# Collection #3

# 1930 – 2024

## Involvement by 'Water' in the Long Term

PREFACE: https://www.waterysauces.org.au/history/theodore/theodorepreface.pdf

**'WATER'** REFLECTS ON THE GROWING OF THE CASTLE CREEK / THEODORE COMMUNITY

**REFLECTIONS BY THE WATER RESOURCES RETIREES ASSOCIATION (WRRA)**

# 1930 - 'WATER' REFLECTS

## ON RE-ORGANISATION OF THE ACTIVITIES OF THE IWSC

(The 1930 Report of the State Public Service Commissioner)

https://www.archivessearch.qld.gov.au/series/S13793

(State Archives: Ref # S 13793)

**Investigations of the Irrigation and Water Supply Commission and the Dawson Valley Irrigation Scheme**

Series

Reports and evidence of inquiries into the Dawson Valley Irrigation Scheme at Theodore and an investigation of the Irrigation and Water Supply Commission

**Below is a brief commentary and a recommendation coming out of the above investigations**
(Source: State Archives)

Both the Department of Public Lands and the IWSC had responsibilities in the area. Over time, inspections and investigations were held to address problems. In 1929 the government decided to overhaul and re-organise the activities of the Irrigation and Water Supply Commission. The State Public Service Commissioner's Department was instructed to inspect, report and make recommendations on the general administration and activities of the Commission. The report was presented in February 1930.

**The major recommendation was that the various activities (of the IWSC) would be transferred to the Departments of Lands and Works, and the Agricultural Bank.**

# 1931 - 'WATER' REFLECTS

## ON CONSTITUTION OF THE LAND ADMINISTRATION BOARD

## as

## COMMISSIONER OF IRRIGATION AND WATER SUPPLY

https://www.austlii.edu.au/cgi-bin/viewdb//au/legis/qld/hist_act/iawsaaao193122gvn44522/

*(The Irrigation and Water Supply Acts Amendment Act of 1931)*

**WATER.**

*Irrigation and Water Supply Acts Amendment Act of 1931* .. .. .. .. .. 22 Geo. V. No. 44.
*Water Authorities Acts Amendment Act of 1931* .. 22 Geo. V. No. 46.

**An Act to Constitute the Land Administration Board to be the Commissioner of Irrigation and Water Supply, and to Amend "The Irrigation Act of 1922" and "The Water Act of 1926," as amended by subsequent Acts, in certain particulars.**

22 Geo. V. No. 44. The Irrigation and Water Supply Acts Amendment Act of 1931.

[Assented to 24th December, 1931.]

BE it enacted by the King's Most Excellent Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Legislative Assembly of Queensland in Parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:—

1. This Act may be cited as "*The Irrigation and Water Supply Acts Amendment Act of* 1931," and shall be read as one with ‖"*The Irrigation Act of* 1922" (as amended by ¶"*The Water Act Amendment Act of* 1930"), and shall also be read as one with **"*The Water Act of* 1926" (as amended by ††"*The Land Acts Amendment Act of* 1927" and ¶"*The Water Act Amendment Act of* 1930"). Short title and construction

**FOOTNOTE:** On 20/12/1946, *'The Irrigation and Water Supply Commission Act of 1946'* was passed. This Act provided for the appointment of a Commissioner of Irrigation and Water Supply, and for the reconstitution of 'the Commissioner the Corporation of the Commissioner of Irrigation and Water Supply'. Commissioner Tom Lang was subsequently appointed and IWSC [2] was then to exist right through to 12/3/1979.

# 1931 – 'WATER' REFLECTS

## ON ONE OF IWSC's LEGENDS - 'DOC' KNUDSEN

### "A World on Its Own."

A GLANCE at the map reveals the fact that Theodore, though linked with the world by railway, is semi-isolated. Travellers describe it as "a world on its own." There is no doctor here, nor a chemist's shop. Usually the absence of a medico is regarded as a tremendous drawback to a settlement, but the residents of Theodore are fortunate. Among their number is one "Doc." Knudsen, an ambulance man who served right through the Boer war and the Great War, and from what I have seen of his work since we have been here I am inclined to doubt whether Theodore could be better served from a medical point of view. As in the case where branches of the Q.A.T.B. exist, and there is no medical officer, exceptionally severe cases are conveyed by motor-rail-ambulance to the Baralaba or Mount Morgan hospitals, but such cases are few.

One instance of the service given by this branch of the Q.A.T.B. may be interesting. Just before we arrived a young fellow riding a motor cycle charged into a barbed wire fence, the wire catching him round the neck which was shockingly lacerated. With a knowledge of surgery gained in two wars, "Doc." Knudsen not only saved his life but put eighteen stitches into a gaping wound in his throat. To-day the young fellow is at work again. As

Source: The Queenslander 4/6/1931

https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/23139794/2373235

'Doc' Knudsen was the Commission's ambulance officer who also served as a guide.

He was employed in March 1924 to replace J Oliver who had resigned. Described as *a rugged character with tough walrus cast of appearance, a man of many parts, well skilled in his ambulance duties but also a farmer in his own right*.

'Doc' had leased his dairy farm to work for the Commission. 'Doc' was later employed as the Health Inspector, Water Master and Inspector of Stock.

Source: Watery Sauces – A People's History of the Water Resources Commission and its Predecessors 1881 – 1995 [I. Pullar; M. Cook])

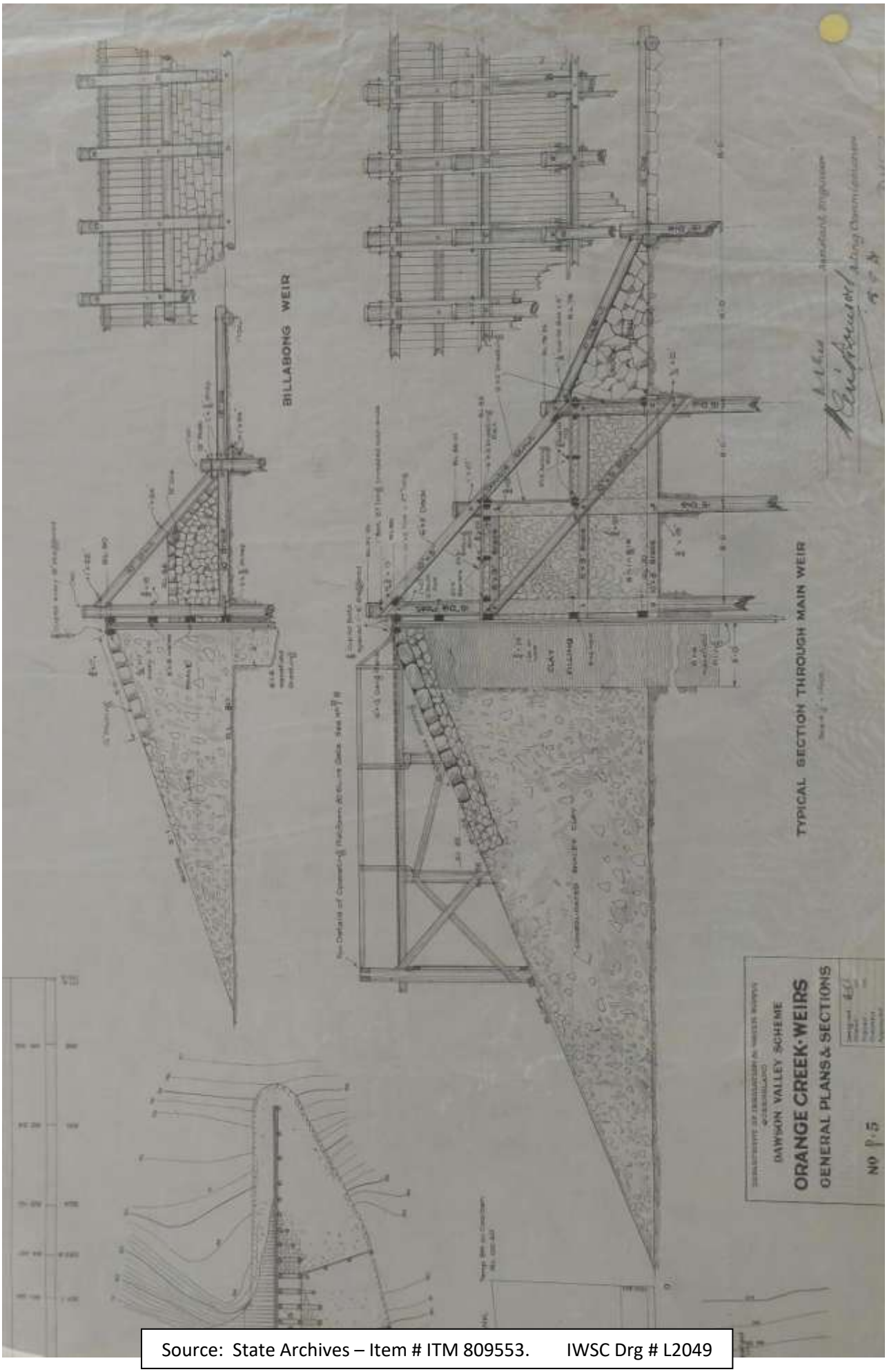
https://waterysauces.org.au/history/commencement/pullarbook/iws.pdf

# 1932 – 'WATER' REFLECTS

## on 'THE TIMBER-CRIB ERA'

**Theodore Weir** (under construction - late 1920's)

**Orange Creek Weir** (under construction – completed 1932)




Source: State Archives – Item # ITM 809553. IWSC Drg # L2049

# FRED BAXTER REFLECTS ON THE BUILDING OF ORANGE CREEK WEIR

*(Sources: Dawson Folk Museum Theodore [Text]; State Archives [Photos])*

The Commission of Irrigation and Water Supply built Orange Creek Weir as part of the Theodore Irrigation Scheme, and the man in charge was Mr Parry.

Wages paid by the Commission were at the rate of twelve shillings a day to a married man, and ten shillings a day to a single man. Parry applied for permission from Brisbane to pay me twelve shillings a day as a bonus for the work I did with the broadaxe.

Don Hall and I had just come in from possum shooting and set up camp on the riverbank under a big Ironbark, when Mr Shaw from the Commission came down and sent us out to set up camp. The Commission supplied tents, and a camp was set up for the workers. Mr Shaw was a nice man, very tall and was called 'Daddy' Shaw. Most of the men were married and they brought their families with them. I camped with Dick McNamee until his wife arrived and being a bachelor, I then moved to a tent by myself. Charlie Van Bael established a grocery store at the camp also.

They picked men who were on 'Relief' in Rockhampton – now known as the Dole –and sent them out on the train to Theodore, where we met them with the truck and took them out to the camp at Orange Creek. Next morning we lined up for work and when they seen the pick and shovels Parry had with him said 'Do we have to use them?' Parry said 'Yes'. Some of them replied 'We're not using them, we can get our 'Relief' money in Rocky without working'. So we had to take them back in to Theodore. Those of the men that stayed were good workers. Joe Rossiter – a carpenter by trade – was one who stayed. He had a small business on Stanley Street in Rockhampton, which his wife managed while he was away.

Price Morris had a contract with the Commission to provide the timber and was paid for each load delivered. He used two teams of bullocks to cart the timber – some of which belonged to Charlie Haeydon. One of the wagons used was one which Price obtained off 'Kinnoul Station'. It was sitting under a tree and deteriorating when Price seen it. He borrowed some bullocks off Jack Clarris and they took it back to Taroom where they repaired it. The back wheels of the wagon were 6 feet in diameter on a 3-inch axle. They cut the wheels down to 5 inches and made the tyres 5 inches wide. In the wet weather you could see the dirt being pushed in front of these tyres, making it very heavy going so Price changed it to a 2 inch axle and smaller tyres.

I was responsible for cutting the timber. Nearby, nearly all Blue Gum and Ironbark was used to construct the weir and I had Don Hall, Harry Otto and Dick McNamee working with me. All of the timber except for the 42 foot piles for the weir was cut up river to Gyranda Homestead. We left the camp early in the morning and returned after dark. Sometimes walking 5 or 6 miles before we reached camp.

There was some big timber cut. The first log that was too big to fit through the breaking-down saw which had a 6 foot cutting width - I took 12 inches off this log with the broadaxe before it would fit through the saw. We cut some big timber, this was split in half by George Campbell – he was a powder monkey who used to work in the Mount Morgan mine. George used to come out from the camp, he would bore a number of holes down the centre of the log and fill them with powder, then light the fuses – and we'd all run for cover and the log would be split right down the middle. These logs could not be loaded the same way as the others and instead of rolling them onto the wagon, Price had to use slides to load them.

I had to dress the timber after it was cut – this included trimming, removing the sap and cutting to the required length. Logs that were placed over the concrete at the sides of the weir had to be trimmed to an even 10 inches for the entire length. This I did with the broadaxe.

The 42-foot piles were cut from Spotted Gum trees in Isla Gorge, from the right hand branch where Hewitt's Valley comes in. They could not be loaded where they were cut and had to be snug out. These logs were 16 inches tapering to 8 inches.

The vertical breaking-down saw was brought from Theodore to Orange Creek by Eric Waller and myself, we used 'The Leyland' truck with solid rubber tyres. The 'Steam Donkey' engine also came from Theodore – it had been used to drive the sawmill. Port Smith and myself used 'The Leyland' to bring it to Orange Creek. Jack Sinclair was the man in charge of the sawmill. Bill Robertson from Rockhampton operated the 'Steam Donkey' engine. The tongue-and-groove sheeting for the weir was cut at the mill.

**'STEAM DONKEY' USED TO DRIVE THE SAWMILL AT ORANGE CK WEIR**

When they were driving the sheeting, Jack Brady (a very hairy man) was on the hammer using the stem when the hose burst, scalding him and taking all the hair and skin off his chest. He was taken to the hospital in Mount Morgan. Another engine driver from Rocky was Bill Jensen. The truck used for carting the stone-fill for the weir was a Chev 6, which the Commission had bought from Les Widt. Port Smith and I made and installed the body and tip on it. Sam Cleary and Arthur Zinger – a Hindu from India – picked up and carted the stone-fill. A chap by the name of Tucker used to come out from Rockhampton and take photos. He was one of the owners of a drapery store 'Tucker & Tucker' in Rockhampton.

During this time a surveyor and his wife and daughter arrived with a letter from Brisbane which he presented to Parry. (He had a funny name which I think was Mr Drescher). The letter requested that Parry release me from my work to help with the surveying of a route for the pipeline from the pump station opposite Gyranda Homestead, through to Cracow. I objected to his saying that I did not know the country well enough. While this was under discussion, Fred Horn rode up and I said 'Here's your man' as Fred knew the country well. It took us three days to survey the route and the surveyor's daughter followed us all the way – on foot. The first water over the weir was the flood of 1934.

**Bullock Team for Haulage of Timber**
Orange Ck Weir Sawmill -1932 (Source: Public Domain)

: 1909 - 1954) / Wed 2 May 1928 / Page 5 / SAWMI

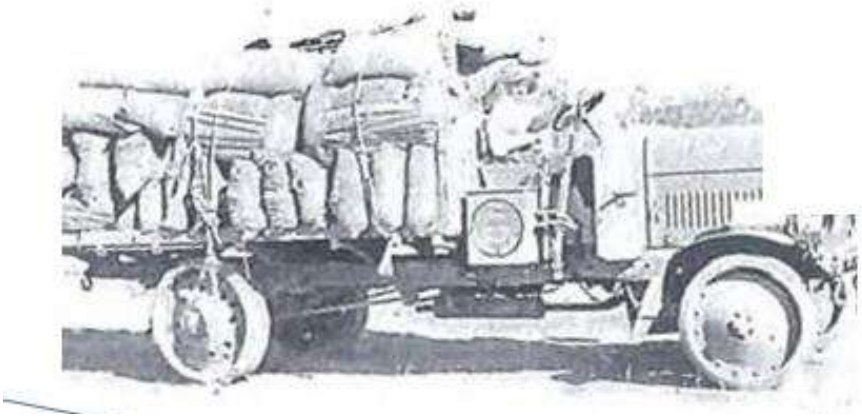
**SAWMILL DESTROYED.**

ROCKHAMPTON, May 1.

The scene at the Government sawmill in the Dawson Valley is one of complete destruction. The whole of the buildings collapsed. The machinery was dashed about and damaged by the rushing torrent.

The water brought down many dead cattle. One drowned beast was left in the kitchen of Anderson's shop. Another lodged in the station-master's house. Dead cattle have been left suspended in trees 20 to 30 feet above the ground.

**Destruction at the IWSC Sawmill**
Theodore – 1928 (Source: Trove)



**'The Leyland' IWSC Motor Lorry used on the Rannes - Castle Ck Run**
(Source: IWSC Annual Report 1922/23)

Used by Fred Baxter and Eric Waller to transport the Vertical Breaking Saw and the 'Steam Donkey' from Theodore to establish the Sawmill on the river bank at Orange Creek Weir

# 1933 - 'WATER' REFLECTS

## ON RE-ASSESSMENT OF THE DAWSON V IRRIG SCHEME

(The 1933 Report of the Land Administration Board)

https://www.archivessearch.qld.gov.au/items/ITM276210

(State Archives: Ref # ITM 276210)

**Report and recommendations of the Land Administration Board (acting as a Royal Commission), on the Dawson Valley Irrigation Settlement, together with appendices and Minutes of Evidence.**

**Recommendations from the above Report are recognised as significant for their informing of the course which development of the Scheme was to take from this point forward. The following are a few statements taken selectively from the Report:-**

*The Dawson Valley irrigation project was a bold conception*

*The capital costs of the Dawson Valley Irrigation Scheme have been enormous for the small settlement results obtained. It must be regarded as the most expensive settlement project in Queensland's history.*

*In view of the immensity of the scheme that was projected and of the fact that much of the expenditure may be claimed to relate to the whole scheme, it is perhaps unfair to charge all the expenditure to date against the existing small settlement at Theodore.*

*Yet the existing settlement is the only tangible result which has accrued from the expenditure. Including the expenditure on railway construction the total cost of the scheme to date has been £1,053,057. One hundred and twenty-four (124) new settlers have been established on the area (including Plainby) which equals an expenditure of £8,492 per settler.*

*Queensland has never before had to pay such a huge and uneconomic cost for its land settlement.*

*In land settlement schemes certain elementary economics should be observed. All new settlement involves the expenditure of public funds, whether in the construction of railways or roads, or in the making of advances to settlers to help them in developing their holdings. Before expenditure is incurred it should first be established beyond reasonable doubt that, directly or indirectly, whether by increased production or by the taxable capacity of the new community, the scheme will, within a reasonable time, pay its own working costs, interest on the loan capital invested, and a sinking fund sufficient to provide for the repayment of the loan when it falls due.*

*In formulating the Dawson Valley Irrigation Scheme these preliminary requirements (ie the above) were not observed. Perhaps the accumulated knowledge of all Government Departments and particularly, the Lands and Agricultural Departments, would not have been an adequate safeguard in launching such an ambitious project.*

*In November 1926, when £367,600 had been expended by the Irrigation Commission, and £303,400 by the Railway Department in extending the railway from Baralaba to Theodore, the State Government applied to the Commonwealth Government, under the £34,000,000 agreement, for a loan of £3,370,000 to further the scheme. An investigation was duly made by the Development and Migration Commission.*

*On May 15, 1928, that Commission reported to the Commonwealth Government that it was of the opinion that until the economics of irrigation practice in the Dawson Valley area had been thoroughly explored, it was necessary for the Commission to defer decision with regard to the scheme as submitted by the Premier of Queensland.*

*The State Government decided not to accept the offer of £100,000 on the terms mentioned and the settlement of the area proceeded in accordance with the plans of the Irrigation Commission. (The above offer was made to Queensland by the Commonwealth following a 1926 request from Queensland Premier McCormack to Prime Minister Bruce for funding assistance for the scheme)*

*Amongst the original settlers there were comparatively few experienced Queenslanders. A large proportion of the settlers came from England and the Southern States of Australia. Notwithstanding some farming knowledge possessed by many of them, they were nevertheless handicapped by their lack of knowledge of local conditions and had much experience to gain. Some few of them also never intended to be farmers, having been attracted to the settlement by prospects of the fat lamb trade and like avenues, which the Commissioner's booklet led them to believe could be followed.*

*The truth of the matter is that the whole Dawson Valley irrigation project, as an economic proposition to the State, was about fifty years ahead of its time.*

*Intense cultivation, with the aid of irrigation, along the banks of our inland river systems, will doubtless come in time, but before even modified schemes in this direction can be economically sound, the population and the markets will need to be such as to absorb, at prices profitable to the producers, the products already grown on our fertile coastal belt with its assured rainfall. Some hundreds of thousands of acres of good cultivable laud, much of it alienated from the Crown, is lying unused throughout the rainfall belt, and future schemes for increasing production should aim at the use of this land instead of more romantic projects for irrigating and cultivating the semi-arid lands of the interior.*

*We recommend that all further consideration of the construction of the Nathan Dam be definitely postponed for a period of at least twenty-five years.*

More comprehensive extracts from the 1933 Report were reported in the 1 June 1933 edition of the Central Queensland Herald (Rockhampton) and can be accessed via the following link:-

https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/70369276/6893081

FOOTNOTE: The WRRA has so far been unable to locate any tangible information relating to the Government's response to the 1933 Land Administration Board Report, other than its passage of the *Irrigation Acts Amendment Act of 1933*. This Act formally proclaimed the Boundary of the Dawson Valley Irrigation Area and also engaged the Theodore Land Agent in administration of lands within, enabling land to be taken up under provisions of both the 'Irrigation' and 'Lands' Acts (Source: State Archives)

# 1933 – 'WATER' REFLECTS

## ON FORMAL PROCLAMATION OF THE DAWSON VALLEY IRRIG AREA

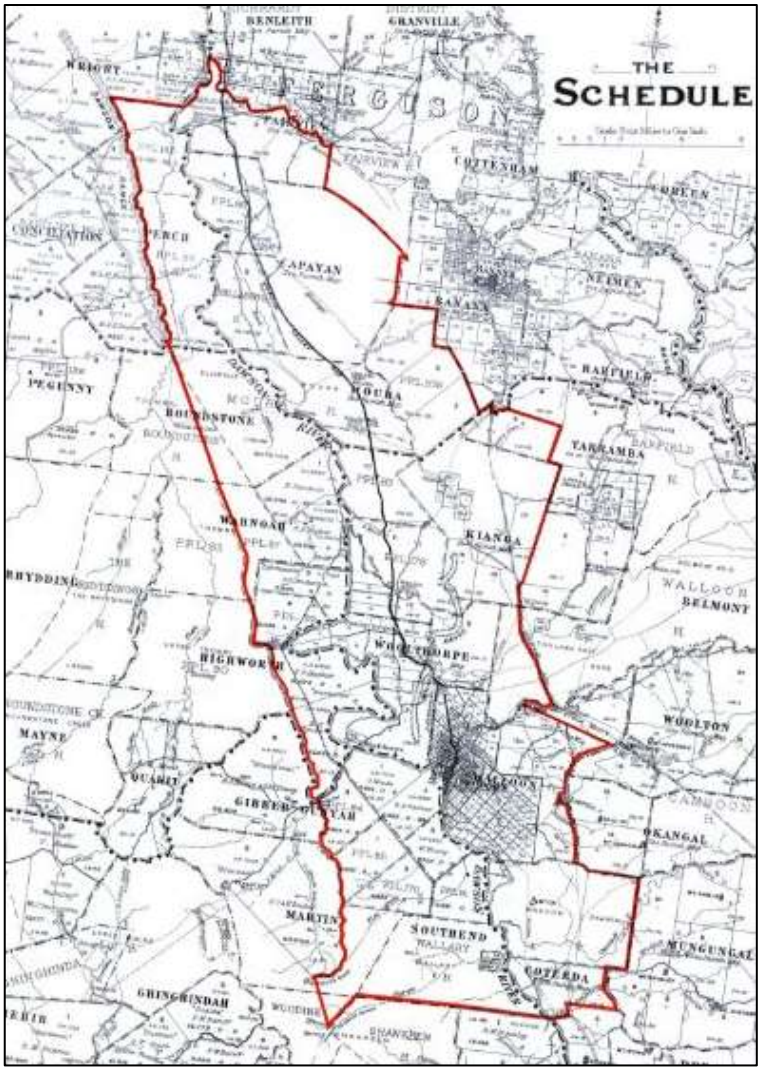
*(The Irrigation Acts Amendment Act of 1933)*

https://classic.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/qld/hist_act/iaaao193324gvn21341/

**An Act to Make Better Provision for the Settlement and Development of the Lands within the Dawson Valley Irrigation Area; to Amend "The Irrigation Acts, 1922 to 1931," and other Acts; and for other purposes.**

[ASSENTED TO 9TH DECEMBER, 1933.]

**On 9/12/1933**, the *Irrig Act Amendment Act* formally proclaimed the Boundary of the Dawson Valley Irrigation Area and also engaged the Theodore Land Agent in administration of land within, enabling land to be taken up under provisions of both the 'Irrigation' & 'Lands' Acts. (Source: State Archives)




**Boundary of the Dawson Valley Irrigation Area** (as formally proclaimed in 1933)

# 1934 – 'WATER' REFLECTS

## ON THE IWSC LEASING OUT ITS HOTEL



### LIQUOR.

**An Act to Enable the Commissioner of Irrigation and Water Supply to Lease the Hotel known as "The Hotel Theodore," to Provide that the Lessee thereof shall be a Licensed Victualler under the Liquor Acts, and for other purposes.**

25 Geo. V. No. 7. THE HOTEL THEODORE LEASE ENABLING ACT OF 1934.

[ASSENTED TO 11TH OCTOBER, 1934.]

Preamble.

WHEREAS pursuant to paragraph (i.) of subclause five of clause thirteen of Part I. of the Schedule to the Water Acts it is, *inter alia*, enacted that wherever in the opinion of the Commissioner of Irrigation and Water Supply it is expedient for the execution of such Act, and facilitating the execution and management of the works and business of the Commissioner or the successful working of an undertaking, he may construct, establish, acquire, purchase, contract for the use of, work, maintain, control, regulate, and manage any hotel, accommodation-house, or other premises for the use and accommodation of the public, and carry on therein the business of the sale and supply of spirituous and fermented liquors:

And whereas pursuant to *"*The Irrigation and Water Supply Acts Amendment Act of* 1931" the Land Administration Board was constituted as the Commissioner of Irrigation and Water Supply for the purposes of the Irrigation Acts and the Water Acts:

And whereas pursuant to the above powers the Commissioner of Irrigation and Water Supply has established, managed, and conducted an Hotel known as "The Hotel Theodore" and situated within the Dawson Valley Irrigation Area:

And whereas it is desirable that the Commissioner of Irrigation and Water Supply be empowered to lease the said Hotel, to provide that the lessee thereof shall be a licensed victualler under the Liquor Acts, and to provide for certain other matters—

Be it therefore enacted by the King's Most Excellent Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Legislative Assembly of Queensland in Parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:—

Short title and construction.

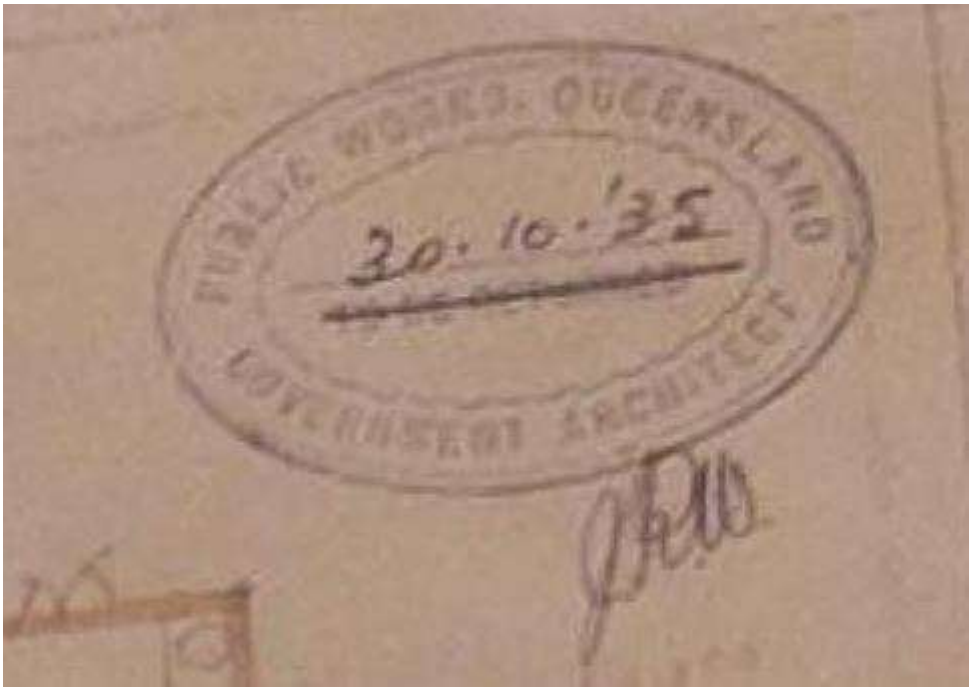
1. This Act may be cited as "*The Hotel Theodore Lease Enabling Act of* 1934."

* 22 Geo. V. No. 44, *supra*, page 14029.

# 1935 – 'WATER' REFLECTS

## ON THE GOVT ARCHITECT DESIGNING THE HOTEL'S 1ST 'ALTERATIONS'

(Source: State Archives Ref# PR 809674)



# 1935 – 'WATER' REFLECTS

## ON THE PASSING OF TRAIL-BLAZER COMMISSIONER PARTRIDGE

Of the eight Irrigation Commissioners to have served the state, Archibald Frederick Partridge was possibly the youngest of the eight to pass at the relatively young age of 56 on 2 April 1935.

(Source: State News in Brief [The Queenslander] April 1935)

AF Partridge is buried in the Mt Thompson Memorial Gardens, Holland Park West, Brisbane.

(The eight Irrigation Commissioners who served the state were Archibald Partridge; John Lang; Dr William Nimmo; Fred Haigh MBE; Frank Learmonth; Don Beattie; Tom Fenwick; and Peter Bevin. Peter is the last surviving of the eight, being long-retired; a proud elder of our IWS/WR community and much valued WRRA member).

Brisbane, collapsed and died while carrying out his duties at the Cannon Hill saleyards last week.

**Mr. A. F. Partridge Dead.**—The death of Mr. A. F. Partridge occurred in Brisbane last week at the age of 56 years. Deceased was formerly Irrigation Commissioner in Queensland, and at one time was appointed by the Government to control the Dawson River undertaking.

**145,000 for Bank Assets.**—Subject to confirmation by the shareholders, the committee of inspection and advice

# 1940 – 'WATER' REFLECTS

## ON THE UPKEEP OF SEAMLESS DEPARTMENTAL & MUNICIPAL ASSETS

The Courier-Mail (Brisbane, Qld. : 1933 - 1954) / Sat 17 Feb 1940 / Page 16 / Advertising

**DEPARTMENT OF IRRIGATION, WATER SUPPLY, AND SEWERAGE, QUEENSLAND.**

TENDERS addressed to the Secretary, Executive Buildings, George Street, Brisbane, are invited for the following. Specifications may be inspected or purchased for £1/1/ each at the Office of the Commissioner, Brisbane.

Tender 942: Painting Externally of Seven Houses, Office, and Water Tower at Theodore. Closing noon 18th March, 1940. Specifications may also be inspected at the Offices of the Irrigation Department, Theodore, and Clerk of Petty Sessions, Rockhampton.

# 1948 to 1950 – 'WATER' REFLECTS

## ON 'IWSC POSITIONS VACANT, THEODORE'

hampton, Qld. : 1878 - 1954) / Sat 31 Dec 1949 / Page 7 / Ad

IRRIGATION AND WATER SUPPLY COMMISSION
THEODORE
CARPENTERS, BRIDGE CARPENTERS, PAINTER.

THE above tradesmen are required for construction work in the Theodore area. Pay at award rates and temporary accommodation available. Applications should be addressed to District Engineer, Theodore or Rockhampton.

DISTRICT ENGINEER,
Theodore.

APPOINTMENT.
STATE PUBLIC SERVICE.
QUEENSLAND.

Mechanical Engineer
DIVISION III.
THEODORE.

APPLICATIONS are invited from qualified persons for appointment as MECHANICAL ENGINEER, DIVISION III., Department of Irrigation and Water Supply, Theodore with Salary-Range Minimum £690 per annum, Maximum £800 per annum, inclusive of present basic wage adjustments and subject to any further such adjustments. Salary in excess of the minimum may be paid according to

ckhampton, Qld. : 1878 - 1954) / Wed 16 Nov 1949 /

IRRIGATION AND WATER SUPPLY COMMISSION
THEODORE
PAINTER

A QUALIFIED painter is required for painting the Commission's buildings at Theodore. Pay at award rates and temporary accommodation available. Applications should be made to District Engineer, Rockhampton or Theodore.

W. E. BROMFIELD.

APPOINTMENT.
STATE PUBLIC SERVICE.
QUEENSLAND.

SHIFT ENGINEER,
DEPARTMENT OF IRRIGATION AND WATER SUPPLY, THEODORE.

Applications are invited from qualified persons for appointment as SHIFT ENGINEER, Department of Irrigation and Water Supply, Theodore, with salary-range, minimum £703 per annum, maximum £803 per annum, inclusive of present basic wage adjustments and subject to any further such adjustments. Salary in excess of the minimum may be paid according to the qualifications and experience of the appointee.

Qualifications: First Class Internal Combustion Certificate, issued by the Department of Machinery and Scaffolding, Queensland; experience in the operation of diesel driven generating or pumping equipment; ability to take charge of a shift at the Theodore Pumping Station and Power House, and to carry out general maintenance and repair work as may be directed by the Mechanical Engineer.

IRRIGATION AND WATER SUPPLY COMMISSION
ENGINE DRIVERS

ENGINE Drivers holding first-class steam and second-class diesel tickets are required for the Theodore Power House. Permanent work and accommodation available. Pay at award rates. Applications should be made in writing or in person to District Engineer, Theodore or Rockhampton.

W. E. BROMFIELD,
District Engineer.

APPOINTMENTS
State Public Service
QUEENSLAND.

DRAFTSMAN
(CIVIL ENGINEERING), (MECHANICAL ENGINEERING) & (SURVEYING).

Applications are invited from qualified persons for appointment as DRAFTSMEN, DEPARTMENT OF IRRIGATION AND WATER SUPPLY, with Salary-Range Minimum £881 per annum, Maximum £1036 per annum, inclusive of present basic wage adjustments, and subject to any further such adjustments, and to any future general variation in Public Service salary rates. Salary in excess of the minimum may be paid according to the qualifications and experience of the appointee.

QUALIFICATIONS

CIVIL ENGINEERING — BRISBANE AND THEODORE:—Approved training in engineering drafting, preferably in hydraulic and water supply work; ability to prepare designs, drawings, plans, graphs, etc.; ability to take

Bulletin (Qld. : 1907 - 1954) / Thu 2 Mar 1950

hampton.

W. E. BROMFIELD,
District Engineer,
THEODORE.

BOY: Wanted a Boy. Apply Duffie City Pharmacy.

COST CLERK – TIMEKEE

IRRIGATION AND WATER SUP COMMISSION, THEODORE

COST CLERK
TIMEKEEPER

A Cost Clerk and a Timekeeper required for the Theodore Dist Office in connection with construc work in the Theodore area.

Applications should addresse District Engineer, Theodore, or R hampton.

W. E. BROMFIELD,
District Engineer,
THEODORE.

CARPENTERS (2) for dismantling

(Rockhampton, Qld. : 1878 - 1954) / Sat 9 Sep 1950 / Page 6

WATER INSPECTOR
WATER OFFICERS (4)
DEPARTMENT OF IRRIGATION AND WATER SUPPLY

APPLICATIONS are invited from qualified persons for appointment to the following positions in the Department of Irrigation and Water Supply.

WATER INSPECTOR, with Salary range minimum £618 per annum, Maximum £718 per annum. The appointee may be required to serve in any part of the State.

WATER OFFICERS (4), with Salary-range minimum £543 per annum, maximum £643 per annum. The vacancies are at present at Theodore (2) and Clare (2).

The minimum and maximum

khampton, Qld. : 1878 - 1954) / Sat 31 Dec 1949 / Page 7 /

IRRIGATION AND WATER SUPPLY COMMISSION
THEODORE
PLANT OPERATORS

OPERATORS are required for TD18, D4 tractors and Jacques 3-8 yd excavator for use in the Theodore area.

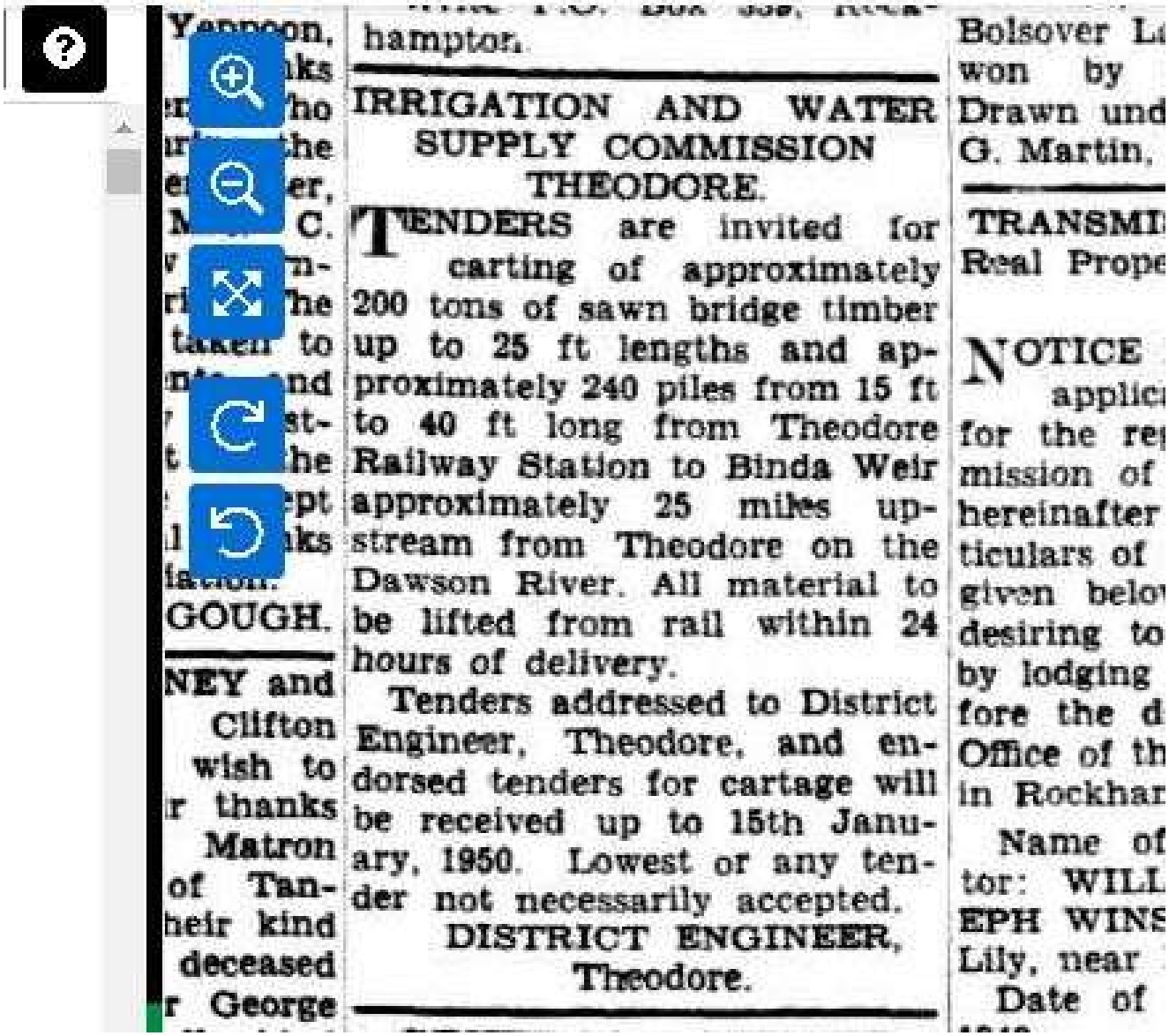
Pay at award rates and temporary accommodation available. Applications should be addressed to District Engineer Theodore or Rockhampton.

DISTRICT ENGINEER,
Theodore.

# 1949 – 'WATER' REFLECTS

## ON TENDERS CALLED FOR CARTING TIMBER TO BINDA WEIR SITE

Morning Bulletin (Rockhampton, Qld. : 1878 - 1954) / Sat 24 Dec 1949 /



Yeppoon, ...ks ...ho ...he ...er, ...C. ...n- ...he taken to ...nd ...st- ...he ...pt ...ks ...GOUGH.

...NEY and Clifton wish to ...r thanks Matron of Tan- ...heir kind deceased ...r George

...hampton.

**IRRIGATION AND WATER SUPPLY COMMISSION THEODORE.**

TENDERS are invited for carting of approximately 200 tons of sawn bridge timber up to 25 ft lengths and approximately 240 piles from 15 ft to 40 ft long from Theodore Railway Station to Binda Weir approximately 25 miles upstream from Theodore on the Dawson River. All material to be lifted from rail within 24 hours of delivery.

Tenders addressed to District Engineer, Theodore, and endorsed tenders for cartage will be received up to 15th January, 1950. Lowest or any tender not necessarily accepted.

DISTRICT ENGINEER, Theodore.

Bolsover L... won by ... Drawn und... G. Martin,

TRANSMI... Real Prope...

NOTICE ... applic... for the re... mission of ... hereinafter ... ticulars of ... given belo... desiring to ... by lodging ... fore the d... Office of th... in Rockhar...

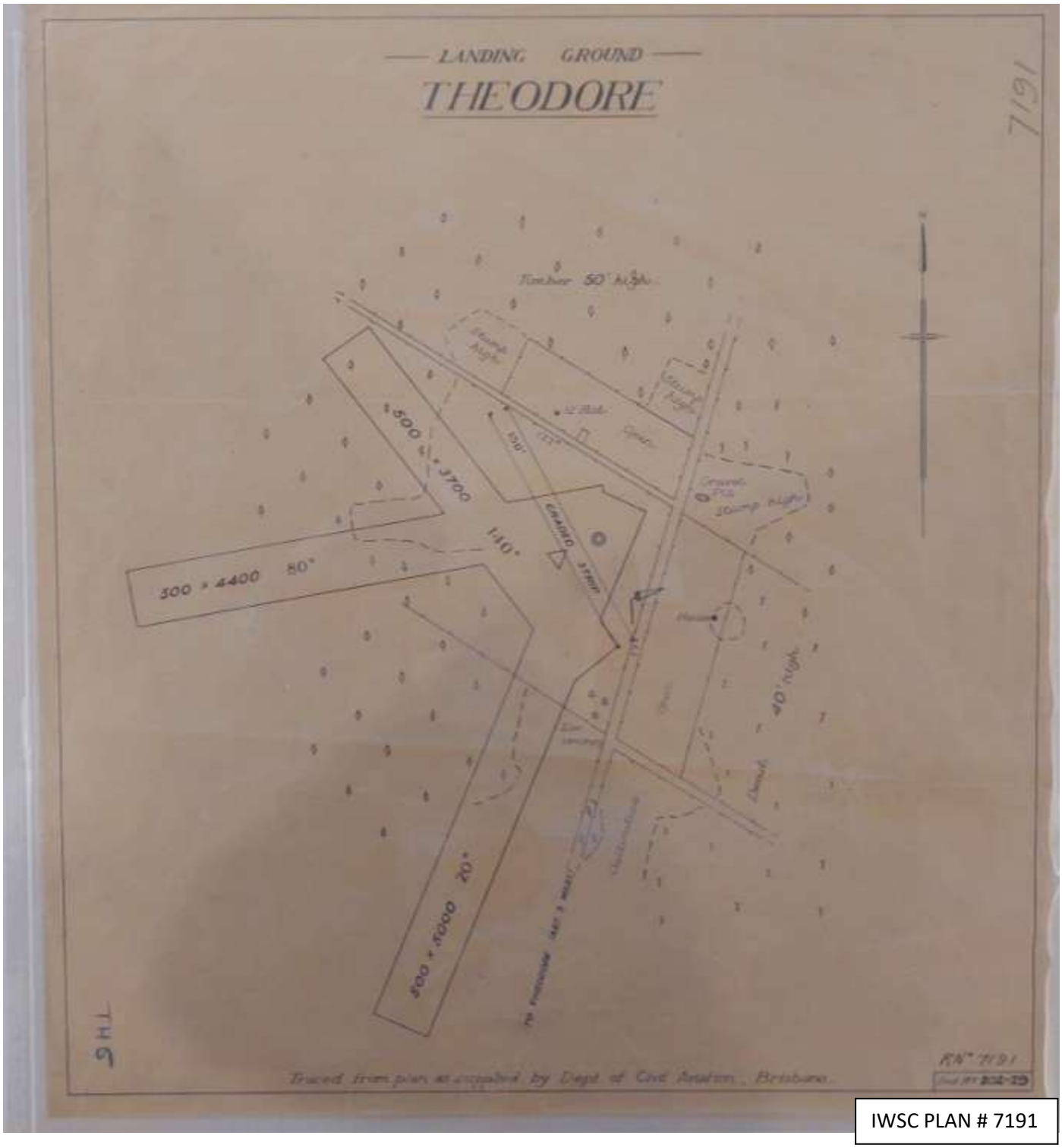
Name of ... tor: WILL... EPH WINS... Lily, near ...

Date of ...

# 1949 – 'WATER' REFLECTS

on 'MUNICIPAL BUSINESS' (IWSC DOCUMENTING OF 'LANDING GROUND' LAYOUT)

(Source: State Archives Ref # ITM 809675)

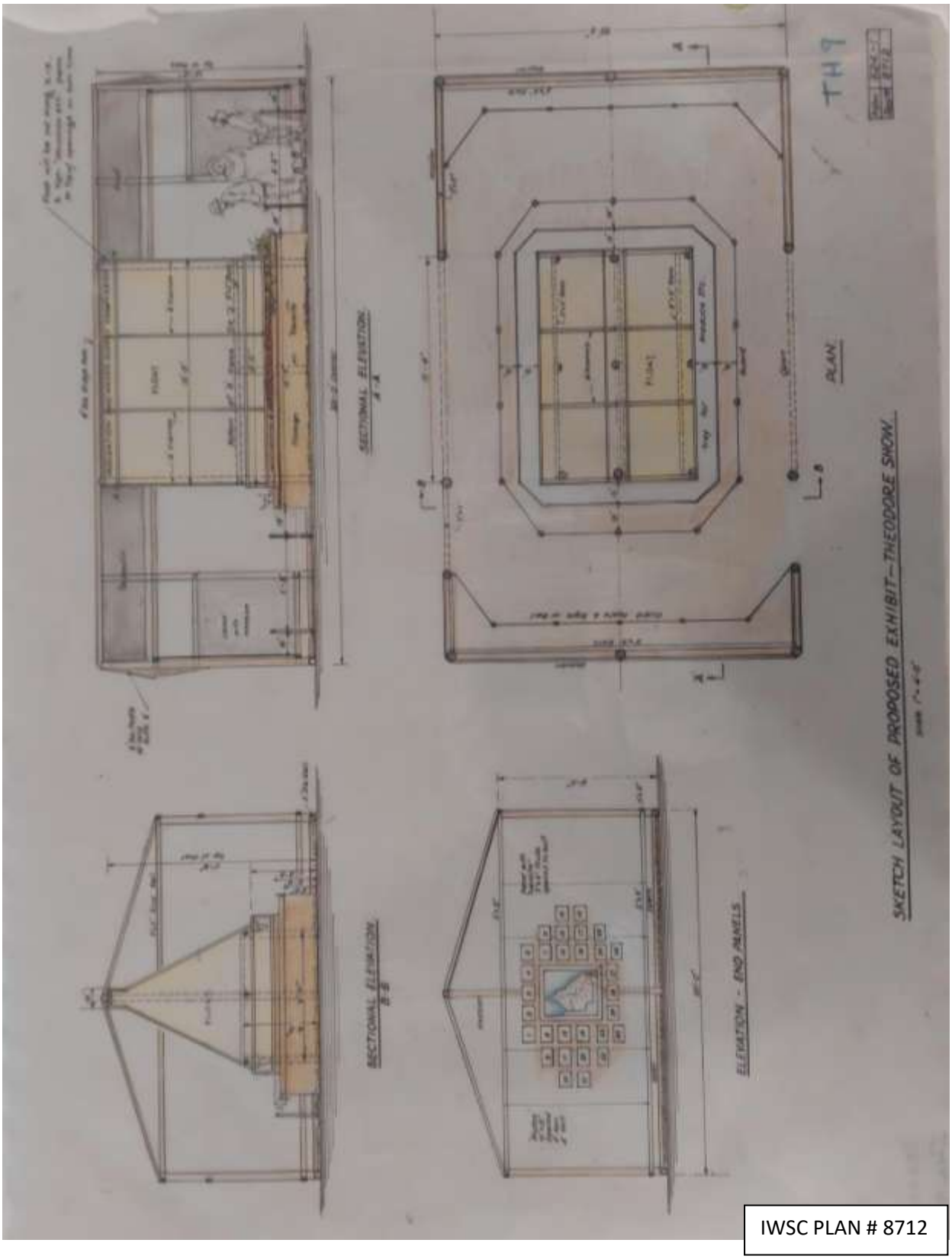



IWSC PLAN # 7191

# 1949 – 'WATER' REFLECTS

## on 'MUNICIPAL BUSINESS' (IWSC GAZEBO EXHIBIT – THEODORE'S FIRST SHOW)

(Source: State Archives Ref# ITM 809679)

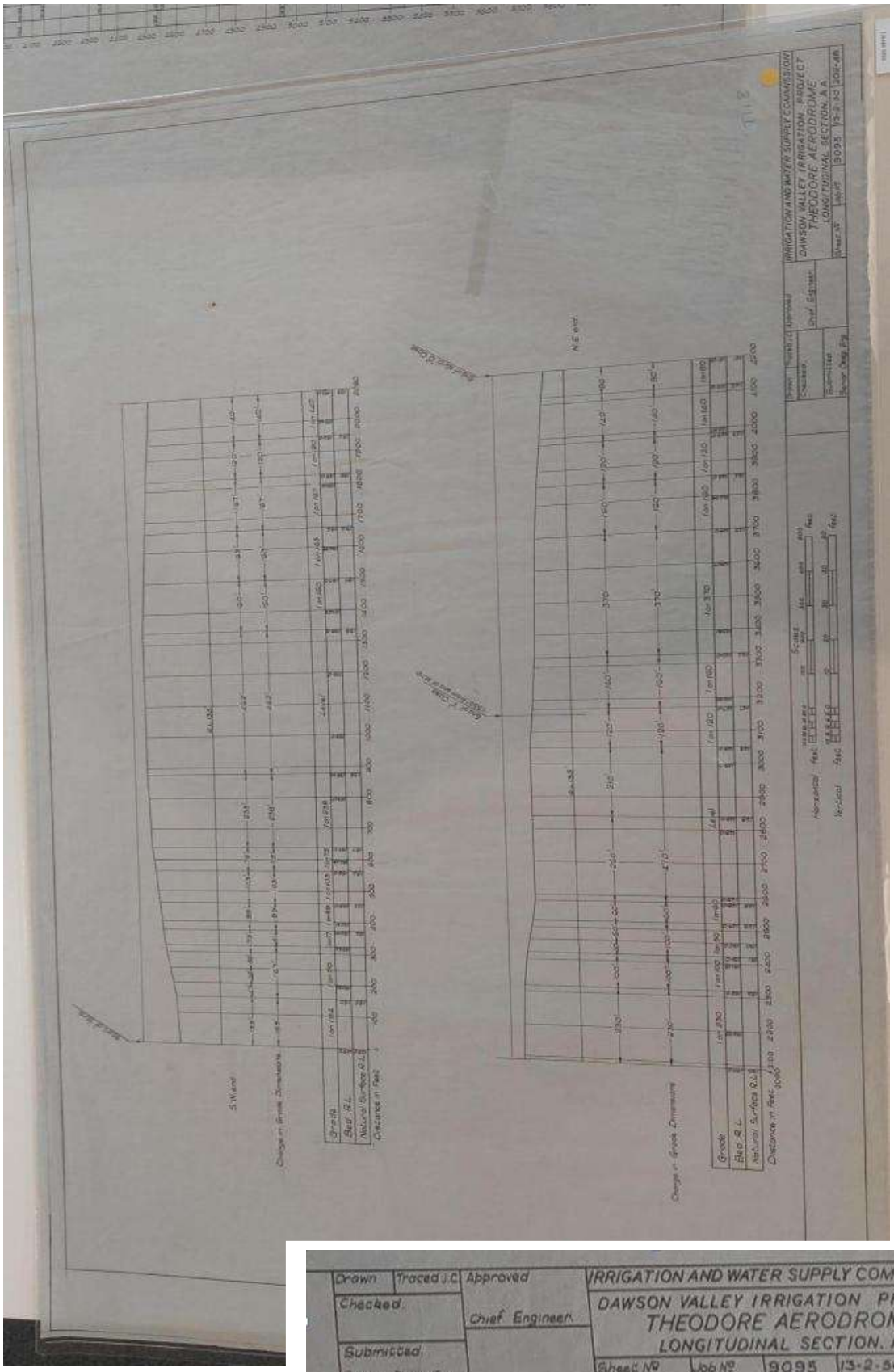



IWSC PLAN # 8712

# 1950 – 'WATER' REFLECTS

on 'MUNICIPAL BUSINESS' (IWSC DOCUMENTING OF 'LANDING GROUND' AIRSTRIPS)

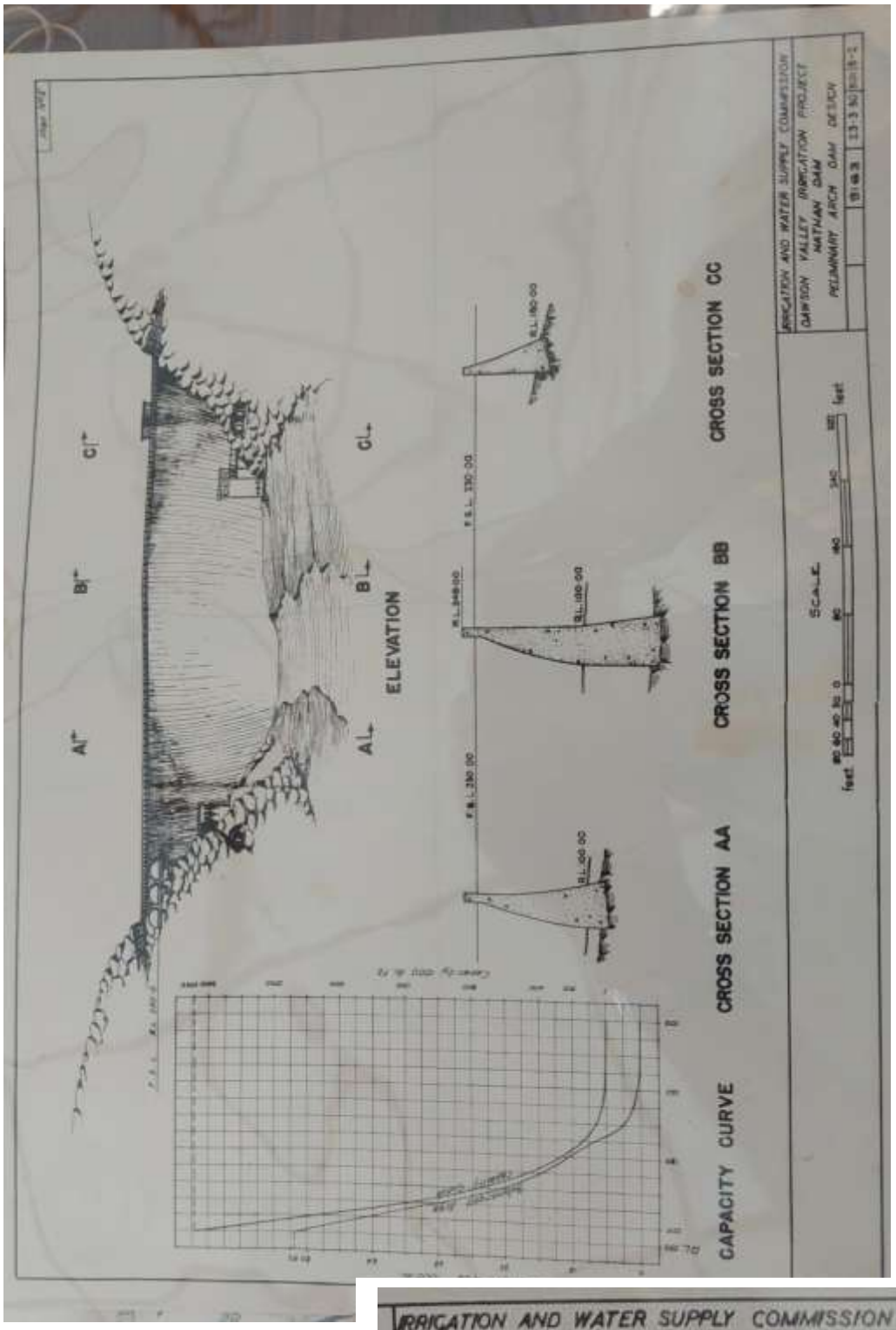
(Source: State Archives Ref# PR 809678)



# 1950 – 'WATER' REFLECTS

## on 'WATER BUSINESS' (IWSC DESIGN OF NATHAN DAM)

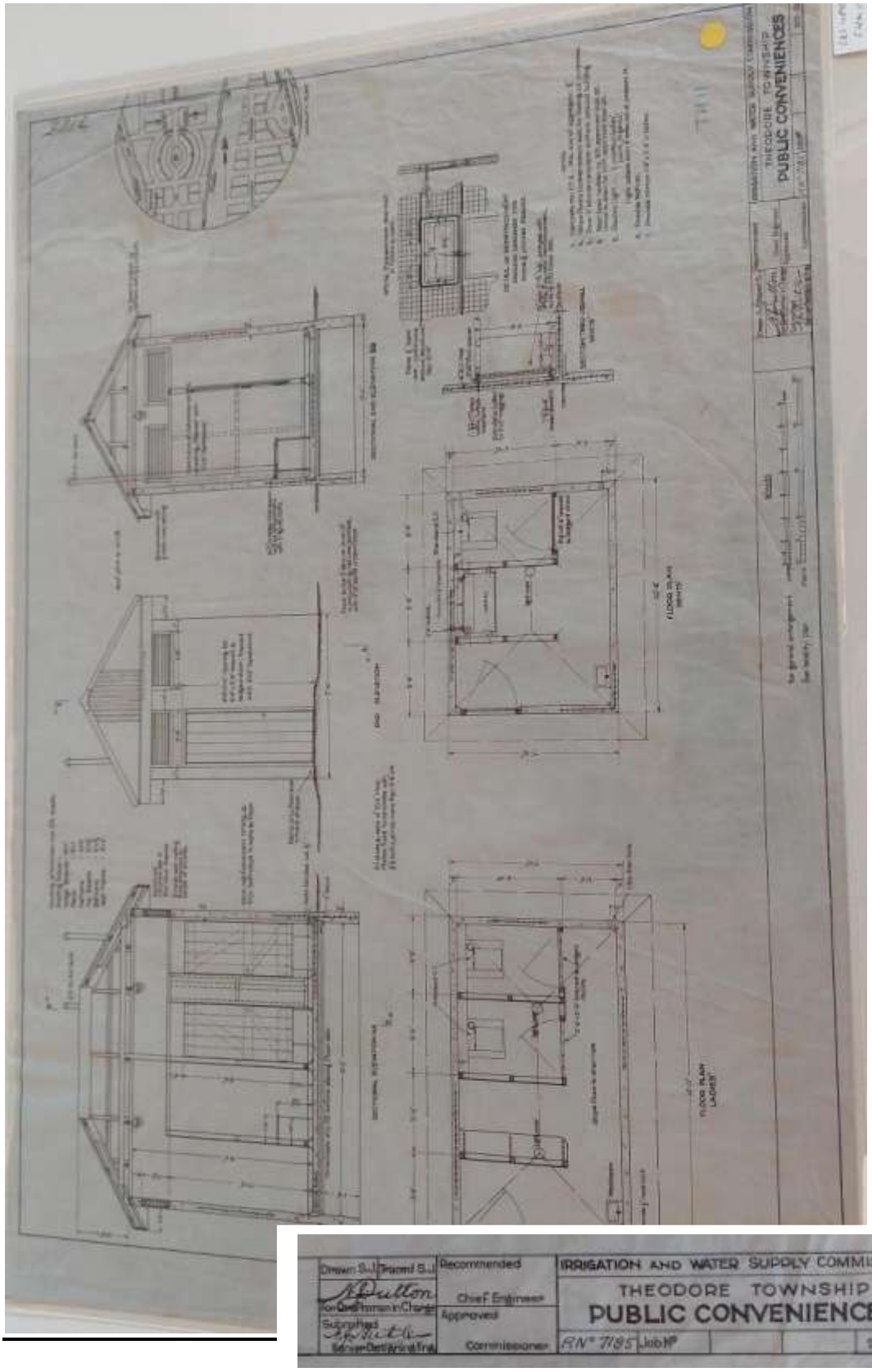
(Source: Dawson Folk Museum, Theodore)



# Early 1950's – 'WATER' REFLECTS

## on 'MUNICIPAL BUSINESS' (IWSC DESIGN OF PUBLIC CONVENIENCES)

(Source: State Archives [Ref PR 809682])



# Early 1950's – 'WATER' REFLECTS

## on 'MUNICIPAL BUSINESS' (IWSC PUBLIC ENGAGEMENTS)

(Source: https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/56942227)

Morning Bulletin (Rockhampton, Qld. : 1878 - 1954) / Sat 6 May 1950 / Page 4 /

# Official Opening Theodore Show

THEODORE, May 5. — The Theodore Show was officially opened today by the Commissioner for Irrigation (Mr Nimmo) who said he could see great prospects for the district. What irrigation had done in the south also could be done at Theodore and he intended to keep things moving.

The president of the Theodore Agricultural and Pastoral Society (Mr D. Hamilton) introduced Mr Nimmo. He thanked the women of Theodore for their response to the appeal to assist in catering at the show. He said the society had been unable to do all the things promised last year owing to scarcity of material and Labour, but had made a few improvements and would continue to do so.

Mr J. E. Freeman also spoke and thanked Mr Nimmo for attending

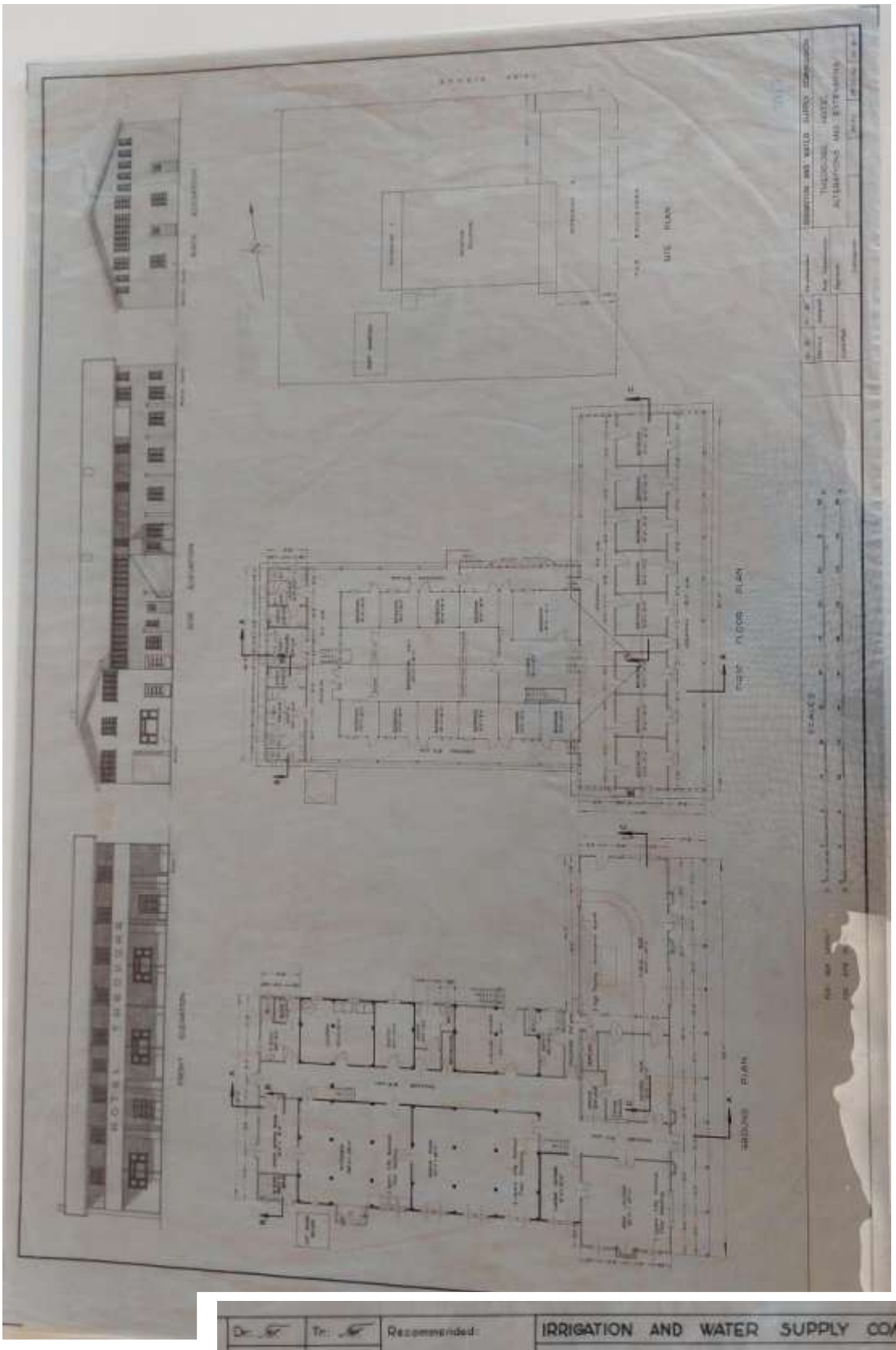
Mr W. A. G. Holmes then spoke of the cooperative or community hotel, the only one of its kind in Queensland. Mr Nimmo had promised great improvements and intended to bring this hotel right up to standard and, in fact, make it the model hotel in Queensland. Shares could now be bought by anyone eligible to hold them.

**Dr William Nimmo**
Irrigation and Water Supply Commissioner
(1949 – 1955)

# Early 1950's - 'WATER' REFLECTS

## on 'MUNICIPAL BUSINESS' (IWSC DOCUMENTING OF HOTEL RENOVATIONS)

(Source: State Archives [Ref PR 809672])

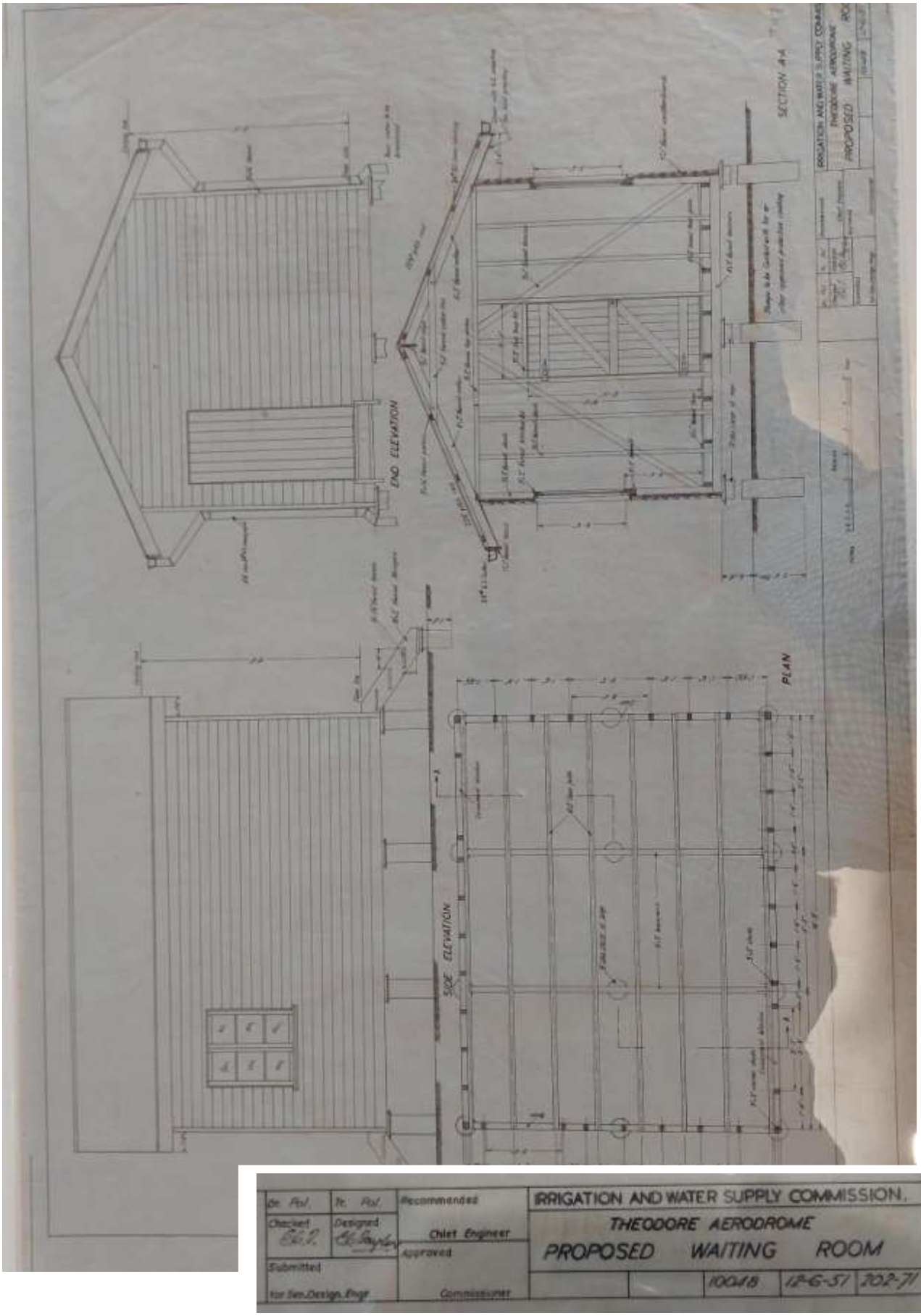


| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Dr: | Tr: | Recommended: | IRRIGATION AND WATER SUPPLY COMMISSION |
| Checked: | Designed: | Asst. Commissioner | THEODORE HOTEL. ALTERATIONS AND EXTENSIONS. |
| Submitted: | | Approved: Commissioner | 859.2 24.10.50 131-6-1 |

# Early 1950's - 'WATER' REFLECTS

on 'MUNICIPAL BUSINESS' (IWSC DESIGN OF WAITING ROOM AT 'LANDING GROUND')

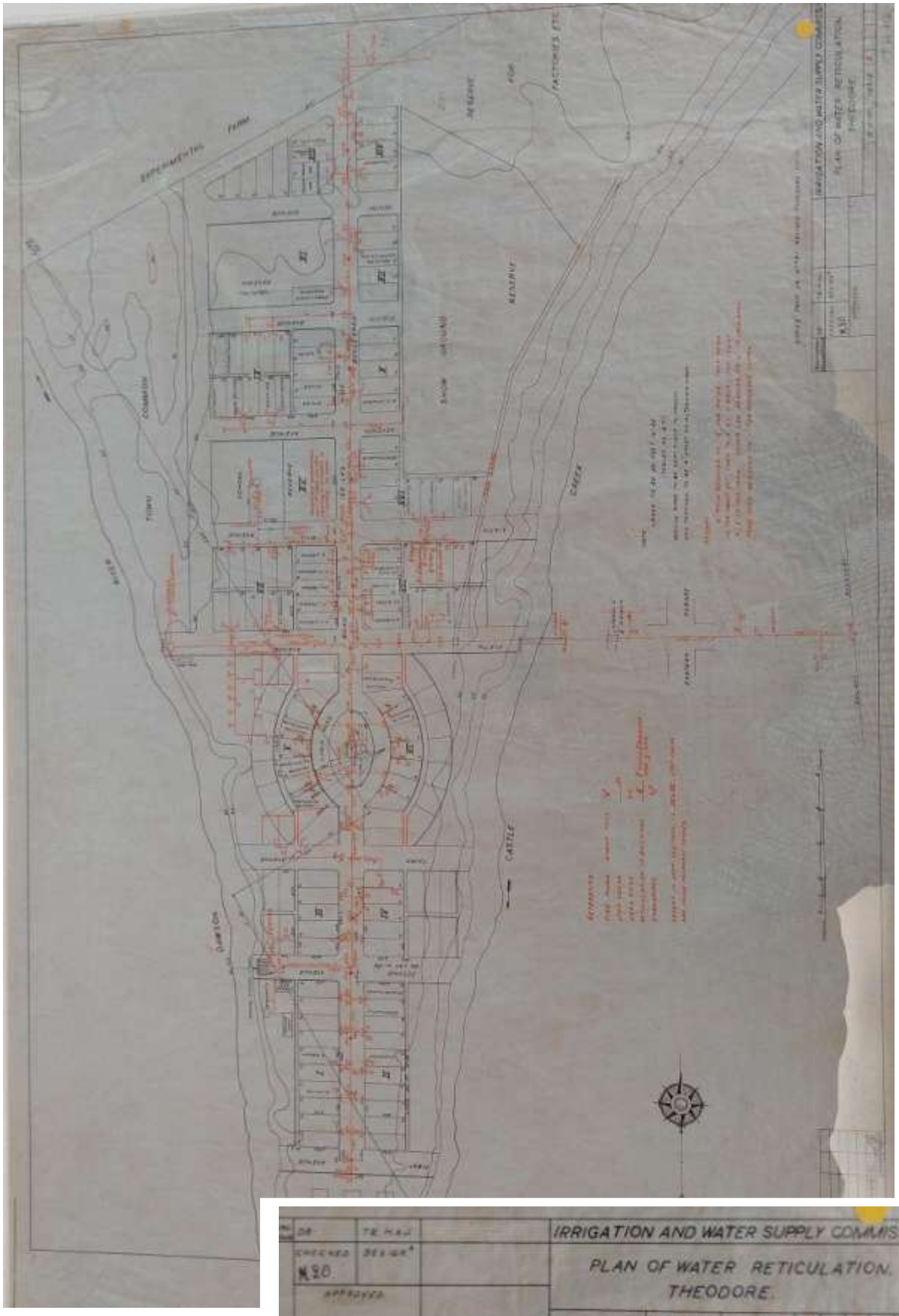
(Source: State Archives [Ref PR 809676])



# Early 1950's - 'WATER' REFLECTS

on 'MUNICIPAL BUSINESS' (IWSC DOCUMENTING OF TOWN WATER RETICULATION)

(Source: State Archives [Ref PR 809680])



# Early 1950's – 'WATER' REFLECTS

## on 'WATER-JOEY' DON HALL - *HIS LIKELY BSA & SIDECAR OUTFIT*

Recollections from childhoods spent in Theodore in the 1950's suggest that a 'water-joey' named Don Hall used to get around in a BSA and Sidecar Outfit, complete with shovels and other tools-of-trade with which Water Officers (affectionately called 'water-joeys') used to adjust channel-checks for water distribution. No photos have been found at State Archives of this sidecar outfit and despite requests to WRRA membership for any such photos which could be tucked away in bottom drawers somewhere, none have yet come to light.

So to give some idea of what such an outfit could have looked like, our research has come across the 1936 advertisement by the Birmingham Small Arms company (below) of their range of motorcycles suitable for sidecar work at the time. Three of the models are further described as being suitable for performing 'Heavy Sidecar Duty', so a conclusion could be drawn that Don's machine – because of the duty it would have been required to perform on the channels - could well have been one of these three. The presence of a 1936 machine in the 1950's is based on an assumption that unlike motorcycle models in today's day-and-age, these models would likely have been around for a good few years following this advertisement (particularly given WW2) and this fits comfortably with the timeframe that has been recalled.

(Source: Public Domain Website)

# 1953 – 'WATER' REFLECTS

## ON CONSTRUCTION OF IWSC SINGLE STAFF BARRACKS

The Courier-Mail (Brisbane, Qld. : 1933 - 1954) / Sat 9 May 1953 / Page 13 / Advertising

IRRIGATION AND WATER SUPPLY COMMISSION, QUEENSLAND.

TENDERS—SINGLE STAFF BARRACKS AND CONVENIENCES—THEODORE.

Tenders, closing at Noon on Wednesday, 10th July, 1953, are invited for the Supply and Erection of Single Staff Barracks and Conveniences at Theodore.

NOTE:—All corrugated iron roof sheeting can be supplied by the Commission.

Tenders, suitably endorsed, should be addressed to the Secretary, Irrigation and Water Supply Commission, corner William and Margaret Streets, Brisbane.

Plans and Specifications may be inspected or obtained for £1 1/ each at the office of the Commissioner, Brisbane, and at the offices of the District Engineers, Theodore and Rockhampton.

The lowest or any tender not necessarily accepted.

D. F. ERICKSON,
Secretary to the Commissioner of Irrigation and Water Supply.
Cnr. William and Margaret Streets, Brisbane. 8th May, 1953.

# 1953 – 'WATER' REFLECTS

## ON CROSSING THE DAWSON AND OPENING UP GIBBER GUNYAH

Queensland Country Life (Qld. : 1900 - 1954) / Thu 10 Sep 1953 / Page 1 / 20 Ne

(Brisbane, Qld. : 1933 - 1954) / Sat 10 Apr 1954 / Page 11

**IRRIGATION AND WATER SUPPLY COMMISSION.**
**TENDERS.**
**CLEARING AND GRUBBING— GIBBER GUNYAH.**

Tenders closing at Noon on Wednesday 5th of May, 1954, are invited for the clearing, grubbing, and stacking of all timber and roots from some 600 acres within the Gibber Gunyah Irrigation Area, situated approximately six miles from Theodore Railway Station.

Tenders, suitably endorsed, should be addressed to the Secretary, Irrigation and Water Supply Commission, corner William and Margaret Streets, Brisbane.

Plans and specifications may be inspected or obtained for £1/1/ each at the office of the Commissioner, Brisbane, and at the offices of the District Engineers, Theodore and Rockhampton. The lowest or any tender not necessarily accepted.

Corner William and Margaret Streets, Brisbane,
April, 1954.

# 20 New Farms At Theodore

## Binda Weir Completed

WITH the completion of the 2400-acre feet Binda Weir, on the Dawson River, 20 farms are to be established at Gibber Gunyah, in the Theodore irrigation project, the Lands Minister (Mr. Foley) stated this week.

Each farm would consist of 100 acres of irrigated land, and 100 acres of dry land, said the Minister.

The total capital cost, including power extensions, pumping plant, irrigation works, drainage, flood prevention, etc., would be about £172,000.

Dairying would be the main industry on irrigated pastures, but cotton and cereals also would be grown.

The new farms will be across the river from Theodore.

The channel distribution system, establishment of power station, extension of electricity reticulation from Theodore to the new area, and road works will take 12 months to complete.

### Opposite Theodore

The charge which would be made for the water, stated a spokesman for the Irrigation and Water Supply Department, would cover operational and maintenance charges.

Asked regarding the redemption of the capital cost, the spokesman said it was Government policy throughout Australia for capital cost of such works to be carried by the State concerned.

## ON PROMOTING SOME EARLY 'WATER' MESSAGES

**WATER CONSERVATION & IRRIGATION**
**'CONSERVE PRODUCE DEVELOP'**

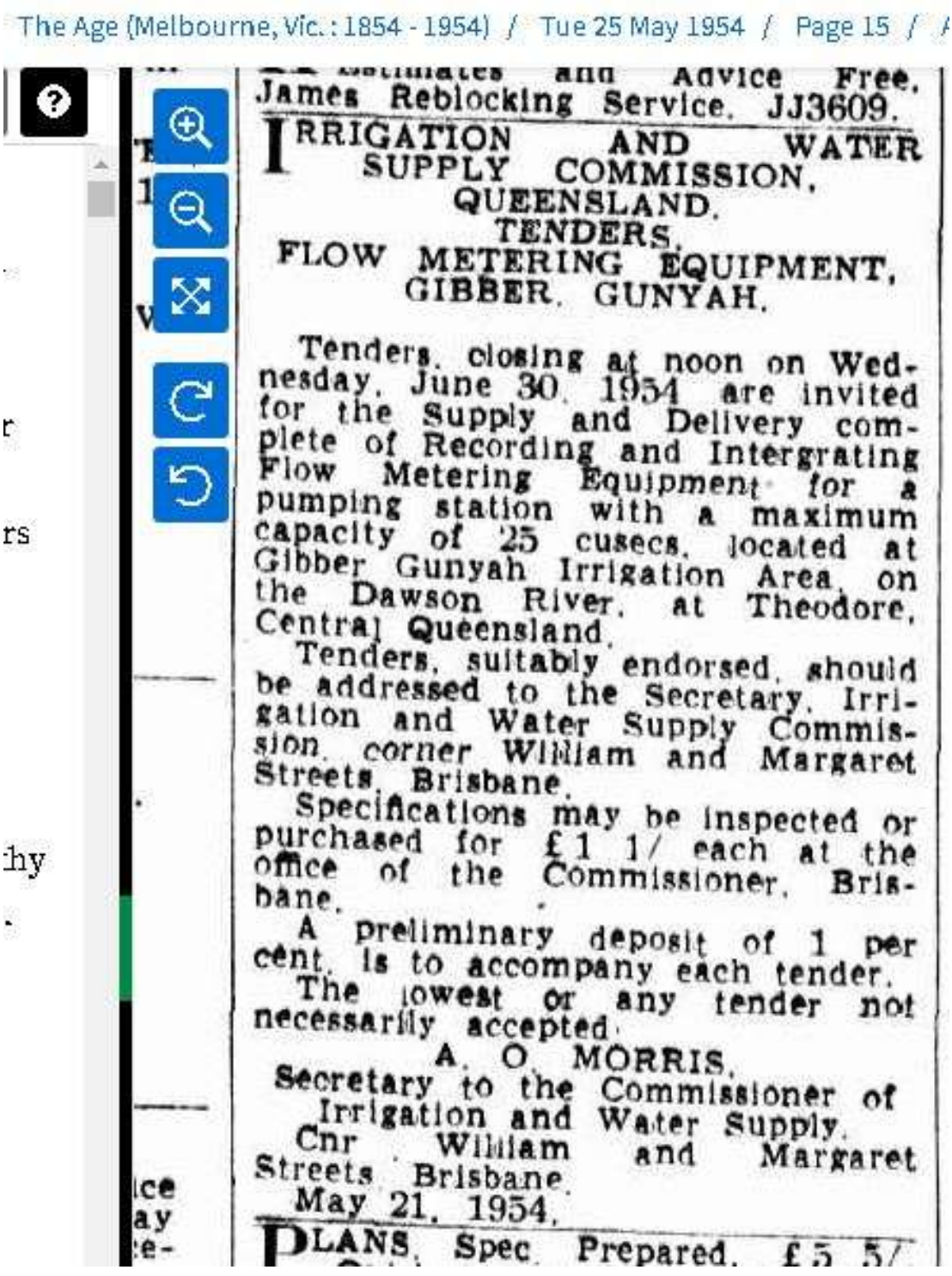
**Middle Front:** Mundubbera & Theodore Weirs

**Middle Side:** Orange Ck., Mundubbera & Emerald Ck Weirs

**1953 AUSTRALIA DAY PROCESSION**
QUEEN ST., BRISBANE

# 1954 – 'WATER' REFLECTS

## ON CALIBRATING THE PUMPS AT GIBBER GUNYAH



The Age (Melbourne, Vic. : 1854 - 1954) / Tue 25 May 1954 / Page 15 /

Estimates and Advice Free. James Reblocking Service. JJ3609.

IRRIGATION AND WATER SUPPLY COMMISSION, QUEENSLAND.

TENDERS.

FLOW METERING EQUIPMENT, GIBBER GUNYAH.

Tenders, closing at noon on Wednesday, June 30, 1954 are invited for the Supply and Delivery complete of Recording and Intergrating Flow Metering Equipment for a pumping station with a maximum capacity of 25 cusecs, located at Gibber Gunyah Irrigation Area, on the Dawson River, at Theodore, Central Queensland.

Tenders, suitably endorsed, should be addressed to the Secretary, Irrigation and Water Supply Commission, corner William and Margaret Streets, Brisbane.

Specifications may be inspected or purchased for £1 1/ each at the office of the Commissioner, Brisbane.

A preliminary deposit of 1 per cent. is to accompany each tender.

The lowest or any tender not necessarily accepted.

A. O. MORRIS,
Secretary to the Commissioner of Irrigation and Water Supply.
Cnr. William and Margaret Streets, Brisbane.
May 21, 1954.

PLANS, Spec. Prepared, £5 5/

# 1954 – 'WATER' REFLECTS

## ON THE SALE OF IWSC's 1st WATERING HOLE



## LIQUOR.

3 ELIZ. II No. 5. THE HOTEL THEODORE SALE ACT OF 1954.

**An Act Relating to the Sale of the Hotel situated at Theodore in the Dawson Valley Irrigation Area and known as the Hotel Theodore.**

[ASSENTED TO 27TH APRIL, 1954.]

BE it enacted by the Queen's Most Excellent Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Legislative Assembly of Queensland in Parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:—

Short title.

**1.** This Act may be cited as "*The Hotel Theodore Sale Act of 1954.*"

Repeal of s. 7. of 25 Geo. V. No. 7.

**2.** Section seven of *"*The Hotel Theodore Lease Enabling Act of* 1934" is repealed.

Sale of the Hotel Theodore authorised.

**3.** Subject to this Act, The Commissioner of Irrigation and Water Supply under and within the meaning of†"*The Irrigation and Water Supply Commission Acts,* 1946 *to* 1949," may sell to the Hotel Theodore Co-operative Association Limited, a society formed and registered under ‡"*The Co-operative Societies Acts,* 1946 *to* 1951," the licensed premises under and within the meaning of §"*The Liquor Acts,* 1912 *to* 1952," known as the Hotel Theodore and comprising the land described in the Schedule to this Act together with the buildings, erections and improvements thereon and fixtures and fittings the property of the said Commissioner therein or thereupon.

The sale shall be at such price and upon such terms and conditions as are agreed upon by the aforesaid parties and approved by the Governor in Council.

# 1954 – 'WATER' REFLECTS

## ON INVESTIGATIONS INTO A BRIDGE OVER THE DAWSON

**RIVER CROSSING BELOW THE HIGH BANK** (mid 1900's) –
CREST OF THEODORE WEIR
(Source: Nat Film / Screen Archives Contribution by W.A.G Holmes)

(Rockhampton, Qld. : 1878 - 1954) / Sat 20 Nov 1954 /

available."

### Dawson Bridge Investigations

BRISBANE, November 19.—Investigations had been made by the Irrigation and Water Supply Commission during the year in conjunction with the Main Roads Department into the provision of a bridge across the Dawson River at Theodore.

This was stated in the Commission's annual report, presented in Parliament today.

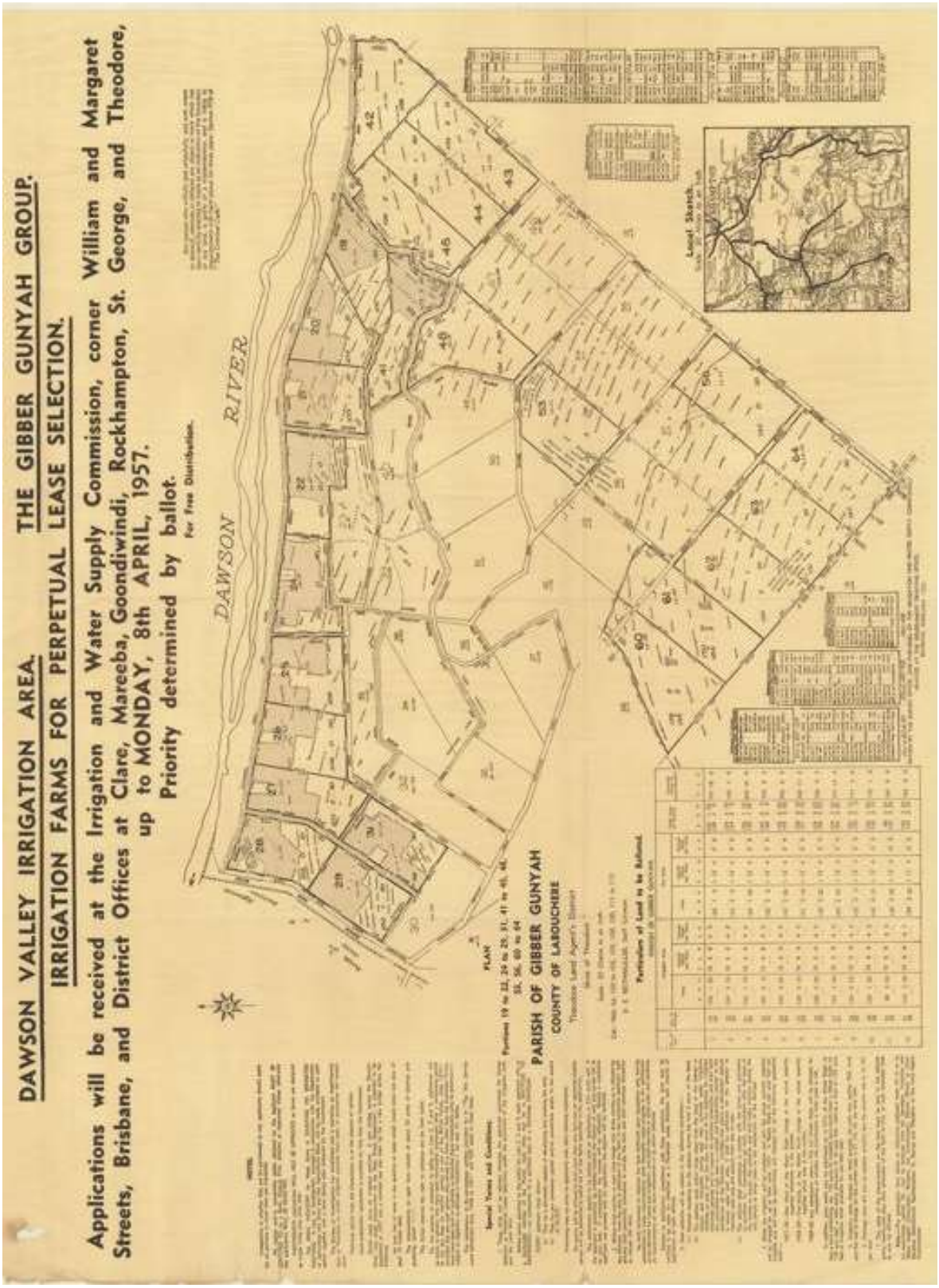
The report stated that the present crossing along the crest of the Theodore weir was untrafficable for considerable periods during the year. Provision of this improved access was essential in conjunction with the extension of irrigation in the Gibber-Gunyah area.

**RIVER CROSSING ABOVE THE HIGH BANK** (2024) –
DOWNSTREAM OF THEODORE WEIR
(Source: Public Domain Contribution by L. Fowler)

# 1957 – 'WATER' REFLECTS

## ON THE PERPETUAL LEASE SELECTION OF GIBBER-GUNYAH FARMS

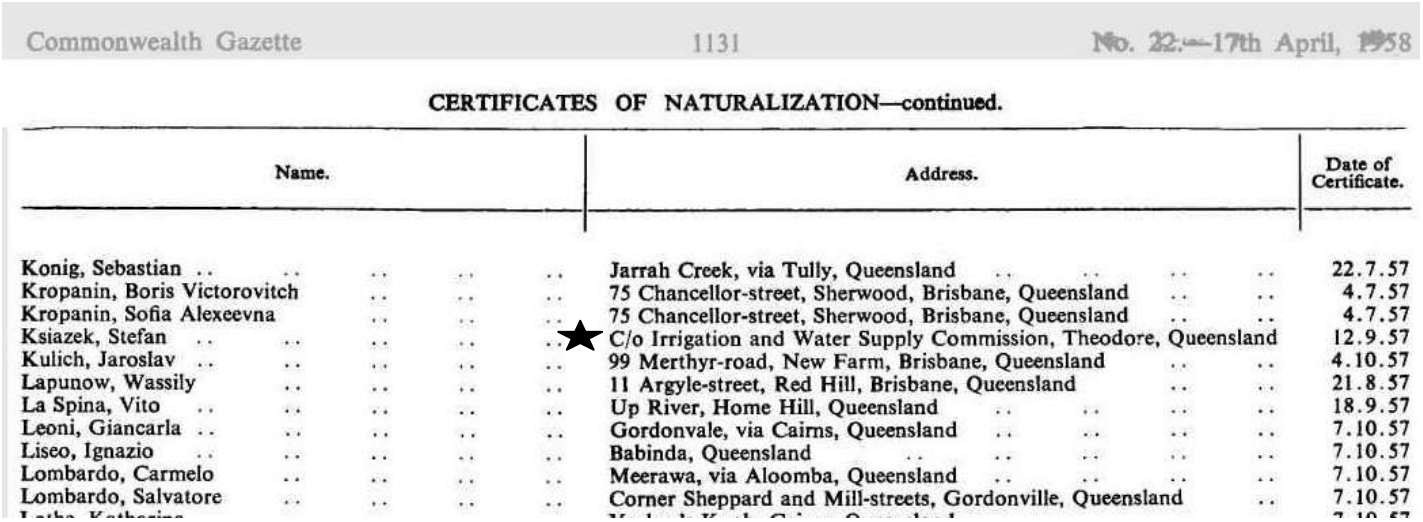
(Source: State Archives Ref# ITM 3615306)



# 1957 – 'WATER' REFLECTS

## on 'c/- Irrigation and Water Supply Commission, Theodore, Qld'

(Source: Commonwealth Gazette #22 https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/240891712 )



Commonwealth Gazette 1131 No. 22.—17th April, 1958

CERTIFICATES OF NATURALIZATION—continued.

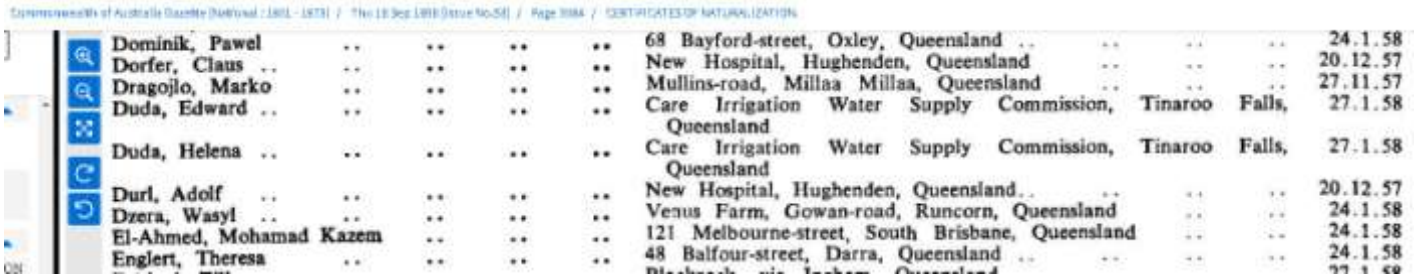
| Name. | Address. | Date of Certificate. |
|---|---|---|
| Konig, Sebastian .. .. .. .. .. | Jarrah Creek, via Tully, Queensland .. .. .. .. | 22.7.57 |
| Kropanin, Boris Victorovitch .. .. .. | 75 Chancellor-street, Sherwood, Brisbane, Queensland .. .. | 4.7.57 |
| Kropanin, Sofia Alexeevna .. .. .. | 75 Chancellor-street, Sherwood, Brisbane, Queensland .. .. | 4.7.57 |
| Ksiazek, Stefan .. .. .. .. .. | ★ C/o Irrigation and Water Supply Commission, Theodore, Queensland | 12.9.57 |
| Kulich, Jaroslav .. .. .. .. .. | 99 Merthyr-road, New Farm, Brisbane, Queensland .. .. | 4.10.57 |
| Lapunow, Wassily .. .. .. .. .. | 11 Argyle-street, Red Hill, Brisbane, Queensland .. .. | 21.8.57 |
| La Spina, Vito .. .. .. .. .. | Up River, Home Hill, Queensland .. .. .. .. | 18.9.57 |
| Leoni, Giancarla .. .. .. .. .. | Gordonvale, via Cairns, Queensland .. .. .. .. | 7.10.57 |
| Liseo, Ignazio .. .. .. .. .. | Babinda, Queensland .. .. .. .. .. | 7.10.57 |
| Lombardo, Carmelo .. .. .. .. | Meerawa, via Aloomba, Queensland .. .. .. .. | 7.10.57 |
| Lombardo, Salvatore .. .. .. .. | Corner Sheppard and Mill-streets, Gordonville, Queensland .. | 7.10.57 |

**WHAT'S BEHIND 'c/- Irrigation and Water Supply Commission, Theodore, Queensland'** ?

This address would have meant many things to Stefan Ksiazek as he wrote it in his application to become a Naturalised Australian. Above all, it would have meant 'home' and stood for a whole new life away from the one he remembered from war-torn Poland as Stefan - along with countless immigrants who migrated to Australia post-WW2 - sought to carve out a better life. There are many such stories of refugees 'going bush' in search of what they sought and valued most and where the IWSC was to play a significant part in both their re-settlement and their lives in the longer term.

Not only would the address have meant job security with the Irrigation and Water Supply Commission, it would also have represented a happier life for Stefan in peaceful surroundings in 'the town that water built' surrounded by the two close-knit communities of water and farming.

Other examples of IWSC 'home' addresses also existed eg **'c/- IWSC Tinaroo Falls, Queensland'**



| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Dominik, Pawel .. .. .. .. .. | 68 Bayford-street, Oxley, Queensland .. .. .. .. | 24.1.58 |
| Dorfer, Claus .. .. .. .. .. | New Hospital, Hughenden, Queensland .. .. .. | 20.12.57 |
| Dragojlo, Marko .. .. .. .. .. | Mullins-road, Millaa Millaa, Queensland .. .. .. | 27.11.57 |
| Duda, Edward .. .. .. .. .. | Care Irrigation Water Supply Commission, Tinaroo Falls, Queensland | 27.1.58 |
| Duda, Helena .. .. .. .. .. | Care Irrigation Water Supply Commission, Tinaroo Falls, Queensland | 27.1.58 |
| Durl, Adolf .. .. .. .. .. | New Hospital, Hughenden, Queensland .. .. .. .. | 20.12.57 |
| Dzera, Wasyl .. .. .. .. .. | Venus Farm, Gowan-road, Runcorn, Queensland .. .. | 24.1.58 |
| El-Ahmed, Mohamad Kazem .. .. .. | 121 Melbourne-street, South Brisbane, Queensland .. .. | 24.1.58 |
| Englert, Theresa .. .. .. .. | 48 Balfour-street, Darra, Queensland .. .. .. .. | 24.1.58 |

# 1958 – 'WATER' REFLECTS

## ON THEODORE'S INCORPORATION INTO BANANA SHIRE & THE CESSATION OF MUNICIPAL OVERSIGHT BY 'WATER'

# 1985 – 'WATER' REFLECTS

## ON FURTHER UP THE DAWSON – THE GO-AHEAD FOR GYRANDA WEIR

(Source: Archives-Search Qld Govt Website)

CONFIDENTIAL

CABINET MINUTE Copy No. 20

Brisbane, 22nd January, 1985

Decision No. 45122

Submission No. 40594 TITLE: Construction of Gyranda Weir on the Dawson River.

CABINET decided:-

That approval be given for the construction of Gyranda Weir at 284.5 km on the Dawson River, to proceed.

CIRCULATION: Queensland Water Resources Commission and copy to Minister.
Premier's Department and copy to Premier and Treasurer.
Treasury Department and copy to Deputy Premier and Minister Assisting the Treasurer.
Department of Primary Industries and copy to Minister.
Department of The Arts, National Parks and Sport and copy to Minister.
National Parks and Wildlife Service.
Department of Community Services and copy to Minister.
All other Ministers for perusal and return.

Certified True Copy

A/Secretary to Cabinet.

# 1988 – 'WATER' REFLECTS

## ON TRANSFER of THEODORE TWS to BANANA SHIRE

(Source: State Archives [Ref # ITM 962148])

C O N F I D E N T I A L

C A B I N E T  M I N U T E

Brisbane, 14th November, 1988

Decision No. 55502

Submission No. 50022

TITLE: Water Resources Commission - Transfer of Theodore Town Water Supply Scheme to Banana Shire Council

CABINET decided:-

That subject to further discussions on access, the approval of the Governor in Council be sought for the transfer of the Theodore urban water supply scheme from the Commissioner of Water Resources to the Banana Shire Council on the terms indicated in the Submission.

CIRCULATION: Water Resources Commission and copy to Minister.
Premier's Department and copy to Premier and Treasurer.
Department of Primary Industries and copy to Minister.
Department of Local Government and copy to Minister.
All other Ministers for perusal and return.

Certified ~~True Copy~~

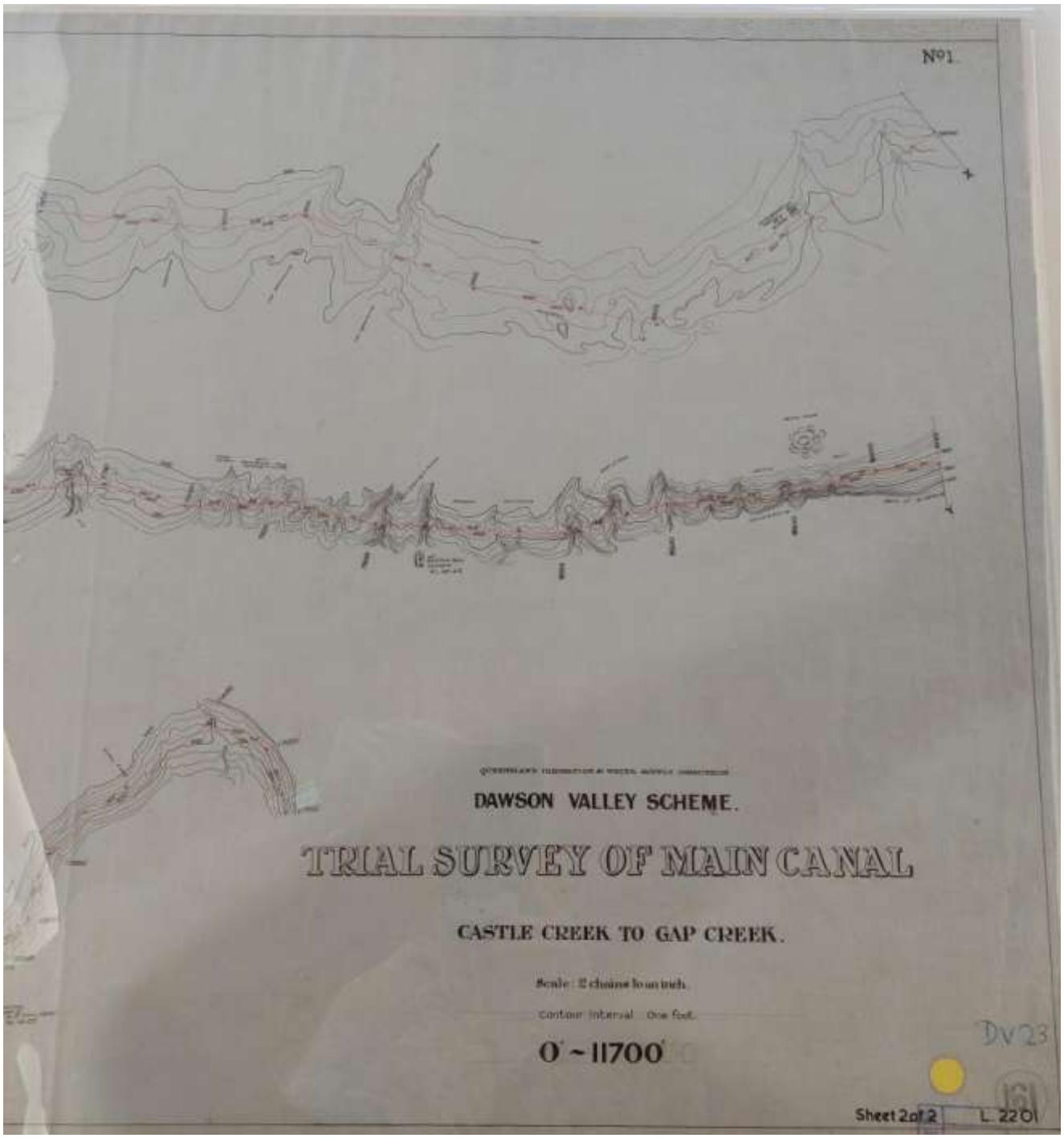
Secretary to Cabinet.

# 2018 – 'WATER' REFLECTS

ON THE JOURNEY FROM CASTLE CK TO CORPORATISATION

**The transfer of the Theodore Channel Irrigation Scheme**

from SUNWATER to THEODORE WATER




**Typical IWSC Investigation Survey assessing a possible Channel Route**

(Source: State Archives Ref # ITM 809541)

**IRRIGATION ACT OF 1922**

WATER.

An Act to make Provision for the Construction, Maintenance, and Management of Works for the Storage and Supply of Water for the purposes of Irrigation, and for other purposes.

[Assented to 16th October, 1922.]

BE it enacted by the King's Most Excellent Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Legislative Assembly of Queensland in Parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:—

1. This Act may be cited as "The Irrigation Act of 1922."

2. In this Act, unless the context otherwise indicates, the following terms have the meanings respectively assigned to them, that is to say:—

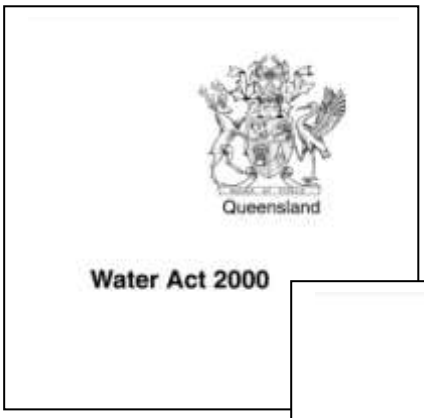
"Authorised," when used with respect to persons—An employee of the Commissioner authorised by him either generally or for any particular purpose under this Act; when used with respect to machinery fittings and other matters—Authorised by this Act or by the Commissioner;

"Channel"—Any ditch, channel, race, aqueduct, trench, conduit, tunnel, sluice, flowing, or line of pipes;

"Commissioner"—The Commissioner of Irrigation appointed under this Act;

"Construct" includes provide, set up, dig, excavate, erect, lay down or place; the power or duty to construct includes the power or duty to maintain when constructed; and correlatives have the like meaning;

"Crown land"—Land vested in His Majesty which is not for the time being dedicated to any public purpose or subject to any deed of grant, lease, contract, provision, or engagement made by or on behalf of His Majesty;



**CORPORATISATION – 1 OCTOBER 2018**

Theodore Water Pty Ltd operates the Theodore Channel Irrigation Scheme which provides irrigation water to 44 allocation holders, covering 3000 ha land located on either side of the Dawson River.

Theodore Water Pty Ltd is owned by the scheme's allocation holders and is managed by an experienced and committed team of water delivery specialists. Oversight is provided by a six-member Board comprised of local and independent representatives.

The company's vision is to provide cost effective and efficient water delivery services to the Theodore region by a local team that's committed to customer service, community engagement and growing the regional economy.

Local ownership only relates to assets associated with the channel distribution scheme such as channels, pipes and drains. Bulk water supply assets such as rivers and dams are not included and remain owned and managed by SunWater. SunWater continues to deliver bulk water to the channel system while Theodore Water Pty Ltd is responsible for its delivery to allocation holders.

(Source: http://www.theodorewater.com.au/)

# 2024 – 'WATER' REFLECTS

on 'The Wife of the Commissioner'

## Mrs ~~Archibald Frederick~~ Louisa May Partridge

On the occasion of the 100th anniversary of the turning on of the lights of the township by *'Mrs AF Partridge, wife of the Commissioner',* the WRRA seeks respectfully to reflect back 100 years when the tabloid reporting of the identity of a married female was through the name of her husband.

Such was the case in the reporting of *'Mrs AF Partridge, wife of the Commissioner'* in 1924.

So to mark this anniversary, an effort has been made to better define the personal identity of Mrs Partridge in her own right; and as the tabloid press would probably report her today. And this is not an attempt to re-write history but more to reflect on how times have changed over the past 100 yrs.

The research commenced by delving back through the Family History source www.myheritage.com. What was found is that a reference in the tabloid press of today to *'the wife of the Commissioner'* would likely be prefixed by *'Mrs LM Partridge'*.

The following is what has been found out about Mrs LM Partridge from www.myheritage.com :-

- Louisa May Fitzgerald is the maiden name of Mrs LM Partridge. Louisa was born in 1878 at Cowra in NSW – one of twelve children of John and Ellen. (Archibald Frederick Partridge was also born in 1878 in NSW but at Port Macquarie)
- Louisa married Archibald at Petersham (NSW) on 3 January 1901. At the time of their marriage, Archibald was employed as an engineer by the First Mildura Irrigation Trust (Vic) where some time later he rose to the position of its General Manager
- Louisa migrated with Archibald to Qld around 1922 (accompanied by their seven children).

And the following has been gleaned from IWSC History sources:- On arrival in Qld, the family literally had to *'hit-the-ground-running'* - Archibald had been appointed as Qld's 1st Irrigation Commissioner where post-WW1, development of the Dawson Valley Irrigation Area was one of its top priorities to *'get-the-state-moving-again'*. Archibald was given extensive powers under the *Irrigation Act of 1922* which extended to executive control over construction of the Castle Ck township itself.

### Louisa May Partridge (Her place in History)

So it can only be speculated here that the *'spinning-of-the-plates'* back then by this most capable of women – who was herself brought up in a family of twelve and was now a mother of seven and a wife of a figure in high office within government (and all which that would have entailed for her) - did not go un-noticed by His Excellency the Governor (Sir Matthew Nathan), on the occasion of the Governor's visit to Castle Creek to officially open the power house and pumping station there.

Sir Matthew was to bestow upon Louisa the greatest accolade he could possibly gift to her from the state, in recognition of the roles she was performing by supporting her husband and by default - the state. She was to have more than earned a place in history as being the wife who turned on the power to the township over which

- her husband had played such a pivotal executive role in developing; and for which
- her husband had visions of becoming 'Qld's Model Garden City' - centre of a thriving agricultural community in the Dawson Valley - and thereby opening up the centre of the state

History more than records that the above was indeed very close to the heart of the member for Chillagoe (and Premier of Qld) – Edward 'Red Ted' Theodore.

And the rest they say is history!

**Louisa May Partridge (Mother of four girls and three boys)**

In order of birth, the seven children of Louisa and Archibald are reported in www.myheritage.com as follows – Archibald John Fitzgerald Partridge (B 1902); Helen Fitzgerald Partridge (B 1905); Bruce Fitzgerald Partridge (B 1906); Maxwell Fitzgerald Partridge (B B 1908); Audrey Fitzgerald Partridge (B 1911); Lillian Partridge (B 1914); Joyce Fitzgerald Partridge (B 1916).

**Louisa May Partridge (Mother of the Bride at Theodore Wedding)**

Louisa's eldest daughter Helen Fitzgerald Partridge was married in Theodore on 19 May 1927, in a ceremony officiated by the Bishop of Rockhampton. For more details, refer 1927 in 'Recollections'

**Louisa May Partridge (Widow of the Consulting Engineer)**

Following the serving out of his Commission on 30 Sept 1929, Archibald worked as a Consulting Engineer in Brisbane (Source: Trove Newspapers). On 2 April 1935 at age 57, just 11 years after she had earned her place in history, Louisa became a widow. Under 'State News in Brief' in 'The Queenslander' and in advice to the general public of the passing of her husband, a notice simply read *'The deceased was formerly Irrigation Commissioner in Qld, and at one time was appointed by the Govt to control the Dawson River undertaking'.* Had this reporting been at a time when Louisa's identity was defined as *'Mrs LM Partridge, wife of the Commissioner'*, then there is a possibility that much more may have been said.

**The Passing of the Partridge Family Matriarch**

Louisa passed away in 1974 aged 96, 50 years after turning on the power to the Castle Ck township. Theodore - and what started out as the Dawson Valley Irrigation Area - stand as monuments today to IWSC Commissioner Archibald Frederick Partridge (*'the husband of Mrs LM Partridge)*

**COMMEMORATIVE PLAQUE**
(Dawson Folk Museum, Theodore)

The WRRA understands that this plaque was attached to the original Water Tower and Bandstand (as designed and constructed by the Irrigation and Water Supply Commission) in the centre of 'The Town That Water Built'.

**NOTE**: Research for this 'reflection' coincided with the 100th anniversary of an event for which Louisa is long remembered. It merged 2 histories – (1) IWSC [ie Annual Reports]; & (2) Partridge Family [ie www.myheritage.com]. To our knowledge, this is the first time that such a reflection has been put together about *'Mrs LM Partridge, wife of the Commissioner'*. With great respect, every attempt was made to ensure its authenticity.