



### Special Points of Interest:

- *Buchanan's Hotel*
- *Arthur's memories of the day Cyclone Althea arrived*
- *Captain Richard Hall, operator of the penny ferry in Ross Creek.*

### A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT

At the beginning of 2019 the Museum received a package in the mail containing a 1911 Diary kept meticulously by Elizabeth O'Brien, following the loss of her husband, Clifford on the SS Yongala. Elizabeth kept every piece of correspondence and newspaper clipping relating to this tragedy up until 1937. There was so much information kept by Elizabeth and sadly she passed away in 1950, not ever knowing if the wreckage of Yongala would be found. The Diary found its way to the Townsville Museum and is on display, along with the story "From love story to tragedy" and now well known author and historian, Trisha Fielding is writing a book based on the contents of the Diary. We are hoping later this year the book will be available for purchase.

With restrictions, mask wearing, sanitizing and the list goes on.....the Museum is still welcoming visitors. We would however like to get some more volunteers to assist with the everyday tasks, so if you know of a friend or family member who has an interest in history, we would love to hear from them.

The Museum was also successful with a Grant through the Federal Member for Herbert, Mr. Phillip Thompson, OAM to purchase new filing cabinets for our extensive photo collections. This Grant is very much appreciated and now the task of accessing the photos and filing them will keep some of the members busy.

Our priority over the last 10 years has been to relocate to new premises but unfortunately nothing has been forthcoming. This year we will be seriously campaigning for a new location so that the history of Townsville can be seen by all visitors and locals.

With the COVID restrictions in place at present, the committee has decided not to open the Museum on the 1st and 3rd Sundays until June 2022, however the Museum is open Monday to Friday 9am to 2.30pm as normal. Follow updates and news on our Facebook page *Townsville Museum*.

Happy New Year and look forward to your visit one day.

Regards,  
Trish Cronin  
President

### TOWNSVILLE MUSEUM AND HISTORICAL SOCIETY

#### BUSINESS HOURS

Monday to Friday

9:00 am to 2:30 pm

First and Third Sundays of the month

1:30 pm to 3:30 pm

ENTRY Adults \$5 Chn \$2

#### MEMBERSHIP FEES

(12 months from 1st July to 30th June)

Single \$ 11.00

Couples \$ 16.50

Corporate \$ 32.50

Monthly committee meetings are held at the Museum on the third Monday of the month at ten o'clock. All committee members are notified a week prior to the meeting.



Currently on display in Hall 2 is the true story "From Love Story to Tragedy". This is the story which is the subject of a new book by Trisha Fielding.

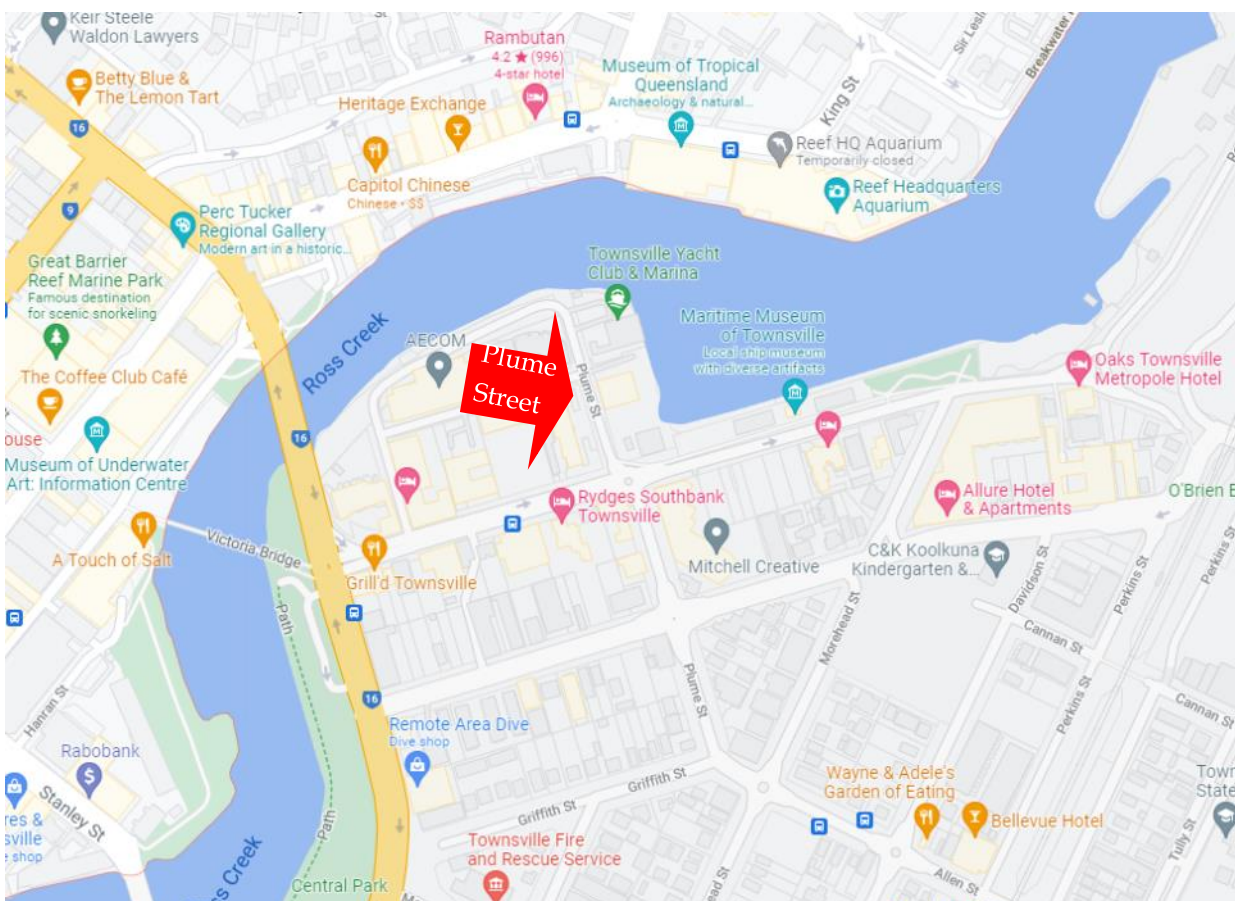
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## PLUME STREET, SOUTH TOWNSVILLE

Plume Street, South Townsville. Named after Henry Plume, the first Archdeacon of the Anglican Diocese of North Queensland. He arrived with Bishop Stanton in 1879 and stayed until 1888, when he moved to Sydney. In 1891 he was appointed the first head of Barker College, Sydney.

Mathew, J. (1995). *Highways and Byways*. Townsville, Queensland: Townsville City Council.



### From the Australian Dictionary of Biographies

## Plume, Henry (1851–1930)

by **Stuart Braga**

This article was published:

**in the *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, Volume 11 , 1988  
online in 2006**

Henry Plume (1851-1930), Anglican clergyman and schoolmaster, was born on 12 August 1851 at Framingham-Pigot, near Norwich, Norfolk, England, elder son of Rev. William Henry Plume and his wife Rebecca Charlotte, née Buck. He was educated at his father's small grammar school and in 1872 entered Corpus Christi College, Cambridge (B.A., 1876; M.A., 1883).

## HENRY PLUME

Made deacon on 19 December 1875, he was ordained priest on 21 December 1876 by the bishop of London and served his curacy at St Giles-in-the-Fields, London, in 1875-79. Here he came under the influence of **Rev. G. H. Stanton**. After Stanton's consecration as bishop of North Queensland, Plume accepted his invitation to accompany him as examining chaplain and on 23 January 1879 at Norwich married Eleanor Marshall (d.1951), daughter of a surgeon.

Plume was vicar of St James' Church, Townsville, from 1879 until his appointment as archdeacon of North Queensland in 1883. He travelled widely throughout the vast diocese, acquiring sites for church buildings and encouraging the lonely and often dispirited outback clergy. Stanton found him 'so prudent, so sound-headed and whole-hearted, so capable of steering a course among the social and ecclesiastical reefs that are more numerous than the coral barriers along our coast'. As vicar-general and as compiler of three small service books adapted to local needs, Plume proved an able lieutenant to his bishop.

Seeking 'fresh fields and pastures new', Plume moved to Sydney in 1888 and was nominated to St Stephen's, Kurrajong, a quiet mountain resort. In 1889 he served for some months as acting warden of St Paul's College within the University of Sydney (and was a fellow in 1903-06). He so enjoyed this experience that on returning to Kurrajong he continued coaching.

In 1891 Plume established Barker College, named in gratitude to 'that good, kind and sympathetic Bishop Barker', who had befriended the Plumes. He ran the school with conspicuous success first at Kurrajong Heights and from 1896 at Hornsby. Starting with eighteen pupils, he was obliged by growing demand to increase his enrolment to forty-five by 1905, though Plume's ideal was a school of twelve. He felt that the school had outgrown its purpose, and sold it to William Charles Carter, who built it into a major private school; it was acquired by the Church of England in 1919 as a diocesan school.

In 1905 Plume returned to England. After serving as assistant chaplain in 1909-10 at St George's, Cannes, France, he settled at Eastbourne where he served until 1930 as honorary curate at St Michael's Church, Ocklynge. He was seen as 'the little, kindly clergyman ... forever on the lookout for somebody or something to help'. Survived by his wife, Plume died without issue on 21 October 1930, bequeathing scholarships at Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, and the University of Sydney.

Plume was the product of the Evangelical churchmanship dominant in England in the mid-nineteenth century. He did not associate with the strong Evangelical party in the diocese of Sydney, not wishing to be identified with any group within the Church. His life was dedicated to the fulfilment of a vocation in Church extension and in education, which he found intellectually satisfying and spiritually fulfilling.

### Select Bibliography

- J. O. Feetham and W. V. Rymer (eds), *North Queensland Jubilee Book 1878-1928* (Townsville, 1929)  
 S. Braga, *Barker College, a History* (Syd, 1978)  
*Windsor and Richmond Gazette*, 3 Jan 1891, 16 Mar 1895  
*Eastbourne Courier and Eastbourne Gazette*, 22 Oct 1930  
*Eastbourne Chronicle*, 25 Oct 1930  
 H. Plume, *History of Barker College* (1920, State Library of New South Wales)  
 K. Rayner, *The History of the Church of England in Queensland* (Ph.D. thesis, University of Queensland, 1962)  
 G. H. Stanton, letter to Prebendary Tucker, 6 May 1880 (SPG, F Mss: Letters from Australia, vol 9, Lambeth Palace, London).

### Citation details

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## A PUB CRAWL THROUGH TOWNSVILLE—BUCHANAN'S HOTEL

This is the entry in Dorothy Gibson-Wilde's book "A Pattern of Pubs". Buchanan's Hotel was situated on the south eastern side of Sturt Street, in the block between Denham and Stokes Street.

1903-1913     David Buchanan (d. 1913)

David Buchanan had been an hotelkeeper in Townsville for twenty-seven years before he built *Buchanan's*. He owned both the *Imperial* and the *Prince of Wales*. When the latter was destroyed by fire in April 1902 he replaced it with a new brick building costing £12,000 and incorporating every up-to-date feature he could find. Buchanan was so proud of his new building that in May 1903 he officially registered a change of name from the *Prince of Wales* to *Buchanan's*. Though he boasted that it "stands easily first in North Queensland", it is doubtful that this hotel ever attained a reputation to rival the *Queen's*. Nevertheless, it was a fine hostelry in a splendid building. The dining saloon, measuring 50 ft by 10 ft, featured a most attractive pressed ceiling, while the bedrooms with extra high walls opened on to broad shady verandahs to catch every breeze. Water was laid on to all rooms where 'patent wash stands' were installed.<sup>1</sup> The verandahs were wreathed in some of Australia's finest iron lace manufactured by Green's Foundry of Townsville. Cast and wrought iron, incorporating panels of coloured glass, formed a magnificent valence around the verandahs, while the balustrading was of cast-iron panels.

<sup>1</sup> Pugh's Almanac, 1906

Lit by gas and with electrically-operated bells to summon staff, it was justly popular with visitors to the city and was favoured by commercial travellers who found the extensive and well-equipped sample rooms, thoughtfully provided by Buchanan, excellent for displaying their wares. *Buchanan's* attracted an extensive and illustrious clientele over the years. The guest register included the names of J. C. Williamson's stars, such as Elsie Moore and Claude Bantock; prominent sporting identities, including the superlative cricketer Sir Donald Bradman; and many others.<sup>1</sup> During the Second World War the hotel was taken over by the American forces. In this era it sheltered Lyndon B. Johnson, a future American President.

It is one of the tragedies of Townsville that *Buchanan's* was demolished after a fire in 1982. Featured on an Australian stamp, 'Buch's, as it was popularly called, was unique; the delicate tracery of cast and wrought iron interspersed with stained glass that protected its verandahs epitomized the exuberant architecture of an era which was already passing when the hotel was built.

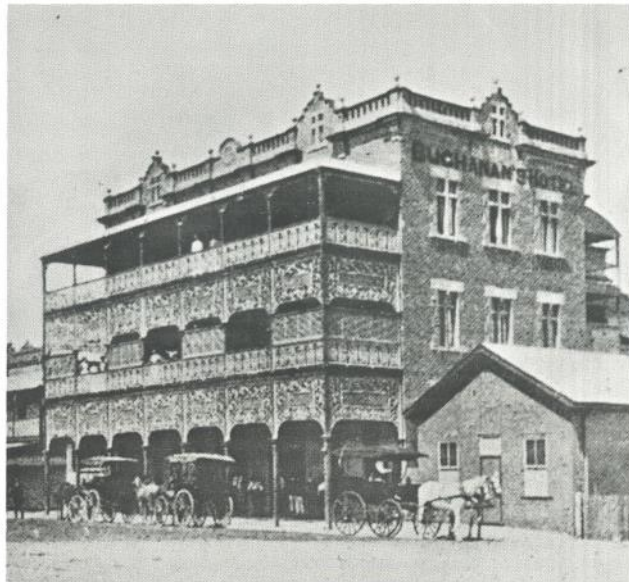
<sup>1</sup> *North Queensland Herald*, 3 October 1902.



## BUCHANAN'S HOTEL

Design of hotels

107



63 *Buchanan's*, c. 1905.

Townsville's two most elaborate hotel buildings, the *Queen's* and *Buchanan's*, were designed in the same year (1902). Both mixed the exposed brick and painted plaster detailing of the Federation era with iron lace, more typical of the nineteenth century. *Buchanan's* was justly famous for its superb cast and wrought iron.



This coffee table has been made with a wooden insert from the Buchanan's Hotel as its feature.

Donated to the Museum by Gail Mabo.

Directory of hotels

129



72 *Buchanan's*, 1980.

(B. Gibson-Wilde)

## RECENT ACQUISITION

### Robert Alexander (Bob) McPherson



Robert Alexander McPherson was born 14 July 1908 in Cloncurry, North Queensland, the first born of Robert and Eva McPherson. A sister Eva was born in 1911. His parents also took in a boy, Cyril, and raised him to adulthood.

Bob, as he was known, grew up at Reid River, a railway camp between Townsville and Charters Towers. He attended

Reid River State School for his primary education, where he did this sampler.

Bob enjoyed the outdoor life at Reid River. He loved fishing, pig hunting and camping out. He was a good shot with a gun and owned a few of them. He also ate most of the game that he shot. He was quite partial to kangaroo tail soup.

After he left school, Bob gained a job in the Queensland Railway as a lad porter and worked his way up to station master. He married Rose Danby in 1932 and they spent the first four years of married life at Rifle Creek, 23km south of Mount Isa where Bob was the station master.

Rose and Bob settled in Townsville and raised five children. After leaving the Queensland Railway, he went on to various

occupations, bookmaker, pie-cart owner and caterer.

He was well known around the Townsville area, as his pie-cart (which was a converted bus), was a favourite stop for a meal and a drink (tea or softdrink) after 5pm at night. The menu was pies, mashed potato, peas, rissoles, hot dogs and steak and kidney stew. The pie cart was situated in Stanley Street.



All his life, Bob's greatest love was fishing. After the war, he and a few mates set up a hut at what was then called "The Haughton" which was the mouth of the Haughton River. It is now known as Cungulla. Over the years, Bob became the principal owner of the hut and most weekends would find him there, fishing and crabbing. He enjoyed nothing more than sitting at the corner of Connors Island with his 70lb handline ready to pull in any big grunter that happened his way.

Bob Mc Pherson was a unique individual, with a passion for country life. He died 15 November, 1972, aged 64.

*Sampler on display was donated by Merle Dickenson (nee McPherson) on behalf of the McPherson family in June 2021.*



Robert's beautiful stitchery is on display in the school room in Hall 2. Above is a close up of the panel showing his name and school.



## FIFTY YEARS AGO, ALTHEA CAME FOR CHRISTMAS

*This is Arthur Rains' recollections of Cyclone Althea.*

25 November 2021

Firstly, I would like to say that I don't want to hear that siren warning recording over the radio ever again. It was around during 1970 -80 and it scared the life out of me.

Much cloudy water has gone beneath the bridges since Althea. Fifty years has passed by but it is still fresh in our minds.

### A Short Burst on Althea

If someone said, "Oh that was something I'll never forget", well now I'm 86 and the event is 50 years distant, and No, I'm not likely to forget it!

Having toured the Atherton Tablelands we arrived home here late Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> December 1971, after hearing a whisper that a cyclone was heading our way. We took a short stop at the Bohle River. It was pretty eerie, short wind gusts but as yet, no rain.

Then, from Victoria Street Stanton Hill in the city, we took in a beautiful view of Cleveland Bay from my in-laws house. We could see Cape Cleveland to the Palm Islands clearly and there was no rain.

Beyond the Palm Islands a distant formation of cumulus storm cloud was evident on the horizon to Townsville's north. There were developing wind gusts but once again, no rain.

Cyclone Althea arrived and caused havoc on Christmas Eve about 8am.

We were back home in Dyer Street Pallarenda. The barometer was dropping significantly. Wind gusts were increasing but still, no rain.

My neighbour, Les Sinclair and I stood calmly in our back yard facing the sea. We had battened down as best we could. There were few trees here, it was lightly wooded then. From our kitchen window we could see the Magnetic Island Ferry crossing to the island.

Contemplating the situation with arms folded, I was thinking that there's possibly nothing much in it. Suddenly, from just across the road and about 200 metres away in Bay Street, the roof of a high set house lifted, broke into four sides and blew up and away!

Possibly a few bleeped words were murmured and we fled, as field mice would at the sight of a falcon!

It was "on" well and truly. Missiles showered our walls, roof and windows. Our house is a high set dwelling and it was sitting there exposed to the elements and missiles. Beneath the house was the Volkswagen V Dub. In 1970, the house cost us about \$10,500 to build. It has 3 bedrooms, an aluminium roof, washing tubs and hot water system open to the elements. External stairs meant no escape so into the bathroom beneath a double bed mattress, Anne, Fiona my 18 month old, and I crouched, and we watched the barometer needle fall. I had taken it from the kitchen wall.

## CYCLONE ALTHEA

The gusts of wind increased. We felt the house push, then the wind dropped, then suddenly the house walls pushed again. Constructionally the house gave way an inch but little more.

Roofing and material screeched by and wrapped around electricity poles or anything outstanding. Most electricity poles moved from the wind by an estimate of about 5 degrees. After two hours of fury, one wondered if it was going to end. The winds eased slightly and Fiona said calmly that she was hungry so out I crept into the kitchen to get some biscuits. That was easy but the house was a wreck. All the curtains were gone, the cupboard doors were torn off and a lounge chair took out the sliding glass door. Looking through the back window, the house behind us was gone, swept from its floorboards.

Photos speak louder than words.

On Christmas morning - no church service - no church.

The barometer needle rose and we ventured outside. Neighbours gradually emerged and surprisingly no one was badly hurt.

Some rain squalls set in.

Through the back window, the waves or surf covered the esplanade. A brave North Ward bus driver was doing the normal run when his bus was blown over at about 8am. He escaped.

A little rain set in.

By night fall the wind returned then the rain set in.

Our film and photos tell this story. A photo speaks a thousand words.

And to give you an idea of how many households were feeling.... It was Christmas time and fridges were full, but there was no electricity. But thanks to the hurricane light, and the kerosene primus, we carried on.

Our house fared well. Windows were gone on two sides. But behind our black and white television set, tucked into the corner of the wall, still stood our inflated Santa Claus. Santa wasn't going anywhere, after all- it was Christmas.

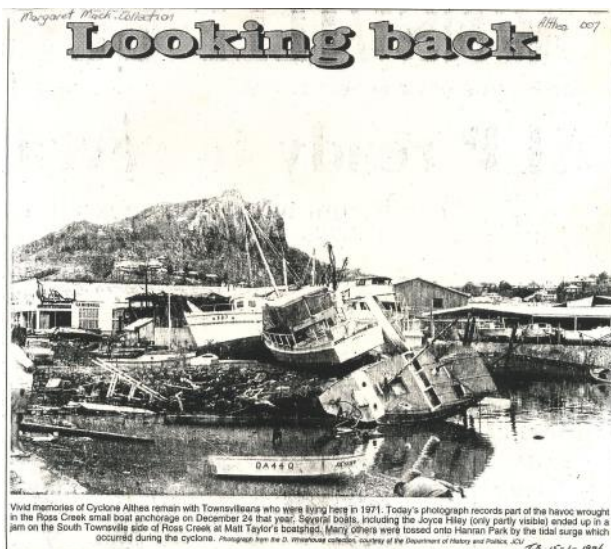
The Townsville Bulletin published a headline in one of its papers. "Pallarenda cops a battering". It surely did.

Arthur Rains

November 2021    Memories of Cyclone Althea



## CYCLONE ALTHEA HITS TOWNSVILLE



Astor Theatre in Palmerston Street



Devastation at Pallarenda. The view from Arthur's house.

Photos by Arthur Rains

## CAPTAIN RICHARD HALL

**Captain Richard Hall, Mariner—Master and owner of the cutter “Flying Fish”.**

Here is an extract from the book “TRINITY PHOENIX” by Dorothy Jones 1976 which was printed by the Cairns Post. The reference for this information is Chapter III, page 23, “Dalrymple’s North-East Coast Expedition 1873”.

Flying Fish Point at Innisfail is said to be named after Captain Richard Hall’s boat the “Flying Fish”. The boat carried 12 tons. Captain Hall lived (and died) at a house in SIXTH STREET, South Townsville. Bundy Creek nearby, which flows into the Ross River, is where he anchored his boat. Bundy Creek is a tidal creek and is now subject to a name change by the Townsville City Council to “Goondi Creek”. The Harbour Board would also be involved in the name change. The creek has almost disappeared because of reclamation work and suburban drainage schemes.

The lamp-post pictured in the attached newspaper cutting (not available) is claimed to be the one which stood at the “Penny Ferry” landing. This Penny Ferry operated across Ross Creek to a landing near the Steam Laundry which was situated on a site adjacent to the present Harbour Board offices. Captain Hall at one time in the 1800s operated this ferry service. He died in 1899 aged 78 years and is buried in the West End Cemetery.

Mr K.G. Smith Senior, a boat builder, now retired, operated from a building and small slipway adjacent to this lamp post opposite the Crown Hotel and would know something of its history.



Richardson, Sidney. *Lower Ferry, Ross Creek Townsville. 1892*

University of Queensland, Sidney Richardson Collection

## CAPTAIN RICHARD HALL

An obituary for Captain Richard Hall's wife, Mrs Zilpah Elizabeth Hall, was located in the Brisbane Courier Mail on Friday 23rd September 1927. This reveals a little more of her husband's interesting life.

"The death occurred of Mrs Zilpah Elizabeth Hall, at the residence of her son-in-law, Mr A. Walters, Petrie. Mrs Hall who was just on 90 years of age, was born in Oxfordshire, England, and came to Australia with her parents as a child, residing with them in Victoria, where they were engaged in sheep farming, until her marriage to the late Captain Richard Hall, in 1850. Captain Hall and his ketch, Flying Fish, were engaged by the Government to convey the Dalrymple exploring party to North Queensland in 1873. The deceased lady leaves three daughters, Mesdames T.W. Bournier (Cairns), A. Walters (Petrie), and C. Collyer (Ipswich). After the death of her husband, Mrs Hall resided with her son-in-law (Mr T. Fitzgerald) at Stewart's Creek and subsequently with him at Laidley. In her later years she resided with her daughter, Mrs A. Walters (Petrie)."

And more family history can be gleaned from the obituary of Mrs Walters, the daughter of Captain Richard Hall and his wife Mrs Zilpah Elizabeth Hall. From the Courier Mail Saturday 9th June 1934:

"The death occurred on April 30th of Mrs Mary Walters, at Petrie, Brisbane, a member of an old and respected family of Townsville, at the age of 72 years. The late Mrs Walters at one time conducted the refreshment rooms at Reid River, and the Reidville Hotel, which her husband (who pre-deceased her by 2 years) built. She was of a kindly disposition, and many a miner in those far off days will regret the passing of one who always extended a helping hand. Mrs Walters was the second daughter of Captain Richard Hall (deceased), who brought the Dalrymple exploring party north in the ketch "Flying Fish", in 1873 which visited the Johnstone River, Cairns Inlet, the Bloomfield, Daintree and other rivers, going as far north as the Endeavour River, where the party arrived just before the rush to the Palmer by steam began. After many exciting trips up and down the northern coast Captain Hall settled in Townsville and built and conducted the upper ferry, before the construction of Victoria Bridge; also the floating baths in Ross Creek. There were four daughters and two sons born to Captain Hall, but there is only remaining—Mrs C. T. Colley, now residing in Ipswich. There is a niece, Mrs Lew Whitman, living at Mirriwinni, and a nephew, Mr Len Bournier, a resident of Cairns. The deceased was a sister of the late Mrs T. W. Bournier, whose husband was, for 19 years, an employee of the 'Cairns Post'."

From Townsville Daily Bulletin of 26 March 1946, in an article written by "Bartle Frere", we learn a little more of the historical context that Captain Richard Hall was a small part of:

"On the outbreak of the Palmer Rush of 1873 the Queensland Government immediately despatched George Elphinstone Dalrymple on a coastal expedition from Cardwell to the Endeavour River to open the port of Cooktown for the new goldfields.

It was on this expedition that Dalrymple named the Johnstone River and also its north and south heads at Gladys Inlet, namely Flying Fish Point and Coquette Point after his two cutters. He also reported that he had observed from the top of the Basilisk Range, near the present South Johnstone Mill, 500,000 acres of the finest agricultural land in Australia of which 300,000 acres were fit for sugar cultivation. He also explored the Russell and Mulgrave Rivers. The Russell River was named after the Earl of Russell and the Mulgrave was named after the Queensland Governor, the Marquis of Normanby and Earl of Mulgrave. Dalrymple had also received instructions to explore all other inlets along the coast between Cardwell and Cooktown."







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&

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