

THE INFLUENCE OF IPSWICH

IN EARLY QUEENSLAND

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## INTRODUCTION

The period covered by this thesis dates from the discovery and first settlement of the Ipswich district in 1827 to the time of the mid-1870's. It was in this early period that Ipswich exerted a great deal of influence on colonial affairs, and often, by successful political manoeuvres, was able to enhance the economic and social well-being of the town.

DISCOVERY AND ESTABLISHMENT

The first reference to the discovery and exploration of the Ipswich area appears in the journal of Captain Logan, dated 7th June 1827 : "Left the settlement (Brisbane) at four o'clock in the morning, proceeded up the Brisbane, and arrived at the limestone hills, on the left branch, at ten o'clock at night; distance 57 miles." (1) An assistant to Logan, the famous explorer Cunningham, was the first to prophesy the future importance of the district, and in his journal (11th July 1828) he said "It is therefore highly probable that upon the site of these Limestone Hills a town will one day be raised." (2) Cunningham commented further on the significance of the Bremer River, a tributary of the Brisbane, as a means of navigation. He traced the river from the Limestone Hills to its junction with the Brisbane, and concluded "The circumstances, moreover, of this river being thus far (that is, to Ipswich) navigable for boats or craft of a certain class, and the consequent saving to the farmer of that expense which is necessarily attendant on the wear and tear of a land carriage of internal produce to the Coast, cannot possibly fail when this country becomes settled on, to be duly considered." (3) On the same mission, the Colonial biologist, Fraser, commented on the site as the "principal key to the internal

1. Steele J.G. The Explorers of the Moreton Bay District 1770-1830 (University of Queensland Press; St. Lucia : 1972) p. 209
2. Russell H.S. The Genesis of Queensland (Turner & Henderson; Sydney : 1888) p. 159
3. ibid.

commerce of this interesting portion of Australia." (4)

Fraser also notes the expanses of flats "of the richest black loam", the prevalence of limestone formation, and also "numerous beds of coal, lying in veins of considerable thickness."

(5) The interest in the future commercial potential of the vicinity was to be vindicated, and to prove the first source of strength for the area. Agriculture assumed importance in the district, and soon the value of the coal fields was noticed.

Even at this stage, a "station" had been established there. Its purpose was to provide lime for building projects being encouraged by Logan in Brisbane. The first "residents" were thus a party consisting of five convicts and an overseer. In one Dispatch, Cunningham states that "from 300 to 400 bushels of excellent lime are burnt weekly at this station, which is regularly conveyed down by boat to Brisbane Town." (6) As a consequence of the occurrence of considerable disturbance by the aborigines, a number of soldiers were stationed near the kilns.

Operations were soon extended to include the grazing of cattle. Later, an "agricultural establishment" was added. (7) These enterprises were gradually expanded, as evidenced by the increase in the number of stock on the station in November 1843 when there were 1620 cattle and 12,000 sheep on the station, with

4. Steele J.G. op. cit. p. 254

5. Transcript Material on Ipswich (Oxley Memorial Library : Brisbane) p. 1

6. City of Ipswich (Morcoms Pub. ; Brisbane : 1935) p. 11

7. Slaughter L. Ipswich Municipal Centenary (Pohlman & Patrick; Ipswich : 1960) p. 60

wool to the value of £1,000. (8) The extent to which government-run enterprises remained effective can be seen by protests as late as 1847 against their competition with private farmers. This caused concern after the settlement was established, as the government occupied the most productive land adjacent to the settlement, and on this the townsfolk were unable to graze their few stock. (9) Added to their monopoly of the most convenient land, was the difficulty of competing with the Government Station using government labour. They could offer to the townspeople, for example, dairy products at a much lower price than the settlers could. (10) George Harris, in his "Reminiscences", (11) mentions that his father bought some stock from the Government Station about 1850, so in some instances this livestock must have formed the basis of settlers' herds. These were used not only for grazing purposes, but also for another early local pursuit - that of teams for hauling timber.

The area was not officially thrown open to free settlement until 1842. Since it was part of the penal settlement, the fifty mile radius rule applied to Limestone as it did to the main Brisbane settlement. Free settlers were not eligible to go into the district, but the overseer of the settlement at Limestone could exercise some right, apparently, to permit entry. H.S. Russell

8. Slaughter I. op. cit. p. 6
9. Moreton Bay Courier 31.7.1847; 30.10.1847
10. Coleby A. The Problems and Feuds Engaging the Attention of the Settlers in the Northern Districts of N.S.W. 1842-59 (B.A. Thesis 1950-51) (University of Queensland)
11. Harris G. Reminiscences Of My Early Days In Ipswich (Fryer Library Manuscript : 1925)

wrote of the experience of his Darling Downs squatter friends, Gilbert Elliott and Pemberton Hodgson, who were given permission to proceed to Limestone under the charge of a guard posted at the boundary limit (at the bottom of Cunningham's Gap). He described their impression of Limestone thus: "Limestone in 1840! How the recollection of that solitary Government cottage - hitherto the most northern and western dwelling in Australia stands out ..." (12) Russell also describes the reception that they received from the supervisor of the establishment - George Thorn, regarded as the "father of Ipswich". He had taken over the post in 1835 and was to open the first store in the early 1840's, at which time the proclamation regarding the 50 mile limit had been lifted. His aim was to provide stores (and liquor) for the squatters who would pass through the district. Thus began an important facet of early Ipswich - that of a supply station for the Downs.

On a visit in 1846, Russell was Thorn's first customer. Thorn showed Russell the so-called Ploughed Station (the Government agricultural settlement). Of this he reported: "a cheerful view of many acres of fine maize". (13) Even at this stage he reported that many of the government livestock were being disposed of.

The history of "Free Ipswich" dates from 1842 with the proclamation allowing free settlement. The penal settlement had officially been closed in 1839 but a number of convicts, including some at Limestone, remained to assist in its transformation. In 1842, Governor Gipps paid a visit to the Moreton Bay area and it

12. Russell H.S. op. cit. p. 207

13. ibid p. 225

was then decided that there should be two towns formed in the colony and that surveys should be undertaken for these two - Brisbane and Ipswich. It was at the time of Gipps' visit that the name Ipswich replaced Limestone in official usage. Apart from being the name of an English town, there is no authoritative statement available as to how the name was decided upon. Theories range from its supposed similarity to the topography of its English counterpart to its being the home of Captain Kous, an early explorer, after whom Gipps named the town. (14) The first known use of the term was a letter from Gipps on 3rd February 1843 to the Colonial Secretary. (15)

There appear to have been two main reasons for the decision to create an inland town so soon. Not only was there a settlement there, but also the use of the river for transportation appealed to Gipps, who himself journeyed from Ipswich to Brisbane in this manner. It was already recognised as the Head of Navigation, and the most likely post from which the squatters could gain their supplies, and ship their produce.

Gipps personally chose the actual site for the town. He asked that "an accurate survey should first be made of all the country on the right bank of the Bremer ... the broken nature of the ground is the only difficulty which opposes itself to the selection of the site for the town. The plateau on which the shearing sheds stand seems to be the best, and this must be adopted, unless Mr. Wade should find one lower down the river, to which a

14. Cilento R. & Lack C. Triumph in the Tropics (Smith & Paterson; Brisbane : 1959)  
 15. Slaughter L. op. cit. p. 615

decided preference should be given." (16) Dr. Lang strongly disapproved of the choice. He wrote in 1852 : "Sir George Gipps happened to be tired when at Ipswich, and he could either not afford time or take the trouble to examine the locality himself, and the community has consequently to suffer for it for all time coming." (17) His objection was to the lack of elevation of the site chosen, which would not only be vulnerable to flooding, but was also not a good site for a port. This criticism was supported by a surveyor named Galloway in 1855. He was sent to investigate suitable extensions to the town area. In his report to the Surveyor General, he stated that the town is "completely in a hole and surrounded by sharp stony limestone ridges; no doubt the site was owing to accident more than to design." This was dismissed by the Surveyor General as being "of no manner at all" as the site had been chosen by the Governor! (18)

Gipps was subjected to further criticism because of a record of bungles in the early surveying of the places (19) not least of which was his support for narrow streets. He was also said to have vetoed a proposal for a town square, thinking it quite unnecessary in the future development of the town as he

16. Coote W. History of the Colony of Queensland Vol. 1 (W. Thorn; Brisbane : 1882) p. 40
17. Harrison G. Jubilee History of Ipswich (Diddams & Co.; Brisbane : 1910) P. 46
18. Queensland Archives : Colonial Secretary's File 1860 : No. 1938
19. Laverty J. Development of the Town of Brisbane 1823-1859 (B.A. Thesis : 1954) (University of Queensland) p. 13

envisaged it, (20) (quoting Dr. Lang, who claimed he had learnt this from personal conversation with the surveyor). There were two types of land survey in the Ipswich area. In the Register of Land Sales (21) these are listed under town purchases (that is, small 32 perch blocks) and also, land purchases or, as they were more often known, as garden allotments.

The first sale is recorded on the 14th of September 1842 (22) with amounts for the town blocks ranging from £15.6.8 to £2.5.5. All lots offered were sold. The town had been gazetted some five months earlier. (23) The sales were much more successful than at Brisbane, where the upset price for the land was much higher. (24) The sale of garden allotments also met with considerable success. In many instances, those buying town allotments also purchased a larger block as well, though often they were little more than an acre. (25) Land sales were to remain a prominent feature of local news well into the 1850's with some keen competition resulting.

The population was about 100 in 1846, and in the main was said to reside in "artistic mansions of bark." (26) One of the

20. Harrison G. op. cit. p. 10

21. Queensland Archives : Register of Lands Sold 1849-59

22. ibid p. 1

23. New South Wales Government Gazette 15.4.1843

24. Laverty J. op. cit. p. 187

25. Lands Register op. cit. p. 173

26. Morrison W.F. The Aldine History of Queensland Vol. 2 (Aldine Publishing Company; Sydney : 1888) p. 505

few pioneers to leave a record of these early times was George Harris. He had come to Ipswich about 1850 as a boy, and refers to the town "which was at that time called Limestone." (27) The adoption of the name Ipswich among the Ipswich people was certainly a slow process. Upon arrival in Ipswich, his father built a "slab dwelling, with a bark roof and an earthen floor." This served as a temporary abode until the family had prospered sufficiently (within a couple of years) to live in a slab house, with shingle roof and pine floor. It was outstanding - boasting five rooms! Although they lived within a couple of miles of the town centre, Harris reported that they were sufficiently "bush" to have trouble with some aborigines, and were the subject of a couple of attempted attacks. On one occasion at least they would not have survived, had the father not been able to get help. "They attacked us one night, coming in a body, armed with fire branches, and other war implements. They evidently intended to murder us and loot the place ... " The frontier spirit obviously had its era even near Ipswich!

Stability in the centre was achieved with the establishment of regular communication by river in 1846. At the time of the start of this movement, the population was only 100. The first interest shown in this form of communication was by a local squatter, James Pearce. His idea, which was adopted, was for steam navigation; and in pursuance of this interest the steamer "Experiment" was purchased. Before this time, there had been some movement by flat-bottomed boats. The first voyage was

recorded by the Moreton Bay Courier : "Owing to the imperfect knowledge of the person acting as pilot, respecting the river flats, she got aground near the crossing place at Woogooroo ... the Ipswich folk were delighted at her appearance amongst them."

(28) It was to be the first of many steamers to ply the route; and also to be the beginning of demands for an improvement programme to be entered into, with regard to the clearance of the river. It was claimed that those most interested in the Experiment were also those wanting Cleveland as port. (29)

Certainly within a few years, the relationship between squatter, Ipswich, steamboat and Cleveland was to be a close one. As the colony grew and the squatting interests came to be challenged by Brisbane interests, the squatters' common purpose was extended.

It was in the period 1846-1850 that the town gained its permanent base. It became a recognised place for the establishment of government functions and institutions. In this regard, Ipswich early claimed the role of the second settlement of the colony, a position it attempted to retain well after other strong claimants had arisen. One example of the relatively early government acknowledgement of Ipswich can be seen in the gazettal of the Court of Petty Sessions for Ipswich on 22nd December 1846. Until the time of the appointment of the Police Magistrate (gazetted 1st January 1852) a bench of Justices of the Peace fulfilled the duties of the Court. Their main area of "jurisdiction" concerned squatter / native conflict. Among other "firsts" for

28. Moreton Bay Courier 20.6.1846

29. Knight J. In The Early Days (Sapsford & Co.; Brisbane : 1895) p. 159

Ipswich in these years may be included the first mail dispatch to Ipswich which arrived in 1848; the post office being gazetted 27th December 1845. The beginning of religious services appears to have been in 1845 when a Rev. Moore of the Wesleyan faith conducted fortnightly services at Ipswich. He was followed in the next few years by representatives of all the other major religious groups.

Of course, by this time, a number of business enterprises catering for the immediate needs of the district had been established. These received a significant impetus with the arrival in the late 1840's of the first of Dr. Lang's migrant ships. These included a number of people who were to become prominent Ipswich citizens. One such man was Benjamin Cribb, a man who left his mark in the early political as well as commercial history of the colony. He established the "London stores" in Ipswich soon after his arrival; and these, in an extended form, have remained the leading enterprise of that nature in the district. He was not the only notable person who made Ipswich his home. Another who was to figure prominently in early affairs was Dr. Challinor, who had been the surgeon on the first of Dr. Lang's ships, the Fortitude.

Thus, by the turn of the decade, the basis of a future thriving centre had been established. Not only was it ideally situated at the "Head of Navigation" to become regarded as the natural centre for a large district; but the residents were to earn a reputation for themselves, largely as the result of an enterprising spirit. This can be manifested in their attempts

to build a solid economic base for the town, the first means at their disposal being to serve squatter interests.

THE IPSWICH / SQUATTER PERIOD - A TIME OF ENTERPRISE IN IPSWICH

For Ipswich, the relationship between the residents of the town and the squatters became extremely close, particularly during the decade of the 1850's. The first indication of this was in the formation of the Moreton Bay District Association. Although the actual work of this squatter organisation was rather limited, most of this work was done in the Ipswich district, in the repair and construction of bridges.

A clear instance of the sense of kinship between the town and the squatters was indicated by the squatters' use of Ipswich as a centre to put their views with regard to the scarcity of labour. Goleby <sup>(1)</sup> refers to a meeting convened in Ipswich in 1847 for this purpose as the first large scale effort by the community to solve a community problem. The issue at this stage was whether there should be a resumption of convict transportation. The shortage of labour was a serious problem to the land owners at this time - especially in relation to shepherds and stockmen. They saw convict labour as the feasible and economic solution. There was a concerted effort on the part of the squatters at a meeting at the beginning of 1850, for example, to gain the tacit support of the Ipswich townspeople for their demands. This was to counter the opposition to their case with regard to transportation then being raised in Brisbane and "to some extent in Ipswich." <sup>(2)</sup> Indeed, this remark is significant, as there is on that issue, some divergence of opinion as to the adoption of

1. Goleby A. op. cit. p. 5

2. Birrell M. The Political Influence of the Squatters 1850-1855 (B.A. Thesis 1950 : University of Queensland) p.1

resolutions calling for convict labour. This did not lessen the efforts to gain the Ipswich support, and there was present at this particular meeting one of the Leslie brothers who said for the benefit of the Ipswich people present: "He would point out and he knew it to be the case that the opposition of the people of Brisbane was intended to do them (that is, the squatters) an injury. But Ipswich was the town to which they would bring their goods." (3) This was also to be an occasion for the squatters to threaten to by-pass Brisbane, preferring Cleveland.

To counter the strong anti-transportation stance of the Moreton Bay Courier, the squatters sponsored their own paper, the Moreton Bay Free Press, under the editorship of A. S. Lyon. He was to become the first editor of Ipswich's paper when it was established in 1855.

The possibility of establishing a port at Cleveland was regarded as important to Ipswich and its economic squatter base as a means of by-passing Brisbane, and thus reducing the trading port status of Brisbane. Cleveland had been opened to settlement in 1850, the first land being sold in December 1851. Symbolically the first two lots sold were bought by persons from Ipswich and the Darling Downs, widely dispersed squatters in particular being large purchasers. (4) The good land sales were regarded as an indication of its possible future position as the port of the colony. This was the desire of squatters such as Francis Bigge,

3. Moreton Bay Courier op. cit. 12.1.1850

4. Register of Lands Sold 1842-59 op. cit. p. 71

himself a buyer of many allotments at Cleveland. At the "anti-transportation" meeting previously referred to, he had said: "The ships from Great Britain would receive at Cleveland Point the produce of the colony. They would there land their passengers who, as they passed up to Ipswich in the steamers, would give a cheer for dirty Brisbane." (5) He is said to have expended large sums of money in efforts to eliminate Brisbane claims as a trading centre. (6)

J. J. Knight put forward the conflicting merits on the claims of Brisbane and Cleveland. (7) The main arguments against Brisbane revolved around the cost of clearing the Bar of the Brisbane River. Additional to this, was the expense incurred by the squatters in having to ship their wool to small vessels for the journey from Brisbane to the Bay and deeper water. In the case of Cleveland, as Governor Gipps had discovered, the deep water in which the ships could anchor was some distance from the shore, and was largely unprotected. In terms of short-term benefit, the case for Cleveland whereby the squatters could put their produce on the steamers at Ipswich and ship it directly to the sea-going vessels at Cleveland had considerable logic. The official weight was fairly solidly in favour of Brisbane at most times. In 1853 Captain Stanley, a surveyor in the Royal Navy, had stated the case against Cleveland on the assumption that a road - if not a tramroad which was also suggested - from Ipswich

5. Moreton Bay Courier 14.1.1850

6. Knight J. op. cit. p. 214

7. ibid pp. 178-179

to Cleveland would be constructed if Cleveland were to be the port, he did not see an advantage for Ipswich in the selection of Cleveland : "For communication with the interior the Brisbane river, navigable as far as Ipswich for small steamers and cargo boats ... possesses great advantages over Cleveland Point, as the settlers on the Darling and Canning Downs, by embarking their goods at Ipswich in smooth water alongside the bank of the river, would avoid 35 miles of land carriage " (to Cleveland). (8)

However, it should not be assumed that Ipswich saw her interests in a similar way. An indication of the Ipswich and Cleveland connection can be seen, for example, in the fact that tenders for the construction of a jetty were called in Ipswich. (9) Dr. Lang (10) committed Ipswich in favour of the squatters' case : "It was proposed, by way of anodyne, to construct a tramroad from Cleveland Point to Ipswich, so as to leave out Brisbane altogether from the course of the inland trade of the district; the people of Ipswich, who were more directly under the influence of the squatters, and who had all those feelings of rivalry towards their fellow-colonists of the capital that uniformly characterise the inhabitants of different trading ports, especially when they come into competition with each other, threw the whole weight of their influence into the squatters' side."

A major indication of the rivalry in that period was in the attitude towards the importance of the river for communication.

8. Moreton Bay Courier 21.5.1853

9. ibid. 15.4.1854

10. J.J. Lang Queensland, Australia (Stanford, London 1861)

A meeting in Ipswich, pressing for additional finance for the removal of obstacles to navigation on the river, passed the following resolution to be forwarded as a memorial to the Governor "that the town of Ipswich situated at the head of the rivers Brisbane and Bremer is rendered from its position, the emporium through which almost the whole of the produce of those districts comprehended under and known by the designation of "the Northern Districts" must find its way to the markets.

That the produce shipped from Moreton Bay during the past year is calculated to have amounted in value to two hundred thousand pounds, fully three fourths of which entered and was forwarded by water, from Ipswich to Brisbane.

That the distance by water from Ipswich to Brisbane is somewhat about fifty miles, and, to a large extent, the banks of the Brisbane and Bremer between these places are literally covered with coal, from which as well as the steamers plying from and to Sydney and Brisbane, those plying between Ipswich and Brisbane are supplied.

That the navigation of the rivers form, therefore, a subject of the deepest importance, to not only the town of Ipswich, but to all parties interested in the internal trade of Moreton Bay" (11)

Comment was made, however, by the Ipswich correspondent to the Moreton Bay Courier about the reluctance of a number of Brisbane people to support the resolution.

A report was furnished to the Colonial Architect describing the obstructions to the navigation of the Bremer in

1855. (12) This gave little indication of the expense of major clearance - especially at the "Seventeen Mile Rocks", to permit the passage of large shipping up the river.

From the beginning moves had been made to place emphasis on improving the state of the road between Ipswich and Brisbane, thus helping to secure the position of Brisbane as Port. It was hoped to encourage a direct carriage of the produce to Brisbane. Surveys for the road work were undertaken in 1852. In 1854 there was an advertisement for twenty to thirty labourers for work on the Ipswich to Brisbane road, and the Ipswich to Drayton road. The Ipswich to Drayton road was more highly considered by the Ipswich people to allow communication with the Downs. A return of the amounts of tolls collected on this road for a two-year period 1856-58 showed a total of £382.8s.10d. (13) It had been in a sufficiently good condition for a coach to have made that trip since 1851; but the road was not trafficable to Brisbane.

Following the floods in 1857, a memorial was once again sent to the Governor asking for assistance in clearing the river of obstacles. The Moreton Bay Courier, more prone to see the Brisbane viewpoint, seized upon this factor to enhance its claim that funds should be distributed more widely on the river. At this point, they were espousing the value of "a good road, open

12. New South Wales Legislative Assembly : Votes and Proceedings : 1855 Vol. 1 p. 343; Vol. 2 p. 1177

13. New South Wales Legislative Assembly : Votes and Proceedings : 1858 Vol. 3 p. 1171

in all weathers." (14) They claimed a couple of months later that those who wanted a concentration on the river "look too closely to merely local interests." (15) At the meeting in Ipswich, however, the river, which they claimed carried nine-tenths of the traffic in the northern districts, was their sole interest. Although a sum of over £10,000 was passed in the Estimates for 1856 (16) nothing was done. The general impression existing on this and other questions in the late 1850's was that little was going to be gained until they had achieved Separation.

In simple economic activities, there were a number of examples of the use made of Ipswich by the squatters as their trading and supply station; and the people of Ipswich looked to the district as their major source of employment. In this respect the activities of George Harris are worth noting. He first rafted pine timber down the Brisbane River, work which was being undertaken by a Joseph Fleming, who was to figure in other early enterprises. (17) Later, he was to deliver bridge timber and engage in more general timber hauling of pine logs. He described the successful rafting method: "after reaching tidal waters, the logs were fastened together and floated down the river to Brisbane. To accomplish this, we worked with the tide. At ebb tide we fastened the raft to the bank until the return of the tide. We

14. Moreton Bay Courier 30.5.1857

15. ibid 11.7.1857

16. New South Wales Legislative Assembly : Votes And Proceedings : 1855 Vol. 1 P. 376

17. Harris G. op. cit. p. 5

then unfastened the raft which was carried down stream. This process we repeated until we reached Brisbane." (18) According to Harris, this trade was quite profitable until 1863, when the sale of logs was no longer considered profitable. Of greater significance to the Colony generally, was the other occupation Harris undertook in the 1850's. He made a number of trips with bullock teams, taking goods to Toowoomba, Warwick, Dalby and Surat. Tenders were called by a number of stations for the carriage of goods, often including furniture as well as food; and of produce to and from Ipswich. These came from such distant places as Tenterfield. (19) Harris recalls: "As soon as we arrived at our destination the drays were unloaded. Next day we started on our homeward journey to Ipswich." (20) During the wool season, the drays would return laden with wool. With poor roads and bridges, bad weather made the journey more difficult, often delaying their return. There were many complaints regarding the poor state of the road system near Ipswich. With creeks swollen with flood waters, considerable delays in getting the produce aboard the steamers were experienced. It was a major source of news for the papers to express delight in the arrival of the drays in town. The volume of wool brought in varied with the seasons, but in 1855 at least, the effect of the Crimean War was seen as beneficial since it kept the market in a "flourishing condition". The Ipswich correspondent on this occasion, as at most times, saw the

18. *ibid* p. 9

19. Moreton Bay Courier 7.5.1853

20. Harris G. op. cit. p. 6

prosperity of the town reflected in terms of the conditions of the wool industry in particular. (21) Most of the colony's wool passed through Ipswich. Goleby estimated some 12,000 bales of wool were loaded on to the steamers, while 10,000 tons of stores were passed to the interior from the town in one particular year. (22)

From 1848, Ipswich was very prominent as a "boiling down" establishment. The process was designed to dispose of the increasing stocks of cattle and sheep which could not be used by the small population. It involved the boiling down of the carcasses into tallow, which was then shipped to England. The industry flourished for many years, and in the 1850's was one of the most successful undertakings of that period. The number and location of these establishments were many and varied, and for much of the time of their existence, Ipswich remained prominent. For example, in 1860 Ipswich had two of the three recorded establishments - the other, a smaller one, being at Wide Bay - slaughtering 3,000 sheep and 4,089 cattle which produced 4,152 hundred-weight of tallow, and 3,200 hundredweight of lard. (23) The following year eight such places are noted in Brisbane, but the total of their produce was less than half that produced in Ipswich. (24) The importance of Ipswich in this regard continued until 1868, when operations had become much more widespread, and the volume

21. Moreton Bay Courier 23.6.1855

22. Goleby A. op. cit. p. 94

23. Queensland Journal of the Legislative Council 1861  
(Statistical Register of Queensland 1860) p. 53

24. ibid 1863 Second Session Vol. VI (Stat. Reg. 1862) p. 52

was declining. (25) The name of Joseph Fleming was eminent in this regard from the 1850's. His interests in early industry were typical of the enterprise and diversity of operation. As well as the boiling down works, he had erected in 1857 a steam operated flour mill, and had also built a steam-run timber mill. In these operations, the use of the river was essential for carriage of the end product.

There were a couple of notable examples in this period of enterprise, of co-operative associations. These once again show the connection between the squatters and Ipswich people. They also illustrate the efforts on the part of Ipswich residents even at this early stage to undertake community-based businesses. As trade increased, and especially the annual wool clip shipments, the number of steamers plying the river also increased. There were eight steamers operating in the early 1850's. (26) Some of these were owned by such a locally owned company - the Bremer Steam Navigation Company. It included many of the prominent local citizens as its shareholders, both from the land and local business people (for example, Hon. Louis Hope and the aforementioned Joseph Fleming. Their first vessel, the "Hawk" was launched late in 1849.

This spirit of co-operation was also displayed in the efforts to establish a "Moreton Coal Company". A provisional committee was formed in 1854. It was strongly Ipswich based, and hoped to

25. *ibid* 1869 Vol. XIV (Stat. Reg. 1868) p. 623

26. Transcript Material : Oxley Library *op. cit.* p. 3

have a capital of £25,000 in shares of £25. This was rather adventurous considering the times and the limited number of people on whom they could draw for support. There was considered to be a great need for coal "not only in Sydney and Victoria, but in South Australia, Swan River, California, and the adjacent colonies and islands." (27) Although the optimism was not justified, and the importance of the coal industry was not to be of major significance for over twenty years, it did show that Ipswich was not lacking in figures of enterprise. No locality was indicated in the prospectus "which seems to have been rather vague in its tenor." (28) The limit of coal mining was mainly a result of the limits of its use. One of the few mine proprietors, all working on a small scale, W. Gray advertised his produce thus: "The undersigned are now prepared to supply coals of the best quality for steamboats, sawmills, blacksmiths etc. from their mine on the Bremer, near Ipswich." (29) The secretary of the proposed company was Arthur Macalister who was to figure not only in the legal life of the colony but, more importantly, in the political sphere, being on three occasions, Premier.

There is probably no greater indication to the growing prosperity of the centre than in the demand for the establishment of savings bank institutions. Moves were being made in the 1850's for such a local (that is, Moreton Bay) institution, instead of having the area treated in this regard as a branch of Sydney.

27. Moreton Bay Courier 27.5.1854

28. Coote W. op. cit. p. 165

29. Moreton Bay Courier 29.11.1856

The argument of the Ipswich paper as quoted in the Moreton Bay Courier was the obvious choice of Ipswich as the site for its headquarters. As the main justification for this view, it had stated : "The majority of depositors will most likely consist of bushmen and people who reside in the interior." (30)

An early writer on the position of the colony saw the 1850's decade as a transitional one for the town of Ipswich. He said : "Not a few of the inhabitants were birds of passage, ready to spread their wings again if the Ipswich summer, so feeble as yet, should show signs of being extinguished in a winter of adversity; still, despite the suspense, signs of confidence in the future were not wanting." (31)

The connection was early developed, and was obvious in their common support for such issues as the pressure to make Cleveland the port. The squatters looked to Ipswich as their centre at an early stage. They supported it in such economic pursuits as the establishment of Boiling Down works. There was also common ground in pressing for priority for the removal of obstacles from the river to improve the steamer passage. The rapport between Ipswich and the squatters had been beneficial to both parties, and the early enterprise displayed by many citizens augured well for the development of the district.

30. Moreton Bay Courier 9.2.1856

31. Aldine History op. cit. p. 507

THE SQUATTERS AND IPSWICH     THE SOCIAL AND POLITICAL INTERACTION

It followed as a natural corollary that the economic association of the Ipswich people and the squatters should result in a common interest in the political sphere, or at least that these interests would be complementary to one another. The fostering of closer social relations to their mutual advantage was inevitable in the circumstances. Moreover, the town had gained a sound (even if temporary) squatter base, and this allowed its development to flourish, and necessarily in time to undertake interests beyond this base. Difficulties are inherent in progress and from quite early times there is evidence of divergence from a common goal within Ipswich to hold on to and expand its beneficial base (which must be seen originally in economic terms) to further its own interests. Although the examples of diversity help to illustrate the healthy advance evident in the society, one can largely argue the case for a forward looking - if self interested community. It was in this period that there developed a spirit of belonging to the district as opposed to regarding the area as a place of temporary abode. This can be seen in a number of instances.

One such instance was in the publication of a local paper. The North Australian was commenced in 1855 for the purpose of fostering local interests. The paper was soon to be in constant conflict with the Brisbane based paper the Moreton Bay Courier and others. Things that were Ipswich based enjoyed the prestige of the title "North Australian." There was some justification in that it was the centre for the northern country of New South

wales. It had earlier been regarded as the most northern point of habitation, although in strict geographical sense, Ipswich is south of Brisbane. The paper was often accused in its early years of being a mouth-piece of the squatters. However, Coleby (1) saw this support not so much as pro-squatter but simply a matter of being pro-Ipswich; and that usually meant the same thing.

A later addition to the Ipswich press world was to go one step further in the pretension of extravagant names - and the name continues - The Queensland Times. It had also been started to press the views of Ipswich, or at least that part of Ipswich with pastoral connections.(2) Part of its foundation in 1859 can be traced to what was probably the greatest cause of dissension operating against Ipswich unity - the religious question. A new ownership of the North Australian in 1861 led the Courier to make the following statement with regard to the paper "war" in Ipswich: "We beg to express the hope that the North Australian, under its new editor, may greatly conduce to the prosperity of Ipswich, and tend to heal these dissensions which have once or twice broken out in the town, and the records of which would lead strangers at a distance to suppose that Ipswich was situated somewhere in the North of Ireland." (3)

1. Coleby A. op. cit. p. 91. The Mitchell Library is the only place with copies of the North Australian
2. Davies A.G. Queensland Pioneer Journals and Journalists (Historical Society of Queensland Journal Vol. 3; 1945 No. 4) p. 269
3. Courier 4.10.1861

reference will later be made to one such occasion. The Queensland Times had been established by a group of leading Ipswich people, to represent what might be termed the "establishment" viewpoint, the North Australian being considered under sectional (that is, Roman Catholic) influence. It is ironical that one of its leading supporters, and no doubt financial backers, was Arthur Macalister, who was later to be regarded in editorial comment as little better than a Brisbanite! At various times papers were to be established, but none had the staying power of The Queensland Times - largely, one suspects, for its continued parochial bias.

An exchange between the rival Ipswich and Brisbane papers in 1856 provides a good example of the district bias of the various presses. The Moreton Bay Courier (3A) headlines its leading article "What next?" "What next? - good gracious, is it possible? Why, the whole of the public institutions of Brisbane, present and prospective, are some fine morning to be shipped on board the "Hawk" and borne away in triumph (if she does not stick in the mud) to Ipswich, 'the head of navigation'!! Yes, all are doomed . . . for so the North Australian has decreed."

The issue which had caused the initial "war" was a claim by the North Australian of the great merits of locating a new jail in Ipswich. They claimed this on the ground that Ipswich was in a most centrally situated position in the colony. It was apparently simply a move by Ipswich people for a share of government establishments in their town. However, Brisbane residents feared that they wanted to take a leading role. The

article highlighted anew a doubt regarding the question of the site of the capital. The Moreton Bay Courier talked of Brisbane being the "seat of government" in a way that indicated some sort of definitive belief in the position of Brisbane as capital for all time. The North Australian was quoted as having said that it would "be prepared, when the proper time arrives, to PROVE that Ipswich is evidently designed by nature to become the capital of the proposed new colony". To this the Moreton Bay Courier had replied that they were "not sufficiently up in the designs of nature to say WHAT she intended Ipswich to become. But certainly if her design was that it SHOULD become 'the capital of the proposed new colony', well all we can say is that she herself was in rather a 'simple and primitive mood'."

To the displeasure of Brisbane, Ipswich was suspected of endeavouring to gain other institutions. The Brisbane paper was willing to concede the right of Ipswich to have branches of institutions (for example, of the savings bank), but it concluded that it was the "TRUNK which the North Australian wants for Ipswich."

There were strong moves in 1856 to have Ipswich declared a migrant depot so that migrants could be shipped directly to Ipswich. (4) This was seen as a move to compel migrants to go to the places of employment to which they had been assigned. Furthermore, it meant by-passing Brisbane and loosening the hold which the town had on the colony in this respect. There had been many court cases in Ipswich concerning the refusal of migrants to

4. Moreton Bay Courier 7.6.1856

go to the bush to work, thereby breaking an agreement. Following arrival in Brisbane, many did not wish to proceed to the interior. On one such occasion, a migrant had a choice of fulfilling his obligation, or incurring a sentence of three months' jail.<sup>(5)</sup>

In the following year, the North Australian <sup>(6)</sup> made further reference to the legitimacy of the claim Ipswich might make for supremacy. For a short time in the 1850's there was some similarity in the populations of the two centres. In terms of electors the North Australian was proud to be able to claim that Ipswich had only eighteen fewer names than the Brisbane district.

A further example of this sort of wishful thinking on the part of Ipswich was that both Roman Catholic and Anglican churches, erected in the late 1850's, were built with the thought in mind that these could be the site of the future cathedrals.

In the final analysis, what might have been the most significant factor in wresting the site of government from Brisbane could have been the action of the squatters if they had been able to gain sufficient influence. It is interesting in this respect to note the degree of common purpose in the early elections for the northern seats in the New South Wales

5. Moreton Bay Courier 7.6.1856  
While on the subject of migration, it is worth noting the early confrontations between the Chinese and white settlers which occurred. This was so serious that on at least occasion it led to the death of one Chinese and the wounding of many more. See Moreton Bay Courier 22.5.1851

6. Goleby A. op. cit. p. 157

Parliament. The first notable contest was for the seat of Stanley Borough, consisting of Brisbane and Ipswich, in 1854. While Lang gained a clear majority in Brisbane, the squatter candidate, Hodgson, made an almost complete sweep of the Ipswich vote, losing the election by only one vote. Earlier, in 1848, Ipswich residents were very disgusted when their town had not been made a polling place. (7) This slight led to an almost total abstention from voting.

It was the 1856 election which provided the classic division of the two towns. This was the first election under full representative government. There were four candidates for the two seats available. Macalister and Forbes were both prominent in the Ipswich area. Both, Forbes in particular, had strong squatting connections. Macalister had previously supported the candidacy of Lang, but since supported squatter candidates "indicating that the realities of the Ipswich situation bore more truly upon him, reinforced by his increasing acceptance into the upper strata of Ipswich and pastoral society." (8) The other two candidates were Richardson from Brisbane, and Sydney man, Holt. Macalister did not try to hide his reason for standing. He told a large (and mostly hostile) Brisbane audience that "he came before them at the solicitation of a large majority of the

7. Goleby A. op. cit. p. 98

8. Wilson P.D. The Political Career of the Honourable Arthur Macalister C.M.G. (B.A. Thesis : 1969) University of Queensland. p. 15

electors of Ipswich." (9) He met some opposition also in Ipswich due to his stand on state aid. (10) The results in this instance speak for themselves.

	Holt	Richardson	Macalister	Forbes
Brisbane votes	301	286	31	36
Ipswich votes	19	30	148	131 (11)

According to Coote, this rivalry served an interest in another quarter - "The rival claims of Ipswich to be the future capital, were sedulously fostered by those who desired nothing better than to see such a disunion between the inhabitants as would give them, at least, some hold against the creation of a new colony. (12)

In August of the same year (1856) a petition was presented to the Legislative Assembly in Sydney, containing 111 "Ipswich" signatures. (13) The main aim was to gain a split of the County of Stanley in order to have an electorate of Brisbane and one of Ipswich. A number of reasons were advanced why the interests of the two centres were divergent, and why Ipswich was the bright star of the future. It explained how Ipswich had "been the entrepot for the greater portion of these districts" (that is, the Northern Districts). It also states - "That ... because much of the land in the neighbourhood and district of

9. Moreton Bay Courier 22.3.1856
10. Wilson P.D. op. cit. p. 19
11. Moreton Bay Courier 12.4.1856
12. Coote W. op. cit. p. 193
13. New South Wales Votes and Proceedings; Legislative Assembly 1856 Vol. I, p. 892

Ipswich is rich in mineral resources, while large portions of it are well adapted for agricultural purposes, the town of Ipswich has not only become important in a commercial point of view, but its population has for years been rapidly increasing ... an increase which no other town in the Northern Districts has been able to exhibit."

The crux of the exercise, however, was left to the last to be explained. It was stated that there had been previous calls to the colonial government for the halting of expenditure on public buildings, with the obvious hope that after inspection it would be decided to site at least some in Ipswich. However, this was said in conjunction with a statement relative to the "extreme jealousy (that) has arisen on the part of the people of Brisbane." It was also claimed that : "Their interests ... are altogether antagonistic; and feelings the most deprecatory have been called forth on occasions involving their joint co-operation." The depth of feeling in Ipswich on the issue was realised by Holt. After gaining ministerial office, and hence having to offer himself for re-election, he promised the Ipswich people a member of their own. (14)

In a subsequent election in 1859, prior to Separation, their request was met and a separate electorate for Ipswich was instituted. That contest was interesting in that Macalister was successful after wooing the Catholic vote - a considerable force in Ipswich - with the Carrot of continued state aid. (15)

14. Moreton Bay Courier 21.6.1856

15. Wilson P. op. cit. p. 31

However, while this popular desire for local representation was successfully achieved, there was not the same agreement with regard to the advisability of creating a municipality, at least until after Separation. The issue illustrates the tendency of the town to indulge in rather extreme internal division - much to the delight of the people of Brisbane. A meeting was held at the beginning of January 1859, to discuss the advisability of the establishment of a council; and also the form it should take. The first meeting ended in chaos, without any vote being taken. The Moreton Bay Courier enjoyed being able to report that the meeting thus ended of the "intellectual and enlightened inhabitants." (16) Those opposed to incorporation claimed that the meeting did not close until after a motion rejecting incorporation was passed; a fact not reported by the Moreton Bay Courier. (17) A further meeting apparently decided by a majority against incorporation. They were accused by the Ipswich correspondent of showing "a display of ignorance and short-sightedness." (18) Although at this stage it was not common to hear much reference to a political interest on the part of the "working class", one person, signing himself as "A Working Man", complained about the attempt to exclude the voice of that group at the meeting by holding it at three o'clock in the afternoon. He intimates that the effort was not successful, with quite a number in attendance to vote against the proposition and its probable extra burden on their pockets. (19)

16. Moreton Bay Courier 26.1.1859

17. *ibid.* 29.1.1859

18. *ibid.* 2.2.1859

19. *ibid.* 5.2.1859

One should also mention that greatest cause of civil discords - religious friction. It was well illustrated over one particular issue of forced labour - on Epiphany Sunday. Throughout a number of issues of the paper, a controversy was fought, the main contestants being the Police Magistrate, Col. Gray and the Roman Catholic priest, Father McGinty. The priest had preached the evil of undertaking servile work on that particular Sunday, but, following the non-appearance of a number of workers, they were taken to court by their employers. The verdict of the Bench appears to have been somewhat irregular with Gray informing Macalister, who was appearing for the Catholics, that his mind was made up prior to the hearing. The action was considered by the Bench to be worth a fine of ten shillings or seven days' imprisonment. A non-sectarian public meeting was subsequently held in Ipswich and widely attended. Two resolutions were carried unanimously and forwarded as part of a memorial to the Governor, Dennison. They stated: "That a certain portion of the executive government connected to the Moreton Bay District had, in the opinion of this meeting, arrived at such a pitch of imbecility and perversion as to call for the expression of public reprobation. ..." "That, in the opinion of the meeting, the late prosecution of some Roman Catholics for refusing to work on Epiphany, was highly reprehensible as being calculated to promote that most shameful of civil discords - religious animosity." (20)

This was not to be the last criticism of Col. Gray. The Ipswich correspondent was to write in 1858 of the man trusted with a

great deal of legal action (both within the town and resultant of actions involving the surrounding district) : "That neither person or property is safe with our at present deadly-lively Police Magistrate of Ipswich." (21)

With regard to the social side of the town, there were a corresponding number of developments. As has been noted with reference to the newspapers, the name "North Australian" was to appear regularly. Perhaps its most prominent application was in relation to the North Australian Club, established in 1857, the first venture of that kind undertaken in Moreton Bay. The original committee was comprised of squatter and Ipswich representatives. The Club was to become a great meeting place for the squatters of the Downs, as well as of the Lockyer, Fassifern and Brisbane Valleys; and, of course, leading Ipswich citizens. Probably there is no clearer indication of the inter-connections of these two groups than there is in the membership of this club. The same group can be seen as the founders of the social event of the year - the race meeting. The first race took place in 1848, and the annual races, under the patronage of a number of trustees, began in 1850. The North Australian Jockey Club was formed in 1852. It is interesting to note that one of the main races was known as the "Separation Stakes!" (22) These races were considered the most important races of the colony. This pre-eminence was to continue after Separation, with

21. Moreton Bay Courier 27.1.1855

22. Slaughter L. op. cit. p. 47

particular government recognition of the meet - in the form of presenting the "Queen's Plate" for the main race. This was worth over £100. (23)

As the years progressed, the extent of the festivities at the time of the races was extended, with the annual race ball adding to the life of the town. (24) There were other activities as well. An advertisement appeared in the paper in which the Ipswich Cricket Club challenged the visiting squatters - and many did appear to make the annual pilgrimage - "to play them at the manly game of cricket." (25)

Of course, not all community efforts were dependent on the efforts or interests of the squatters. In 1850 a meeting was held to form an "Ipswich Literary Institution". It became known as the "Ipswich Subscription Library and Reading Room" in 1854. References were regularly made to lectures held by these groups. No comment was made as to how the first lecture was received. It was entitled "Self Knowledge, the basis of all true intellectual and moral improvement." (26) There must have been a body of people in the town who had a very high opinion of their cultural standing! At varying times in the 1850's, the town could boast a choral society, an amateur dramatic group, as well as visits from

23. Queensland Journal of the Legislative Council 1866 ; Vol.9  
(Statement of Revenue & Expenditure 1865) p. 10

24. Harris L. Early Days of Ipswich (Queensland Women's  
Historical Association Souvenir - 1959)

25. Moreton Bay Courier 2.4.1853

26. ibid. 2.4.1853

a number of "artistes". Even a concert could be used as an illustration to prove the cultural superiority of the people of Ipswich to their neighbours down the river. It was claimed by the Ipswich correspondent that a performing group had lost money at their Brisbane performances. A further reproof was that "to the fastidious taste of the Brisbaners, the less classical songs and pieces were the most applauded . . . Now these singers came unexpectedly to Ipswich . . . Yet they were so heartedly received." (sic) (27)

However, the educational record of the town in the 1850's was not particularly impressive although a number of church and private schools had been established, and as early as 1850, there had been attempts to form a National School. These had advanced sufficiently for patrons to be elected, representatives being chosen on a religious basis (two each of the Church of England, the Roman Catholic and the Episcopalian Church). (28) It was acknowledged with regard to private schools that "their sphere of usefulness is more limited." (29) However, no National School was established until 1861. This delay was very considerable when one considers the rapid expansion of population in the district in the decade. This could have been due to the lack of interest shown by that group of people who invariably were involved in community projects, due to their children's needs being well catered for.

27. Moreton Bay Courier 9.12.1854

28. Oxley transcript op. cit. p. 6

29. Moreton Bay Courier 30.7.1853

As has been stated previously, the Fifties was largely the transitional period from a pioneer establishment to a firmly settled community. It was distinguished, too, by the efforts of Ipswich to establish a position of some prominence in the northern districts. In the period before Separation, this was largely achieved in co-operation with the squatters. It had also shown signs of the rivalry between Ipswich and Brisbane. The pressure to remove from Brisbane the site of the capital, however, does not appear to have been sustained. By late 1858, a meeting in Ipswich called to discuss the Separation could do so without mention being made on the issue of the site of the capital. (30) However, the seat of government was not the only prize Ipswich wanted - and the town certainly exerted some pressure to expand its influence in the post-Separation period.

30. Moreton Bay Courier 20.11.1858

THE POWER OF IPSWICH IN POLITICAL AFFAIRS - POST-SEPARATION

The extent to which Ipswich in the 1860's and early 1870's played a leading role, probably unjustified by her size, in the affairs of the colony can well be illustrated by her influence on political affairs. This influence, or attempts at influence, can be seen in two particular instances - in her bid for a large expenditure to be maintained in furthering the navigability of the Brisbane River <sup>(1)</sup> and in her stand with regard to railway development and extension. <sup>(2)</sup> However, such moves can be seen more generally than this in the political affairs of the colony.

With regard to parliamentary representation, the first group of elected members did not augur well for unity in the Ipswich cause. This was due to early attempts to elect groups of candidates (Ipswich was well represented by three members as well as three from the surrounding West Moreton, out of a house of twenty-six members) on a religious basis. As will be seen in terms of establishment of the Grammar School, it was in the early 1860's that the religious rivalry was at its height in the town - and caused a great deal of disunity and ill-feeling in the area. In fact, the proportion of Roman Catholics in 1861 was 39% of the population of Ipswich, while they accounted for only 23% of the Brisbane population. <sup>(3)</sup> This high proportion of Roman Catholics within Ipswich was gradually reduced. Yet there were Roman Catholics who had gained general support, and no better example

1. see Chapter 5

2. see Chapter 6

3. J.L.C. 1861 Vol. 3 (Census of 1861)

of this was John Murphy, first mayor of Ipswich, who was also to have the mayoralty conferred upon him on several subsequent occasions. The Courier correspondent in Ipswich spoke of the 1862 Council thus : "We have been locally governed by very good men no doubt . . . and the principle mainly followed in their election was - were they Irish by birth, or were they Roman Catholics in faith?" (4) The correspondent, in a valiant effort to prove the lack of bias in the town, commented about Ipswich sending "a full share of Roman Catholics to Parliament." In the first Parliament, one Catholic, P. O'Sullivan, had been returned on a Catholic plumper vote, largely on the question of "State Aid." He blithely claimed that there was only one of his creed in Parliament. (5)

A full scale effort does appear to have been made in this regard in the second Council election in 1862. The results give an indication of the extent of the division along religious lines at this stage. The three successful candidates were all closely aligned to the squatter-based section of the business community. What is more, they were Protestant. There was a total of seven Roman Catholic candidates and, as the paper noted, "they put forth their utmost strength." The three successful candidates on this occasion, B. Cribb, Macalister and Thorn (Senior) received 195, 194, and 191 votes respectively, while the three leading Catholic candidates, O'Sullivan, Ford and Gorry, gained 143, 131

4. Courier 13.2.1862

5. Morrison A. Politics in Early Queensland Vol. IV No.3  
1950 p. 298 Historical Society of Queensland Journal

and 130 votes respectively. The other four candidates could only muster 32 votes between them. (6) For the previous year, the vote for the three aldermen to be elected on rotation was led by one Michael O'Malley, as the leading Catholic candidate. (7) However, this distinction was soon modified, and less than two months later, when it was necessary for Macalister to seek re-election upon joining the Herbert Ministry, his nomination was seconded by Gorry, while O'Sullivan was performing a similar honour for the rival candidate, the squatter Bell. However, Bell did have considerable Roman Catholic backing. (8) In a subsequent election in late 1862 for a vacant West Moreton seat, when Bell was once again a candidate, he was accused by his opponent of representing a "coalition of Roman Catholics, squatters, and some business". (9) At least the areas of patronage were becoming less divisive. The main 1862 election appears to have been the only really concerted effort conducted along religious lines.

By 1864 the signs of disunity within the town were quickly vanishing. To some extent this can be seen in the colonial sphere, the Ministry being accused of being an "Ipswich Ministry". (10) The reason for the accusation was the fact that there were then three ministers of the crown representing Ipswich and West Moreton electorates. The Queensland Times regarded

6. Courier 13.2.1862

7. Harrison G. op. cit. p. 21

8. Courier 27.3.1862

9. ibid. 2.12.1862

10. The Queensland Times 7.1.1864

this as a major sacrifice on the part of Ipswich, who then lost the services of three private members. However, according to Groom, the member for Drayton and Toowoomba, there was a fair degree of collaboration between both Ipswich and West Moreton private and ministerial members who, between them, "virtually ruled the colony at the present time; because where a small locality returned six members to the House, and where there was unity of action or feeling, he thought it could not happen otherwise." (11) On the other hand, as an indication that Ipswich was not unduly favoured, comparison was made between the expensive undertakings in Brisbane and the singular lack of any local work in Ipswich. Macalister entered the ministry as Minister for Lands and Works, and in this position he was accused of favouring Ipswich and prejudicing the development of Brisbane. One such instance concerned the Brisbane Corporation Bridge. It was claimed that there was unnecessary interference by the Ministry in the affairs of the Corporation. The original Brisbane Bridge Act of 1861 was not followed by the Brisbane Council in details of that type of bridge to be built. That Bill had passed the Legislative Assembly by a vote of fourteen to seven. This seven included the six Ipswich and West Moreton members. (12) It appeared to be a favourite pastime for the Ipswich members to find irregularities with the construction plans. (13)

There was an added problem for Ipswich, however, in that any

11. Q.P.D. 1866 Vol. 3 p. 674

12. V. & P. 1861 pp. 216-7

13. e.g. V. & P. 1865 p. 154

bridge over the river could cause disturbance to the river traffic and present difficulties for future sea-going vessels. The Queensland Times took umbrage at a comment in a Brisbane paper, the Guardian, wherein it blamed Macalister for an "Ipswich job" in causing difficulties, and complained also of the negative attitude (ostensibly supported by Macalister) of the Lands Department and Surveyor's Office in failing to help the Brisbane Corporation to work out acceptable tenders. (14) The Ipswich membership was strong enough on this issue as late as 1867 to still ensure the sound defeat of a bill for extra Government expenditure on the Bridge. (15) Ipswich was quick to refute any criticism of favouritism by claiming that the town of Ipswich would never have asked for £50,000 "for a mere municipal work" such as a water-works, as Brisbane had done. (16)

Comment must be made on the early activities of the Council, which appears to have been a scene of much enterprise. The members had been declared in March 1860, soon after Separation. They were very active in work around the wharves, and in the controlling of these. These wharves were also a good source of revenue - at one stage bringing in £1 per square foot of frontage. (17) The group was active in other spheres, for example in establishing a fire brigade and improving the water supply. It was a very business-like affair - no default in the payment of rates was to be tolerated. The first council passed a resolution

14. The Queensland Times 5.1.1864

15. Q. P. D. 1869 Vol. 9 p. 498

16. The Queensland Times 31.3.1864

17. Harrison G. op. cit. p. 17

"that the Town Clerk be instructed to read over the names, if any, of the parties who have not paid the first moiety of rates, and that the names of the said parties be published in the local newspaper, and that legal proceedings be taken for the recovery of the said rates." (18) There was a considerable amount of prestige and interest attached to gaining election to the council. Even some squatters showed an interest - with Francis North, Mayor on a number of examples, the best example.

The council was zealous in the exercise of its powers. One such instance concerned the formation of a gold exploration party under a Captain Mechosk. The citizens of Ipswich had been the sole originators of the scheme, and did not appreciate the formation of a committee in Brisbane, including officials to oversee operations. The council, on behalf of the Ipswich organisers, complained to the government about this. This complaint seems to have been the main reason for the government to reprimand the council for "stepping beyond the legitimate limits of their jurisdiction . . . They are unable to admit the right of any corporation in the colony to dictate to them upon a matter so alien to the duties of Municipalities as defined by the Act." (19)

The cries of "Ipswich Ministry" were strengthened after Macalister became Premier in 1866, and were heard most clearly in terms of the relative merits of River and Rail transport. The six members were commonly referred to as the "Ipswich Bunch". The Queensland Times would not admit that any success concerning local

18. ibid. p. 21

19. Queensland Archives Colonial Secretary's File 1861  
No. 694

activities was due to the influence of the government. Its main argument related to the lack of assistance in local works such as bridge building. It also regretted the lack of finance brought to the town by government employees (for example, administrative and clerical workers). Unlike Brisbane, Ipswich did not have many such employees based in the town. A Queensland Times editorial expressed something of the Ipswich feeling: "The success (of the town) is entirely due to the energy and ability to combine for the common purpose, possessed by the people themselves." (20)

There was considerable association between the Darling Downs squatting groups in the House, and the Ipswich group of members. This is obvious when a leading member of the landed gentry, Bell, took a seat for many years as a representative of West Moreton. There was no apology for this connection. It was pointed out in 1866 that "considering the prosperity of most of the people of Ipswich is intimately connected with the prosperity of the squatters . . . the people here (Ipswich) have too much good sense to wish ill to the squatters." (21) The community of interest can be seen in the introduction by Macalister of new Land Laws in 1866. He said the object was "to provide settlement to a limited extent without interfering with the pastoral interests of the colony". (22) Actually, the refusal of the government to make more far-reaching reforms of the Land Laws in favour of

20. The Queensland Times 31.3.1864

21. ibid. 31.7.1866

22. Q. P. D. Vol 3, 1866 p.176

agricultural settlement led to the fall of the government. Prior to this, however, there was considerable discontent in Ipswich about the indigenous Macalister - his Government was described, even in 1866 as "the determined and notorious opponents to a settlement of the people on the lands of the colony." (23) To some extent this must be seen as a result of conflict of interests, with a growing realisation of the importance of agriculture for the welfare of the district.

Macalister's main problem with the townspeople had been his attitude to the Railway question, and that was a subject on which one was not forgiven! It would probably have been impossible to adopt the state-wide interests necessary to be Premier, and also to be a satisfactory member for Ipswich. With respect to Macalister, this is the conclusion Wilson reached. (24) Wilson dates Macalister's more general State-wide outlook from 1864. This would seem to correspond to the period when the influential local news organ began its crusade against him. On heading the list of successful candidates in 1867, Macalister berated The Queensland Times which he claimed had discriminated against him during the past eighteen months. (25) Indeed, he was accused by Dr. Challinor, the next popular candidate in terms of votes, of unscrupulous practices during the election in the form of providing free train transport to the Polling centre for workmen

23. The Queensland Times 4.8.1866

24. Wilson, P.D. op. cit. p. 74

25. The Queensland Times 25.6.1867

"up the line". This led to a claim that "the time will come ere long when Mr. Macalister will have no more chance of election in Ipswich". (26) Macalister was soon to realise this himself.

In 1868, two former ministers - Macalister and Bell, left their Ipswich stronghold to take seats on the Downs. (27)

Nevertheless, it was during the post-Macalister Squatter Government of the late 1860's and early 1870's that the Ipswich parliamentary representation solidarity with the Government was most noticeable. This is just another indication of the degree to which their common stance was mainly one of convenience. On individual issues, their own interests often diverged, and they voted accordingly. For example, when Ipswich was asking for £600 for the establishment of a powder magazine, all distant members opposed the move. (28)

The Queensland Times editor noted that local parliamentary representation was "dwindling down into the more humble position of men of sense, or, put another way 'non-party' men," (29) which really meant that they were there to sponsor Ipswich interests. Apparently this included their own personal interests when Cribb and Dr. Challinor as magistrates - and members of the Legislative Assembly at that point - were on the bench which considered who should be included on the electoral rolls for Ipswich and West Moreton, much to the disgust of a Roman Catholic group in

26. ibid. 22.6.1867

27. ibid. 15.9.1868

28. V. & P. 1868 1st Session p. 184

29. The Queensland Times 22.9.1868

47.

particular under O'Sullivan and O'Malley. (30) This was not the only occasion in West Moreton in particular where electorally corrupt practices were in existence. There were a number of claims that more dead people continued to vote than live ones! Lilley in 1871 claimed that there were some "who had been dead so long that they had forgotten their names!" (31)

The question which provided ample opportunity for the groups to denigrate one another was electoral re-distribution. Ipswich had always been considered well represented, largely by a group of candidates who held similar views. There was a fair degree of continuity in membership. This even included unsuccessful Ipswich candidates of note standing again for West Moreton, which election always took place later than Ipswich. There was probably more connection with pastoral pursuits amongst the West Moreton membership, although they all worked for the same end. After the days of Bell, there never appears to have been the "pure merino" breed squatter representative in the area, even if they often found their interests were similar.

An attempt to introduce an additional representation bill in early 1869 met with the opposition of the "six", due to the suggestion of additional representation of East Moreton, with its Brisbane interests. (32) Further efforts later in the same year met with a similar response from Ipswich, while Brisbane

30. The Queensland Times 15.4.1869

31. Q. P. D. 1871 Vol. XI p. 3651

32. ibid. 1869 Vol. 8 p. 710

complained of a disparity of advantage compared with Ipswich. (33) the greatest aspiration for the Ipswich members, wholeheartedly supported by The Queensland Times, was to keep the "Great Liberal Party" out of office in this period of the late 1860's and early 1870's. In terms of redistribution procedures, until this time it had been necessary to gain a two-thirds majority in a vote for reform. It was noted that the aims of the Liberal Party, which wanted a simple majority system, included a "desire to weaken the wholesome influence possessed by the Ipswich and West Moreton electorate". (34) The relationship of Ipswich with the squatter government was exemplified by further efforts in 1870 towards redistribution. In an arrangement detrimental to Ipswich (the number of members to be cut) however, The Queensland Times claimed that it had never been the intention of the government to let the bill pass. When attempts were made to gain support for the bill, The Queensland Times showed the inadequacies of the count as, at the time of estimation of electors, many of Ipswich's male population were away at the Gympie gold fields. (35) Then a further attempt to achieve a redistribution - in which it was agreed that Ipswich representation should not suffer - caused the rather sarcastic retort of The Queensland Times regarding "the reverence that appears to be felt by both parties, for the Modern Athens." (36) By this time Ipswich had by far the lowest number

33. ibid. Vol. 9, 1869 p. 710

34. The Queensland Times 26.7.1870

35. ibid. 20.12.1870

36. ibid. 7.12.1871

of adult males per representative of any electorate in the State, with only 309. There were very few, even sparsely populated areas, under 600. The Queensland Times would not admit complete disparity with the rest of the State, as it was "balanced slightly" by the 1020 ratio of West Moreton. (37) There was no question that their interests or outlook should in any way be divergent!

The many attempts at electoral reform were finally successful in reducing discrepancies in electoral numbers in 1872. In many ways this coincided with a decline in the influence the "Ipswich bunch" could exercise simply because of the numbers in a relatively small chamber. The actual number of Ipswich and West Moreton members was not reduced from six, but all were divided into single electorates; but "The prevention of the swamping of the whole country by the influence of a portion of it, be that portion of Brisbane or Ipswich or any other district, the 'bunch' system days are numbered." (38) Ipswich's connections with the present government must have still had some effect as their average per seat was about 750, while that of Brisbane was 900. Until this time, the unanimity of the Ipswich group had been exceptional. Morrison (39) says that they were known as "the Ipswich phalanx or the Ipswich clique according to the commentator's politics." From 1870 one of their number, Thompson, had been Minister for Lands in the Palmer "Squatter" Ministry. This did not affect his basic objectives. In standing for re-election in that year he

37. ibid. 12.12.1871

38. ibid. 18.1.1872

39. Morrison A. op. cit. p. 297

said that the Ipswich representatives as a group "had done all they could to attain their object in the face of great opposition".<sup>(40)</sup> Later a list of 364 signatories requisitioned B. Cribb, Thompson, and Johnstone (once mayor of the town) to stand for the three seats of Ipswich. This they did under a joint banner, making their objective plain as endeavouring to save the country "from the ruin contemplated by a coalition of persons for selfish purposes, styling themselves the "great Liberal Party".<sup>(41)</sup> In other words, this "great Liberal Party" did not have the interests of Ipswich at heart. Similarly, in West Moreton, an equivalent list (over 300) of persons published their names in The Queensland Times in support of the three sitting members of the Legislative Assembly, Thorn (Senior), Forbes and Ferrett. Supporting the views of these six members, The Queensland Times justified the stand taken: "We believe in a party that will not deal unjustly or harshly with people simply because they are squatters."<sup>(42)</sup> Needless to say, the six were all returned handsomely. This was to be the case with the same men in 1871. The only threat to any of them had been O'Sullivan, at this stage rather a "traitor" due to his views on the railway, in West Moreton; but he was nearly 200 behind the group vote, and his had been largely a plumper vote, not from Catholics but, according to The Queensland Times, the result of a steamer load from Brisbane coming up to Goodna.<sup>(43)</sup>

40. The Queensland Times 12.5.1870

41. ibid. 23.7.1870

42. ibid. 15.9.1870

43. ibid. 27.7.1871

In the years preceding the division of 1872, there was probably the most concerted attack upon the power that the Ipswich clique was exerting. One adjournment debate seemed to have been particularly opportune for all the anti-Ipswich forces to express their disgust at the influence of the town on political affairs. The main objection concerned the lack of a railway extension to Brisbane, as also in the 1860's with regard to agricultural incentives. However, these were not the only causes of dissent. The theory of Ipswich domination was extended further, whereby the government was accused of being subservient to Mr. Cribb, and his firm of Cribb & Foote. Lilley, whose distaste for the anti-Liberal forces naturally made him despise the Ipswich stand of support for the Squatter-led Government of Palmer in particular, was as anti-Ipswich as Cribb was pro-Ipswich. He claimed that Cribb believed "that in Ipswich the country lived, moved and had its being". (44) Mc Ilwraith went further, claiming that Ipswich and West Moreton members had "always done most to destroy the constitution." (45) When Palmer moved for the adjournment of the House for some months, he was accused of having done it on behalf of Messrs. Cribb & Foote, supported by the Ministry, five Ipswich members, and only five "others". (46) "Others" were northern members, whom Handy, the member for Mitchell, advised that they would get nothing until they threw off the bondage to the Ipswich clique - or, as Handy phrased it, to the "father (that is, Cribb)

44. Q. P. D. 1871 Vol. XII p. 365

45. ibid. p. 382

46. ibid. p/ 432

and his five children." (47) He considered it a disgrace for the colony "to allow an oligarchy or a faction to rule over them." (48) The reply to the criticism was left to the "father of the family" who claimed that the opposition "knew very well that he had not the least importance in the House or the colony." There does not seem to have been any attempt to distinguish the commercial role of the firm Cribb & Poote, and the political dealings of the Ipswich members, and Cribb in particular. The member for Maranoa was one who was highly critical of the extension of the firm's commercial influence in his area. (49)

With the redistribution, and greater spreading of population it was only natural that the extent to which any one community could retain a large sway over affairs should diminish. This, no doubt, was largely aided, too, by the extension of the railway to Brisbane. In this regard, vested interest in Ipswich no longer rested largely with the government. Indeed, by 1873, affairs had so altered that it was possible for Macalister to once again return to his old town. Under the new one-member electorate, he stood against Thompson. Macalister could still base his case in terms of Ipswich, and the disregard shown to it by the government. "He strongly objected to Ipswich being converted into a rotten borough, to return a member at the dictation of squatters or squatters' agents." (50) Furthermore, he was

47. ibid. p. 438

48. ibid. p. 440

49. ibid. p. 441

50. Queensland Times 11.11.1873

successful, and soon went on to be Premier once again. However, apart from achieving a proper city water supply, there appears to be little overt gains favouring the centre. In short, conditions had changed, and not even a man with the Ipswich connections of George Thorn Junior, who briefly followed Macalister to the Premiership, could hope to alter a changed situation.

The degree of the political influence of Ipswich had been extensive, largely as a result of the strength and solidarity of representation as well as ministerial membership, most notably that of Macalister. Although the initial parliamentary representation did not augur well for solidarity of purpose, this had soon been overcome and unity achieved as successive members regarded current issues in terms of Ipswich's interests. This was well illustrated in their role of opposition to added benefits to Brisbane. Support of ministers was dependant on their willingness to maintain the strength and power exerted by the locality, although accusations of favouritism and undue influence were always denied. The Redistribution question highlighted the issue of Ipswich influence at one period, as did the emphasis placed on the importance of the river, the use of the railway to their advantage and even the giving of agricultural subsidies at other times.

The communication confrontation regarding Ipswich and Brisbane in the 1850's had been largely centred on the relative merits of expansion of road transport or the improvement of river carriage. Ipswich stressed the importance of the river. In general, too, in the 1860's the conflict once again involved support for the river from Ipswich, while Brisbane eulogised the benefits of rail transport.

During the first session of the Post-Separation Parliament, Macalister had successfully moved that a supplementary estimate of £2,000 be passed for improvement of the navigability of both the Brisbane and Bremer Rivers. (1) However, there was no action taken.

There was sufficient pressure in Ipswich for the mayor (John Murphy) to contact the Colonial Secretary, on behalf of Ipswich, to draw the attention of the Secretary to the lack of action taken on this grant, also a grant of £3,000 for a bridge over the Bremer at Ipswich. He asked for "prompt and efficient expenditure of these sums." However, he received little satisfaction, the Colonial Secretary ordering that the Mayor be informed that "no action at present" should be undertaken. (2) In fact, nothing was spent in the year 1861. Similarly, Bell, in asking the Government in 1863 if it was the intention to improve the Bremer, received the reply that this was the case "so

1. V. & P. 1860 p. 83

2. Queensland Archives : Colonial Secretary's File 1860  
No. 1988

soon as money is provided for the improvement of the rivers of the colony." (3)

A report by a Lieutenant Heath had concluded that to remove the impediments from the Bremer River would not largely increase the overall depth of the river, an aim favoured by Ipswich with the idea that larger sea-going vessels would be able to travel to Ipswich. (4) To undertake reports on the obstructions had been one way of maintaining inaction. Another report on the greatest obstruction of them all, the Seventeen Mile Rocks, (5) was presented to Parliament on 12th June, 1861.

At a meeting in 1862 it was decided to form a provisional committee of Ipswich citizens "empowered to draw up resolutions embodying the necessary steps to be taken in deepening and improving the navigation of the River Bremer." (6) The main thrust of the memorial that came out of these preliminary moves concerned the need to clear the obstructions to navigation, as well as deepening the river. Two of the parliamentary representatives present at the meeting - B. Cribb and O'Sullivan - urged that pressure be put on the Government to provide a dredge for this purpose. At this early stage Cribb, in particular, was already suggesting that they use the dredge being employed at the bar of the Brisbane River, on entry to the bay. Thus is illustrated the

3. V. & P. 1863 Second Session p. 87

4. ibid. 1861 Session 7.5.1861

5. J. L. C. 1861 Paper No. 13

6. Courier 14.11.1862

interest, not only of improving the Bremer and Upper Brisbane navigation, but at the same time restricting expenditure on the lower areas. The logic of this was that there was little need to have a deeper river to Brisbane than above that town. Shipments could be made direct from Ipswich to the bay, and therefore there would be no need for large sums to be spent on the lower reaches of the river.

The general attitude was to eliminate as much as possible the Brisbane link in terms of goods and produce shipments. There were complaints regarding the limitations in getting up to Ipswich goods that were shipped to Brisbane. (7) However, Prospects were bright, as The Queensland Times recorded on 29th November, 1862 that "We are now very glad to find that there is now no want of encouragement for direct shipments to England." (8)

The meeting previously mentioned dealt with three matters - all on the basis of the "needs" for Ipswich. With regard to river navigation - which was the leading consideration - the movement for improving the navigability of the Bremer River was due to the "large influx of population, capital and stock which the colony is daily receiving . . . the rapidly increasing importance of the Western Districts, which receive their supplies and return their produce by these rivers." The possibility of railway links with the interior provided an added reason for good transport from Ipswich to the port. The resolution also remarked that "we confidently anticipate that the day is not

7. ibid. 21.11.1862

8. The Queensland Times 29.11.1862

far distant when the increase of the traffic will demand the employment of large sea-going vessels in the carrying trade of these rivers, and also that the intercolonial steamers shall be enabled to come up to Ipswich and discharge their cargoes there." (9)

The argument that boats should proceed directly to Ipswich had emphasised the advantage that trips to Sydney would be more economical, a return freight would be advantageous, and the hinterlands of Ipswich offered this in the form of vast beds of easily procurable coal. The wish was two-fold; to clear the obstructions mentioned in Lieutenant Heath's report, and also to procure the services of a dredge to work on deepening the river. Typically, the Ipswich speakers to the resolution stressed the belief that their interests were really the interests of the people in the colony generally. The other theme was that so long as water transport was practicable - and it would be so only if they could convince the government of the necessity for priority for this river work - it would be much cheaper than land transport. The urgency, as far as Ipswich was concerned, was not simply a passing one - methods, quantities and expenses of such a programme of clearing work had been calculated. O'Sullivan, in advocating the urgency of making an immediate start, used the major justification that "he had always been under the impression that it was possible to bring sea-going vessels up to Ipswich and, with perseverance, it certainly would be done." In common with other speakers, he was quick to add

that "if he thought the present movement would benefit Ipswich at the expense of Brisbane, his voice would be raised against it, but obviously such was not the case." (10)

Related to the question of the use of water transport was an attempt to have an immigration depot established at Ipswich. Since 1857 there had been a site reserved by the then Government of New South Wales for the establishment of such a depot at Ipswich on the banks of the Bremer River. They claimed that the time had arrived (probably it was fast running out!) for the establishment of such a depot. It was seen as advantageous, not only from the migrant viewpoint, but also for the "speedy distribution" of the migrants for the benefit of the public. The special claim made for Ipswich was that it was "as near as possible to the place where there is the greatest demand for their services - that pastoral enterprises must for some time to come afford the principal field of labour." (11) Still in 1865 Dr. Challinor was complaining of efforts in Brisbane to prevent migrants going to Ipswich. (12) In all this, Ipswich was still quite proud to point out that it was "the outlet to a large extent of pastoral country at the head of a navigable river, and the termination of land carriage." Regarding this aspect, the theme espoused by the speakers was that the system whereby all migrants for the region had to pass through Brisbane settlement was overt favouritism to Brisbane. The design to gain an

10. ibid.

11. ibid.

12. Q. P. D. 1865 Vol. 2 p. 174

immigrant depot illustrates both that Ipswich strongly desired to present all possible justification for works to be done, and also to stress that this was undertaken in the interests of the colony generally, and the pastoralists particularly. Therein lay Ipswich's source of strength.

While two local members were leading advocates for the views thus being urged, the area of ministerial jurisdiction on the question of the river fell under the new - and at this point strongly Ipswich-orientated - Minister for Lands and Works, Macalister. It is interesting to note the period in which so much was done in terms of river improvement - the early Macalister period. Another matter of interest was that the resolution to be presented to the Governor regarding clearing of the river was from the "merchants, bankers, squatters, and other inhabitants of Ipswich" while the depot resolution was from "employers of labour in Ipswich." With regard to the establishment of this immigration depot, Dr. Challinor asked the Colonial Secretary in late 1864 about progress towards its formation, and was told that the depot had been ready for some months, and a number of immigrants were expected shortly. (13)

The first record of actual expenditure on the river was in the 1863 Statement of Revenue and Expenditure, when £1,900 had been granted for clearing both the Brisbane and Bremer Rivers, no information being provided about specific amounts or the location to be cleared. However, the big "River" expense lay in the purchase and operation of a dredge - the Lytton - whose

13. V. & P. 1864 Second Session p. 115

operations involved areas below Brisbane. This amounted to over 11,000. <sup>(14)</sup> In the following year there was 4,500 allocated specifically for work in clearing obstructions to the Bremer, <sup>(15)</sup> Macalister being Minister for Lands and Works at that time. He openly advocated the total priority that should be given to river transport above all else. <sup>(16)</sup> Not all agreed with this, however, and the Courier insinuated that it was "an Ipswich job" <sup>(17)</sup> A Select meeting of the Legislative Assembly on "the Rivers and Harbours of the Colony" included three members from Ipswich and West Moreton out of a total of six, while there was only one other South-East Queensland member, R. Cribb, of East Moreton. Naturally the findings stressed the importance of "deepening and improving the navigable rivers of this colony", and their cause gained some support from similar moves by those interested in the Fitzroy River. <sup>(18)</sup> Ipswich held the view that their river was "the highway of the colony and the chief avenue of communication with the interior" but the Courier <sup>(19)</sup> could not see why the money should be spent on the river instead of Brisbane or Rockhampton. Something like 60,000 "has been sunk in the most useless undertaking, the clearing of the Bar. No government in its senses would ever think of clearing the

14. J. L. C. 1864 Vol. VII (Statistical Register of Queensland 1863) p. 97

15. Ibid. 1865 Vol. VIII (Statement of Revenue and Expenditure 1864)

16. Bernays C.A. Queensland Politics During Sixty Years 1859-1919 (A. J. Cumming : Government Printer 1919)

17. Courier 30.3.1864

18. V. & P. 1864 Second Session pp. 1195, 1261

19. Courier 29.3.1864

river between Lytton (the site to which sea-going vessels could go at that stage) and Brisbane" In 1865 there was included a sum of nearly £20,000, the two main areas of expenditure to be the purchase of a further dredge, and a start to clearing some of the obstructions. (20)

The 1865 report of the Engineer of Harbours and Rivers showed the rapid progress in the work of clearing the river, but also the enormity of the task. Tenders for much of the work had been called in 1864. (21) There was a suggestion of cutting a channel sixty feet wide and six feet deep through the basaltic rock near Ipswich, as well as of deepening channels at the Ipswich wharves. For the removal of the "Five mile rocks" there were employed "4 divers, 9 miners, one blacksmith, 11 labourers" and this force was to be extended for continuing work on the Seventeen Mile Rocks. At the Brisbane - Bremer junction, some 16,629 cubic feet of stone were "set in." (22) In the following year there was some consternation about the delay in further operations just before the time the work should have been completed, probably at the time of the fall of the Macalister Government. (23)

The Engineer's report of 1866 showed an expenditure of over 6,600 for work on the Bremer. Included in this was the expense

20. J. L. C. 1866 Vol. IX (Statement of Revenue and Expenditure 1865) p. 5

21. Queensland Archives Secretary of Lands and Works File 1864 No. 768

22. V. & P. 1865 Session p. 1293

23. ibid. 1867 Second Session Vol. 2 p. 153

involved in the completion of a channel near Ipswich, the undertaking of similar work at the junction of the Brisbane and Bremer Rivers, and the removal of obstructions - including about 4,000 cubic yards at Seventeen Mile Rocks. The new dredge, previously mentioned, which arrived in April 1866 (24) was then expected to deepen areas of flats in the river. The engineer claimed "The importance of the Brisbane and Bremer navigation is daily increasing. At the present time there are engaged therein 18 steamers, 18 sailing vessels, 23 barges, about 70 market boats; when greater facilities are afforded no doubt the number will be largely augmented." He also commented on the significant but less important obstructions below Brisbane. (25) Greater facilities would have included a need for improvement in the standard of wharfage. It appears to have been a major effort in a short time to clear the Bremer and Brisbane Rivers to the satisfaction of Ipswich. This report not only refers to dredging and blasting activities, but also describes the construction at the junction of the two rivers of a wall "composed of large square blocks of sandstone hammer dressed and laid dry."

As evidence of the considerable opposition to the large expenditure on this improvement work, especially during the crisis year for Queensland of 1866 Walsh, the member for Maryborough, moved a substantial motion which reflected the opposition in many quarters to continuing vast expenditures on Public Works,

24. The Queensland Times 17.4.1866

25. V. & P. 1860 Session p. 1572

particularly in South Queensland. The fourth resolution read : "That it is desirable to stop the further expenditure of money in the improvement of the navigation of the river between Ipswich and Brisbane." The argument was propounded against further such spending on the grounds that it was wasteful; the benefits would be minimal compared with benefits which would be derived from improvements from Brisbane to the Bay. Pittsimmons, the member for Rockhampton, summed up this view by saying : "The Government were so blinded with a desire to please the Ipswich people, that they could not do justice to other parts of the colony." (26)

The view of Ipswich members, put by B. Cribb, was that little public works were done for Ipswich while "money had been spent on Brisbane, and the people of Ipswich had been taxed in equal proportion." He claimed that money could be spent to make genuine improvements to the river, and cited the fact that vessels drawing seven feet of water had gone to Ipswich. "The only fear . . . was that navigation of the river would be so far improved that goods would be taken up to Ipswich direct, without being landed in Brisbane." He claimed further that Ipswich people had only asked for one of the items of work on the river to be undertaken - and this not an expensive removal job. (27)

The Queensland Times expressed disgust when the motion was accepted without a division in the House : "We were given to understand that the motion was designedly put by the Speaker in

26. Q. P. D. 1866 Vol. 3 p. 753

27. ibid. p. 755

so low a tone, so quickly, that, until it was declared carried, not one member of the House knew what was going on. This impression was subsequently strengthened by the evident unwillingness of Mr. Elliott (the Speaker) to have the matter reopened. We are well aware that the honourable gentleman is no friend of Ipswich."<sup>(28)</sup> B. Cribb was not willing to allow the matter to rest there. He had subsequently moved that the resolution stopping expenditure be rescinded, stating that the average expenditure on the river over the six year period (1860 to 1866) was "little more than £2,000 per annum." He thought this was in no way excessive compared to the expenditure on roads - for the same period £14,806 had been spent on the Ipswich to Brisbane road alone, and the river was for trade as well as passengers. Further, if the money was not continued, the amount already spent might be wasted.<sup>(29)</sup> His strongest supporter was Macalister, as Colonial Secretary: "If the works above Brisbane were discontinued, the works at the mouth of the Brisbane must be discontinued also, for it would be monstrous robbery to spend £100,000 in opening the bar at the mouth of the river to allow vessels to come up to Brisbane, if the expenditure of a few thousands in opening the river to the second town in the colony was to be objected to . . . he held that they had no business to deepen the river above Lytton. They had no right to encourage large ships to come up the river,

28. The Queensland Times 16.10.1866

29. Q. P. D. 1866 Vol. 3 p. 839

bringing with them, perhaps, the seeds of some virulent disease." (30) Macalister said that nearly £20,000 had been spent on purchase of plant - and expressed his fear that this might be transferred from its original purpose to be used below Brisbane.

The defeat of the Macalister Ministry in 1867 coincided with the withdrawal of funds expended on the Upper River area, and in 1867, of a total of £10,000 for expenditure on Harbours and Rivers, the Bremer was allotted only £475. (31) In the period 1860 - 67 that part of the river had received £49,147 of a total Rivers and Harbours expenditure of £147,216. (32)

To increase the influence of Ipswich in the colony, efforts were made to have it declared a "port of entry". This would have the effect of enhancing the importance of the river, and would supplement its role as "Highway of the Colony". These moves appear to have been sponsored largely by the business community, and the aim was to have all goods shipped for Ipswich and beyond shipped directly to Ipswich. In 1860, a notice (33) had been published in the Government Gazette stating: "No goods liable to duty can, under any circumstances, be forwarded hence to Ipswich until they have been in the first place landed and stored in Brisbane, there to be gauged, or weighed, and marked."

30. ibid. p. 841

31. J.L.C. 1868 Vol. XII (Statistical Register 1867) p. 353

32. ibid. 1868-69 Vol. XIII (Detailed Statement of the Total Expenditure 1860-67 under Several Loan Acts - Auditor General's Report) p. 122

33. Queensland Government Gazette 27.9.1860

In endeavouring to maintain a leading role as a centre for the distribution and collection of goods for the Downs, the "Merchants, traders and other inhabitants of Ipswich" presented a petition to the Government to this end in 1867. (34) At that time, of course, no goods liable to duty could be forwarded to Ipswich until they had been passed through Customs at Brisbane. In 1865 B. Cribb had complained that Ipswich-bound goods on which duty had to be paid in Brisbane, would not be less than £ 30,000 per year. (35) They claimed this caused three main complaints; loss of property on the Brisbane wharves, enormous charges of the Brisbane Customs agents, and loss of articles through unnecessarily long detention at Brisbane. Even more importantly, it was "a right due to the inhabitants of the second town of the colony, who are very large consumers of goods that bear duty, and also from the geographical position of Ipswich as head of the navigation and terminus of the Southern and Western Railway, consequently the depot for all goods for the surrounding district, and the towns and stations in the interior." (36)

Ipswich agents were thus placed at a disadvantage compared with their "rivals in trade" in Brisbane. Again it became a political matter which, when referred by the minister responsible, the Colonial Treasurer, to the Collector of Customs, Thornton, elicited the reply that such a move was of no practical value

34. V. & P. 1867 First Session p. 105

35. Q. P. D. 1865 Vol. 2 p. 177

36. V. & P. 1867 First Session p. 106

"unless the obstruction to the navigation of the Brisbane and of the Bremer Creek (sic.) be removed." (37) He would not accept the categorisation of Ipswich as other than an "inland town", and not entitled to any more special consideration than elsewhere. Thornton was not considered a friend of Ipswich at all, but rather a creature of Brisbane, and there was no worse epithet! (38) His view in this regard was that no moves to have Ipswich declared a port of entry should be allowed, however, the influence of the Ipswich traders, in particular the firm of Cribb & Foote, appears to have over-ruled this. The initial reply from the Treasury Department was that it was not possible, but Ipswich interests persisted. They were most irate at Thornton's response to their plea- or, as they described it, "the lucid report of the Collector of Customs." (39) Furthermore, his reference to the "Creek" was seen as an affront. Under the leadership of Parliamentarians Cribb and Mr. Challinor, a new submission was prepared. It noted the number of sea-going vessels which plied the Ipswich route as well as the proposed "direct communication between Ipswich and Sydney...and, as regards the direct importation of goods from Europe, Brisbane physically stands exactly in the same relation to ships compelled to anchor in the bay that Ipswich does, with this exception only that Brisbane is not quite so far 'inland' as the latter town; while in reference to exports, it is

37. ibid. p. 107

38. The Queensland Times 1.1.1867 ; 3.1.1867

39. V. & P. 1867 Session p. 108

notorious (sic.) that the great bulk of wool, tallow and hides, which are forwarded direct to England from this colony, are lightered to the Bay from Ipswich, without any intermediate transshipment at Brisbane." (40) Relationships were very strained, with the Ipswich committee refusing to meet with Thornton when he had been sent to Ipswich, largely because of his "local prejudices to bias his judgment." This was pointed out by B. Cribb in a letter to the Colonial Secretary in early 1867. (41)

In a further letter to the Ipswich interests, the Colonial Secretary concluded (notwithstanding the 1860 notice) that Ipswich already was a port of entry, as part of the port of Brisbane, and thus any alteration was not necessary. However, there was an acknowledgment of the present difficulties regarding transit of goods to Ipswich, and of the need to remedy these; although it was claimed that if this involved further government expenditure, it would have to receive Parliamentary authorisation. To this, the Ipswich members of the Legislative Assembly replied to the Colonial Treasurer: "The Government has no desire to have the present system of collecting the duties and bonding of goods of Ipswich consignees materially altered, and that it is merely to avoid the odium of refusing to give substantial redress to indisputable and remediable grievances that the Government proposes to refer it to Parliament, foreseeing that the anti-Ipswich proclivities which of late have manifested themselves on every possible occasion in both Houses of the

40. ibid. p. 109

41. ibid.

Legislature will interpose an effectual bar to the removal of the disabilities of which we so justly complain." (42) This was compared with Brisbane works, not requiring the same authorisation; particularly work on the Brisbane bridge.

The persistent pestering by Ipswich seems to have been effective as, by the end of January, "Port of Entry" status as interpreted by Ipswich was granted. (43) This consisted of the Colonial Treasurer advising the Collector of Customs that he did not consider the 1860 gazettal notice was "now essential". (44) A further advance was gained in 1870 when all goods designated for Ipswich and beyond (that is, if via Ipswich) should be directed straight to Ipswich. The then Colonial Treasurer, Rassey, on his immediate agreement to this request, was commended by The Queensland Times, which concluded that "petty local jealousies had been at the bottom of past obstructionism." (45)

From the Ipswich viewpoint, this step had been long in coming in a period when there were growing calls for the Ipswich to Brisbane railway link. Although the busiest period of river traffic was then still being reached, its permanence was threatened by the lack of continuation of expenditure for its improvement. The moves to have any works at all carried out did not eventuate - or even gain great prominence. In 1869, a memorial was forwarded from Ipswich and West Moreton to the

42. ibid. p. 111

43. The Queensland Times 31.6.1867

44. V. & P. 1867 Session p. 110

45. The Queensland Times 31.5.1870

Government asking for a dredge as the river was becoming badly silted. (46)

A further deputation in 1870 to the Minister for Works, Walsh, asking for an improvement of the river navigation at a relatively small cost, was informed that it would receive favourable consideration. The papers' dispute was reminiscent of old, with the Courier taking offence at the suggestion. To this, the Queensland Times replied that it was not a matter of "beginning the work, but of continuing it", (47) that is, to bring it up to the standard of below Brisbane, and allow sea-going vessels up to Ipswich; which the Courier saw as unreasonable. The Queensland Times claimed that sea-going vessels went to Ipswich already. (48) All seems to have been in vain.

One of the last efforts - and the most ambitious - was noted in a letter to the local paper. The writer's idea was for the construction of locks at Seventeen Mile Rocks to deepen the river above that point. (49) Not even less enterprising schemes were undertaken, however, so the constant barrage of pronouncements of the ability to develop the capabilities of the river to a larger vessel port were never successful. What had once been of prime importance as the "Highway of the Colony" could not continue to be so as the state expanded.

The use of river transport was probably the most significant claim by Ipswich in its attempts to retain its

46. ibid. 23.3.1869

47. ibid. 13.10.1870

48. ibid. 4.3.1871

49. ibid. 21.10.1871

economic influence. The period of Macalister's premiership in particular kept this claim alive. While Ipswich had a leading role in the communication system, its place in the colony's affairs was great. This could only be continued if the river remained the major communication link between Brisbane and Ipswich, and hence with the rest of the southern district. To this end, the relative merits of improving river transport and railway construction were going to be viewed differently in Ipswich and Brisbane. While the "superiority" of the river was the obvious claim by Ipswich, having unnecessary poor competition was a limiting factor from the Brisbane viewpoint. It was not difficult for both settlements to claim undue influence by the other when, for example, work on the river above Brisbane was undertaken at the expense of below the town; or of money spent on the river that could have been used on railway construction.

THE RAILWAY QUESTION

The importance of retaining a leading role in the communication system was more crucial than anything else to the expansion and economic well-being of Ipswich, and, just as efforts to have the river improved must be seen in this context, so must the encouragement of railway construction from Ipswich to the interior, and the efforts to prevent the railway continuing to Brisbane. The amount of traffic of goods and produce was very significant, as can be evidenced by the information supplied by the Ipswich agents to the Commission on railway extension in 1871. Although it is impossible to gain an estimate of the proportion of the colony's trade that passed through Ipswich, the vast majority of the Southern merchants used Ipswich as the depot for trading their produce. Ipswich fought hard to retain this advantage.

There had been moves even before Separation for the formation of a railway line in the colony, and a company - the Moreton Bay Tramway Company - was mooted soon after Separation. The main action seems to have come from Brisbane interests, but Ipswich was also prominently represented on the provisional committee formed. The prospectus stated that "such tramway should extend between Ipswich and Toowoomba, power being reserved to continue it at both ends should the shareholders think fit." (1) A Parliamentary Select Committee was established to examine the proposal, and it was sufficiently

1. Queensland Archives : Colonial Secretary's File 1860  
No. 1815

satisfied with the prospects to recommend the introduction of a Bill on the issue.

Surveys of the area were undertaken to establish a suitable line of track, and almost immediately there was talk of extension of the proposed rail line to Dalby, but no mention was made of any extension to Brisbane. (2) However, the scheme never materialized, even though there were moves to have the company taken over by the Government. (3) What is interesting in regard to the proposed company is that Ipswich was to be the starting point for the railway. Initially, there was not going to be competition for river transport in that quarter, although the fact that the prospectus states that the line could be continued at both ends signifies that the notion of a railway to Brisbane was at least contemplated.

This must have added to the interest in the formation of railways by the Government. In 1863 an engineer, Fitzgibbon, tabled a report for a proposed line of railway from Ipswich to Dalby and Warwick, via Toowoomba. As well as giving estimates of cost, and descriptions of the work involved, he had the opportunity to note that : "Sectional jealousies may for a time retard the construction of railways here." (4)

The Herbert Ministry was threatened over this issue when it proposed a Loan of nearly £ 1,000,000 for a railway from Ipswich

2. ibid. 1861 NO. 723

3. V. & P. 1860 p. 134

4. ibid. 1863 2nd Session p. 589

"towards the interior", and for telegraph extensions for northern ports. It did not have an easy passage. An amendment was moved to the motion to delay it, and this was only defeated by the casting vote of the Speaker. As was to be the pattern on the railway question henceforward, the total Ipswich and West Moreton representation voted for the loan, while the total Brisbane and East Moreton group took the opposing view. (5)

This had been the last act of the first Parliament; and in the first session of the second Parliament, a new Herbert Government voted a loan, including £250,000 for a railway from Ipswich to "Little Liverpool." (6)

In the same year there was a proposal for a railway survey to be undertaken from Ipswich to Brisbane. This was only defeated by twelve votes to ten, with Ipswich and West Moreton strongly opposing the idea. (7) While Brisbane fought strongly for the extension Ipswich, in conformity with the established pattern, maintained its position as the main centre of opposition to the proposal. The reasons can be seen as three-fold - an anti-Brisbane move; a fear that a continuation of the railway would reduce Ipswich's importance in trade; and a vested interest in the continuation of river transport.

The general mood had changed somewhat by 1865, with regard to railway extension to Brisbane. At that point only the

5. ibid. 1863 1st Session 20.5.1863

6. Bernays C.A. op. cit. p. 28

7. V. & P. 1863 2nd Session p. 149

Brisbane and East Moreton members favoured a line being surveyed, while the eighteen others who voted opposed even a survey being undertaken. (8) One of the members for Brisbane, Blackeney, moving for £2,000 to be thus expended, attempted to gain the Downs' support (which was not then forthcoming) by saying he "would not like to chance having to remain there (that is, Ipswich) for the tide, until the Bremer Creek (I will not call it a river) rises sufficiently to enable a steamer to come down." After concluding that "it is not reasonable or right that the citizens of Brisbane should wait thus" he once more encouraged the Downs' support by pointing out that bales of wool tore and disintegrated in their transfer from drays to steamers. His plea for extension also involved the claim that one third of the population of the colony lived in the vicinity of Brisbane and should not have to suffer "because we have no friends in high quarters." (9) The answer of the Government was delivered by Macalister. He said : "The object of the railway policy introduced by the Government was the substitution of railway communication for the mud tracks that existed throughout the interior. It was to provide for the internal communication of the colony, and not to compete with water communication . . . it was recognised that the head of navigation was the point at which railway communication commenced." (10) Macalister could

8. ibid. 1865 Session p. 75

9. Q. P. D. 1865 Vol. 2 pp. 167-168

10. ibid. 1865 Vol. 2 p. 170

not conceive how the Railway could ever compete with the River for goods traffic. As for the passenger traffic, he said that he "would be happy to support any private enterprise of that type." (11) Bell, the Colonial Treasurer, further argued the case against extension when he claimed that "it would be easy to place heavy goods in lighters at Ipswich as at Brisbane, to be conveyed to vessels in the bay." (12) With limited funds, the Ipswich case could rely on Northern support, as they saw it as a further expenditure on the South, to their detriment.

The Brisbane population did not slacken in their efforts. One petition presented in 1866 concerning railway extension to Brisbane attracted 1,444 signatures. (13) Another method of attempting to discredit the railway system as it existed was to accuse Ipswich personalities of making great profits out of railway construction contracts. The Queensland Times reported such charges even against Macalister, (14) and of course Cribb & Poote were accused of making undue profits also. (15) There were also accusations about influence in gaining an unnecessarily elaborate railway station for Ipswich, as well as an "unnecessary bridge over the Bremer, which was not authorised by Parliament." (16) There was no doubt a degree of envy on the part of Brisbane that Ipswich

11. ibid. p. 171

12. ibid. p. 173

13. V. & P. 1866 Session p. 1555

14. The Queensland Times 21.5.1864

15. ibid. 21.5.1864

16. J. L. C. 1866 Vol. IX Paper 381; (Report from the Select Committee on Railways of the Colony.)

had stolen the limelight with regard to railways. Ipswich was enjoying the role - as was illustrated by the grand manner in which the opening of the railway was conducted in the presence of the Governor and the entire Ministry. (17)

As the railway system expanded westwards, there was a continuing clamour by those towns not already linked to have it proceed to their district. There was one effort in 1866 to have this expansion temporarily curtailed. In trying to save on public expenditure it was proposed by Walsh (at the same time as he made an effort to prevent more money being spent on the river) to discontinue further work on the line between Toowoomba and Warwick. To satisfy the contractor he proposed that, instead, an agreement should be made for this work to be replaced by the construction of a line from Ipswich to Brisbane, regarded as a cheaper proposition. This was immediately seen as a deal for the support of the Brisbane members. The move was unsuccessful, as the resolution against any further expansion was passed by thirteen votes to twelve; while the suggestion of a railway to Ipswich still gained only Brisbane support, being defeated seventeen votes to seven. (18)

The Brisbane clique tried other methods as well. R. Cribb of East Moreton put forward a motion that assistance be given to a private firm to construct the Ipswich to Brisbane line, but this idea appears to have been abandoned. (19) A further attempt along

17. The Queensland Times 17.5.1864

18. Q. P. D. 1866 Vol. 3 p. 765

19. ibid. p. 861

the same lines was made in the following year. On this occasion there was more outspoken criticism of the fact that the railway was terminated at Ipswich instead of Brisbane, and that large sums that could have been spent to this end had been used on clearing the river. However, there was not the optimism to be making large ventures on an area on which much had already been spent. (20)

The Ipswich viewpoint regarding these aims was that it was not for the good of the colony as a whole that the extension was required, but as a means of transfer of traffic from Ipswich to Brisbane. Ipswich was not willing to concede the railway on these terms. If goods could be loaded inland and transported direct to the port, this was advantageous; but from the Ipswich viewpoint, this meant transport past Brisbane to the Bay at Lytton. (21) A growing number approved that course of action for the future, thus countering their Brisbane opponents. There was obviously validity in both arguments; but however ardently both Ipswich and Brisbane argued their cases, it is difficult not to see their own self-interest as the base.

There was a growing group now in support of the railway being extended to Brisbane. Macalister was a convert to this view about 1867, and this had the effect of virtually ending any further election for him for Ipswich, (22) as he himself realised.

20. ibid. 1867 Vol. 5 pp. 474-475

21. The Queensland Times 13.4.1867

22. ibid. 15.9.1869

The whole railway question was a very provocative one, particularly for the Ipswich representatives. There had been much expended on the extension westward and south of the railway in a period of financial instability. For the period 1860-67, the expenditure on the Southern railway was estimated above one and a half million pounds. (23) With rather high freight rates, there was still considerable dray traffic to Ipswich. Opponents to the idea regarded the whole railway system as being "Ipswichian". (24) The Downs areas were also becoming more vocal in support of railway extension to Brisbane. Petitions were presented by Allora, Warwick and Dalby to this effect, claiming the need for direct communication with Brisbane, by now the best market in the colony, and, as the result of considerable expenditure on the lower river, becoming increasingly important as a port. There was even a petition for West Moreton claiming the desirability, in their view, of a railway to make their passage to Brisbane easier, especially those some distance from the river. (25) This view met with the disapproval of The Queensland Times, which claimed that the majority of the signatures were not genuine. (26) No local member was going to tarnish his reputation by presenting such a petition, (27)

In the period, late 1868-70, with Lilley and his Brisbane support as Leader of the Government, moves for the railway

23. J. L. C. Vol. VIII 1868-69 p. 120
24. The Queensland Times 30.5.1867
25. V. & P. 1869 Session p. 401
26. The Queensland Times 7.9.1869
27. V. & P. 1869 Session p. 465

extension were intensified. In the opening speech of 1869, the extension question was expressed : "the advisability of certain economical extensions of these undertakings, with a view to make them more fully reproductive." (28) It was part of the programme again in 1870, but because of other reasons, such as an unsatisfactory redistribution, the Lilley Government was replaced by the aforementioned Palmer Government. The Palmer Government who were, after all, dependent on solid Ipswich and West Moreton support, were to delay making a decision by undertaking further investigation. Further surveys were commissioned regarding the formation of a line between Ipswich and Brisbane. One such report had been undertaken in 1866, and a further one in 1870. In both of these, the projected railway line was kept south of the river, so that a bridge would not interfere with river transit. This was to become a major issue in the years ahead. (29) For his opening speech, Palmer indicated the future likelihood of the railway but Pring, one of the Brisbane members, was quick to point out that "in that case there would be a member of the cabinet, the members for West Moreton and the three members for Ipswich ready to leave their ranks." (30)

A move instigated by the Legislative Council had developed into the appointment of a select committee of both Houses to examine the feasibility of the establishment of a railway from Ipswich to

28. Q. P. D. 1869 Vol. 9 p. 1

29. J. L. C. 1st Session 1870 Vol. XV p. 89

30. Q. P. D. 1870 Vol. XI p. 18

Brisbane. The Ipswich Secretary for Public Lands, Thompson, noted that the majority membership of the Legislative Council was known to be in favour of extension; so he was wanting "fair representation" of the opposite view from the Assembly. To this end, he appointed himself, as well as Johnstone, another Ipswich member. (31) With regard to the Legislative Council, on occasions such as this, Ipswich must have sorely felt its almost total lack of representation in the body, a characteristic from the earliest post-Separation appointments. Most of the "eligible" Ipswich people were more interested in the rough and tumble of the Assembly - George Thorn Junior was the first, but even he left the arena to return to the Assembly, and accept the Premiership for a limited period.

Detailed examinations by the Select Committee considered a number of issues. This included interviews with a number of representatives of the steamer companies and agents. Each detailed the amount of goods and produce - wool, cotton, sheepskins, hides, tallow and grains. There was a general agreement regarding the improved state of conditions - both in terms of a number of steamers plying the route, and also wharfage and handling improvements. The system whereby produce from the interior was assigned to their shipping agents in Ipswich did not present a serious handicap in terms of present transfer from railway to river. The argument was that there had to be a transfer from Rail to River at Ipswich - which in the case of one company only took four minutes - and subsequent carriage by steamer, in

the case of wool in particular, straight to the sea-going vessel. If railway replaced it, there was still the problem of getting from the rail to the larger boats, (32) and dependent on where a proposed railway was situated in Brisbane, North or South, it was thought it might prove inconvenient as far as handling was concerned. (33) One Ipswich representative, S. Hodgson, went to some lengths to point out the awkward position if wool, in particular, were taken to expensive Brisbane wharfage and loading arrangements. Handling was seen as easier under the existing arrangement. All this must have been partly due to the manner in which, by this stage, the system of storage and carriage had become well established.

With regard to particular products, there was raised the question of cheapness of movement. With coal, for example, the representatives of the Australian Steam Navigation Company (A.S.N.) concluded that the river would always take it more cheaply, especially as so much of it was mined near the river. (34) Added to this, was the growing importance of agriculture being undertaken in the Ipswich area. The general attitude of this business and transport group was represented by the shipping agents. Like the A.S.N., the largest company, they introduced their own steamers to take the produce from the recognised commencement of trading activities, Ipswich at this time.

Ipswich was to view with extreme caution any inference that the rail extension offered them great benefits. In other quarters,

32. This was the case as stated by J. & D. Harris, shipping agents. V. & P. 1871 Session p. 712

33. ibid. p. 756

34. ibid. p. 730

the railway was seen as a wasteful extravagance which could not compete against the river. (35) According to the Committee attitude, this was more in terms of wool movement than of agricultural production, which apparently was hampered on the Downs because of the lack of a direct route to the central market. (36) Indeed, there was a valiant effort by the pro-expansionist members to amplify the increasing role of agriculture - particularly between Ipswich and Brisbane.

One of the Assembly members of the Select Committee, Dr. O'Doherty, a Brisbane member, claimed that it was the general opinion of the Commission that "the witnesses were presented to us with no other object than to postpone our action . . . and prevent a report." (37) O'Doherty had moved, subsequent to the committee evidence being tabled, that, with regard to extension to Brisbane, "the time has arrived when such extension should be carried out." (38) Although Johnstone did give reserved support to an eventual railway link, he noted the decline in trade on the Ipswich to Brisbane route from £30,000 in 1864 to £19,600 estimated in 1871. Consequently he declared that "he would now do his duty to his constituents, and vote against any Loan Bill for railway extension until (there was) . . . renewed energy and life blood to this colony." (39) With great consistency, the Brisbane members could

35. The Queensland Times 11.5.1871  
 36. V. & P. 1871 Session p. 750  
 37. Q. P. D. 1871 Vol. XII p. 205  
 38. V. & P. 1871 Session p. 74  
 39. Q. P. D. 1871 Vol. XII p. 216

find many reasons why the railway was an immediate necessity to the capital, while Ipswich members clung vainly to arguments which kept their influence as a trading and shipping centre. That they really had to make great efforts to retain this influence is shown by the fact that O'Doherty's motion was lost by sixteen votes to fifteen; thus, although by a slight margin, there was a further victory to the Ipswich and West Moreton solidarity at the expense of their Brisbane counter-group.

In response to the general interest on the issue, a meeting was called in Ipswich to discuss the question. It was claimed to be organised by the Railway Extension League from Brisbane, whose arguments "are all manufactured in Brisbane and generously supplied to country towns free." Even allowing for this, the meeting was reported three to one against extension. Of this, The Queensland Times had pleasure in saying that it disproved the idea that "we are told to vote at the dictation of one of two mercantile houses in the town." (40) This view was supported by the electoral result achieved by the anti-extensionist forces in July 1871. (41) The Palmer Government did its best to stall the issue, no doubt with the encouragement of the "Bunch".

A Royal Commission into the question of railway construction was held in 1872. The commissioners were all members of the Legislative Assembly. Apart from a good deal of technical evidence on positioning of lines, and types of equipment, the commission also made a number of recommendations. There was a

40. The Queensland Times 27.5.1871

41. See Chapter 4.

divergence of opinion as to the recommendations, as no doubt could be expected; as the commission contained two members representing Brisbane interests, Lilley from Brisbane and Atkin from East Moreton on one side, with Wienholt, a squatter from the Western Downs, B. Cribb, and a Burnett man, Scott, who had not been in Parliament at the time of O'Doherty's effort in 1871 concerning extension. On the question of the rail link to Brisbane, the Report stated that it "should be carried out without delay." (42) This was only majority viewpoint, however, with Wienholt reserving his decision as he had "not sufficient data to justify the recommendation." (43) B. Cribb was more outspoken, as was fitting for an Ipswich representative. He claimed the invalidity of the Commission to make any such recommendation. Its only aim was to enquire into the CONSTRUCTION of railways. However, on other grounds, "not one particle of evidence was taken to show the necessity of carrying out the Southern and Western extension to Brisbane 'without delay'". Irrespective of these arguments, he obviously did not want this to be a decisive end to the debate. This was evidenced by his questioning the voting credentials on such recommendations of Atkin who had, since its formation, resigned his seat. (44) This stand by B. Cribb was indicative of the rear-guard action now necessary for Ipswich to undertake in order to retain the terminus.

The forces of time were now against them. Their rationale

42. V. & P. 1872 p. 15 (there was similar mention of the Northern Railway)

43. ibid. p. 17

44. ibid.

of limited Government resources, combined with lack of need, was becoming tested to the extreme as the demand grew for increased reliability and rapidity of communication, not only from Brisbane but from Western centres also. The Northern members now saw it in their interest, too, to give their support in return for greater expansion of northern railways. The Ipswich position deteriorated further with the ending of group representation. They had no choice but to make the best of the situation, and retain what importance they could with a railway continuation.

The main point of contention now concerned the terminus within Brisbane of the proposed railway. The point of concern to Ipswich was where the line would cross the river, and hence to what extent it would interfere with river traffic. There was also the question of where it should go - whether to South Brisbane, or across to North Brisbane, or if instead it should be extended to Lytton or Cleveland. Macalister, who by this time had returned to Ipswich, questioned the surveyor, Mr. Stanley, as to what size vessels could go up the river under his proposed bridge at Oxley. (45) Provision had to be made for future vessels bringing down coal, especially. However, the issue did not produce sufficient emotionalism even to divide the House on the Government recommendation that the railway go into Brisbane, crossing the river at Oxley. This was largely due to the assurance that the bridge at Oxley would be a "swing bridge", and this would not interfere with the river traffic. (46) At the

45. Q. P. D. 1873 Vol. IV p. 163

46. ibid. p. 155

same time, the Brisbane Parliamentary membership could still not see why any money should be spent in making the new railway more accessible to the town area of Ipswich, but on this question they were defeated sixteen votes to seven. (47) The influence of Ipswich was still powerful enough to protect the interests of the town. The time had arrived when the railway from Ipswich to Brisbane would take its place in the transport system of the colony, and Ipswich would take advantage of whatever benefits were available to it from that source, safeguarding its expansion and economy.

Ipswich had been vitally concerned with railway construction from the earliest period of its establishment. It was another area in which to attempt to gain maximum benefits for Ipswich. This is obvious in the town's enthusiasm for railway construction from Ipswich westward, thus enhancing the locality's trading status. To this same end, there was equal effort to discourage moves for railway extension to Brisbane. That Ipswich was able to successfully lead the opposition to extension for so long well illustrates the influence of the community.

47. ibid. p. 186

THE CULTURAL AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

The economic condition of the town had a sound base in its role as trading centre for the country areas. This continued into the 1860's. For the most part, therefore, one can say that Ipswich had entered that decade quite prosperous, with an anticipated successful future, particularly if that future could be safeguarded by a continuing influence exerted mainly in the political sphere.

With such a background, there was obviously a firm basis on which developments of a cultural and social nature could be undertaken, thus reinforcing the future significance and potential of the centre.

No better example of this is available than the developments in the educational sphere. The development of the Grammar School in particular offers a clear illustration of the enterprise and desire to retain prominence exhibited by the town. However, this had only been possible due to earlier developments at more junior levels. The National School, projected first in 1851, was finally established in 1861. The pressures for its establishment seem to have been extraordinarily slow in development. In 1860, there were three Government sponsored schools at Brisbane, Drayton and Warwick, but none at Ipswich. This may have been due to the large number of private schools established - ten of a religious base, and two "mixed" schools, catering for some 348 pupils. (Brisbane's eight "mixed" private schools only catered for 234).<sup>(1)</sup> Even after the establishment of National Schools

1. J. L. C. 1861 Vol. 2 (Statistical Register of Queensland  
1860 Report) p. 39

at Ipswich and Little Ipswich (the western side of the town) in the following year, they did not have their own building "in consequence of delays arising from local circumstances." (2) This may have been a reference to the apparent difficulty organisers had in gaining the necessary subscriptions. (3) This seems to have been only a temporary problem as "excellent substantial buildings were reported in the following year." (4) The Ipswich school in particular soon gained a fine reputation scholastically, and gradually became more prominent at the expense of the independent schools whose existence, however, had been much more protracted at Ipswich than was generally the case.

In the secondary sphere of education there was a more noticeable gap in the availability of schooling. Consequently, that class of people always to the fore in early cultural developments, displayed great interest in the establishment of a secondary school. The concept of a school must be seen as the result of interest on the part of two groups - probably for divergent reasons. The original instigators were the Catholic community leaders who, no doubt, were encouraged in their interest by strong support from the Church hierarchy. The second group was that group of people who exerted tremendous influence on virtually all spheres of colonial life - the business and professional group under the leadership of the whole group of political representatives previously mentioned. As with any action associated with

2. ibid. Vol. IV 1862 (Report of the Board of General Education) p. 5

3. Courier 21.10.1861

4. J. L. C. 1863 Vol. V (Report of the Board of General Education 1862)

this group, their actions must be seen in the wider context of the extended influence which may be derived for Ipswich from such a venture.

One of the first acts passed by the Queensland Parliament was the Grammar Schools Act. Conditional upon the establishment of such schools was the fact that £1,000 must be raised by donation or subscription in any district, and a similar amount would then be forwarded by the government.

Ironically, what was to become the pride of the Ipswich business and professional group, was originally inspired by the action of the Catholic community under the leadership of the recently arrived Bishop Quinn. Along with larger amounts for Brisbane, he had deposited a sum of £2,000 in Ipswich for the establishment of a Grammar School (5) but was advised that this was to be done on a non-sectarian basis. However, this did not stop moves by the Catholic population in Ipswich under P. O'Sullivan attempting to establish a Grammar School. There had been £1,000 subscribed, with three leading Catholics each giving £100. A meeting was called in August 1861, and about two hundred people attended. An attempt was made to conduct the affairs on a non-sectarian base, with the Presbyterian Minister moving that "the time has now arrived when it is expedient to have established in Ipswich a public school." (6) Harmony did not continue, however, when the central

5. Queensland Archives : Colonial Secretary's File 1861  
No. 1593

6. Allsopp J.H. A Centenary History of the Ipswich Grammar School 1863-1963 (Gordon Duncan & Co., Ipswich 1963)  
P. 16

issue of membership of the committee was considered, with the Roman Catholics critical of the majority of less numerical religious groups. The meeting ended in brawling, which apparently continued for several days. "On the Sunday, many of the Protestant clergy spoke vehemently against the Papacy, and a minor Reformation seemed imminent." (7) A further turbulent meeting was held in the following week at which it was decided to establish a Grammar School, but this was without Roman Catholic support. Insults and charges of sectarianism became the order of the day. However, subscription collections went ahead under a committee led by Macalister and B. Cribb. Progress was good in this respect, with over £900 being collected within a fortnight. (8) Progress was sufficiently advanced by late March 1862 for the election of the three elected trustees, with Macalister, B. Cribb and G. Thorn successful. One of the four government nominated trustees was C. Gorry, a Catholic, but such was the feeling in Ipswich about the issue that he almost immediately resigned his seat on the Trust. (9)

Later in 1867, there was communication between the Colonial Secretary and the Trustees regarding a request by the Catholic Bishop, Quinn, to establish a Grammar School. He was quoted as wanting to do so as the Grammar School "had fallen under the predominant influence of dissent, whereas the school he proposed to establish was to be thoroughly unsectarian." (10, 11) The

7. ibid. p. 17

8. Courier 7.3.1862

9. Queensland Archives : Colonial Secretary's File 1861  
No. 2280

10. Quoted by Trustees

11. V. & F. 1867 2nd Session Vol. II p. 1

government denied any such reason as having been given.

The religious issue is probably the most noticeable example of the degree of bitterness which would result from division within the town. This was the case in 1864 when the Anglican and Roman Catholic Bishops held a meeting in Ipswich as part of a tour to gain support for the State Aid issue, and the related challenge to the National Education system; when the division, to use the Anglican Bishop's term, was between these two religions and the "dissenters".<sup>(12)</sup> In Ipswich, at any rate, this appears to have been a largely Roman Catholic affair, with only minor Anglican backing. The other major instance of religious trouble worth noting concerned the question of immigration, whereby the Ipswich Roman Catholics claimed unfair treatment for Irish immigration.<sup>(13)</sup>

The points of difference on these particular issues seem to have been intensified by the rival news organs. While the Courier enjoyed being able to note the resultant disunity in Ipswich, The Queensland Times continually favoured the anti-Catholic issues, as in the case of the dismissal of the Catholic minister, McGinty. Much to his disapproval, McGinty had been removed from his pastoral duties at Ipswich. He refused to release the funds collected by the Ipswich Church for a concert, fearing that they would be used elsewhere by the Bishop. The Queensland Times felt that such moves were most distasteful and strongly sympathised with McGinty, while the great majority of Ipswich Roman Catholics rallied with the Bishop (admittedly some of them under the threat

12. The Queensland Times 6.10.1864

13. ibid. 19.1.1867

of excommunication!) (14) With this internal trouble within the Catholic community, plans for the development of a counter to the Grammar School appear to have lapsed.

As for the Grammar School itself, it appears to have been largely successful, as one would expect with the backing it was receiving from its enterprising supporters. Although it had an initial enrolment of only eighteen, it was to expand quickly and be influential, particularly in the early period when it stood alone as an educational institution. What is more, it was acknowledged in the colony as a whole as being a good idea, and one that other centres should follow. This can be seen most clearly in the discussion that took place at the time of the Grammar Schools Act Amendment Bill, the main purpose of which was to make possible an increase in the amount the Government could contribute to it. There was almost unanimous agreement regarding its success as, in the word of Colonial Secretary Herbert, an "experiment." (15) Mr. Lilley, who seldom supported any Ipswich initiative, would not only support it, but regarded it as "a disgrace to the metropolis" that some similar effort had not been undertaken. (16) An amendment by R. Cribb to the effect that there should not be the support forthcoming to help what he considered wealthy parents was not even seconded, and was strongly objected to by one of the Trustees, Dr. Challinor, who pointed out that it was not a local matter but "one which affected the

14. Courier 22.11.1862

15. Q. P. D. 1864 Vol. 1 p. 115

16. ibid. 117

interests of the whole of the colony."<sup>(17)</sup> The standard of staff appears to have been very high, the first headmaster having a fine reputation from Sydney.

This achievement on the part of Ipswich initiative is really outstanding. On the 1864 Census figures, Ipswich's population was only 4,579 compared to Brisbane's 12,551. <sup>(18)</sup> Not only did they employ a well qualified staff, but also erected large sturdy buildings to cater for future expansionary needs. Public interest could be seen in the number of generous scholarships offered to help the less financially secure. But, as optimistic as so many were, it was largely taken advantage of by Ipswich people. Maybe it was not considered wholesome for the Brisbane children to be so exposed! Much more noticeable was the total absence of squatters' sons among the first students. The Ipswich attendance ranged from sons of parents of varying incomes.

There appear to have been some difficulties about 1869. At that point the first headmaster left after a disagreement with the Trustees. <sup>(19)</sup> By this time, the Brisbane Grammar School was in operation, and afforded an opportunity for the school to be viewed on a comparative basis. Its Brisbane counterpart quickly gained a greater attendance figure, and thus could offer better opportunities, but this set-back appears to have been only temporary. Probably of more lasting significance was the question raised by some of the school's detractors concerning the social

17. ibid. 116

18. J. L. C. 1864 Vol. VII (Census of 1864) p. 9

19. The Queensland Times 26.1.1869

value attached to attending the school. (20)

Of course, its importance extended beyond the educational benefits it afforded to the colony. It was also a means for the upper echelons of Ipswich to display their leading role in this aspect of colonial affairs. The opening ceremony in 1863, for example, was a significant event in the social calendar of the area. It was performed by the Governor in the presence of the leading ministers. "Subscribers to the school of £5 or above were to have the privilege of introducing a lady into the body of the hall where reserved seats were set aside for them. The gallery was to be open to the general public." (21)

This was not the only such occasion, and indeed it was probably not as important as one other in particular, illustrating the manner in which the affairs of the school provided a forum for political, as well as social and educational, activities. The Distribution of Prizes by the Governor in 1865 is a case in point. Also present were the Colonial Secretary, the Colonial Treasurer Bell, as well as the Minister for Lands, Macalister, admittedly all Parliamentary representatives of the Ipswich area! The Trustees of the school, including Macalister and Bell and Parliamentarians Dr. Challinor and Benjamin Cribb, presented an address to the Governor, (ostensibly in their role as trustees) stating: "The Trustees believe that the very gratifying circumstances under which they meet your Excellency today, afford the

20. ibid. 9.3.1871

21. Allsopp J.H. op. cit. p. 19

indisputable evidence, both of the satisfactory manner in which the operations of the school are conducted, and of the high appreciation by the public of the principles of non-sectarian education . . . It is well understood that unconstitutional attempts have been made to induce your Excellency to alter the system of education as established by law in Queensland, and in other respects to interfere with the Constitutional functions of the Ministry and Parliament." (22)

The issue had been raised in Parliament largely because of the political nature of the address, to which the Governor had replied in like manner, in sympathy with the views expressed. The Ministry was condemned by the leading critic in the House, Walsn, for using the occasion to draw the Governor into political affairs. The underlying criticism was obviously against the manner in which the dual role of the Ipswich establishment cum ministry was used to affect affairs of the colony generally. (23)

In 1867, when it was time for the trustees to face re-election, there were more complaints about the fact that Benjamin Cribb and Dr. Challinor were "indiscriminate supporters of the present ministry" and that there was a greater need for educationalists than politicians on the Trust. (some did not even have a knowledge of the Latin tongue!) (24)

Such political overtones of the establishment should not be over-emphasised in relation to its educational worth. As early

22. Q. P. D. 1865 Vol. 2 p. 416

23. ibid. p. 419

24. The Queensland Times 7.5.1867

as 1861, the Courier, writing in relation to the proposed Grammar School and the efforts of the School of Arts, had said that Ipswich was "ahead in educational matters." (25)

Certainly the activities of the School of Arts were equal to the activities of the Grammar School in innovation and self-initiative on the part of the town. As has been previously mentioned, the School of Arts or its predecessors, had been in existence since the early 1850's. The real impetus to its activities largely centred on the early 1860's period. In moving for an amount of £1,000 to be granted to the institution in 1864, Bell, the Colonial Treasurer, spoke in glowing terms about the manner in which the inhabitants had erected the institution almost entirely at their own cost. (26) Its activities were wide-spread, ranging from debating classes to providing reading and library facilities. A "Parliamentary Debating Society" started in 1864, continued for thirty years. However, their most noticeable effort, which symbolised their industry and endeavours to display their intellectual skills, was in the production of the "Ipswich Punch". It was produced monthly in 1866 and in 1870, and was written in script, and often illustrated. (27) The effort which must have been involved would have been very time-consuming for the publishers, who went under the title of "The Punch Club."

Their speciality was cutting sarcasm of anyone in power or

25. Courier 21.10.1861

26. Q. P. D. 1864 Vol. 1 p. 187

27. Copies once found in the Reading Room are now in the Oxley Library

things political - from the Queen down. Efforts of more literary merit and substance were also written. The writers explained the process by which material was presented by the twelve working members : "Each page has to undergo the ordeal of ballot, to prevent any contribution finding its way to the eye of the public which might contain any allusion hurtful to the tender feelings of the said public." (28) One wonders if this were the case! The second issue contained a rather lengthy poem, extolling the virtues of the town - a couple of stanzas illustrate the superiority of the place

" . . . . .  
 A little river we have got  
 So winding and so pretty  
 With steamers rushing up and down  
 To Brisbane - Dirty city  
 Where we never go unless we're forced  
 In that town to show our face  
 But soon make track  
 To this truly rural place  
 . . . . .  
 And we have got a Grammar School  
 Worthy of imitation  
 For teaching the Athenian youth  
 Our rising generation  
 Where in dead and living languages  
 They're getting on space  
 There's no surprise we grow so wise  
 In this truly rural place "  
 . . . . .

The anti-Brisbane theme was very strong. Satirical comments related to actual instances could be linked to a display of Ipswich erudition. "For the last month or two, the Dusty little city of Brisbane has been in a frantic state from the fact of a small speck of what was considered to be gold having been

found in the mud somewhere near the town . . . A member of the learned body from Ipswich, and who knows gold when he sees it, pronounced the particle to be mica." After all Ipswich, the "seat of modern learning" was also known as Modern Athens. The Queensland Times had said of these early issues that they were mainly "Athenian" in their interests. (29) The local leaders also received their share of criticism. In a "Wanted" Employment Column, requirements were advised: "Gentlemen who will mind their own business; Civility indispensable - no alderman need apply."

With regard to the urging of Brisbane for a railway to the capital, the suggestion is for such a line to go from Brisbane to Woogaroo (the mental asylum) where the instigators of the idea belong. (30) The social "elite" were treated similarly as on the occasion of the opening of the railway to Gatton: "The aristocracy of Ipswich, who can trace their pedigree as far back as half a dozen years ago . . . kept aloof from the inferior sort . . . Then there were pretty little knots of jumped up citizens from the town down the river." (31) Of all the individuals who had been ridiculed, no-one was castigated as the Turncoat Macalister who had long been accused of political gymnastics. (32)

The community outlook of Ipswich can be seen in a couple of other instances. One such was in the initiative concerning the

29. The Queensland Times 30.2.1866

30. Ipswich Punch 15.4.1866

31. ibid. 15.6.1866

32. ibid. 4.11.1870

formation of military forces. In May 1860, the Ipswich troop of the Queensland Mounted Rifles was formed, as was the First or Ipswich Company of the Queensland Rifle Brigade. (33) By 1862 the two groups had sixty-four members (34) and expanded this progressively. By 1864 the only Light Horse Company was Ipswich based (35), but a couple of years later it was amalgamated with the Ipswich Artillery, as had previously been found necessary in Brisbane.

The oldest claim for social pre-eminence was as the racing centre, and in the 1860's Ipswich still retained a leading role. However, as the colony expanded, naturally more centres had their annual meetings. Ipswich had the only regular three-day meet and, as The Queensland Times liked to point out for the benefit of Brisbane, the North Australian Jockey Club was "the principal meeting of the colony," (36) as well as being "the headquarters of the sporting world of Queensland." (37) By the late 1860's, some meets were conducted by a committee of townspeople, and not the North Australian Jockey Club, which retained its squatter prominence under the leadership of Bell. This was symbolic of the diverging of interests of the squatters and Ipswich, but the fact that some race meetings were conducted by the old club shows the lingering expediency of the relationship.

33. Queensland Archives Colonial Secretary's File 1860 No. 816  
 34. J. L. C. 1863 Vol. V (Statistical Register of Queensland 1862) p. 49  
 35. J. L. C. 1865 Vol. VIII (Stat. Reg. of Queensland 1864)  
 36. The Queensland Times 17.3.1866  
 37. ibid. 9.6.1866

However, this movement towards an independent effort was noticeable, not only on this front, but also in such major moves as the establishment of the Grammar School, and the solely Ipswich nature of the School of Arts. The cultural activities were wider than these, with Ipswich retaining its status as the second town (at least) for visiting musical and other cultural groups; but it was in the wide activities sponsored by the School of Arts that they would admit no intellectual superior. This applied even to their parliamentary representatives who could seldom see any division between their own claims, and those of the colony generally.

The social awareness of the centre was obvious in a number of aspects. Their leading role in providing secondary education was the most noticeable, and it gave the "Athenians" the opportunity to compare such moves in Ipswich with those in Brisbane. It also exemplified that greatest of divisive influences in the town - religious friction. The School of Arts and its varied activities also highlighted the Ipswich spirit of striving for prominence. This spirit was evident in other spheres such as in stressing their role as the racing centre of the colony. In all, there was much effort exerted to sponsor the interest of Ipswich as a leader in social behaviour.

THE IMPACT OF AGRICULTUREA NEW SOURCE OF IPSWICH STRENGTH

As settlement extended, with a corresponding decline in the importance of Ipswich to the squatter community, Ipswich was faced with a growing realisation that it would have to look elsewhere to retain a secure economic base and, subsequently, maintain its influence. It was in the growth of agricultural settlement that this new base was to be found, at least temporarily.

In 1860, the Ipswich district could only claim 636 acres of cultivation, about half of which was maize.<sup>(1)</sup> The following year saw the first growth of cotton in the district. There had been experiments in growing the crop from the early 1850's in Ipswich. Lang was one individual who predicted that Ipswich was eminently suited to cotton production: "the future staple production of Queensland".<sup>(2)</sup> However, it was not until well into the 1860's that the size of crops began to expand. The first four bales of cotton shipped to England were produced in 1862.<sup>(3)</sup>

An early effort was made to form an Ipswich Cotton Company. It was the second registered company in Queensland under a Registration Act of 1863.<sup>(4)</sup> It never became successful as the acreages remained small until the emphasis moved to family workings, and not company plantations.

1. J. L. C. 1861 (Statistical Register of Queensland 1860)  
p. 67

2. Lang J. op. cit. p. 205

3. Courier 24.4.1862

4. Queensland Archives Register of Companies

Cotton was early recognised as the best crop : "The difference in the receipts in cotton and in maize is so great, the former being three times that of the latter." (5) This was the case largely because of a very significant bonus system originated in 1860, originally worth £10 per bale of cotton, and given in an attempt to boost agricultural production. Further incentives were given with the opening up of more agricultural lands. One report from the surveyor in 1867 tells of the first rate quality of the land being surveyed. (6) This was further aided in the mid eighteen-sixties by unusually high prices being offered, resultant from the impact of the American Civil War and the lack of production in that quarter. Although this provided a tremendous boost in interest, the great increase in areas under cultivation came later. It was to be a common cry (7) that the bonus system was not as great a boost to many people as its opponents claimed; mainly because the number involved in this activity only began to expand rapidly from 1867. In that year, the Ipswich district recorded 4,529 acres of cotton out of a total Queensland acreage of 5,264. (8) In the same year a public meeting was held to impress upon the government the importance of further land settlement for agriculture. (9) The growing concern for agriculture can be seen in the stress that candidates

5. The Queensland Times 24.4.1866

6. J. L. C. 1865 Vol. VIII (Reports from Selector of Agricultural Reserves)

7. Q. P. D. 1869 Vol. 9 p. 229

8. J. L. C. 1868 Vol. XII (Statistical Register of Queensland 1867) p. 13

9. The Queensland Times 27.4.1867

placed on extolling the virtues of agriculture. (10) The Queensland Times was proud to announce : "Our population is changing from being principally a distributing or trading community to one most engaged in producing." (11) In that same year, five cotton gins had already been established in the district.

As was to be the case for the next five years, 1868 saw another steep increase in the acreage under cotton cultivation, with nearly 8,000 acres accounting for about seventy per cent of the state's crop. A new Land Law was also introduced in 1868 which aided the establishment of "Homestead selectors". The Land Commission for West Moreton said in 1871 : "There is scarcely a man in West Moreton who has not a homestead, and what we want now is for people to come to increase the homesteads." (12) It was as a result of this expansion that moves were made in Ipswich to form a cotton mill. (13) The crop was growing in significance. It was the colony's fifth largest export earner at this point.

With regard to the significance of this, as seen through Ipswich eyes, one needs only to look at the strenuous efforts that they made to have the level of cotton bonus continued. Opposition to continuation of the bonus was the main cause of the failure of Dr. Challiner to retain his position as an Ipswich Parliamentary representative in the 1868 election. (14)

10. ibid. 8.6.1867

11. ibid. 3.8.1867

12. V. & P. 1871 Session p. 816

13. J.L.C. 1869 Vol. XIV (Statistical Register of Queensland 1868) p. 456

14. The Queensland Times 29.9.1868

There was constant mention by successive governments of the intention not to extend the bonus system. The system had been arranged whereby the bonus would be gradually reduced, but the extent and speed of this reduction depended upon the government. In 1869, there was further and stronger pressure on the part of the Ipswich District to have the bonus continued in order to make cotton growing a viable concern. A public meeting was held to stress the point. The main argument was that it was only in the last two years that cotton had been a practical concern and hence, as yet, there was still need for considerable assistance. It was contended that the country was only then being opened up "to men of small means." It was especially necessary, so they argued, as it allowed work for any surplus labour. At that point, the bonus was at the rate of £5 per bale and it was proposed by the government that this should be reduced to £2.10s. which did not fall within the category of a "gradual reduction" according to The Queensland Times.<sup>(15)</sup> There was, at this time, a growing effort to justify the continuation of the bonus in terms of its benefit beyond the Ipswich area, but this was rather difficult, considering that the vast majority of cotton was grown in the one district. Such was the concern that two Petitions were forwarded to the Legislative Council in the hope that that House would not approve the reduction. In the 870 names of Petitioners, the "practical farmers" were well backed by the Town whose interests were their own.<sup>(16)</sup> Indeed, one of the Ipswich members, Thompson,

15. ibid. 1.6.1869

16. J.L.C. 1869 Vol. XIV 2nd Session p. 503

had said in the debate concerning the bonus that Ipswich "was spoken of some time ago as the 'Deserted village', but owing in a great degree to the cotton growing industry in the surrounding country, the houses in Ipswich were once again becoming occupied." (17) Naturally the Ipswich and West Moreton Parliamentary representatives worked hard on this issue. When the Colonial Treasurer in the Lilley Government moved for a further year for the bonus at the same rate of £2.10s., there were claims that this was to gain the support of the Ipswich members for his government. Much of this criticism was from leading squatter members, certainly a divergence from an Ipswich-squatter alliance. (18) There were also suggestions of a "deal" between the Ipswich and Eriabane members to allow railway extension in return for continued bonuses. (19) The common interest with the squatters was re-established after 1870 when the squatter group, in turn, needed the support of Ipswich members. One way this was achieved was in the introduction of an up-dated Land Act allowing for greater agricultural settlement.

There was a belated attempt in the Legislative Council to alter the 1870 proposals for a reduction to £2.10s. bonus for that year. It was suggested that for 1870 the bonus be only reduced to £4, thus following the line of the proposal in stressing the need for any reduction to be gradual.

17. Q. P. D. 1869 Vol. 9 p. 12

18. ibid. p.221

19. Q. P. D. 1871 Vol. XII p. 438

The question became one of the right of the Legislative Council to amend financial matters. Only the six Ipswich and West Moreton members would support such a concept on this occasion. (20)

Partial compensation for the lack of bonuses was the rapid increase in acreage, particularly in 1870-71 when nearly 11,000 acres were planted, the only significant crop for Ipswich and by far the major site for cotton in Queensland. This was reflected in other ways as well, with Ipswich being very prominent in agricultural implements manufacture; as well as being the site of many cotton gins. (21)

Although its quality was very fluctuating due to pest menaces and changing seasonal conditions, cotton was recognised as the only worth-while crop. One farmer said in 1871 : "A man who grows maize has to go about and beg before he can sell it, but that is not the case with cotton." (22) The crop was recognised by the Ipswich agents who were generous with advances. All the farmers were located in fairly close proximity (by necessity of the agricultural reserves leases). For example, this particular farmer was situated in a central position with about sixty farms within a distance of a couple of miles.

However, what must rank as of major importance throughout is the degree to which this agricultural settlement opened up the area, and aided Ipswich in gaining an independent base for itself. Complementary to this was the part that cotton played in giving

20. Y. & P. 1869 Vol. 1 p. 401

21. ibid. 1871-72 Session pp. 636; 639

22. ibid. 1871 Session p.748

Ipswich a further claim to continuing influence within the colony. One field in which this was obvious was in the regular agricultural shows and competitions in Ipswich; and the foundation of agricultural societies. This is particularly interesting in that an Ipswich society, largely dominated by business persons, in a very paternal way, encouraged the farmer settlements in the district to set up sub-branches. In so doing, the emphasis was on getting "practical farmer" participation. The Queensland Times put the case rather delightfully: "Farmers, as a rule, do not have much intercourse with each other, especially the better class of farmers - men who do not congregate at public houses, or lounge at the roadside." (23) There was a fair attempt on the part of Ipswich to cultivate the farmer as a "desirable class of settler" who gave the district cause for optimism: "The hard working couple, with three or four or half a dozen or more children, and their twenty to thirty acres of cultivation, will be the great cotton growers of this colony." (24)

Of course the business houses were not slow to take advantage of a buoyant production, as were those with loading and shipping interests. As usual, leading the field was Cribb & Foote, whose range of activities included ginning the cotton, as well as being the leading exporter and shipping agent. At the height of optimism in the town, a group under the leadership of Benjamin Cribb and including a few farmers, delved deeply into the possibility of establishing a cotton manufacturing company in

23. The Queensland Times 17.7.1869

24. ibid. 26.3.1870

Ipswich. The desire to promote such a venture was due to "more than a quarter of a million of money lying idle in the Government Savings Bank; Ipswich being the largest depositor in proportion to her population." (25)

Although detailed estimates had been made (a number of locals were skilled in these arts) and there was much enthusiasm for the scheme, it did not get a sufficiently rapid start to become established before a feeling of doom began to set in regarding the future of the product. If such an enterprise were to be successful, it would have been in Ipswich, as the closer to Ipswich one was, the better the price prospects were for the producer. There was a continued desire to have farms as close to the town as possible.

What looked like a continued source of strength for the district crumbled quite rapidly. By 1874, the cotton acreage was down to 3,000 acres, and by 1876 it had become minimal, while the production of maize had risen sharply; as had the production of hay, now more saleable. (26) A short spell of interest in sugar cane did not prove successful. Basic to the collapse of cotton was the uneconomic nature of the crop, due to very low English prices and a return to normality in America. Including the now very light bonus, in 1871 farmers were only receiving 1<sup>s</sup>d. per lb. which raised doubts of the continued viability of the crop. (27)

25. ibid. 3.7.1869

26. V. & P. 1877 Vol. 2 (Statistical Register of Queensland 1876)

27. The Queensland Times 15.4.1871

It did leave lasting benefits, however, in that it had opened up much land which continued to be used for agricultural pursuits. It also meant the establishment of small towns to cater for the needs of the communities. These often included branches of parent Ipswich businesses. It had also given employment to a number of aborigines - over 100 in one area, according to The Queensland Times. (28)

Although it was only a short period during which agriculture played the leading role in maintaining the standing of Ipswich, it was an important one. There was virtually no agriculture in 1860, when Ipswich was still very dependant on the squatter connection. Then, with the expansion of cotton in particular, with the good prices initially prevailing, new horizons opened up for the district. The efforts to retain the cotton bonus system were later used to sustain this process. There were also obvious efforts by the townsfolk to co-operate with the farmer population.

Of most lasting significance was the manner in which agriculture aided Ipswich to become a more self-supporting centre. It was really the first major taste of "independence" for Ipswich. No doubt in this it contributed to a faith in the community to expand in other spheres, especially the establishment of industry and the use of local natural resources. In a critical transitional period, it had sustained some Ipswich influence in colonial affairs.

28. ibid. 13.4.1872

NEW PROSPECTS FOR IPSWICH - THE MID 1870's

From the earliest settlement, the potential and future value of the vast coal resources was noted. Coal had been extracted in small quantities for local use, and some was also used by shipping. Everything was on a small scale. It was to be a considerable time before mining was conducted on a sufficiently high level to involve obtaining high quality coal, combined with the complementary task of prospecting for the best grade. A further instance of the confidence exhibited in all that Ipswich undertook was the attitude, long held, that these vast reserves of coal would aid (in the early stages only as an additional factor) in making Ipswich a powerful force for all time. Carried to its logical (Ipswich) conclusion, Ipswich was to be the Manchester of Queensland.

Related to the position of industry, is that of employment. Opportunities - and the lack thereof - in this field in the early years of Ipswich reflect the difficulties, as well as bases for future strength. Efforts to improve the employment position, in turn, reflect the continued endeavours by Ipswichites to consolidate the town's existence, and aid in its growth.

The manner in which this was achieved showed, as had been seen in the political aspect, a fairly united Ipswich. On an issue such as demands by "mechanics" for work limitations, expressed in late 1862, -the eight hour movement - agreement with contractors was soon to be reached. The issue had been resolved to limit to an eight hour day with a minimum wage promise of £3

by 1863. <sup>(1)</sup> At this stage, of course, there was a limit to "bona fide" members of the trade", <sup>(2)</sup> that is, the building trade.

Obviously, the path was not all smooth as each side bargained to gain the better deal, and some difficulties with existing contract agreements were experienced. However, considering the resistance elsewhere, the mutual moderation exhibited prevented great strains within the community, even if one admits that this was an expansionary period for the town when trade work was much demanded, and the artisan was in a strong bargaining position.

Another facet of the employment question was the serious situation in which many working people found themselves in 1866, due to the serious widespread economic difficulties of that year. It was to E. Cribb and Dr. Challinor that the unemployed directed their grievance in the hope that they would seek aid from the government in finding work. Men signed this request to Cribb and Challinor, pointing out that many of them had families in Ipswich, and thus wanted employment in the area. Their position must have been becoming desperate as they pointed out that "many of them at present (are) feeling the pangs of hunger." <sup>(3)</sup> This letter of request to Challinor and Cribb from the unemployed was forwarded to the Minister by the two men with their own strong backing. They especially saw the problem being presented for its Ipswich content : "it is the distressing case of those with families, long resident in this district, that we desire

1. Courier 18.10.1862

2. ibid. 30.9.1862

3. Queensland Archives Public Works Office 1866 No. 83

specially to press upon your attention , . . we have no hesitation in saying the cases brought under your notice in this document are far more deserving of government interposition than very many of those that have been obtruding themselves more forcibly on public attention." (4)

Ipswich as the primary railway site also was the centre for a number of workmen involved in line construction. There was a considerable slackening in work in 1866. This led to general dissatisfaction among the navvies who staged a mini-revolt in support of their right to work. (5) Conditions must have soon improved as it was reported that 1320 men were working on the line by early 1867. (6)

The importance of the railway as a support for Ipswich was continued by the siting of the railway workshops in the town. They had been built up from the time of the start of the railway. The first group of skilled engineers had come out from England in late 1864. To have gained the principal workshop in the southern area of the colony was due to a combination of convenience (Ipswich being the starting point) and political influence such as Ipswich was able to exert. The issue was to be a late example of how Ipswich had attempted to exert pressure to maintain an economic support for the centre, and thus continue its influence.

The problem did not culminate until 1879. In that year, a government unfriendly to Ipswich had allowed the workshop activities

4. ibid. Dr. Challinor and B. Uribb to Watts, the Minister for Works.

5. Courier 6.9.1866

6. The Queensland Times 17.1.1867

to run down. This involved the dismissal of over 100 employees at one particular point, with others being threatened. The battle revolved around the question whether the workshops had previously been expanded to the extent that they had for mainly political purposes. There was cause for animosity between towns over the question of obtaining government employment within their areas. Notwithstanding railway employees, Ipswich claimed a lack of dependence upon this, such as Brisbane was subject to. (7) Even allowing for those in the railways, the numbers recorded in government employment in the Ipswich district was 254, compared with 561 in Brisbane. (8)

To the Ipswich member of Parliament, Macfarlane, the dismissal of these men involved a deterioration of the value of property in Ipswich as well as "not only injuring the working men, but a very large class besides." (9) To the Ipswich representative, it was more than Ipswich's prosperity at stake, but that of the colony as the sacked employees would leave the country, often taking trade skills with them. Reminiscent of claims that Cribb & Foote ran the country in past times, was the call by one member that "only four people - storekeepers . . . benefitted by all the lavish expenditure of money in these yards." He was reputed to have further stated that such was the monopoly that even the Jews had been obliged to leave Ipswich! (10) The Premier, McIlwraith,

7. ibid. 9.1.1872

8. ibid. 25.1.1872

9. Q. P. D. 1872 Vol. XXIX p. 166

10. ibid.

spoke of the "luxurious workmen of Ipswich" working in a "Political organisation like the Ipswich workshops." These could be compared to the "starving wives and families at Clermont" (11) His Minister for Public Works, Macrossan, said : "Ipswich had been hitherto a power in the State. They wished to keep up that power - that government within a government - which . . . existed in the Ipswich yards. He could tell the honourable gentlemen that previous Ministers for Works had been coerced into doing what they did not wish to do by those luxurious workmen in the Ipswich yards and that men had been dismissed from those yards and put back again by the baneful influence in Ipswich against the wishes of the heads of the department there." There were further accusations of incompetent men in the Ipswich yard. (12) Symbolic of Ipswich's diminishing ability to gain its end was a defeat in getting the government to reconsider the dismissals. That showed their political decline. However, it did not mean an end to the workshops' activities which, in a report of their workings, were found to be done by "competent workmen under effective superintendence." (13) In terms of placing of staff in Tocwoomba and Rockhampton, there was a comment that "they cannot recommend any such increase as would lead to an appreciable weakening of the present staff at Ipswich." (14) It was clear that the claims of Ipswich as the principal centre for repair and construction was thus "legitimised". On the question of political patronage in job

11. ibid. p. 176

12. ibid. p. 182

13. V. & P. 1879 Vol. 2 p. 538

14. ibid. 539

appointments, the conclusion was that this was minimal and only made of efficient workmen <sup>(15)</sup> although there were some claims in evidence given to the contrary. <sup>(16)</sup>

Even with setbacks as mentioned above, the workshops were a considerable employer of labour - there were 382 in the locomotive works alone in 1879 centred in Ipswich. <sup>(17)</sup> Added to this, railway repair and construction meant positions for skilled men, and consequently a source for private industry, as well as prosperity for the town.

The railway had served the town's interests as a continuing benefit while it had looked elsewhere for its primary strengths. This was to continue in the period of Ipswich as an industry based community. It had helped give Ipswich an identity as a future centre for manufacturing industry. Of course the other major factor was the ready supply of coal. In 1860 it was noted that 12,327 tons of coal worth £9,244 had been taken out of Ipswich mines. <sup>(18)</sup> From this time until the mid-1870's the amount extracted fluctuated between this amount and 25,000 tons per annum. In 1865, conditional grants of leases for mining coal were made. These were for areas of not less than 60 acres or more than 640 acres, and not in town areas or agricultural reserves. <sup>(19)</sup>

It was essentially limited production, and thus limited means of extraction. Much of it was done with the thought of being situated near the river for transport purposes, rather than placing an emphasis on finding the best deposits.

15. ibid. 16. ibid. p. 623

17. ibid. p. 533

18. J.L.C. 1861 (Statistical Register 1860) p. 53

19. V. & P. 1865 p. 1207

In 1876, thirteen mines were in existence in Ipswich, producing 40,320 tons of coal at a value of £21,187, and 700 tons of coke at a value of £1,140. (20) This was the time when there was a sudden upswing in mining activities. The coal industry was starting to make demands with regard to greater production and more recognition of the miners' needs. The Coal-miners of Ipswich petitioned for legislation for a special code of rules to be administered by a coal inspector. Demands were for basic things such as proper mine ventilation. They were considered necessary to retain experienced miners so needed from Britain. (21) Mines regulations were introduced in 1879, with coal gaining recognition as well as gold. It was in terms of the petitioners' demands for greater security for their lives. (22)

It was in the same period that the major figure of mining in the district, Lewis Thomas, was expanding his mines and helping to mould a new role for Ipswich, and one which it was to retain for a long time. It was an essential move to undertake. As the colony expanded, Ipswich could no longer expect to retain much influence because it was the second centre to Brisbane, around which differing groups and areas could rally to their mutual interest.

The story of the development of coal mining from the mid-1870's until the present time is another story in the history of

20. ibid. 1877 Session Vol. 2 (Statistics of Queensland 1876)  
p. 912

21. V. & P. 1877 Vol. 3 p. 245

22. Q. P. D. 1879 Vol. XXIX pp. 197, 303

Ipswich. This was the start of a new era for the district, and one where successes dependent on short term influences had no part. It was with coal mining and associated industrial growth that Ipswich was to find its permanent base.

A final occurrence exemplifies the move to a more humble, yet more lasting and secure future. It followed the more localised interests as shown by the production of cotton. It was even more local - the beginning of industry. The first such move was for the establishment of a Woollen Company. The conditions were considered right for such an enterprise. Although put in unkind tones as befitting the Brisbane media, the following statement concerning moves for industry did contain some truth: "the plethora of good things within reach of the good folk of these parts in days gone by probably made them less eager than they might have been to turn opportunity to account . . . (Ipswichites) have fortunately come to feel the pinch of having to use their wits for the purpose of securing Fortune's favours." . . . "there is no reason known to us why the Ipswich of a hundred years hence may not, like Manchester in the Old Country, be the centre of a great populous and thriving district." (23) Obviously, the reference to the lack of turning "opportunity to account" was not supposed to apply to the political as well as the economic sphere.

The prospectus of the proposed Queensland Woollen Mills (the place had not become completely provincial in outlook!) stated: "The object of the Provisional directors of this company is to inaugurate a permanent industry which they hope will only provide

23. Courier 16.1.1875

the forerunner of many others that will give steady and profitable employment to skilled and unskilled labour, at the same time yielding a fair interest to the shareholders for the capital invested. Such industries will tend to settle a thrifty and prosperous population permanently in the country. To some extent they will help to develop our rich coalfields - as yet but little known - and cause an increased demand for our agricultural and farm produce." (24)

It was successful under the leadership of the typical Ipswich Who's Who, having been registered in mid-1875, (25) with a capital of £10,000 and an equal number of shares, this being later considerably increased. It was the beginning of a new era, and one which had a lasting economic base, allowing for a guaranteed future.

There had been two particularly important developments in the mid-1870's. These were the beginnings of rapid expansion in coal mining, and the establishment of the first private industry of any magnitude allowing for secured expansion. These provide a terminating point between early examples of attempts to exert undue influence, to a more lasting and secure, if less spectacular, position as an industrial centre. The position of Ipswich as an industrial centre had been due to a number of factors, including prospects for employment. There was an obvious need for permanent employment in the district, exemplified by the troubles of 1866. This situation can be seen as a factor

24. The Queensland Times 21.1.1875

25. Queensland Archives Register of Companies 16.7.1875

in the subsequent interest in industry, another factor being a realisation of the potential of the area's resources.

Railway work, often requiring skill, was to provide a further impetus to progress for the town.

CONCLUSION

In concluding this account, one must give credit to the early residents of Ipswich for their ability to further the progress of the town, and their dedication to that end.

From its discovery in 1827, Permanent settlement had been established at "Limestone", the present site of Ipswich. It was an obvious site for a settlement, being the "head of navigation", that is, the furthestmost inland point providing ease of communication. As such, it soon became the centre for the large squatting districts. An early common cause was established between the townsfolk and the squatters, and their interaction extended beyond the development of Ipswich as their trading and shipping base. There was also a considerable amount of common purpose in political affairs. From the Ipswich viewpoint, this was closely linked to the rivalry between Ipswich and Brisbane, best exemplified by the conflict over the relative merits of clearing the river above Brisbane, to the establishment of other means of communication, as well as support for Cleveland as the port.

Ipswich was very much a self-interested community. The solidarity of Parliamentary representation for Ipswich and the surrounding West Moreton meant that a considerable influence could be exerted on a small Parliament. When, added to this was a substantial membership in many ministries, the influence that the area could exert was extensive. This was particularly the case because of the immense importance for ministries to gain the support of what was initially a quarter of the Legislative Assembly.

That this proportion of representation was the most generous in the colony for much of this early period is indicative of the power possessed by the locality. The clearing of the obstructions in the Rivers, and its complementary effect of delaying railway construction to Brisbane for a considerable period, is the most significant. The elevation of men like Macalister to such vital positions also had a considerable effect; the amount expended on clearing the Bremer and Upper Brisbane Rivers was nearly all spent during his term.

Although firmly opposed to railway extension to Brisbane for a very considerable period, Ipswich gained much from its position as the first centre of railways in the colony. This was important not only because it meant that Ipswich continued as the leading trading and shipping point for the country interests, but also with regard to the establishment of the railway workshops at that locality.

The short period when cotton reigned supreme in importance to the economy of the area provides an example of the support given to any venture which may have had a beneficial economic effect on the town. The Ipswich exertions to retain the high bonuses, largely responsible for the success of the crops, illustrate this support.

This general economic prosperity of the community stimulated other social aspirations as well. It was believed by the town that it represented a leading cultural community - a "Modern Athens". This belief had practical expression in such enterprises as the establishment of the Grammar School. Of course

its role as the meeting place of many of the leading squatters helped to establish its social position.

In all its early years, Ipswich had been competing with a number of other interests, principally of Brisbane origin, to exert as much influence as it could on colonial affairs - political, economic, and social. However, by the mid-1870's a new era was becoming apparent. By this stage there had been considerable expansion throughout the colony, with an associated deterioration of the influence that any one district could exert on the colony's affairs. Ipswich in the long term was not to suffer because of this waning influence, as coal mining activities developed with a consequent expansion in industry; and a more secure base for the town's welfare was to result from this.

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