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INTERACTIONS IN AND AROUND STATIONS

By

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Modelling the Railways of Queensland Convention 2018

THE SCENE

This paper discusses places served by railways in Queensland where interaction with other modes of transportation occurred or is occurring. The places were selected in light of my experiences or personal connections to those localities. Activities described are not necessarily comprehensive in respect of anywhere at any particular time. My intention is to provide inspiration for modelling by application of scenarios.

As in many countries, in Queensland waterways were the communication platform prior to the construction of roads and later railways. Many roads were developed over pathways utilized by the traditional owners of country. Railways in Australia were mainly constructed by governments to give better access to country and improve the passage of goods and people over the land where there was perceived to be an economic need and benefit. It follows that railways must therefore interact with other means of conveyance in the localities and population centres served by the various modes.

Gone are the days in Queensland when government owned transport enterprises were protected by legislation against competition. Each enterprise has to justify its economic existence. Subsidies are provided to enterprises both publicly and privately owned in support of the government's recognized community service obligations. The most heavily subsidized enterprises in Queensland today are not in the transport sector but in health and education. In the current age it is increasingly apparent that when the economic imperative diminishes and disappears, the rationale for the service and its supporting infrastructure ceases to exist.

YULEBA

As a young man my maternal grandfather after a brief career in the Queensland Public Service found employment in western Queensland in the wool industry. He was at Dalby in 1918 when he secured employment as a classer at a shearing shed in the Surat district. He travelled west presumably per the "Western Mail" and alighted at Yuleba. From here he travelled to Surat by Cobb & Co coach. The Cobb & Co agency and changing station in Surat at the time was managed by my great grandfather who later became a publican and for a time ran the D'Aguilar Hotel.

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Yuleba station in 1913 (Source unknown)

Yuleba in 1918 was a service centre for the pastoral, agricultural and timber industries and the seat of the Bendemere Shire. Little motorized transport existed at this time and most of the interaction at the railway station was with horse drawn plant. Just imagine the scene on arrival of the mail train at Yuleba – horses being ridden, horses drawing traps, wagons, drays, buggies, carts and the coach for Surat.



Cobb & Co coach (National Archives)

Cobb & Co was modern Australia's first service corporation at a national level and never competed with railways. Mail contracts underpinned the viability of the company. As railways extended in the nineteenth century, the company always continued to feed the railway termini or stations along the railway providing services complementary to the railways. The Cobb & Co horses were carefully selected and maintained well as the effectiveness and profitability of the business depended upon them. The company was a major presence in western and northern Queensland for decades. Horses were retired when reliable motor vehicles became available after the Great War.

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An office or agency and stables were maintained by the company in the towns on its routes. The route to Surat from Yuleba involved stages servicing pastoral stations where the horse teams were changed and looked after by local grooms. The Yuleba – Surat route is significant in that it was the last horse drawn coach service in Australia. The Surat coach was replaced by a passenger and freight carrying International truck in 1924.



Cobb & Co International motor unit Surat -Yuleba 1924 (source unknown)

Surat never received its intended railway and Yuleba remained a railhead for Surat until recent times. The road mail, passenger and freight service was operated by a sedan cab truck into the sixties. The western rail passenger service, now the “Westlander”, still calls at Yuleba twice a week in both directions although there are no longer any scheduled freight trains calling there: a great change to the situation which prevailed for well over a century after the arrival of the first train in 1879 when the name of the place was Baltinglass, changed later to Yuelba and later again to the current spelling.

SANDGATE

Grandad had a shearing contracting business based in Surat and later ran hotels in Dulacca and Oakey. In the fifties he went on the land running his own sheep on a property near Tara but the presence of dingo packs adversely affected the productivity and profitability of the venture causing him to move to the coast at Woody Point and support his lifestyle by owning and operating a small general store business. Growing up at Virginia I was enthralled by the fascinating operation at Sandgate when travelling to and from Woody Point by train and bus for visits.

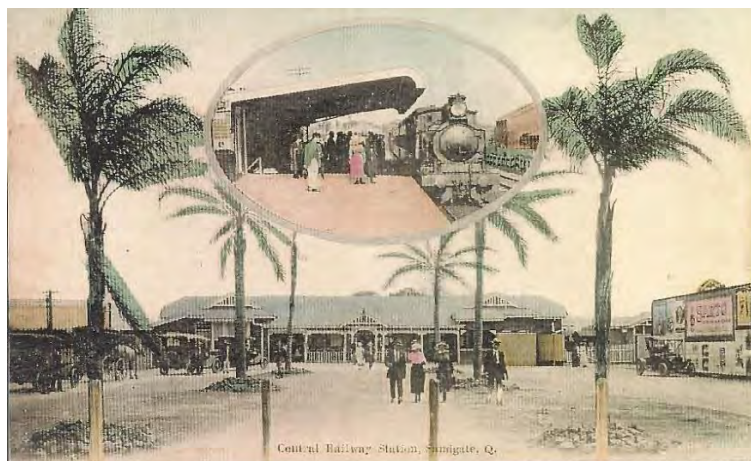
Local passenger trains on the North Coast Railway through Virginia were hauled mainly by black tanks (D17s), but nearly every train on the Sandgate line observed from home was powered by big gleaming green tender engines (B18 1/4s and new BB18 1/4s). It was an adventure to have a ride behind one of these engines from Northgate to Sandgate. Once away from Northgate there was opportunity for a glimpse of home across Warburton’s paddock and immediately on the right was the cannery with likely an old black engine (B15con, PB15, B17, C16) shunting wagons of pineapples. Further along could be seen

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the construction of the Banyo workshops. Then there was the risk of cinders in the eyes going around the long curve after Nudgee followed by the long straight through the bush to Boondall and so on past Deagon into Sandgate. From the platform one could observe the engine shed where a green or brown machine might be seen resting and the gasworks near which might be seen a rake of coal hoppers. Outside the station were the platforms at which the vehicles in shiny dark green and cream of the Hornibrook Highway Bus Service were parked in lines. There were two other companies whose vehicles stood to the eastern side of the platforms: one with green and cream livery running to Bald Hills, or Lutwyche, and the other whose buses were black and white offering a local service to/from Nashville and Brighton whose destination on the header proclaimed "RAILWAY".

We always walked out of the station and along a bus platform to board the Hornibrook bus for Woody Point. Other platforms had Hornibrook exotica waiting – buses which ran to Margate and the exotic trailer buses which ran to Redcliffe and Scarborough. These buses had conductors just like the trams. Later I came to recognize the Faegol, Fords, Reos, Whites (some left-hand drive), Bedford OBs and Leyland Tigers and Comets. Going home the bus stopped near the station entrance close to the platform from where I would earnestly attempt to discern what was in the engine shed and near the gasworks while we waited for the train to arrive from Shorncliffe. My day was made one evening when I saw a "blue baby" (DD17) shunting coal hoppers.

Sandgate saw the first train in 1882 and it soon became a destination for excursionists and holidaymakers. With a steadily growing population it became a town in 1903 and in 1912 it was able to fund construction of a town hall. Municipal amalgamation occurred in 1925 on creation of the City of Greater Brisbane. Sandgate effectively became a Brisbane dormitory suburb and the small farms and market gardens became suburbia supported by the increasingly frequent railway service. Reticulated water, gas and power attracted a growing population. For a long time Sandgate also remained a resort. The railway was extended approximately 1km to Shorncliffe in 1897.



Postcard of Sandgate station ca 1912 Courtesy of Sandgate & District Historical Society & Museum

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From early times there were interactions at Sandgate station. Initially there were the local horse bus and cabs services provided by accommodation houses and which gradually morphed into motor bus and taxi services feeding the station and local carriers delivering goods to businesses and homes from the station. A transport interchange was constructed in the area at the front of the station and was ready in 1935 when the Hornibrook Highway (toll) viaduct from Brighton to Clontarf was opened. This enabled direct road access to the Redcliffe Peninsula from Brisbane. The previous land route was via Petrie from which a bus service operated over poor roads. Another option was by steamer to Woody Point or Redcliffe or ML “Olivene” and other vessels that provided a service across Hays Inlet to Clontarf and Woody Point.



Advertising poster - John Oxley Library Collection

A co-ordinated rail and road service commenced from Sandgate over the new bridge to the Redcliffe Peninsula and this was used by the majority of the visitors to the area. It also enabled a reasonable commute to work in Brisbane and the northern suburbs close to the railway. On summer weekends in the late 1940s and 1950s the co-ordinated rail and road service was very popular as Brisbane residents who did not own a car availed of the opportunity to go to the beach.

CARDWELL



Cardwell aerial 1967 from unidentified souvenir

The North Coast Railway opened from Lilypond through Cardwell and Banyan (Tully) to Feluga on 10 December 1924 according to the *1999 Queensland Line Sections*. My father during a visit to Cardwell in 1981 told me that he had last set foot in Cardwell when he travelled there with his parents (my grandparents) and neighbours, other railway families and the public from Townsville per a special return excursion train from Townsville that ran in early December 1924 in celebration of the completion of the North Coast Railway. My paternal grandfather was a railway employee (checker) and resided with my grandmother and father at Little Perkins Street, South Townsville, conveniently across the street from the South Yard, in a house believed to have been earlier relocated by rail from Charters Towers.

My father recalled watching the engine, a C16 he thought, being cut off the train, taking water, running round via the fork line, and shunting the train at Cardwell. He said that in 1924 there was a 'lot of bush' around the town and in 1981 recognised one or two likely surviving buildings that were in town in 1924. He also said that people who travelled on the train brought their supplies from Townsville and found places near the waterfront to have their picnic.

In 1924 terms in Queensland, Cardwell was an old town having been established early in 1864 in the country of the Girramay and Bandjin people where George Elphinstone Dalrymple with Queensland Government sanction but not funding landed on the shores of

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Rockingham Bay with the intent of establishing better access to the Valley of Lagoons, his and partners Arthur and Walter Scott, 'run' on the upper reaches of the Burdekin River. Dalrymple followed aboriginal pathways through a gap in the Cardwell range to the valley of the Herbert River, and then ascended the Seaview Range to reach the Valley of Lagoons. During late 1864 and early 1865 a Queensland Government party constructed a track from Cardwell to the Herbert valley over the Cardwell Range through what later was named Dalrymple Gap. This track, including construction of a stone pitched bridge over a creek on the eastern side of the range, was the first made road suitable for wheeled traffic in North Queensland. The stone pitched bridge is the oldest surviving example of civil engineering and public works in mainland North Queensland. Today south from Cardwell to Damper Creek not far from the shoreline, the alignment of the old track to the Valley of Lagoons is generally followed by the parallel Bruce Highway and North Coast Railway.

The close proximity of the North Coast Railway to the Pacific Ocean would not have been lost on the excursionists of 1924 as has since been to subsequent tourists and other visitors. From the carriage window on the eastern side of the train even today the sea can easily be discerned as trains pass across busy Brasenose street at the commercial area edge, and the Bruce Highway level crossings at the southern entrance to the town.

Cardwell being the port on Rockingham Bay received calls from the smaller ships on the northern run from Townsville conveying passengers, mail and freight, usually sailing through the scenic Hinchinbrook Channel from Lucinda. Ships came alongside the town jetty at high tide or transferred cargo to smaller local craft in deeper water. The jetty tramway was equipped with trolleys that were pushed to the shed on the shore where goods would be stored until collected by the consignees. A cyclone later destroyed the outer end of the jetty. The truncated timber jetty with its remaining tramway was replaced by a longer concrete structure in 1964. Regular shipping sailed past Cardwell following the opening of the North Coast Railway.



Cardwell Jetty & Tramway ca 1912 SLQ pic

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The “Old Cardwell Post Office and Telegraph Station” of today is likely the oldest building still standing in North Queensland having arrived in ‘flat pack’ form in 1870 and erected as the eastern terminal building of the overland telegraph line to Normanton and the Gulf of Carpentaria. The telegraph was intended to connect with the cable from Singapore on the shores of the Gulf but a change in policy resulted in the international connection being secured at Darwin leaving the Cardwell – Normanton section confined to servicing local traffic. Even as late as 1975 sections of the remnant wire were utilized for telephone traffic.

Cardwell diminished despite its natural harbour and anchorages, to be eclipsed by Townsville and Cairns which became the ports for North Queensland and were advantaged by being close to relatively easily ascendable routes up and over the coastal ranges to the interior. To the north of Cardwell the Bulgun, Banyan, Tully and Murray Valleys attracted cane growing leading to significant population growth and the establishment of the sugar mill at Tully in 1925. Cardwell became it has been said “a quiet backwater, a whistle stop” on the way north, although passengers on the mail trains enjoyed legendary fish lunches at the cafés in Bowen Street while the steam engines were being serviced.

In the early 1960s the Bruce Highway from Ingham to Cardwell received a bitumen top greatly facilitating tourism into the far north by private motor vehicle. To capture this traffic, cafes, service stations, motels and caravan parks were established in Cardwell. Prior to this time tourists travelled to the north regularly by sea and rail, and in ever increasing numbers by air. Meanwhile the Sunlander continued to pass through in each direction six days per week. There were other industries beyond tourism. Prominent were local commercial fishing, tropical and citrus fruit growing, harvesting old growth timber, plantation timber establishment, and maintenance and harvesting in addition to the customary rural small businesses which undertook minor engineering, fuel sales, accommodation, general retail sales, butcher, banking, newsagent, medical practitioner, pharmacy, hotel, post office and country club.

Timber cutting had been undertaken in the area since 1864, and over the years sawmills were established and thrived for a time. Many individuals resorted to timber cutting when work was scarce as there was always a market for cut timber for domestic fuel until grid power was connected in 1955. The North Coast Railway construction provided work for many in the early 1920s and once open the railway became a means of economically transporting cut timber north and south to sugar mills and other enterprises for fuel, sleepers, bridging, general construction and building including housing construction. Cordwood loaded vertically into H and FG wagons was a major traffic on rail from Cardwell for a while. The establishment of “Forestry” plantations saw native timbers strategically harvested from reserves over many years and only ceased in 1988 with the onset of World Heritage status of the native forests.

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Two of my neighbours in 1981 were directly involved in the timber industry operating “small businesses” of which each was proprietor and sole employee. Each man owned and operated a considerable array of mechanical equipment which was utilized in harvesting and transporting timber. Their work and stable income was derived from the contracts and ad hoc orders from the Railway Department and sugar mills for sleepers, girders and other cuts plus various forms of raw timber products like fencing material for farmers and other landholders. The timber sourced by these men was assigned to them by the “Forestry” authority (the official title continually kept changing with each new government administration) and was usually old growth native timber sometimes located in areas where “Forestry” was preparing to establish new pine timber plantations.

Cut sleepers for the Railway Department were taken to the Cardwell railway station yard and stacked beside the goods siding. A mutually convenient time was agreed with the Railway Department (timber sleeper purchasing) delegate and in his presence each sleeper was turned and spun around so that each side could be examined in detail by the delegate. The delegate would complete the paperwork to arrange for payment to the cutter. The cutters were responsible for loading the passed sleepers into the wagons (usually FJS) provided.



Timber cutter John McAndrew loading sleepers for delivery to Cardwell station for Railway Department inspection– GRP pic

Orders from sugar mills were generally delivered by the cutter on his truck to the per way yards at the mills where appropriate mechanical handling equipment was available to unload the timber. Mutually agreed arrangements were made in respect of other customers. The timber cutters paid a royalty to “Forestry” for all timber which they harvested.

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The Daylight Rail Tours between Brisbane and Cairns and return commenced in the early 1960s. These were single journeys over five days between the two termini. The Railway Department provided the steel road and vehicles (initially 2000 class two car railcar sets, later DEL hauled two or three MBL/MBLM cars and MBV) and the then Queensland Government Tourist Bureau, later the Queensland Tourist and Travel Corporation, the majority of the marketing and all of the off-train management, organization and facilitation. This popular service for tourists was an important economic contributor to all the communities at which it called, Cardwell included.



From the John Oxley Library Collection

In the 1980s the tour was at Cardwell on the fifth day northbound from Brisbane and first day southbound from Cairns. Northbound the train arrived empty from the south. From Ingham the patrons had travelled by road to Lucinda/Dungeness and boarded the catamaran ferry MV Tekin II, and cruised through the Hinchinbrook Channel. Lunch was served on board MV Tekin II. Patrons were disembarked at the Cardwell jetty and taken by (school) bus to the railway station to rejoin the waiting train and proceed to Cairns. The southbound tour itinerary at this point was the reverse of the northbound. The train arrived from Cairns, later proceeding empty to Ingham, and patrons boarded the bus for the short trip to the jetty to embark on the MV Tekin II. If time was available a local sightseeing circuit was undertaken between the station and jetty and vice versa. Bus transport was supplied by the local school bus operator in his Bedford VAM with Athol Hedges coachwork fitted out with “school” seats which must have been an interesting experience for some patrons.

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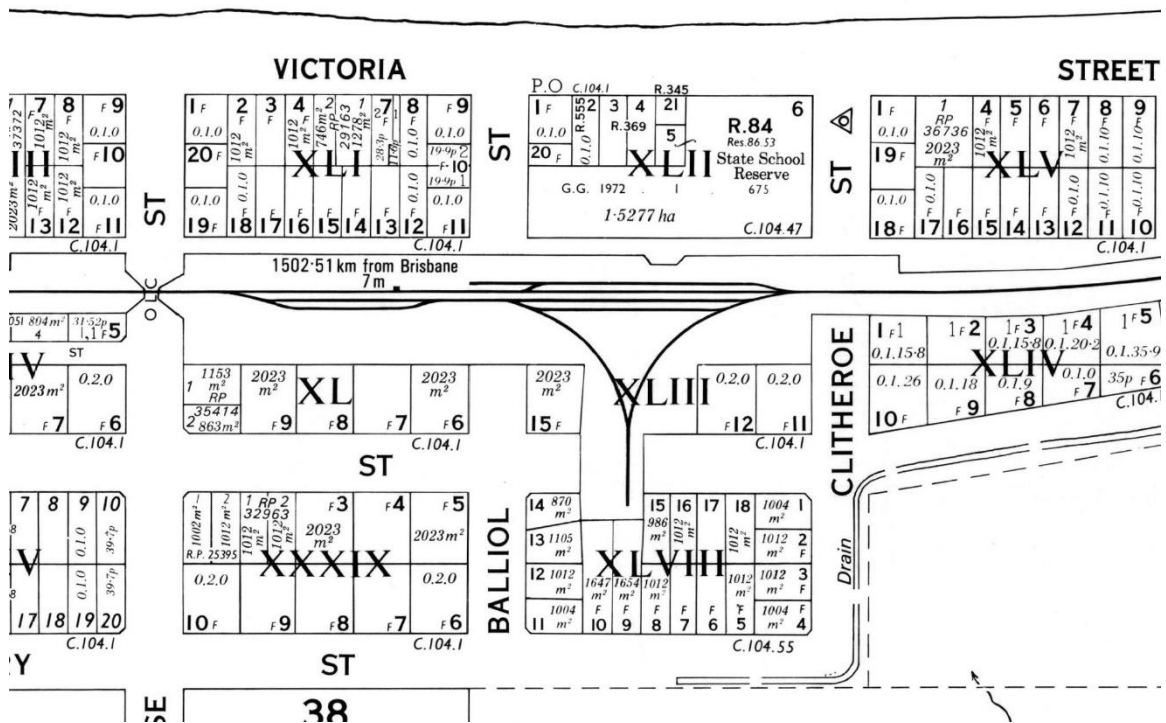
The North Coast Railway traversed the Cardwell urban area and effectively cut the town into east and west sides. Most residences and all the retail businesses were on the eastern and shore side. The remainder of the residences, the Country Club (golf and bowls), the showgrounds, council depot, engineering works, “Forestry” depot, workshop and office, and cemetery were on the western side. Day and night trains crossed at Cardwell which was a staff station with trailable facing points. At the northern end of the loop on the western side stood a large water tank which was relocated to Kennedy close to the Bruce Highway for community use after the need to replenish water in steam engine tenders had ended.

When I lived in Cardwell, Sunlanders came through in both directions five times weekly on the two different schedules (1970 arrangements). Despite the competing frequent “express” long distance road coach services on the Bruce highway, the Sunlanders handled local passenger traffic between Cardwell and Ingham. On certain weekdays it was possible to spend a few hours between south and northbound trains at Ingham. Prior to the 1970 timetable it was possible to travel per Sunlander to and from Tully whereat several hours could be availed, enabling personal business to be pursued. Parcels and small freight were also conveyed on the mails. I recall wagons being shunted out of trains into the goods and other sidings. The end loading bank at the goods siding dead end and southern end of the passenger platform (approximately rail level) provided a surface onto which freight could be unloaded easily from brake vans and wagons.

Cardwell was the home station for a number of railway maintenance staff. Some resided in Railway Department housing astride the tracks in the vicinity of the station. There was also a track inspector who resided in Cardwell in his own residence, but in the official Suzuki hi-rail vehicle, could appear anywhere in the north, including on the isolated Normanton Railway. Railway Department employees were subject to transfer like all government employees but there was little turnover as Cardwell was considered a prime posting. The employees and their families contributed immensely to the community and cultural life in town.

The gangs started work at 07.00 Monday to Fridays and the exhausts of their quads rent the morning with a cacophony of “putt, putt, putt, putt, putt” until they proceed on their way to the worksite for the day. The heavy rail finished at the northern end of the Brasenose street level crossing. From there to Bilyana it was 60lb. Heavy rail was inserted in this section in the late 1980s. The fork line was lifted some years before but the site and within the triangle was occupied by Railway Department material. Around 1985 I recall a proposal being discussed locally that consideration was being given to establishing a depot for trainmen, including provision of permanent employee housing, erection of a small locomotive maintenance facility with additional sidings including reinstatement of the fork line.

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cad map courtesy Arthur Robinson

During the 1950s and 1960s there was an annual primary inter school sports carnival held in Tully during the cooler months at which all local district school children participated. A special train conveyed children and teachers from Cardwell, Ellerbeck, Kennedy, Bilyana, and Euramo to Tully and return. The children were assembled into their school groups at the Tully showgrounds and then marched carrying their school flags accompanied by a band to the oval at the Tully State Primary School. The trains were worked by steam engines and consisted of about four or five carriages. The train was locally referred to as “The Flea” and “The Flying Flea”. Presumably engines and carriages were worked empty from Townsville for these events.

KENNEDY

Approximately 12 km north of Cardwell is Kennedy which still has a crossing loop and was once a busy place with various sidings and loops. The 1950 General Appendix under By Law 532 at Clause 439 outlined specific instructions in respect of shunting outside the up home signal without the staff.

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Kennedy Station ca 1948 (CCRC Library Collection)

A large sawmill operated at Kennedy. This sawmill had its own siding over which raw logs arrived and outgoing processed ply and dressed timber were dispatched to many destinations including Newstead.



Brown & Broad sawmill - Kennedy (courtesy E Albert)

The Kennedy mill (originally Standply, then Brown and Broad, later Foxwood) also processed timber from the Kirrama Range area where substantial logging activities were in operation for many years. Milling operations ceased in January 1971 and fire in December 1972 destroyed the buildings. Some local timber was processed at the nearby

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sawmill at Carruchan, a small community in the Cardwell/Kennedy hinterland. The Carruchan sawmill was destroyed by fire in 1962. Incredibly the bench and its steam powered engine survive today and actually operate occasionally at the Woodworks tourist attraction near Gympie.



Cardwell Logging Co Dodge & jinker with load – courtesy E Albert

The Cardwell Logging Company's truck depot and workshop was adjacent to the railway at Kennedy. Logs were also loaded onto rail at Kennedy and transported away for processing. Logging and timber processing were significant industries in this area, supporting many families in and around Cardwell and Kennedy.

Land in the valley of Kennedy creek was primarily utilized for growing bananas and citrus fruits. Citrus in locally manufactured cases was dispatched south to southern markets from Cardwell and Kennedy stations. Advance arrangements were necessary by growers for suitable wagons to convey their produce. In the 1980 containers of bananas were loaded on rail at Kennedy for Brisbane and interstate destinations.

Passenger services were the same as Cardwell. Today the "Spirit of Queensland" does not stop for passengers at Kennedy whose residents have to travel to Cardwell if they wish to travel on this service. The competing road coaches call on request at the Kennedy store at the junction of the Kennedy Valley Road and the Bruce Highway.

The locality name commemorates Edmund Kennedy the leader of the ill-fated 1848 expedition from Rockingham Bay to Cape York. The party camped in the vicinity of Ellerbeck (between Cardwell and Kennedy) on the trek from the coast in search of a suitable route up the coastal escarpment.

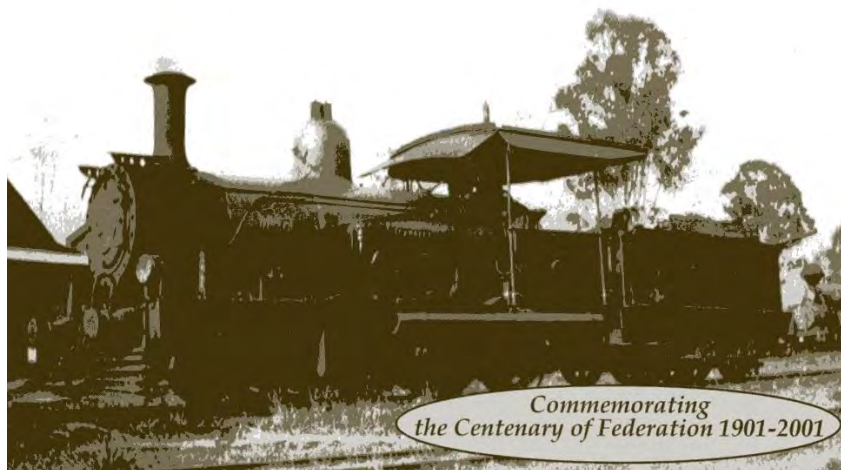
GUNDIAH

Gundiah has been served by railway since the originally isolated Maryborough Railway was extended to Gympie. The station was established in 1882 and today is a crossing loop on the North Coast Railway. Gundiah is to the west of Mt Bauple where on the eastern slopes is the small town of Bauple and in the country around agricultural and timber industries were developed. A sugar mill was established at Bauple and the first crush occurred in 1896.

Bauple is derived from “baupval” in the Kabi language, and refers to the frill necked lizard which in the Dreamtime guarded the sacred places on the mountain from where stone axes were obtained. Macadamia nuts, also known as Bauple or Queensland nuts, grew wild in this area and were regarded by the Kabi and other indigenous peoples as a delicacy. The macadamia nut industry is supported by plantations growing these nuts in eastern sub-tropical Australia. Macadamias are the only native Australian plant that has been developed and traded internationally as a commercial food product.

Travellers passing through Gundiah on the North Coast Railway may have noticed an alignment diverging on the eastern side and heading east towards the mountain. This was, until 1952, the private railway of the Bauple Sugar Mill. During the sugar harvesting season whole stalk cane inbound and bagged sugar outbound was hauled to and from the mill by engines hired from the Railway Department. These were B12 2-6-0s, and B13 4-6-0s although there is a report recorded of A12 4-4-0 No 62 running on the line. The Bauple Mill in 1926 purchased B12 No 30 from the department. The engine was subsequently named “BAUPLE” and proudly carried the name on a brass plate mounted on the side of the boiler.

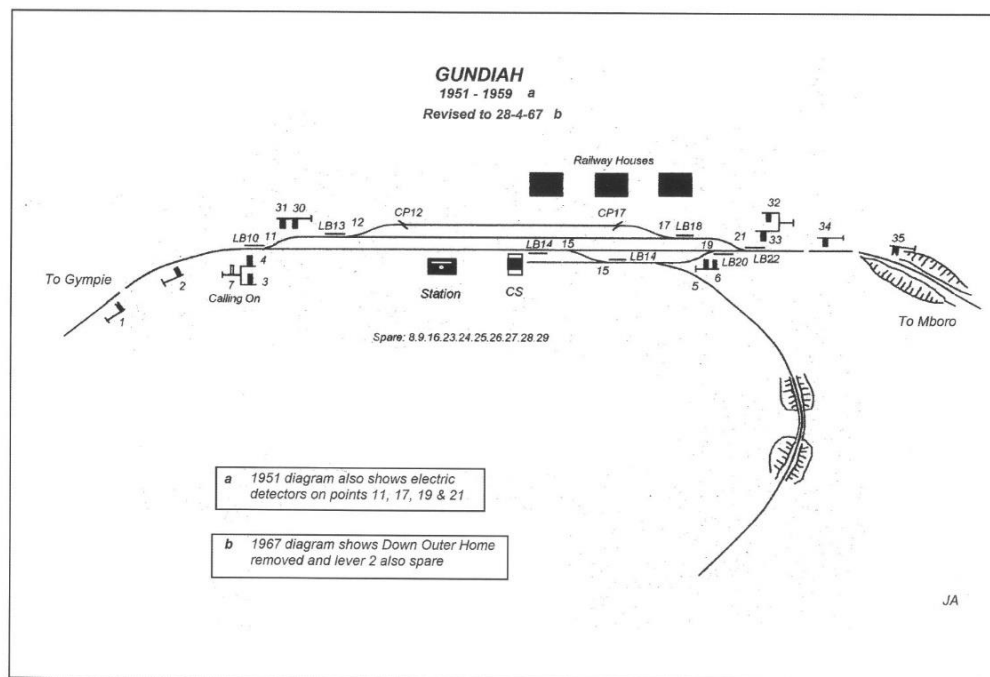
Mount Bauple & District Historical Society Inc.



Former QGR B12 No.30 “BAUPLE”, Krauss 2 ft gauge loco right background. (Mt Bauple & District Historical Society Postcard)

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The junction points for the sugar mill mainline faced Gympie. It was approximately 6 ½ miles (10.5 kms) to Bauple over some steep grades and sharp curves. For normal operation and in deference to the limited haulage capacity of the engine, a dividing siding was laid at the summit of the grade where the train was parked and secured. The engine returned to Gundiah and hauled the remaining vehicles to the dividing siding, attached these vehicles to the parked consist in the siding and proceeded to the mill. Towards the Kanighan area there was a short branch from the Gundiah – Bauple mainline where the points faced Bauple. There is a photograph of the late 1940s depicting the “Bauple” parked on a dead end near the Gundiah station building awaiting a delivery of fresh cane.



Gundiah diagram courtesy John Armstrong

The Bauple Sugar Mill also ran a small Krauss 0-4-0WT which hauled cane on the 2 ft gauge mill tracks until 1946 when this operation ceased in favour of road transport of cane from local farms to the mill. Availability at low cost of WWII surplus trucks hastened the demise of the 2 ft gauge operation. Sugar cane still grows today around Mt Bauple. The harvested cane is transported on the Bruce Highway by B-double trucks to the Maryborough Sugar Factory.

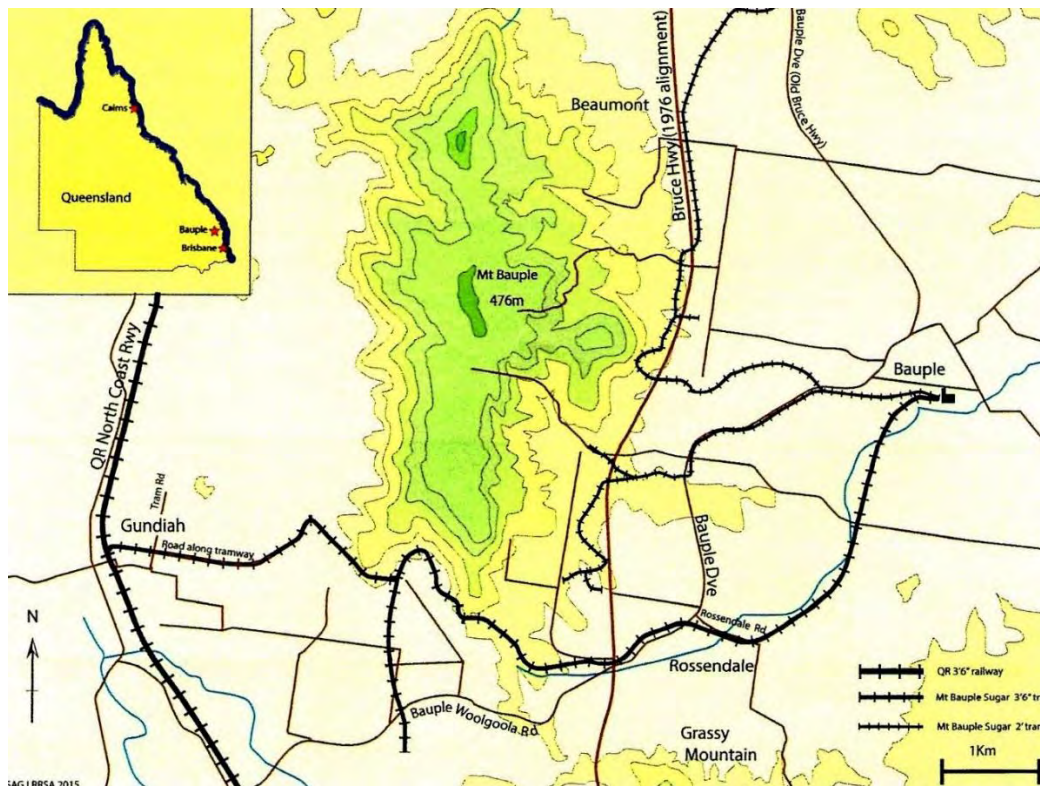
With the installation of CTC in 1979 Gundiah became unattended. Gundiah loop today is on a different topographical alignment to that which existed prior to the 1990s. Main Street crosses both roads of the loop and passes the Prince Alfred Hotel on the western side of the railway. In the 1990s I travelled in a two car 2000 class excursion that terminated at

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Gundiah near the crossing where everyone alighted and patronized the hotel. Trains still cross here, but no more is it possible for triple crosses like the afternoon in the late 1970s when from aboard the club car of the southbound Sunlander, I observed north and south bound freights in the loop and refuged on the remnant of the Bauple line.

The 1950 General Appendix under by Law 532 at Clause 297 is worth quoting:-

“Mount Bauple tramway – A tramway runs from Gundiah to Mt Bauple. The only wagons belonging to the Department which can be run over the tramway are “S”, “DF”, and “H” wagons with 5 ton axles; 8 ton axle stock must not on any account be sent on the tramway; and the Department’s engines must not be run over it except when under hire to the Mt Bauple Tramway. Traffic will be booked to and from Gundiah. Engines of the B13 class only are allowed on the tramway.”



Map from Light Railways 241 Feb 2015