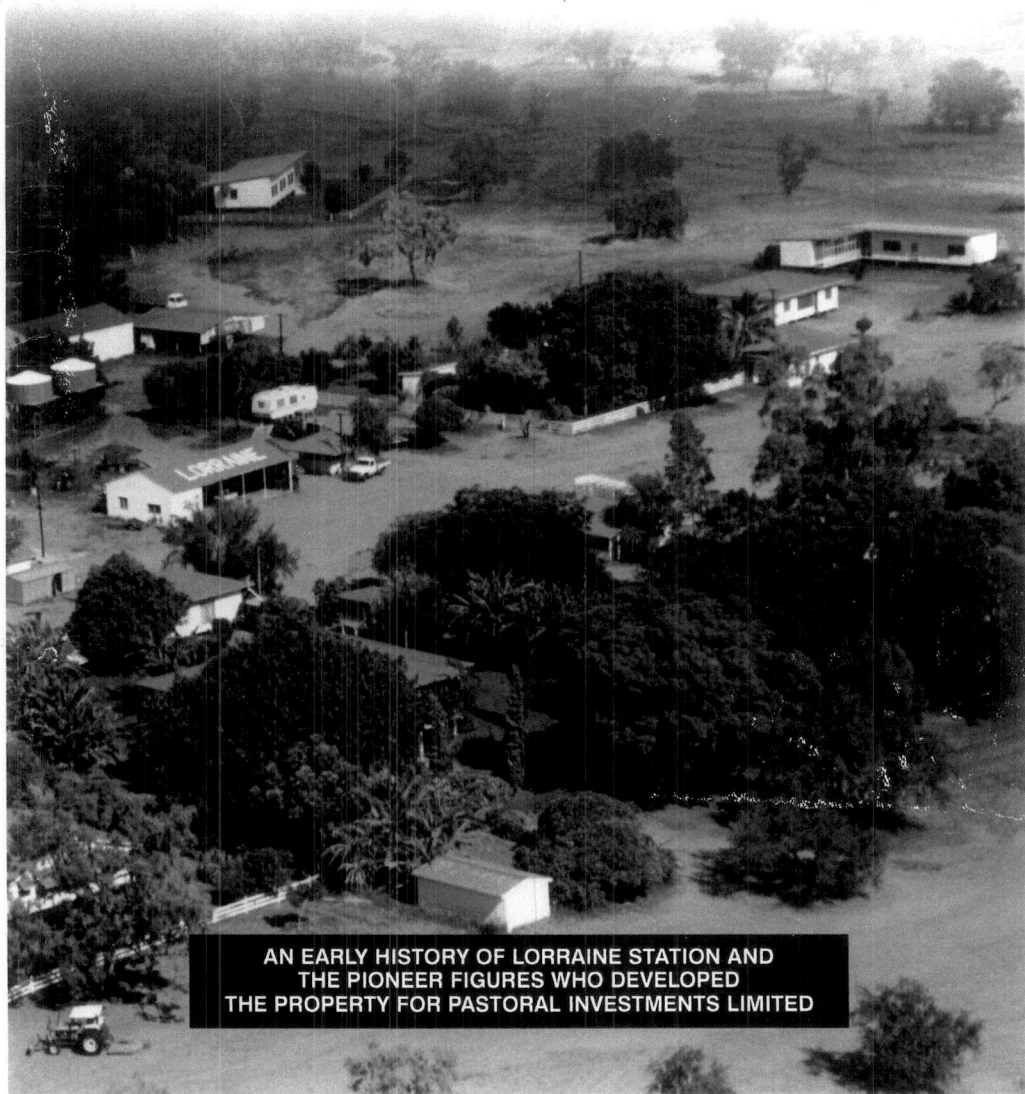


LORRAINE STATION

AN EARLY HISTORY

ANNE PHILP



AN EARLY HISTORY OF LORRAINE STATION AND
THE PIONEER FIGURES WHO DEVELOPED
THE PROPERTY FOR PASTORAL INVESTMENTS LIMITED

LORRAINE STATION

AN EARLY HISTORY

**AN EARLY HISTORY OF LORRAINE STATION AND
THE PIONEER FIGURES WHO DEVELOPED THE
PROPERTY FOR PASTORAL INVESTMENTS LIMITED**

ANNE PHILP

LORRAINE STATION

AN EARLY HISTORY

CONTENTS

	PAGE
1. INTRODUCTION	1
2. FRED BRODIE	5
3. JOHN KIRKALDY	12
4. THE WHITE CONNECTION	26
5. PICKING UP THE PIECES	39
6. THE ABORIGINAL CONNECTION	48
7. EPILOGUE LORRAINE 1933-2003	58
8. SOURCES	68

1. INTRODUCTION

LORRAINE is a cattle station in the Gulf country of North Queensland. It is situated on the Leichhardt River which empties into the Gulf of Carpentaria more than a hundred miles north beyond the once used river ports of Burketown and Normanton. Its nearest railhead is Cloncurry, eighty miles to the south.

This paper attempts to present the early history of *LORRAINE* station from its first mention in the Queensland land records in the late 1860's. Like the surrounding properties of the Gulf of Carpentaria its leasehold lands covered more than 80,000 acres of flat river plains dependant on the annual monsoon rains and subject to cyclical floods and drought.

Although today *LORRAINE* is a modern, well managed cattle station, the source of the prosperous beef cattle business owned by Pastoral Investments Company, we are concerned here with only its first fifty years – which are told through the pioneer figures who shaped its early development. Its history is important in that it parallels the development of the beef cattle industry in north Queensland as a whole; *LORRAINE*'s history reflects the same difficulties, the same booms and busts that effected the other north Queensland cattle properties.

The Gulf country was one of the last frontiers of pastoral settlement in Australia. Its development followed hard on the heels of the early explorers. In 1841 John Stokes, arriving by sea, named the Flinders and Albert rivers and labelled the land nearby “the Plains of Promise”. In 1844 Leichhardt became the first explorer to arrive by land, reporting on good pasture land there. His favourable reports were backed up by A. C. Gregory, who had been briefed to search out potential pastoral land. Such reports provoked the disastrous Burke and Wills expedition from Victoria in 1860, underwritten by British and Victorian money to search for potential grazing land. Subsequently William Landsborough, one of several searchers for the missing Burke and Wills, reported on “vast grassy timbered plains south of the Gulf”. He navigated the Norman River and in 1867 chose the town site for Normanton.

Normanton became the entry port for the considerable number of pastoralists from down south who came to take advantage of Queensland’s generous Land Act, which offered fourteen year leases to squatters who could stock their runs. These adventurous young men became the new “owner-managers” in the north, taking up vast leaseholds of land and stocking them with sheep or cattle, which they landed by coastal steamer at either Burketown or Normanton. It is at this time, the late 1860s, that the names of *LORRAINE* and its outstation *TALAWANTA* first appear in the Queensland land records. *LORRAINE* Station, favourably sited on the Leichhardt River, was amongst the first of the lands taken up by the squatters in the Gulf. *LORRAINE* thus became the centre of a

pastoral enterprise whose history can be traced through to the present day and which continues under the ownership of the **PASTORAL INVESTMENTS COMPANY**. Although comparatively small for the area (the property has averaged about 800 square miles in area over the past 140 years), **LORRAINE'S** fortunes and policies act as an exemplar for those of the North Queensland beef industry as a whole.

The first twenty years of settlement in the Gulf did not live up to the golden expectations which had promoted the early land rush. It was soon discovered that open range grazing over vast areas was unsuitable for sheep. The labour necessary for shepherding and shearing was unavailable in the empty northern lands, and the transportation of wool over vast distances to a port was a further difficulty. Squatters quickly turned to the more mobile cattle, which were less labour intensive and could be let loose to graze through the wet season and then mustered ready for sale in the dry. But there remained other trials; more than enough for the early settlers. The remoteness of the area created enormous difficulties in accessing supplies, attracting labour, and getting stock to the only markets in the south. The opening of the goldfields on the Palmer River provided the first local markets for beef, but there remained the harsh semi-tropical climate – unhealthy for both man and beast - which encouraged disease and discouraged white labour. Many owners depended upon an unpaid black labour force, which in the event was critical to the successful opening up of the area. The flat, well-watered grasslands, which had appeared so attractive to the

first explorers, proved vulnerable to flooding in the wet season and lacking in nutrition during the long dry season, when they dried out rapidly. Pleuro-pneumonia amongst the cattle was troublesome and the appearance of cattle tick in 1888, bringing the dreaded red water fever, caused the Queensland Government to restrict the movement of cattle out of the Gulf country in 1894. Some hope was offered to the struggling pastoralists with the beginning of refrigerated meat shipments from Townsville in the eighties and with the opening of a meat extract plant in Burketown in the nineties. However over-extensive bank borrowing combined with the severe drought of the nineties put paid to the hopes of these early settlers. With reduced markets for their stock and Queensland Government restrictions on moving cattle out of the tick area, these first pioneers could no longer meet their rising bank debts. Moreover, they were unable to sell their leaseholds due to the drought, and one by one these first properties in the Gulf were taken over by the banks and finance houses to which they had become so hopelessly indebted.

LORRAINE proved no exception.

2. FRED BRODIE

During this early period, Fred Brodie (accompanied by his brother) was one of the many young men from the south attracted to the empty lands of the Gulf country. Brodie came from the Hunter River district of New South Wales, and by the early 1870's he and his brother had acquired the leasehold of *LORRAINE* and *TALAWANTA* (reported as covering 882 and 500 square miles respectively). Fred Brodie was to become a key name in the history of *LORRAINE* over the next fifty years, and it is to him more than to any other that the Pastoral Investments Company owes its inception.

Indications of the Brodies' progress on *LORRAINE* and *TALAWANTA* over the next fifteen years can be gleaned by searching the stock movement reports for the Normanton district published in the *Queenslander* (a newspaper published in Townsville). For example:

September 1877: "Messrs. Brodie have stock travelling out to take up new country"

November 1878: "900 breeding cattle are travelling to the Brodie brothers on the Leichhardt."

November 1879: "90 bulls recently arrived at *Lorraine Station* (Brodie Bros) and are for sale"

May 1881: "400 head of fat cattle from *Lorraine* left for Port Darwin."

October 1882: “1700 heifers are bound for *Lorraine Station* (held by Brodie and Richardson)”

November 1883: “250 fats belonging to Brodie and Richardson for Palmer”

The numbers of cattle involved are enormous – particularly as they all had to be walked in from the river port of Normanton and overlanded out. The fats going to the Palmer River are obviously for sale on the gold fields – by 1877 there were 17,000 diggers there. The Port Darwin contingent were probably destined for shipment. It appears that Fred Brodie split with his brother and acquired another partner (Richardson) in about 1880, but he was obviously building up quite a name for himself in North Queensland.

In January 1883 a reporter from the *Queenslander* gave a glowing report of **LORRAINE** station. He had reached there after an eight day boat trip from Brisbane to Thursday Island, connecting with a three day boat trip up the Norman River to Normanton, followed by several days horse ride to **TALAWANTA** (the outstation, covering 500 square miles at the time) and thence on to **LORRAINE**; **LORRAINE** he writes, *is situated on the Leichhardt and is the property of Messrs Richardson and Brodie and contains an area of 882 square miles, the greater part of it being splendid sheep country indeed ... the owners are seriously thinking of disposing of all the cattle now depasturing thereon and placing sheep in their stead, as they have such a magnificent tract of country suitable for carrying thousands*

of sheep. The Leichhardt runs right through this run, and in some waterholes - which are very numerous - I think you might manage to float the Great Eastern. At this station I was struck with the very fine grasses, which seem to grow so luxuriantly in the Gulf country and one need only look at the stock for ample proof of their fattening qualities.

Despite the enthusiasm of this journalist for **LORRAINE**, by the end of the eighties Brodie was to fall prey to the same fate as nearly all owner-managers in the Gulf at the time. The rapid expansion of the North Queensland herds was not matched by an expansion of marketing opportunities for beef, and with severe drought setting in their owners were forced to overland their animals through Bourke to the southern markets. One writer estimated that by 1891 some 50,000 head per year had been despatched from stations around Normanton. Reports of cattle movements in the *Queenslander* newspaper again tell the story of Brodie's **LORRAINE** herd:

(Q 10/8/89) "1,000 bullocks and fats for Bourke"

(Q 17/5/90) "1,000 stores from *Lorraine* to Wodonga"

(Q 15/8/91) "1,250 mixed stores from *Lorraine* going past Jundah; F.A. Brodie the owner"

Land records show that the **LORRAINE** lease was submitted to auction in 1891, but there were no offers. All through the Gulf country the drought had taken hold; the owners walked off their

land, and there were no new pastoralists willing to take over. The banks which had lent so liberally during the land boom now took over the lands, but with no new settlers to purchase leases, they were forced to install managers and run the properties themselves. This unsatisfactory situation persisted for the next twenty years. In this respect, the *LORRAINE* story was no different. In 1892 the Australian Joint Stock Bank foreclosed on *LORRAINE* and *TALAWANTA* and installed its own manager on the property. *LORRAINE* was to be run from the Sydney office of the bank until 1915 when Brodie put together a syndicate to buy it back again.



FA BRODIE

Although Brodie was forced to abandon *LORRAINE* he remained in north Queensland. Rather like the young Sidney Kidman he took on any job to survive; for a time in the Normanton district he was butchering and marketing meat.

He married in Normanton and his son, Frederick Arthur was born there. Gradually over the next fifteen years he used his knowledge of the country and his local contacts in the beef industry to establish a successful stock and station agency in Cloncurry.

During the period preceding the First World War Brodie quickly recognised the signs of a recovery in the Queensland beef industry: there had been a run of good seasons creating a demand for cattle for restocking; greater use was being made of the artesian bore system; a subsidiary of the American meat freezing consortium – Swifts Ltd – had taken over the North Queensland Meat Export works in Townsville, creating an expanded market for beef cattle. Syndicates of pastoralists and investors were forming to buy up the big stations in the north. The Brodie agency was instrumental in putting together several big purchases of Gulf stations. For example in 1914 the Augustus Downs Pastoral Company was formed to take over the land neighbouring *LORRAINE*. Its subscribers included Sidney Kidman, F.A.Brodie, and A.S. Kidman. Then in 1915 the *LORRAINE and TALAWANTA Pastoral Company* was formed. Its subscribers included F.A.Brodie, Sidney Kidman and the brothers F.J.(Frank) and J.C.(James) White. Brodie together with Frank White carried out the initial inspection and report to subscribers.

Brodie achieved his aim of regaining his original run just in time; he died in November 1915. A contemporary leaves us this moving obituary:

Telegrams have come through this morning of the death of Fred Brodie, and a gap is left among the cattlemen of Queensland that will be very hard to fill. I knew him long ago, when I was fourteen and he a year or two older. He must have been older because he had a station (I think it was Lorraine, on the Leichhardt). This was in 1873. The Brodies are an old family and belonged somewhere about Murrurundi, and in young days Fred Brodie, like the rest of his kin was a great mountain rider ... Lorraine, grand run as it is, produced cattle rapidly, and in a very few years it was a great herd, and Fred Brodie worked hard to make it so, but the awful times of the eighties came and the herd like every other herd thereabout, although numerous, was almost valueless, and big overdrafts gave men worry. The early nineties followed and the outlook was no better. The banks took over many places (Lawn Hill with 11,000 cattle on it, Kamerilaroi with the same). And Fred lost Lorraine ... when Croydon was going strong we find Fred Brodie butchering there and at Normanton, and travelling hard, driving the meat cart, and slaughtering cattle as if he'd never known any better times. But happily although Croydon failed, Fred Brodie kept going and it was a good day for him when he set up business as F.A. Brodie and Co., stock agents, because his sterling character was known in the Gulf

and his friends stuck to him, and in a few years he was in a big way of business, selling cattle everywhere from Newcastle Waters to Barrington. He was playing a game he knew well ... but he's gone now, and as I've said his place will take a lot of filling, for he knew the country and could talk it from Barwon to the Leichhardt and the Roper. He knew the runs, but he's gone, and he left the clean record of a good man (North Queensland Register 22/11/1915)

Brodie left a son, Frederick Arthur Brodie, to carry on the business of F.A.Brodie & Co in Cloncurry, who was later to take up a position as board member, and subsequently as chairman, of the Pastoral Investments Company.

Almost ninety years later, the Pastoral Investments Company is still run by descendants of the original board members, with the majority of its shares held by the descendants of the Brodie, Kidman and White families.

Mr FA Brodie Jnr.



3. JOHN KIRKALDY

Most of the old-time pioneer squatters have 'gone down' and the bulk of the station properties are now in the hands of the banks. (The Queenslander, 25 May 1895)

In 1890 Fred Brodie, like his neighbours in the Gulf country, was crippled by drought and constricted markets. His carefully built up cattle herds were now valueless. He submitted the **LORRAINE** and **TALAWANTA** lease for auction in June 1890 but received no offers. And in 1891 the Joint Australian Stock Bank foreclosed on **LORRAINE** and **TALAWANTA**.

But in the climate of the 1890s there was no prospect of the banks being able to resell these leaseholds. Instead, the financial institutions set up their own pastoral management departments at their headquarters in Sydney or Melbourne and appointed managers to run the properties until their eventual sale. In the case of **LORRAINE** the Joint Australian Stock Bank, which subsequent to a takeover in 1910 became the Australian Bank of Commerce, installed a manager who reported to their Pastoral Superintendent in Sydney. Twenty-four years of Bank management were to follow until the property leasehold was finally sold in 1915.

The manager selected by the bank for *LORRAINE* was John Kirkaldy, a young Scots immigrant with some Queensland banking experience. His qualifications for managing a Gulf country cattle station - other than a desire to work on the new frontier up north - were minimal. He was installed in a primitive homestead - five rooms built up on piles over an earth floor - with separate kitchen and staff huts. The *LORRAINE* homestead was pleasantly situated near a bend in the Leichhardt River but was more than eighty miles north of Cloncurry, the nearest town. Supplies were ordered from Normanton and Burketown to the north - groceries from the former, saddlery and hardware from the latter - and made their way to those towns by the Burns-Philp coastal steamer. The mailman and passing hawkers arrived weekly except during the wet season, when Kirkaldy could be cut off for weeks at a time. Reports had to be sent regularly to Mr Fairbairn, the Pastoral Superintendent of the Australian Joint Stock Bank in Sydney.

Kirkaldy's managerial apprenticeship during those early years must have been difficult and lonely. Living in a house staffed by a Chinese cook and a pair of women from the station Aboriginal camp, he was responsible for more than a thousand square miles of unfenced country. He was assisted by barely literate white stockmen and local Aboriginals, some of whom were only young boys. He supervised all the work of the station, inspecting the

stock and water supplies by day and trying to catch up with his bookkeeping and reports by the light of an oil lamp at night. His only social contacts were with members of his stock camp, the mailman, passing drovers, and travelling hawkers – the rare exceptions being his long rides into Cloncurry for business and district meetings. Such a lifestyle was made even more difficult by the climate - working in the intense heat of the dry season and surviving the high humidity and tropical diseases of the wet season.

Drought continued through the first ten years of Kirkaldy's management – rainfall at *LORRAINE* in 1902 registered only 6.84 inches. Red water fever and the associated cattle tick became endemic in the north, forcing the imposition of quarantine for the whole of the Gulf country and the Cape York Peninsula. In effect, this meant the closing of southern markets to Gulf country cattle. But at last, after 1903, the good seasons began to return. There was a demand for cattle as former drought-hit properties began to restock, and the banks began investing in the area, spending money on boundary fencing and bores for permanent water.

Kirkaldy's 1909 report to the Bank stated that on *LORRAINE* and *TALAWANTA* there were now seven miles of fencing, large drafting yards and a big horse paddock with 310 horses and 27,000 cattle. In October that year Kirkaldy took his only long leave from *LORRAINE* – down to Sydney. The following five

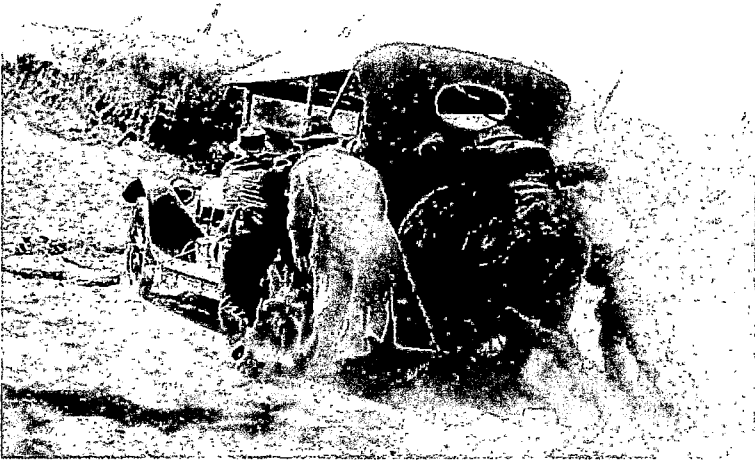
years recorded rapidly increasing development of cattle and infrastructure on both **LORRAINE** and **TALAWANTA**.

By 1914 Kirkaldy was an experienced manager with more than twenty years on **LORRAINE** behind him. He was well respected in the district and had built up valuable contacts with drovers and stockmen, essential to the Gulf country beef industry. That year a subsidiary of the American consortium *Swifts* had bought up the North Queensland Meat Export works in Townsville, foreshadowing a surge in meat export prices and making Townsville the largest centre for beef exports in Australia. The outbreak of war brought a rapid rise in meat prices, and at last there was a new optimism in the Queensland beef industry, bringing further investment interest in the large Gulf properties.

The 1914 stock report for **LORRAINE** shows it to be a leasehold of 709 square miles, with a rent of £951, and carrying 19,560 cattle and 200 horses. **TALAWANTA**, covering 1,502 square miles, registered 14,027 cattle and 160 horses. Both properties were ripe for further investment.

Fred Brodie, with his agency in Cloncurry, was well placed to put together a syndicate of investors to take over his old leaseholding, and in June 1915 **THE LORRAINE AND TALAWANTA PASTORAL COMPANY** was formed: it consisted of Sidney Kidman, Fred

Brodie, the brothers J. C. (James) White and F. J. (Frank) White (already holding a chain of properties in N.S.W., Queensland, and the Northern Territory), and two Sydney investors, J. K. Mackay and Colin Richards. The conclusion of the deal must have provided great satisfaction to Brodie senior, who after twenty-five years at last saw **LORRAINE** and **TALAWANTA** back in family hands again. He died later that year.



SAND BOG ON ROAD TO LORRAINE

Brodie and Frank White carried out the initial inspection and reported to the subscribers on their purchase.

Frank White wrote enthusiastically:

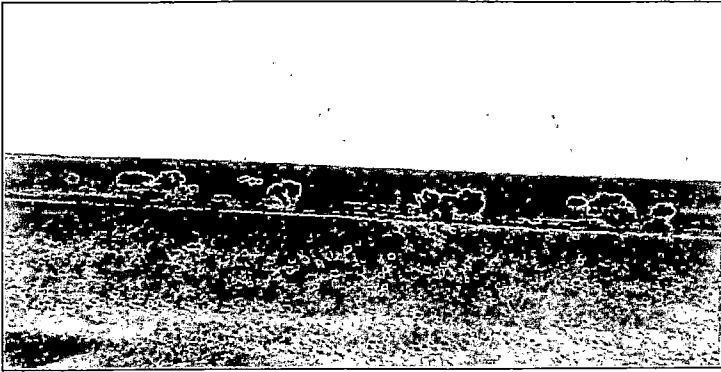
Both stations are under the Management of Mr John Kirkaldy who has managed them for the last twenty two years, and during the whole of that time he has only once been to Sydney. He is a

very conscientious, straightforward man, his word is his bond and anything he tells you can be absolutely relied upon as being correct. Where a considerable amount of money is to be expended in making improvements, he is the man fitted for the position ... Mr Kirkaldy is loyal to his employers, careful in details, and has a faculty for dealing with Blacks, a large number of which are always employed, and his intimate knowledge of this extensive country is invaluable ...

(Report to Directors 1915)

It was agreed that Kirkaldy be retained as manager at £600 per annum. Kirkaldy then managed the smooth transfer of ownership from Bank to Company Board; the only change being that his reports were directed to the Company Secretary, A.B. Wilkinson, in the Sydney office of F.A. Brodie rather than to the Pastoral Superintendent at the Australian Bank of Commerce.

Policy direction and supervision of Kirkaldy's work were largely handled by Frank White, who made inspection visits to **LORRAINE** and **TALAWANTA** each winter. White's annual reports to the Board amply document conditions on **LORRAINE** and the changes that took place over the next twelve years.



PROPERTY VIEW 1922

“A considerable amount of money” as White had predicted to the Board, was indeed expended. The nominal capital of the new company was 120,000 shares @ £120,000. Company assets were assessed at £110,000. The approximate purchase price was £49,000, with annual Government rent standing at £1,988. A Buick car was purchased for Kirkaldy at the outset. In order to double the carrying capacity of the run, White (an experienced water diviner) marked three new sites for the sinking of bores. Forty-six miles of boundary fencing between *LORRAINE* and *Augustus Downs* were planned. In the following year, new stock yards, new workers’ accommodation at *LORRAINE*, more stock horses, and a hundred more herd bulls were ordered - all this in addition to the sinking of bores and installation of windmills already commenced. Even the building of a telephone line was mooted. The next two years saw the sinking of two more bores, with another windmill to improve the homestead supply.

CATTLE ON LEICHHARDT 1922



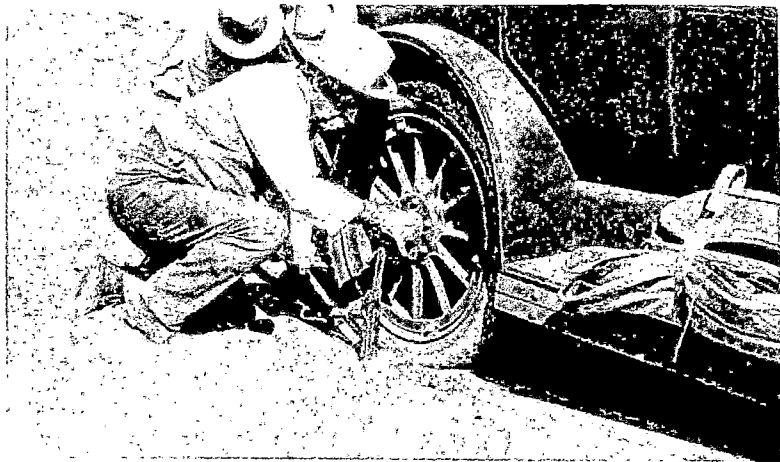
Internal fencing was extended with a boundary rider to maintain it. A new policy of getting rid of all station hands after the dry season muster except for the head stockman and one assistant was instituted. A steam engine was ordered and a fireplough (hauled by 26 horses!) was recommended for maintaining serviceable roads.

By 1921 the last instalment of the purchase price for *LORRAINE* had been paid. A new company - with a Brisbane office, to avoid the payment of multiple taxes (N.S.W., Queensland, and Federal) was registered. Its name was **PASTORAL INVESTMENTS LIMITED.**

But the beef cattle industry again went into a decline. It was felt throughout North Queensland from 1922 onwards, and had its impact on *LORRAINE* as well: it put a stop to more ambitious development.

Depressed cattle prices produced a pessimistic outlook throughout the industry and White reported to the Board on the long discussions he had had with Kirkaldy about reducing expenses ... with the conclusion that no possible reduction can be made. Mr Kirkaldy going so far as to propose a reduction of his own salary. I told him the idea could not be entertained. My own opinion being that the station is starved for want of more help. We keep no bookkeeper, Mr Kirkaldy filling the dual position of manager and Bookkeeper. At the three main stations one calls at on the way down one sees a homestead staff far in excess of our own, including housemaids, bookkeeper, gardener and general hand, whereas Mr Kirkaldy is satisfied with cook and gardener combined, a gin to do the housework and blackboy as wood-carter, butcher and general useful.

All improvements, including the erection of the previously proposed telephone line and "the new horse yard badly wanted when funds allow" now ceased - apart from general maintenance.



JOHN KIRKALDY - CHANGING TYRE ON 1917 BUICK

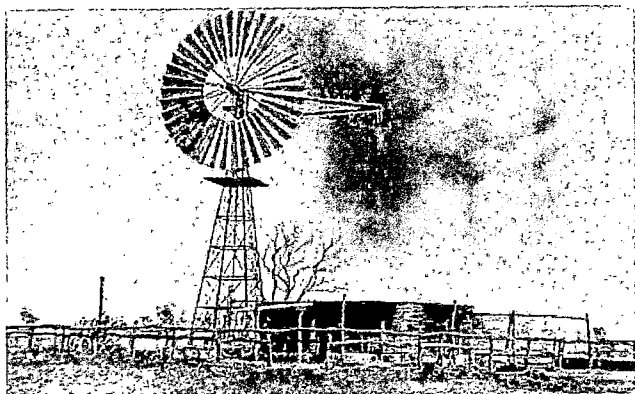
Over the next few years, with increasing hard times, grumbles from the Board of Directors continued regarding the need to cut down expenditure. All were firmly countered by White in his Annual Report to Directors:

I have gone carefully into this matter with Mr Kirkaldy and cannot see any means of reducing the cost of running the station. In fact to be up to date expenditure should be increased and not decreased ...

In 1924 the mustering camps on **LORRAINE** were run only by a head stockman (white), helped by Aboriginal staff. White remarked that *"the cause of the employment of so much black labour is that no white labour was procurable this year, in any case blacks for mustering are preferable to strange whites"*.

However, and despite the problems, in 1924 five mobs of cattle were sent off to *Swifts* meat export company in Townsville, generating a good price of more than £3,000 for each mob, and **PASTORAL INVESTMENTS** was able to pay its first dividend for some years. That year also marked the appointment of Frederick Arthur Brodie (Fred Brodie's son) to the Board. He was to play a major role in the future development of the company.

By 1926 Kirkaldy was in his late sixties and his long working life in the harsh conditions of the north was beginning to take its toll. He was well respected throughout the region and participated to the full in the life of the district, taking his place on the local land boards. But his living conditions were little changed.



**WINDMILL
AT
LORRAINE**

LORRAINE homestead was still a five-roomed house built up on piles with no electricity; the only escape from the heat being afforded by the area under the house. There he struggled at night to keep up with his accounts and reports after long days attending to cattle work, endless repairs needed to the mill machinery, and car maintenance. With no bookkeeping assistance or mechanical maintenance staff, and only a Chinese cook/gardener and aboriginal house girls for housekeeping, his life was fairly simple and isolated. When the roads became impassable through the long humid wet season conditions became even more trying.

The wet season of 1927 was particularly hot and humid. Good falls of rain made the surrounding roads impassable by motor vehicle. On his last trip to Cloncurry Kirkaldy's friends had been worried about his health (he had continuous nosebleeds but refused to see a doctor).

MacGillivray (a friend and hire car driver in Cloncurry) wrote to Frank White with a moving account of Kirkaldy's last weeks in January; he wrote also of his concerns for Kirkaldy's health, particularly after Kirkaldy was "lost" for five days when his car broke down and he wandered in the wrong direction in his struggle to get "home" to *LORRAINE* from Cloncurry.

Kirkaldy's own last writings comment on the difficulty of completing his written records as he laboured night after night on his long overdue returns. Reading these last letters one has a sense of his isolation and frustration and of an impending tragedy.

On the early morning of February the first, he was discovered by Fred Ding – the Chinese cook – slumped in his chair unconscious before his open ledgers and cash boxes. He failed to regain consciousness and died that evening. Due to the impassable nature of the roads and the fact that his white overseer was away, his funeral and burial was carried out by “some men camped on the River who made a good coffin and buried him under a Bauhinia tree within fifty yards of the front steps in the south east corner of the garden.” It was a sad and lonely end to what had been a successful and hardworking life. Next day flags were flown at half-mast in Cloncurry and the local papers were full of generous tributes to “a grand old Gentleman”. Kirkaldy's personality and career are best summed up in a friend's tribute published after his death:

As a friend of the late Mr John Kirkaldy ... I desire to express my sorrow at the loss of a friend of thirty six years standing. There are not many remaining 'links' of that duration remaining in the North. In 1891 we came north, Mr Kirkaldy to the Leichhardt, myself to the Flinders and up to 1920 we occasionally met and shared each other's pleasures.

In that year John was straight in body and in mind, and so remained to the last. John was probably the sole survivor of the pastoral industry remaining in the Gulf, and was respected and loved by all who knew him. John loved the Gulf and the Gulf loved him, and his familiar figure, coupled with his wonderful personality, will never be obliterated from Lorraine or the pathways that lead thereto. In his young days he was a tall, good looking man, and always took considerable interest in local sport and the welfare of his surroundings. His advice was frequently sought and freely given. Vale, honest John, you have delivered your last 'draft' you have mustered your last 'camp' and alone you managed Lorraine for thirty six years. (North Queensland Register, February 1927)

4. THE WHITE CONNECTION

The White brothers – Frank and James – were the elder brothers of a large family that had grown up in the Hunter Valley and continued to hold extensive properties there. They had worked closely in partnership on their Muswellbrook, Armidale, and Guyra properties even before extending their interests north to Goondiwindi and Queensland. From 1912 onwards they held part shares in *Lerida* near Hughendon in Queensland and had taken equal third shares in the enormous *Brunette Downs* station in the Northern Territory. When Fred Brodie was putting together a syndicate to acquire the lease of **LORRAINE** and **TALAWANTA** in North Queensland it was logical that they should be approached. Indeed it was Sidney Kidman who lent Frank White a car to get across from *Brunette Downs* to inspect the area.

FJ WHITE & CHARLEY VYNER WITH BUSH
TURKEY 1922

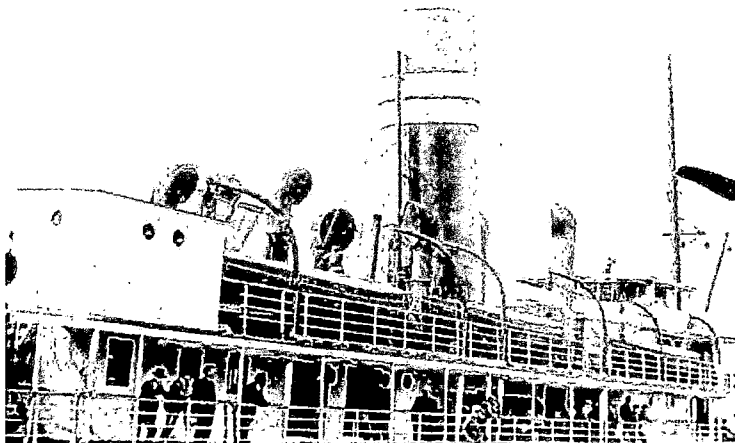
So in 1915 the **LORRAINE AND TALAWANTA PASTORAL COMPANY** was formed. Its subscribers were Sidney Kidman, F. A. Brodie, Frank and James White, J. K. Mackay, and Colin Richards.



Although James White was voted in as Chairman, it was Frank White and Brodie who did the initial inspection and report in 1915, and for the next twelve years it was Frank White who carried out the annual inspection, recommending where the bores were to be sunk, which cattle and horses to buy, negotiating with the abattoirs at Townsville, and recommending which mills and water pumps to acquire.

Frank White's annual reports to the Board give us the details of *LORRAINE'S* development over these early years, and his handwritten diaries document the difficulties overcome, the distances travelled, and the relationships built up with the *LORRAINE* manager and staff. It should be noted that during these years both Frank White and Kirkaldy were in their sixties.

By 1918 Frank White, although a man of extensive experience and indomitable energy, had been diagnosed with Parkinson's Disease. At first this only affected his handwriting (because of a tremor), a problem which he overcame by taking with him on his journeys north first one of his daughters, and later a young protégé, to write up his notes. Later it affected his mobility – a difficulty which he solved by hiring a car and driver from Cloncurry, and later still by using the first Qantas charter services to do away with what had originally been a week long journey from Armidale to *LORRAINE*.



COASTAL STEAMER TO TOWNSVILLE

In the early years the annual winter journey followed a standard pattern:

Armidale to Brisbane - night train

Brisbane to Gladstone - train

Gladstone to Townsville - coastal steamer

Townsville to Cloncurry - train

Cloncurry to *LORRAINE* - hired car

On *LORRAINE & TALAWANTA* - car / buggy / horse

The return journey would usually detour by Hughendon to inspect another of the White properties. His diary always noted time, distances, and means of travel; for example in 1916:

Train (return) 2578 miles

Car (Cloncurry to *LORRAINE* return) 456 miles + 168 miles on *LORRAINE*

Buggy 67 miles

Rode 101 miles

By 1925 White was in his seventies and further immobilised by Parkinson's. It was the first year he was able to charter a plane, and the tally reads:

Train ... 2062 miles

Car ... 1267 miles

Plane ... 957 miles

Of course, mechanical difficulties and road conditions often made the journey to and from **LORRAINE** and Cloncurry long and tedious. This short diary entry for 1918, when he was accompanied by his daughter Elsie, tells the story of their return journey from **LORRAINE** to Cloncurry:

29th Left at 6a.m in Kirkaldy's car made Kamilaroi at 7.30 left again at 8.45 taking Doyle, broke down 10 miles off Coolullah, Grimby overtook us about 1, sent word on to Coolullah – no men at home so Grimby returned at 4 with a buggy, Elsie & I went with him to Coolullah & wired Brodie to send out a car

30th Found MacGillivray had arrived with car at 4.30 (a.m.), after breakfast he & I in his car went on to our car fixed her by 11.30 Kirkaldy & Doyle brought her on to Coolullah – after lunch we all left & made Cloncurry by 6.15



TRAIN TOWNSVILLE TO CLONCURRY

FJ WHITE & CHARLEY VYNER - 1922

The next morning White and Elsie caught the 6.15 a.m. train for Hughendon, reaching *Lerida* by evening, for a five day inspection of that property before the long rail journey back to Armidale.

If not mechanical breakdowns, or cars bogged in sand, it was floods. White's 1921 journey with Elsie was long delayed by floodwaters.

After a week's delay in Cloncurry waiting for the road to Kamilaroi to become passable, they got out by freighting two cars and themselves on a special train to Oona (62 miles distant) from whence they could be driven to Kamilaroi, and on to *LORRAINE* the next day.

Both white and Aboriginal stockmen were employed on *LORRAINE* during these years, as on most Gulf stations. There was an Aboriginal camp on *LORRAINE* where the families of the Aboriginal stockmen lived. Each year White would also inspect the camp (taking sweets for the children) to report on their numbers and conditions.

The annual reports reveal that White had apparently unfettered reign over this period, directing policy, buying in stock, and investing in machinery. It was he who chose the sites for the first three bores; a few years later he insisted on a fourth and fifth bore being sunk. Each year he carefully inspected wells and mill machinery and ordered new parts from selected manufacturers:

Number 1 is out of commission owing to the 250 feet of number 5 casing having, through an accident, slipped to the bottom of the bore. As the expense of getting a boring plant out to recover this casing, would be very heavy, and it may have telescoped or been otherwise damaged in its fall, I ordered from Williams (in Rockhampton) a new set of casing, 350 feet, in place of the 250 feet lost, which with accessories cost £224. My reason for getting the extra hundred feet in length was, that with the 250 feet and a four and a half pump, the mill with a good wind pumped the bore out; the extra hundred feet in depth, and reducing the pump to a four inch, should insure a more permanent supply of water.

(F. J. W. Report to Directors, 1920)

There was other plant attracting his attention:

Mr Kirkaldy has a makeshift fire plough, far too light ... I am in favour of getting a better tool for this work, not only for fire breaks but to make a trafficable road ... the best implement I have seen for this purpose is at Lerida where they have an immense amount of fire ploughing to do and have tested most makes. While at Rockhampton I interviewed Sidney Williams, who supply the plough I refer to at £152 10 shillings, the main trouble will be to get strength to pull it, as it takes about 26 horses to do heavy work [!] (F. J. W. Report to Directors, 1920)

White would instruct Kirkaldy to buy in more horses or bulls, often before the decision went to the board: for example in the 1919 report “100 more herd bulls” were authorised and Kirkaldy was instructed to buy another 30 horses at the Cloncurry sale. During the year Kirkaldy often wrote direct to White, as did Macnamara, the head stockman on *TALAWANTA*. Take, for example, this frank exchange (October 1925):

Dear Sir,

I am surprised to hear that you think I have plenty horses I have only 140 working horses on the place that may seem a lot but it is not quite two teams when you work one team for five weeks they are not fit to do any more work that year I mean you are not doing justice to your horses I send away most of the bullocks & have to do a lot of riding to get them of course (sic) I have a bullock paddock but it is badly in need of repair in fact it wants seven miles of new fence in one place it is nothing to get the same bullocks on three or four different camps therefor you are giving your horses a lot of extra work. This year my men were all Abos & they are very very hard on horses I do not think one Stallion is enough for two places.

But White was not always free of criticism from other Board members. For example Sidney Kidman (October 1, 1925) writes:

I have received Mr White's Report, I think it is time Lorraine stopped building those wooden yards and used wire Broncho Yards. We have been bronchoing our cattle for the last twenty five years and it has saved us hundreds of pounds. You can build a wire yard for forty pounds or even less, and you don't have to drive your cattle about and are able to get the work done in half the time. I would advise you to write Mr White and tell him to do away with these old fashioned wooden yards

After the bad years of 1922 and 1923 White argued strongly against Board members' grumbles about the need to reduce expenditure:

Reduction of expenses: I have carefully gone into this matter with Mr Kirkaldy and we cannot see where it is possible to reduce expenditure advantageous to the working of the company. All improvements have ceased. A certain sum must be spent in maintenance unless the Company is willing to lose the benefit of the money already expended by allowing improvements to go to rack. As far as labour is concerned, we cannot see how the station can be run with less. (F. J. W. Report to Directors, 1923)

In 1921 the **PASTORAL INVESTMENTS COMPANY** had been registered with a Brisbane office – a change made to avoid paying multiple Probate taxes (N.S.W. as well as Queensland and

Federal). It made no difference to the management of **LORRAINE**, as the Directors remained the same as for the **LORRAINE AND TALAWANTA PASTORAL COMPANY**. In 1924 Grose (the executor of F. A. Brodie's estate) resigned, and his place was taken by F. A. Brodie (the younger). J.C. White, the founding Chairman, died in 1926 and his place on the Board was filled by Walter Kidman.



NEW STOCKYARDS – LORRAINE 1922

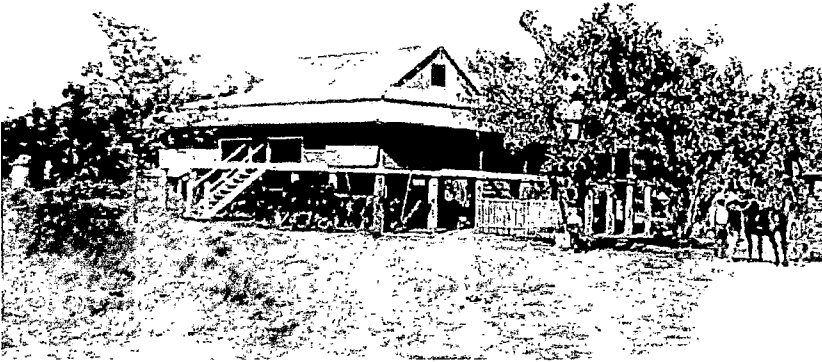
In 1927 F. J. White managed his inspection visit to **LORRAINE** almost solely by Qantas charter plane. It was done in short hops: Armidale – Moree – Brewarrina – Charleville – Longreach – *Lerida* – Cloncurry – **LORRAINE**. On **LORRAINE** the distances were covered mostly by car. It was to be F. J. White's last inspection visit.

Later that year he resigned as Chairman, though remaining a Director of the Company, and regretted that ill health would preclude his making further inspection visits.

Until his death in 1934 he continued, through correspondence and a close inspection of the **LORRAINE** records, to maintain his interest in the company he had helped to found. His large parcel of company shares are still held by his various descendants.

In accepting F. J. White's resignation as Chairman the Company Secretary wrote:

Your retirement from active work seems a fitting time to review the operations of the Company from its start ... the results in the face of bad cattle markets for some years past, are to my mind very satisfactory, and are in a large measure due to the constant activity and advice of the late Hon. Jas. White and yourself
(A.B. Wilkinson to F. J. White, 10.4.1928)



LORRAINE IN 1922

It is worthwhile summarising those first twelve years. The nominal capital of the company at its inception in 1915 was 120,000 shares @ 120,000 pounds; and certainly “a considerable amount of money,” as White expressed it, was expended in the first five years. For example, in 1917 the annual report lists the following capital expenditure:

Fencing	£730
Buildings	£77
Plant	£1406
Artesian bores, wells	£4500

But the hefty profits for that year (£18,291) still allowed the company to pay out a 10% dividend. In fact, for the years 1916 to 1921 inclusive, £33,000 were distributed by way of dividends. And in 1921 12,000 bonus shares were distributed out of reserved

profits. The only years when no dividends could be paid were 1922, 1923, and 1924, due to the general recession in the cattle industry in north Queensland. The number of cattle carried on *LORRAINE* and *TALAWANTA* during the entire period 1915-1927 varied from 27000 to 30000, with 42,842 beasts sold over that time.

The death of Kirkaldy as manager and the retirement of F. J. White as company chairman in 1927 marked the end of an era. Perhaps it also marked the end of easy profits for the north Queensland cattle industry in general, and for *LORRAINE* in particular.

5. PICKING UP THE PIECES

It was Fred Brodie who went to **LORRAINE** “to pick up the pieces” after the sudden death of John Kirkaldy. He found the station ledger records to be in a deplorable state and reported of Kirkaldy:

I regret to advise that he had apparently been a sick man for some months, and the books had only been partially posted for a long time ... One does not like to in any way disparage the memory of the late John Kirkaldy, but we must face the facts and admit that for some considerable time he has not been in a fit physical condition to fully manage the property ... It is of paramount importance therefore that an active and energetic manager be appointed, capable of fully analysing the position ... Personally I cannot think of anyone more suited than Mr Burnett, and I recommend that he be appointed. I also recommend that the Board consider appointing a bookkeeper in order to allow the manager to give his full time to outside work.

Within the month E. G. Burnett was appointed manager and installed at **LORRAINE** homestead. He was an experienced Gulf Country cattleman and had been running the neighbouring property to **LORRAINE** – his own *Cowan Downs*. A bookkeeper, Thompson, was quickly appointed. As Burnett was married with a large family, more accommodation had to be provided at

LORRAINE homestead, and by July, when White made his usual inspection visit, he reported that:

I found the Burnett family very comfortably settled in the old house. The family consists of 3 grown up daughters, and 2 boys and a girl from about 2 years to 5 years. Burnett had had all the floor space under the building set with cement. This means a most sensible addition to the house, and is used for a dining room and work room, and can without much expense be divided into smaller rooms. I instructed Mr Burnett to get sufficient wire gauze to enclose the portion of the cemented space ... As far as I could gather from my few days intercourse with Mr Burnett, he is just the man we want. This I find to be the opinion of any residents I have addressed on the subject.

In his first year on **LORRAINE** Burnett brought things up to date and carried through a number of reforms. Nuss, the head stockman on **TALAWANTA**, was replaced: "He is lacking in the energy that the man in his position should possess. Things have been much neglected over there." Fencing was extended, troublesome bore mill machinery improved, and building maintenance attended to. Burnett suggested establishing a small bull breeding herd - which was agreed to. He also drew attention to dangerous overstocking on **LORRAINE-TALAWANTA** due to incomplete mustering. By the time Brodie submitted his September 1928 report, he could enthusiastically tell the Board:

In Mr Burnett the Company has secured a most diligent and efficient Manager, who understands the need for working the Stations as economically as is consistent with efficiency. I fully discussed the question of administration costs with him and I could see that he has given the matter very careful thought and can be relied upon not to waste money unnecessarily. He is, however, not a man who will effect false economies by cutting down working expenses below the margin at which the Station can be properly run.

He has made a considerable reduction in the number of hands previously employed on the Station, but he is getting better results with the smaller staff owing to his diligence in seeing that the work which they have to do is properly carried out. Generally speaking I found everything at the Station is in a most satisfactory state.

As for **LORRAINE** homestead:



The buildings surrounding the Homestead are kept in first class order.

LORRAINE IN 1927

The house itself, which stands on high blocks, has been greatly improved since I was last on the property, by enclosing the space underneath with fly-proof gauze, and concreting the floor. As you are no doubt aware when Mr Burnett took over, there were not many comforts for women-folk, and in order to be as economical as possible, he has apart from the wire gauzing, effected very few improvements. He would like permission to floor two of the upstairs rooms with linoleum.

A new acetylene gas plant provided lighting for the homestead. The 1929 insurance payments indicate the type and number of buildings on **LORRAINE** at this time

Manager's house	£800
Store	£250
Kitchen	£100
Stockmen's quarters	£100
Two huts	£100
Blacksmith's shop	£75



LORRAINE IIN 1934

The Australian Inland Mission installed powerful wireless sets at the station which improved communications for **LORRAINE**, and A. I. M.'s aerial ambulance now used an airstrip on the property to fly out accident victims.

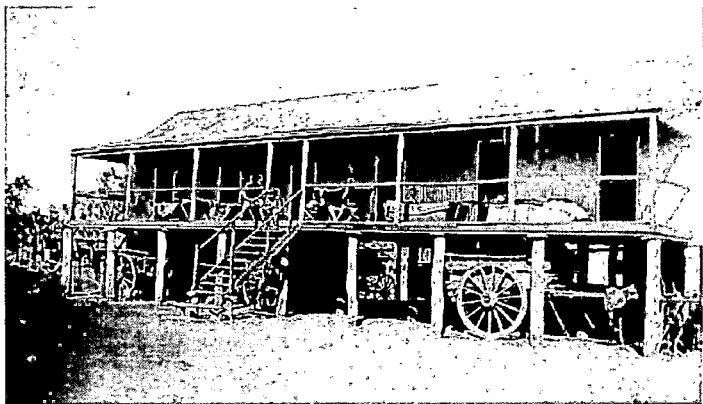
Up to 1930 there had been a succession of good seasons; profits were up (cattle sales brought in £28,242 that year) and the Company was able to pay 6% annual dividends. The energetic management of Burnett and careful supervision by Brodie was standing the property in good stead. But in succeeding years conditions became more difficult. By November 1931 drought conditions were bad and the Leichhardt River at the homestead was almost dry; Burnett reported that it was still running, but putrid with dead carcasses, so that household water had to be filtered. The homestead well was practically dry and had to be deepened. Many of the stock were dying. The following year proved no better.

In January the stud cattle had to be turned out – the Leichhardt River was no longer running. By April, the station was nearly out of feed; they were forced to sell 2000 breeders, and the men's wages were further reduced. Several thousand head of store cattle were sent off to *Swifts* freezing works in Townsville but their condition, and consequently the prices, were very poor. More bullocks were sent off for agistment: 1,244 trucked to Dajarra, 1,215 to Morvellan (N.S.W.), some railed through Butrumore, others to Barcaldine. The stud cattle had to be let out, but the stud bull was too weak to be moved and later died after hand feeding. In Brodie's opinion conditions were worse than the 1926 drought, and so the worst since the early 1900's.

The men's wages (totalling £4,345 in 1930) were reduced, some to £2/10/- per week But depression conditions were bad.

Throughout Queensland: cattle duffing was rife; the stolen cattle were used to feed the men in the strikers' camps, and there were many unemployed who were on the roads. There were sometimes more than 100 men camped on the river below **LORRAINE** homestead. Brodie took a shrewd view of attempts to reduce ration costs:

Lorraine suffers to a certain extent from the position of the Homestead. It is right on the main road, just a full day's run by Car from Cloncurry, and in consequence there are always a fair number of callers.



WORKERS QUARTERS LORRAINE 1948

In addition there are a number of travellers on the Leichhardt road looking for work, most of whom require beef, and sometimes a small amount of rations. It is the custom of the Station to supply beef when asked, and in necessitous cases, to give enough rations to take a traveller on to the next port of call, and I consider it advisable to follow this custom as there is little doubt that a refusal to supply beef often results in illegal killing on the Run, and in addition a disgruntled traveller will get his own back by lighting fires, leaving gates open and so on.

The other change brought to the cattle industry in the 1930s involved the poor returns offered by the Townsville meat works. Brodie's 1932 report to the Board commented:

It seems apparent that we can no longer look forward to making satisfactory disposals of stock to the Townsville Meat Works, unless, as a result of the Ottawa Conference, the Overseas Market improves to an extent to which there is no present indication. Swifts have forced out competition and the Townsville market is controlled by them ... the season is normally a very

short one, overhead costs are high, the plant is probably not up-to-date, and in consequence of these and other factors cattle have to be sold at a price determined by Swifts, and if this season's prices are any guide to the future, then the outlook at Townsville is hopeless..

There are two avenues left -

- (a) cattle can be railed from Kajabbi to the southern markets, or*
- (b) in normal seasons they can be travelled by road.*

And indeed the remainder of the decade saw a greater proportion of **LORRAINE** cattle moved for sale onto the southern markets rather than taken to Townsville.



MUSTERING CAMP LORRAINE 1948

To sum up: By 1935, despite the vagaries of drought, varying demand in the beef industry, and other problems, and twenty years after the inception of the **LORRAINE AND TALAWANTA PASTORAL COMPANY** and its 1921 subsidiary **PASTORAL INVESTMENTS, LORRAINE** Station continued as a thriving business, returning a steady profit to its investors. The Directors now consisted of two founders, Sidney Kidman and J. K. Mackay, as well as F. A. Brodie (junior), Walter Kidman, A. B. Wilkinson, and L. P. Dutton. Its long serving Secretary, A. B. Wilkinson, was about to be replaced by his son, W. G. Wilkinson. F. A. Brodie (junior) was its new Chairman. For many years to come he would continue to supervise the activities and direct the policies of the company.

6. THE ABORIGINAL CONTRIBUTION

No early history of *LORRAINE* would be complete without considering the part played by its Aboriginal workers. As on most north Queensland properties in the early years, Aboriginal labour was an integral part of the labour force at *LORRAINE*.

The North Queensland cattle industry was not, in reality, economically viable in the period up to 1915. In order to minimise labour costs and to fill the jobs that white workers were reluctant to take on, local Aboriginals provided much of the labour – particularly for stock work, at which they soon proved themselves adept.

In the early part of the late nineteenth century jobs for Aboriginals on the first leasehold stations suited all sides. From the Aboriginal point of view, it enabled them to live with their families on traditional lands and to have access to clothing, tobacco, and rations; but because the work was seasonal, they could still travel and attend ceremonies. The white managers, on the other hand, had a dependable supply of “boys” to work the cattle; in return they only had to supply minimal living conditions for Aboriginal women and children – and at little cost other than for basic rations. For its part, the Government was pleased to supply cheap labour to help build up an increasingly important

beef industry, while the actual costs of food, clothing, and shelter for the indigenous population was borne not by the Government but by the cattle stations.

In 1897 the Government enacted the *Aboriginal Protection Act* to control and direct the Aboriginal labour force. It aimed to oversee payments and to introduce written agreements for employees.

Aboriginal workers were to receive about one third of white wages, plus food and clothing. But as wages seemed to disappear into station stores, the Government-appointed Protectors instituted paternalistic financial arrangements for Aboriginal workers: they "banked" two thirds of the adult wage and held these moneys in a provident fund against an individual's need in times of sickness or unemployment.

How this worked on *LORRAINE* can be seen in reports from Kirkaldy and Burnett and in their correspondence with the Protectors. Both men were fairly benevolent managers, had long experience with the system, and over the early years about half their labour force was aboriginal.

As early as January 1899 Kirkaldy was writing to the Police Protectorate in Burketown for permission to employ Aborigines who were already working on *LORRAINE*, but without formal agreements. As Kirkaldy argued, “their staying with me points I think to the fact that they are willing to be employed.” Throughout the succeeding years there are records in the *LORRAINE* letter books of the number of Aborigines employed: a monthly report had to be sent to the Protector, together with a proportion of their wages. In 1912 Kirkaldy wrote to the Protector of Aborigines in Burketown regarding the number of women listed:

... the gins are not worth their wages ... we could do without them but we want the boys and they want the girls whom we feed, as stated, as well as their innumerable offspring and they get rations from the kitchen when the cook's back is turned for their sisters.

In April 1914 Kirkaldy wrote to the Bank's Pastoral Supervisor in Sydney:

The Protector of Aborigines has demanded half a crown of the



boys' wages to be placed to their credit in his hands instead of a shilling a week as formerly.

FJ WHITE WITH ABORIGINAL WOMEN/CHILDREN AT LORRAINE CAMP

I have considered it necessary to raise their wages to 12/6 per week in consequence as 10/- per week at their disposal is required to settle their store accounts for clothes, tobacco etc. and leave them sufficient money to make them satisfied and work well. The Protector says they can get the money at their credit if they are out of work, and no doubt they sometimes get a little of it, but I think the Mission Stations are supported by it ... [there was some evidence to back up this supposition]

Kirkaldy's letters to the Protector over the years frequently expressed his frustration and discontent with the overly petty

administration of the Aboriginal Protection Act. The employer's point of view is summed up in Brodie's evidence before the Beef Cattle Industry Commission in 1928:

... the conditions under which blacks must be employed are in many respects onerous ... they must be paid wages regarding age and not usefulness ... and paid full rates through the wet season to be kept signed on.



**ABORIGINAL
FAMILIES**

Again in 1928

Burnett complains to
the Cloncurry Protector:

... when there is no employment for any of the Aboriginal stockmen it is not possible for these men to obtain supplies from other sources but the station. They cannot obtain credit elsewhere. While they have funds in the Bank it is not reasonable to expect the station to provide them with rations gratuitously. The appropriation of 76% of their earnings by the protectorate was ostensibly for their own maintenance when unemployed.

A year later, in another letter to the Cloncurry Protector, Burnett eloquently expressed his feelings about the injustice of the government sequestration of Aboriginal wages:

They [aboriginal workers] do not understand this practical sequestration of their wages by the State. They are not arithmeticians, and do not know much about the debits and credits in their accounts. They do know however, that they have worked regularly for a number of years and that the greater part of their wages has been lodged to their credit in a mysterious banking account somewhere. You have displayed a more generous disposition towards the blacks than some of your predecessors at Cloncurry – and presumably you may be subject to certain limitations yourself.



HOUSE GIRL 1922

I am prepared to admit that the legal aspect of the withholding of this money is no concern of yours, and it is useless to discuss it. For all that I consider that the persons who have the most reason

to be dissatisfied with the present conditions of service are the blacks themselves.

In the early period, when harsh conditions made white labour a scarce commodity, Aboriginal stockmen were crucial in supplying cheap and ready labour to the struggling North Queensland beef cattle industry. But there appears to have been a gradual change over the years. As profits built up into the early 1920s, more money was invested in station development, markets were more readily available, and the Aboriginal contribution became less critical to the viability of the industry. By the 1930s over-administration by the Government under the Aboriginal Protection Act led to grave injustices for people who had been loyal and hard-working employees.

The sad case of Gilbert Patterson, an Aboriginal stockman who had grown up and worked for many years on *LORRAINE*, provides an example. Patterson was the son of a white stockman and an Aboriginal woman and had grown up around the station stock camp, working there from an early age and accepted as a white stockman - with a white stockman's wage. By September 1929 he was married to an aboriginal woman named Alice who worked at the homestead and had four growing sons. Burnett's correspondence with the Cloncurry Protector continues his story:

Gilbert Patterson a half caste was never registered [as aboriginal] as he has associated and worked with white men since infancy ... in intelligence and industry he is certainly superior to the average half caste; he knows the value of money and signs his own name – he wants to apply for Exemption papers which I have no hesitation in recommending (September 1929)

In October 1929 the Cloncurry Protector referred the matter of Gilbert Patterson's Exemption to the Chief Protector in Brisbane. Again Burnett supplied a reference:

Patterson has associated with and worked with white men since his infancy and to all intents and purposes has lived on an equality with them as far as station life is concerned. He has always received the full wage of station hands as fixed by the various awards (£2/9/-) and has contributed to the Unemployed Workers Insurance in conformity with the Act respecting it. When working here and elsewhere his status has never been called into question by his employers and he does not appear to have realised the necessity of formal Exemption ... I can assure you that he is intelligent and industrious and is certainly above the average half-caste in general ability and attention to duty.

However the Chief Protector rejected Patterson's appeal. Burnett's subsequent report in June 1930 to the Aboriginal Protector, Cloncurry, read:

Alice Patterson (wife of Gilbert) is to get 12/- per week, clothing and found. Gilbert has been classified aboriginal by the Chief Protector – so she must be too. Now Gilbert gets only 30/- and Alice 10/- per week. [the remainder of their wages for the previous three months had been sent in to the Protector]

Burnett wrote again to the Protector in August 1930: "Gilbert Patterson and also Alice ceased work 16 August - £10.5.0 sent on [to the Protector] for wages". In January 1931 Burnett wrote: "Gilbert and Alice Patterson and family arrived here without food or money" (Burnett gave them food but was instructed by the Protector to send the Pattersons straight to him). Burnett reported to the Protector again in April 1931: "Gilbert Patterson started work April 1, his wages to be paid to him here, remember the family he provides for." In December 1933 Burnett reported to the Protector yet again:

When Gilbert Patterson got into trouble early this year I was in Cloncurry the day he was tried. The Protector asked me to give him work if he got out under the First Offender's Act. Lawman Johnson defended him with me guaranteeing his 5/5/- fee. I

agreed if I was allowed to engage him as a freelance (i.e. not as an Aboriginal) so he could pay off the fee. Police agreed so Patterson worked here at award rates during the mustering season. Since, he is out of work with a store debt of £10. Previously he had always worked freelance until forced to sign on [as an Aboriginal] by the Chief Protector. He is a good cattle man but under present conditions has had a hard row to hoe.

The last official record in this tragic story reveals that in October 1934 the Protector of Aborigines, Cloncurry, sent Gilbert Patterson to Palm Island.



CHINESE GARDENER &
FAMILY – LORRAINE
1922

7. EPILOGUE: *LORRAINE* 1933-2003

The **PASTORAL INVESTMENTS COMPANY** – like all long continuing businesses - has been subject to high and low periods and various changes of policy over the eighty years of its existence. But throughout that period, the continuing successful development of *LORRAINE* station has been ensured by the continuity of its Board management and by the presence of three long serving company secretaries.

With the death of F. J. White in 1934 the maintenance of carefully archived *LORRAINE* records came to an end also, and there is little detail concerning work on the station from the mid-1930s until company accounts resumed in the 1960s. During this period E. G. Burnett retired; he was succeeded as manager briefly by Lou Markey, and then by George Schultz, who died in 1958, to be succeeded by W. D. Walker. Certainly there were profits enough for a major rebuilding of the *LORRAINE* homestead in the early fifties, and fortunately annual inspections and policy direction were ably continued by F. A. Brodie right up to his death in 1963. He was assisted on the Board by Walter Kidman, whose father, Sir Sidney Kidman, had died in 1935. F. J. White's nephew James White took a seat on the Board after his uncle's death; he was later succeeded by Alan White, and then after Alan White's death in 1960 by Bruce White. L. P. Dutton continued to serve on the Board until 1958, a term of nearly thirty years. H. G.

Wilkinson took over from his father as Secretary in the late 1920s; he served in that capacity for thirty years, and died in 1960. A. B. Wilkinson went on to serve as a member of the Board until his death in 1957.



**HOMESTEAD
1970**

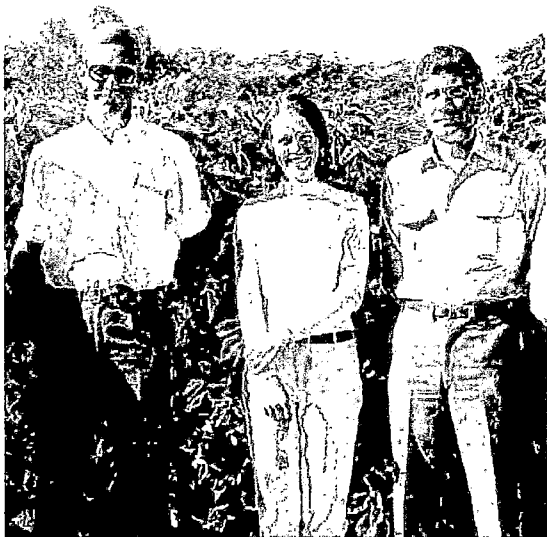


TED & MARGARET FLAMSTEED 1995

The long service of the Company's Board members clearly had many positive aspects. But it also had a negative side: a process of natural attrition among the directors due to age, and on the death of F. A. Brodie in 1963 the Company was faced with a crisis. It had only two

remaining directors - the aging Walter Kidman and the recently appointed Bruce White – aided by a relatively new Company Secretary, Stan Brogan. *LORRAINE* came very close to being sold, but it was decided to undertake an attempt at restructuring first.

To this end, the Board decided in 1964 to invite Arthur Angliss to become a director. Angliss was a Victorian businessman who had long been involved in the beef industry; indeed at one time he had partnered Kidman in the ownership of *Augustus Downs*. Angliss accepted the invitation and was voted into the Chair. A sale was still envisaged, but Angliss proposed that there should first be a radical restructuring to bring the property up to date.



IAN BOWMAN WITH TED & MARGARET
FLAMSTEED

In April 1964 it was resolved that every available head of cattle be sold; that the manager W. D. Walker retire forthwith, and that J. V. Sivyer be appointed in his place. The bookkeeper was also replaced - necessarily so, as he had been gaoled for defalcation. That year £20,000 was to be spent on repairs and improvements. In October the Directors' fees and the Manager's salary were increased, as were the dividends paid to shareholders (30% interim + 50% final). And in November the Directors decided to increase the Board numbers to five by appointing I. H. (Mick)

Bowman (Brodie's nephew) and B. B. (Benny) White (Bruce White's son). In March 1965 an extraordinary meeting of shareholders was held, at which Angliss was elected Chairman and new Articles of Association were adopted. But the Directors agreed to delay a decision on the future of the company itself until Mick Bowman and B. B. White could visit *LORRAINE* in July. At the October meeting a decision on the company's future was undertaken, in that an offer was made to the Lands Department concerning the leasehold, and the Chairman's improvement program (to develop 1,270 square miles at £131,446) was accepted. Capital expenditure of £23,950 and improvements and repairs of £5,080 were approved. In addition, an interim dividend of 40% and final dividend of 60% were agreed to. In December 1966 a new lease of 945 square miles with a development program of £425,000 over seven years was agreed to. In 1968 the Board made a vital decision: to reduce the capital of the company (from £144,000 to £28,000), and to invest the excess bank funds in long term debentures and other equity. At the June 1969 meeting the Chairman reported that he was replacing Sivyver with E. J. Flamstead as Manager.

The Board confirmed the appointment and also the investment of £200,000 in company shares: the Secretary was instructed to carry out investment in both short and long term securities with the

approval of the Chairman. In 1972 this investment policy was further boosted by the decision to sell all Preference shares and invest the cash realized in industrial equities (£500,000), in addition to undertaking repairs and expenditure of £38,650. In 1973 the long held lease of *TALAWANTA* was given up.

In addition to the major financial restructuring overseen by Angliss, much change and development took place at an operational level on *LORRAINE* under the managership of Ted Flamstead. A plane had been bought in 1970 to cover all parts of the vast property. The shorthorn stud was crossed with droughtmaster cattle. Better housing was built for married stockmen. By 1979 road trains were taking over from the drovers.



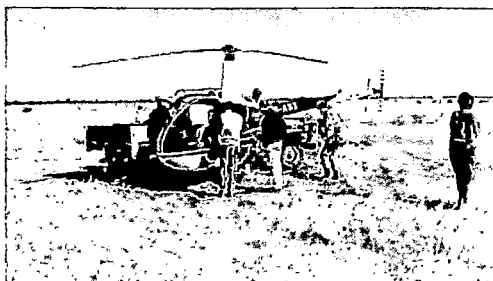
LORRAINE ROAD TRAIN – LATE 1980'S

By March 1975 the condition of the cattle industry was said to be “the worst ever suffered by the industry in Australia”. But although the company made a trading loss that year, thanks to its share investments it was able to continue to pay shareholder dividends.

In December 1976, after twelve years as Managing Director, Arthur Angliss retired from the **PASTORAL INVESTMENTS COMPANY**. He was succeeded by Mick Bowman.

Under Bowman’s leadership, Ted Flamstead continued with a program of change and development. Importantly, the stud cattle were changed to Brahman, which gradually obviated the need for dipping. In 1981 a school was opened on **LORRAINE**, staffed by the Queensland Education Department. Major renovations to the homestead and garden, with air conditioning, electricity (it was connected to the north Queensland electricity grid in 1987), and better married housing made the **LORRAINE** settlement more comfortable for families.

Following a trial of contract mustering by helicopter, a helicopter was purchased for the property in 1991.



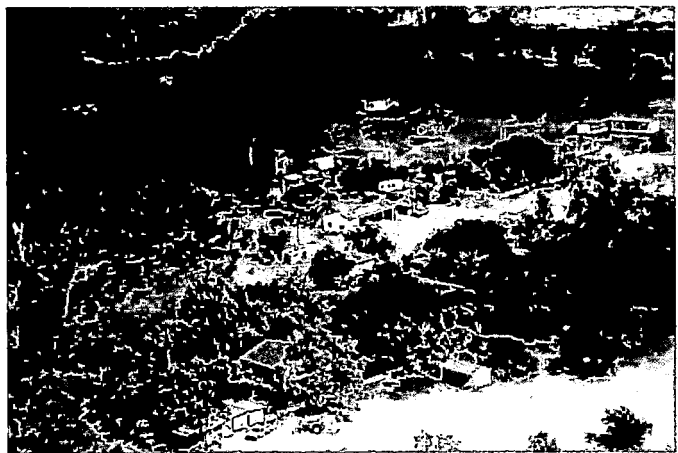
LORRAINE HELICOPTER WITH LADY

PILOT

On the death of Director J. K. Ayers in 1981, John Ayers was appointed to the Board. In 1984, after twenty years service on the Board, Mick Bowman died; he was succeeded by Wendy Bowman. Ted Flamstead was also elected as a director.

Benny White now took over the chairmanship of the company – a position that he ably held through the following twenty years. During this period of time, the company continued its policy of further improvements to the property and progressively increased the annual dividend payments to shareholders. The company continued with its policy of augmenting funds when necessary from the profits of its share portfolio, and further equity investments were made whenever possible.(e.g. up to £250,000 in 1991).

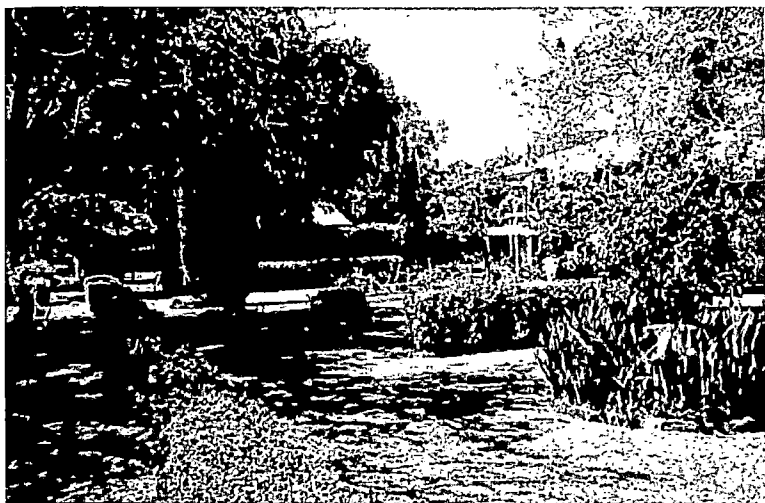
1990 saw the successful beginning of live cattle exports to Indonesia using Jeff Daniels as agent.



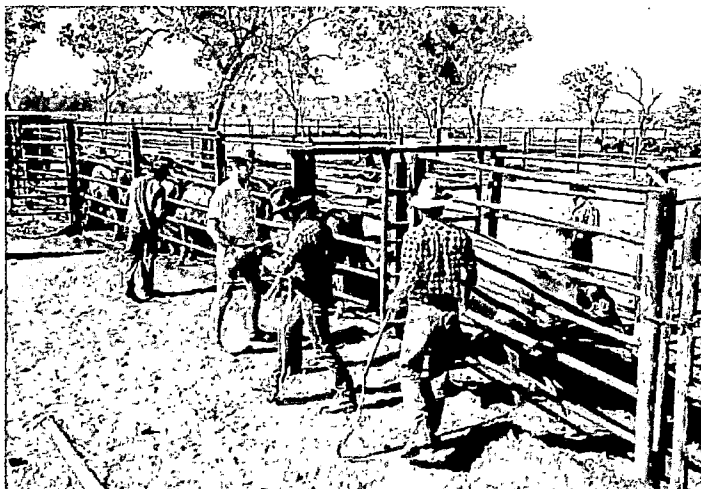
HOMESTEAD COMPLEX 1995

In 1995 Ted Flamstead retired after twenty-five years of management on *LORRAINE*, having overseen enormous changes during that period. The Board, still supported by its long serving secretary Stan Brogan, appointed Peter Macauley as Manager. A number of changes were made, including the sale of the helicopter and purchase of new cattle loaders, with more money expended on yards, fencing, and water. The outstation Coolibah camp was closed, as was the school.

Most important of all, however, was the launching of a pilot irrigation scheme to grow sorghum, to be converted into silage. The pilot scheme proved a success, and in 2000 a giant irrigated feedlot producing both sorghum and corn for the Brahman cattle awaiting export, came into operation. It was a change which was to bring *LORRAINE* into the 21st Century.



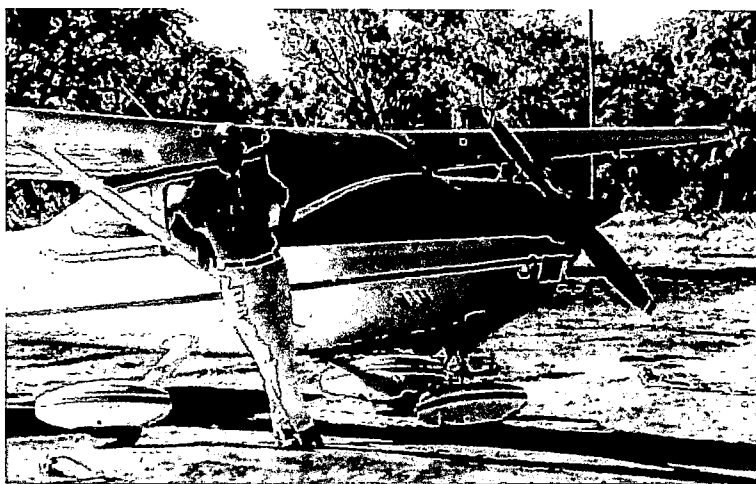
HOMESTEAD GARDENS 1995



TED IN CATTLE YARDS 1994



LORRAINE HOMESTEAD 1995



TED FLAMSTEED & CESSNA
PLANE 1995

8. SOURCES

An early history of **LORRAINE** station was made possible through the records kept by my grandfather – F.J. White of *Saumarez*, Armidale. He was one of the founding subscribers to the **LORRAINE** and **TALAWANTA** Pastoral Company (1915) which in 1921 changed its registration to Queensland as the Pastoral Investments Company. From 1915 to 1927 he kept a handwritten record of his annual inspection visits to **LORRAINE**. In addition he retained a file of all his reports to Directors together with company financial statements and correspondence with the company secretary. This collection of records ceased on his death in 1934, but remained at *Saumarez* homestead and are now part of the F.J.White, Saumarez papers in the New England University Archives, Armidale

The F.J.White photos of **LORRAINE** were taken with a Box Brownie camera in 1922 during an inspection visit to **LORRAINE** and the originals are held in a photo album at *Saumarez* homestead, National Trust, Armidale.

A major source were the **LORRAINE** station ledger books containing all the painstakingly hand written records and returns sent by manager Kirkaldy first to the Pastoral Supervisor at the Bank and later to the secretary of the Pastoral Investments Company. These covered the period 1898 to 1927. Some reports

and correspondence also exist for the Burnett managerial period. All these station ledger books are held in the James Cook University Archives, Townsville.

With assistance from the Pastoral Investments Company I travelled to Queensland to view these ledger books and also searched the land records in the Queensland Archives and the newspaper files in the Brisbane Oxley Library.

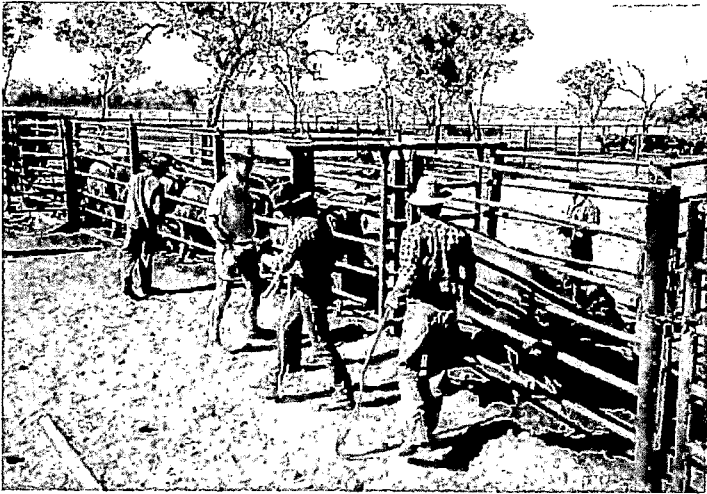
I am indebted to help from Dawn May of James Cook University on the part played by aboriginals in the Queensland cattle industry. Dawn May *Aboriginal Labour and the Cattle Industry* Cambridge Univ.Press1994

Unfortunately there is an almost complete break in Lorraine station records from the death of F.J.White (1934) until 1961 when the Pastoral Investment Company annual reports and financial statements are available.

The impetus for this history comes from Stan Brogan – the long serving Secretary of the Pastoral Investments Company. He has encouraged and assisted and patiently waited throughout the regrettably long production time of this paper.

Secondly, I must thank retired manager Ted Flamstead who has given generously of his time in interviews and photographs from his collection.

Thirdly, Wendy Bowman has also assisted with her interest, interview time and photographs.



LORRAINE STATION

AN EARLY HISTORY

The Directors of Pastoral Investments Ltd and Lorraine Pastoral Co Pty Ltd offer their sincere thanks to Anne Philp for her professionalism, energy and dedication in writing this early history of the Lorraine property.