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GATEWAY TO A GOLDEN LAND: TOWNSVILLE TO 1884

Thesis submitted by
Dorothy Mary Gibson-Wilde BA *JCU*

in December 1982

in partial fulfilment of the requirements
for the degree of Bachelor of Arts with Honours
in the Department of History at
James Cook University of North Queensland

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18. 8. 83

DECLARATION

I declare that this thesis is my own work and has not been submitted in any form for another degree or diploma at any university or other institution of tertiary education. Information derived from the published or unpublished work of other authors has been acknowledged in the text and a list of references is given.

18. 8. 83

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ABSTRACT

This thesis is a study of the development of the townscape of Townsville during the first twenty years of settlement. Since it is necessary to appreciate how the area appeared before settlement in order to understand the changes brought about by European intrusion, it commences with the descriptions from the journals of early explorers, from Captain Cook onwards, and ends in 1884 with the township beginning to develop into the city we know today.

Normally, the author of such a study can rely on one or more histories of the city with which he is concerned for background data. In the case of Townsville, no properly documented history existed and all popular histories were found to contain inaccuracies or to be mainly repetitions of earlier works. The most reliable source was found to be the Christmas Supplement published with the *Townsville Herald* of 24 December 1887. It was therefore necessary to work from original documents to obtain accurate background history, so that this work includes more discussion of such material than might otherwise have been the case. It is divided into two parts. Part One deals with exploration, foundation, and survival, and Part Two with consolidation and expansion.

Part One contains descriptions of Cleveland Bay before settlement. It was discovered that the explorer and botanist, Allan Cunningham, was the first European to land in Cleveland Bay when official Botanist with Phillip Parker King's expedition in the *Mermaid* in 1819. Cunningham's Journals provided excellent descriptions of the area, while his collecting lists, located in the Herbarium of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, England, provided a record of many of the plants then growing in the region. The reasons for Townsville's foundation and why it was not founded earlier are then examined. This includes a brief discussion of the shortcomings of Bowen, Wickham and Cardwell, in order to account for Townsville's comparatively rapid growth. It was discovered that the township was founded by Black and Company, with partners John Melton Black and Robert Towns, not by Towns and Company with Black as local

Manager, as previously believed for over a century. The activities of John Melton Black and his relationship with Robert Towns are examined, extensive use being made of the surviving correspondence of both Black and Towns. The problems involved in founding the town and the difficulties Black and Towns experienced in persuading the Government to provide assistance are described. It was discovered that Black had presented the Government with fairly detailed maps of the proposed townsite and that Captain Heath from the Harbours and Rivers Department had made a survey of the bay before settlement. Black's maps are reproduced in the endnotes and Heath's report examined in the text of this work. The early settlement, development of a town plan, extension of amenities and facilities and first buildings are described with some account of life in the township in 1866 derived from the diary of J.T. Walker, the first Manager of the Bank of New South Wales, which the author located in the Mitchell Library. Other reminiscences of early settlers and visitors, such as C.S. Rowe, R.B. Howard, Andrew Carroll, Lucy Gray, Catherine Robinson, James Gordon jnr and members of the Hodel family, are also quoted. The township's slow growth until the discovery of gold in 1867, and its remarkable survival of the pastoral crisis of the 1860s, the cyclone of 1867 and the departure of Black, is next detailed. Part One ends with a discussion of the effects of the discovery in subsequent years of several major goldfields in the hinterland and their effect on Townsville until 1870.

Part Two deals with the effects on Townsville of the discovery of further goldfields, the expansion of settlement in the north and in particular the growth of Cooktown and other northern ports and discusses why Townsville continued to grow during the 1870s, emerging clearly by 1884 as the dominant town in north Queensland, and possible capital of a new northern state. The growth of industries, both in the town and surrounding districts, is discussed together with the expansion of facilities and amenities in the town. This includes brief histories of the Great Northern Railway, harbour improvements, schools, churches, newspapers, hospital and other facilities and amenities. Changes in the townscape are described, in particular the slow change from corrugated-iron and timber buildings to brick structures, the extension of roads and the evolution of suburbs. Many of Townsville's early buildings are described with accompanying illustrations, and it has been possible to identify for the first time most of their architects and builders. The thesis concludes with a description of Townsville in 1884 and looks sadly at the irreparable damage to the surrounding scenery wrought by the settlers' apparently insatiable need for wood, and their lack of appreciation of the natural flora.

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TOWNSVILLE PAST AND PRESENT

(Air: Killaloo)

Over twenty years ago,
As some of you know,
In Townsville dwelt a very happy crew;
No coats were worn those days,
Shirt sleeves were all the craze --
A free and easy costume, very true.
But now the custom's changed,
And ease is quite estranged.
Folk revel in the garb of Southern clime;
Coats and waistcoats now are seen,
Stand-up collars, too, I mean,
Especially now we're into Summer time.

CHORUS-

*You may talk of stand-up collars,
Swell clerks without the dollars
With all the latest fashions from the South or Woogaroo;
But for comfort and for ease
Give me the old style, please,
To jog along in free attire as old hands used to do.*

At Jimmy Mac's old pub
Some of the lads took grub;
While further up the street at the O'Neill's
Such another jovial crowd,
With common sense endowed,
Had lodgings or perchance took daily meals.
Each one had decent screw,
Our numbers were but few,
But still we always had the best of cheer.
At Jack Low's Hall we met,
Had a dance, perhaps a "wet"
Of Martel's dark or Bass' English beer.

CHORUS

Few old hands now remain,
All fun seems on the wane.
We ne'er will see the good old days again.
In store and office too,
With unenviable screw,
Youths do the work that once was done by men.
Cheap labour is the cry,
Employers do outvie
Each other with retrenching, drastic acts!
On the future that's in store
We can but muse and pore,
Eschewing style that present time exacts.

CHORUS

Some ladies toe the line
In costume masculine,
When on their bikes you see them do a spin;
Like frilled lizards some appear,
With clothes puffed round their ear,
And hornet waists unsightly long and thin.
Then there's published "Social Notes"
Of arrivals by the boats,
Amongst the upper crust these folks appear;
'Tis hard to draw the line,
Or society define,
In doing so you give offence, I fear.

A.R.J.

PART ONE

EXPLORATION, FOUNDATION AND SURVIVAL

Chapter 1

In order to discover what Cleveland Bay was like before the settlement of Townsville and to understand why Townsville, eventually the most successful of the ports established in North Queensland, was the last of the early settlements made in the attempt to find a port for the Kennedy District, one must begin with the accounts of the earliest explorers.

The first record of Europeans sighting the area comes from James Cook.¹ On 6 June 1770, Cook named Cleveland Bay, Cape Cleveland and Magnetical Island.² He remarked that

the whole appear'd to have the most rugged[sic] rocky and barrenest surface of any we have yet seen. However it is not without inhabitants as we saw smooks[sic] in several place(s) in the bottom of the Bay.³

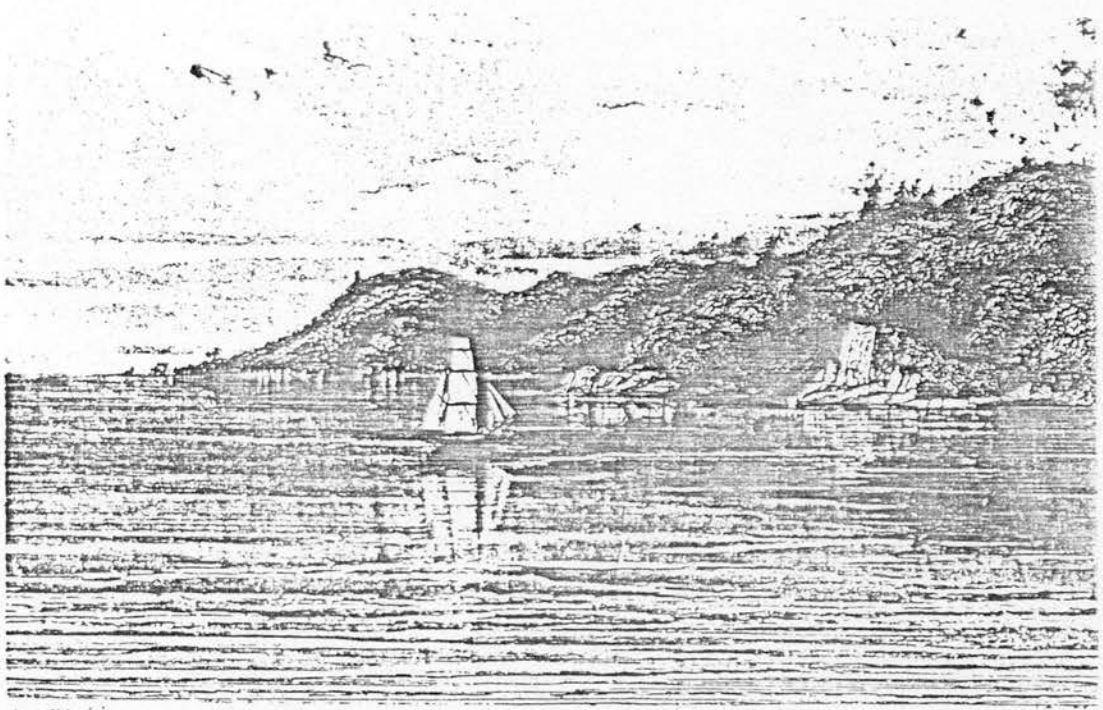
Cook's descriptions of the Queensland coast in general leave an unattractive impression. For instance, his description of Double Island Point states that "the land hereabouts, which is of a moderate height, appears more barren than any we have yet seen on this coast and the soil more sandy..."⁴ Yet this is the coastal fringe of one of Queensland's richest dairying areas, the Mary Valley. It should also be noted that Cook's observations of

¹Cook was probably not the first explorer to visit the area. This honour is probably due to the Portuguese De Mendonca in 1522. For an account of this visit see K.G. McIntyre, *The Secret Discovery of Australia*, London 1977.

²The name 'Magnetical' used by all early explorers appears to have been dropped in favour of 'Magnetic' in the 1880s. Henceforth the modern terminology 'Magnetic' will be used.

³J.C. Beaglehole (ed.), *The Voyage of the Endeavour 1768-1771*, Cambridge 1955, pp. 338-39.

⁴Quoted by I. Pedley, *Winds of Change - 100 Years in Widgee Shire*, Gympie 1979, p. 11.



North West part of Anguilla Island.

London Published by D. & W. BOONE 1846.

Cleveland Bay were made from two leagues (about ten kilometres) out to sea and should not be regarded as more than distant and fleeting impressions. As Ian Pedley had pointed out, "seen from the coast fair judgment could not be passed".⁵ Yet it was from the coast that all judgments of North Queensland were made for many more years, and it was largely on the basis of coastal exploration that the first settlements were established.

Australia's first settlement had been in existence for thirty-one years before Cleveland Bay was explored in any detail. Lt Phillip Parker King commanding the *Mermaid* on a survey cruise of the Australian coast arrived in the area in June 1819.⁶ Accompanying King as official botanical collector was Alan Cunningham, whose later exploits in discovering the Darling Downs and Cunningham's Gap in southern Queensland are well known;⁷ he is also recognised as one of Australia's greatest botanical collectors. Cunningham was the first European to record landing in Cleveland Bay when he stepped ashore at Red Rock Bay on Cape Cleveland on 14 June 1819. On entering Cleveland Bay, Cunningham noted, as Cook had done, that the area was very rugged and rocky, but added that it was "covered with a sparse vegetation, while in other parts small timber and thick matted brush appears".⁸ King remarked that

Cape Cleveland is the extremity of a mountainous projection, and like Mount Upstart rises abruptly from low land, by which it is separated from the lofty range of Mount Eliot[*sic*].

The land to the west of the Cape was wooded and uneven. The shores of the bay were lined with mangroves alternating with sandy beaches.

⁵ *ibid.*

⁶ Born in Australia, the son of Phillip Gidley King, the third Governor of the Colony of New South Wales (1800-1806), P.P. King later rose to the rank of Admiral in the Royal Navy. Geoffrey Ingleton, *Charting a Continent*, Sydney 1944, pp. 38-9, has pointed out that he "can be justly called the greatest of the early Marine Surveyors". He was "the first and for years the only Australian-born to attain eminence in the world outside the Australian colonies" (D. Pike (ed.), *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, vol. 1).

⁷ For an account of Cunningham see W.G. McMinn, *Allan Cunningham, Botanist and Explorer*, Melbourne 1970.

⁸ Allan Cunningham, *Journal*, State Archives of N.S.W.

⁹ P.P. King, *Narrative of a Survey of the Intertropical and Western Coasts of Australia*, 2 vols, London 1827, vol. 1, p. 191.

Close to the beaches were several fresh water pools and streams with groups of native huts in clearings. Cunningham described one of these huts as being "of capacious circular form and neatly thatched with foliage of pandanus".¹⁰ He noted that the timber was a species of Eucalyptus like the Port Jackson blue gum, but very stunted and small. The rocks were chiefly a coarse grained whiteish gray granite. However, though the soil may have been "miserable", Cunningham collected an impressive number of botanical specimens in the short time he was in the area. Many of the plants can still be found in the region of Cape Cleveland, but if they existed in other areas, have long disappeared.

On 15 June 1819, once again at Cape Cleveland, King and Cunningham climbed the highest hill at the back of the beach. In approaching it they crossed a wide stream. The scrub however was so dense that they could not reach the summit in the time they had allowed for the ascent. From the point they reached they could see

lagoons on the low western shores of the Bay appearing to extend to the base of the bounding range...about which were native smokes arising. [Above them was] the rocky inaccessible steep perpendicular side of a high hill to the east of us on the opposite side of a deep rocky gully...clothed...with the Norfolk pine of very ordinary dimensions...also this beautiful tree can be traced well by the eye to the highest pinnacle of the range, giving the whole a truly pleasing picturesque effect.¹¹

King commented that

the view obtained was neither so useful, nor so extensive as I had expected: the coast for six miles back is low, and occupied by a large body of water;¹² beyond which is a range of flat-topped and precipitous rocky hills that appear to be inaccessible, and to form almost an impenetrable barrier between the sea-coast and the interior.¹³

On 16 June 1819 King and Cunningham again landed at Cape Cleveland. In the afternoon a ship's party under the command of Bedwell took soundings across the bay to the southern end of

¹⁰Cunningham, op. cit.; H. Brayshaw, *Aboriginal Material Culture in the Herbert/Burdekin District, North Queensland*, vol. 1, Ph.D. thesis, History Dept, James Cook University, describes other huts of similar types in various parts of the district.

¹¹Cunningham, op. cit. Cunningham refers to the Hoop Pine (*Araucaria Cunninghamii*) as Norfolk pine throughout his journals.

¹²This may have been the salt pans of the present Town Common. It is no doubt the body of water referred to in the map used by Dalrymple (see below).

¹³King, op. cit., pp. 192-3.

Magnetic Island and towards the channel between the island and Cape Pallarenda. Cunningham explored a range of mountains "further to the SW".¹⁴ It is not clear which range this was, though it may have been Castle Hill. In all three days no Aborigines were seen, although footprints were sighted. The number of native huts observed and the many smokes noted around the foothills indicated the presence of a large number of inhabitants. It was not until the vessel was leaving on 17 June that several Aborigines appeared on the sandy beach at the north end of Magnetic Island, presumably the present West Point beach. Several wallabies were seen, but it was the amazing number of butterflies which impressed King:

The numbers seen by us were indeed "incredible" the stem of every grass-tree (*Xanthorrhoea*) which plant grows abundantly upon the hills, was covered with them and on their taking wing, the air appeared as it were, in perfect motion.¹⁵

It was twenty years later before Europeans again recorded their impressions of the Cleveland Bay area. In that time settlements had been established at Moreton Bay, Melbourne, Adelaide, Perth and Port Essington, pastoral settlement was rapidly spreading into the interior of the southern part of Australia, and much more of that area had been explored and mapped. The vessel which then visited Cleveland Bay is probably the most famous in the history of maritime surveying - the *Beagle*.¹⁶ It was heading northwards on a surveying voyage under command of John Clements Wickham.¹⁷

¹⁴Cunningham, op. cit.

¹⁵King, op. cit., p. 195. This was a new species of butterfly later described by W.S. MacLeay as *Euploea Hamata*. William Sharp MacLeay (1892-1865) was the son of Alexander MacLeay, Colonial Secretary of N.S.W. Both were keen naturalists, as was William MacLeay, nephew of Alexander and cousin of W.S. Their combined collections were presented as the MacLeay Collection to the University of Sydney.

¹⁶See Appendix A for an account of the *Beagle*'s history.

¹⁷Wickham was later appointed first Police Magistrate of the Moreton Bay settlement and remained in that post until Queensland became a separate colony in 1869. He was related by marriage to G.E. Dalrymple whose sister Henrietta married Thomas Leslie. Leslie's brothers were married to two daughters of Hannibal Macarthur and Wickham's first wife was a third Macarthur daughter, Anna. Hannibal Macarthur's wife was Maria, the sister of Philip Parker King. Wickham's name was prominent among those who subscribed to finance the Dalrymple expedition to explore Northern Queensland in 1859.

Although the *Beagle* did not enter Cleveland Bay during the voyage of 1839, John Lort Stokes in his account of the voyage remarked in passing that

there is a good anchorage on the west side [of Magnetic Island] where it is densely covered with trees, amidst which a few straggling pines reared their lofty and angular shaped heads giving by their variety a picturesque appearance to the scene.¹⁸

The *Beagle* returned on 9 June 1841, this time under command of Stokes.¹⁹ It remained five days, but Stokes' account of the stay is rather sketchy. The crew did their laundry and swabbed decks, and divine service was held. The ship's boat was lowered every day to explore,²⁰ but all Stokes tells us is that "it is a high piece of land with an ill defined peak in the centre 1770 feet in height".²¹ From his account he does not appear to have explored any other areas of the bay. His main purpose appears to have been to explore the southern corner of Halifax Bay, since King believed that there might be a large body of water, perhaps a river in the area.²² Stokes found Halifax Bay very attractive; in June 1839 he had written that

it is the general opinion of every voyager who has sailed along the coast of Halifax Bay that it is the most interesting portion of the north-east side of the continent.²³

In June 1841 a party landed on the southern corner on "a long flat Sandy Beach"²⁴ which must be the Shelley Beach of today. They crossed some small sand dunes, covered with a type of spinifex and reached "a luxuriant growth of grass, rich and soft with a springing sort of feel to the feet".²⁵ They saw wallabies and, guided by the rich appearance of a group of eucalypts and tea trees, found a stream of fresh water. The soil was light and sandy,

¹⁸J.L. Stokes, *Discoveries in Australia*, London 1846, 2 vols, vol. I, p. 337.

¹⁹Stokes remained in the Royal Navy, rising to the rank of Admiral (Pike, op. cit.). Stokes' papers and uniforms are held by the Maritime Museum, Greenwich.

²⁰Log and Proceedings on Board HM Surveying Sloop *Beagle*, 25 March 1841 to 29 December 1841, Public Record Office, Kew, England.

²¹Stokes, op. cit., vol. II, p. 252.

²²King, op. cit., vol. I, p. 196.

²³Stokes, op. cit., vol. I, p. 340.

²⁴ibid., vol. II, p. 253.

²⁵ibid.

covered with dense creepers, and innumerable quantities of *Angustifolia*²⁶ in splendid flower, many of the clusters occupying a space of 3 feet in diameter with a proportionate stem of about 5 feet from the earth. The hum of insects and sudden disturbance of rich-coloured parrots, screaming and fluttering through the branches and the strong, short aped[sic] flight of the dove with its melancholy cooing transported us in imagination a long way inland,²⁷ whereas we were not 300 yards from the beach.

They ascended Many Peaks Range, pushing their way through long grass so interwoven with creepers that they had to tear a way through. Here they disturbed an Aboriginal who fled. This appears to have been the first time that any of the early explorers actually encountered one of the Aboriginal population of the area. Stokes remarked that the country appeared to be granitic and

parts near the beach were thrown into massive blocks, at high water, completely surrounded by the flux of the tide. The view inland was intercepted by hills and trees, the former assuming²⁸ the same appearance as the one we were on but higher.

A sandy spit was noted connecting Magnetic Island with the mainland. Stokes thought that it must have been sufficiently shallow at low water to allow the Aboriginals to cross as no canoes were found. While the *Beagle* lay at anchor Lt Gore sketched it moored near Magnetic Island. This sketch, published in *Discoveries in Australia*, is the first published view of the area.²⁹

Had Stokes' advice been followed, Halifax Bay might have been settled earlier. He proposed that this would be an excellent site for a convict settlement.³⁰ However the era of transportation of Britain's criminals was passing and North Queensland was spared the agonies of the convict system. Twenty more years would pass before Europeans colonised North Queensland, yet already Cleveland Bay was being affected by European intrusion. Both the *Mermaid* and the *Beagle* restocked their supplies of wood and water in the bay, cutting down quantities of trees and starting the steady destruction of the native flora and fauna which has resulted in the present barren and denuded appearance of the area.

²⁶ Native lily (*Crinum Angustifolium*).

²⁷ Stokes, op. cit., vol. II, p. 253.

²⁸ *ibid.*, p. 254.

²⁹ *ibid.*, vol. I, opposite p. 338.

³⁰ *ibid.*, vol. II, p. 511.

The *Beagle* appears to have been the last of the famous early survey vessels to enter Cleveland Bay. Other survey ships visited the north but did not enter the bay. For instance on 2 May 1843, not long after the Moreton Bay settlement had been thrown open to free settlers, the *Fly* commanded by F.P. Blackwood anchored on the south-east side of Cape Cleveland. The published account of that voyage included a description of the southern side of the Cape as being "still more broken and abrupt and also more woody than Cape Upstart, having fine pines in many gullies".³¹ The *Fly* passed on northwards without entering Cleveland Bay.

In the succeeding years an increasing number of ships used the Inner Passage of the reef. Cleveland Bay was probably known to beche-de-mer and sandalwood gatherers, but no other records of ships visiting the bay appear to exist until 1860.

The impression of Cleveland Bay left by the accounts of early explorers is not unattractive. The scenery was picturesque and the bay was fringed with long sandy beaches alternating with mangroves. There was certainly a great deal more vegetation in the area than the present appearance indicates, but the soil appeared infertile and the timber was stunted though the undergrowth was dense. The terrain in some parts was rugged and rocky, contrasting with low-lying swampy land in others. However there appears to have been a fairly large Aboriginal population and more fresh water than one can find today. Although not an impossible site for a settlement, it was obviously not a good one. No early explorer suggested the possibility of using any of the streams debouching into the bay as a small boat anchorage. All found sheltered anchorage under the lee of Cape Cleveland or Magnetic Island, but none remarked on the possibilities of Cleveland Bay as a port. King did comment that the mountains encircling the bay appeared to be impenetrable, cutting off access to the hinterland - not an encouraging observation for future settlers.³²

³¹J.B. Jukes, *Narrative of the Surveying Voyage of HMS Fly Commanded by Capt F.P. Blackwood RN*, London 1847, p. 56.

³²King, op. cit., pp. 192-3.

With the exception of Stokes, none appears to have considered any site on the north-east coast as being suitable for a future port. Their main interest lay in surveying the Inner or King's³³ Passage of the Barrier Reef, in order to chart a safe passage for shipping and to locate possible anchorages and sources of wood and water. In Cleveland Bay good anchorage was found with plenty of wood and fresh water - enough to satisfy the immediate needs of shipping using the Torres Strait route to the east via the Inner Passage. At that stage nothing was known of the interior of the north and there was still ample land available for pastoral expansion closer to settled areas in the south. Settlement in the north must have seemed a distant prospect.

Land exploration of North Queensland did not start until 1844 when Ludwig Leichhardt's expedition to Port Essington passed through the area.³⁴ Leichhardt gave glowing descriptions of the pastoral prospects of the Burdekin Valley which extends through the hinterland of Cleveland Bay, arousing interest in the north but no real thought of settlement. Too little was known of the region and it was too far from settled areas to attract pastoralists. Further, the unhappy fate of the Kennedy Expedition of 1848, exploring the Cape York area, emphasised the hostility of the Aboriginal population of the north - a major hazard to settlers.³⁵

Nevertheless others did visit the area in the 1850s. Christopher Allingham, William Kilman and W.H. Gaden are all recorded as visiting the north at that time;³⁶ only Kilman may have penetrated as far north as Cleveland Bay, but he left no record.³⁷ The brothers A.C. and F.T. Gregory traversed the lands further west

³³P.P. King referred to the Inner Passage as King's Passage.

³⁴L. Leichhardt, *Journal of an Overland Expedition from Moreton Bay to Port Essington*, London 1847.

³⁵For an account of the Kennedy Expedition see W. Carron, *Narrative of an Expedition undertaken under the Direction of the late Mr Assistant Surveyor Kennedy*, Sydney 1849.

³⁶On Allingham see G.C. Bolton, 'The Exploration of North Queensland: Some Problems', *Journal of the Royal Australian Historical Society*, vol. XLVI, p. 352. On Gaden see J.T.S. Bird, *The Early History of Rockhampton*, Brisbane 1904, p. 390.

³⁷E. Palmer, *Early Days in North Queensland*, Sydney 1903, p. 94.

in 1856, reinforcing Leichhardt's account of the Burdekin Valley.³⁸ It should be emphasised however that both the Leichhardt and Gregory expeditions only passed through a narrow corridor, blazing a trail from the north-west to the southern colonies of Australia. The greater part of North Queensland was still unknown.

Three years passed after the Gregorys' expedition before further plans were made to explore the north. This time they were certainly connected with pastoral settlement on which gold discoveries in New South Wales and Victoria were starting to have an effect. The gold rushes not only brought the capital necessary for the opening up of North Queensland, but also as Geoffrey Bolton has pointed out,

brought many who challenged the squatter's hold on the land and reforming politicians talked of cutting up pastoral runs for selection as farms.³⁹

Graziers felt a need for new lands far away from such threats.

In response to this new impetus three expeditions to the north were proposed, but only two eventuated. One under John Mackay⁴⁰ led to the foundation of the city bearing his name; the other under George Elphinstone Dalrymple⁴¹ led to the settlement of the Kennedy District. The third, proposed by William Lockhart Morton, never eventuated, but led indirectly to the discovery of Port Denison. It was the account of Morton's proposed expedition in the *Sydney Morning Herald*, with reference to a promise of compensation from the Colonial Secretary of N.S.W. to the discoverer of a good harbour in the north, which spurred Henry Daniel Sinclair, James Gordon, Poole and Thomas to venture north in the ketch *Santa Barbara* on 1 September 1859.⁴² They discovered Port Denison. Looking no further

³⁸A.C. and F.T. Gregory, *Journals of Australian Explorations*, Brisbane 1884, p. 188.

³⁹G.C. Bolton, *A Thousand Miles Away*, Canberra 1972, p. 15.

⁴⁰John Mackay, 'Discovery of the Pioneer River', *Townsville Herald* (hereafter *TH*), 7 and 14 July 1888.

⁴¹D.J. Farnfield, *Frontiersman*, Melbourne 1968.

⁴²*Sydney Morning Herald*, 28 July 1859. An account of their voyage appeared in the *Sydney Morning Herald*, 24 November 1859. Accounts also appeared at various later dates in the *Port Denison Times* (hereafter *PDT*) and other Queensland newspapers.

they made no attempt to investigate access to the hinterland but returned south as quickly as possible to claim the reward.⁴³

In Australian history, ports have often been established before routes to the hinterland were explored, so Sinclair and company cannot be blamed for failing to see that settlers further north would find Port Denison inaccessible for lengthy periods in the wet season. Only one European could have told them that the Burdekin and its tributaries as well as every other river and creek in the north rose in mighty flood in the wet season: Jimmy Morrill. Cast ashore in Cleveland Bay when the *Peruvian* was wrecked in 1846, Morrill lived with the Aborigines for seventeen years, the first European to live in the area. Morrill's knowledge would have been of inestimable value to the earliest settlers but he did not emerge from the bush on Jarvisfield Station until 1863.⁴⁴

When Dalrymple returned in April 1860 from his exploration of the Burdekin Valley with splendid reports of the pastoral prospects, confirmed later in the year by Mackay's reports from slightly further south, settlement was almost a foregone conclusion. The explorer Augustus Charles Gregory, now Chief Commissioner for Crown Lands in Queensland, recommended a thorough survey of the area before it was opened to settlers.⁴⁵ Although much of the coast had been mapped by 1860, very little of the hinterland had been explored and virtually no attempts had been made to discover routes connecting coast with hinterland. Gregory's recommendation would have ensured much more orderly settlement, eased the tasks of the Commissioner for Crown Lands in the Kennedy District,⁴⁶ avoided the

⁴³It is one of the ironies of North Queensland history that the reward proved to be non-existent. Queensland was proclaimed a separate colony in December 1859 and the New South Wales Government disclaimed any promise of rewards since the area in question was part of Queensland.

⁴⁴Bowen Historical Society, *The Story of James Morrill*; C.S. Rowe, letter to the Editor, *TH*, 22 February 1898.

⁴⁵Report from the Select Committee on Government Departments, Queensland Legislative Assembly, *Votes and Proceedings* (hereafter *Q.L.A., V. & P.*), 1860, pp. 1-2; A. Allingham, *Taming the Wilderness*, Townsville 1977, p. 18.

⁴⁶For an account of the difficulties of that position see Farnfield, *op. cit.*, pp. 40-53.

confusion resulting from conflicting claims to land⁴⁷ and led to the founding of coastal settlements on a basis of real knowledge of their accessibility to the hinterland rather than guesswork. The Government ignored Gregory's advice in favour of speed and economy.⁴⁸

One major point remained to be cleared up before settlement of the Kennedy District could proceed. Dalrymple had returned with the suggestion that the mouth of the Burdekin River might provide an alternative port of access.⁴⁹ His previous expedition had not followed the river to its mouth as they had encountered hostile Aborigines, and it was not obvious from earlier coastal surveys where it might enter the sea. Dalrymple thought it might debouch into Cleveland Bay. Therefore on 26 August 1860 the Government Schooner *Spitfire* under the command of Lt J.W. Smith, with G.E. Dalrymple, R.P. Stone (Surveyor), Mr Fitzallan (Botanical Collector), Mr Bousfield (Master), 7 seamen,⁵⁰ and two Aborigines left Moreton Bay to explore harbours on the north coast and to discover the mouth of the Burdekin River. They arrived on 11 September 1860 at Port Denison which Dalrymple found "a very fine little harbour"⁵¹ while Smith remarked that "nothing could be more gratifying than the appearance of this splendid little port".⁵² The surrounding countryside impressed Dalrymple:

Low hills and swelling ridges clothed with rich grass, and openly timbered with Eucalypti, Ash, Ironbark, etc, etc, descend to the shores of the harbour and neighbouring coasts, here and there bounded by a very narrow belt of mangroves; altogether the most beautiful coast country I have yet seen in Australia.

From the heights of Mt Gordon they could see a broad fertile and

⁴⁷Allingham, op. cit., pp. 58-9.

⁴⁸ibid., pp. 15-19.

⁴⁹Dalrymple gives an account of his report regarding this and the reasoning behind it in J.W. Smith and G.E. Dalrymple, *Report on the Proceedings of the Queensland Government Schooner Spitfire in Search of the mouth of the River Burdekin on the North East Coast of Australia*, Brisbane 1860, pt II, p. 32.

⁵⁰One of these was Thomas who had been aboard Sinclair's *Santa Barbara*.

⁵¹Smith and Dalrymple, op. cit., pt II, p. 19.

⁵²ibid., pt I, p. 4.

⁵³ibid., pt II, p. 19.

richly wooded valley running SSW and Dalrymple believed that "a short and easy route could be obtained by this valley to the heads of the Suttor, Isaacs, etc".⁵⁴ Towards the south-west another fine valley could be seen and Dalrymple believed that there was "much fine, rich, open, fresh and plain country in all these valleys"⁵⁵ and that a level and direct route from Port Denison into the heart of the country would bring the districts of the Bowen and lower Burdekin Rivers within 80 kilometres and the central part of the upper Burdekin within 160 kilometres of the port.

The mouth of the Burdekin had still to be discovered however, and on 12 September they headed north. On 15 September 1860 they came to anchor in Cleveland Bay close to Cape Cleveland, where Smith, Dalrymple, Stone, Fitzallan and Jamie Alexander (an Aboriginal) landed. They encountered some Aboriginals to whom they gave biscuits and tobacco and who seemed friendly, but caused alarm when they

began to feel us all over, and especially the Botanist who was in good condition - smacking their lips and giving other unmistakable evidences of a relish for human flesh and a desire to gratify it.⁵⁶

When more Aboriginals arrived with stones and spears, appearing less friendly, the Europeans opened fire, killing at least one. To prevent the summoning of reinforcements they also proceeded to break up a native canoe.⁵⁷ This encounter, the first recorded meeting of numbers of Aboriginals with Europeans in Cleveland Bay, was in fact the result of a tragic error. Morrill later informed Dalrymple that the Aboriginals were his friends trying to indicate that Morrill was with them.⁵⁸ Had Dalrymple and his party realised this and held their fire a little longer, they might have met Morrill earlier and gained the benefit of his extensive knowledge of the area while establishing friendly relations with the native population. This was but one of many encounters between Aboriginals and white settlers in the area when, as Farnfield emphasised, "bloodshed and

⁵⁴ *ibid.*, p. 20.

⁵⁵ *ibid.*

⁵⁶ *ibid.*, p. 23.

⁵⁷ *ibid.*, pt I, p. 5 and pt II, p. 24.

⁵⁸ Farnfield, *op. cit.*, p. 59.

vicious animosity had been caused because there was no means of intercourse between the two".⁵⁹ Europeans who had long lost touch with their own tribal origins had recourse to the gun as a "medium of understanding",⁶⁰ a method which was devastating to the Aborigines, and which led, not to understanding and sharing of the land, but often to open warfare.

The immediate result of Dalrymple's encounter was that the party could not land on the following day as the Aborigines, ready to revenge their losses, had gathered in numbers on the beaches and hills "shrieking and yelling most diabolically".⁶¹ However they moved off that evening and exploration was resumed. Dalrymple noted that

Cape Cleveland runs out from the main in a chain of high hills, exactly similar to Gloucester Island, Cape Upstart and Magnetical Island, which forms the north-western boundary of the bay, only of lower elevation and covered with Pines, Eucalypti, etc. The south end of the cape is divided from Mount Elliot by an expanse of low mangrove swamps and mud flats, intersected by salt water creeks.⁶²

Smith noted that the water in the bay shoaled rapidly.⁶³ On 17 September they worked towards Magnetic Island coming to anchor on the north side of the island "with Bay Rock bearing W by N 1 1/2 miles",⁶⁴ and Dalrymple landed with a party to cut a pine spar for the top-mast of the *Spliffire*. He described the island as being

high, rocky, and pine-clad, ...separated from the mainland by a narrow strait partly dry, exposing sand banks at low water. The formation of this island also is granitic, immense boulders of this rock lining the shores and being piled on the summits and strewn over the slopes of the hills in wild confusion. Lofty pines spring out of the crevices of the rocks, giving considerable beauty to the scenery.

Dalrymple immediately considered uses for the timber of the pines in furniture, boat building, etc. Obviously the beauty they brought to the landscape could be considered of little importance compared with

⁵⁹ *ibid.*

⁶⁰ *ibid.*

⁶¹ Smith and Dalrymple, *op. cit.*, pt I, p. 5.

⁶² *ibid.*, pt II, p. 23.

⁶³ *ibid.*, pt I, p. 5.

⁶⁴ *ibid.*, p. 6.

⁶⁵ *ibid.*, pt II, p. 24.

their use as felled timber. Victorian colonisers seldom paused to consider the disastrous effects of their clearing of the land and realised too late, and then only partially, what drastic changes they had wrought.

On 19 September, apparently following in Stokes' footsteps, they landed in the southern corner of Halifax Bay, having satisfied themselves that the Burdekin did not debouch there. They ascended Many Peaks Range and looked out over the Town Common.

In the clear morning light a beautiful and very distinct bird's eye view was obtained of the coasts of Halifax Bay, Cleveland Bay and the mountains, valleys and low country of the mainland. Immediately beneath the hills a large extent of salt water swamps, mud flats and low plains, covered with large ant hills, stretched for some seven miles to the south.⁶⁶

From the hill-top three large camps of Aborigines could be seen and when they reached the foot of the hills they were confronted by a number of Aborigines "dancing their war dance (corrobbory)".⁶⁷ Dalrymple and party made an orderly retreat to the boats but not without firing a number of shots and suffering a near miss from a native spear.⁶⁸ Their troubles were not over, for on their return to the *Spitfire* they found that two canoes with Aborigines from Magnetic Island had joined the fray and the Master, Mr Bousfield had to resort to discharging the *Spitfire's* brass gun in order to discourage them.

On 20 September Dalrymple and party concentrated their efforts on the southern corner of Cleveland Bay where three large creek entrances were discovered. Smith called one of these Crocodile Creek; the other into which two entrances were found was probably Alligator Creek. They also discovered a rivulet to the west of "Mt Abbott"⁶⁹ which appears to be Stewart's Creek. Apparently they did not discover Ross River. Dalrymple remarked that two of the creeks discovered would "afford harbours for small coasters, for the requirements of the fine country behind them",⁷⁰ but neither he nor

⁶⁶ *ibid.*, pt II, p. 25.

⁶⁷ *ibid.*, pt I, p. 6.

⁶⁸ Smith remarked that this spear was "somewhat different from what we had before seen, being fitted at the hand end for a woomera, or throwing stick".

⁶⁹ This appears to be a misprint for Mt Elliott.

Smith commented on the possibility of establishing a port in Cleveland Bay. Still seeking the mouth of the Burdekin River, they moved south. In Bowling Green Bay on 22 September they discovered the mouth of the Haughton River, traced it for 19 kilometres and left, believing it to be one of the mouths of the Burdekin.⁷¹ Though mistaken, this was a reasonable deduction from available information.

In the next few days Dalrymple ascertained that the Wickham⁷² was the main mouth of the Burdekin but would not provide a good harbour, and so the *Spitfire* returned to Port Denison. On a second assessment both Dalrymple and Smith agreed that it was a well-sheltered and commodious harbour with an excellent site for a township where water was easily obtainable. The country around was open forest and plains with granite for building. There were abundant timber trees, though once again Dalrymple does not pause to ponder what their felling might do to the area. Easy access to the interior seemed assured; the Aborigines though hostile did not attack with the same determination as those at Cleveland Bay.⁷³ Dalrymple does not seem to have considered the possibility that the Burdekin in flood might prove a barrier to communication with the hinterland, though Wickham had noted flood debris in the trees along its banks and Dalrymple was familiar with his journals.⁷⁴ Smith noted that

the whole of the country embracing from the Wickham River to the inner part of Cleveland Bay is occasionally covered with water which could come from no other but the Burdekin.⁷⁵

If he did see it as a problem, Dalrymple did not mention it, and

⁷⁰Smith and Dalrymple, op. cit., pt II, p. 26; Bolton, *A Thousand Miles Away*, op. cit., p. 31, states that Cleveland Bay was "a harbour praised by Dalrymple" but this remark appears to be the only one he made which refers to even a possible harbour.

⁷¹Dalrymple believed all of the creeks in Cleveland Bay must form part of the Burdekin delta.

⁷²Discovered by Wickham in the *Beagle* in 1839 (Stokes, op. cit., p. 330).

⁷³Smith and Dalrymple, op. cit., pt II, pp. 32-3.

⁷⁴ibid., p. 31. Dalrymple actually quotes Wickham's journal. See also Stokes, op. cit., p. 330.

⁷⁵Smith and Dalrymple, op. cit., pt I, p. 9.

declared that

Port Denison is easy of access from all parts of the interior, by routes with which I am already acquainted.

Such a statement was of course not entirely true, but it was not a time for caution, and Dalrymple was no doubt anxious to hasten settlement. As Allingham has written:

From the outset, Kennedy squatting occupation was conceived as a northern extension in the broad pattern of eastern Australian pastoral settlement and, in the urgent expansionist atmosphere which prevailed, little serious consideration was given to possible northern circumstances that might complicate the programme.

Both Smith and Dalrymple recommended Port Denison as the site for the first settlement in the Kennedy District: there on 11 April 1861 the town of Bowen was officially founded.

Before settlement of the Kennedy District began on 1 January 1861, explorers in Cleveland Bay had viewed the area only from the sea. Very little land exploration had been attempted, and that confined mainly to Cape Cleveland and Many Peaks Range at Cape Pallarenda. The early explorers found the landscape picturesque, much more densely wooded than its present appearance suggests, with much more water in lagoons and small creeks. It did not appear an ideal site for a town with much of the terrain being either rocky and elevated or low and swampy with heavy fringes of mangroves along some stretches of the coastline. The soil appeared rather infertile, yet there was ample fresh water and it supported a large population of Aborigines. However the Aborigines had become more hostile in the period between 1840 and 1860, giving every indication by the time Dalrymple entered the Bay of being some of the most warlike on the coasts he had explored. The mountains ringing the bay seemed to bar access to the interior and although there were streams entering the bay which might provide anchorage for coastal shipping, no comments had been made on its suitability as a harbour. One must deduce that it did not seem particularly suitable, since the vessels entering it anchored either under Cape Cleveland or near the north-western end of Magnetic Island, rather than in the middle of the bay, while the water near Cape Cleveland shoaled rapidly. It

⁷⁶ *ibid.*, pt II, p. 33.

⁷⁷ Allingham, *op. cit.*, pp. 13-14.

could not be compared with the well-sheltered anchorage, attractive and fertile appearance and apparently easy access to the hinterland offered at Port Denison. Given the Government's decision to open the Kennedy District to settlers before a thorough survey and the increasing urgency of the matter of its settlement, Port Denison appears to have been virtually the only choice for a port at that stage.

Cleveland Bay had to wait another three and a half years for settlement.

Chapter 2

If Dalrymple found Port Denison such an excellent harbour, why were other ports founded in the Kennedy District so soon after its settlement? Why were both Wickham and Cardwell founded before Townsville? Why was Townsville founded at all? To discover the answers to these questions one must look at events in the Kennedy District in the years from 1861 to 1864.

Port Denison was indeed a delightful area. Michael Cunningham noted that it was "with the exception of Port Jackson, the loveliest place in Australia".¹ He also noted however that Bowen harbour had a drawback - "the water becomes shallow near the shore".² Sir Charles Nicholson was more expansive:

The Bay of Port Denison is unfortunately shallow, its greatest depth in the centre not exceeding 25 feet. The shores are low and shelving and difficulty (in the absence of a jetty or pier) is encountered in landing at high water. At other times boats are unable to reach the shore and the only means of landing are, as far as passengers are concerned, the back and shoulders of a sturdy aboriginal black or in the case of goods, a bullock or horse-team which has to be drawn some 200 or 300 feet into the sea.

No creeks debouched into Port Denison which might serve as anchorages and facilitate loading and unloading at wharves. Nicholson noted that the supply of fresh water was insufficient, in contradiction of Dalrymple's report.⁴ These were drawbacks which he

¹M.S. Cunningham, *The Pioneering of the River Burdekin*, Brisbane 1895, p. 2.

²ibid.

³Sir C. Nicholson to Governor Bowen, 22 August 1861, extract in *R.G.S. Proceedings*, vol. VI, 1859-60, p. 118.

⁴Smith and Dalrymple, *op. cit.*, p. 33.

felt to be "capable of removal or mitigation".⁵ A further drawback, not so easily overcome, soon became obvious.

Within two years of the founding of Bowen, squatters had moved with amazing rapidity into the Kennedy District. There were many, both genuine squatter and speculator, anxious to acquire land and the Queensland Government was keen to foster settlement quickly with a view to increasing revenue.⁶ By November 1862 Governor Bowen could report:

During the short space of 18 months our pastoral settlers have practically added to the British Empire and pushed on the margin of Christianity and civilization over a territory as extensive as Great Britain itself.⁷

Most of the territory lay to the north-west of Bowen with runs tending to cluster closely along the valleys of the Burdekin River and its tributaries. The majority of these new properties lay to the north-east of the Burdekin River with the largest number in the hinterland of Cleveland Bay.⁸ By the end of 1863 squatters were penetrating beyond the boundaries of the Kennedy into what would become the Flinders and Cook Districts, many hundreds of miles north of Bowen. For these settlers, Bowen was most inconveniently situated. Not only was the road to their only port and sole contact with the outside world long and hazardous, but the freight on their stores carted such great distances by dray was enormous. There were other problems too, such as loneliness and the distance from medical help. There were many, like Longshaw, who perished before a doctor could be reached.⁹ In the wet season the flooded Burdekin River and its tributaries could isolate settlers for months; for many stations the journey to Bowen involved not one but two crossings of the Burdekin as well as a number of crossings of lesser streams. It was possible to swim across with one's horse, and drays could be floated on rafts, but the current was often too strong; at the most

⁵Nicholson, *op. cit.*

⁶Allingham, *op. cit.*, pp. 16-19.

⁷Bowen to Newcastle, 5 November 1860, in S. Lane-Poole (ed.), *Thirty Years of Colonial Government*, London 1889, vol. I, p. 224.

⁸See Appendix B. See also Allingham, *op. cit.*, p. 28 for a map of this area.

⁹Joseph and William Hann, *Joseph Hann and Family - Settlement in North Queensland 1861-1871*, n.p. n.d., pp. 11-12.

favourable of times - if one can refer to any part of the North Queensland wet season in such terms - it was an extremely hazardous undertaking.

Joseph and William Hann discovered the problems involved in March 1862.¹⁰ Together with Jack Hann, James¹¹ and James Hannan, they left Bowen on 23 February 1862 with fifteen horses and three months' rations. The first wet season experienced by North Queensland settlers had just broken. They arrived at the Burdekin on 3 March to find it too high to cross. Undaunted, some of the party began looking for a better crossing place while the others started making a raft. The river rose for the next two days and it was not until 7 March that it began to fall. However the current was still too strong to risk a crossing and they had to go 8 kilometres upstream in an effort to locate an easier crossing place. It was not until 10 March, eight days after their arrival at the Burdekin, that they met with success and then it took all day to take one load of supplies across by raft. In the process the raft was nearly overturned and some of the stores were wet. Next day a further load of stores was rafted across and the horses were forced into the water. The current was too strong and the horses turned back. In the resulting melee William Hann was nearly drowned.¹² No mention is made of the presence of crocodiles. North Queensland streams abounded in these creatures and their presence often added a further peril to the crossing not only of the Burdekin but of many other rivers.¹³

Experiences such as these quickly convinced the Kennedy settlers of the need for a port to the north of the Burdekin. There was no other solution to their dilemma. Engineering technology had

¹⁰ *ibid.*, pp. 6-7.

¹¹ Presumed to have been the James who with Fenwick pioneered Nulla Nulla.

¹² Joseph Hann himself was drowned on 3 January 1864 while attempting to cross the flooded Burdekin River on horseback at Burdekin Downs (Hann, *op. cit.*, p. 53).

¹³ All papers of the day featured tales of sightings of crocodiles. Particularly gruesome was the *Illustrated Sydney News* of 16 May 1867 which has a sketch of an 'alligator' seizing a native girl. *Willmetts Cooktown Almanac*, 1876, records the death in 1874 of Scott, the mailman who was taken by an 'alligator' while crossing the Herbert River, and there were at least three people taken by crocodiles in Ross Creek.

then only just advanced to a stage where it might have solved the problem of bridging the Burdekin, but the cost would have been prohibitive.¹⁴ Several crossing points were established in the 1860s¹⁵ and ferries were provided, but it was an expensive and time-consuming business. William Hann described the process on 31 March 1864 when he used the ferry at the Lower Burdekin. It cost 3 pounds (\$6.00), a reasonably large sum in those days, to cross Hann and his waggon. The wheels were removed from the waggon and the body floated across. On the other side the wheels had to be replaced.¹⁶ Obviously a port which offered easy access without necessitating a major crossing of the Burdekin, and with fewer minor streams to be negotiated, would be a great boon to the settlers of the North Kennedy.

Edmund Spencer Antill¹⁷ erected a rough landing at one of the mouths of the Burdekin in 1862, on Jarvisfield Station. This developed into the township of Wickham (see map) which soon boasted two hotels and a regular coastal shipping service from Bowen. Many North Kennedy settlers were soon using it,¹⁸ but it was never very satisfactory. It was still too far south for settlers in the North Kennedy and even in the comparatively light wet season of 1863 it was unsatisfactory. As Towns and Black later pointed out, it was "liable at all times to inundation",¹⁹ and in the heavy wet of 1864 its fate was sealed. *The Three Friends*, a schooner belonging to Seaward & Co. was caught in the flood and ran aground, two of her crew were drowned²⁰ and most of the goods on the landing were washed

¹⁴The Burdekin was bridged in 1873 in the vicinity of the present settlement of Milaroo. That bridge was low-level, designed so that the current of flood waters would pass over it. It was not until the 1950s that the high-level all-weather bridge was erected between Ayr and Home Hill.

¹⁵See Appendix C.

¹⁶Hann, op. cit., pp. 63-4.

¹⁷E.S. Antill established Jarvisfield Station in 1862. Antill's Plains and Antill Creek near Townsville are named after him.

¹⁸Hann, op. cit., 16-17 November 1863, p. 50, and 1 December 1863, p. 53.

¹⁹J.M. Black and R. Towns to Colonial Secretary, Brisbane, 13 September 1864, Queensland State Archives (hereafter Q.S.A.), LWO/B2:LWO/A16 1864 2205.

²⁰Thomas, one of the discoverers of Port Denison, and Cook.

away.²¹ Wickham was revived at least twice²² but each time the Burdekin River wrecked the settlement.

Governor Bowen was aware of the need for another port in the Kennedy District. In September 1862, returning from a visit to Cape York, HMS *Pioneer* commanded by Commodore Burnett, with Bowen aboard, visited Rockingham Bay. Their visit was aimed at

discovering a secure anchorage which may serve as a port for the settlers who have already driven their flocks and herds in the Valley of Lagoons.²³

Since very few settlers appear to have been established in Valley of Lagoons then, and the majority of stations were on the Burdekin and its tributaries in the hinterland of Halifax, Cleveland and Bowling Green Bays, Bowen was either looking to a future when Valley of Lagoons might support more settlers, or was favouring a very limited number of the North Kennedy settlers. No consideration was given to the possibilities of the other bays as ports, though both Halifax Bay and Cleveland Bay would have been closer to the majority of stations in the area than Rockingham Bay. Commodore Burnett found two good anchorages in Rockingham Bay although, as Bowen realised, it was

as yet uncertain...if a practicable route can be discovered into the interior over the mountain range which here runs parallel to the shore.²⁴

Nevertheless he thought this a problem which will "soon be solved by the progress of civilisation".²⁵

It was a problem which Dalrymple was happy to tackle. With interests in stations in the Valley of Lagoons he naturally favoured a settlement in Rockingham Bay. In 1863 he attempted to find a route from the Valley of Lagoons to the coast - and failed.²⁶ This

²¹Article by McEwen, master of *The Three Friends*, PDT, 5 March 1864; D. Adams (ed.), *The Letters of Rachel Henning*, Melbourne 1963, p. 158.

²²In 1865 and in 1868.

²³Governor of Queensland to Secretary of State for the Colonies, Queensland Legislative Council, *Journals*, vols 1-7, 1860-64, no. 57, p. 10. Valley of Lagoons was then (as it is today) in the hinterland of Rockingham Bay.

²⁴ibid.

²⁵ibid.

²⁶A.J. Scott, 'Overland Expedition Port Denison to Rockingham Bay', *R.G.S. Proceedings*, vol. VIII, 1863, p. 110.

did not shake his conviction that Rockingham Bay was the right place for a port, so much so that when his ship, the *Policeman*²⁷ on its way to found Cardwell, called at Cleveland Bay for water and fodder²⁸ he did not even consider investigating its potential.

Once more, with far less justification than at Bowen, a port was founded on judgements made from the sea. It was only after settlement that a track was pioneered into the interior, and then one which led straight to the Valley of Lagoons, serving mainly the interests of Scott Brothers, Dalrymple & Co. Admittedly Cardwell was founded ostensibly as a private venture by that firm, but it received much government support.²⁹ W.A. Tully, Commissioner for Crown Lands in the North Kennedy, and Lt Marlow, commanding a detachment of Native Police, accompanied the founding party and a sum of 2000 pounds (\$4000) was voted by the government for improvements to the road and harbour almost immediately. Later, in September 1865 the Queensland Legislative Assembly voted 2292 pounds (\$4584) to the founders of Cardwell in compensation for their efforts.³⁰ In fact the founding of Cardwell was a blatant use of government money virtually for the sole benefit of one particular group of Kennedy settlers. As a harbour, Cardwell had serious deficiencies. The water was shallow for some distance from shore, necessitating erection of a jetty. When finally erected the jetty had to be 600 metres long and, as Jones states, was "more of an embarrassment than a godsend".³¹ Despite expenditure on the road alone of the total amount of 2000 pounds (\$4000) allotted by the government for port and road works, this road was not a success. It crossed the Herbert River which, as A.J. Boyd remarked, was "constantly impassable during the wet season and often during other parts of the year, to ordinary travellers".³² It passed through rain

²⁷Bowen vessel chartered by Dalrymple for this expedition.

²⁸Report from Dalrymple to Bowen, *Queensland Daily Guardian*, 6 August 1864, quoted in Dorothy Jones, *Cardwell Shire Story*, Brisbane 1970, p. 73.

²⁹Herbert, the Premier of Queensland, was one of the partners of the Scotts and Dalrymple.

³⁰Jones, *op. cit.*, p. 74 ff, in particular for compensation p. 83; Farnfield, *op. cit.*, p. 66 ff, for expenditure on road pp. 75-6.

³¹Jones, *op. cit.*, p. 85.

forest infested with the stinging tree³³ and traversed boggy country; in other sections it was so steep that Boyd felt that his horse "was walking on his hind legs whilst I had my face between his ears".³⁴ Very soon further attempts were made to find a better way.³⁵ Cardwell was, if anything, less accessible to the majority of settlers in the North Kennedy than Bowen. As Jones points out, "the truth of the matter was that the road was adequate for only so long as there was none better".³⁶

That better road was discovered as the result of a much more carefully considered exploration of Cleveland Bay inspired by John Melton Black, which resulted in the founding of Townsville.

Since Black was responsible for both the foundation of that city and the design of its early townscape, it seems appropriate at this point to provide a brief account of his earlier activities. Born in 1830, the son of an Edinburgh physician,³⁷ he worked for a time with a firm of London merchants before coming to Australia about 1852.³⁸ The goldfields at Ballarat and Bendigo were beginning to boom and Black made a considerable fortune running a carrying business from Melbourne and Geelong to the goldfields.

His drays had been well known, the long lines that left Melbourne and Geelong being generally regarded as an institution of the country; and when the rates that ruled were from 30 pounds to 100 pounds per ton, the profits made were such as succeeding generations might sigh for.³⁹

By 1855 Black had abandoned the carrying trade. On 5 July 1855 he

³²'Old Chum' [A.J. Boyd], *Old Colonials*, London 1882, facsimile edn, Sydney 1974, p. 184.

³³ibid.

³⁴ibid.

³⁵It was actually one of the 'better ways' Boyd was describing above, and though it was not the so-called main road, the track which gloried in that title appears to have been little better.

³⁶Jones, op. cit., p. 87.

³⁷On the marriage certificate of J.M. Black, Black's father's name is given as James Black, Physician. However, a search of the records of the National Library of Scotland, Edinburgh, revealed no physician by the name of James Black in Edinburgh at the time of J.M. Black's birth.

³⁸A. Sutherland et al., *Victoria and her Metropolis*, vol. I, 1888, p. 514 states that Black made his fortune in the three years prior to 1855, which puts his date of arrival at 1852.

³⁹Sutherland, op. cit., p. 514.

opened the Theatre Royal in Bourke Street, Melbourne. Part of a complex which contained an hotel and shops, the venture cost him 95,000 pounds (\$190,000).⁴⁰ With its own plant to supply gas lighting and seating 3000, the theatre was one of the wonders of Melbourne. Unfortunately the youthful Black could not match the theatrical experience and talents of George Coppin and his partner Gustavus Brooke who opened the Olympic Theatre a fortnight after Black opened the Royal. Black put up a good fight and a court case resulted from his attempts to buy Brooke's leading lady. After a sad attempt at producing grand opera Black made the mistake of introducing the notorious Lola Montez to the Melbourne stage. Disgusted by the then scandalous spider dance, which now seems more hilarious than shocking,⁴¹ staid Melbourne audiences shunned his theatre. His magnificent venture foundered and Coppin bought him out.⁴² Black acquired another theatre in 1857, the Amphitheatre in Spring Street, Melbourne, which he converted, renaming it the Princess Theatre. This too he soon sold to Coppin, probably already attracted by prospects in the far north. However it was at the Princess Theatre apparently that he met W.A. Ross and C.S. Rowe.

W.A. Ross, William Longshaw, a Melbourne tinsmith, Inman and John MacKinlay appear to have joined Black originally in the venture to acquire grazing properties in the Kennedy District. Apparently only Black, Ross and Longshaw were left by the time the venture actually started.⁴³ According to Bird, Black waited on Dalrymple on the morning of 1 January 1861, when Kennedy lands were officially available for selection, in the attempt to map graze territory in the new district. Dalrymple refused the application as he had no knowledge of the country.⁴⁴ Black returned to Sydney where in March

⁴⁰ *Illustrated Sydney News*, 25 November 1869.

⁴¹ Montez had a number of wire spiders attached inside her skirt. Her dance involved wriggling wildly in order to dislodge the spiders.

⁴² *Australia's Heritage - The Making of a Nation*, Sydney 1971: 'Curtain up on the Australian Theatre', p. 994-1000; 'When Lola Montez hit Town', pp. 968-71.

⁴³ For lists of Black's partners see C.S. Rowe, 'Memoranda', *Cummins & Campbell Monthly Magazine* (hereafter *CCM*), April and May 1931; also *TH Supplement*, 24 December 1887. John MacKinlay became involved in the search for Burke and Wills, and Inman seems to have disappeared from the scene fairly quickly although this has been difficult to authenticate with any certainty. On MacKinlay see J. Davis and W. Westgarth, *Tracks of MacKinlay and Party Across Australia*, London 1863.

1861 he chartered the schooner *Buonaparte* commanded by Captain Rob.⁴⁵ It left Sydney on 19 March 1861 "for an unknown destination".⁴⁶ On board were Black, Longshaw, Ross, C.S. Rowe, a bushman, two bullock drivers and two Murray Aboriginals, Jerry and Peter whom MacKinlay had left with the party.⁴⁷ The expedition must have resembled Noah's Ark. They had supplies for twelve months,

two bullock drays and tackling, sixteen bullocks, eleven horses, four small pigs, two dozen young fowls, a bloodhound and a bull slut, three casks of pressed beef, riding saddles, pack saddles and fodder for the stock, etc.

North of Rockhampton the coast was unfamiliar and they anchored every night for safety. Rowe states that they landed at Port Denison on the morning that Commissioner Dalrymple's tent was erected. This would make their arrival date late in May 1861.⁴⁹

Clearly Black and party were different from the average Kennedy settlers who, as Allingham has noted, were "predominantly of rural background, equipped with squatting expertise and established frontier policies".⁵⁰ It is fairly certain that they were speculators well aware of the fact Colin Archer emphasised: "this is no doubt the way to make money. Stock and sell".⁵¹ Despite the fact that none had previous squatting experience they arrived well-equipped. Black even had a theodolite and other surveying equipment. About the end of May 1861, with Longshaw, Warner⁵² and Jerry "the blackboy", he set out to explore for territory. Having selected land on the Fanning River, he returned to Bowen in early July in time to catch the steamer *Eagle* to Brisbane, arriving there

⁴⁴Bird, op. cit., pp. 395-6; Farnfield, op. cit., p. 38.

⁴⁵The *Buonaparte* returned from a voyage to Hokianga, NZ on 21 February 1861. Agents were Laidley, Ireland & Co., Lloyd's Chambers, Sydney. (*Moreton Bay Courier*, 14 March 1861 and *Sydney Morning Herald*, 18 March 1861)

⁴⁶*Sydney Morning Herald*, 20 March 1861, sailing notices.

⁴⁷Rowe, op. cit., April 1931, p. 21.

⁴⁸ibid., p. 19.

⁴⁹ibid., p. 21; D.J. Farnfield, *George Elphinstone Dalrymple - His Life and Times in Queensland, 1859-1874*, Ph.D. thesis, University of Queensland, 1968, p. 69.

⁵⁰Allingham, op. cit., p. 15.

⁵¹ibid., p. 19.

⁵²Probably the bushman mentioned by Rowe.

on 21 July 1861.⁵³ It was probably on board the *Eagle* that Black met Robert Towns.

A number of writers⁵⁴ have stated that Black had become a partner of Robert Towns before his departure for North Queensland. The correspondence of Robert Towns⁵⁵ makes it quite clear that this was *not* the case and that in fact he had little acquaintance with Black before early 1864.⁵⁶ The voyage of the *Eagle* from Port Denison to Brisbane on 14 July 1861 is the first occasion when it can be shown that the paths of Towns and Black might have crossed. Also on board the *Eagle* were A.C. Gregory and Sir Charles Nicholson.⁵⁷ Why Towns was visiting Bowen at that stage is not clear.⁵⁸ It seems likely that he was making his own assessment of the area with a view to future investment; it is possible that he was looking for a site for a boiling-down works. Nehemiah Bartley states that Towns wrote to Dalrymple in 1862⁵⁹ asking his opinion of the most favourable

⁵³ *Rockhampton Morning Bulletin*, 9 July 1861; *Moreton Bay Courier*, 1 and 22 July 1861. The *Eagle* left Brisbane on 29 June, left Rockhampton on 7 July, and returned to Brisbane on 21 July having left Port Denison on 14 July. It was the first steamer to visit Port Denison.

⁵⁴ W.J. Doherty, *The Townsville Book*, Brisbane 1920, pp. 27-30; Farnfield, Ph.D. thesis, op. cit., p. 94; Allingham, op. cit., p. 35; H.J. Taylor, *The History of Townsville Harbour 1864-1979*, Brisbane 1980, and others.

⁵⁵ Robert Towns MSS, set 307, items 50-3, Mitchell Library, Sydney (hereafter Towns MSS).

⁵⁶ Towns to D.S. Warren, 18 May 1864 and 30 May 1864, Towns MSS, item 52, nos 182-3, 225, 228.

⁵⁷ It was on this journey that Nicholson formed the opinions quoted above.

⁵⁸ Towns is reported in *TH* Supplement, 24 December 1887 as claiming, when explaining why Townsville was named in his honour, that he piloted the steamer when Governor Bowen visited the newly-discovered harbour of Port Denison, and that it was because that "feat was so successfully accomplished that the Government were anxious to reward" him. This does not appear to be correct. Bowen and Towns do not appear to have sailed together to North Queensland. It is presumed that Towns was referring to this cruise of the *Eagle*, which was the first steamship to visit Port Denison, and he certainly is not listed as the pilot. It is quite probable that the *TH* report above was wrong.

⁵⁹ N. Bartley, *Australian Pioneers and Reminiscences 1849-1894*, Brisbane 1896, facsimile edn, Sydney 1978, p. 323, states that G.E. Dalrymple journeyed north to Rockingham Bay in 1862 and on his return found the said letter from Towns. As Dalrymple journeyed to Rockingham Bay in 1863, Bartley's date is questionable.

site for a boiling-down works and that Dalrymple recommended the mouth of "what is now known as Ross Creek".⁶⁰ This is unlikely as Dalrymple did not know of the existence of Ross Creek according to his account of his journey in the *Splittire*.⁶¹ If he did recommend a creek to Towns it was probably Alligator Creek. Towns appears to have been unimpressed both with Dalrymple's reply (assuming Bartley was correct) and with the prospects of Bowen, as he made no investments there or in the hinterland at that time.⁶²

It is possible that Towns discussed the prospects of the north and his interest in establishing a boiling-down works on board the *Eagle* in Black's hearing, if not with Black himself. However Towns's correspondence seems to negate this, and no partnership was formed at that time. Black proceeded to Parramatta to obtain stock for the Fanning River properties. While he was away, apparently bringing the stock north, Longshaw died on 23 April 1862.⁶³ Black, like the Hanns and other early graziers, lacked the capital to continue alone. He had merely acquired a licence to stock a number of pastoral runs. The annual cost of the licence for each run was not great but to that had to be added the cost of supporting himself and his work force for the year or more before any return could be expected and, above all, the cost of buying the stock to place on the runs in accordance with the terms of the licence. This could not be delayed long since the licence would be forfeit if stocking conditions were not met by a set time. Therefore he needed to find a new partner quickly, but it was not Towns who became Black's new partner, but Byrnes of Parramatta.⁶⁴ Byrnes is said to have stocked

⁶⁰ *ibid.*

⁶¹ Smith and Dalrymple, *op. cit.*

⁶² Taylor, *op. cit.*, p. 13, states "Captain Towns had acquired extensive leaseholds of a wide tract of land extending from the Gulf of Carpentaria to Port Denison. The properties were not operating successfully when Towns met Black in Sydney and appointed him his manager...". This is quite incorrect. Towns had only a part interest in one station - Strathalbyn (Bolton, *A Thousand Miles Away*, *op. cit.*, p. 30) - before Black offered him his properties in 1864.

⁶³ Hann, *op. cit.*, p. 12.

⁶⁴ This appears to have been the same Byrnes whom Joseph Hann contacted on 28 July 1862 and again on 4 August 1862. The brothers James and William Byrnes were in partnership selling stock at Parramatta. Both brothers served in the N.S.W. Legislative Council, William being a Life Member from 1861. James was also a member of the Legislative Assembly of N.S.W. for a time (Pike, *op. cit.*).

the Black properties with 22,000 sheep.⁶⁵

When Black formed the idea of establishing a settlement in Cleveland Bay is not clear. Robert Christison stated that

Towns's agent, Black had quarrelled with the leading Bowen merchant over the high rates to Towns's station, Woodstock, on the Burdekin, and had formed a new port.

Black certainly was concerned about the high rates of cartage, as correspondence between Towns and Black shows.⁶⁷ It is most likely that he was just as interested in obtaining a share in such profits to be gained in the carrying business from a new port, as he was in reducing the costs of carriage to his own stations.

However, it seems that Black's conviction that a better port than Bowen might be formed north of the Burdekin predated quarrels with merchants. The *Townsville Herald* history, based on reminiscences of those who knew Black, states that

Mr Black from the first had been strongly convinced a port would in time be discovered there [Cleveland Bay] that would eventually eclipse Bowen, which place he used to reiterate lay too much to the eastward to be the port for the western pastoral country. So strong was his conviction on this point that he took no pains to secure landed property there when it might have been purchased at very low rates, and his arguments prevailed with several individuals at the time of a government land sale at Bowen and induced them to refrain from investing.

Black's original choice was not Cleveland Bay. He was interested in the establishment of Wickham⁶⁹ and one of his first selections on the northern coast was a property called Woodstock in Halifax Bay for which he applied for a licence on 28 April 1862.⁷⁰

⁶⁵ *TH* Supplement, 24 December 1887, p. 29. It is not clear whether this was William or James Byrnes. Evidence suggests it was William since his son William M.R. Byrnes and his nephew Henry Mackinnon Bohle overlanded one herd of this stock to Fanning Downs, arriving on 28 October 1863 (fragment of diary of S.F. Walker, *Townsville Jubilee Carnival programme*, August 1913; letter Ms B.I.M. Hooke nee Bohle to the author, 15 December 1979).

⁶⁶ M.M. Bennett, *Christison of Lammermoor*, London 1927, p. 76. This is incorrect insofar as Woodstock was not on the Burdekin, and at the time Black might have quarrelled with Bowen merchants the property did not belong to Towns.

⁶⁷ Towns to Black, 4 August 1864, Towns MSS, item 52, no. 432.

⁶⁸ *TH* Supplement, 24 December 1887, p. 30.

⁶⁹ *ibid.*, p. 29.

It was not until January 1863 that Black turned his attention to Cleveland Bay⁷¹ and in the following months he took up runs in the area with a sea frontage of roughly 120 kilometres stretching from Bowling Green Bay through Cleveland Bay to Halifax Bay. The area bordering the sea was not regarded as good grazing country, but Black took it up in order to prevent others coming in.⁷² By the end of 1863 Black held not only the 120 kilometres of sea frontage, but an estimated 1300 square kilometres of the hinterland.⁷³ According to Towns he was known locally as "Jumping Jack" as he had

jumped some of his neighbours - in retaliation of[*sic*] having been jumped - and in other cases finding blocks of country not stocked he has managed to do so while others were thinking about it.⁷⁴

Woodstock became the Head Station of the Cleveland Bay properties and a centre of exploration.⁷⁵ That Black and his employees were investigating the area carefully is attested by Thomas Major who climbed Mt Elliot about this time. He remarked of the view from the summit: "What a lovely prospect was now open to our view".⁷⁶ Mt Elliot would have been the best vantage point to view Cleveland Bay.

In January 1864 M.W. Reid, C.S. Rowe and Matthew,⁷⁷ despite an exceptionally heavy and early wet took a herd of cattle "to the northernmost point of Mt Elliot".⁷⁸ They were only able to reach Alligator Creek roughly in the area where the meatworks later stood: unable to penetrate the dense mangroves ringing the coast, they

⁷⁰This was an entirely different holding from that which Black later acquired in April 1863, and which still bears the name Woodstock, on the road west from Townsville. Licence money was paid for this first Woodstock, but no lease was applied for and the licence money was refunded (Q.S.A., CLO/N18, p. 487).

⁷¹Repulse Plains and Stanley Plains were acquired in January 1863 (see Appendix D for a list of Black's holdings).

⁷²Towns to D. Brooks, 16 April 1864, Towns MSS, item 52, no. 107.

⁷³*ibid.*

⁷⁴Towns to Warren, 30 May 1864, Towns MSS, item 52, no. 228. Towns only hoped "nothing worse may be proven against him" and quite approved of Black's actions which were common methods of acquiring land in the Kennedy and other districts.

⁷⁵This was the present Woodstock, not the first taken up and abandoned in Halifax Bay.

⁷⁶T. Major, *Leaves from a Squatter's Notebook*, London 1900, pp. 32-3.

⁷⁷Mt Matthew was named after this stockman then.

⁷⁸TH Supplement, 24 December 1887, p. 76.

returned to Woodstock. Their journey however enabled Black to claim in Bowen that the area was stocked and so secure the lease. It is a measure of Black's determination to hold this land that he was willing to risk his life in the 1864 floods in order to reach Bowen to do this.

Mr Black with great pluck had swum the Haughton River and reaching Scott's Creek at night took refuge in the fork of a tree to escape from the flood waters, his horse being tied up in water, which reached to the girths. He remained in that situation until daylight when he proceeded on his perilous jaunt, crossing the Burdekin in a dug-out log and swimming many creeks in which alligators are not unknown.

Meanwhile Black had other problems. Byrnes having withdrawn from the partnership, he needed a new partner, preferably rich and influential. He found just the man - Robert Towns. Not only was Towns one of Australia's richest men, he was also the head of a large firm with mercantile interests, and had considerable influence with the governments of both Queensland and New South Wales.⁸⁰

It must be emphasised that up to this point all lands in the Cleveland Bay area and the hinterland were held in the name of J.M. Black *solely*; the idea of securing all these lands and establishing a port in Cleveland Bay also appears to have been his alone.⁸¹ It was not Towns who offered Black a share in a partnership, but the reverse. There was never any thought of Black becoming Towns's manager, as has been written so often.⁸² It was Black who offered Towns a half-share in the company of J.M. Black & Co., with Black as Managing Partner. Towns provided the finance in return for which all lands previously held in Black's name were transferred to Robert Towns.⁸³ Both J.F. Stevens and 'Viator' claim

⁷⁹ *ibid.*

⁸⁰ There are many accounts of Robert Towns, such as *Looking Backward to 1842*, Sydney 1942, for which historical data was provided by A. King.

⁸¹ Bolton, *A Thousand Miles Away*, op. cit., p. 30, infers that Towns acquired the properties early in 1864 and then Black came to Sydney and "talked the old capitalist into authorising the construction of a boiling-down works..." This was not the case. Towns states clearly in his letters to Brooks and Warren that he purchased a half share of Black's properties. He did not acquire them until after that date.

⁸² e.g. Taylor, op. cit., p. 13.

⁸³ This is deduced from the fact that the lands henceforth appear as being Towns's properties.

that the reason Towns entered this partnership was that Black had saved Towns from either choking or poisoning.⁸⁴ This is apparently based on the reminiscences of William Boyes, which are mainly a fabrication.⁸⁵

Towns entered into partnership with Black simply because Black's offer was too tempting to refuse: a half share in "a small principality"⁸⁶ on which a large number of sheep might be raised profitably. Although at that stage Black had not determined an exact site for a port, he could assure Towns on the evidence of Dalrymple's discoveries⁸⁷ that the area contained one or two small harbours at which station supplies could be brought in and from which goods could be shipped. All Towns needed was a site for a boiling-down works at which his Pacific Islanders might do all the rough labour.⁸⁸ Black could assure him that there was every prospect that such a site could be discovered. Throwing caution to the winds, Towns purchased Black's runs and joined the partnership of Black & Co.⁸⁹ It was only after he had done so that the usually prudent Towns discovered Black's past in the theatrical business in Melbourne and then made belated enquiries regarding his new partner's character.⁹⁰ His enquiries were evidently satisfactory

⁸⁴J.F. Stevens, *Townsville and Townsville*, Brisbane 1966, p. 15; 'Viator', 'The Great Pioneer of Townsville', *CCM*, September 1930, p. 35.

⁸⁵W.W. Boyes, 'Reminiscences', *North Queensland Register Townsville Jubilee Souvenir*, 25 August 1913, p. 26. William Boyes arrived in North Queensland in April 1865. He came north with his wife in the schooner *Policeman* under command of Captain Till. He described himself as a speculator and was bound for Rockingham Bay with cargo. When they arrived at Rockingham Bay he could not pay his passage money but promised to pay if the captain would bring him back to Port Denison. Arrived there, he still refused to pay and Captain Till seized a pair of opera glasses as security. Court notes in *PDT*, 22 April 1865, report the case in which Boyes sued Till for theft of the opera glasses. After that Boyes became a partner of Alfred Sands in a ginger beer and cordial manufacturing business in Bowen but that partnership was dissolved by 20 May 1865 (*PDT* 20 May 1865). It was after this that Boyes came to Townsville. His claim to have baked the first batch of bread eaten in Townsville is therefore dubious. His statements regarding Towns and Black must be discounted entirely. In fact Boyes is a totally unreliable source. Boyes' son William Townsville Boyes was the first white child born in Townsville. He was later arrested for robbery in Townsville and horse stealing in Charters Towers.

⁸⁶Towns to Brooks, 16 April 1864, Towns MSS, item 52, no. 107.

⁸⁷See above, ch. 1.

⁸⁸Towns to Brooks, *ibid.*

⁸⁹*ibid.*

since the partnership continued.

The firm of Black & Co., whose only members were John Melton Black and Robert Towns, was the founder of Townsville, not Towns & Co. as often stated.⁹¹ The only connection between the two firms was that Robert Towns was a partner in both. He makes it quite clear that his connection with Black was on his "own private account"⁹² and that he was "determined to separate my eggs, not to have all in one basket neither to lock up the whole of my capital for other people's benefit".⁹³

Having secured the backing of Towns, Black immediately returned north and despatched Andrew Ball and Mark Watt Reid on another exploration of Cleveland Bay. In April 1864 they succeeded in penetrating the mangrove barrier and discovered a way out to the coast. Ball and Reid emerged in the south-eastern bight of Cleveland Bay. It seemed well-sheltered by the south-eastern headland of the bay and by Magnetic Island. They found a large salt water creek about 100 metres to the west⁹⁴ but were prevented from reaching its mouth by quicksand. They then proceeded inland and

found good sound country of iron bark ridges with gravelly soil for 13 or 14 miles bearing toward the southern end of the ranges dividing the watershed of the Fanning and Haughton Rivers".

Turning once more towards the coast, they discovered Ross River which proved to be tidal, and tracing it back to the vicinity of the present Rooney's Bridge they were able to cross. Soon afterwards they came to Ross Creek which they ascertained joined Ross River, before tracing it towards the sea. Finding their course blocked by a rocky spur of Melton Hill which then extended to the creek, they decided to try to reach the coast by riding around Castle Hill. At last they reached the sea again and camped below the spur of rock

⁹⁰Towns to Warren, 18 May 1864 and 30 May 1864, Towns MSS, op. cit.

⁹¹Doherty, op. cit., and others.

⁹²Towns to Brooks, op. cit..

⁹³ibid.

⁹⁴This was most likely Stewart's Creek.

⁹⁵PDT, 21 May 1864. This report was based on information from Richard Willis, the publican of the Cardington Hotel, Haughton River.

over which Wickham Street now runs.⁹⁶ Looking at the area today it is difficult to appreciate why it took so long to find a way out to the coast. However, the wet of 1864 had been long and heavy and a dense fringe of mangroves covered the coast between Alligator Creek and Ross Creek, stretching in some places for over a kilometre inland.⁹⁷

Convinced that he had discovered the best site for a port in Cleveland Bay, Ball immediately dispatched a messenger to inform Black while he continued to explore the area. Black did not at once hasten to establish a settlement. He saw clearly that "a fine harbour and beautiful scenery will not make a city".⁹⁸ To thrive and attain commercial success and incidentally return maximum profit to its founders, a new port would need industry and assured trade. Not only would a boiling-down works provide the start of industry but it would also help to ensure the profitability of the stations in the hinterland. As Towns pointed out:

unless we can find a market or the means of boiling down they[cattle and sheep] are valueless - so unless you can do so near water carriage it will be equally impossible.

Therefore a site for a boiling-down works must be assured.

Trade however could only be guaranteed by a better, shorter and more reliable road to the hinterland, serving as many properties as possible. As Richard Willis pointed out:

all the stations up this road [are] interested in finding a place to land their goods safe from flood, and where their teams will not be detained for weeks as they were last season by the Ana branch of the Burdekin.¹⁵⁸

If Black could find such a road to Cleveland Bay the trade from

⁹⁶This is based on accounts in *PDT*, 21 May 1864, *TH* Supplement, 24 December 1887, and *TH* Supplement, 14 December 1892.

⁹⁷Some idea of the difficulties of this mangrove country can be gained from the account of J.T. Walker who with J.C. Cowan, Townsville's first solicitor, became lost in this area in 1866 while returning from Woodstock. "In attempting to round the farthest hill, we got into swampy mangrove[sic] country, evidently by the sea breeze not far from the coast... I came back and in attempting to recross my horse fairly bogged - of course I jumped off and after much floundering the poor animal managed to escape...but it was so exhausted it could not stand for some minutes." (diary of J.T. Walker, uncatalogued MS., Mitchell Library, Sydney, 23 July 1866).

⁹⁸A. Trollope, *Australia and New Zealand*, Leipzig 1873, p. 46. Trollope made this remark of Gladstone.

⁹⁹Towns to Black, 4 August 1864, Towns MSS, item 52, no. 432.

these stations was assured and the high freight charges then enriching the carriers of Bowen would flow to Black & Co. Furthermore, unless Black could find a road better and more reliable than those from Cardwell and Bowen, justifying the foundation of a new port, it was unlikely that the Government would support his venture. He could not afford to be like Dalrymple - confident that a satisfactory road would be found. He had to make sure there was a road and also a site for a boiling-down works before any moves were made.

Consequently, before committing himself to establishing a settlement on the creek, Black examined the possibilities and prospects of the area carefully. His assessment of the region does not include comparisons with Sydney Harbour nor rapturous exclamations over the beauty of the scenery.¹⁰¹ He confined himself sensibly to the practicalities of whether or not Cleveland Bay could provide all of his requirements. A reasonable line of road was discovered and marked to the upper Burdekin settlement of Dalrymple.

By this discovery the Upper Burdekin township situated 160 miles [256 km] from Port Denison is accessible to this Port by the road at a distance of 70 miles [112 km]."¹⁰²

Contrary to appearances noted by early explorers, good building ground was found all around the base of Castle Hill.¹⁰³ A satisfactory site for a boiling-down works was marked out on Ross River.¹⁰⁴ The harbour, it is true, was rather indifferent, but its shortcomings were more than outweighed by the ease of access to the hinterland. Once rocks were cleared from the entrance to Ross Creek there would be sheltered anchorage where wharves could be

¹⁰⁰ PDT, 25 June 1864. Also quoted by Allingham, *op. cit.*, p. 96. Allingham attributes this statement to "Korah Wills, Proprietor of the Haughton River Hotel". Korah Wills was never the licensee of the Haughton River Hotel, which was correctly titled the Cardington Hotel, Haughton River. The licensee of that hotel was Richard Willis whose name appears clearly as the writer of this letter.

¹⁰¹ Compare Dalrymple at Bowen and Cardwell.

¹⁰² Black and Towns to Colonial Secretary, 13 September 1864, *op. cit.*

¹⁰³ Named by Andrew Ball (*TH* Supplement, 24 December 1887, p. 29).

¹⁰⁴ This was located roughly where Clayton Street joins Queen's Road in Hermit Park.

constructed on the banks. The map presented by Black and Towns to the Government in September 1864¹⁰⁵ shows clearly how thoroughly the exploration of Cleveland Bay was carried out before the decision was made to establish a port. The courses of Ross River and Ross Creek and the upper courses of the Bohle, Alice and Black Rivers are accurately marked, though the lower courses of the Black and Alice are incorrect, seeming to point to educated guesswork rather than exploration of that more distant area.¹⁰⁶ Alligator and Crocodile Creeks are shown only at their mouths, but the mountains surrounding the bay are shown correctly. In a more detailed map¹⁰⁷ the area at the mouths of Ross Creek and Ross River is shown, with the site for building wharves indicated, together with ground suitable for building, marshy and mangrove-clad areas, the site for the boiling-down works and the route for a road to the hinterland. Inset is a diagram showing where the rocks in Ross Creek were situated.

One cannot but be struck by the sharp contrast this makes with Dalrymple's founding of Cardwell; this careful exploration and assessment of the suitability of the site beforehand contributed much to the later success of Townsville as a city.

The answers to the questions posed at the beginning of this chapter are now clear. Port Denison was an excellent harbour but proved inaccessible to a large part of the Kennedy District. Wickham, resulting from one settler's attempt to meet his own needs, was too prone to flood. Had thorough exploration been carried out, a port in Cleveland Bay might have been founded earlier but, carried away by the beauty of Rockingham Bay and influenced by the needs of his own Valley of Lagoons, Dalrymple founded Cardwell, a most unsatisfactory solution for the North Kennedy. Dalrymple's preference for Cardwell was not based on any well-considered exploration of its suitability or access to a large section of the North Kennedy hinterland, nor was it determined by a careful

¹⁰⁵ See map at endnotes.

¹⁰⁶ The Alice is shown as debouching into Halifax Bay separately from the Black whereas it is in fact a tributary of the Black.

¹⁰⁷ See map at endnotes.

comparison with other areas. Despite the founding of three ports, the North Kennedy still remained without an easily accessible outlet. Cleveland Bay, thoroughly explored and its prospects carefully considered by Black and Towns, provided that outlet.

The credit for this belongs mainly to J.M. Black. The drive and acumen with which he had gained control over all the land in the immediate vicinity of Cleveland Bay were then directed into thorough exploration which preceeded commitment to developing a port. Black's experience in overland transport no doubt alerted him to the importance of access to the interior, so little regarded in the founding of Bowen and Cardwell; the need to convince a distant and cautious partner may also have contributed to the exemplary thoroughness with which he prepared his case.

Many reasons have been given for the founding of Townsville: most are unsatisfactory.¹⁰⁸ The reasons for its founding were solely that it offered the best and quickest route from the coast to the interior and a reasonable harbour, together with a satisfactory site for a boiling-down works which Robert Towns required. Had Bowen or Cardwell provided these, neither Black nor Towns was the type of businessman who would allow petty grievances to stand in his way. The simple fact was that Bowen and Cardwell were not suitable; Cleveland Bay was.

¹⁰⁸The *TH* Supplement, 24 December 1887, p. 29, states that "for some reason Captain Towns was offended with the people of Bowen and he withdrew the light of his countenance from them nor would he patronize their port". This appears to be nonsense. A.C. MacMillan stated that "there were frequent wranglings with the authorities at Bowen about land matters, harbour dues, etc. and after being worsted in a prosecution, it was reported that J.M. Black shook his fist at the Bench and exclaimed 'The day is coming when I shall make Bowen tremble'. On his return to the Fanning he at once organised a party to search for a new landing place in Cleveland Bay" (letter quoted in 'Archibald Campbell MacMillan - a Northern Queensland Pioneer', *CCM*, June 1934, p. 11). There does not appear to be any truth in this statement. Black kept his venture in Cleveland Bay secret, even making a joke of it when information leaked out (R.H. Willis in *PDT*, 25 June 1864). Christison also recalled Black disagreeing with the merchants of Bowen. However it is unlikely that Black would have allowed such things to stand in his way had Bowen suited his purpose as well as or better than Cleveland Bay. A third account (and the original source of this has not been found) attributes the founding of Townsville to the fact that the Bowen residents objected to the smell of a boiling-down works. Even if this were true that Bowen people had not wanted a boiling-down works, it is difficult to see how they could have prevented Black building one if he wished.

Chapter 3

It was not until September 1864 that Black and Towns were fully convinced that Cleveland Bay met all their requirements and were ready to approach the Queensland Government. On 13 September 1864, while maintaining a policy of strict secrecy locally in order to keep out other settlers and obtain pre-emptive rights to as much land as possible in the area,¹ they officially informed the Colonial Secretary of Black's discovery of a site for a port in Cleveland Bay "with land high and dry and well suited for a township and the road to the interior available for immediate use".² They claimed that they were prepared to expend large sums to develop the area privately, but believed this would be detrimental to the area and that it was a matter for the government. This was so much humbug. Neither Black nor Towns was so altruistic or so uninformed as to believe that they could establish a private port without government intervention. Both realised that government approval would be needed to establish many other necessary amenities, and neither was likely to expend his own moneys on harbour and road improvements when government money might be obtained.

Despite the fact that, for the first time, the government was presented with a port site in the Kennedy District with hinterland explored and a comparatively easy road marked, Black and Towns

¹Willis, *op. cit.*, makes it clear that Black was making a joke of the discovery of a road to Cleveland Bay for his own reasons. Black to Towns, 31 July 1865, Black MSS, A31, Mitchell Library, Sydney (hereafter Black MSS) refers to "the secrecy with which the township has been wrapped since its first formation."

²Black and Towns to Colonial Secretary, 13 September 1864, *op. cit.* TH Supplement, 24 December 1887, p. 30 states that it was Towns's boasting of his private township and jealousy of J. Moor Dillon of Homestead "that lead the government to examine the port." This is obviously incorrect.

received little encouragement. They requested as compensation the pre-emptive right to purchase 640 acres (256 hectares) as a site for a boiling-down works and some allotments in the proposed town area. Initially it appears that the government agreed to this request.³ However, in a letter dated 5 October 1864, Herbert advised that the lands would have to be put up to public auction.⁴ Towns objected strongly to this and left the matter in abeyance until a government surveyor should make a report on the area, at the same time apparently making plans to circumvent this government decision.⁵ There was probably a number of reasons for the lack of government enthusiasm for a new port. Funds were scarce, and two townships had already been established in the north. Herbert had interests which favoured the development of Cardwell⁶ and Gregory claimed he had evidence to prove that Black was not the discoverer of the port site at Cleveland Bay.⁷

Nevertheless the government schooner *Flora* under command of Captain Heath, then Government Marine Surveyor, was despatched for Cleveland Bay in October 1864. It called at Bowen on the way north and took aboard Jimmy Morrill as Aboriginal interpreter,⁸ arriving in Cleveland Bay on 22 October 1864. For the first time a surveyor was seriously considering the potentialities of the bay as a harbour. He did not dismiss it and confirmed the report of Black and Towns. Cape Cleveland offered good shelter except from north-westerly winds. Although a flat extended for a considerable distance off the western shore, the water shoaled gradually and vessels would have no trouble finding good anchorage according to their draught. There was good shelter from north-westerly winds and winds to the northward of north-east in about 2 1/2 fathoms (4.5 metres) at low water "off a sandy beach lying between the south-east

³Towns to Minister for Lands and Works, 12 October 1864, Q.S.A., LWO/B2:LWO/A16 1864 2205.

⁴Herbert to Towns and Black, Q.S.A., op. cit.

⁵Towns to Black, 3 May 1865, Towns MSS, item 52, no. 7.

⁶See Farnfield, op. cit., p. 54 ff.

⁷Towns to Black, 3 May 1866, Towns MSS, item 52, no. 393.

⁸Heath to Surveyor General, 12 December 1864, Q.S.A., SUR/A22 64/3219.

and south points of the island".⁹ A reef running off from this point towards Cape Pallarenda¹⁰ extended about a third of the way across the channel but there appeared to be a clear passage between the reef and the cape with 8 or 9 fathoms (about 15 metres) at low water. Heath concluded that:

a vessel of moderate size could during south-easterly winds ride out almost any weather in the bay off the mouth of the creek and cargo could be brought down in vessels of light draught of water while smaller vessels not able to enter the creek could in any emergency run through the passage between Magnetical Island and Cape Pallarenda and obtain shelter under the lee of the former. A secure anchorage could always be found under Cape Cleveland at a distance of some 10 or 11 miles [about 20 km] from the Creek.¹¹

Heath found the mouth of the creek difficult to discover. He remarked that

had not the sketch by Mr Black...unmistakably pointed out its position, I should not have imagined for an instant that there was any opening in the land at all¹² -

which explains why the creek had not been found earlier. He rowed up its course nearly to its junction with Ross River¹³ when it became too shallow to proceed further. A short distance from its mouth it took a sharp bend to the west at which point it was about 70 metres in width. Heath remarked that once in that part of the creek a small craft "could not have a more snug berth".¹⁴ It was not greatly affected by floods, the deep water channel was unmistakable, the entrance was sheltered during the prevailing south-easterly winds, and if the rocks in the creek were lowered vessels could pass over them safely. He found the soil to the west of the entrance was sandy and not heavily timbered. The hills apparently of granite were about 75 metres high with "Mount Cudtheringa"¹⁵ a remarkable

⁹Heath refers to the south point by the name Point Burgamunda. It is known as Nobby's Point or Nobby's Head. The beach is Picnic Bay.

¹⁰It appears that Heath named Cape Pallarenda, possibly on Jimmy Morrill's advice of its native name.

¹¹Heath to Surveyor General, op. cit.

¹²ibid.

¹³Ross Creek had not been named but Ross River had.

¹⁴Heath to Surveyor General, op. cit.

¹⁵Heath appears to have given Castle Hill its official title at this time, probably on Jimmy Morrill's advice that Cudtheringa was its Aboriginal name. It was spelled originally with a d.

peak about a mile to the west. These hills appeared to be too steep to afford good sites for building but he thought that the land facing the bay between the hills at the mouth of the creek and the next point of land¹⁶ had a convenient slope for building. On the east side of the creek the ground was rough and broken granite country with some level spots in places which might provide good building sites.

His conclusion was that,

though too narrow for vessels of any size and too shoal for vessels of any draught of water and though having some awkward rocks inside its entrance it had notwithstanding some recommendations and should there prove to be easy access to it from the interior it may be found a convenient shipping port for small craft.¹⁷

While the reports of early explorers had not been unattractive, they certainly had not left the impression that Cleveland Bay offered such possibilities. They had indicated that it appeared to be inaccessible to the hinterland. This emphasised the folly of judging the suitability of port sites solely from coastal exploration. Cleveland Bay was not an ideal natural harbour, but it had a number of advantages. The presence of a creek where wharves could be built obviated the need for a costly jetty which would be necessary at both Bowen and Cardwell. The anchorage at the wharves in the creek would provide better shelter for the small coastal vessels of the time than that offered at either Bowen or Cardwell. The fact that goods had to be lightered to the creek from larger vessels which could not enter had not prevented the development of a port at Brisbane; the distance which goods had to be lightered from Moreton Bay was much greater in fact than it would be at Cleveland Bay. The shallowness of the creek was not a problem. The greatest advantage however was the easy and reliable route to the hinterland, which had already been assured by Black. Since the Age of Technology was barely dawning, it was much easier and cheaper to blast rocks from the entrance to a creek and develop a road over a comparatively low range through reasonable country than it was to build an all-weather bridge over the Burdekin or construct a road

¹⁶This was Kissing Point though it was not named then.

¹⁷Heath to Surveyor General, op. cit.

over the heights of the Seaview Range behind Cardwell through dense jungle and country infested with poison bush.

If not as beautiful as the site chosen by Dalrymple at Cardwell, Cleveland Bay was undoubtedly more practicable. It should not be imagined however that Black and Towns were less self-interested than Dalrymple; they were as much concerned with the value of their property as Dalrymple was with that of the Valley of Lagoons. Black and Towns were merely shrewder and more experienced businessmen with more practical views than Dalrymple. Not only had Black seen the advantages of having a port easily accessible to his own properties, but he knew through experience the profits to be made if he established a business there with a carrying trade to the hinterland. Experience too had shown Towns the importance of a boiling-down works to a pastoral industry so far from markets. As Farnfield pointed out, Dalrymple "had not the temperament for moneymaking";¹⁸ Black and Towns had. Consequently they looked more carefully at all aspects which might guarantee the future profitability of Cleveland Bay than Dalrymple had done at Rockingham Bay. Black's survey of the area was not so much exploration in the ordinary sense, as a feasibility study of the kind commonly made by a modern corporation before committing itself to investment in new projects. If a port with an assured road to the hinterland was "highly important to the interests of that [the Kennedy] district"¹⁹ it was even more important, if Towns were honest, to the business interests of Black and Towns, neither of whom were as 'Viator' remarked professional philanthropists.²⁰

Heath's report, the first official report on the harbour at Cleveland Bay,²¹ was not submitted to the government until 12 December 1864. Before the government had received it, Black had already established the first settlement at Cleveland Bay. Spurred on by the need to secure the land he required before others might

¹⁸Farnfield, op. cit.

¹⁹Black and Towns to Colonial Secretary, 13 September 1864, op. cit.

²⁰'Viator', op. cit., p. 37.

²¹Taylor, op. cit., p. 23, states that the first report dealing with Townsville or Cleveland Bay was dated April 1865. Heath's report predates that report.

arrive, he dispatched a party from Fanning Downs in October 1864 about the time the *Flora* was investigating the area. The first contingent of settlers led by W.A. Ross²² arrived in Cleveland Bay on 5 November 1864.²³ No chartered boat brought a founding party from Bowen. No government surveyor or other official accompanied the party and the presence of a detachment of Native Police which arrived about 11 November²⁴ appears to have been due to Black's friendship with Kennelly,²⁵ the officer-in-charge rather than to any government direction. The settlers at Cleveland Bay were local. They came from the interior with a minimum of trouble to a site which had been explored and mapped. J. Collier stated that

the pioneer squatter was the forerunner of towns in Australia [and] townships...grow up at suitable places to serve as receiving and distributing centres for squatters' produce and supplies.²⁶

Townsville was the only early North Queensland settlement which met that description: squatters settled the hinterland, discovered their own convenient route to the coast, then established a township.

J.M. Black did not accompany the first party when they set up camp on a lagoon in North Ward (shown on Black's map) to await his arrival. The Aboriginals called the lagoon "Hambeluna";²⁷ Europeans called it Comerford's Lagoon.²⁸ Like so many of the beautiful lagoons in the vicinity of Townsville, it has now disappeared. Rowe described it as

a delightful spot. The beautiful clear water was surrounded by lofty trees²⁹ whose branches interlocked overhead and on hot days its pleasant shade made it a most desirable spot.³⁰

Despite Rowe's remarks that it was vandalism to cut down these trees

²²TH Supplement, 24 December 1887, p. 76. This also states that C.S. Rowe drove the bullock team which carried the supplies.

²³Rowe, op. cit., May 1931, p. 19 gives this date. S.F. Walker, op. cit., says 15 November. Walker may have arrived later.

²⁴Black to Towns, 21 November 1864, CCM, January 1930, p. 11.

²⁵Black named the point which projected from Melton Hill, before it was quarried, Point Kennelly in his honour.

²⁶J. Collier, *The Pastoral Age in Australasia*, London 1911, p. 299.

²⁷Report of Jimmy Morrill, quoted by Heath, op. cit.

²⁸Common usage.

²⁹*Melaleuca Leucadendron*.

³⁰Rowe, op. cit., May 1931, p. 21.

they were soon felled to build a log hut.³¹ Natural beauty meant little to Victorian man faced with the practicalities of erecting shelter in an alien environment, so the area soon began to lose its charms before the demands of the axe and the pitsaw. When Black arrived a few days later the work of establishing a township began in earnest.

In one respect, like most founders of towns in Australia, Black was fortunate. Here the historic functions of towns as fortresses, markets and seats of government³² could be reduced to the two last. Unlike Roman and mediaeval town founders or even pioneer settlers in the Americas,³³ Black did not need to provide fortifications to protect the township. There was no threat from external enemies and in spite of Dalrymple's experience,³⁴ there was little trouble with the Aborigines. Rowe recorded that after they chased the timbergetters who ranged to the north of the settlement, they were "requested forcibly but firmly to keep to their ground near Cape Marlow"³⁵ and appear to have done so. No other records of encounters with the Aboriginal population at this time appear to exist.

Nevertheless Black's task was not an easy one. There was ample space for wharves, warehouses and business premises. However the bank of the creek was covered with mangroves which would have to be cleared, though the creek abounded in crocodiles.³⁶ Access could be

³¹No description of how this log hut was built has been discovered. It is reasonable to suppose that it was similar to that built in 1861 on Fanning River Station, of which Joe Dunn was "the architect and moving spirit". Dunn "had seen how things were done in New Zealand. Huge logs, dovetailed at the corners, were rolled up on ends. With holes cut here and there for our rifles..." (Rowe, *ibid.*).

³²G.H. Martin, 'The Town as Palimpsest' in W.J. Dyos (ed.), *The Study of Urban History*, London 1968.

³³See A. Toynbee (ed.), *Cities of Destiny*, London 1967.

³⁴See above.

³⁵Rowe, *op. cit.*

³⁶The author's search of Townsville newspapers revealed many accounts of the numbers of crocodiles in the area. There were both salt water and fresh water varieties; the salt water crocodiles used occasionally to cruise up and down in the waters between the mouth of the creek and Kissing Point. Two records of people being taken by crocodiles were found, though there may have been more.

gained to the creek only by climbing over what is now known as Melton Hill or along the sands of the beach at low tide. A rocky spur of Melton Hill projected into the waters of the bay to the north, while another running eastwards into the creek would need to be blasted to provide a route to the wharves.³⁷ Rocks barring the creek entrance would also have to be blasted for vessels to enter the creek.

Black was prepared to overcome these difficulties however and by 21 November 1864 he could report to Towns that the mangrove belt facing the creek on the town side was nearly cleared, and that he had surveyed the corner of land adjoining the creek and laid it out "in the most suitable manner for the future".³⁸ Sites for a butcher's shop, a blacksmith, an hotel, a timberyard and a store and wharf had been selected. A head cattle station had been formed 11 km away on the bank of Ross River. Black had also selected the site for his own house on the top of the present Melton Hill. The site for the boiling-down works had been surveyed and was being fenced in, together with the lagoon adjoining it, "for if we lose that place, there is no other place on the coast suitable".³⁹ The fencing of this site indicates that they had decided to circumvent the government proposal to auction this land by securing it by other means, possibly under the provisions of the Sugar and Coffee Regulations of 27 September 1864 with which Towns would have been very familiar.⁴⁰

It is astonishing that all of this had been accomplished in about sixteen days, but one must realise that Black was racing against time in order to secure as much land as possible before news of his settlement reached the outside world. Black enthused to Towns that the more he saw of the place the better he liked it: "it is the opinion of all those that have seen it that it will be a most

³⁷These spurs were roughly in the vicinity of the present Tobruk Pool and Stanton House respectively.

³⁸Black to Towns, 21 November 1864, op. cit.

³⁹ibid.

⁴⁰Towns would have known these from experience at his plantation 'Townsvale' on the Logan River.

important place".⁴¹

However, progress was greatly hampered by the non-arrival of the vessel Towns had promised to send with supplies of food and building material. Black also needed a winch or a monkey in order to drive piles in the creek so that he could backfill them to construct the wharf. He informed Towns that unless the vessel arrived in five days he would be compelled to travel to Bowen and engage a small craft to bring supplies. Towns's boat did not arrive, and the tiny settlement was on the verge of starvation. Ball had resorted to feeding his men on "alligator" eggs.⁴² So Black journeyed overland to Bowen and chartered the steamer *Amy*⁴³ commanded by Captain Major⁴⁴ from MacLeod, Carter & Co. to bring supplies not only for his own band of settlers, but also for the Native Police detachment which was still at Cleveland Bay, and for Antill's station on the Burdekin.⁴⁵ In order to secure the co-operation of the Bowen merchants he was apparently forced to agree to provide wharf sites in the new port for both leading Bowen firms, Seaward, Marsh & Co. and MacLeod, Carter & Co..⁴⁶ Thus the opportunity for Black & Co. to establish a mercantile monopoly in Cleveland Bay was lost because of the tardiness of Towns's first supply boat. This was probably not Towns's fault but merely due to the sailing conditions of the day. As Christison recalled, coasters of that time "made no pretence of keeping to a time-table; to arrive would be sufficient achievement".⁴⁷

⁴¹Black to Towns, 21 November 1864, op. cit.

⁴²*TH* Supplement, 24 December 1887, p. 30.

⁴³The *Amy* was the first steamer to operate out of a north Queensland port. It arrived in Bowen in November 1864 and its first trip was a pleasure trip around the bay at Bowen (*PDT*, 12 November 1864).

⁴⁴Later master of the *Black Prince* and then licensee of the Royal Hotel, Townsville, which used to stand on the corner of Flinders and Stokes Streets now occupied by David Jones store.

⁴⁵Towns acquired Antill's property 'Jarvisfield' when he formed the partnership of Black & Co. with Black in 1864.

⁴⁶Seaward, Marsh & Co. immediately announced their intention of building a store at Cleveland Bay (*PDT*, 10 December 1864).

⁴⁷Bennett, op. cit., p. 46.

If a monopoly was lost, survival and a more cheerful Christmas in 1864 were assured since a regular shipping service from Bowen operated from that date. The *Amy* reached Cleveland Bay about 10 December 1864.⁴⁸ The *Eva* under command of Captain Macbeath⁴⁹ left Bowen about that date with William Aplin,⁵⁰ then an employee of Seaward, Marsh & Co., on board to investigate the new port. Aplin, who later played an important role in developing the township, was so impressed with the prospects that within a few months he formed a partnership with William Clifton⁵¹ and set up business there. When the *Eva* arrived in mid-December,⁵² so little was known of the place that Macbeath anchored off the mouth of Ross River and rowed up that stream "expecting at every turn to discover the settlement of which Mr Black had boasted".⁵³ It was not until next day, with the assistance of signals from the beach, that the site of the township on Ross Creek was located.

If Aplin thought it "a good place",⁵⁴ Macbeath's reports were positively glowing. He confirmed Heath's remarks concerning the harbour, adding that he considered it "one of the best in Queensland" and that with

very moderate outlay for wharfage three times the quantity of cargo might be lightered with half the number of vessels that it would take to accomplish the same amount of work in Moreton Bay.⁵⁵

Black had informed him that there was an excellent road from the bay

⁴⁸The arrival date of the *Amy* is deduced from dates in the Hann diaries - Joseph Hann met it at the Burdekin Landing on 8 December 1864 on its way north with Black aboard. Also the sailing notices in *PDT*, 24 December 1864 announced the *Amy* had returned from Cleveland Bay on 18 December 1864.

⁴⁹The agents for the *Eva* were Seaward, Marsh & Co.

⁵⁰Born 27 April 1840, Aplin arrived at Bowen in 1863. He formed a partnership with William Clifton in 1865 and purchased the stores of Seaward, Marsh & Co. at Townsville, which traded as Clifton, Aplin & Co., then as Aplin, Brown & Co. and still later as Aplin, Brown & Crawshay. He retired from the firm in 1881 to Southwick station. He was a Member of the Queensland Legislative Council from 1880 until his death on 18 February 1901.

⁵¹William Clifton arrived at Bowen in 1863.

⁵²Aplin said 14 December 1864 (*TH* Supplement, 24 December 1887); Macbeath said 17 December (*PDT*, 31 December 1864).

⁵³*TH* Supplement, 24 December 1887, p. 31.

⁵⁴*ibid.*

⁵⁵*Queensland Daily Guardian*, 17 January 1865.

when at that time no wool could come down nor stores go up from the Burdekin. Of the site for the town, it was

the most beautiful...I have seen in Queensland, all hilly and clear of swamps and flats with scenery not to be surpassed in every direction.⁵⁶

Macbeath refers to the features Kissing Point, Darling Point, Darling Island and Castle Hill indicating that these had been named since the visit of Heath.⁵⁷ Macbeath's description of hills covered with fine trees and grass a metre high, with excellent water in a lagoon close by, and with several larger lagoons only a few kilometres away, is almost lyrical and makes a sharp contrast with the impressions of earlier explorers.⁵⁸

Macbeath's description, the first to be published of the new township, appeared in the *Port Denison Times* on 31 December 1864 and in the *Queensland Daily Guardian* of 17 January 1865. The secrecy with which Towns and Black had enshrouded their operations was at an end. No doubt Macbeath's report did much to quell scepticism in the south regarding Cleveland Bay, but it also induced a number of settlers to come to the new township before Black had achieved his objectives.

The *Uncle Tom*, the vessel Black was expecting in November bringing stores, timber⁵⁹ and Kanaka labourers from the Logan, did not arrive until 17 January 1865. Already the landscape of Cleveland Bay was yielding quickly to primitive townscape. A rough jetty had been erected in the creek where Black & Co.'s wharf and store would be sited,⁶⁰ to which access was gained by a track about five metres wide cleared through the mangroves. Most of the trees along the bank of the creek as far as the spur of Melton Hill had

⁵⁶ *ibid.*

⁵⁷ Darling Point was the point on which Pilot Hill projected. It no longer exists, having disappeared with reclamation work at the wharves. It was also known as Sibbie Point. Darling Island was the proper name of Magazine Island, part of which can be seen as the hill near the wharves. It was sometimes also referred to as Inch Gordon.

⁵⁸ See above.

⁵⁹ Probably from Maryborough. Black & Co. purchased timber from Greathead & Gladwell of Maryborough, though some timber was later brought from Redbank, but proved of inferior quality.

⁶⁰ *TH* Supplement, 24 December 1887, p. 30-1.

been felled although the stumps still remained. The site chosen for the first buildings had been subdivided and some buildings commenced. C.H. Allen remarked that "a newly formed Australian town is not a very beautiful object",⁶¹ and this first settlement was no exception. Francis Hodel⁶² recalled that Black, S.F. Walker and W.A. Ross were living "in a little hut built of sheets of iron tied together with strips of raw hide",⁶³ while the first store at the corner of the present Flinders Street and Wickham Street⁶⁴ was little more than a bush shelter with the storekeeper Peter Lauder⁶⁵ and his wife⁶⁶ living in a humpy beside it.

The first building erected, apart from the log hut on the lagoon, had been a shanty pub⁶⁷ of logs and a few sheets of corrugated iron on the site of the Criterion Hotel. In this, the first settlement at Townsville was typical of new settlements in other parts of Australia at the time, where public houses preceded other amenities.⁶⁸ Such primitive resorts provided, as Carrington remarked, "oases of civilisation" in the wilderness.⁶⁹ Not only did they provide the drink which many pioneers consumed in great quantity⁷⁰ but they also provided meals for the mainly bachelor population and a meeting place where the loneliness of the bush could be dispelled with social contact for a brief period. They provided a forum of debate on many issues, a dissemination point for news, and accomodation for both settlers and travellers. Therefore a 'pub' might be regarded as an essential amenity for settlers in

⁶¹C.H. Allen, *A Visit to Queensland and her Goldfields*, London 1870.

⁶²Hodel arrived at Townsville 17 January 1865 from the Logan River District, and later engaged in butchering, baking and newspaper businesses. He died at Cooktown 11 March 1896.

⁶³This site now occupied by former Bank of N.S.W.

⁶⁴*TH* Supplement, 24 December 1887, p. 30.

⁶⁵Sometimes referred to as Lander.

⁶⁶First European woman in Townsville.

⁶⁷Common usage for a rough unlicensed hostelry which sprang up in new settlements, particularly on the goldfields.

⁶⁸Bird, *op. cit.*, p. 60.

⁶⁹G. Carrington, *Colonial Adventures and Experiences of a University Man*, London 1871, p. 25.

⁷⁰Allingham, *op. cit.*, p. 90.

remote areas such as Cleveland Bay.

With the arrival of building supplies, the scene began to change more rapidly, moving immediately from the first stage of town growth in Australia noted by R.E.N. Twopeny, the log hut, to the second stage, the weatherboard cottage.⁷¹ It appears that no thought was given to exploiting the local granite in building although it was proven later to be quite suitable.⁷² Neither was any attempt made to start a brickworks, probably because there was no one experienced in either stonemasonry or brickmaking among the early settlers and also because of difficulty in locating suitable clay for brickmaking.⁷³

The first permanent buildings erected in Townsville either were of corrugated iron or were the thin weatherboard constructions with iron roofs deplored by Allen.⁷⁴ In some cases being adapted to the hot conditions by the addition of a front verandah, occasionally with verandahs all around, their design followed the pattern which Twopeny noted as being favoured by Australians: "an oblong block bisected by a 3 foot to 8 foot passage".⁷⁵ This pattern varied occasionally in Townsville where the bisecting passageway was discarded. These simple wooden structures were favoured because, as T.P.L. Weitemeyer pointed out, they were very easy to build. He noted that

housebuilding in the small Queensland towns can scarcely be called a trade inasmuch that any practical man who can use carpenter's tools could easily build his own house. A hammer and a coarse saw was about a complete set of tools on many jobs.⁷⁶

A tradesman however was indispensable for larger, more elaborate

⁷¹R.E.N. Twopeny, *Town Life in Australia*, London 1883, facsimile edn, Sydney 1973, p. 30.

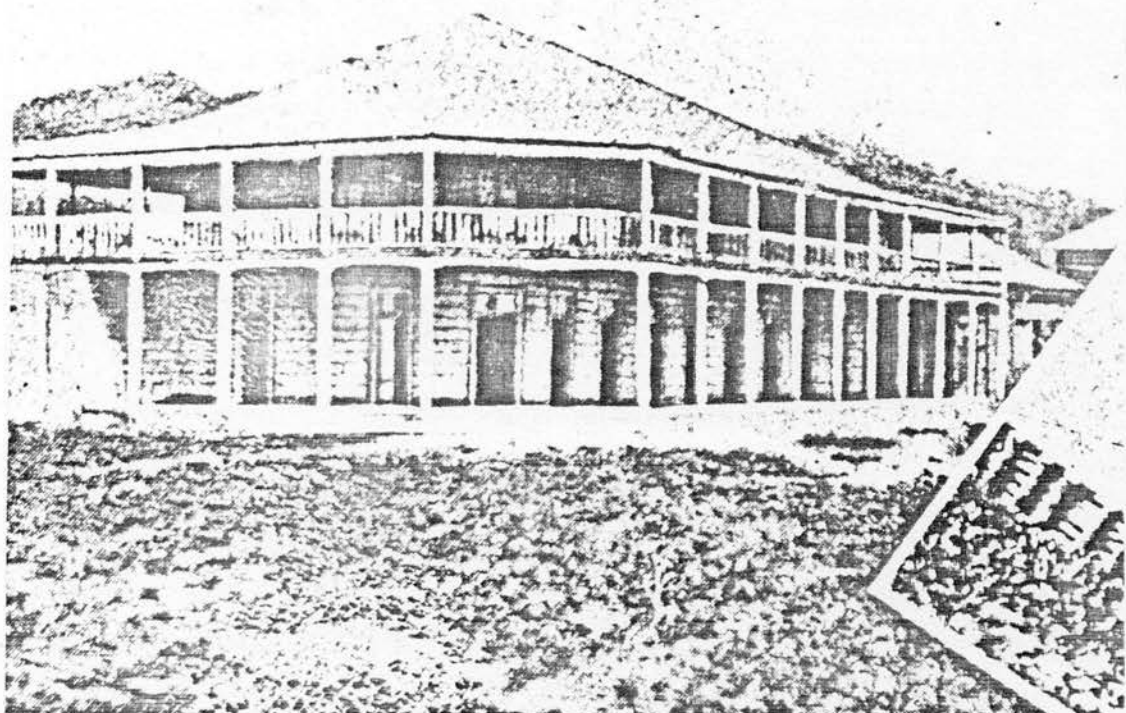
⁷²The magazine on Darling Island (Magazine Island) was later built of granite.

⁷³See Towns MSS, November-December 1865, for the difficulties in obtaining bricklayers. There is still a shortage of clay suitable for brickmaking near Townsville.

⁷⁴Allen, *op. cit.*, p. 159.

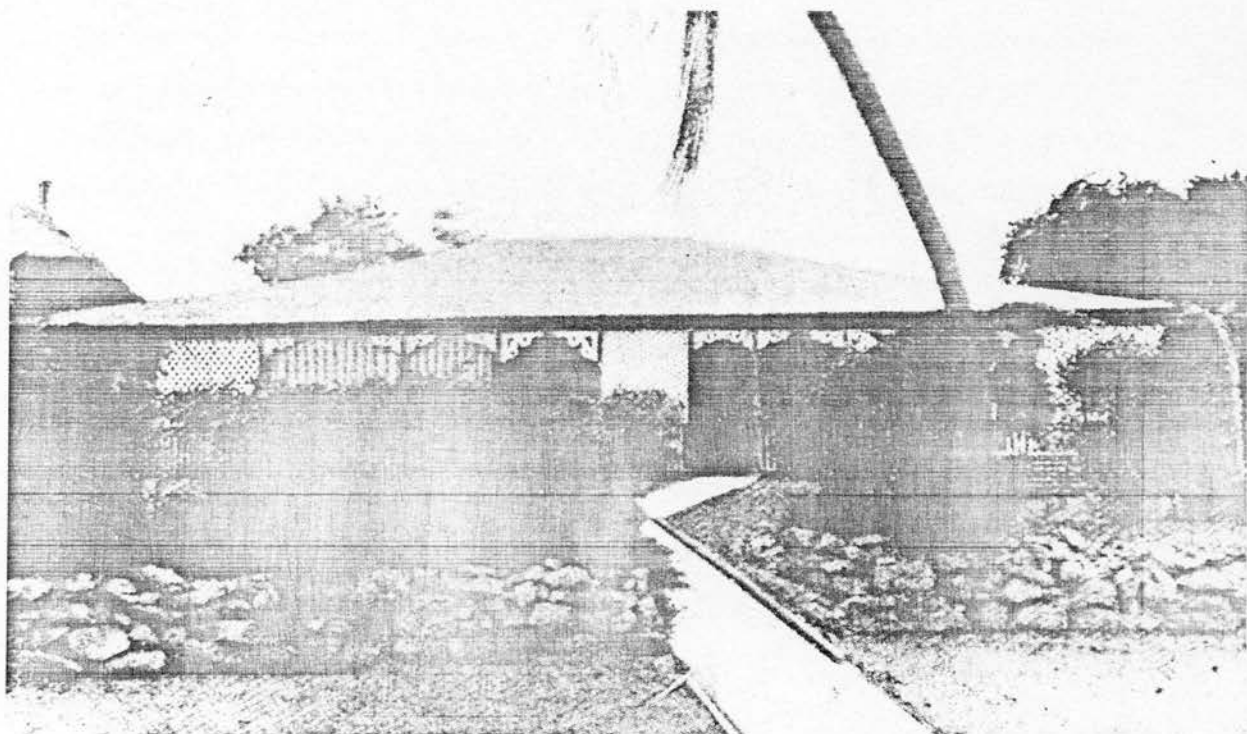
⁷⁵Twopeny, *op. cit.*, p. 34.

⁷⁶'A Danish Immigrant' [T.P.L. Weitemeyer], *Missing Friends*, London 1890, pp. 92-3.



The Criterion Hotel (about 1873)

Photograph from Cummins and Campbell's Monthly Magazine, June 1931.



J.M. Black's House

Photograph from Cummins and Campbell's Monthly Magazine, February, 1931

houses.

The first house erected in Townsville for J.M. Black himself was built on top of Melton Hill in Twopeny's standard design,⁷⁷ with four rooms surrounded by verandahs with a detached kitchen at the rear.⁷⁸ It was known as Bachelor's Hall as all its inhabitants were unmarried men. A primitive slab smithy, a shop and a butcher's shop were also erected about this time. The most ambitious building was a two-storeyed hotel commenced near the original log shanty pub. Built of timber, with verandahs 3.5 metres wide to both upper and lower floors, it contained 25 rooms.⁷⁹ No architect appears to have resided in the settlement at that time, but Francis Clarke, Bowen's first Mayor, was a qualified architect⁸⁰ and G.R. Johnson was advertising as an architect in Bowen.⁸¹ Either of these might have assisted with the design, but it is quite possible that the building was erected by local carpenters to their own design or that of Black or W.A. Ross.⁸²

Faced with the continuing shortage of building material and anxious to secure as many allotments as possible at the first land sales, Black ordered Hodel to erect buildings on corner blocks and (a) property boundary lines between every two allotments so that improvements might be claimed on every block.⁸³ When the Government Surveyor, Clarendon Stuart arrived in the *Lilly* in February 1865,⁸⁴ Black had apparently started buildings on nearly every allotment in the original part of the settlement. As 'Fairplay' complained,

between every other allotment, a few stumps stuck in the sand...do double dummy...a person would be allowed to build on paying a consideration to the

⁷⁷See above.

⁷⁸See plan at endnotes.

⁷⁹*PDT*, 5 August 1865.

⁸⁰Otto Cserhalmi, unpublished B.Arch. thesis on Francis Clarke, University of New South Wales, 1974.

⁸¹*PDT*, 11 March 1865.

⁸²Ross was the first licensee of the Criterion Hotel.

⁸³See map at endnotes.

⁸⁴*Lilly* sailed from Bowen on 13 February 1865 with Stuart aboard (*PDT*, 12 February 1865, sailing notices) and was detained briefly at Cleveland Bay to land Stuart and his party (*PDT*, 11 March 1865, sailing notices).

Great Mogul.⁸⁵

Not only was Black charging to allow settlers to build, in order to ensure that his layout of the township would not be altered and all his efforts lost, it seems he bribed Stuart so that his original plan might be included in Stuart's town plan.⁸⁶ Thus it was Black's original plan extended by Stuart's own work which became the first Townsville town plan.

Black's plan of the section of the town nearest the creek mouth, which appears to have been all he laid out, followed the grid pattern which was, according to Gerald Burke, "normal practice for towns that had to be built in a hurry".⁸⁷ He did not attempt to survey the hills which would have taken much longer since they did not lend themselves to regular sub-division as readily as the flat areas. His plan divided the area at the mouth into fairly regular rectangles with rectangular allotments continuing on one side of the present Flinders Street from the corner of Wickham Street to where the spur of Melton Hill still protruded into the creek. On the other side of Flinders Street was the creek with sites for the three wharves. There was one on either side of the present Wickham Street with a third at the corner of the present Denham Street. MacLeod, Carter & Co. had the wharf nearest the creek mouth (on the site of the present Queensland Insurance Building), Black & Co.'s was opposite that (on the site of the present Terrace Club Restaurant), while Seaward, Marsh & Co. occupied the site near Denham Street (on the site of the former Clifton & Aplin Building, now occupied by State Government Offices) opposite the Post Office.

Black does not appear to have cherished notions of developing a planned town such as Alberti advocated:

a city is not built wholly for the sake of shelter, but ought to be so contrived that besides more civil conveniences there may be handsome spaces left for squares, courses for chariots, gardens, places to take the air in, for swimming and the like, both for amusement and recreation.⁸⁸

⁸⁵Letter to the Editor, signed 'Fairplay', *PDT*, 23 March 1865.

⁸⁶"I was compelled to purchase for Stuart because as I informed you in Brisbane I promised to secure these allotments for him if practicable and we might want him for the future." (Black to Towns, 31 July 1865, *Black MSS*).

⁸⁷Gerald Burke, *Townscapes*, London 1976, p. 5.

Black's greatest need was for speed. If Stuart had harboured grander notions of town planning, government regulations stifled them, insisting on a grid pattern with streets 2 chains (40 metres) wide.⁸⁹ Stuart's plan of 1865⁹⁰ also ignored the hills and concentrated on the flat land along the creek beyond Melton Hill and the area between Melton Hill and Kissing Point. These two areas were joined by Oxley Street which passed over a saddle connecting Melton Hill with Stanton Hill. The area along the creek comprised only Denham Street to Blackwood Street in one direction and Flinders Street to Walker Street in the other, while the area facing the beach extended only from the Strand to Eyre Street with Melton Hill and Kissing Point forming the boundaries at either end. In a more detailed map produced a little later, he noted that beyond Eyre Street there was "fine open country lightly timbered with teatree, white gum and stunted iron bark".⁹¹ The area around the lagoon was designated as water and recreation reserve while an area for a garden was marked at the top of what is now Carter Street in North Ward, so some consideration was given to future parkland. The creeks which debouched into Ross Creek are clearly marked, as is that which used to run into the sea near Leichhardt Street.

This first town plan established a pattern of development for the Townsville townscape. It would take shape gradually in a pattern of rectangular blocks concentrated more on the flat lands than on the hills "influenced by decisions made by individuals or authorities to develop or redevelop single sites or small groups of sites"⁹², rather than in any grand overall plan.

⁸⁸For a brief account of Leone Battista Alberti, see T. Copplestone (ed.), *World Architecture*, London 1963, p. 237 ff. This quotation appears in Gerald Burke, *Towns in the Making*, London 1971, p. 72.

⁸⁹Information supplied by Townsville City Council Town Planner, Mr John Mathew.

⁹⁰See plan at endnotes.

⁹¹Townsville town map, c. 1870, Q.S.A., L6/5. The size of this map precludes reproduction in this thesis.

⁹²Burke, *Townscapes*, op. cit., p. 4.

By the time Stuart had nearly completed his survey, the Customs Department had realised that, although not gazetted as a port of entry, Cleveland Bay was receiving visits from shipping. Jimmy Morrill was sent to Cleveland Bay as Customs Overseer on the *Ariel* about 24 March 1865.⁹³ On the vessel was a cargo of spirits which could not be offered for sale as the port had not been gazetted as a place where spirituous liquors could be sold⁹⁴ though the *Amy* had managed to land an illegal cargo a little earlier which plunged the inhabitants into limbo for three days.⁹⁵ However Kilner, the Sub-collector of Customs at Bowen did not visit Morrill and inspect the new port until a few months later. It was not until 6 June 1865 that he reported to his chief in Brisbane that three vessels in addition to coasters from Bowen had discharged at Cleveland Bay, the township appeared to be on a healthy site, there were several buildings nearly completed and a good road could be made to the interior. He also reported that it was not far from the route used by vessels passing through Torres Strait; when entering port, Kilner had noticed a barque passing "within 20 miles" (about 30 km) of the township. He recommended that "some person ought to be stationed there to protect the revenue".⁹⁶ Kilner appears to have been the first person to have noted the accessibility of Cleveland Bay to the Torres Straits shipping route in an official report. However the wheels of government grind exceedingly slowly and it was not until October that a Sub-Collector of Customs arrived.

Meanwhile the first sale of Townsville land had been held at Bowen on 31 July 1865. Settlers had continued to flow into the township and there had been "wholesale jumping of allotments".⁹⁷ By

⁹³F. Kilner, Sub-collector of Customs, Bowen to James Morrill, 24 March 1865, *CCM*, February 1932, p. 68.

⁹⁴"Seaward, MacLeod & ourselves have some 1000 pounds worth of spirits in the township and yet we cannot dispose of a single item" (Black to Towns, 27 July 1865, *Black MSS*).

⁹⁵*TH* Supplement, 24 December 1887, p. 30.

⁹⁶Kilner to Collector of Customs, Brisbane, 6 June 1865, *CCM*, February 1932, p. 77.

⁹⁷Letter to the Editor, signed 'Argus', *PDT*, 1 April 1865.

17 July Black informed Towns that there was now more than three times the population of Rockingham Bay and "the place begins to assume the character and appearance of a town".⁹⁸ It was not a very attractive appearance. The dwellings for the most part remained a motley collection of humpies, with the merchants erecting larger houses on Melton Hill. The two-storeyed Criterion Hotel was nearly completed, but it was the three large galvanised-iron warehouses, then nearing completion on the creek, which dominated the scene. Since the mainspring of the town's existence was its usefulness as a port where goods could be exchanged, it was only to be expected that the warehouses of merchants should become an important element in the townscape. Buildings clustered on one side of the mouth of Ross Creek which as R.B. Howard recalled "seemed to be the favorite resort of crocodiles and I estimated that there would be some hundreds of these saurians to the square mile".⁹⁹

While the settlement was still in two sections, one centred on the lagoon in North Ward, the other at the mouth of the creek, the main business centre was developing along the creek where the wharves were located, again a development which might be expected in a small township so dependent on trade. Flinders Street was a rough dirt track, interrupted by gullies where streams flowed into Ross Creek, with many of the stumps of trees that had been felled impeding passage. The buildings of the township fringed one side of the street with the creek on the other, bordered only by the three wharves and accompanying warehouses. At high tide the street was covered for much of its length with salt water, still blocked by the spur of Melton Hill. All along the creek where the mangroves had been cleared, sticky black mud was exposed and "the odour...was not of the eau-de-cologne variety".¹⁰⁰ On the beach which extended right up to the front of the Criterion Hotel, the *Ariel* had gone aground in April and remained fast despite efforts to shift it.¹⁰¹ The wreck

⁹⁸Black to Towns, 11 July 1865, *Black MSS*.

⁹⁹R.B. Howard, 'Early History of North Queensland', *CCM*, February 1938, p. 74. Howard does not give dates in his article but refers to arriving at Dalrymple just after the disappearance of Genge. His disappearance was reported in *PDT*, 25 March 1865, therefore it is reasonable to suppose that Howard was in Cleveland Bay in March 1865.

¹⁰⁰Howard, *op. cit.*

which did not enhance the scene provided shelter for a number of people and building material for others.

The cargo of vessels which could not enter the creek was lightered by longboat or by the ketch *Contest*¹⁰² to the wharves in the creek. A start had been made on removing the rocks which barred the creek entrance, though this was a slow process since work could be done only at low tide which limited working time to at most an hour and a half each day.¹⁰³

Work on the road over Harvey's Range was progressing and wool was already arriving for shipment. From the arrival of the *Uncle Tom* in January, a number of Kanakas had been clearing the mangroves on the Ross Island side of the creek in an attempt to let more air into the tiny settlement. They had also cleared land on the river from what is now Railway Estate through the present Hermit Park roughly to the vicinity of Waterview Street, where Black and Towns planned to establish sugar and cotton plantations and the boiling-down works. Building materials and the boilers, digestors and other parts for the latter arrived in the *Amherst* in June. The design for the boiling-down works was based on those Towns already owned at Redbank near Brisbane, which were managed by Edwin Campbell. The machinery was purchased from Russell & Co. of Sydney.¹⁰⁴ In order to retain the location for the boiling-down works and the plantation it was necessary to plant either sugar or coffee. Sugar plants could only be obtained from the south, the Pacific Islands or the Dutch East Indies; coffee seed was likewise difficult to obtain. Ever resourceful, Black planted processed coffee beans in order to fulfil the government conditions for acquisition of the land.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰¹The *Ariel* was never shifted and its hulk was eventually auctioned.

¹⁰²The *Contest* belonged to Vigers & Scantlebury, boatbuilders, who had migrated from Bowen to Townsville in July 1865 (*PDT*, 1 July 1865).

¹⁰³Black to Towns, 11 July 1865, op. cit.

¹⁰⁴For history of Russell & Co. see M.A. Carter, *The Sydney Foundry and Engineering Works* and P.N. Russell & Co., unpublished *Historical Archaeology Undergraduate Research Project*, University of Sydney, 1980.

¹⁰⁵*TH Supplement*, 24 December 1887, p. 30.

Obviously the township had developed rapidly before the first land sales were held at Bowen on 31 July 1865. By then Towns was proudly informing his friends that "the government had honoured him by naming the new port Towns-ville",¹⁰⁶ a decision of which local residents appear to have disapproved for they continued to refer to their town by their own choice 'Castletown'¹⁰⁷ or just 'the Bay' for some months more. The first newspaper was called *The Castletown Times*.¹⁰⁸

With the influx of settlers and the rapid development it is not surprising that bidders at the first land sale were

Cleveland Bay mad [and] notwithstanding all the secrecy with which the place has been wrapped in since its first formation, the value of the position is so apparent to every one that the public have invested their money even without seeing the place.¹⁰⁹

Sixty nine lots were offered, raising "4139 pounds [\$8278] at an average of 240 pounds per acre [\$1200 per hectare]". The highest price realised was 1100 pounds per acre (\$5500 per hectare).¹¹⁰ If it pleased Black to be able to write to Towns, who was refusing to invest any more money until he had seen the place for himself, that "my ideas were correct about the value of this place",¹¹¹ there were many aspects of the sale which disgusted him. The government would only reserve the two allotments on which the hotel was built and the three on which he had erected a butcher's shop, an iron store and a store, together with the sites of the wharves.¹¹² These could be purchased by Black and Towns at the average price paid at the sale. The high prices paid ensured that Black and Towns would have to pay dearly for their holding. Though it had been "through our means

¹⁰⁶Towns to Black, 11 July 1865, Towns MSS, item 52, no. 126.

¹⁰⁷*TH* Supplement, 24 December 1887, p. 30 states Andrew Ball chose this name because of a fancied resemblance to Castletown in the Isle of Man.

¹⁰⁸*TH* Supplement, 14 December 1892, p. 34 states that "its circulation was certainly the largest in the district; but its career was brief, being limited to three or four weekly issues". No publication dates or details of editor, etc. exist.

¹⁰⁹Black to Towns, 31 November 1865, *Black* MSS.

¹¹⁰*ibid.*

¹¹¹*ibid.*

¹¹²See map at endnotes.

alone the land had been rendered so valuable", all that their industry had obtained was land for 240 pounds per acre which they might have "purchased outright 12 months ago at 1 pound per acre".¹¹³ On the other allotments which had been improved, Gregory and McIlwraith¹¹⁴ had agreed that buyers should pay costs of improvements at valuations fixed by Black. When the sale was gazetted, value of improvements were listed as being determined by arbitration, a change for which Black blamed Herbert¹¹⁵ and which differed from previous practise according to Towns.¹¹⁶

Black was extremely annoyed and for the first time one glimpses how difficult he had found the last few months:

we have not a piece of ground for ourselves except by paying an outrageous price for it. So much for discovering a new port for all the privation and rough life I have endured for the last twelve months leaving altogether out of the question the risk to my life and injury to my health.¹¹⁷

Furthermore despite promises two months earlier, the Executive had not yet gazetted the port as a Port of Entry, as a place for holding Courts of Petty Session or where spirituous liquor could be sold.

Black was ill and his position must have been extremely frustrating, but his optimistic belief in his town still remained. The land sale would "make the cattle stations very valuable and more than double the value of our paddock land",¹¹⁸ the next sale would bring still higher prices and the township would go ahead rapidly. During the next few months his relationship with Towns, never particularly friendly, deteriorated. Based solely on Towns's correspondence - since Black's letters for this period no longer exist - it appears that Towns was extremely intolerant, overbearing and distrustful without any real grasp of the problems and needs involved in founding and developing the township he proudly acclaimed bore his name. He complained continually that Black was not keeping him informed on developments though the fragment of

¹¹³Black to Towns, 31 November 1865, op. cit.

¹¹⁴Surveyor General and Minister for Lands and Works.

¹¹⁵Towns to Black, 31 July 1865, Towns MSS, item 52, no. 220.

¹¹⁶Towns to Colonial Secretary, 12 September 1865, Towns MSS, item 52, no. 393.

¹¹⁷Black to Towns, 31 July 1865, *Black MSS*.

¹¹⁸*ibid*.

Black's correspondence which remains indicates that this was not so. Towns strongly disapproved of alcohol and was extremely intolerant of human weakness in others. Black's request for a piano and a billiard table for the Criterion Hotel was questioned on the grounds that "such unnecessary temptations...will not improve the moral code of society in Townsville".¹¹⁹ In a township where these would provide practically the sole recreational facilities¹²⁰ Towns's remarks seem not only unsympathetic but unbelievably pompous and sanctimonious.

Unwilling to expend funds on Black's advice, he was only too willing to believe the often scurrilous reports of others in preference to Black's.¹²¹ In August 1865 Mr Daniels of Bowen related to him a highly coloured account of the number of 'loose women' in the place.¹²² He told Towns that Black's housekeeper had been in prison and "that when the public house was opened the whole community were in a state of drunkenness for several days (he said three weeks)".¹²³ This appears to have been a tissue of lies and half-truths judging on the little evidence available. Towns however believed Daniels and railed at Black:

The debt has more than doubled and what have you to show for it. Your whole attention appears to be bent on this den of vice.¹²⁴

To compound Black's problems, Towns had sent his son Bob to the new settlement and now complained bitterly that Black had failed to curb young Bob's drinking habits. It was doubly unreasonable of Towns to blame Black for not effecting a reform in which Towns himself had failed and to expect Black to devote time to supervising the young man in the midst of his other problems.¹²⁵

¹¹⁹Towns to Black, 31 July 1865, Towns MSS, item 52, no. 220.

¹²⁰The diaries of J.T. Walker, op. cit., indicate clearly that playing billiards was one of the main spare time occupations in the tiny settlement.

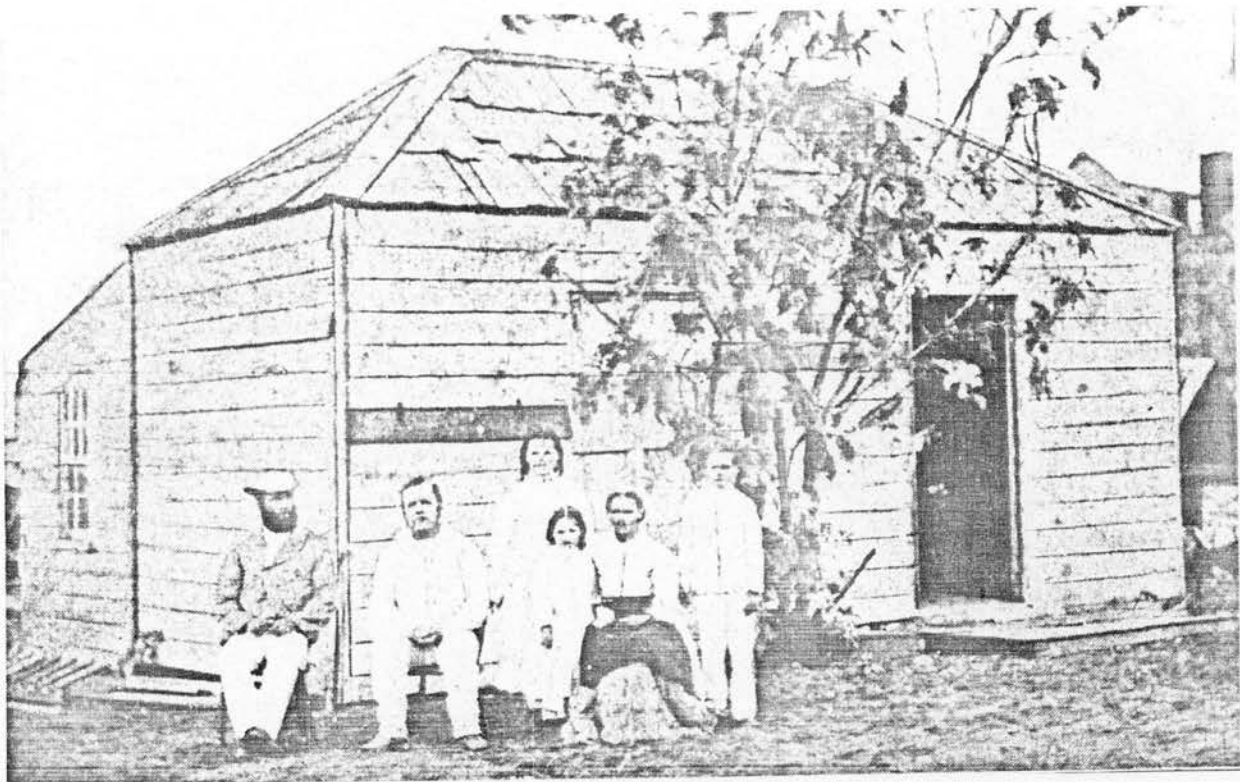
¹²¹Captain MacDonald of the *Amherst*, Wilks and Daniels all retailed stories to Towns.

¹²²Towns to Black, 27 August 1865, Towns MSS, item 52, no. 115. It is thought that this referred to the arrival of three barmaids for the Criterion Hotel, one of whom was Catherine Colvin, later well-known as Mrs Robinson; they do not appear to have merited such a description.

¹²³ibid.

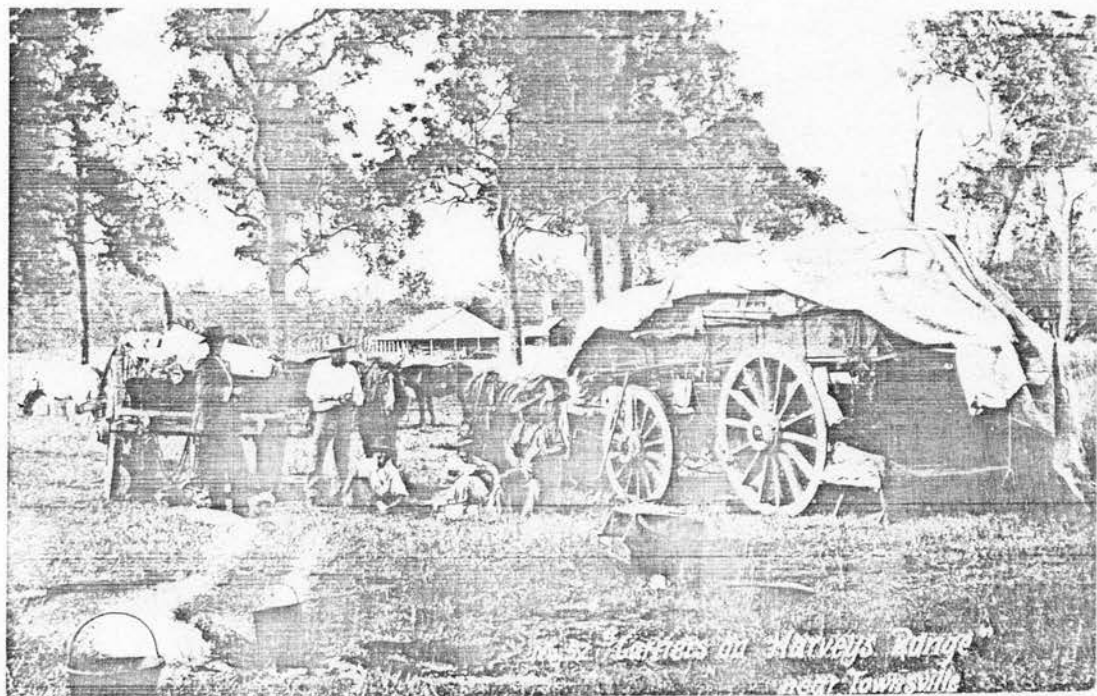
¹²⁴ibid.

¹²⁵It is not clear whether Towns's complaint was that Bob actually drank to excess or that he drank at all.



An Early Townsville House.

(Photograph from Jubilee Carnival Programme - 1913 - Delamothe Collection, James Cook University, Townsville)



A later view of carriers camped at Thornton's Gap, Hervey's Range with Eureka Hotel in the background.

(Photograph from the collection of Mr N. Shailer)

Towns's complaints may have had some foundation, since Black was but human, but Towns's intolerance, sanctimoniousness, and lack of understanding of conditions in the north leave Black with one's sympathy. Obviously they were both business men, each wanting his own way, both autocratic; Black was quick-tempered¹²⁶ and Towns irascible. When Towns evinced his distrust of Black to the extent of sending Henry Wilks north "to represent my interests under your management"¹²⁷ and instructing that Wilks should be in charge when Black was away from town without consulting Black on the subject, Black reacted angrily. His letter to Towns no longer exists but it must have been strongly worded since Towns refused to receive part of it;¹²⁸ Towns started to back down a little, though he did not alter the view that he (or his money) had played the most important role in the founding of Townsville. In a letter to Henry Wilks, while agreeing that the place would be of much value, he emphasised "by whose means has it been brought up to value", though he was forced to admit that Black had "displayed much judgement and energy with the arrangement".¹²⁹

Clearly if Towns was not unappreciative of Black's work, he believed that his money was the factor of greatest importance in developing Townsville. Since the whole project would not have commenced without Black, and it is certainly doubtful that it would have progressed so rapidly to that point without his ability, Towns appears grossly unjust.

While Black and Towns bickered, the township grew. After the first land sale Black advertised that the road to the Upper Burdekin crossing would be opened on 10 August 1865¹³⁰ and the cuttings over the main range completed about six weeks later. The route of Black's road was from the Upper Burdekin to Somer's¹³¹ 'Dotswood'

¹²⁶In an argument with J.A.J. MacLeod in Bowen, Black actually pulled out a handful of MacLeod's beard (*PDT*, 13 December 1865).

¹²⁷Towns to Black, 11 September 1865, Towns MSS, item 52, no. 380.

¹²⁸Towns to Black, 24 October 1865, Towns MSS, item 52, no. 54.

¹²⁹Towns to Wilks, 24 October 1865, Towns MSS, item 52, no. 50.

¹³⁰*PDT*, 5 August 1865.

¹³¹This was the Philip Somer who had come north with Dalrymple's party in 1861 to settle the Kennedy country (Bolton, *op. cit.*, p. 25).

station to Speed's Creek, thence to the Gap¹³² and Cleveland Bay - a distance of 93 km. Tenders were called for the erection of buildings at the boiling-down works.¹³³ The Engineer, Mr Heslip left Sydney about that time¹³⁴ but progress at the plant was held up as part of the structure was to be of brick and there were no brickworks at Cleveland Bay. The bricks were shipped apparently from Sydney on the *Spec* but the bricklayer who was to arrive with them missed the ship because he was "blind drunk".¹³⁵ It was not until December that a bricklayer arrived from Rockhampton.¹³⁶

On 31 September 1865, nearly six months after Black and Towns first request, the town was gazetted a Port of Entry. The first Harbour Master and Sub-Collector of Customs was James Gordon¹³⁷ at a salary of \$600 per annum. He was also appointed Acting Police Magistrate without salary, Clerk of Petty Sessions and District Registrar. Gordon arrived at the beginning of October 1865,¹³⁸ a few days in advance of the *Platypus* bringing Governor Bowen on his only visit to the township. A reporter with the Governor's party noted that "though it is very little more than twelve months since the first drays arrived from the interior there are upward of 200 inhabitants in Townsville".¹³⁹ His Excellency spent the night ashore and on 9 October departed with a long list of requests from the citizens for further government assistance.

¹³²Thornton's Gap, Harvey's Range.

¹³³PDT, 5 August 1865.

¹³⁴Towns to Black, 2 August 1865, Towns MSS, item 52, no. 241.

¹³⁵Towns to Black, 15 November 1865, Towns MSS, item 52, no. 136.

¹³⁶Towns to Black, 5 December 1865, Towns MSS, item 52, no. 214.

¹³⁷Born in 1822 at Dumfries, Scotland. After 10 years in India growing Indigo, he came to Australia in 1852. He was in the pastoral industry in South Australia, before coming to Sydney c. 1854, where he opened a school for boys. He arrived at the Canoona Gold Rush in 1858 where he met Sinclair and joined the expedition on *Santa Barbara* which discovered Port Denison. He was appointed Sub-Collector of Customs at Bowen on its foundation in 1861 then at Broad Sound, until appointed Sub-Collector at Townsville in 1865. He founded 'Cluden' and 'Lochinvar' stations. Died at Brisbane in 1904. (Information from V.B. Jones, 'James Gordon', unpublished MS., Bowen Historical Society.)

¹³⁸'Viator', 'James Gordon, Our First Townsville Police Magistrate', CCM, June 1932, p. 9.

¹³⁹Report of the Governor's visit appeared in PDT, 2 December 1865.

Man's intrusion into Cleveland Bay had already had one devastating effect on the landscape. The reporter with the Governor's party noted that the lagoons were nearly all dried up and water was being obtained from "a creek some two or three miles distant"¹⁴⁰ or from wells near the beach. When the founding party had arrived almost exactly twelve months previously the lagoons had been full. The wet season of 1864 had been heavier than that of 1865 but it would seem that the drying-up of the lagoons was due as much to the felling of the trees which shaded them and slowed evaporation, as to a lower rainfall.

By the end of 1865, despite government apathy and lack of financial support, Townsville was a thriving township serving not only the North Kennedy, but also the Flinders District into which settlers had been trickling while settlement at the new port was progressing. The reports of both Heath and Macbeath¹⁴¹ affirmed that its harbour if not perfect was certainly adequate; the road to the interior was proving more successful than the roads from Bowen or Cardwell. This gave Townsville a natural advantage but as yet it did not appear to challenge Bowen as the main port in the north. The *Port Denison Times*, which later regarded Townsville as an unwelcome rival to Bowen, could still envisage that

with Bowen as our London, Cleveland Bay as our Liverpool and direct communication with India, China and the old world through Torres Strait we can see no reason why North Australia should not take the position of Queen of the Australias.¹⁴²

Landscape had fast become townscape, but the town was raw and unattractive, straggling beside the mud of the creek. It was redeemed by the splendid backdrop of wooded and grassy hills and the dramatic outcrop of Castle Hill with the long golden beaches fringing the seashore. The Dalrymple Road stretched over Melton Hill or along the beach at low tide, through North Ward, thence across the plains to Thornton's Gap. In the vicinity of Kissing Point a German called Robinson had established a vineyard¹⁴³ and

¹⁴⁰ *ibid.*

¹⁴¹ See above.

¹⁴² *PDT*, 15 July 1865.

¹⁴³ 'Viator', 'Mrs C. Robinson - Townsville's Oldest Resident', *CCM*, December 1933, p. 41. Mrs Robinson's reminiscences are unreliable in places, but this fact appears to be correct.

further round Castle Hill was McCarey's Dairy which supplied milk and butter to the township. Along Ross River, frequently reached by boat, Black & Co.'s boiling-down works were rapidly taking shape. This progress was due almost entirely to the initiative and organisation of J.M. Black backed by Robert Towns's money and influence - but already this partnership was showing signs of disintegration.

The future of the township was by no means assured despite the optimism of Black and Towns. It had become a supply centre for a vast hinterland, but the sole industry of the area was pastoral, vulnerable to uncertainties of climate, market fluctuations and animal disease. If Townsville was not to remain a straggling river port, other industries must develop which would bring security and wealth. Sugar and cotton had not yet been tried and the best hope appeared to be in the discovery of gold. Gold had been discovered at Roma Creek outside Bowen by a Mr Barry in July 1865 and citizens of Bowen had offered \$100 reward to anyone finding a goldfield within 150 kilometres of Bowen.¹⁴⁴ Obviously the citizens of Townsville also saw the advantages of gold discoveries since on 23 September 1865 the *Port Denison Times* carried the news that a committee had been formed at Townsville to offer a reward for the discovery of a goldfield there. Only 10 days later it was announced that a new goldfield had been discovered at Keelbottom Creek; by early December Towns was writing of a "valuable goldfield within 50 miles of the township"¹⁴⁵ and forecasting that "it will swamp both Port Denison and Cardwell".¹⁴⁶ However the extent of the gold discoveries remained to be proven.

Much had been accomplished at Cleveland Bay in its first twelve months of existence. Its future held much promise, but it remained to be seen if promise would become reality.

¹⁴⁴PDT, 15 July 1875.

¹⁴⁵PDT, 18 November 1865, from *Moreton Bay Courier*, 4 October 1865.

¹⁴⁶Towns to (indecipherable), 5 December 1865, Towns MSS, item 52, no. 207. In fact Towns had a personal interest in the goldfield. George Osborne and Michael Miles had discovered gold on Towns's run at the Star River and Towns held a half share and interest in their venture, having advanced money for their expenses.

Chapter 4

During 1866 and early 1867 the promise of the first year remained a distant dream; the future was even less assured as the pastoral industry in the Kennedy slumped and no major gold discoveries occurred. Yet Townsville continued to grow, assuming a more civilised aspect; services improved and life became more comfortable for the inhabitants. The little township survived the first major cyclone to hit the north-eastern coast since settlement and its citizens rebuilt their shattered premises. Still it seemed that Townsville might be destined to remain a stragglng river port serving a pastoral population struggling to survive in the hinterland. Then, in July 1867, news of a major gold discovery brought renewed hope.¹

As both Bolton and Allingham emphasise, the crisis in the pastoral industry throughout the north had reached disastrous proportions by 1866.² Since the pastoral industry was the rock on which Townsville was founded, it is surprising that the township not only survived the crisis, but continued to grow quite rapidly throughout the period. That it did so is largely due to the success of the boiling-down works, providing many graziers with the only local market for their beasts in the uncertain period before gold discoveries brought a larger population to the area and pastoralists adapted their husbandry methods to tropical conditions.

¹*Cleveland Bay Express* (hereafter *CBE*), 6 July 1867, 13 July 1867.

²Bolton, *A Thousand Miles Away*, ch. 2; Allingham, *op. cit.*, ch. 5.

The works opened in April 1866³ and by June the *Port Denison Times* was reporting that over 500 head of cattle had been received, the best yield of tallow being 175 kg per head from Andrew Ball's herd.⁴ By July, extensions were being added and machinery for the manufacture of beef extract was installed.⁵ About that time also a shed for two cotton gins was erected. Although the cultivation of cotton had barely begun, what might be called a small industrial estate extended along Ross River in the vicinity of the present Waterview Street, with a Superintendent's cottage, cotton ginnery, saw mill, cottages and barracks for workers, mess huts, cooperage, tallow sheds, slaughter yards, salting house, and a brick engine room housing the steam engine with a large chimney dominating all.

Further, despite the pastoral crisis, wool continued to arrive steadily for shipment, though only apparently in small quantities, and trade increased to such an extent that Carter & Co. extended their stores, while Black & Co. doubled the size of theirs.⁶ Wool also began arriving by sea from Jarvisfield station where a landing had been opened at Barratta Creek in September. Shortly, hundreds of bales were awaiting shipment there by the cutter *Spec* which transported them to Townsville for trans-shipment to Sydney. The *Cleveland Bay Express* was encouraged to forecast that "this place ought to become a great emporium for the shipment of tropical produce".⁷

Cultivation started slowly. Maize and coconuts were planted first and were progressing well at Black & Co.'s plantation at Ross River, but it was not until July 1866 when the *Blue Bell* landed about 60 South Sea Islanders⁸ that work on the sugar and cotton plantations commenced in earnest. The first sugar cane was planted

³*Cleveland Bay Herald*, 3 March 1866.

⁴*PDT*, 10 June 1866. Statistics from Q.L.A., V. & P., 1867, show 6196 sheep and 496 cattle had been slaughtered.

⁵*ibid.*, 14 July 1866, states a considerable quantity of machinery had arrived on the *James Patterson* for the boiling-down works for the manufacture of a new product known on the continent as "extract of beef".

⁶*ibid.*, 17 November 1866.

⁷*CBE*, 22 September 1866.

⁸*PDT*, 21 July 1866; J.T. Walker, diary, op. cit., 8 July 1866.

in September when the *Blue Bell* brought the plants from "the Islands".⁹ The cotton which was planted probably came as seedlings from 'Townsvale', Robert Towns's plantation on the Logan River.¹⁰

Of more importance in the development of cultivation of "tropical produce" in the long term, were the explorations of Bowling Green Bay by the *Spec* in July¹¹ and the arrival on the *Boomerang* in November of 402 bundles of plant cane for Davidson's plantation near Cardwell.¹² The *Spec* expedition discovered rich alluvial soil suitable for growing sugar in the region south from Barratta Creek. Although it was not until 1879 that the Burdekin sugar lands were brought under cultivation,¹³ this knowledge remained in the background to be exploited when the time was ripe. The plants for Davidson's plantation at Bellenden Plains founded a sugar industry in the Cardwell/Herbert River district,¹⁴ which though faltering at first eventually had a considerable effect on the prosperity of Townsville. Though these regions had little effect on Townsville's growth in 1866, they added another dimension to the future prospects of the township, and it is significant that at such an early date Townsville was becoming a centre for regional development, and also a social centre for the inhabitants.

During 1866 also, beche-de-mer gatherers working in the region started to use Townsville as a supply centre. In October the Towns & Co. collecting ship *Berengaria* called at Cleveland Bay on its way to the East.¹⁵ While only Towns & Co. vessels are recorded as using the port initially, Wawn and others¹⁶ soon began using it regularly

⁹PDT, 8 September 1866. The "Islands" from which the plants were obtained are not specified.

¹⁰Stevens, op. cit., gives some account of 'Townsvale'.

¹¹PDT, 21 July 1866.

¹²CBE, 17 November 1866.

¹³*Queenslander* (hereafter *Qlder*), 29 October 1881, 12 November 1881; Roy Connolly, *John Drysdale and the Burdekin*, Sydney 1964.

¹⁴Jones, op. cit., *Cardwell Shire Story*, pp. 110 ff, pp. 117 ff; C.H. Eden, *My Wife and I in Queensland*, London 1872.

¹⁵Sustenance (Master of the *Berengaria*) to Towns, 5 October 1866, Black MSS, op. cit.

and the beche-de-mer traders continued to bring trade to the port for many years.

The boiling-down works, the sugar and cotton plantations, and the beche-de-mer industry employed mainly Kanaka labour, and once again it was the Towns & Co. vessels *Woodlark* and *Blue Bell* which started bringing south Sea islanders to Townsville to meet labour demands.¹⁷ Others followed and there was soon an established trade in South Sea Island labour through the port; the notorious Ross Lewin was well known in Townsville.¹⁸

Copper mining also started in 1866, when Richard Daintree and William Hann commenced operations at the Einasleigh River.¹⁹ It was not a financial success and only a small quantity was exported from Townsville, its influence on the growth of the town being insignificant. Daintree, however, with experience of the Victorian Geological Survey, introduced systematic searches for minerals to the north which eventually resulted in the discovery of the payable goldfields Townsville's founders had hoped for.²⁰ Meanwhile, although a major goldfield was not found, enough small discoveries were made to keep hope of richer rewards very much alive.

In January D. Gibson announced his discovery, with W. Thornton, of a considerable extent of gold bearing country on the Star River which he believed was payable.²¹ The Townsville Gold Committee immediately set about raising a \$1000 reward for the discovery of a payable field²² and a number of local residents hastened to the Star River. By March, advertisements "To the Gold Diggings via Cleveland Bay" started appearing in the *Port Denison Times*. Despite warnings

¹⁶The partnership of William Twizell Wawn, Lawrence Godfrey and James Dore "at present in Townsville" was dissolved in 1867 (CBE, 27 July 1867).

¹⁷CBE, 22 December 1866; PDT, 21 July 1866.

¹⁸Lewin worked as Captain on one of the Towns & Co. vessels used to procure Kanaka labour. He was dismissed, and turned to 'blackbirding' on his own account, gaining a reputation for brutality.

¹⁹Bolton, *A Thousand Miles Away*, p. 45; PDT, 11 July 1866.

²⁰ibid., pp. 45 and 47.

²¹PDT, 31 January 1866.

²²ibid.

that the field was not proven, many Bowen residents left to try their luck also.²³ It did not arouse much interest in the south however, and few southern miners arrived. Those who did found the Star far from an Eldorado. There was gold, but not alluvial in great quantities, and water was scarce. Gibson's predictions for his discovery, whether innocently or deliberately, were misleading, leaving many who hastened to the Star in dire straits. No stores were erected and there was not even a public house. Several more small rushes, to Bald Hills and Wolfgang Springs in May and to Clarke River in September, kept hopes high. The scent of success kept diggers fossicking and Townsville progressing.

The impact on Townsville of this first rush was small but important. Numbers of diggers continued to fossick in the hinterland creating a demand for supplies there, while others returned to Townsville and stayed to swell the population. More importantly, it started a migration of businessmen from Bowen. Chief of those who arrived from Bowen in 1866 were Robert Rollwagen, Anton Blitz, Abraham Brodziak and Aaron Rodgers.²⁴ All were able businessmen who contributed much to the development of the township during the next decades.

As miners looked to Townsville for supplies and as a coastal resort, so did the squatters who had remained to fight for their properties in the North Kennedy and Flinders Districts. Increasingly they regarded Townsville as a meeting place,²⁵ and it was already becoming the hub of a communications network extending inland in all directions and north and south along the coast. There were regular shipping services between Bowen and Townsville, Townsville and the Barrattas, and Townsville and Cardwell,²⁶ as well

²³PDT, 7 March 1866.

²⁴Brodziak and Rodgers advertised a clearing-out sale in Bowen (PDT, 10 February 1866) and were soon advertising in Townsville (PDT, 6 June 1866). Similarly, Blitz advertised a clearing-out sale in Bowen (PDT, 23 May 1866) and was advertising in Townsville (CBE, 15 September 1866). The partnership of R. Rollwagen and A. Anderson was dissolved (PDT, 30 June 1866) and Rollwagen was advertising as a Tinsmith and Plumber in Townsville (CBE, 30 June 1866).

²⁵Hann, op. cit., describes journeys to Townsville and meetings with other squatters there. J.T. Walker, op. cit., lists a number of squatters passing through at various times.

²⁶Bowen firms continued regular services to the Burdekin Landing, Townsville and Cardwell. CBE, 1 December 1866, announced the arrival of the steamer *Black Prince*. Henceforth, this vessel traded out of Townsville to Cardwell and Bowen.

as the monthly steamer from the south. Black's road, though little more than a track, extended over 500 kilometres into the Flinders District. A licensed hotel was even then opened on the Flinders River and other hotels had opened at the Bohle and at the base of the track via Thornton's Gap, while the Eureka Hotel²⁷ at the top of the range continued as a popular stopping place.²⁸ The Upper Burdekin crossing had developed into the township of Dalrymple, at the crossroads of the tracks from Bowen and Townsville, with two hotels,²⁹ stores, a smithy, and a large wool store under construction by Jack Langton.³⁰ In March, the government road party started improving the road over Harvey's Range and new cuttings were opened in September when Robert Williamson's two teams "carrying 7 tons on two drays" came down.³¹ By December there were 20 teams on the road.³² The road to the Lower Burdekin was not as well developed: the coast road led past the boiling-down works and across Ross River to Woodstock station, thence to Hamilton's Crossing of the Burdekin, Inkerman, Salisbury Plains and so to Bowen. Closer to town, the original track to Dalrymple had been re-routed to follow the course of the present Warburton Street further round Castle Hill, heading off towards Harvey's Range along the route of the present Old Common Road.

All these developments contributed to keep Townsville growing during this uncertain period, and amenities and services in the township improved. Captain Nares³³ in the *Salamander* surveyed the

²⁷D.M. Gibson-Wilde, 'The Eureka Hotel', John Oxley Journal, September/October 1980, vol. 1, no. 7, p. 6.

²⁸Notices of intention to apply for licences: James Reynolds, Flinders Hotel on the Flinders River (*PDT*, 30 September 1865). C.S. Rowe, Eureka Hotel at Thornton's Gap (*PDT*, 23 September 1865); Herbert Francis Keller, Bohle Hotel (*PDT*, 29 November 1865); James Mead, Royal Oak (later Range Hotel) at the foot of the range (*PDT*, 2 September 1865).

²⁹Great Northern Hotel (H. Genge) and Woolpack Inn (J. Higginson).

³⁰*PDT*, 25 December 1865.

³¹*PDT*, 21 March 1866, 29 September 1866.

³²*PDT*, 22 December 1866.

³³Later Sir George Strong Nares, Vice-Admiral, 1831-1915. In 1872 he commanded *Challenger* on the first major round-the-world oceanographic expedition. In 1875-76 he led an Arctic Expedition. Details in *Guide to the Manuscripts in the National Maritime Museum, Greenwich*, vol. 1.

bay and a chart was prepared. The pilot and boat's crew occupied their spare time in removing rocks and boulders from the creek entrance, and there were three lighters operating - *Wonder*, *Spec* and *Rose* - as well as the *Black Prince*.³⁴

Captain Sustenances in the *Berengaria*, the largest vessel to enter Cleveland Bay at that time, found it "first rate", though lightering cargo was "slow work".³⁵ The port was neither the miserable muddy apology Bolton depicts³⁶ nor the complete success the *Cleveland Bay Express* claimed;³⁷ in fine weather the lightering of goods and passengers was extremely successful. Then, the larger vessels anchored close to the mouth of the creek and unloading and loading was accomplished speedily with a minimum of discomfort. In rough weather the larger vessels needed to anchor in the calm waters under the lee of Magnetic Island several kilometres away. Lightering was seldom impossible, but took much longer and sometimes subjected passengers and goods to a rough and wet trip into the shelter of the creek. As calm weather mainly prevailed, this was not a great problem for most of the year but proved annoying at times. This difficulty however was far outweighed by the convenience of the road to the inland.

One major improvement to communications was the extension of the A.S.N. Co.'s monthly steamer service to Townsville in February 1866. Hitherto the service had terminated at Bowen, and Townsville residents wishing to travel south had needed to travel to that port, while southern mails had been carried to and from Bowen by coastal traders or by the mailman who rode a regular route between Townsville and Bowen. The service was inaugurated with the arrival of the steamer *Rangatira* on 17 February 1866, under command of Captain Harley.³⁸ On board was Robert Towns, making his first and last journey to "his" township.

³⁴*PDT*, 22 December 1866, refers to the lighters. The *Black Prince* (Australian Steam Navigation Co.) arrived on 30 November 1866 (*CBE*, 1 December 1866).

³⁵Sustenances to Towns, 5 October 1866, *Black MSS*.

³⁶Bolton, *A Thousand Miles Away*, op. cit., p. 48.

³⁷*CBE*, 20 September 1866.

³⁸*Cleveland Bay Herald*, 3 March 1866.

Towns brought the news that the township was now gazetted as a Municipality and a place where Courts of Petty Sessions could be held. The first Municipal elections were in May, and J.M. Black was elected the first Mayor with R. McDougal the first Town Clerk.³⁹ The municipal boundary ran along Ross Creek to the alignment of the present Ingham Road which it followed to the present Hugh Street, then turned along that alignment towards the sea, joining the coast at Rowe's Bay in the vicinity of the present Rowe's Bay Caravan Park. Municipal by-laws were formulated to regulate the future development of the townscape. Henceforth, Council approval would be required for the erection of awnings or shades, which had to be 9 feet (about 3 metres) in height, over footpaths. The alignment of curbing and guttering was regimented, carters and drivers and drawers of wood and water were licensed, restrictions were placed on the killing of cattle and the sale of butcher's meat, and regulations were introduced to restrict the dumping of rubbish.⁴⁰ A town dump was established at Stokes Street, then uninhabited and some distance from the main township. The Strand, the original section of Flinders Street, King Street and Denham Street were stumped and were being formed and metalled, although both the Strand and Flinders Street ended at King Street where they merged into sand and mud beyond the Customs Reserve.

A major road improvement came with the removal of the rocky spur blocking Flinders Street. Previously, those who attempted to pass around this spur made unpleasantly sticky progress⁴¹ while those scrambling over it at high tide had "indistinct reminiscences of chamois hunting (in the Swiss Alps) and the streets of Venice huddled together in an extraordinary manner".⁴² The rock was removed and used to fill in the bank of the creek nearby, and though still reminiscent of Venice at high tide, Flinders Street extended

³⁹*PDT*, 11 August 1866. R. McDougal had resigned as Town Clerk and was replaced by W.B. Grimaldi (*PDT*, 11 August 1866).

⁴⁰*Q.L.A., V. & P.*, 1867, p. 819.

⁴¹See P.F. Hanran's reminiscences, *TH Supplement*, 24 December 1887, p. 54.

⁴²*Cleveland Bay Herald*, undated cutting, found in J.T. Walker's diary, *op. cit.*

uninterrupted along the river bank and settlement was spreading into the West End⁴³ of the town.

There was no Town Hall, Council meetings being held at the Criterion Hotel and at the Masonic Hall which was erected facing the Strand beside the Criterion Hotel when the first Masonic Lodge was formed in July.⁴⁴ Clarendon Stuart surveyed Melton Hill⁴⁵ in July setting aside sites for a Town Hall, a school and a hospital, rising one above the other along what is now Melton Terrace. By October the Council was considering plans for a Town Hall, a grandiose building with

a handsome facade of 114 feet with verandah on three sides 12 feet wide, a large square tower in the Italian style in height 35 feet is placed over the entrance hall. To the right of the entrance hall is a large room 45 feet long and 27 feet wide intended for meetings of the council and as a public room. To the left are the offices intended for the use of the Town Clerk, Town Surveyor and other officers of the corporation.⁴⁶

It was an impossible dream, for the Council could only afford the left wing, and even that could not be built until the Government approved a grant of land. When this was received, only a half acre (0.2 hectare) was provided which did not allow such a magnificent edifice,⁴⁷ so the matter was left in abeyance.

A Customs House which also doubled as the Police Magistrate's Office and Court House was erected on Melton Hill,⁴⁸ with a house for the Custom's Officer beside it. James Gordon still remained as 'Lord High Everything' however. A corrugated-iron Bond Store was built on the Customs Reserve, and also houses for the pilot and boat's crew.⁴⁹ A Post Master, William Aplin was appointed in

⁴³The area of town from the present Post Office westward was then called West End.

⁴⁴PDT, 11 July 1866.

⁴⁵Stuart named the hill Melton Hill after considering Prospect Hill, Constitution Hill, Holborn Hill, the Craggs and Black's Hill (PDT, 14 July 1866).

⁴⁶CBE, 6 October 1866. Plans prepared by Geo. R. Johnson.

⁴⁷PDT, 22 December 1866.

⁴⁸The exact date of the erection of the Court House is not known but it was certainly completed by the time Towns arrived in March. It stood in Wickham Street where the State Government Building is now located.

⁴⁹These buildings are thought to have been erected on or near the site of the present Harbour Board Offices. John Scully (or Sully) was appointed Acting Pilot on 28 December 1865 (Q.L.A., V. & P., 1866).

February 1866, though the 'Post Office' was only a small section of Clifton & Aplin's store.⁵⁰ It was announced in October that future sales of Townsville land would be held in Townsville, not Bowen. Local people then found it easier to secure the land they required.

In February also, the town's first bank, the Australian Joint Stock Bank, under the management of A.J. Greaves, opened in a former fruit and confectionery shop on the Strand⁵¹ next to the Exchange Hotel.⁵² Robert Towns was incensed. At the time of the first land sale, being a director of the Bank of New South Wales, he had offered that company a block of land which the management had hesitated to accept. That another bank should now have opened first in the town named after him was not to be borne:

You will learn from Mr Peebles [relieving manager at Bowen] the *hasty and unseemly stride* made on the part of our compeers the J.S. - *they have even trench on the Sabbath* - be that as it may they have got the start and *you must not blame the writer* I gave you timely notice.⁵³

The upshot of this was that a second bank was opened by the Bank of New South Wales under the management of J.T. Walker on 20 March 1866 in premises in Flinders Street rented from Black & Co.⁵⁴

March also saw the opening of the first school by Mrs Irving, wife of R.W. Irving, a clerk in the Customs Office. Mrs Irving was a qualified teacher who had previously run a school in Bowen.⁵⁵ Her school was conducted in a room of the Irving dwelling near the corner of Flinders and Denham Streets at a fee of one shilling (ten cents) per week.⁵⁶ Later a second school run by a Mrs Bolger was

⁵⁰Gordon acted as Post Master until 1 February 1866, when Aplin was appointed (Q.L.A., V. & P., 1867).

⁵¹PDT, 7 March 1866; TH Supplement, 24 December 1887, p. 50.

⁵²Later named Wills's Hotel and then the North Australian Hotel (see below).

⁵³R.F. Holder, *The Bank of N.S.W.: A History*, vol. 1 1817-1893, Sydney 1976, p. 271.

⁵⁴Archival material supplied by Mr L. Gilmore, Manager of the Bank of N.S.W., Townsville.

⁵⁵PDT, 16 December 1865, had an advertisement for a school run by Mrs Irving, "a trained and certified teacher" who had a "thorough English education" and taught piano and needlework.

⁵⁶CBE, 7 March 1868; 'Reminiscences of James Gordon jun.', CCM, June 1931, pp. 9-11.

opened on the Strand near the Exchange Hotel.⁵⁷

On 3 March 1866 the first number of the weekly *Cleveland Bay Herald and Northern Pioneer*, referred to familiarly as 'The Snorter' or 'The Weekly Rag', was published at a cost of sixpence (five cents) per paper.⁵⁸ The editor was an American, James Thorburn Brown, of "unamiable manners and of neglected education who not only spells badly but writes ungrammatically".⁵⁹ Brown's addition to the landscape, besides his "marine residence" on Melton Hill,⁶⁰ was a flagpole in front of his office from which he insisted on flying the American flag. Since the American Civil War was of recent memory and British sympathies had been largely with the South, the flying of a 'Yankee' flag was much resented and eventually F.A. Fryer cut it down, an action which resulted in a hilarious court case with Fryer being fined 40 shillings (\$4) and costs and Brown losing what little respect the community may have had for him.⁶¹ He left soon after, having first attempted to sell off the printing press which was mortgaged to Black & Co., and the town was without a paper for some weeks until a group of townsmen formed a company and started the *Cleveland Bay Express*, which was to last considerably longer.⁶²

A library and reading room were established in November 1866 at a subscription of 1 pound (\$2) payable quarterly.⁶³ W.B. Grimaldi donated the use of the front part of his office for three hours each evening. The group relied on donations for supplies of books. They also considered starting a museum, if "sufficient inducement" offered. The town's first solicitor, J.R. Cowen opened an office at the Criterion Hotel in June and the first medical practitioner, Dr

⁵⁷F.C. Hodel, 'First Impressions of Townsville', *CCM*, April 1931, pp. 51-3.

⁵⁸J.T. Walker, op. cit., 24 March 1866.

⁵⁹J.T. Walker, op. cit., 9 April 1866 to 7 May 1866.

⁶⁰*PDT*, 21 March 1866.

⁶¹J.T. Walker, op. cit., 9 April 1866 to 17 May 1866.

⁶²This paper continued until July 1876 when it was amalgamated with the *Townsville Times*, emerging under a new title, the *Townsville Herald*, on 1 August 1876.

⁶³Committee members: James Gordon (president), J.M. Black (vice-president), J.T. Walker (treasurer), E.U. Roberts (secretary), W.B. Grimaldi, A. Blitz, ? Boston, A. Brodziak, ? Josephson and ? Childs (*PDT*, 14 November 1866).

Ascher commenced practice in a room at the Exchange Hotel in July.⁶⁴ At a meeting at the Criterion Hotel in June, the Burdekin and Flinders District Hospital Committee was formed and subscriptions were being sought to build a hospital.⁶⁵ A cemetery was established in what is now West End,⁶⁶ and a Town Surveyor, E.U. Roberts was appointed in September.⁶⁷

In July the Burdekin and Flinders Turf Club was formed.⁶⁸ The first race meeting had been held in January 1866 when such gallopers as 'Dobbin' and 'Stick-in-the-mud' were nominated.⁶⁹ The "track" was the sand between Kissing Point and the rocks at the foot of Melton Hill. In pouring rain the whole population turned out for the occasion. Other meetings were held using the same "track" until, with the formation of a club, a start was made to clear a race track on the Dalrymple Road on a reserve of 64 hectares where the present Recreation and School Reserves now border Hugh Street. Nathaniel Melzegarth opened the Shearer's Arms Hotel nearby to assuage the thirst of the punters.⁷⁰

There were four hotels in the township: the Criterion, the Townsville and the Exchange in the main area at the mouth of the creek, with Hamilton's at the West End on the corner of Flinders and Denham Streets.⁷¹ The Exchange Hotel was erected on the Strand by Edward Head, a carpenter with experience in both Sydney and Bowen who advertised his "house" as being "replete with every comfort to suit the most fastidious and admitted by all to be one of the finest hotels in Queensland".⁷² Both the Criterion and the Exchange hotels offered bathing facilities and billiard saloons.

⁶⁴ibid., 20 June 1866.

⁶⁵ibid., 9 June 1866.

⁶⁶Andy Carroll, 'An Old Identity of Townsville', CCM, October 1934, p. 33. The first interment was Mary, the servant of J.F. Hof, but the burial does not appear to have been registered.

⁶⁷CBE, 29 September 1866.

⁶⁸PDT, 11 July 1866.

⁶⁹ibid., 13 January 1866.

⁷⁰CBE, 22 December 1866.

⁷¹Application for a licence for Hamilton's Hotel appears in CBE, 22 December 1866. There is no confirmation that this was the first licence application; the hotel could have been in existence for some months.

⁷²ibid., 15 September 1866.

As one might expect, there was no reticulated water supply in so young a settlement. Residents relied on wells or on water delivered at two shillings (20 cents) per barrel by P. Petersen, who also ran a boarding house on the Strand.⁷³ Few people appear to have owned rain-water tanks at this stage. There was a Lemonade, Soda Water and Cordial Factory on the Strand, run by Taylor.⁷⁴ Two chemists and druggists opened: T.C. Rowden at the Cleveland Bay Medical Hall in Flinders Street, and A.H. Cooper at the Apothecaries' Hall on the Strand.⁷⁵ Both were dentists and for some months, until the arrival of the first doctor, provided the only medical aid in the settlement as well. There were at least two land, stock and station agents: W.T. Morris⁷⁶ and W.B. Grimaldi who also operated as an auctioneer at the Townsville Auction Rooms.⁷⁷ F.C. Stocker appears to have been the only boot and shoe maker,⁷⁸ E. Parks had opened the first saddlery⁷⁹ and Mrs Lynch was advertising as a dress and mantle maker.⁸⁰ W.A. Ross had abandoned hotelkeeping to open business as a general merchant, while Brodziak & Rodgers and A. Blitz had also opened businesses as general merchants.⁸¹ P.F. Hanran had established business as a produce merchant and commission agent in Flinders St, and J.B. Pridmore had opened the Townsville Livery Stable on the Strand beside the Exchange Hotel.⁸² There were two butchers⁸³ and two bakers.⁸⁴ Reise and Kohlborn were cabinet makers, french polishers and upholsterers,

⁷³Carroll, op. cit., CCM, November 1934, p. 49; *Cleveland Bay Herald*, op. cit.

⁷⁴*Cleveland Bay Herald*, op. cit.

⁷⁵ibid.

⁷⁶CBE, 13 October 1866.

⁷⁷*Cleveland Bay Herald*, op. cit.

⁷⁸ibid.

⁷⁹CBE, 27 October 1866.

⁸⁰ibid., 13 October 1866. Located on the Strand.

⁸¹ibid., 15 September 1866.

⁸²ibid.

⁸³F.C. Hodel, Flinders Street (ibid.) and William Graham (Hof had left the business) (ibid.).

⁸⁴C. Hubinger, Flinders Street (ibid.) and P. Heath, Flinders Street (op. cit., 27 October 1866).

while H.J. Meldrum and Helmes Brothers and Dickinson advertised as carpenters and joiners, also acting as the town's undertakers.⁸⁵ Three dairies were established, McCarey's which appears to have been somewhere in the Belgian Gardens area, Comerford's on the lagoon in North Ward and Molloy's opposite the site of the present Central School. Robinson's vineyard was still at Kissing Point and the community was supplied with fresh vegetables from Chinese gardens at the lagoon at the boiling-down works and also on the lagoons which extend behind the present St Columba's convent in Belgian Gardens.

By the end of 1866 the town had many of the amenities of longer-settled centres, but it still lacked a permanent policeman. A lockup and police station were erected near the corner of King Street actually on the alignment of Flinders Street, but estimates do not show an appointment of a police officer to Townsville.⁸⁶ There was no clergyman either. Church services were conducted in the Court House by R.W. Irving and James Gordon who was known irreverently as 'The Lord Bishop'.⁸⁷ Gordon performed marriages and also conducted funeral services. The Reverend Searle and Father McGinty visited occasionally from Bowen to conduct services for Anglicans and Catholics respectively, but Presbyterians who were strongly represented in the tiny community had to attend Church of England services which they did not enjoy.⁸⁸ Nevertheless the township had assumed a more settled and permanent appearance.

That its appearance might have been more settled did not make it any more attractive. It remained an odd jumble of permanent and makeshift structures straggling along a "dirty creek",⁸⁹ making a sharp contrast with the splendour of its setting surrounded by rugged hills, with the "Nulla-shaped form of Cootharinga"⁹⁰ brooding above it like a great faceless sphinx. J.T. Walker remarked that it

⁸⁵*Cleveland Bay Herald*, op. cit.

⁸⁶Reference to the lockup is made in reports of the 1867 cyclone.

⁸⁷J.T. Walker describes attending services regularly.

⁸⁸J.T. Walker, op. cit., 30 September 1866.

⁸⁹Reminiscences of Aaron Rodgers, *North Queensland Herald*, 6 April 1898.

⁹⁰Archibald Meston uses this phrase in a short story 'The Cave Skeleton', *North Queensland Register*, 25 December 1893.

was "a picturesque spot with a fine bold hill in its rear known as Castle Hill - the Town is not much at present...".⁹¹ Everyone built "just what kind of house or cottage" he chose.⁹² New arrivals just pitched tents or built humpies of whatever material they could find on any vacant land available. This motley collection intermingled with the better-built more permanent structures and the whole must have had that "irregular appearance not very pleasing to the eye"⁹³ which Allen found so unappealing in other new Queensland towns.

The large galvanised-iron warehouses of the three major firms squatting on stilts beside the wharves in the mud of the creek still dominated Flinders Street. Single-storeyed gable-roofed 'timber and tin' stores and houses straggled along the opposite side of the street, which was either a dust-bowl or a mud puddle, depending on the season and the height of the tide. The houses of the merchants dotted Melton Hill, while the town's most pretentious buildings, the Criterion and Exchange hotels, dominated the Strand. Both were of 'timber and tin' construction and double-storeyed. The Criterion hotel had verandahs surrounding the whole building at both levels and contained 5 sitting rooms and 25 bedrooms. The Exchange, with verandahs only at the front to both floors and containing only 2 sitting rooms and 10 bedrooms, was the most attractive building in the township with a projecting porch over the entrance and the front door flanked by glass panels, all surmounted by a decorative semi-circular fanlight. The other hotels, the Townsville and Hamilton's, were unpretentious single-storeyed 'timber and tin' structures, and the Masonic Hall appears to have been little more than a two-roomed dwelling.

Of the public buildings, the Bond Store was a plain iron warehouse, while the Court House was a solid timber building, rectangular in shape which appears originally to have had no verandahs, best described as functional. The police station and gaol was also a 'timber and tin' structure, apparently L-shaped, on low blocks. No details of plans of these constructions are

⁹¹J.T. Walker, op. cit., 16 March 1866.

⁹²Allen, op. cit., p. 162.

⁹³ibid.

available and it has so far proved impossible to ascertain whether they were locally constructed or prefabricated in the south as other government buildings frequently were.⁹⁴ Though no description of its construction appears to exist, Black's house on Melton Hill remained the most imposing in the township and he had erected an observatory nearby.

Beyond Hamilton's Hotel, Flinders Street tapered off to a narrow bush track which led through dense scrub to Graham's slaughter yards which were located in the vicinity of the present Knapp Street. The bush was so dense there that when cattle strayed on one occasion they were not located for three days until they were discovered on Monkey Island.⁹⁵ It is not clear whether a track to the cemetery led from the slaughter yards or whether it was reached by a track branching from the Dalrymple Road in the present Belgian Gardens. It is quite probable there were two tracks.

The main road to Dalrymple still crossed the saddle of Melton Hill through North Ward and Belgian Gardens, winding among scrub and trees. A few dwellings had been erected on the Strand and the dairies and Robinson's vineyard were scattered through the present North Ward and Belgian Gardens. The green of Chinese gardens carpeted the shores of the lagoon in Belgian Gardens,⁹⁶ with Melzegarth's hotel and the race course nearby. Two carriers' camps were established, one at the foot of the incline from Melton Hill, the other where the road headed across the swampy region now occupied by the airport and the Town Common.⁹⁷ This area was covered with trees and scrub and the lagoons abounded in wildfowl.

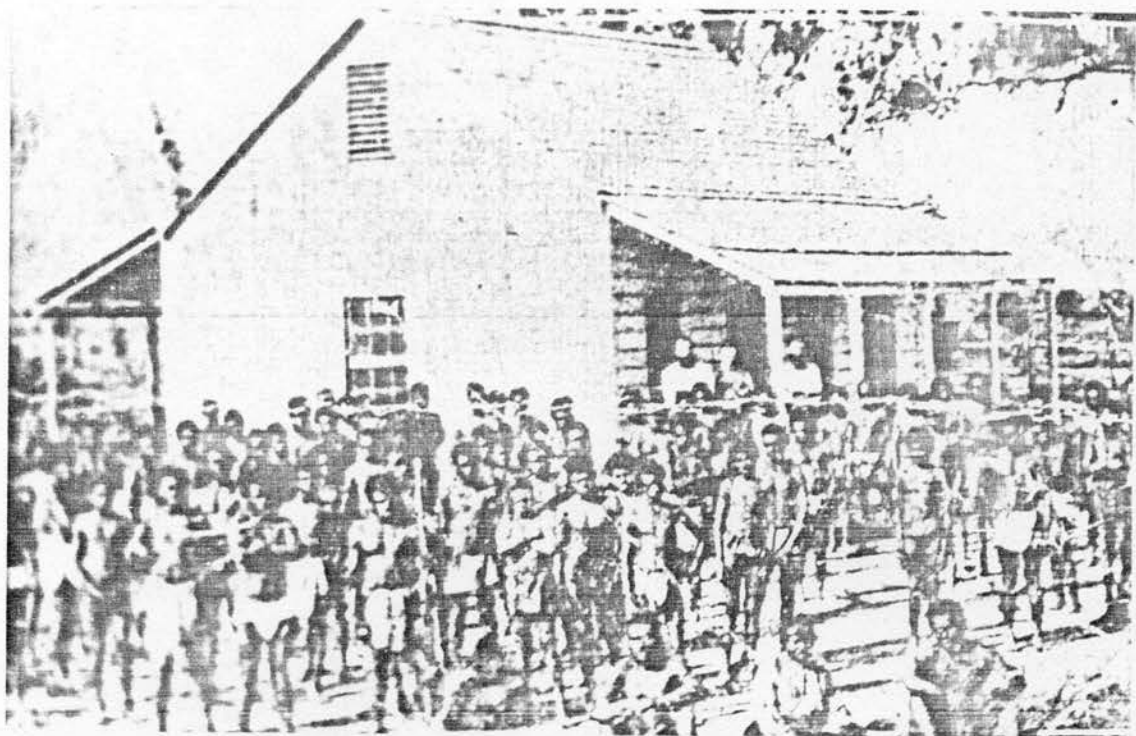
Along Ross River, orderly rows of cotton, sugar and maize plants with the graceful but alien coconut palms had replaced the native bush on the river bank over about 80 hectares extending roughly from the present Yates Street in Railway Estate through

⁹⁴For example the National School and the Immigration Barracks.

⁹⁵This used to be in the vicinity of the Townsville State High School. The area has now been reclaimed and altered beyond recognition.

⁹⁶J.T. Walker, *op. cit.*, 19-21 July 1866.

⁹⁷Carroll, *op. cit.*, *CCM*, October 1934, p. 35; W.H. Corfield, *Reminiscences of Queensland 1862-1899*, Brisbane 1921, p. 42.



Overseer's House, Black & Co's Plantation, showing Kanaka Labourers.
(Photograph from the collection of Mrs D.M.Gibson-Wilde)



First premises of the Australian Joint Stock Bank and the North Australian Hotel (formerly the Exchange and Wills) circa 1873
(Photograph from Jubilee Carnival Programme - 1913 - Delamothe Collection, James Cook University, Townsville)

Hermit Park to the present Bowen Road. A house for a plantation overseer and Kanaka quarters stood in cotton fields near what is now Yenoor railway siding. The boiling-down works, further up the river, was a picturesque sight from a distance, set between the river and a large lagoon edged with the bright green of Chinese vegetable gardens. Closer, it was not so pleasant, with the primitive methods then used in boiling down. Goods and people were frequently conveyed between that area and the main settlement by boat along Ross Creek. At that time the creek appears to have been deeper and quite navigable to its junction with Ross River, except at very low tide, and was quite a busy waterway.

Despite improvements, life in the township was hard and often monotonous with an overwhelming sense of isolation. While "much pleased" with the place and forecasting that it would go ahead daily, Robert Towns found it "a most isolated place".⁹⁸ Business was mostly "very slack" and sometimes "almost disheartening", according to J.T. Walker, who found it "after all...an out of the world hole".⁹⁹ Nevertheless he described himself as "quietly contented" and boredom was perhaps the least of the settler's problems.

Towns discovered others: "I never felt so unhappy from home in my life what from bites and blight I have been confined to the house since my arrival here".¹⁰⁰ Bites and blight were but a few of the discomforts. Not only were there hordes of mosquitos and sandflies, but there were cockroaches which sounded at night "for all the world like rain inside the noise they make flying about. Killing them is disgusting occupation - Whew! Paugh! Ugh!".¹⁰¹ Besides the crocodiles which regularly devoured the settlers' dogs and even invaded Flinders Street on occasion,¹⁰² sharks were occasionally

⁹⁸Towns to Brooks, 13 March 1866, Towns MSS, item 51, no. 355; Towns to Cameron, 12 March 1866, Towns MSS, item 51, no. 354.

⁹⁹J.T. Walker, op. cit.

¹⁰⁰Towns to Brooks, 13 March 1866, op. cit.

¹⁰¹J.T. Walker, op. cit., 3 December 1866.

¹⁰²*Cleveland Bay Herald*, undated cutting, found in J.T. Walker's diary, op. cit., states: "On one occasion rumour had it that an alligator[*sic*] took a sniff at one butcher's shop door, but with the remark 'Idor et proeterea nihil' proceeded to patronise the opposition shop with, if possible, even worse ill luck, as it was on this occasion 'odor foetidus'! Since then Flinders Street at night time has been almost totally deserted, and many imagine the Corporation through the omniverous propensities of 'our amphibious friend' will be obliged to erect a placard 'Beware of Crocodiles'".

sighted near the rocks, a spot often frequented by bathers. As Walker remarked, their presence "rather spoils one's enjoyment, having such ugly neighbours".¹⁰³ There were also marine stingers, snakes, myriads of frogs, and dingoes who "serenaded" the residents from Ross Island.¹⁰⁴

Accidents, particularly falls from horses, were frequent.¹⁰⁵ Although Dalrymple had assured the Government that "the climate of the Kennedy District...is particularly healthy", this was not to prove entirely correct.¹⁰⁶ Blight was a common problem, but the most common complaint was "fever and ague" which covered a variety of ills ranging from a feverish cold through pneumonia to malaria.¹⁰⁷ Remedies were few and simple, the staple being quinine and Holloway's Pills.¹⁰⁸ In spite of Dalrymple's assurance of

the easterly trade winds moderating the temperature at all seasons, while the direct rays of the summer sun, which in these latitudes are extremely penetrating, are generally subdued or wholly obscured by the dense clouds of the rainy season,¹⁰⁹

the climate was hot and muggy throughout the summer. Sanitation was primitive and much stamina and self-sufficiency was needed to survive.

Life was slow though not without diversions. J.T. Walker had "more spare time than at any former part of my life".¹¹⁰ The bank opened for only three hours every day, after which he occupied himself with reading and writing, visiting friends, sea bathing,

¹⁰³J.T. Walker, op. cit.

¹⁰⁴Deduced from a number of accounts appearing in papers over the period studied. The best early description of a stinger attack comes from the *Queenslander*, 21 February 1874 and shows some ignorance of types of stingers, all being lumped under the one name of *physalia*(s): "bathing in the sea is open to danger from the presence of the abominable little creature, the 'physalia[s?]' or Portuguese man-of-war. The sea swarms with them and to give an idea..." A number of stinger attacks were reported including one fatality in 1878. *CBE*, 19 June 1869 has a description of the dingoes on Ross Island.

¹⁰⁵Chapman, the superintendant of road works over Harvey's Range, died as the result of a fall from a horse, and there are many accounts of other similar accidents.

¹⁰⁶Smith and Dalrymple, op. cit., pt II, p. 37.

¹⁰⁷See also Allingham, op. cit., p. 77.

¹⁰⁸Carrington, op. cit., p. 137.

¹⁰⁹Smith and Dalrymple, op. cit.

¹¹⁰J.T. Walker, op. cit., 21 March 1866.

playing billiards and chess and walking along the sands to Kissing Point. Occasionally he ventured as far as Rowe's Bay or Cape Pallarenda.¹¹¹ He climbed Castle Hill, visited Magnetic Island on a coral collecting trip and hunted kangaroo in the hinterland. There were also riding expeditions to Cape Pallarenda, Mt Louisa and the Bohle Hotel with longer trips to Woodstock and to the top of Harvey's Range. Livelier diversions were provided by the races, balls,¹¹² and the dinner which marked the anniversary of the first land sale.¹¹³ He attended the performance of the first visiting entertainers at the Criterion Hotel, describing them as "10th rate performers", only one with any "musical capacity, the others simply noisy buffoons".¹¹⁴ He was also present at a private dance held at the Gordon's house which was "the first time such a thing has been attempted at a private house in Townsville".¹¹⁵

In today's busy world Walker's life sounds almost idyllic - though he frequently found life dull - and yet for men life was reasonably full and enjoyable. For the women, barred by Victorian conventions from many of the diversions open to the males, faced with the problems of running a household and bearing and raising children, life must have been wearisome indeed. Nevertheless it was much more comfortable in the little coastal township than on the stations in the hinterland and the citizens of Townsville were remarkably well off in some ways. Fresh fish were netted regularly by a band of fishermen at the mouth of Ross Creek, fresh vegetables were obtainable for most of the year from the Chinese gardens and fresh meat, milk and butter were delivered daily. Only fresh fruit was lacking although even then pineapples were being supplied in small quantity from Cardwell.¹¹⁶

¹¹¹J.T. Walker refers to 'Rose' Bay, though C.S. Rowe claimed consistently the bay was named for him. He also refers to Cape Pallarenda as Cape Marlow, although Pallarenda was its official name and the highest mountain in the Many Peaks Range was named Mt Marlow.

¹¹²Balls were held to celebrate the change of ownership of hotels, e.g. when the Criterion passed from Ross to G.R. Johnson, and the Townsville Hotel passed from De Zoet to Fletcher and O'Neill.

¹¹³J.T. Walker, op. cit., 31 July 1866, records a public holiday to mark the "First Anniversary of the Foundation of the Town."

¹¹⁴J.T. Walker, op. cit., 14 August 1866.

¹¹⁵J.T. Walker, op. cit., 26 July 1866. The dances were the quadrille and the polka.

Even so, it needed much courage and determination on the part of both men and women to accept the challenges of pioneering Townsville, to create their own amusements and to foster improvements in the town. They did not delude themselves that success would come quickly or easily, but realised that "years of toil and struggle must elapse before we can hope to attract a large population to our shores".¹¹⁷ Buoyed by the vision that they were "Pioneers of the Wilderness with whom it rests to lay the foundation of a new colony on the Great Australian Continent",¹¹⁸ they were content to work steadily towards prosperity.

By February 1867 prosperity appeared even more distant. The pastoral industry was sinking deeper into decline and no further gold discoveries had been made, although a steady trickle of gold continued to flow into the township. The Townsville Gold Committee decided that something must be done to stimulate further prospecting. A new reward of \$2000 was offered to anyone discovering a goldfield yielding 5000 ounces (about 14 kg) in the first 12 months.¹¹⁹ Before this could produce any results, on 3 March 1867 Townsville became the first town in Australia to be struck by a tropical cyclone.

Devastation was severe, but surprisingly the township was not completely obliterated. As one might expect, tents were the first victims of the wind, and many houses were unroofed or flattened. One large house in Flinders Street was lifted from its blocks and deposited two metres away undamaged. However the residences of Black, Clifton, Gordon and Shearer suffered little damage and even many humpies escaped harm. Of the larger buildings, only Clifton & Aplin's store, the Townsville Hotel and the Masonic Hall were totally wrecked. Black & Co.'s store was unroofed, the Criterion and Exchange Hotels lost parts of their roofs and the top verandah of the Criterion was badly damaged. At the Exchange, the detached kitchen was blown over and one side of the billiard room torn away.

¹¹⁶PDT, 21 July 1866.

¹¹⁷*Cleveland Bay Herald*, op. cit.

¹¹⁸ibid.

¹¹⁹PDT, 2 February 1867.

Hamilton's Hotel was undamaged except for the destruction of the American Bowling Alley next to the hotel. The *Cleveland Bay Express* office was unroofed and the front blown inwards, a fate which befell a number of shops. The stores of W.A. Ross, Carter & Co., Brodziak & Rodgers, the courthouse and the lockup-police station all escaped damage.

At the boiling-down works the large chimney came down "as gently as if lowered by block and tackle"¹²⁰ and the machinery was unscathed. However most of the buildings were either unroofed or levelled. The cotton and sugar crops suffered severely and only one house was left standing on the plantation. The newly formed streets were furrowed by deep gullies and the Municipal Council discovered a problem which has plagued every council since - the maintenance of streets in a tropical wet season. A mass of debris piled up in Flinders Street where the rocks had recently been cleared away, and the road out of town was blocked by fallen trees and swollen streams. The road over the Range was closed completely by a rock fall.¹²¹

After such an onslaught it might be expected that the township would languish. Some settlers did leave, but many remained, determined that

a town like this possessing the advantages it does of central position to vast cattle and sheep tracts of the interior of the North Kennedy District must not be left in the state it is at present but on its 'debris' must be raised up a city that will suit the requirements of the North and show the world what British energy and perserverance can accomplish.¹²²

Within a fortnight most damaged buildings had been re-roofed and repaired, the Criterion and Exchange Hotels were nearly completed and Hamilton was rebuilding his bowling alley. By 22 March the Townsville Hotel had been rebuilt and was opened with a Grand Ball.¹²³ By May the boiling-down works was again in operation and working at full capacity. Only the Masonic Hall and Clifton & Aplin's store were not immediately rebuilt while Black & Co.'s store

¹²⁰PDT, 27 March 1867.

¹²¹ibid., 16 March 1867.

¹²²ibid.

¹²³CBE, 23 March 1867.

was only partly re-roofed. Timber, still imported from the south, was scarce but this problem was partly overcome by the use for the first time of hoop pine from Magnetic Island which Cockfield rafted to the mainland.¹²⁴ It was an amazing recovery.

Unfortunately business did not recover as speedily. Carter & Co., Mollison of the Townsville Hotel and Head of the Exchange Hotel were in financial difficulties, and Clifton & Aplin did not re-erect their store. John Melton Black left Townsville on the *Boomerang* on 10 May 1867, never to return. His partnership with Robert Towns had ceased "through the effluxion of time" at the end of April and Towns was most anxious to be rid of him.¹²⁵ The relationship which had improved a little after Towns's visit had again deteriorated. There was a problem over "a woman" in which S.F. Walker, now Chief Clerk for Black & Co. was somehow involved.¹²⁶ Who the woman was and what had occurred is not clear from Towns's correspondence. It may have been Marion Drummond O'Dowda, the woman Black eventually married, who was then in Townsville.¹²⁷ What Black's feelings on the matter were, or whether he would have been interested in resuscitating the partnership, is not known. His health was certainly impaired and his firm belief in the future of Townsville may have been shaken, but as a speculator he may have judged that the time was right to capitalise on the venture. In the next few months Towns and Black haggled over final settlement. It was not until 28 August however that Towns wrote to S.F. Walker that a settlement had been reached.¹²⁸ How much this involved is not known but it was not entirely to Towns's satisfaction as it involved "a serious loss to us".¹²⁹ The founding firm of Black & Co. disappeared to be replaced

¹²⁴ *ibid.*, 30 March 1867.

¹²⁵ *ibid.*, 29 June 1867.

¹²⁶ Towns to S.F. Walker, 16 June 1867, Towns MSS, item 52, no. 364.

¹²⁷ Daughter of Alicia Mainwaring and Henry O'Dowda of Dublin. Black married Miss O'Dowda at St Patrick's Chapel, Sutton Street, Soho Square, London on 15 April 1869 (copy of Certificate of Marriage from General Registry Office, London). *CBE*, 6 July 1867, sailing notice, lists Miss O'Dowda among those departing by the *Boomerang* on 5 July 1867.

¹²⁸ Also on 28 August, Black addressed a letter to the *Cleveland Bay Express* notifying that he had severed his connection with Robert Towns (*CBE*, 21 September 1867).

¹²⁹ Towns to S.F. Walker, ? September 1867, Towns MSS, item 52, unnumbered.

by Towns & Co. with S.F. Walker as manager, much more firmly under Towns's direction than Black had been.¹³⁰

Black returned to England. The settlement he received from Towns must have left him comfortably off and it was understood locally that his father had died leaving him property in England. The *Cleveland Bay Express* was not surprised "at his leaving a country so full of disagreeables as this".¹³¹ The inhabitants of Townsville later sent him a magnificent gold cup made from Cape River gold together with a most appreciative testimonial acknowledging fully his contribution to the development of the town.¹³² Black planned to return in 1870 to contest the seat of Kennedy in the forthcoming elections, but was not able to arrive from England in time.¹³³ Thenceforward he seems to have severed all ties with the past. It was popularly believed that he died in 1884, until his sons visited Townsville in 1930 when it was discovered that he had married Marion O'Dowda and had a family of five children.¹³⁴ His sons supplied the information that he had founded the Bell Punching and Printing Company in London, an extremely successful venture, and lived in considerable comfort to the age of 89, dying in 1919. Strangely, Black told his children little of his life in North Queensland and his sons were astonished to learn he had founded Townsville.¹³⁵

Black was a speculator, perhaps the most successful the North has known. He succeeded in a venture beyond the wildest dreams of many men. Because of his perception, Townsville was founded in the right place at the right time to benefit most from future

¹³⁰ *ibid.*

¹³¹ *CBE*, 28 July 1867.

¹³² *ibid.*, 21 March 1868.

¹³³ *ibid.*, 11 June 1870, 3 September 1870.

¹³⁴ Douglas Black's account of his father, reproduced in *CCM*, September 1930, pp, 35-41, has been found to be erroneous. He states his parents were married at Hanover Square; they were married in the Catholic Chapel at Soho. He states Black's ashes were in Kensel Green Crematorium; there was no such crematorium in 1930. Verified by the author in London, November 1981.

¹³⁵ It was after the visit of Black's sons in 1930 that they and their sister (whose name is not included among the donors on the portrait), donated a painting of their father to the City Council. The painting now hangs in the City Administration building.

developments in the North Kennedy. Black's departure saw the end of the initial period of Townsville's settlement and development. He had brought about its foundation and fostered its survival and growth. Whether his departure might have had any effect on the township, other than causing general regret at his leaving, is difficult to judge. By then there were a number of other businessmen capable of taking his place, who were just as keen as Black to fight for the town's progress. Furthermore, before news of Black's departure for England had reached the township, when prospects of further development appeared most grim, the promise of gold became a reality.

Daintree had concluded that the Cape River district showed excellent prospects and acting on his advice six prospectors, David James, Robert Robertson, Thomas Ellem, Charles Chappel, James Hewson and James Stoner started fossicking there.¹³⁶ In June they struck rich gold and by 5 July twelve pounds of gold (about 5.5 kg) was sent south on the *Boomerang*.¹³⁷ Other discoveries confirmed the extent of the field and by October there were 700 diggers on the field, with several hundred more on the way.¹³⁸ The immediate impact of the gold discovery at Cape River was not overwhelming. Most of the miners walked to the Cape River diggings from Central Queensland. Only small numbers arrived by sea at first so there was no sudden increase in shipping or large influx of arrivals streaming through the town. Nevertheless there was a noticeable upsurge in trade. Within three weeks, Rollwagen received a large order for wash dishes, C.S. Rowe opened the Commercial Hotel in Flinders Street, and Clifton and Aplin decided to re-build their store which had lain in ruins since March.¹³⁹ Supplies at the Cape River were scarce and prices in consequence high, and by the beginning of August several drays laden with supplies were heading out of town. At an auction of Clifton & Aplin's cyclone-damaged stock "brisk bidding showed gold 'galore' in Townsville".¹⁴⁰

¹³⁶The names listed here are from the *CBE*, 13 July 1867. Bolton, *A Thousand Miles Away*, p. 45, lists David Jones, Robert Robertson, Thomas Ellem, James Hewson, James Stonor and Charles Chappell.

¹³⁷*CBE*, 6 July 1867.

¹³⁸*PDT*, 5 October 1867.

¹³⁹*ibid.*, 20 July 1867, 24 August 1867; *CBE*, 20 July 1867.

The year 1867 ended with the gold discovery having brought little improvement or alteration to the townscape. A temporary hospital was erected. This was merely a two-roomed cottage with front verandah, costing \$60, which was described, only two years later, as "a ramshackle humpy".¹⁴¹ The Commercial Hotel was an unpretentious single-storeyed building with a triple-gabled roof and street awning, indistinguishable from the stores surrounding it. Clifton & Aplins' new store was a functional timber building with a shingle roof, unadorned and not particularly attractive. A Townsville Benefit, Investment and Building Society was formed,¹⁴² which indicates renewed interest in building, but few new houses seem to have appeared, and while subscription lists were started to purchase land for a Catholic Church, no churches were built. The only improvement to services in the town that the gold discovery hastened was the appointment of two police officers. If anything the town appeared even less lively than before with the sudden depopulation as local residents joined the rush to the Cape.

During the years 1866 and 1867 Townsville had not only survived the pastoral crisis, a devastating cyclone and the departure of its founder, it had actually grown, and services had improved. Already it was established at the centre of a network of roads and sea routes reaching out into the surrounding regions. The foundations had been laid well and now as new life was flowing into the township with the discovery of gold, the next few years would witness remarkable changes.

¹⁴⁰PDT, 3 August 1867.

¹⁴¹CBE, 21 August 1869.

¹⁴²CBE, 21 September 1867 published a prospectus, listing W.B. Grimaldi (provisional secretary), and A. Brodziak, J. Fletcher, W.A. Ross, J.E. Rutherford, E.U. Roberts, A. Blitz (provisional directors).

Chapter 5

The dramatic effect of the gold discoveries became noticeable in early 1868. In March that year the first large groups of miners began to arrive by sea.¹ By July there were 75 drays on the road between Townsville and the Cape River and business was being pushed on at "railway speed".² By August the road to the Cape River was "literally lined with drays".³ By November 1868 there was "a larger population on the Cape River Diggings than is contained in the whole of the other parts of the district put together".⁴

The Cape River field, while rescuing Townsville from stagnation, would not alone have guaranteed its development into a prosperous town. However, once one goldfield had been proved, it seemed that there was gold everywhere. In March 1868 the *Cleveland Bay Express*, discussed the prospects at the Gilbert field, in January 1869 fine gold samples at Ravenswood were reported, in September 1871 reefs at the Etheridge field were in the headlines and in February 1872 the discovery of gold at Charters Towers was reported.⁵ It was this succession of discoveries which ensured Townsville's progress into the early 1870s. As each new field opened, a road from Townsville was available almost immediately, which in every case proved to be the best route.

¹130 diggers arrived on the *Boomerang* (CBE, 28 March 1868). 84 diggers chiefly from New Zealand arrived on the *Eagle* bound for the Cape River (CBE, 11 April 1868).

²PDT, 4 July 1868.

³ibid., 1 August 1868.

⁴CBE, 14 November 1868.

⁵ibid., 28 March 1868; PDT, 16 January 1869, 29 September 1871, 24 February 1872.

Bowen tried desperately to gain the goldfields trade but the Townsville merchants never took Bowen competition very seriously;

so long as we have merchandise and energetic merchants and agents in our port, we need not fear of Bowen's attempts to eat us out and take all the benefit to herself of our Northern goldfields.⁶

Until the discovery of gold at Cape River the merchants in Bowen had remained smugly complacent that Bowen's better harbour would never be challenged by Townsville. Now for the first time they thought about improving their roads to the North Kennedy, but few displayed the 'get up and go' enterprise of Townsville's merchants.

Townsville's carriers had blazed a track to the Cape River while Bowen's merchants were sending 'memorials'⁷ to the Northern Engineer for Roads, A.C. MacMillan, requesting that the *Government* should find a road from Bowen to the diggings.⁸ However, as the *Port Denison Times* argued,

if the road from Townsville is so much shorter and better than that from Bowen...the traffic will go that way and nothing we can do will be able to divert it.⁹

Sadly for Bowen, Townsville was closer and a new and better road to that port via Homestead was opened in August 1867 which was even shorter.¹⁰ As the Ravenswood diggings developed, Bowen merchants contemplated re-opening the port of Wickham. This was unsuccessful, but in 1873 a bridge was erected over the Burdekin River further upstream.¹¹ This bridge however was an 'under-current' structure at times covered by six metres of water,¹² and Townsville continued to offer easier access to Ravenswood than Bowen.

During the Gilbert goldrush, Bowen accused Townsville of pirating the Gilbert trade from Cardwell. There is very little reason for this. Townsville merchants had offered a reward to the discoverer of a track to the Gilbert¹³ and established a road, while

⁶PDT, 17 August 1867.

⁷Petitions.

⁸ibid., 13 July 1867.

⁹ibid., 31 August 1867.

¹⁰ibid., 3 August 1867.

¹¹ibid., 15 June 1872, 11 January 1873.

¹²An 'under-current' bridge was designed to cross rivers at low level allowing flood water to cover them to some depth, thus escaping damage from surface currents and floating debris.

Cardwell merchants congratulated themselves on finding a track - then sat back insisting "the Government must do the remainder".¹⁴ Carriers found that the route from Townsville, though longer, took less time to traverse.¹⁵ Further, the Cardwell track was still infested with poison bush, and Collins of the Lynd lost eight working bullocks there in 1869.¹⁶ This was comparable to the loss of a prime-mover to a modern trucking company, so obviously carriers preferred the longer route via Dalrymple to Townsville, since it was not only free of poison bush but was quicker, involving only one stiff pull as opposed to many on the Cardwell track which, as the *Queenslander* pointed out, might "not be inaptly compared to a mule track among the Andes".¹⁷

Though Normanton¹⁸ took some of the Gilbert and Etheridge trade, Townsville retained a large share. This was largely the fault of Normanton storekeepers who were perhaps not as honest as those at Townsville!

A new road is being made from the top of the Cleveland Bay Road to this place [Georgetown] passing by the Star Copper Mines and coming out upon the old Lynd Road...shorter by 80 miles... we should then be enabled to get our rations good and fresh which we are not able now to do having to take what certain storekeepers choose to send us via the Norman.¹⁹

No amount of pressure from the Townsville merchants could have secured trade had the roads to Townsville not proved so convenient. This was the major factor which ensured that in the period from 1867 to 1872 Townsville became the major port for five rich goldfields. Luck and the opportunism and energy of Townsville businessmen did play important roles, but it must be emphasised that it was the convenient situation of the port and the ease of access to the hinterland, as J.M. Black had realised, that was the most important factor in Townsville's development.

¹³ *ibid.*, 12 June 1869.

¹⁴ *ibid.*, 2 October 1869.

¹⁵ *CBE*, 29 May 1869.

¹⁶ *ibid.*

¹⁷ *Qlder*, 13 June 1874.

¹⁸ Founded in 1864.

¹⁹ *PDT*, 10 July 1875, reporting from the Georgetown paper.

While gold began to take over as the major influence on Townsville's progress during 1868 and 1869 other industries continued. The first cotton crop was harvested in 1868 and 6350 kg of cotton were exported that year. In 1869 cotton exports rose to 9950 kg.²⁰ Sugar cane appears to have grown well but no attempt was made to erect a mill to process it. Beche-de-mer collectors used the port and the Kanaka trade continued.²¹ The pastoral industry was still in chaos, but wool was exported from Townsville and the boiling-down works was still operating profitably, while graziers continued to make Townsville their coastal resort.

The continuing effect of these industries now joined with the tremendous impetus of the gold discoveries caused Townsville's imports and exports to rise dramatically. Bowen soon fell well behind. A steady stream of merchants and tradesmen left Bowen for Townsville, some like Mason of Melbourne Stores bringing their stores with them.²² Throughout 1868 and 1869 thousands arrived heading for 'the Cape' and later the Gilbert and Ravenswood goldfields. Townsville developed a dual character which it still has to a certain degree: one section of the community of permanent residents, many of long standing, providing a solid core whose continuing presence lent the township stability and fostered steady growth, and another section of itinerants and speculators who arrived, set up business for a brief period, sold out at profit and left, contributing little to the town's development and having little real interest in the 'North'.

The contrast with Bowen which Weitemeyer noted, was even more obvious:

..one would scarcely think that this place and Bowen were in the same country. In Bowen everybody seemed to have plenty of time. The shopkeepers there would stand in their doorways most of the time, or go visiting one another. Then although Bowen was so much larger than Townsville, there seemed to be no people in it. But here there were crowds everywhere and seemingly not an idle man.²³

²⁰*Pugh's Almanac*, 1869 and 1870.

²¹*CBE*, 5 September 1868.

²²*ibid.*, 23 May 1868.

Townsville soon overtook Bowen. There was a sense of continual movement and expansion; local people busily going about their employment, new arrivals on their way to the goldfields, investors making personal inspections, successful diggers in town enjoying their new-found wealth, gamblers, prostitutes and confidence tricksters. Mingling with all, the Aborigines, previously frightened to approach nearer than Kissing Point, now paraded the streets, mostly stark naked, offending the sensibilities of Victorian settlers.²⁴

Townsville merchants prospered, most establishing branches at the diggings. As well as the carrying trade inland, there was a regular shipping service between Townsville, Cardwell and Bowen with two vessels competing for trade: the *Day Dawn* (agents S.F. Walker & Co.) and the A.S.N. steamer *Black Prince* (agents Towns & Co.).²⁵ Clifton & Aplin erected another new store in Flinders Street at the corner of Denham Street,²⁶ and the number of mercantile firms doubled. Of the older firms, Brodziak & Rodgers, W.A. Ross & Co., P.F. Hanran, and Towns & Co. were still in business, while Tulloh Nation & Co., Fred Gordon, Edward Head & Co. and S.F. Walker & Co. now entered the scene.²⁷ The large Chinese population on the goldfields resulted in the establishment of a Chinese firm, Sun Kum Toon.²⁸ The first firm to open in western Flinders Street, their premises were roughly on the site of the present Alexandra Arcade.

With the increased demand for vehicles, Thomas the blacksmith started making tip-drays at his shop behind the Criterion Hotel.²⁹ Pack horses were used extensively also, and saddlers received many large orders for pack saddles³⁰ as well as the usual harness and

²³Weitemeyer, op. cit., p. 104.

²⁴CBE, 29 May 1869.

²⁵ibid., 14 March 1868.

²⁶ibid., 15 May 1869.

²⁷All information on firms from CBE, advertisements and news items. CBE, 7 March 1868 has a notice that S.F. Walker severed his connection with Towns & Co. F. Coleman then became Towns & Co.'s Townsville manager.

²⁸ibid., 15 May 1869.

²⁹ibid., 8 February 1868.

³⁰Carroll, op. cit., CCM, October 1934, p. 37.

saddlery requirements, while Rollwagen the tinsmith must have been hard put to make enough dishes for goldwashing. As might be expected with the large increase in the numbers of carriers and blacksmiths, many other small businesses started. Local businessmen realised the potential for investment and companies were formed to develop the goldfields. The first local company was the Gold River Quartz Crushing Co. with Andrew Ball as provisional secretary.³¹

There was a large increase in demand for hotel accommodation although most diggers arriving preferred to pitch tents wherever they found a suitable spot. The Exchange Hotel was purchased from Head by Korah Halcombe Wills, previously a dedicated Bowen supporter, who renamed it Wills's Hotel.³² Edward Head then erected another Exchange Hotel in Flinders Street for Elizabeth Poole.³³ James Evans purchased the Townsville Hotel and renamed it Tattersalls.³⁴ Then John Deane built a new Townsville Hotel at the corner of Denham and Flinders Sts,³⁵ increasing the number of hotels in the township to seven.

Services and amenities in the township were strained as Townsville became a legal and medical centre for the surrounding districts. Criminals were brought in for trial or to be held in the lockup, and the sick for hospital treatment. The police force which numbered two at the end of 1867 - a sergeant and a constable - was expanded by two more constables in 1868 with the Commissioner of Police warning "more will be required shortly".³⁶ An official Gold Escort replaced the volunteer corps which had been riding a regular route to bring gold shipments safely to the Townsville banks for shipment south.³⁷ A permanent hospital was erected on Ross Island

³¹Directors: M.J. Benzeville (A.J.S. Bank), W. Aplin (C. & A.), A.C. Bailey (wellknown hotelkeeper), F.J. Hanran, S.F. Walker, H.F. Low (hotelkeeper), A. Brodziak, J. Fletcher (CBE, 3 March 1869).

³²ibid., 27 June 1868.

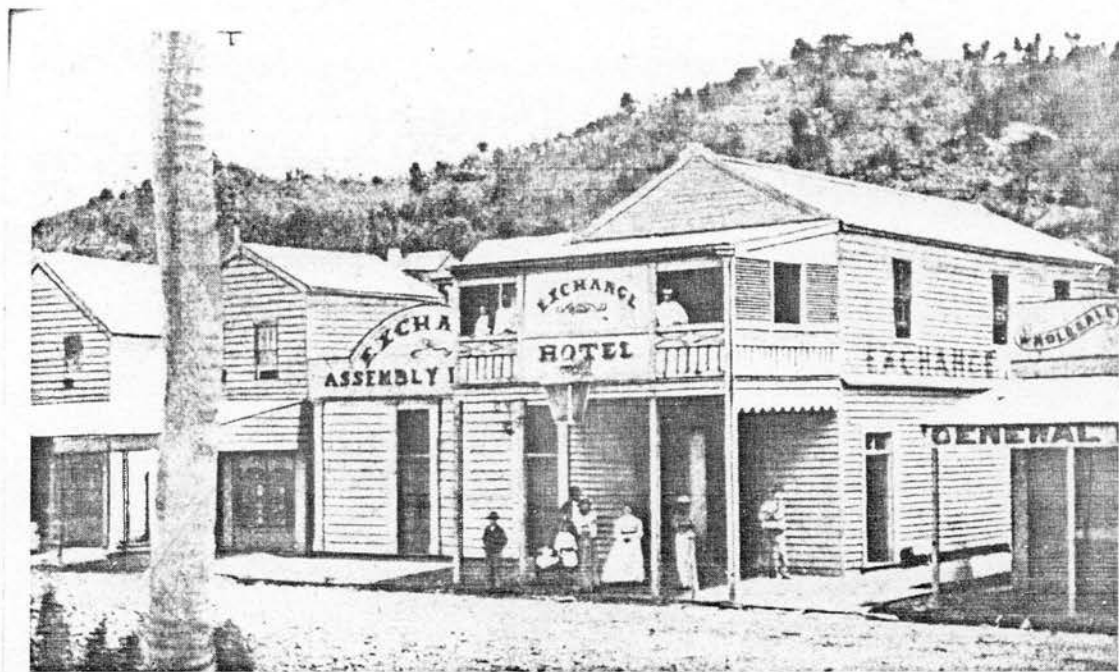
³³ibid., 29 February 1869. This hotel was on the site of the present Exchange Hotel.

³⁴ibid., 4 April 1868, 11 April 1868, 15 August 1868.

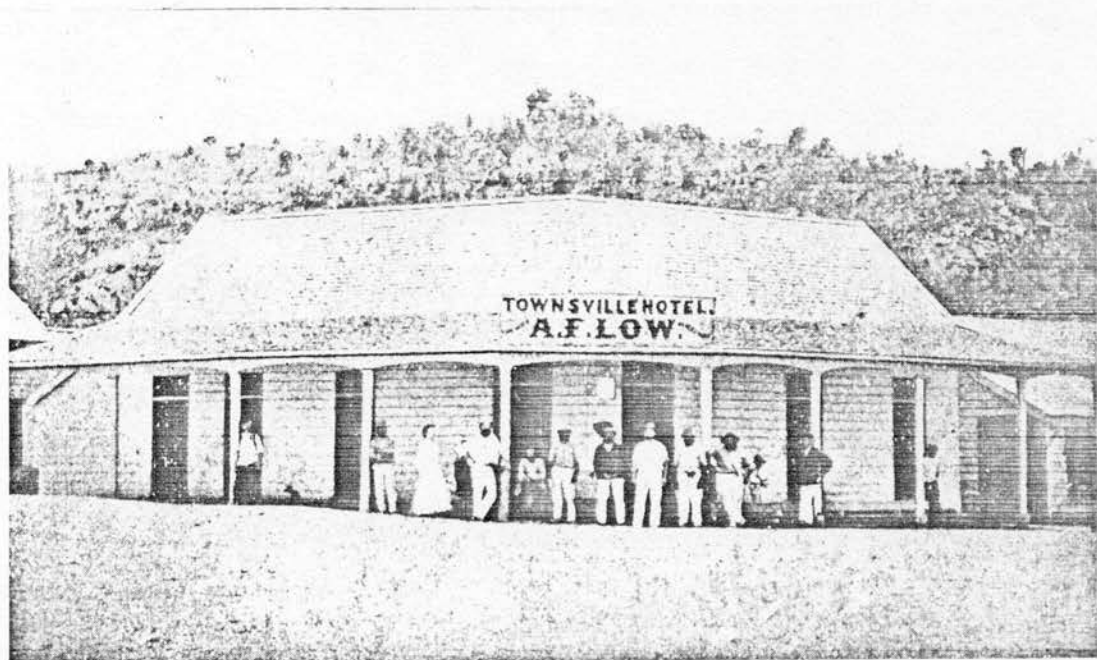
³⁵ibid., 16 October 1869.

³⁶Report of Commissioner of Police upon tour of inspection, Q.L.A., V.& P., 3 June 1868, p. 83.

³⁷ibid.



The Exchange Hotel and Exchange Assembly Rooms about 1870.
(Photograph from Jubilee Carnival Programme - 1913 - Delamothe
Collection, James Cook University, Townsville)



The Townsville Hotel about 1873
(Photograph from Jubilee Carnival Programme - 1913 - Delamothe
Collection, James Cook University, Townsville)

where it was believed the climate would be healthier.³⁸ It could hardly have been called convenient as all patients had to be transported across the creek by boat. Dangerously ill patients were apparently treated at doctors' rooms in the township when delay in transporting them across the creek might have been fatal. The number of doctors increased³⁹ as did the number of solicitors.⁴⁰

By 1869 a National School was started, though parents objected, stating that it was in a remote corner of the town.⁴¹ Despite objections it remained, to become later the old Central School, and attendances rapidly increased.⁴² In 1869 also Signor Panizza arrived from Sydney and was advertising music and singing lessons.⁴³ Already, despite the lack of a church, a Church of England Choir was formed⁴⁴ and there appear to have been some amateur singing groups though little information exists on these. The Municipal Council acquired its own wharf site opposite King street⁴⁵ and a Town Hall was erected on Melton Hill. The Library and Reading Room, forerunner of the School of Arts, was soon housed there.⁴⁶ A public pound was established in West End and stray animals were rounded up, no longer to roam a menace on the streets.⁴⁷ Funds were collected to fence the cemetery, but this does not seem to have been very effective since the cemetery was accidentally sold at auction in 1869.⁴⁸

³⁸CBE, 28 November 1868. This was near the present Cleveland Foundry.

³⁹By at least two; Dr Callaghan arrived in August 1868 (*ibid.*, 1 August 1868) and Dr Cunningham in October 1869 (*ibid.*, 9 October 1869). It is not known how long they remained.

⁴⁰Gilbert Wright (*ibid.*, 2 October 1869) and W.G. McNish (*ibid.*, 23 May 1868).

⁴¹*ibid.*, 5 June 1869.

⁴²*ibid.*, 20 November 1869.

⁴³*ibid.*, 28 August 1869.

⁴⁴*ibid.*, 31 July 1869.

⁴⁵*ibid.*, 28 August 1868.

⁴⁶*ibid.*, 10 October 1868.

⁴⁷*ibid.*, 7 March 1868. This was in the region of the present Fletcher Street. The first poundkeeper was John Deane (*ibid.*, 23 January 1869).

⁴⁸*ibid.*, 26 September 1868, 24 July 1869.

The Bank of New South Wales finally erected its own premises at the corner of the Strand and Wickham Street⁴⁹ but the greatest improvement to services came with the connection of the telegraph line on 11 March 1869⁵⁰ putting the township in direct contact with the rest of the world. A temporary telegraph office was opened in an office on the Strand⁵¹ with a permanent office opening shortly afterwards in Wickham Street.⁵²

Socially, life had become much livelier. There were still balls and dinners, but more regular entertainment was now provided by two theatres. The Theatre Royal was the first to open on 19 August 1869 under the management of the well-known actor Thomas Fawcett.⁵³ One of the first programmes offered was a concert by Madame Carandini, Miss Rosina Carandini, Miss Fannie Carandini and Mr Walter Sherwin.⁵⁴ The Theatre Royal was soon opposed by the Exchange Assembly Rooms run by Mrs Poole.⁵⁵

Despite a chronic labour shortage, as men continued to hasten to the goldfields, the *Cleveland Bay Express* could still note with pride. "though slow, the sure progress of the improved roads".⁵⁶ Oxley Street from Denham Street to the foot of the hill was resurfaced, and work also commenced on the raising of Flinders Street from Denham Street to King Street so that it was hoped

before long to see the water at spring tides confined to its proper course instead of diffusing its moist and offensive favours over a great portion of our principal thoroughfare.⁵⁷

As no provision was made for drainage, these road works were of

⁴⁹ibid., 26 June 1869.

⁵⁰ibid., 13 March 1869.

⁵¹On the site of part of the former Queens Hotel.

⁵²ibid., 13 January 1869, 17 April 1869, 18 September 1869. This was on the site now occupied by the A.B.C. studios.

⁵³ibid., 21 August 1869, 25 September 1869. Fawcett was a stage name. He was actually Thomas Rowe, the brother of C.S. Rowe.

⁵⁴ibid., 3 July 1869. Madame Carandini is said to have been Christie Palmerston's mother.

⁵⁵ibid., 17 July 1869.

⁵⁶ibid., 7 March 1868.

⁵⁷ibid., 22 February 1868.

little permanent value, destined to wash away with the next heavy wet season. Some slight improvement was made by the introduction of a by-law requiring that all owners of houses having a frontage to any main street should have them sufficiently spouted, but the effect of this is doubtful.⁵⁸ Footpaths were introduced in eastern Flinders Street, King Street, Wickham Street and on the Strand, although both Flinders Street and the Strand still remained unformed beyond King Street.⁵⁹ Some work was done on the formation of Denham Street and on Sturt Street from Denham Street to Stokes Street. In North Ward, as settlement spread, Eyre Street was formed from Oxley Street to Kennedy Street, and Warburton Street was formed from Howell Street to Eyre Street, with brick culverts being installed where creeks flowed across them at Gregory Street and between Stuart Street and Landsborough Street.⁶⁰

The road through North Ward was still regarded as the main road out of town, but new tracks were appearing, one leading out along Flinders Street and through West End to join the Dalrymple Track somewhere in the present suburb of Garbutt, the other following Flinders Street to the present Morris Street, then turning off roughly along the present Charters Towers and Ross River Roads to join the Dalrymple Track in the vicinity of the present Gleeson's Weir. After the Government installed a Toll Bar at the foot of Thornton's Gap in 1867,⁶¹ the carriers started to use a new route to the diggings, avoiding the toll by heading up Ross River to the present dam site, crossing the river there to Woodstock and the Haughton River and thence to Dalrymple and the goldfields. After the toll was removed,⁶² traffic to the Cape River, Gilbert and Etheridge fields followed the original route over Thornton's Gap, and this became known as the Georgetown Road. Traffic to Ravenswood and later Charters Towers used the route via Ross River which eventually became the Cobb & Co. coach road.⁶³ Some traffic

⁵⁸ibid., 25 April 1868.

⁵⁹ibid., 18 April 1868.

⁶⁰ibid., 3 July 1869.

⁶¹ibid., 26 October 1867.

⁶²ibid., 4 July 1868.

⁶³*Wilmott's North Queensland Almanac and Gazetteer* (hereafter *Wilmott's Almanac*), 1879.

apparently also proceeded along a route roughly similar to the present railway line to join this road at Woodstock, but the two former routes appear to have been used more frequently. By 1869, the original Thornton's Gap road was served by a number of wayside inns.⁶⁴ Most of these were, according to Lucy Gray, "noisy and dirty", though she found the Alice Hotel offered a warm welcome.⁶⁵

The town had spread in a number of directions. The hospital was the sole building in the present South Townsville with the police horse paddock occupying most of the remainder. The vineyard at Kissing Point had failed and Robinson moved to the former Chinese gardens in Belgian Gardens⁶⁶ which were known from then until the first world war as German Gardens. Part of that area was sold, but there do not appear to have been many houses built. Land was purchased by Camp, Flannigan, Bell, King, Benton, Crowther, Healy, Molloy, Morris and McVean,⁶⁷ most of whom eventually established either smithys or dairies, but it is not certain if they had done so by 1869. The hotel in Belgian Gardens had been renamed the Racecourse Hotel and Nathaniel Melzegarth transferred the license to Duncan McVean.⁶⁸ The hotel must have been doing well, as the carriers' camp nearby increased in size. Land in the present West End was sold in two and four hectare blocks in 1868,⁶⁹ but the purchasers were mainly speculators though some, like Pridmore of the livery stables and Fletcher the butcher, probably acquired their blocks for grazing. Findlater, Black & Co.'s former plantation overseer, had taken up land on the southern side of Ross River where James Gordon had also acquired the land on which he later developed Cluden Park.⁷⁰ He was already employing Chinese to develop

⁶⁴The Range Hotel at the foot of the Gap, the Bohle Hotel, the Alice Hotel and the Dotswood Hotel had been established.

⁶⁵Lucy Gray, 'Journey to Hughenden', reproduced in *Queensland Heritage*, vol. 1, no. 1, November 1964, p. 15.

⁶⁶'Viator', 'Mrs C. Robinson - Townsville's Oldest Resident', op. cit.

⁶⁷Details from Townsville Town Map, 1870, Q.S.A., L6/5 1870.

⁶⁸CBE, 1 January 1869.

⁶⁹ibid., 9 May 1868.

⁷⁰ibid., 20 March 1869.

extensive vegetable gardens on Stewart's Creek. Thomas Aitken and W.T. Morris had also taken up large areas of land in the present Aitkenvale.⁷¹ It can be seen that much of the land later included in the suburbs of Townsville was already settled by 1870 though it was mainly used for grazing and few could have foreseen that the town would one day extend so far.

In general, Townsville had a reputation of being "a dreary ugly place",⁷² but Lucy Gray was pleasantly surprised on her arrival, and remarked with great perception

I have found the generality of people don't know what is pretty, unless they are told. Australians, especially, don't seem to care for any place that is quite wild and uncultivated. They prefer trim, well-kept gardens and open country without many hills or trees.⁷³

She found Townsville beautiful, as they came to anchor "in a wide bay with mountains [of] every shade of blue violet gray stretching away to the north and the interior, suggesting an infinity of lovely places". Riding in the environs of the town by moonlight, she delighted in "such delicious yellow light and deep purple brown shadows, not like the cold blue and silver of English moonlight".

To her the bush was

a forest of tall trees without undergrowth, chiefly gums but others with delicate feathery(?) foliage mixed with palms which looked lovely against the clear green shading into deep blue of the sky.⁷⁴

Lucy Gray was one of few who lifted her eyes from the immediate foreground of little wooden buildings huddled along one side of the main street with the creek lying opposite, to appreciate the town's splendid setting of bush and mountains. In truth, at the end of the 1860s the township, as might be expected in such a recently developed place, did little justice to its beautiful setting. As Lucy Gray herself pointed out, it "looked very different" in harsh daylight.⁷⁵

⁷¹ibid., 30 October 1869.

⁷²Gray, op. cit., p. 13.

⁷³ibid., p. 14.

⁷⁴ibid.

⁷⁵ibid.

Those arriving in 1868 and 1869 found Townsville a straggling village with the creek forming one side of the main street. Shanties made of "packing cases and old tin" stood side by side with "others built with a view to permanency, of nicely dressed sawn timber, and looking like rich relations in contrast to their poor neighbours".⁷⁶ The whole cannot have been improved by the fact that citizens insisted on dumping their rubbish on the bank of the creek near Towns & Co.'s premises rather than using the approved dump.⁷⁷ On the other side of the creek was "a vast wilderness of swamp, long grass and trees" and Flinders Street straggled off into the bush beyond Denham Street, after which there were "turns off to the bush in all directions and tents, huts or sheets of galvanised iron stood all about...".⁷⁸

The main aim of the early settlers was to obtain shelter as quickly and as cheaply as possible and establish themselves in business. It is unlikely that many had determined whether they would remain in the area. It is certain that a number desired only to acquire wealth quickly in order to return south or to England to retire as 'gentlemen'. Others desired "a home - my own, my own and free, and I feel that I shall gain it in the land beyond the sea".⁷⁹ Little was known about the 'North'. The Neames were told in 1870 that they would "most likely be killed and eaten by the blacks or else by the crocodiles, and if not we should die of fever...".⁸⁰ No settler can have had definite knowledge as to whether he would even survive let alone remain in Townsville. Much would have depended on how well he succeeded and could support himself. Therefore the earliest houses were mainly of simple practical construction, easily built either by the owner or by builders with little or no skill, as Weitemeyer emphasised.⁸¹ More

⁷⁶Weitemeyer, op. cit., p. 102.

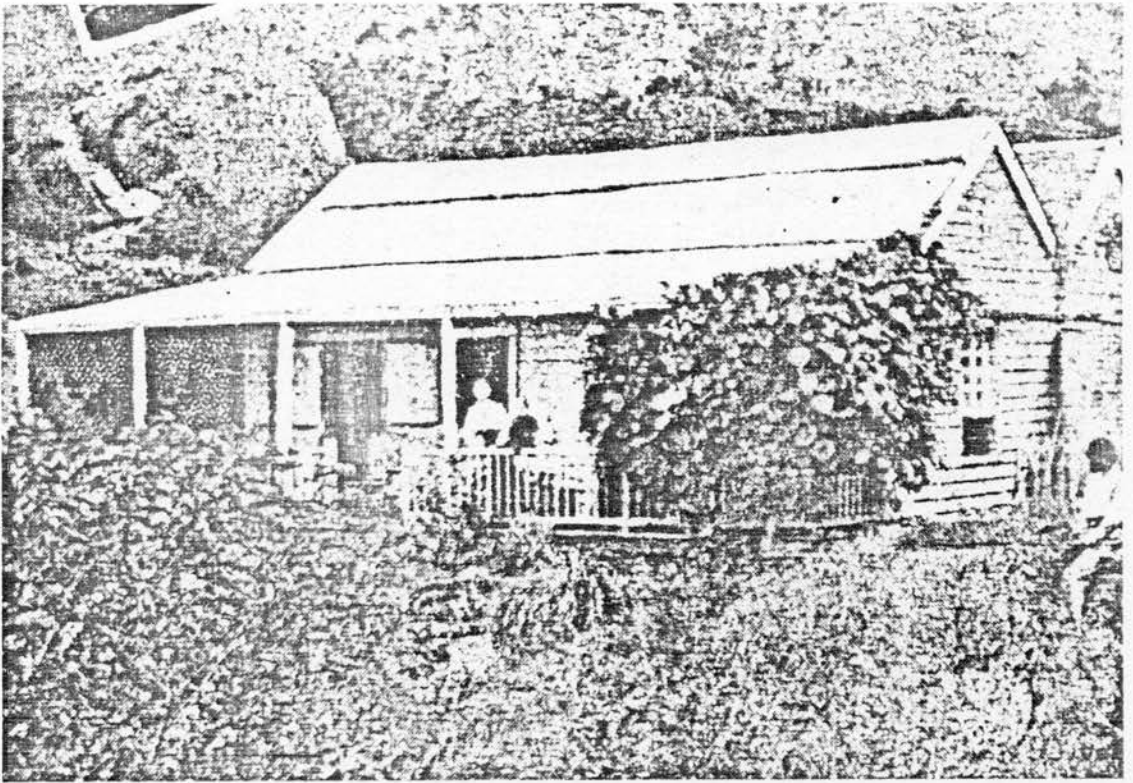
⁷⁷CBE, 19 September 1868.

⁷⁸Weitemeyer, op. cit., pp. 103-4.

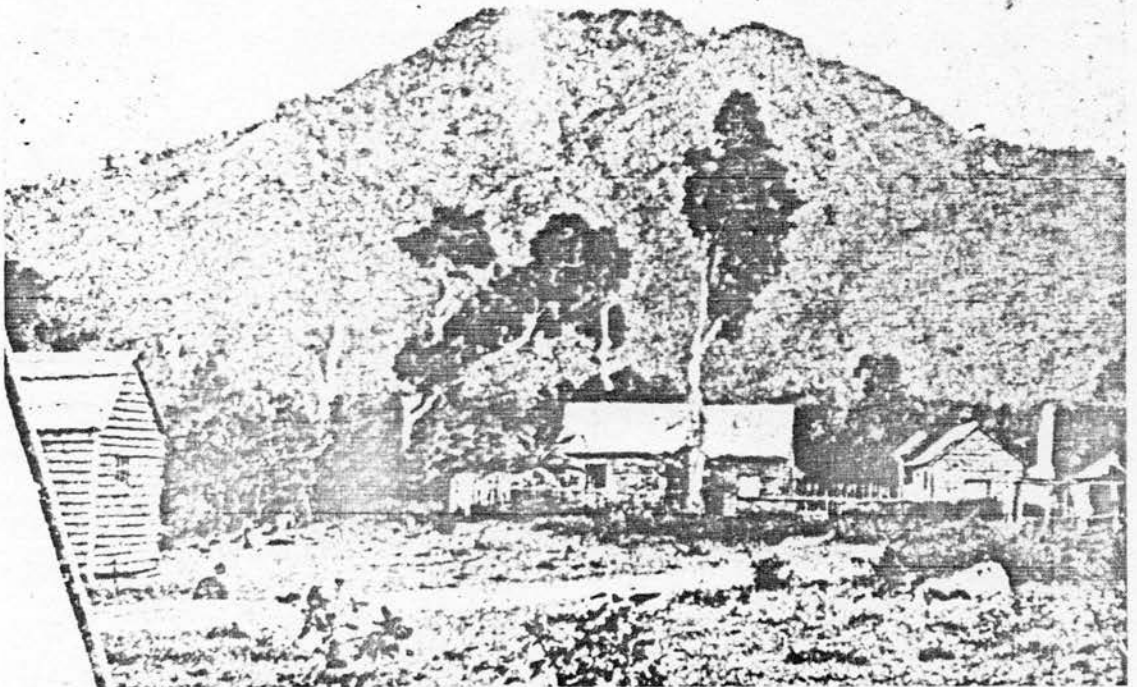
⁷⁹This is part of a poem by George Randall, immigration agent for the Queensland Government in London, 1867, quoted in Ian Turner, *The Australian Dream*, Melbourne 1968, p. 77.

⁸⁰Arthur Neame, 'Memoirs', *Queensland Heritage*, vol. 1, no. 4, May 1966, p. 26.

⁸¹See above.



F.A. Fryer's House - Melton Hill
(Photograph from Cummins and Campbell's Monthly Magazine, June, 1931)



Molloy's House and Dairy - North Ward
(Photograph from Cummins and Campbell's Monthly Magazine, June 1931)

elaborate houses would not be built until success and a measure of wealth were assured.

In the meantime, as in other Queensland towns, the houses were "mostly wooden or iron constructions raised on piles and consisting of a single floor with a small verandah in front".⁸² All timber was imported from the south, mainly from Maryborough.⁸³ Black & Co. were advertising for gum, iron bark and pine at their steam sawmills at Ross River⁸⁴ but this appears to have been for the steam boilers at the boiling-down works rather than for building purposes, though possibly some may have been used for building. Pine from Magnetic Island was being used in 1867 though probably not to any great extent.⁸⁵ Joinery was largely imported from the south.⁸⁶ Roofing material was corrugated iron and, surprisingly often, wooden shingles, which also were imported mainly from Maryborough.⁸⁷

Houses in early Townsville were almost invariably on low blocks with simple gable roofs which were the easiest to build. In some cases, louvered openings in the gable ends provided roof ventilation. Where larger houses were required, a second gable roof was usually added, giving a saw-toothed roof line. From photographic evidence available, it seems that J.M. Black's house on Melton Hill was the only private residence with a hip roof for some years.

Houses were built with either two or four main rooms, most commonly with only a front verandah, though a few were surrounded by verandahs on all sides. They were sheeted externally with either 'tin' (galvanised iron) or wide weatherboards which appear to have been either 15 or 20 centimetres (6 or 8 inches) wide, although those used on the overseer's house at Black & Co.'s plantation appear even wider. Exposed framing does not appear to have been used on any of the early houses in Townsville judging from available

⁸²Allen, *op. cit.*, p. 162.

⁸³Deduced from CBE, advertisements and sailing notices.

⁸⁴*Cleveland Bay Herald*, 3 March 1866.

⁸⁵CBE, 30 March 1867.

⁸⁶Deduced from CBE advertisements.

⁸⁷*ibid.*

photographic evidence. Entrance to these early homes was usually by a set of wooden steps without handrails located at the centre of the front verandah facing the front door. This gave access to either a central hallway or to the main living room in designs which dispensed with a central hallway, and was flanked by either sash windows or French doors. Sometimes there was a verandah at the back of the house where the kitchen was located. More frequently however to avoid fire risk, the kitchen was housed in a detached building at the rear of the main building. There was little ornamentation on these early houses. Decorative fretwork corner brackets and other details do not appear to have been used until much later; although photographs of J.M Black's house show such brackets, it is probable that these were added later.

Building blocks were mostly one-quarter acre (0.1 hectare) in area and toilet facilities were provided by outhouses situated some distance from the house - the traditional thunderboxes - serviced by a sanitary contractor. Occasionally similar small structures contained primitive shower arrangements, as Jessie Macqueen observed:

We had a bathroom too, a few yards from the house. From an architectural point of view, this closely resembled another structure of the same dimensions, which, as some still do, stood far at the end of the allotment. But the bathroom did contain one luxury - a shower bath of antiquated design. A tin contraption as water contained[*sic*] lowered from a rafter above, by a pulley and chain to the floor to be filled, then heaved upward into place. The bottom end perforated like a shower spray, performed the operation when we pulled a long string and lifted the plug.⁸⁸

As well, there were often servant quarters, stables and perhaps a carriage house, sometimes with provision for keeping a cow or chickens. Rain-water storage tanks do not appear to have been used much in the early years of settlement.

The shops too showed little variation in style, being set similarly on low stumps with timber floors. Though mainly of one storey, there appear to have been one or two with two storeys with living quarters upstairs. They were of simple design with gable roofs, the gable facing the street, with awnings shading the footpaths. The roof line of eastern Flinders Street was like the

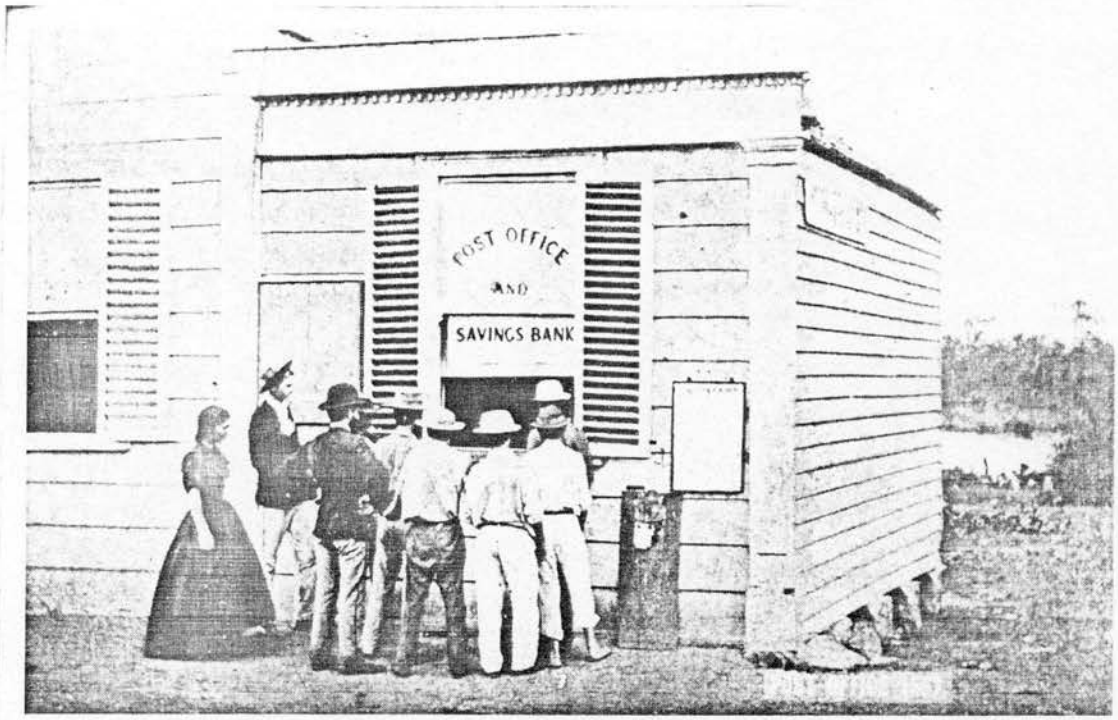
⁸⁸Jessie Macqueen, *Memories of Townsville*, Townsville 1963, p. 3.

teeth of a saw, the line being broken only by the two-storeyed facade of the Exchange Hotel. Shops were often minute with wooden steps without handrails giving access to a front door set to one side, and a single large window on the opposite side in the space between the door and the wall. Larger stores were built, like larger houses, merely by adding an additional gable roof. These had mainly centrally placed front entries with large windows on either side. Ventilation was provided, as in the houses, by louvered openings in the gables. As with the houses, they too were sheathed externally with weatherboards, and roofed with galvanised iron or shingles. Sometimes they were sheathed with galvanised iron also.

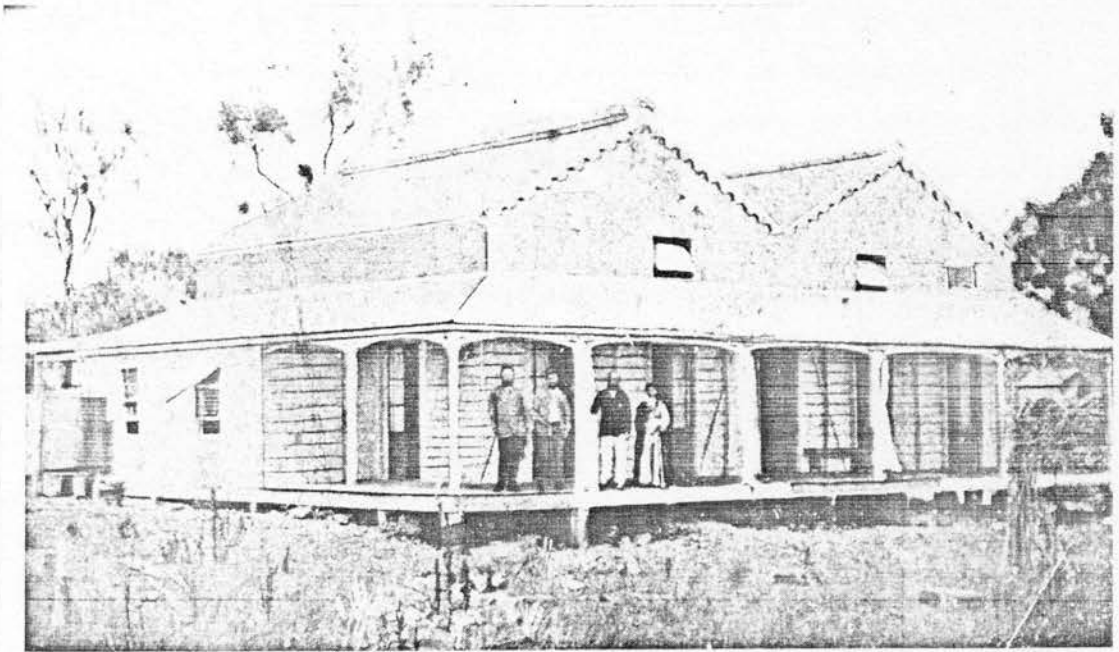
The large warehouses and wharves of the merchants remained the only buildings on the bank of the creek and were functional rather than beautiful. The former Carter & Co. warehouse, later taken over by the A.S.N. Company, was a large galvanised-iron building with gable roof. Towns & Co. appears to have been a conglomeration of three or four gable roofed buildings but it is not now possible to ascertain if all buildings were sheathed with iron or weatherboards. Later photographs, taken when Robert Philp took over these stores, indicate that the Flinders Street building, at least, may have been sheathed with timber. However Philp had carried out extensive renovations, and the evidence is not conclusive. Clifton & Aplin Brothers'⁸⁹ stores were of timber with shingle roofs. The original store, built after the cyclone, stood on piles on the river bank with new stores facing Flinders Street. By 1870 these had expanded to two hip-roofed sheds with timber 'false front' rising to a plainly decorated parapet, with two large entrance doors separated by sash windows screened with shutters. At the Denham Street end, a small building was attached which served as the local Post Office until postal services were shifted into an official post office in Wickham Street in 1874.

By 1870 there were only five public buildings: the Hospital, the Town Hall, the National School, the Court and Custom's House and the Gaol. Tenders had been called for the erection of a Magazine to

⁸⁹By this time, the original partners were joined by William Aplin's brother, Henry.



Townsville Post Office about 1870 (The photograph bears the date 1867, but this appears a little early).
(Photograph from the collection of Mrs D.M. Gibson-Wilde)



The Hospital erected in 1868
(Photograph from Jubilee Carnival Programme - 1913 - Delamothe Collection, James Cook University, Townsville)

store the gunpowder used on the goldfields but no move had been made towards its erection.⁹⁰

The Hospital, intended to accommodate 20 to 30 patients, was erected in 1868 at a cost of about \$250, nearly all of which was subscribed in Townsville.⁹¹ Designed by Emmanuel Usher Roberts, it stood roughly near the rear of the present Cleveland Foundry. It is unlikely that Roberts had any training in architecture, and the hospital was plainly designed, resembling an oversized house with double-gable roof and surrounding verandahs. It was of timber, set on low stumps. Where the verandah shaded the walls, the exposed framing building technique was used for the first time in the township.⁹² Above the line of the verandah roof, the walls were externally sheeted with weatherboards. The total dimensions of the building were 15 m x 12 m with verandahs 3 metres wide. A plain front door led to a hallway dividing the building in two, with two wards on either side, 6 m x 5 m with a roof "upwards of 20ft [6 m] high".⁹³ One of the back wards was set apart for patients with eye diseases, so common then in the north, and was painted green. Ventilation was provided by hopper-type shutters in the upper walls, and raised ridge capping to allow the passage of breeze into the ceiling. Some decorative features, such as scalloped barge boards and plain arched inserts between the verandah posts were introduced, but the verandah was left open without balustrading.

The Court and Customs House remained a most austere building, while the Telegraph Office was virtually a gable-roofed house, with open verandah overlooking Wickham Street. Sheeted in weatherboards with a shingle roof, it was an extremely plain building which the *Cleveland Bay Express* felt "could have been more pretentious".⁹⁴ The Police Station and Gaol remained unchanged while the Town Hall was little more than a wooden shed with front verandah overlooking

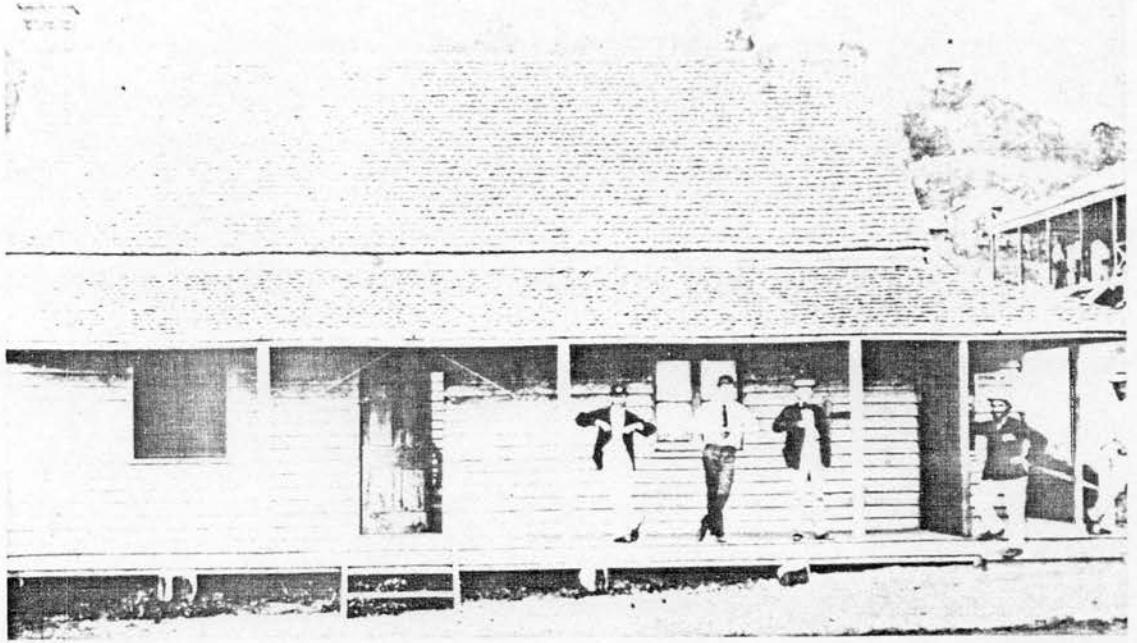
⁹⁰CBE, 21 August 1869.

⁹¹ibid., 28 November 1868.

⁹²In this type of construction, walls were sheeted only on the inside, leaving the framing of the building exposed externally.

⁹³ibid.

⁹⁴ibid., 17 April 1869.



The Telegraph Office erected in 1869
(Photograph from the collection of the John Oxley Library, Brisbane)



Cleveland Terrace about 1875.
On the right between the roofs of the Bank of N.S.W. is the first
Town Hall.
(Photograph from the collection of the Mitchell Library, Sydney)

the Strand. It was a far cry from the edifice proposed originally by Johnson.⁹⁵ Erected by the contractors Shearer and Brodie and "though not a stately edifice", it suited exactly the requirements of the Council.⁹⁶ It contained a council chamber, town clerk's office and town surveyor's office with a store room under the building.

The National School opened officially in the building which had been the Burdekin and Flinders Hospital on the Strand.⁹⁷ A new building was pre-fabricated in Brisbane, and arrived on the brig *Louisa Maria* in May 1869.⁹⁸ It was erected by D'Evlin, a Brisbane contractor, on the site now occupied by the Dental Clinic, and completed by August 1869.⁹⁹ Of hardwood weatherboards, lined with pine, the main building measured 15 m x 6 m, with the roof preprojecting at each end for 6 metres. The walls were 3.8 m in height, and ventilation was provided "by an open roof with projecting eaves supported on the walls by frame principals and stop-chamfered purloins[*sic*]". The building was painted on the exterior in deep chocolate with the sashes and doors cut in, and the lining boards were varnished. The school was furnished with 12 long desks to serve the needs of 48 scholars. A headmaster's residence was provided 50 metres from the building, consisting of two large rooms with verandah back and front and a kitchen with brick chimney.¹⁰⁰

The most pretentious buildings remained the hotels. The Criterion was "the largest and most comfortably and pleasantly situated in Townsville".¹⁰¹ It was repaired after the 1867 cyclone in the same style as before. The Exchange Hotel, now renamed Wills's, also retained its original appearance. James Evans

⁹⁵See above.

⁹⁶CBE, 26 September 1868.

⁹⁷ibid., 18 July 1868, states it was purchased for \$10; ibid., 27 March 1869. See ch. 4 for a description of the original building.

⁹⁸ibid., 15 May 1869.

⁹⁹School was to open on 16 August 1869 (ibid., 14 August 1869).

¹⁰⁰ibid., 31 July 1869.

¹⁰¹ibid., 5 June 1869.

acquired the Townsville Hotel in 1868 and renamed it Tattersalls. He immediately built a two-storeyed addition with what appears to have been a cantilevered balcony to the Wickham Street facade of the single-storeyed building, which had been restored after the 1867 cyclone.¹⁰² The new Exchange Hotel in Flinders Street occupied only half the frontage of the present Exchange Hotel. It was two-storeyed with a verandah to the top floor extending over the footpath to shade the street frontage. This verandah was balustraded with dowelling topped by a border of cross-braces.

All other hotels were single-storeyed, the Commercial having a triple-gabled roof with louvered ventilation panels at the centre of each gable, and a street awning with a decorative arched edging shading the street. The Townsville Hotel was built in an L-shape to follow the corner of Denham Street and Flinders Street, again in simple single-storeyed design with French doors surmounted by fanlights opening directly to the footpath. The shingle roof extended to shade the footpath and was edged with plain arched boards. All hotels were sheeted externally with wide weatherboards.

The premises of the banks were unimpressive. The Australian Joint Stock Bank remained in the original sweet shop. The Bank of New South Wales erected its own premises at the corner of the Strand and Wickham Street in 1869.¹⁰³ Built by Magee, this building resembled an unpretentious house, part of which served as quarters for the manager.

Neither the Theatre Royal nor The Exchange Assembly Rooms could be called imposing buildings. No photographs have survived of the Theatre Royal, but descriptions indicate that Bridges, the owner, had converted premises previously used as a shop next to the Commercial Hotel.¹⁰⁴ A photograph does exist of the Exchange Assembly Rooms which shows it to have been a single-storeyed building attached to the Exchange Hotel. Of plain weatherboard construction with two doors surmounted by fanlights opening directly to the footpath, it was given some prominence by a large board

¹⁰²ibid., 15 August 1868.

¹⁰³ibid., 23 January 1869.

¹⁰⁴ibid., 21 August 1869.

attached to the parapet bearing its name, but could not be described as impressive.

By the start of 1870 Townsville had changed rapidly, but while there were now many substantial permanent buildings, these were still for the most part unremarkable and interspersed with humpies and shanties. The streets, though formed in places, remained for the most part mere tracks through the scrub and those that were formed were only gravel. The wear and tear of the iron-bound wheels of drays and waggons and the feet of the many beasts used in transport, together with the vagaries of the weather, soon broke them up again.

Some thought was given to a future when citizens might welcome open green spaces. A reserve for a town common was applied for in 1868.¹⁰⁵ This stretched from the municipal boundary as far as Cape Pallarenda to a depth of 3 kilometres from the beach. However, the common was used for grazing, not as a recreation area. In 1869 the surveyor E.U. Roberts was instructed by the Government to lay out 40 hectares of land for a botanical gardens and recreation ground, but no effort appears to have been made to develop the area.¹⁰⁶

Townsville was beginning to put on a thriving air and was booming rapidly in February 1870, when it was struck again by "a heavy gale, if not a hurricane". The roofs of nearly every verandah on Melton Hill were blown off, and outhouses were blown down in "a most indiscriminate manner".¹⁰⁷ The verandah roofs and portions of the main buildings of both Wills's Hotel and the Criterion Hotel were partly carried away and several suburban houses were damaged, but the Flinders Street area appears to have suffered little damage. Trees were uprooted and many blocked tracks in all directions while the different roads to the racecourse were "literally strewn with fallen timber".¹⁰⁸ The steamer *Black Prince* ended its days beached

¹⁰⁵ *ibid.*, 18 July 1868.

¹⁰⁶ *ibid.*, 14 August 1869. This area was bounded by the streets now named Warburton, Paxton, Landsborough and Gregory.

¹⁰⁷ *PDT*, 12 March 1870.

¹⁰⁸ *ibid.*

on the Strand a kilometre south of Kissing Point, where its remains must lie beneath the sands to this day in the vicinity of the Seaview Hotel. The ketch *Wonder* was also beached somewhere between there and the present Convent, but it was apparently salvaged.

The whole of the southern bank of Ross Creek as far as the plantation and the boiling-down works was "one sheet of water of very uncertain depth".¹⁰⁹ Water two metres deep flowed through the boiling-down works, washing away a large number of casks, while the cottages occupied by the employees were completely washed out and the kitchens and outhouses swept away. The cotton and sugar crops were flattened. Combined with a severe depression in the Australian cotton industry, this put an end to the cotton and sugar industries at Cleveland Bay. Bolton has stated that this flood probably caused the closure of the boiling-down works.¹¹⁰ This was not so; operations were resumed after the flood, but by August the management was offering reduced rates for processing sheep.¹¹¹ That such offers were needed to attract business indicates that the works must not have been operating anywhere near to full capacity. The reduction in the number of beasts in the hinterland due to the slump, improved husbandry and the increased demand for meat on the goldfields may well have reduced the demand for boiling down. Towns had also started removing sheep from his stations in the hinterland so that the boiling-down works was perhaps not as necessary to the interests of Towns & Co. Whatever the reasons, the boiling-down works appears to have ceased operations at the end of 1870. Though having no further influence on the development of Townsville, it had contributed to keep the town alive until the gold discoveries took over to hasten development.

With a golden future assured, at least for the next few years, there was no hesitation in rebuilding. All damaged buildings were quickly restored, and life in the township became even busier. By March the correspondent of *The Queenslander* was remarking that this

¹⁰⁹ *ibid.*

¹¹⁰ Bolton, *A Thousand Miles Away*, op. cit., p. 40.

¹¹¹ *CBE*, 13 August 1870.

northern entrepot, "the Gateway to a Golden Land", was

a thriving bustling little place with an active and intelligent corporation proud of what they have already accomplished and fully alive to the further requirements of the place.

Riding up Flinders Street he found it "quite a work of art, raised and metalled, crowded with horse and bullock teams loading for the various diggings".¹¹²

If Carr's pamphlet *Where not to Emigrate*¹¹³ may have been discouraging migrants from coming to Queensland generally, gold discoveries kept new arrivals flocking through Townsville at an astonishing rate. By May 1870 the *Port Denison Times* was reporting that Flinders Street was

quite alive with horse teams and bullock drays. An immense quantity of loading has gone out of town independent of the goods which have been taken by some dozens of pack horses bound for the Gilbert and other goldfields. There are now no less than 50 loaded drays between Townsville and the Range and the quantity of loading may be averaged at about two and one half tons for each team.¹¹⁴

Crushing machinery was arriving regularly for trans-shipment to the goldfields and the gold escort was bringing regular shipments of gold into the vaults of the Townsville banks. The beche-de-mer and Kanaka traders were still operating.¹¹⁵ Though the pastoral industry remained in the doldrums, the sugar industry in the Cardwell/Herbert River area was more firmly established. Cardwell was initially the port the early cane farmers looked to, but Neame and others frequently used Townsville as a source of supplies and labour and the foundations were laid for greater interdependence in the future.

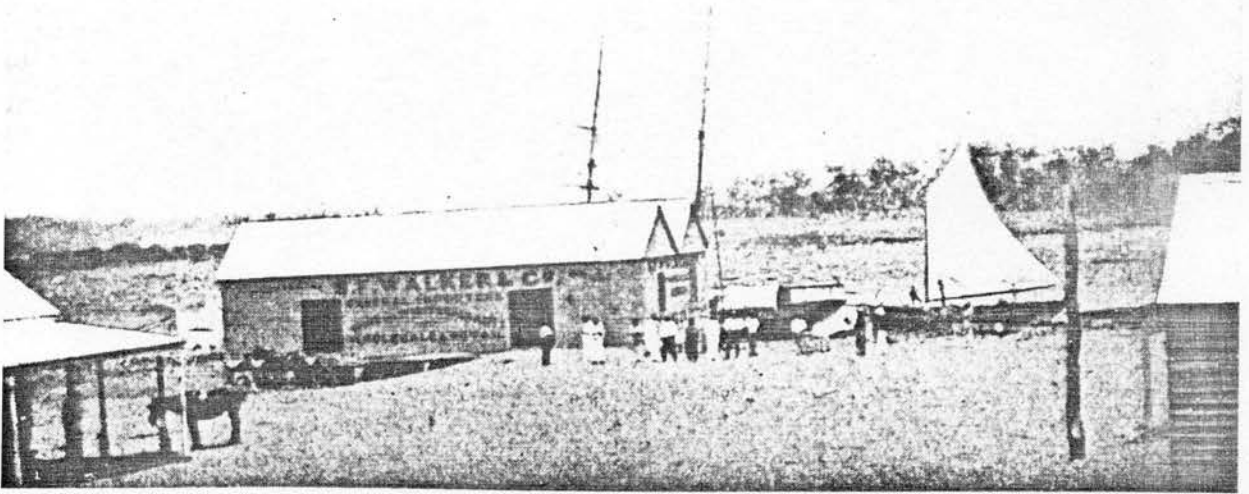
Townsville grew rapidly. No move was made though to establish the business centre in North Ward as Black had planned. The city centre remained in eastern Flinders Street near the wharves, with Flinders Street now extending further west, into the block between Denham Street and Stokes Street. In eastern Flinders Street "empty

¹¹²Qlder, 26 March 1870.

¹¹³Referred to in CBE, 16 April 1870.

¹¹⁴PDT, 7 May 1870.

¹¹⁵Jones, *Trinity Phoenix*, op. cit., p. 16 notes the connection between Garland and S.F. Walker and other connections between the beche-de-mer traders of Green Island in particular and Townsville at this time and later.



Warehouses of S.F. Walker and Co(erected for Carter and Co in 1865) about 1870.

(Photograph from Jubilee Carnival Programme - 1913 - Delamothe Collection, James Cook University, Townsville)



Warehouses of Clifton and Aplin Brothers about 1870.

(Photograph from the collection of the John Oxley Library, Brisbane)



View from Melton Hill overlooking the mouth of Ross Creek about 1870. In the foreground from left to right are the back of the Court and Customs House, back of the Telegraph Office and Tattersall's Hotel. In the background, from left to right are the back of the North Australian Hotel, back of the Criterion Hotel, buildings of the Harbours and Rivers Department and the Police Station and Lock-up. Across the cree, the hospital is clearly visible while the Magazine is just discernible on Darling (or Magazine) Island.
(Photograph from Jubilee Carnival Programme - 1913 - Delamothe Collection, James Cook University, Townsville)



Magazine Island (also known as Darling Island) from Darling Point (later known as Pilot Hill) about 1870, showing location of the Magazine.
(Photograph from the collection of the Department of History, James Cook University, Townsville)

allotments were being filled with shops" and the *Cleveland Bay Express* forecast that it would not be long before all allotments were filled and land in Flinders Street would be at a premium.¹¹⁶

Direct trade had been established with Sydney for some time¹¹⁷ and in 1870 direct trade with Melbourne was established.¹¹⁸ A shorter road to Ravenswood was opened and a regular coach service to that thriving township started from the Exchange Hotel in August 1870.¹¹⁹ It is not clear whether the coach route followed the old road via North Ward or the new route which had been pioneered, along Flinders Street and into the present Ingham Road to a point near where the Carriers' Arms Hotel was built a couple of years later.¹²⁰ The road then turned left to pass through the mangroves which extended to the present showgrounds, on what must have been a corduroy crossing,¹²¹ thence to follow roughly the alignments of the present Charters Towers Road and Ross River Road to the present Moondarga area. From there, the Ravenswood road branched off to follow the bank of Ross River to the Ross Crossing,¹²² while the Georgetown road continued to follow the old road over Harvey's Range.

More improvements had been made to other facilities in order to meet the growing commercial requirements. W.H. Poultney removed many of the rocks which blocked the mouth of the creek, and the A.S.N. Co., which had taken over the former Carter & Co. wharf site, reclaimed the ground along the creek around their store, improving their wharf and landing facilities.¹²³ The first full time Post

¹¹⁶CBE, 27 August 1870.

¹¹⁷Towns & Co. pioneered this trade. CBE, 7 March 1868 advertised direct sailing to Sydney of the ketch *Edith* (agent S.F. Walker).

¹¹⁸The *Ottawa* was on its way from Melbourne (CBE, 11 June 1870) though it is not certain whether this was on a regular basis.

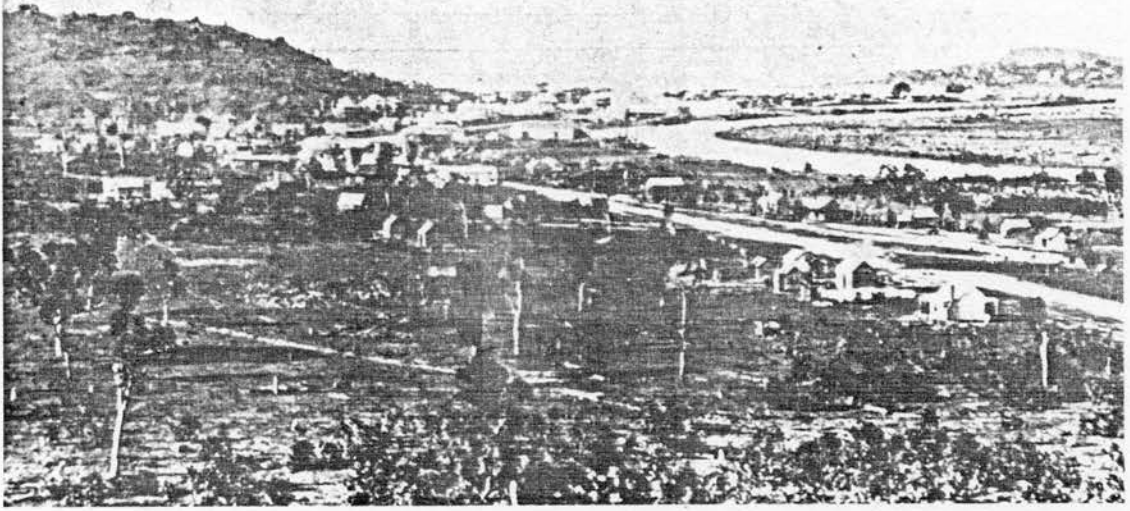
¹¹⁹CBE, 13 August 1870. The first coach to run between Townsville and Ravenswood arrived from Sydney on the *Boomerang* on 12 August 1870. It commenced running at 7 a.m. on Thursday, 18 August 1870 under the proprietorship of Mr Ganes.

¹²⁰On site of present Midtown Motel, Ingham Road.

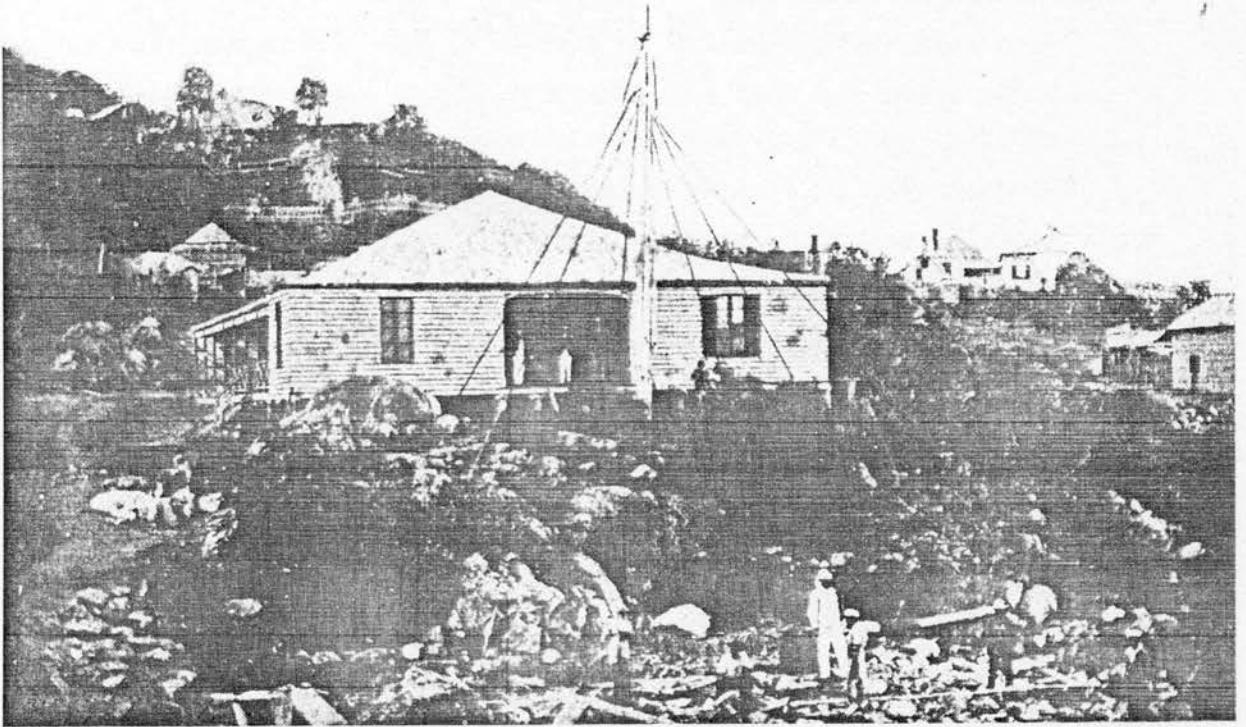
¹²¹A crossing made from parallel logs laid on the soft mud.

¹²²This was roughly where the Ross River Dam is now sited.

¹²³CBE, 27 August 1870.



View of Townsville from Castle Hill about 1870.
(Photograph from the Delamothe Collection, James Cook University,
Townsville)



The Court and Customs House, 1872. On the verandah are, on the left
R.W. Irving, in centre, Smales and on the right, James Gordon.
(Photograph from Jubilee Carnival Programme - 1913 - Delamothe
Collection, James Cook University, Townsville)

Master, E.G. Grose, was appointed¹²⁴ though the Post Office remained the rather strange little building attached to Clifton & Aplin Brothers' Store. The Magazine was completed and explosives were now stored with less danger to the community on the opposite side of the creek, where Redcliffe Island now became popularly known as Magazine Island. The Magazine was built of local stone which was found to be admirably adapted for building purposes. It was 5.4 m x 4.2 m and 3.2 metres in height with an iron roof projecting well over the walls. The flooring was of hardwood and the entrance door was of "cedar sheeted with copper".¹²⁵ It was the only occasion, until the erection of the present Customs House in 1899, that local stone was used in a building in Townsville.

The Court and Customs House was extended to cater for the proposed sittings of the District Court. It appears that the original building was surrounded by a verandah 3.5 metres wide, and the verandah corners overlooking Wickham Street were enclosed to provide offices for the Police Magistrate (4.5 m x 3.6 m) and the Clerk of Petty Sessions (3.6 m square). The height of these rooms was only 2.1 metres at the outer wall plates, and as they were roofed with unceiled galvanised iron, the heat in summer was "unbearable".¹²⁶ The windows in these new rooms were casements, screened by louvered shutters and this appears to have been the first time in Townsville that this style of window was used. During sittings of the Northern District Court, the Police Magistrate had to vacate his office to provide a robing room for the judge while the Clerk of Petty Sessions' room became the retiring room for the jury. On such occasions the Police Magistrate had "no office in which I can transact any Police business, thereby necessitating a total stoppage".¹²⁷ It was an inconvenient and unattractive building which even in 1870 was already situated too far from the western section of the township where future development was obviously going to extend. Nevertheless it was there that the first

¹²⁴ *ibid.*, 5 November 1870, states Mr Grose had just arrived.

¹²⁵ *ibid.*, 11 June 1870.

¹²⁶ Fitzroy Somerset, P.M., Townsville to Under-Secretary Public Works, 30 March 1874, Q.S.A., WOR/A396:96/5993.

¹²⁷ *ibid.*

sittings of the District Court took place under Justice Hirst on 7 November 1870.¹²⁸

The township still had no church although both Catholic and Church of England denominations owned blocks of land.¹²⁹ A Church of England minister, the Rev. Adams arrived in 1870,¹³⁰ and conducted services in the Court House; it was there in November of that year that Bishop Tuffnell held the first Anglican confirmation service in the township.¹³¹

Another ward was added to the Hospital¹³² and sites were laid out on Melton Hill for a School of Arts and a Fire Brigade Headquarters.¹³³ Although meetings had been held to establish a School of Arts,¹³⁴ no building had commenced and the Library was still accommodated in the Municipal Chambers. Another hotel, the European, was erected in the block between Stokes and Stanley Streets, but no description of this hotel remains.

Recreational facilities were improved when W.H. Poultney was employed to clear an area in the Botanical Gardens Reserve for a cricket ground.¹³⁵ Named the Townsville Cricket Ground, it was formally opened in May 1870, and became the venue for an annual match - Bush versus Town.¹³⁶ What appears to have been Townsville's first charter boat trip to the Barrier Reef took place at Easter when several local residents chartered the *Day Dawn* to visit the Barrier Reef and Palm Islands, "shooting, fishing and hunting for

¹²⁸CBE, 12 November 1870 states the first District Court sittings "Monday and Tuesday last" (i.e. 7 and 8 November 1870).

¹²⁹A collection was made for the purchase of the land for the Catholic Church. See list of contributors in CBE, 16 November 1867.

¹³⁰ibid., 23 July 1870.

¹³¹ibid., 19 November 1870. The silver communion service used at this service was donated to the parish of St James by the Bishop of Sydney (ibid., 15 October 1870)

¹³²ibid., 17 December 1870.

¹³³ibid., 24 September 1870.

¹³⁴ibid., 15 October 1870.

¹³⁵ibid., 14 May 1870. This was on the site of the present Central School.

¹³⁶ibid., 30 July 1870.

curiosities".¹³⁷

At this point also, the Municipal Council started to try repairing some of the depredations man had made to the flora. Since the start of settlement, trees in the surrounding areas had been steadily felled mainly for firewood for the cooking and washing needs of the settlers, but also for the steam boilers at the boiling-down works and for steamships. As a result, the area was being steadily denuded of all usable timber. There was little respect for, or knowledge of, native trees, but the Council, apparently in an effort to repair some of the damage, imported a number of saplings of both native and exotic trees from the Queensland Acclimitisation Society.¹³⁸ Where these trees were planted is not known, but it is reasonable to suppose that some of them were established in the Botanical Gardens.

Life in the township appears to have become much wilder in some respects. Townsville was now host to all the lawlessness of the goldfields.¹³⁹ There were reports of drunkenness, violence and vagrancy with violent crimes such as a stabbing which took place in a by-lane off Flinders Street in 1870.¹⁴⁰ Further to this, the Aborigines had become more troublesome. A large group of "wild blacks" visited the town in June 1870, stealing numerous items and causing concern,¹⁴¹ and a permanent camp of about 300 Aborigines was established at Mt Marlow in July. Sergeant Higgins of the local police reported that the gunyahs erected were "of more than usual substantial nature", indicating a long stay.¹⁴² The Aborigines used to visit the settlement with loads of firewood which they sold for "sixpence a load";¹⁴³ this camp became a source of labour for

¹³⁷ *ibid.*, 16 April 1870.

¹³⁸ *ibid.*, 27 August 1870.

¹³⁹ There are a number of examples of this, but the best is perhaps the complaint that Townsville "was honoured by a visit from certain gentry whose gambling proclivities have rendered them only too familiar with police authorities in other parts of Queensland" (*CBE*, 11 June 1870).

¹⁴⁰ *ibid.*, 27 August 1870.

¹⁴¹ *ibid.*, 25 June 1870.

¹⁴² *ibid.*

¹⁴³ Carroll, *op. cit.*, *CCM*, December 1934, p. 49.

the district and, it is assumed, for the local beche-de-mer gatherers.¹⁴⁴ They became a problem to the settlers since

scarcely anything is too hot or too heavy for them to carry away and simply ordering them to depart from the vicinity of dwelling houses even when in a state of nudity is absurd.¹⁴⁵

In summary, Townsville was still a long way from becoming an attractive, orderly and substantial town by the end of 1870. The discovery of gold was too recent to have had a great impact on the building styles in the township, and there were few signs of the increased assurance of its permanence or growing affluence in the architectural styles of the buildings at the end of the 1860s. As Bolton points out, "civic pride did not flourish in an industry as transient and uncertain as gold mining",¹⁴⁶ and Townsville was very much a part of the goldfields' development at this stage. It remained a raw and unremarkable collection of 'timber and tin' buildings with few pretensions and little charm, save for the beauty of its setting. In six years it had emerged from virgin bush to bustling township. It had outstripped both Bowen and Cardwell to become the major port of north Queensland, despite the fact that the harbour remained unimproved, except for the removal of a few of the rocks barring the creek. Even then, despite the gold discoveries, the future could hardly be regarded as assured. Gold was an unreliable foundation on which to build, the pastoral industry was barely beginning to show signs of improvement, the sugar industry was in its infancy and the beche-de-mer and Kanaka trades, valuable supplementary supports, were not sufficient to carry the township to an assured future. It remained to be seen whether the 1870s would bring lasting prosperity and whether Townsville would continue to reign as north Queensland's major port into the 1880s.

¹⁴⁴Hann, *op. cit.*, mentions obtaining children from this camp. Neame, *op. cit.*, vol. 1, no. 3, November 1965, p. 23 and vol. 1, no. 4, May 1966, p. 26, obtained labourers there. See also Jones, *Trinity Phoenix*, *op. cit.*, p. 16 ff.

¹⁴⁵CBE, 13 August 1870.

¹⁴⁶Bolton, *A Thousand Miles Away*, *op. cit.*, p. 121.

PART TWO

CONSOLIDATION AND EXPANSION

Chapter 6

Townsville's supremacy as north Queensland's major port did not continue unchallenged. After gold was discovered on the Palmer and on the Hodgkinson, first Cooktown, then Port Douglas and Cairns were founded. Challenged by these competitors, Townsville's fortunes fluctuated, but never again returned to the doldrums of the 1860s, and by 1878 it was again outstripping all rivals. Cooktown, unlike Townsville, relied on only one goldfield and no industries developed to support its growth, so that by the end of the decade its prospects were waning, while Cairns and Port Douglas remained minor centres. During the next five years, Townsville consolidated its position, and by 1884 it had emerged, twenty years after its foundation, as north Queensland's major port, the communication and supply centre of a rich and flourishing region. Townsville then was clearly destined to become one of Queensland's most important cities, hopefully the capital of a new state of 'North Queensland'.

Throughout 1871, 1872 and 1873 the gold boom had continued unabated. The discovery of further goldfields at the Etheridge and at Charters Towers brought prospectors in ever-increasing numbers. The road from Townsville was "crowded with swagmen",¹ while one visitor recorded that "Townsville reminded me of a goldfields town at the zenith of the Victorian golden times - streets crowded, teams loading, shopkeepers busy, prices exorbitant and sellers indifferent to customers".² The effects of the rush were even felt in Brisbane where

¹Qlder, 5 October 1872.

²'To Port Darwin and Back', PDT, 14 December 1872.

the steamer *James Paterson* left for Bowen and Townsville on 18 September with 100 diggers on board... the Q.S.N. Co.'s old wharf presented a scene of bustle and excitement for several hours prior to the departure...the like of which has not been seen here for many a long day.³

Though most arrivals were intent on reaching the goldfields, population grew rapidly - "houses are going up in all directions and so scarce are empty houses that new arrivals can hardly find a place to lay there[sic] heads".⁴

The discovery of gold at the Palmer in 1873 and the opening of the new port of Cooktown in October of that year initially had a beneficial effect. During this period and for much of 1874, most of the trade for the Palmer came via Townsville.⁵ Townsville merchants were first in the field there,⁶ and a number started branches both at the Palmer and at Cooktown, while the numbers of ships using the port increased so that by November 1873 there was "a perfect fleet of schooners" at anchor in the bay, and Townsville was still "fast increasing".⁷ As the *Queenslander* put it,

the insane rush [to the Palmer] has been productive of benefit to our port inasmuch as we have for the past six months been particularly favoured by the steamboat companies..."⁸

In July 1874 the place was practically bursting with newcomers so that

house room is as hard to be obtained as it was in Vienna during the Exhibition. Rents are high but wages are in proportion...new buildings are springing up delighting the hearts of timber merchants and contractors.⁹

By then, however, it is apparent that the headlong rush of the previous years had slowed. Building was forced to a virtual standstill as all timber was being shipped to Cooktown, and by August that year there were complaints that the town was "almost

³*Qlder*, 21 September 1872.

⁴*ibid.*, 28 June 1873.

⁵*Willmetts' Cooktown Almanac*, 1876, p. 5.

⁶The *TH Supplement*, 24 December 1887, p. 32, states that P.F. Hanran was the first to land a cargo of goods, closely followed by George Raff.

⁷*Qlder*, 15 November 1873, 29 November 1873.

⁸*ibid.*, 13 June 1874.

⁹*ibid.*, 25 July 1874.

deserted".¹⁰ By April 1875 local businessmen were lamenting that "Townsville could do with an additional gold field as things are rather dull now".¹¹ During this period the Gilbert and Etheridge fields were almost abandoned. At the Cloncurry, Cape River, Ravenswood and Charters Towers fields, the easily available alluvial deposits had been mainly worked out, while many diggers had left for the Palmer or - later - the Hodgkinson fields. ¹²There was a lull as miners considered further possibilities. Gold exports via Townsville waned after 1875, reaching the lowest point since 1871 in 1878. It was during these years that the Palmer produced its richest gold and Cooktown flourished; the Hodgkinson was developed and Cairns and Port Douglas were established. The goldfields of the north resembled seething bee-hives with swarms gathering at each new discovery - most to find it not to their liking - then swarming elsewhere or returning to their hive, while others remained to work happily on proven fields. The fortunes of Townsville waxed and waned, but though business at times must have been exceedingly slack, it never ceased to thrive. In fact it remained remarkably healthy. There was still an increasing demand for houses, judging from complaints about the shortage of dwelling houses, and commercial matters were reported as "looking well" with "teams constantly loading in Flinders Street".*

Even by 1876, when Cooktown's exports of gold were far exceeding those of Townsville¹³ and there were a number of bankruptcies, most merchants were still doing well. Businessmen may have complained that "times are bad exceedingly so", but as one observer remarked sceptically

a stranger visiting Townsville at the present time might be inclined to dispute this fact a little on observing the number of horse and cattle teams drawn up in front of the various business places, all loading up with goods and merchandise for the interior and likewise the activity prevailing at the various wharves consequent upon the arrival recently of an unusual amount of shipping.¹⁴

In fact, a close study reveals that the apparent commercial

¹⁰ibid., 28 March 1874, 8 August 1874.

¹¹ibid., 17 April 1875.

¹²ibid., 9 January 1875, 17 July 1875.

¹³*Pugh's Almanac*, 1877.

depression was short-lived and deceptive, affecting mainly a number of hotel-keepers who, wishing to capitalise on the dearth of accomodation, had all erected large new hotels which far exceeded the needs of the town. As the *Queenslander* noted, "with these exceptions, the trade of the district has been and is in a healthy condition and has never been otherwise", and there was still much confidence in Townsville's future.¹⁵ By September 1878 the town was described as "spreading and improving" with the wharves "putting on week by week an increased picture of activity".¹⁶ By the end of 1879 gold exports had risen to exceed those of Cooktown once more and trade was increasing rapidly; the increase in shipping was such that one correspondent exclaimed:

Talk about shipping! During the five years I have known Townsville I do not ever remember seeing such activity in this line.¹⁷

In the next few years trade increased and, despite a slight slump in 1883, gold exports continued to rise, so there was no longer any doubt regarding Townsville's future.

The reason for Townsville's continuing and surprisingly steady growth lay in the fact that its prosperity was no longer dependent solely on the goldfields, as it had been in 1870. Though gold was still important, the mining industry had diversified. Silverlead was being mined at both Ravenswood and the Star River. A sample of silver from Ravenswood forwarded to the Melbourne Exhibition in 1881 by P.F. Hanran caused a sensation, and by November of that year a company was being floated in Sydney to work the Comstock Mine at the Star.¹⁸ By 1882 there was much discussion of the Great Kennedy Silver Mine, and much activity in the formation of companies to work the Star River silver mines.¹⁹ Silver and lead continued to flow through Townsville during the succeeding years.

¹⁴TH, 17 August 1876.

¹⁵TH, 14 December 1876; *Qlder*, 20 December 1876.

¹⁶TH, 11 September 1878.

¹⁷*Qlder*, 10 December 1879.

¹⁸ibid., 26 February 1881, 5 November 1881.

¹⁹ibid., 11 March 1882. 22 April 1882.

The pastoral industry had steadily recovered and by 1884 was again a major factor in Townsville's growth. Wool was coming into the port in greater quantity as pastoral settlement was reaching ever further west. In December 1878, Townsville merchants expanded trade into the newly-opened Diamantina District, offering bonuses to those who would make the long trip there and back. One of those who pioneered this trade was Manby, who left Townsville in April 1878 with over 8 tonnes of goods on two waggons, returning in 17 weeks with two heavy loads of wool.²⁰ He had used the road via Hughenden, but J.C. von Steiglitz marked a new road in a few months, and Townsville was assured of a very large share in the trade of that district.²¹

As a result of the upswing in pastoral prosperity, a new boiling-down works was established. The *Townsville Herald* of 3 May 1879 announced that a meeting at the Queens Hotel had formed the North Queensland Meat Preserving and Boiling Down Company. The main forces behind this appear to have been William Hann, William Villiers Brown, Robert Philp, W.D. Clarke, Donald MacIntyre, R.W. Graham, S.F. Walker, John Anning, H. Abbott, L.F. Sachs and Walter Hays. Joseph Page, for many years manager of Ramornie Meat Preserving Company, Clarence River, was consulted for advice, and in June a party hired the *Cllo* in order to visit Alligator Creek and inspect a site there suggested by Hann for the works.²² This site proving suitable, Burns and Twigg of Rockhampton were commissioned to provide plant, and by June 1880 boiling down had commenced at the new works, though no meat-preserving was ever undertaken.²³ By 1884 drought in the hinterland appears to have reduced the stock numbers and the works were closed. Despite this temporary setback, the pastoral industry continued vital to Townsville.

²⁰*TH*, 13 July 1878, 14 August 1878.

²¹*ibid.*

²²*ibid.*, 4 June 1879, 21 June 1879.

²³*ibid.*, 29 November 1879; *Qlder*, 26 June 1880. In *Qlder*, 26 February 1881, a statement appears to the effect that the company had decided not to enter on meat-preserving that year, but were instituting enquiries concerning machinery necessary for that work. There is no evidence that such machinery was ever installed. See also Bolton, *A Thousand Miles Away*, op. cit., p. 101.

While the pastoral industry regained prosperity, the sugar industry had also become an important influence on the town. On the Herbert, 200 hectares were under cultivation by 1874, and by 1876 mills at Bemerside, Gairloch and Macknade were crushing, with the whole of their output being sold in Townsville.²⁴ Despite the rust disease which attacked the crop throughout the State at that time, the industry survived and boomed. By the end of 1879, sugar-growing was expanding on the Herbert, with the first land at the new township of Ingham already sold.²⁵ By 1884, the Herbert River plantations extended for many miles upstream and to the north and south of the river, while the Victoria Sugar Company had built the largest mill in Queensland at Victoria Estate.²⁶ Further north, T.H. Fitzgerald had founded the Innisfail plantation at Geraldton, and between 1880 and 1883, Tyson and Henry founded a sugar industry on the Tully River.²⁷ To the south, A.C. MacMillan had opened the lands of the Burdekin delta. Here, water shortage had proved to be a problem in developing the area for agriculture.²⁸ MacMillan overcame this difficulty, when he took up the Airdmillan Estate in 1879, by introducing windmills to tap underground water supplies for irrigation. By 1884 Seaforth, Drynie, Kalamia, Maidavale and Pioneer Estates had been taken up, and the township of Ayr, founded in 1882, was growing.²⁹ Not only was the sugar from these areas shipped to Townsville by lighter for trans-shipment, but the machinery for the many mills came via Townsville, and it was both a supply and social centre for the planters. The town boomed as a sugar port with talk of rail links with both regions, but these

²⁴Qlder, 16 September 1876, clearly names these three mills. Bolton, *A Thousand Miles Away*, op. cit., p. 74, states that these mills were *Farleigh*, *Macnade* and *Bemerside*, but the only known *Farleigh* mill was at Mackay.

²⁵Jones, *Cardwell Shire Story*, op. cit., p. 218.

²⁶Bolton, *A Thousand Miles Away*, op. cit., p. 137. This mill is now the largest in the southern hemisphere. Victoria Sugar Company was a subsidiary of the Colonial Sugar Refining Company at that time. Qlder, 3 June 1882, reports machinery being taken to the Herbert for C.S.R.

²⁷For a history of these areas see Dorothy Jones, *Hurricane Lamps and Blue Umbrellas*, Cairns 1973. See also Jones, *Cardwell Shire Story*, op. cit.

²⁸Annual rainfall for 1879: Bowen 981 mm, Townsville 1351 mm.

²⁹Connolly, op. cit.; 'From Bowen to the Burdekin Delta Sugar Lands', Qlder, 15 October 1881; 'Airdmillan Plantation', Qlder, 12 November 1881; Qlder, 1 July 1882.

remained pipe dreams in 1884.³⁰

Industries such as the beche-de-mer and Kanaka trades continued, and a new export industry in dried and salted fish was started.³¹ This last venture, which Willmetts referred to in 1877 as a thriving export industry, was in the hands of Chinese fishermen, but it does not appear to have survived beyond 1879.³² Garland was also bringing turtles into the port, but no account of any industries such as the processing of turtle oil has been discovered.³³

As one might expect in a town so dependent on trade, the transport and allied industries expanded. From 1872 onwards, roads throughout the district were extended, with many former bush tracks transformed into well-defined routes. In the early 1870s, Cobb & Co. started regular passenger services from Townsville to Charter Towers and Ravenswood, while some private coaches still operated.³⁴ Drays and waggons continued as the main forms of goods transportation. Even after the advent of the railway, coaches and horse and bullock teams remained in use on routes not served by rail, such as the road to Georgetown, while the horse continued as man's chief mode of personal transport. Blacksmiths and wheelwrights, coach-builders, livery stable proprietors and saddlery and harness makers were much in demand. Many of the pack saddles used in transporting goods from Cooktown to the Palmer goldfields were made in Townsville.³⁵

³⁰First talk of this appears in *Qlder*, 26 August 1882, when 26 plantations in the Lower Burdekin petitioned for a rail link with the Charter Towers line.

³¹Jones, *Trinity Phoenix*, op. cit., has a good account of the beche-de-mer trade.

³²*Willmetts's Almanac*, 1877, p. 37. *CBE*, 28 August 1875, also refers to dried fish from a Burdekin Fishery.

³³*TH*, 30 September 1876.

³⁴The exact date when Cobb & Co. commenced is unknown. It was either in or prior to 1875 as there is reference to the firm in *CBE*, 6 November 1875. For a schedule of their service see Appendix E. Other coaches were run by Corveth (*Northern Miner*, 13 June 1877; see Appendix E) and Bolger (*ibid.*, 28 July 1877).

³⁵Carroll, op. cit., October 1934, p. 37.

By 1884 Townsville boasted an effective public transport system, with horse-drawn buses running regularly. The first of these services started in 1878 when A. Haskell imported a trap "to ply regularly from the Wharf to the Carriers' Arms Hotel" at a cost of "6d for the whole or any part of the journey".³⁶ By 1882 Ned Mayne, formerly one of Cobb & Co.'s noted whips, had introduced "a real omnibus" to run daily between the A.S.N. Co.'s wharf and the Rising Sun.³⁷ By 1884, Palmer had a small fleet of buses, and a month later Cotter imported two Sydney omnibuses to run from the Queen's Wharf to the Carriers' Arms Hotel.³⁸ A week later, a fourth omnibus arrived from Brisbane. Apparently Brisbane buses were better since they were "large, roomy and well-ventilated" and preferable to the "old-fashioned buses from Sydney".³⁹ By this time, many cabs were available, so that Townsville was surprisingly well-supplied with public transport.⁴⁰

By 1884, a small fleet of Townsville-based coastal steamers was running regular weekly services to ports north and south in the region, and Townsvillians wishing to travel to southern ports and overseas were no longer dependent on a monthly steamer from the south.⁴¹ Regular shipping services had commenced to southern ports, and also to Far Eastern ports and to Europe via the Torres Strait, as Townsville had become an international port in 1873, with the arrival of the first mail steamer to use this route, the *Sunfoo*, on 9 December 1873.⁴² The *Flintshire*, the largest steamer then to enter Queensland waters, started a regular monthly service in 1874.⁴³

³⁶*TH*, 14 December 1878.

³⁷*Qlder*, 6 May 1882.

³⁸*ibid.*, 29 March 1884, 12 April 1884.

³⁹*ibid.*, 19 April 1884.

⁴⁰*ibid.*, 12 April 1884, 27 December 1884.

⁴¹A.S.N. Co.'s schedule: "Departs every Monday at noon for Bowen, Mackay, Broadsound, Gladstone, Brisbane, Sydney and Melbourne. Departs every Wednesday afternoon for Cardwell, Herbert River, Cairns, Port Douglas and Cooktown." (*TH*, 1 January 1879). This service was extended to Ingham in 1881 (*Qlder*, 25 June 1881). Clifton & Aplin ran regular local services (*Qlder*, 19 April 1884). Q.S.N. Co. and Howard Smith & Co. were competing on interstate routes (*Qlder*, 19 January 1884).

⁴²*Pugh's Almanac*, 1875.

⁴³*Qlder*, 23 May 1874.

While the British India Steam Navigation Co. pioneered the Torres Strait route, the Eastern and Australian Co., MacIlwraith McEachern & Co. and others soon followed.⁴⁴ In 1884, Boyd counted 13 large steamers at anchor in the bay among numbers of other smaller craft.⁴⁵ In fact at that time, Townsville was in direct shipping contact with many more parts of the world than it is today, a century later.

Partly in response to the needs of the transport industry and partly to those of the mining and sugar industries, a foundry was started in December 1877 by William Hobson & Reid. Housed in buildings situated on the northern bank of Ross Creek roughly where the upper railway bridge now crosses the creek, it was the first to be established in north Queensland. Its first castings were produced in July 1878, in the presence of several leading citizens.⁴⁶ The establishing of the foundry meant that some of the machinery required by the mining and sugar industries might now be manufactured or repaired locally - a notable advance. About 1881, the plant was taken over by MacPherson & Co., who shifted to larger premises in Sturt Street West near Morris Street. Business grew to such an extent that it was found necessary to form a separate company, the Townsville Foundry and Shipbuilding Co. Ltd, with Carnaby superintending operations; a slip and works were erected on Ross Island near the Immigration Barracks. MacPherson & Co. then confined their activities solely to their hardware and ironmongery business.⁴⁷ Previously, boat-building had been on a minor scale and apparently confined to the construction of timber vessels.⁴⁸ The

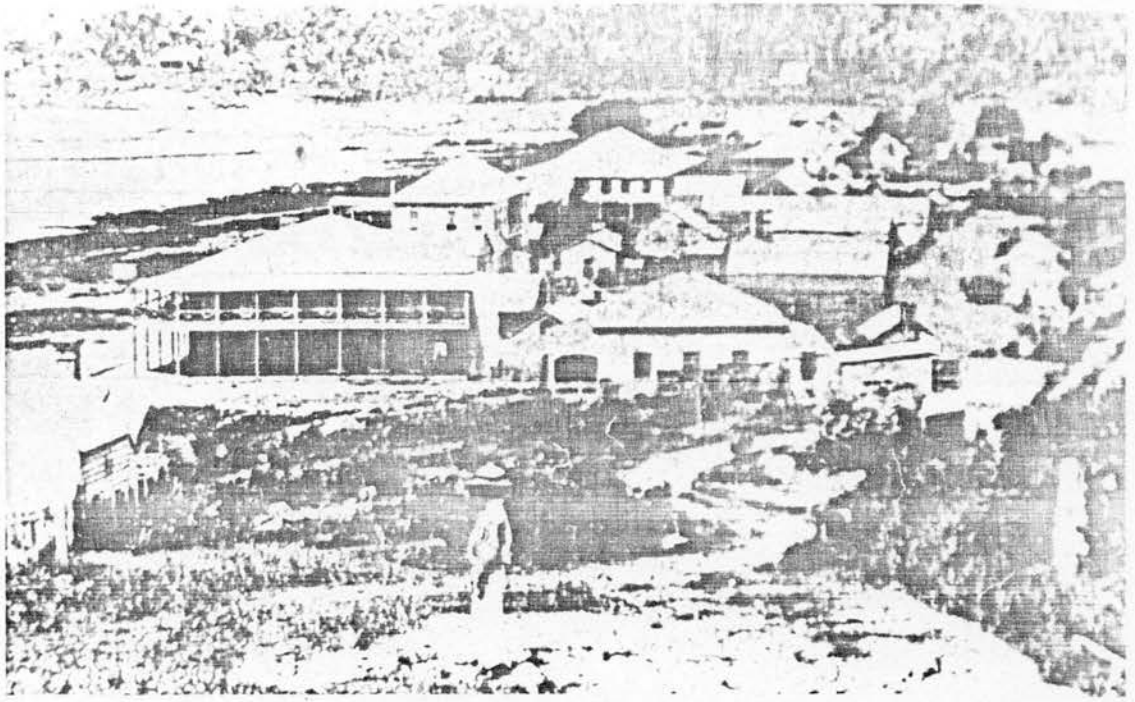
⁴⁴Information gleaned from newspaper shipping notices, Burns Philp & Co.'s *Handbook of Information*, 1884, and Eastern and Australian Mail Steam Co.'s *Descriptive Illustrated Handbook - Singapore Route to Australia*, 1875. Also *TH*, 9 August 1879.

⁴⁵*Qlder*, 27 December 1884.

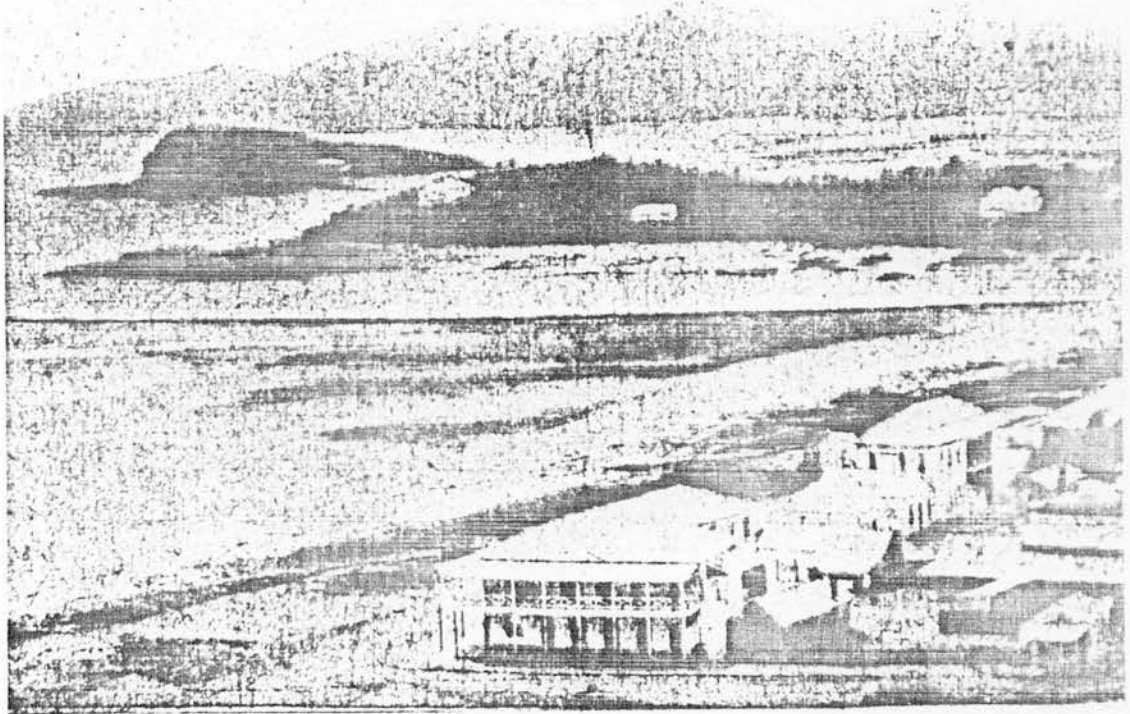
⁴⁶*Willmetts Almanac*, 1879, news items for December 1877 and July 1878; *TH*, 5 January 1878; *Qlder*, 24 May 1879.

⁴⁷*Qlder*, 23 August 1884. History of MacPherson & Co. and the Townsville Foundry and Shipbuilding Co. comes from *TH Supplement*, 24 December 1887, p. 52. The Townsville Foundry and Shipbuilding works were on the site of the present Cleveland Foundry.

⁴⁸Such as the steam launch built for John Dean by James Steel (*TH*, 6 August 1879).



View of Creek mouth from Melton Hill about 1875 showing Queens Hotel.
(Photograph from Jubilee Carnival Programme - 1913 - Delamothe
Collection, James Cook University, Townsville)



View of Creek mouth about 1875 showing first breakwater and the dam
between Magazine Island and the Mainland.
(Photograph from Cummins and Campbell's Monthly Magazine, November, 1941)

industry now expanded, with iron boats being built. In May 1884, the *Queenslander* was reporting that the "shipbuilding industry is assuming an important position here";⁴⁹ a large punt for the Johnstone River was being built, with orders for two large lighters for the same place. The first vessel built, the *Delta* for Aplin Brown & Co., was launched early in August 1884.⁵⁰

Despite the tremendous increase in shipping, work on improving the harbour remained incomplete and unsatisfactory. Major improvements had started in 1871 when W.H. Poultney was given the contract to clear rocks at the mouth of the creek.⁵¹ In 1872 a breakwater was erected on the western side of the creek,⁵² while a dam was started from the Pilot Reserve to Magazine Island in an attempt to stop silt and sand from Ross River blocking the creek entrance.⁵³ It was clear that these small efforts would not solve Townsville's problems, and in August 1874 the Government voted \$8000 to improve the harbour.⁵⁴ There were differences of opinion as to what should be done. Fountain, then Government Engineer at Townsville, thought it should be spent on a swing basin and extending the breakwater already existing.⁵⁵ Others thought a jetty should be built out on a line with Wickham Street.⁵⁶ In February 1875, Lt Connor arrived to make a survey of the area in order to determine what might be done.⁵⁷ His report, released in April, recommended that the jetty should be built, not from Wickham Street, but from Magazine Island - a decision which met with some local opposition because it would result in wharves and related facilities being located on the opposite side of the creek from the township.⁵⁸

⁴⁹*Qlder*, 5 April 1884, 17 May 1884.

⁵⁰*ibid.*, 23 August 1884.

⁵¹*ibid.*, 28 October 1871.

⁵²This was known as Fountain's Breakwater.

⁵³*Pugh's Almanac*, 1873; *Qlder*, 3 May 1873.

⁵⁴*Qlder*, 18 August 1874.

⁵⁵*ibid.*, 15 August 1874.

⁵⁶*CBE*, 15 August 1875.

⁵⁷*Qlder*, 13 February 1875.

⁵⁸*ibid.*, 17 April 1875; *CBE*, 15 August 1875.

The final decision was left in the hands of Nisbett, Engineer for Harbours and Rivers, who endorsed the Magazine Island site, but it was not until September that further funds were voted for the project. Work had not commenced by February 1876, and it was not until November that the plans were completed.⁵⁹

These envisaged that a causeway would be built from the most seaward point of the Pilot Reserve on the mainland to Magazine Island, a distance of 300 metres, with a roadway 9 metres wide and 1.5 metres above high water level. A roadway would continue across the island where 0.6 hectares of the hill was to be excavated for the works. From the other side of the island, a pier 840 metres in length was to extend in a straight line from Magazine Island carrying a 4.5 metre roadway. The first 375 metres of this pier was to be of stone quarried from Magazine Island, with the remaining 465 metres being of timber spans, each 9 metres long, and supported on three piles protected by strong wrought iron tubes and braced with iron. It was then proposed that the pier should curve to the NNW for 30 metres and then continue a further 125 metres so as to form a crook. The outer end of this pier was to be widened to form wharfage 85 metres long by 10.5 metres wide on the inner side with ferry steps at the junction of the wharves and the narrow section of the pier.⁶⁰ There would be a depth of 3 metres at low water and 6 metres at high, so that vessels of large tonnage might be able to berth alongside, protected from the weather. A goods shed, 30 metres by 3 metres, and offices were planned at the end of the pier, and a tramway was to be laid from the mainland to the wharves.⁶¹ It was hoped to extend the tramway along the jetty to facilitate transport of goods.

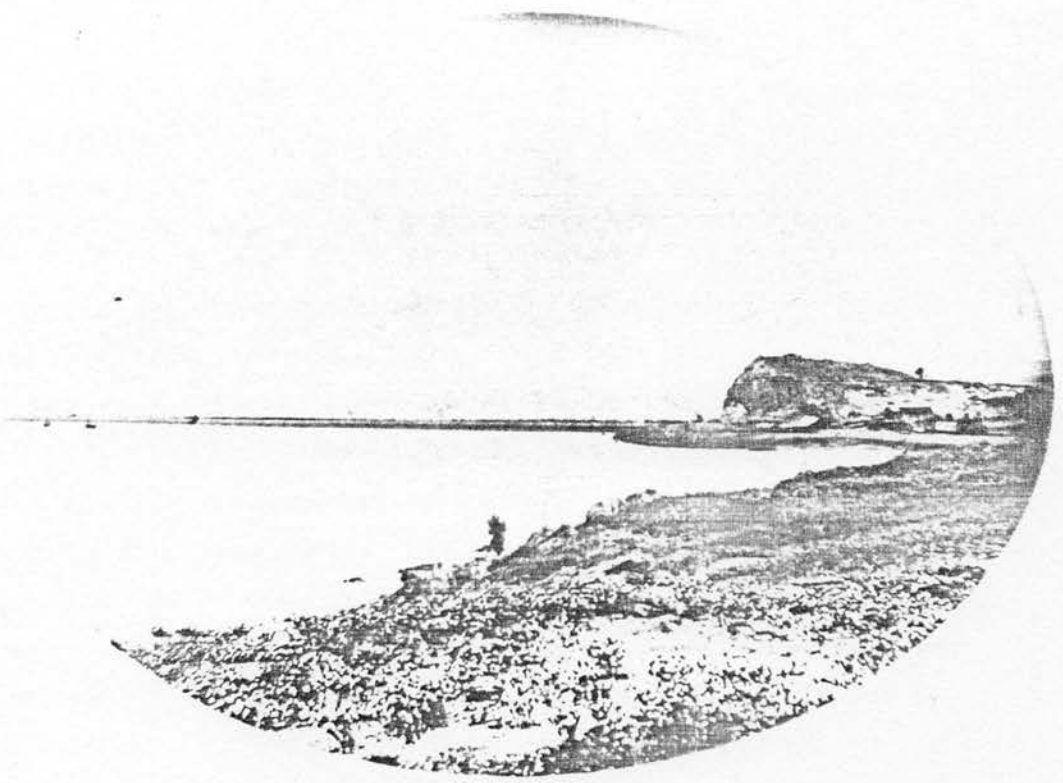
By the time the plans were completed, the causeway across to Magazine Island was finished and the stone pier extended 40 metres into the bay.⁶² While this pier was being built it was discovered

⁵⁹Qlder, 26 February 1876, 18 November 1876.

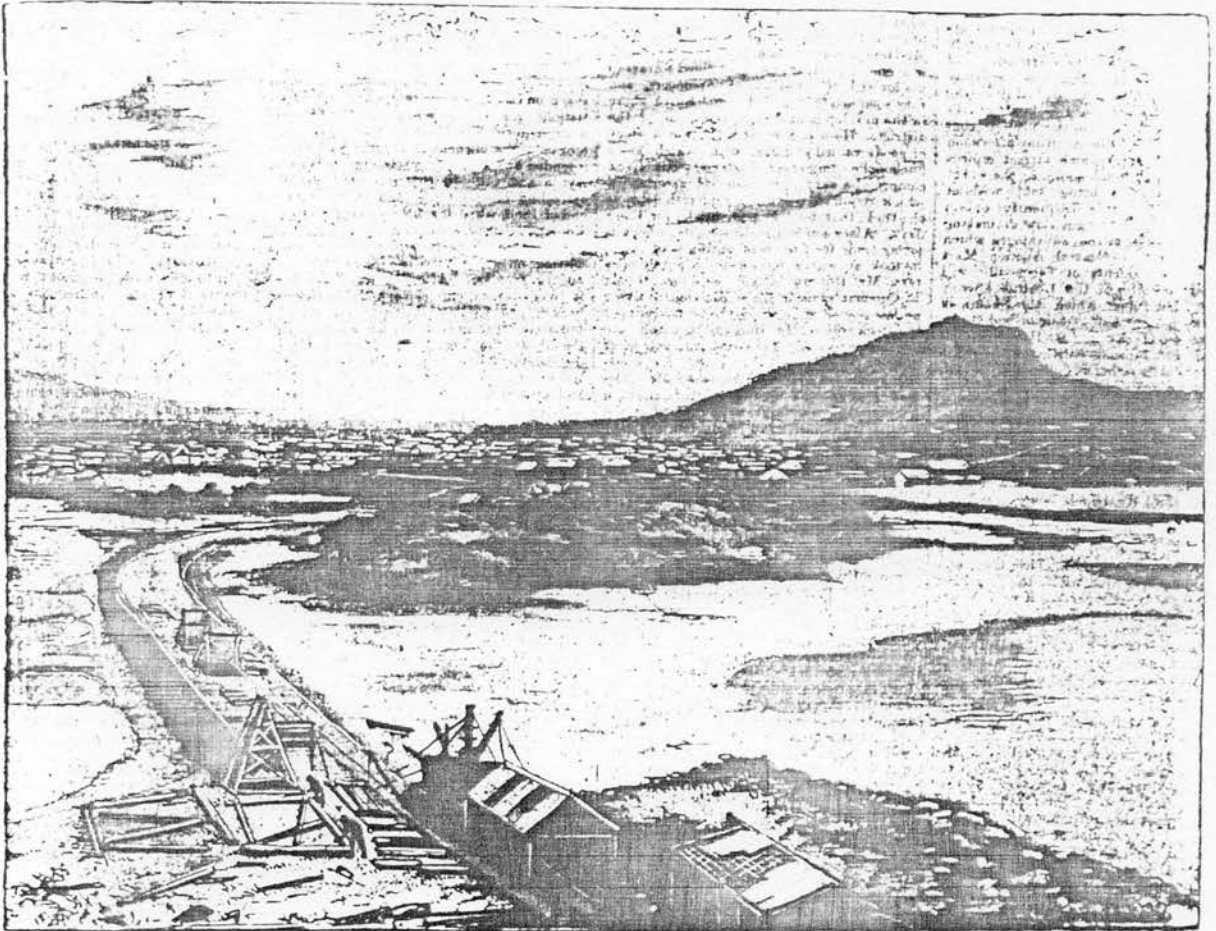
⁶⁰There was no bridge across to Ross Island at this time.

⁶¹Qlder, 18 November 1876.

⁶²Qlder, 15 July 1876, 18 November 1876. Mr Whittaker was the local supervisor of works (TH, 5 August 1876).



The Harbour Works about 1860
(Photograph from the Collection of the Mitchell Library, Sydney)



VIEW FROM MAGAZINE ISLAND LOOKING WEST—From a photograph by William Rowe.

The Causeway connecting Magazine Island with Ross Island.
(Sketch from the Townsville Herald Supplement 24 December, 1887
from Microfilm in the James Cook University Library, Townsville)

that a sand spit, threatening to block the mouth of the creek, was building up from the western side of Ross Creek, and it was found necessary to erect "a substantial stone wall" to prevent silting on that side of the creek.⁶³

However, at this point with the pier extending out about 800 metres, in August 1879 money ran out and work was suspended, leaving the harbour virtually unimproved and the problem of the sand-spit at the creek mouth unsolved.⁶⁴ Ships were still mooring in the bay with lighters bringing passengers and goods to the wharves in the creek. If anything, the passage into the creek was more difficult to negotiate because of the silting at the creek entrance. Efforts were made to alleviate this problem when Whittaker was employed to clear rocks from Ross Creek, but he finished in 1881 without any marked improvement.⁶⁵ A dredge was then employed in 1882 to clear the sand accumulated on the bar, but was withdrawn within a few months.⁶⁶

In the meantime, in October 1881 a further sum of \$40 000 was allocated by the Government for work on the Townsville jetty; up to that point \$128 000 had been expended.⁶⁷ By then it had become apparent that, if the original plan were followed, silt from the creek might be prevented from being washed out to sea, and that a jetty on the original line would make future extension into deeper water virtually impossible. It was therefore decided to carry the jetty out on the same line for a further distance of about 150 metres, then erect a wharf on timber piles extending for 60 metres on the town side. The western breakwater was also to be extended. By this time there was strong demand for a road along the beach front, so it was decided that rock for the works should be obtained from the projection of Melton Hill (known as Point Kennelly) which blocked passage from the Strand to North Ward. By July 1883, huge

⁶³TH, 29 January 1878. At this time stone for this breakwater came from Magazine Island.

⁶⁴Qlder, 29 April 1882; CBE, 23 August 1879.

⁶⁵Qlder, 26 June 1880, 13 March 1881.

⁶⁶TH Supplement, 24 December 1887, p. 36.

⁶⁷Qlder, 1 October 1881, 29 April 1882.

masses of rock were being transported from the quarry on the Strand, and by the end of 1884 the harbour improvements were well under way with the dredge *Platypus* employed keeping the entrance to the creek clear.⁶⁸ Nature, however, solved the problem of silting of the creek when a major flood in 1884 washed the accumulation of silt and sand out to sea.⁶⁹ It would be pleasing to be able to report that the Townsville harbour works were soon completed, but due to difficulties encountered and changes of plan, this took another eight years.⁷⁰

Fortunately, work on the railway to Charters Towers progressed more rapidly. Agitation started in 1873 for a railway to tap the western districts.⁷¹ Pressure came from both Townsville and Charters Towers. Bowen claimed a prior right to have the railway terminate there, but once again was defeated by the Burdekin River. Bolton gives credit to the Townsville politicians for the termination of the railway at Townsville, as well as acknowledging that "it was on the right side of the Burdekin".⁷² This ignores the pressure from Charters Towers where opinion was overwhelmingly in favour of Townsville;

between Charters Towers and Townsville, settlement is steadily growing. Bowen may be a great place but Charters Towers is and therefore her right to be first served cannot fairly be questioned.⁷³

Once again, it was Townsville's ease of access to the hinterland, in particular to Charters Towers, which really won the day. In 1875, Delisser was sent north to survey a possible route for the railway, but the Premier McIlwraith gave northerners to understand that this was merely a trial survey to secure reservation of the land that might be required and it would be some time before a railway was actually constructed.⁷⁴ However, pressure from the north continued, and by 1877 the Queensland Government approved the acquisition of

⁶⁸*ibid.*, 14 July 1883, 25 November 1884.

⁶⁹*PDT*, 12 January 1884.

⁷⁰*TH Supplement*, 24 December 1887, p. 36.

⁷¹*Qlder*, 11 October 1873.

⁷²Bolton, *A Thousand Miles Away*, op. cit., p. 161.

⁷³*Northern Miner*, 27 January 1877.

⁷⁴*PDT*, 25 September 1875, 18 December 1875.

land through which a railway between Townsville and Charters Towers might pass, and plans for the building of the line were presented to the Government by Ballard, Chief Engineer for Railways.⁷⁵ Government consideration of the Townsville to Charters Towers Railway came at a time when schemes were being put forward to build low cost railways, and it was suggested that money could be saved by building only a 2 foot gauge line rather than the 3 foot 6 inch gauge used on the railways already established in the southern and central areas.⁷⁶ This fortunately did not meet with Government approval, and the full 3 foot 6 inch gauge track was approved. The route chosen terminated on Ross Island in order to be close to the wharves. Despite careful surveying in order to economise, it was estimated that costs would still average over \$6000 per kilometre.⁷⁷

The plan for a Ross Island terminus met with an immediate outcry from the businessmen established on the northern shore of the creek, fearing that the centre of the city would shift to Ross Island leaving them high and dry. Despite moves to put a road bridge across the creek, they insisted that it was

absolutely necessary in order to protect the vested interest of this town that the Railway terminus should be in the centre of the city.⁷⁸

On the other hand, residents of Ross Island thought they saw a bonanza coming and protested that

the proposed alteration of the site of the railway terminus was unconstitutional and...detrimental to the interests of the colony at large.⁷⁹

This was an argument no-one really won. Although the Government decided that the railway should not terminate in Ross Island, neither did it terminate in the centre of the city close to the business premises of the 'vested interests'. Instead, it was decided to bridge Ross Creek and build a railway station opposite Jones Street at the West End.⁸⁰

⁷⁵Q.L.A., V. & P., 1877, p. 450 ff; *Northern Miner*, 29 August 1877.

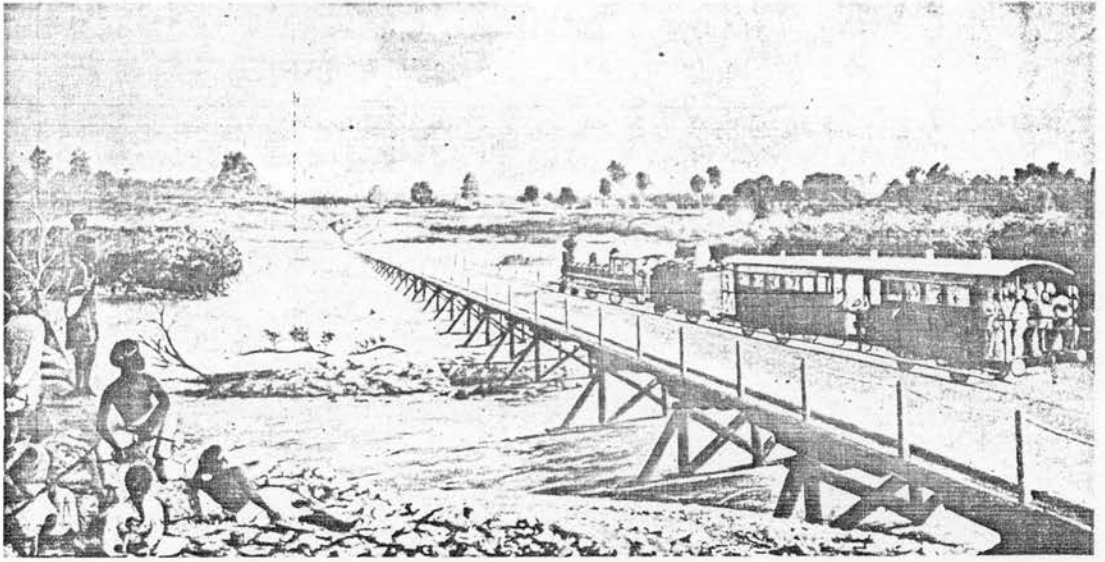
⁷⁶There was much discussion of these schemes in newspapers of the day.

⁷⁷Q.L.A., V. & P., 1877, p. 454.

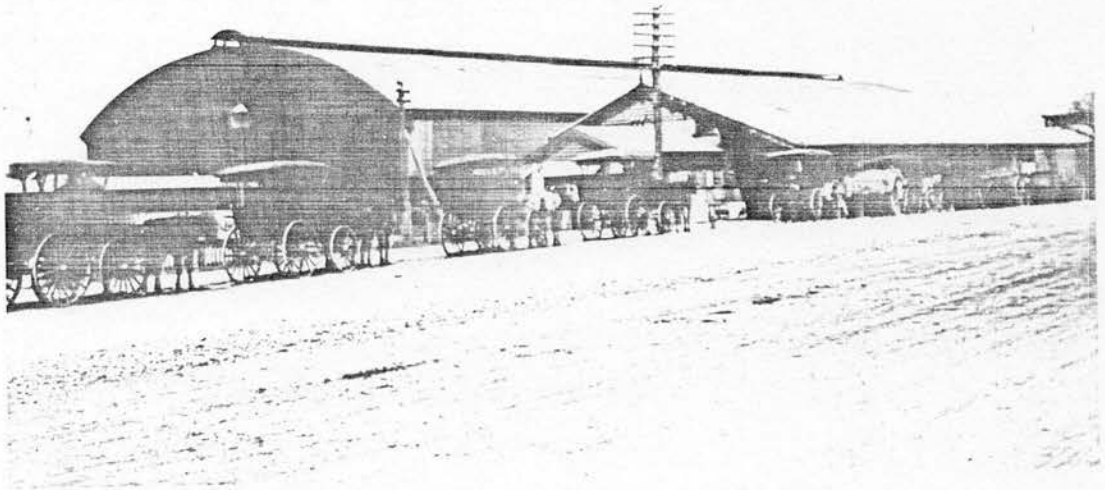
⁷⁸CBE, 8 March 1879.

⁷⁹ibid.

⁸⁰Where the present upstream railway bridge crosses the creek.



This is said to be a sketch of the first train to cross the Burdekin River in 1882. The artist was W.J. Allom.
(Sketch from the collection of the John Oxley Library, Brisbane)



A later photograph of the Railway Station which stood opposite Jones Street.
(Photograph from the collection of the Department of History, James Cook University, Townsville)

The first contracts, to Boden for ballast and Matthews for clearing, were let in November 1878, and by the end of 1879 the iron for the rails had arrived, as well as three locomotives and a quantity of rolling-stock.⁸¹ By October 1880, the railway station and the bridges across Ross Creek and Ross River⁸² were ready for the plates, and by December, 50 kilometres of line was completed. The official opening was held on 20 December 1880, when the contractor's train and the two Government engines, gaily decorated with bunting and carrying Page's Brass Band, ran for a couple of hours along the completed section to Reidsville.⁸³ and the Mayor, Thankfull Willmet, declared the line open.⁸⁴ By February, passengers could leave Townsville at 5 a.m. on Tuesday, Thursday or Saturday and connect with the coach to Charters Towers at Reid River, reaching Charters Towers on the same day. This was a great improvement; the service was immediately so popular that there were numerous complaints of "overcrowding in the box which is expected to serve as a first class carriage". By 9 November, the line was opened to Ravenswood Junction (now Mingela) and by 24 July 1882, Sir Thomas McIlwraith had opened the Charters Towers section. Seventy invited guests boarded a special train with Sir Thomas about 9 a.m. and arrived at the Burdekin Bridge (at Macrossan)⁸⁵ to be met by a crowd of between 2000 and 3000 people who had previously arrived from Charters Towers. The Ministerial party "partook of luncheon in the goods shed" before proceeding to Charters Towers arriving there at 3 p.m.⁸⁶ A few days later, McIlwraith returned to Townsville where celebrations culminated in a champagne supper at

⁸¹TH, 27 November 1878. The iron arrived on the barques *Bertie* and *Andes*, the locomotives and rolling-stock on the American barque *Addie E. Sleeper* (TH, 5 November 1879).

⁸²This bridge was on the site of the present railway bridge across Ross River in Railway Estate.
Qlder, 6 November 1880, 11 December 1880.

⁸³This railway encampment no longer exists.

⁸⁴Qlder, 25 December 1880, 8 January 1881.
ibid., 5 February 1881.

⁸⁵This was not the old high-level bridge which remains at Macrossan but a low-level bridge.

⁸⁶ibid., 9 December 1882.

the Queens Hotel.⁸⁷ This did not mean that construction stopped. By February 1884, the line reached Homestead and by October, Pentland. In December 1884, the branch line from Ravenswood Junction to Ravenswood was opened by H.H. Barton, Chairman of the Divisional Board, and a free luncheon was held in the goods shed which the *Queenslander's* correspondent declared to have been "more like a beer garden than anything else".⁸⁸

In the meantime, the decision had been made to link the new harbour with the business centre of the town and the railway station, by the erection of a road bridge across Ross Creek. The site chosen for the bridge was most unsuitable, being from a point near the present Metropole Hotel in eastern Flinders Street. Despite controversy over its siting, the contract was let to W. Salmon in January 1878.⁸⁹ A substantial structure incorporating a drawbridge to allow passage of shipping up the creek, it consisted of massive timber and iron superstructure carried on ironbark piles.⁹⁰ At least two ships, the *Harriet Armitage* and the *Marquis of Lorne*, ran foul of it during construction.⁹¹ Nevertheless, work continued and it was ready for trials of the drawbridge before opening in March 1879.⁹² Both J.M. Macrossan, then Minister of Works, and A.C. MacMillan, Northern Engineer for Roads, arrived to inspect it, only to witness a complete fiasco. According to calculations, two men should have been able to work the winches. Instead, the combined efforts of 17 men barely moved it. Without ever being opened to the public it was declared a "huge engineering blunder".⁹³ Petitions soon circulated for its removal and by December "the great eyesore bridge" was being dismantled and its components used to build the railway.⁹⁴ The creek was destined to

⁸⁷ *ibid.*, 16 December 1882.

⁸⁸ *ibid.*, 20 December 1884.

⁸⁹ *TH*, 9 January 1878.

⁹⁰ *ibid.*, 16 February 1878, 3 August 1878, 1 February 1879.

⁹¹ *ibid.*, 31 August 1878, 4 January 1878, 4 June 1879.

⁹² *ibid.*, 12 March 1879.

⁹³ *ibid.*

⁹⁴ *ibid.*, 27 August 1879, 1 November 1879; *Qld*, 27 December 1879.

remain unbridged for another ten years,⁹⁵ the only means of transport across the creek being the ferries at the end of eastern Flinders Street and near Stokes Street.

The growth of transport and allied industries, in particular the works on the harbour and railway which were labour intensive, providing jobs for many hundreds of workers, had a considerable effect on the town. The railway in particular inspired confidence:

we are looking forward to the opening of the Northern Railway to bring about an entire change in things by causing a settlement of agriculturalists upon acres and acres of land now doing nothing.⁹⁶

Given the soil of the land through which the railway passed, this was an impossible dream, but it does indicate the future prospects the railway opened for Townsville in the eyes of many speculators.

Townsville had entered the Railway Age with surprising rapidity considering that the world's first steam railway between Stockton and Darlington had opened only 57 years before the line from Townsville to Charters Towers, and Townsville had only been in existence for 18 years.⁹⁷ It should be emphasised here how greatly Townsville's progress was influenced by the fact that it developed in parallel with the expansion and improvement of technology. Steam engines powered the machinery which not only made the development of mining and the milling of sugar easier and quicker, but also provided power for sawmills, water reticulation, and light industry. Steamships and trains facilitated faster and more comfortable travel, speeding up the process of settlement and development. To Victorian man, whose communication with the rest of the world had previously been governed by the vagaries of the wind and tide or the capacity of his own legs or those of his animals, these were wondrous innovations, and Townsville was fortunate indeed to have been founded at a time when it was able to benefit from such advances. There is no doubt that progress would have been much slower without them.

⁹⁵Until Victoria Bridge was opened in 1889.

⁹⁶*Qld*, 27 December 1879.

⁹⁷O.S. Nock, *The Dawn of World Railways 1800-1850*, London 1972, p. 112. The Stockton to Darlington line opened on 27 September 1825.

By 1884, technological progress was even more evident with the establishment of a gas works. As early as 1879, there was talk of introducing gas,⁹⁸ but it was not until 1881 that the Townsville Gas and Coke Co. was formed with a capital of 10 000 pounds in one pound shares, 7 000 of which were purchased by August by local residents.⁹⁹ All shares were taken up by September, and in February 1882, Fleming of Brisbane was commissioned to purchase plant in England.¹⁰⁰ This arrived on the *Lanarkshire* in October 1882, and by January 1883 the mains through the principal streets had been laid, and excavations for the gasometer were completed.¹⁰¹ In March 1883, the first building in town to be lighted by gas, the Town Hall, was "prettily illuminated".¹⁰² Initially gas was used mainly for lighting, bringing not only an improvement in the quality of life but also greater safety, since it was much less a fire hazard than oil or kerosene lamps. It also enabled the Council to provide better street lighting. Where previously residents had relied on hand-held lanterns to find their way along streets, aided by the large lights suspended in front of hotels and light from shops and houses, gas lamps were now installed in Flinders Street, where 14 lamp-posts were being erected in March 1883.¹⁰³

A number of other manufacturing plants were also established. A factory for the manufacture of soap and candles was started by Fletcher and Walker in 1872 at the West End near the Carriers' Arms Hotel.¹⁰⁴ By 1878, this had become a large establishment with a brick building, 12 metres long by 3 metres wide, "with two iron vats for boiling soap each capable of turning out 4 tons of soap per week".¹⁰⁵ In January of that year soap was exported to Hong Kong and

⁹⁸TH, 15 November 1879.

⁹⁹Qlder, 30 July 1881, 13 August 1881. For a list of directors see Qlder, 20 August 1881.

¹⁰⁰ibid., 10 September 1881, 25 February 1882.

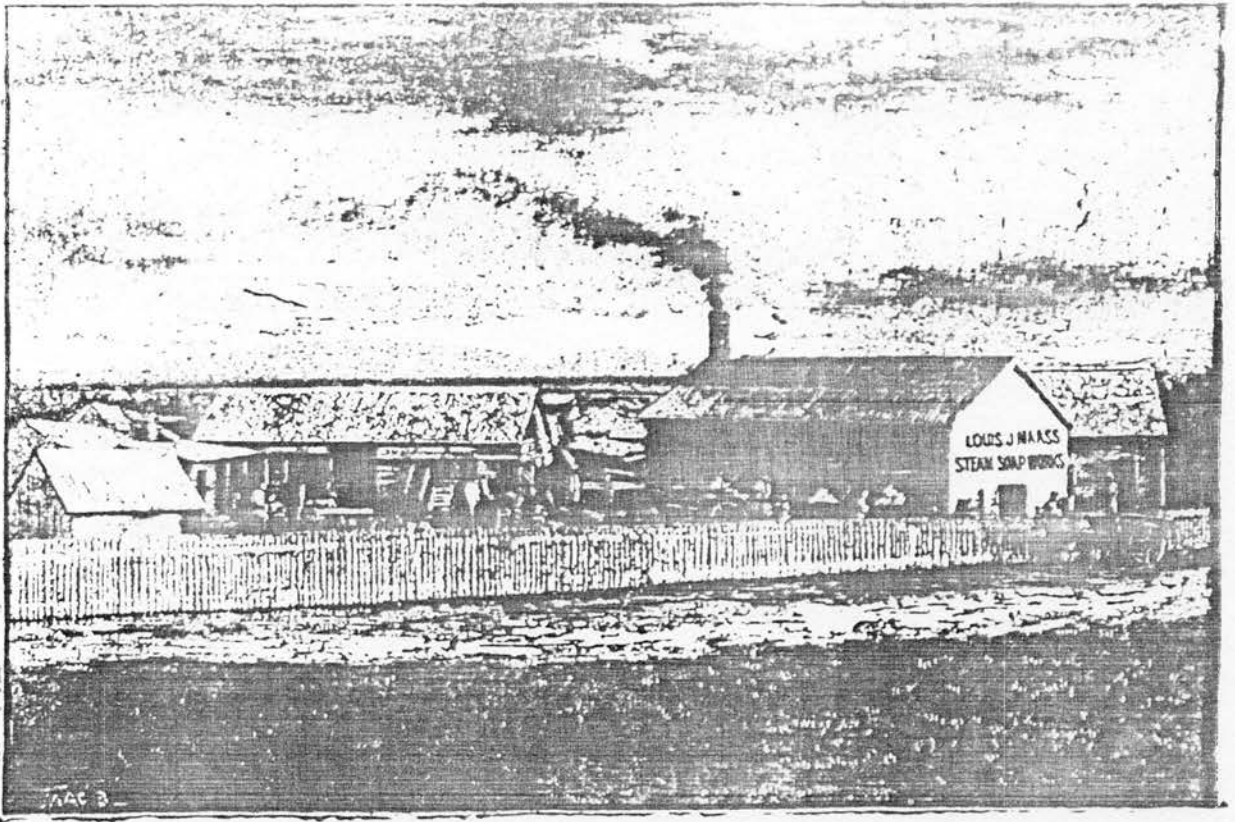
¹⁰¹ibid., 21 October 1882, 28 October 1882, 6 and 13 January 1883.

¹⁰²ibid., 10 March 1883.

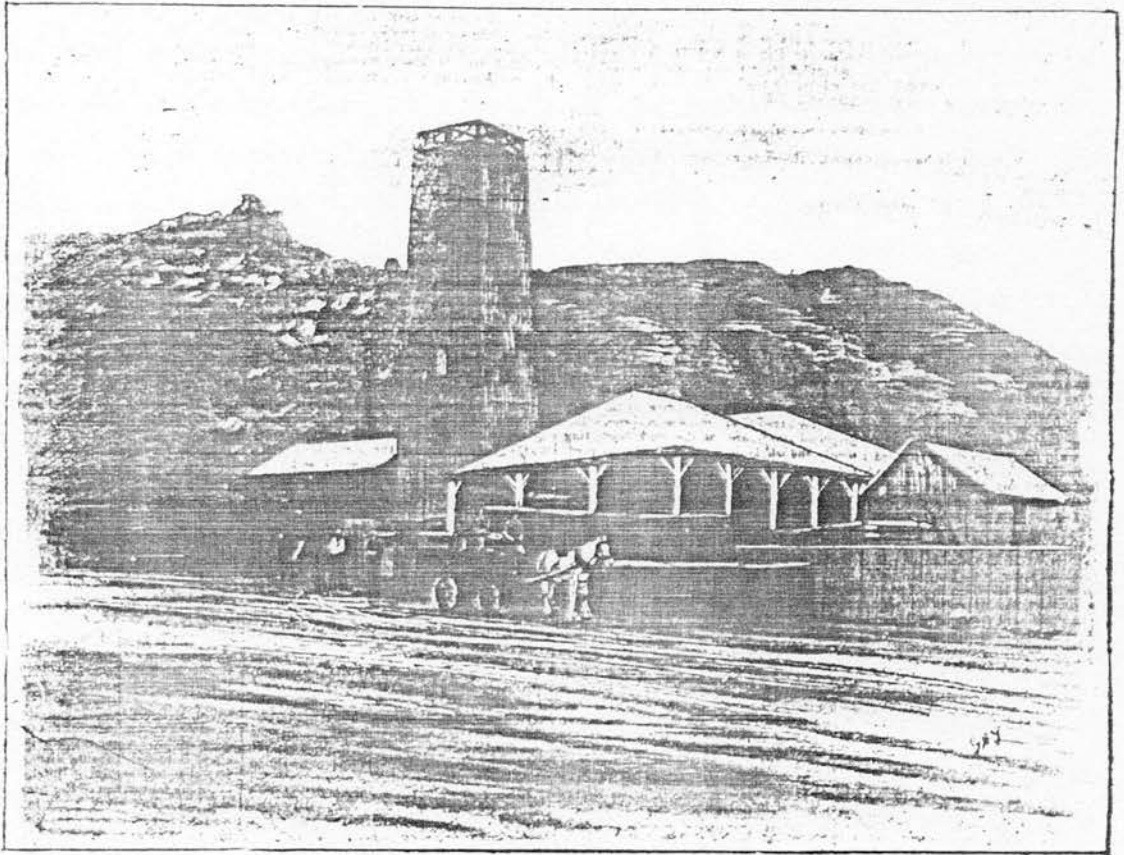
¹⁰³ibid., 31 March 1883.

¹⁰⁴Joseph Fletcher and S.F. Walker (Qlder, 11 October 1873).

¹⁰⁵TH, 27 July 1878.



STEAM SOAP WORKS, LOUIS MAASS PROPRIETOR.—From a photograph by William Rowe.



SOUTH QUEENSLAND BREWING COMPANY (See Page 48).—From a photograph by William Rowe.

Industrial Buildings.

Singapore, but it is not known whether this trade continued.¹⁰⁶ A second factory, the Australian Soap and Candle Works, was started by A. Donaldson & Co. at the old Towns & Co. boiling-down buildings, but there is no information as to the opening or closing dates of this establishment.¹⁰⁷

A brewery was opened in the last week of December 1882 by the Townsville Brewery Co. managed by D.T. Dillon.¹⁰⁸ It was housed in a two-storeyed brick building opposite the then railway station. A.J. Boyd remarked that he "could taste little difference between their brew and that of Castlemain[sic] at Milton [Brisbane]".¹⁰⁹ This company was eventually taken over by the North Queensland Brewing Company.¹¹⁰

In 1883 Thankfull Willmetts installed machinery for printing, book-binding and lithography.¹¹¹ By 1884, three newspapers were flourishing in the town: the *Townsville Daily Bulletin*, the *Daily Northern Standard* and the *Townsville Herald*. The company which had run the *Cleveland Bay Express* sold out in June 1870 to Henry Bohm, who died suddenly in 1872.¹¹² His widow then married Charles Ernest Carkeet, who took over the running of the paper. Carkeet suffered from "lung disease"¹¹³ and in August 1875 sold out to A.J. Boyd, who in turn sold out to Thomas Williams in 1876.¹¹⁴ Meanwhile, in November 1874, James McManus had founded a second paper, the *Townsville Times*.¹¹⁵ In July 1876, Williams and McManus joined forces and the two papers were amalgamated, to become the *Townsville Herald*.¹¹⁶ The partnership did not last long and by February 1877

¹⁰⁶ibid., 12 January 1878. This works continued into the twentieth century.

¹⁰⁷ibid., 7 September 1876.

¹⁰⁸*Qlder*, 19 and 26 January 1884.

¹⁰⁹ibid., 27 December 1884.

¹¹⁰For history of N.Q. Brewing Co. see *TH* Supplement, 24 December 1887, p. 48.

¹¹¹ibid., p. 39.

¹¹²*CBE*, 11 June 1870; *Qlder*, 7 September 1872.

¹¹³*TH*, 29 January 1879.

¹¹⁴*CBE*, 28 August 1875, 22 April 1876.

¹¹⁵*Pugh's Almanac*, 1875, gives the date of 4 November 1875.

Williams had left,¹¹⁷ leaving McManus to continue alone until 1882, when he disposed of a two-thirds interest in the paper to "a syndicate of gentlemen in Townsville who are deeply interested and foremost in the present Separation Movement."¹¹⁸ Henceforth the paper was run by the Townsville Herald Co. until it was merged with the *Townsville Daily Bulletin* in 1884.¹¹⁹

Another paper, the *Townsville Argus*, was started by Thomas Wright in January 1877, while yet another, the *Northern Standard*, was started by J.Y. Walker & Co. in July that year.¹²⁰ The *Townsville Argus* appears to have been either short-lived or to have merged with the *Northern Standard* within a few months, for when Walker left town in January 1878, Wright continued as proprietor of the *Northern Standard* until his death in November 1881.¹²¹ His widow then carried on as proprietress but died only three months later and the paper was put up for sale. Joseph Hodel purchased it in September 1882 and thenceforward it was run by Frank and Frederick Hodel who had previously run the *Palmer Chronicle*.¹²² In 1884 it was appearing as the *Daily Northern Standard* priced at "1d per copy".¹²³ It was not Townsville's first daily paper, however. In September 1881, E. Rhode, J.K. Meehan and Dodd S. Clarke had founded the *Townsville Bulletin* as a bi-weekly paper. On 1 January 1883, they started publishing it as a daily. It too cost "1d per copy".¹²⁴ That the town could support not only a weekly but also two daily papers, was a measure of the remarkable growth of the first twenty years.

¹¹⁶CBE, 26 July 1876. The first number of the tri-weekly *Townsville Herald* appeared on Tuesday, 1 August 1876.

¹¹⁷TH, 14 February 1877. Williams took over the Townsville Hotel.

¹¹⁸Qlder, 5 August 1882.

¹¹⁹Northern Miner, 6 September 1884.

¹²⁰Pugh's Almanac, 1877; Northern Miner, 28 July 1877, 10 November 1887.

¹²¹CBE, 23 January 1878; Qlder, 11 March 1882.

¹²²Qlder, 7 October 1882.

¹²³ibid., 12 April 1884.

¹²⁴ibid., 13 January 1883.

These industries helped to cushion Townsville from the fluctuating effects of gold during the 1870s, but there were other factors which contributed to Townsville's steady development by this time. The most important of these was that many merchants maintained their faith in Townsville and, while establishing branches on the goldfields and at other northern ports as they developed, continued to regard Townsville as their headquarters. As Bolton points out,

among those who originated measures for the development of their own districts, the merchants and businessmen of the ports were the most energetic boosters.¹²⁵

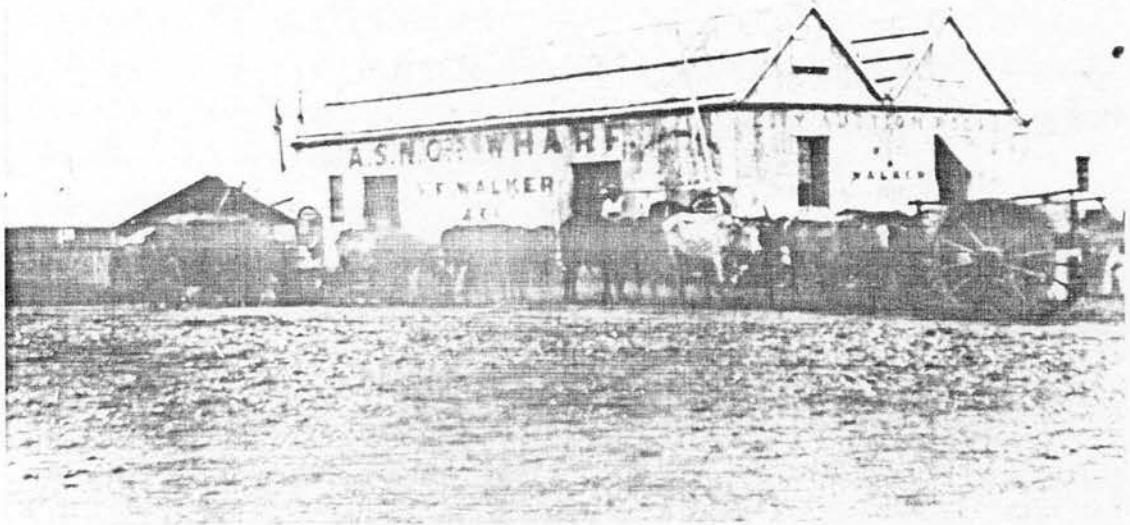
This was particularly true of Townsville. If J.M. Black had led the way in opening trade with the hinterland in the beginning, his successors expanded trade in all directions, so that by the 1880s Townsville had become the commercial centre of a very large area spreading west to the Diamantina, south to the lands of the Burdekin delta and north to Cairns, with offshoots to Normanton and Thursday Island. ¹²⁶

During the 1870s there was much change in the mercantile field. A number of the old firms survived, but Towns & Co. had disappeared by 1871.* Hanran, Clifton & Aplin Bros and Brodziak & Rodgers continued in business; Blitz and Walker also remained, but were no longer associated with their original businesses. Many new firms had commenced; of these the best known were Burns, Philp & Co., Willmetts & Co., Samuel Allen and Sons, Hollis Hopkins & Co., Armati & Fraire and MacPherson & Co.¹²⁷ All of these firms, as well as the managers of the Bank of New South Wales, W.V. Brown, and of the A.J.S. Bank, L.F. Sachs, contributed to Townsville's progress. It was Clifton & Aplin Bros and S.F. Walker & Co. as agent for the A.S.N. Co., who fostered the opening of direct trade with southern

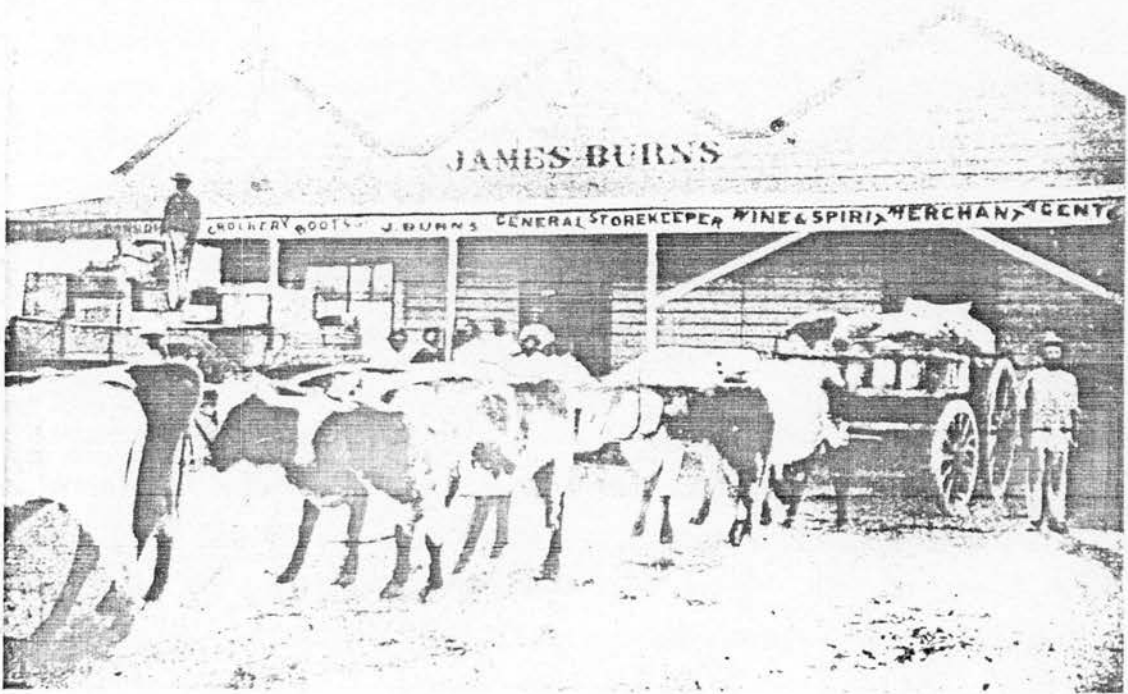
¹²⁵Bolton, *A Thousand Miles Away*, op. cit., p. 163.

¹²⁶This firm was taken over by Frederick Coleman who originally came north as its manager (CBE, 7 March 1868). He entered into partnership with P.F. Hanran (TH Supplement, 24 December 1887, p. 54) who continued alone after Coleman's death (Willmetts's *Almanac*, 1876 states that Coleman died in December 1872) until 1875 when he erected his own premises on the opposite side of the street (CBE, 23 February 1876). The old Towns & Co. premises then passed into the tenancy of MacLeod & Co. (CBE, 7 June 1876) which was in liquidation by 1876, when Robert Philp acquired them.

¹²⁷For details of these firms see Appendix F.



A.S.N. Co's Warehouse (formerly Walker and Co) about 1875 with bullock teams loading outside.
(Photograph from the collection of the Mitchell Library, Sydney)



First warehouses of James Burns - 1873.
(Photograph from the collection of the Mitchell Library, Sydney)

ports and of local shipping services to the Burdekin and northern ports. In the 1880s this trade was extended by Clifton & Aplin Bros and Philp & Co., both firms owning several steamers. Although no records now exist of exactly who was involved, a number of firms appear to have collaborated to pioneer direct importation from England in 1875 when the *Kapunda* arrived with 600 tonnes of goods. Even the ever-critical *Port Denison Times* congratulated Townsville merchants for "doing business in a proper manner".¹²⁸

Many Townsville merchants made a practice of opening branches on the goldfields and at the northern ports as they opened. There were also a number of Chinese merchants, in particular Sun Kum Toon and Wing On & Co., who maintained a thriving trade with the Chinese population on the goldfields. The timber merchants carried on an extensive trade, importing timber from North America, Tasmania and Maryborough, and exporting it to northern ports, to the goldfields of the north and west, and to the sugar plantations of the north and south, as well as fostering trade in cedar from the Daintree and, later, Cairns.

By 1880, however, it is clear that Aplin, Brown & Co. and Robert Philp were the town's leading merchants. Bolton has emphasised the importance of Burns Philp & Co., stating that by 1881 it had won paramouncy in north Queensland;¹²⁹ this date appears to be too early. The company of Burns Philp Pty Ltd was not formed until 1883, and although at that date Robert Philp was one of the town's leading merchants, one cannot claim that his firm was 'paramount'. Aplin Brown & Co. was at least as important. This company descended from the firm of Clifton & Aplin Bros, the only one of the three original firms to survive into the 1880s. In 1879 William Villiers Brown, previously Manager of the Bank of New South Wales branch in the town, joined the original partners and when in 1880 William Clifton, saddened by the death of his wife, left the colony, the firm became Aplin Brown & Co.¹³⁰ After the retirement of the Aplin brothers in 1881, the firm was formed into a limited

¹²⁸PDT, 23 October 1875.

¹²⁹Bolton, *A Thousand Miles Away*, op. cit, p. 163.

¹³⁰TH, 1 January 1879; Qlder, 8 May 1880.

liability company with a capital of \$120 000, increased in 1882 to \$250 000, and W.V. Brown became manager.

Their leading rival, James Burns, had established a trading company in 1873.¹³¹ By 1876 his business was thriving, but ill health and the death of his young wife¹³² caused him to form a partnership with Robert Philp; the company was thenceforth known as Philp & Co. Meanwhile Burns had left Townsville to start another business in Sydney, and in 1883 Burns and Philp merged their interests to form Burns Philp & Co.

Not only did the merchants work energetically to expand their own businesses, but they combined with a remarkable unity to further the development of the town. As Ivimey later remarked, when considering the preponderance of Townsville in the north,

the cause may be a general co-operation of the interests at the chief towns that are elsewhere in fervid opposition to each other, for even politics in Townsville, however rancid they may become... do not stop the desire to work together whenever the common interests of the town are concerned.¹³³

There is little doubt that the continued development of Townsville during the 1870s and 1880s was due in large measure to the faith of these men in its future, and their willingness to fight together for its progress. That they were sometimes regarded as 'one-eyed' in their support of Townsville, was not entirely accurate. As Christine Doran points out, their attitude reflected their realisation of the interdependence of Townsville and the surrounding districts rather than selfish concerns: "Townsville people know that nothing which benefits north Queensland can fail to benefit them".¹³⁴

Undoubtedly businessmen dominated the town's politics. From 1864 to 1884, ten men served as Mayor of Townsville; seven of them were merchants.¹³⁵ William Aplin, William Villiers Brown, Robert

¹³¹For history of this firm see K. Buckley and K. Klugman, *The History of Burns Philp*, Sydney 1981.

¹³²Mrs Burns nee Miss Mary Leadingham died aged 19 (CBE, 3 May 1876).

¹³³A.J. Ivimey, *Mining and Descriptive Queensland*, Brisbane 1889, p. 82.

¹³⁴TH, 20 December 1890, quoted in Christine Doran, *Separatism in Townsville*, Studies in N.Q. History, no. 4, Townsville 1981, p. 36.

Philp, W.J. Castling, John Deane, P.F. Hanran and Joseph Hodel were businessmen at this time, who sought election to Queensland Parliament, then or later, to fight for the North.¹³⁶ They were active in local affairs and in promoting the development of local industries, as were Thankfull Willmet, S.F. Walker, James Burns, H. Le T. Hubert and Hollis Hopkins.¹³⁷ Hopkins and Willmet were particularly active in working for the Northern Separation League to promote the establishing of a new state in north Queensland.¹³⁸ All of Townsville's business community appears to have participated in the formation of a Chamber of Commerce in Townsville on 31 May 1882. This institution

devoted itself to watching over the commercial interests of the town and in securing from the powers that be the rights and privileges to which our commercial institutions are entitled.¹³⁹

The first chairman was W.V. Brown with Robert Philp as vice-chairman. During succeeding years the Chamber exerted considerable pressure to ensure Townsville's continuing development.

Of less importance, though not to be overlooked, was the fact that many of the men who left the town to explore the prospects of the goldfields or of the new ports further north, left their families in Townsville and continued to regard it as their home.

The *Queenslander* noted in 1875 that

there are more women and children in Townsville than in any other place I know of. The men are mostly employed away from home and the women are left to look after the bairns. Wherever you go you see two women for one man.¹⁴⁰

While the men were away they continued to send money for the support of their families, thus keeping trade in the town going. Also, though some families did eventually move away, many breadwinners

¹³⁵See Appendix G for a list of the mayors.

¹³⁶For biographical details of these, see D.B. Waterson, A *Biographical Register of Queensland Parliament*, Canberra 1972.

¹³⁷For further information on these, see W.F. Morrison, *The Aldine History of Queensland*, vol. II.

¹³⁸*Pugh's Almanac*, 1883, reports a preliminary meeting held on 11 July 1882. For a history of this movement, see Doran, op. cit.

¹³⁹*TH Supplement*, 24 December 1887, p. 68.

¹⁴⁰*Qlder*, 3 July 1875.

returned to find work in Townsville or if they had struck it rich, to invest in business here. Among those who made money on the goldfields and returned were T. Willmetts, J.F. Hof and Murdo Cameron. Sadly for Townsville's future, it was far more common however for those who made fortunes in north Queensland to depart and invest their wealth in the south or overseas. This trend was already apparent by 1884; J.M. Black was probably the first to have profited from north Queensland and retired to England, but A.C. Bailey, who was associated with both Bowen and Townsville, also retired early to live in England on wealth amassed in the north.¹⁴¹ Others followed, and it is one of the north's misfortunes that the largest proportion of the wealth won here was expended elsewhere. The small proportion invested in Townsville did however stimulate some development.

It is clear that while Townsville experienced many ups and downs during the 1870s, the trend of its progress was surprisingly steady: if the pace of growth occasionally slowed, it never stopped. By 1884 Townsville was dependent solely on neither the pastoral industry nor gold, but on a diversity of industries. It had become the hub of a wide network of communication throughout the surrounding districts which depended on the town for supplies and as a social centre. Its future appeared more secure than at any previous time as it outstripped its rivals, and the railway was confirming its hold on the hinterland: it was poised on the brink of a boom which would transform it into a major city.

¹⁴¹Bailey died on 27 December 1876 at his residence in London (TH, 7 April 1877)

Chapter 7

Despite the tremendous growth of trade and industries, public services and amenities had only just begun to reflect Townsville's progress by 1884. During the 1870s, neither the State Government nor the Municipal Council seemed able to cope with increasing demands, so that the history of this sector of Townsville's growth is an almost hilarious catalogue of disaster and decay. As Macrossan pointed out later, "for the one pound spent by the Government in Townsville before 1874, five pounds was spent in Bowen...".¹ It appeared that public buildings had either to fall down or become totally inadequate before the erection of new ones was considered, and it was only at the very end of the decade that things began to improve. The Municipal Council had the greatest difficulty in keeping pace with roadworks.

No sooner was eastern Flinders Street raised above tide level² than the township was spreading westwards where the street there was below high water level. As late as 1874 an Aboriginal child was taken by a crocodile while playing in one of the lagoons left by the overflow of the creek at high tide in Flinders Street.³ No sooner were these blocks raised⁴ than complaints came from further west of the disgraceful and impassable state (as soon as the wet sets in) of that portion of Flinders Street to the west of Blackwood Street.⁵

To go to town from that area involved at times wading knee deep in

¹Quoted in Doran, op. cit., p. 34.

²It was raised by 1 metre in some places; Clifton & Aplin's store had to be raised 1 metre in order to be level with the footpath (TH, 15 September 1877).

³Qlder, 21 February 1874.

⁴TH, 5 January 1878.

mud. By 1875 the main thoroughfare was almost impassable and substantial drains, an excellent footpath and a sound durable roadway made up to its permanent level would constitute a very real instalment on permanent municipal works.⁵

The road over Melton Hill from Denham Street to Oxley Street had become a "perfect quarry",⁷ and "a decent approach to town from the interior" was sadly needed.⁸

The Council tried its hardest. The roadway in front of the Queens and Criterion Hotels, previously merely a sand surface was turned into good solid road, the gullies in Flinders Steet were bridged and some drainage work undertaken.⁹ This produced its own spate of complaints that it was "a dustbowl now it was drained and needed a watercart";¹⁰ shopkeepers Stewart & Lucas and Armati installed curtaining to their awnings to keep out the dust.¹¹ It seemed that the Council could not win, but work continued. Culverts were installed over the gullies in Walker Street and Sturt Street, between Stokes Street and Stanley Street, with these streets being formed to Stanley Street.¹² A new cutting was made over Melton Hill, at this time called School Hill,¹³ the road to German Gardens was put in order and the level of Flinders Street raised as far as Blackwood Street.¹⁴ Roads were continually being extended and new roads were cleared, but road maintenance remained an intractable problem as the *Queenslander* emphasised in 1882:

The traffic has increased to such an extent that the corporation will have to employ a strong staff of men to keep the main street in repair.¹⁵

It was a never-ending job as traffic increased, and streets remained

⁵CBE, 4 December 1878.

⁶ibid., 10 July 1875.

⁷Qlder, 14 August 1875.

⁸CBE, 22 August 1875.

⁹ibid., 21 August 1875, 22 September 1875.

¹⁰ibid., 21 August 1875.

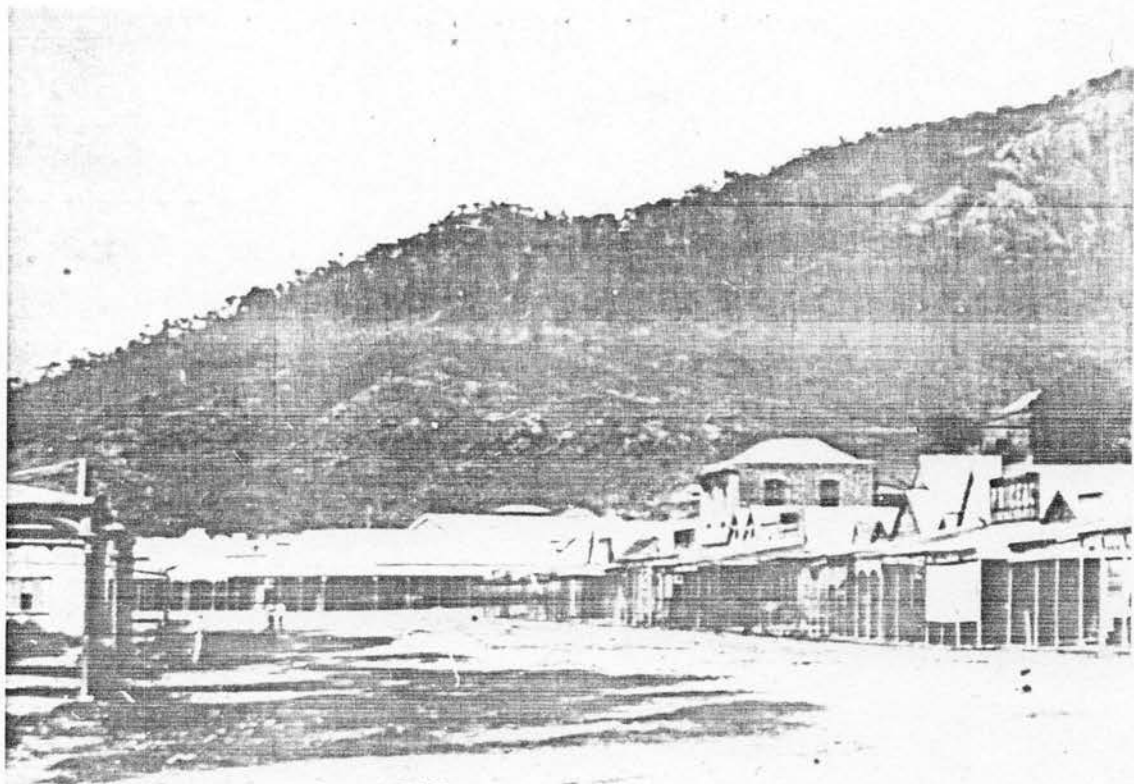
¹¹ibid., 11 November 1875.

¹²ibid., 30 October 1875.

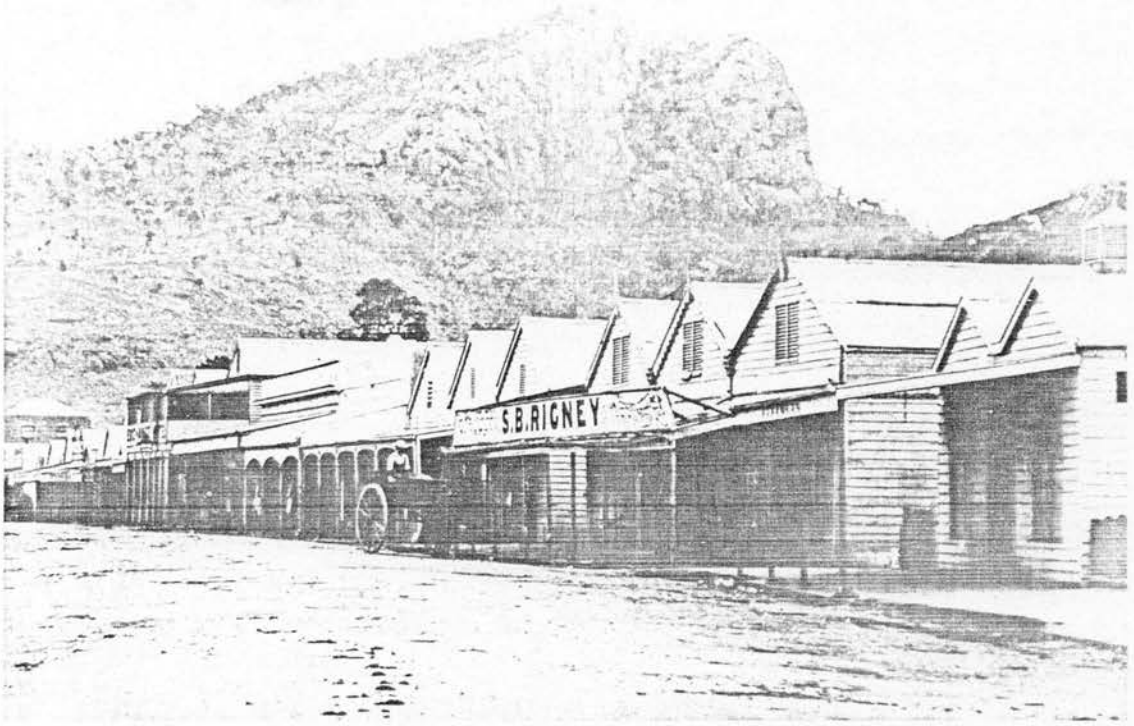
¹³ibid., 13 November 1875.

¹⁴ibid., 9 February 1876, 5 December 1876.

¹⁵Qlder, 1 July 1882.



The intersection of Flinders Street and Denham Street - 1879
On the right, Tofft's shops, the first double-storeyed brick stores in the town stand out above the quaint jumble of 'timber and tin' stores. The first tenants of these shops were J.N. Parkes and Horn and Petersen. At the corner of Denham Street was the West End Hotel on the site now occupied by the Perc Tucker Memorial Art Gallery.
(Photograph from the collection of the Mitchell Library, Sydney)



View of eastern Flinders Street - 1879

On the right, the stores with double-gabled roof belonged to P.F. Hanran. The stores bearing S.B. Rigney's name were originally erected by Black and Co. The one on the right of these was the first premises in Townsville of both the Bank of New South Wales in 1866 and the Queensland National Bank in 1873. Next to Rigney's are the triple gables of the Commercial Hotel and beyond that, Palmer's shops, some of the earliest brick shops in the town. The double-storeyed timber building with verandah projecting over the footpath was the Exchange Hotel.

(Photograph from the collection of the Mitchell Library, Sydney)

gravel-surfaced with inadequate drainage.

The lack of drainage was a source of many complaints regarding the unutterably foul smells, which, together with the aroma from "obnoxious privies and filthy back premises"¹⁶ and the smell from the fish-curing establishment - "enough to create pestilence and poison the whole block from Denham Street to Stokes Street",¹⁷ did not improve Townsville's charms. A subterranean drainage scheme was considered, but was found to be too costly

in direct opposition to the Health Board who recommend the system as essential for the preservation of health in a tropical climate.¹⁸

So by 1884, although the fish curing establishment no longer tainted the air, "sanitary arrangements" were still "a source of perplexity to the councillors" and "a well defined system of drainage" remained an urgent need.¹⁹ "Rotten potatoes and fish...refuse in gutters opposite the butcher's shops...spread its perfume around" and the mud of Ross Creek was perfumed with "the agglomerated stink of twenty one unventilated years".²⁰

In its smells, though perhaps a little worse than other Victorian towns, Townsville was not greatly different. As Frances M. Jones has pointed out, Victorian cities in general were not particularly pleasant, "the carriageway a ribbon of horsedroppings converted by rain into a morass which passing wheels threw on to the pavement". She quotes a description of London's Strand in which horse-droppings were stated to be six inches deep.²¹ The inhabitants of Townsville however appear to have been extremely sensitive about the aroma. As late as 1889, Gilbert Parker recounted the following story:

Sitting on the verandah of the Queens Hotel an hour after I arrived in Townsville, and seeing a gentleman walking about the beach as if in search of something, I asked the citizen to whom I was talking if the

¹⁶CBE, 5 January 1876.

¹⁷ibid., 14 February 1877.

¹⁸Qlder, 29 April 1882.

¹⁹ibid., 19 April 1884.

²⁰ibid., 27 December 1884. This article was written by A.J. Boyd who believed Townsville was founded in 1863.

²¹Frances M. Jones, 'The Aesthetic of the 19th Century Industrial Town', in H.J. Dyos (ed.), *The Study of Urban History*, London 1968, pp. 172-3 and p. 183.

pedestrian were prospecting. "No" he said, "that is the Mayor looking for smells". It was true; his Worship was out with thoughts of sewage on his mind. Townsville suffers from that curse, that demon of so many Austrian cities - bad drainage...²²

Drainage was to remain a major problem for many years.

Nevertheless, despite continuing problems of drainage and maintenance, the Council had obviously made great, if slow, improvements to roads since 1870. Even more importantly, it had at last succeeded in providing the town with a reliable water supply.

There had been much concern over the town's water supply which was provided by wells and lagoons for some years, with a number of citizens in the 1870s installing their own rain water tanks. The first serious discussion regarding possible sources of a better supply took place in 1876.²³ Over the next few years, several schemes were considered,²⁴ but nothing eventuated and it was not until 1880 that another scheme was suggested - the sinking of wells in what was then known as the Rising Sun.²⁵ The Engineer, Clements, found that a supply from these wells might provide all the water the town required for some years and it was decided to go ahead with this scheme, for which the Council allotted \$60 000.²⁶ Excavations for a reservoir 30 metres by 18 metres and 4.8 metres deep were started in January 1881, and pipes for reticulation arrived on the *Scottish Knight* in July.²⁷ By April 1882, machinery to purify the water was installed at the wells and was being "kept going day and night".²⁸ The contractors, Burns and Twigg of Rockhampton, installed the pumping engine and machinery by October, by which time the reservoir was ready for testing, and on 16 October 1882 the

²²Gilbert Parker, *Round the Compass in Australia*, London & Melbourne 1892, p. 276.

²³TH, 7 October 1876.

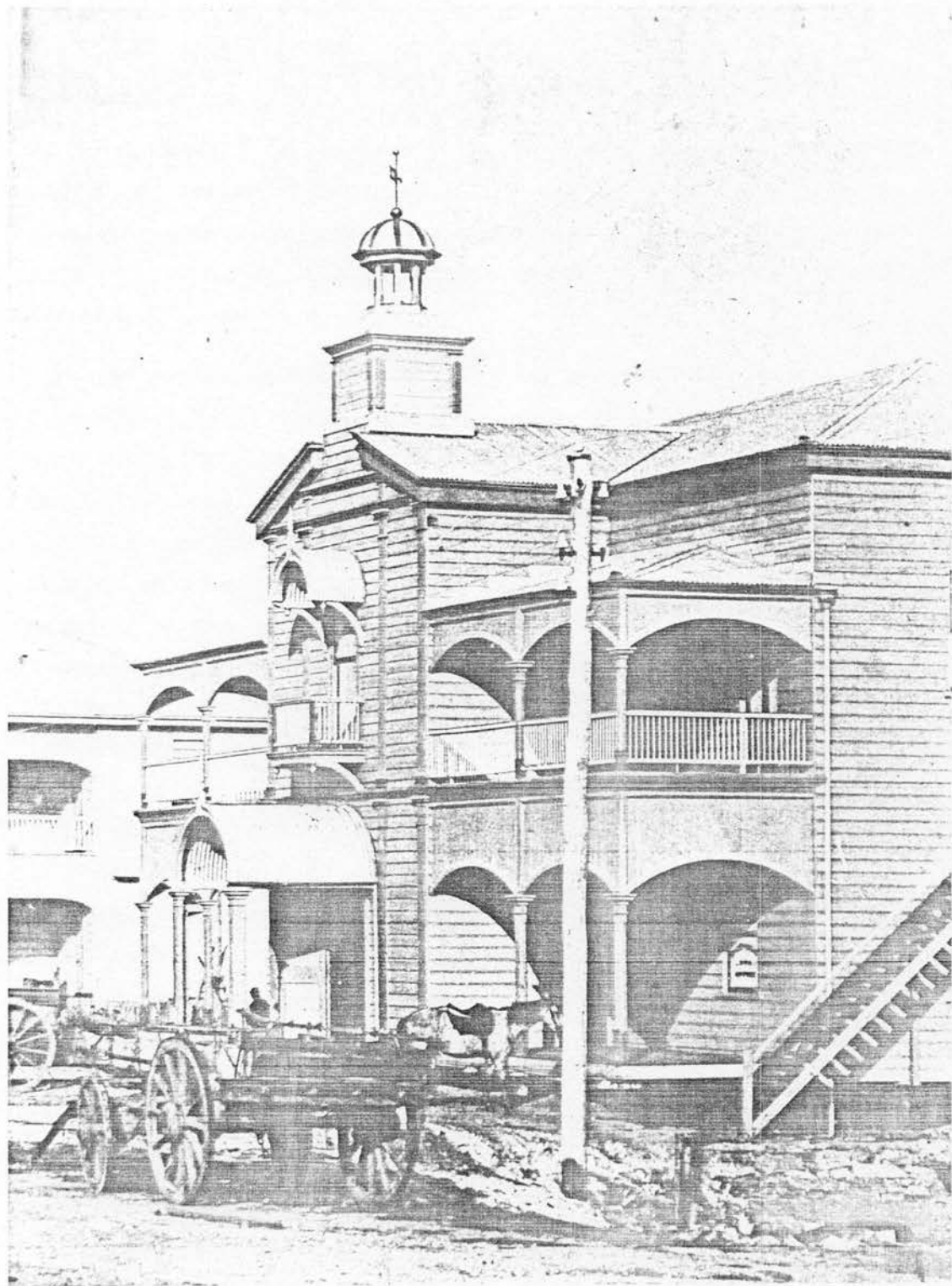
²⁴ibid., 14 June 1879 lists an Alligator Creek scheme, a Bohle Well scheme, a Mount Stuart gravitation scheme and a Reid River gravitation scheme.

²⁵Qlder, 11 December 1880. These wells were in the vicinity of the present Mundingburra School.

²⁶ibid., 16 April 1881.

²⁷ibid., 22 January 1881, 23 July 1881.

²⁸ibid., 29 April 1882.



The Town Hall - 1880
(Photograph from the collection of the Mitchell Library, Sydney)

Townsville Herald announced that

on Saturday afternoon, the machinery for the waterworks was started. Alderman Hanran turned the steam on and as the fly wheel began to turn broke a bottle of champagne on it.²⁹

By then, about 14 kilometres of piping had been laid. By the next month, the reservoir had been filled and the works were pronounced a thorough success.³⁰ During the next years, reticulated water was laid to most areas of Townsville, and by 1884 sites for new wells further out were being explored.³¹

The Municipal Council had at last achieved a more impressive Town Hall. By 1876 the original Council Chambers were in bad repair and too far from the business area of town. The Council then decided to move to rented premises in eastern Flinders Street which had been occupied by R. Morton, a saddler.³² By 1878, more suitable offices were being sought;³³ a further move was made in November to premises in Denham Street, previously occupied by C.O. Price & Co.³⁴ However, the night that the Council first occupied these offices, the Town Clerk, Lewis, who had been embezzling Council funds resorted to arson to escape discovery,³⁵ thus necessitating another shift to a shop in Stokes Street.³⁶ By this time the need for a larger and more central Town Hall had become urgent. Petitions were made to the Government for a new site in the vicinity of the Telegraph Office, together with a grant of funds.³⁷ By the end of 1879, both site³⁸ and funds were available, and despite some delay as Councillors argued the respective merits of a one- or two-storeyed building, the new Town Hall, erected by Shimmin, was

²⁹ *ibid.*, 24 June 1882, 7 October 1882, 28 October 1882.

³⁰ *ibid.*, 4 November 1882.

³¹ *ibid.*, 24 May 1884.

³² *CBE*, 22 April 1876.

³³ *TH*, 19 October 1878.

³⁴ *Qlder*, 16 November 1878.

³⁵ *TH*, 22 January 1879, 8 February 1879.

³⁶ *ibid.*, 9 November 1879. The site of this is now occupied by NORQEB offices.

³⁷ *ibid.*, 8 March 1879.

³⁸ Presently occupied by the Municipal Library.

completed by 1881.³⁹ The town was nearly deprived of its Council Chambers again in 1883 when a fire destroyed the clock in the tower.⁴⁰ Fortunately the fire services functioned well and the building survived.

If the Municipal Council's record seems slow moving, that of the Queensland Government was, if anything, worse. The first major improvement of the 1870s came with the erection in 1872 of a new Post Office in Wickham Street.⁴¹ Opened on 24 November 1874, it was almost immediately found to be too small.⁴² Despite additions, it remained in 1884 inadequate and too far from the business centre of the town.

The Telegraph Office had rapidly outgrown its original premises; in 1876 requests were made for a new office, but no action was taken.⁴³ By 1878, the building was not only too small but falling apart; still another year lapsed before a new building was erected at the corner of Flinders Street and Denham Street.⁴⁴ In 1883, facilities were further improved with the installation of the town's first telephone exchange, the first test call being made between Willmett's office and the exchange.⁴⁵

The history of the hospital might well be termed "scandalous". It was still on Ross Island in the old building which rapidly became inadequate and, like the Telegraph Office, fell into disrepair. In 1875, part of the roof fell in⁴⁶ and in 1876, though it was crowded with patients, it was in such bad repair that "a heavy gale would level it".⁴⁷ It could still only be reached by boat across the

³⁹*Qlder*, 10 January 1880, 13 March 1880, 19 June 1880, 25 June 1881.

⁴⁰*ibid.*, 15 September 1883. The clock was installed in 1882 (*ibid.*, 20 May 1882).

⁴¹*Pugh's Almanac*, 1873, has reference to tenders being called for this on 26 February 1872.

⁴²*Qlder*, 28 November 1874; *Willmett's Almanac*, 1877, p. 38.

⁴³*CBE*, 25 March 1876.

⁴⁴*TH*, 16 January 1878, 12 July 1879.

⁴⁵*Qlder*, 17 March 1883.

⁴⁶*Townsville Times*, 4 December 1875.

⁴⁷*Qlder*, 29 January 1876.

creek, a great inconvenience with critically injured or ill patients. Discussion regarding the need for a new hospital resulted in consideration of a number of sites, but by 1878, there was still no new hospital, and the old building had become so bad that patients had to be moved into part of the Immigration Barracks nearby, where temporary quarters were hastily erected.⁴⁸ The old hospital was then sold for demolition.⁴⁹ A new hospital was an urgent necessity, but it was January 1879 before plans for one were drawn up⁵⁰ to be erected on the Hospital Reserve set aside in 1871.⁵¹ It was not until June 1879 that the foundation stone was laid on the site in North Ward.⁵² A further comedy of errors ensued as first one contractor, Jensen, had his contract cancelled, then another firm, Fraser and Longstaff, had theirs repudiated, until finally the contract was let to J. Miller for \$4400.⁵³ However it was 1881 before the new building was ready for occupation;⁵⁴ for three years patients had occupied inadequate temporary quarters. At least by that time, Townsville was well supplied with medical practitioners,⁵⁵ and Dr Geldard had established the Cleveland Bay Sanitarium for Lady Patients on Melton Hill⁵⁶ which provided some alternative accommodation for those who could afford it. Other health care in the community was provided by a Reception House for lunatics on Ross Island in 1871⁵⁷ which was still in use in 1884.

⁴⁸TH, 6 March 1878, 24 August 1878.

⁴⁹CBE, 27 March 1878.

⁵⁰TH, 4 January 1879.

⁵¹Queensland Government Gazette, 1871, p. 15.

⁵²TH, 18 June 1879. Still occupied today by the Townsville General Hospital, though the old buildings have now disappeared.

⁵³ibid., 17 September 1879, 22 November 1879; Q.L.A., V.& P., 1880, p. 1002.

⁵⁴Qlder, 30 April 1881.

⁵⁵Listed in Pugh's Almanac.

⁵⁶TH, 4 January 1879. This was either in or close to Geldard's house which still remains at the top of Denham Street near St James Cathedral.

⁵⁷Queensland Government Gazette, 1871, p. 1515.

The Immigration Barracks to which the hospital patients were transferred had been erected in 1876⁵⁸ to provide housing for the many immigrants arriving; previously they had been housed in tents.⁵⁹ The numbers of immigrants had increased by 1884, but most found employment quickly and moved out so that the barracks continued adequate, though at times it was necessary to house some in vacant accommodation available in the town.⁶⁰ Immigrants arriving in ships which were quarantined were not so fortunate. A site had been set aside for a Quarantine Station on Magnetic Island in 1875, but no buildings were erected.⁶¹ Tents were supplied at Picnic Bay for women and children, but men were apparently supposed to find shelter for themselves. Temporary humpies were made of calico, canvas or any other available material.⁶² Food was apparently in short supply. Dr Ryan, who was in quarantine there in 1878, described hunting for game or bartering for fish from the Aborigines, and he noted also that water was scarce.⁶³ By 1884, the only change was that food was sent daily from the mainland,⁶⁴ and the Butler family, who assisted many quarantine victims, had formed a settlement at Picnic Bay.⁶⁵ No substantial permanent shelter was provided.

Like practically every other public building in the town, the Court and Customs House too had become quite inadequate by 1874, when it was decided to build a new Court House in Sturt Street.⁶⁶ With shortages, first of bricks, then of cement, it became a standing joke in the community as to whether it would ever be finished.⁶⁷ It was not until May 1877 that Justice Sheppard "opened

⁵⁸*Townsville Times*, 17 November 1875; *CBE*, 9 February 1876.

⁵⁹*Qlder*, 28 March 1874

⁶⁰*ibid.*, 27 January 1877.

⁶¹*ibid.*, 16 January 1875.

⁶²*TH*, 5 October 1878.

⁶³*ibid.*, 30 October 1878.

⁶⁴*Qlder*, 17 March 1883.

⁶⁵Jessie Macqueen, *The Real Magnetic*, Townsville 1952.

⁶⁶Fitzroy Somerset to Undersecretary Public Works, 30 March 1874 (Q.S.A., WOR/A396, 96/5993).

⁶⁷*CBE*, 9 February 1876, 23 February 1876; *TH*, 18 November 1876.

Criminal Assizes in the new Court House" with a long list of cases, the most intriguing of which was that of the charge of bigamy dismissed against one Annie Clarke, alias Kirk, Anderson, Crane, Henderson and Collins.⁶⁸

The Gaol, despite extensions, had also become inadequate as early as 1872.⁶⁹ Not only was it overcrowded, but criminals had discovered it was by no means escape proof. At least two escapes were made by sawing holes in the timber floor and crawling out between the stumps below,⁷⁰ but it was not until 1875 that tenders were called for a new building.⁷¹ The site chosen was on part of the Botanical Gardens Reserve, already occupied by the cricket ground. Despite complaints, the Government refused to pay compensation to the Cricket Club;⁷² the Government Architect laid out the site in May 1877, and the new gaol was occupied by October 1878.⁷³

The police appear to have been worse off than the prisoners, housed in accommodation described as "wretched".⁷⁴ A new Police Station was erected in 1876 at the corner of Stanley Street and Sturt Street, but new police barracks were not built nearby until 1879.⁷⁵ Other improvements were made with the erection of new buildings for the pilot station, which appear to have remained adequate, on the other side of Ross Creek in 1875,⁷⁶ and lighthouses at Cape Cleveland and Bay Rock.⁷⁷ A new magazine was erected fourteen kilometres out of town⁷⁸ as the original building was too

⁶⁸*Qlder*, 5 May 1877.

⁶⁹*Queensland Government Gazette*, 1871, p. 17.

⁷⁰'Professor' Russell (*Qlder*, 9 March 1872); Dempsey, a horse stealer (*Qlder*, 11 May 1872).

⁷¹*Queensland Government Gazette*, 1875, pp. 1004-5.

⁷²*TH* Supplement, 24 December 1887, p. 66.

⁷³*ibid.*, 23 May 1877; *CBE*, 19 October 1878.

⁷⁴*TH*, 10 September 1879.

⁷⁵*CBE*, 5 December 1876; *TH*, 10 September 1879.

⁷⁶From then on called Pilot Hill (*Qlder*, 13 February 1875; *Townsville Times*, 15 September 1875).

⁷⁷J.H. Thorburn, 'Major lighthouses of Queensland', pt II, *Queensland Heritage*, vol. 1, no. 7, November 1967, p. 22.

close to the harbour works.⁷⁹ Another had been erected on Ross Creek,⁸⁰ but after a consignment of faulty dynamite exploded in 1881, shaking the town and shattering windows, the dangers became all too apparent.⁸¹ It was then decided to move the explosive storage to a safer distance.⁸²

That the town might suffer major damage from an explosion was a minor risk; the risk of fire was much greater. For most of this period the lack of a reticulated water supply made fire-fighting in the town virtually impossible. It was only after fire devastated a large section of the western side of Flinders Street in 1877⁸³ that a Fire Brigade was formed at a meeting held at Low's Townsville Hotel on 5 April 1878.⁸⁴ A fire engine had been procured⁸⁵ and a Fire Station was erected in Denham Street,⁸⁶ but the fire engine, which must have been either a hand cart model or an early horse-drawn one, failed on first use.⁸⁷ Even with the engine operating, fire-fighters were unable to procure enough water unless the fire attended was close to the creek or to a lagoon from which water might be pumped. The Fire Brigade therefore remained somewhat inefficient until its reorganisation in 1880, and the installation of the town water supply.⁸⁸ In the meantime practically the whole of two blocks of Flinders Street had been destroyed by fire.⁸⁹

⁷⁸At Roseneath (*Qlder*, 26 November 1881).

⁷⁹*CBE*, 1 April 1876.

⁸⁰*Q.L.A., V. & P.*, 1879, p. 738.

⁸¹*Qlder*, 16 July 1881, 23 July 1881.

⁸²*ibid.*, 13 January 1883.

⁸³*Mackay Mercury*, 6 October 1877.

⁸⁴*TH*, 5 April 1878.

⁸⁵*Willmetts's Almanac*, 1880, states this arrived on 8 February 1878.

⁸⁶Petition to Government re shifting of Fire Station when the Telegraph Office was being built (*TH*, 8 March 1879).

⁸⁷*ibid.*, 25 October 1879.

⁸⁸*Qlder*, 20 November 1882.

⁸⁹*Mackay Mercury*, 6 October 1877; *Qlder*, 8 February 1873, 13 August 1881, 24 September 1881.

State schools were one of the few services which continued to meet community needs satisfactorily, though even these could not have done so had not a number of private and church schools been established. By 1884, new state schools had been established at Mundingburrah and Ross Island, but there was still need for a school at West End.⁹⁰ The National School had expanded rapidly. By 1873, a separate Girls' School was being erected, which was opened by the Governor in 1874.⁹¹ The original building then became the Boys' School, and by 1879 an Infants' School was added to the complex.⁹²

A Convent School opened in March 1873 with 100 pupils.⁹³ It was run by the Sisters of the Order of St Joseph in a building on the Strand which was either close to the Catholic Church or may actually have been the Church itself initially. A Convent was erected by June 1873,⁹⁴ but tenders for the erection of a schoolhouse were not called until June 1876.⁹⁵ In 1877 the Convent was removed to a new site and enlarged,⁹⁶ but in February 1878 the Sisters of St Joseph left, and the school closed.⁹⁷ This situation only lasted until September however, when a number of Sisters of Mercy arrived and arrangements were made to re-open the school.⁹⁸ By 1877, the Church of England was also operating a school, the St James English Church School.⁹⁹

Secondary education was not readily available; parents wishing their children to receive higher education were forced to send them to boarding school in the south. From 1875 onward, there was discussion regarding the establishment of a Grammar School,¹⁰⁰ and a

⁹⁰*Qlder*, 22 April 1882.

⁹¹*ibid.*, 11 October 1873, 5 September 1874.

⁹²*TH*, 25 May 1879.

⁹³*Qlder*, 29 March 1873.

⁹⁴*ibid.*, 28 June 1873.

⁹⁵*CBE*, 28 June 1876.

⁹⁶*TH*, 26 May 1877.

⁹⁷*Willmetts's Almanac*, 1879.

⁹⁸*TH*, 28 September 1878.

⁹⁹*ibid.*, 26 May 1877. No details of this school have been located.

site was selected near the Botanical Gardens,¹⁰¹ but nothing was apparently done to secure it and another site for a Grammar School was allocated at Kissing Point, which appears on maps of the day.¹⁰² Nothing was done however towards the erection of buildings at that time.

In the meantime, a number of private schools attempted to fill this gap. Mrs Deakin O'Reilly had a "select Boarding and Day School" for girls¹⁰³ but this does not seem to have lasted for long; Mrs Skene's "Boarding and Day Seminary for Young Ladies" was still operating in 1879.¹⁰⁴ In 1876, J.Y. Walker opened a Collegiate School for Boys.¹⁰⁵ Walker, a member of the University of St Andrews, charged "15 guineas per quarter" for boarders.¹⁰⁶ However, he departed to join the state teaching service in the Bundaberg area¹⁰⁷ and his school closed, though Patrick F. McGurk opened another Grammar School in 1879.¹⁰⁸ This seems to have disappeared quickly, and it was not until 1881 that another Grammar School was started by David Thomatis MA PhD, who arrived in Townsville in July from Rockhampton.¹⁰⁹ Thomatis had come from the College of Preceptors in London and had been Senior Master at Ballarat Grammar School.¹¹⁰ His school was a boarding school and offered education to both boys and girls, Mrs Thomatis acting as Lady Principal, though boys and girls departments were kept separate. Pupils were prepared for entry to universities, law, surveying, engineering, the civil service, and other professions. However, at that time, with all secondary school examinations under the authority of the University of Sydney, and Townsville not a centre for holding local

¹⁰⁰*Townsville Times*, 9 February 1876.

¹⁰¹*CBE*, 23 October 1875.

¹⁰²Townsville Town Map, 1870 (Q.S.A., L6/5 1880).

¹⁰³*CBE*, 21 August 1875.

¹⁰⁴*TH*, 30 October 1875, 1 January 1879.

¹⁰⁵*ibid.*, 1 July 1876, 1 August 1876.

¹⁰⁶*ibid.*, 10 March 1877.

¹⁰⁷*ibid.*, 23 January 1878.

¹⁰⁸*ibid.*, 4 January 1879.

¹⁰⁹*Qlder*, 23 July 1881.

¹¹⁰Biographical details from *Willmetts Almanac*, 1885.

examinations until 1888,¹¹¹ students had to travel south to sit for these examinations. Thomatis's Grammar School was still operating in 1884.¹¹²

By that time, there were more definite steps being taken to establish a Townsville Grammar School. The site selected previously in the Botanical Gardens Reserve was again favoured,¹¹³ and a subscription list which James Tyson headed with a donation of \$200 was started.¹¹⁴ It was not long before a permanent Grammar School would be opened.

With all of these schools in operation, Townsville children were reasonably supplied with educational facilities, although the private schools were not free and therefore only available to those affluent enough to afford them. Orphans had not been so fortunate. Without an orphanage, children taken into the care of the state had been sent to Rockhampton or Brisbane. In 1878, it was decided to erect an Orphanage at Townsville.¹¹⁵ This was built on a block of land behind the Convent in North Ward and opened in January 1879, making conditions for orphans a little more humane.¹¹⁶

By 1884, there were seven churches with eleven ministers of religion,¹¹⁷ and the Anglican diocese of North Queensland had been created, with Bishop Stanton as the first Bishop of north Queensland.¹¹⁸ The Church of England had erected the first church in Townsville, St James, in 1871.¹¹⁹ By 1884, two more Anglican

¹¹¹TH, 25 August 1888.

¹¹²This school appears to have continued almost until the building of the Townsville Grammar School in 1887. There is reference to it in the *Week*, January 1886. Thomatis later went to Cairns and eventually ended in South America.

¹¹³Qlder, 24 March 1884.

¹¹⁴ibid., 23 February 1884. Copy of this list in Appendix H.

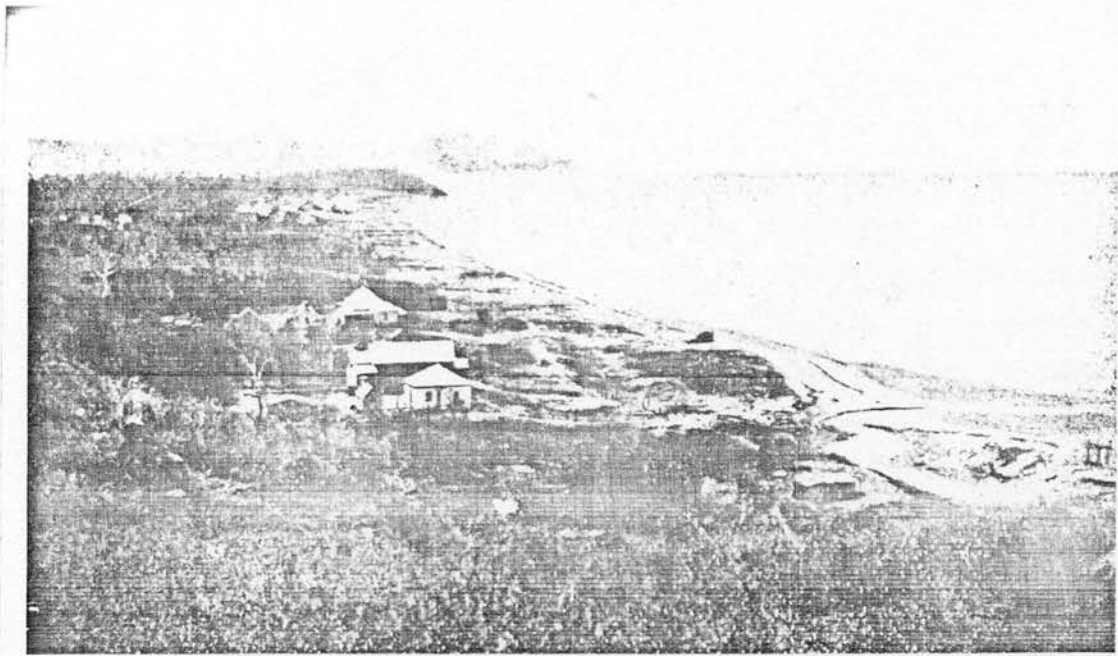
¹¹⁵Tenders were called in TH, 4 December 1878.

¹¹⁶ibid., 29 January 1879.

¹¹⁷Listed in *Willmetts's Almanac*, 1885.

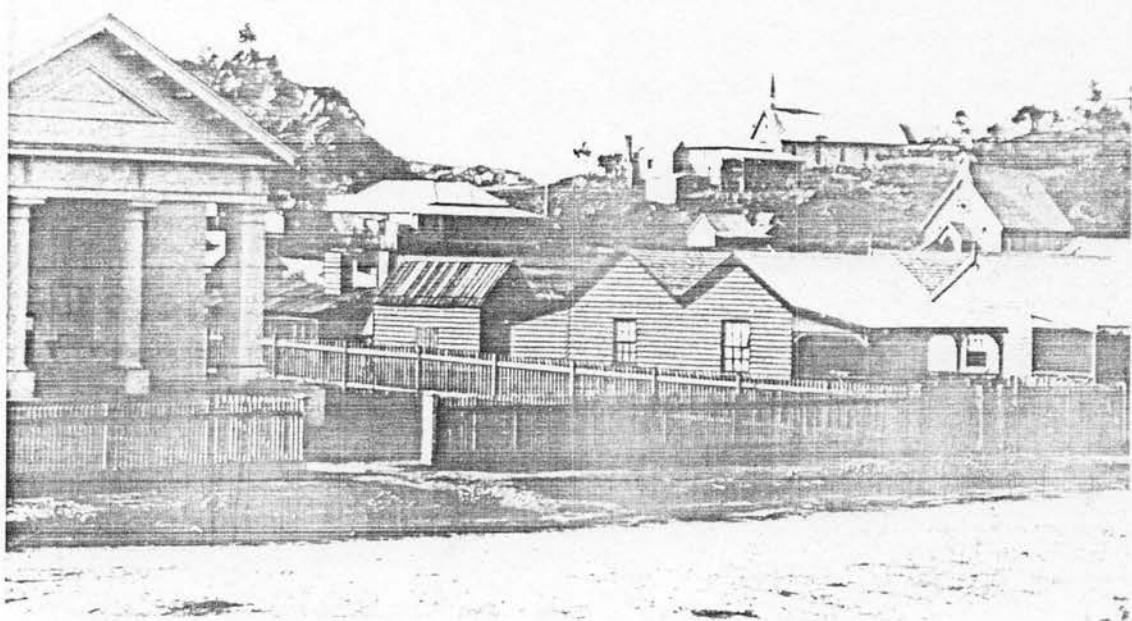
¹¹⁸Qlder, 27 July 1878. Stanton arrived on 21 May 1879 (TH, 25 May 1879).

¹¹⁹TH Supplement, 24 December 1887, states that the foundation stone was laid on 24 May 1871. This was sited directly in front of where the present St James Cathedral now stands.



The Strand about 1872 showing St Joseph's Catholic Church with the Rectory beside it.

(Photograph from Jubilee Carnival Programme - 1913 - Delamothe Collection, James Cook University, Townsville)



Sturt Street about 1880 showing the front of the Court House on the left, Dr Geldard's house in front of St James Church of England and the Congregational Church (erected 1875) in Denham Street on the right.
(Photograph from the collection of the Mitchell Library, Sydney)

churches were established: St Peters, West End, and St Johns, South Townsville.¹²⁰ The second church to be erected was the Catholic Church of St Joseph, erected on the Strand about 1872, shortly after the arrival of the first Catholic priest, Father Connolly.¹²¹ Connolly left in 1878 and was replaced by Father Walsh in August of that year.¹²² In 1875, the Reverend Gray, a minister of the Congregational Church arrived,¹²³ and a Congregational Church was opened in Denham Street by November.¹²⁴ A Methodist church was the fourth to open in 1877, after the arrival of the Rev. William Benson Mather,¹²⁵ and in 1884, after the arrival of the first Presbyterian minister, Duncan MacDonald, a Presbyterian church was erected.¹²⁶ Finally, after twenty years, all major denominations were provided with both ministers and churches.

By 1884, there was a variety of shops displaying a range of merchandise almost as varied as one might have found in large cities throughout the country at that time. A choice of goods was available in Townsville stores from virtually every part of the globe: ornamental tiles, cane and carved ware from China, tea from India, China or Ceylon blended to one's taste by T.T. Cowley, and an apparently endless variety of other goods.¹²⁷ Ice was being delivered every morning to town customers. A number of attempts to start ice works had failed, but by 1883 one ice works was in full working order and by November "ice creams and drinks are the order of the day almost in every hotel and shop in town".¹²⁸

¹²⁰TH Supplement, 24 December 1887, p. 66.

¹²¹TH Supplement, 24 December 1887, states that the first Catholic priest arrived and the first Catholic Church was erected in 1875. This is incorrect. *Qlder*, 11 March 1871, states that Fr Connolly arrived on the *Storm King* from London to go to Cleveland Bay. Fr Connolly laid the foundation stone of the Catholic Chapel at Ravenswood in August 1871 (*Qlder*, 19 August 1871) and *Pugh's Almanac* lists him as priest at Townsville by 1873.

¹²²TH Supplement, 24 December 1887, p. 60; *Qlder*, 31 August 1878.

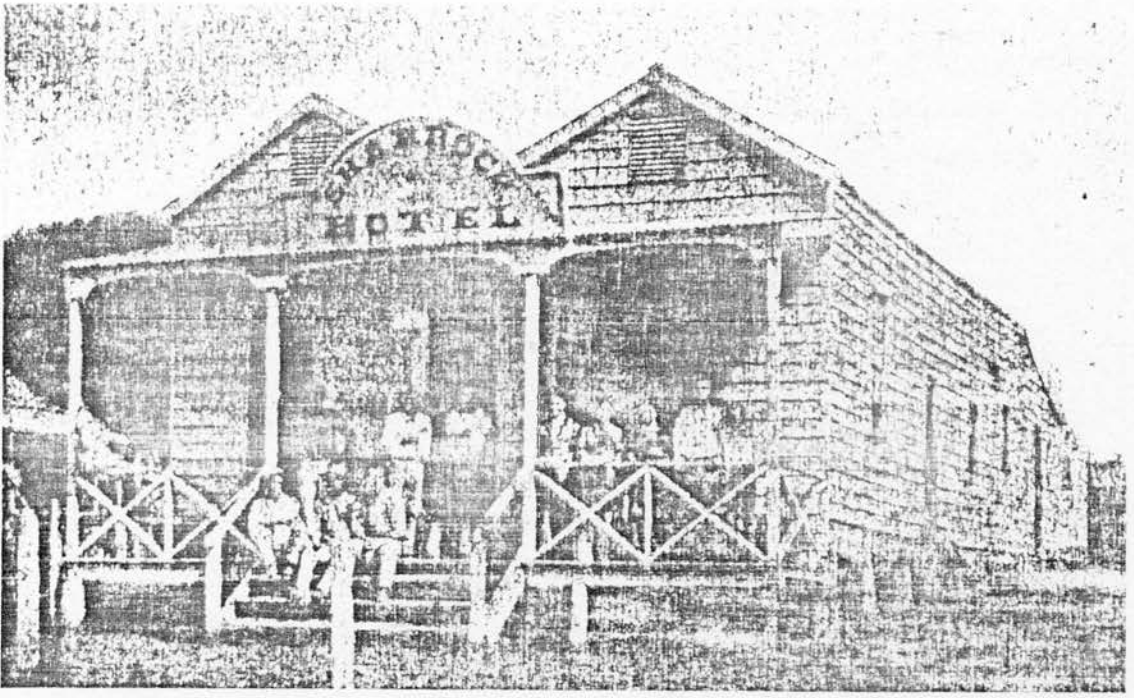
¹²³*Qlder*, 17 April 1875.

¹²⁴*Townsville Times*, 27 November 1875. This church stood on the site later occupied by the A.W.U. Hall demolished in 1980 to make way for a new road.

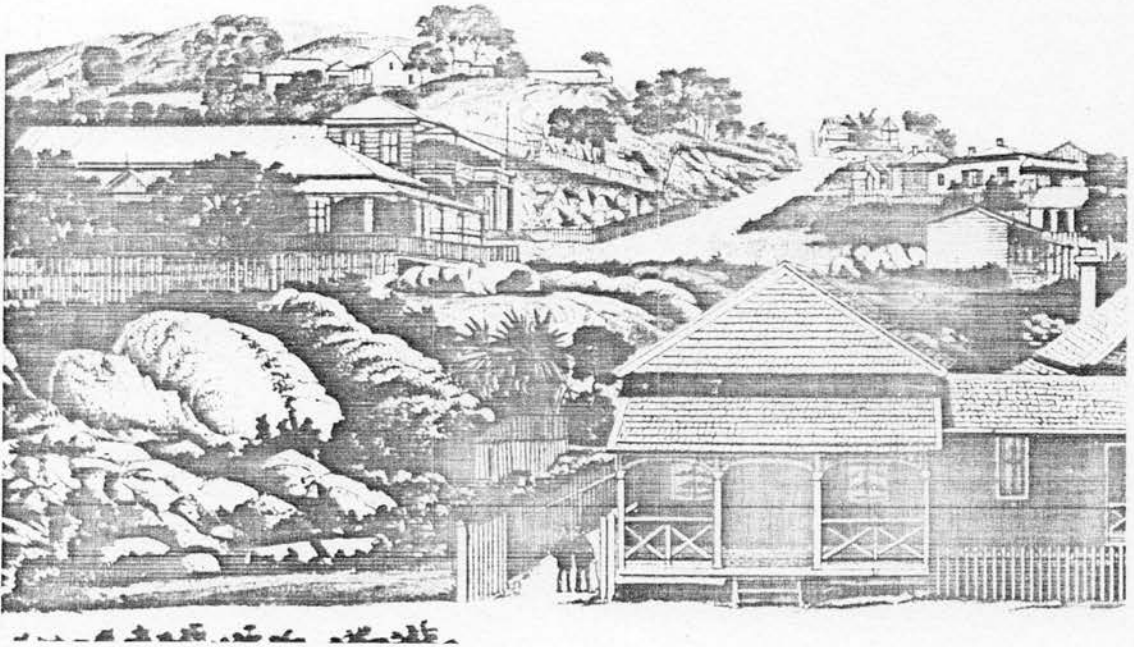
¹²⁵*Willmetts's Almanac*, 1878, gives the date for this as March 1877.

¹²⁶*Willmetts's Almanac*, 1885.

¹²⁷TH, 15 March 1879; Macqueen, *Memories of Townsville*, op. cit., pp. 10-11.



Shamrock Hotel, Flinders Street circa 1877
(Photograph from Cummins and Campbell's Monthly Magazine, November, 1941)



Cleveland Terrace about 1884 with the School of Arts (erected 1877)
(Sketch from Views of Townsville - Mitchell Library, Sydney)

Five banks were operating by 1884: the Australian Joint Stock Bank and the Bank of New South Wales continued, while the Queensland National Bank had opened in 1873, and the Bank of Australasia and the Union Bank in 1881.¹²⁹ Certainly no-one could now complain that banking business was slow.

The number of hotels in the town had increased greatly also, with no less than 27 listed in Pugh's Almanac for 1885.¹³⁰ The shortage of hotel accommodation, evident in 1875, had been over-redressed by the end of 1876, with the erection of eight new hotels.¹³¹ By 1882, however, when the Supreme Court sat for a particularly busy session, or when other events drew numbers of people into the town, hotel accommodation was again "lamentably deficient; all houses full and many of the principal hotels had to make shakedown beds on the verandahs".¹³² Although five new hotels opened in the next two years¹³³ it remained "an acknowledged fact that the hotel accommodation is totally inadequate to the requirements of the place".¹³⁴

The standard of accommodation in these hotels varied, though all appear to have improved greatly on earlier standards. At the top of the scale were the Queens and the Imperial, with the Queens slightly in front:

All over the colonies, the hotels as a rule are bad, but most fortunately at Townsville one finds a brilliant exception to this fact. The Queens Hotel is really most comfortable and would certainly rank far above anything of its kind in Brisbane and Sydney.¹³⁵

The *Queenslander* in fact rated it as "probably the best in the

¹²⁸*Qlder*, 17 November 1883.

¹²⁹*ibid.*, 16 August 1873, 5 February 1881, 12 February 1881.

¹³⁰See Appendix I.

¹³¹The Prince of Wales (*TH*, 2 November 1876), Queensland (*CBE*, 23 October 1875), Freemasons (*CBE*, 25 September 1875), Courthouse (*CBE*, 22 September 1875), Working Man's Home (*CBE*, 13 November 1875), Post Office (*CBE*, 29 January 1876), Bellevue, North Ward (*CBE*, 29 March 1876), Paragon, Telegraph Office block of Flinders Street (*TH*, 16 November 1876).

¹³²*Qlder*, 13 May 1882.

¹³³Imperial in 1882, Crown, Tower, Southern Cross, Excelsior in 1884.

¹³⁴*ibid.*, 19 July 1884.

¹³⁵H.W. Stirling, *The Never Never Land - a Ride in North Queensland*, London 1884, p. 78.

Colony".¹³⁶

The range of entertainment and recreational facilities available to the population had also expanded. A School of Arts had been erected. This too had a remarkably chequered history, being descended from the Library and Reading Room established in 1866. From Grimaldi's office, the books had been transferred to the Council Office on the Strand, and in about 1870 a School of Arts was properly formed. The Library was then transferred again to a cottage owned by Bartels, described as a "miserable humpy".¹³⁷ By 1875, it had again been shifted temporarily to the Council Chambers.¹³⁸ It is not clear whether a shift was made back to Bartels' cottage or not, but by October 1875, wherever it was, the roof was leaking badly, and there was much discussion regarding the need for a permanent School of Arts.¹³⁹ Nothing eventuated however, and the Reading Room was transferred to another house owned by Bartels at the top of Denham Street, while discussion continued.¹⁴⁰ There were plans for a School of Arts in Flinders Street, but like those for the first Town Hall, they remained unfulfilled dreams.¹⁴¹ The decision was at last made to erect the new building on the site set aside on Melton Hill, where it was opened on 20 September 1877 with a concert by the Orpheus Glee Club.¹⁴²

The Library was housed in one section of the building and there was provision for a museum, though this left much to be desired, containing only "two pieces of petrified wood, a few spears, a cannon-ball and an ancient and well-worn tall black hat". It was somewhat redeemed by a display of R.L. Jack's geological specimens which "gave the place a decent tone".¹⁴³

¹³⁶Qlder, 28 February 1882.

¹³⁷ibid., 9 August 1873.

¹³⁸ibid., 27 March 1875.

¹³⁹CBE, 2 October 1875; *Townsville Times*, 29 December 1875.

¹⁴⁰CBE, 20 October 1875.

¹⁴¹*Townsville Times*, 29 December 1875.

¹⁴²CBE, 1 January 1877, *TH*, 19 January 1879. This building eventually became the Supreme Court and is presently occupied by the State Government Traffic Office.

¹⁴³Qlder, 20 November 1880.

There was also a fine concert hall which seated 800; reputed to have had excellent acoustics, it became Townsville's artistic centre. The Theatre Royal and Poole's Assembly Rooms had long been replaced by the Olympic Theatre, attached to the Denham Street facade of the Townsville Hotel, but by 1878 it had become a restaurant.¹⁴⁴

A steady stream of visiting artists such as Madame Carandini, and groups such as Ashton's Circus and the Lilliputian Opera Troupe flowed through the town.¹⁴⁵ Besides these, there were outlets for local talent: church choirs and amateur singing groups, such as the Orpheus Glee Club.¹⁴⁶ The Townsville Garrick Amateur Dramatic Club was formed in 1879, and local amateurs staged a variety of performances, even attempting an Oratorio in 1880.¹⁴⁷ There were frequent lectures, such as that given by A.J. Boyd on Arctic Exploration,¹⁴⁸ so that a variety of entertainment both serious and lighthearted was available. Freemasonry continued to expand also. Since the cyclone of 1867, Lodges had conducted meetings at hotels or in the Council Chambers. By 1876 however, the top floor of a new two-storeyed wooden building erected by J.W. Major next to the Royal Hotel in Flinders Street had become the Masonic Hall.¹⁴⁹

By 1884, Townsville could support three cricket clubs and a football club.¹⁵⁰ Cricket appears to have been more popular than football, with Townsville clubs playing visiting matches in centres such as Ingham.¹⁵¹ There was no Rifle Club, but a detachment of the Queensland Volunteer Artillery was formed after representations by

¹⁴⁴*Willmetts's Cooktown Almanac* 1876; *TH*, 27 February 1878.

¹⁴⁵*TH*, 24 May 1879; *Northern Miner*, 18 July 1877; *Qlder*, 17 May 1884.

¹⁴⁶*TH*, 16 April 1879. A group called the Townsville Amateur Serenaders existed as early as 1868 (*CBE*, 20 June 1868). A Church of England choir had been formed by 1869 (*CBE*, 21 July 1869).

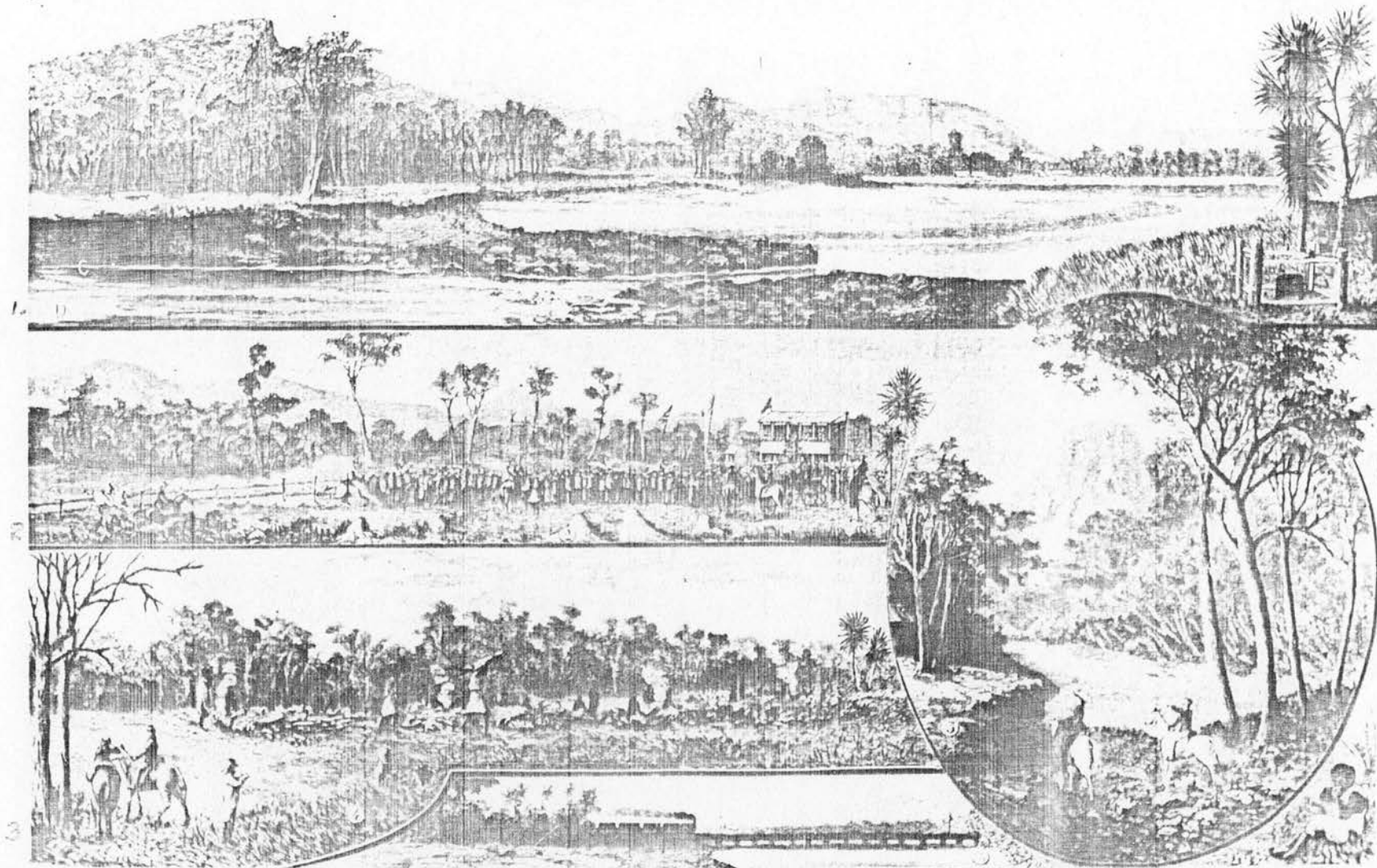
¹⁴⁷*ibid.*; *Qlder*, 17 April 1880.

¹⁴⁸*Qlder*, 9 August 1875.

¹⁴⁹*CBE*, 6 May 1876.

¹⁵⁰The cricket clubs were the Townsville, Mercantile and Albert Clubs (*Willmetts's Almanac*, 1885). Football matches were played on Ross Island (*TH*, 20 July 1878; *Qlder*, 30 June 1883).

¹⁵¹*Qlder*, 22 April 1882.



Scenes of Townsville - 1882
 (From Illustrated Sydney News
 1882. Mitchell Library,
 Sydney)

1. Ross River with the buildings of the old Boiling Down works in the distance.
2. The Racecourse at Hermit Park
3. Camp of Aborigines, Hermit Park
4. A train crossing Ross River
5. Riding along Ross River.

A.F. Low in 1878, and when Lt Col. Blaxland made an inspection in 1880, over 40 members were in attendance.¹⁵² On that occasion, Blaxland selected a site for the first battery on "an elevation about 2 miles north of Ross Creek known as Kissing Point and the butts for rifle practise are to be just at the rear of the battery".¹⁵³ The Turf Club continued to prosper, but it was considered desirable to shift the race track from Belgian Gardens. New sites were tried in the paddock of W.T. Morris¹⁵⁴ and at L.F. Sachs's Hermit Park Estate.¹⁵⁵ In 1882 Dr Frost and O'Rourke developed a new track at Cluden, erecting a grandstand in 1883.¹⁵⁶ Reached by rail, it became the official home of the Townsville Turf Club.

Sports meetings were popular, as was swimming, though this had caused some complaints. Residents bathed in the open sea near the rocks on the Strand, but women in those restricted Victorian times could not, as there were no facilities for bathing in private. To preserve decency, by-laws were introduced to limit male bathing to certain times of day when ladies might not see them. These were frequently disregarded however as the *Townsville Herald* remarked:

We ourselves have had ocular demonstration of the positiv. indecency with which in the broad light of day full grown men disport themselves in the sea opposite private residences on the Strand.¹⁵⁷

In 1879 public bathing facilities were provided, and although some complained at the cost, it appears that the problem was solved.¹⁵⁸ Boating too was a popular pastime, with excursions to Magnetic Island and the Palms being popular.¹⁵⁹

¹⁵²This was No. 4 Battery of the Queensland Volunteer Artillery (*TH*, 24 July 1878).

¹⁵³*Qlder*, 12 February 1881.

¹⁵⁴*TH*, 20 June 1877. The site of this is not exactly known. Morris owned paddocks in West End, Belgian Gardens and Hermit Park.

¹⁵⁵*Qlder*, 12 January 1883.

¹⁵⁶*ibid.*, 16 June 1883.

¹⁵⁷*TH*, 1 January 1879.

¹⁵⁸*ibid.*, 5 November 1879; *Qlder*, 17 April 1880. These were apparently in Ross Creek.

¹⁵⁹References to such excursions are numerous, e.g. *Qlder*, 26 April 1884. Of particular interest was the celebration of the Royal heir's fortieth birthday in 1881 with a cruise around the island, landing at Horseshoe Bay (*ibid.*, 26 November 1881).

The formation of the North Queensland Pastoral and Agricultural Society after a meeting to form a company to establish the boiling-down works in 1879, added to the town's attractions. Walter Hays was the Secretary *pro tem*. The Society was formally established in June 1879, when Judge Chubb became the Secretary, but he was replaced by J.N. Parkes soon after.¹⁶⁰ The first Townsville Show was held in August 1880 with the ring events being staged in part of the Botanical Gardens Reserve.¹⁶¹ By June 1882, the Society had procured its own property at the West End and erected yards and a ring, and the ring events were held on that site for the first time during the 1882 Show.¹⁶²

Though improvements had been slow and many more were still needed,¹⁶³ Townsville by 1884 had become a much more agreeable and safer place to live. Life however still held some fears. Although the Aborigines no longer posed a threat, the ubiquitous crocodiles remained - though decreased in numbers - while snakes, stingers and sharks still abounded, as they do today.¹⁶⁴ Further, though Townsville might have been regarded as

a sort of Torquay, Worthing or Weston-super-Mare
where fever-stricken denizens of the interior come to
inhale the delightful sea breezes¹⁶⁵

it was subject to outbreaks of fevers of various kinds. The *Queenslander* noted on one occasion that 80 people had died in two weeks in one epidemic of typhoid fever, while the A.M.P. Society had imposed a one percent residence risk on the amount of each life policy taken out in Townsville.¹⁶⁶ Much more research on tropical diseases was needed before such scourges were prevented.

¹⁶⁰*TH*, 25 June 1879, 20 December 1879.

¹⁶¹*Qlder*, 28 August 1880.

¹⁶²*ibid.*, 28 August 1882.

¹⁶³In particular the Northern Supreme Court was still centred on Bowen.

¹⁶⁴*Qlder*, 17 April 1880. *TH*, 1 January 1879 records the death of a child from the sting of a jelly fish.

¹⁶⁵*Qlder*, 8 March 1873.

¹⁶⁶*Qlder*, 11 October 1881, 17 July 1884.

The climate during the summer months did not improve, but given the prevailing conditions for workers in England, many immigrants may have felt that a few months of tropical heat with almost ideal weather for the remainder of the year were preferable to the vagaries of the British climate and winters spent in houses with little or no heating. There must have been times though when, without the benefit of modern cooling systems, the summers were almost unbearable.

To the visitor arriving in Townsville in 1884, it must have seemed a strange mixture of contrasts. With steamers still anchoring in the bay, there were occasions when rough weather prevented the use of the steam lighters to bring passengers to the wharves in the creek. Whale boats were then used, depositing arrivals soaking wet and without baggage.¹⁶⁷ This was not a frequent occurrence, but it must have come as a particularly pleasant surprise to discover that Townsville possessed nearly all of the amenities and facilities Victorians expected to find in their cities, with the roads well made, though perhaps boggy or dusty according to the seasons, with gas lighting, cab and bus services, first class hotels and reticulated water supply. The wild times of gold rushes and railway building, when the considerable trade in sly grog on Ross Island produced angry complaints of the "disgraceful state of Ross Island on jetty pay night"¹⁶⁸ had passed. By 1884, Townsville presented an air of solid respectability.

¹⁶⁷ *ibid.*, 18 March 1882.

¹⁶⁸ *TH*, 6 August 1879, 20 August 1879.

Chapter 8

Townsville in 1884 was a well-established town, the centre of a rich and thriving district, its harbour thronged with shipping from many parts of the world. It had indeed vindicated Robert Towns's prediction that it "will knock the wind out of Bowen and Rockhampton [Towns meant Rockingham] Bay".¹ If, by 1868, the *Port Denison Times* could remark that Townsville was "a remarkable instance of the rapid growth of Australian settlements",² by 1884 it was even more remarkable. Yet, though it had changed rapidly, the townscape as a whole did not reflect the growing affluence of the city and in some ways was even less attractive than in 1864.

It had spread in all directions from the original huddle of buildings at the creek mouth. With Flinders Street firmly established as the main thoroughfare, settlement had gradually moved westward at an accelerating pace after 1875, when the *Cleveland Bay Express* noted that "if the jetty is built at Magazine Island, the corner of Denham Street will be the busiest portion of the town",³ believing that a bridge would have to be built across the creek at Denham Street. As it turned out, this was incorrect, but did not stop speculation. In 1878, the location chosen for the railway station further stimulated the movement westward, so that by 1882 Flinders Street "was built for a mile with all blocks fully occupied".⁴ Whereas the Newmarket Hotel once marked the end of

¹Towns to Gilchrist, upon the opening of the Bowen Branch of the Bank of N.S.W., 27 September 1864, quoted in Holder, *op. cit.*, p. 270-1.

²Almanac for 1868, *PDT*, p. 15.

³*CBE*, 10 November 1875.

⁴'Sketcher', 'North Queensland Notes', *Qlder*, 25 February 1882.

settlement,⁵ buildings now occupied nearly every block extending to Morris Street, though not until the Municipal Council agreed to lease land on the creek side of the street were both sides of Flinders Street occupied, as far as Blackwood Street, beyond which it retained its former one-sided appearance.⁶

In what is now known as West End, settlement first developed around the Carriers' Arms Hotel, the Soapworks and the Foundry in the Morris Street area. In 1883, the Mission Church of St Peter's opened in Morris Street⁷. By that time, the region of Walker Street and Sturt Street West probably had a number of homes erected, and the area of Hann Street and Maryvale Street was being developed. Ashton had an estate extending from the present West End School to the cemetery. Beyond that, there were probably a few houses scattered through the bush to Hof's brickworks, established in 1884 about two kilometres beyond the cemetery⁸. On the southern side of what is now Ingham Road, the stockyards and ring of the show grounds were completed by June 1882,⁹ but from there back to the Causeway was mainly bush or mangrove swamp.

In the area now regarded as the heart of the city, Sturt Street from Penham Street to Blackwood Street was partially lined with houses. With the opening of the Court House in 1878, the legal centre of the town moved to the corner of Stokes Street and Sturt Street; further along, the Police Barracks were built at the corner of Stanley Street and Blackwood Street. There were a number of houses on Walker Street and Wills Street, with the Presbyterian and Methodist Churches sited on opposite corners of the intersection of Wills Street and Stokes Street. Houses had started to appear on Stanton Hill¹⁰ and there were a number of houses on Melton Hill,

⁵TH Supplement, 24 December 1887, p. 54, states the Newmarket Hotel was built about the time of the Palmer gold rushes which indicates a date of late 1873. It was built by 1875, since advertisements appear in the papers regularly then.

⁶Qlder, 25 June 1881.

⁷ibid., 13 October 1883, states that it was nearly finished. TH Supplement, 24 December 1887, p. 64, states that it was opened in December 1883 by Bishop Stanton.

⁸Macqueen, *Memories of Townsville*, op. cit., p. 20 ff.

⁹Qlder, 24 June 1882.

mainly along Cleveland Terrace, with a few in the region of Melton Terrace towards the Strand.¹¹

At North Ward, where the Catholic Church and Convent, National School, Orphanage, Gaol and Hospital had been erected, there were numerous houses by 1884 in the streets between the hospital and the beach, but these petered out before reaching Comerford's lagoon. There were no houses in the region between the Botanical Gardens and Castle Hill.

At Belgian Gardens there was a little more settlement, but by 1884, this area had fallen from favour and the fashionable area of town was in Hermit Park and Mundingburrah.¹² By late 1883, however, it was apparent that the areas in West End and Belgian Gardens would soon be developed, and it was in Belgian Gardens in 1883 that Bishop Stanton selected a site "for the future Bishopsbourne"¹³. Houses near the town were increasingly difficult to obtain, and it was confidently being predicted that "all the available ground round the town side of Castle Hill will soon become studded over with residences"¹⁴. All other areas of the present city were, in 1879, under the jurisdiction of the Thuringowa Divisional Board.¹⁵

The main road to the goldfields, through what are now the suburbs of Hermit Park, Mundingburra and Aitkenvale, was well established. With the starting of coach services to the goldfields, the need for a hotel was quickly recognised, and the Rising Sun Hotel established.¹⁶ A small settlement gradually developed around the hotel. The only other significant building, apart from the old boiling-down works, was the home of L.F. Sachs in the vicinity of

¹⁰ibid., 13 October 1883.

¹¹Only one of the houses erected before 1884 remains. This is the former Hooman house in Cleveland Terrace. Dr Geldard's house erected near St James Church still remains in Denham Street (CBE, 7 June 1876).

¹²Qlder, 13 January 1883. At this time Mundingburrah was spelt with a final h.

¹³ibid., 25 December 1883. This was where Bishop's Lodge now stands.

¹⁴ibid., 13 October 1883.

¹⁵Created in 1879 after the passing of the Divisional Boards' Act of 1879.

¹⁶The exact date when this hotel was started is not known, but advertisements appear in papers in 1876 (CBE, 29 March 1876).

the present Avenue. Being surrounded by bush, the locals referred to it as Hermit Park and, whether Sachs liked it or not, the name persisted.¹⁷

By 1882, these areas were recognised as good localities in which to live, with good soil and an excellent water supply from wells, so that the town was "fast extending out that way".¹⁸ The city waterworks was established in Mundingburra in 1882, and subsequently many of the town's merchants acquired large blocks on which to establish estates.¹⁹ A number of farms were also established, notably Ben Gulliver's thriving nursery, on a stream a little further out.²⁰ By 1884, the Charters Towers Road was virtually lined with either villas of the wealthy, set in large grounds, or small pockets of settlement in the region of the present Hermit Park and Rising Sun Hotels, with farms interspersed here and there.²¹ As on Sydney's North Shore, before the commencement of public transport services, settlement was limited to those who could afford their own means of transport to travel to work in the town.²²

At the other end of the social scale was Ross Island, resort of the workers on the jetty and on the railway. The old Hospital had remained in solitary splendour for some years until the Pilot Buildings were transferred to Sibbie Point in 1875.²³ In 1876, the Immigration Barracks were erected further up the creek from the Hospital,²⁴ and when work on the wharf commenced, many of the workers decided to live close by, since they could still cross the creek only by ferry. When work began on the railway, more workers took up residence there and a number of houses were erected, though reminiscences indicate that it was mainly a tent settlement at this

¹⁷Carroll, op. cit., CCM,, November 1934, p. 51.

¹⁸Qlder, 12 August 1882.

¹⁹ibid., 19 January 1884.

²⁰This was where the Villa Vincent Home is now established.

²¹ibid., 27 December 1884.

²²G.C. Bolton, *Spoils and Spoilers*, Sydney 1981, p. 117.

²³Townsville Times, 15 September 1875. Sibbie Point was thenceforth known as Pilot Hill.

²⁴CBE, 9 February 1876.

stage.²⁵ With the decision to erect a bridge to connect the island with the main town centre, shops were erected and Murdo Cameron built the Bridge Hotel in 1879.²⁶ Although the bridge was never opened, the population on the island continued to grow. After much outcry and a petition to the Government in Brisbane, the island was eventually annexed to the Municipality in 1883²⁷. By 1884, the land had been subdivided and sold, and the area began to fill rapidly with houses.²⁸ Murdo Cameron sold the Bridge Hotel and erected the more palatial Crown Hotel about that time,²⁹

Further out, some farms and estates were located in the Mount Louisa area,³⁰ and farming and pastoral settlement extended along Ross River.³¹ The Steiglitz Brothers had settled Berreberringha³² on the southern side of the river, while Gordon was well established at Cluden Park.

Though the township had spread somewhat haphazardly, it continued to develop in an orderly fashion with rectangular blocks laid out along straight wide streets. By the 1880s however, as developers were opening new land, sub-division of private blocks was unrestricted. With no co-operation to ensure that roads ran straight from one development to the next, or that blocks were of even size, this resulted in the range of block sizes to be found today, in particular in West End, where blocks range from 400 to 1000 square metres. Access roads were developed in a random manner which has resulted today in streets such as Garrick Street with dog-leg bends, while there is only one through road, Ingham Road,

²⁵Reminiscences of the Ansell family, related to the author by Ms Ansell. Reminiscences of Mrs Treeby, related to the author by Mrs J.R. Gibbard, Mrs Treeby's great-niece.

²⁶TH, 16 April 1879.

²⁷Qlder, 3 February 1883.

²⁸TH Supplement, 24 December 1887, p. 60, states that by then there were 550 houses.

²⁹This hotel is mentioned in an account in the Qlder, 27 December 1884.

³⁰ibid.

³¹CBE, 14 September 1878. Yorgen Rasmussen, Hans Joshengen, J.W. Turner and William Morgan had all acquired land on Ross River.

³²TH, 7 June 1891.

giving direct access from the City Centre to West End.

Though "buildings of a high order of architecture were going up",³³ and Townsville was "assuming the look and appearance of a flourishing southern capital, so many new and handsome brick buildings are erected or in course of erection",³⁴ 'timber and tin' still dominated the scene, with few brick buildings, despite the increasing affluence of the merchants and shopkeepers. The old mixture of permanent and impermanent remained, though the latter was much less obtrusive. The first home for most new arrivals was still a tent "but with wages here, [they] soon recover themselves".³⁵ By 1884, workers were finding it much easier to obtain houses. It was noted in a report of the Annual Meeting of the Townsville Permanent Building Society No. 2, that "the working class have largely availed themselves of it to purchase ground and erect cottages...".³⁶

As late as 1882 there were shortages of all building materials. Timber was still the quickest and easiest to obtain and to erect. However, though supplies were brought from the United States,³⁷ and Maryborough, as well as cedar from the Daintree and later from the Barron Valley, there were frequent shortages. The opening of two timber mills in 1882 brought an improvement, and thenceforward problems of timber supplies diminished.³⁸

The 'Age of Brick and Stucco', the third of Twopeny's stages of town development³⁹ was slow to come to Townsville. Although brickworks were started in 1870,⁴⁰ considerable difficulty was

³³ibid., 8 December 1875.

³⁴Qlder, 2 December 1882.

³⁵ibid., 14 July 1883. At that time a builder's labourer received 90 cents per day, bricklayers \$1.40, and carpenters \$1.20 or \$1.40.

³⁶ibid., 17 May 1884.

³⁷This trade was pioneered by Fred Gordon and William Kirk (*TH* Supplement, 24 December 1887, p. 56). Both Oregon pine and redwood were imported.

³⁸Qlder, 26 August 1882.

³⁹Twopeny, op. cit., p. 30. His last stage was that of stone, which Townsville has never reached.

⁴⁰CBE, 24 December 1870.

encountered in finding suitable clay and in coping with wet season conditions: in 1876, two parties of brickmakers sent from the south had to give up because it was too wet.⁴¹ There were continual shortages of bricks for both the Post Office and the Court House, and for a time James Burns was even importing bricks.⁴² Nor was the first use of brick in a major building, the Post Office, entirely satisfactory; with the first wet season, rain penetrated the unplastered exterior brick walls and "great patches of wet" appeared on the walls of the neatly plastered rooms.⁴³ This experience probably deterred others from using brick, but gradually the problems were solved, and slowly the number of brick buildings increased. Concrete also proved difficult to obtain initially, and a supply was procured by processing coral from Magnetic Island. This was dug from the reef and "transported to Townsville pulverised and treated and was the material used for building Townsville's first tiny Court House".⁴⁴

Public buildings by 1884, whether timber or brick, were in general more pretentious. Some were designed by architects, but the majority appear to have been designed by experienced builders such as C.A. Ward and John Rooney, or surveyors such as J. Richardson and Edward Bevan. A number of architects and surveyors advertised during this period, but of only two is it known that they had formal training as architects: Christian Waagepetersen and Francis H. Nixon. Waagepetersen had attended the Royal Academy in Copenhagen and was an Associate of the North of England Architectural Association.⁴⁵ He started practice in Townsville in 1882, but had left by 1885.⁴⁶ Nixon had been employed as an architect in Beechworth, Victoria, before his arrival in north Queensland. He commenced practice in Townsville in 1878 but appears to have left before 1881.⁴⁷

⁴¹ibid., 9 March 1876.

⁴²TH, 12 January 1876; *Townsville Times*, 28 July 1876.

⁴³Qlder, 27 March 1875.

⁴⁴Macqueen, *The Real Magnetic*, op. cit., p. 7. The Court House referred to is the present Magistrates' Court.

⁴⁵*Willmetts Almanac*, 1883.

⁴⁶Qlder, 10 June 1882. He is not mentioned in *Willmetts Almanac*, 1885.

The architect who had the greatest impact on Townsville's townscape, and who has left a particularly fine heritage of buildings in Townsville today, was the Brisbane-based F.D.G. Stanley.⁴⁸ He designed the first Post Office, the Magistrates' Court, the 1878 Gaol, the 1879 Telegraph Office and the Hospital while Colonial Architect, and later, the Queensland National Bank, while in private practice.⁴⁹

Domestic architecture altered little; house designs were largely the same as they had been in the 1860s. The exposed framing technique, now regarded as characteristic of north Queensland,⁵⁰ became more common, as was the use of milled timber. Most houses were built on low blocks; only one house on high blocks, that of Robert Philp at Ellerslie in Mundingburrah, has been definitely identified from this era.⁵¹ There were more larger houses, almost invariably with either gable or hip roofs, the verandah roof stepped down from that of the main building.⁵² The most luxurious of these houses was that built by Salmon in 1878 for the sub-collector of Customs. Probably designed by Stanley, it had a wide verandah all round, brick piers on concrete foundations, and although of weatherboard, all rooms were plastered and ceiled. The joinery was of cedar with window sashes double-hung, and some of the rooms featured fireplaces with mantelpieces and hearths "excellently finished".⁵³

⁴⁷CBE, 29 June 1878; *Northern Miner*, 20 November 1883.

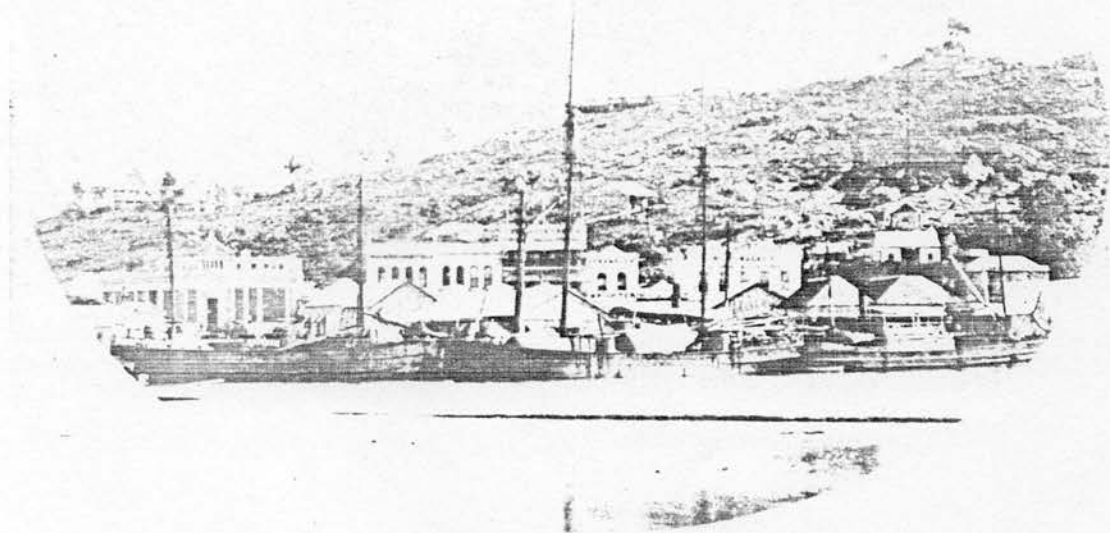
⁴⁸Born at Edinburgh in 1839. He studied architecture in Edinburgh, and emigrated to Brisbane in 1862. Shortly after, he joined the Colonial Architect's Department, then under the control of Charles Tiffin. He was Chief Draughtsman and Inspector of Works up to 1872 when he became Colonial Architect and Inspector of Roads and Bridges. He held that position until 1881 when he resigned and started private practice. However he continued to supervise some public works for a further two years. Information from W.F. Morison, op. cit., vol. II, p. 423.

⁴⁹This is now the National Bank opposite Northtown in Flinders Mall. Later he designed the Bank (former A.J.S. Bank), the lower storey of the Perc Tucker Art Gallery (former Union Bank), the former Bank of N.S.W. on the corner of Wickham Street and Flinders Street and the first building of the Grammar School.

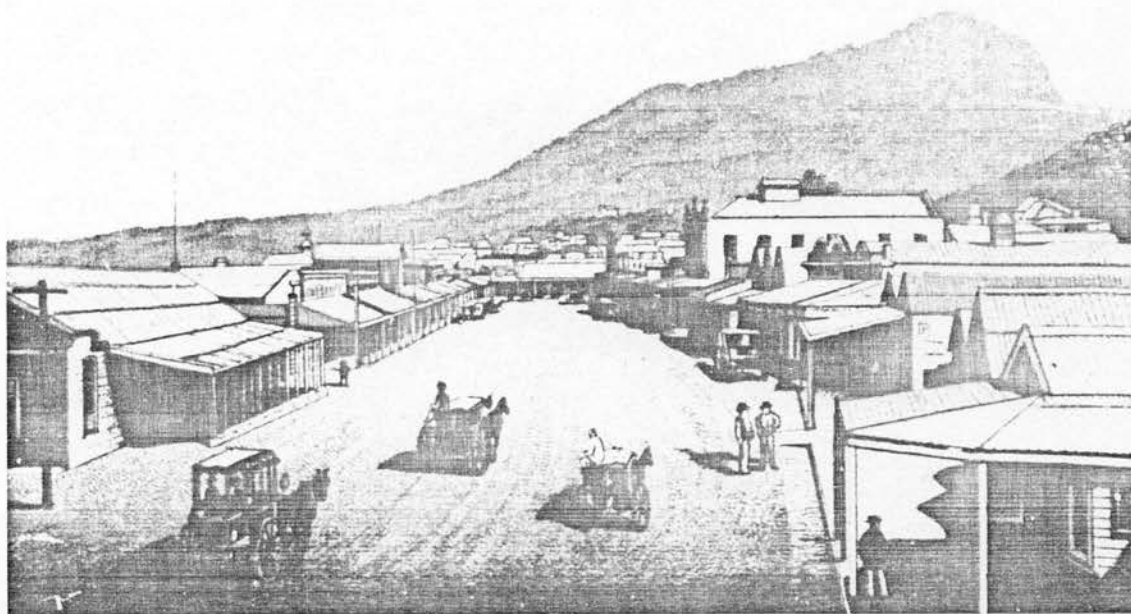
⁵⁰P.G. Bell, *Houses and Mining Settlements in North Queensland, 1861 to 1920*, Ph. D. thesis, History Department, J.C.U., 1982.

⁵¹H.C. Perry, *Memoirs of the Hon. Sir Robert Philp 1851-1922*, Brisbane 1923, p. 76. St Anne's School now occupies the site of Philp's estate.

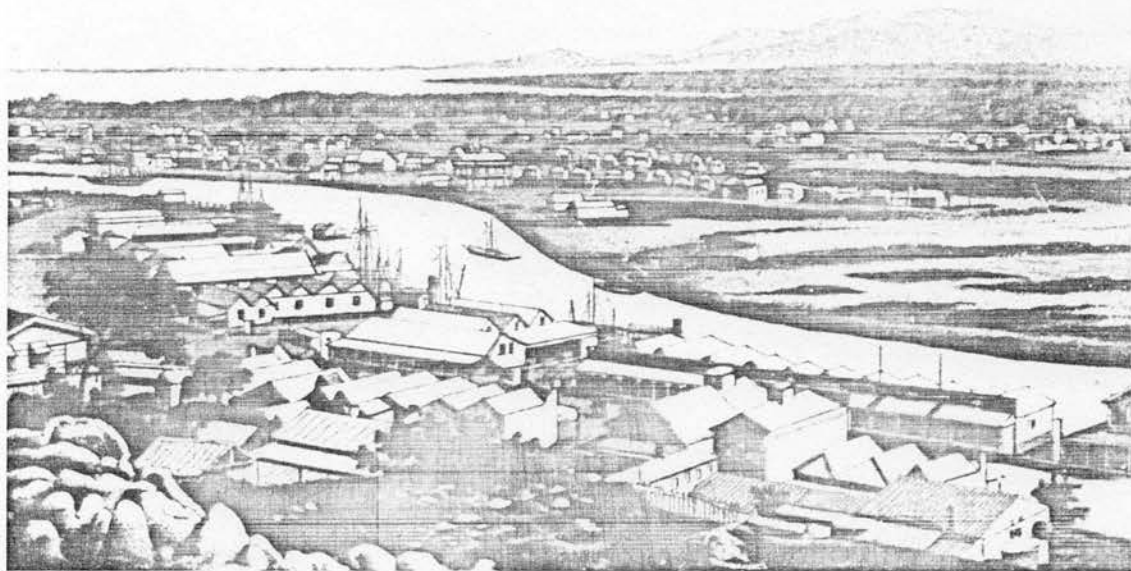
⁵²Bell, op. cit.



View from Ross Island about 1885. The Vicarage of St James Church can be seen on Melton Hill while the Bank of Australasia, Plant's Stores, the Excelsior Hotel and W.P. Waiker's 'Bee-hive' stand out clearly.
(Photograph from the collection of the John Oxley Library, Brisbane)



Eastern Flinders Street about 1884. The building in the left foreground was Burns Philp & Co Ltd. In the right foreground, at the corner of Wickham Street was Marshall's store.
(Sketch from Views of Townsville - Mitchell Library, Sydney)



Ross Island from Melton Hill about 1884. The two-storeyed building on Ross Island was the Crown Hotel.
(Sketch from Views of Townsville - Mitchell Library, Sydney)

There were probably only two brick houses in Townsville by 1884.⁵⁴ The first of these to be built was the residence for the Gaoler at North Ward; designed by Stanley, it was erected by J. and J. Rooney in 1878.⁵⁵ It may have served as the official gatehouse of the Gaol and is the most impressive residence ever erected in Townsville. Bearing only a distant relationship to the "Queensland style" houses more common in the area, its design is clearly derived from the Georgian and Regency residences of Britain, which were translated to Colonial Architecture of an earlier date.⁵⁶ It is highly reminiscent in particular of one of the designs appearing in W.F. Pocock's *Architectural Designs for Rustic Cottages, Picturesque Dwellings, Villas etc* (1807).⁵⁷ Of plastered brick, it has no verandahs, but a porch *in antis*⁵⁸ with the front door surmounted by an oval fanlight. Stanley's original touches were the windows of the ground floor which are arched rather than rectangular, and shaded by shutters carefully shaped to fit the arches. The finished effect was one of well-mannered symmetrical elegance. The other brick residence, the only authenticated private home in Townsville built of brick, was erected for W.J. Castling, a butcher, in 1882.⁵⁹

Despite a general improvement, public and commercial buildings presented a strange mixture of contrasts. Though brick was "fast superseding wood, especially for business purposes",⁶⁰ the majority

⁵³TH, 27 February 1878.

⁵⁴Bolton, *A Thousand Miles Away*, op. cit., p. 167, states that the first brick house in Townsville was built for John Deane in 1889. This is not correct. John Deane erected a house in 1878 on land at the corner of Stokes Street and Sturt Street but it is not now known whether it was of brick or timber.

⁵⁵TH, 19 October 1878, 1 October 1879. This is now the Administration Block of Central State School.

⁵⁶e.g. Old Government House, Parramatta, or the former Prince of Wales Inn, Franklin Street, Richmond, Tasmania. See P. Cox and C. Lucas, *Australian Colonial Architecture*, Melbourne 1978, p. 8 and p. 66.

⁵⁷See Cox and Lucas, op. cit., p. 126.

⁵⁸Architectural term for a porch which is recessed into the building, rather than protruding.

⁵⁹Qlder, 14 January 1882.

⁶⁰Stirling, op. cit., p. 69.

of brick stores and banks were confined to one side of Flinders Street from Wickham Street to Stokes Street. Beyond that area, and on the creek side of the street, the buildings were still 'timber and tin'. The increasing affluence and social status of the merchants was not reflected in their premises - mostly single-storeyed buildings clustered on wooden piles along the creek bank - which, though greatly extended and well-kept, still retained the original appearance of the 1860s.⁶¹ Only Brodziak & Rodgers,⁶² Samuel Allen & Sons,⁶³ and Scott Dawson and Stewart⁶⁴ boasted brick premises, though all of these were only single-storeyed. The premises of the merchants no longer dominated the streetscape, as they had in the 1860s and early 1870s.

On the opposite side of the street, brick shops, banks and hotels had appeared quickly between 1877 and 1884. It is doubtful if the old 'timber and tin' stores there would have disappeared so quickly, had not fire razed large sections of these blocks in 1877 and 1881,⁶⁵ and had not the Council introduced by-laws to restrict building in those areas to brick and iron.⁶⁶ 'Timber and tin' stores, still in the majority, were generally one-storeyed, but there were a number of two-storeyed buildings such as that erected for Major in 1876, the top storey of which became the Masonic Hall.⁶⁷

⁶¹Burns Philp, Aplin, Brown & Co. and the A.U.S.N. Co.

⁶²See below.

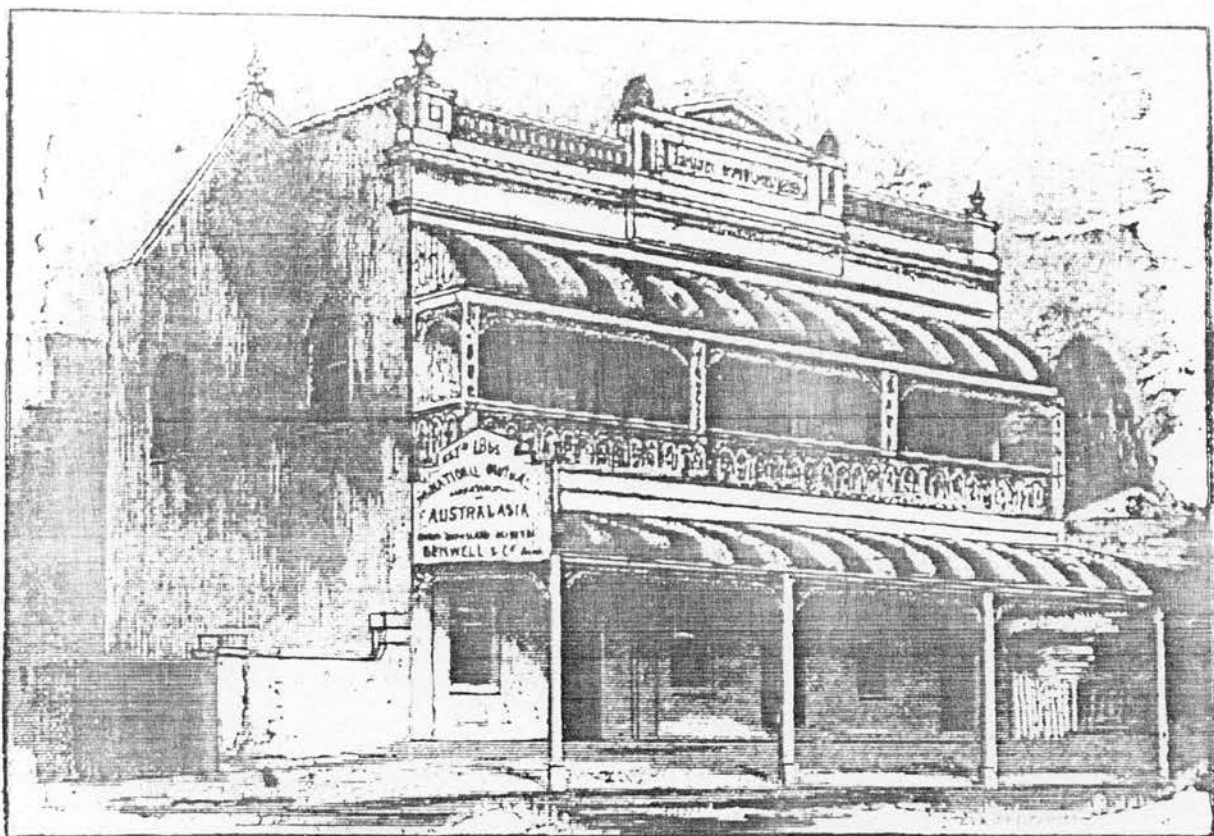
⁶³*Qlder*, 14 January 1882. This building is the lower storey of the present Barclays Building.

⁶⁴*ibid.*, 20 December 1884. This building is the ground floor of the Commonwealth Building in Sturt Street.

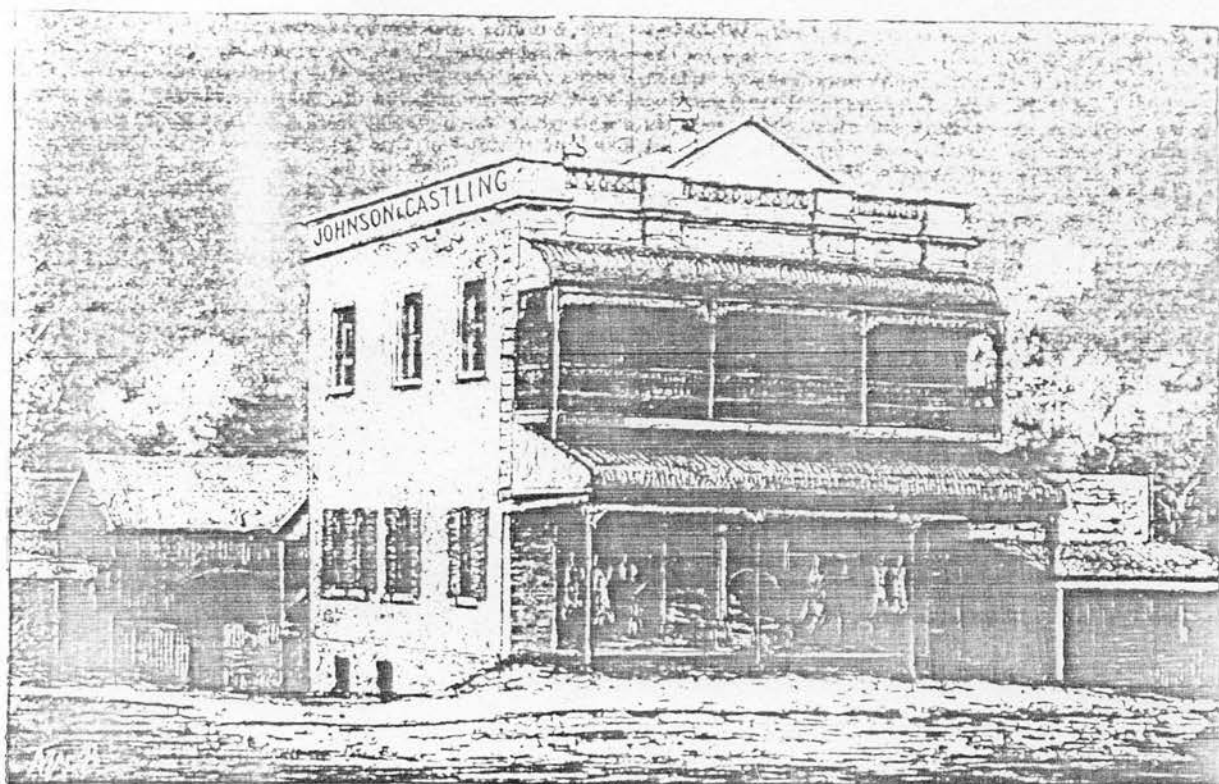
⁶⁵*Mackay Mercury*, 6 October 1877, reports that fire destroyed Brodziak & Rodgers, Sun Kum Toon, Queensland Hotel, Queensland National Bank, R. Philp's warehouse, Mrs Hearn's millinery shop, Rollwagen's tinsmith's shop and Simpson's saddlery, and fire was only stayed by pulling down the Paragon Hotel. Fire destroyed the Townsville Hotel, Allen's produce store, Witham's bakery and Pannam's fruiterie (*Qlder*, 13 August 1881). Fire destroyed Walker's drapery, Exchange Hotel, Marshall's fruiterie, E. Bolton's barber shop, Stout's baker shop, McCormack's fruiterie, Dillon's fancy goods, Tuillier's tobacconist and Pennram's[sic] fruiterie (this was probably Pannam, a two-time loser) (*ibid.*, 24 September 1881).

⁶⁶*ibid.*, 15 October 1881.

⁶⁷*TH*, 6 May 1876.



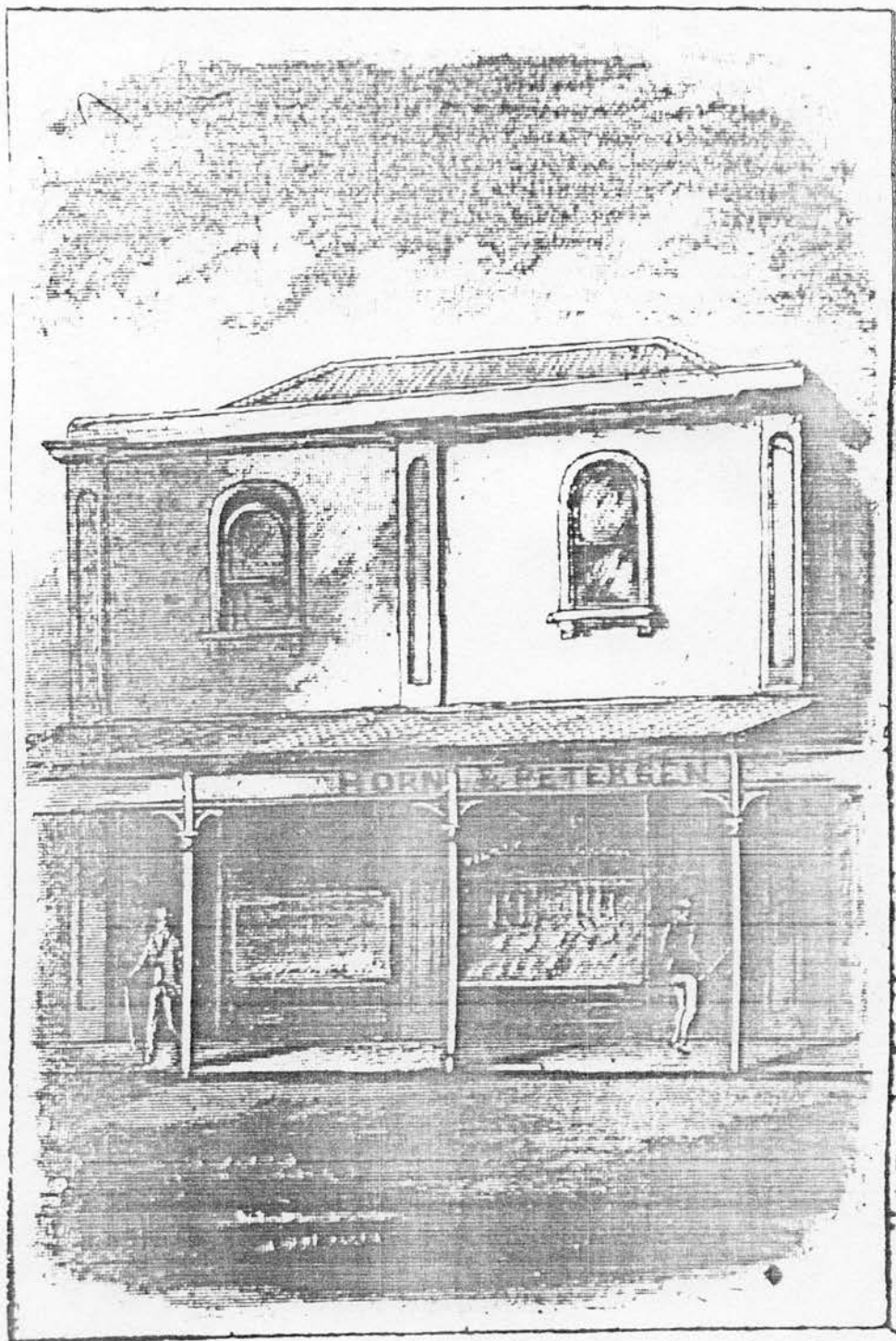
NATIONAL MUTUAL LIFE ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA LTD. (See Page 48).—From a photograph by William Rowe.



MESSERS. JOHNSON AND CASTLING'S BUTCHERING ESTABLISHMENT.—From a photograph by William Rowe.

Two buildings in a "new" architectural style introduced to Townsville in 1882. The upper building still exists as the Roberts, Leu and North Chambers in Denham Street.

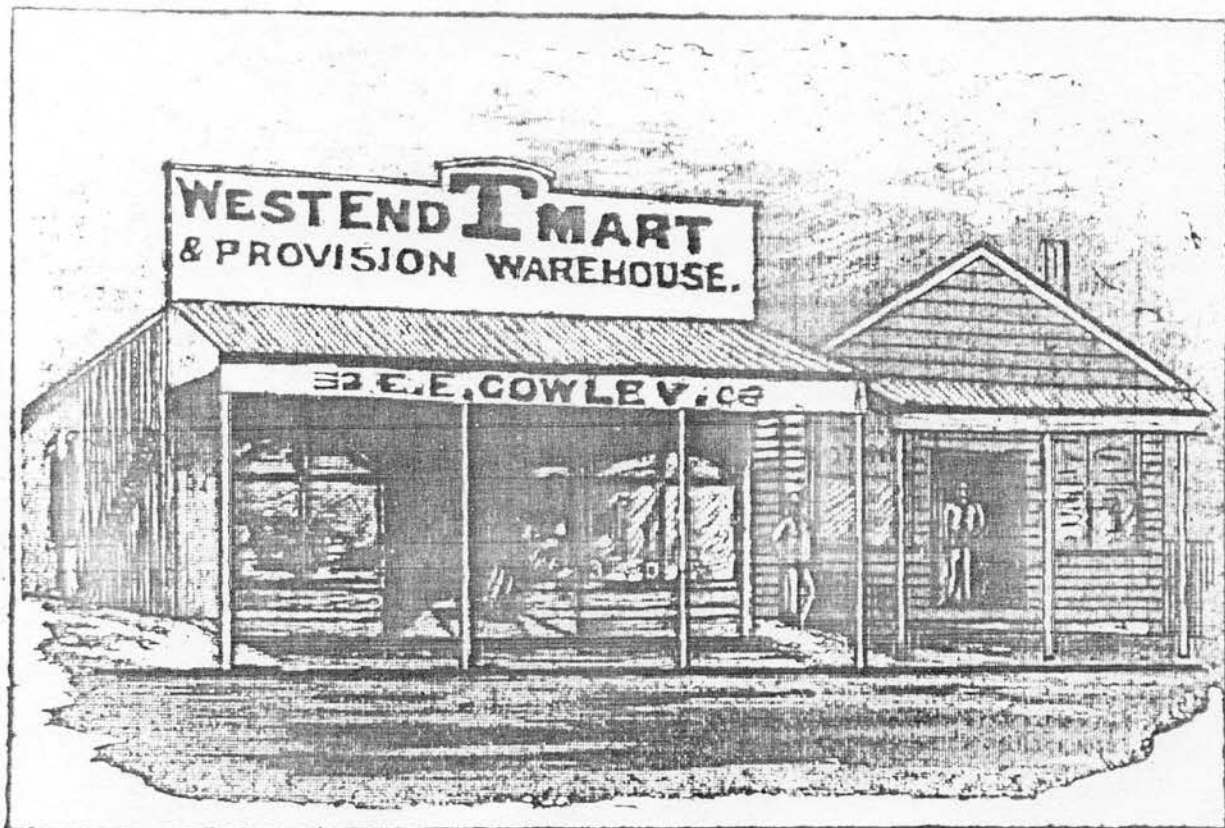
(Sketches from the Townsville Herald Supplement 24 December, 1887 from Microfilm in James Cook University Library, Townsville)



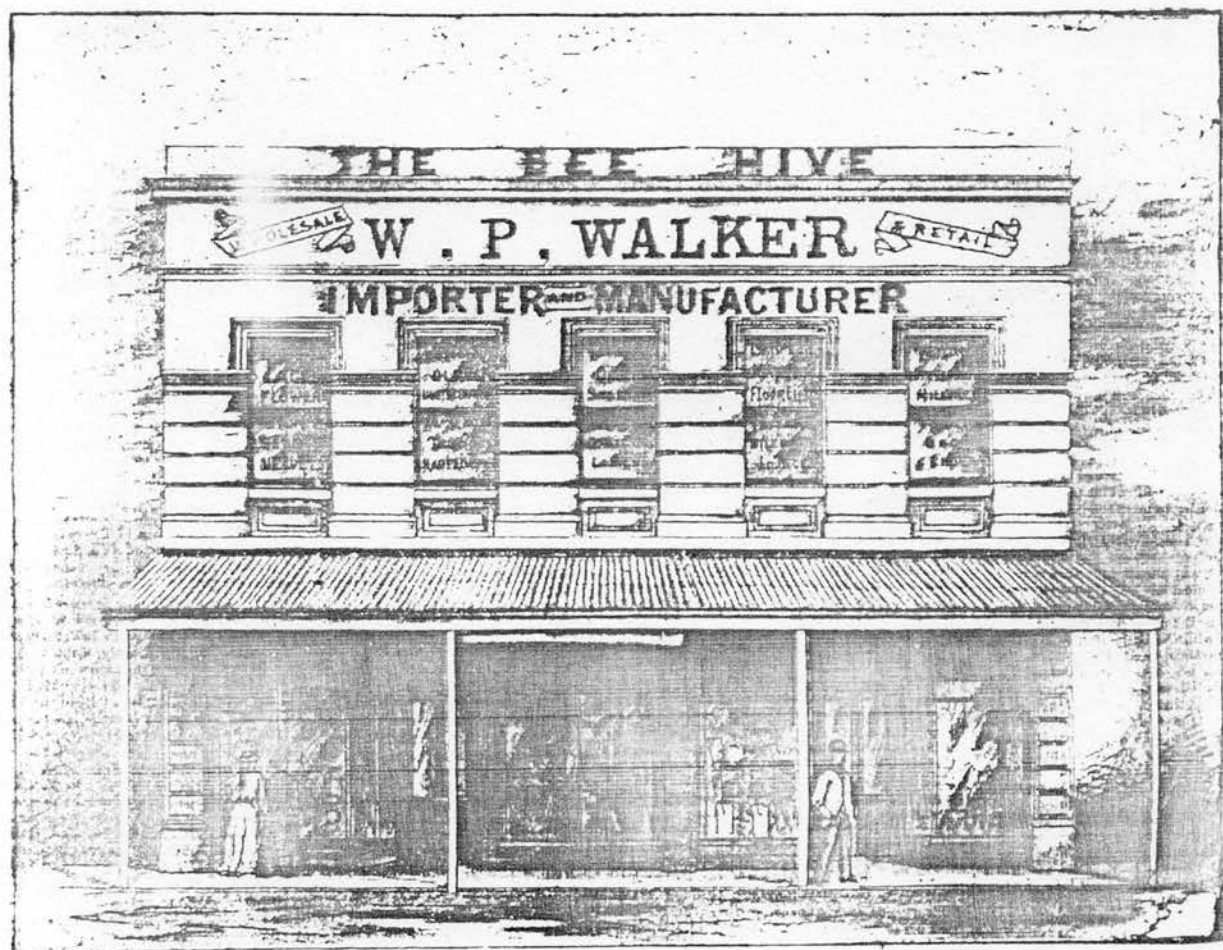
MESSRS. HORN AND PETERSEN'S JEWELLERY SHOP (See Page 50).—From a photograph by William Rowe.

Tofft's Brick Shops, erected 1879/80. These were the first two-storeyed brick stores in Townsville.

(Photograph from the Townsville Herald Supplement 24 December, 1887 from Microfilm in the James Cook University Library, Townsville)



MRS. E. E. COWLEY'S T MART (See Page 50).— From a photograph by William Rowe.



MRS. W. P. WALKER'S BEE HIVE DAIRY STORE (See Page 18).— From a photograph by William Rowe.

The Old and the New. Cowley's T Mart dated from the mid-1870s and Walker's Beehive was erected in 1882.
 (Sketch from the Townsville Herald Supplement 24 December, 1887
 from Microfilm in the James Cook University Library, Townsville)

The earliest brick stores, were single-storeyed, of the same basic design as the wooden stores, with main entrance at the centre front flanked by display windows. They remained plain, though more elaborate parapets and finishes were becoming fashionable. The first such stores appear to have been those of Edward Head, Brodziak & Rodgers and James Palmer.⁶⁸ Double-storeyed brick stores started to appear by 1880, when Tofft replaced his Globe Hotel with two double-storeyed brick stores.⁶⁹ Tofft's building, which was designed by S. Richardson and built by James Miller, was extremely plain with disproportionately small windows in the upper floor, but it was not long before more elaborate two-storeyed shops appeared. W.P. Walker erected a large plain, though well-proportioned, drapery store in 1882, which was the largest of its kind north of Rockhampton.⁷⁰

About 1882, a new style of brick building appeared - two-storeyed, the lower level shaded by a street awning, the upper level by a cantilevered balcony balustraded with elaborate cast iron. The designer or designers of these buildings is not known, and their classical parapets, symmetrical proportions and awnings painted in wide stripes clearly indicate Regency influence. The earliest of these were the building then known as the Bank Building, now Roberts Leu and North Chambers⁷¹ and Johnson and Costling's butcher shop at the corner of Stokes Street and Flinders Street.⁷² A third building which appears to have been similar was erected for Smith and Walker at the corner of Flinders Street and Stanley Street.⁷³ Neo-classical influence is also obvious in what were then

⁶⁸Head's store, a range of four shops on the Denham Street side of the Q.N. Bank, was erected by C.A. Ward (*TH*, 7 December 1878). Brodziak & Rodgers (now Green & Rawkins Pharmacy) was erected by C.A. Ward (*ibid.*, 27 February 1878). Palmer's old shops were sold for demolition to be replaced by two brick stores (*ibid.*, 30 October 1878). Part of these probably still exists in the building presently occupied by Higgins Restaurant and the Aboriginal Gallery in eastern Flinders Street.

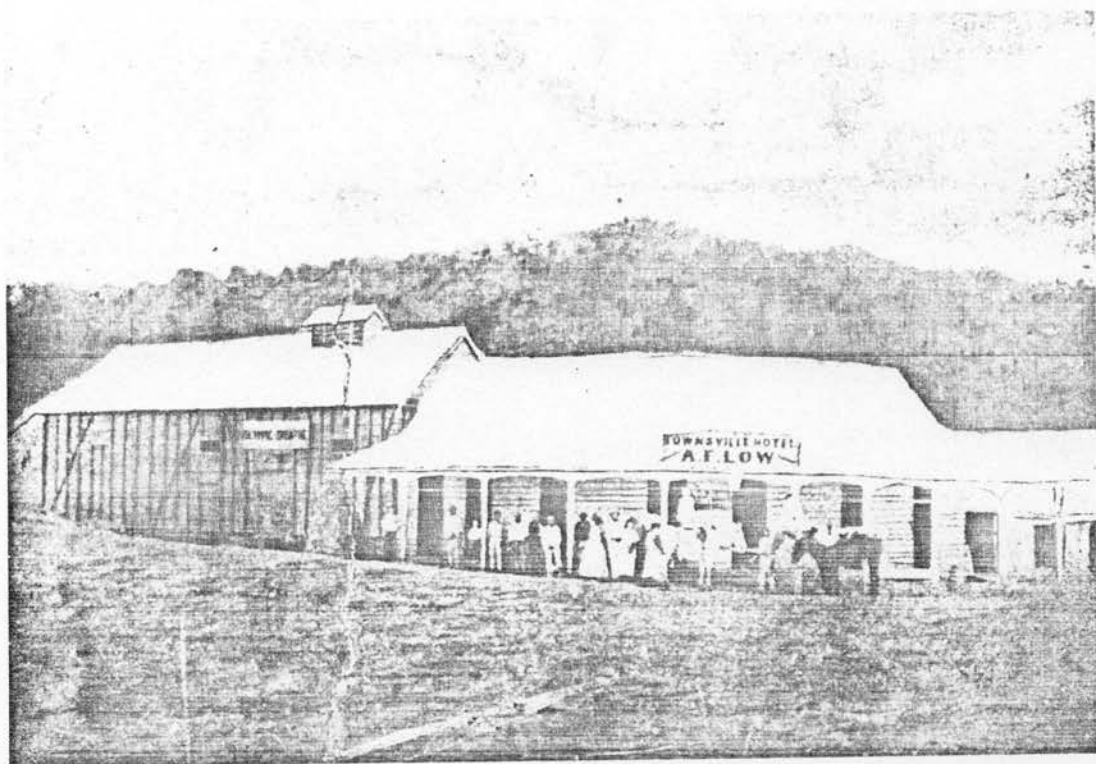
⁶⁹*Northern Standard*, 4 June 1880, quoted by 'Viator', 'An Old Townsville Newspaper', *CCM*, October 1931, p. 57.

⁷⁰*Qlder*, 2 December 1882; *TH* Supplement, 24 December 1887, p. 48.

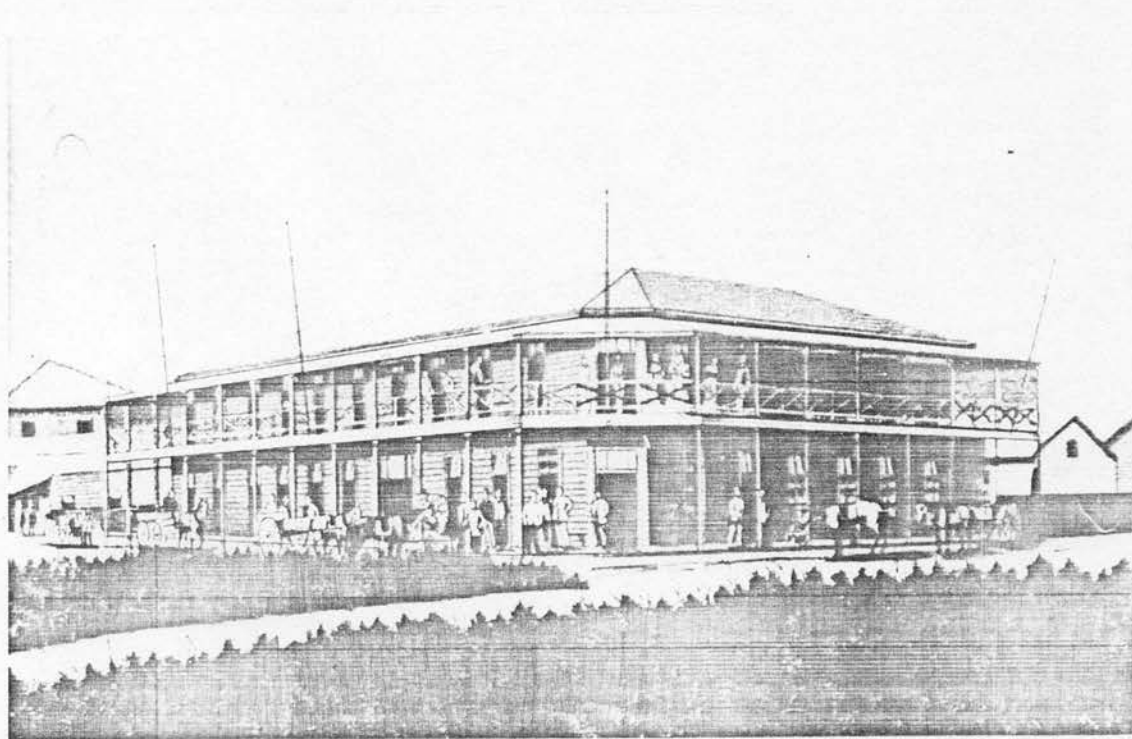
⁷¹*Willmetts Almanac*, 1883. The upper balcony has now been removed.

⁷²*Qlder*, 21 July 1883. This site is now occupied by the C.B.C. Bank.

⁷³*ibid.*, 3 June 1882. The T & G Insurance Building now occupies this site.



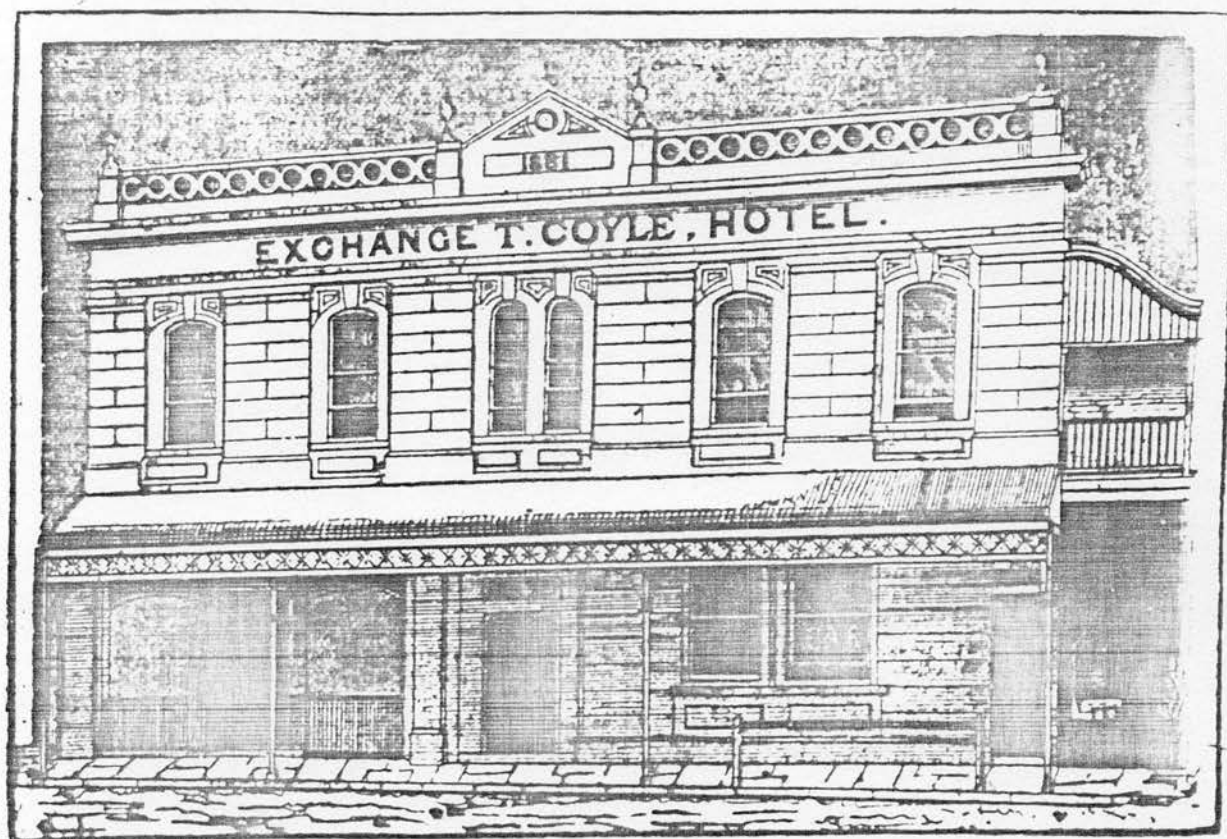
Townsville Hotel and Olympic Theatre about 1875
(Photograph from Jubilee Carnival Programme - 1913 - Delamothe
Collection, James Cook University, Townsville)



Queens Hotel (erected 1873) about 1884
(Sketch from Views of Townsville - Mitchell Library, Sydney)



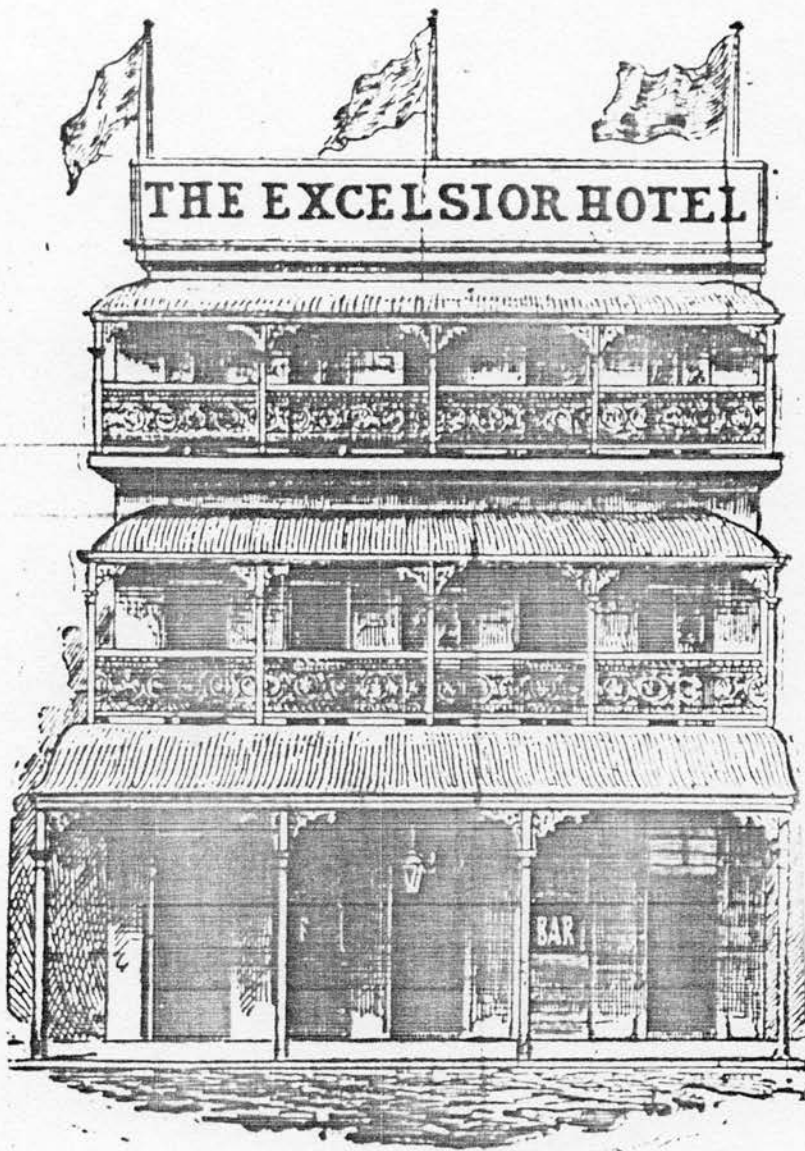
A Horse Bus in front of Tattersall's Hotel (erected about 1881)
Photograph from Ms A. Lanskey.



MR. T. COYLE'S EXCHANGE HOTEL (See Page 46).—From a photograph by William Bewe.

The Exchange Hotel opened in 1882. This building still exists as the present Exchange Hotel in eastern Flinders Street.

(Sketch from the Townsville Herald Supplement 24 December, 1887 from Microfilm in James Cook University Library, Townsville)



THE EXCELSIOR HOTEL (See page 46).—From a photograph by William Rowe.

The Excelsior Hotel erected 1884, the first three-storeyed building in Townsville.
(Sketch from the Townsville Herald Supplement 24 December, 1887 from Microfilm in the James Cook University Library, Townsville)

the most elaborate shops in Townsville, the "two handsome shops 80 feet deep and two storeys high with plate glass fronts" erected for E.H.T. Plant.⁷⁴ These were erected by J. & J. Rooney but the designer is not known. These new brick shops, though in the minority, certainly added distinction to the streetscape, but looked a little out of place surrounded by unremarkable 'timber and tin' structures.

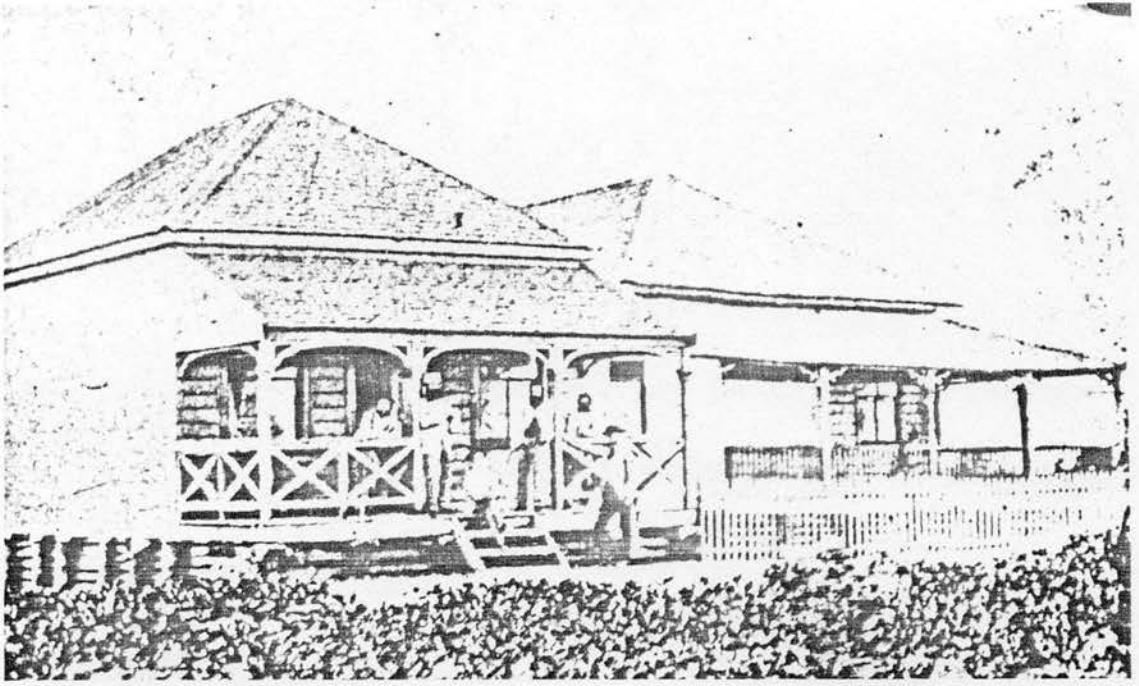
The hotels, with only two exceptions, were still 'timber and tin'. A few of the original one-storeyed buildings remained, notably the Commercial and the West End.⁷⁵ By 1884, most were substantial two-storeyed structures, though their design was somewhat monotonous. Nearly all had verandahs extending along the street facades at both upper and lower levels, with the lower level left open and the upper storey protected with either cross-braced or dowel balustrading, though a few like the Imperial had balustrading at both levels. A few boasted decorative corner brackets. The most elaborate hotels in the town were undoubtedly the Exchange and the Excelsior, both brick. The new Exchange Hotel opened in 1882, when it was "one of the best buildings of its kind in the colony".⁷⁶ It was the first brick hotel to be erected in Townsville, but neither its architect nor its builder is known. It shows obvious Classical influence, with a fine decorative parapet. Unlike all previous hotels, the Exchange originally had no upper verandah, but a street awning with an attractive cast-iron border shading the street. It contained shops and offices as well as the hotel. By 1884 however, the Excelsior Hotel was the wonder of Townsville. Built and probably designed by Edward Hart, it rose to three storeys, the first three-storeyed building in the town.⁷⁷ At the ground floor level, an awning extended to shade the street, while the upper floors were shaded by cantilevered balconies balustraded with elaborate cast iron. If the influence of Regency architecture can

⁷⁴ *ibid.*, 22 April 1882. Completed in 1884.

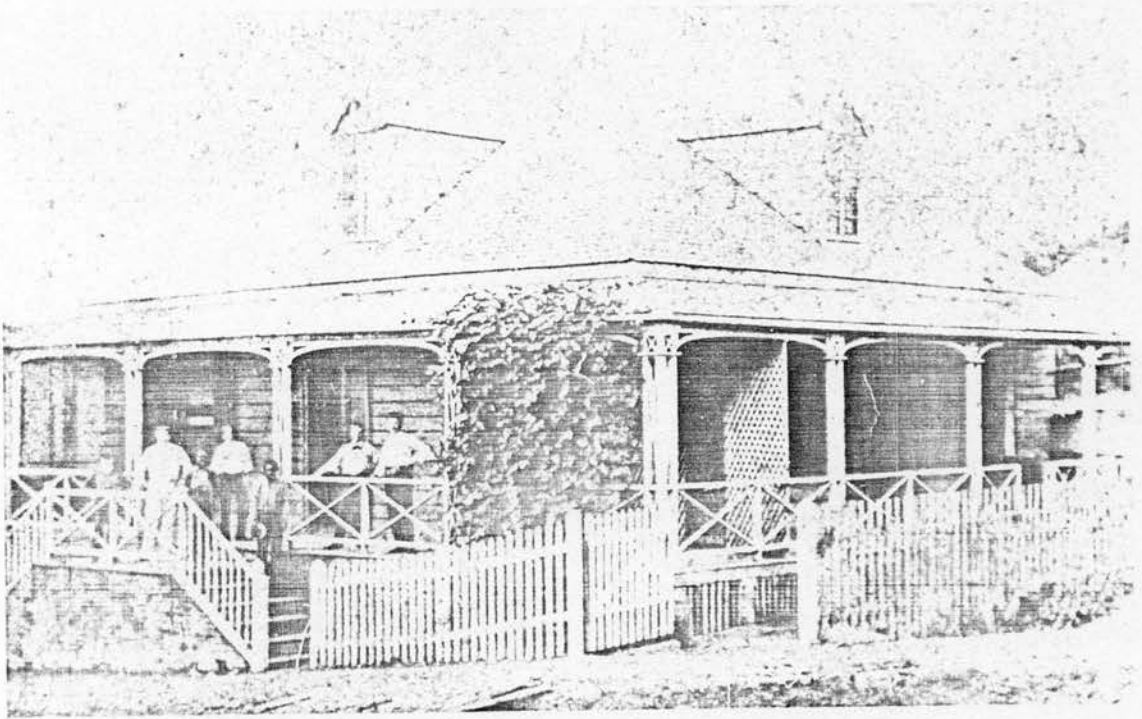
⁷⁵ The West End Hotel had even then been auctioned for removal, to be replaced the next year by the Union Bank, now the ground floor of the Perc Tucker Art Gallery.

⁷⁶ *Qlder*, 7 October 1882; *TH Supplement*, 24 December 1887, p. 46.

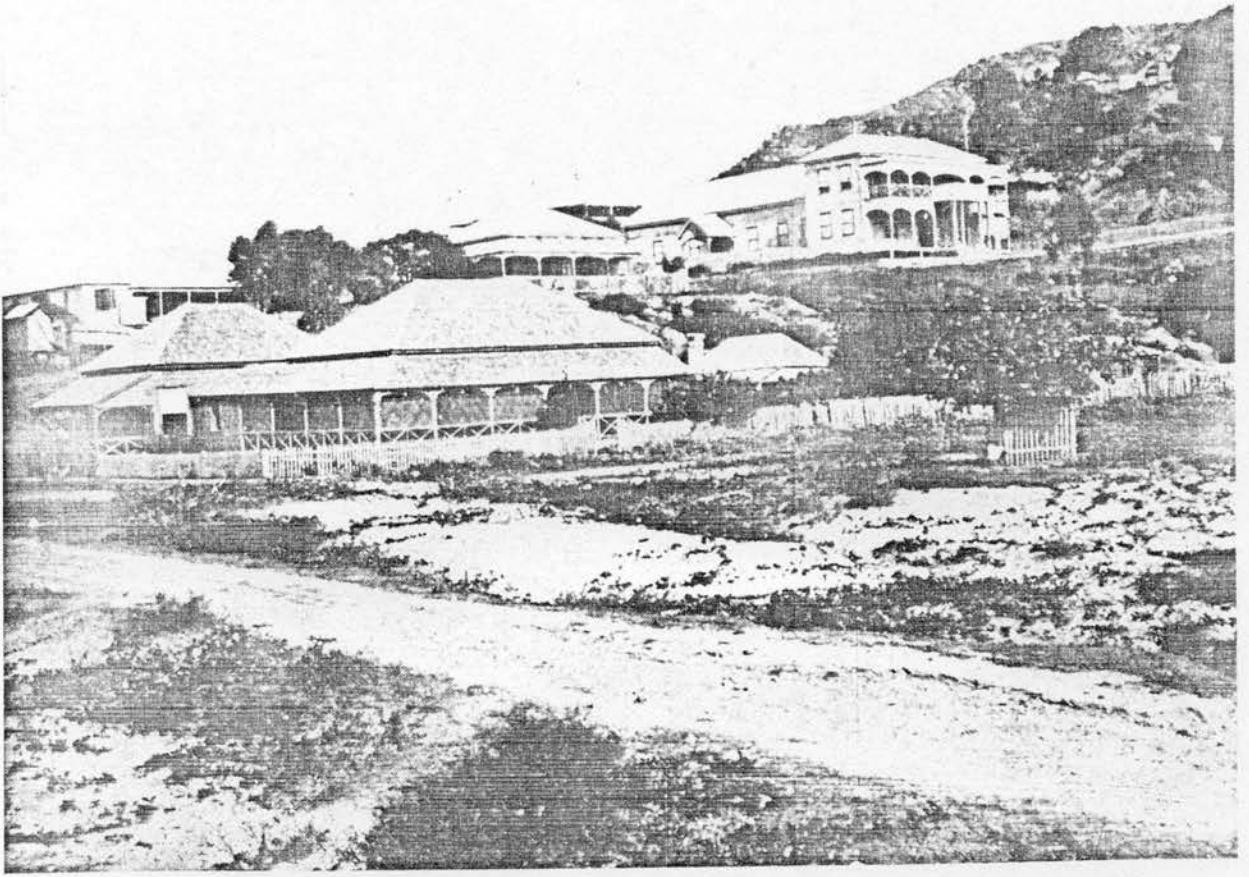
⁷⁷ *Qlder*, 23 February 1884; *TH Supplement*, 24 December 1887, p. 46. This building stood where James Cook Tavern is now sited. It was destroyed by fire.



The Bank of New South Wales about 1875. The building on the right was the first erected, in 1869. The building on the left was erected in 1873.
(Photograph from Cummins and Campbell's Monthly Magazine, June 1931)

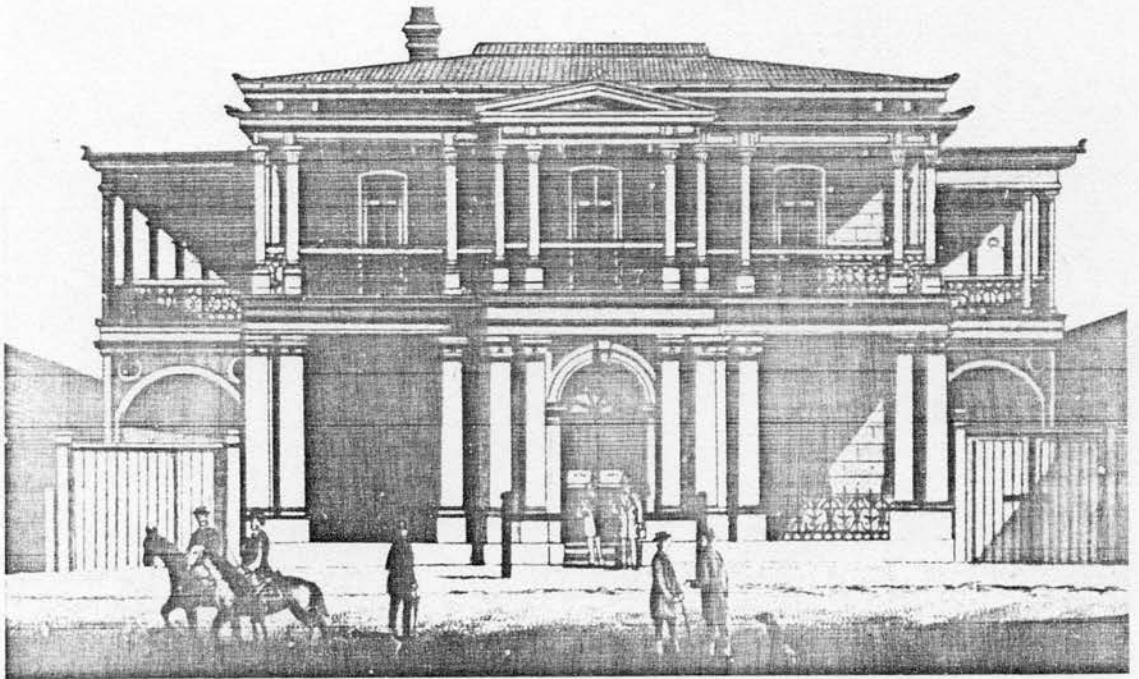


Second premises of the Australian Joint Stock Bank in Wickham Street (erected 1875) about 1880.
(Photograph from the Delamothe Collection, James Cook University, Townsville)



The Strand about 1882 showing Bank of New South Wales and the School of Arts.

(Photograph from Jubilee Carnival Programme - 1913 - Delamotne Collection, James Cook University, Townsville)



Queensland National Bank, Flinders Street (erected 1879) about 1884
(Sketch from Views of Townsville - Mitchell Library, Sydney)

be detected, it was also highly reminiscent of buildings in the Old Quarter of New Orleans. It did not however earn the reputation of revolutionizing Townsville architecture. That title was conferred on the splendid new building designed by Stanley for the Queensland National Bank.

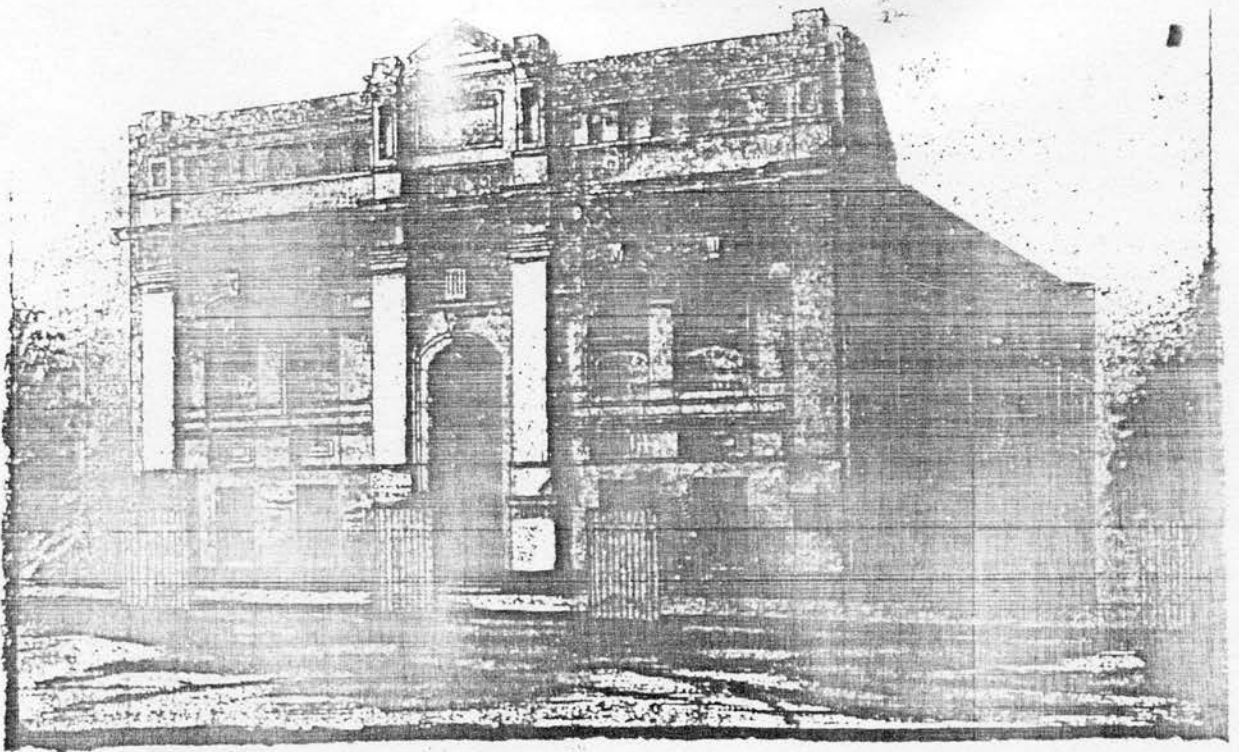
Erected by C.A. Ward, it was and remains, one of Townsville's best built and most pleasingly designed buildings. The main building contained banking offices on the ground floor and the Manager's residence on the upper floor. It was no more than a simple Regency cottage similar to the Gaoler's residence, to which Stanley added verandahs on three sides. The verandahs did not encircle the building however, the side verandahs starting in line with the front of the main building, the front verandah projecting, with a shallow porch at the centre emphasising the entry. This structure introduced the use of more elaborate features to Townsville buildings. The columns supporting the upper floor were topped with elaborate capitals, while the balustrading introduced the use of elaborate cast iron with different patterns used on upper and lower floors. It was a pleasingly-proportioned and elegant building. Totally different, but no less impressive, were the premises of the Bank of Australasia, designed in 1884 by "a well-known Melbourne Architect".⁷⁸ Though single-storeyed, it was given stature by the use of a high and finely-decorated parapet with a pediment surmounting a corner entrance. It was unusual in that it had neither verandah nor street awning. Instead, tall, deep set windows were shaded from the sun by louvered shutters. Though simple in design, and clearly Classical in inspiration, it was a most attractive building with particularly fine plasterwork.

These two bank buildings were undoubtedly the finest in the township at the time, and outshone the buildings of the older banks. The Bank of New South Wales was still located at the corner of Wickham Street and the Strand. The original building on the corner block had been converted into a manager's residence in 1873, when a new building was erected on the block next door, connected to the

⁷⁸*Willmetts' Almanac*, 1885. The name of this architect has not been located.

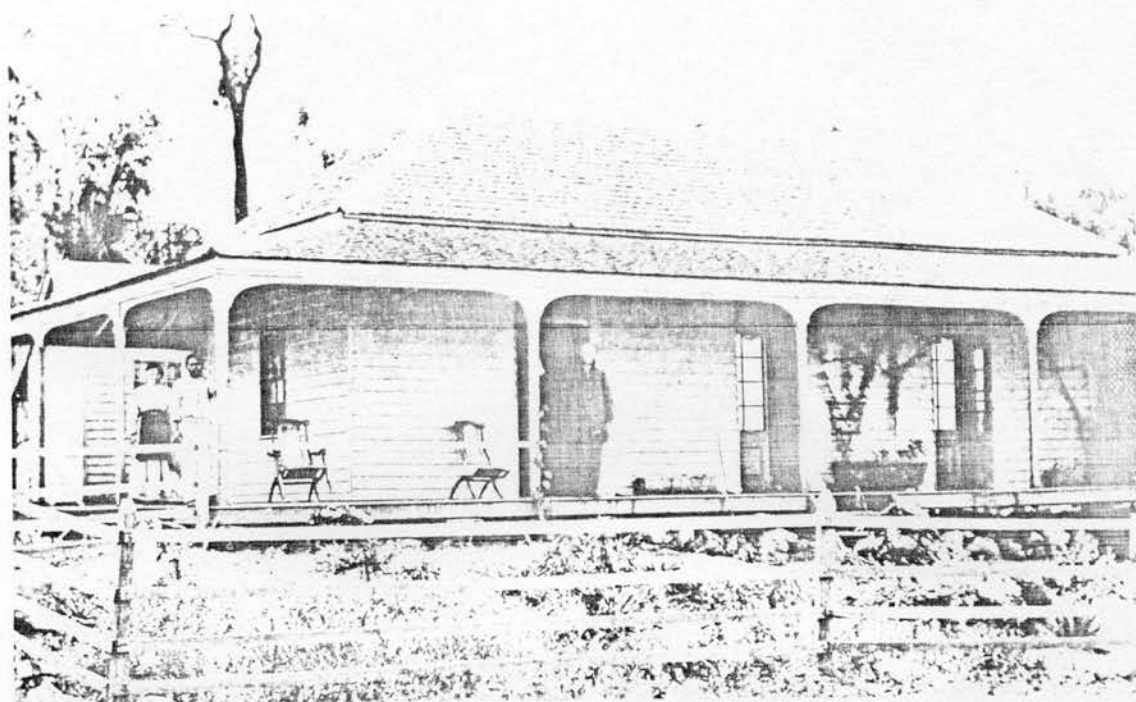


The Bank of Australasia erected in 1884 - note the gas street lamp.
(Photograph from the collection of the John Oxley Library, Brisbane)

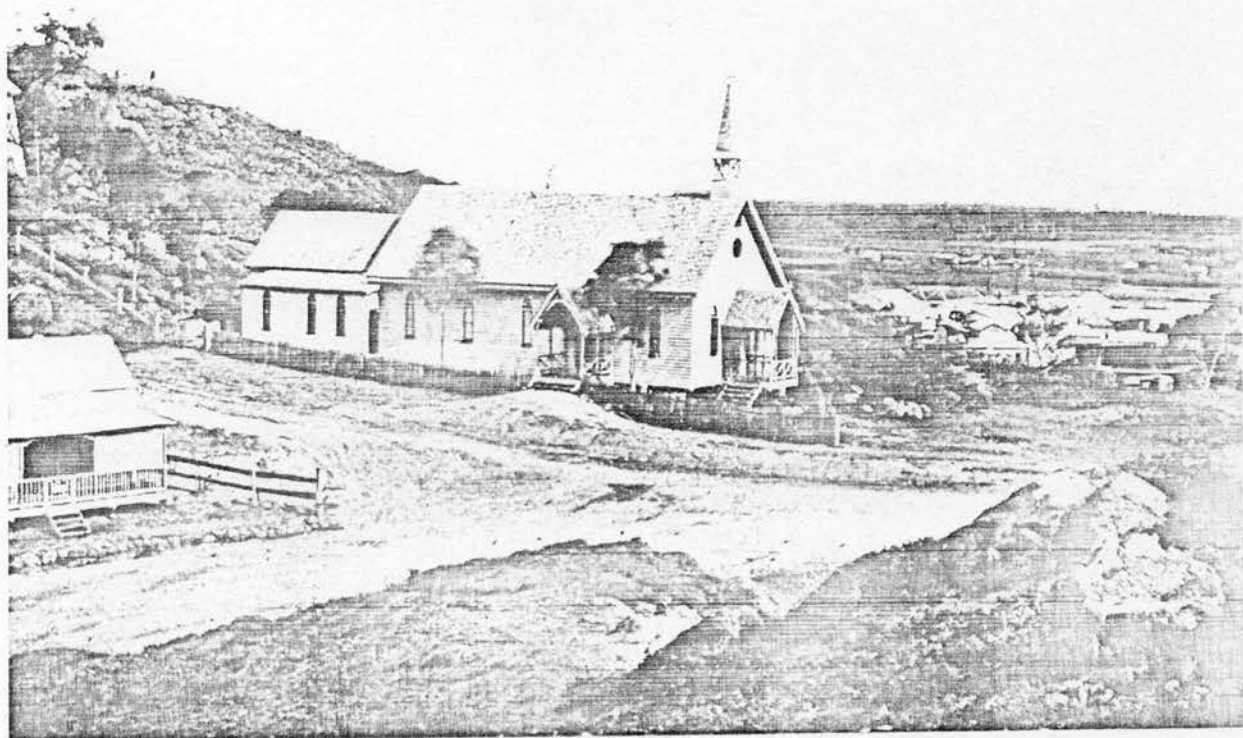


MESSRS. SCOTT, DAWSON, AND STEWART'S WAREHOUSE.—From a photograph by William Rowe.

This building, erected in 1884 is presently the ground floor of the Commonwealth Office Building in Sturt Street.
(Sketch from the Townsville Herald Supplement 24 December, 1887
from Microfilm in the James Cook University Library, Townsville)



The Church of England Rectory in the early 1870s
(Photograph from the collection of the John Oxley Library, Brisbane)



St James Church of England about 1879. The first building, erected in 1871 is on the right with the vestry added later with a lower roof at the rear.

(Photograph from Jubilee Carnival Programme - 1913 - Delamothe Collection, James Cook University, Townsville)

original one by a covered way.⁷⁹ They were unimpressive premises resembling two large houses. In 1875, the Australian Joint Stock Bank erected new premises in Wickham Street.⁸⁰ These too were little more than a large house, distinguished by two dormer windows protruding from the roof, presumably to admit light and air, and by the use of decorative timber columns supporting the verandah, reminiscent of the iron treillage⁸¹ seen frequently on Regency houses.

In a town which had depended so greatly on mercantile enterprise and gold, it is perhaps not surprising to find the banks so elaborate and the churches so unimpressive. It was, however, rather a reversal of the English tradition, where churches were frequently the most impressive buildings in towns and villages. By 1884, there were only two brick churches, both extremely plain. The Methodist Church, originally a simple 'timber and tin' building in 1877, was replaced in 1883 by north Queensland's first brick church, designed by Waagepetersen and erected by J. Buckley.⁸² It was a very basic gable-roofed structure, Gothic in inspiration with buttresses and pointed arched windows, and a small portico surmounted by an oval glass window. The Presbyterians erected the next brick church in 1884. Designed by A. Brandt and built by Edward Hart, it too was a simple gable-roofed structure.⁸³ Though larger, with a more steeply pitched roof than the Methodist church and with a larger front porch, it was unimpressive.

The remaining churches were all of 'timber and tin'. The earliest of these, the St James Church of England, continued as the seat of the Bishop of North Queensland, though a movement had started to erect a Cathedral.⁸⁴ Originally built in 1871 by Meldrum

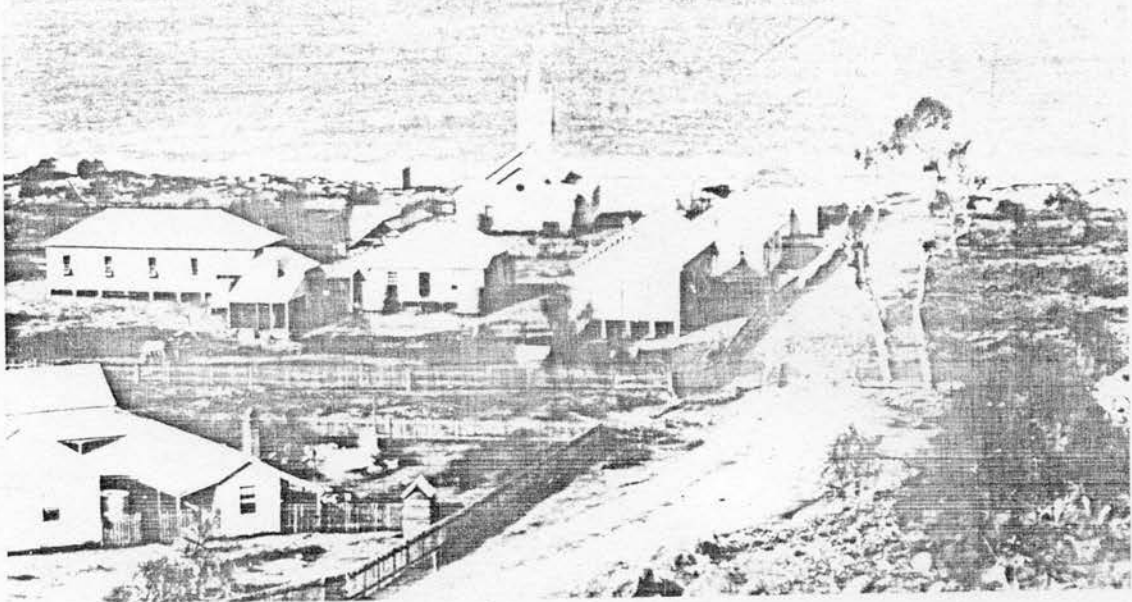
⁷⁹*Qld*er, 29 November 1873.

⁸⁰*TH* Supplement, 24 December 1887, p. 50.

⁸¹Trellis usually in steel or timber (Cox and Lucas, *op. cit.*, p. 64-5 and p. 270).

⁸²*Qld*er, 8 September 1883. This church is incorporated in the present Uniting Church at the corner of Wills Street and Stokes Street.

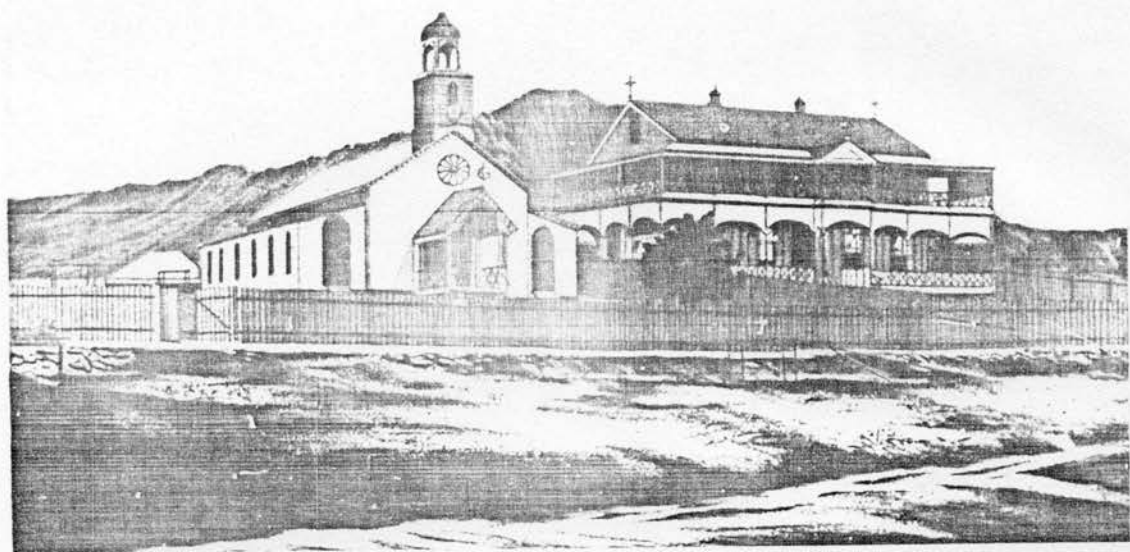
⁸³*TH* Supplement, 24 December 1887, p. 70. This was demolished by cyclone Althea in 1971.



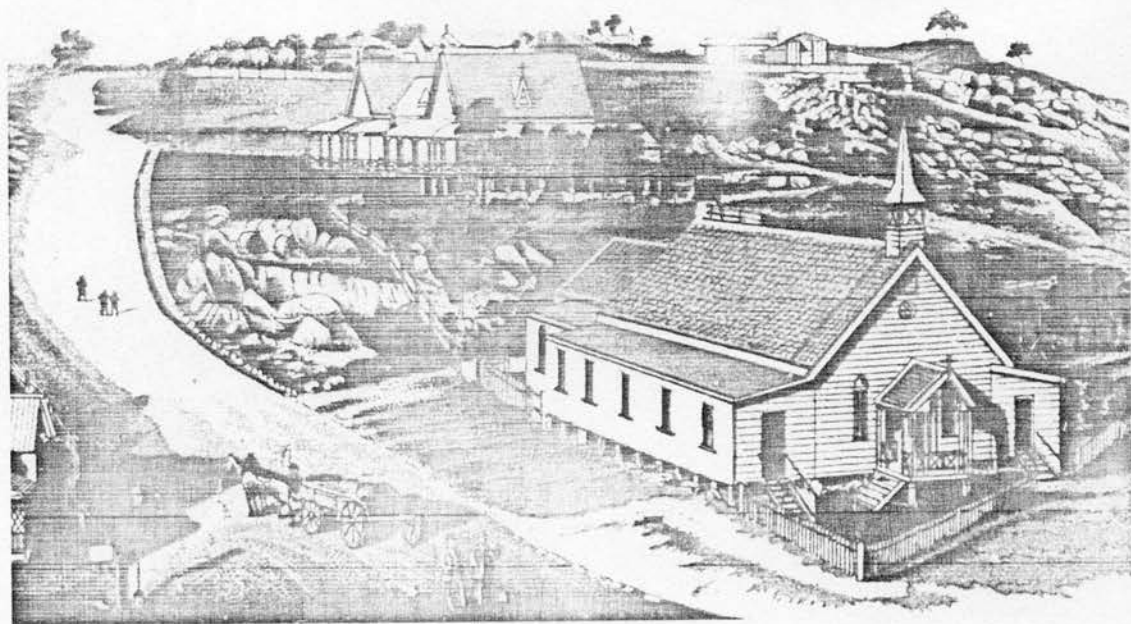
St Joseph's Church and Convent about 1879. In the left foreground is the Orphanage erected in 1878.
(Photograph from the collection of the Mitchell Library, Sydney)



St Peter's Church of England (erected 1882) Morris Street, West End.
(Photograph from the collection of Mrs D.M. Gibson-Wilde)



St Joseph's Church and the Convent (erected 1883) about 1884
 (Sketch from Views of Townsville - Mitchell Library, Sydney)



St James Church of England with the Vicarage on the hill above, about 1884.
 It is believed that the Vicarage was the original Rectory with
 a wing with tall gabled roof added at right-angles at each end.
 (Sketch from Views of Townsville - Mitchell Library, Sydney)

and Driscoll,⁸⁵ it had been a very plain gable-roofed structure set on low blocks, with a side entrance porch, topped with a small and somewhat incongruous tower at the front. Over the years it was extended: the chancel was lengthened in 1880 to accommodate the choir, and north and south aisles were added in 1883.⁸⁶ These extensions were added in a piecemeal fashion which resulted in an unattractive building, "a wretched apology for a cathedral that seems to focus all the heat for miles around".⁸⁷

St Joseph's Catholic Church too was originally a simple gable-roofed structure on low blocks. It had been extended by 1882, with an Italianate square tower added to the front, and side aisles. By 1884, the front was further extended and a new tower placed on top of the roof at the seaward end. The extensions to this, which were probably the work of J. and J. Rooney who are known to have done work on the Convent, were more harmonious than those at St James, and in 1884 St Joseph's was an attractive building, though not particularly impressive. The Congregational Church, erected in 1875, was the best proportioned of the early 'timber and tin' churches, with a steeper pitched roof and an attractive circular window over a projecting front porch. Little is known of St John's, South Townsville, though it is recorded as being a "pretty little church".⁸⁸ St Peter's was the most attractive of the churches. Gothic in design, and set on the ground rather than on stumps it was a simple, well-proportioned building with projecting front porch. On the whole, however, Ivimey's later remark that "it seems a shame that in the city of lordly commercial buildings the churches should be so small and shabby"⁸⁹ was very relevant in 1884.

The schools were still 'timber and tin', mainly on low blocks with the exception of Ross Island, which was raised on higher blocks. The State schools were substantial structures with

⁸⁴Qlder, 11 August 1883.

⁸⁵TH Supplement, 24 December 1887, p. 64.

⁸⁶Qlder, 10 January 1880; TH Supplement, 24 December 1887, loc. cit.

⁸⁷Ivimey, op. cit., p. 83.

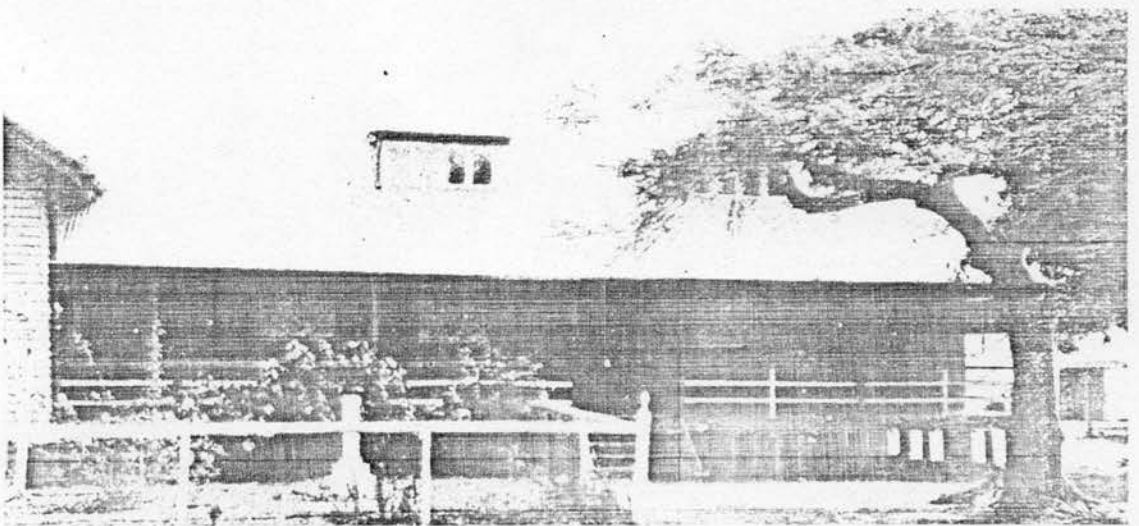
⁸⁸TH Supplement, 24 December 1887, p. 66.

⁸⁹Ivimey, loc. cit.



View from Castle Hill about 1883. W.J. Castling's house at the corner of Walker Street and Stokes Street can be seen clearly, also the Police Barracks and Police Station in the corner of Stanley Street and Sturt Street. Note the tent on the block in the foreground.

(Photograph from the collection of the Mitchell Library, Sydney)



Mundingburra School - 1884

(Photograph from the collection of Mrs D.M. Gibson-Wilde)



The Telegraph Office erected in 1879.
(Photograph from the collection of the John Oxley Library, Brisbane)

attractive detail in ornamental brackets and balustrading. The Convent had grown rapidly from a cluster of unimpressive buildings in the 1870s; by 1884 it contained two two-storeyed buildings, one of which, the new convent of 1883, was a most substantial and attractive structure with wide verandahs overlooking Cleveland Bay.

'Timber and tin' continued to be most popular for the construction of other public buildings. The Immigration Barracks, prefabricated in Maryborough and erected by James Lawry in 1876,⁹⁰ looked precisely what they were - barracks - comprising long ranges of unornamented wooden buildings with verandahs shading the front of each building. The Police Station and Police Barracks were likewise unremarkable, as were the buildings of the Pilot Station. The Customs Office remained the original Court and Customs House, while the orphanage was merely a large house with one or two barrack-like extensions. The Railway Station, which appears to have been the 'temporary station' until 1914, was, according to Boyd, "stigmatised as unpretentious, the accommodation limited and arrangements for obtaining tickets disgraceful".⁹¹ Surrounded by corrugated-iron service buildings, it was not an attractive sight.

The Telegraph Office, erected at the corner of Flinders Street and Denham Street in 1879, was a more attractive building. Designed by Stanley and erected by J. & J. Rooney,⁹² it was obviously in the Regency tradition, with a central gable protruding to break the line of the facade, and dowel-balustraded verandahs sheltering the front on either side. Downstairs, it contained operating and battery rooms and public and private offices. Upstairs was the residence of the Head Operator.

The Town Hall, erected next door to the Telegraph Office by Shimmin in 1880, was much more pretentious, with a clock tower topped by a cupola.⁹³ It had a slightly incongruous projecting front porch with a semi-circular roof, above which projected a very small balcony shaded by another smaller semi-circular awning, little more

⁹⁰CBE, 9 February 1876.

⁹¹Qlder, 2 February 1885.

⁹²Q.L.A., V.&P., 1879, p. 738.

⁹³Qlder, 19 June 1880.



Wickham Street about 1864 showing the Post Office in the foreground. The two-storeyed building in the background was the Post Office Hotel. (Sketch from Views of Townsville - Mitchell Library, Sydney)



The Court House, Sturt Street in 1982
(Photograph by Mr Brian Pump)

than a window hood. The facade was finished with timber pilasters but these and the dowel balustrades were very plain. It contained Council offices and meeting room on the ground floor and a large hall upstairs.⁹⁴ The upstairs portion however could only be reached by a tall and steep staircase on the outside of the building, which was unsightly as well as inconvenient. Though it was a great improvement on the original Town Hall, and was certainly more pretentious, it was nevertheless a modest structure. The School of Arts, designed and built by C.A. Ward, was also a simple structure, referred to by at least one notable northerner as "an abominable old handbox".⁹⁵ It had a two-storeyed front section shaded by verandahs with a projecting entry porch, and an auditorium extending at the rear.

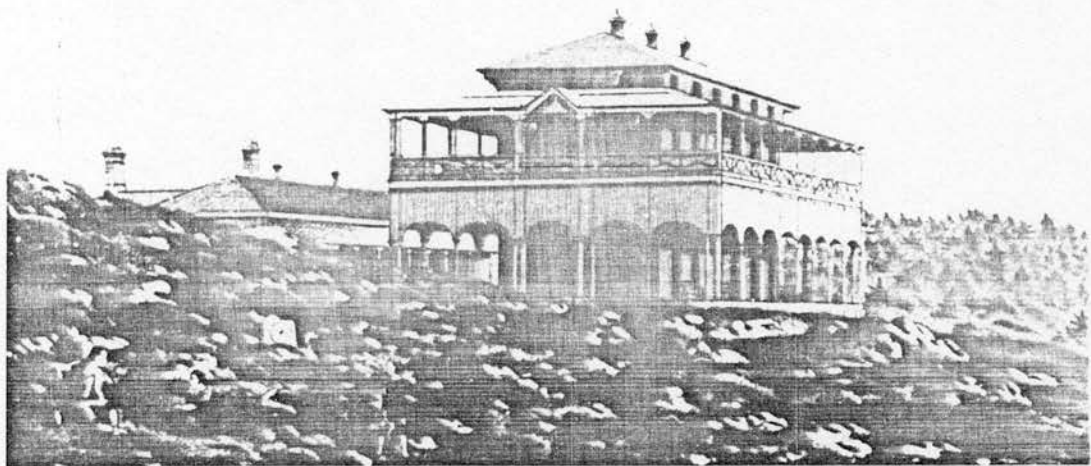
There were but four brick public buildings in 1884: the Post Office, the Court House, the Gaol and the Hospital. The Post Office, designed by Stanley and the first major brick building in Townsville, was an attractive asymmetrical structure of two storeys with projecting gable to one side of the front, and with verandahs shading the rest of the facade at both upper and lower levels. The upper verandah was enclosed with dowel balustrading. The Magistrates' Court was the second major brick building in the town. Basically a simple gable-roofed structure, the walls of the courtroom were shaded by verandahs on each side. It was given an impressive appearance by the addition of a Classical portico, reminiscent of earlier Colonial structures such as Berrima Courthouse.⁹⁶ Despite its simplicity, due no doubt to shortage of Government funds, it was a most pleasing building, if somewhat austere.

The Gaol, surrounded by a semi-circular brick wall 600 millimetres thick, was certainly austere; in fact, the *Townsville Herald* felt that "the architect has succeeded in designing a building which combines all requisites necessary to make up regulation gloominess".⁹⁷ It contained two two-storeyed buildings

⁹⁴ *ibid.*, 25 February 1882.

⁹⁵ A.J. Ivimey, *All About Queensland*, Brisbane 1889, p. 70.

⁹⁶ Cox and Lucas, *op. cit.*, p. 202.



The Hospital (opened 1881) about 1884
(Sketch from Views of Townsville - Mitchell Library, Sydney)



View of North Ward in the 1890s showing the Hospital with the buildings
of the first Gaol beyond, and, in the distance, the lagoon called
"Hambeluna" on which the first log hut was built in 1865.
(Photograph from the collection of the Mitchell Library, Sydney)

for male and female prisoners, each building being divided by a narrow passage with "six cells 9 feet long, 7 feet wide and 10 feet high."⁹⁸ There were eight cells for females and twelve cells for males.⁹⁹ By contrast, the Hospital, also a Stanley building, was open and airy.¹⁰⁰ It was a simple rectangular brick structure surrounded by 3.5 metre verandahs on all sides, with cross-braced balustrading to the upper floor. Though simple in design, it was most attractive, "a credit to the district and occupies a very pleasant position overlooking the Bay".¹⁰¹ It too reflected the elegance of Georgian and Regency architectural styles which characterised early Townsville buildings.

By 1884, industrial buildings had become a familiar part of the Townsville scene. Our knowledge of their appearance comes mainly from sketches and photographs. The Soap Works and the Brewery consisted of both brick and timber buildings, while the Foundry appears to have been of timber. The Ship-building Works was a large iron building. All were plain, functional buildings of unremarkable architectural style, though apparently neatly kept and well fenced. Though there were comparatively few well-designed and remarkable brick buildings by 1884, as Carl Feilberg noted:

Townsville promises to be a very fine city; and although it is too new a settlement to contain many buildings of special note, it will not be long without them....¹⁰²

Obviously Townsville had changed greatly. To travellers arriving by sea, its setting was "remarkable at any time of year"¹⁰³ with

the town being built on the banks of a wide bay and up against and around a hill rising a thousand feet immediately above the shoreline. Mount Elliot some miles in the background lifts its head 5000 feet high and stands the unrivalled mountain sentinel of the district.¹⁰⁴

⁹⁷TH, 2 October 1879. It was designed by Stanley and erected by J. Rooney at a cost of \$6668 (Q.L.A., V.&P., 1879, loc. cit).

⁹⁸PDT, 12 June 1875.

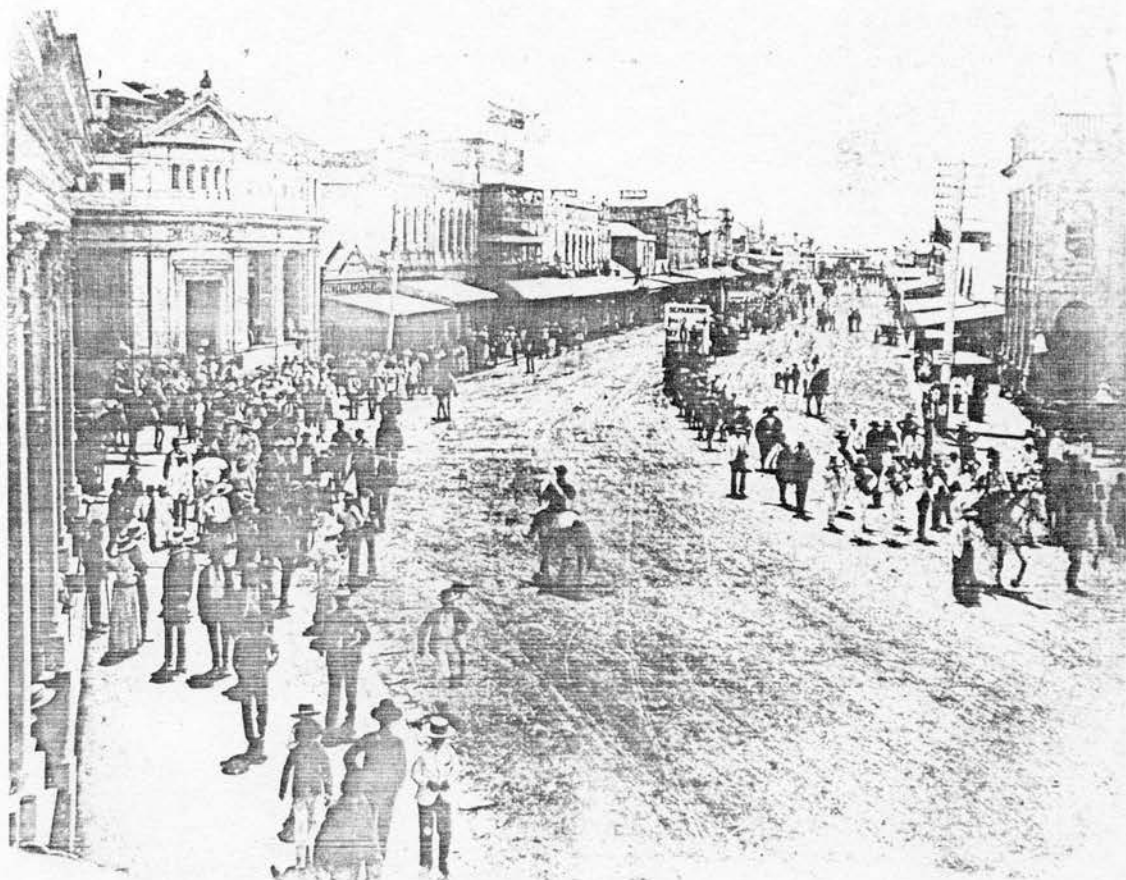
⁹⁹CBE, 19 January 1878.

¹⁰⁰Q.L.A., V.&P., 1879, loc. cit.

¹⁰¹Qlder, 31 July 1880.

¹⁰²Carl A. Feilberg, in Howard Willoughby, *Australian Pictures*, London 1886, pp. 123-4.

¹⁰³TH Supplement, 14 December 1892.



The intersection of Flinders Street and Denham Street during a Separation Rally in 1893. On the left, at the corner of Denham Street was the Bank of Australia, beyond which were Samuel Allen and Sons, the shops erected for H. T. Plant, the Excelsior Hotel, W.P. Walker's 'Beehive' and Tofft's Shops.
(Photograph from Ms A. Lanskey)

Closer up the view was not quite so pleasant. The transition from landscape to townscape had rapidly gained momentum with devastating effect. The long tentacles of the breakwaters plunged into the sea with an untidy jumble of sheds for the harbour works clustering below the defaced cliffs of Magazine Island. The once-craggy promontory of Point Keneally had been amputated leaving a dull red scar on the face of Melton Hill, though now a road could be extended along the whole length of the beach, which was undoubtedly one of the city's great charms:

The Strand is about a mile long to Kissing Point and it makes a glorious promenade on a moonlight night when the breeze blows straight and cool from Magnetic Island.¹⁰⁵

If the beach was beautiful, the view on entering the creek was not. On the Ross Island side, the slip and the corrugated-iron buildings of the Ship-building Works could hardly be called picturesque, while mangroves and mud extended along Palmer Street, with the yards of boat-builders and beached vessels in untidy and unsightly jumble. On the opposite side of the creek, wharves perched on stilts as far as the Railway Station, with gaps here and there. At times it could appear attractive as one writer found:

Seen through the romantic medium of a full moon the reflection of the many buildings on the water conveys to the imaginative mind a tropical Venice.¹⁰⁶

He did add however - "in a very primitive state". At low tide, the turgid waters of the creek moved sluggishly between banks of black and smelly mud.

On landing, the visitor discovered wide streets and modern amenities, but shops and houses stretched along gravel streets devoid of trees, while the lines of telephone poles then appearing did not enhance the scene. Houses, mostly small cottages sitting on stumps on 1000 square metre or smaller blocks with outhouses on the back fence line, were generally unfenced. Unshaded by trees and without softening greenery, they appeared as in the harshness of the desert.

¹⁰⁴Michael Davitt, *Life and Progress in Australasia*, London 1898, p. 283.

¹⁰⁵Ivimey, *Mining and Descriptive Queensland*, op. cit., p. 94.

¹⁰⁶*Illustrated Sydney News*, 13 May 1882.

Trees had been felled indiscriminately, not only to make way for settlement but also to provide fuel. Coal was imported from 1875,¹⁰⁷ so that steamships no longer used wood in their boilers, but the increasing population had an ever-growing need for firewood. As in other areas of Australia, there was virtually no thought of reforestation.¹⁰⁸ The *auracarias*, once so abundant, had practically disappeared from the mountains; everywhere the timber was felled unmercifully. The prevailing attitude was: "Well, why shouldn't a man cut down a couple of trees for firewood and anyhow, what does a bit of landscape matter?".¹⁰⁹ As the trees shading them disappeared, the lagoons dried up. In North Ward, the lagoon originally called so musically "Hambeluna", and once so beautiful, was no longer surrounded by bushland, but lay in a barren waste, the skeletons of dead trees protruding desolately from its waters.

No thought was given to establishing public parks other than the Botanical Gardens Reserve, part of which had already been excised for the Gaol and another part of which would soon be given to the Grammar School, while another area had become playing fields known as Queen's Park. Only a fraction of the area was given over to gardens, which were attended by a gardener¹¹⁰ with some attempts being made to improve them,¹¹¹ but by 1884 they remained "little laid out".¹¹² No attempt was made to plant trees to shade the streets, while the Strand, without which Townsville "would have very few charms", was "utterly devoid of trees",¹¹³ until 1881 when the Council planted 30 cedar trees.¹¹⁴ No other street plantings are recorded.

¹⁰⁷CBE, 25 September 1875.

¹⁰⁸See Bolton, *Spoils and Spoilers*, op. cit.

¹⁰⁹Macqueen, *Memories of Townsville*, op. cit., p. 19.

¹¹⁰TH, 23 January 1878.

¹¹¹Qlder, 21 October 1882.

¹¹²ibid., 27 December 1884.

¹¹³TH, 16 January 1878.

¹¹⁴Qlder, 13 August 1881. *ibid.*, 22 April 1882 records additional planting of cocoa and betel nut trees on the Strand.

This failure to retain some bush, or plant trees to give shade, probably stemmed from a number of causes. Native trees were little appreciated or understood, and imported trees were frequently difficult to establish. Many feared that trees would fall on their houses in time of cyclone, and there was a chronic scarcity of water. Many inhabitants were transients who cared little about improving their environment since they would not be staying long enough to benefit. On top of all these, there was a considerable problem with goats after 1877.¹¹⁵ The goat population appears to have reached a peak about 1879, when the Aborigines were encouraged to catch them on Castle Hill and Melton Hill at "1 shilling a head", after which the goats were deported to Magnetic Island, Cape Cleveland, Cape Bowling Green and Palm Island.¹¹⁶ In the face of such problems, Townsville's early settlers might well be excused for their apparent failure to improve their surroundings, though as Bolton emphasises, our ancestors seem to have hated trees.¹¹⁷

The remarkable exceptions to the general rule of barrenness in Townsville suburbia were the Belgian Gardens and Hermit Park/Mundingburra regions, which appeared as oases in the desert. At Belgian Gardens, lagoons surrounded by graceful melaleucas remained, with the bright green of Bartels' gardens.¹¹⁸ At Hermit Park/Mundingburra, the estates of the wealthy boasted colourful gardens with fine trees, and Gulliver's Nursery¹¹⁹ put the Botanical Gardens to shame. In this area

the beautiful foliage of the orange groves and other fruitbearing trees interspersed here and there with the waving sugar cane planted as a tentative measure¹²⁰

made a very attractive picture. At Hermit Park, Sachs had planted "long avenues of the splendid poinciana regia...to indicate the approach to the house and line the road fence" and Aplin had planted his estate at Acacia Vale with a long avenue of calophyllum,

¹¹⁵*TH*, 17 August 1876, 6 August 1879; *Qlder*, 19 June 1880.

¹¹⁶*Northern Standard*, 4 June 1880.

¹¹⁷Bolton, *Spills and Spoilers*, op. cit., ch. 4..

¹¹⁸Originally Robinson's gardens.

¹¹⁹Established 1881 (*TH*, 14 August 1886).

¹²⁰*Qlder*, 12 November 1881.

leichhardt and poinciana trees.¹²¹

In fact, though Townsville's townscape had extended, with buildings and amenities greatly improved in the twenty years of European settlement, the landscape most certainly had not. The depredations of settlers had left Townsville a much less attractive place:

Like Damascus, Townsville is picturesque only from a distance. When its streets and surroundings are traversed it is seen that the civic authorities have done their worst to destroy the trees that once made the place beautiful and the result is universal barrenness and aridity.¹²²

¹²¹ibid., 27 December 1884.

APPENDIXES

Appendix A

HISTORY OF HMS BEAGLE BEFORE ITS ARRIVAL IN CLEVELAND BAY

The *Beagle* was built at Woolwich in 1819. According to J.L. Stokes, "her first exploit was the novel and unprecedented one of passing through old London Bridge (the first rigged man o' war that had ever floated so high upon the waters of the Thames) in order to salute at the Coronation of King George the Fourth."¹

In 1825 it was commissioned by Commander Pringle Stokes (no relation to J.L. Stokes) as second officer of an expedition which sailed from Plymouth on 22 May 1826 to chart the coasts of Peru, Chile and Patagonia. The commanding vessel of that expedition was the *Adventure* commanded by Philip Parker King, who had previously commanded the *Mermaid* and the *Bathurst* on surveys in Australian waters. Pringle Stokes died, and Captain Robert Fitzroy succeeded to his position. Also under King on that voyage were J.C. Wickham and J.L. Stokes, as well as Owen Stanley, another officer destined to feature in the history of north Queensland. That survey was completed in 1830, and in 1831 the *Beagle* was commissioned to undertake a voyage of scientific discovery around the world under command of Captain Robert Fitzroy. Stokes, Wickham and Owen Stanley remained, serving under Fitzroy on that voyage, Wickham being First Lieutenant. On board was Charles Darwin, who formulated many of his theories expressed in his famous *Origin of the Species* during the voyage. Darwin wrote an account of the journey.² That voyage completed in 1836, the *Beagle* was commissioned in 1837 for a surveying voyage in Australian waters under the command of J.C. Wickham, with Stokes as First Lieutenant. On the way out to Australia on that voyage, it transported George Grey and his party to South Africa where they trans-shipped to another vessel to proceed on an expedition of exploration in north-west Australia, which resulted in the discovery of the Glenelg River.

¹Stokes, op. cit.

²N. Berlow (ed.), *Diary of the Voyage of HMS Beagle*, Cambridge 1933.

Appendix B

LIST OF RUNS IN THE NORTH KENNEDY REGION, 1863

This list indicates the closest convenient port to each run:

Cardwell (+), Bowen (++), or Townsville (+++).

Runs north of the Burdekin

| | |
|-------------------|-----|
| Mt Surprise | + |
| Wyandotte | + |
| Valley of Lagoons | + |
| Glendhu | + |
| Craigie | + |
| Mt Emu | +++ |
| Reedy Springs | +++ |
| Cargoan | +++ |
| Tara | +++ |
| Niall | +++ |
| Maryvale | +++ |
| Nulla Nulla | +++ |
| Lolworth | +++ |
| Bluff Downs | +++ |
| Yallock Vale | +++ |
| Hillgrove | +++ |
| Southwick | +++ |
| Eumara | +++ |
| Reedy Lake | +++ |
| Dotswood | +++ |
| Burdekin Downs | +++ |
| Fanning River | +++ |
| Woodstock | +++ |
| Merri Merriwah | +++ |
| Ravenswood | +++ |
| Conway | +++ |
| Woodhouse | +++ |
| Jarvisfield | +++ |

Runs south of the Burdekin

| | |
|------------------|------------------------|
| Leichhardt Downs | ++ |
| Strathalbyn | ++ |
| Heidelberg | ++ |
| Mt McConnell | ++ |
| St Ann's | ++ |
| Natal Downs | ++ |
| Victoria Downs | ? |
| Strathmore | ++ |
| Strathbogie | ++ |
| Inkerman | ++ |
| Eaton Vale | ++ |
| Salisbury | ++ |
| L. Pleasant | ++ |
| Strathdon | ++ |
| Proserpine | ++ |
| Sonoma | ++ |
| Crystal Brook | ++ |
| St Helens | (closest to Mackay) |

Appendix C

CROSSINGS OF THE BURDEKIN RIVER

Lower Crossings: Jarvisfield
Leichhardt Downs

Upper Crossings: Connolly Creek
Broughton (above junction of Broughton
and Burdekin Rivers)
Hamilton's (just below junction of Burdekin
and Fanning Rivers)
Burdekin Downs (below Dillon's Creek junction)
Dalrymple (junction of Keelbottom Creek
and the Burdekin River)

Appendix D

*PROPERTIES HELD BY JOHN MELTON BLACK IN THE CLEVELAND BAY
AREA AT THE BEGINNING OF 1864*

WOODSTOCK

Estimated area: 90 square miles.

Boundaries: Commencing at a point on the north boundary of Cleveland Plains run 3 miles to the northward of the north-east point thence by a line running along the Coast Reserves of Bowling Green Bay in a northerly direction 9 miles frontage; thence by a line westerly along the Coast Reserve of Cleveland Bay 9 miles frontage; thence by a line east and running along the north boundary of Cleveland Plains run 9 miles frontage. This run includes the land contained in the promontory forming Cape Cleveland.

Amended description:

Estimated area: 83 square miles.

Boundaries: Commencing at the north-east corner of Stanley Plains run and bounded thence on the west by the eastern boundary of that run and a prolongation thereof, being a line bearing south and passing through a tree marked broad arrow over IV eleven miles twenty chains; thence on the south by a line bearing east to the corner of Cleveland Plains and along the northern boundary of that run to the Haughton River nine miles thirty chains; thence on the east by the left bank of that river downwards in a northerly direction to the boundary of the coast reserve; and thence on the north-east and north by that boundary, being a line bearing west thirty-three degrees north to a tree marked broad arrow over III eight miles; thence west twenty degrees north four miles to the point of commencement.

Reference: Q.S.A., CLO/N19, p.687.
Application lodged 9 April 1863.
Licence issued to date from 9 April 1863.
Lease issued to date from 1 January 1864.
This lease was transferred to Robert Towns in 1864.

STANLEY PLAINS

Estimated area: 70 square miles.

Boundaries: Commencing at the north-west corner of Woodstock run, thence by a line along the Coast Reserve of Cleveland and Halifax Bays in a westerly direction 10 miles frontage; thence by a line south to the coast range; thence by the coast range in an easterly direction to the south-west point of Woodstock run; and thence by that boundary to the starting point.

Amended description:

Estimated area: 80 square miles.

Boundaries: Commencing at the north-west corner of Woodstock run, and bound thence on the north by a line bearing west, being the boundary of the Coast Reserve 10 miles; thence to the west by the eastern boundary of Repulse Plains run, being a line bearing south and passing about 20 chains east of a tree marked broad arrow over XII 8 miles; thence on the south by a portion of the northern boundary of Lansdowne run and a prolongation thereof to Woodstock, being a line bearing east 10 miles; and thence on the east by the boundary of Woodstock run, being a line bearing north eight miles to the point of commencement.

Reference: Q.S.A., CLO/N19, p.689.
Application lodged 9 April 1863.
Licence issued to date from 9 April 1863.
Lease issued to date from 1 January 1864.
This lease was transferred to Robert Towns in 1864.

REPULSE PLAINS

Estimated area: 49 square miles.

Boundaries: Commencing at the north-west corner of Stanley Plains run; thence by a line along the Coast reserve of Halifax Bay in a westerly and northerly direction 7 miles frontage; thence by a line south to the coast range; thence by the coast range in a south and east direction of the south-west point of Stanley Plains run; and thence by that boundary to the starting point.

Amended description:

Estimated area: 59 square miles.

Boundaries: Commencing at the north-west corner of Landsdowne run, and bounded thence on the south by a portion of the north boundary of that run, being a line bearing east 5 miles 50 chains; thence on the east by the west boundary of Stanley Plains run, being a line bearing north and passing through a point about 20 chains east of a tree marked broad arrow over XII to the Coast Reserve 8 miles; thence on the north by a line bearing west 25 degrees north to the Ross River about 4 miles 40 chains; and thence on the west by the right bank of the Ross River upwards, in a southerly direction, to the point of commencement.

Reference: Q.S.A., CLO/N19, p.688.
Application lodged 9 April 1863.
Licence issued to date from 9 April 1863.
Lease issued to date from 1 January 1864.
This lease was transferred to Robert Towns in 1864.

Other properties held by John Melton Black at the beginning of 1864:

| <u>Property</u> | <u>Licence to date from</u> | <u>Lease to date from</u> | <u>Reference</u> |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Denham Park | 13.11.1862 | 1.7.1863 | CLO/N19, p.631 |
| Salisbury) | | | |
| Warwick) | | | |
| Richmond) | | | |
| Texas) | 8.10.1862 | 1.7.1863 | ibid., pp.617-19, 621-4 |
|) | | | |
| Middleham) | | | |
| Gloucester) | | | |
| Bosworth) | | | |
| Cleveland Plains | 3.3.1863 | 1.7.1863 | ibid., p.664 |
| Cintra | 4.3.1863 | 1.7.1863 | ibid., p.665 |
| Magenta | 4.3.1863 | 1.7.1863 | ibid., p.666 |
| Wyoming | 9.4.1863 | 1.1.1863 | ibid., p.690 |
| Avoca | 9.4.1863 | 1.1.1864 | ibid., p.692 |
| Fermoy | | | |
| Avonmore | | | |
| Oregon | | | |
| Belle Vue | | | |
| Pleasant Bank | | | |
| Avonmore | | | |
| The Pampas | | | |
| Halifax Plains | | | |
| Victoria Downs Nos 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 | | | |
| Pentland Downs Nos 1, 2 and 3 | | | |

Properties acquired later:

| | | | |
|------------------------------|------------|----------|----------------|
| Lan(d?)sdowne (J.M.Black) | 10.4.1865 | 1.1.1866 | CLO/N45, p.41 |
| Balaclava (R.Towns) | 17.10.1864 | 1.7.1865 | ibid., p.35 |
| Crimea (Towns & Co.) | 30.8.1875 | 1.7.1877 | LAN/N59, p.119 |

Note that Crimea was acquired after Robert Towns's death.

Towns acquired all of these properties in 1864 with the exception of Lansdowne which he took over in 1866. It is reasonable to suppose that he acquired the properties later in 1864 about the time the licence application was made for Balaclava, i.e. 17 October 1864. He had not acquired all of them in April 1864 as Black sold Middleham, Avoca, Denham Park, Salisbury, Warwick, Richmond, Gloucester, Bosworth, Springfield (for which Black had a licence but never applied for a lease), Texas and Oregon to Harry Drax Bloxham about 30 April 1864 (*Port Denison Times*, 30 April 1864). Victoria Downs and a property called Westland Downs (not shown in the above lists from Q.S.A.) were sold to George Kilgour Ingelow on the same date (*Port Denison Times*, 30 April 1864). Towns later acquired nearly all of these properties. J.G.McDonald sold Inkerman Downs, Glen Avon and Dalrymple to Robert Towns and Alex Stuart on about 30 April 1864 also (*Port Denison Times*, 30 April 1864).

Appendix E

COACH SERVICES — TOWNSVILLE TO CHARTERS TOWERS

The Cobb & Co. service commenced at the Criterion Hotel until June 1878, when Cobb's office shifted to the Commercial Hotel (on the site of Lang's Hotel) (*Willmetts Almanac*, 1879).

Townsville to

| | |
|--|---------|
| J. Hearne's Rising Sun Hotel | 2 miles |
| T. Gleeson's Retreat Hotel | 6 miles |
| Mrs Gallagher's Kennedy Hotel | 6 miles |
| Nancarrow's Ross Crossing | — |
| Cobb's stables (change horses) | 6 miles |
| Davidson's Carrier's Arms Hotel | 5 miles |
| Lansdowne Hotel (stop for dinner) | 4 miles |
| Cobb's stables, Double Barrel Creek (change horses) | 4 miles |
| Reid Inn | 8 miles |
| H.S. Holmes's Haughton Inn (stay night) | 4 miles |

Cobb's coaches from Townsville, Charters Towers, Millchester and Ravenswood all converged here.

| | |
|--|-------------|
| Mitchell's Carrier's Arms Hotel | 11 miles |
| G. Hawkin's Bush Inn (breakfast) | 6 miles |
| Fanning Downs Hotel (change horses) | 16 miles |
| Cross Burdekin at Hamilton's Crossing | |
| M' Andrews' Burdekin Hotel | |
| to Millchester | 12 miles |
| to Charters Towers (Cobb's stables and office, Gard's Club Hotel) | 2 1/2 miles |

Advertisement for Corveth's Coach

Cheap fares to Townsville.
Will leave Mr Acker's Booking Office,
Charters Towers for Townsville via
Millchester every Saturday morning and
Mr Fryer's Townsville Hotel for Charters
Towers every Wednesday morning.

Fares 1.15.3 each way.

Luggage 20 lbs allowed free, all over to
be charged for 2 1/2d per lb.

Appendix F

TOWNSVILLE BUSINESSES

S.F. Walker became an Auctioneer and Commission Agent.

A. Blitz became a Newsagent and Stationer.

Armati & Fraire acquired the retail department of Burns Philp & Co. about 1881.

Hollis Hopkins took over the wholesale drapery sections of both Burns Philp & Co. and Aplin, Brown & Co. in 1881.

MacPherson & Co. took over the wholesale ironmongery sections of Burns Philp & Co. and Aplin, Brown & Co. in 1881 (*TH* Supplement, 24 December 1887, p. 42).

Willmet & Co. was founded by Thankfull Willmet in 1873 (*ibid.*, p. 39).

Samuel Allen & Sons was founded by Samuel Allen in 1872 purely as a produce business.

Appendix G

MAYORS OF TOWNSVILLE (1866-1884)

| <u>Name</u> | <u>Occupation</u> | <u>Period of Mayoralty</u> |
|-------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------|
| J.M. Black | merchant | 1866-67 |
| W.A. Ross | merchant and hotelkeeper | 1868 |
| W.A. Aplin | merchant | 1869 |
| E. Coleman | do | 1869 |
| P.F. Hanran | do | 1871-72, 1876-77, 1879, 1882 |
| S.F. Walker | merchant and commission agent | 1873, 1875 |
| J. Fletcher | businessman and hotelkeeper | 1874 |
| E.A. Head | hotelkeeper | 1878 |
| T. Willmet | businessman | 1880-81, 1883 (9 mths), 1884 |
| W.V. Brown | merchant | 1883 (3 mths) |

SUBSCRIPTION LIST FOR TOWNSVILLE GRAMMAR SCHOOL, 1884

Subscriptions for Grammar School, Townsville

| | | | | | | | |
|------------------|-----|----|----|----------------------|------|----|---|
| See Lycan | 100 | | | Forward £ | 1175 | 19 | 4 |
| R. Shelf | 50 | | | R. Kellerman | 31 | 10 | |
| L. E. Walker | 50 | | | J. Gordon | 31 | 10 | |
| Johnson & Co | 50 | | | J. Kennedy | 31 | 10 | |
| W. Kirk | 50 | | | G. Easton | 5 | 5 | |
| J. H. Gilbert | 50 | | | E. Conley | 5 | 5 | |
| W. T. Brown | 50 | | | H. De La J. Hubert | 5 | 5 | |
| W. P. Walker | 50 | | | A. Bundoct | 5 | 5 | |
| J. Hamilton | 50 | | | R. Annobong | 2 | 2 | |
| R. S. Jack | 33 | 6 | 8 | H. Kern | 2 | 2 | |
| J. Willmetts | 33 | 6 | 8 | J. Fraser | 2 | 2 | |
| W. Claydon | 31 | 10 | | J. R. Pritchard | 1 | | |
| J. Miller | 31 | 10 | | W. J. Robinson | 2 | 2 | |
| H. Bastela | 31 | 10 | | Ch. Hanson | 2 | 2 | |
| E. Norris | 31 | 10 | | C. Wyatt | 1 | 1 | |
| E. Cunningham | 10 | | | J. Stout | 2 | 2 | |
| W. G. Smith | 10 | | | L. McAllister | 2 | 2 | |
| H. Plume | 10 | 10 | | W. Sanders | 31 | 10 | |
| J. N. Barker | 10 | 10 | | A. Ball | 31 | 10 | |
| E. K. Russell | 10 | | | A. Mickle | 2 | 2 | |
| R. J. Harman | 10 | 10 | | R. Abraham | 5 | 5 | |
| A. J. West | 10 | 10 | | Friends to Education | 10 | 10 | |
| H. Hopkins & Co | 10 | 10 | | Jensen & Wall | 2 | 2 | |
| Macpherson & Co | 10 | 10 | | J. Enright | 2 | 2 | |
| E. A. Herald | 10 | 10 | | D. Buchanan | 31 | 10 | |
| G. Simpson | 5 | 5 | | R. Long | 2 | 2 | |
| J. Sherman | 5 | | | J. N. Seldon | 2 | 2 | |
| J. N. Carruthers | 31 | 10 | | R. Parsons & Co | 2 | 2 | |
| D. S. Clarke | 5 | 5 | | W. Pease | 2 | 2 | |
| J. Smyth | 31 | 10 | | J. J. Porter | 2 | 2 | |
| A. McKenzie | 5 | 5 | | Jas. Burns | 2 | 1 | |
| D. McJuliane | 5 | 5 | | L. J. Sachs | 10 | 10 | |
| | 885 | 3 | 11 | | 1175 | 19 | 4 |

Appendix I

HOTELS IN TOWNSVILLE - 1884

| Hotel | Estab. | Location |
|-----------------------------------|--------|--|
| Aitkenvale | c.1876 | on site of Vale Hotel |
| Commercial | 1867 | on site of Lang's Hotel |
| Courthouse | 1875 | on site of Herbert Hotel |
| Criterion | 1865 | on site of present Criterion Hotel |
| Carrier's Arms | ? | on site of Midtown Motel, Ingham Road |
| Crown | 1884 | on site of present Crown Hotel |
| Day Dawn (form. Freemasons) | 1875 | on site of Dalgety's Arcade |
| Derwent (form. Bellevue) | 1876 | on site of Hotel Allen |
| Bridge | 1879 | on site of Metropole Hotel |
| Excelsior | 1884 | on site of James Cook Tavern |
| Exchange | 1882 | on site of present Exchange Hotel |
| Leichhardt | 1879 | site now occupied by shops, Flinders Mall |
| Newmarket | c.1874 | on site of present Newmarket Hotel |
| Queensland (form. Paragon) | 1876 | on site of David Jones store |
| Racecourse | ? | Belgian Gardens |
| Railway | c.1882 | in Flinders Street between Jones Street and Fletcher Street |
| Tower | 1884 | on corner of Flinders Street and Jones Street |
| Tattersalls (orig. Townsville) | 1866 | on site of present Tattersalls Hotel |
| Working Man's Home | 1875 | site unknown |
| Southern Cross | 1884 | site unknown |
| Queens | 1873 | on site of N.Q. Television & Broadcasting studios |
| Imperial | 1883 | on corner of King Street and Flinders Street |
| Royal | c.1873 | on corner of Stokes Street and Flinders Street, now occupied by David Jones store |
| Prince of Wales | 1875 | on site of (former) Buchanan's Hotel |
| Post Office | 1876 | near present A.B.C. studios, Wickham Street |
| Rising Sun | c.1875 | on site of present Rising Sun Hotel |
| Royal Oak | 1876 | on site of present Royal Oak Hotel |

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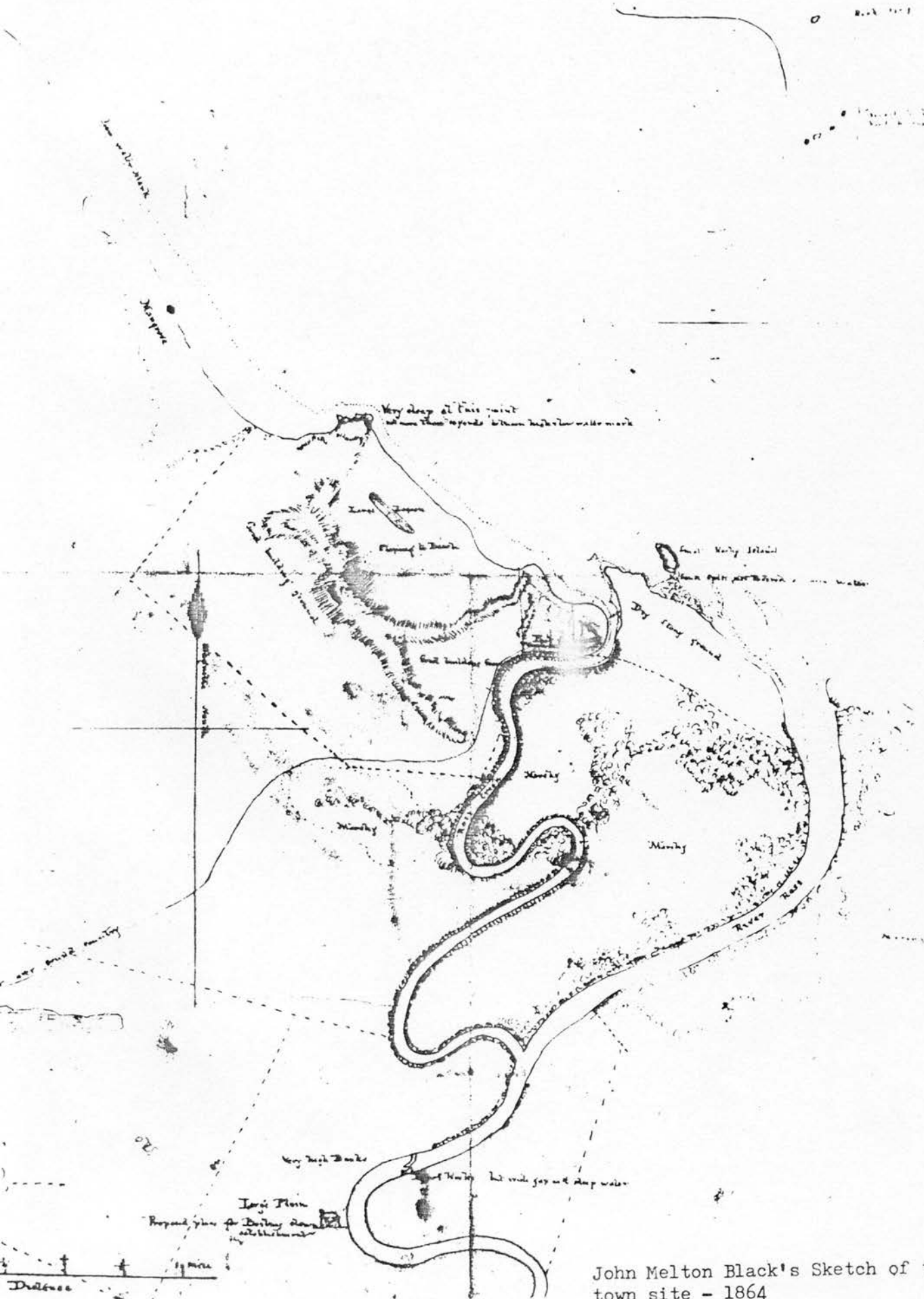
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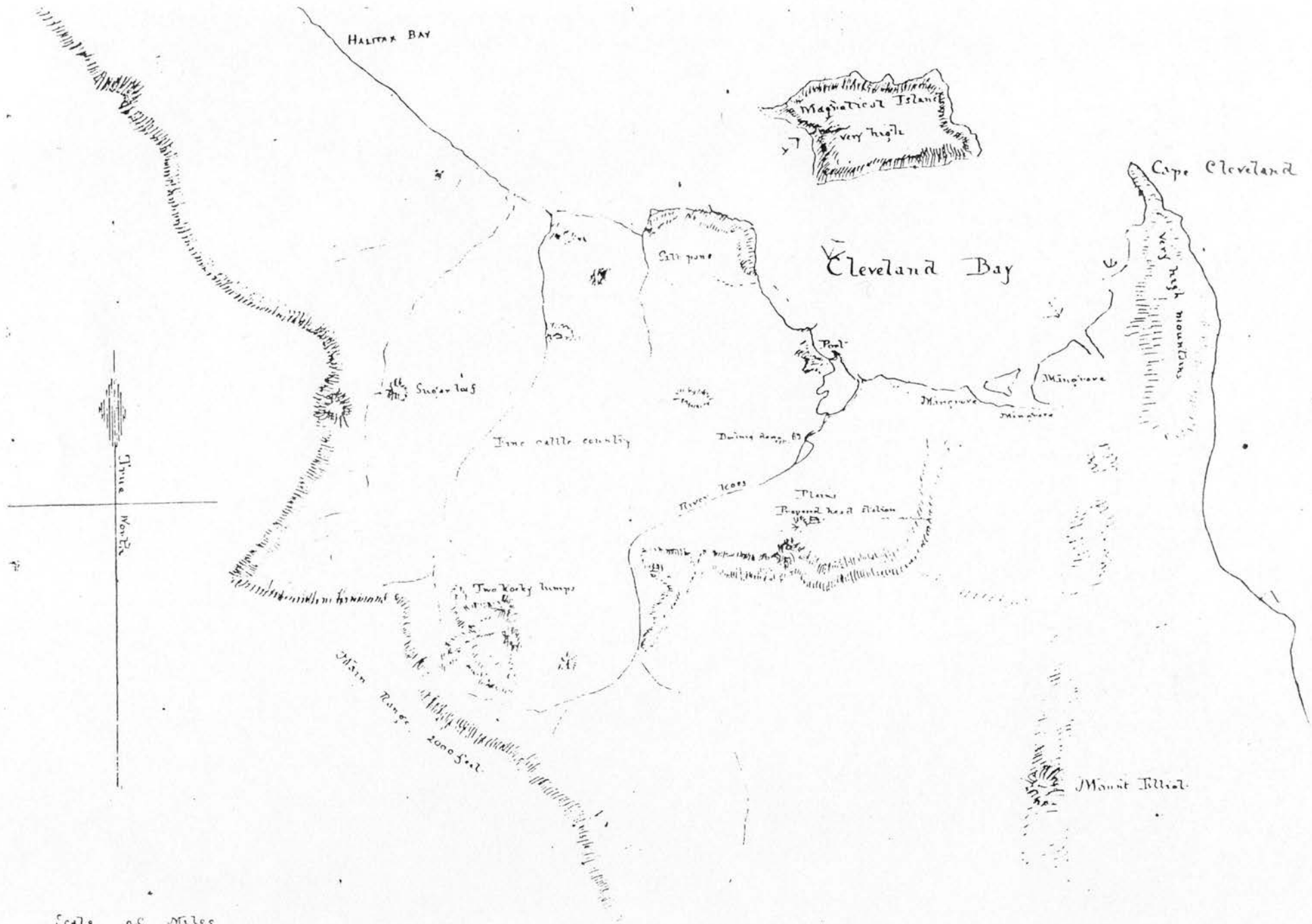
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Plan
Showing the
River Channel
by the
Oaks



John Melton Black's Sketch of the town site - 1864



Scale 0.5 Miles

John Melton Black's Sketch of Cleveland Bay

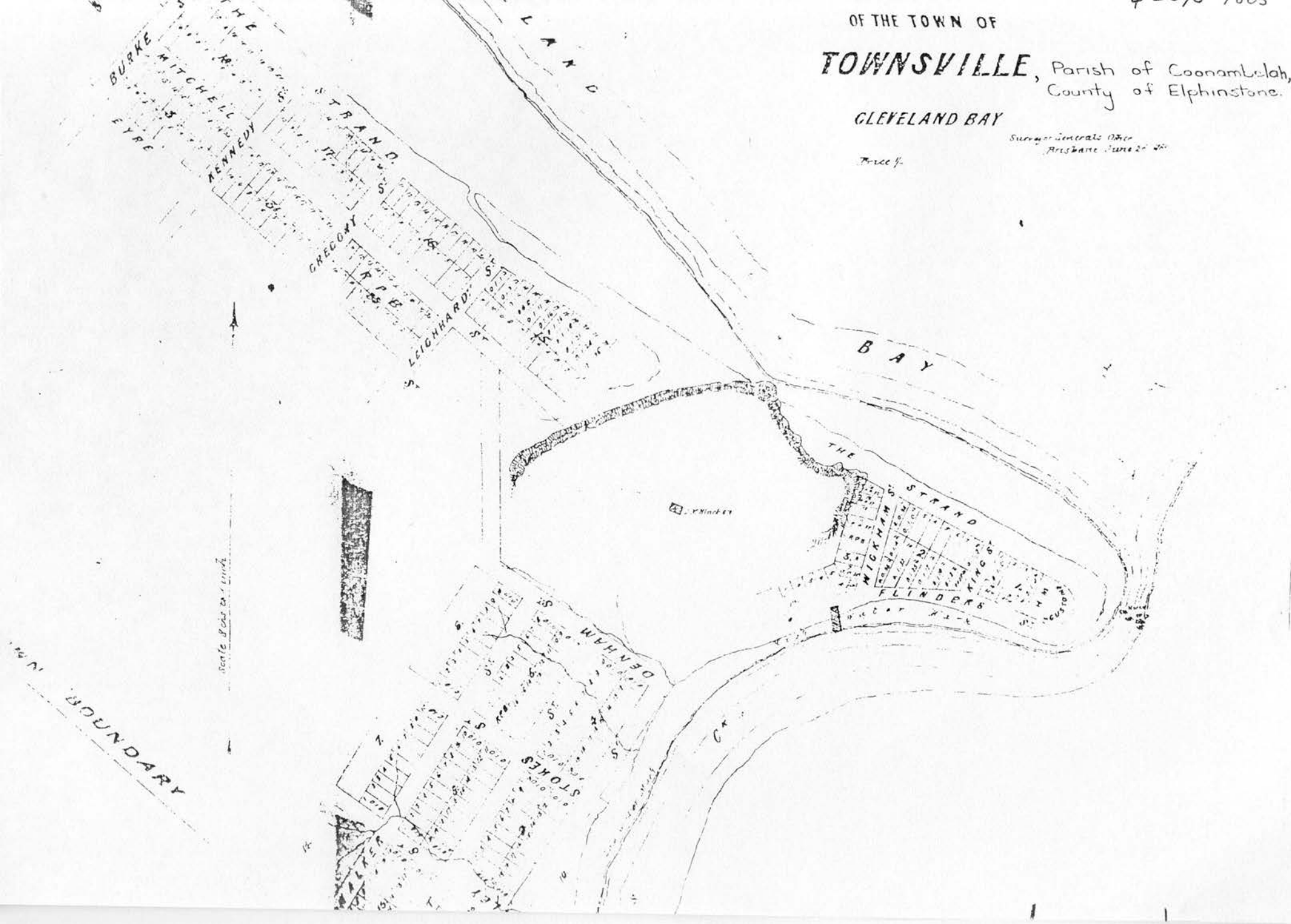
OF THE TOWN OF

TOWNSVILLE, Parish of Coonambulah, County of Elphinstone.

CLEVELAND BAY

Surveyor-General's Office
Adelaide June 20 1863

Price 1/-



Townsville taken from a plan made in 1867.

*Magnetic Island
about 5 miles from Town
A nice sail.*

CLEVELAND BAY.

Splendid Bathing

Beach 1 1/2 miles long.

The Strand

BANK
built
to
prevent
floods

WICKHAM ST

STREET

CUSTOM
HOUSE

High Water Mark

Batchelors
Hall

HILL ABOUT 200 FT
HIGH.

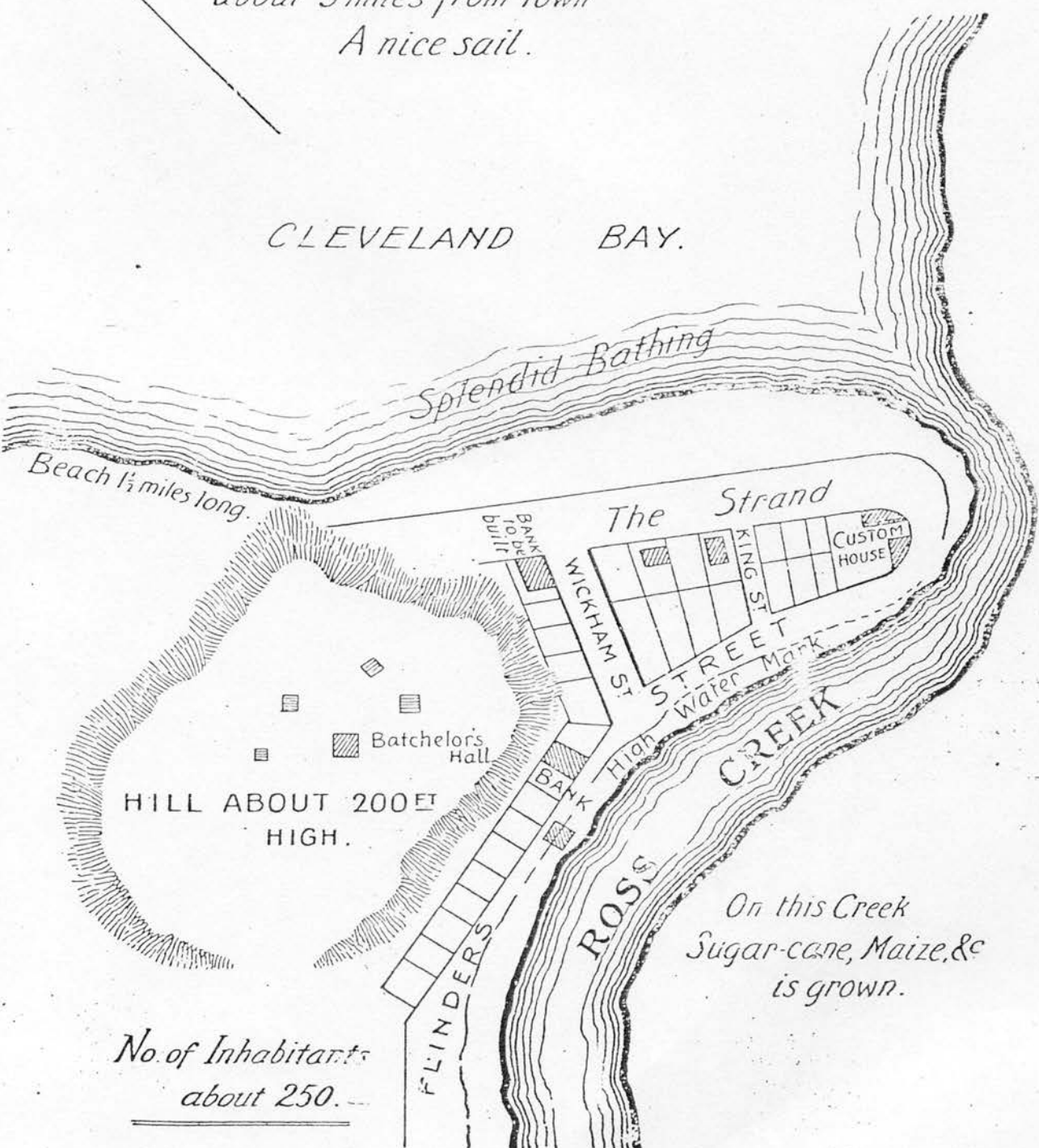
BANK

ROSS
CREEK

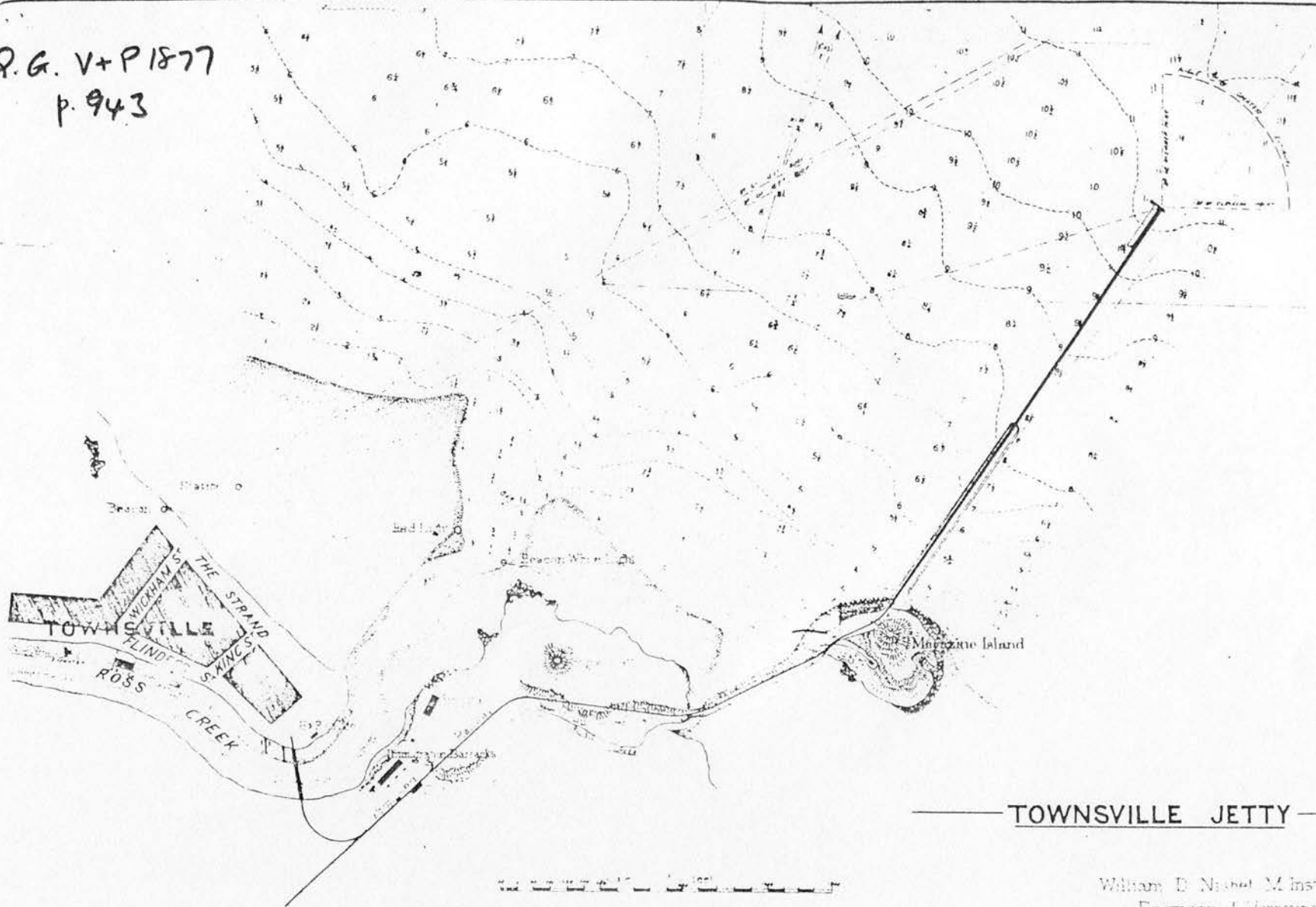
*On this Creek
Sugar-cane, Maize, &c
is grown.*

*No. of Inhabitants
about 250.*

FLINDERS



Q.G. V+P 1877
P. 943



— TOWNSVILLE JETTY —

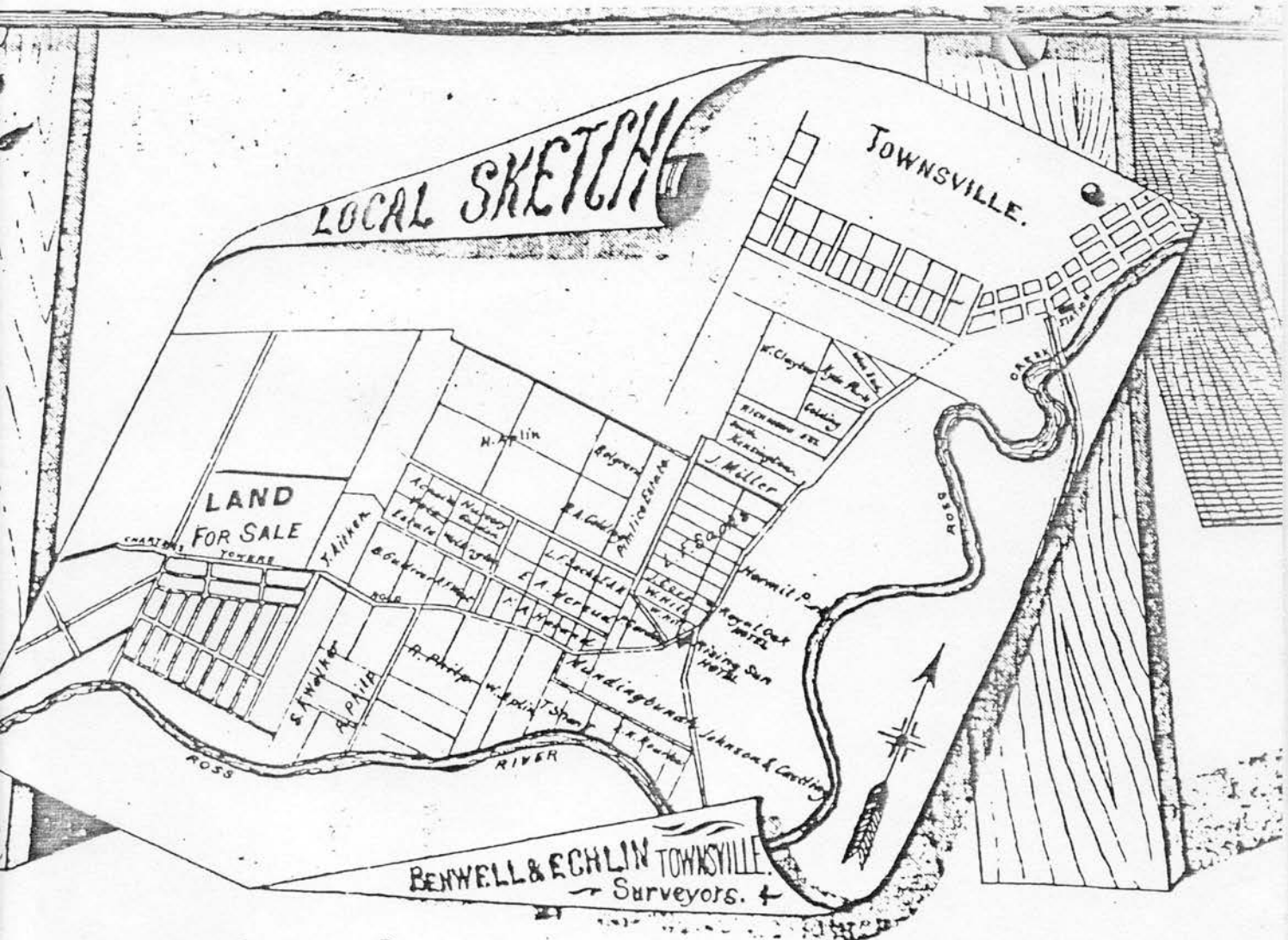
William D. Nichol M. Inst. C.E.
Engineer of Harbours & Rivers
Brisbane 30th June 1877



| Railway | From | To | Miles | Reference |
|--------------------|-----------|----|-------|-----------|
| Open for Traffic | Townsvill | 35 | 35 | ————— |
| Under Construction | | 35 | 60 | ----- |
| Approved by Parl. | | 60 | 85 | ----- |
| Exploration Survey | | 85 | 187 | ----- |
| Prop. | | 85 | 245 | ----- |

A. 1881 Vol. II
 3 after p. 402

Latitude 19° S



REYSON & CO LITHO. BRISBANE.

Hermit Park, Mundingburra and Aitkenvale
1885