

A NARRATIVE OF THE
TERRIBLE CYCLONE

AND
FLOOD



IN
TOWNSVILLE, NORTH QUEENSLAND,

January 25th, 26th, 27th and 28th. 1896.

*With Illustrated Supplement from Blocks supplied by
"Northern Miner Newspaper Co., Ltd."
Charters Towers.*

COMPILED BY

J. W FAWCETT,

FROM PERSONAL OBSERVATIONS,

Townsville Daily Bulletin and Townsville Evening Star.

PUBLISHED BY
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FLINDERS STREET, TOWNSVILLE,

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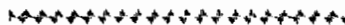
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TERRIBLE CYCLONE AND FLOOD IN TOWNSVILLE,

JANUARY 25th, 26th, 27th and 28th, 1896.

Saturday, Sunday, Monday and Tuesday, the 25th, 26th, 27th and 28th days of January, 1896, will long remain, like memorable landmarks, on the minds of the residents of Townsville, as the period of the most terrific of all cyclones and floods which have occurred in this city. So strange are the powers that be in Australia, whilst the people of Southern Queensland, New South Wales, and Victoria, were suffering from the effects of a terrible heat wave which claimed many victims as its own, the inhabitants of Townsville, in North Queensland, and adjacent districts, were visited by a most terrific hurricane accompanied by an equally terrific rainstorm and flood.

On the evening of Friday, January 24th, a telegram was received in Townsville from the officer in charge of the Meteorological Bureau, at Brisbane as follows:—"Considerable indications of tropical disturbance named 'Sigma' to N.E. of Cardwell; please wire to-night, eight o'clock, any fall in barometer;" and the weather forecast for the 25th contained the intimation that "Sigma" was making southwards.

The warning was timely, but no human preparation could have avoided the dire effects which followed the violent disturbance of the forces of nature, nor ensured preservation from the appalling outcome of so terrible a cyclonic visitation. A few days previous to this, the weather, which for some time had been hot and stifling, had been very unsettled and threatening for rain, with a few thunder-showers, suddenly became fine and fairly cool, but on Thursday, the 23rd, a strong wind arose from the south-east accompanied with unsettled rain-clouds, and some rain fell, 1.72 points being registered up to 9 a.m. on Friday, 24th. On

SATURDAY, 25th,

a steady rain set in in the morning and continued all day, the sky being dull and cloudy. The wind, which blew persistently from the E.,S.E., drove the rain, which was heavy at intervals, into places hitherto considered weather-proof, and soon after noon the wind increased in force until about 2 p.m., when it blew a gale. The waters of Cleveland Bay became pretty rough, and as there was a high sea running when the tide rose to its full height at 5.40 p.m., the waves broke over the eastern jetty with some force, and also covered at times the western breakwater with white foam. Inside the harbour the waves were rough and strong and of a dangerous size, and caused the owners and commanders of vessels, anchored both there and in the creek, to take special precautions for their safety. By 2 p.m. the barometer, which registered 29.73, began to fall, and by 5.30 p.m. had reached 29.68, with every indication of the approach of a storm. By midnight the wind had increased to such a strength that it became apparent that the disturbance "Sigma" was approaching in the dread form of a cyclone or hurricane, and about the same time the wind veered to the south-east increasing in violence, and on

SUNDAY, 26th,

a heavy gale was blowing from that direction, accompanied by continuous showers. By 7 a.m. the appearance of Cleveland Bay was anything but pleasing. Huge waves dashed upon the beach, and frequently overwhelmed about one-half of the eastern jetty, pouring in irresistible deluging volumes into the harbour, while the

western break-water was almost entirely submerged at times by the continuous billows and dashing waves. All day the bay presented an imposing and terrific sight, and the waves were of a vastness never before seen.

Early in the morning a telegram came through from Brisbane from the Meteorological office, advising the lighthouse-keeper at Cape Cleveland to hoist the storm signals, as the centre of the "Sigma" storm disturbance was north-east of Cardwell (90 miles distant), and was making south. That official telegraphed that the wind then registered "11," at which the force of wind is equal to 75 miles an hour, and as "12" is the highest numeral on the scale, it was recognized that a severe wind storm, capable of doing an unlimited amount of damage, was in progress. At about 10 o'clock the wind commenced to blow strongly, the intervals between the gusts becoming less frequent than what they had been, accompanied by heavy rains, the former increasing in violence to hurricane force, whilst the latter poured down in almost wholesale torrents at intervals. Both in the city and suburbs few persons ventured out of the house, for what with the violent wind, the impetuous rain, and the fact that every channel and gully had been transformed into a roaring torrent and watercourse, there was certainly no inducement except for those who wished to note the characteristics and effects of the gale. The barometer, which registered 29.61 at 9 a.m., continued to fall throughout the day, and by 4 p.m. it was 29.41. From this hour until about 10 p.m., when the wind veered somewhat suddenly to the east, and as suddenly decreased somewhat in violence, was the period during which the cyclone attained its greatest force and committed the most disastrous damages. At sea the waves in the bay were highest and most violent, whilst on land great trees, some four, five and six feet in circumference, and how old is impossible to say, were either torn up by the roots or broken off close to the level of the ground. To do such damage as this the force of the wind must have had a pressure of something like from 40 lbs. to 50 lbs. to the square foot, or a velocity of from 90 to 100 miles an hour. Between 9 a.m. and 9.50 p.m., the rainfall was 7.16 inches. The barometer fell from 29.41 at 4 p.m. to 29.28 at 8 p.m., when it began to rise again to 29.34 at 11 p.m., falling to 29.31 at midnight, at which time the wind again increased in violence.

The career of the hurricane during Sunday was something terrific in Townsville, and is fairly well described in the following extract from the *Townsville Bulletin* of Wednesday, January 29th (there being no issues for Monday and Tuesday):—"Fences were laid flat in all parts of the town, and verandahs stripped. Houses in exposed parts suffered first and the more severely; but with strange particularism some dwellings which occupied sheltered situations, and which might have been considered fairly safe, were damaged, while others which were not favoured in any way by location, escaped. New houses, too, were buffeted and shaken, and shattered to the alarm and discomfort of occupants, and others which had weathered more than one gale again escaped scot free. Between six and seven o'clock, before night had blotted out some of the terrifying aspects of the hurricane, several startling incidents were witnessed in Flinders Street. Strong men were blown down by the wind, and all who braved the weather had to manoeuvre adroitly in order to get along, and to pause frequently for breath. The drifting rain stung one's face like hail, and the noise of the atmospheric tumult was almost deafening. Sheets of iron torn from roofs flew before the wind high in the air or skimmed along the street, or were tossed about like sheets of paper; and telegraph wires torn from insulators whipped wide areas until they became twisted and plaited around the poles. Along Flinders Street the wind unaided, stove in shop windows leaving valuable goods exposed, and in several instances sheets of iron were driven through plate-glass that had been left unprotected by shutters, with a crash and a clatter. The few who were about during the early part of the evening had to be on the alert, for not only had the impetuosity of the wind to be withstood, but the vagrant and erratic sheets of iron which were hurled about with irresistible force gave absolute denial to any sense of security. Those who did not walk abroad were anything but free from the effects of the hurricane. There were few—however substantial their abodes—who were not dismayed, and to say that everybody suffered discomforts and inconveniences is to put the matter mildly indeed. So many houses were damaged, and the disturbance was so persistent and unremitting in its attacks that few could have been buoyed up by the hope that theirs would be fortunate enough to escape. Momentary dread of being rendered homeless and exposed to the pitiless fury of the warring elements must have been almost universally felt, together with pity and sympathy for less fortunate neighbours and friends." The suburbs suffered in equal measure with the different wards of the town, and in Hermit Park, as well as Ross Island, and

other portions of ground lying only a few feet above sea level, houses were unroofed and even blown to pieces. Some were displaced from their blocks and even swept a considerable distance away from their respective allotments, and a great number surrounded by the flood waters. Despite the inclemency of the storm, several rescue parties put off in boats and punts and removed to places of security the most of those whose houses were in critical situations. The scenes in Townsville and the nearer suburbs on Sunday evening as night approached, were saddening, and will for ever remain vividly impressed on the minds of those who were beholders, endurers and sufferers. Besides witnessing the awful scenes of a town being literally torn to pieces by the raging elements, and hearing the clanging of iron as it was torn off the roofs and swept banging along the streets, the crash of falling buildings, and the piercing screams of the steam syrens of the vessels in the bay and creek, mingled with the rushing roar of the flood waters, they had, when night closed on the scenes, to make shift as best they could. Dozens of houses had collapsed, and scores of verandahs and roofs had been torn off and hurled in every direction. Scarcely a house escaped disaster of some kind, for even where roofs had remained intact, the tremendous force of the wind drove the rain under the iron and through the woodwork, penetrating everywhere, saturating beds and bedding, and damaging furniture and clothing. Substantial residences, that in the worst of past times had never been known to leak, were simply flooded by the driving rain, causing damage and discomfort to all the occupants. Rest was anything but quiet, for what with the anxiety of each one's safety, and the expectation that it might be their turn next to suffer, the mind was kept in action, whilst sleep, owing to the noise of the tumult and the perpetual dread of the effects of the awful visitation, was next to being impossible. The wind, which for a couple of hours had decreased, increased again in violence at midnight, howling, shrieking and whistling with demoniac anger, and on

MONDAY, 27th,

at 3 a.m. veered round to the north-east, in which direction it continued to blow all day. Previous to the latter time there were some squalls of terrific force. Rain continued at intervals with heavy rain-squalls, and by 9 a.m. the rainfall for the previous 24 hours was about 17.5 inches, the record being lost. The barometer stood at its lowest reading during the hurricane at 2 a.m., viz.—29.26, and from 3 a.m. continued to rise all day, standing at 29.67 at 9 p.m.

During Sunday night and early on Monday morning the cyclone worked its worst, the result being deplorable in the extreme. The destruction was widespread and the damage general. The houses spared by the furies of the earlier portion of the storm now experienced their hour of trouble, and all over the town and suburbs damage and destruction was wrought by the storm fiend. The devastation was simply a rehearsal of what had already occurred; roofs torn off, verandahs blown down, stock in shops, stores and warehouses damaged and destroyed, houses and other buildings displaced from their blocks, and some entirely demolished, windows smashed, out-buildings blown over and destroyed, and gardens ruined or wrecked. Ross River overflowed its banks about midnight and flooded the whole of Cluden Plain to a depth of six feet, and placing the inhabitants of the Idalia Estate in a perilous situation, only about half-a-dozen of the 50 cottages being above flood level. They had, however, prepared for the worst, deserting their cottages and taking refuge in the buildings of the Meat Works. On the north side of the river the overflowing waters surrounded all the houses in close proximity to the bank of the stream and rendered the buildings anything but safe, as well as placing the inhabitants in a state of great anxiety for their own safety. The overflowing waters rushed with irresistible force, over what, in ordinary circumstances is dry land, whilst the more shallow portions and smaller gullies were converted into angry torrents. From Cluden almost to the Rising Sun an expanse of country some three miles wide, was one stretch of water, over which waves of no ordinary size rolled, tossed and foamed, like the billows of an angry sea. Ross Island, the lower portions of Hermit Park, and a stretch from the German Gardens northwards to Cape Marlow, was also one sheet of water. In the streets of the city it was a dangerous and difficult operation to attempt to walk along while the hurricane was blowing, for the sheets of iron swept up the streets with a force sufficient to cut a man in two had he come in contact with any of them. The whole town was desolate looking. During the intervals of heavy rain the cliffs of Castle Hill were seamed with cascades, and as the wind caught the impetuous torrents it scattered them into continuous clouds of spray. In the harbour the vessels were terribly tried, some parted their cables and drifted away to become either total wrecks, or to receive serious damage, whilst others succumbed.

Flotsam and jetsam of all kinds, wreckage and a mass of floating matter, was drifted hither and thither and cast ashore. Along the beach the huge waves dashed ashore utterly demolishing the Municipal Baths and making inroads upon the Strand highway. Persons whose houses were rendered tenantless were obliged to seek safety and shelter. Sometimes they were driven from their homes at a moment's warning, leaving all their possessions to the mercy of the storm. The hotels were crowded with fugitives, public buildings were converted into caravanserais, and private families had to accommodate their less fortunate neighbours. The town was in a terrible state, being deprived of telegraphic communication, railway service, the water supply, and the customary visits of the baker, butcher, and milkman, whilst at night there was no gas, the works being flooded. Towards night there were some squalls of heavy rain which continued from the north-east and north till after midnight, and on

TUESDAY, 28th,

at 9 a.m., 2.75 inches of rain during the past 24 hours, about which time the weather moderated, the wind gradually calming down. Showers fell during the day at intervals, some of which were perfect torrents, but these were of short duration. The barometer which stood at 29.69 at 9 p.m., continued to rise slightly during the day, but towards night fell again, registering 29.67 at 7 p.m. Just before sunset the sun peered out from behind the clouds of the western sky for a few minutes, as if laughing at the storm fiend. The sight in Townsville was saddening as one viewed the wholesale evidence of destruction. Sheets of galvanized iron lay about the streets and vacant places by dozens. The Corner of Flinders and Stoke Streets was heaped up with iron and timber from ruined verandahs and roofs, and wood and iron littered the streets. Up to daybreak on

WEDNESDAY, 29th,

there were slight showers. From about 7 a.m. to 10 p.m. it was fine with the sun trying to break through the clouds and a warm drying northern wind, but from the latter hour heavy showers continued all day. The flood waters went down considerably. The barometer continued rising throughout the day and by 11 p.m. registered 29.72, and the hurricane had passed. On

THURSDAY, 30th,

the sun, after several days seclusion, again shone out in the morning, feebly at first, but with a warm north-western wind. This had a wonderful influence for good upon every one. After the trials and troubles of the previous few days the change was grateful, and every one's spirits rose, and even those who had lost most began to look upon the bright side of things. Business, which had been dormant for a while was resumed, houses were thrown open to dry and air the saturated furniture, and repairs to the damaged property commenced.

THE DAMAGE.

The cyclone and flood of January 25th, 26th, 27th and 28th, is the most calamitous visitation that has ever befallen Townsville, and the general and widespread desolation which followed its visit was something enormous. To attempt to give details of the damage, destruction and loss, effected by this most terrible calamity is an almost impossible feat, for every portion of the entire city, suburbs, and district suffered, and almost every inhabitant was a sufferer some way or another. The following particulars will give some faint idea of the extent, devastation and havoc, committed by the storm fiend "Sigma." Some thousands of pounds and months of labour will be required to be expended before all the traces of the storm are removed. Some were so unfortunate as to be ruined by the complete wreck of their homes, and the irretrievable damages done to their furniture and goods, whilst merchants, storekeepers, and soft goods tradesmen, lost considerably by the damage or destruction of their stock.

THE EAST WARD.

STRAND AND FLINDERS STREET EAST.—Several of the large, fine shade trees on the Strand were literally torn to pieces. The Queen's Hotel (Mr. D. MacLurcan), had the front (Strand) verandah roof carried away, and the iron stripped off the roof of the Wickham Street wing, exposing all the rooms, their contents being saturated with water. The rain was driven under doors, windows, and roofs on the Strand side, destroying furniture and fittings. The low brick wall at the end of the verandah also gave away, loosening the brick foundations at the end of the

house. The Criterion Hotel (Mr. P. Connell), was left in a deplorable condition, scarcely a sheet of iron being left on the roof of the house, whilst the whole place was soaked through and through and rendered quite uninhabitable, the furniture also, being nearly all destroyed. The Imperial Hotel (Mr. D. Buchanan), lost the whole of the balcony roof, and had the roof of the main building slightly damaged by falling iron. Some of the furniture was also slightly damaged by the rain driving under the doors and through broken windows. Townsville Bond lost a few sheets of roofing iron and had some windows broken, but received no serious damage.

MELTON HILL.—This elevated part of the town had to bear the full force of the storm and suffered considerably, almost the whole of the houses being unroofed whilst some of the once comfortable residences were completely wrecked, together with all they contained in the way of furniture. The old building once known as St. James' Pro. Cathedral, latterly St. James' Schoolroom, was utterly ruined, collapsing entirely. St. James' Cathedral lost a few sheets of iron off the roof, and the drifting rain did some damage inside. The Bishop's Lodge and St. James' Vicarage escaped. The residence of Mrs. S. F. Walker, suffered severely, nearly all the main building being destroyed. Mr. D. L. Drybrough's residence was totally wrecked, and the furniture, crockery, etc., destroyed. The Supreme Court and Customs House were both more or less seriously damaged.

FLINDERS STREET EAST—Received only trivial damage, a few sheets of iron being blown off here and there, this being due to the more substantial character of the buildings, most of which are of brick. The flood, however, rose above the level of the wharves and did some damage. In the Adelaide Steamship Company's Office there was two feet of water, and in the stores there was only a few inches, some maize being the chief article which was slightly damaged. At Howard Smith's Wharf the flood waters were ten inches higher than any previous record, standing to the depth of one foot. In Burns, Philp & Co.'s Wharf Stores the water rose two feet, in which no previous flood had entered, and destroyed large quantities of cement, salt and sugar, whilst goods in the new warehouse were slightly damaged by the rain beating in through louvres, door, and window joints. At Aplin, Brown & Crawshaw, Limited, Wharf Stores, the water rose several inches, damaging some sugar which was stored there. Some sugar in the Bulk Store, which was just above the highest level of the flood, was also slightly damaged by the rain. Mr. P. F. Hanran's Grocery Store was slightly damaged. The Victoria Swing Bridge over Ross Creek partly collapsed, a couple of the cylinder piles on the Island side sinking about three feet, and vehicles and foot passengers had to cross at their own risk. Mr. Witham's Refreshment Rooms had the kitchen blown down. Mr. Clayton, Chemist, had the roof damaged by the iron from other roofs being blown upon it. Messrs. Rooney & Co.'s Victoria Bridge Store was partially unroofed.

STANTON HILL.—The Hospital was much damaged, hardly a dry corner in any of the wards, nurses' quarters, or doctor's residence, being found on Sunday night and Monday; several windows were driven in and ridge capping torn off; the wardsman's cottage was displaced from the blocks, a large portion of the fence blown down, and several of the ornamental and shade trees battered, broken, and uprooted. The residence of Mr. Graham which had the windows and doors blown in on Sunday, slipped completely off the brick piles on Monday morning, some of them going through the floor and others giving away, and leaving the house and furniture a complete wreck; Mr. Graham and his family had narrow escapes. The Rev. A. Hutchison's (Wesleyan Minister) residence was completely wrecked, the roof and the ceiling both giving away, and clergyman and his wife were obliged to seek shelter at Mr. W. J. Castling's residence. That belonging to Mr. Walker had the whole of the iron and the greater part of the woodwork of the roof blown off, and a portion of the furniture damaged; Mr. Walker, his wife and family, and Mr. Hunter, who was ill with fever and confined to his bed at the time, were obliged to find shelter at the residence of the Rev. A. M. Gauld, Presbyterian Minister. Mr. Murray's house had a portion of the roof blown off, and furniture injured by the rain. Mr. H. Smith's residence was also damaged, a portion of the roof and verandah of the main building, and the roof of the kitchen being blown off, and some furniture, crockery and cooking utensils in the latter building broken. Mr. Nelson's residence had the roof blown off, and the furniture, clothing, etc., damaged. Mr. W. Lennon's house was also left roofless.

WEST WARD.

FLINDERS STREET.—From the corner of Flinders Street and Stoke Street westwards, considerable damage was done, whilst in the West End the devastation

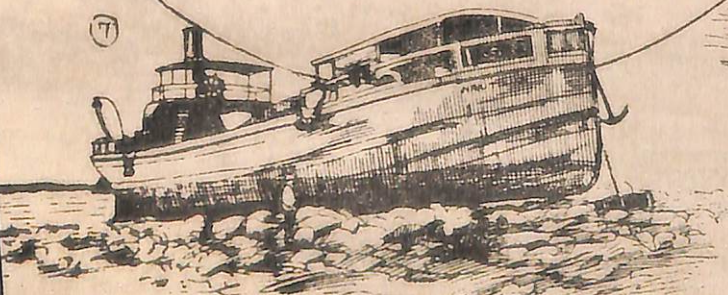
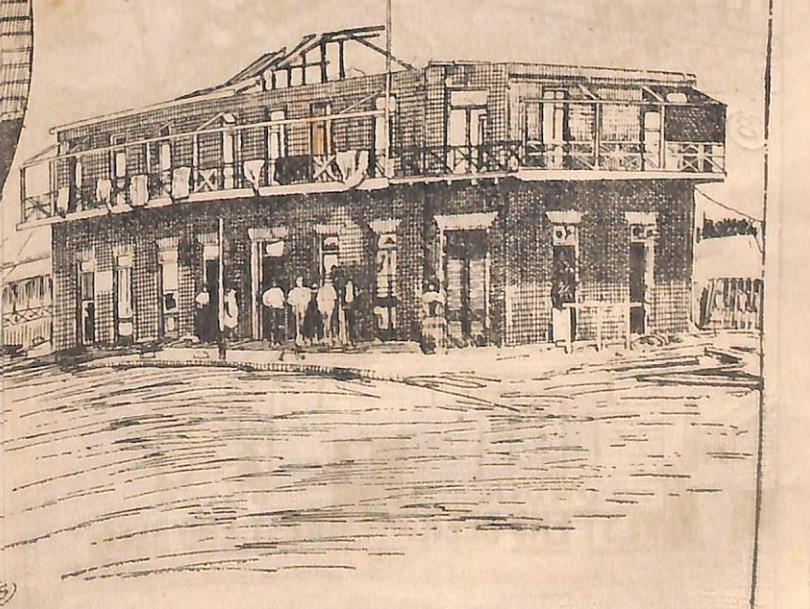
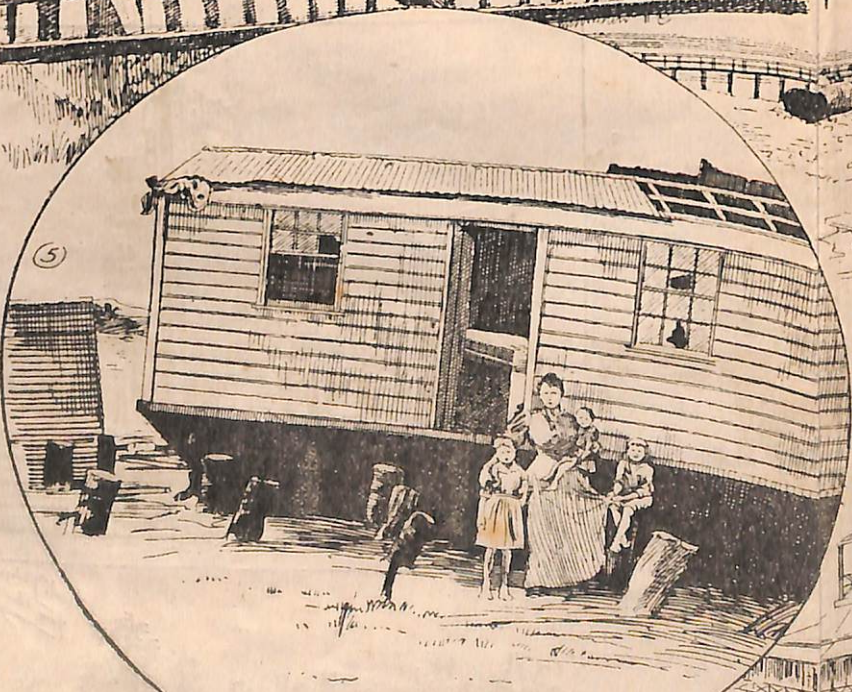
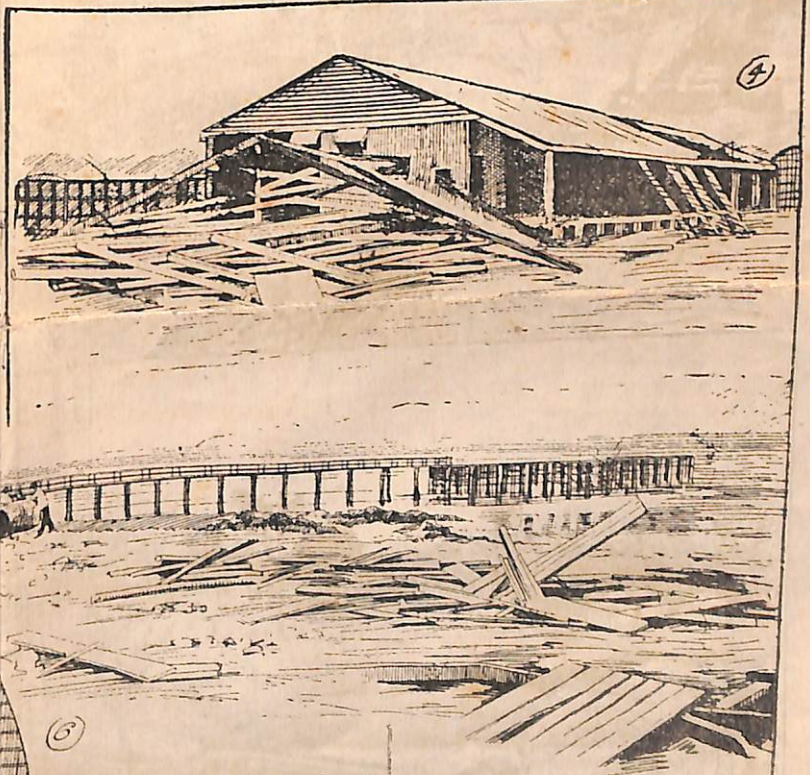
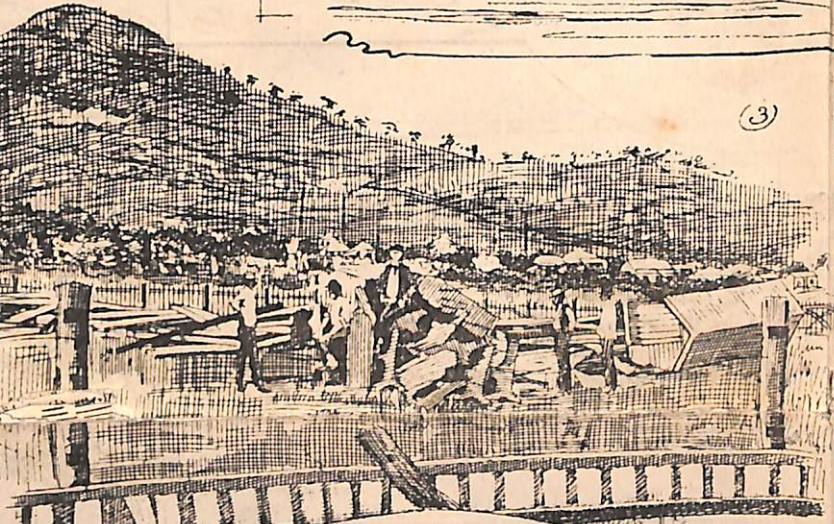
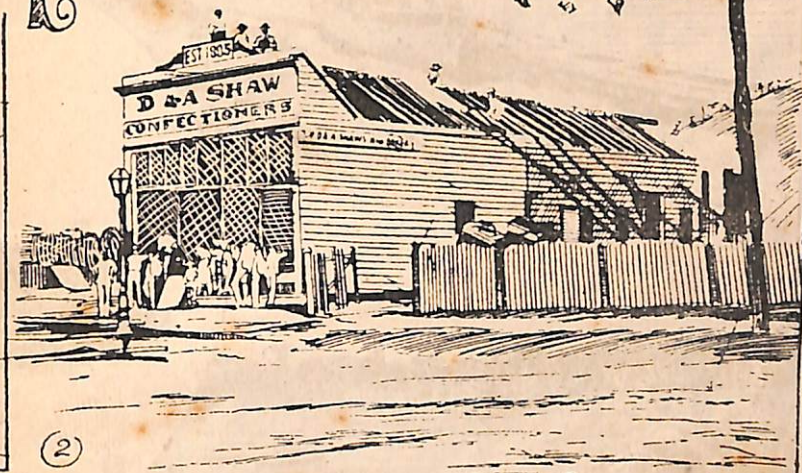
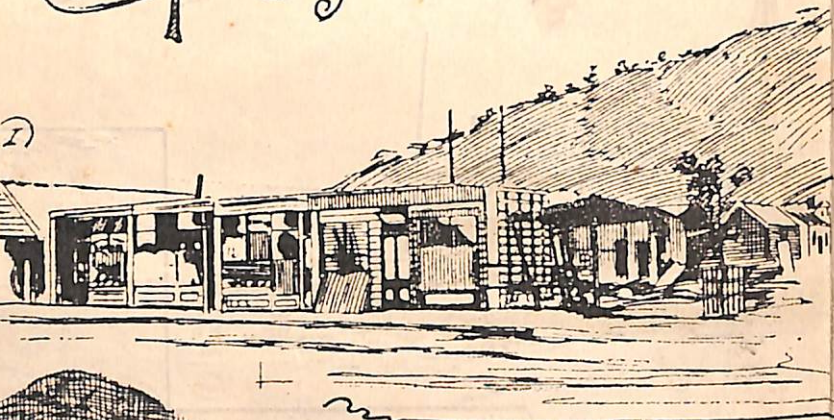
was very great. The houses in the latter part of the town being for the most part the homes of labouring men, the loss entailed was very severe, and there was scarcely a tenement which had not more or less been damaged. Many collapsed altogether, others were left roofless and without verandahs, whilst some were completely upended. Mr. C. Richard's Confectionery Shop suffered considerably, a portion being unroofed and the window smashed, causing serious damage to the stock of confectionery and sugar. Mr. R. Lennon's Cash Drapery Mart escaped pretty well, the driving rain doing only a slight damage in the Bulk Store. Messrs. Shield Brothers, Boot Store, had the windows broken, and some stock damaged by exposure to rain. Mr. T. Empson's Grocery Store had a large plate-glass window (23 feet by 9 feet) smashed. Messrs. McKimmin & Richardson's Drapery Establishment had only a pane of glass in the skylight broken, and some goods in the front window slightly damaged by the rain beating in. Messrs. E. E. Cowley & Company, Grocers and Wine and Spirit Merchants, had the verandah in front of the shop carried away, and the windows smashed, but comparatively little damage was done to the stock. Messrs. Daking, Smith & Company, Drapers, had the large plate-glass window (16 feet by 8 feet) smashed, and the stock in the window damaged by water. Mr. M. Bloom's Tinsmithing and Plumbing Shop was slightly damaged. The West End Brewery (Brisbane) establishment, under Messrs. Henlein & Co., was almost a total ruin, the walls being all that was left standing, the contents being more or less damaged. Mr. H. Anderson, Bookseller, had the front window smashed, and some stock damaged. The *Bulletin* Office lost its back verandah and a portion of the roof, and the damage otherwise was of so serious a character as to render the publication of Monday's and Tuesday's paper impossible. The Newmarket Hotel (Mr. T. Lowth), was partially unroofed. Messrs. R. H. Thomas, Bookseller, and H. Thomas, Sailmaker, had the windows broken and some goods damaged. The Railway Sheds suffered severely and will require a large sum of money to renew the damage. The large Woolshed was completely wrecked, the whole structure falling with a crash. Four men who were engaged in securing the goods therein from damage had a narrow escape. The new 66 feet addition to the Goods Shed was the next to go, and then followed the almost total unroofing of the large Goods Shed, the Carpenter's Shop, Maintenance Office, Railway Stores, Engine Wash-out Shed, and Waggon Repairing Shop, besides other serious damage to them and also to other buildings. Mr. Langdown's Butchers Shop was unroofed and rendered windowless; and Mr. Trollope's Bakery and Shop was unroofed. The Metropolitan Hotel (Mrs. K. Hannan), was entirely, and the Tower Hotel (Mr. E. Downs), was partially unroofed. The Lion Brewery received only damage to the Coopers and Washing Sheds at the back, both collapsing altogether. Pritchard's Family Hotel was damaged by the flying iron and timber from the Railway Maintenance Office opposite. The Office of the Thuringowa Divisional Board lost the roof of the verandah. The Carriers' Arms Hotel (Mr. J. White), lost the verandahs and a portion of the roof, and had the kitchen and the out-buildings damaged. The West End State School and the Roman Catholic Church (St. Mary's) did not suffer any apparent damage. The Wesleyan Chapel collapsed on Sunday at 6 p.m., into a heap of ruins. The West End Hotel (Mr. T. Fitzsimmons), was totally wrecked, the roof and verandahs being carried away, leaving only the brick walls. Messrs. Shaw Brothers Bakery was completely wrecked at 5.30 a.m. on Monday morning, and 28 tons of flour was also destroyed. Mr. T. Brown, Baker, was also a heavy loser, his bakehouse and kitchen being wrecked: a quantity of currants, flour, sugar, &c., destroyed, and a quantity of furniture spoiled.

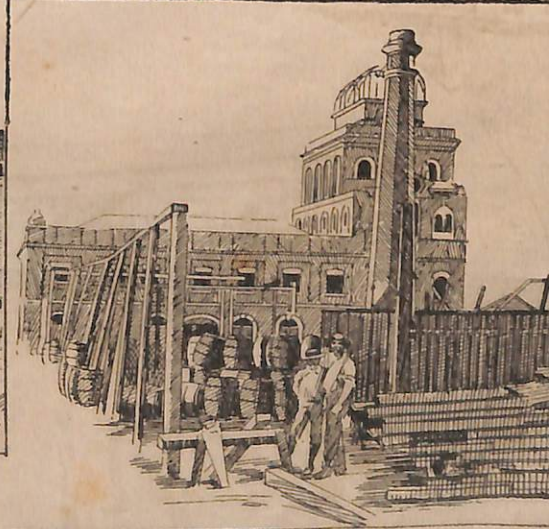
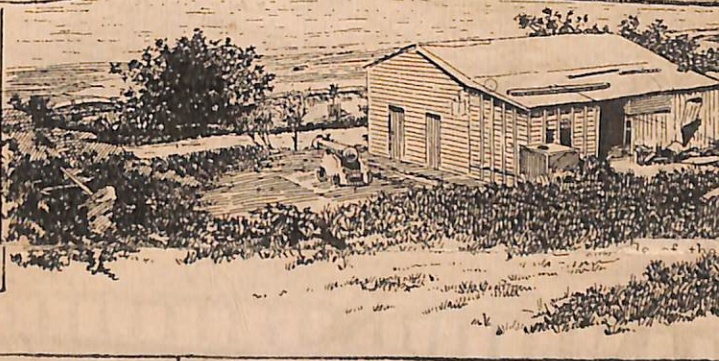
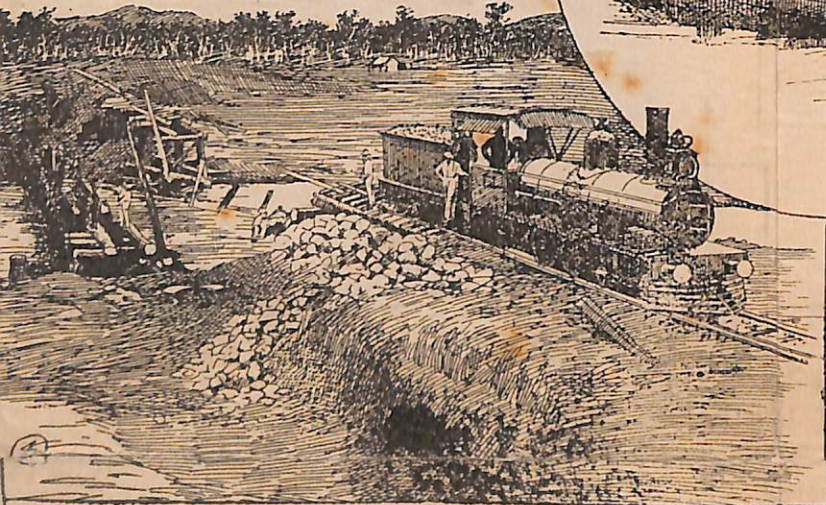
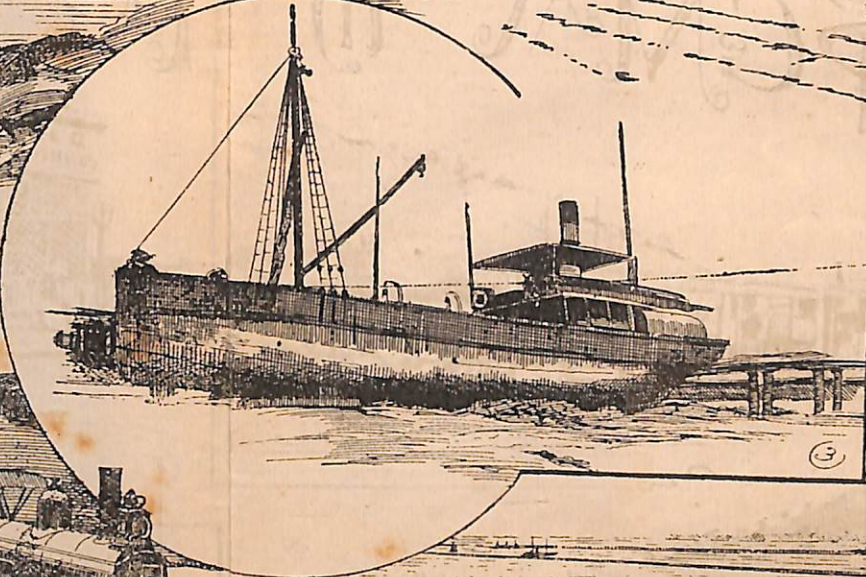
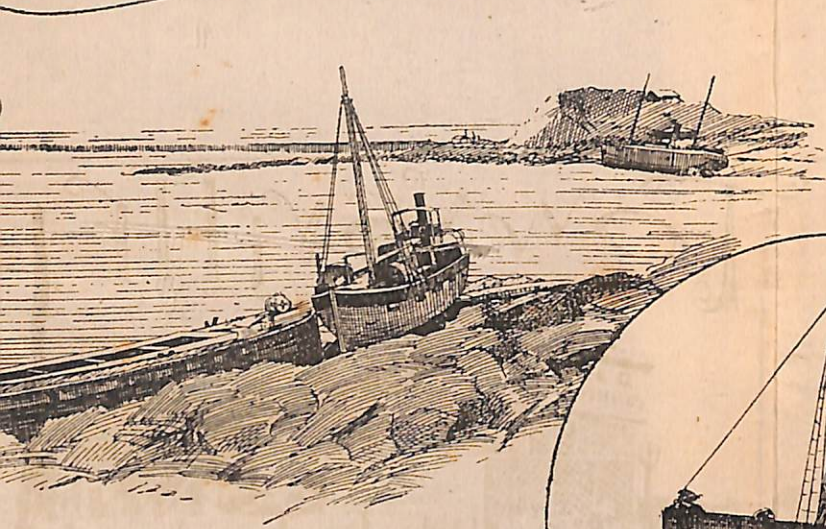
HANRAN STREET.—Mr. A. E. McCreedy, Builder and Timber Merchant, lost a large quantity of timber, and Messrs. Welch & Co.'s Bulk Store was totally wrecked, building collapsing like a pack of cards, and the goods stored therein damaged. The Gasworks were submerged on Monday, and the gasometer became exhausted on Sunday and Monday nights.

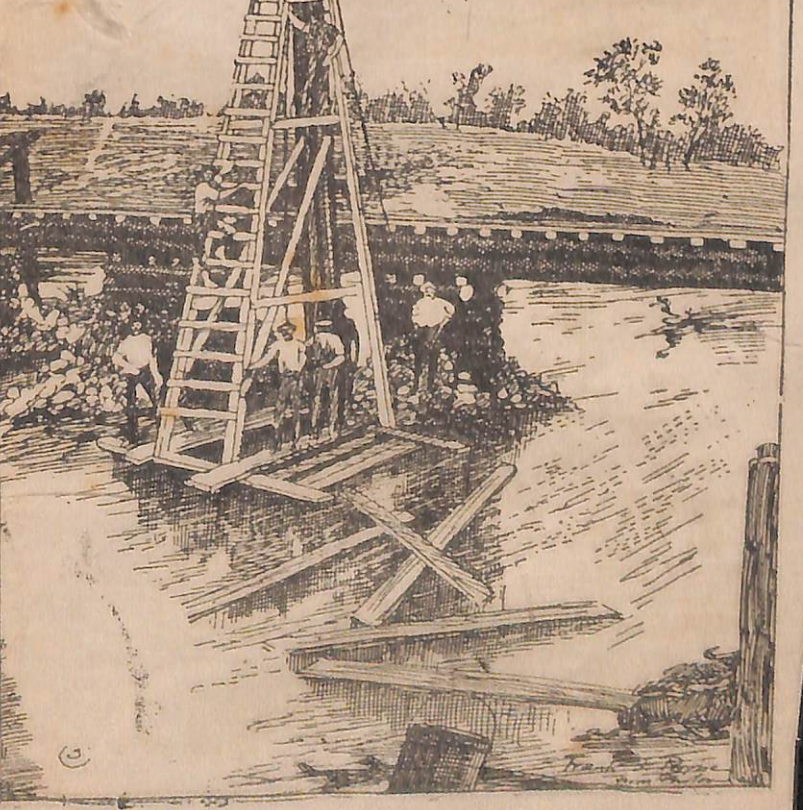
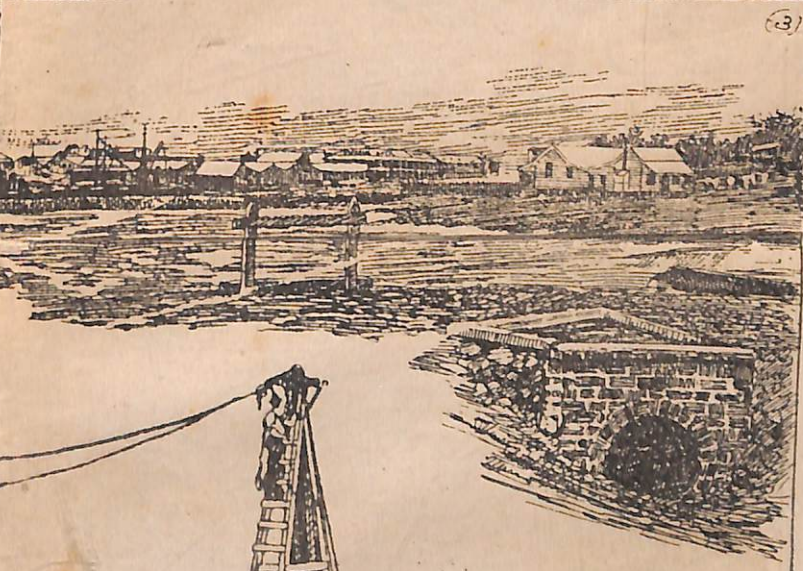
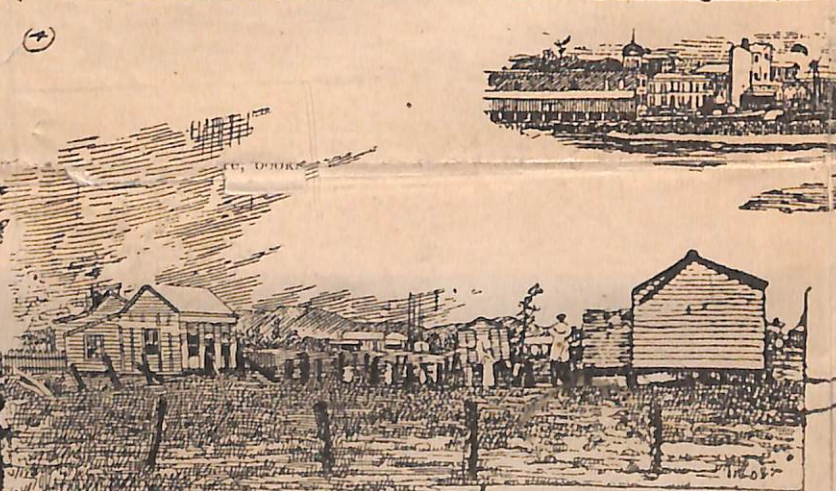
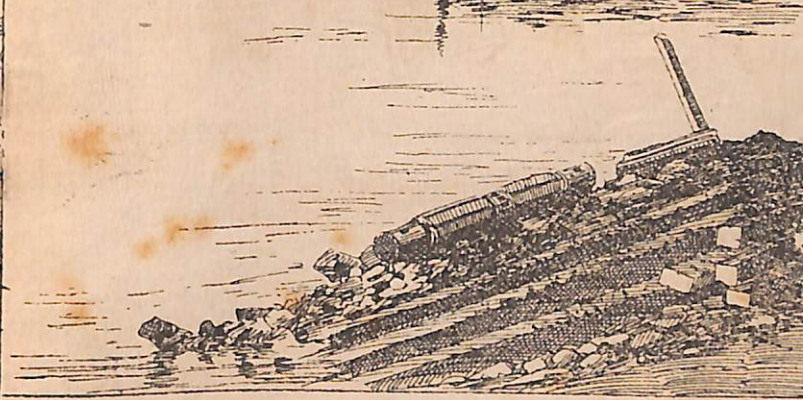
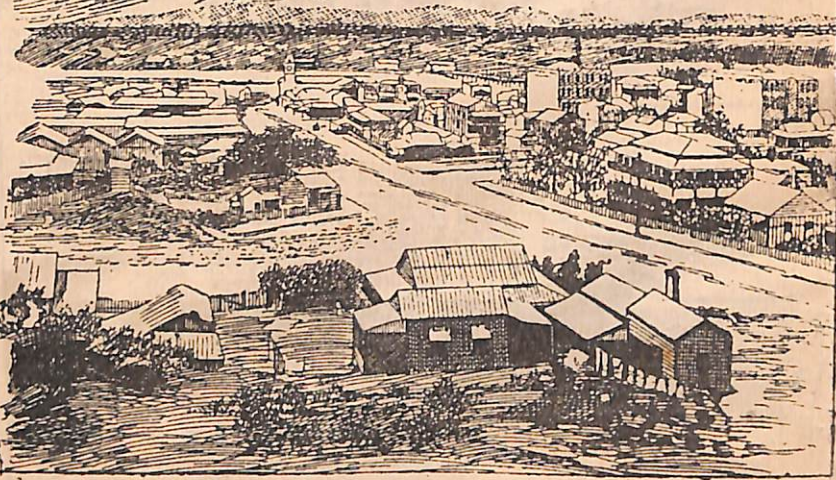
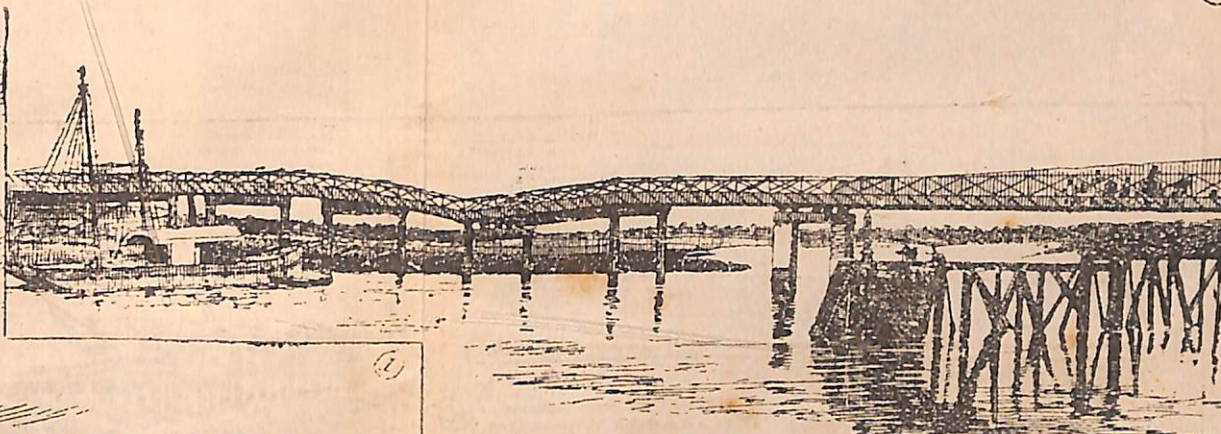
BETWEEN FLINDERS STREET AND STANTON HILL.—The Day Dawn Hotel (Mrs. J. Finnigan), was more or less seriously damaged, as was likewise the Norman Hall. The School of Arts was almost entirely unroofed, the furniture and works in the reference library damaged and destroyed, the volumes of the lending library damaged, the stage scenery damaged, and a piano saturated with the water. Much damage was also done to the adjoining houses by the flying iron. Kirk & Macpherson's, Limited, Bulk Store in Sturt Street, lost a portion of the roof, but the contents received no damage.

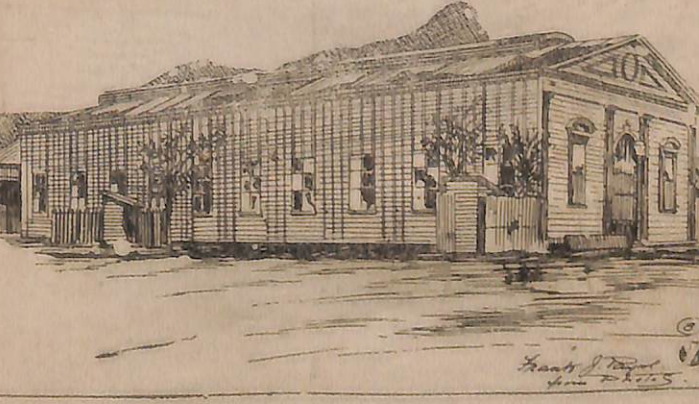
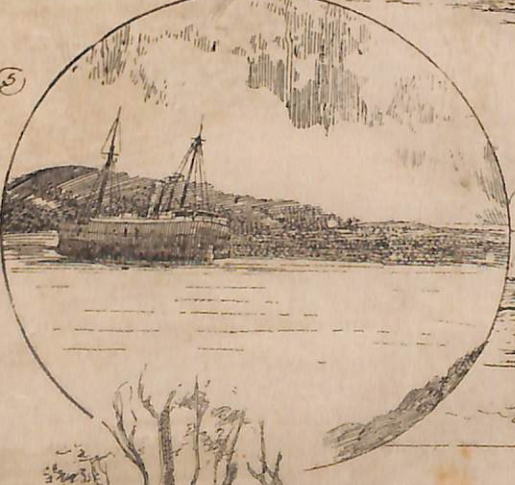
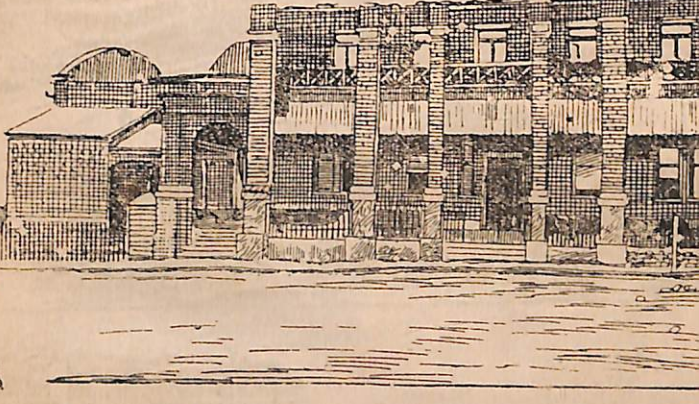
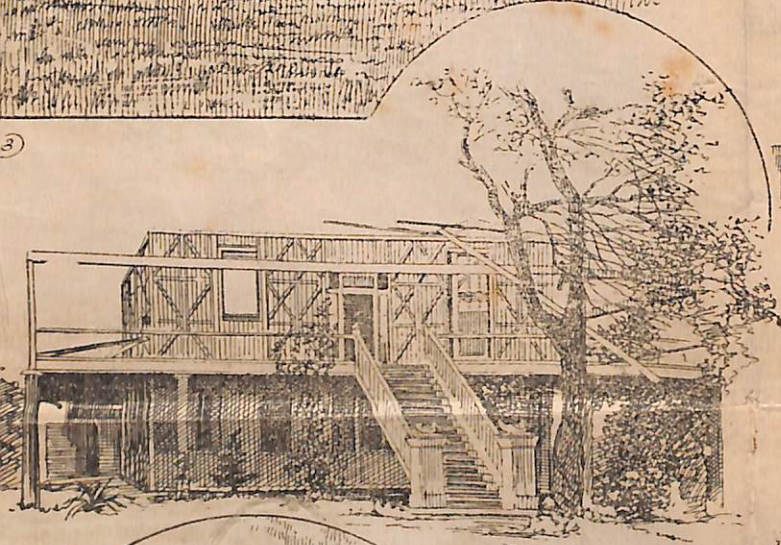
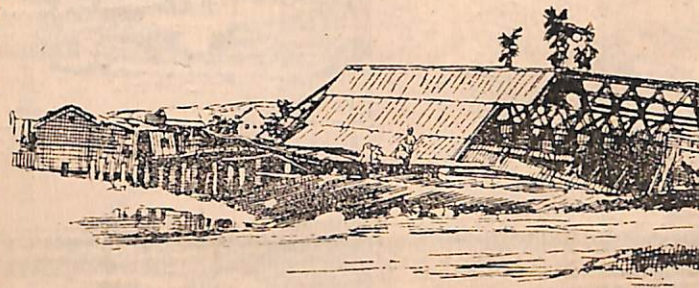
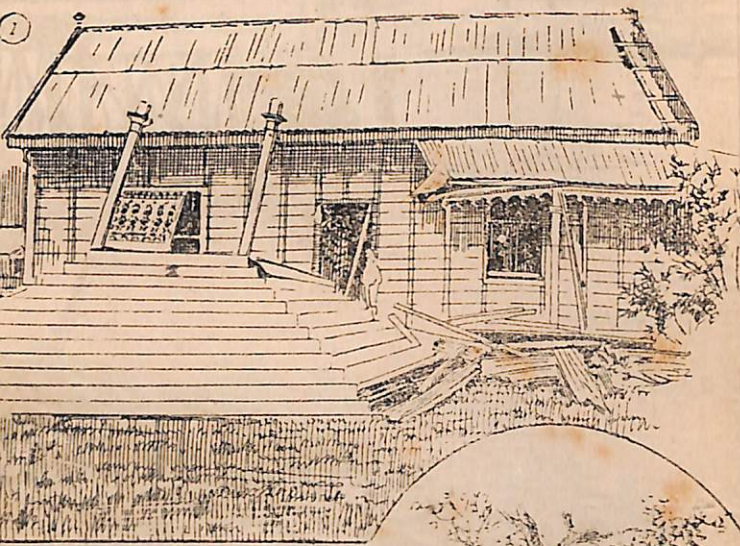
STURT STREET WEST AND MORRIS STREET.—The Masonic Hall and the adjoining Baptist Church escaped, but several buildings on the opposite side of the street

SCMA in Townsville









Frank J. Taylor
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were damaged and destroyed. St. Peter's Anglican Church, Morris Street, was partially unroofed and had some of the windows blown in, while the Vicarage lost a portion of the verandah.

WEST END.—The two Bulk Stores (both kerosene) owned by Messrs. Welch & Co., Merchants and Importers, and Alfred Shaw, Limited, Ironmongers, were both completely wrecked, both being left minus walls and roof. The houses at the foot of Castle Hill suffered severely, whole streets being wrecked. Stagpole Street had the whole of its houses more or less seriously injured and rendered almost uninhabitable. Mr. Eykyn's residence was completely ruined.

NORTH WARD.

CASTLE HILL.—This time-worn landmark had to bear the brunt of the storm, and accordingly suffered seriously, every tree being more or less damaged, whilst some were torn up by the roots or had their branches torn to pieces, the remainder were stripped of their foliage. The aspect of the Hill after the cyclone had passed, instead of being bright and green as it generally is after the wet season and during rain, was as dull and brown as if it was suffering from a twelve months drought.

FROM THE STRAND TO CASTLE HILL.—The stockade in front of the Reception House collapsed entirely, and the Botanical Gardens and Queen's Park received considerable damage to trees and plants, many of the former being blown down. The Grammar School had its roof damaged by the removal of the ridge-capping and the loosening of the sheets of iron. The Orphanage escaped pretty well, the only damage being, beside a sheet or two of iron loosened, was the falling of the chimney through the hospital building. A house that had only been taken on the Saturday by a new arrival from the north, who had also bought the furniture that was in it, totally collapsed during the storm, and the occupants were left homeless and friendless in a strange town. During Sunday, Monday and Tuesday, Mitchell Street was converted into a canal.

SOUTH WARD (ROSS ISLAND).

ROSS ISLAND—Lying so little above sea level, suffered considerably from the cyclone and flood, the whole presenting a wrecked appearance, houses being unroofed, some being lifted bodily off the blocks, and others collapsing in total wrecks. The Pilot Station was wrecked, but the boats and gear were saved. The Pilot's cottage was partially unroofed, as likewise was the Immigration Depot. Mr. T. Page's residence was shifted off the blocks. St. John's Church of England was completely wrecked, as was also the Vicarage, representing a loss of £600. The Oddfellows Hall was utterly demolished, and a family who had taken refuge in the building before it collapsed had a narrow escape. The Belle Vue Hotel lost its roof, and the Australian Hotel (Mr. H. Potter), had the servants' quarters partially unroofed. The Crown Hotel (Mr. M. Cameron), also suffered. Mr. J. N. Stout's Baker's Shop was completely wrecked, and Victoria Foundry was partially unroofed. Messrs. Rooney & Co.'s Sawmill and Wood Factory was partially unroofed. On the flat land, buildings were wrecked in all directions, and numbers of cottages were shifted from their blocks and unroofed. Messrs. F. Anderson, Graham, Hayworth, Kenny, Maloney, Owen, and Turner's cottages were demolished and swept away. The Drill Shed was partially unroofed, and some of the arms of the Naval Brigade were slightly damaged. The flood here on Monday was eight inches above that of 1892. Palmer Street was almost obliterated, while a portion of Morehead Street, near the Crown Hotel, was washed away.

THE SUBURBS.

HERMIT PARK, &c.—This suburb suffered in equal measure with other parts of the town. Houses were swept off their blocks and some were upended, others lost their roofs or verandahs, or both. Some collapsed entirely and the material swept away. Fences and out-buildings were overturned, and in many cases swept away. Mr. Grose's residence was unroofed, and Mr. Grose, who is an invalid, had to be carried over to Mr. Philp's residence for security. Mr. Clayton had his kitchen verandah and out-buildings, as well as several trees in the garden, including a mango tree 18 years old, torn up by the roots, and a banyan three feet in circumference broken off short. Dr. Nisbet's residence, "Roegart," had much damage done to the furniture, whilst Mr. Norris's residence was lifted off the piles and sat down on the ground. Mr. Clive, Storekeeper, had the roof blown off his house, and the furniture drenched. Captain C. A. Calvert, Hyde Park, besides losing £300 worth of furniture, books, and other valuables, narrowly escaped death

while swimming from his submerged house. he managed to save the life of his housekeeper by swimming with her to a place of safety. Mr. J. Rodger's residence was wrecked. Mr. Witham's bakery and residence was ruined, and flour, sugar, &c., destroyed, and both Mr. and Mrs. Witham had a narrow escape. Mr. G. Camp's residence was blown of the blocks and Damaged.

MUNDINGBURRA.—The residence of Mr. Steele was partially unroofed, and the windmill blown down. Mr. F. Gordon's residence, "Glenroy," also suffered, whilst many of the trees of the avenue were uprooted. "Kogarah," Mr. Justice Chubb's residence, suffered severely, and is nearly ruined, and when rendered unsafe by the rising of the flood waters on Monday morning, the Judge, his family and servants, endeavoured to make their way across to the higher ground at Mr. F. Gordon's, and after three hours succeeded in reaching their destination, but not without serious mishap, the housemaid, Alice Hughes, being drowned, and the cook having a narrow escape from a similar fate. "Knogle Park," the Hon. W. Aplin's late residence, was rendered unsafe, the river having washed away the riverbank, and leaving about 15 feet of one part of the building overhanging the new bed of the stream. Willmett Well was obliged to suspend operations, the flood waters putting out the fires. Several parties who were camped on the bank of the Ross River in this neighbourhood, escaped in most cases with bare life, after having lost their all.

AITKENVALE.—The Wesleyan Church was completely destroyed. Acacia Vale Gardens were seriously damaged, and Mr. B. Gulliver's residence wrecked owing to the chimney being blown down upon the roof.

ROSS RIVER MEATWORKS.

Ross River Meatworks did not suffer much injury beyond the loss of some coal and loose timber. The water rose here $2\frac{1}{2}$ feet higher than the flood of 1890. The floor of the office was under water, and the books not in the shelves were damaged.

Ross River Bridge was partially carried away, the lower and older portions on the south side turning completely over on Wednesday afternoon.

The Idalia Estate, which was under water, did not suffer very much, only seven out of fifty cottages being displaced from the blocks, but all the out-houses were blown or washed over. Tons and tons of sand were deposited all over the Estate in sandbanks.

The Branch Railway Line to the Works was considerably damaged.

CLUDEN, STEWART'S CREEK, &c.

The flood waters at Cluden Railway Station were 6 feet over the line on the 28th. The buildings on the Racecourse were wrecked, the iron being torn off the grand stand, the saddling paddock, and other buildings. The Cluden Training Stables were unroofed, and Mr. Grant's house was also unroofed and removed some fifty yards from its original site. The older buildings at Mr. J. Gordon's residence were wrecked, and Mr. J. Hodel received damage to house and home.

The Divisional Board's Bridge over Stewart's Creek was unharmed, but the approaches were washed away. The stockade at Stewart's Creek Penal Establishment was blown down. No damage was done to the buildings or plant at the North Queensland Meat Extract Co.'s Works at Alligator Creek. Fences and trees, however, were blown down in every direction.

The settlers on the Black River received only slight damages to their residences, but out-buildings, sheds and fences were laid flat. Trees were uprooted by hundreds and shattered. A large number of cattle were also lost.

On the Alice River the greatest damage done was to trees, which were destroyed wholesale.

The vegetation on Magnetic Island also suffered severely, the trees being stripped bare, and the hoop pines bereft of their branches. The large and handsome figtree at Picnic Bay, the resort of so many picnic parties, was uprooted, and Mr. Butler's cocoa-nut trees were broken across. At the Quarantine Station the surgery and large store were shifted off their blocks, and the wharf damaged. Bay Rock, Cape Cleveland, and Cape Bowling Green Lighthouses were unscathed, but the lighthouse keeper's cottage at Cape Cleveland lost its roof, and the boathshed was damaged. Mr. Armand, of Almer Bay, had his house demolished, several trees in his garden damaged, his boat cast high and dry on the beach, and his wife seriously hurt.

The total amount of damage done to Townsville can never be exactly stated, but was estimated at half a million (£500,000) sterling. Some of the losses of the various bodies, &c., were placed as follows:—Harbour Board, £20,000; Municipal, £300; Church of England property, £1200; Wesleyan Church property, £1000.

THE HARBOUR WORKS AND PLANT.

The Harbour Works were severely damaged. During Sunday morning, the end of the Western Breakwater suffered considerably, the waves loosening the stones some fifty feet from the end which was grouted with cement, and in time isolated it to a certain extent from the rest. The iron standard which carried the green light was knocked out of the straight and swept away. About 600 feet of the breakwater was swept away. The damage done to the Eastern Jetty was extensive, about 1600 feet of the end was completely shattered, and some five or six feet of it swept off the top, whilst the lighthouse carrying the red light was washed away. Nearer the wharf extensive breaches were made: the cement coping and portion of the base being demolished; the wharf suffered no injury; The roof of the Harbours and Rivers boat shed was torn off, but the Harbours and Rivers wharf and office suffered no serious injury. The cottage occupied by Mr. Oxtoby of the Department was completely wrecked.

THE VESSELS.

Several Vessels were either wrecked or driven into such positions from which it will be hard to float them again, whilst a number suffered damage otherwise. The following were the Vessels in the Creek or Harbour during the time of the Cyclone with brief accounts of the damage they sustained, if any

- “ADA DENT” (Burns, Philp & Co., Ltd.), Passenger Launch, 30 tons, Captain Toft, was sunk in the creek near to Burns, Philp & Co.’s wharf, by the steam lighter Barratta; she was raised again on February 1st.
- “ADELAIDE” (Aplin, Brown & Crawshay, Ltd.), Steamer, 100 tons, Captain Kerr, was fast to the wharf, and suffered no damage.
- “ALARM,” Beche-de-mer Ketch, became a total wreck.
- “ALBATROSS,” Government Steamer, arrived from Thursday Island on 25th, and anchored in the harbour and bravely rode out the full force of the gale with two anchors down and steam up, she received some slight damages from the Presto and Heather Bell.
- “ALEXANDRA,” Refrigerating Tender, Captain Jones, broke away from the Eastern Jetty, and after hugging the Western structure for several hours, drifted across to the Eastern one again, and ran into the S.S. Leura, injuring her, and knocking a hole in her stern, and after drifting up the harbour, knocked against the Star of Hope (then sunk) and rolling over her went ashore high and dry on the rocks near the Pilot Station.
- “ANNIE,” Beche-de-mer Cutter, high and dry.
- “BARRATTA” (Burns, Philp & Co., Ltd.), Steam Lighter, 160 tons, Captain Moyses, which had been outside, sought shelter in the Creek, but in getting alongside Burns, Philp & Co.’s wharf, collided with the Ada Dent and sank her.
- “BOBBIE TOWNS” (Burns, Philp & Co., Ltd.), Steamer, 140 tons, Captain E. Colbert, was moored to the Jetty wharf and rode out the gale without sustaining any injury whatever; her captain displayed some splendid seamanship in the rescue of the Diamantina, bringing her against all the fury of the Cyclone back to the Eastern breakwater, amid cheers from those on board the Leura.
- “BURDEKIN” (Aplin, Brown and Crawshay, Ltd.), Steamer, Captain Stewart, was fast to the wharf and received no damage.
- “CANAIPIA” (Burns, Philp & Co., Ltd.), Lighter, 160 tons, Captain Chenoweth, was moored to the Jetty wharf and received no damage.
- “CHRISTINA GOLLAN” (Aplin, Brown & Crawshay, Ltd.), Steamer, Captain Turner, was moored at the Jetty wharf but was struck by derelicts several times.
- “DIAMANTINA” (Burns, Philp & Co., Ltd.), Lighter, 285 tons, Captain Pitt, was moored to the Eastern Jetty, but parting her cable and drifting away was rescued by the Bobbie Towns and moored again to the Jetty wharf, receiving no damage.
- “DUGONG” Government Hopper Barge, sank in the harbour alongside the Western breakwater.

- "ELECTRIC LIGHT" (Burns, Philp & Co., Ltd.), Steamer, 81 tons, Captain Freeman, which left this creek on the 23rd for Barratta Creek returned to Townsville on the 30th safe and sound, after experiencing rough weather.
- "ELLEN" (Howard Smith & Sons), Steamer, was alongside the Breakwater with cargo for the Leura, where she lost both her anchors, and drifting first on to the Breakwater and then up the harbour, went on the rocks alongside Brand & Drybrough's Foundry.
- "ELNATHAN" (Aplin, Brown & Crawshay, Ltd.), Steamer, broke away from the wharf on Monday afternoon, and proceeding down the creek grounded in the bight in front of the Hotel Metropole.
- "FLORENCE ELLIOTT" (Howard Smith & Sons), 70 tons, fully loaded with tallow for shipment south per the Leura, foundered during Sunday night alongside the Western breakwater.
- "FRANKLIN" (Adelaide Steamship Co.), Steamer, Captain Ussher, was anchored inside Jetty wharf and braved the worst of the gale successfully.
- "HEATHER BELL" (Burns, Philp & Co., Ltd.), Steam Lighter, 110 tons, Captain Carlsen, broke adrift from her moorings at the Jetty wharf on Sunday and was driven high and dry on the rocks near the Pilot Station, beside the Alexandra, with her back broken.
- "LALLA ROOKH" (Aplin, Brown & Crawshay Ltd.), Ketch, was in the harbour loaded with log timber from Cairns, but she drifted out and foundered a wreck off Bremner Point, Magnetic Island.
- "LARK," Beche-de-mer, Cutter, high and dry.
- "LAVINA," Schooner, Captain Paesch, left Townsville on Thursday evening 23rd for Maryborough, but was obliged to put back under Cape Cleveland, where she lost an anchor, and not being able to hold her ground, was driven before the gale and totally wrecked on the shore of Bright's Bay, Magnetic Island; on the 26th one of the seamen, Frank Rawley by name, was struck by a wave and killed, previous to the striking of the vessel.
- "LEURA," Steamer, Captain R. R. Brown, having received timely information of the final forecast, remained in the harbour moored to the Eastern breakwater; at 7 p.m. on Sunday she went on to the Eastern breakwater, off which she came at 7.30 a.m. on Monday morning; when she broke away she had out two 3½ in. and one 3 in. wire hawsers and a 5½ in. Manila cable, all new, and two anchors, and they failed to hold her; on the 29th after coaling she left for Brisbane direct.
- "LUCY AND ADELAIDE" (Burns, Philp & Co., Ltd.), Lighter, hung on to her anchors during the storm, but was somewhat damaged by the Leura when that vessel broke adrift.
- "MARY" (Adelaide Steamship Co.), Steamer was on Messrs. Brand & Drybrough's slip, and remained safe.
- "MAGGIE L. WESTON" (Howard Smith & Sons), Steam Lighter, broke away on Monday afternoon with the steamer Elnathan from Aplin, Brown & Crawshay's wharf, and grounded in the bight in the front of the Hotel Metropole.
- "MAY QUEEN" (Adelaide Steamship Co.), Lighter, was slightly knocked about by the Leura, but was not seriously damaged.
- "MURIEL" (Adelaide Steamship Co.), Steamer, Captain Campbell, was moored inside the Jetty wharf and remained safe.
- "MYALL" (Howard Smith & Sons), Steamer, Captain Crock, broke away on Sunday afternoon, but her Captain with splendid seamanship succeeded in bringing her up the creek, and mooring her to the Adelaide Steamship Co.'s wharf.
- "NAUTILUS," Government Hopper Barge, was washed on the rocks at the point beyond the Foundry.
- "NEBO" (Howard Smith & Sons), Lighter, 80 tons, sank inside the Western breakwater.
- "PRESTO" (Adelaide Steamship Co.), Iron Hulk, broke away from her moorings at the Jetty wharf on Sunday night or Monday morning, and drifting on to the Western breakwater sank with 350 tons of coal, 9 tons of sugar and 15 tons of general cargo.
- "ROCK LILY," Cutter, Captain R. White, owner and master, was driven on the rocks abreast of the Foundry and damaged.

"SCOUT" (Rooney & Co.), Schooner, Captain Campbell, arrived with most of her sails rent and damaged, from Cairns on Wednesday, January 29th, having anchored between Gould Island and Hinchinbrook from 26th to 29th.

"STAR OF HOPE" (Aplin, Brown & Crawshay, Ltd.), Steamer, weathered the gale for many hours, but broke loose on Monday and sank in the harbour below the Pilot Station, becoming a total wreck.

"VICTORY" (Burns, Philp & Co., Ltd.), Steamer, 90 tons, Captain Tutty, was moored safely throughout the Cyclone at the A.U.S.N. Co.'s wharf.

The following are the Pleasure and Fishing boats, and how they fared during the Cyclone:—

"BOOMERANG," 23 ft., belonging to George Head and party, escaped scathless.

"DORA," 14 ft., belonging to Mr. T. Blee, was seriously damaged.

"ENTERPRISE," 22 ft., belonging to W. Hollins, Junr., was uninjured.

"GOLDFINCH," 26 ft., belonging to Mr. H. Limberg, was swamped, but received very slight damages.

"GOWRA," 22 ft., received no damage.

"HEPHZIBAH," 27 ft., belonging to Butler Bros., was slightly damaged.

"ORACLE," 12 ft., Canvas boat, belonging to Satini Bros. was uninjured.

"PENTOWEN," 22 ft., belonging to Mr. A. Moyses, was blown ashore and had her tuck started and sails torn to ribbons.

"REGINA," 24 ft., belonging to Mr. C. Norris, was damaged and lost her mainsail.

"ROWENA," 20 ft., Fishing boat, belonging to Mr. Emerald, was washed out of the creek and cast on the beach near the baths a wreck.

"VANAPA," Yacht, was purposely scuttled by her caretaker, and received little damage.

THE RAILWAY

On Sunday owing to there being no communication by telegraph with the stations beyond Townsville, Mr. M. McGavin, the Traffic Manager, cancelled three cattle trains, which were to leave the Townsville Station for Torrens Creek. On Monday morning an attempt was made to run a train as far up the line as possible. The engine had to turn back at Cluden, there being 6ft of water over the line. Another attempt was made in the afternoon with better results. By a telegram received in Townsville on Tuesday evening from Woodstock, it was found that the Reid River Bridge had been severely battered, and seven spans on the Charters Towers side had been carried away. In the morning of Wednesday the 29th, a train left Townsville with a gang of 40 men, the object of repairing the line wherever necessary. The permanent way was found to be in fairly good order up to Double Barrel (27 miles), when a stoppage had to be made to repair the bridge over the creek, the Townsville approach having been slightly damaged. Other damage was found at the 32 mile, where there was a washaway of 40 or 50 yards, and between it and the Reid River (35 miles) three bridges from 14 ft., 18 ft. and 20 ft. had been washed away. These were repaired, and by Friday the line was clear to the Reid River. It was then found that the bridge over the Haughton River was washed away; this Bridge was of 16 spans, supported on 66 ft. spliced piles. On Friday 31st, the first mails since the 25th, arrived in Townsville from Charters Towers, being trollied from the Haughton to the Reid, and on the following Saturday the first batch of passengers from Charters Towers arrived, being two days on the journey, many having to walk the fourteen mile break between the Reid and Haughton. Private coaches started to run the distance on February 7th. On the 7th the bridge at the Reid was so far repaired as to enable a train with light loads to cross as was also the deviation at the Haughton River, enabling passengers, mails and goods to be sent direct to the Burdekin, where they had to be ferried over. The first goods train from Townsville to Charters Towers since January 25th, crossed the Burdekin on February 11th.

THE TELEGRAPH.

Telegraphic communication with all parts, North, West and South of Townsville were cut off by the storm fiend "Sigma" on Sunday. The wires torn from the insulators, were plaited together, or twisted around the poles in almost un-revailable form, whilst a number of poles were laid flat. By Wednesday 29th, a couple of wires were stretched across the Ross, where a great break occurred, and

communication was restored as far as Oonoonba. By 3.20 p.m. on Thursday the 30th, telegraphic communication was restored as far as Woodstock, and at 10.15 a.m. on the 31st with Charters Towers, for the first time since Saturday the 25th, but in five minutes the line collapsed again; later on the line was again in working order, and Charters Towers had communication with Brisbane, via Muttaborra. By February 4th, communication was restored with Ingham, and by the 7th, direct communication with Brisbane.

SUCCOUR FOR THE DESTITUTE AND NEEDY.

It is impossible to chronicle the self-denying acts of the many who rendered assistance to the destitute, or of those who put off in boats on Sunday and Monday to convey to safer places those, whose houses had already been demolished, or were in a state of insecurity, or of those who made welcome to such comforts as houses subject to the beating rain could afford homeless neighbours. Both in Hermit park and on Ross Island, rescue parties were out in boats and punts, removing to places of safety, the occupants of houses in critical positions on Sunday and Monday. Messrs. Aplin, Brown & Crawshaw, despatched a ship's boat to Hermit Park, by means of which several families were conveyed to safer quarters: and early on Tuesday morning, a boat manned by six hands, and amply provisioned with flour and beef, was placed in charge of Mr. P. Ahern, Foreman of Municipal Works, and despatched by the Mayor and Alderman Hanran to the same suburb, and its presence was welcomed by those whose supplies had been cut off, or who had been called upon to entertain neighbours who had lost their homes. During the Cyclone some 300 hundred homeless people were accommodated in the Ross Island State School. They began to flock thither on Sunday evening, and kept arriving all night long. Every room was full of men, women and children. One mother was there with a baby only three days old, and another with an infant a week old. Both Mr. and Mrs. Galloway (the head teacher and his wife), did all they could to secure some degree of comfort to the unfortunate fugitives, who had so unwillingly become their guests. Scores of people also took advantage of the shelter that the Immigration Depot afforded. The West End State School was also used to house the unfortunate families in that neighbourhood, some fifty persons finding refuge therein, and others sought refuge in the Oddfellow's Hall, Sturt Street, and also in the Court House, and St. James' Cathedral.

On Tuesday, the 28th, the Police Magistrate (Mr. E. Morey,) accompanied by the Mayor (Alderman Forrest) and Alderman Downs, visited the Ross Island State School and the Immigration Depot, and issued, on behalf of the Government, orders for two days rations for all who were in need. In the School there were several who were not necessitated, they had only sought shelter, and only 40 were on rations. At the Immigration Depot there were about 160 persons on Monday, and Mr. Morey arranged with Mr. Boyd (the wardsmen,) to give all the regulation ration. On Wednesday the depot accommodated 60 adults and 89 children, all of whom were supplied with rations, bed and bedding; 44 persons were accommodated in the Court House on Tuesday, but only one family on Wednesday.

At a Special Meeting of the Municipal Council on Tuesday afternoon, the 28th, The Mayor was authorised to take whatever steps he deemed best and necessary for supplying those people who had been driven into various refuges, with food.

On Thursday, the 30th, a large and influential meeting convened by the Mayor, was held in the Town Hall, to consider the best available means of relieving the distress and suffering, caused by the recent calamitous flood and cyclone. An Executive Committee of five, consisting of the following gentlemen, His Worship the Mayor (Alderman Forrest) Alderman Hanran, A. Ogden, M.L.A., Messrs. J. N. Parkes and R. Wakeford, with Mr. H. A. McMahon, Secretary, and Mr. D. F. Treohy (Town Clerk), Treasurer, were appointed to deal practically with all matters in connection with affording relief to the sufferers and those in distress from the flood. "*The Townsville Daily Bulletin*" and the "*Townsville Evening Star*" both opened Relief Subscription Funds. Several liberal donations were received, and by February 21st the amount had reached £2250.

NARROW ESCAPES.

During the height of the Cyclone, and also during the flood, several persons had narrow escapes. The men on the Star of Hope and Lalla Rookh, when these vessels foundered, escaped with difficulty. One man had a terrible experience, as he scrambled first from the Star of Hope on to the Dugong, barge, and from there on to the breakwater; when the Presto, coalhulk, began to drift in to the Harbour

on Sunday, there were six men on board, four of whom jumped on to the Heather Belle as she drifted past, the remaining two were obliged to remain on board until Monday. An old man named Smith and his two sons, who had established a small Wood Depot on the banks of Ross River, escaped, after a critical experience; when the flood had washed their camp away, they started to wade towards the residence of Mr. Justice Chubb, Kogarah, but the force of the current proved too much for the father and younger son, and they were placed in the fork of a tree by the elder son, there they remained, the elder son standing at the foot of the tree from Sunday night until 11 a.m. on Monday, when they were rescued. A man, two women and three children were rescued from similar places in the same locality, as was also a traveller, who had climbed a tree with his pack saddle. A narrow escape from drowning was witnessed at the Causeway near Mr. Clayton's house, Hermit Park, on Tuesday, 28th.; two young men attempted to cross, the one being on horseback and the other holding on to his stirrup-iron; suddenly the stirrup-leather gave away and the young fellow was swept off his feet by the current. His companion bravely followed him up and managed to bring him to dry land.

A PITIFUL CASE OF MENTAL ANXIETY.

One of the most pitiful cases of the terrible experience undergone in the anxiety borne during the cyclone was that of a female resident of Ross Island, who had gone out in the tender on Saturday to see her sister off by the "Leura," thinking that she would only be away for a few hours at the most, she left her baby (an infant only a few weeks old), at home with a nurse girl. To her dismay the storm burst, and when she found that she was unable to return, her anguish of mind may be better imagined than described, and especially when Captain Brown thought he would have to steer for Brisbane. She had to endure this torture until Monday, when the poor mother declared that if an attempt was not made to put her ashore, she would throw herself over. Notwithstanding the great risk she was lowered into a boat and taken across to the breakwater where she had to climb up the piles of the unfinished wharf, and in the strength given by desperation, managed to cross the space from pile to pile, and walked along the breakwater until she got to land, from where she had some distance to walk before she reached home.

THE DEATH ROLL.

The most lamentable feature of the dreadful visitation, was the sad loss of life, no less than eighteen persons succumbing to the work of the storm fiend.

1. Frank Rawley, a sailor on board the Schooner Lavina, was struck by a heavy sea and his head dashed against a pump, killing him instantly, on Saturday, 26th.
 2. Dorathea Grimman, aged 77, mother of Mrs C. S. Rowe.
 3. Mary Dora Rowe, aged 14, } Daughters of Charles and Mary Rowe,
 4. Gertrude Viola Rowe, aged 10, } and grand children of Dorathea Grimman.
 - 5-6. Sarah Selina Hunt, aged 37, and infant son, wife and child of Mr. Hunt, Secretary of the Anchor of Hope Lodge, I.O.G.T., Mrs. Hunt being Chaplain.
 7. William Thomas (otherwise Wallace) aged 10.
- These six were drowned by the upsetting of a boat in Allen Street, Ross Island, on Monday morning, 27th, four others who were in the boat had a narrow escape.
8. Alice B. A. Hughes, aged 25, single, engaged as housemaid to Mr. Justice Chubb, Kogarah, Mundingburrah, while attempting to get to a safer situation, was swept away and drowned, 27th.
 - 9-10. Two Female aborigines were drowned in attempting to swim over Ross River, 27th.
 11. A male aboriginal was drowned near the brick works, Hermit Park, 27th.
 12. The body of a female aboriginal was found hanging over a fence at the back of the Show Grounds, 28th.
 13. Mr. Thomas Holmes in attempting to cross the Causeway by Mr. Clayton's house, was swept away and drowned, 28th; body not found until the 30th.
 14. Alexander Walker, while attempting to cross Ross River Bridge at the Meat Works, was swept away and drowned, 28th.
 - 15-16. Robert Baker, aged 60, and Jessie Baker, aged 56, husband and wife, who lived in a cottage almost opposite the North Star Hotel, were drowned. Their cottage collapsed, and their bodies were found on the 29th.
 17. William John Barrett, aged 35, wharf labourer, was drowned, 29th.
 18. The body of a female aboriginal was found in a swamp near the Rifle Range, Ross Island, 29th.

PREVIOUS STORMS IN TOWNSVILLE.

- 1867—March 3rd.—A cyclone similar to the present—1896—and of considerably longer duration, devastated the then infant settlement, committing serious damage.
- 1870—February 21st.—A hurricane in Townsville causing great destruction.
- 1877—February 23rd-26th.—Very heavy rains in Townsville, 31·5 inches falling in one week, causing a serious flood.
- 1890—March 24th.—Hurricane in Townsville, several houses unroofed.
- 1892—January 26th.—Serious Flood in Townsville, 26 inches of rain in 24 hours.

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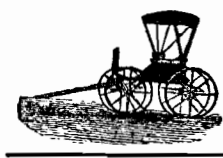
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