Recollections

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

1920 - 2025

This volume was developed through the generosity of interested parties who made personal contributions for the enjoyment of others in the broader community.

The contributions published in Recollections are the contributors' own-sourced information and stories, some of which may include a quoted reference to a 'point-of-truth' (eg News Clips; Web links) and some of which may be solely or largely personal accounts.

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

REFLECTIONS BY THE WATER RESOURCES RETIREES ASSOCIATION (WRRA)

October 1920 - 'WATER' REFLECTS

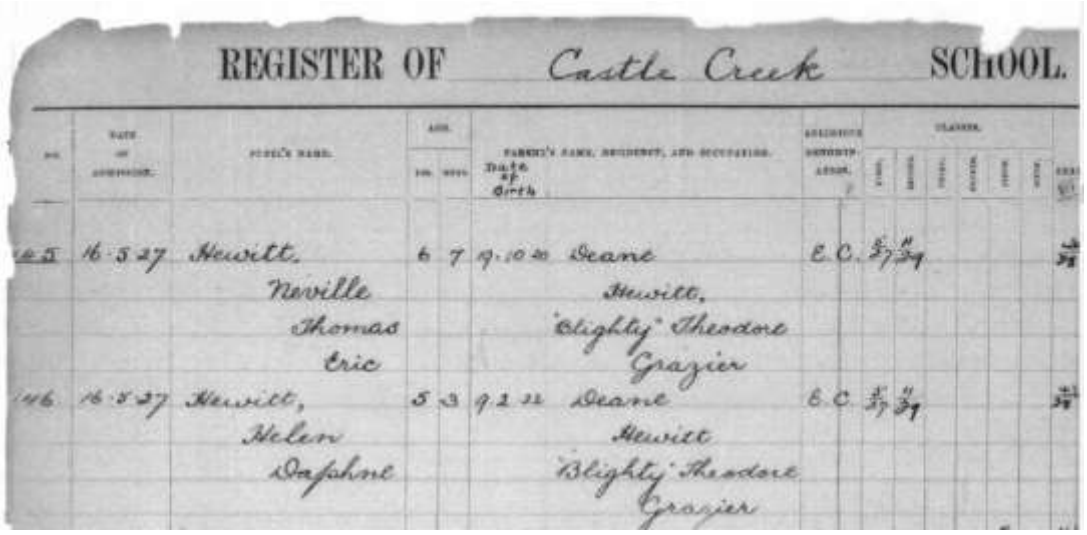
on the Birth of a Theodore and 'Water' Old Boy *'from Blighty'*

(Contributor: WRRA)

'Mrs D Hewitt from Blighty' – *the Theodore Connection*

'Mrs D Hewitt from Blighty' was reported In the Rockhampton Morning Bulletin's coverage of the Vice Regal visit to the Castle Creek Junction in May 1922, as being one of a number of the womenfolk from the surrounding countryside who assisted with hospitality provided to the Vice Regal Party at their Luncheon. Nancy, along with husband Deane, had just nineteen months earlier become the proud parents of Neville Thomas Eric 'Nev' Hewitt on 19 October 1920, just two months after State Hydraulic Engineer Hugo Eklund (Water Supply Department) had deployed a second survey party to the area. This deployment was to record the contours of the plains of the Dawson Valley to determine their suitability for subdivision into irrigated farms.

Little could Nancy and Deane have imagined that just five years after that Luncheon, they would be going down a tree-lined boulevard lined with selected palms and street light standards not far from the Castle Creek Junction where the Luncheon had been held. And then going around a park with an impressive water tower in the centre, to enrol their son Neville and his sister Helen into the Castle Creek State School, a school built by the IWSC under the stewardship of Queensland's 1st Irrigation Commissioner, Archibald Partridge.



REGISTER OF Castle Creek SCHOOL.

					Date of Birth									
145	16-5-27	Hewitt, Neville Thomas Eric	6	7	19-10-20	Deane Hewitt, 'Blighty' Theodore Grazier	E.C.	5/7/34						
146	16-5-27	Hewitt, Helen Daphne	5	3	9-2-22	Deane Hewitt 'Blighty' Theodore Grazier	E.C.	5/7/34						

Nev Hewitt – *the 'Water' Connection*

A half a century or so later, the very son whom Dean and Nancy had enrolled at the Castle Creek State School in 1927 would be administering the 'water' portfolio as Water Resources Minister in the Queensland Government, where part of his role was to review Annual Reports submitted to him by the 5th and 6th Irrigation Commissioners – Frank Learmonth and Don Beattie respectively. The Annual Reports were not just on the Dawson Valley Irrigation Area but on seven or so others spread around the state.

Nev represented his electorate between 1956 and 1980 at a time when there was a considerable focus on water conservation. During that time he

would see the construction of some 10 or so major dams as well as numerous weirs around the state – one of which was to bear his name on the Dawson River at Baralaba.

Upon his retirement in 1980, one of Nev's last tasks as Water Resources Minister was to introduce legislation into the House which would cater for the construction of Burdekin Falls Dam.

Naming of Neville Hewitt Park

After Nev's retirement, the very park on the Boulevard which Deane and Nancy would have passed on their way to enrol Nev at the Castle Creek State School was named the Neville Hewitt Park, to honour his service to his electorate between 1956 and 1980 – and to his state.

NEVILLE HEWITT PARK, THEODORE – 2016

Original Certificate of Title for the Park (RP description: Lot 2 on SP 125729 - Township of Theodore)

NOTE: Efforts are being made to locate an original Certificate of Title for the Park for inclusion here.

Original Survey Plan for the Park (RP description: Lot 2 on SP 125729 - Township of Theodore)

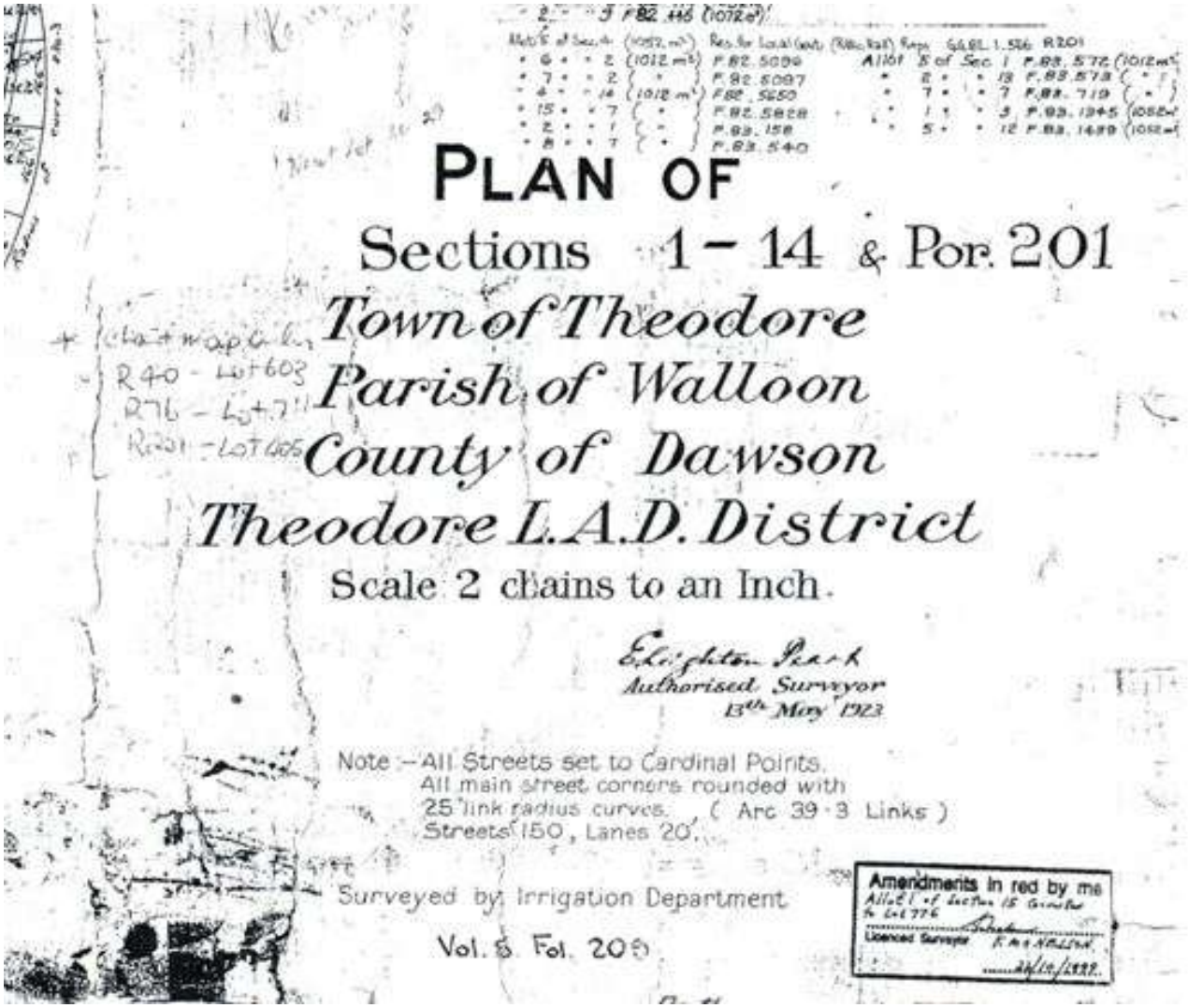
NOTE: Efforts are being made to locate a copy of the original Survey Plan for the Park **for** inclusion here.

May 1923 – 'WATER' REFLECTS

ON THE TOWN PLAN and ITS AUTHORISED SURVEYOR

(Contributor: WRRA [via Qld Titles; Dawson Folk Museum; 'The Peart Collection'; & Public Domain])

The Town Plan endorsed by IWSC-contracted Authorised Surveyor Eric Leighton Peart on 13th May 1923.

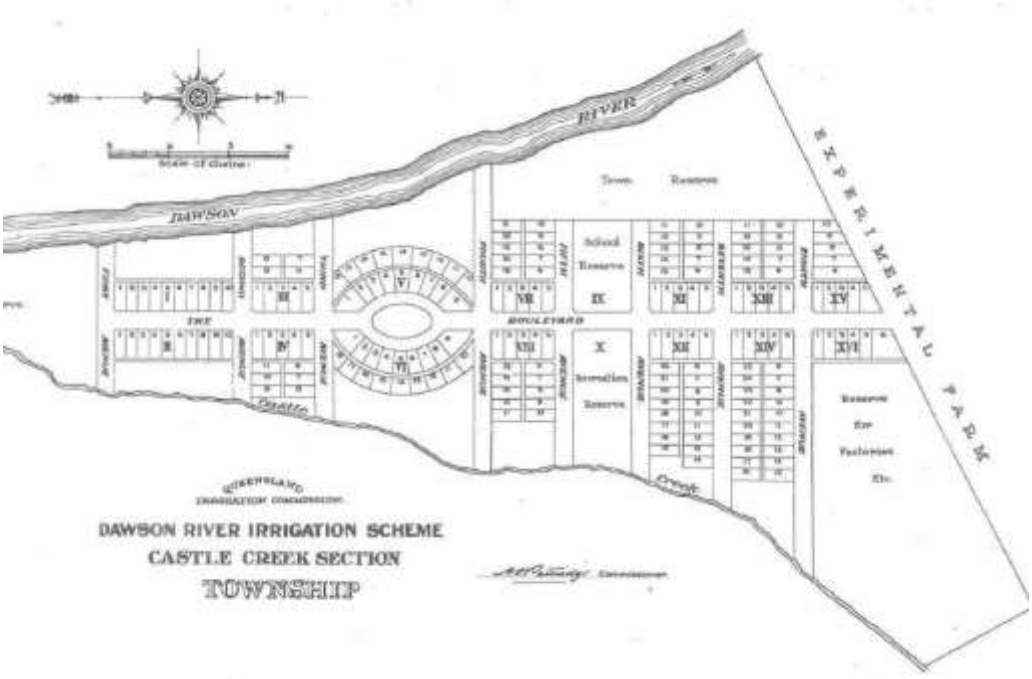


Acknowledgement of the role of the irrigation and Water Supply Commission

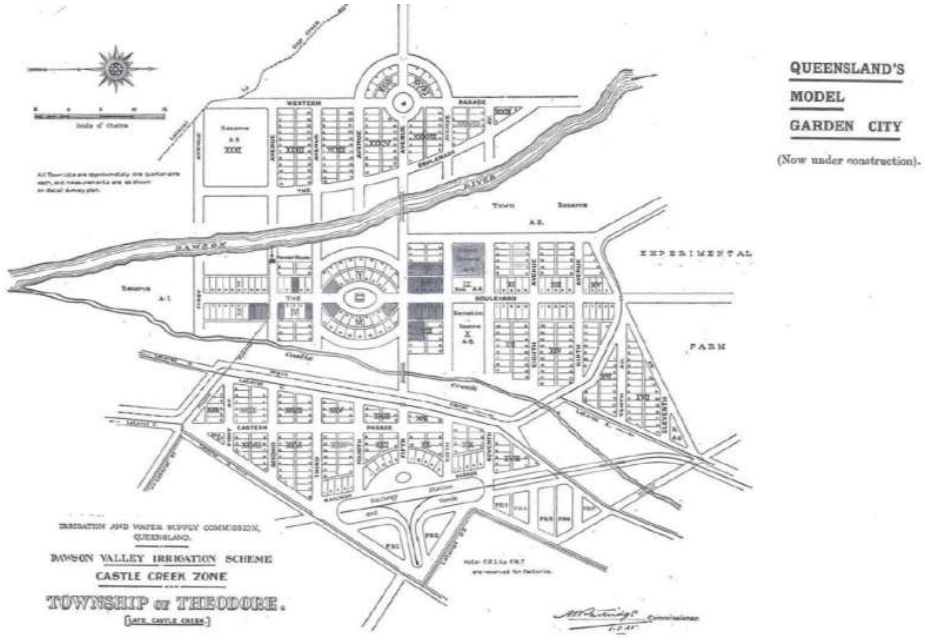
What is so special to the descendants of those involved in the development of 'The Town that Water Built' (as well as with development of many other IWSC 'monuments' around the state) is the simple recognition by the acknowledgement above, that Theodore was '**Surveyed by the Irrigation Department'**.

Conceptual Town Plans

It is not known when the first conceptual layout of the township was prepared, so a possibility exists that it could have been a fait-accompli by the time Partridge took office. It was endorsed with Commissioner Partridge's signature in his first ever Annual Report (1922-23) – that particular version showed the Castle Creek township defined by the confines of the two streams at their confluence, and nothing much else. The date of his endorsement is unclear.



The second somewhat more ambitious conceptual layout to be endorsed by Partridge (below) appeared in his 1924 – 25 Annual Report. Again, the date of his endorsement is unclear:-



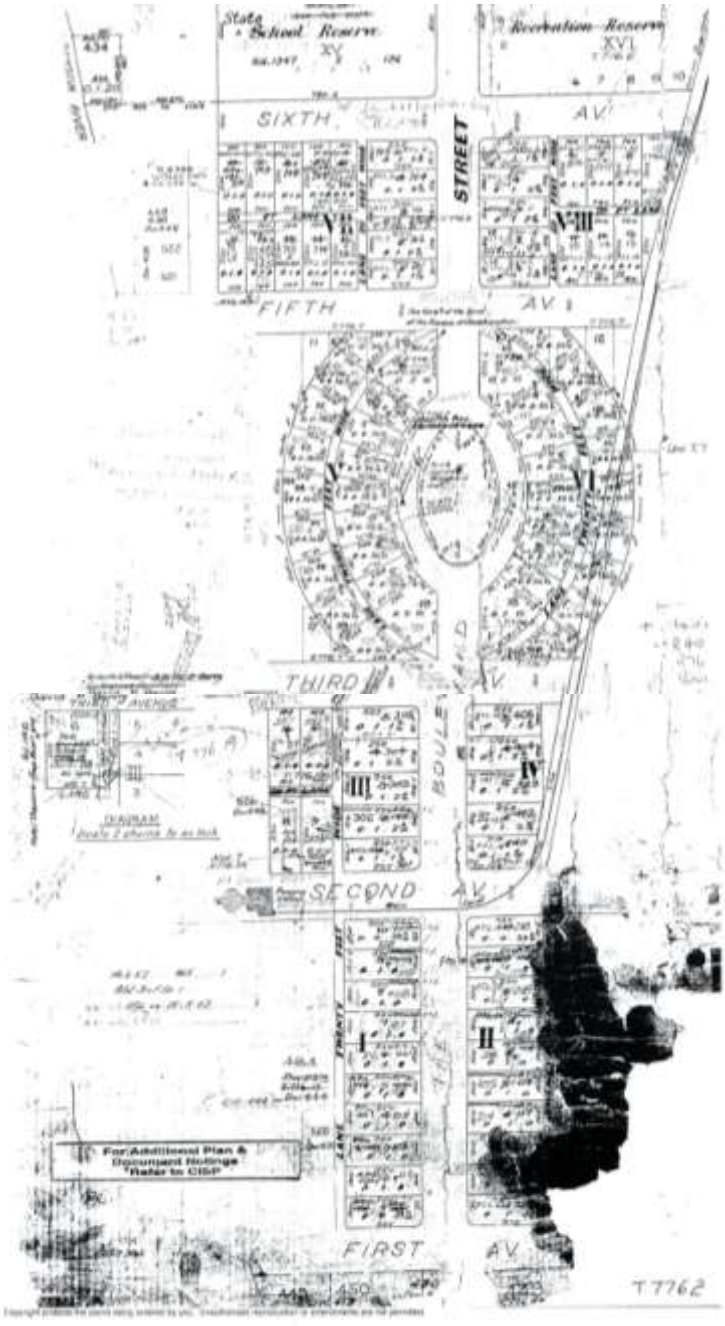
This particular version contained certain revisions thought to be either under consideration by Partridge at the time, or possibly even parting visions held by Premier Theodore in putting his final stamp on it just prior to his resignation on 25 Feb 1925.

Revisions noted as being recorded in the second conceptual layout:-

1. The renaming of the Township from 'Castle Ck' to 'Theodore'
2. An ambitious vision of an extension of the township beyond the confines of the two streams, including possible extension of the avenues in an east-west direction, incorporating a new avenue beyond the streams (Fourth Avenue - to align with the water tower). This vision resulted in the renaming of all original names of avenues north of the water tower, and in the subsequent disappearance of the street name of 'Fourth Avenue' as it originally appeared in the immediate northern vicinity of the water tower – and from the streetscape of Theodore forever. This was as a direct consequence of the ambitious vision not being realised, as times and fortunes for IWSC's involvement were to change in subsequent years post 'Red Ted' Theodore

EXTRACT FROM THE 1923 TOWN PLAN OF THEODORE

This extract provided by Titles Queensland (below) shows the endorsed 1923 plan, which also includes some scheme-related information (eg pump station on the Dawson R at the end of Second Avenue; & location of survey line for 'Main Canal' to the east of the water tower). The plan also formally records the disappearance of the name 'Fourth Avenue', through its renaming as 'Fifth Avenue'.



LOOKING THROUGH THE SURVEYOR'S LENS

So for history's sake, the WRRA has made an attempt to piece together the following story of Eric, his family and his exploits in the pioneering role they played in development of Theodore / Dawson Valley:-

Eric was born in 1888 in Burnie (Tasmania) and married Ada Minnie Palmer in 1915.

As a consequence of the passage of *The Land Surveyors Act of 1908* – "an Act to provide for the registration of Land Surveyors and to control the practice of such Surveyors" – Authorised Surveyor Eric Leighton Peart became the 274th surveyor in Queensland to comply with its registration requirements. (Eric's name does not appear on any early IWSC staff chart, so an assumption is made that Eric was employed as a Contract Surveyor by the IWSC. Either way, he is quoted throughout this document as an IWSC Surveyor).

Sometime before 1920, Eric and Ada set foot in the Dawson Valley, lured by the then Water Supply Department's exciting prospects of them playing their respective pioneering roles in the opening up of the lands of the Dawson Valley to irrigation. This started with the Castle Creek Section, including planning for its proposed service centre to be located within confines defined by the confluence of Castle Creek with the Dawson River.

For Eric and Engineering Surveyors Blackman and Little in the few years leading up to the passage of the *Irrigation Act of 1922*, this initially involved the undertaking of considerable investigation surveys beyond the confluence of these two streams, to better define the topography of an immense area on the plains assessed as early as 1890 as having good prospects for irrigation (ie report by Irrigation Engineer E Rigby). For Eric, it also involved considerable sub-division activity to support both irrigated and dry-land farming, with a WRRA theory being that instructions may well have come from 'the top' (ie Premier Theodore) as part of a wider Land Settlement Policy.

For Ada, it meant providing support to her husband in any way possible, including reportedly accompanying him on his survey missions into the field on those occasions when his selected mode of transport happened to be their motor vehicle. And where this accompaniment later extended to bringing along their first child. Two of their children (Jean and Jack) were first-day enrolments at the Castle Ck SS when it opened on 6 May 1924 (enrolled as #25 and #29 respectively), while another three (Thomas, Kelvin and Robert) were subsequently enrolled as #70; # 115; and # 187 on 1 Sept 1924; 20 Sept 1926; and 30 January 1928 respectively. These children were amongst the first to ever live in an iWSC camp in the first ever irrigation area developed by the state and were therefore among the first ever 'IWSC Camp Kids' in the state. This particular group has always held a special place within our 'water' community, as the childhoods of many IWSC children were spent moving from camp to camp with their parents - particularly during the 'dam-building days' some 30 or so years later. (Photo shows Eric possibly in 'planning mode').

LOOKING THROUGH ANOTHER LENS

As time went on and with an extensive area covered in the Dawson, Eric kept a comprehensive photographic record of his exploits, travels and points-of-interest he happened to stumble across. The Dawson Folk Museum at Theodore as well as State Archives retain an amount of such material and references have also been found to a 'Peart Collection'. Some of that collection can be located on the following website:-

https://www.qld.gov.au/recreation/arts/heritage/museum-of-lands/surveying/survey-qld/field-surveyor

Also, worthy of note is that the actual cable in the iconic Dawson River Cableway photo (below left) resides in the yard of the Dawson Folk Museum in Theodore – this Museum is an absolute treasure-trove of IWSC's involvement with the Dawson. The vehicle on the Cableway is thought to be Eric's.

Over water – when the going gets tough

On land – when the going gets tough

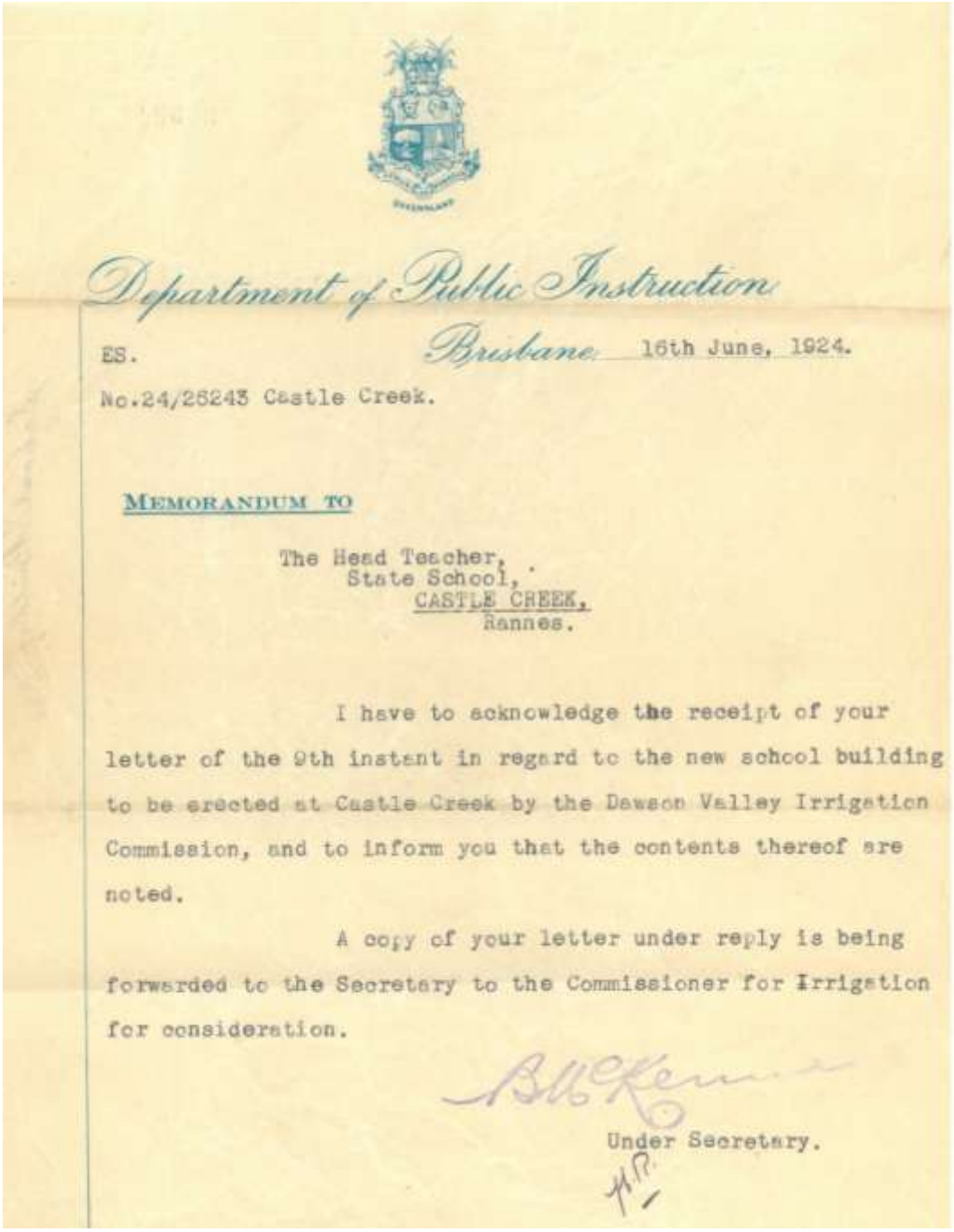
On the tooth – when the chainmen get hungry
(Snaring of scrub turkey in the Dawson)

On horseback - Eric and a chainman near a 'Flying Camp'
(Weir site on the Dawson R)

Albany Creek Memorial Park
(Bridgeman Downs, Brisbane)

1924 – 'WATER' REFLECTS
ON THE CASTLE CREEK STATE SCHOOL – BUILT BY THE IWSC

(Contributor: Anne Chater)



Department of Public Instruction

ES. Brisbane 16th June, 1924.

No.24/26243 Castle Creek.

MEMORANDUM TO

The Head Teacher,
State School,
CASTLE CREEK,
Rannes.

I have to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 9th instant in regard to the new school building to be erected at Castle Creek by the Dawson Valley Irrigation Commission, and to inform you that the contents thereof are noted.

A copy of your letter under reply is being forwarded to the Secretary to the Commissioner for Irrigation for consideration.

B McKenna

Under Secretary.

H.P.

FOOTNOTE: The WRRA considers it quite possible that the Castle Ck SS was the only one ever constructed by the IWSC.

'State Archives' describes the school as *'Castle Creek State School No.676 - opened via Rannes on the Dawson Valley line in the Gladstone Region in 1924 as a Class 9 school, with Claude Dollar* as *its first Head Teacher*.
'State Archives' also quotes Qld Govt Gazette, 1924, Vol.CXXII, No.104, p.1263.

1927 – 'WATER' REFLECTS
ON THE PARTRIDGE WEDDING IN 'THE TOWN THAT WATER BUILT'

(Contributor: Jenny Brownlie-Smith)

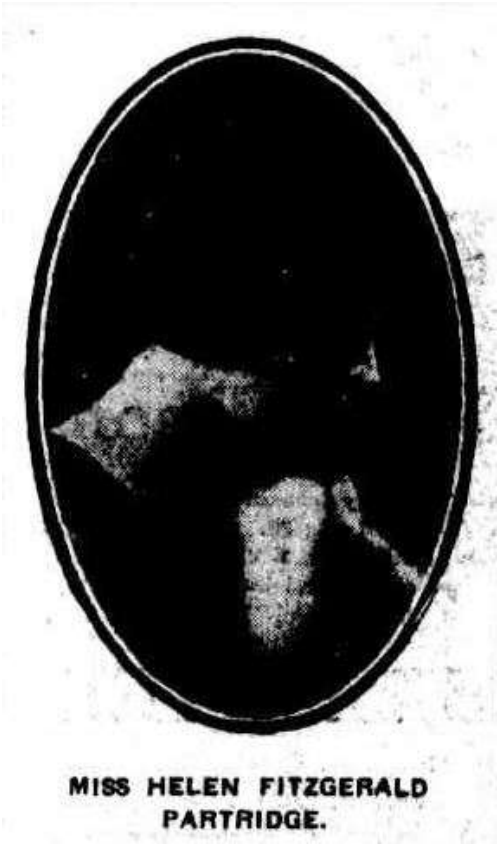
https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/21823235 https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/page/1641905

Helen Fitzgerald Partridge was the eldest daughter of **Louisa May Partridge** (nee Fitzgerald) and **Archibald Frederick Partridge**. Helen married Dr John Ralston from Wowan (130km to the north) at a ceremony in Theodore on 19 May 1927, officiated by the Bishop of Rockhampton (the Right Rev Dr Crick**). It is not known at this stage whether their Certificate of Marriage was the first to witness the town's new name of Theodore** (following the name change months earlier); or where the ceremony actually took place in the township.

FOOTNOTE: Our thanks are extended to Jenny for this valuable contribution to the recording of the historical association between the IWSC and Theodore.

The Brisbane Courier (Qld. : 1864 - 1933) / Wed 11 May 1927 / Page 28

:8: The marriage of Miss Helen Fitzgerald Partridge (eldest daughter of Mr. and Mrs. A. F. Partridge) and Dr. John Windeyer Ralston (elder son of Mr. and Mrs. N. B. Ralston, Wentworthville, N.S.W.) will take place on May 19.



MISS HELEN FITZGERALD PARTRIDGE.

DR. JOHN WINDEYER RALSTON, of Wowan, whose marriage to Miss Helen Fitzgerald Partridge, eldest daughter of Mr. and Mrs. A. F. Partridge, of Ascot, will be celebrated on May 19, at Theodore, Dawson Valley, by the Right Rev. Dr. Crick, Bishop of Rockhampton.

1930 – 'WATER' REFLECTS
ON IWSC HYDROGRAPHERS AT NATHAN GORGE DAM SITE

(Contributor: Paul Martin)

'Three Men in a Boat'

I came across this photo of three IWSC Hydrographers in a bond-wood stream-gauging boat at Nathan Gorge Dam Site around 1930. It is shown equipped with all the on-board hydrographic equipment of the day (including what is most probably a Price Current Meter), for the recording of stream-related data. By the late 1920's, the Stream Gauging Branch within IWSC had grown to seven hydrographers, reflecting the importance of this data-gathering activity.

FOOTNOTE: The WRRA was unable to identify the above three men.

The importance of gathering of stream data to be used as a basis for informing hydrologic decisions (incl those for selection of appropriate dam sites) was recognised by John-Baillie [JB] Henderson ('Hydraulic Henderson' as he was known, set up the Hydraulic Engineers Department in 1883. He was Queensland's 1st Hydraulic Engineer).

In 1909, JB Henderson set up a Stream Gauging Branch and appointed four staff – Charles Deshon, Stream Gaugers Croker and Morrision; and an Assistant – Bert Wragge (son of Government Meteorologist Clement Wragge).

In 1922 - following his appointment as Qld's first Irrigation Commissioner and upon setting up of the Irrigation Commission - Archibald Partridge incorporated the Stream Gauging Branch into his new organisation and appointed FJ Calvert as Stream Gauging Engineer. (Calvert had joined the old Hydraulic Engineers Department in 1913 and had assisted Henderson in the establishment of stream gauges and, in conjunction with Clement Wragge, established flood warning systems).

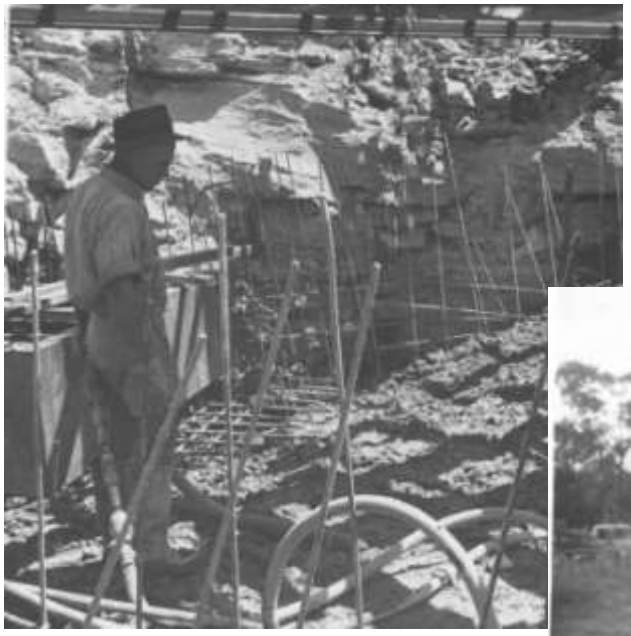
(Source: https://waterysauces.org.au/history/investigation/pullarbook/sw.pdf)

1946 – 'WATER' REFLECTS

ON THE START OF A FATHER & SON ASSOCIATION WITH THE IWSC

(Contributor: Anne Chater [courtesy of Vernon Campbell])

CLAUDE and VERNON CAMPBELL Claude Campbell worked for the IWSC in 1946 with his brother-in-law Arthur Ford. One of their jobs was to cut wood for the steam engines in the first power house at Theodore. The photo below left shows Claude working on the Gibber Gunyah pump well.



After finishing with the IWSC, Claude worked for the Banana Shire Council (after about 1957 when the Council took over Theodore from the IWSC).

Claude also competed in athletics, and can be seen below competing in a foot-race at Theodore.

Claude's son Vernon Campbell became an apprentice electrician with IWSC in 1954 under Syd Foreshaw. Vern remembers putting the first lights on the tennis courts at Theodore as an apprentice to Syd Foreshaw in 1955. He remembers that the light standards could be wound up and down to change the bulbs.

Vern spent three years in Theodore before being sent to Tinaroo Falls Dam; Moogerah Dam; and then on to Borumba Dam in 1961. When Citra got involved with construction of Borumba Dam (this dam was the first IWSC storage to be constructed entirely by contract), Vern moved back to Theodore and was a private contractor for 9 1/2 years before becoming the District Superintendent of Capricorn Regional Electricity Board in 1971. Vern retired from the then Ergon in 1996.

Another memory of Vern's is that in 1955/56 there were three sites being looked at for Nathan Dam: (1) A site at 'The Brae'; (2) A site 12 miles from Cracow on the Taroom Rd; and (3) A site at Nathan Gorge. Vern remembers getting the sites wired for power generators – they cut poles and sheds were built.

Vern also recalls Ron Afflick - a safety and first aid officer who was also Vern's boss at Tinaroo - also visiting Theodore at a later date.

1955 – 'WATER' REFLECTS

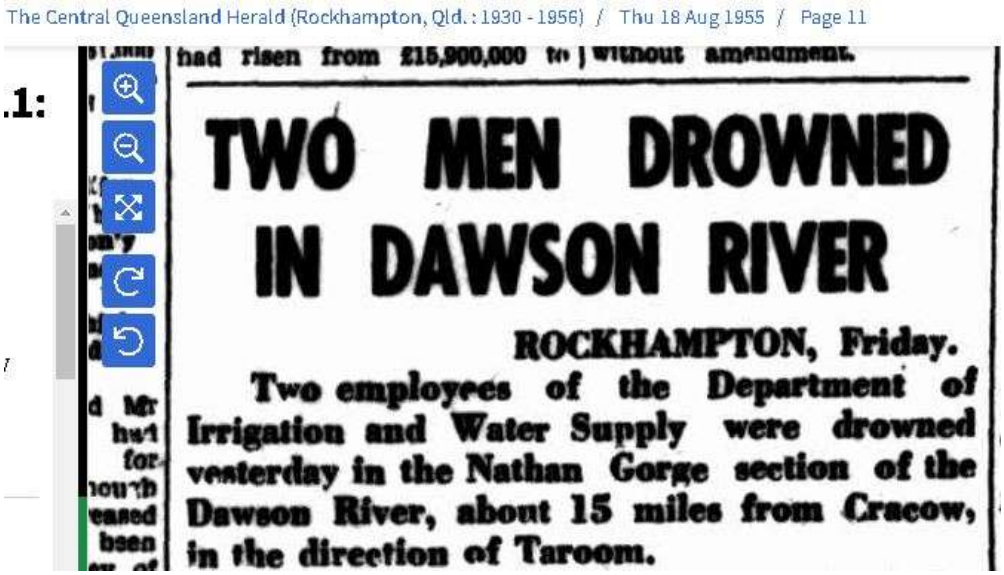
ON ONE OF IWSC's DARKEST DAYS ON THE DAWSON

(Contributor: Anne Chater [courtesy of Vernon Campbell])

This recollection was compiled out of respect for all IWSC families affected by events which unfolded on Wed 17 August 1955, on a section of the Dawson River known as 'The Brae' near the site of the proposed Nathan Dam. This has to have been one of the darkest days in the history of IWSC and its close-knit community's involvement with the Dawson and Theodore. For on that day, a tragic drowning event claimed the lives of two IWSC employees and subsequently involved a further twenty five in the search and recovery effort.

Vernon Campbell - long-time Theodore resident - recalls the tragedy well, as he was an apprentice electrician with the IWSC at the time, putting power through to a camp at a Nathan Dam site. Vern's recollection is that the drowning occurred near a site called 'The Brae'.

https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/79253382



The Central Queensland Herald (Rockhampton, Qld. : 1930 - 1956) / Thu 18 Aug 1955 / Page 11

had risen from £15,900,000 to | without amendment.

TWO MEN DROWNED IN DAWSON RIVER

ROCKHAMPTON, Friday.

Two employees of the Department of Irrigation and Water Supply were drowned yesterday in the Nathan Gorge section of the Dawson River, about 15 miles from Cracow, in the direction of Taroom.

AS REPORTED *The men were Conrad Hoames Jackson (38) - Surveyors Chainman; and Leigh O'Hare (23) - Surveyors Labourer. They were members of a large party from the department surveying a proposed dam site. The two men were drowned about 11.15am while trying to swim ashore from a swamped dinghy. Jackson, OHare and Desmond Terence Foster - engineering surveyor - left their camp at site 185, three miles from the main camp, in an 8ft dinghy fitted with an outboard motor. They were on a surveying trip along the river. The police were informed that after going about a mile upstream, Jackson moved forward in the small dinghy with the object of shifting some gear in the bow. Water poured over the side and the dinghy quickly filled.*

The three men swam for the bank about 60ft away. Foster reached land and then heard O'Hare call out "Des, I'm going'.

Foster looked around and saw Jackson trying to help O'Hare. Foster started to swim back to the men, but they sank before he could reach them. Word was sent to the main camp and 25 employees of the Department of Irrigation and Water Supply and two policemen from Cracow (Sergent Westrup in charge) commenced looking for the bodies. The river is 60yds wide and 14ft deep at the scene of the tragedy and the water was muddy.

It was stated that O'Hare's parents live at Salisbury, Brisbane; and Jackson's father lives near Cairns.

1990 – 'WATER' REFLECTS

ON THE TEAM IN THE 'WATER' OFFICE AT THEODORE

(Contributor: Jon Chapman [WRC District Clerk / DPI&W District Administration Officer])

The Chapman family arrived in Theodore a few days before Christmas 1989 - it was hot and we wondered what the hell we were doing! Peter Moran was the District Engineer and this was my first venture away from groundwater management. I had worked with Peter when he was relieving District Engineer at Charleville. The Dawson Valley Irrigation Scheme was now the focus, although I would see much more in the coming two years.

We shared an office with Department of Primary Industries and Forestry and between them, they had three staff, two of whom were hardly ever in the office. In water season not many of our staff were in the office either. The water joeys were always out and about.

I walked into an office where a no swearing policy was in the process of being introduced. This had caused some kerfuffle within the ranks because for those who have ever worked in the bush and in a man's world as it was back then - in a very challenging environment like the full blown water season - it was never going to cut it, at least that is how I (as a swearer) saw the world. However as were the times back then, it was the boss's wishes and they were respected to some extent - but I could see it wasn't great for morale. When told I too had to stick to the policy I said *"…f&%khim…"* , and normal chatter and cussing continued and we all moved on. Sometime later the boss said to me 'I don't know what you did but morale lifted once you arrived'.

The head water joey was Rod Basham, a big burly gentle giant. The water season was challenging with the demands of farmers, the hot weather and the management of personalities – and the latter presented challenges for some!

Ian Sorensen was a lean laconic character, true salt of the earth type. The Sorensen's have a long line of 'Wateries' with Bob based in Mackay and Steve in Roma. Ian was always up for a beer and a chat, never complained and worked hard.

Don Collier (RIP) was a long time 'Watery' as well with a history in construction. Don had a wry sense of humour, loved a beer and a joke. Don and I got on well.

Colin Bendall was the new kid on the block - I had worked with Col's dad Rolly in Brisbane (Gatton). Col of course went on to far greater things in Sunwater.

We had a full workshop and a store in the depot. Cliffy and Cheyanne were the grease monkeys. This depot was the pride and joy of the workforce and the town. It was used for many things - and not all related to the Water Resources Commission! There was a maintenance crew that worked across central region with Jim Barrie (who was based in Rocky) - Jim was paired off with two men based in Theodore - Steve and Jimmy.

The administration team were locals and in a small town, that can be a can of worms! With no official *Secrets Act* in place, some farmers knew more about us than we knew ourselves. One of the more humorous and stressful times was annual water charges – the payment days at the end of the interest free period. Long story but the farmers more or less had a six month period to pay their bills without incurring interest. Many paid in the normal 30 day period and some more paid after overdue account letters arrived in the mail. But twenty

odd old hard-heads would come in on the last day of the interest free period, abuse the p**s out of whoever the District Clerk was and pay up. This same process had been going on for many years. One guy even finished a heated discussion with me one day with *".....see you over at the pub for a beer later....."* as if nothing had just happened. That was Theodore!

Peter Moran left in late 1990 and in what seemed to me to be an unusual move, he was replaced by Neville Wogandt from the Burdekin - Nev was not an engineer!! Times were a-changing but nothing like what was to come. Neville was one of my best bosses, albeit for one short but hell of a turbulent time. Being a senior water joey in the Burdekin, he knew all the stories and all the farmers complaints, and was able to look them in the eye and call their bluff.

I was the 3rd District Clerk in 40 years! Cec Kilvington had been there forever and he was replaced by his understudy, Peter Guthrie (RIP) in the late 80's. Peter went to Biloela in 1989 and I replaced him. An Internal Audit in late 1990 was very unflattering of past administration practices but this was a good thing for me in the long run. Sadly during 1990, Peter had a fall off a horse and died from his injuries.

Theodore was a sub office of Rockhampton and we saw many a visitor from there and Biloela. We all did many road trips between Theodore and Rocky, Bilo and Emerald. People like Mike McKenna, Mick Williams, Kerry Marler, Maurie Clewley, Kel Roberts, Bill Legg, Tony Bucknell, Bev Pratt, Gaye Nicholls and Tom Wallwork were often in Theodore. Kerry and Maurie had a full-time job at the Cracow mine as I recall!

In 1989 Wayne Goss as elected Premier and in new government, set about changing and downsizing the public service in the state. In 1991, the impact of these changes was to result in a substantial reduction or loss of public service representatives in a number of smaller rural communities such as Theodore. This was to have a big impact on my career. After changing my title from District Clerk to District Administration Officer earlier in 1990, all administration staff were to leave by Xmas 1991 and while the water joeys had to stay, the office was effectively sidelined and Biloela became the main Office.

Before going I had to arrange to sell off all sorts and years of accumulated equipment and supplies. Good plant and equipment - useful only to the Dawson Valley Irrigation Area - went for a song and in my mind anyway, the decline of Theodore the town had begun. Redundancies were on offer. They lost five of us as well as a copper and a teacher. The DPI presence disappeared and soon after a bank closed. The redundancies offered during this reorganisation saw hundreds of years' experience depart from the organisation. At the time I said the impact would be felt not immediately but in 10 or 15 years' time and how prophetic that was! The experience that was being lost was going to be hard to replace.

On a personal note, Nev & I attended a town meeting or two, supporting the townspeople's calls for a change of heart by the government. Not everyone saw things our way and I got a rebuke from the Director General (Tom Fenwick) via Dudley McIntosh, along the lines of *".....pull ya f^&g head in....."* Dudley and I cleaned up the store and in hindsight a few decisions to throw out stuff rather than keep it for history's sake may not have been the best call to make (particularly at a time like this when we are attempting to recall 100 years of it) but as I recall at the time, there was a lot of pressure to "just make it happen".

I played my last competitive cricket for Theodore in the Dawson Callide competition. We won more than we lost! Both kids were now in school but sadly Aaron who was now 6 was diagnosed with Type 1 diabetes. While the forced transfer caused anguish for us, it was in hindsight a blessing at a personal level.

The kids (now 40 odd) often talk about their days in Theodore.

As a family, we enjoyed Theodore - the people were always friendly, the work was good fun most of the time and the memories are still there.

1990 - First day in the office

1991 – A day in the field (Glebe Weir)

1991 – The Chapmans house opposite the office
(taken following a storm)

1991 – A flood coming down the Dawson
(@ Taroom Crossing)

1991 – 'Water' Office Christmas Break-up @ Theodore
(the Bashams, the Sorensens and the Wogandts)

1991 – The Theodore Office
(on the day the Chapmans left)

2022 – 'WATER' REFLECTS

on 'OUR CENTENARY LUNCHEON' AT THE HOTEL THEODORE

(Contributor: WRRA)

'Water' returned to Theodore on 4 October 2022 to commemorate the 100th Anniversary of the passage of the ***Irrigation Act of 1922*** and in Theodore's case, a subsequent long and sentimental involvement by 'water' in the district. Amongst other things, this Act had extensive powers enabling Archibald Partridge to exercise executive control over the development by the IWSC of the township and scheme at Castle Creek.

But unlike Theodore, 'water' has had more than one name-change in 100 yrs and its family tree has also grown with the addition of a few more 'branches', all of whom managed to be represented on the day at the Luncheon eg Sunwater; Theodore Water; Banana Shire; the irrigation community - and of course the WRRA.

As well as 'Our Centenary Luncheon' in Theodore, a further five events were held around the state, organised by a WRRA sub-Committee headed up by Bruce Pearce. Bruce had talked about returning to Theodore to attend the town's 100th celebrations but sadly both he and wife Jennifer passed away unexpectedly in 2023.

Memorabilia was produced for all six 'Q100' events, with Theodore scoring a set of placemats as well as a stubby cooler bearing a simple message from 'water' which spoke volumes about 'the town that water built':-

https://www.waterysauces.org.au/navigation/centenarycelebrations.htm

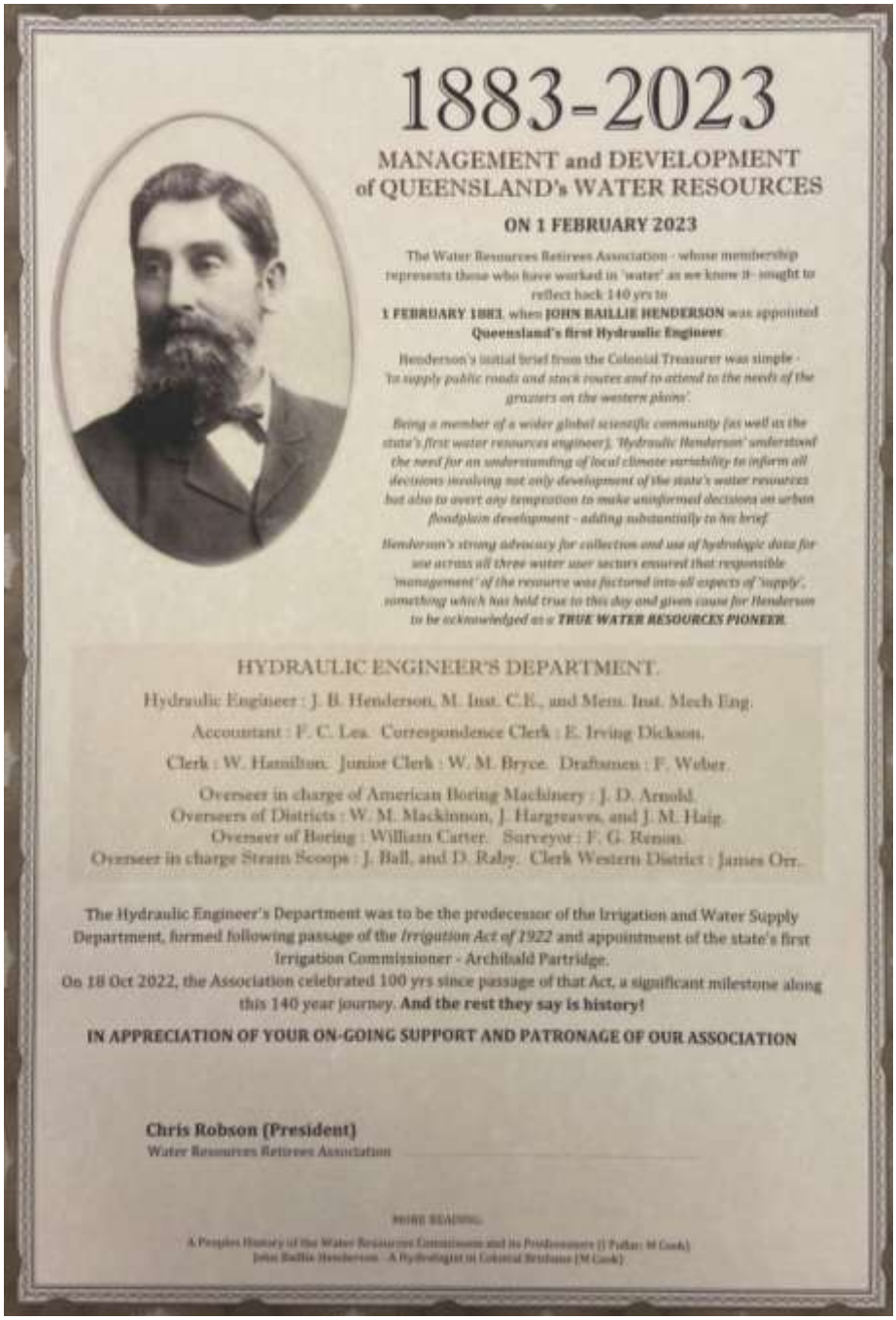
2023 – 'WATER' REFLECTS

on *'ATTENDING TO THE NEEDS OF GRAZIERS ON THE WESTERN PLAINS'*

(Contributor: WRRA – acknowledging Co-Patrons Sunwater & Dept of Regional Devt., Manufacturing & Water)

Works on the Dawson around 1922 started 40 yrs or so after the state's 1st Hydraulic Engineer [JB *'Hydraulic'* Henderson] was appointed. Henderson's brief from the state was simple – ***'supply public roads and stock routes and attend to the needs of graziers on the western plains'***. In colonial Queensland, this basically meant chasing artesian water for consumptive purposes, long before the luxury of the state providing surface water supplies for irrigation by settlers was being contemplated.

So in 2023 - the 140th anniversary of the start of JB's contribution to management / development of the state's water resources – the WRRA presented certificates to the CEO's of two organisations who continue to make such valuable contributions to the state (ie our two Co-Patrons) and who also continue to provide support to our Association through their on-going involvement.



1883-2023

MANAGEMENT and DEVELOPMENT of QUEENSLAND's WATER RESOURCES

ON 1 FEBRUARY 2023

The Water Resources Retirees Association - whose membership represents those who have worked in 'water' as we know it- sought to reflect back 140 yrs to

1 FEBRUARY 1883, when **JOHN BAILLIE HENDERSON** was appointed **Queensland's first Hydraulic Engineer**.

Henderson's initial brief from the Colonial Treasurer was simple - *'to supply public roads and stock routes and to attend to the needs of the graziers on the western plains'.*

Being a member of a wider global scientific community (as well as the state's first water resources engineer), 'Hydraulic Henderson' understood the need for an understanding of local climate variability to inform all decisions involving not only development of the state's water resources but also to avert any temptation to make uninformed decisions on urban floodplain development - adding substantially to his brief.

Henderson's strong advocacy for collection and use of hydrologic data for use across all three water user sectors ensured that responsible 'management' of the resource was factored into all aspects of 'supply', something which has held true to this day and given cause for Henderson to be acknowledged as a ***TRUE WATER RESOURCES PIONEER.***

HYDRAULIC ENGINEER'S DEPARTMENT.

Hydraulic Engineer : J. B. Henderson, M. Inst. C.E., and Mem. Inst. Mech. Eng.

Accountant : F. C. Lea. Correspondence Clerk : E. Irving Dickson.

Clerk : W. Hamilton. Junior Clerk : W. M. Bryce. Draftsmen : F. Weber.

Overseer in charge of American Boring Machinery : J. D. Arnold.
Overseers of Districts : W. M. Mackinnon, J. Hargreaves, and J. M. Haig.
Overseer of Boring : William Carter. Surveyor : F. G. Renton.
Overseer in charge Steam Scoops : J. Ball, and D. Raby. Clerk Western District : James Orr.

The Hydraulic Engineer's Department was to be the predecessor of the Irrigation and Water Supply Department, formed following passage of the *Irrigation Act of 1922* and appointment of the state's first Irrigation Commissioner - Archibald Partridge.

On 18 Oct 2022, the Association celebrated 100 yrs since passage of that Act, a significant milestone along this 140 year journey. **And the rest they say is history!**

IN APPRECIATION OF YOUR ON-GOING SUPPORT AND PATRONAGE OF OUR ASSOCIATION

Chris Robson (President)
Water Resources Retirees Association

MORE READING:

A Peoples History of the Water Resources Commission and its Predecessors (J Pullar, M Cook)
John Baillie Henderson - A Hydrologist in Colonial Brisbane (M Cook)

2023 – 'WATER' REFLECTS

ON A PROUD MURAL ON THE BOULEVARD

'Theodore - The Town that Water Built'

(Contributor: Malcolm Irwin)

I met my wife at Theodore when I was working on the coal investigation for Dawson South Coal Mine. Later, Trevor Olsen - the field mechanic at Theodore - suggested I call John Hillier who then directed me to call Geoff Eades. Trevor Lawson answered the phone. Before too long we were traversing rivers, pipeline routes and dam sites, and then I was transferred to the Peter Faust Dam construction site - a dam designed by Errol Beitz and Peter Allen. The final project I worked on was the Nathan Dam drilling, which followed on from Bob Dunlop's work in 1955. Some of Bob's work might have been lost in the flood of 1974, but Ben Russo was able to re-locate many logs with Bob's fine handwriting.

For over a decade we travelled as family to Theodore to visit the relatives. My father-in -law Earl Clements was Chairman of the Hotel Co-operative for several years. Earl held the district and regional staff at Theodore office in high regard.

2024 – 'WATER' REFLECTS ON 100th ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS

THE ADDITION OF THE THEODORE WATER TOWER TO THE NATIONAL ART SILO TRAIL

(Contributor: Anne Chater)

The Theodore Chamber of Commerce decided to organise the painting of the water tower as a gift to the town marking 100 yrs since Mrs Partridge turned on the lights to Theodore and Governor Nathan turned on the first water pump to the town and the irrigation system thereby marking the functional start of ***'the town that water built'***.

The Theodore Chamber of Commerce is also mindful of the need for small country towns to not only rural-proof themselves via legislative accommodations such as having the same access to education, health and recreational facilities as do our regional and metropolitan counterparts, but to also future-proof our towns.

One strategy in future proofing Theodore is to increase tourism and by having the water tower on the National Art Silo Trail. This will attract more tourists to Theodore, particularly the 'grey nomads' as they travel Australia from one silo to the next.

When the theme of the centenary – ***Sensing the Past, Enjoying the Present and Focusing on the Future*** - was determined within the catch phrase of Theodore being '**the town that water built'** – it was decided that the Dawson River would be the basis for the artwork.

No matter whether you came to these parts 60 000 years ago or 6 weeks ago, the reason you will be here is based on the River.

Grants were written and 2 ½ years later the water tower was painted – finished by 13 May 2024 after taking two weeks. Artists Joel Fergie (aka The Zookeeper) and Travis Vinson (aka Drapl) were engaged,

The artist's briefing was to include the theme of the centenary whilst remembering that Theodore's point of difference from other small rural towns being the Dawson River. The art had to also remember that when you have been to one small rural town, you have been to one small rural town.

The artist's discourse:

'A Ripple In Time' *was created by Queensland Based Artists Joel Fergie 'The Zookeeper' and Travis Vinson 'Drapl'. The work was developed in collaboration and consultation with the wider Theodore Community.*

Nestled in the heart of Theodore, Queensland, where the Dawson River weaves its way through an ancient landscape. This water tower stands, paying homage to the vibrant community that thrives along its banks.

At its centre, two young locals Cooper and Yakani enjoy the river, fishing for the iconic Saratoga and Yellow Belly as many of their kin have done for generations in the past, now and into the future. They are forever young. Surrounding them, the canvas comes alive with a mosaic of local wildlife, each species chosen to reflect the region's rich biodiversity and cultural significance.

A platypus sits on a shallow bank, a testament to the unique aquatic wildlife that thrives on its banks. Overhead, a pair of red-tailed black cockatoos add their distinctive presence, a reminder of rain to come.

Throughout the scene, Willy Wagtails flitter playfully, representing the spirit of the neighbouring Ghungalu people while a Tawny Frogmouth (a Nightjar) the Totem of the Wulli Wulli language group perches quietly in an old gum tree. Yakini sharing a Ghungalu and Wulli Wulli heritage.

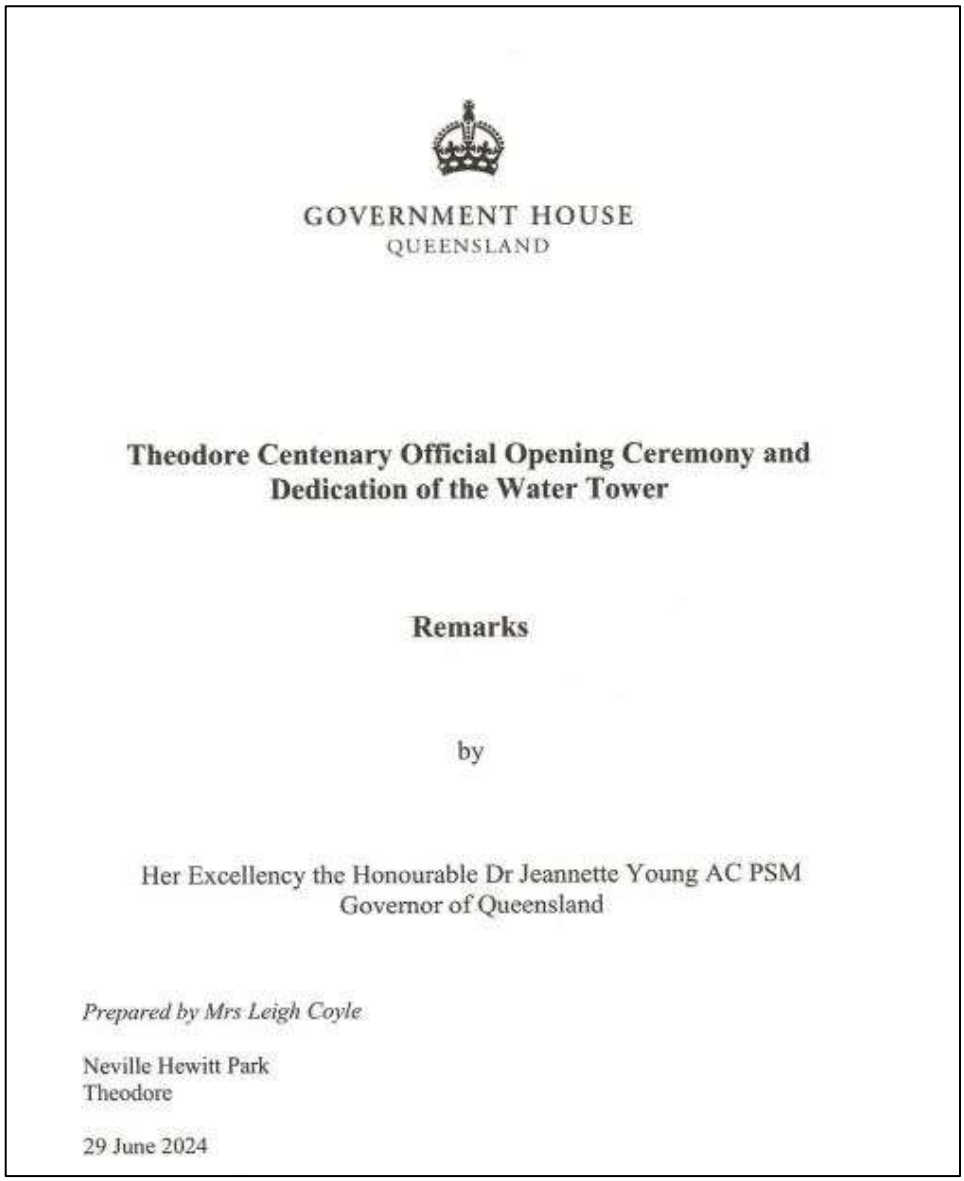
This artwork invites viewers to pause and reflect on the beauty of their surroundings. It looks to evoke a sense of pride and belonging among the people of Theodore, fostering a deeper appreciation for their environment and the stories it continues to inspire. As Theodore looks toward its 2024 Centenary celebrations, "A Ripple in Time" stands as a testament to the community's enduring vitality and the timeless beauty of its beloved Dawson River.

2024 – 'WATER' REFLECTS

ON 100th ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS

OPENING CEREMONY & DEDICATION OF WATER TOWER by HER EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR

(Source: Government House, Brisbane)



GOVERNMENT HOUSE
QUEENSLAND

Theodore Centenary Official Opening Ceremony and Dedication of the Water Tower

Remarks

by

Her Excellency the Honourable Dr Jeannette Young AC PSM
Governor of Queensland

Prepared by Mrs Leigh Coyle

Neville Hewitt Park
Theodore

29 June 2024

SPEECH BY HER EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR DR JEANNETE YOUNG AC PSM

*Member for Flynn, **Mr Colin Boyce MP**; Member for Callide, **Mr Bryson Head MP**; Banana Shire Mayor, **Councillor Neville Ferrier** and Councillors; distinguished guests; ladies and gentlemen.*

*I begin by acknowledging the Original Custodians of the lands on which we gather, and pay my respects to Elders past, present and emerging, and to all First Nations people here today, including Wulli Wulli Elder and local traditional custodian, **Mr Noel Pope**.*

I am delighted to be joining you all to celebrate Theodore's centenary, particularly as this is my first official visit as Governor to this unique and beautiful town.

It is tremendous to see so many people here to honour the history and stories that have made this place so special – not just to those who live here, but to our whole State – and I hope you have been enjoying the many festivities on offer over the weekend.

On the 29th of June 1924, my early predecessor – Queensland Governor Sir Matthew Nathan – turned on the water in the irrigation channels that supplied the first 5,000-acre section of the ambitious Dawson River Irrigation Scheme.

Together with the then Queensland Premier, Edward Theodore – after whom Castle Creek was renamed – Sir Nathan was a champion for a project that he considered would be "one of the most important schemes in the world".

Consequently, from its beginnings, Theodore had all the modern conveniences, with its own power station and electricity, together with the vision and drive to make it an appealing urban centre for the region, with its lovely buildings and palm-lined boulevard.

While the original irrigation scheme was never fully realised, this community – ***"the town that water built"*** *– has never lost its links to its past, nor its commitment to a vibrant future, and water remains a precious resource, vital for Theodore's cotton and grain growers.*

Today, I am proud to be here – a century after Sir Matthew first turned on the water pump – to very appropriately dedicate the water tower with its stunning new artwork, and lend my support to a community that deeply values the contributions of those who came before.

This solid water tower symbolises the strength of the people who have made Theodore home. Its impressive artwork encapsulates the centenary theme – 'Sensing the Past, Enjoying the Present and Focusing on the Future'.

It evokes life along the majestic Dawson River, threading through the stories of ancient indigenous traditions and encouraging us to appreciate the immense beauty of our surroundings, now and for years to come.

I am sure that ***A Ripple in Time*** *will attract admirers from far and wide, and I congratulate its creators* ***Joel Fergie*** *and* ***Travis Vinson****, for the talent and insight they brought to developing this magnificent piece of art.*

I would also like to thank ***Ms Anne Chater****, who, together with members of the Theodore Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the Theodore Historical Society,* ***Mayor Ferrier****, the Banana Shire Council and all enthusiastic supporters have made this weekend possible and I am also pleased that Mr Steven Theodore could be here to celebrate the success of the town named after his great Uncle.*

Congratulations everyone, and Happy 100th Theodore!

2024 – 'WATER' REFLECTS ON 100th ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS

INVITATION OF THE WATER RESOURCES RETIREES ASSOCIATION

(Contributor: WRRA [via Ed Donohue - 'Theodore Water' Board Member & IWSC/WRC 'Old'Boy')

FOOTNOTE BY THE WRRA: In recognition of the significant contribution made by 'water' to ***'the town that water built'***, an invitation was extended to the WRRA by Ms Anne Chater (Convenor of the celebrations) to be represented in the Official Party, and for the representative to make a speech on behalf of 'water' at the Official Opening Ceremony. The WRRA was indeed honoured by this invitation and approached member and fellow 'IWSC/WRC Old Boy' Ed Donohue to provide this proud representation. Ed graciously accepted.

Ed is no stranger to the Theodore area and to 'water', having been appointed as one of the Directors on the inaugural Board of Theodore Water in 2018. This appointment follows a distinguished career which Ed had in 'water' in both Brisbane and Regional Queensland, where he held senior positions within a range of portfolios over a number of years.

Ed also made himself known to another member of the Official Party who had early 'water' connections and a name synonymous with Theodore - Deborah Partridge. This followed Deborah's commemoration of the 100th anniversary of the turning on of the lights to the township by her grand-mother Louisa in 1924, where Deborah ceremoniously turned on the lights to illuminate the Water Tower on The Boulevard in 2024. (In all probability, Theodore's is likely to be the latest addition to the National Art Silo Trail in Australia). Ed passed on to Deborah the acknowledgement by the WRRA of the pioneering role which her grand-father Archibald had played in not only establishing the Irrigation and Water Supply Commission, but also in providing executive control over subsequent development of the township and scheme at Castle Creek.

The WRRA wishes to thank Ed for 'doing us proud' on such an historic occasion as this, and for also supplying the following record of his speech for sharing with anyone who was unable to attend.

Her Excellency, the Governor of Queensland, distinguished guests, the young people of Theodore, the People of the Wulli Wulli land, ladies and gentleman.

*It is well known that Theodore is **'the town that water built'**. Today I have the honour of representing the staff and retirees of the Queensland Government's Departments that were responsible for the management of the water resources and the provision of water supplies.*

Through Machinery of Government (MOG) changes, the Department has had over time a number of various names and responsibilities. These were the Lands Administration Board (in the bad days), Water Resources, DNR, DNRM, even DERM and SunWater from 2000, but the most famous and well known was the Irrigation and Water Supply Commission, better known as IWSC. I worked for those Departments for 40 years (1972 – 2012) and my favourite was the IWSC.

The committee and members of the Water Resources Retirees' Association would like to thank you for the invitation to be part of your celebrations this weekend.

The theme of the weekend is appropriate:

- *Sensing the past*
- *Enjoying the present*
- *Focussing on the future*

First Theme – Sensing the Past

Reflecting on the first of these, think back 105 years. It was only 30 years after the Great Shearers' Strike; those who believed in Utopia had gone to Paraguay and were returning to Australia; and it was just after World War 1.

The Government faced two problems:

- *Redeployment of returned soldiers*
- *Need for regional development to stem the flow of people from the country to the cities*

Premier Theodore and Commissioner Partridge shared a vision and what a vision!

- *Build one of the largest dams in the world*
- *A small hydropower station for the local area*
- *Irrigate 30,000 hectares (5 areas from here to Baralaba)*
- *Fodder capital of Queensland*
- *Build a model garden township with a palm tree central boulevard, and tree lined avenues*

They both believed when the first settlers arrived they would be greeted with 'most of the conveniences of a city'.

It was therefore the business of the IWSC to implement this vision and set the tone for the scheme.

The boundaries of the local authorities were altered to create a separate jurisdiction.

The Commission staff assumed the normal duties and functions of a local council such as rates, roads, rubbish, electricity, hotel accommodation and more. This went on until about 1958 when Banana Shire Council took over.

Last night, my son David who is a Cadastral Surveyor, reminded me of the challenges of surveying the curved boundaries of the land titles in the vicinity of this water tower.

There were also dark days:-

- *Poor roads to Rockhampton & Biloela*
- *The railway was late*
- *Indigenous people were relocated from Taroom to Woorabinda*
- *Funds from England dried up*
- *The Little Green Book was over optimistic*
- *Floods in 1928 and 1931*
- *The Depression in 1930 and*
- *Royal Commission in 1933*

An outcome (recommendation) of the LAB report (Royal Commission) was that the Dam project be abandoned for about 25 years and that the whole project (Dawson Valley Irrigation Project) was about 50 years ahead of its time.

What I find interesting is that when it came to ceremonial activities, it was Mrs Partridge who was given the honour of turning on the lights in 1924. If Theodore and Partridge were 25 to 50 years ahead of their time in water resource development, then in terms of gender equality they were at least 80 – 100 years ahead of their time.

Second Theme – Enjoying the Present

It is obvious that we are all enjoying the benefits of the hard work of those who have gone before us.

Accordingly I would like to acknowledge the work of past employees of the various Water Departments and SunWater (particularly the IWSC) who created the foundations we have today.

I would like to thank the people of Theodore for their hospitality over the years to the newly transferred staff and accepting and welcoming them into the community.

During my time with the Department, we had supportive ministers from both sides of politics. Two who stand out are Nev Hewitt and Ed Casey.

Third Theme – Focussing on the Future

The future is bright and there is potential to achieve the vision of 100 years ago. There are only 6 good dam sites available in Queensland and the Nathan site is the most southerly. I challenge the community to preserve the site for future development to harness the economic growth that comes from water infrastructure development.

Thank you and I wish you well in your celebrations this weekend.

2024 – 'WATER' REFLECTS

ON 100th ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS

'PROUD WE PLAYED OUR PART'

(Contributor: Ed Donohue)

2025 - 'WATER' REFLECTS

ON THE PLANNERS OF THE TOWNSHIP

(A Scenario involving a Water Supply Dept Engineer & an Authorised Surveyor; & a Premier)

(Contributor: WRRA)

IN SHORT

This is the only scenario presented in 'Collections and Recollections'. An amount of research has been undertaken to ensure that some degree of credibility could be attached to it. In the absence of another more plausible (or factual) version coming forward, the WRRA is hoping that the scenario presented here may have gone some way in assisting the pursuit of the elusive answer to the question 'Who designed Theodore?'

At the centre of the scenario is Water Supply Department Engineer Bowyer Edward Shaw and Authorised Surveyor Eric Leighton Peart; and the then Premier of Queensland - Edward Granville Theodore.

In short, the research suggests that Castle Ck/Theodore was designed between 1921 and late 1922 by 'WATER' (ie by then Qld Water Supply Dept Officers - Engineer Bowyer Shaw and Auth Surveyor Eric Peart) - under direction of then Premier Theodore. And that

- the proximity for the eventual location of a township site may have inadvertently been identified by Inspecting Surveyor Amos of the Railways Dept., in his submission to the Chief Engineer for Railways (Mr Sexton) for Mr Sexton's Feb 1922 meeting with Engineer Shaw and Deputy Surveyor General, Lands Dept (Mr Ford). This meeting looked into possible rail routes to serve the proposed irrigation area and a report from that meeting identified two possible routes. And that
- the rail route Option B proposed by Amos was subsequently confirmed by the Royal Commission in August 1922 as one of its findings. And that
- the planning for the township by Engineer Shaw and Authorised Surveyor Peart to serve the 'Option B' rail route was well advanced by the time Irrigation Commissioner Partridge was appointed and formed the Queensland Irrigation Commission in Oct 1922. And that
- Authorised Surveyor Peart endorsed the Town Plan carrying the footnote *'Surveyed by Irrigation Department'* on 13th May 1923. And that
- possible instructions & leverage were provided by Premier Theodore - with his 'Red Ted' hat on!

SUMMARY

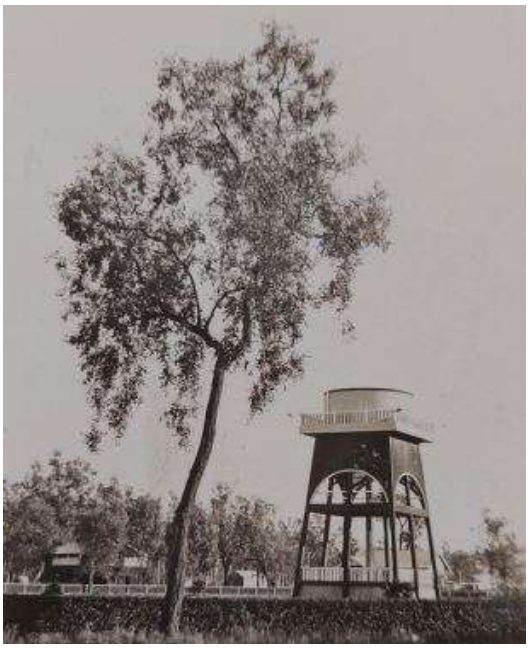
Even though 'water' is credited with having built the township 100 years ago, a definitive answer to the 'planner/designer' question has so far evaded 'water'. A few speculative theories have existed over time, one being that Walter Burley Griffin was the designer. But the response provided by the Burley Griffin Society is that this is not the case.

However, it cannot be ruled out that whoever gave instructions for the design of the township or for that matter may have been involved with its design, may have either had a knowledge of township design (in particular the Burley Griffin style) and/or have been in such a position as to ensure that the influence was carried through to the design. Griffin had designed the irrigation townships of Griffith *(named after political advocate the Hon. Arthur Griffith, Minister for Public Works [1910 – 1915])*; and Leeton in NSW *(named after political advocate the Hon Charles Alfred Lee, Minister for Public Works [1904 – 1910].* Both townships were considered as 'model townships' for their time and were designed to support the Murrumbidgee Irrigation Area, NSW's first.

And what is also of some interest is that a prominent water tower designed by Griffin in Leeton and built in 1912/14, to this day remains a feature of the township (just as the original timber water tower on 'an island' on the Boulevard in the then township of Castle Creek would have been).

The difference with the tower built in Theodore is that it proudly displayed a plaque acknowledging the IWSC for the design and construction of the magnificent timber structure which also incorporated a bandstand - almost as if it was a statement to our southern cousins that we did not have to look beyond the borders of not just our state but also our nation as they did, to find a designer to design something as grand as the Castle Creek water tower.

Leeton's First Water Tower
(designed by Walter Burley Griffin)



Castle Ck / Theodore's First Water Tower
(designed and built by IWSC)

But it must also be remembered that the Murrumbidgee was already off to a flying start with their irrigation area by the time Walter Burley Griffin got involved with designing the townships of Leeton and Griffith to serve the area, whereas Queensland was starting with a blank canvas in the Dawson. So on the one hand we may have been seeking to find some linkage between the township and Griffin because of his profile but on the other, a statement like the one on the plaque on the tower could suggest there could have well been a resolve in post-WW1 Queensland with Premier Theodore at the helm, that we were capable of building something similar to what they had down south by 'going-it-alone'.

So it was Theodore (not the Minister for Lands) who personally introduced the Irrigation Bill into the House for debate and who subsequently saw it passed as the *Irrigation Act of 1922*. But not before ensuring it had specific provisions in it to cater for the establishment of scheme and township in the Castle Ck Section.

So our research looked at possible involvement by Premier Theodore. This involvement takes in possible provision of instructions in some shape or form down to the Water Supply Department (but in particular to Authorised Surveyor Peart & Engineer Shaw) to influence planning of the layout for the Town. Authorised Surveyor Peart would appear to have been contracted pre-IWSC by the Water Supply Department to lay out the cadastre of the Castle Creek Section before the appointment of Commissioner Partridge.

Shaw pre-Water Supply Dept Qld had also worked as a Resident Engineer in the Yanco Section of the Murrumbidgee Irrigation Area just outside Leeton. (In his testimony to the Royal Commission into the

extension of the rail line to Castle Creek, Shaw stated that he was involved in the Northern Murrumbidgee for five years, as well as with Burrunjuck Dam at some stage). Shaw presumably could have also brought to Queensland a desire to put his stamp on things as a newly appointed Assistant Engineer to then Executive Engineer Eklund, through his first-hand and most recent knowledge of the influence of Walter Burley Griffin on the design, layout and construction of Leeton (including the prominence of the water tower and its central location). A notion existed that Peart and Shaw would have had to have received instructions from 'Brisbane' to enable them to set the township out – 'Brisbane' inferring some form of possible formal town planning involvement from 'the big smoke', which is where the majority of town planning influence in that day-and-age seemed to be directed. So an effort was made to better define ' the big smoke'.

In the early 1920's town planning was thought (at least through this research) as having been in its infancy, at least for centres beyond 'the big smoke'. This conclusion was reached through reading of an article published by the Town Planning Association of Queensland in the Brisbane Courier of 9 Nov 1922 (six months after the May Vice regal trip to the Castle Creek Junction). The article reads as follows:-

https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/20582606/1615339 *'Serious consideration will also require to be given to the control of the growth of new townships which must inevitably come into future existence consequent on the consummation of the extensive irrigation schemes proposed to be established in different parts of the state.....We are now asking the public of Queensland to help us carry into effect measures and ideas which will not only benefit us, but be the most valuable legacy which we could possibly hand on to succeeding generations'.*

This leads to the idea that either the Town Planning Association did not have knowledge of any involvement by their membership at that time in the design of the township; or any knowledge as to how far the design and survey of the township of Castle Creek had actually progressed ; or for that matter, possibly any knowledge of any other designer beyond their membership who could otherwise have been involved. This could suggest then that the design may have been done 'in-house' (ie within government) without any formal knowledge or recognition of it by the Town Planning Association of Queensland.

As well, in its reporting of its accompaniment on the Vice-Regal tour some six months earlier (ie 30 May 1922), the Morning Bulletin in Rockhampton had reported that the area around the Castle Creek Junction

'*has been sub-divisionally designed with a proposed township in a central position'.*

This could lead to a conclusion that 'big smoke' was in fact Premier Edward Theodore being armed with a conceptual vision which as part of his wider Land Settlement agenda, was shared either directly or indirectly with an Engineer and a Surveyor from the then Water Supply Department in order for it to happen 'on-the-ground'.

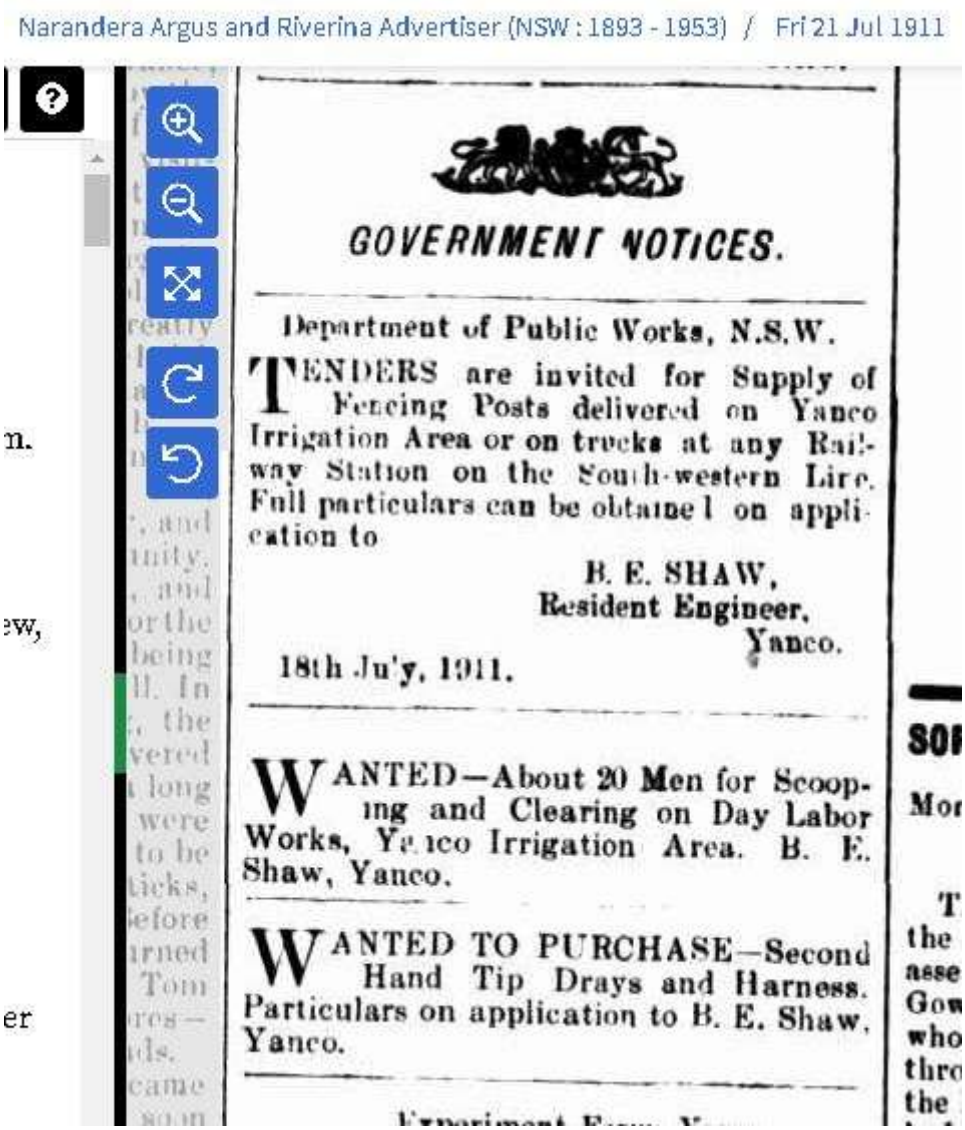
And that the visit by the Vice-Regal Party in May 1922 could be seen more of an inspection by Theodore of 'works in progress' in terms of progression of authorised subdivision; and that by being in the company of the Governor as well, it provided Theodore with an opportunity to impress him with this inspection because it was the Governor after all whose ultimate support Theodore would require for subsequent legislation to be endorsed. That support could be considered as being almost sealed when Theodore while at Camboon Station named an 'ideal dam-site' on the Dawson River as 'Nathan's (sic) Gorge' in the presence of Governor Nathan. And with a possible added reassurance on the day being given to Peart and Shaw that 'the paperwork is to follow' (ie that Theodore would be [a] pushing through subsequent legislation to underpin the vision becoming a reality; and [b] appointing a Commissioner of Irrigation to take the baton over from him). And that maybe there may have been a distant notion in there somewhere that further down the track, there may

be an opportunity to have a township named after one of its strongest advocates, in much the same way as had happened in NSW.

The Town Plan of Castle Creek had been fully surveyed and endorsed by Authorised Surveyor Peart by 13 May 1923, just seven months after the passage of the *Irrigation Act of 1922* and the appointment of Commissioner Partridge. And just on three years after Partridge was appointed (and just four months after Premier Theodore had resigned), Partridge made the recommendation in his 1924-25 Annual Report that the township be renamed Theodore, something the ex-Premier is quoted as having 'consented to'.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Engineer Shaw and his Background The Public Works Salary Registers (State Records Authority NSW) has Shaw's DOB as 22 April 1868, and his first position held being that of Field Assistant, commencing on 6 June 1890. Shaw subsequently became qualified as a Civil Engineer. In his testimony to the Royal Commission looking into the rail extension from Baralaba to Castle Creek, IWSC Engineer Bowyer Shaw stated that he had spent five years in the Northern Murrumbidgee and had also been involved in some shape or form with Burrunjuck Dam. Our research has also found references to him as 'Resident Engineer, Yanco Section' in the Murrumbidgee.



Narandera Argus and Riverina Advertiser (NSW : 1893 - 1953) / Fri 21 Jul 1911

GOVERNMENT NOTICES.

Department of Public Works, N.S.W.

TENDERS are invited for Supply of Fencing Posts delivered on Yanco Irrigation Area or on trucks at any Railway Station on the South-western Line. Full particulars can be obtained on application to

B. E. SHAW,
Resident Engineer,
Yanco.

18th July, 1911.

WANTED—About 20 Men for Scooping and Clearing on Day Labor Works, Yanco Irrigation Area. B. E. Shaw, Yanco.

WANTED TO PURCHASE—Second Hand Tip Drays and Harness. Particulars on application to B. E. Shaw, Yanco.

Engineer Shaw and his Advocacy for a particular rail route (and township site)

In Feb 1922 prior to the Royal Commission, a Committee comprising the Chief Engineer for Railways (Mr Sexton); Deputy Surveyor General representing the Lands Dept (Mr Ford) and Assistant Engineer Water Supply Department (Mr Shaw) met to discuss the best rail route to serve the proposed irrigation area. The Committee had before it a Railways proposal to construct a line from Rannes via Banana to Castle Ck – with a branch line to Moura. Mr Shaw sketched in a route which he thought would be a possible suitable route as well. The outcome of that meeting was that the Committee recommended a route referred to as Option B, which saw it serve a Township in the proximity of the present township of Theodore. The route which Shaw had proposed saw it serve a proposed Township further up Castle Creek away from its junction with the Dawson River.

Under question at the Royal Commission into the extension of the rail line from Baralaba to Castle Creek, Shaw was asked about the 'difference of opinion' which appeared to exist in relation to a proposed site for the township. The following is the testimony provided by Mr Shaw (with reference to Mr Amos in it being a reference to the Railway Department's Inspecting Surveyor):-

28. In the reports we have had there seems to be a diversity of opinion regarding the township site?—Yes.

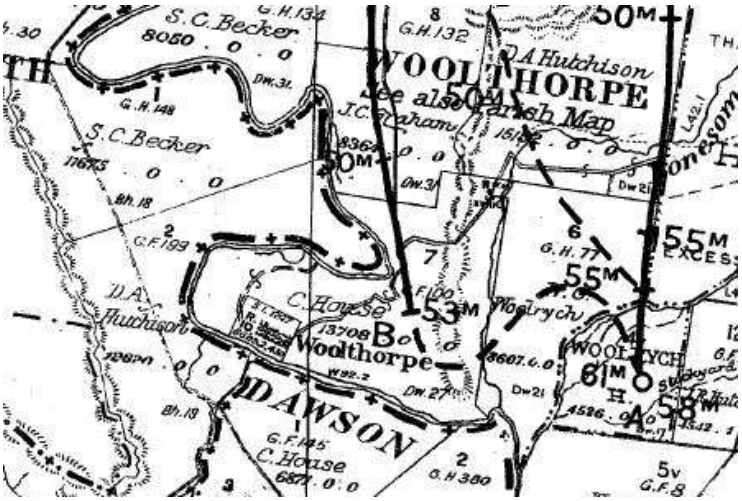
29. Mr. Amos recommends the "B" site?—Yes. There is a difficulty in getting in to the "A" site. He also said it would take a lot of money to take a railway across the Brigalow scrub. My idea is that the Baralaba to Castle Creek line must be extended up to the top of the irrigation settlement.

30. What distance from the top of the proposed settlement is the terminus?—About 20 miles.

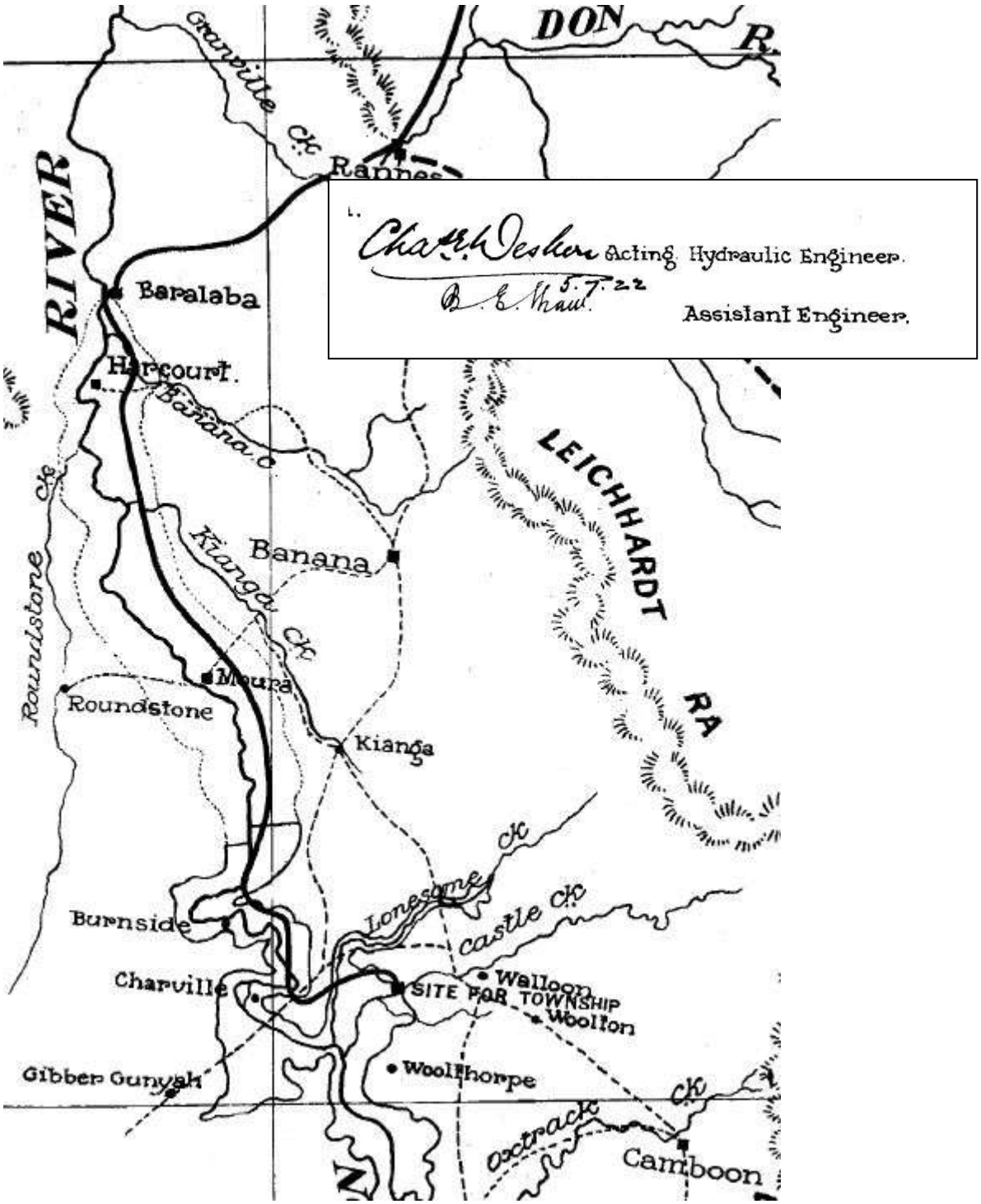
31. I think the committee of experts favoured the "B" site?—Yes.

32. Is it a better township site?—No; the original site is the better for township purposes. We did not definitely decide on a site. The railway surveyor is not up there yet, and I think it only fair that when he gets there he should thoroughly investigate the position. I believe his instructions are to stop at "B," and I am sending over a paper to say that when he gets to that point the other site should be investigated. It is really a matter for the railway engineer to decide.

49. I notice from the report of the Chief Engineer for Railways, and also from your remarks, that there is some argument as to the most suitable site for a township?—There is not an argument, exactly. The Committee decided that the site marked "B" was the better site on the evidence before us, but I think it is advisable, when the survey is completed, that the whole thing should be investigated.



Extract from Appendix A - Railway Dept submission to Royal Commission Adopted Option B rail route is on the left.



Extract from Appendix B - Water Supply Dept submission to Royal Commission This shows the rail line option Shaw was wanting to be investigated. It would have placed the township much further upstream from the eventual site selected.

The outcome of the Royal Commission was that the rail line should proceed and that one of Railway's Options (B) be adopted, thereby placing the rail line in the vicinity of the site eventually selected for the township. (Shaw's testimony to the Commission [ie response #32 on the previous page] could suggest that it may have in fact been the Railway Engineer who had the upper hand in final selection of the site for the town. Nothing has been found to prove or disprove this suggestion).

State Hydraulic Engineer Eklund In late Dec 1920 in his Irrigation Bulletin presented to government, Eklund had laid out his advocacy for opening up of various parts of Queensland to irrigation, and of the requirement for a special Act of Parliament to be passed to provide a legislative basis on which to proceed. By the time his Bulletin was presented, Eklund had already deployed two survey teams into the Dawson. As well,

Engineer Shaw had been employed to assist Eklund. Eklund vacated his position as State Hydraulic Engineer by April 1921, taking up a position as Manager of Hume's Pipe Factory in Loveday, SA.

https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/20467248/1607302

Town Planning Association of Queensland Some weight to the scenario could possibly be seen as coming from the timing and content of an article published by the Town Planning Association of Queensland in Nov 1922, six months after the Vice Regal tour of the Dawson. The timing could have provided an ideal opportunity for a designer of the township to be identified but intentionally or otherwise, it did not. The Association did not touch on Castle Creek in particular (ie the Township) or for that matter any possible involvement by Theodore (ie the Premier) himself. The article reads as follows:-

https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/20582606/1615339

'Serious consideration will also require to be given to the control of the growth of new townships which must inevitably come into future existence consequent on the consummation of the extensive irrigation schemes proposed to be established in different parts of the state.....We are now asking the public of Queensland to help us carry into effect measures and ideas which will not only benefit us, but be the most valuable legacy which we could possibly hand on to succeeding generations'.

Vice Regal Tour of the Dawson Below is a 30 May 1922 extract from a press article in the Morning Bulletin in Rockhampton, written by a correspondent who travelled with the Official Party on its Vice Regal Tour:-

https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/page/5216092

"Early on Thursday afternoon the party, accompanied by ***Mr BE Shaw – Assistant Engineer of the Water Supply Department*** *and representatives of the Rockhampton daily papers - set out on a motor car inspection of the main features of the proposed Dawson Valley Irrigation Scheme – the Governor's car (a Cadillac) being driven by Mr A Taylor and the other two cars (a Buick and a Studebaker) by Messrs W Finlay and J Marsden respectively.....*

The party left Moura after an early breakfast on Friday and passed Kianga Homestead but before reaching Walloon the cars were relieved of some of the luggage by ***Mr EL Peart, Surveyor****, who was travelling behind the party in his Ford car. From the turn-off, a run was made by the four cars along a grass track, for the most part scarcely perceptible, for about nine miles along or near Castle Creek until they reached Castle Creek Junction, in the vicinity of which at Lonesome Ck* ***a compact area of 10,000 acres of very rich soil has been sub-divisionally designed, with a proposed township in a central position, at a considerable elevation above the farm lands, with a proposed distributing canal at its feet.***

It has been suggested that this should be the first settlement in connection with the scheme. Below Castle Creek Junction it is proposed to construct a temporary weir. Luncheon provided here by Mrs C House and Miss M House of Charlevue; Mrs R Davey of Roundstone; and Mrs D Hewitt and Miss L Clewes of Blighty was very acceptable and photographs were taken of the Governor seated on a petrol case and of the Premier sitting on a bag or canvas doing justice to the good things on an impoverished table of two stretchers covered with a cloth".

Below are the members of the Vice-Regal party at that Luncheon, at a site reported in one Press outlet as being 'The Chauk Dam-Site' on the Dawson River.

'The Luncheon at the Junction' - *Vice Regal Party at the Castle Ck / Dawson R Junction (May 1922)*

In the photo but in no specific order are pictured:- The Governor Sir Matthew Nathan; the Governor's Aide-De-Camp (Captain Hammond); Premier Theodore and his party [comprising the Minister for Railways [Hon L Larcombe] & CQ representatives [namely FM Forde; HL Hartley; and J Stopford MMLA]); **Engineer Bowyer E Shaw and Authorised Surveyor Eric L Peart (Water Supply Department)**; driver of the Governor's Cadillac (A Taylor); drivers of the other two vehicles [Buick and Studebaker] W Finley and J Marsden respectively; and two representatives from the Rockhampton Press.

Some of the Vice Regal Party at Cracow Station

PLATE 88.—IN A DAWSON VALLEY GARDEN. A MINISTERIAL VISIT TO CRACOW STATION.
From the Right: THE PREMIER HON. E. G. THEODORE, MR. F. M. FORDE, M.L.A., HON. JAMES STOPFORD, ——, HON. J. LARCOMBE.

(Source: Fryer Library, UQ)

Naming of Nathan's (sic) **Gorge**

It is reported that the Vice Regal party reached 'the Gorge' on Sat 27 May 1922. The next morning at Camboon Station, the Premier announced 'the Gorge' would hereinafter be known as 'Nathan's (sic) Gorge' and that it was 'a perfect dam-site'.

OBSERVATIONS MADE BY 'WATER' (ie 'the joining of the dots')

In relation to this tour party and its visit to the Dawson:-

- 'Rail' was represented by the Minister for Railways; 'Water' was represented by Engineer Shaw and Surveyor Peart (not by the Minister for Lands or the acting head of the then Water Supply Dept)
- The press article claims that the area '***has been sub-divisionally designed, with a proposed township in a central position'.*** This could suggest that the die had already been cast in relation to design of the township as Partridge did not arrive in Queensland until three months later (late August/early September 1922) - this puts to bed any suggestions that instructions could have come from him. Partridge's subsequent endorsement for the Town Plan (as it appeared in his first 1922-23 Annual Report) could therefore be interpreted as a 'fait-accompli'. The first Town Plan for the Township of Castle Ck was ready for Authorised Surveyor Peart's endorsement on 13th May 1923.
- The naming of 'Nathan's (sic) Gorge' and its quoting as a perfect dam-site (prior to having any legislation passed on which to progress the irrigation scheme) could be seen as having won the support of the Governor-in-Council, to ensure eventual passage of the *Irrigation Act of 1922*

DATES AND EVENTS OF SOME SIGNIFICANCE (ie in 'the joining of the dots')

- **1916** (Nov) – Engineer Hugo Eklund appointed as an Exec Engineer in the Water Supply Department - in charge of designing the Inkerman Irrigation Scheme in NQ
- **1916** / 17 – Engineer Bowyer Shaw appointed as an Assistant Engr in the Water Supply Dept to assist Eklund – Shaw's experience in the recent past had also extended to involvement with theYanco Section of the Murrumbidgee Irrigation Area (NSW's first) outside Leeton, and with Burrunjuck Dam.
- **1919** (Oct 22) – **Edward Theodore appointed as Queensland Premier**
- **1920** (Feb) – Engineer Hugo Eklund appointed State Hydraulic Engineer on probation for 12 months, following death of John Hargreaves
- **1920** (May) – Engineer Hugo Eklund reports to government on 1st survey party having been deployed to Dawson Valley
- **1920** (Aug) – Engineer Hugo Eklund reports to government on 2nd survey party having been deployed to Dawson Valley
- **1920** (Dec) – Engineer Hugo Eklund reports on 'Irrigation in Queensland' in a Bulletin provided to government which - amongst other areas identified - rates the Dawson Valley as having good prospects for opening up to irrigation. He also states that an *Irrigation Bill* is in the process of being prepared
- **1921** (Apr) – Engineer Hugo Eklund's resignation to take up a position as Manager of Humes Pipe Factory at Loveday in SA; and Engineer Charles Deshon's subsequent appointment as Acting Hydraulic Engineer, Water Supply Department
- **1922** (Feb 10) – 'The Week' (Brisbane tabloid) prints the article – 'Land Settlement; Two Big Schemes Advocated; Upper Burnett and Dawson'. The article talks up the advocacy of the Premier for the prospects of the Dawson Valley being opened up for land settlement, through the development of the proposed irrigation scheme. QUOTE: *'Mr J Larcombe (Minister for Railways) emphasises the urgency of the Dawson Valley scheme which, he said, was a definite phase of the Government's land settlement policy. Mr J Stopford MLA congratulates the Premier on having departed from the policy of Premiers in days gone by, in that he did not believe in building railways and then trusting to Providence to populate the district. The Premier had adopted a wise course when he had called in experts to investigate the question of closer settlement by means of irrigation schemes, such as that proposed in the Dawson Valley'.*

https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/192972952

- **1922** (Feb 10) – Chief Engineer of Queensland Railways (Mr RE Sexton) was instructed to have an examination survey made of a route for a railway from Rannes (on the DawsonValley Line) to the

Dawson Valley Irrigation Area near Castle Ck. A conference then took place between Messrs Sexton; Shaw and Ford (Deputy Surveyor General).

- **1922** (Feb 16) – Report presented to Railway Department, following Engineer Shaw taking the Water Supply Department's preferred location for the rail line (and thereby a township) to a prior meeting with the Chief Engineer for Railways (Mr Sexton) and Deputy Surveyor General representing the Lands Dept (Mr Ford). The report states that a trial survey of a rail line route as proposed by Railways be made from Baralaba to Castle Creek.
- **1922** (May 24) – A Royal Commission is appointed to look into and report back on a proposal to extend the rail line from Baralaba to Castle Creek to serve the irrigation scheme being proposed.
- **1922** (May 25) – Vice Regal party of thirteen heads off for the Dawson Valley. Amongst others, the party includes Governor Nathan; Premier Theodore; Minister for Railways; and Water Supply Department representatives (Engineer Bowyer Shaw and Authorised Surveyor Eric Peart)
- **1922** (May 28) – Premier Theodore – at Camboon Station - declares a site on the Dawson R as being 'perfect' for a major dam to serve the Dawson Valley, and that the site would henceforth be known as 'Nathan's (sic) Gorge'
- **1922** (May 30) – Widespread reporting of the Vice Regal tour in the press in their visit to the Castle Creek Junction area, including a statement that ***'the area has been sub-divisionally designed with a proposed township in a central location'***
- **1922** (July 3) – Engineer Shaw provides testimony on behalf of the Water Supply Department to the Royal Commission into the rail extension**.** He also provides a map showing a township location which he suggests should be further investigated.
- **1922** (Aug 11) – Royal Commission findings into the proposed extension of the rail line from Baralaba to Castle Creek are released, endorsing the earlier Committee's railway option (Option B).
- **1922** (Aug 28) – Engineer Archibald Partridge (appointed days earlier to report back to government on the Dawson Valley prospects) arrives in Qld, and departs for Dawson Valley the following week. On this his first trip, he was accompanied by Engineer Shaw who took Partridge over the route traversed by the Premier and the Governor in May 1922, inspecting dam sites at Castle Ck., Delusion Ck and Nathan's (sic) Gorge. Upon his return, Partridge commences writing a report.
- **1922** (Sept 20) – Premier Theodore personally introduces the *Irrigation Bill* into the House for its first reading, with references being made to Partridge as 'Acting Commissioner'. The Bill does not contain any specific provisions dealing with development of a scheme in the Dawson Valley.

https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/20572664

- **1922** (Sept 27) – 'Acting Commissioner Partridge' completes his report and delivers it to Premier Theodore
- **1922** (Oct 3) – Premier Theodore leads the second reading of the Irrigation Bill, to incorporate amendments including specific dealings with the Castle Ck Section of the Dawson R Undertaking, as influenced by Partridge's report. These particular amendments attract significant adverse comment, with members of the Assembly claiming that they had not had enough time to consider Partridge's report (Theodore claimed that it had *'been on the table for a couple of days'*).

https://documents.parliament.qld.gov.au/events/han/1922/1922_10_03_A.pdf

- **1922** (Oct 4) – Third reading of the Irrigation Bill scheduled to take place. (It has not been established if any subsequent readings took place)
- **1922** (Oct 18) – The *Irrigation Act of 1922* receives the assent of Governor Nathan
- **1922** (Oct 19) – **Commissioner Partridge's appointment by Governor Nathan**, to give effect to all provisions of the *Irrigation Act of 1922* (with an immediate focus to be given to the specific provisions for the Dawson Valley). 'Queensland Irrigation Commission' (QIC) is formed.
- **1922** (Nov) – Commissioner Partridge makes his second trip to the Dawson, accompanied by Mr BE Shaw (Supervising Engineer) and Mr C Douglas (Mechanical Engineer) of the 'Irrigation and Conservation Branch' - https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/213123839

- **Late 1922** – Irrigation and Water Supply Commission (IWSC) is formed by government, through merger of the QIC and the Water Supply Dept, with Commissioner Partridge at the helm
- **1923** (May 13) – Auth Surveyor Peart endorses his original surveyed plan of Castle Ck Township
- **1923** (>June 30) – Commissioner Partridge presents his first Annual Report (1922-23) to Parliament, in which is contained the 1st conceptual layout of the township to hold his endorsement
- **1924** (June) – Vice Regal party taking in Governor Nathan, Premier Theodore and Commissioner Partridge visit the township for the ceremonial turning on of the power to the township by Louisa May Partridge, wife of Commissioner Partridge. Commissioner Partridge is very complimentary of the efforts of all staff involved.
- **1925** (Feb 25) – **Edward Theodore resigns as Queensland Premier**
- **1925** (Sept 1) – Commissioner Partridge presents the 1924 / 25 IWSC Annual Report to Secretary for Lands (Hon William McCormack – sworn in week following as Premier McCormack). This report contains a second conceptual Town Plan endorsed by Partridge, showing ambitious extensions beyond the confines of Castle Ck and the Dawson River. This version is referenced as 'Queensland's Model Garden City' and recommends the change of its name from Castle Ck to Township of Theodore, to reflect Premier Theodore's strong advocacy for the area. It also states that the ex-Premier *'has consented to'* the recommendation.
- **1926** (Dec 1) – Government Gazette notification of name change to Township to Theodore, with the postal address for the IWSC to be *'Theodore, via Baralaba, Dawson Valley Line Q'*
- **1928** (30 Jan) – Authorised Surveyor Peart enrols his fifth child Robert at the Castle Creek State School (enrolment #187). This could indicate that there was still a requirement for his services and that sub-division activity was still occurring in the area.
- **1929** (Sept 30) – **Archibald Partridge's commission as Irrigation Commissioner ends and is not renewed. Archibald continues on in Brisbane as a Consulting Engineer**. Ex-IWSC Secretary J Grant Thompson appointed as Acting Commissioner.
- **1929** – Ex-Premier Theodore elected as deputy to Prime Minister James Scullin
- **1931** – Ex-Premier Theodore elected as Federal Treasurer until defeat of the government at the 1931 election. Theodore leaves politics, to pursue a successful business career with Frank Packer
- **1931** (Sept) – Acting Irrig Commr J Grant Thompson accompanies Governor Sir John Goodwin on a visit to Theodore to inspect the scheme, and are welcomed by Superintendant Mr Harland
- **1931** – *Irrigation and Water Supply Acts Amendment Act of 1931* is passed, constituting the Land Administration Board to be the Commissioner of Irrigation and Water Supply
- **1932** – Engineer Shaw is involved with design and construction of Orange Creek Weir on the Dawson; as well as Bingera Weir on the Burnett
- **1935** – Engineer Shaw leaves the IWSC to join the Stanley River Works Board, the Board constituted with responsibility for design and construction of Somerset Dam

Longevity of the key players

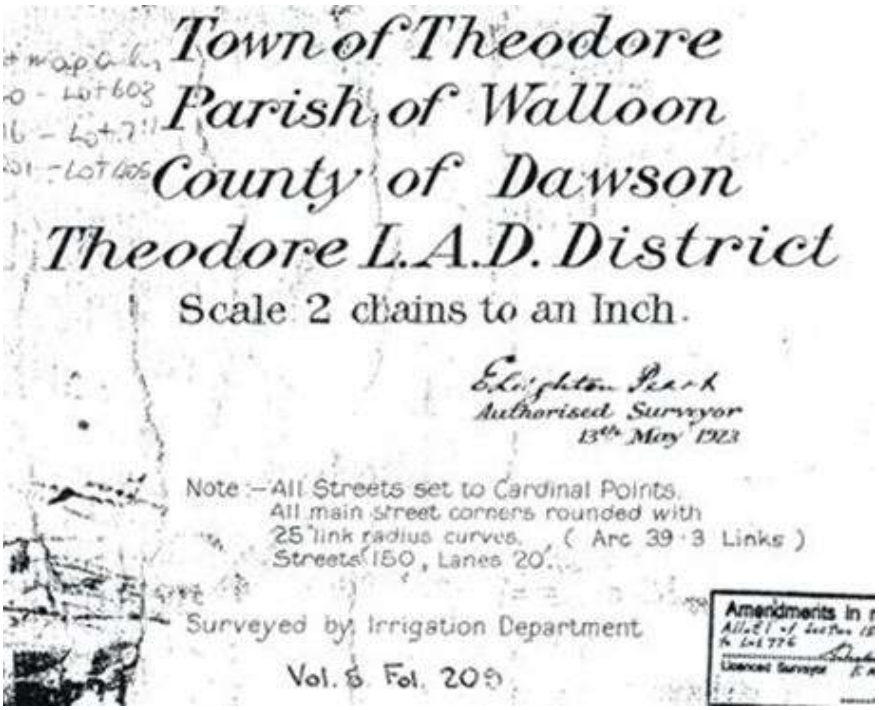
- **1935** – **PARTRIDGE** - Ex- General Mgr First Mildura Irrigation Trust (Vic) / IWSC Commissioner (Qld) / Consulting Engineer (Qld) / **Archibald Frederick Partridge passes away in Brisbane, aged 56**.
- **1942** – **SHAW** - Ex-North Murrumbidgee Irrig Area Resident Engr (Yanco NSW) /IWSC Engr (Qld) / Stanley River Works Board Engr (Qld) / (No further professional profile available) / **Bowyer Edward Shaw passes away at Somerset Dam, aged 74**
- **1950** – **EKLUND** - Ex State Hydraulic Engineer (Qld) / Mgr Humes Pipes Factory (SA) / Mgr Humes Pipe Factory (Qld) / Mgr Cement Linings Limited (Qld) / **Hugo Emanuel Andreas Eklund passes away in Brisbane, aged 71.**
- **1950** – **THEODORE** - Ex Premier (Qld) / Deputy Prime Minister (Aust) / Federal Treasurer (Aust) / Business Assoc of Frank Packer (NSW) / **Edward Granville Theodore passes away in Sydney aged 66.**
- **1974** – **PEART** - Ex-IWSC-contracted Auth Surveyor (Qld) / (No further professional profile available) / **Eric Leighton Peart passes away in Brisbane, aged 86.**

CONCLUSION REACHED BY 'WATER'

There is an element of confidence in the scenario presented. Until such time as can be proven otherwise, the very real possibility of personal involvement by Premier Theodore in some shape or form - coupled with major lead roles played by Engineer Bowyer E Shaw and Authorised Surveyor Eric L Peart &– is considered to be the most likely scenario for those involved in the planning of Theodore:-

An Engineer; an Authorised Surveyor; and a Premier

The WRRA would therefore suggest that Theodore could be both
'THE TOWN THAT WATER BUILT'
as well as
'THE TOWN THAT WATER PLANNED'



Commemorative Plaque
in memory of IWSC Engineer
Bowyer Edward Shaw
and his wife Clara Maria Shaw
(Mt Thompson Memorial Gardens and
Crematorium, Holland Park, Brisbane)

FOOTNOTE: re ANOTHER IRRIGATION TOWNSHIP built by ANOTHER ENGINEER SHAW in ANOTHER STATE

EB Shaw (not BE Shaw)- Ebenezer B Shaw - State Rivers and Water Supply Commission [V]

A degree of optimism prevailed early on in the research on the Castle Creek / Theodore Township when an article was uncovered in the Bendigo Advertiser of 4 June 1915 under the heading *'Water Commission – Appointment of Mr Shaw – Resented by Irrigation Members'.*

https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/89967356

No given names appeared in the article. It reported on the appointment of an Engineer by the name of Shaw to an 'Irrigationist' position in the State Rivers and Water Supply Commission (V). In the article, the claim was made that Shaw:-

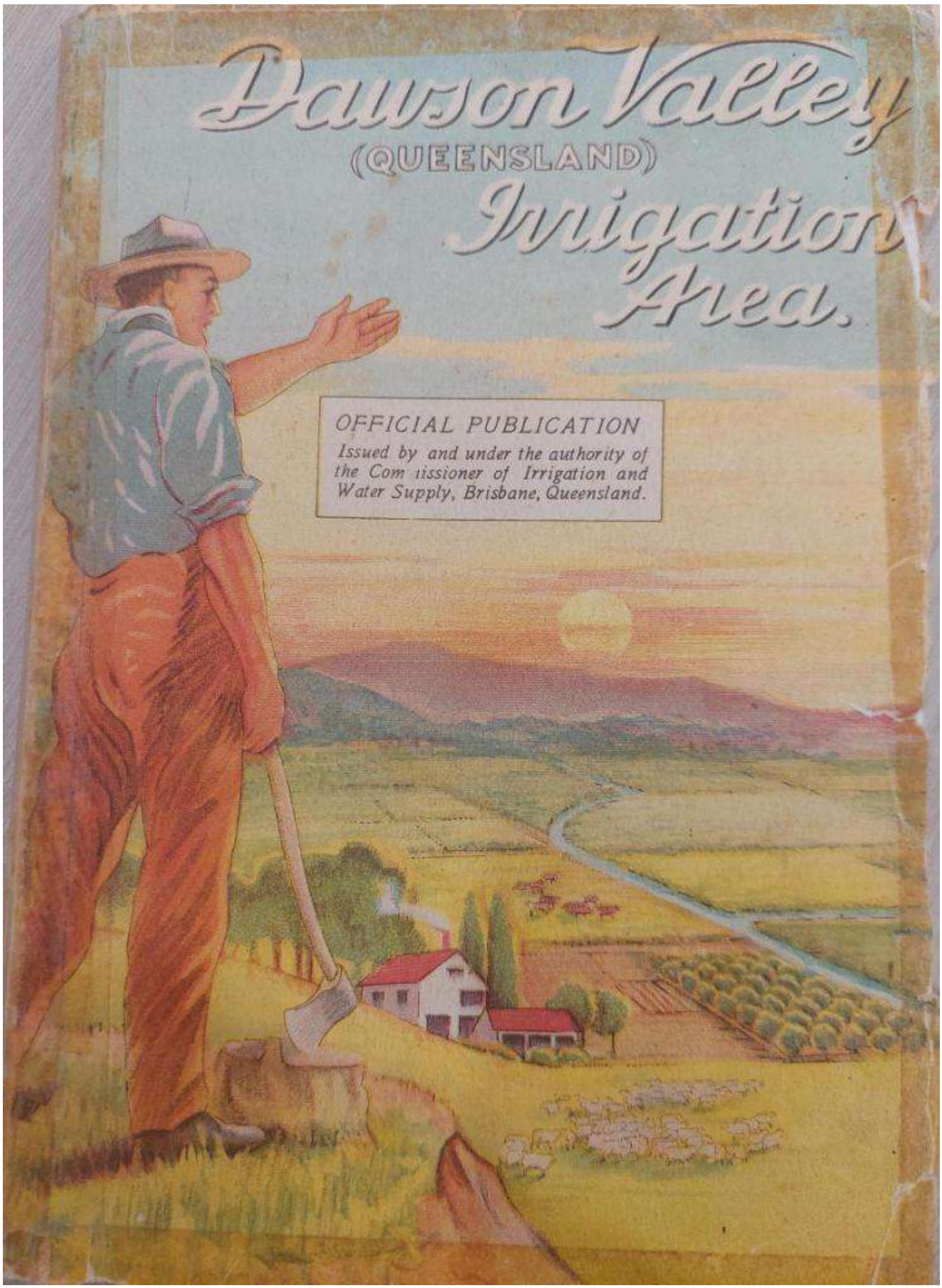
> *'completely designed and carried out the Nyah irrigation settlement (on a bend of the Murray River in Victoria) which was one of the most promising in the state. He had absolute control of the engineering and designing'.*

Should this settlement have been designed by IWSC Engineer Bowyer E Shaw (BE Shaw), a very strong case could then have been built around Bowyer as being the designer/planner of Theodore based on this past experience and credit. (The Nyah irrigation settlement is quoted as being built in 1893 and its establishment was of some note as it was reported as imitating the 'New Australia' settlement of William Lane in Paraguay).

However, further research was to uncover an eminent Engineer by the name of Ebenezer B Shaw (EB Shaw) who in 1915 had been appointed as a Commissioner of the State Rivers and Water Supply Commission (V). So as much as the Bendigo Advertiser discusses the appointment of a Shaw to an 'Irrigationist' position at the centre of its article, the very fact that the appointment held the ire of many at the time suggests that the appointment was actually to that of the higher office of Commissioner. This was all but confirmed after reading a Bibliography on Ebenezer Shaw, where there were also two other references in the Bendigo Advertiser article which have now been shown to align directly with Ebenezer B Shaw – ie that he got his qualifications at Melbourne University; and that he joined the SRWSC (V) upon its inception in 1906. Ebenezer Shaw is also credited with involvement in the construction of such high profile jobs as the Flinders St Railway Viaduct (Melbourne).

APPENDICES

NOTE: APPENDIX 1 IS A REPRODUCTION
(DOC Ref# PR 314333 - State Archives)


Dawson Valley
(QUEENSLAND)
Irrigation
Area.
OFFICIAL PUBLICATION
Issued by and under the authority of the Com ıissioner of Irrigation and Water Supply, Brisbane, Queensland.

IRRIGATION AND WATER SUPPLY COMMISSION,
QUEENSLAND.

The

Dawson Valley Irrigation Scheme

and

WHAT IT OFFERS TO SETTLERS.

Published by and under the Authority of
A. F. PARTRIDGE
Commissioner of Irrigation and Water Supply, Queensland.
1926.

Queensland's Great Agricultural Project.

FOREWORD.

In the Dawson Valley, one of the most fertile districts in Queensland, a magnificent scheme for the utilisation of the waters of a great river for irrigation purposes offers to settlers a golden . . . . opportunity . . . . .

The first 30,000 acres of what ultimately will be a 300,000-acre project have been prepared for settlement, and 373 irrigated and dry farm areas are . . now available for allotment . .

POINTS FOR SETTLERS

1. *Land tenure is perpetual leasehold, no cash being required to purchase land. Furthermore, no land tax is payable*
2. *Perpetual leasehold means possession of the land by settlers and their heirs forever, providing conditions of lease are fulfilled. Leaseholds and improvements thereon may be transferred in the same manner as freehold property*
3. *Farms may be selected on the following liberal conditions:*

   Upon application – One year's charges (as per schedule) to be lodged with application

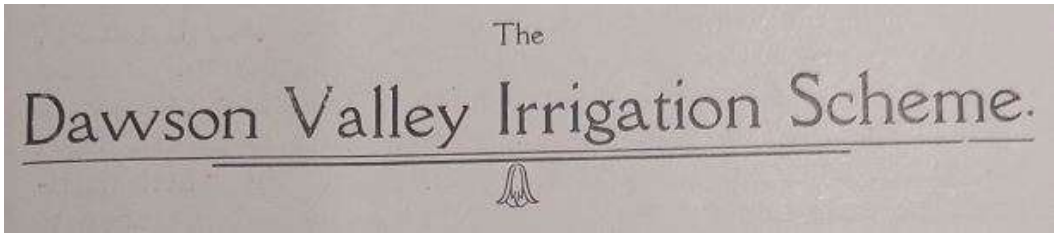
   First year – Amount lodged with application to be accepted as first year's charges

   Second year – One-third of charges only to be paid

   Third year – Two-thirds of charges only to be paid

   Fourth year and thereafter – Payment in full of charges as per schedule

4. *The annual charge scheduled includes land rental, irrigation water rates, shire rates, and roads and channel maintenance*
5. *Regular rotational periods of irrigation for farms*
6. *Main and feeder roads throughout the area, connected directly by rail to seaboard cities*
7. *Assistance to settlers to build homes, improve and stock their farms, on £ for £ basis.*
8. *Commissioner's Demonstration Farm within the area*
9. *Factories built and operated by Commissioner as products become available from farmers*



No other State in Australia offers to the settler so much as does Queensland. Already in proportion to population the wealthiest section of the Commonwealth; teeming with natural resources practically untouched; capable of immense development; young, virile, progressive; with every advantage the South can boast, and many more which are peculiarly its own – truly, it is the Land of Opportunity, the Golden State.

From every part of the British Empire seekers of a new life in a new land have made Queensland their home. They came in search of larger opportunity, of better, happier ways of living; they stayed because they found them.

These pioneers have proved that this great, rich, swiftly growing State offers a better chance to get ahead. They realised that here, as elsewhere, hard work is the price of success. They found, too, that in Queensland the rewards of working, planning and saving are sure and lasting. South of the Equator there is not a country of greater potentialities. Tens of thousands of acres of glorious land lie in idleness awaiting the day when agriculture will rouse them into fruitful activity. And, as the land is conquered, wealth and population will surely follow.

The California of the Commonwealth in point of climate, of promise of a splendid future, of possibilities of expansion, it holds out both hands to the settler.

Are you willing to grow with Queensland? Your chance is here, and the purpose of this pamphlet is to show what is offered in connection with one of the most important schemes of closer settlement which Queensland

is now developing. Learn of the opportunity awaiting settlers in the Dawson Valley, destined a decade hence to be the heart of rural Queensland. The project is one in which agriculture and energy will combine to bring a huge area to such a point of production that the reward of the pioneer will be worthy of his enterprise.

The Township Weir, Theodore

HARNESSING A GREAT RIVER

There is no public or private question of such importance to the State as the reclamation and irrigation of arid and semi-arid lands. In Queensland, this form of development has not in the past received the attention which has been devoted to it elsewhere, and so it may be said that the Dawson Valley scheme marks a definite step forward, a chapter that will be one of the most notable in the history of the State.

Farming is economic only when crops can be grown during periods of drought as well as those of normal or abnormal rainfall. Realising this, the Government of Queensland has set about an adjustment of the balance in rural industries, and the Dawson Valley Irrigation Scheme is the outcome. Almost since the earliest years of settlement in Queensland, the preponderance of attention of the man in the dry interior has been in the direction of stock-raising or wool-growing. But it has become evident that the uncertainty of the seasons in our inland areas is distant about 134 miles from Theodore, the central township of the first of the irrigation zones now available for settlement.

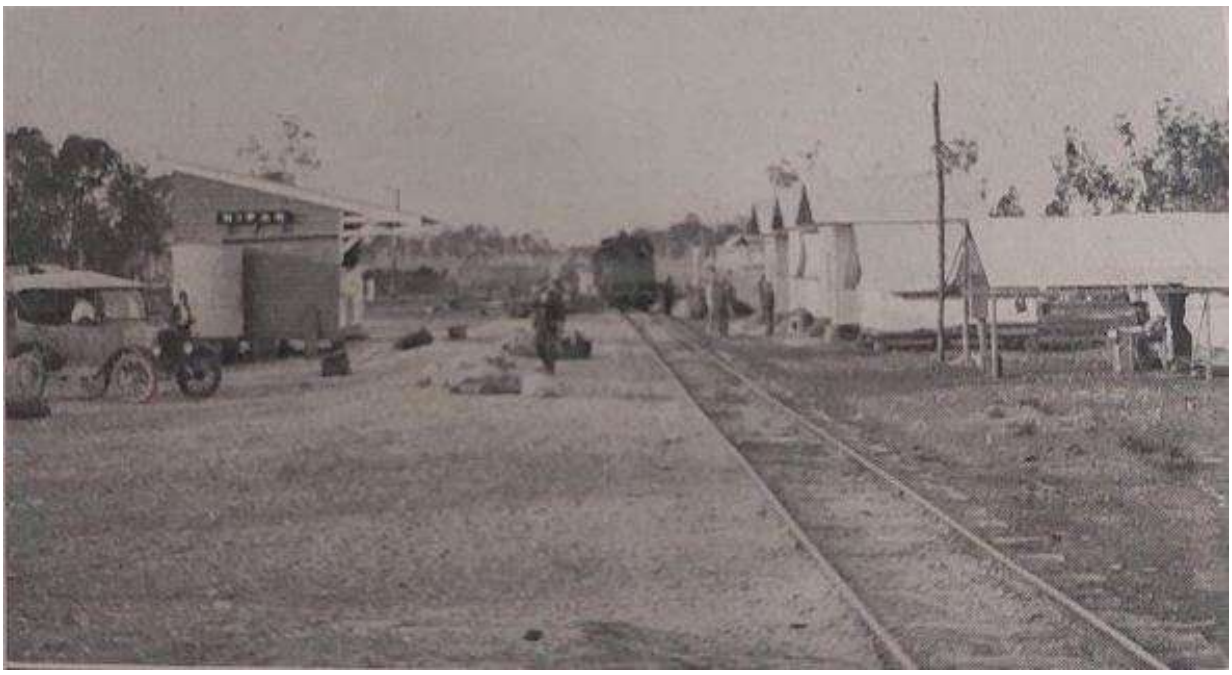
An Irrigation Canal at Theodore

This is an ever-present obstacle to steady progress from an agricultural point of view, and has caused a swing of opinion towards conserving the waters of the great river systems, and thus making available vast areas of land that need only the life-giving water to make them generously productive.

Ultimately, there should be at least 5,000 irrigated farms and 2,000 attached dry areas in the Dawson Valley, each one immune from any fear of drought by reason of the enormous storage of water that will be available. At a conservative estimate the population of the townships and the agricultural areas will be not less than 50,000; so the importance to the State of this great project can be readily understood.

WHAT AND WHERE IS THE DAWSON VALLEY?

The Dawson River rises in the Great Dividing Range and flows through a tract of country situated in what is known as the Central District. Rockhampton, apart from Brisbane the most thriving city on the eastern seaboard,



Present Rail-Head, Dawson Valley Line

The Dawson Valley railway, now approaching completion, serves the whole of the irrigation areas, and good feeder roads provide facilities for travel and transport by the modern method of the motor. Travelling by motor from Brisbane, via Toowoomba and Dalby, Theodore is 350 miles from Brisbane.

As is the case of Southern California prior to the advent of irrigation, this district hitherto has been devoted almost entirely to cattle-raising. There are miles of rich river flats, soil tests from which have revealed good capillarity, ample humus, and liberal amounts of all plant foods. The vegetation is light and capable of easy removal. Above the river flats are higher lands which include scrub areas, plain country with scattered clumps of timber, and rolling downs. The soil is very fertile on all these higher lands, the growth of grass after adequate rainfall is prolific, and their suitability for the pasturage of stock is unquestioned. Apart from this, with irrigation by means of pumping from the lower-level canals, they can be made to produce seasonal crops in great quantity and under profitable conditions.

It is in truth a Valley of Promise; a land in which any farmer worthy of the name should make good.

In the matter of climate the Dawson Valley has many advantages. It is sufficiently distant from the coast to escape the humidity associated with summer heat in that part of the State, and to participate in the cool nights peculiar to inland Queensland near the Tropic of Capricorn. During the winter frosts are light and few in number, and in summer it is seldom that there is a day when the heat is not tempered by a gentle breeze.

There is an average annual rainfall of 27 inches, most of which falls in the four summer months, December to March.

A MAGNIFICENT PROJECT

It is impossible to contemplate the scheme by which it is proposed to convert the Dawson Valley from an unproductive and sparsely populated area into a prosperous countryside, without visualising at the same time the stupendous nature of the project.

All great engineering feats have their romantic side, for there is something about the immensity of them, the victory of human skill and ingenuity over the difficulties presented by Nature, which appeals to the imagination of the average man. When it is considered, therefore, that to provide against all contingencies in the irrigation of the Dawson Valley there is to be constructed the largest water storage in the world, it will be realised that the Government of Queensland is determined to spare no effort to make the project the success it deserves to be.

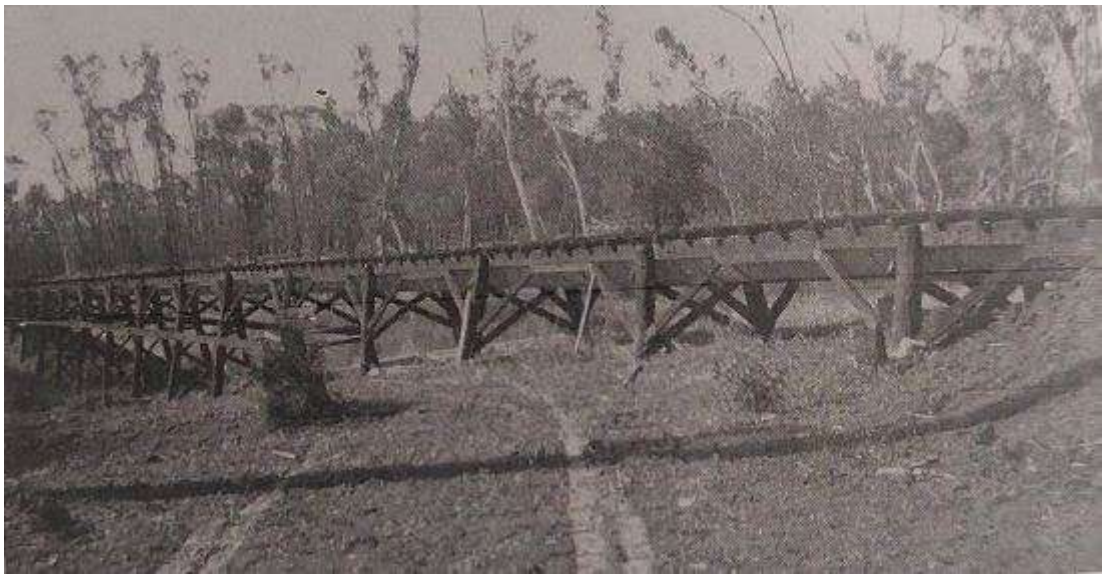
Irrigation Canal with Regulator, Theodore

The physical features of the country are admirably adapted for irrigation on a very large scale. Nature has provided ideal conditions for conserving water at a gorge – selected for the site of the main storage dam – which is situated towards the head of the river and about 30 miles below the township of Taroom. The narrowness and depth of the walls at this point permit the construction of a tremendous storage at a relatively low cost. When it is completed, the great dam – to be known as the Nathan Dam as a compliment to the late Governor of Queensland Sir Matthew Nathan, who took a deep interest in the scheme – will impound at least 2,485,000 acre-feet of water. The immense volume stored can be better understood when it is realised that there would be more than sufficient to supply Brisbane for over 50 years without any rainfall during that period. A further idea of the magnitude of the reservoir may be gained from the fact that 130 square miles of country will be submerged. This great storage is considered necessary in order to ensure the safety of the extensive areas of land which will ultimately depend upon it.

A Drainage Channel, Theodore

Some years hence, when the whole of the territory to be irrigated is ready for settlement, we will find, reviewing the scheme from its beginning at Nathan Dam, that from the great reservoir the stored water is delivered through sluices to a hydro-electric station, where electricity is generated for the production of power and lighting for the whole project. After leaving the power station, the water discharges down the bed of the river to secondary weirs, each of which forms the offtake works and regulators for the canals which supply the whole area by gravitation.

The irrigable area commanded by gravitation is from 100,000 to 150,000 acres, lying along both banks of the river for a distance of over 100 miles. Of a further 200,000 acres of higher land, portions of which will be attached to the irrigated blocks for stock-raising and general farming purposes, it will be possible to irrigate about 50,000 acres by pumping to the higher levels from the gravitation canals, the power being derived from the hydro-electric scheme mentioned above.



Fluming Water over Creek, Theodore

Probably it will be six or seven years before the whole of the available area of 150,000 irrigable acres is ready for settlement, but by that time production in a very considerable portion of the Dawson Valley should be in full swing. It is not proposed to delay settlement any longer than can be helped, for it is recognised that the sooner land is taken up the cheaper becomes the cost of completing the project. With this end in view, the scheme provides for five distinct zones of from 40,000 to 50,000 acres, each with its own township, and each

with its correspondingly large area of 'dry' country. It is the first of these, the Theodore Zone, that is now open for selection. As will be seen later in this pamphlet from a description of what is being done in Theodore, it is intended to give the incoming settler every possible chance of making a success of his work.

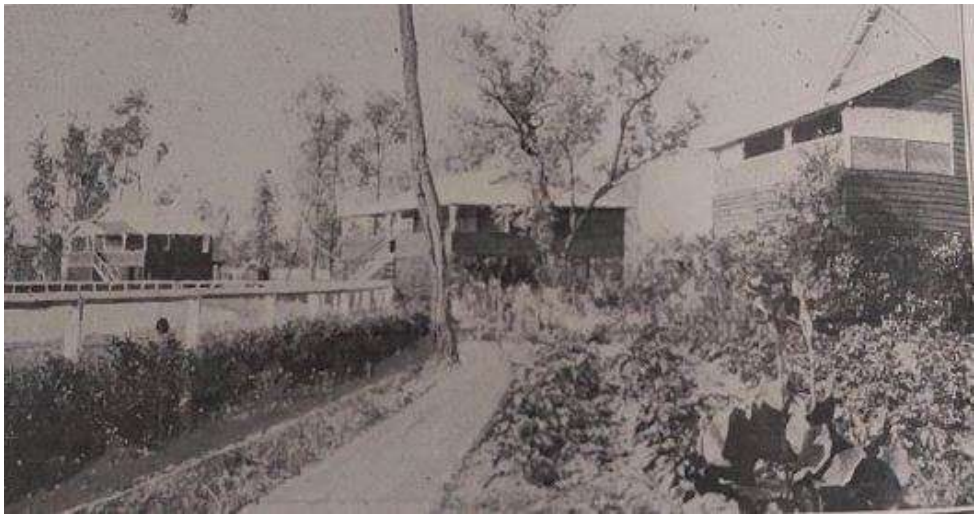
THEODORE ZONE – THE FIRST SETTLEMENT

The best way to realise the work that has been done in the Theodore zone, 30,000 acres of which are now available for allotment, is to visualise that section of the Dawson Valley district as it appeared in 1923.

Theodore Area in 1923

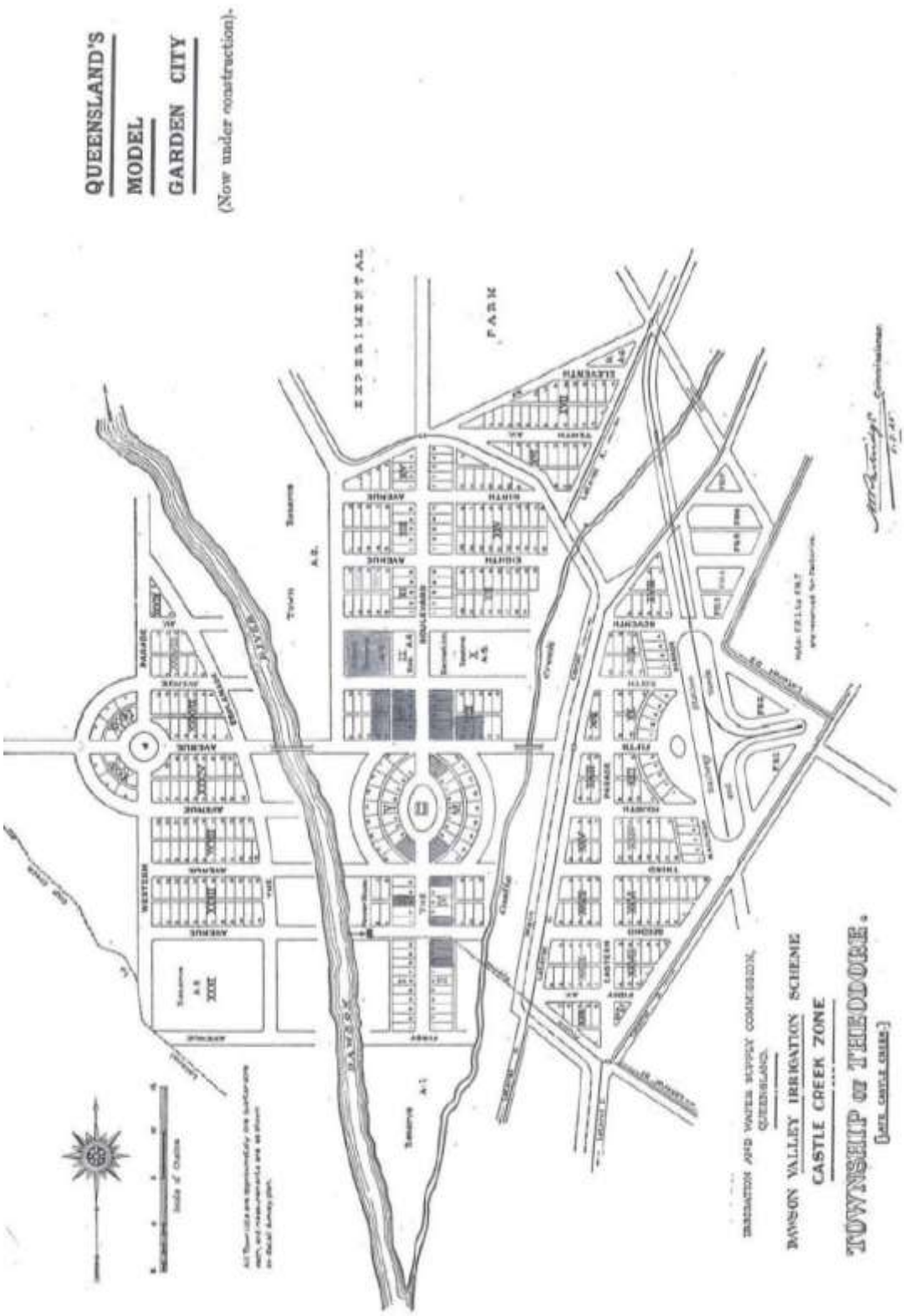
In those days there would have been traversed for mile upon mile a country wherein the only signs of life were provided by the herds of cattle which grazed along the verdant river flats or wandered among the scrub and upon grassy plains of the uplands. There was then nothing to indicate that in this locality the magic wand of irrigation was to bring into being pulsing centres of business life, pleasant homesteads, good roads, a railway; everything, in fact, on which there could be based the existence of a thriving community.

But what a difference today! No greater surprise could be afforded the traveller of three years ago than the sight which spreads before him as he approaches the central town by night. There on the plains, where he had watched the browsing cattle, the glitter of a modern electric system would greet him – the lights along the trim, tree-planted boulevards and building-bordered streets of the first model garden city of Australia. So would he come to Theodore, first of the zonal townships of the Dawson Valley scheme, created by the engineers and town planners who are carrying out the great project, and typifying the preparations which are being made for the reception of an important community.



Corner of Theodore Township, 1926

Theodore has been planned along the most modern lines and the determination of the administration is that nothing will be allowed to mar the beauty of design which the latest town planning methods have made possible. In many ways Theodore will enjoy conveniences at least equal to suburban areas around large cities.



Skirting one side of the area on which the township stands are the waters of the Dawson. Traversing the township from north to south there is a spacious garden boulevard, intersected at intervals by avenues which

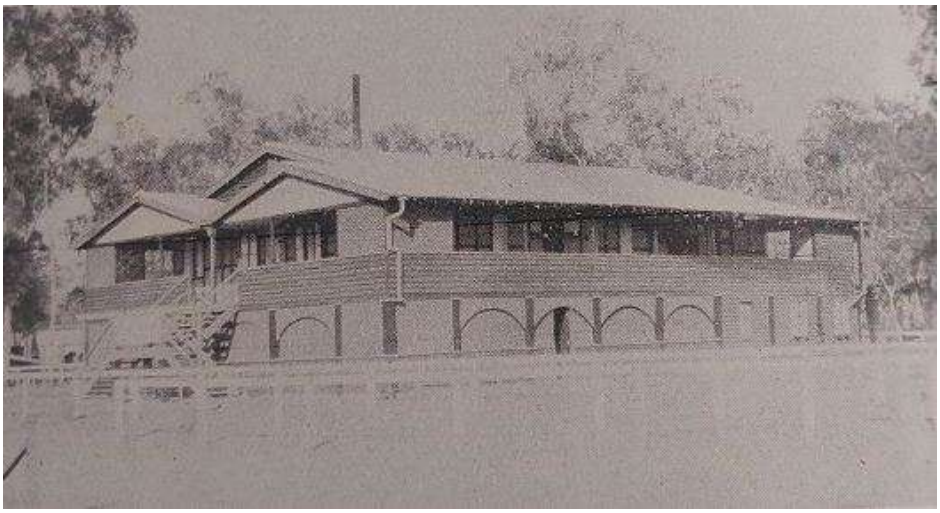
have also been planted with palms and shade trees in such a manner as to lend a restful aspect to the general scheme. Certain of these avenues are designed to accommodate the business section of the town, and along the others will be the residences of the community. In the centre of the town is an oval, around which have been erected the residences for the accommodation of members of the Commissioner's local staff, neat and varied in design, and each situated on a quarter-acre block.

Another Corner of Theodore Township

The oval is laid out in lawns, in the centre of which stands a picturesque water tower, 50 feet high, from which the town water supply is reticulated. The lower floor of the tower is arranged as a bandstand.

Theodore is equipped with an electric supply system, current for which is generated at a modern power station on the bank of the river. The station also supplies power to the pumping plant which lifts the water for the irrigation of the 5,000 acres of farm blocks now ready around Theodore. For house and street lighting and industrial purposes, power is supplied from the same source.

Buildings already in existence include a large accommodation house for the convenience of intending settlers and visitors; a public hall with provision for picture shows, dances and public entertainments; a school with accommodation for 100 children; the local offices of the Commissioner, a post office, official and private residences, and shops. An up-to-date sawmill, controlled by the Commissioner, is operating at Theodore, and the whole of the timber required for building and construction purposes is cut on the spot at a comparatively low cost.



Settlers and Visitors Accommodation House, Theodore

Large stocks of sawn timber are on hand ready for the time when they will be drawn upon for settler's homes and the other requirements of the areas.

It has been decided that in the erection of houses within the Theodore township area there must be no departure from designs that will tend to add to the artistic layout of the settlement. To this end, the Commissioner will only give his consent to building after the plans have been inspected and approved by his officers. Settlers are assisted in this connection by varied plans being made available if desired. By adhering to this system, it is hoped to foster the growth of a gem among country towns, and, when the other zonal centres are completed on the same lines and connected by rail and road, life in the Dawson Valley should be healthier and happier than in the crowded cities of the coast.

A Cottage Garden, Theodore Township

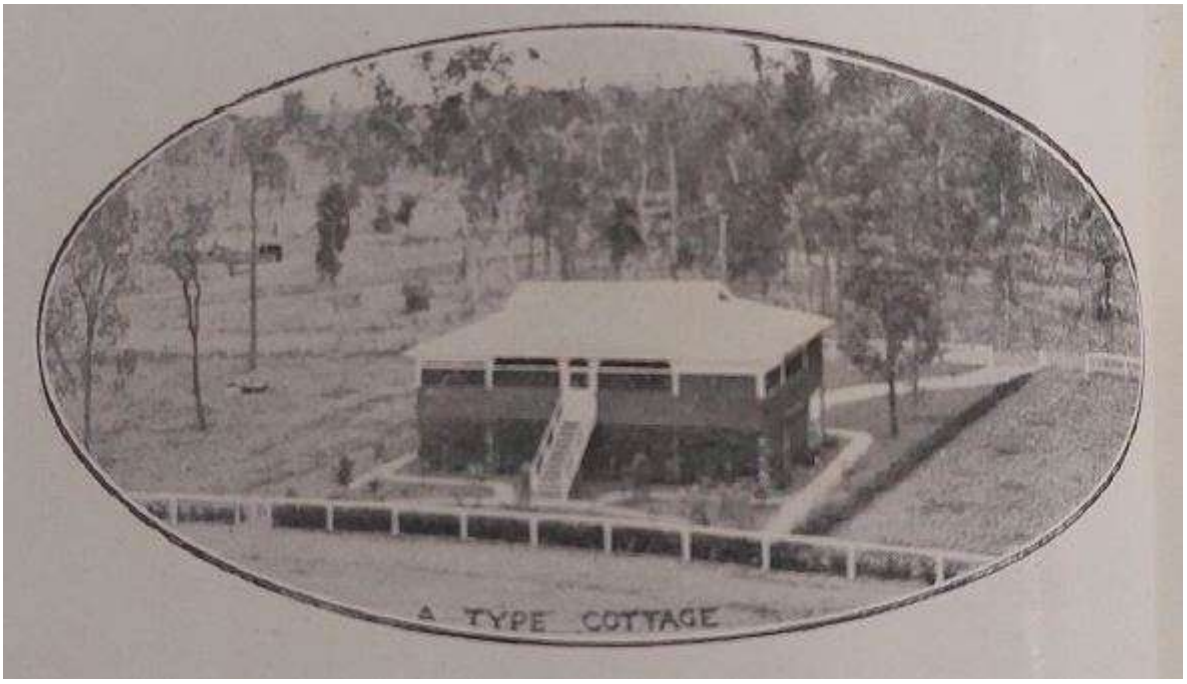
THE FIRST 30,000 ACRES

373 Farms Now Ready for Settlement

During the past three years the work of making ready the Theodore zone for farming purposes has been proceeding steadily, and 30,000 acres have been contoured and subdivided. There are 264 irrigated farms now ready for settlement, together with 109 dry farms. The latter include some of the finest grazing land in the State, and much of it is admirably adapted for agricultural purposes.

It is the intention of the Commissioner to allocate to any holder of an irrigation block who may desire it a proportionate area of 'dry' land, thus affording him an excellent opportunity of extending his operations to dairy-farming, lamb-raising, or the growing of seasonal crops. Dry farms will be provided with bores or dams on extended terms of payment.

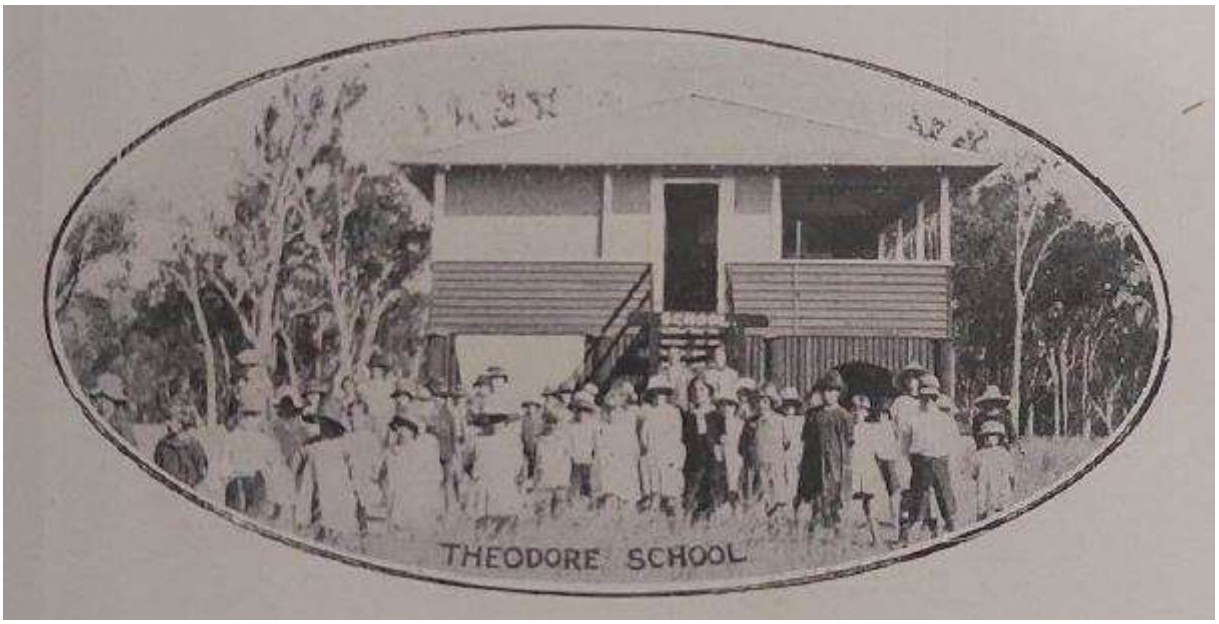
The farm blocks now available radiate from the township centre, and are directly connected thereto by main and feeder roads which ensure rapid and easy transit for produce and stock from the farms to the railway station at Theodore. This section might be described as the inner circle of the Theodore irrigation zone.



In area the irrigated farms range from 10 to 24 acres. This, it has been proved by the experiences of other irrigation settlements, is sufficiently large for the convenient working of a property which is devoted to intense culture. Each block is designed as a 'one-man' farm, but there is no objection to two irrigated blocks being taken up by one settler, provided that he can show to the satisfaction of the Commissioner that he is able to handle the larger area. One dry block only will be allotted, even if two irrigated blocks are taken up by one settler. Furthermore, dry farms will be allotted only to holders of irrigated farms. The areas of the dry farms range from 80 to 500 acres.

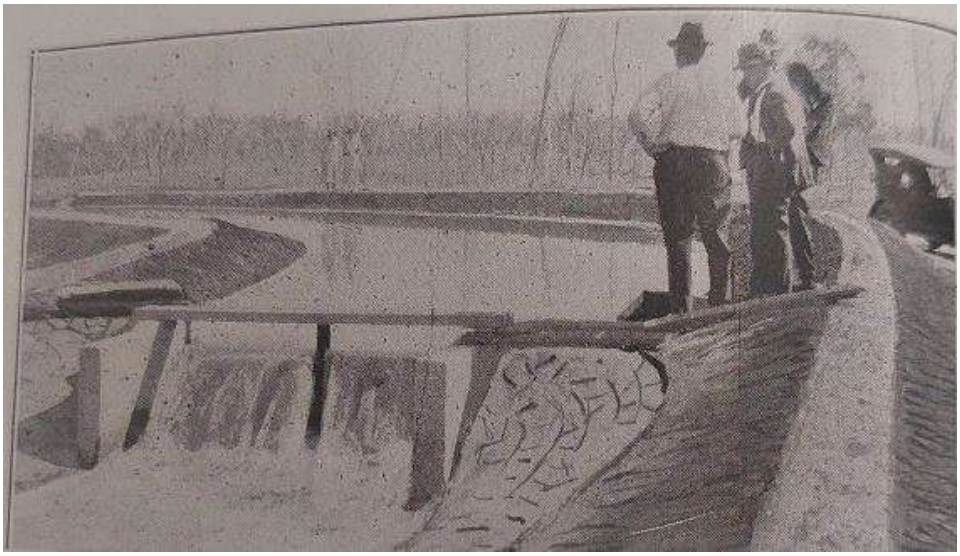
Group or Family Farming

There is an outstanding opportunity for the introduction of what might be termed 'family farming'. Assuming that the successful applicant for land has sufficient capital and one or two sons who are also financially strong enough to take up farms themselves, the holdings might be grouped so that they could be worked jointly.



There is no need to stress the saving in cost and labour or the increased efficiency of working that can be affected by such methods. This has been demonstrated elsewhere and under conditions not nearly so advantageous as those offered by the Dawson Valley Scheme.

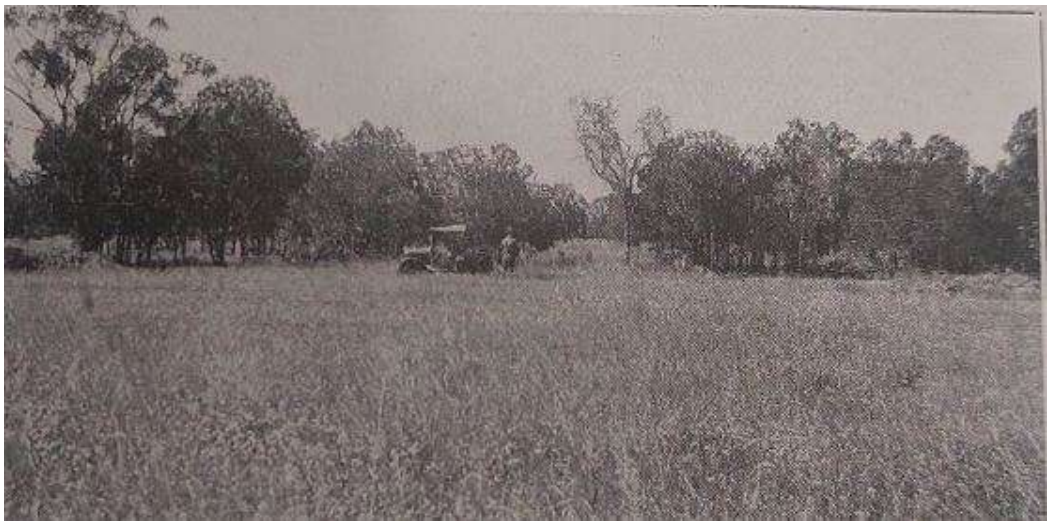
In addition to the larger irrigated blocks, there are 25 farms of from 6 to 7 acres each which have been designed as workers' blocks. They are situated immediately adjacent to the township and will be taken up, it is anticipated, by those who are partially employed elsewhere, either in connection with the operations of the Commissioner or in factories and other pursuits within the area. These 25 'workers' farms are exempt from the condition of £ 400 cash being held by applicants, and are opened to experienced workers who have £100 cash available for improvements. No dry blocks are attachable to workers' farms.



Canal and Regulating Weir, Theodore

The whole scheme has been designed as a gravitation supply, but until the Nathan Dam is completed water will be temporarily pumped from the river and carried by channels to a water outlet on each farm, and there it will be taken care of by the settler, who will distribute it according to the requirements of his property. The main canals and distributaries through which the water will be delivered have already been constructed, and all that remains for the settler to do after he has prepared his land for cultivation will be to construct his own head ditches which is a simple operation.

The combination of 'dry' and irrigated farming forms one of the most attractive features of the scheme; indeed, it is certain that a contributing factor to progress will be found to be the high quality of the land behind the river flats and not commanded by the irrigation channels. The road system in the Area has been laid out in such fashion that there will be connection everywhere between the irrigated and 'dry' blocks. No difficulty will be experienced, therefore, in shifting stock or material to and fro.



An Attached Dry Farm, Theodore; Note Herbage

While the irrigated blocks are being utilised to their fullest capacity for intense culture, lamb and pig raising, wool-growing, or dairy farming on 'dry' lands will provide an opening for expansion which is the natural desire of the progressive farmer.

In all cases, settlers will be required to do their own clearing, fencing, ditching, and grading. The Commissioner undertakes to deliver the water by means of outlets from adjoining channels – of which there are about 50 miles – to the most convenient point on each farm. Such supply will be sufficient to irrigate the area within a given period. Clearing, as already stated, will not, on most of the farms, be a heavy or expensive business. Owing to the irrigated section being on alluvial river flats, very little grading of the land will be required.

LAND TENURE

How Blocks May Be Acquired

Whence will come the settlers for the first 30,000 acres of the Dawson Valley scheme? It is anticipated that, from inquiries already in hand, that the scheme will prove so attractive that no difficulty will be experienced in securing applications for the areas now thrown open. It is considered that the preliminary 30,000 acres at Theodore can be filled with settlers from Queensland and other Australian States, though, as operations are extended, no doubt numbers of desirable migrants will be attracted from overseas.

Another Dry Farm, Theodore

Each applicant before being allotted a farm will go before a board composed of executive officers of the Commissioner, where full particulars of his experience and finances will be recorded, and his suitability or otherwise for taking up irrigation blocks determined. On being granted a qualification certificate he may select a block or have it selected for him.

Allotments will be made on terms of perpetual leasehold; that is to say, the holder and the descendants have the title of the land in perpetuity, and while the conditions of the lease are observed it cannot be terminated, except of course, at the wish of the tenant himself. The leaseholds may be transferred with the approval of the Commissioner, but in no case will this be allowed at an increased rental. In other words, the tenant may only sell the value of his improvements or tenant right.

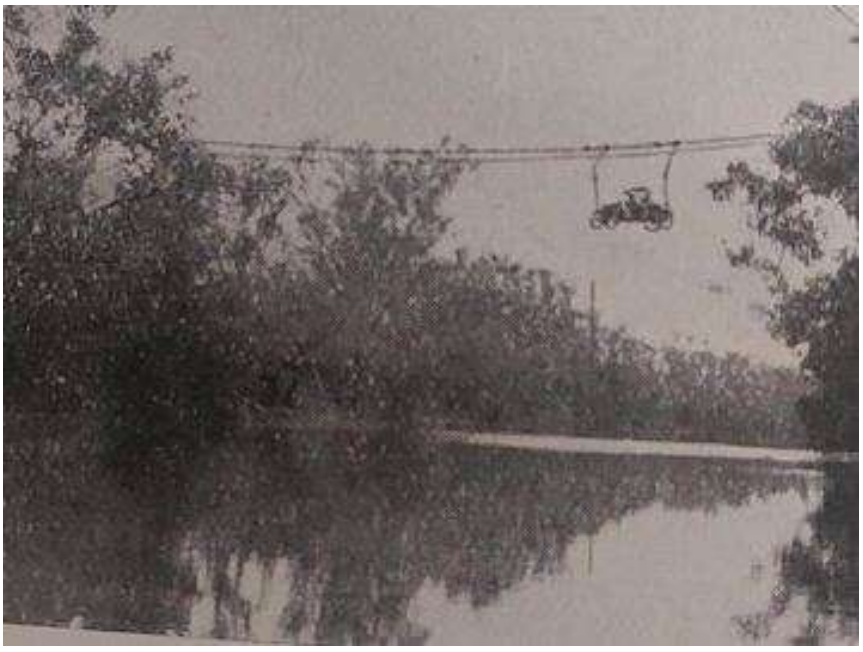
An Example of Private Residence, Theodore Area

In the event of a settler being compelled to give up his holding for any cause, such as ill-health, and being unable to arrange an approved transfer, he may surrender his farm to the Commissioner. The farm may then be re-leased, the incoming tenant paying the Commissioner the value of the tenant right as above, the outgoing tenant then being reimbursed accordingly.

WATER RIGHTS

Rental and Water Rates

Every farm is entitled to a certain assessed quantity of water as a fixed right (known as the 'water right'), which is determined before the farms are opened for selection. The amount so granted is based upon the area of irrigable land. On areas with even a lower average rainfall than prevails in the Dawson Valley, 2 acre-feet of water is regarded as sufficient for agricultural requirements, but the scheme is designed to afford a supply up to 3 acre-feet, from which it will be seen that there is no likelihood of a shortage.



Crossing the Dawson by Cableway at Township

What is meant by '3 acre-feet of water'? The term represents the amount of water which would be required to cover an acre of ground to the depth of 3 feet, or, in actual quantity, somewhat more than 800,000 gallons. Of course, this is not used in one watering, but is applied at varying times as may be required, usually 4 to 6 inches being taken at one irrigation.

As to payment, there will be an annual charge of 30 shillings per acre for the irrigable areas and 2 shillings per acre for the 'dry' areas, this figure including all charges for land rent, water, and road maintenance. Be4ing on terms of perpetual leasehold, no land tax is payable by the tenant. This is an exceedingly low figure. For long it has been a contention against irrigation schemes that settlers have had to pay heavy rates, and that their holdings have been loaded with the interest bill for the costly work of building dams and canals, erecting pumping stations, and so forth. Where the Dawson Valley scheme rises above all others is that the interest and redemption upon the whole of the works will be based on a low expenditure for the comparatively large area served by the Scheme.

Commissioner's Sawmill on the Bank of the Dawson

Apart from this, as the national aspect of the Scheme is developed, and the State as a whole benefits from the Dawson Valley fodder reserve, the question must be faced as to whether the State should not contribute towards the interest and redemption charges upon the works. It is reasonable to believe that the Government may favourably consider such a proposal.

FARMIMG AND FINANCE

Assistance to Block-holders

It must be thoroughly understood by applicants for blocks that the Dawson Valley scheme is not intended to be a resort for the man without capital, who merely has an idea of becoming a farmer.

The first step towards progress will be made by the person who has the means and the ability to provide for himself and his family while he is getting his land ready for culture. It could not reasonably be expected that, after having provided farms at exceedingly low rental, the Commissioner would be prepared to 'spoon-feed' his tenants. In apportioning blocks, consideration will be given to this, and the applicant who can show that he has ample capital, and is regarded by the Qualifications Board as likely to develop into a desirable settler, will be given every consideration in the allotment of farms.

It is impossible to set a hard-and-fast rule regarding the amount of capital a settler will need; so much depends on the personal equation – on a man's experience, industry, and the style of farming he adopts. If he is able to do a fair amount of the preparatory work of getting his farm in order without calling in hired labour, the amount of necessary capital will be affected to that extent. The small annual charge for rent and water

rate sets the greater part of his capital free for the purchase of farm equipment, stock, seed, trees, and so forth, and for domestic requirements in the interim between his occupancy of the block and his first returns.

It is considered that in the case of a man with agricultural experience, who is in a position to do his own work, the min amount of cash he should have available is £400. Without such experience, at least £800 would be necessary. As already mentioned, 25 small farms have been set aside as workers' blocks (6 to 7 acres) and will be allotted to workers with experience and £100 cash capital. Applicants without experience and without money cannot be considered. Such persons, however earnest they may be, would be burdens on the scheme, and there is no guarantee that under such a handicap they would ever make desirable settlers. Similarly, 'spoon-feeding' tends to develop a spineless community, and gives rise to a spirit of dependency on the State.

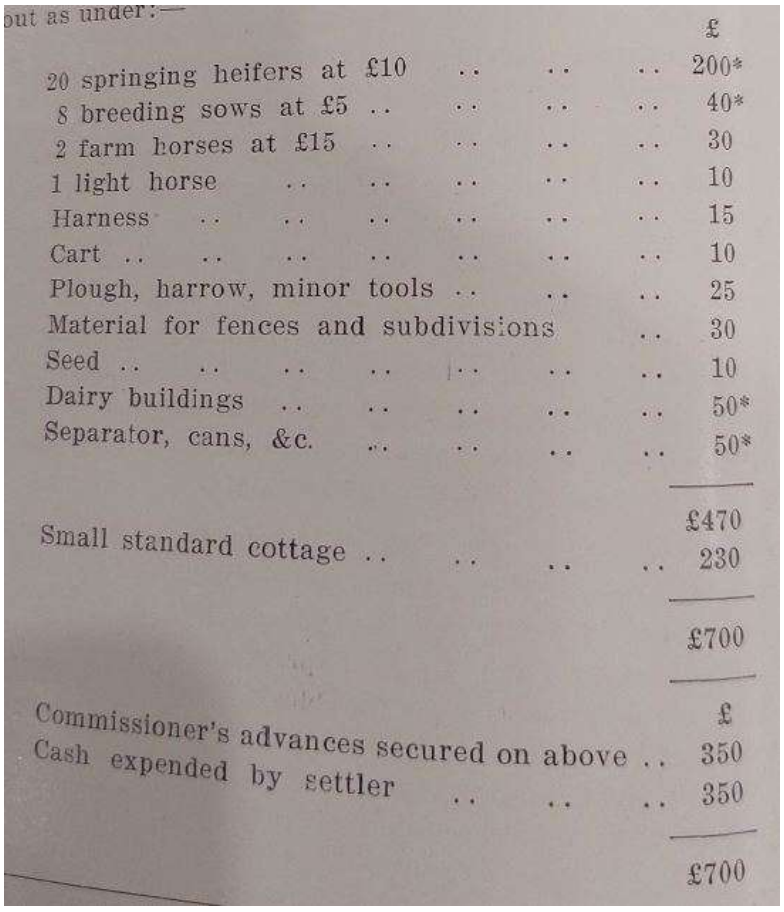
It is recognised that in some cases settlers will require a measure of assistance in the early stages of their tenancies, and to this end the Commissioner will finance block-holders on the basis of £ for £ on the value of improvements, with a maximum of £500 to each settler. In other words, a settler may expend £1,000 in the preparation and stocking of his farm, of which £500 would be his own money. Low rates of interest and liberal terms of repayment are fixed. As well, necessity for financial self-help cannot be too strongly stressed.

Improvements upon which advances may be made - erection of home & farm buildings, fencing, purchase of stock / implements, and other expenditure to make the farm productive. Advances will be made gradually as the block is improved and the capacity of the settler is made manifest. By this means he should be able to develop his farm and have sufficient means to provide for his family during early stages of settlement.

£ FOR £ PRINCIPLE

How Money is Advanced

As illustrating the principle on which the assistance on a £ for £ basis will be distributed, let us take the case of a settler possessing £500 and desiring to take up dairying and pig-raising. It is assumed that he would provide his own labour for fencing, cultivation, and the planting of crops; apart from this his expenditure would probably work out as under:-



out as under:—

	£
20 springing heifers at £10	200*
8 breeding sows at £5	40*
2 farm horses at £15	30
1 light horse	10
Harness	15
Cart	10
Plough, harrow, minor tools	25
Material for fences and subdivisions ..	30
Seed	10
Dairy buildings	50*
Separator, cans, &c.	50*
	£470
Small standard cottage	230
	£700

	£
Commissioner's advances secured on above ..	350
Cash expended by settler	350
	£700

Assuming that he had started with £ 500, the settler would thus have a margin of £ 150 with which to provide for the support of his family for the first year at least. By the end of the first year his holding should commence to pay its way.

In this total of £700, items amounting to £360 would be the subject of an immediate advance of £180 by the Commissioner, and the remaining items – those marked * - amounting to £340, would entail a further advance of £170 by the Commissioner when the farm was in a position to commence dairying, probably within nine months from selection.

This settler would require an irrigable farm of 20 acres with 100 acres of 'dry' land attached. His land rental, water rates etc would amount to 30 shillings per acre on 20 acres of irrigated land, and 2 shillings per acre on 100 acres of 'dry' land, or £40 per annum in all.

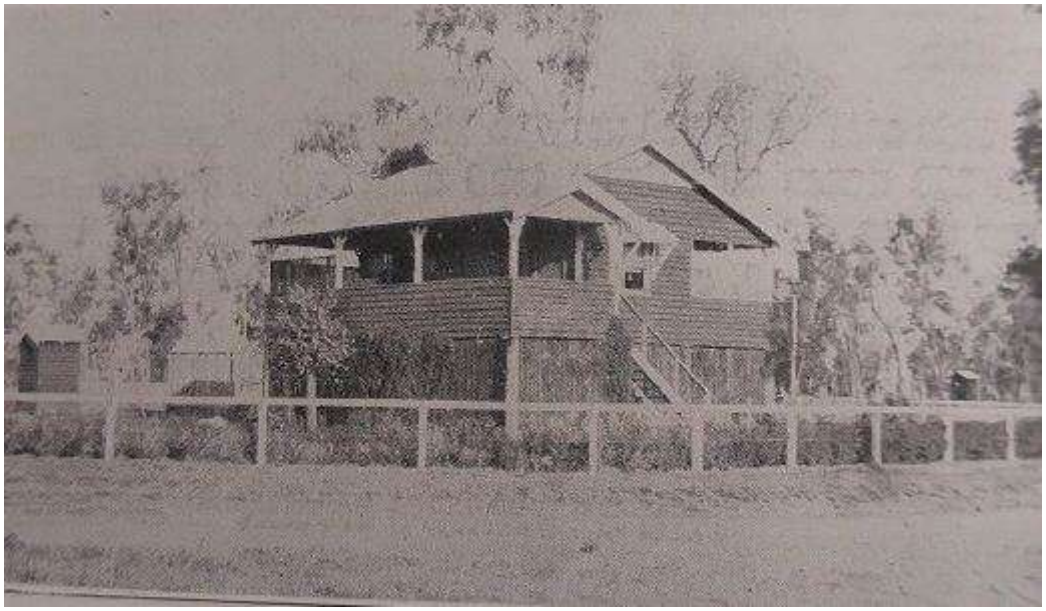
THE SETTLERS HOME

To be Built to a Standard of Comfort

To assist settlers in the problem of housing themselves and their families, the Commissioner will make available plans of 'type' houses which it will be possible to build at a minimum of cost, at the same time preserving a certain attractiveness of design and interior comfort.

Permission will be granted to settlers to reside under canvas or in temporary dwellings during the first six months of their occupancy of their blocks. Arrangements should be made during this time, however, for the erection of a permanent abode, and only in exceptional cases will extensions of time be granted.

The building of expensive houses by assisted settlers will not be countenanced, as, until such time as the farmer is financially strong enough to pay for additions, a two or three-roomed bungalow house with wide veranda all round should be ample for average requirements. This class of building will cost about £350 and is quite suitable for the climate. The money which would be put into a more expensive dwelling can be made to play its part in relieving the settler of a drag of debt by being used for the purchase of stock or plant.



Small Type of Cottage at Theodore

Timber cut at the sawmill at Theodore will be available for purchase by settlers. Stocks of this timber have been accumulating for a considerable period, and when called into use will have been rendered suitable by thorough seasoning.

THE SOIL AND ITS USE

First-class Agricultural Land

Soil analyses have been compiled from samples taken throughout the area. It has been found that practically every type is represented, from light sandy loams to heavy black alluvial loams on the river flats, with varying types of red to chocolate scrub soils of very fine texture and quality on the slopes. The soil analyses show good capillarity, indicating suitability for irrigated culture. The percentage of humus varies from fair to very good, the lime content is high throughout, and there are liberal supplies of mineral plant food available.

Clearing Alluvial Flats in the Dawson Valley

On the whole, the Areas may be classed as first-grade agricultural land, which is, by reason of the several types of soil represented, suitable for the profitable production of almost every kind of crop. The fertility of the whole Area is evidenced by the native timber and prolific growth of natural grasses, and instances of what can be done under irrigated culture are to be found at the Theodore Experimental Farm, where the crops planted have made vigorous growth.

AN OBJECT LESSON

What to Grow, and Where.

At the outset, an Experimental Farm of 130 acres was established by the Commissioner on land that was considered as average of the quality prevailing on the Area. The Farm affords practical demonstration in all operations connected with irrigation farming, and also illustrates the suitability of various crops to the class of soil. This should prove of great benefit to new and old settlers alike.

It is not the intention of the Commissioner to dictate to the settlers what crops they should grow, or what class of farming they should follow. But when advice is sought it will be readily forthcoming. As far as possible, however, certain areas will be designated as most suitable for particular crops, but if a settler in a classified

area chooses to grow something different, that is his own concern entirely. It is obvious, however, that unity of action and co-operation in the matter of ideas is to the advantage of all.

Fresh fruit growing on an extensive scale will not be encouraged until such time as an export market is more fully assured. The production of essentials is favoured rather than luxuries that can be done without in times of financial depression. Fruits suitable for canning, citrus crops, and fruits and vegetables suited for

dehydration may be handled in comparatively small quantities. It is along the lines of growing proved crops and raising exportable commodities that success will lie, and farmers will not be encouraged to go in extensively for either experimental crops or untried methods.

In the Dawson Valley Area there are large, compact sections well adapted for the production of those crops requiring special soil conditions, such as lucerne, tobacco, cotton, rice, peanuts, potatoes, onions, and several varieties of fruit. The whole Area may be classed as suitable for ordinary fodder crops, including maize, millet, sorghums, sudan grass, wheat, and barley.

SUITABLE CROPS

Intense Culture and Mixed Farming

Cotton Section, Commissioner's Demonstration Farm, Theodore

Amongst the crops which are likely to be most suitable for profitable production on the Areas, might be mentioned the following:-

Cotton. Already the Dawson Valley in parts other than those to be served by the irrigation scheme has been proved to be particularly suited to the needs of cotton production, in spite of irregular rainfall. Therefore, with irrigation, the Area should quickly take rank as the most important and flourishing cotton-growing centre in the Commonwealth.

In Egypt, where admittedly the finest quality of the world's cotton is produced, the crops are cultivated entirely under irrigated conditions.

The average yield of cotton for the whole of Queensland in the season 1924-25 was 327 lb to the acre, whilst returns to date show that for 1925-26 it will be slightly lower; nonetheless, yields of 900 to 1,000 lb to the acre of seed cotton are reported from many farms on the Lower Dawson, and on the Commissioner's Experimental Farm one plot yielded at the rate of 1,640 lb to the acre.

Luxuriant Pastures on the Dry Farming Sections

While an average yield of from 1,000 to 1,500 lb per acre, which seems quite feasible under irrigated conditions, an excellent return is assured.

It may be said that any soil that will produce a good crop of maize will be equally suitable for the growing of cotton. As with most other crops, water is the determining factor between success and failure, and, as irrigation assures the farmer of a constant and well-regulated supply, the possibility of failure is limited accordingly.

Rice. Apart from the many well-known and proved crops, rice-growing is an industry which should have a promising future in the Dawson Valley Area. So far it has little or no standing as a crop in Queensland, though it was grown successfully by the Chinese in North Queensland fifty or more years ago, and also spasmodically by others ever since, sufficiently to prove its suitability to soil and climate. The chief reason why it has not expanded as an industry is, no doubt, lack of suitable water facilities for irrigating.

Rice has already been successfully grown on the Murrumbidgee Irrigation Area in New South Wales, where approximately 1,800 tons were produced last season, and yields up to 140 bushels per acre were obtained. It is considered there than an average of 75 bushels per acre can confidently be expected. A bushel of rice is taken at 42 lb as against 60 lb for wheat, and, comparing the average of 75 bushels or 3,150 lb with the average yield of wheat in Queensland, say 12 ½ bushels or 750 lb., it will be seen that there is a wide margin in favour of the former.

To ensure success, most varieties of rice require more or less submergence, the degree of which varies greatly, but it is the one factor most subject to artificial control. It is clear, then, that rice is a crop essentially adapted for irrigated districts, where it may be regarded as one of the safest of the major crops.

The most suitable soil is a rich, silty, and fairly heavy loam, with an impervious clayey subsoil, which will hold the water better than the lighter loams. There are large areas of this class on the lower Dawson lands, typically suited for the purpose.

The total importations of dressed and undressed rice into the Commonwealth for the year ending June, 1924, were 31,688 tons, valued at £461,701, and there seems no reason why this quantity, or at least a considerable portion of it, should not be grown on the Dawson Irrigation Area, and the proceeds distributed amongst our own farmers. The climate conditions and assured supplies of water should render this locality more ideally situated for the production of rice than anywhere else in the Commonwealth.

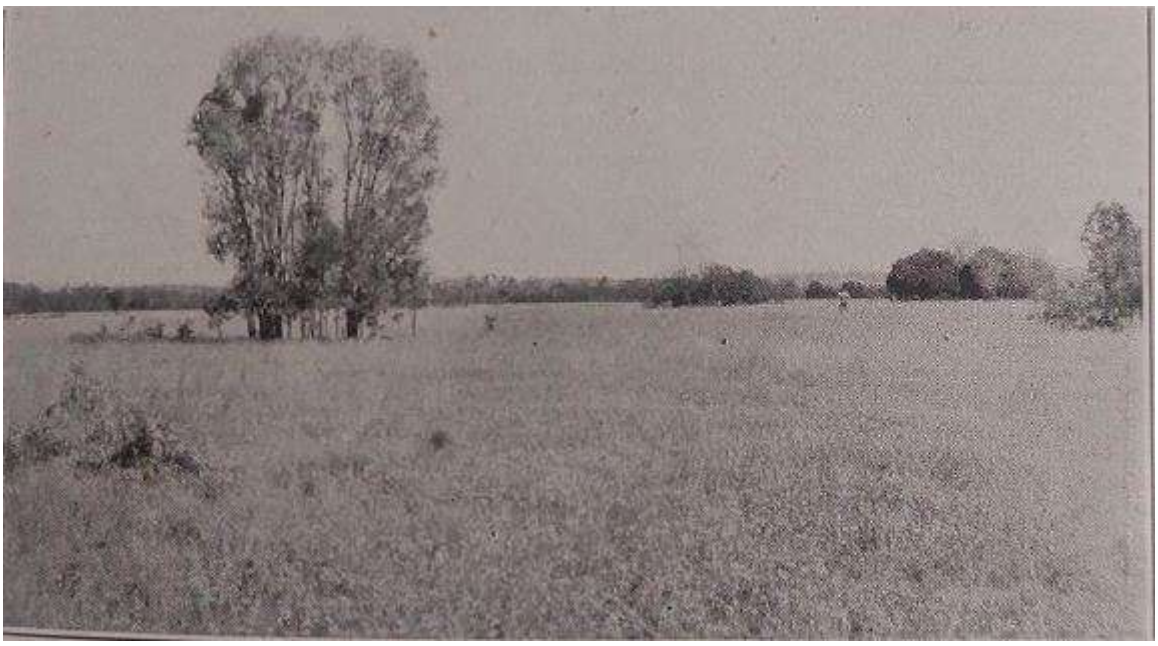
Tobacco. This is another crop which should be grown successfully on the Dawson Irrigation Area.

Bottle Tree Scrub, Dry Area

Limited quantities have been grown in Queensland for many years, and it is difficult to understand why this profitable crop has not been produced on a much larger scale – at least to the extent of supplying our own requirements. Probably this is due to the very great care required in drying and curing the leaf and the necessity for uniformity in this respect; also the relative expense of erecting curing barns would be a deterring factor with many small farmers.

It is expected that tobacco-growing will be undertaken fairly extensively in the Dawson Valley, where large areas have been classed by experts as being suitable for the growing of good, bright tobacco. The Commissioner proposes to provide central drying kilns, where drying and curing will be carried out under expert supervision, thus ensuring uniformity of type and of methods of treatment.

Climatically, Queensland has certain advantages over other Australian States, and has given ample proof of being able to produce a high-class tobacco in great quantity. The most suitable soil for the growth of best-quality leaf is a friable, sandy, alluvial loam, fairly rich in humus, and with a high capillarity.



Dry Farming Area in Open Country

The subsoil should be porous and capable of free drainage. Moreover, to ensure its healthy condition, the crop must be kept growing at a uniform rate, and this can only be attained by thorough cultivation, and by supplying the necessary moisture to the soil as required.

All these qualities and conditions are available in the irrigated areas of the Dawson Valley, and there is no reason why the industry should not become one of the most important of the Area. The total importations of tobacco amount in value to not less than £ 2,000,000 a year, which alone furnishes an indication of the extent of the local market.

Peanuts. Although the peanut cannot be classed as a major crop, it is well worthy of attention, and much more prominence might be given to it. As an industry it has been retarded by the ineffective tariff on the nuts, which permitted them to be imported more cheaply from such countries as China, but encouragement is now offered to the local grower by the high protective tariff of 6 pence per lb for shelled and 4 pence per pound for unshelled nuts.

The First Breaking on the Alluvial Irrigated Farms

There is a considerable and increasing demand for this product locally and in the Southern States, principally for the manufacture of oil and margarine, and also for confectionery and other purposes. The peanut is of great value for fattening pigs, and the vines make an excellent fodder for other livestock. It is one of the major crops grown in the United States of America, where the area annually planted is in the vicinity of 2,000,000 acres, and where it is justly looked upon as one of the most important of the world's oil-producing crops.

Apart from the value of the crop itself, it has particular merit when planted in rotation with other crops, such as maize, cotton etc., as a means of enriching the soil, owing to its power, common to all legumes, of absorbing nitrogen from the air, and restoring this valuable element of plant food to the soil. Peanuts do best on the lighter types of soil, preferably a well-drained, light, sandy, grey loam with a good percentage of lime, which class is well represented in the Dawson Valley. With such a soil, the nuts can be lifted readily, and yields of from 1 to 2 tons per acre of a clean, light coloured product should be obtained.

Cutting Lucerne, Demonstration Farm, Theodore

Lucerne. Apart from the production of essential commodities such as cotton, tobacco, rice, butter, cheese, bacon, lambs, wool etc., one of the more important thoughts behind the scheme is to make the Dawson Valley the fodder reserve area of the State. This aspect of the project has been carefully considered in all its bearings, and no factors, financial or practical, have been overlooked which would militate against the success of this scheme within a scheme.

The project would be self supporting and, at the same time, state-wide in its ramifications. Here should be a very real and effective antidote to the ravages of the recurring droughts in portions of the State, with their consequent heavy financial and stock losses.

In such a scheme the production of lucerne, that 'king of fodders', which is so well known to the agricultural

Fodder Section, Commissioner's Demonstration Farm

community, would play a leading part. It should be mentioned, however, that the growing of lucerne or other crops under irrigation purely for sale as fodder is not usually profitable except in times of general drought. Feeding to dairy stock, pigs and lambs, and the conservation of any surplus for sale or consumption in periods of shortage is the safest and most advantageous use of lucerne.

Other Crops. Apart from the products which have been dealt with, there are many others which will repay attention. It must be remembered that, with direct rail communication between Theodore and Rockhampton, produce can be consigned to all parts of Australia and overseas. There will be a ready market for tomatoes, vegetables and fruit in Rockhampton and other central towns. Citrus fruits, figs and almonds have been found to flourish at homesteads near the Dawson Valley and broom millet, of a quality far superior to that of the imported article, has given splendid results on trial plots at the Demonstration Farm.

Fruit Section, Commissioner's Demonstration Farm (First Year)

DAIRY FARMING

Probably no industry will benefit to a greater extent from irrigation than will dairy farming. Queensland has a foreign market for its dairy products that is constantly increasing, and home consumption is, of course, a most important consideration.

The Dawson Valley Scheme presents a splendid opening for the dairy farmer. There will be regular and ample supplies of feed available at all times, thus ensuring the output of the farm throughout the year, and also allowing advantage to be taken of the increased prices in the local market when supplies fall off elsewhere, owing to scanty herbage, or during periods of drought. Opportunities are offered for the establishment of this class of farming on the dry areas, with the adjoining section of irrigable land providing a guaranteed supply of fodder.

Fodder Section, Commissioner's Demonstration Farm

FAT LAMBS – A Staple Industry

An inspection of the 'dry' areas attached to the irrigated farms indicates the wonderful grass-growing capacity of these lands. The abundance of grass is a matter for wondering comment. It is luxuriantly thick, and sufficiently high to hide mudguards of a motor car. It is a delightful country, with handsome clumps of timber which have been retained as shade trees, lending a park-like appearance to the wide sweep of plain and rolling downs.

Here is the opportunity for the farmer who desires to embark on fat lamb raising for export – a branch of sheep-farming which promises to be exceptionally lucrative. As an industry it has not been given much attention in Queensland so far, though in New Zealand, and to some extent in the Southern States of the Commonwealth, it is followed more profitably.

Grazing Farm, Dawson Valley Area

The grazing lands of the Dawson Valley constitute first-class sheep country, and lucerne and other fodders may be cheaply cultivated for fattening the lambs for market.

Striking Examples

Some almost incredible results have been obtained by hand-feeding or grazing sheep on lucerne, and numerous instances can be quoted where from 25 to 75 sheep are carried to the acre. In this connection, the following extract from the "Sydney Mail" is if interest:-

> *'It may be mentioned that during the 1919-20 drought, when many thousands of sheep were lost and when valuable stocks of highly priced stud animals were threatened with extinction, this farmer (Mr A Purcell) provided accommodation for no fewer than 12,700 head – including 200 high-priced rams – on an area of his estate of a few hundred acres, and fed them successfully for 10 months on the lucerne cut from 150 acres. That 12,700 sheep could be fed for a 10 months on 150 acres sounds incredible, but it was done".*

Another instance may be quoted of a demonstration which was conducted under the supervision of an officer of the New South Wales Department of Agriculture, near Forbes (NSW). The officer's report is as follows:-

> *"Early in October a paddock of lucerne containing22 ½ acres was handed over for the experiment. That there had been no provision made beforehand is shown by the fact that just previously to this being a flock of 550 sheep had been depasturing on this paddock, and for the purpose of obtaining uniform and successive growth ten acres of irregular herbage had to be cut and carried off the ground. Two flocks of sheep, mixed sexes and all ages, one of merinos and the other of crossbreeds, were brought in from a back station where they were starving under drought conditions. 562 sheep from each of these flocks were put into two separate paddocks of 30 acres each, and a mixed flock of the same number into a similar third paddock. Neither lot had the slightest sign of edible vegetation within their enclosure, except what was given to them from the time they went in. The merinos were generally in fair store condition. Many of the crossbreeds were so weak that they could hardly crawl, but they were retained and included in the test from the consideration that such sheep would probably be found on any station in time of drought……The lucerne was cut daily and carted out to the sheep twice each day, thus giving 1,685 sheep two lots of nice fresh food daily. After cutting, these lands were irrigated, each as early as convenient, and by the time the seventh land was cut the first one was always ready again. The total loss by death was only one sheep. At the end of February the sheep were generally in good health and doing well; had a good growth of clean, bright wool, and had gained over 3 lb in weight per sheep, while the lucerne paddock contained as much feed for cutting as when the trial commenced".*

These illustrations show the extraordinary results that may be obtained in this class of farming under irrigation conditions.

PORK AND BACON

Pig-raising Potentialities

Throughout Australia, it has been found that the pig, if raised under proper conditions, provides the farmer with a not inconsiderable portion of his revenue. There need be no waste on a farm where pigs are kept, and there are not wanting those among the members of the farming community who claim that pigs are more profitable than cows. This may be an exaggeration, but it would be idle to deny that pig-raising as an adjunct to dairying is a remunerative branch of the business of farming

Standard Bore and Water Facility for Dry Farms

In such a district as the Dawson Valley, where lucerne and other fodders can be produced so cheaply and in such large quantities, the industry should develop into one of considerable importance. By the conversion of these fodders into pork and bacon, there is created an exportable commodity of considerable value for which there is almost an unlimited demand overseas, apart from requirements of the local markets.

With irrigation as an insurance, pig-raising, combined with dairy farming, will probably go far towards building up the prosperity of the Dawson Valley.

THE SECOND STATE

Raw Material to Finished Product

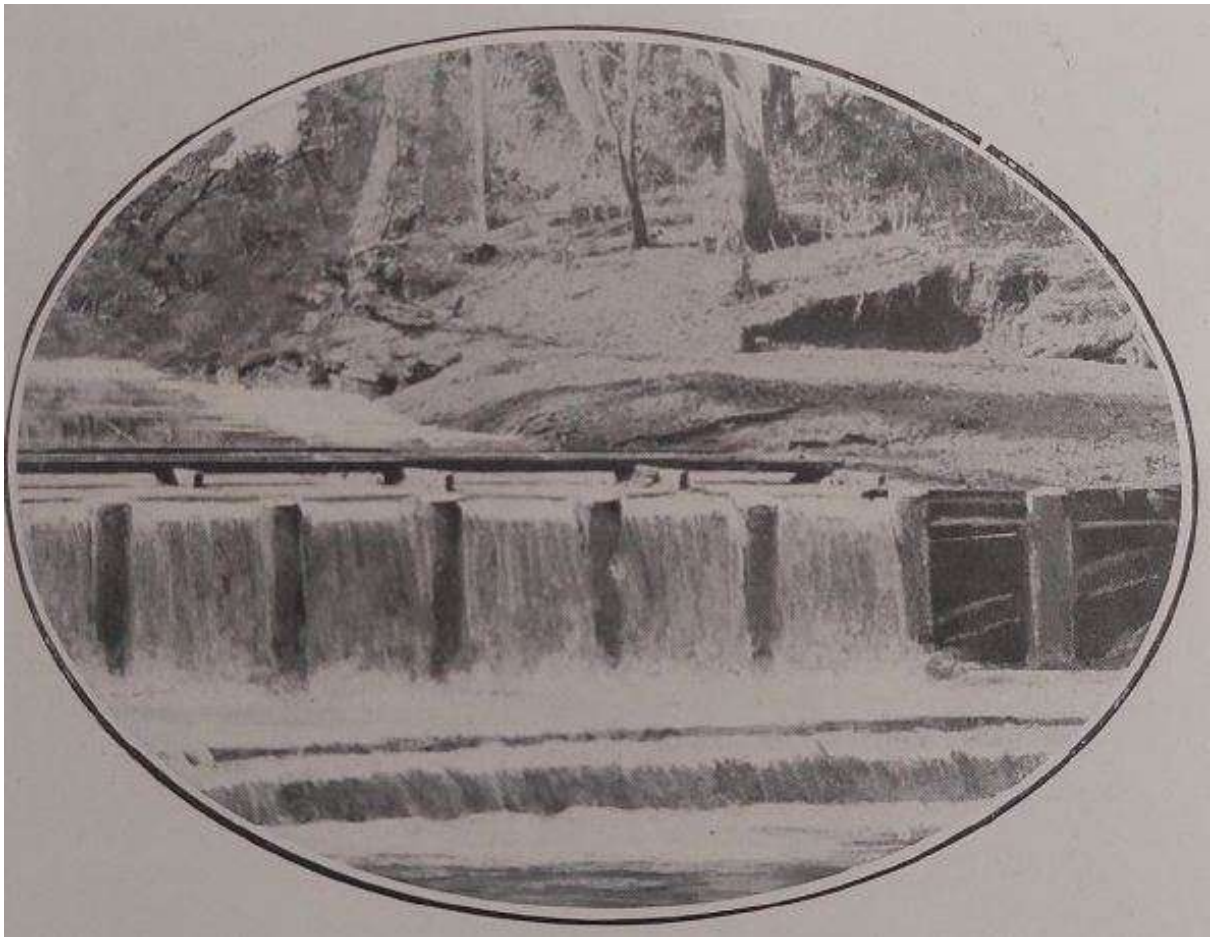
An essential adjunct of primary production is the provision of means whereby the results of agriculture may be transformed to the second stage of the marketable commodity. It will not be left for the settler in the Dawson Valley to entirely provide these for himself, for, coincidentally with the settlement of the first section of the Dawson Valley Areas, the Commissioner will make provision for the necessary plant for treatment of the more important produce. As the first 5,000 acres of irrigable farms in question will become the centre of a section of about 30,000 acres of irrigable farms when this portion of the full scheme is completed, any plant erected requires to be of a small character, with provisions for additions as they become necessary.

In passing it might be mentioned that, although the factories would be built and operated by the Commissioner in the initial stages, it is intended that ultimately these should be owned by the farmers themselves and worked on co-operative lines. When the number of settlers justifies it, small local elective

advisory boards will be constituted in each area. The work of these boards will be to promote the interests of settlers in the section, assist by advice and example, and help to co-ordinate the operations of the Commissioner with the work and aims of the settlers.

Naturally, in any such scheme as the one under review, the question of the disposal of the products grown under irrigation in such a large area cannot be regarded as being other than of the utmost importance.

Ever since closer settlement commenced in earnest about thirty years ago, 'over-production' has been the fear of the pessimists. The passage of time has proved, however, that by co-operative action no great difficulty has been experienced in the satisfactory disposal of products. Whatever the article produced, the first essential to a profitable return is the creation of a thoroughly organised market, and this matter is being given close attention by officers of the Commissioner.



Weir and Swimming Pool, Theodore

SOCIAL LIFE

What Irrigation Settlements Offer

One of the attractions of settlement on irrigated areas lies in the improved facilities it offers for social intercourse, which is usually lacking under ordinary rural conditions.

The comparative isolation and monotony of country life is largely responsible for drawing the younger generation off the land to seek occupation elsewhere, generally amid the brighter surroundings of the city. With closer settlement on a large scale this isolation will be non-existent, and the conditions will be largely reversed.

Numbers of city dwellers from all classes should be attracted, as well as experienced agriculturists, who will be encouraged, by the prospect of making as assured income under such congenial conditions, to make their home in this Valley of Content. The Dawson Valley Scheme offers exceptional opportunities for the building up of a home in a settled district, convenient to main towns, with a splendid climate, and with most of the conveniences and social advantages of modern civilisation.

In a few years the district should carry an extensive population spread throughout the farming and pastoral areas and the townships of the different zones. The country is not confined to a single industry, but offers endless opportunities to a community which will include factory workers, those engaged in the various commercial and industrial pursuits, officials and others. The usual forms of entertainment will follow naturally, and all classes of sport should be well represented

Cottages of Various Types in Progress, Theodore

Main and Feeder Roads Throughout the Area

Experienced and Sympathetic Administration

The successful settlement of any irrigation area is primarily dependent upon sound administration, and if this is based on broad, sympathetic and experienced lines settlers undoubtedly will respond to it. The settler is not merely a cog in a machine. On the contrary it must be realised that he is one of the determining factors of ultimate success or failure, and that the administration's duty is to assist, advise, and consider the concerns of its people, consistent, of course, with reasonable business conditions and the interests of the State generally. It will be found that these conditions are not lacking in the administration of the Dawson Valley Scheme.

DOUBLY SAFEGUARDED

Lessons from History of Irrigation

Bearing in mind the experiences of other irrigation enterprises, and profiting by the mistakes of the past, the initiation of irrigation enterprise in Queensland is doubly guarded, first by the application of modern constructional and technical skill required for such an extensive project as the Dawson Valley Scheme, and, secondly, by encouraging only proved and sound principles of settlement, which, though entailing a slower growth, are infinitely surer, and certainly of more permanent value to the State.

Out of the knowledge that has been gained through a careful study of the history of irrigation in Australia and other parts of the world have been formulated the principles upon which the policy of the Irrigation and Water Supply Commission of Queensland has been based, among the most important being:-

1. *Land ownership limited to the amount which families and individuals can apply to a useful purpose;*
2. *Co-operation, with the associative ownership of factories and utilities;*
3. *Well-considered rotation and diversification of crops;*
4. *Scientific control of marketing, both export and local, with an assurance to the grower of a fair return for a first-class product; and*
5. *The production of proved crops and essential commodities which, even in periods of depression, are in regular demand both locally and abroad*

CONCLUSION

The Soundest Investment

The Dawson Valley Irrigation Scheme presents itself as a sound investment for the settler. It will provide a career for his sons, and for his womenfolk a life that will be rendered attractive by its healthfulness and its opportunities for social pleasures. Its potentialities are self-evident – those who move forward with it will be progressing towards prosperity.

Coincident with the growth of Queensland's population must be a steady increase in the demand for the products of the soil; a demand which should find a ready response from the thousands of farms which in years to come will transform the Dawson Valley from Waste to Wealth.

Here also will be found the solution to the problem of how best to prevent the city-ward drift of the younger rural generation. Irrigation settlement permits of a condition of life which is far removed from the grinding, heart-breaking strenuousness too frequently associated with the working of a farm. Life is more comfortable, more opportunity is provided for recreation, and the home folk find themselves in a position to enjoy a freer and less irksome existence.

It must not be thought, of course, that the development of a successful irrigation farm consists merely of running the water over the land and then sitting down and waiting for things to grow. In no phase of farming – and this applies more particularly to irrigated farming – can success be achieved without hard work and a determination to get ahead. The man who farms with his head, so to speak, as well as with his physical powers, or, in other words, combines hard work and brains, is the man on whom Fortune will smile the soonest.

‘Aeroplane Sketch’ of Theodore Zone
showing
Section ‘A’(Model Garden Town of Theodore)
and
Portions of Sections ‘B’ and ‘C’ (Farm Lands)

THEODORE

Theodore
100 Year Celebration

28th - 30th June 2024

PROGRAM OF EVENTS

Friday 28 June 2024	Arrive Theodore
	School and museum open for tours
	Catch up with friends and family
6.30pm	Dance at Theodore RSL
Saturday 29 June	Venue: The Boulevard CBD *Museum and School open – times will be advised**
9.30am	QAS (QLD Ambulance Service) 100 Year Celebration
11.00am	Street Parade with Floats - Boulevard
12.30pm	Lunch
2.00pm	Official speeches - invited dignitaries
	Opening of Centenary walking track and unveiling of water tower
3.30pm	Roll Call - School
5.30pm	Boulevard Twilight markets – food and bar
6.30pm	Boulevard – Turn on the lights to Theodore
7.00pm to late	Continue to catch up - enjoy the town
Sunday 30 June	Venue: Junction Park
9.00 -11.00am	100 km fun run – (100 individuals or groups to run 1 km representing each year since 1924)
10.00am	BBQ Brunch with Games from 1924
Farewell	Until we meet again

Accommodation: Hotel Theodore, Theodore Sports and Recreation grounds for caravans and tents, friends and family.

Food: Hotel Theodore, Theodore Home and Garden, Xtreme Servo, food vans and coffee vans, Lions Club of Theodore, other community organisations

Toilets – School, The Bull Ring, adjacent to Tennis courts, portable toilets in and around Boulevard.