INTRODUCTION

This Conservation Plan was commissioned by the Rockhampton City Council to control conservation work to Archer Park Railway Station at Rockhampton. This work and the Conservation Plan is funded from the One Nation Heritage Properties Restoration Program.

This document contains a history of the station, a statement of significance to highlight that about the station that is important, a condition report, and conservation policies to guide future actions. Separate documents are being prepared for conservation work to the station

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

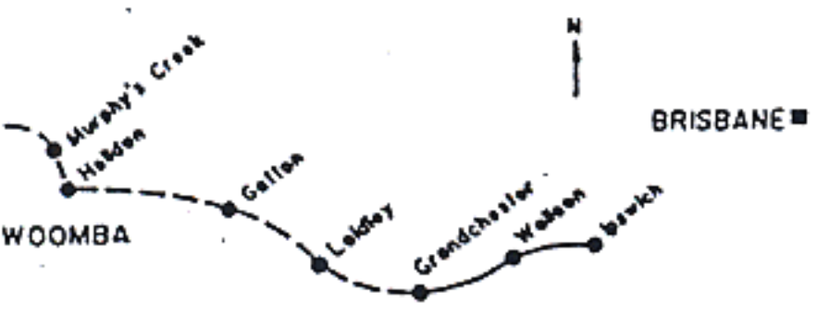
This report was written by Michael Kennedy. Some of the history was based on (or extracted), from a report written by John Kerr on Archer Park Railway Station, prepared for Robert Riddel Architect. John Kerr in addition undertook the Archival Research which he compiled into a separate document

The following people were of great assistance to the study. Officers of the Department of Environment and Heritage, particularly Marcus Richardson who was responsible for overseeing the project. Officers from the Rockhampton City Council especially Russell Peate. Members of the Capricorn Steam Train Historical Society particularly Dennis Sheehan. Other people included Clive Gunton from the Architectural Branch of Queensland Rail, Lorna McDonnald, The Genealogical Society of Queensland, The John Oxley Library, and the University of Central Queensland

Cover photo Richard Stringer 1969

THE BIRTH OF THE QUEENSLAND RAILWAY

The Queensland Parliament passed the Railway Act in 1863 which enabled the construction of the first railway in Queensland. It ran from Ipswich to Granchester some 34 kilometres to the west, and opened in mid 1865 less than six years after Queensland became a separate colony.



Adapted from Kerr, J., Triumph of the Narrow Gauge,

The proposal to build the railway was controversial, and subject to lengthy debate in Parliament. Included in the debate was the decision on economic and engineering grounds to construct the line in the comparatively light and narrow '3ft 6inch' gauge to facilitate the crossing of the Great Dividing Range. This was in contrast to the much wider 'standard gauge' used in the other Australian Colonies, and proved to be a hallmark of Queensland Railways.

The first railways in Victoria and South Australia linked their capital cities with their ports. The first railway in New South Wales linked Sydney and Parramatta, both significant cities. Queensland's first railway, longer than all of these, linked only a shallow river port with a minor village. Much of the freight continued to go by road. The railway to Grandchester only made sense because it was to be part of a railway to the Darling Downs and, until it reached there, it was of little economic value.*

*See Kerr, J., Triumph of the Narrow Gauge, p 3-12

ROCKHAMPTON'S OWN RAILWAY

The residents of Central Queensland reacted angrily to the 1863 Railway Bill which promised an expensive railway for southern Queensland. They wanted their own railway which they saw as a means of accelerating development westward. Political reality determined the result. After the Railway Bill was passed by only the speaker's casting vote, the Government had to bow to the demand that the north must share in the fruits of the Railway Act, since it had to help shoulder the debt.*

*ibid., p23

Providing a railway to the Darling Downs was pioneering the use of rail transport in areas of sparse population, but a railway west of Rockhampton took the idea to absurdity. It was like a railway following the explorers. The Archer Brothers had discovered the Fitzroy only ten years earlier, and Rockhampton was not established until 1856. It was scarcely a village until the short lived Canoona gold rush brought an influx of population two years later.*

*This account is, in part, extracted from Kerr, J., Triumph of the Narrow Gauge,

Adapted from Kerr, J., Triumph of the Narrow Gauge,

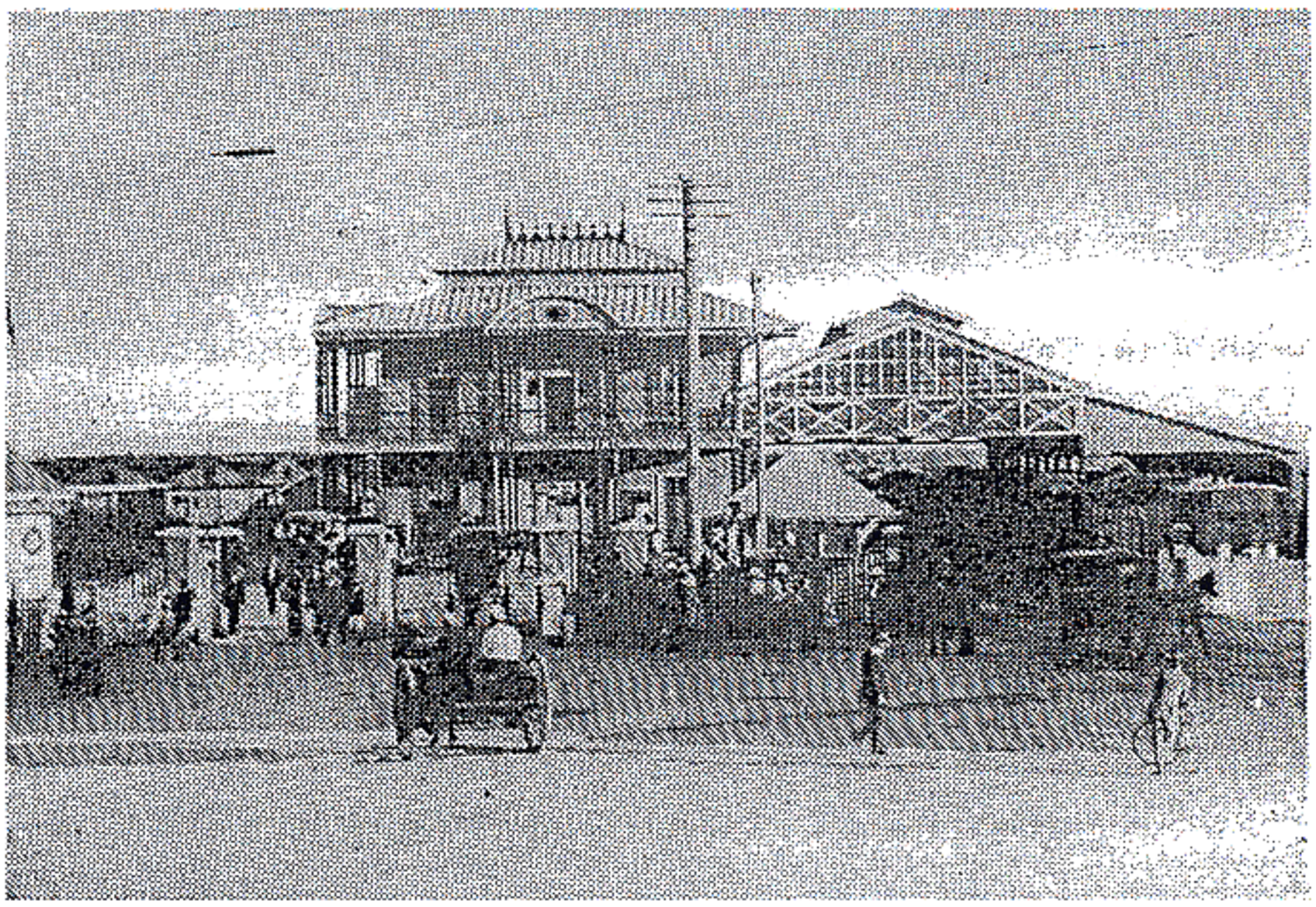
By 1864, when construction started on a railway, Rockhampton had a population of 5000. There had been a recent development of a copper field at Peak Downs to the north west, and this, combined with convenient access to the pastoral properties of the inland, ensured that Rockhampton developed as a river port - at the expense of the fine deep water port of Gladstone.

The Rockhampton line opened on 19 September 1867. It was 50 kilometres in length and linked Rockhampton with the village of Westwood, a point where the roads to Taroom, Springsure, Peak Downs and the Central West diverged. The Rockhampton terminus* was a short distance from the old gaol, and consisted of an imported cast iron railway station which included a substantial roof that covered three tracks and protected rolling stock as well as passengers.

*This was later referred to as the Stanley Street Station and is the site of the present Rockhampton Railway Station. The old gaol was adapted and used as a railway workshop.

The new railway was given the grandiose title of 'The Great Northern Railway' although it was anything but that. A daily return service was provided, but since it stopped short of the coastal ranges and linked no major settlements, it was of little economic value and was not well patronised. Its short-comings were recognised by politicians, but any immediate extension to improve the situation was out of the question as the Queensland Government survived a shortage of loan funds brought about by the collapse of their bankers the London based firm of Agra and Masterman Approval was finally given to its extension westward in August 1872, under the control of Robert Ballard, a extremely competent and energetic engineer. By 1879 the line had reached a point now known as Emerald.

The Southern line was extended from Granchester to Toowoomba and Dalby in 1867, and Warwick in 1871 and, in 1872 approval was given for its extension from Brisbane to Ipswich.



The Stanley Street Railway Station C1887. From the University of Central Queensland Collection

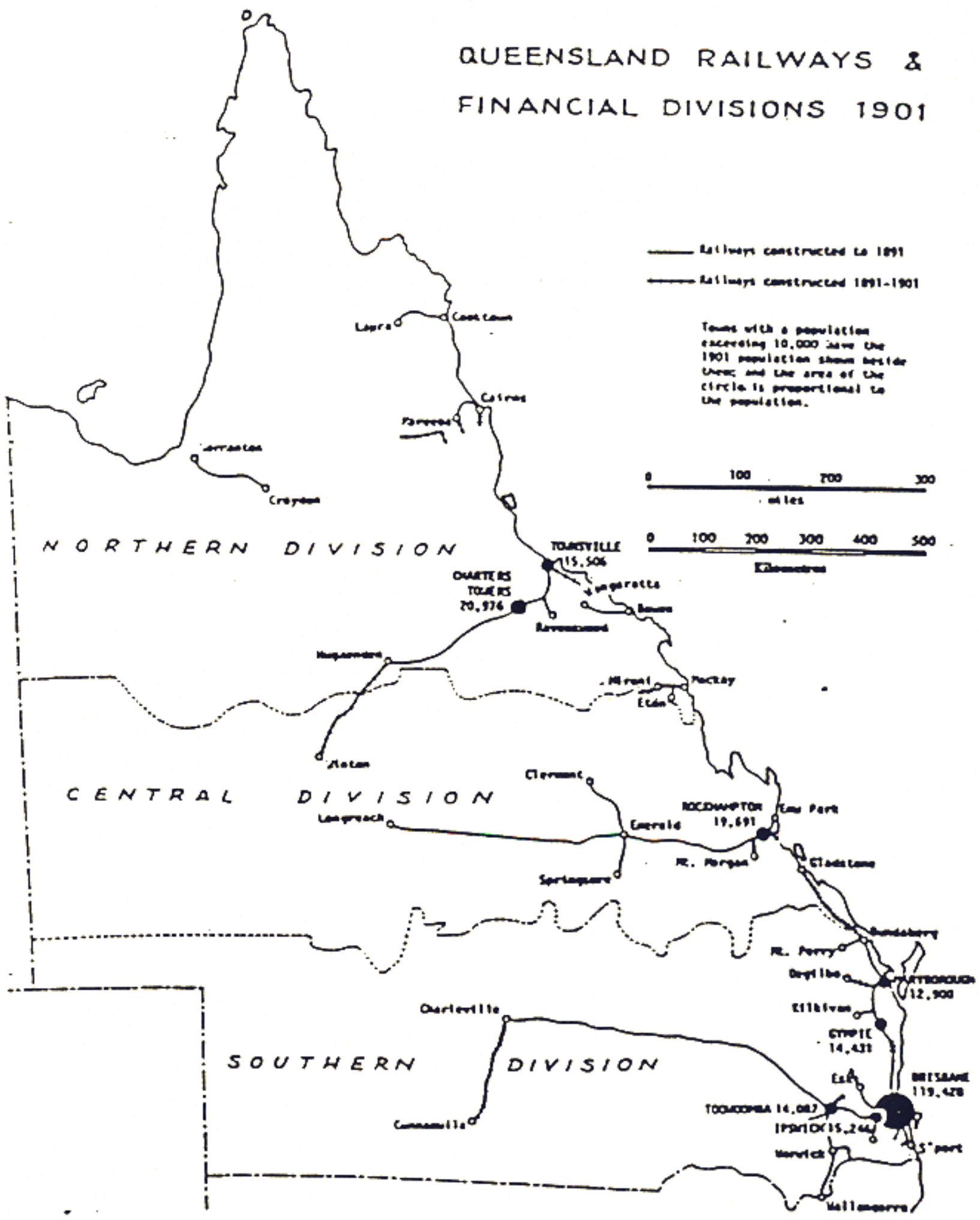
Decentralised Development

Ross Fitzgerald in his history of Queensland* comments that *..By the close of 1860's Queensland had two separate trunk lines running westward, one in the Southern region, beginning in Ipswich and the other in the centre, starting at the port of Rockhampton. Brisbane had no part in the system, if indeed the word system could be applied. The Queensland phenomenon was established: unlike other Australian colonies economic life did not revolve around the capital. Railway construction both reflected and preserved this phenomenon. All roads and rails did not, and were never to, lead to Brisbane.*

*Fitzgerald, Ross. The History of Queensland -From the Dreaming to 1915, p 266

The 1880s were boom years for the Australian colonies. All were able to raise substantial loans in Britain to fund extensive railway construction. The development of Queensland's new settlements had been established, based on pastoral, mining and agricultural expansion, and to serve them, the ports of Maryborough, Bundaberg, Rockhampton, Mackay, Townsville, Cairns, Cooktown and Normanton developed. Each secured a railway to serve its hinterland. All were isolated. The line from Townsville to Charters Towers which was opened in 1882, took the name of The Great Northern Railway from the Rockhampton line which was renamed the Central Railway in 1878.

The Central Railway was extended westward to Longreach which became the line's terminus on 15 February 1892. In the meantime branches had been built to Clermont and Springsure. Emerald, like most of the settlements on the Central Railway, owed its existence and prosperity to the railway. Rockhampton was the headquarters of a railway which, entirely unconnected with other railways, serviced a vast pastoral area to the west.



From Lawson, R. Brisbane In The 1890's

THE EMU PARK RAILWAY

As Brisbane grew in influence, its citizens began to clamour for suburban railways like those provided in Sydney, Melbourne and Adelaide. Thus in 1882 a railway was built linking Brisbane with the seaside resort of Sandgate, enabling residents to escape the oppressive summer heat quickly and cheaply. What Brisbane had, Rockhampton demanded, and on 30 September 1885 Parliament approved construction of a railway from Rockhampton to the nearest seaside resort, Emu Park.

As the cost of bridging the Fitzroy river just for a seaside line was considered excessive, the Emu Park railway commenced near the North Rockhampton Council Chambers* at the northern end of the road bridge across the Fitzroy. The railway to Emu Park opened to traffic on 23 December 1888 with two trains running daily. The ninety minute journey was popular, although somewhat inconvenient for the majority of the population who lived south of the river.*

*Rockhampton comprised two municipal councils, one serving each side of the river. This had been the case since 1883.

*See also Kerr, J., Triumph of the Narrow Gauge,p50-51.

THE INFLUENCE OF MOUNT MORGAN

The discovery of gold at Mount Morgan in 1882 generated immense wealth for Rockhampton. The mine was extraordinarily rich in fact the richest single gold mine in the world.* The Mt Morgan Gold Mining Company floated in 1886 with £1,000,000 in capital returned to its investors in the first ten years of operation - £200,000 for every pound invested*. The wealth was reflected in the growth of Rockhampton as a major mercantile and administrative centre, and substantial public and private buildings were erected.*

*Mc Donald, L. Rockhampton: a History of City and Districts ,p330.

*Fitzgerald, Ross. The History of Queensland -From the Dreaming to 1915 p172

*Kerr, J., Mount Morgan: Gold, Copper & Oil St. Lucia, J.D. & R.S. Kerr, 1983.

William Patterson and John Ferguson, both members of Parliament for Central Queensland, held substantial share holdings in the Mount Morgan Gold Mining Company, and their wealth, and that of Mt Morgan, ensured that Central Queensland had substantial influence in Queensland politics and Government decisions.*

*Fitzgerald, Ross. The History of Queensland -From the Dreaming to 1915, p 314

SEPARATION

Another important influence on Queenslands politics, was Central Queenslands push for their own state, separate from southern Queensland which they felt was dominated by Brisbane. The movement, which had been active since 1870, was led by the Archers, Rockhampton's most prominent squatter family.. As the Queensland Separation League, it gathered momentum in the 1890 's with the help of George Curtis MLA.

The confidence of the north in its own mineral and agricultural resources was justifiably high. It produced a great amount of the wealth of Queensland, and its exports through the port of Rockhampton were higher than Brisbane. The Separation League alleged they had unequal parliamentary representation and received a less than fair share of expenditure *

*Fitzgerald, Ross. The History of Queensland -From the Dreaming to 1915 p 286-295

In its heyday the movement was a serious and strong lobby group who exercised a great deal of influence on the Queensland Government. This influence had both a positive and negative effect. It ensured that Central Queensland was given a reasonably equal share of government spending, but decisions on how to spend this money were sometimes taken on political grounds to placate or fragment the separation movement, rather than on the basis of what was best for Queensland.

The Separation Movement in Central Queensland was divided by the question of Federation and it lost much of its impetus. Its death knoll was the construction of the Gladstone to Rockhampton railway in 1903 which connected Rockhampton with Brisbane. For a full account see McDonald, L., Rockhampton; a History of City and Districts, Chapter 17.

Much of the expenditure that was returned to the Central District was spent on the expansion of the railway system. Charles Buzacott proprietor of the Rockhampton Morning Bulletin pointed out ... *the history of the Separation Movement and the history of railway extension in Queensland run, as it were, in parallel grooves.**

*as quoted in McDonald, L., Rockhampton; a History of City and Districts, 544.

ENDING THE ISOLATION OF THE EMU PARK RAILWAY

In 1890 the Railway Department investigated the possibility of connecting Emu Park to the Central Line. Linking the two involved, building a bridge over the Fitzroy, and a railway through the built-up area of Rockhampton. The cost of resumptions threatened to become more expensive than building the bridge.

A trial survey was made of two alternative routes. One began at Rockhampton station and, after crossing Stanley Street on the level, curved into Alma Lane, midway between Denison and Alma Streets, and followed its alignment, crossing Derby, William, Denham, Fitzroy, Archer, Cambridge, and Albert Streets and then Alma, Bolsover and East Streets as it took a 90 degree curve to cross the Fitzroy River at The Rocks by a 20 chain (400 metre) long bridge and then curving south-west to link up with the Emu Park terminus at North Rockhampton.*

*Hard Batch 124, Batch 1, A/9047, Queensland State Archives (QSA).

Chief Engineer H.C. Stanley favoured an alternative, longer route which avoided the multitude of level crossings in the centre of Rockhampton. It left Rockhampton as a dead end station, and diverged from the Central Railway half a mile towards Westwood. It took a broad curve turning west and then north to traverse the Athelstane Range area of suburban Rockhampton, crossed the river at its narrowest point in the city, upstream from The Rocks, by an 11 chain (220 metre) long bridge. Most streets crossed the line by overbridge or passed under the railway.

Stanley did not think that .. *cost should, in this case, carry much weight as the numerous level crossings so near the heart of the City ... renders it in my opinion a highly dangerous and objectionable one. Rather than adopt such a line it would, I consider, be preferable to run the Railway down the centre of Denison Street as accidents would be less liable to happen when a considerable length of line is always in view.*

*H.C. Stanley to Secretary 28 March 1890, Hard Batch 124 Batch 1, A/9047, QSA.

In his recommendation for the Athelstane Range route he pointed out ..it enables better street crossings, saves 9 chains in length of bridge, and provides communication with a populous suburb on the slopes of the Athelstane Range.*

Stanley was authorised in August to have a permanent survey made along his recommended route via Athelstane Range. As completed at the end of 1890, the surveyed line was estimated to cost £74,920. Besides the heavy expense, it involved resuming land from such prominent citizens as William Patterson, C.S.D. Melbourne and T.S. Hall.*

No action was taken before the 1893 depression put an end to railway construction for several years.

*William Rodger 4 February 1891, Letterbook p28-40, seen at Rockhampton Administration Offices, 1989.

Stanley's trial survey of the connecting railway line 1890. Hard Batch 124, Batch 1, A/9047, Queensland State Archives (QSA).

BROADMOUNT

The Fitzroy was a narrow winding river, and it required much expensive dredging to enable moderate sized vessels to reach the town wharves. Rockhampton merchants were content with a river port but primary producers wanted rail access to deep water for the export of wool and meat. Gladstone's natural deep-water harbour was the logical choice, but concern that trade would bypass Rockhampton, precluded it being acceptable to the citizens and politicians of Rockhampton*.

*See Mc Donald, L. Rockhampton: a History of City and Districts p82

The Chamber of Commerce favoured a rail link with Port Alma on the southern side of Rockhampton* where a wharf lay idle, having been built in 1884* for the eastern terminus of the now abandoned McIlwraith Government's Transcontinental Railway scheme.

*See Mc Donald, L. Rockhampton: a History of City and Districts p94

*See. Queensland Parliament. V&P 1882,2,1077 (Annual Report of Engineer for Harbours & Rivers). 11

The Lake's Creek meatworks were located on the northern side of the river, beside the Emu Park Railway.* The works had their own wharf, and used lighters to transport frozen meat to export ships in Keppel Bay. This was becoming a major export. The meat works favoured building a port at Broadmount further downstream but on the same side of the river.

*McDonald,L, Rockhampton: a History of City and Districts, p226.

Of the two Port Alma was the better port as Broadmount was accessible only at high tide, but the Government in 1894, against the wishes of the majority of Rockhampton people, decided to build a port at Broadmount, and to connect it with the Central Railway by a bridge over the Fitzroy.

THE RAILWAY DOWN DENISON STREET

The government did not share Stanley's view that expense was of little consequence, nor did it wish to disrupt the properties of prominent citizens. In August 1894 Stanley was asked for an estimate of the cost of the line via Denison Street. Using the same river crossing as on the Athelstane Range route, the cost was reduced £22,873 to £52,047, the major expenditure being the bridge, £36,017 for a single line structure.

*Town Clerk 28 September 1894, ibid.

The Rockhampton City Council quickly and unanimously agreed to the new plan with the line running along Denison Street.* Plans were prepared for Parliament, the line taking an eight chain (160 metre) radius curve to enter Denison Street, and a sharp 5 chain (100 metre) radius curve at North Street out of Denison Street in order to minimise property resumption. The bridge was designed as single line with one 250, two 150 and six 40 foot spans. Two stations were planned en route, one at the Denison and Fitzroy Street intersection, closest point to the city centre and another in North Street near the bridge.

The Rockhampton Morning Bulletin opposed the Denison Street plan as... *an extremely short-sighted one, and was, moreover, fraught with great danger and inconvenience to the public. But the council agreed to it with a light-hearted alacrity suggestive*

*of delight rather than of misgivings at the prospect of trains running along one of the principal streets of the town....One does not need to be an railway engineer to see that this should be what is called an elevated railway. That is the Government should buy the land along one side of Denison Street, build an embankment and bridge all the intersection streets to avoid level crossings.**

*Rockhampton Morning Bulletin, 7/10/1895, Batch 1, Hard Batch 124.

Stanley visited the Manager of the Lakes Creek Meat Works who suggested building a double track line, and offered to guarantee two train loads of livestock daily from the west and a train load of coal daily. Railing of cattle in large numbers was then just developing and Stanley was suitably impressed to recommended that if there was prospect of duplicating the line within ten or so years, it would be better to spend an extra £8491 and build a double line bridge at the outset.*

*Hard Batch 124, Batch 1, A/9047, QSA.

In October 1895 Parliament approved construction of a branch from Nankin Creek on the Emu Park line, 15 miles (25 km) to Broadmount. Stanley revised his bridge estimate in October 1895, and found the double line bridge would cost not £8491 extra but £23,234 extra but still strongly recommended it.*

The Broadmount Railway was opened on 1/1/1898

*H.C. Stanley 10 October 1895, ibid.

Plans of what was known as the Rockhampton Junction Railway were tabled in Parliament in September 1895*. Because of the volume of traffic expected to the new port at Broadmount, and the nature of the Rockhampton Junction Railway as a suburban line, Commissioner Gray recommended building the line as double track.*

*Qld Parliamentary Debates 94,1039.

*V&P 1895,3,777.

The line as approved by both houses of Parliament in December 1895 was a single track, but the Select Committee appointed by the Legislative Council recommended that the substructure of the bridge - the piers and abutments - be built with provision for two tracks.*

*Qld Parliamentary Debates 74,1164-76 & 74,1919.

DOUBLE TRACK

The Rockhampton Chamber of Commerce continued to press for double track. George Silas Curtis, who led the Chamber's campaign for a deepwater port and was member for Rockhampton in the lower house 1893-1902, saw the Railway Minister on 15 October 1896.

The Mayor, Wilson Littler, had a week earlier given permission for the double track in Denison Street, but requested that the site in Section 41 between Fitzroy and Denham Streets on the south-western side of Denison Street, be used for the central station.*

*Telegram Davis to Kidston 8 October 1896, Hard Batch 124 Batch 1, A/9047, QSA.

Curtis found Robert Philp unwilling to build a double track bridge or duplicate the connection. He cabled Rockhampton with the results of the meeting. *Have just interviewed Railway Minister who declined to make double bridge or line unless one half of the Archer Park be surrendered by Council for Station. The other sites suggested are not of sufficient size to admit of erection of*

*station and necessary sidings and the Minister declines to purchase any land for purpose. Strong advise Council to concede what is asked - reply required by Saturday as all work in connection with bridge plans suspended.**

*Telegram G.S. Curtis from Brisbane 15 October 1896, Hard Batch 124 Batch 1, A/9047, QSA.

The Rockhampton City Council met quickly and, on Curtis's suggestion, capitulated. They cabled William Kidston the newly elected MLA for Rockhampton the next day ..*Council resolved to hand over half Leichhardt square on condition of double line rails in Denison Street and over bridge.**

*Telegram Wm Davis Town Clerk to W Kidston MLA 16 October 1896, Hard Batch 124 Batch 1, A/9047, QSA.

By sacrificing both Denison Street and the park - known locally as Leichhardt Square - Council achieved its ambitions of a double track line through the city and a central station for passenger trains.*

*Memo Acting Secretary to Acting Chief Engineer 19 October 1896, Hard Batch 124 Batch 1, A/9047, QSA.

A CENTRAL RAILWAY STATION

The Rockhampton terminus at Stanley Street had been selected, not for its proximity to the business district, but because it was a government reserve and it saved the expense of resumptions. It was situated at the edge of the city and was not convenient for city passengers.

Brisbane, with which Rockhampton naturally compared itself, had its fringe-of-the-city terminus at Roma Street extended into the city in 1889 when Brisbane Central Station opened.* For Central Queensland, the Rockhampton Junction railway provided an opportunity for extending its railway through the city, and erecting a suitable Rockhampton Central station.

*Kerr, J., Triumph of the Narrow Gauge, p25.

For political reasons, a rather rudimentary station building was erected and it was 1899 before the tender was awarded to erect the present edifice.

THE DESIGN OF THE CENTRAL STATION - ARCHER PARK

The layout of The Central Station or Archer Park as it was more commonly referred to, was developed in Brisbane by Chief Engineer Stanley. The first plan in April 1897, showed the station separate from the two main lines down Denison Street, with points off the line from Rockhampton to North Rockhampton, crossing the southbound line by crossovers with slip points, providing access to and from the southbound line.

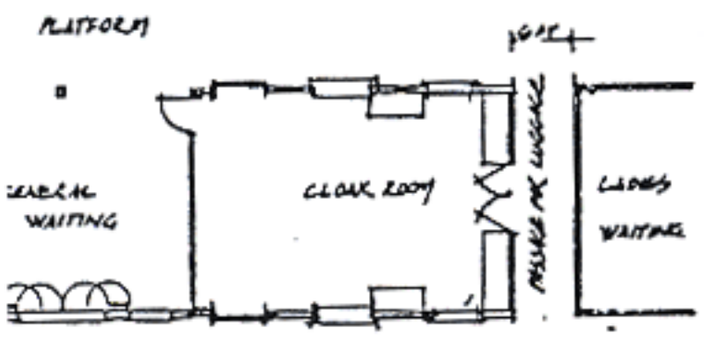
The single platform was 300 foot long, 20 foot wide and two foot three inches above rail level. The track to the platform and the three line loop beside it under the carriage shade left only a narrow strip of Denison Street for vehicles. Afterthe Principal Assistant Engineer William Pagan and the Commissioner visited Rockhampton in October, the plans were altered to increase the gap between the two through main lines and the three lines running into the station, to leave a strip clear for road traffic.*

*Pagan for Chief Engineer to Secretary 18 October 1897, Hard Batch 124A Batch 4 A/9048, QSA.

The initial April sketch plan of the station was 90ft long by 20ft wide, and consisted of a station master's office, a booking office, a general waiting area and a ladies waiting room including toilets. The gents toilets and the lamp room were a separate structure located at the northern end of the platform. The carriage shade ran the full length of the platform and was 44ft wide.

After consulting with the General Traffic Manager F T Thallon, the Chief Engineer had prepared by December 1897 an amended plan of the station building. It was longer, 140 ft, with a ten foot wide verandah for the full length of the street side. An addition was a cloak room with sliding doors adjacent to the general waiting room, and separated by a 6 foot passage way for luggage. *

*Hard Batch 124A Batch 4 A/9048, QSA; plans of Archer Park, held by Chief Railway Architect, Brisbane.



Revised layout showing relocated passage. Re-drawn in part from drawing on Hard Batch 124A Batch 4 A/9048, QSA; Robert Riddel 1993

Thallon thought the arrangement of rooms was not functional, as the parcels office, booking office and cloak room would frequently be under the control of one man many hours of the day and be impossible to supervise. He was also critical of the lack of station seating, and the sliding doors to the cloak room which he thought were impractical.

Thallon considered a revised plan, which relocated the passage between the cloak room and the ladies waiting room, but was still critical of the narrowness of the passage and its impracticability for the movement of barrows of luggage from the cloakroom.

The Commissioner provided the solution ... *to dispense with the passage and throw the space into the waiting room, the doorway in the cloak room to be placed in the centre of the room opposite the ticket window.*

HENRICK HANSEN

The final plans were drawn in the first half of 1898. They are initialled H.H. indicating they were drawn up by Henrick Hansen, an architect who was employed by Queensland Railways as a Draftsman from 1877 until retrenched in 1904.*

*Watson, D and McKay, J, A Directory of Queensland Architects to 1940

Photograph of Henrik Hansen in "Staff Photo and History Book No 2." Railway Museum.

Archer Park was one of a number of railway stations built in about 1900 to serve major centres on the Central Line. Most were designed or documented by Hansen. Such stations include Mount Morgan, Winton and Cunnamulla. All had a curved station roof which by protecting passengers and covering the track, obviated the building of a separate carriage shed.

Archer Park was a fine piece of design in the Victorian style. The station itself was constructed of timber and the front facade carried a parapet decorated with panels and toped with robust finials. At the entrance the parapet was emphasised in a typical Victorian fashion, by a decorated semi-circular gable which was supported on cast iron columns topped with a large cast iron frieze. The station accommodation itself was commodious and it was well serviced with a verandah which ran its full length.

The stations most important feature however was the large curved carriage shade which spaned 45feet(13.7m) and was 300feet(91.5m). The roof was constructed of iron trusses sheeted with galvanised iron sheeting. The ridge carried a open vent and light to the station was provided by a skylight that ran the length of the shade above the platform. The whole was

supported on 200x200 timber stanchions buried in the ground.

Overall it was a impressive piece of engineering in the 'grand' manner of major railway terminals

QUEENSLAND RAILWAYS

CENTRAL LINE

PASSENGER STATION — ARCHER PARK

Drawing No 1

Carriage Shade

Platform

Platform

Platform

Plan of Offices and Carriage Shade

Plan Passenger Station - Archer Park. Drawing No 1 Dated 21/6/1898. NTS. from Architectural Section Queensland Railways

QUEENSLAND RAILWAYS

CENTRAL LINE

PASSENGER STATION — ARCHER PARK

ELEVATIONS &c.

FRONT ELEVATION

ELEVATION TO LINE

BACK ELEVATION

END ELEVATION

Elevation Passenger Station - Archer Park. Drawing No 2 Dated 21/6/1898. NTS. from Architectural Section Queensland Railways

BUILDING ARCHER PARK AND THE JUNCTION RAILWAY

The supervision of the Junction Line was under the control of a Railway Engineer Bernays who was appointment by the Commissioner of Railways in late 1896. His duties as Resident Engineer in charge, included the supervision of the bridge and the whole of the Junction Line including Archer Park.

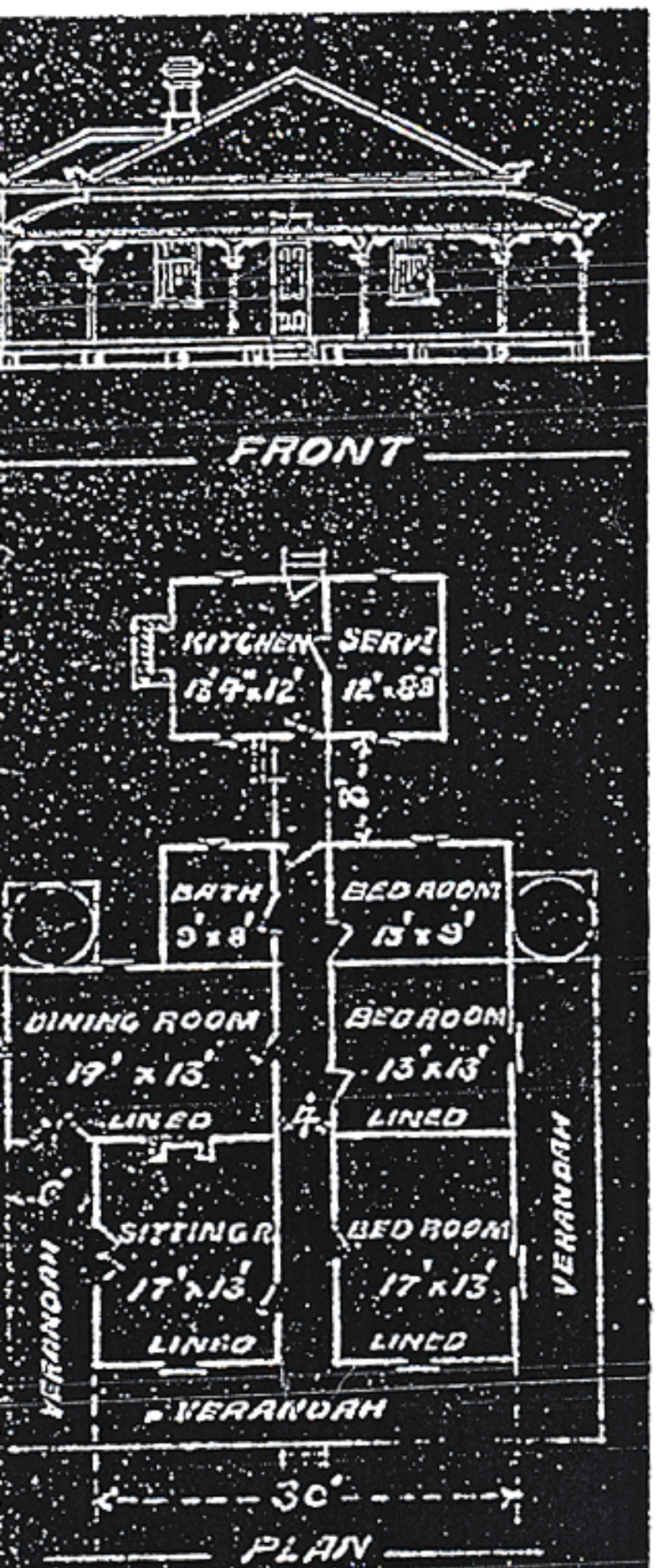
The first and main contract was the construction of the Rockhampton Junction Railway, which was awarded to G.C. Willcocks in the first half of 1897. The work involved the 25 kilometre branch line to Broadmount, and the line down Denison Street but the major work was the bridge over the Fitzroy, a start on which was delayed because of freshes in the river until after the 1898 wet season.* The Alexandra Bridge had been designed by Stanley and was smaller but almost identical to his Albert Bridge built across the river at Indooroopilly in 1895.*

Annual Report of the Commissioner for Railways (hereinafter CR) 1896-97 p13.

*Kerr, J., Triumph of the Narrow Gauge,p89

*O'Connor, Spanning Two Centuries - Historic Bridges of Australia, p197,198.

Bernays called tenders for the construction of a low set timber framed house for the station master at Archer Park in September 1897. The drawing of the structure which is labelled "1st Class Station Master's House- Archer Park", was drawn by Henrick Hansen and is dated 21.11.93. It would appear to be a standard, although the original design was altered by increasing the verandah width from 6ft to 7ft6ins, and eliminating the hall way, thus enlarging the sitting room.



Drawing of Station Masters house - from QSA A/9048, Batch 4

*H.C. Stanley 15 December 1897, Batch 4, Hard Batch 124A, A/9048, QSA.

The proposed site was the south east corner of Archer Park near the corner of Archer and Denison Streets however, following the Commissioners visit to Archer Park in October and his decision to increase the space between Denison Street and the station, this site was no longer available. W. Pagan recommended a new quarter acre site in Cambridge Street which was vacant crown land, and this was approved.

The tender for the erection of the house was won by Thomas Mc Watters for a price of £520 and a construction time of 16 weeks. Bernays who was having *great difficulty in getting house accommodation at Rockhampton anywhere near his work*, was given approval by the Commissioner to occupy the house upon its completion.

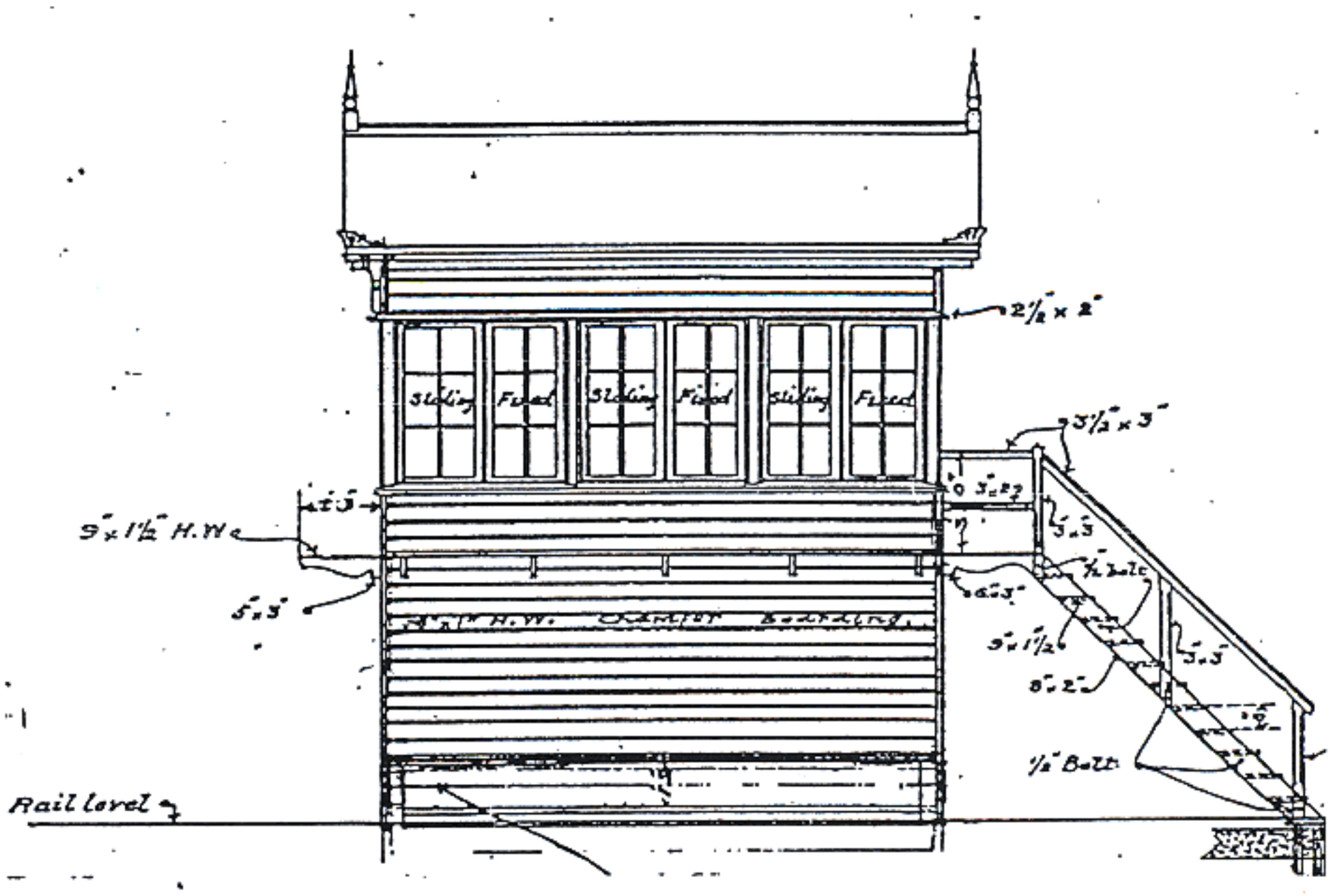
Tenders were called for a signal cabin at Archer Park in July 1898. Only one was received - that of Watson and McDonald for £168 - and this was accepted. The signalling system at Archer Park had been subject to much departmental discussion. Stanley suggested dispensing with interlocking at Archer Park because of the expense entailed in enclosing the wires and rods necessary due to the line being in the street.*

Traffic Manager Thallon pointed out, that because of the distance between the points, it would be expensive in manpower if the station was not interlocked, and the points had to be changed individually. Furthermore, as there was to be only one platform, it would be necessary to make constant changes to the points and signals.

Thallon subsequently became concerned at the cost of the interlocking and in March 1898 suggested deviating the double line so as to swing into Archer Park and lessen the length of the interlocking rods and gear. Stanley consented, and approval was given in May 1898 to interlock the station and to use the interlocking apparatus from West Street, Ipswich which was no longer required there.

Thallon had second thoughts in May 1899 and sought to revert to the original plan to enable through trains to pass without having to go through the station arcade. Stanley readily agreed, and approval was given to lay the extra 20 chain of track in Denison Street at a cost of £1333. *

*Batch 4A, Hard Batch 124A, A/9048, QSA.



Elevation of Signal Cabin from Drawing dated 8/6/1898.NTS. from Architectural Section Queensland Railways

Tenders for building the Rockhampton Central Station buildings closed in February 1899. Thomas Butterworth Renshaw and Harry Ricketts submitted the lowest tender, £4130, somewhat above the £3895 departmental estimate of which £1680 was for the station building proper, £1756 for the carriage shade, and the rest for closets and urinal, gas and water and fencing.

Chief Engineer to Secretary 11/12/1897 Batch 4 and Batch 4A, Hard Batch 124A, A/9048, QSA.

The contractors were recommended on the basis that the firm was *capable and competent*, and had carried out numerous large building contracts in Rockhampton, including the recent new Harbour Board offices.*

During the construction of Archer Park work was well under way when Resident Engineer Bernays discussed the possibility of installing electric light supplied by the Rockhampton Gas Company, which also had an electricity franchise. William Pagan of the Chief Engineer's office recommended the offer, but the price seemed high and the Chief Engineer decided it might be cheaper for the Department to install its own plant and light both Archer Park and Stanley Street stations, connecting the two by cable.*

*William Pagan 5 June 1899, Batch 4A; Chief Mechanical Engineer 14 October 1899 and Chief Engineer to Secretary 22 December 1899, Batch 4B, Hard Batch 124A, A/9048, QSA.

It was obviously going to take months to provide electric lighting, so for the opening the Chief Engineer arranged for gas to be

installed, rationalising the expense as a back up in case the electricity supply was interrupted.

A plan accompanying correspondence dated 4/12/1899 shows an electrical cable connecting Archer Park, the station masters house and the workshops.

*Batch 4B Hard Batch 124A, A/9048, QSA.

An Order in Council was obtained, which the Crown Solicitor advised was needed, in order for the Department to run an electricity cable down Denison Street. The Town Council were also required to approve the cable - which they did - subject to a requirement of installing an arc lamp at each street intersection. Such were the problems of running a railway line down a main street.*

THE OFFICIAL OPENING OF THE JUNCTION LINE

Queenslander 11/12/1899 p974; Morning Bulletin 7/11/1899 p5: both reports mis-spelt the name Alexandria.

The opening ceremony for the new Junction Railway took place on the afternoon of the 6th November 1899 at the bridge itself. A train of two engines and 12 carriages left the Rockhampton Terminus in Stanley Street and broke through a ribbon. Railways Minister J. Murray officially named the bridge "Alexandra" breaking a bottle of champagne as he formally declared it open.*

*Hard Batch 124A, Batch 7, A/9048; QSA.

The name was selected in haste. Mid-morning Murray telegraphed Commissioner Gray asking if he had thought of any suitable name for the bridge. He added *I think of naming it the Normanby in honour of my electorate ... I open it at four pm reply.* Gray rejected this as there was a Normanby Bridge on the Cooktown Railway, and quickly consulted the Premier who suggested naming it Alexandra in honour of the Princess of Wales.*

*The official name, Archer Park rather than the common name, Leichhardt Square, was adopted for the station on 18 October 1899.□41 □
*Rockhampton Morning Bulletin 14/11/1899 p1, 4.

Archer Park station* was not ready for the opening, and initially passengers had to wait in the street at Denison Street. Within days passengers had to be warned against jumping off the slow moving trains at street corners.*

There was no official opening of Archer Park Station other than the ceremony performed by Murray in opening up the new Junction Line of which it was an integral part. An announcement that "The Central Railway Station" *will be opened for the use of the public on Monday next the 11th instant* , was made in the The The Rockhampton Morning Bulletin on the 5th of December 1899. A description was also provided...*starting from the Archer Street end of the building a conveniently fitted lavatory is first entered. Then come the station-master's office and a parcels and booking office. Next to this is the vestibule, and in close proximity a passage for luggage. The cloak room adjoins this passage and next is the ladies' waiting room, with the ladies' lavatory adjoining. The last apartment is the lamp room. Ample seating accommodation will be provided on the platform. The building is of wood on a concrete foundation with a concrete platform laid with tiles similar to those used in the vestibule and on the front verandah. The platform wall and coping are of concrete. The roof which spans the rails is of galvanised iron supported on ironbark standards, and is almost semi-circular in shape, stability being given to the building by iron beams. The carriage shed roof is of iron trusses and corrugated iron, with lantern lights the whole length.*

A FUNCTIONAL ARCHER PARK

Archer Park was put immediately to use over the busy Christmas period, and it proved immediately popular servicing local passenger trains to and from Westward, Emu Park, Lakes Creek and Mt Morgan.* Ticket sales reported in the Rockhampton newspaper for the Christmas period showed that almost equal numbers of people travelled from the new station as from the old Stanley Street station, the number peaking on the 23rd December at 241.*

*The Mt Morgan line had opened in Nov 1898.

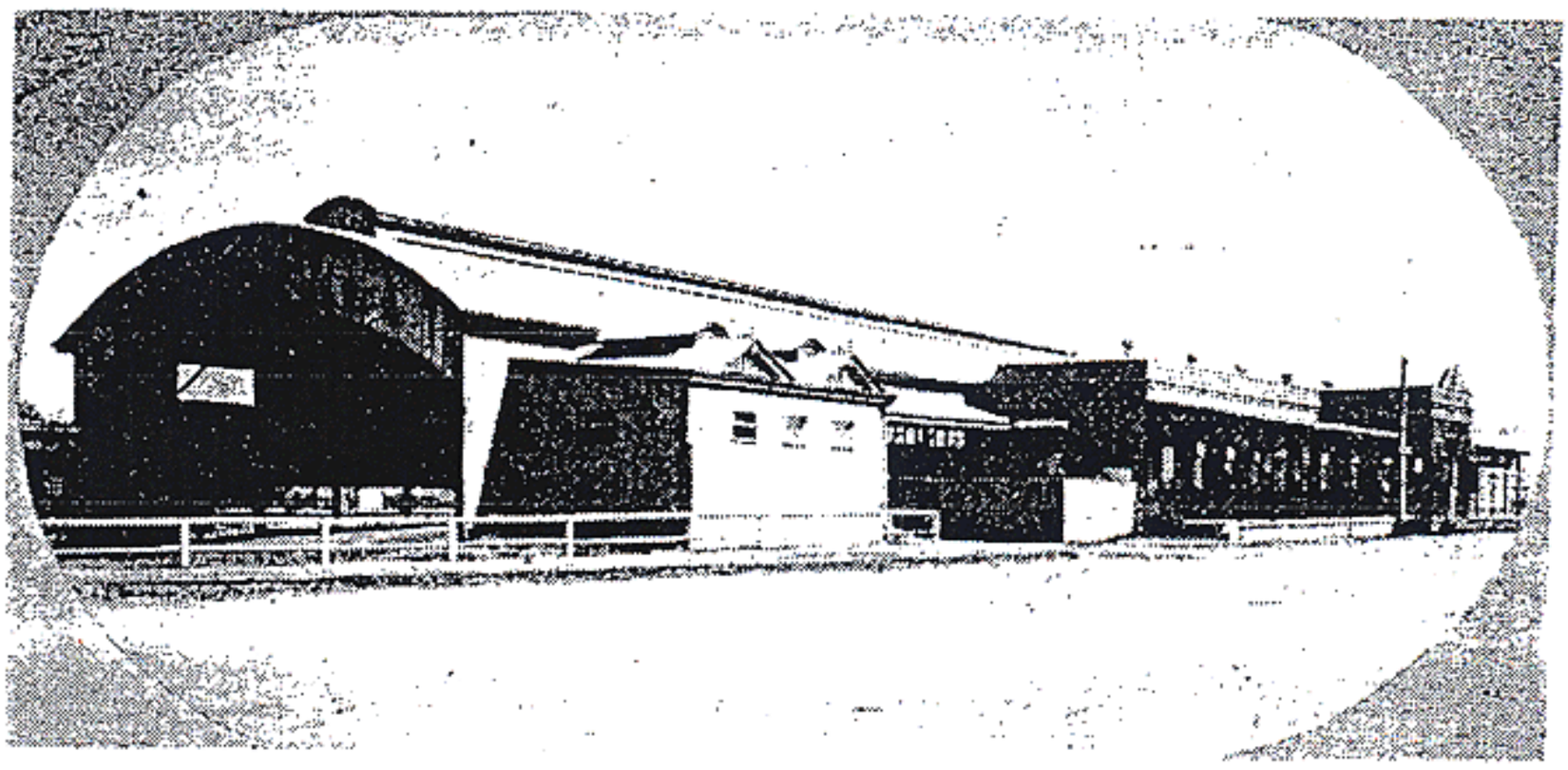
*The Rockhampton Morning Bulletin, 27/23/1899

Archer Park soon superseded the Stanley Street station as the most important passenger station. After the rail link from Brisbane to Rockhampton*, opened in December 1903, mail trains to and from Brisbane terminated at and began from Archer Park as did the mail train to Longreach.

*This was facilitated by the connection of Gladstone to Rockhampton

As a measure of its significance, mile posts on the Central Line were repositioned to measure distance from Archer Park, instead of from the old Stanley Street station, just as in Southern Queensland distance was altered to be measured from Brisbane Central station.

The Mail train to Brisbane departed Archer Park at 12 noon Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, while the train from the south terminated at Archer Park at 4.05pm Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays, making just a five minute stop at the Stanley Street station.



Archer Park c1906. Photo from The Capricornia 26/5/1906 John Oxley Library

ACTIVITIES AT ARCHER PARK

Archer Park's other major role was in handling regional trains used mainly by workers, shoppers and excursion travellers. The busy times were before and after school, business and shopping hours, and on Sundays.

Archer Park handled only coaching traffic. This basically meant passengers, but also included parcels and mails, and being close to the business centre, it was convenient and successful for this purpose.

To maintain two shifts, the Station Master was aided by an Assistant, and a porter. Two signalmen, also working in shifts, operated the signals and points.

The Station Master was responsible for ticket sales, despatching trains, administration work and a host of other activities connected with the operation of the station. From the onset, it was a senior and therefore attractive posting, but it was never the less a busy and demanding job.

J.D. Bogie, Station Master at Archer Park, killed himself on Tuesday 30 August 1904. He came on duty at 5.30am, despatched the Mount Morgan train, went home for breakfast, returned and despatched the Lakes Creek train at 7.30am. When trains from Westwood, Lake's Creek and Emu Park arrived just before 9am, there was no sign of him. Enquires were made at his house and then a search found his body in the office. He had placed a gun against the wall, and positioning a broom handle against the trigger, kicked the broom handle. The bullet entered near his heart and he died quickly. A note gave financial problems as the reason. Bogie had been with the Department for 22 years.

*Brisbane Courier 31/8/1904 p5.

He was succeeded as Station Master by William Dunbar.

EXCURSIONS

Emu Park proved to be a popular destination for excursions particularly for annual picnics. Some of these were quite large such as the 18th annual picnic of the Waterside Workers Federation when 1100 journeyed to the seaside in two special trains which left Rockhampton at 8:15am and 8:45, returning at 5:45 and 6:05 from Emu Park.

The Capricornian newspaper published numerous photographs of these outings and the activity at Emu Park

Other excursion groups included Railway employees and employees from Rockhampton business houses such as Walter Reid*

*photo of in The Capricornian 14/12/1907

"Moonlight" excursions were organised from 1907 departing from Rockhampton at 7 pm and returning around midnight. The Capricornian reported *The picnic to-night guaranteed by Mr May (publican of the Grand Hotel at Emu Park) was very successful. The Railway Department put on two trains bringing down 700 excursionists. The Railway arrangements were excellent, there was not a hitch.**

*The Capricornian, 23/11/1907,.

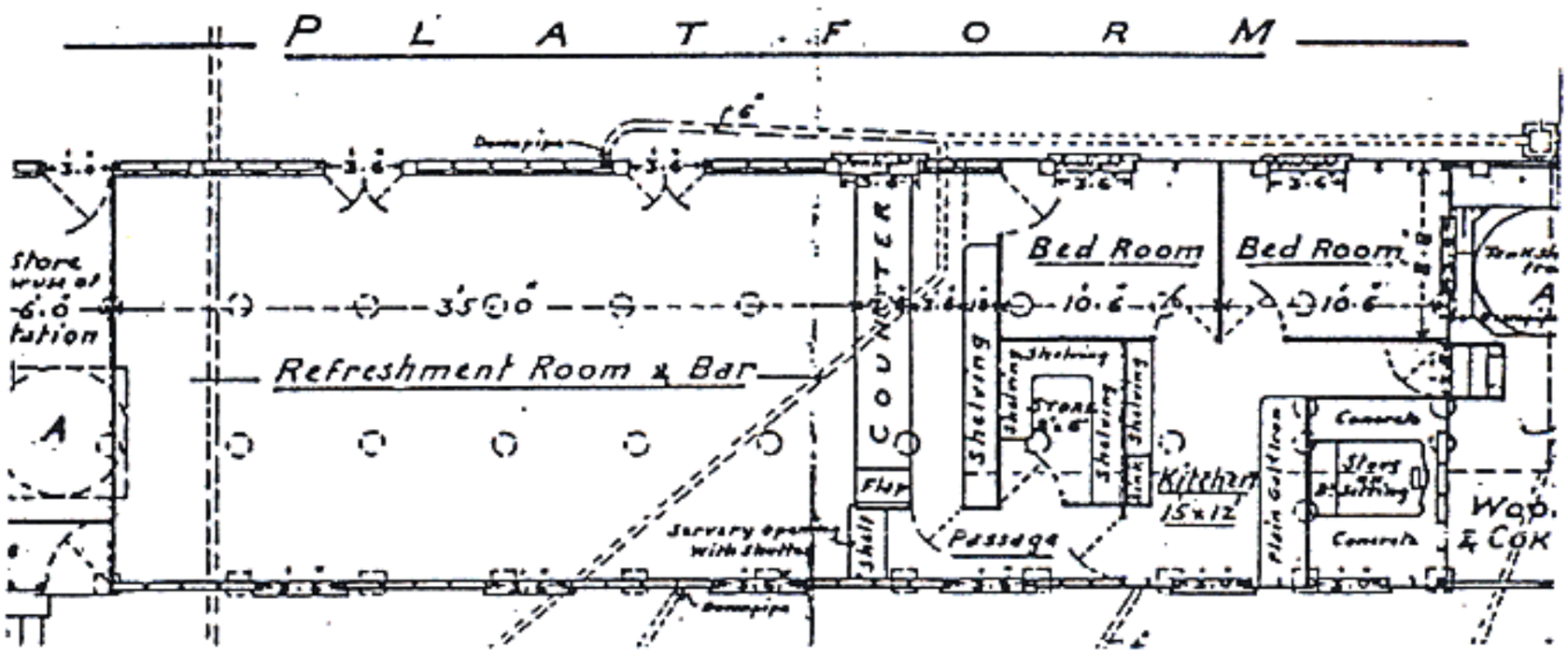
REFRESHMENT ROOM

Partially as a result of the popularity of these excursions and the use of the station as a terminus for the Brisbane and Longreach mail trains, a decision was made to build a refreshment room at Archer Park. Plans were drawn up in 1906, to extend the building at the Cambridge Street end of the station. The accommodation to be provided included a tea room, bar and quarters for refreshment room staff.*

*Plans, Chief Railway Architect's office.

There were several schemes documented, but the one built necessitated the repositioning of the tank stand adjacent to the existing building, the demolition of the picket fence and gates between the existing building and the lamp room, and the repositioning of the lamp room further along the platform. The new refreshment room opened in the second half of 1908.*

*Based on the fact that the Public Timetable dated 2/8/1908 did made no mention of a refreshment room whilst the 2/11/1908 timetable did. No department files have been found for the period 1900 to 1920.



Plan of Refreshment Room built in c1906. nts from Architectural Section Queensland Railways

Archer Park was one of numerous stations to have a refreshment room. It would not have had the same busy rush that other refreshment rooms that catered for meal stops on long distance trains experienced, but as a terminal station for mail trains it had a number of patrons wanting refreshments. On Sundays there were considerable numbers of through passengers between Mt Morgan and the seaside, and many patronised the refreshment rooms.

Refreshment rooms were popular for tea and ham sandwiches, pies, sausage rolls, drinks, and for confectionary, cigarettes and other items. The bar served liquor. The refreshment rooms at Archer Park were unique in Rockhampton until 1918 when an additional one was built at the Stanley Street station.

State Control of major rooms began on 1 January 1917, including Archer Park.. QPD 125,2804; Parliamentary Papers 1918,2,1775.
Archer Park was one of nine rooms leased to private individuals during 1929/30 but the Railway Department resumed control from 1 May 1937.

The Archer Park refreshment room was leased, as were all refreshment rooms until the Government established a State Railway Refreshment Room services in 1916. The lessee at Archer Park was T.B. Sanners who paid a rental of £220 per annum.

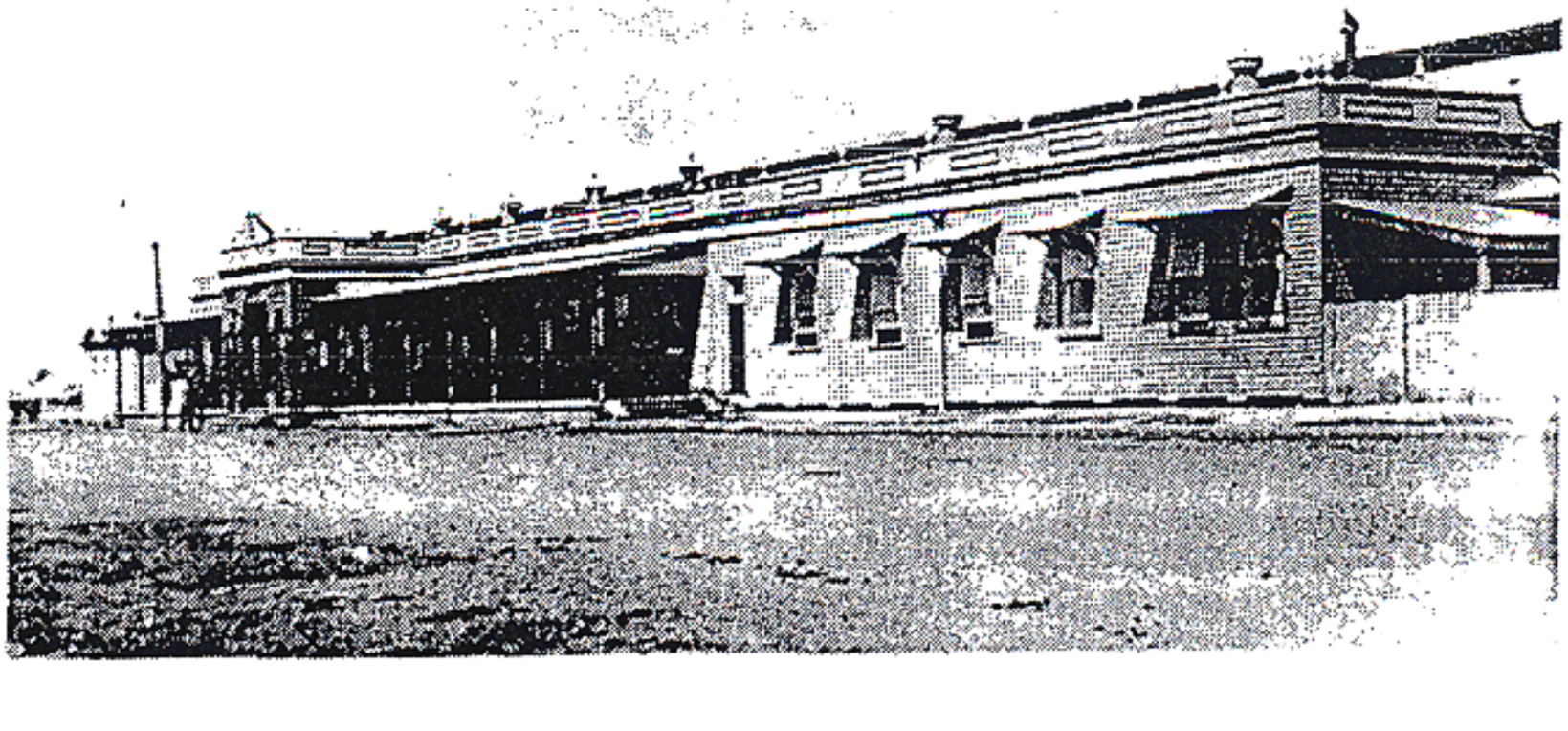


Photo showing the completed Refreshment Room C 1912. John Oxley Library

A BUSY STATION

Archer Park was a busy place with as many as 25 trains using the station on many days. The November 1912 Public Sheet Timetable shows the following trains, which ran every day Mondays to Saturdays unless shown. The goods trains all had passenger accommodation as other goods trains did not call into Archer Park. Mixed trains which took goods or freight, had a carriage for passengers as well. Many of the Lakes Creek trains commonly ran as passenger trains except when freight wagons were added.

5.40am Passenger train to Mount Morgan
6.20am Mixed train from Rockhampton to Mount Chalmers
6.38am Mail train from Longreach Tuesday and Friday only
6.48am Mixed train from Rockhampton to Lakes Creek
7.46am Mixed train from Lakes Creek to Rockhampton
8.10am Mixed train from Yeppoon to Rockhampton Monday only
8.13am Mixed train from Rockhampton to Lakes Creek
8.30am Passenger train from Emu Park to Mount Morgan Monday only
8.45am Mixed train from Westwood
8.52am Passenger train from Emu Park (Yeppoon connection) to R'ton (not Mondays)
9.50am Mixed train Lakes Creek to Rockhampton
9.55am Goods train from Rockhampton, Mon.Wed.Fri. to Emu Park, Thursday Yeppoon
10.00am Mixed train to Mount Morgan (not run Mondays)
10.20am Goods train from Mount Chalmers to Rockhampton
11.05am Goods train from Longreach (not Mondays but including Sundays)
12noon Mail train to Brisbane except Saturdays
12.23pm Mixed train from Rockhampton to Lakes Creek
1.35pm Mixed train from Lakes Creek to Rockhampton
2.10pm Goods train from Rockhampton to Mount Chalmers Saturdays only
2.10pm Goods train to Westwood Saturdays only
2.55pm Goods train from Rockhampton to Mount Chalmers (not run Saturdays)
3.15pm Passenger train from Mount Morgan to Emu Park Saturdays only
3.30pm Mixed train from Rockhampton to Yeppoon Saturdays only
3.40pm Mixed from Mount Morgan (not run Saturdays)
4.15pm Mail train from Brisbane
4.20pm Passenger train to Mount Morgan
4.28pm Mixed train Rockhampton to Lakes Creek (not run Saturdays)
5.10pm Mixed train to Westwood (not Saturdays)
5.20pm Passenger train from Rockhampton to Emu Park (connection Yeppoon)(not Sat)
5.28pm Mixed train from Mount Chalmers to Rockhampton Saturdays only
5.35pm Mixed train from Lakes Creek to Rockhampton (not Saturdays)
6.05pm Goods train from Emu Park Mon.Wed.Fri., Yeppoon Thursday
6.33pm Goods train from Mount Chalmers to Rockhampton (not Saturdays)
8.05pm Goods train to Longreach (Wednesday Blackall)
8.20pm Passenger train from Mount Morgan
9.30pm Mail train to Longreach Tuesday and Friday only.

On Sundays only the few trains were handled but the trains to Emu Park and Yeppoon often brought the biggest crowds of the week.

6.00am Passenger train to Mount Morgan
9.40am Passenger train from Mount Morgan to Emu Park
9.55am Passenger train from Rockhampton to Yeppoon
11.05am Goods train from Longreach
6.20pm Passenger train from Yeppoon to Rockhampton
6.35pm Passenger train from Emu Park to Mount Morgan
10.25pm Passenger train from Mount Morgan.*

*Timetable in possession of John Kerr.

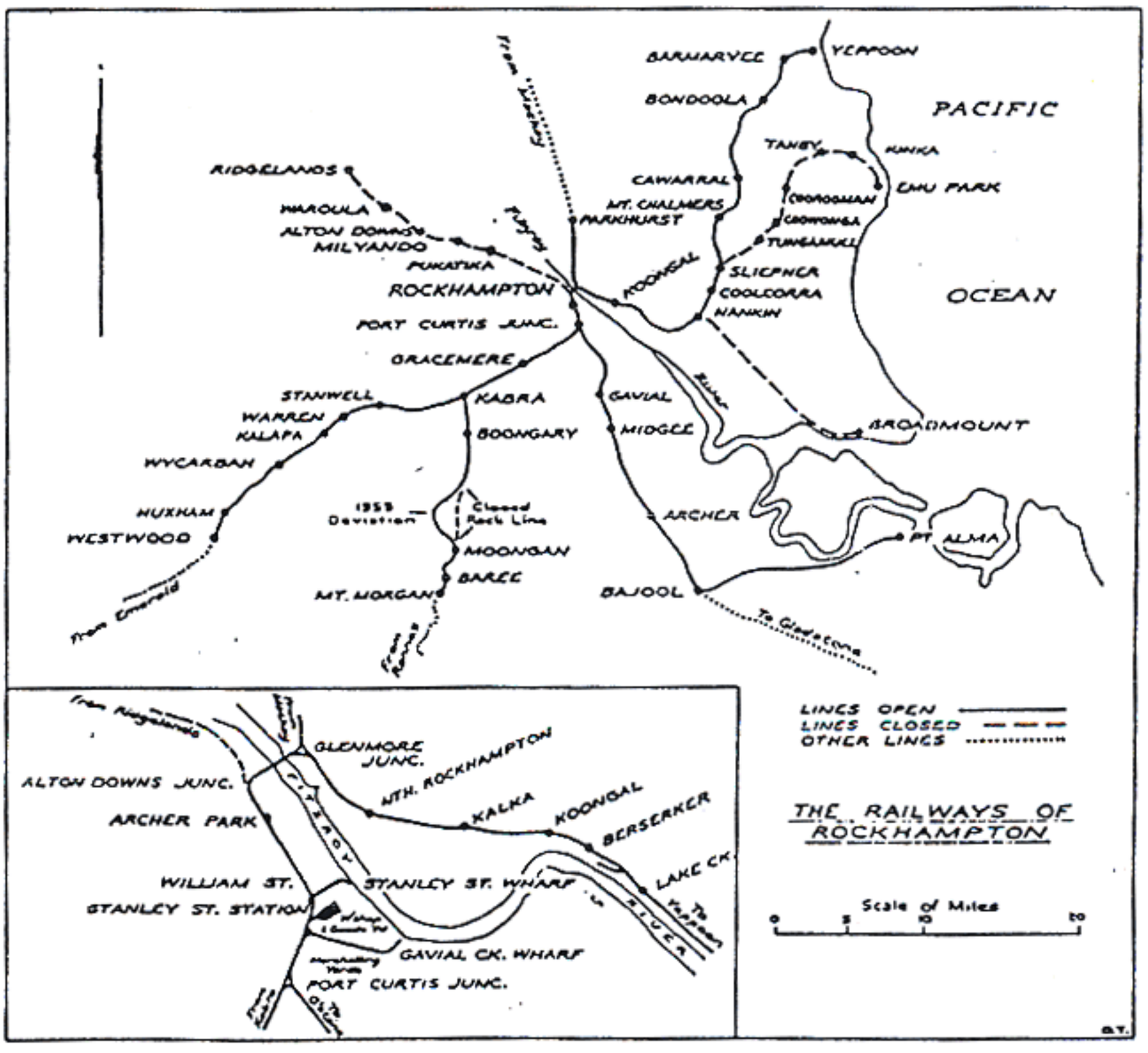
CENTRAL LINE EXPANSION

*See also John Kerr, Triumph of Narrow Gauge p.117.

*Annual Reports of the Commissioner for Railways.

The Central Line continued to expand. A branch line to the copper mining township at Mount Chalmers opened in 1908 and to Yeppoon in 1909.* From 1 July 1913, the first section of the North Coast Line towards Mackay opened, and a train left Rockhampton at 10am for Jardine, returning at 2.10pm. It was extended to Yaamba three months later, and the rails gradually crept on towards Mackay. The Alton Downs branch opened officially in October 1916, meaning an extra mixed train passing through Archer Park each way on several days each week.

New facilities were constructed at the workshops to service the increasing number of rolling stock on the line. Of these the most important was a new 52 stall roundhouse completed in 1914 to house engines at the Stanley Street workshops.

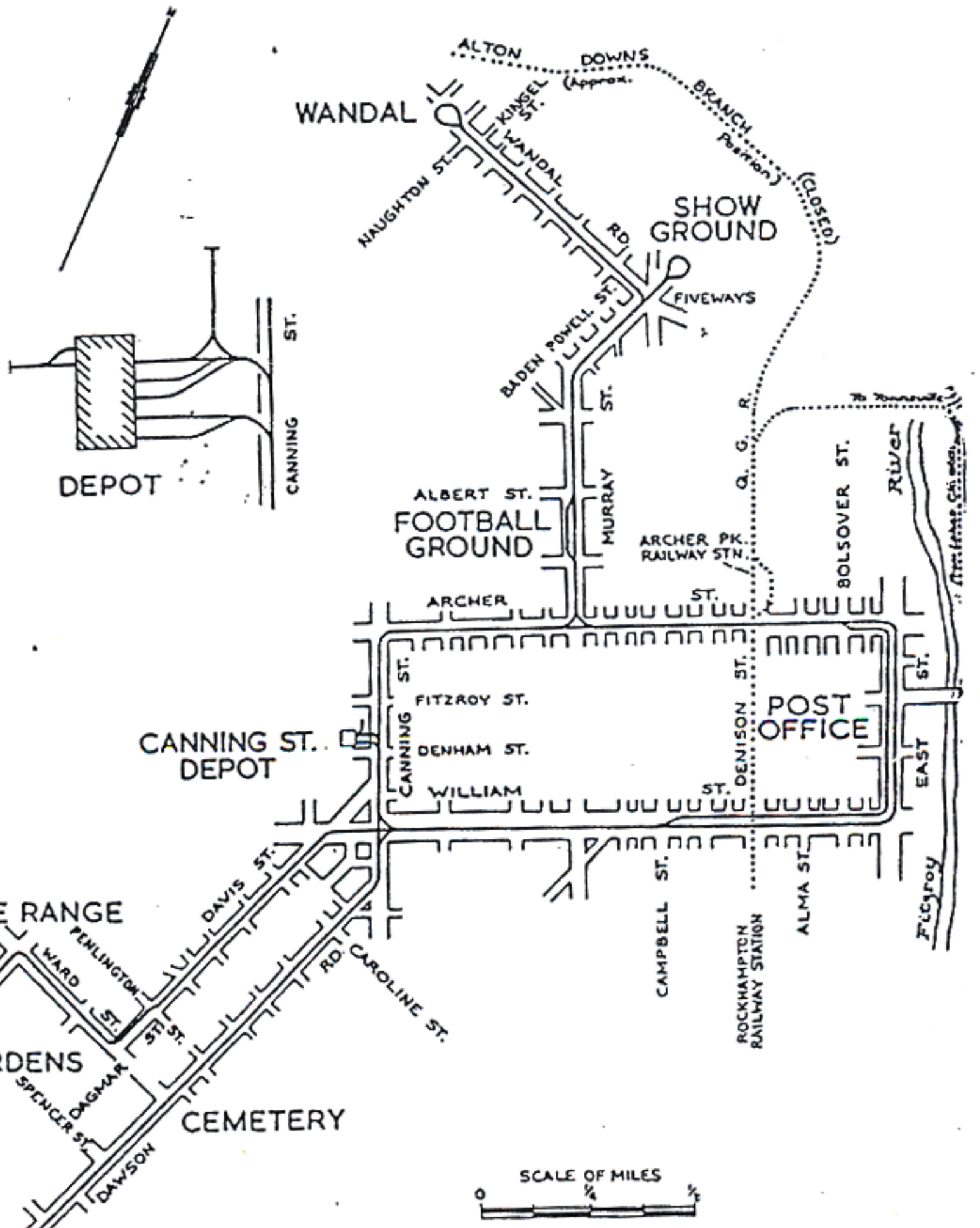


Railway lines in and about Rockhampton. Knowles,J.W., Provincial Suburban Trains in Queensland. Australian Railway Historical Society Bulletin. October 1972

A PROVINCIAL AND SUBURBAN TRAIN SERVICE

Archer Park was the centre of an important and thriving provincial passenger rail system. It drew commuters and day trippers, from railway stations on the lines to Westward, Mt Morgan, Alton Downs, Yeppoon and Emu Park. As well, it was part of an efficient and innovative suburban transportation network facilitated in part by the railway line in Denison Street and supplementing the City Council's tramway system.

By 1907 the wealth and size of Rockhampton was such, that the city fathers were able to plan a tramway system to service the city centre and the outlying suburban areas. The system which opened in 1909, used French made 'Purrey' trams and trailers. They were steam powered and ran on the same 3ft 6inch gauge as the railway.



ROCKHAMPTON TRAMWAYS 1909-1939

Rockhampton Tramways 1909-1939. Knowles,J.W., Australian Railway Historical Society Bulletin. June 1974

The trams were a source of pride to the citizens of Rockhampton who considered their very presence gave Rockhampton a certain sophistication which ably justified their 'city' status. On all accounts the opinion was warranted as the system was efficient and the enterprise successful.*

*Mc Donald.L, Rockhampton A History of City and District, p343

In 1914 the Railway Department adapted its Lakes Creek railway service to a rail-train service using a similar steam powered Purrey tram on the existing railway track. This allowed for a more frequent service and stops at street corners as required. The service, which ran from the Lakes Creek abattoir to the Stanley Street station, did not go into Archer Park but it stoped nearby.

There was a reasonable demand, as the Lakes Creek abattoir had a very large labour force, and the Council trams did not venture across the Fitzroy to service north side residents. It ran fourteen times daily making fourteen stops in the six mile trip. The journey took 25 to 30 minutes. A limited service to Parkhurst was added in 1920.

In many ways the regular railway in Denison Street gave the appearance of a street tramway. All trains were required to carry a bell which the fireman had to ring continuously while it was moving along the street as a warning to traffic, and the train was limited to a maximum of 10 miles per hour. All suburban trains stoped at the intersection of William and Denison Streets for the convenience of passengers, where, although tickets could be purchased bearing the name, there was no indication of a station - not even a sign board

Other trains and later rail motors were also required to make frequent stops along Denison Street. For example both the passenger train and the rail motor to Yaamba were scheduled to stop at all level crossings from Stanley Street to Glenmore Junction if required.*

*Knowles,J.W., Provincial Suburban Trains in Queensland. Australian Railway Historical Society Bulletin. October 1972 p194-216.

The tram-train service was discontinued in 1933 & the City Council tram service in 1939 because of bus and motor vehicle competition.

*ibid

Trams in East Street C 1923.
John Oxley Library

THE DEMISE OF ARCHER PARK

Archer Park platform was too short and the layout of the track too restricted to handle long mail and mixed trains. Bringing such trains into Archer Park often meant that the ends of the train were over the crossover and blocked the main line. In addition, it was impossible in such situations, for the signalman to have a clear line of sight to the engine driver, necessitating communication by hand signal should the driver be required to shunt to clear the main line. The frequency of such trains increased when the extension of the railway from Rockhampton to Mackay and further north was completed in 1921.

The General Manager of the Central Division, John Chambers, investigated the problems of long trains at Archer Park in August 1922. He found a simple solution to the visibility problem, by recommending the removal of sufficient of the galvanised iron sheeting from the western wall of the arcade to enable passing trains to be seen from the platform. He was unable to resolve the problems associated with long trains, as it was impracticable to extend Archer Park or provide the necessary facilities to cater for such long trains.

*Secretary's File 1924/1076, Batch 1, Rockhampton New Passenger Station, A/12580, QSA. See also Annual Report of the Commissioner 1924-25 p51, 1925-26 p57, 1926-27 p49, 1927-28 p57.

Instead, to handle mail trains to Mackay, Townsville and Cairns along the North Coast Line, Stanley Street station was expanded in 1923 to provide two 600 feet long platforms, twice the length of those at Archer Park. The new facilities were preparatory to building major extensions to the Stanley Street station between 1924 and 1928, which clearly recognised it was the major station in Rockhampton.*

Archer Park C 1923 from The Queenslander 23/12/1923. John Oxley Library

SIGNALLING, INTERLOCKING AND RELOCATION OF THE SIGNAL CABIN

The Station Master at Archer Park was also responsible for the operation of the points at nearby Glenmore Junction and the branch line to Alton Downs.

Glenmore Junction, which was constructed in 1913, was near the northern side of the bridge near Glenmore Road where the North Coast Line left the double track. The points and signals were interlocked and the key of the signal cabin was kept at Archer Park.

*General Appendix 1916 Clause 190 and subsequent issues.

The Alton Downs junction was near North Street where the single line branch diverged from the double tracks in Denison Street. It was constructed in 1916, and a small cabin was provided for Archer Park staff and equipment.*

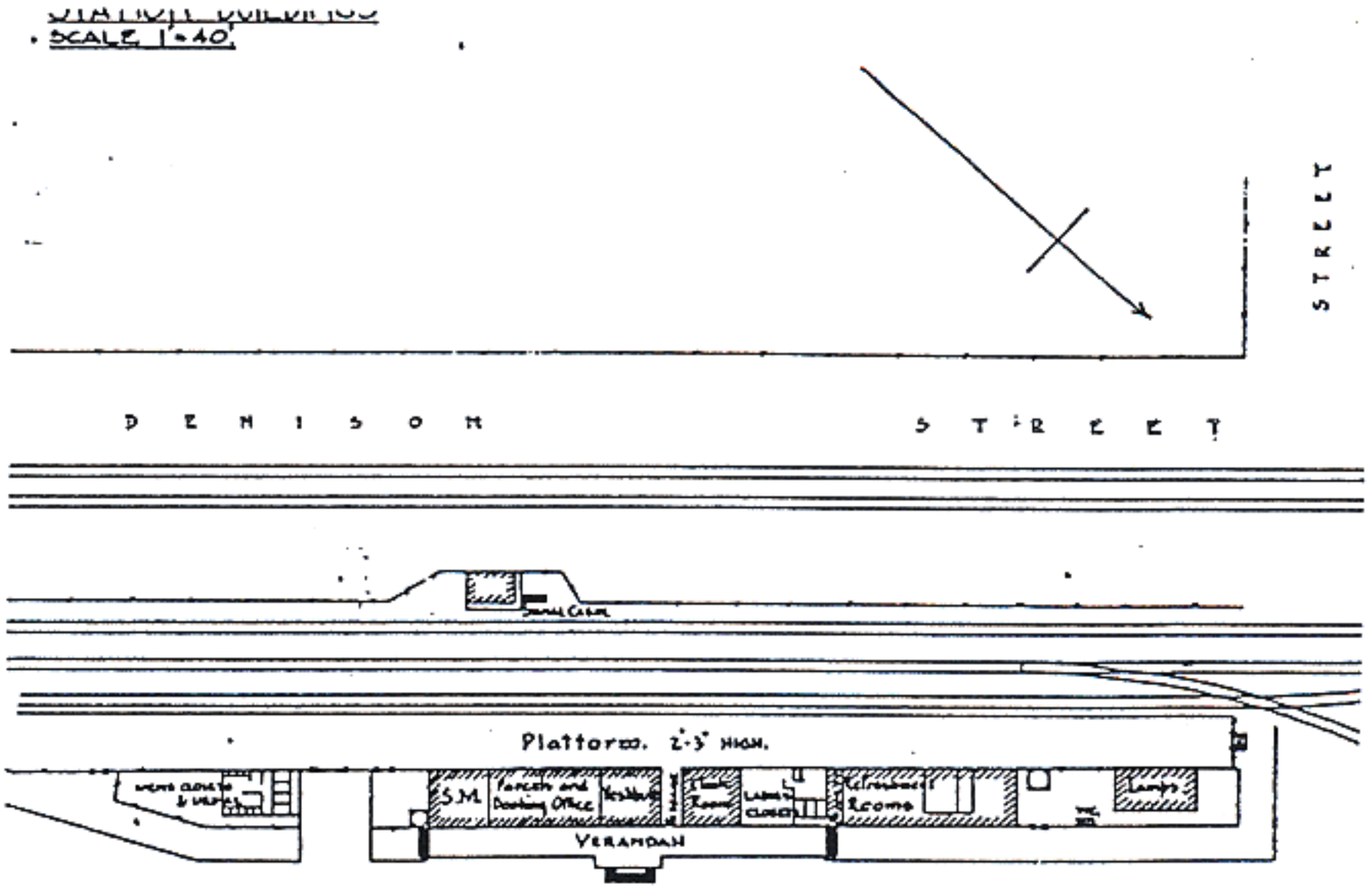
*General Appendix 1925 Clause 165 and subsequent issues.

Although Archer Park did not handle goods traffic, a private siding was provided for the Rockhampton cooperative Dairy Company in late 1921 to their site at the corner of Cambridge and Denison Streets.*

*It was in use by November 1921, see Weekly Notice No. 694.
The points to the siding were removed in early 1942, but recent inspection showed that some of the track and possibly the butter factory building remain in situ.

To provide a minimum five chain radius curve the siding had to be connected to the loop line rather than the track serving the platform, and this necessitated additions to the signalling and interlocking and moving a set of catchpoints.*

*Chief Engineer's Office Files, STN 52 Batch 2.



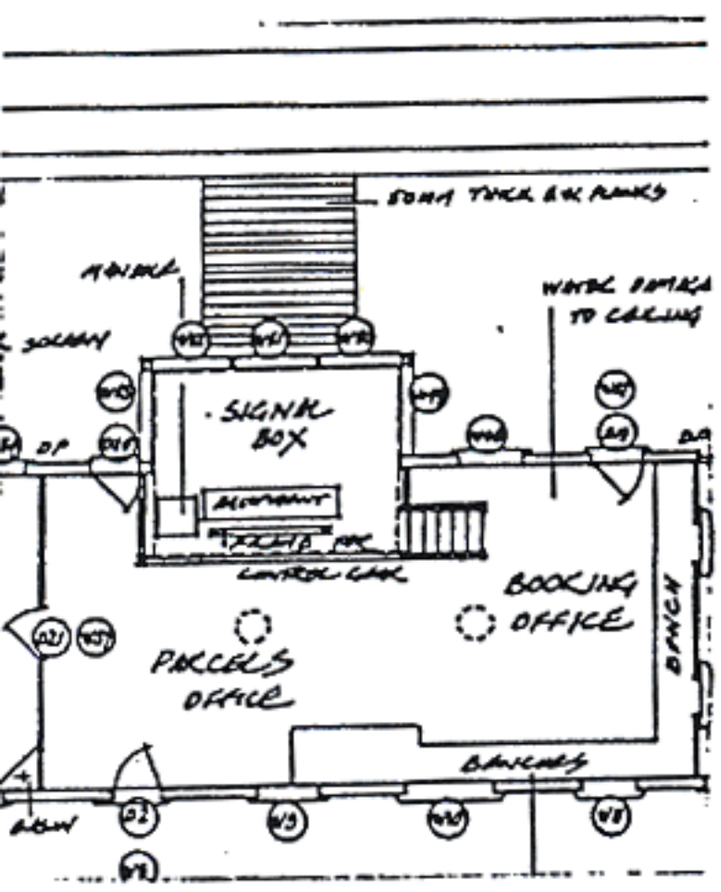
Drawing of Archer Park C1925
nts Queensland Railways

In 1922 John Chambers, as part of his review of the problems associated with long trains at Archer Park, recommended that consideration be given to the installation of automatic signalling to the main line and moving the signal cabin at Archer Park to the platform to save the wages of two signalmen. This was a very early consideration of the use of automatic signalling as it was quite new to Queensland having only been recently installed between Brisbane and Sherwood on the Main Line.

There were insurmountable problems with installing an comparatively novel automatic system to control the Junction Railway in Rockhampton, including the reliability of circuits on track buried into a roadway, and the inability of an automatic system to control traffic over the Alexandra Bridge which was subject to load restrictions. After much investigation, a decision to drop the proposal was finally made in 1924 when it was also decided not to move the signal cabin to the platform. *

*Chief Engineer's Files STN 52 Batch 2 and Works File WS372 Batch 1 (some correspondence is common to both.

In the 1950s Queensland Railways failed to earn as much revenue



New Position of Signal Cabin. Measured Drawing Robert Riddel Architect 1993

as expenditure in two successive years, 1951-52 and 1952-53. Road competition was increasing and Archer Park was experiencing declining traffic. Approval was given in early 1955 to replace a clerk and two adult porters at Archer Park with a night officer and two lad porters, saving £700 per annum.

It was obvious, as it had been in 1922, that much greater savings could be made, another £1400 per annum, by dispensing with the two signalmen, but this could not be done unless the cabin was moved onto the platform at an estimated cost of £2200. The Station Masters, Assistant Station Masters and Night Officers Union who considered this move retrograde, sent a deputation to Transport Minister Duggan in April and were successful in having the signal cabin retained.

A year later, with another loss in 1955-56, the General Manager, J.R. Allison reopened the issue ..*in view of the necessity to enforce strict economy.* Commissioner Moriarty quickly approved the transfer of the interlocking frame to the station at an estimated cost of £1002. The Signalmen's Union protested at the loss of jobs and saw the Commissioner on 17 August. Moriarty had inspected Archer Park the day before and was satisfied there was no safety risk in the move. The work was put in hand and completed in December 1956.*

*Correspondence in Works File WS372 Batch 1.

DECLINE OF ARCHER PARK

After a loss in 1955-56, and the relocation of the signal cabin into the Station Master's Office, the General Manager also proposed withdrawing the Night Officer (F. Kilpatrick) and the Lad Porter leaving a staff of just Station Master and Porter, and having only local trains and rail motors call into Archer Park. This was approved in January 1957.

From 28 January 1957 the only trains to stop at Archer Park became the train to Mount Morgan, the mixed train to Mackay on Sundays, the St. Lawrence rail motors and the Emu Park and Yeppoon services. Other trains either bypassed Archer Park, or started from Stanley Street, or in the case of the Westwood rail motor, from the quasi station in William Street.*

*Secretary to General Manager Rockhampton 16 January 1957, Works File WS372 Batch 1: Weekly Notices 4/57, 5/57.

Archer Park was quiet except for weekend seaside excursions in summer times. The station was much larger than needed for the business transacted. Part of the area was used for the Appeals Court, where employees appealing against promotions or against fines, had their appeals heard in a judicial atmosphere. Other spare space was used for Departmental record storage. The refreshment rooms was licensed to trade from 10am to 10pm and continued to operate although most revenue came from local residents, rather than from mail train passengers for whom it had been built.

The Alton Downs branch line had closed in 1955, the Emu Park branch closed in 1964, and the St. Lawrence rail motor ceased in January 1968, leaving only the Sunday night mixed from Rockhampton to Mackay and the Yeppoon services using Archer Park. When the Yeppoon service was withdrawn in late 1969, Archer Park was closed as a station from Monday 2 February 1970.*

*Sunshine Express December 1969 p154; Acting Secretary Neeson to General Manager 23/1/1970, works File WS.372 Batch 1.

As there were numerous private sidings to be shunted between Archer Park and Parkhurst, Fourth class Assistant Station Master Brian Bressington who was at Archer Park, was retained and was...*required to operate a motor vehicle between Archer Park and Parkhurst and supervise traffic operations generally in this area.**

Bressington continued to rent the Station Master's House in Denison Street until 1979 when it was freeholded and sold

*Sec to GM CD, 3.3.71, QSA Batch 3, WS 372 & Lease Archer Park QRX, File 76/115, Rockhampton General Manager's Office A Room Series, Railway Historical Centre.

ARCHER PARK AS A DOOR-TO-DOOR FREIGHT TERMINAL

Tenders were invited in January 1970 for the lease of Archer Park Railway Station but they did not attract a suitable leasee.* Instead a decision was made to use the building for departmental use with the Commissioner's proviso ..*that no money is to be spent on the maintenance of this building.**

*QPD 5 December 1969 p2183.

*Secretary to General Manager 5 March 1970, Works File WS.372 Batch 1.

Queensland Railways was in the process of developing a door to door freight service in conjunction with private enterprise and Archer Park was modified and made into a freight terminal. Alteration included removing every second post on the Denison Street side of the carriage shade to provide access for road vehicles to wagons under the shade, and the area between the main line and the Archer Park lines was excavated and filled with material suitable for carrying heavy road transports.

The station master's office continued to be used by the Assistant Station Master, but freight companies used some of the rooms of the station building for storage. By February 1971 a number of floor boards in the vestibule had broken as a result of using heavily laden trolleys, and the company involved agreed to pay for repairs and to renew the floor with heavier boards.*

*B.G. Jackson 17 February and 6 March 1971 in File 76/115.

The building quickly began to look shabby, and in September 1971, after a request by the City Council, the General manager asked for minor essential repairs to fascias and guttering, for the removal of the paling fences, and for painting the street elevation.

*Correspondence between General Manager Rockhampton and Secretary, Brisbane in File 76/115.

Filling had been placed on the northern end of the platform to allow motor vehicles to use the platform.* By October 1972 the platform was sinking and the concrete generally was breaking up under the weight of cranes and fork lifts in use.

*Secretary to General Manager 22 November 1971, File 76/115.

In January 1974 Queensland Railfast Express Pty Ltd trading as QRX. was given a lease of the whole area north of the station vestibule. Permission was given for the removal of the partitions in the old refreshment room and the strengthening of the floor.*

*Minute 401 Rockhampton 24 June 1974 agreed to toilet, removal of partitions and new doorways at QRX expense; two months later QRX agreed to pay for the floor strengthening File 76/115, see Secretary to GM 16 August 1974 & seq.

At the end of 1976 QRX decided to make Archer Park its headquarters for its freight operation in Rockhampton rather than the alternative site it had been offered at Kawana on the north side of the river.

A Museum

The noise and inconvenience of freight operations, resulted in residents of the area protesting to the Town Clerk in February 1982 asking that the facility be moved. The Commissioner assured the Council of the importance of the operation to Queensland Rails viability, and pointed out that the volume of activity had diminished with the transfer of refrigerated container operations to a central facility in Bolsover Street goods yards. The Commissioner also declined Council's request to turn the station into a museum while the area was in demand for freight facilities.*

*Chief Engineer's File STN 52 Batch 7.

The Alexandra Bridge has been a matter of restriction on trains since at least 1922 when C16 or heavier engines were not permitted to pass on the bridge and trains hauled by two engines were not allowed to enter the bridge while another train was on it. Restrictions on the bridge were not removed until late 1975 when the two lines over the bridge were made single.* Plans have been long debated for a replacement bridge, in line with Stanley Street. This would allow the eliminating of the Denison Street line for which the Mayor of Rockhampton, Rex Pilbeam, strongly agitated in 1977.*

*General Manager Rockhampton 28 August 1922, Chief Engineer's File Batch 2 STN 52; General Appendix 1935 Clause 247; Weekly Notice 42/75.

*See for example QPD 9 December 1969 p2215, 20 August 1975 p58-59, no definite plans.

The Rockhampton City Council continued to pressure the Railway Department to have the station turned into a museum.* An alternative site for QRX at Port Curtis Junction had been found, and the Commissioner supported the museum concept, especially as the building had been given an A classification by the National Trust. In 1989 QRX recognised that its tenure at Archer Park was limited, and was able to strike a deal under which Queensland Railway financed its move to the new site.*

*Deputation 21 November 1984 to Commissioner in Rockhampton, Chief Engineer's File STN 52 Batch 11 and subsequent correspondence.

*Annual Report of Queensland Railways 1991-1992 p50, Special Suspense Account details.

Archer Park closed for the second time at midnight Sunday 14 January 1990 when QRX vacated the premises. Two electric and three mechanical semaphore signals at Archer Park were removed; four mechanical semaphore signals were made inoperative and crossed off; and the crossovers, turnouts and catchpoints were placed out of use, being spiked and clipped for mainline traffic only. Archer Park ceased to be a block section on the double line. As a station, it had ceased to exist.

On the 1st May 1990 Queensland Railway handed over Archer Park station to the Rockhampton City Council on the understanding that the building would be made into a museum.*

*Rockhampton Morning Bulletin, 2/5/1990.

ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

THE CONCEPT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Cultural significance is the term used to describe that quality of a place which makes it of value to society. The Australian Heritage Commission Act 1975 defines the National Estate as consisting of ... *those places, being components of the natural environment of Australia or the cultural environment of Australia, that have aesthetic, historic, scientific or social significance or other special value for future generations as well as for the present community.* This definition has become the Australian bench-mark and the basis for similar definitions used in state heritage legislation throughout Australia.

The criteria for the assessment of cultural significance has undergone an evolutionary process of development and refinement in the fifteen years since the National Estate Act was passed, and the Commission has continually reviewed, updated and republished their standard criteria. Professional organisations such as Australian ICOMOS* have also produced guidelines for the assessment of cultural significance* as has Dr J.S.Kerr in his work, The Conservation Plan.

*International Council On Monuments and Sites.

*published in the document Guidelines to the Burra Charter: Cultural Significance

The criteria used in the assessment of Archer Park Railway Station is based on the recommendations of these documents and flows from an understanding of the history of the building. It may be summarised by considering the following questions

Does the station have important associations or links with

historic events
the citizens of Rockhampton
the development of Rockhampton
important people
railway development or
with its surroundings

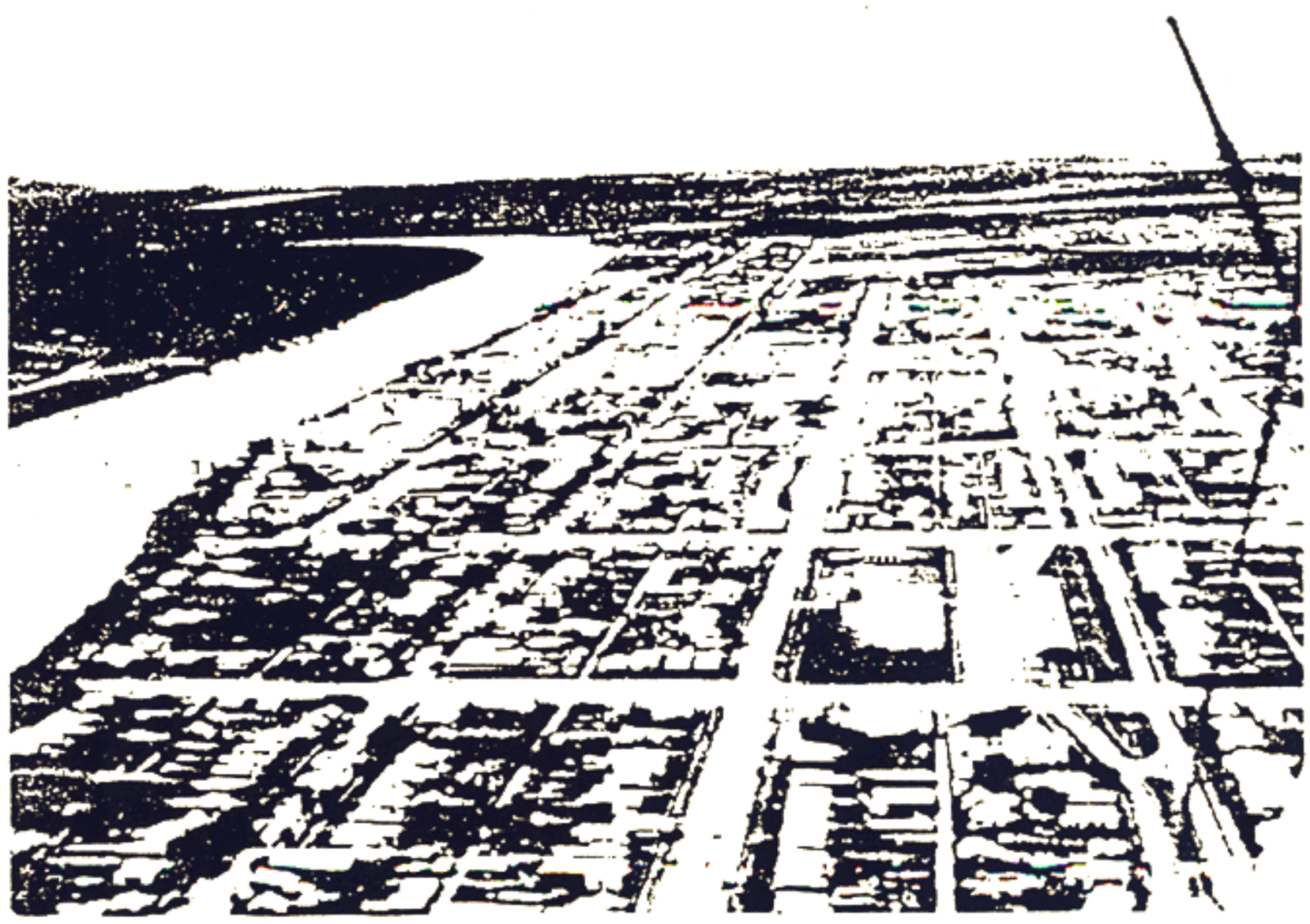
Does the building fabric provide evidence which demonstrates

the usage of the station
an excellence in design
innovative technology or
the work of an important architect

DISCUSSION OF SIGNIFICANCE ARCHER PARK

1. As a component of the railway in Denison Street

Archer Park station was conceived and built as part of the Junction Railway which connected North Rockhampton with the Stanley Street terminus. The most distinguishing feature of this line is the track that was purposely laid down the middle of Denison Street, a major thoroughfare of the city of Rockhampton.



Aerial Photograph of Rockhampton C1930. John Oxley Library

In Queensland a number of branch lines run beside roads for comparatively short distances, but only at Bundaberg, Rockhampton, Townsville and Cairns do trains run down the middle of a street. At Bundaberg the distance is short, and it is a single track. At Cairns the street is more like two separate streets either side of a single track which is well separated from the road. At Townsville, a double track runs down one side of the road but is fenced off from it. In all cases the lines are not main lines nor the streets main thoroughfares.

Elsewhere in Australia there are, or were, situations where railway lines run down streets, as in Wedderburn in Victoria, Yass in New South Wales, and Port Pirie and Semaphore in South Australia. Of these the Port Pirie line (which no longer runs) was the most similar in composition to the Denison Street line, however it was not a through line and ran only to a port terminus.

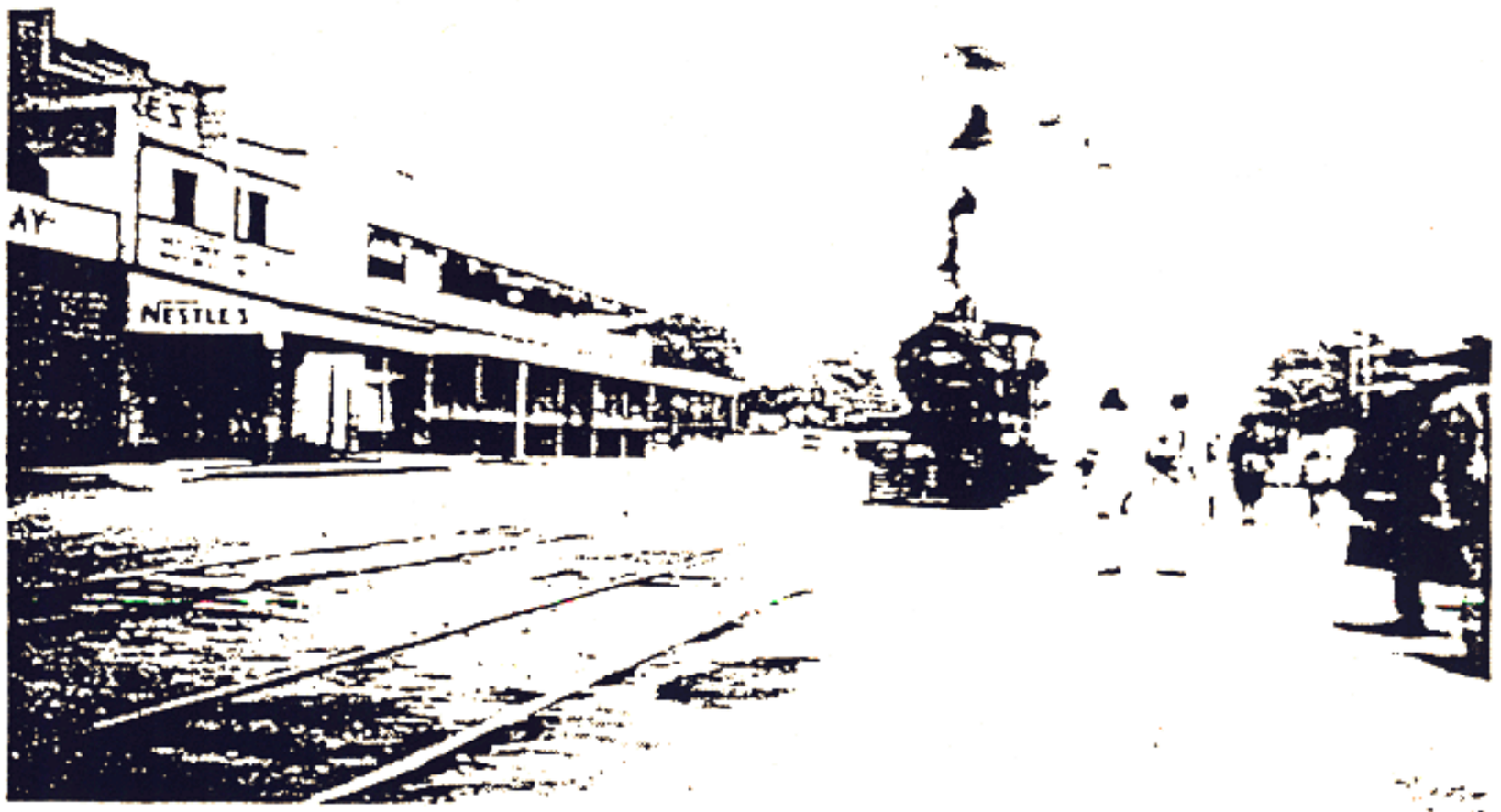
The Denison Street line, is one of a comparatively small number of railway lines that run down a major street of a town or city in Australia, and is the most significance.

Rockhampton's success as a port city was dependant on the railway. The vision of its citizens since 1860 was of a port serving a vast hinterland. By 1892, with the expansion of the last section of the Central Line to Longreach, this dream had been largely fulfilled,* and Rockhampton was the seaboard terminus of a railway servicing a vast inland area.

*Mc Donald, L. Rockhampton: a History of City and Districts .p165

Railways were then, and still are now, of great importance to the economy of Rockhampton and the lives of its citizens. The positioning of the railway line in Denison Street reinforces that importance, and ensures that it is an integral part of the city for all to see and use. As a busy* freight and passenger line it transports people and goods to and from the north, and livestock to the Lakes Creek meat works from the west.

It is claimed that a record 144 trains passed the Archer Park Signal Cabin in one 24 hour period during the war. As told to J. Kerr by the son of a Rockhampton signalman.



Dennison Street 1920. Yepoon train picking up passengers. John Oxley Library

As a commuter line it was part of everyday life. It allowed day trippers and workers from outlying areas on the Yeppoon, Emu Park, Alton Downs, Westwood and Mount Morgan lines, convenient access to the city centre. Disembarkation was either at the central station of Archer Park, the non - station in William Street or in some cases at individual street corners.* For suburban passengers it allowed for the operation of a train line as a tram line and supplemented the Rockhampton City Council's tramway system. From 1909 to the late 1930's the Lakes Creek and later Parkhurst tram-train, conveniently connected the suburbs of North Rockhampton with street corners in Denison Street.

*For example the Yeppoon Railmotor C1930

Although the Bulletin prophesied *...it will be an astonishing thing if the town does not speedily see reason to regret the light hearted action of the Council* *and it was Mayor Pilbeam's and others wish to have the line removed, it has remained and become part of the fabric of the city. It has considerable novelty and streetscape value, and is an important component of the urban design of Rockhampton.

*As quoted in Mc Donald, L. Rockhampton: a History of City and Districts p170

Archer Park Station was built as a 'central railway station' on the Denison Street railway line, and its creation and use are totally dependant upon this fact. If the line had been routed to the west as Stanley wished, a central railway station for Rockhampton would have not been needed.

Archer Park Station is significant because it is an integral part of the Denison Street railway line which is of considerable importance to the city of Rockhampton, and is unique in Australia.

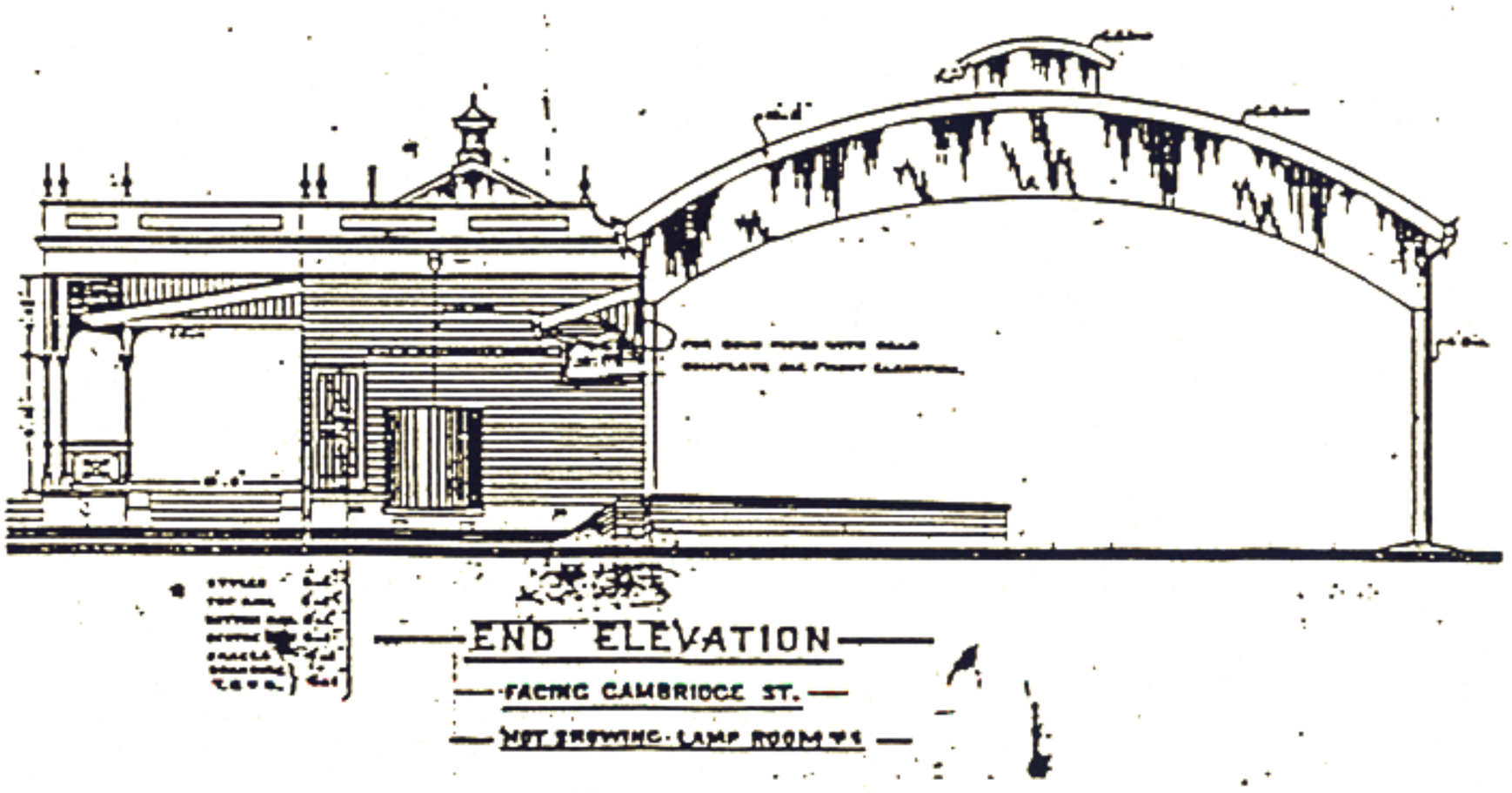
2 Its design

Henrick Hansen the designer of Archer Park, immigrated from Hamburg to Maryborough in 1873*. Little is known of his architectural training or of his early work, except that he practiced briefly as an architect in Maryborough prior to 1877, when he began his long and productive employment as an architect with the Queensland Railways.*

*from immigration records Qld Genealogical Society

*Watson D and McKay J. A Directory of Queendland Architects, p99.

Until around 1900, Hansen was responsible for the documentation of most railway buildings. His output was impressive and varied, consisting of both standard drawings and individual designs for all classes and types of railway buildings.



Western Elevatiion Archer Park, from the original drawings 1898. Architectural Section , Queensland Railways

In 1892 Hansen documented a carriage shade for Mareeba. Carriage shades were structures adjacent to the platform used for the temporary shelter of carriages at stations. The Mareeba carriage shade was distinctive because it would appear to be the first time that such a structure a employed a curved roof.

As was normally the case the Mareeba shade stopped short of covering the platform which was given a separate awning. An exception to this, was the cast iron Stanley Street station at Rockhampton imported from England in 187?, which had a gabled shade that extended to cover the platform as well as the tracks. At Archer Park, Hansen repeated this concept but used a large curved shade constructed with iron trusses supported on timber posts which, on the platform side, were an integral part of the station structure. The ridge was vented, and the roof and the northern wall were covered with galvanised iron sheeting. The whole structure, combined with the decorative station building, was a distinctive and stylistic piece of work.

There followed quickly in the same year, three similar designs for new stations and integral curved shades - at Cunnamulla, Winton and Mt Morgan. They were identical but smaller than Archer Park, except that the decoration to the front facade of the station was slightly different, and there were minor differences to the arrangement of rooms

Hansen designed Emerald station in early 1900, which was similar to Archer Park, but with a platform awning in lieu of a carriage shade. From 1901 onwards he was mostly occupied with the documentation of Ipswich Workshops. In 1904 he was retrenched along with others in the design office, as a cost saving measure to alleviate a shortage of funds. Hansen was 61 years old

The dismissal of Hansen and the influence of younger architects such as Vincent Price, heralded a change in architectural style in

the railway drawing office. Hansen had designed in the now pass'e Victorian style. The new style that was heralded by J.J. Clark's sketch plan for Townsville station in 189? and illustrated in the design of Charters Towers in 1901, was of an vastly different Edwardian character.

*Of these only Mt Morgan and Archer Park remain

Archer Park, Cunnamulla, Winton and Mt Morgan* with their distinctive curved shades were never to be repeated.

Archer Park railway station is significant for its use of a curved carriage and platform shade.

3 Social

When Archer Park was being built, railways were already the pre-eminent form of transportation in Queensland, and part of the fabric of everyday life. They continued to be so, while the alternative was horse drawn or slow steam-powered vehicles, on poorly made or unformed dirt roads. Even trains on narrow gauge, with a low standard of track (for cheapness), were many times faster than road transport, and far more comfortable. This advantage was only slowly whittled away as motor cars were introduced in the 1920's, roads were bituminised and bridges built or raised above flood levels.

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*Richards,J. & McKenzie,J.M. The Railway Station: a Social History. p1

The importance of railway transport to society at the time of the construction of Archer Park, and for the next ten to twenty years, cannot be underestimated. It was a cheap and efficient form of public transport available to all, providing new and exciting opportunities for travel and communication. It was the triumph of the industrial revolution and the culmination of the Victorian era - the essence of the Victorian ideals of progress and civilisation. Railway stations were more than mere departure points, they were gateways to the seaside, to the country or to the wider world.*

*Knowles,J.W. The Rockhampton City Tramway-Australian Railway Historical Bulletin Vol xxv June 1974

Archer Park station was the focus of railway activity in the central city area of Rockhampton, and was the busiest passenger station in Rockhampton.* It was convenient to the business district and was used by a large number of suburban passengers. In this regard it was easily the busiest non-metropolitan suburban station in Queensland and possibly in Australia. It was also very busy as a general passenger station for other destinations, as well as for the important tasks of dispatching and receiving mail, newspapers and parcels. At holiday times it was exceptionally busy with passengers travelling to the seaside at Emu Park and Yeppoon.

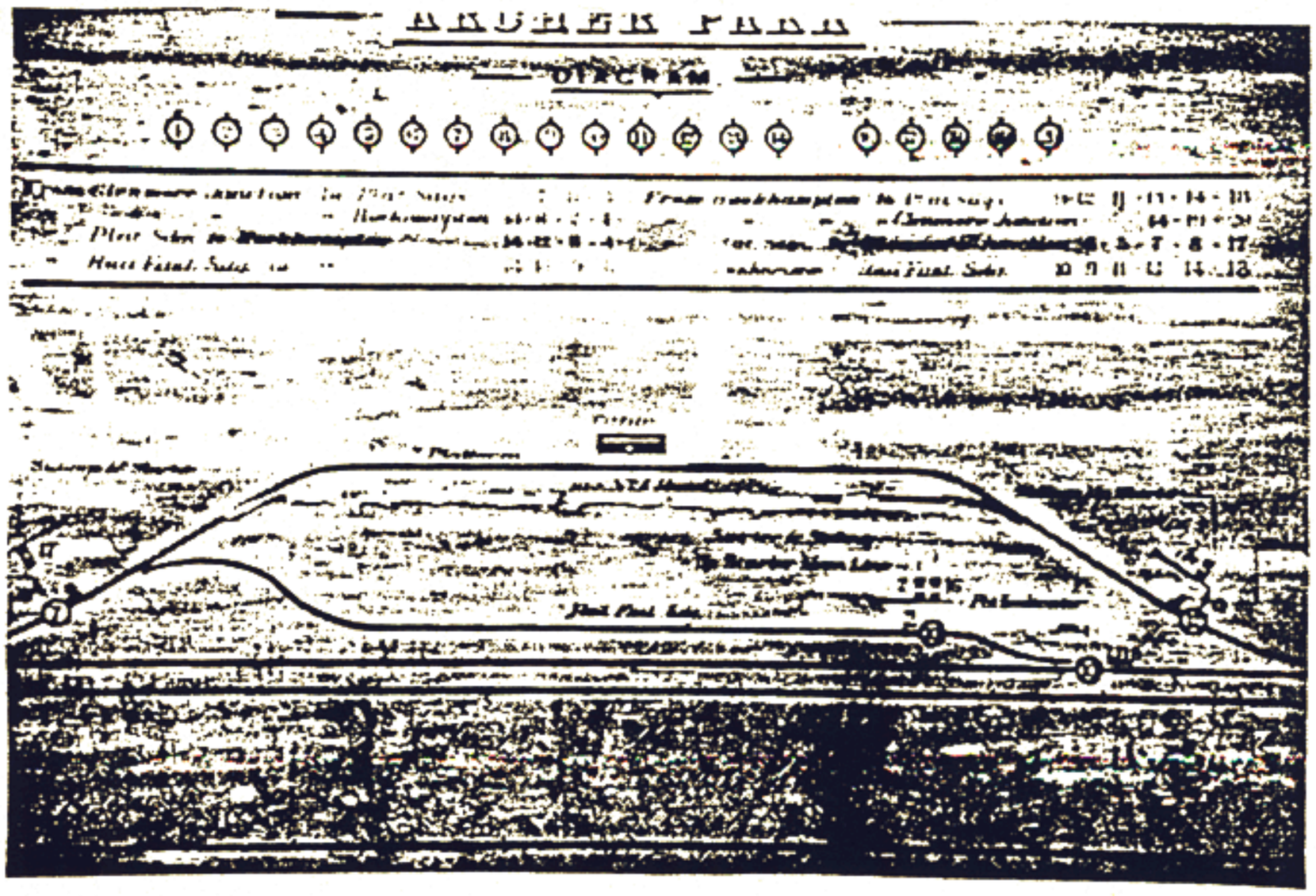
Archer Park railway station is significant as the main passenger station for Rockhampton at a time when railways were the pre-eminent form of transport

4 Signalling Features

To understand the importance of interlocking, it is essential to understand something of the controls by which trains are diverted from one track to another via points. Signals are provided to warn drivers that it is, or is not, safe to proceed. Green indicates that it is safe, yellow, to proceed at caution, and red not to proceed.

Where there are a number of signals and points, making sure signals and points agreed became a problem. Mechanical interlocking was developed so that by grouping levers for points and signals together at a single point or cabin, levers could be joined in a way that prevented a signal lever being pulled to clear, if the points for that movement were not set to agree with the signals. When electrical signalling replaces mechanical interlocking, relays are used to create the same fail-safe conditions.

Mechanical interlocking was adopted at the major stations in Southern Queensland starting in 1880, only a year or so after the first installation in New South Wales. As there was less traffic than in New South Wales and much of it at lower speeds, interlocking was not employed to the same extent in Queensland. Neverless there were substantial installations and that at Archer Park was moderately large by Queensland standards.



Framed Diagram of signals in Signal Cabin at Archer Park.

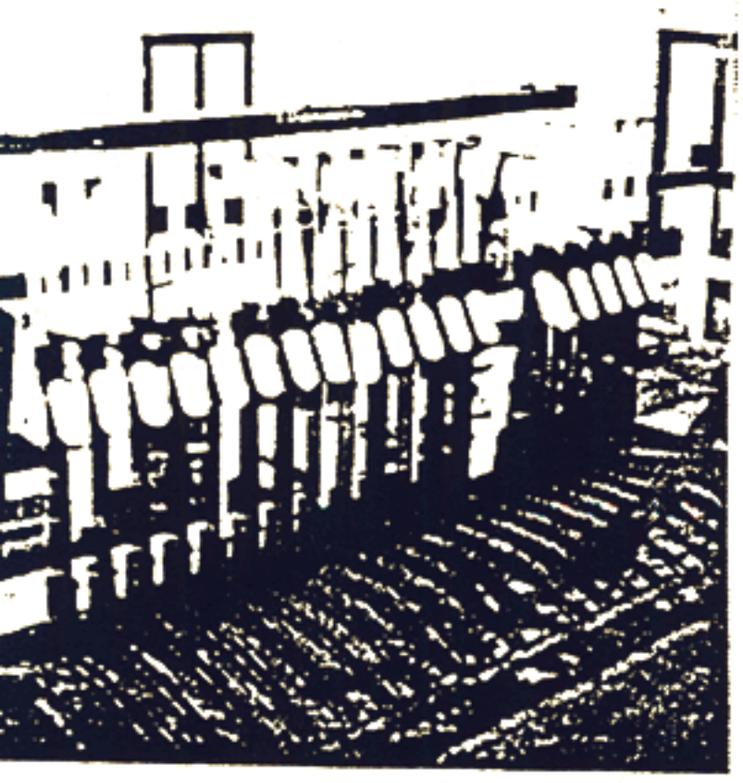
The system at Archer Park was installed when it was built and adapted in 1956 when the signal cabin was relocated in the Station. It remained intact after the station was closed in 1969 and records show that it was complete in 1975 when the Australian Heritage Commission made an inspection of the station and subsequently listed it on the Register of the National Estate.

The Commission's report cites Archer Park as being of significance in part.. *as one of the few mechanically interlocked*

stations remaining in Queensland, most having been replaced with modern equipment. For this reason the boundaries have been extended to include the signalling, crossovers, wires and rodding in Denison Street for the station's importance as an example of mechanical safety systems.

Since the Australian Heritage Commission's inspection, the station has been totally isolated from the main line and the rods which ran alongside the tracks have been removed, together with the two signals which controlled entry to the station. What remains is that part of the interlocking system that is contained in the signal cabin and the platform. These remnants include the gears and levers in the signal cabin, and the control rods that run from these levers through the platform to the edge of the track.

No substantial working interlocking systems remain in Queensland as all have been replaced by Centralised Traffic Control which relies on electronic devices. This is in contrast to Victoria and New South Wales where there are interlocking installations that remain in use. Mechanical interlocking was an important aspect in making train operations safe and a significant part of Queensland railway history. The remnants that remain at Archer Park are not unique but they are rare and they are important.



Controls in the Archer Park Signal Cabin

Archer Park railway station is significant for the remnants of its interlocking signalling system.

5 Condition

With the exception of the 1907 refreshment room extension, Archer Park railway station has been altered little since it was constructed - the signal box has been repositioned, and the lamp room demolished. In addition there have been some minor modifications or items that have been removed. These include the hexagonal tiles to the platform, the sides of the carriage shade and its skylights, the two lines of track adjacent to the platform track, sign boards, fixtures and fittings, and work associated with the conversion of the building for its use as a freight terminal, mainly partitions to the Refreshment Room and Cloak Room, and the overlaying of timber floors for strength.

The overall form of the building however, has not altered. The external elevations are almost as they were built, as is the layout of the station building including, the station master's office, the booking and ticket office, the signal box, the entry, the vestibule, the waiting area, the verandah, the cloak room, the ladies and gents toilets, the platform, and the form of the refreshment room and the carriage shade. No additional buildings have been built on the site, and the layout, the track, fences and roadways remain as they were constructed. Overall, the whole, including the building and site, display a high degree of intactness.

This is not normally the case with railway stations, as many are subject to the pressures of expansion which necessitates

numerous alteration and additions to building fabric. Archer Park was spared this, mainly as it was no longer used, as a major passenger terminal after 1923. Whilst Archer Park's intactness is not unique, it is rare and is significant.

Archer Park railway station is significant for its intactness.