

# A New Heaven: An Overview of Queensland History

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January 2009

In his novel *The Land Takers* first published in 1934, the Queensland journalist and novelist, Brian Penton, remembering his boyhood encounters with “a battered old relic” whose memory went back to the 1840s, wrote evocatively of

.... the savage deeds, the cruel life, the hatred between men and men and man and country, the homesickness, the loneliness, the despair of inescapable exile in the bush; the strange forms of madness and cruelty; the brooding, in - turned characters; and, joined with this, an almost fanatic idealism which repudiated the tyranny of the past and looked to the future in a new country for a new heaven and earth, a new justice; on the one hand the social outcasts ...on the other the adventurers; blackest pessimism balancing the most radical optimism...

Yet a poem, published in the fledgling *Moreton Bay Courier* in February 1849 to welcome the arrival of Rev. Dr John Dunmore Lang’s Scottish artisan immigrants, set another chord that has echoed throughout Queensland’s history:

*Hail Strangers, hail! Right Welcome to our shore  
We wish you joy, - Eden could yield no more.  
We bid you welcome to Australia wide,  
Land of the sunny clime, - the ocean’s pride,  
Land of the azure heaven, - the gorgeous sky,  
Of wide-spread fertile plains, and mountains high;  
...That loathsome sight, England’s poor law prison,  
where poverty is punished more than treason...  
Welcome, then, strangers to our Eden shore, -  
And for its joys indulgent heaven adore.*

These images of escaping poverty and cramped circumstances, poor health and securing an Antipodean Eden recur throughout Queensland's history. Individuals were seemingly offered the opportunity to renew and reinvent themselves in an environment full of challenge, possibility and regeneration. Dangers existed in confronting the vast terrain, the remoteness, the sheer strangeness of the landscape and the already occupying Indigenous peoples. The rhetoric of promise and reinvention deflected any pessimism concerning the enormity of the obstacles to success; rather a resolute determination, hard work, faith in progress and a degree of good luck set the ambitious individual along the highway of success.

Yet, as Penton so vividly captured, other recurrent forces always lurked to cast shadows on this dream of optimism and good fortune. The colony of Queensland, proclaimed in December 1859, carried with it an altogether dark past as a secondary detention centre for recidivist felons in New South Wales. The Bigge Report in 1822 recommended several new penal settlements: Port Bowen (now Yeppoon), Port Curtis (now Gladstone) and Morton Bay (sic) (now Redcliffe and Brisbane). Governor Thomas Brisbane wrote to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, Lord Bathurst that the location of the Moreton Bay Penal Settlement, begun in 1824, was a perfect destination "...on account of its distance and impossibility of escape..." The regime of punishment for any offence was severe in the extreme and the imposition of hard work in the sub-tropical sun, initially without the benefit of animals or proper tools, made the life of the recidivist a living hell.

Initial relations with the Indigenous peoples were tentative on both sides. Missionary Eipper reported in 1841 that the Turrbal and Ningy Ningy peoples thought that the incoming convicts and their attendants were returning ancestral spirits. They were soon alerted to the true identity of the incomers. Tom Petrie recalled in 1904 that he was told by his friend and informant, Dalaipi, that the Ningy Ningy at Redcliffe attacked the tiny settlement that had been the original choice for the penal station and speared several convicts. The previous year John Oxley's party fired on the Turrbal people.

Altercations with Indigenous peoples were always a factor that made life difficult for the British as they proceeded over the decades to dominate the land. Garumngar men attacked convicts despatched to Limestone (now Ipswich) to build a kiln. The murder of a soldier of the 57<sup>th</sup> Regiment by either the Nunukal or Goenpul in March 1830 resulted in wide scale reprisals by the military on Moreton Island. Yet the last Commandant of Moreton Bay, Captain Foster Fyans, recorded in his memoirs that he presented the Nunukal 'chief' to Governor Richard Burke in 1837. "Captain Toggery", as he was dubbed, was presented with a crescent decorated by a convict engraver. Dressed in a military uniform of sorts, he was paraded through Sydney as a curious exhibit. This penchant for this type of display persisted. Archibald Meston who established the first official government reserve on Fraser Island in 1897 and who was instrumental in the passage of the *Aboriginal Protection and the Restriction of the Sale of Opium Act (1897)* (which set the pattern for segregation on reserves for decades) escorted a group of Indigenous warriors down to Sydney to welcome in the new Commonwealth in 1901. In the official celebrations of the centenary of Queensland in 1959, Indigenous men appeared in an official party dressed as native mounted police, a group that exterminated Indigenous people on the expanding frontier.

Early missionary activity by Italian priests in 1825 on Stradbroke Island and German Lutherans at Zion Hill (now the northern Brisbane suburb of Nundah) in 1837 took race relations into another realm, where the object was to "civilize and Christianise" the various Indigenous peoples. Father Duncan McNab, a visionary Scottish Roman Catholic priest, took his commitment to the displaced peoples even one radical step further. In 1876 he proposed that individuals could be granted selections under existing land legislation. He and three men, Charles Diper, William Watiman Nilpeli and Charles Diper Ghepara, made an unsuccessful claim for land at Durundur near Caboolture (where the Scottish-Norwegian Archer family had established their property in the 1840s and entertained the German scientist and explorer Dr Ludwig Leichhardt in 1843). Ironically as he made this landmark claim, Queensland finalised the design of its official flag, the symbol of its British sovereignty.

Some decades before, on a three-day excursion to the Glasshouse Mountains, Leichhardt commented upon the majesty of this environment, new to European eyes. “These mountains are very remarkable. Out of the low ranges they rise like needles, like castles, like those fascinated rocks in the ocean....” Leichhardt is an important figure in Queensland history. In June 1843, the year following the establishment of free settlement in the northern districts of New South Wales, Leichhardt reported: “All the country from the Condamine to the range is called the DARLING DOWNS (sic)... There is no equal to them in the colony for sheep rearing....” Leichhardt wrote glowingly of the local Indigenous men with whom he went on hunting expeditions. The following year after his expedition set off from *Jimbour* station at Dalby, his early optimism about race relations was challenged when his colleague, Gilbert, was speared. Leichhardt’s visions have captured subsequent novelists; Voss, the tragic hero of Patrick White’s novel and David Malouf’s opera libretto, are full of bravado, optimism and tragedy.

Patrick and George Leslie, stern Scots Presbyterians, were the first pastoralists who responded to early speculations of lush pastures first reported by surveyor Alan Cunningham in his expedition in 1827. They arrived in April 1840 when the district was still a convict settlement of recidivist felons. They established *Canning Downs* and *Toolburra* stations, forming what the colourful pastoralist – parliamentarian Oscar De Satgé in his *Pages From the Journal of a Queensland Squatter* (1901) argued was the basis of the “Pure Merinos: “They have little [more] to be desired in the way of reputation for industry, courage, honesty of purpose, and absolute good faith: their word being their bond; their agreements seldom written, their servants well used, their animals cared for, and their homesteads open to the most ungrudging hospitality, and what can a country desire more in the founders of her early history?”. Queensland’s first Governor Sir George Bowen also perceived them as “... Gentlemen [who] live in patriarchal style among their immense flocks and herds, amusing themselves with hunting, shooting and fishing. I have often thought (especially in reading Thackeray’s novel *The Virginians*) that the Queensland gentlemen-squatters have a similar relation to

other Australians that the Virginian planters of a hundred years back bore to the other Americans.”

One descendant of these “Pure Merinos”, Pamela Lukin Watson in *Frontier lands and pioneer legends: how pastoralists gained Karuwali land* (1998) explored the grimmer realities of early pastoral settlement. The concept of *terra nullius* had taken away Indigenous sovereignty that was not recognised until the Mabo case in the High Court in 1992. The right of Indigenous people to use their land when it was occupied under pastoral leases was recognised in the Wik case of 1996.

For what de Satgé and Bowen did not allude to in their glowing assessments of the early pastoralists, often the scions of the British aristocracy and gentry, was the process by which they acquired their vast domains. Many started out with positive and humane ideals about how they would deal with the Indigenous peoples. Leichhardt was a traveller and a scientist and unlike the early pastoralists he had no intention of claiming the land as his own. The Leslies armed their ticket-of-leave convicts to kill the local Aborigines who speared shepherds and sheep. The first Queensland Post Master General, Thomas Murray-Prior who owned *Bromelton* near Boonah recorded several accounts of expeditions he led to destroy the Indigenous owners of the lands he wanted. Daughter Rose Praed’s autobiography, *My Australian Girlhood* (1902) was a frank account of frontier violence.

The exploration of the new land, with its brutal savagery towards people, flora and fauna alike, alongside erudition and civilised manners of many of the wealthy pastoralists and later sugar planters, set long fissures of tensions through the burgeoning society. *Jimbour* homestead originally constructed by parliamentarian Joshua Peter Bell in 1873-74 heralded a confidence and permanence, its magnificence a rival to Government House in Brisbane. Bell symbolically represents the rapid changes in early Queensland, for *Jimbour* in 1860 was the first pastoral run to be professionally surveyed. The precision of the lines on the surveyor’s map denoted the new order where money,

influence and connection would chart the future destiny of the “queenly colony”.

Like many well-connected wealthy pastoralists, Murray-Prior maintained extensive and diversified commercial operations. In 1859 he purchased a third of the St. Lucia reach of the Brisbane River (near the current location of the University of Queensland). Later pastoralist-parliamentarians like Premier Sir Thomas McIlwraith, in partnership with the Earl of Manchester with big runs of the Darling Downs, Mitchell and the Maranoa, operated a family shipping line as well as numerous commercial, banking and mining operations. With his grandiose vision in 1883 he attempted to annex Papua New Guinea as a Queensland colony. Sir Robert Philp, a strong advocate of Northern Separation from the tyranny of Brisbane, “a thousand miles away” and the co-founder Burns Philp, the merchant fleet that operated in the south Pacific, was a Premier of Queensland and major landholder near Boonah. His company won the contract to deport Melanesians in 1906 and 1907 under new Commonwealth legislation to ensure a “white Australia”.

Leichhardt’s wonder at the new environment, just like his initial admiration for the skills of the Indigenous peoples, did not set the pattern in those who followed. The grazier Donald Gunn recalled “the old pioneering days seemed to consist of fights against nature the whole time.” Frank Baily, a well-connected young tutor at *Jimboomba* Station near Beaudesert, sent back detailed letters to his family at home in England recounting the massive killing of birds so lovingly depicted in John Gould’s books. In 1868 he sent his sisters parrot feathers for their hats, having seen the new fashions in the *Illustrated London Times*. Baily spent his days hunting birds and animals as he had only three hours’ instruction to perform every day. William Senior in *Near and Far: an angler’s sketches of home, sport and colonial life* (1888) outlined the sentiment that “the first duty [of a colonist] is to take an axe and ring as many trees as you can.” Five years later the prominent British journalist, Flora Shaw (Baroness Lugard) in her *Letters from Queensland* wrote despairingly of the desecration of the natural environment. She noted, “[s]ometimes an entire hill-side would be white with such a ghostly forest.”

The introduction of new species of flora and fauna added to the destruction of the variety of fragile eco-systems of Queensland. Foxes for rural gentlemen to hunt soon escaped to wreak havoc on native animals and birds. Cats soon went feral and remain a serious environmental issue today. Rabbits became such a pest in New South Wales that the Queensland Parliament as early as 1886 wanted fences constructed to keep out more rabbits. The fence in the McPherson Range in dense country showed the sheer futility of the enterprise. The cane toad introduced to eat insects in the sugar plants in 1935 soon got out of control and has now reached the Northern Territory. The prickly pear was introduced on the First Fleet in 1788 in the hope of producing a cochineal industry, reaching the Queensland border a century later. It was not controlled until the introduction of the Argentinean moth *Cactoblastis cactorum* in 1925. But this was not before some 24 million hectares were blighted by prickly pear.

Attitudes towards the natural environment were not always so exploitative and destructive. In 1908 the Witches Falls in the Lamington area was proclaimed Queensland's first National Park. The untiring efforts of parliamentarian saw-miller and engineer, Romeo Lahey saw the Lamington National Park declared seven years later. He was instrumental in establishing the National Parks Association in 1930. He and partner, Arthur Groom later established Binna Burra as an eco-tourism lodge three years later.

The environmental movement often made tentative steps in the following decades. The 1920s witnessed intense savagery again towards the native fauna with the destruction of millions of koalas and possums for the fur trade. In 1919 over one million koalas were culled. Three years later the *Animal and Bird Act* attempted to redress these processes of annihilation after public protest. In 1927 the first koala sanctuary was established; ironically over half a million koalas and possums were slaughtered in one month of 1927. Koalas remained a potent symbol for public outrage. In the 1994 state election, when the government under Premier Wayne Goss proposed an extensive toll-road along the South Coast Motorway that traversed a koala habitat at Daisy Hill,

public sentiment was on the side of the koalas. The “Dead Koalas Tell Tales” slogan and poignant pictures on television and in the media saw the government lose four seats. This was despite his government’s commitment to extending the area of national parks substantially.

In the post-war era, environmental concerns also extended to the coastal regions. The Wildlife Preservation Society formed in 1959 targeted the mining of coastal mineral sands by foreign multinational companies. Poet Judith Wright was a notable member and long-term environmental campaigner. The first major campaign won by an individual centred on Fraser Island where a local teacher, John Sinclair opposed the government’s approval of the development of the unique sand island in 1971. A strong “Save the Barrier Reef” campaign emerged when Premier Johannes Bjelke-Petersen’s government granted leases to drill for oil on the fragile Great Barrier Reef. The first stage of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park was proclaimed in 1979.

Development that intruded on and often destroyed the natural environment had a long history. Pastoralism was not the only industry envisaged in the early years of white settlement that would transform the landscape. Mary McConnel of *Cressbrook* Station in the Brisbane Valley identified the settlers’ desire to cultivate the land and exploit its resources. She reported that one of “Dr Lang’s immigrants was a first-class cabinet maker, Towill by name... [who made furniture from] cedar and stained pine, and it was very much admired by our visitors”. Richard Daintree’s magnificent photographs detail the majesty of the rainforest tropical forests. Adventurous men like Christie Palmerston explored these vast northern areas. These early explorers were driven by a curiosity to map the contours of the bush’s unknown vastness. These figures, considered heroic in this era, brought back the first accounts of the environment and its inhabitants, so foreign to the European’s world experience. George Dalrymple, writing to Governor Bowen in August 1864 from Cardwell, envisioned its glorious future: “churches, public building, streets, warehouses, &c. spread far along the gleaming shore and back to the

base of the mountains, and the taper spires of a merchant fleet give life to the now lonely waters of the harbour.”

In reality for early settlers the themes of the alien character of the new homeland, its vast and forbidding contours, its inherent danger and forbiddingness dominated accounts. Even for early native-born Queenslanders like Rosa Praed, the bush, though familiar, was forbidding:

Words fail for painting the loneliness of the Australian bush. Mile after mile of primeval forest; interminable vistas of melancholy gum-trees; ravines, along the sides of which the long-bladed grass grows rankly; level, untimbered plains alternating with undulating tracks of pasture, here and there, broken by steep gully, stony ridge, or dried-up creek.

Leichhardt's last expedition lost all its members and was never located. Burke and Wills' expedition was similarly doomed in an alien and unknown environment. The Queensland search party, led by Frederick Walker who later commanded a Native Mounted Police corps, left from Rockhampton on 9 September 1860.

The difficulties of transport and communications presented constant challenges. Queensland however provided world class solutions later. The establishment of Qantas in Longreach and Winton in 1920 helped close the barriers for regional dwellers. The four founders, all veterans of the First World War, used their considerable skills gained in the new arts of aerial warfare for peaceful purpose. The establishment of the first Royal Flying Doctor Service in 1928 in Cloncurry brought emergency medical services to those in remote areas, thus bridging the terrible sense of isolation and distance.

Climate, limited markets, poor transport, and the pastoral monopoly initially stifled agriculture in Queensland. In 1837 J.W. Mayo used female convicts to plant cotton and sugarcane. Dr John Dunmore Lang's early proposals to establish a cotton industry set forth in his *Cooksland* (1847) came to nothing.

A marked change occurred in the early 1860s when the American Civil War erupted, leading to a search for alternative supplies of raw cotton to supply the English textile mills. The Queensland Government offered potential growers a substantial subsidy. Plantations sprung up between the Tweed River and Rockhampton. Captain Robert Towns was convinced that cheap non-white labour was essential for financial viability in the global market. In August 1863 he introduced the first shipload of Melanesian indentured labourers to work his cotton plantation on the Logan River. Despite extraordinary opposition from missionaries in the New Hebrides and Queensland Liberal parliamentarians like Charles Lilley, the introduction of Pacific Islanders continued until 1904.

A few other wealthy landowners, including the Hon. Louis Hope, uncle of the Commonwealth's first Governor-General, followed Towns' lead at Cleveland. Hope and Captain Claudius Whish also experimented with another tropical crop – sugar cane. Wet conditions and insect pests continually plagued cotton. When the American South revived and the new struggling industry could not compete, Queensland growers directed their attention to sugar production. John Spiller planted the first crop in Mackay in 1865. By the early 1870s Mackay was producing one-third of Queensland's output, an expansion underwritten by the use of Melanesian indentured labour.

Plantations contained a rigid social hierarchy with wealthy often-aristocratic landowners like the resident Earl of Yarmouth at the apex. Along with Pacific Islanders, Chinese, Japanese, Ceylonese and Piedmontese labourers were added to the workforces. Sweeping political and economic changes altered the old way of life based upon immense wealth and privilege. The scourge of sugarcane rust ended early prosperity in 1875, with severe depression leading to the fragmentation of large plantations from the late 1880s. Legislation ensured that small farmers and co-operative mills and CSR became the backbone of the restructured industry in 1891. The Liberal concept of a rural yeomanry held a long attraction in Queensland, extending through post-World War One soldier settlement on the Atherton Tableland,

the Biloela district and around Nambour, to the failure of the Peak Downs Scheme in the early 1950s, when distance to markets and adverse environmental conditions repeated this familiar story of adversity.

Life on the land with those without capital and unattached to the networks of power and privilege like the wealthy squatters, mining magnates and sugar planters was relentlessly hard. The original *Crown Lands Alienation Act* of 1860, introduced under the first Parliament led by Premier, R. G. W. Herbert, favoured the large pastoralist with its provision of 14-year pastoral leases. Land acts introduced under Liberal John Douglas were more disposed to the rights of the poorer selectors. Griffith's 1884 Act was within the ideal of the Liberals for yeoman farmers; yet, all too often the wealthy pastoralists 'dummied' the process leaving little of value for the small farmer. The *Homesteads Land Act* of 1901 and the establishment of the state Agricultural Bank the following year attempted to increase the prospects of small farmers. Some, like the German communities in the Brisbane Valley and on the Darling Downs, were frugally successful but they were the exceptions.

Celebrations of rural achievement and abundance such as the Royal Agricultural Shows, first opened at Toowoomba in July 1862, were the optimistic face behind constant struggle, endurance and often failure. Farsighted initiatives like the construction of a flourmill at Allora by the local municipal council in 1870 were welcome forms of rural assistance. The opening of the Queensland National Bank in 1872 with services throughout the colony also provided financial assistance.

Life in early Queensland was harsh and the important contribution that women made to the development of this state must be acknowledged. In his most enduring poem, "The Women of the West", George Essex Evans poignantly intoned:

We have held our father's creed. No call  
has passed us by.

We faced and fought the wilderness, we sent our sons to die.

And we have hearts to do and dare, and yet, o'er

all the rest,

The hearts that made the Nation were the Women of the West.

Steele Rudd (Arthur Hoey Davis, the Brisbane Sheriff of the Supreme Court) also captured these bonds. In *On Our Selection* he commented that “[w]ith our combined male and female forces ... we rolled and thundered big logs together in the face of Hell’s own fires...” Many women found domestic life debilitating and often soul destroying. Commenting on the selectors at Stanthorpe, he pondered: “I often wonder how the women stood it in the first few years...Mother, when she was alone, used to sit on a log...and cry for hours.” For many men life was an enduring round of hard work for little reward. J.J. Hilder’s painting, “Ploughing” (1910) shows an anonymous farmer bent by his lonely toil.

Pastoralism had strong links to other new industries. The Archer Family’s *Gracemere* station was built around the original gold rush at Canoona in 1852. James Nash’s discovery of gold at Gympie in 1867 was the later salvation of Queensland, gripped in severe financial crisis. More gold rushes followed, including Ravenswood (1868); Etheridge River (1870); Palmer River (1873) and Charters Towers (1882). Gold triggered massive immigration from the US, Europe and China and the creation of numerous towns in the wilderness. Croydon now bears little resemblance to the boomtown of the 1890s, when population peaked at 7000. Although mining continued until 1906, poor management, lack of transport and environmental difficulties were significant factors in its demise.

Discovered by a stockman in 1880, Mount Morgan remained untapped for six years until the formation of the Mount Morgan Gold Mining Company. Although immense wealth was extracted, technical difficulties caused erratic production until the company finally went into liquidation in 1927. While the

prosperity for many was brief, solid foundations were laid for others. Wealth from this field was invested in the Anglo-Persian Oil Company, now BP.

Gold had a symbolic meaning beyond material wealth. As a parting gift from the women of Queensland, Lady Lamington in 1902 was presented with “the most beautiful solid gold set of brushes, bottles, comb etc that I have ever seen, and best of all it was made in Brisbane ... at Messrs. Hardy, the jewellers”. Gold was prominent in various Queensland exhibits sent to international expositions in the 19th century. Wealth generated from gold was a tangible measure of Queensland’s progress from shameful recidivist settlement to a powerhouse of imperial finances and resources. The Customs House, the magnificent Venetian palace on the Brisbane River completed in 1887, reflected this confidence and prosperity.

Mining was not limited to gold, for many other non-ferrous metals made their own valuable contributions. Tin was discovered at Stanthorpe in 1872, where an enterprising Scot named John Moffat expanded his small storekeeping business. When extensive deposits of tin were found at Herberton seven years later, Moffat relocated north to establish a mining empire which embraced silver mines at Montalbion, copper at Chillagoe and Cloncurry, wolfram at Mount Carbine, coal at Mount Mulligan and oil shale south of Gladstone. Moffat died in 1918, just five years before an itinerant prospector named John Campbell Miles stumbled on rich silver-lead, zinc and copper deposits of Mount Isa. Miles’ find was to have a major impact on Queensland’s economy right to the present.

Mining was also essential for the development of secondary industries, the growth of which is reflected in Noel Lambert’s watercolour, *Symbolic Representation of Transport and Industries in Queensland* (c.1939). Moreover, mineral exploitation continued its economic prominence, with the state’s first open-cut coal mine at Blair Athol near Clermont operating from 1946. It was the beginning of a boom in coal extraction, with large-scale deposits worked at Moura and Blackwater. New state government initiatives

in clean coal production have lessened the detrimental environmental impact of carbon fuels.

Bauxite brought together the twin themes of displacement and development. Essential for the production of aluminium, enormous reserves of bauxite were discovered on the west coast of Cape York Peninsula in 1955. Two years later the new Coalition government was elected on a slogan “a new deal for the Far North.” Although much bauxite was located on Aboriginal reserves, the government granted leases to multi-national mining corporations. Extraction went ahead. When passive resistance occurred at Mapoon in November 1963, traditional custodians were forcibly evicted. Comalco was for its time a forward-thinking company with positive employment practices. The port of Gladstone, now a powerhouse of the Queensland export economy, also contained an aluminium smelter. Cities like Mackay, Rockhampton and Gladstone, with their massive ports and infrastructure, contribute to the buoyancy of the export economy.

Like life on the land, in the maritime industries and the mining sector, life in the townships initially was also hard. When granted separation in 1859, the new colony was lacking in basic infrastructures. Both Governor Bowen and Premier Robert Herbert realised the need for services, not just in the capital of Brisbane but also in other centres. A daily coach service from Brisbane to Ipswich was established and this was supplemented in 1865 with the inaugural railway line. In March 1860 steam ships began runs to the new northern ports. In 1860 Rockhampton was proclaimed a municipality, following Brisbane in September 1859 and Ipswich in February 1860. In April that year the first telegraph was sent from Brisbane to Ipswich, with the telegraph line from Brisbane to Tenterfield completed in November.

In February 1862 a ferry service between the north and south banks of the Brisbane River was leased. A year later severe floods affected both Brisbane and Ipswich. A permanent bridge was constructed at the top of Queen Street to Melbourne Street in the capital and opened in June 1874. The new colony

experienced severe flooding in 1864 and three years later cyclones inundated the small settlements of Townsville and Bowen. Fire was also a problem in the incipient capital. A volunteer fire service was established in Brisbane in 1860, the first modern fire engine arriving in June 1862. With many wooden buildings, fire could surge through streets with little hindrance as it did in May 1864 and on 8 October 1866 through Queen Street.

It was not just the material infrastructure that was developed. The first *Education Act* was passed in 1860 endowing grammar schools on the British model. Ipswich Grammar School opened its doors in 1863 with Brisbane Grammar School following in 1869. Prince Alfred set its foundation stone in February 1867 in the first royal visit to the colony. Girls could receive a secondary education in Brisbane at All Hallows School, established in 1867 by the redoubtable Mother Vincent Whitty. Premier Charles Lilley initiated free, compulsory and secular primary education in 1870, though Queensland waited until 1912 before the first state high schools were established at Mount Morgan and Brisbane. Samuel Griffith, later a leader of the federation movement, initiator of the first version of the federal Constitution, Premier of Queensland, Chief Justice of both Queensland and the High Court, had to travel to Maitland for his free state education. For remote rural children even into the second half of the 20th century it was not until the School of the Air that they gained access to continuous free state primary education.

Technical education was slow to develop, with the Brisbane Technical College (incorporated into QUT) established in 1885 and the Gatton Agricultural College in 1897 (now part of the University of Queensland). There were initiatives to aid primary industry, with the Sugar Experimental Bureaux, first at Bundaberg and the Meteorological Bureau established by Clement Wragge in 1887 with the Queensland Post and Telegraph Service. Wragge first initiated the naming of cyclones.

Cyclones were not the only major hazard in the tropical landscape. Health in a sub-tropical climate was a constant preoccupation. The dictum that “white men cannot work in the tropics” was augmented along class and ethnic lines

as British men worked in the mining, pastoral and transport industries in the heat. What they objected to was routine servile labour in the sugar industry where Islanders principally filled this role. When white workers entered the sugar industry as cane cutters in 1911, constant problems with diseases like Weil's disease (from rats' urine) bedevilled the industry. Raphael Cilento, the Director General of Health in 1935, provided the research by which the disease was identified. Queensland had already produced other notable physicians and scientists who addressed the problems of life in the tropics. Dr Thomas Lane Bancroft, with a practice in Geraldton (Innisfail) Hospital in 1885-1886, conducted pioneering research on poisonous tropical plants. Later, as the quarantine officer in Brisbane in 1904, he first investigated the causes of dengue fever and proposed answers for the causes of malaria; as well as research in other fields of animal medicine such as the cause of "Birdsville disease" in horses, tropical agriculture and soil conservation. He was instrumental in bringing many examples of native flora and fauna into the collections of the new Queensland Museum.

Health in the cities and not just in the tropical coast, maritime and mining industries could be hazardous. There were numerous outbreaks of the supposedly medieval disease, bubonic plague in Queensland in the late 19th and 20th centuries, with severe outbreaks in Brisbane and Maryborough in the first decade of the 20th century. These galvanised government intervention, bringing in major public health and sanitary reforms.

The health of child-bearing woman and infants was a constant problem, with Queensland in the 19th century experiencing the highest maternal and infant mortality rates in Australia. Gas street lighting had been introduced in Brisbane in November 1865 and the following year the Enoggera Reservoir took over from the inadequate facilities in what is now Tank Street in Brisbane. Yet the inadequacy of drinking water, impure milk and sanitary arrangements in homes meant high death rates, especially for babies and small children in the long hot months of the year.

Inoculations against diphtheria began in 1895 but vaccination did not prevent diseases like poliomyelitis (or infant paralysis as it was then called). Serious epidemics continued until the early 1950s. One Queensland medical entrepreneur, Elizabeth Kenny established a clinic in Clifton in 1911. Without formal training and qualifications she defied the medical establishment with her revolutionary methods, attracting immense funding from the State Government's Golden Casket Lottery Fund in the 1930s for her clinics in Brisbane and Townsville.

The *Maternity Act* of 1922, which provided for the establishment of free mother and baby clinics, followed a pro-natalist preoccupation so prevalent in Australia after the terrible losses in World War One. Cilento and Home Secretary, Ned Hanlon brought in the first free public state hospital for women in 1936 and a free public health service in 1941. This was at the cost of education, for secondary education was not compulsory in Queensland until 1962.

Initially requiring considerable capital and often semi-skilled labour but few with higher education, development in Queensland has been largely predicated upon expert primary and extractive industries and the establishment of ports such as Brisbane, Gladstone and Rockhampton. There was little manufacturing or secondary industry. The first major project, the first locomotive for the timber-millers, Pettigrew and Sims, at Dundathu, near Gympie built by ship makers, John Walker and Company at Maryborough was an important breakthrough. The railways workshops at Ipswich were important centres of industry. Most secondary industry however serviced the production of value added primary production such as the mills owned by CSR at Ingham and Innisfail, the distilleries at Beenleigh and Bundaberg or the flourmills owned by the enterprising O'Brien family of Toowoomba.

Labor Premier Edward Theodore envisaged another future for the Queensland economy based upon massive industrial enterprises, the first of which was to be an iron ore smelter in Bowen. Queensland's suspicious

conservatives, fearing a militant industrial working class aided by a radical Labor government, defeated this initiative. Yet, like Mclwraith before him, Theodore had big visions for the state. The Dawson River scheme to harness water for farmers and industry and the expansion of railways and main roads in the 1920s was all part of his vision of prosperity. The establishment of the first State Government Insurance Office (now Suncorp) by the socialist Ryan government demonstrated how political will could affect large-scale commercial success for Queensland initiatives.

The construction of the Grey Street Bridge in Brisbane in 1932, the Brisbane City Hall and the Storey Bridge across Kangaroo Point in Brisbane in 1941 marked a commitment of government and municipalities to large-scale infrastructure projects. The transformation of former farming country on the St. Lucia reach of the river with the construction of the University of Queensland campus by the Forgan Smith government in the 1940s showed a confidence in Queensland excellence. Expo 88 was another public manifestation of pride in Queensland and its achievements.

Sir Johannes Bjelke-Peterson in the 1970s and 1980s, whose political ideology was far removed from Theodore's, continued this tradition of state development. Queensland was also fortunate to possess senior public servants of the highest calibre. Colin Clark, Sir Leo Hielscher, Sir Sidney Schubert and Eric Finger were instrumental in transforming the Queensland economy from its narrow prime industry bases. The commitment of the Beattie and the Bligh governments to "the Smart State" with enlargement of medical, biotechnology and information technology industries continues the diversification of the economy.

In the 19th century many of the markers of democratic progress were secured in Queensland. The Queensland Parliament first held a sitting in May 1860. The magnificent Parliament House, designed by colonial architect Charles Tiffin, was opened in August 1866. Only a few years later, manhood suffrage (with residency requirements) was established, with white women waiting until 1905 to get the vote. Irene Longman, the first woman elected to the

Legislative Assembly in the state in 1929, achieved this notable honour only a year after all adult women in Great Britain were enfranchised. Queensland however lagged behind Britain in the appointment of women police officers. Plural voting was also abolished in 1905 under a coalition Labor-Liberal government. Indigenous Queenslanders gained the full franchise in 1965, three years after the Commonwealth legislation. Queensland was revolutionary in many other respects, with the world's first Labor government sworn in December 1899, led by Anderson Dawson born in Rockhampton in 1863. Queensland took several more extraordinary firsts. It abolished the Legislative Council and capital punishment in 1922. The sole communist elected to an imperial parliament, barrister Fred Paterson became member for Bowen 1944- 51.

With its hierarchical class structure, riven by ethnic and religious alignments, Queensland experienced periods of intense class and sectarian antagonisms. Even before Separation the police had gone on strike in Brisbane in 1854. On 11 March 1864 an enthusiastic crowd endorsed the principles of the eight-hour day. In November 1864 riots broke out among the largely Irish navvies constructing the railway line to Toowoomba. During the depression in the colony from 1866-71, Brisbane and other centres like Ipswich witnessed major industrial disturbances with Premier Herbert attacked and assaulted. A food riot on 11 September 1866, when the cry "bread or blood" echoed through the streets of Brisbane, was a serious altercation between protestors and police. Brisbane was to maintain its radical reputation with the world's first general strike erupting in early 1912. There had been strikes throughout the state as well.

Many of the most severe and prolonged strikes occurred in the pastoral industry. With the collapse of the sugar industry in 1889, recession turned to full-blown depression by 1890. Following the inter-colonial Maritime Strike in 1889, the Shearers' Strike in early 1891 saw class warfare at its most savage. In January the shearers at Clermont went out, objecting to the new contracts imposed by the pastoralists. At Barcaldine a republican flag, with a kangaroo and emu, alongside an English rose, a Scottish thistle and an Irish shamrock

(but no Welsh leek) on an azure background was flown. Proclamations of revolution were made under the Tree of Knowledge. The colonial army and the Native Mounted Police were despatched against unionists with 225 imprisoned, some on long sentences in the notorious St Helena prison in Moreton Bay. With wealthy pastoralists, Thomas McIlwraith as premier and Horace Tozer as Home Secretary, the government had little sympathy for workers. The radical socialist and journalist, William Lane, editor of *The Worker*, led a doomed party to Paraguay to establish a New Australia colony in 1894.

Yet only two years after the Shearers' Strike, Labor\* won some 13 seats in the Legislative Assembly, some third of the vote. Until the split in 1957, Labor ruled from 1915, with the exception of the Moore government in 1929-32. The coalition held office from 1957 to 1983 when the Nationals held government in their own right until the Goss government was elected in 1989.

One striking feature of Queensland history is the manner in which democratic governments of all persuasions have attempted to limit common-law freedoms such as freedom of speech and rights of assembly. Griffith served in a coalition with McIlwraith as Attorney General in 1891, for instance. Massive force was used in 1912, the Townsville Meatworkers Strike of 1919, the Red Flag riots in Brisbane that year, the South Johnstone Mill Workers Strike of 1927, the Railway Workers Strike of 1948, the Pastoral Strike of 1956, the Mt. Isa Dispute in 1965 and the SEQEB strike of 1985. Governments, both Labor and non-Labor, have had citizens under surveillance. A section of the *Traffic Act* of 1938 provided provisions for the limitation of free assembly, which were used in the Meatworkers Strike of 1948. A declaration of a state of emergency was an overreaction to protest against the Springbok tour in 1971. In 1977 street marches were first banned altogether.

*\*Until 1908 the Australian Labor Party used the spelling 'Labour'. For consistency this paper uses the current spelling 'Labor'.*

Alongside its radical elements Queensland had contrary deep loyalties to the Empire. Queensland's first enthusiastic offer of troops for the Anglo-Boer war in South Africa in 1899 was a prelude to its initial enthusiastic response to the declaration of hostilities in August 1914. Yet the war brought to the surface deep-seated class, gender, sectarian and ethnic fissures. Though the Ryan government publicly supported the war effort, more radical ministers like John Fihelly were antagonistic. The Ryan government was the only labor government not to split over the issue of conscription in 1916 and 1917, fully supporting the notion of a volunteer force.

World War II did not witness these deep chasms of conflict, though communists, strong in many influential unions did not support the war effort until the USSR joined the Allies in June 1941. What Queenslanders in particular feared was their vulnerability to Japanese attack while the Second AIF was in the Mediterranean. In March 1941 a convoy of US navy personnel paraded through the streets of Brisbane, months before Japan attacked Pearl Harbour, bringing the isolationist USA into the war. The presence of Major General Douglas MacArthur's Headquarters in the AMP Building on Edward and Queen Streets, Brisbane from mid 1942 to late 1943 assuaged some anxiety.

Australia turned away from Britain in 1942, setting its new foreign policy with its new ally, the United States of America. The first visit by a serving US president in 1966 to Townsville and Brisbane was a major event. At this time most Australian supported Australian involvement in Vietnam and military conscription. Lyndon Johnson received an enthusiastic welcome with only a few protestors. The tour of the Beatles in 1964 however garnered far more public enthusiasm, if largely from young women.

If the first governor, Sir George Bowen were able to reappear today he would be astounded as he stepped forth from his tiny vessel at the Botanic Gardens and surveyed Queensland. His first steps through what is now QUT, past Old Government House to the magnificent Houses of Parliament, through paved streets, with a freeway passing by his old gardens with cars, trucks and

buses, over modern steel bridges with over a million people in the capital, set still in an awkward spot in the far south eastern corner of the vast terrain. From a tiny convict settlement he might recognise the Commissariat Store and little else.

For in 150 years this outpost of Empire, begun without hope as a penal settlement for colonial recidivists, is now a modern thriving society with busy ports, heavy industry and medical and biotechnology research centres. The state has seen two female governors and a woman premier. Women sit in the parliament, in the Cabinet room, in the boardrooms, on the Supreme Court and other judicial benches, as professors and other positions of authority. The legacy of racial divide lingers but again is unrecognisable from the sharp divisions of 1859.

In 1959 the state celebrated its centenary of Separation as a distinct entity by re-enactments of the official landing by Governor and Lady Bowen as well as a celebration of its pioneering past. Today the celebrations of the past are important as the state moves from a primitive settlement to a prosperous modern diversified economy. In 1920 four war veterans began a tiny enterprise in Longreach, flying a primitive plane to Winton. Just as Qantas has grown to be a world leader in its field, so too has the State of Queensland.