

A timeline of change on the Fitzroy River, 1855 to 1965, focusing on the Port of Rockhampton

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(This is an ongoing project which will be updated periodically as new information comes to hand.)

Pre white settlement	Darumbal people living along Toonooba (Fitzroy River) and lagoons. 'Monster' floods reputed to have been 'spear deep' in vicinity of later main street and reaching from Berserkers to Dee Range (Mount Morgan).
Early white exploration: 1770	James Cook names Keppel Bay.
1802	Matthew Flinders surveys Keppel Bay.
1844	Ludwig Leichhardt's overland expedition to Port Essington: encounters and names major tributaries - Dawson, Comet, Mackenzie and Isaacs and presumes they join to form a major river which flows into Keppel Bay.
1853	During overland expedition from the Burnett region in search of suitable pasture, pioneers William and Charles Archer come upon 'a fine navigable looking stream with the tide running up strong'. They name it the Fitzroy River in honour of Sir Charles Fitz Roy, Governor of New South Wales.

Year	Rockhampton and regional growth, development and politics	Port activity/navigation on Fitzroy River	Fitzroy River and changes/'improvements'/ideas	Floods/drought Flood heights as on present gauge on river at R'ton.	Trade and other aspects
1855	Archers return with sheep and commence grazing at <i>Gracemere</i> .	Archers construct a jetty on river bank (near Fitzroy St.) Colin Archer's ketch <i>Ellida</i> arrives with supplies from Maryborough. Later the	The Fitzroy drains an area of approximately 55,000 square miles. The river is 1,100 feet (ft) wide where the Archers' jetty is constructed some 32 miles from the mouth; 2,100ft wide at Rocky Point; over 4 miles wide at the mouth. The tidal range is 6 to 10ft at Rockhampton; 9 to 16ft at the	Probably dry conditions prevail	First imports (supplies) and exports (wool) by Archers. Transhipped at

		<i>Albion</i> , under the command of Capt. Hardy, arrives from Gladstone after being stranded in the Narrows and in the river. <i>Albion</i> initiates inter-colonial trade to Sydney.	mouth. Several tortuous bends and numerous shoals and sandbanks present problems for navigation. Fitzroy River banks in town reach are steep, rough and sloping with a fringe of mangroves 100' wide. The southern bank is thickly covered with black mangroves with more open, tall and straight white mangroves lining the northern bank.		Gladstone for passage to Brisbane and southern ports.
1856	Rockhampton consists of Bush Inn, Richard Palmer's store and police hut.				
1857	P.F. MacDonald commences grazing at Yaamba.				
1858	Government bases Native Mounted Police camp in Rockhampton. Canoona goldrush swells population to 5,000 with most leave soon after when the rush is deemed a 'duffer'. NSW government declares Rockhampton a port of entry with Sub-Inspector of Customs H. Lumsdaine. A town survey, street plan and land sale are undertaken.	River shoals strand many vessels which give names to features such as Bronzewing Sand; Pirate Point and Timandra Bank. NSW government appoints Pilot Robertson for the Fitzroy and instructs Captain Matthew Rundle to survey the river. Being still unfamiliar with the river, Robertson runs the government cutter <i>Satellite</i> aground on Timandra Bank with Rundle on board. He then navigates upstream safely by avoiding stranded and wrecked boats along the course.			700-800 bales of wool exported; cattle and sheep to New Caledonia.
1859	Queensland separates from NSW	Harbours and Rivers Department appoints Rundle		First flood in white experience	

		as Harbour Master. He marks the navigation channel with oil drums as buoys and wooden crates as beacons.		(8.23m) in January. Rundle erects a gauge on the riverbank at Quay and Derby Sts.	
1860	Population of Rockhampton is 750-1,000, mostly housed in tents.	<i>SS Tamar</i> is the first steamer on the Fitzroy River.			
1861	Queensland government proclaims Rockhampton a municipality and holds first council elections. 1861 Census records Rockhampton's population at 698. Gold and copper are discovered at Peak Downs	Tenders for first wharf are called. Australasian Steam Navigation Company (ASN) commences trade with Rockhampton from the south. Vessels drawing 10-12ft can dock at town wharf.			
1862	Centre of government representation moved from Gladstone to Rockhampton. Immigration direct to Keppel Bay commences with <i>SS Eutopia</i> bringing 324 English and Scottish immigrants.	Government constructs a public wharf. Qld Shipping Co. commences trading with Rockhampton.		Flood in March (8.46m)	
1863	Peak year of immigration to Rockhampton with four ships carrying 2,194 passengers of whom about 1,500 remain in the town. Land sales are conducted at Herbert (Broadmount) in prospect of future deepwater port development.	Pilot Charles Haynes commences with Harbours and Rivers Dept (serves 32yrs)	Shoaling on Upper Flats reduces low water depths to 14 inches (ins).		
1864	John Douglas MLA seeks government funding to make the	Barque <i>Woodbine</i> is the first overseas vessel in river.	Engineer of Roads, H. Plews, presents a report 'Navigation of the River Fitzroy' to Queensland Legislative Assembly	Flood in February (8.46m) and	

	Fitzroy 'the noblest navigable river in Queensland'.	Staff Cmdr Jeffrey in <i>HMS Pearl</i> surveys Keppel Bay and names Port Alma, Balaclava Is, Cardigan, Chersonese, Eupatoria and Kazatch Points, and Raglan Creek after Crimean War places and military personnel.	suggesting dredging Upper Flats to improve navigation, also constructing rubble dykes parallel to stream axis (as on the Clyde) to keep open the channel by increasing scour on the stream bed. He recommends the whole river should have 'a careful "engineering" survey' to ascertain the tides, currents, counter-currents at various points before improvements begin. Superintendent of Dredging, Thomas Francis, conducts a survey but, as the <i>Morning Bulletin (MB)</i> alleges, for political reasons this is not tabled in parliament or published.	March (8.69m). Changes to river banks occur and the Upper Flats crossing shifts 300ft down-stream.	
			Government orders Upper Flats dredging.		
1865	Great Northern Railway commences from Rockhampton westward in anticipation of attracting the embryonic western wool trade away from Brisbane and to Rockhampton, as well as gold and copper wealth from Peak Downs. Telegraphic connection with Brisbane established.	Portmaster Heath surveys and charts Upper Flats before dredging commences. Light ship is positioned on Upper Flats to indicate new channel and depth. Vessels up to 600 tons can navigate river. <i>SS Lady Young</i> visits Rockhampton.	RIVER WORKS BEGIN WITH DREDGING Under Harbours and Rivers Chief Engineer Brady, bucket dredge <i>Bremer</i> (25 hp) with tender <i>Mary</i> begins work dredging a new channel at Upper Flats to give 11in. greater depth; gravel from cutting is placed in the old (natural) channel, at a total cost of £5,428. Capt. Rundle believes only time will tell if the channel will remain permanent.		
1866	School of Arts created in Rockhampton. Gold discovery at Crocodile Creek brings a population influx to the district, including 'excessive numbers' of Chinese.		Silted up channel requires re-dredging at a cost of £3710.		
1867	Railway reaches and creates the		£962 spent on re-dredging.		

	township of Westwood, 30 miles west of Rockhampton.				
1868	<p>Berkelman and Co's boiling down works (and later beef and mutton preserving plant) opens at Laurel Bank, 10 miles upstream from Rockhampton.</p> <p>Gold discovery at Cawarral.</p>	<p>ASN and Queen's wharves are erected, with Rockhampton Municipal Council having the right to control wharves and collect dues.</p> <p>Lighters carry preserved meats and barges carry tallow and skins down to ships anchored either in Keppel Bay or at Central Island. Both are towed by the iron-hulled steam-launch <i>Ant</i>.</p>	No works are undertaken on the river so that Upper Flats gives only 2ft 3in at low water.		
1869	Public debate over river works begins with discontent over the comparative amounts of funding for Fitzroy and Brisbane Rivers.	<p>Notice issued to mariners that the river is 'practically closed' except for vessels of light draught.</p> <p>Excursion by small steamers to Curtis Island (later Beachton)</p>	<p>Upper Flats new channel is deemed inferior to the old channel and now has only 1ft of water at low tide. <i>Morning Bulletin</i> claims navigation of the river is 'a matter of vital interest to the town and to the whole district' but dredging appears to be an operation which 'removes one heap of shifting sand to make room for another'. It criticises the government for not proceeding with Thomas Francis's plan to dredge on the northern side of the river at Upper Flats where the current is strongest and the bed is of shingles and hard shale. Engineer Brady, it alleges, cut the channel on the southern side of the river through loose and shifting sand. It claims the government has consequently wasted several thousands of pounds.</p> <p>Brady considers dredging work on the Fitzroy 'must be an unceasing work and a never ending expense'. To reduce the need for dredging by 'training' the river to scour its own channel, he proposes narrowing the river either by planting mangroves, by fascine work (bundles of long sticks bound</p>		Exports: 31,109 oz gold; 2,952 tons wool; 987 tons copper; 6,317 hides

			together) or a combination of both. These would also accumulate deposits behind them and further narrow the channel. The plan is deemed the only practical and economical one for success in the Fitzroy, as had been demonstrated in the Bremer River at Ipswich. Capt. Rundle supports the fascines and mangrove idea but this does not eventuate.		
1870	Gold discovered at New Zealand Gully.		Dredge <i>Bremer</i> is laid up	Flood in February (7.62m)	First preserved meat exports
1871			<i>Bremer</i> is still inactive.		
1872	Central Queensland Meat Preserving Co. Ltd commences canning and boiling down operations at Lakes Creek. Central Railway westward extension begins with 14 miles of track from Westwood to Rocky Creek.	<i>SS Light Brigade</i> loads wool for London.			
1873	Rockhampton Chamber of Commerce forms and pushes for local and regional development and suitable port facilities.				
1874	Lakes Creek Meatworks closes due to drought. Railway extension from Rocky Creek across the Dawson River.	Patent slip is constructed for dredge, punts and small craft on south bank at Upper Flats.	Portmaster Heath advises of the unsuitability of the river for dredging but believes the cutting (new channel) must be kept open until a groyne planned for the south bank at Upper Flats forces the tide to scour the cut.		
1875	<i>MB</i> voices great optimism that, with river improvements, Rockhampton will become a deepwater port trading directly with England.	Flood leaves shoals in the navigational channel. New municipal wharf collapses into the river.	TRAINING WALL CONSTRUCTION BEGINS W.D. Nisbet (H&R) reports on a proposed scheme to obtain 10ft at low water from bay to town . He recommends dykes or training walls be constructed rather than groynes, assisted by dredging until they can train the river to do its own work.	Flood in March: (8.69m); presumed to be limit of flooding possibility.	

			A two-mile line of piles marks the start of No. 1 Training Wall on the south bank at Upper Flats just above government slip. Walls are constructed from mattresses of mangrove fascines filled with quarried stone and sunk in layers. Nisbet deems this the first work of its kind in Queensland and is thus 'an experiment'.		
1876	<p>Housing begins to spread in low-lying areas of Rockhampton: Depot Hill, Lower East Street, Kalka.</p> <p>Mechanisation is introduced on the wharves with a 7h.p. donkey engine for discharging cargo.</p> <p>Railway reaches and creates Duaringa.</p>	<p>Fewer steamers are detained by tides at Upper Flats since dredging affords an extra foot of water.</p> <p>Cmdr Bedwell RN surveys Fitzroy R.</p>		Dry seasons prevail to 1889.	
1877	<p>Plans are drawn up for Rockhampton-Broadmount railway. Broadmount land sales are held in anticipation of a boom at the new deepwater port.</p> <p>Lakes Creek meatworks reopens.</p>		<p>Nisbet reports on river progress: 4700ft of the planned 5100ft wall completed. He recommends a new Humbug Channel be constructed and the closure of old Humbug Channel, Alligator Passage, Casuarina Creek and Satellite Channel. Nisbet also suggests closing North and Middle Channels to improve South Channel entrance to river mouth.</p> <p>£14,400 spent to date on river improvements.</p>		
1878	<p>Construction of a new quarantine station commences on Mackenzie Island.</p> <p>Local opposition erupts over requests by Gladstone for rail connection to Rockhampton which the latter's residents fear will draw western trade to the port of Gladstone. Gladstone interests protest against government</p>	<p><i>SS Scottish Bard</i> 'tops off' cargo at Central Island anchorage.</p> <p>Start of regular popular excursions (400-700 passengers) to Beachton (Golden Shore Hotel) in <i>S.S. Lady Bowen</i>.. First trip on Easter Monday falls foul of the 'dreaded Flats' and is held</p>	<p>New buckets sought for <i>Bremer</i> to clear channel being formed by training walls at Upper Flats. <i>MB</i> has 'full confidence in the ultimate success' of Nisbet's scheme but complains about the state of the flats and the idleness of the dredge which, according to Nisbet, is inefficient and too costly.</p> <p>Contractor Kearney completes the delivery of 25,000 tons of Lakes Creek Quarry stone for No 1 Wall (half completed). Labourer Michael O'Donohoe is accidentally killed during quarry operations.</p>		

	<p>moneys being spent on Fitzroy River works while the superior Gladstone harbour is ignored.</p> <p>Central Railway (formerly GNR) reaches and creates Comet.</p>	<p>up by tide for four hours and does not reach Beachton until evening. On the return trip, the same problem occurs at Upper Flats.</p> <p>Visibility of a long reach of the river from bay is possible after Kanakas clear large amounts of scrub on Mackenzie Island.</p> <p>Mooring piles are installed in the river below Upper Flats for vessels to wait in sight of tide/depth signals.</p>			
1879	<p>Albert Norton (MLA Port Curtis) moves to have Fitzroy R works suspended due to high cost and availability of 'magnificent harbour' at Port Curtis; wants Rockhampton-Gladstone rail surveyed.</p> <p>Influx of Scandinavian immigrants to Rockhampton district.</p> <p>Local shareholders form Central Queensland Meat Export Co. Ltd which takes over and reopens Lakes Creek meatworks. Installation of freezers expands the existing preserving and boiling down activities.</p> <p>Central Railway reaches and creates Emerald on the Nogo River.</p>	<p>Vessels advised to take pilot across Upper Flats to take full advantage of new depths and avoid problems during dredging.</p> <p>Immigrants transhipped at Keppel Bay to <i>Lady Bowen</i> for trip up the river. One Danish male lost overboard when boat collides with the schooner <i>Heron</i> on Upper Flats at night.</p>	<p><i>Bremer</i> again at work removing gravel ridge at upper end of cutting on Upper Flats. <i>MB</i> complains the dredge 'is too small and otherwise unsuited for dredging this river' but no other dredge available until newly-authorized vessel is constructed.</p>		

1880	<p>Norton again moves suspension of Fitzroy R works.</p> <p>Transcontinental Railway planned (Roma to Gulf of Carpentaria with spur to R'ton area).</p>	<p>Capt Rundle retires as Harbour Master; A.E. Sykes appointed.</p>	<p>No. 1 Wall completed with 'economy and durability' and a similar type of wall on the Mississippi River was declared a success. No. 3 Wall (Prawn Island) started to close off subsidiary branches of the river to direct scour into 'main' dredged channel. No. 2 Wall at Archer's Crossing not commenced as depth problems there are not so pressing.</p> <p>Dredge <i>Bremer</i> retired and <i>Lytton</i> starts.</p> <p>To date, £70,400 spent on river improvements.</p> <p>After consultation with Nisbet and Jardine, Town Surveyor Campbell prepares a plan for conservation of the river bank to prevent erosion of the south bank of town reach. He reports that the river is wearing away the clay bank between high and low water marks, toppling the upper slopes and depositing the material downstream at the Upper Flats. Campbell proposes a rubble stone retaining wall from the Deepwater Wharf to Gavial Creek, similar in construction to the training wall at Upper Flats. Council approves plan but does not proceed for want of funds for the estimated £11,980 project.</p>		
1881	<p>McIlwraith Govt selects Port Alma as TR spur terminus port.</p> <p>Central Railway reaches and creates Boguntungan</p>		<p><i>Lytton</i> cutting through bank at Brown's Crossing over three months.</p>		
1882	<p>Norton's motion for R'ton-G'stone railway lost 22-9</p> <p>Central Railway spur line opens from</p>	<p>Deepwater Wharf built: 500ft long and 64ft wide. Piles of NSW turpentine sunk into 9ft hard clay and 1ft rock; deck of Tasmanian blue gum; costing £8,000. H&R Engineer</p>	<p>Dredge <i>Lytton</i> finishes on the Fitzroy.</p>		

	Emerald to Capella (Peak Downs). Discovery of gold at Mount Morgan.	Jardine believes this 'exceedingly low cost' wharf requires piles to be sheathed with muntz metal (copper-zinc) to protect against 'cobra' (<i>teredo</i> or shipworm - a marine borer especially prevalent in tropical waters) and whole structure to be reinforced. Town Surveyor Campbell defends the construction as having 'necessary stability' but without 'unnecessary expenditures'.			
1883	Lakes Creek meatworks cease operations following a major fire. Central Railway crosses the western watershed of the Fitzroy Basin, the Drummond Range.				
1884	Lakes Creek meatworks reopens after costly rebuilding and modernisation. Central Railway reaches and creates Alpha. A spur line from Emerald to Springsure also opens and line continues from Capella to Clermont. Telephone Exchange opens.	Port Alma screw pile wharf completed by contractors Burns and Twigg Ltd at Eupatoria Point/Raglan Creek.	Dredge <i>Saurian</i> commences and gives 'complete satisfaction'. It is 900 tons; has 31 buckets; lifts 3,000 tons of spoil and fills 19 punts per day; and employs 17 men.		
1885	Lakes Creek meatworks goes into liquidation due to the fire, expensive rebuilding and dull world market. Purchased by a Melbourne company which takes the same name of CQME	Permanent tide gauges installed in river and leading lights for river and Port Alma. Passengers complain about	Sand and silt deposits increased behind No. 1 Wall as the interstices in the mattress foundations close; Prawn Channel dyke (366') built to high tide, causing water to flow over Second Flats and Archer's Crossing. No. 3 Wall at Prawn Is. advanced 3,100ft downstream to half-tide and creates a		

	<p>Co.; expands freezing works and employs about 700 hands at peak of 8 month kill season.</p> <p>Central Railway reaches and creates Jericho. Settlement throughout Fitzroy Basin increases.</p> <p>Port Alma versus river trade stimulates much public debate. Lighterage charges and problems of transshipment up the 'devious and intricate Fitzroy' are seen as a 'serious obstacle to the prosperity of Rockhampton'. Others believe the construction of a railway line to Port Alma would not pay.</p>	<p>night transhipments up the river without sleeping accommodation. One comments that 'no amount of money will ever make a first-class water highway' of the Fitzroy.</p> <p>Public pressure for a jetty at Beachton following the drowning of two young women during conveyance to the shore from <i>SS Corea</i>.</p>	<p>'much required' deposition area. Lack of depositing areas deemed a 'serious obstacle' to dredging operations. Six side-delivery hopper barges to be constructed for increased rates of dumping.</p> <p>Dykes to high tide at Goat Island and back channel also constructed for this purpose and site level raised. Dumping to start behind No. 1 Wall.</p> <p>Discontent over river improvements under Harbours and Rivers Department (Nisbet and Jardine) and eminent British hydraulic engineer Sir John Coode requested to advise on river works. Great debate also on the issue of damming the Fitzroy River. An anonymous correspondent to <i>MB</i> states that damming the Fitzroy at the rocks will improve navigation below the town by preventing the flow depositing silt on Upper Flats. He also claims this measure will provide a 'never-failing' fresh water supply for town, irrigation and regional development through 200 miles of improved up-stream river conditions suitable for barges.</p> <p>Sir John Coode, inspects port and river. Preliminary findings include advice against damming the river at the rocks as this would eventually cause silting up of the town reach and for a considerable distance below the town, thus preventing future navigation. Alternatively, he suggests removal of the rocks (by blasting) to make the current steady and even, with the beneficial result of deepening the river and improving navigation.</p>		
1886	<p>Central Railway reaches Barcaldine.</p> <p>Mount Morgan Gold Mining Co. Ltd forms.</p>	<p>Grassy Hill and Sea Hill lighthouses established</p>	<p>Engineer Jardine reports chief difficulty of the river is the washing away banks which he considers will require protection before long. Dredging continues in No. 2 Cut (Archer's Crossing), No. 3 Cut (Sand Flats), No. 4 Cut (Brown's Crossing) and No. 5 Cut (Central Island).</p> <p>No. 3 Wall almost completed and a dyke of mangrove fascines to be constructed in upper Prawn Channel to direct</p>		

			water into No. 5 Cut.		
1887					
1888	Railway line from North Rockhampton to Emu Park opens.	<p>Australasian United Steam Navigation Co. Ltd (AUSN) light-draft tenders <i>Dolphin</i> and <i>Taldora</i> convey cargo and passengers to Keppel Bay to meet steamers on trunk lines while bi-weekly service to Sydney leaves from town wharves.</p> <p>Howard Smith and Sons Ltd advertise regular runs of 'fast inter-colonial steel steamships' of 1,000-2,000 tons carrying passengers and cargo from town wharves to Queensland and southern ports, thus avoiding transshipment in Keppel Bay.</p>	<p><i>Saurian</i> working Upper Flats at end of dredging run from Central Is. Reports of increased scour from dredging, some places constant but shoals and bank encroachment on other parts of channel. Banks undermined and fallen timber increasing chances of shoaling. H&R recommends extension of training walls and dykes to confine water to main channel, especially at Goat Is.</p> <p>Sir John Coode's report on river and estuary comments that no action has been taken on walls proposed by Nisbet from Winding Reach, along the southern margin of Humbug Channel to Woods Point. Goode suggests a similar scheme but one which will attain 12ft at low water and possibly 15ft. He recommends closure of passages between Casuarina, Mosquito and Sandfly Islands to concentrate scour. Also recommends training of a channel between Shoal Island and Rocky Point where river is some three-quarters of a mile wide; and suggests cutting a channel across Pirate Point to straighten river and shorten trip by 4 miles.</p> <p>Richard Schmidt appointed as Rockhampton's Resident Engineer, Harbours & Rivers.</p>	<p>Coode recommends cutting down river rocks to water level to aid discharge of flood waters.</p> <p>Municipal Council discusses the loss of more than 8ft of south bank in town reach during (minor) flooding in February and consequent plans for 'improvement and retention' of the bank.</p>	First export (300 tons) of frozen beef hind quarters to London.
1889	Rockhampton opinion split over Port Alma and opposing petitions presented to parliament; Introduction of Harbour Boards Bill.		<p><i>Saurian</i> dredging at Sand Flats/Browns Crossing to 10ft; No. 2 Wall being extended downstream at Elbow Sand end towards Archer's Crossing to protect dredged channel in cuttings and provide space for deposition.</p> <p>Chamber of Commerce reports good progress in deepening the river and training wall construction and hopes these will end 'the odium attaching' to the river.</p>		
1890			H&R reports less flood damage to works than anticipated and training work 'sensibly advanced' the scour in most	Flood in April (8.76m). Town	

			places Schmidt observes that river at upper end of No. 1 Cut (at start of No. 1 Wall) is not sufficiently contracted and to increase scour, further wall construction is needed on opposite bank; lower end of No. 1 Wall needs raising; second dyke at Brown's Is and training spur at Brown Spit if completed would have protected Cut No. 3 at Sand Flat; Goat-Kid-Ram Sand dykes completed; and, as dredging has been unsuccessful in keeping No. 5 Cut clear, the proposed closure of Boat Passage (Central Is-Hawk Bank to southern bank) will concentrate scour there.	Surveyor Parker prepares report on flood, determines speed and quantity of flow; urges 'conservation and utilisation' of flood water; new 'true flood level' erroneously assumed.	
1891			H&R Engineer A.W. Jardine confirms efficacy of training walls (crossings previously carrying less than 6' now carried 9'3"). Total cost of river improvements to June 1891 = £112,500. <i>Saurian</i> and plant laid up.		Great Depression begins.
1892	<p>Chamber of Commerce protests the stopping of dredging/construction work on the river, claiming 'the waterway of the district' should be kept open. For a deepwater port, however, it considers options of Broadmount, Emu Park, Bluff Harbour (Double Heads/ Rosslyn Bay) and Port Alma. Government Portmaster Almond supports Broadmount.</p> <p>Perceived neglect of Rockhampton's river interests gives strength to calls for political separation for Central Queensland.</p> <p>Central Railway reaches Longreach.</p>	<p><i>SS Elginshire</i> (2980 tons net) arrives at river mouth to collect frozen beef and collides with tender from Lakes Creek Meatworks, <i>SS Vlissingen</i> (221 tons) and punt <i>New Chum</i> at anchor at Flat Island, mid-South Channel.</p> <p>Signs of silting up again. River depths at LW: Upper Fl., Browns Cross. & Central Is. - 7ft; Rocky Pt - 8ft; with ever-shifting shallows.</p>	<p>Dredging work ceases due to lack of government funds and belief that there had been too much public money spent on 'unsatisfactory' and 'old fashioned' system of dredging. All men laid off except Resident Engineer.</p> <p>Chamber of Commerce complains to Premier Griffith that the river was in 'fairly good order' but moderate sized steamers (eg 1,000 ton <i>Burwah</i>) could only come in and out at very high tide. Claims wall construction without dredging would be useless. Asks for £20,000 to heighten No. 1 wall upstream from Central Island for 8 miles. Government says dredging would recommence at the slightest shoaling. Engineer Jardine presents Premier with plans for river improvements which are of a 'more modern kind, giving much better navigable results, and at a considerably reduced outlay'.</p>		500 tons of frozen beef to London.

	Western graziers express discontent with the absence of a deepwater port for wool exports.				
1893	Chamber of Commerce supports Port Alma; Govt selects Broadmount	Inbound <i>SS Woonoona</i> carrying 800 tons of coal is wrecked on Upper Flats shoals			
1894					
1895	Formation of Rockhampton Harbour Trust Board of Advice; British East India Co. leases Pt Alma wharf; plans for Broadmount-Broadmount railway; plans for R'ton-North R'ton railway; Rockhampton Harbour Board Act passed.		Survey of sea approaches to Broadmount; Portmaster opposes choice of South Channel. A.Archer MLA seeks information about capacity and price of new suction dredges available in Melbourne.		1891-1895: Town wharf trade: 70% tonnage; Bay trade by lighterage: 30%
1896	Rockhampton Harbour Board takes over port administration; elected by dues payers, local and western ratepayers; W. Burns (Chair), A. Mawdsley (Sec.), R. Schmidt (Eng.) Review of trade and river development; Mackenzie Island quarantine station closes.	<i>Vlissingen</i> , on wrong side of channel between Central Is and Pirate Point at night, strikes <i>SS Wawoon</i> , drowning one man. <i>SS Taldora</i> hits unlit cutter; <i>SS Elamang</i> stranded at Elbow Sand for 6 days. Pilot Haynes retires and is appointed master of <i>Saurian</i> .	Dredge <i>Saurian</i> , tugs <i>Curlew</i> and <i>Hawk</i> , six side-delivery barges, launch <i>Wallaby</i> , six stone punts, and assorted machinery taken over by Rockhampton Harbour Board. 7980 tons of rock deposited at Brown Is wall. Harbours and Rivers Department continues to maintain river works in the sea reaches and estuary. River bed borings from bay (Cardigan lead) to town begin. RHB opposes Middle Channel as main entrance to the river and Broadmount.	Flood in February (8.92m). Estimated homes flooded: 100; people evacuated to Immigration Depot alone: 300.	Town wharves: 101,865 tons; Broadmount 32,882 tons.
1897	North Coast Railway from Brisbane to Gladstone opens.	Gridiron at Ledge Point for local dredge maintenance rather than voyaging to Brisbane; <i>QGSS Premier</i> starts B'mount-G'stone run.	H&R considers river 'has never been in a better shape' and is being further improved by dredging and more wall construction. Chamber of Commerce is delighted that RHB has 'justified its existence' by achieving a minimum depth of 10ft from town to bay. Harbours and Rivers Department dredges Middle Channel. At Humbug Reach, borings begin across neck of Pirate Point	Drought conditions. Permanent flood gauges (Lord Kelvin's patent-automatic design) are set up with	Town wharves: 99,606 tons; Broadmount 37,043 tons.

			<p>for possible canal; river bed borings completed.</p> <p>Schmidt scheme proposes a straight river with 18ft minimum at low water with costing of a plan to achieve 20ft at low water; recommends removal of lower mile of No. 1 Wall and placing closer to south bank for better scouring; No. 2 Spur opposite to be altered and extended downstream; construction of 9.9 miles of walls and 5.5 miles of 'banks'; Prawn Is Wall (No. 3) to be heightened; bank protection undertaken; cut across Pirate Point; and new Humbug Reach channel dredged - at a total cost of £362,855. Schmidt suggested alternative of cutting a 6.75 mile canal from Thompson's Pt to above Archer's Crossing to cut out bends - estimated at £550,000.</p> <p>Schmidt considers that Nisbet's cheap method of construction with timber has been a failure as teredo or shipworm has eaten out the timber and the stone has collapsed - rendering rebuilding of solid rubble stone necessary.</p> <p>Harbour Board desires 20ft depth at low water, requiring 13.8 miles of channel dredging at £69,269. After bore report of 'easy dredgible nature' of river bed, RHB calls tenders for a suction dredge to remove 2,000 tons of silt per hour.</p> <p>Wall stone deposition for year: Old Slip Wall (No.1) 150 tons; Elbow Wall (No. 2) 660 tons; Prawn Is. Wall (No. 3) 380 tons; Brown Is./Second Flats dykes (No. 4) 2590 tons; Central Is. dykes 21,840 tons. Sand Flats wall completed.</p>	<p>telegraphic contact with Comet, Taroom, Duaringa (Dawson R.) and Yaamba (Fitzroy R.).</p>	
1898	<p>Line to Broadmount opens to little public interest. Branch line up the Razorback to Mount Morgan from Kabra on Central Railway.</p> <p>RHB purchases Railway (Deepwater)</p>	<p><i>SS Vlissingen</i> sunk after collision with <i>SS Leichhardt</i> at Archer's Crossing. Average tonnage of boats berthing at town wharves is 310 tons.</p>	<p><i>Saurian</i> dredges Town and Lakes Creek Reaches 29,866 tons; Upper Flats 372,052 tons; Sand Flats 68,906 tons; Ram Sand 43,306 tons; Central Is. cut 15,576 tons. Stone deposited: Elbow Wall 450 tons; Brown Is dykes completed.</p>	<p>Flood in February (8.23m)</p>	<p>Town wharves: 125,325 tons; Broadmount 33,827 tons.</p>

	wharf from government.		<p>RHB protests against the government opening up Middle Channel by dredging; Conflicting opinion on Middle or South Channels; RHB accepts Middle Channel;</p> <p>Boat Channel closed;</p> <p>RHB engages C. Napier Bell to report on Schmidt scheme. Bell endorses Schmidt's proposal but claims 20ft should be the object of designing works which, with tidal assistance of training walls, should create depths of 24ft. He also recommends removing and repositioning lower part of No. 1 Wall and pitching unprotected banks because training walls are useless unless the opposite wall is also protected. Bell believes similar work at Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Antwerp and Bremen have 'successfully trained' and improved rivers similar to the Fitzroy.</p> <p>Government engages American hydraulic engineer, Lindon W. Bates, to advise on Brisbane, Fitzroy and other Queensland Rivers. Bates Report claims the 'certainty' of achieving 20ft depth to town wharves. Recommends closure of Casuarina Creek and Alligator Passage; extension of proposed Satellite Wall across Bronzewing Sands; movement in tidal opening of planned Shoal Island Wall to Rocky Point end; cut across Pirate Point; realignment of No. 1 Wall and wall constructed opposite on northern bank. Advises that <i>Saurian</i> is old, inadequate and should be replaced.</p>		
1899	Alexandra Railway Bridge over Fitzroy River completed.	<i>Vlissingen</i> wreck removed.	<p>Training wall and dredging work continue. Depth available at low water is 10ft from bay to town.</p> <p>Machinery for suction dredge <i>Elwood</i> purchased in Melbourne and hull constructed locally; completed for £14,259 and employing 14 men. On advice of Lindon Bates,</p>	Prolonged drought begins	Town wharves: 139,625 tons; Broadmount 30,388 tons.

			<p>RHB requests government to widen Middle Channel by 200' at Mackenzie Island. RHB orders a Bates suction dredge, 100' pipe and launch for £59,000.</p> <p>Dredging by <i>Saurian</i>: Upper Flats 386,987 tons; Archer's Crossing 51,413 tons; Winding Reach 53,547 tons; Humbug Reach 48,853.</p> <p>Stone deposited: No. 1 wall 320 tons; Prawn Is. wall 70 tons; The Cut Wall 13,880 tons; Central Is. dyke 9,800 tons. New Lower Quarry at Thompson's Point..</p>		
1900		RHB has vision of overseas ships at town wharves.	<p>Strengthening of dyke across Boat Channel completed by new dredge <i>Elwood</i>. <i>Elwood</i> also clears Upper Flats Sec. 1 Cut 1 of 490,253 tons; Training wall work continues to keep dredges employed to fullest capacity.</p> <p>Govt dredge <i>Casuarina</i> at work in Middle Channel to achieve 17ft at low water and at Broadmount wharf to obtain 20ft.</p> <p>Dredging by <i>Saurian</i>: Upper Flats Cut 1 386,346 tons; Central Is. 10,240 tons; Winding Reach 165,334 tons; Humbug Reach 29,013 tons. <i>Saurian</i> retired.</p> <p>Stone deposited: Tannery Wall 14,340 tons; Old Slip Wall 18,225 tons; The Cut 2,220 tons.</p>	Drought and bubonic plague adversely affect RHB revenue.	<p>Town wharves: 116,939 tons; Broadmount 31,188 tons.</p> <p>1896-1900: Town wharf trade: 78% tonnage; Bay trade (lighterage): 22%.</p>
1901	<p>Construction of Gavial Creek explosives wharf contracted locally.</p> <p>Customs Houses opens.</p> <p>London-based Nelson Brothers take over CQME Co. Ltd. and integrate Lakes Creek Meatworks into global meat industry. Plant adopts new methods and expands to become the largest meat preserving and freezing works in Australia, processing 500</p>	<p>20ft extension to Deepwater Wharf; gridiron lengthened to accommodate <i>Archer</i> and <i>Elwood</i>.</p> <p><i>SS Duke of Westminster</i> (3736 tons) berths at Port Alma. Broadmount Wharf extended upstream by 220ft to make 720ft frontage. (<i>SS Devonshire</i> 6,059 tons, drawing 22ft 8in.) berths at Broadmount.</p>	<p>New 'Dredger' <i>Archer</i>, designed by Lindon Bates, arrives in Rockhampton from Tyneside dockyard via Suez Canal and Torres Strait. The £60,000 dredge is 235ft long; 39ft 4in. beam, has four Babcox and Wilcox marine boilers with a dredging capacity of 2,500 cubic yards per hour. Sand/shingle tests in March exceed expectations; and a clay test in September is also pleasing, with the dredge cutting and pumping lumps of clay 'as large as a man's head' onto the dumping area now exposed at low water behind No. 1 wall.</p> <p><i>Archer</i> commences pumping sand onto a dyke between</p>		<p>Port trade declines with drought</p> <p>Town wharves: 82,029 tons; Broadmount 25,272 tons.</p>

	bullocks and 3,000 sheep per day.		<p>Shoal Island and Iguana Point. Successive layers of brushwood and sand are laid on the dyke to 2-3ft above high water until the half-mile wide channel is completely blocked. According to <i>MB</i>, this is the first construction in Australia employing that method although it was commonly and successfully used along the Mississippi. Before completion, a strong tidal flow breaches the bank but <i>Archer</i> quickly repairs the gap. The dyke is then faced with stone. This method of construction is deemed to be cheaper and quicker than 'laboriously building [solid] stone walls'. RHB is delighted with the scheme and plans to construct similar walls.</p> <p>No. 1 Wall raised and extended.</p> <p><i>Casuarina</i> removes shoaling in No 6 cut above Mackenzie Island and work at Broadmount.</p>		
1902	Railway connected to newly opened Gavial Creek wharf. Mackenzie Island Quarantine Station closed; used for lightkeeper's residence.	Upper Flats lightship removed; <i>SS Karaweera</i> (1021 tons) stranded and wrecked at northern end of Central Island. <i>SS Jumna</i> (4,152 tons, drawing 25ft 10in.) at Port Alma.	<p>Iguana Point dyke completed.</p> <p><i>Casuarina</i> working in Nos 5 and 6 cuts in Middle Channel to restore depth to 17ft</p>	Drought broken.	Town wharves: 103,175 tons; Broadmount 22,306 tons.
1903	Gladstone-Rockhampton rail line commenced.	<p><i>SS Astracana</i> (1,725 tons, drawing 18ft 10in.) berths at town wharves. Stern of <i>Karaweera</i> wreck beached at entrance to Thunder Is. Channel.</p> <p>Despite decades of navigation and surveys, a new rock (Derwent Rock) is discovered</p>	<p>All river work ceased by mid year and all hands laid off due to drought</p> <p>H&R Engineer Cullen reports on Middle Channel as best entrance despite shoaling.</p>		Town wharves: 77,282 tons; Broadmount 20,285 tons.

		in the river near Lakes Creek when a boat hits it.			
1904	<p>Port trade reached nadir. £150,000 government loan to RHB. State Treasurer Kidston (MLA R'ton) supports Port Alma as cheapest and most permanent port; but in what the <i>MB</i> termed 'a complete right about face on the port question', the following month he supports Broadmount;</p> <p>Competition from rail transport with opening of Gladstone-Rockhampton line.</p>	Broadmount-Gladstone boat link by <i>QGSS Premier</i> discontinued due to rail link	<p>Repairs to Shoal Point-Iguana Pt dyke. Detailed survey of Shoal Island reach between Rocky and Thompson's Pts; Cullen (H&R) further reports that Middle Channel is easier and cheaper to maintain than South Channel would be but Schmidt (RHB) claims Middle Channel would require the construction of a training wall to high tide level from north bank, closure of North Passage with barrier dyke to low water, and dredging of channel to 400ft width due to sharp angle of leads into Broadmount. Schmidt counters that South Channel provides an almost straight run requiring only a 300ft cut which would maintain its depth if dredged to axis of current as Napier Bell suggested.</p> <p>Middle Channel deteriorates badly but government refuses to dredge. RHB hires <i>Casuarina</i> to do this, stating board's opinion that South Channel was the better is vindicated; Survey of both channels undertaken by Schmidt.</p>	Below average rainfall	Town wharves: 76,108 tons; Broadmount 23,953 tons.
1905	Trade recovery begins after drought. RHB obtains £30,000 govt loan and a 'more equitable adjustment' of long distance rail haulage rages.	Another rock (Mid Rock) discovered in the river at Lakes Creek after a boat strikes it.	<p><i>Casuarina</i> completes work on Middle Passage after removing 94,350 cu.yds of spoil.</p> <p>Schmidt report favours South Channel as cheapest to maintain so RHB adopts it as entrance to Broadmount and river but Middle to be maintained until new channel ready.</p> <p>No. 2 wall extended 5,600ft and raised. Shoal Island training wall (15,000ft) started with 84,500 tons of stone from Lower Quarry at Thompson's Pt. Engineer Schmidt dies suddenly and is replaced by M.E. Bale.</p> <p><i>Saurian</i> sold to South Australian Government; <i>Elwood</i>, tender <i>Wallaby</i> and five barges laid up in Alligator Passage.</p>	Below average rainfall	<p>Town wharves: 108,379 tons; Broadmount 16,194 tons.</p> <p>1901-1905: Town wharf trade: 80% tonnage; Bay trade (lighterage): 20%.</p>

1906	RHB aims to bring ships up to town wharves to avoid both rail or lighterage costs.	New slip at Thompson's Point	RHB speeds up completion of Shoal Is Wall and No. 2 Wall which was nearing completion. Satellite training wall started. Dredging entrance to Broadmount continues. Engineer Bale reports he would never have advised the Broadmount port and railway but they were already in existence; Advises Middle Channel is 17ft and South Channel is 20ft but would involve a bad turn at Broadmount and worse around Rocky Point for large vessels; also advises blockage of North Passage to increase flow through Middle Passage.		Town wharves: 132,608 tons; Broadmount 31,857 tons.
1907	Western graziers demand reliable deepwater facilities for exports and suggest Port Alma be utilised. RHB applies to government for construction of Bajool-Port Alma railway.	<i>SS Suffolk</i> (7,573 tons, drawing 17ft) berths at Broadmount. Capt Sykes retires as HM and Pilot S. Wilkinson appointed as his replacement.	Engineer A.J. Goldsmith takes over from E. Bale. Reports that total length of training walls and dykes completed or under construction was 14 miles. <i>Elwood's</i> pump sold to S.A. Government; clam dredge machinery installed on Gavial Creek wharf. Elbow Wall (11,290ft) completed to 9ft 6in. above LW; Shoal Island Wall (15,000ft) extended; Tannery Wall laid out along north bank of Upper Flats and commenced.		Town wharves: 157,365 tons; Broadmount 35,356 tons. Iron ore from Iron Island in Broadsound to Gavial Creek wharf for Mount Morgan Ltd.
1908	Port trade back to 1899 figures. Govt-RHB agreement on Port Alma. Govt to construct line and hand over wharf to RHB which would maintain wharf facilities. Agreement between RHB, govt and shipping coys that lighterage would stop and all large ships would berth at Port Alma. RBH vote on this was 5 to 3, reflecting board division on issue.	<i>SS Saint Bryde</i> (3,834 tons, drawing 14ft 6in.) berths at town wharves. RHB states 91% of the 2,372 coastal ships which entered Keppel Bay anchored there; only 9% berthed at Broadmount which was therefore a waste of money.	Tannery Wall backfilled; stone deposited on Tannery, Satellite and Shoal Is Walls; new walls at Middle Flats and Winding Reach set out. Lower Quarry at Thompson's Pt closed and machinery moved to a 'reorganised' Upper Quarry where steam shovel replaces hand shovels and drays and output increases from 150 to 800 tons per day. Performance of <i>Archer</i> deemed inferior to its Brisbane sister <i>Hercules</i> which lifts 2.4 times the quantity at 45% the cost.	Flood in March (7.26m)	Town wharves: 209,852 tons; Broadmount 39,509 tons.

1909	<p>Govt appoints Board of Experts to decide on Port Alma or Broadmount for deepwater port. Reported that former had marine/nautical advantage but latter had land advantage. Recommended connecting both by a railway via Casuarina Island and with a 6,600ft bridge over Fitzroy at Rocky Point for estimated cost of £141,682. RHB Secretary Mawdsley suggests Thompson's Point for deepwater port.</p> <p>Port Alma selected as deepwater port and cross-river railway plan abandoned. Subsequently, RHB divided by those supporting Port Alma development and those supporting Rockhampton and the river trade.</p>		<p>Tannery wall completed. Gap of 580ft in No. 2 (Elbow) Wall closed. North Wall (800ft) at Middle Flats completed but South Wall at Middle Flats still in progress. Dredging spoils are pumped behind South Wall.</p> <p>Engineer J.H. Baynes reports 4.5 million tons were removed from Shoal Island reach by increased tidal scour caused by partly completed Shoal Island Wall ie. equivalent to four year's work costing £44,000 by <i>Archer</i> as opposed to once-off £38,000 for wall.</p> <p>RHB considers three different proposals for the cut through Pirate Point (Bates, Schmidt and Bale). Although deemed desirable, the anticipated cost of £117,000 is too much for the cash-strapped RHB. Thus, the board has 'no other course' but to improve the present channel around the point by dredging and building the Winding Reach Training Wall at a total cost of £9,720.</p>		<p>Town wharves: 207,525 tons; Broadmount 49,965 tons.</p>
1910	<p>First sod turned for Bajool-Port Alma railway. Railway from Clermont reaches Blair Athol (steaming coal).</p>		<p>Winding Reach Wall completed to 4,860ft and short wall on north side of Humbug Reach completed in 8 weeks. So all walls from Rockhampton to Winding Reach now completed.</p> <p>One of the largest dredging problems undertaken, New Humbug Reach channel, was completed and difficult Satellite channel closed. Gap of 475ft being closed in Satellite Wall; Humbug and Shoal Island Walls continuing.</p>	<p>Flood in February (8.15m) Unsuccessful approach to government for a flood warning system.</p>	<p>Town wharves: 212,814 tons (peak of river trade); Broadmount 51,889 tons.</p>
1911	<p>RHB extends Port Alma wharf by 500ft. Electric light on town wharves.</p> <p>Extension of North Coast Railway from Rockhampton north towards St Lawrence.</p>	<p>RHB passes by-law to protect river banks against damage by ships moving too fast. Average tonnage of boats berthing at town wharves is 600 tons.</p>	<p>Adverse report on Middle Channel by Engineer Baynes.</p>	<p>Flood in February (7.90m); RHB continues efforts without success to have flood warning system installed on</p>	<p>Town wharves: 173,788 tons; Broadmount 62,552 tons (peak of Broadmount trade).</p>

				tributaries, offering to pay one quarter of the costs.	Town wharf trade: 80% tonnage; Bay trade 20% (lighterage to town wharves) Water hyacinth problem
1912	Gov. Sir William MacGregor opens Port Alma railway , thus ending the need for lightering up the Fitzroy. Government refuses to extend RHB's borrowing powers.		Three month industrial strike by dredge crew.		Town wharves: 157,576 tons; Broadmount: 48,367 tons; Port Alma: 13,585 tons No iron ore shipments
1913	Government's special long haulage rates for railway freight (to Brisbane) decreases local shipping trade, especially for wool.		South Channel opens as alternate entrance to Broadmount and river. Pilots find South Channel easier for entry and Middle Channel easier for exit until a wider bell mouth is cut.		Town wharves: 211,925 tons; Broadmount: 27,186 tons; Port Alma: 28,706 tons. Peak in wool exports with 156,211 bales. No iron ore.
1914	RHB expands to 11 members elected by local ratepayers and western shire councillors.		Engineer H.H. McCulloch appointed and supports wisdom of South Channel. Chairman G.B. Hopper claims 'ultimate aim' of 20ft to town wharves had not been achieved mainly		Town wharves: 203,106 tons; Broadmount

	Lakes Creek Meatworks secures government war-time contract to supply meat for Britain.		due to insufficient funds but must still be pursued.		10,835 tons; Port Alma: 45,773 tons. Iron ore shipments again. Shortage of shipping during World War I diverts shipping trade to the railways.
1915	RHB's borrowing powers raised to £400,000	Deepwater Wharf extended 304ft on downstream side.	Government grants £18,000 loan to dredge above Rocky Point to complete and repair training walls.		Town wharves: 192,174 tons; Broadmount 5,340 tons; Port Alma: 34,393 tons. RHB wants decreased long haulage rail rates and local wool sales to boost port trade.
1916		Berthage charges introduced. NZ engineer H.W. Hamer reports favourably on Port Alma and recommends the eventual bringing of shipping 'to the heart of the city' as in Glasgow, London etc. However, as expenditure on further training walls and	Satellite Wall closure completed.		Town wharves: 173,547 tons; Broadmount: 0 tons; Port Alma: 33,474 tons.

		dredging might be problematic for some years, he supports Port Alma as the terminal port at river mouth.			
1917	Mount Morgan railway line extends to Baralaba for coal mine.		Satellite Wall raised to three-quarter tide level but flood in river necessitates repairs.	Floods in January (8.18m) and March.	Town wharves: 135,006 tons; Broadmount 693 tons; Port Alma: 26,934 tons.
1918	RHB deputation to Treasurer to 'wipe out board's indebtedness and let it start over again' is unsuccessful. Treasurer foreshadows Gladstone as CQ's port. Gladstone challenges Port Alma as CQ port and leads to formation of Port Defence Committee in R'ton which recommends maintaining river to present tonnage and developing Port Alma for larger ships.	Average tonnage of boats berthing at town wharves increases to 747 tons.	Part of river bank at Archer's Crossing, subject to erosion, is protected by a stone revetment. Old groyne below Gavial Creek removed by clam dredge.	Record flood in January-February 1918 (10.11m)	Town wharves: 151,204 tons; Broadmount 962 tons. Port Alma: 16,893 tons.
1919		Capt. Wilkinson retires as Harbour Master; Frederick Rhodes appointed as HM. Only one berthing at Broadmount during year.	Dredge <i>Archer</i> breaks down irreparably after 19 years and removing 19,165,400 tons of sand/mud from bed to behind walls (or 72% of material moved 1896-1945). Dredge <i>Ceratodus</i> hired from Bundaberg HB to try to clear flood damage.		Town wharves: 94,434 tons; Broadmount 0 tons. Port Alma: 22,356 tons. Continued lack of shipping and inability of RHB to restore river depths affects trade.
1920	RHB is determined to 'keep the river	Vessels still having to lighten	Continued dredging of shoals with make-shift plant at False	RHB requests	Town wharves:

	open' and to close North Passage to benefit the river.	at Port Alma before trip up the river.	Point, Brown's Crossing, Archer's Crossing, Quarry Lead, Upper Flats and Gavial Creek. Government dredges <i>Casuarina</i> and <i>Ceratodus</i> at work in river. Minimum depth is 10ft at LW at Rocky Point. Rocks off Devil's Elbow and Derwent and Eagle Rocks on Upper Flats are removed. Visiting NZ Engineer G.F. Holmes engaged to report on cutting a channel between Flat Is and Obstruction Bank to link Middle and South Channels; and building a wall to high-tide level across North Passage.	flood warning station at Riverslea, below junction of Mackenzie and Dawson Rivers to give 3 days warning of flooding in Rockhampton.	95,903 tons; Broadmount 0 tons. Port Alma: 24,168 tons. Intensified competition from railways for trade. Only 26,315 bales of wool exported (drop of 83% on 1913 peak)
1921	Opening of Rockhampton-Mackay railway line with joining of rail lines at St Lawrence. RHB falsely anticipates this will increase port trade.	HM Rhodes resigns and is replaced by J. Bartlett. Five ton crane erected on Broadmount Wharf for coal loading but tidal delays increase costs.	Holmes reports that the cut between Flat Is. and Obstruction Bank will not succeed; and North Passage should not be closed. H&R Engineer Cullen inspects works and recommends 12ft LW as adequate for river vessels. Estimates only 4,850ft to be dredged to achieve that depth compared with 40,600ft in 1876. Also recommends raising Satellite Wall to 8ft above LW, extending Shoal Island Wall to Rocky Point and raising it to 8ft above LW. Treasury approves £3,000 for Satellite Wall and £1,000 to build a light dredger for maintenance.		Town wharves: 58,878 tons; Broadmount 11,506 tons; Port Alma: 29,111 tons. Iron ore shipments cease.
1922	RHB unable to meet loan commitments due to reduced shipping during war and cheap long haulage rail rates. Open franchise introduced for harbour board elections.	A. Walsh replaces transferred Bartlett as HM.	Continued stone revetment at Archer's Crossing and above Hawk Point. Continued dredging at Central Island and Middle Flats due to shoaling. Survey of estuary by T.J. O'Donoghue (H&R) from April to December.	Flood in January (6.48m) and February (7.87m)	Town wharves: 82,258 tons; Broadmount 22,751 tons. Port Alma: 23,714 tons.
1923		J. Switzer replaces transferred Walsh as HM.	Engineer McCulloch reports on river and recommends South Channel which he considers the main entrance to the river. Closing Shoal Is. Wall would benefit both channels but cost of obtaining 17ft at LW there would be only £32,500 compared with £125,000 for Middle Channel. Cullen (H&R) endorses McCulloch report, stating Shoal		Town wharves: 85,444 tons; Broadmount 55 tons. Port Alma: 36,571 tons.

			Island Wall should be extended to Rocky Point as a first step and that, on completion, the shoal area should be dredged. Engineer McCulloch dies and is replaced by A. Nicholson.		
1924	RHB applies for £45,000 govt loan for works as recommended by McCulloch/Cullen.	Steam crane erected at Port Alma to encourage coal exports.			Town wharves: 85,081 tons; Broadmount: 0 tons. Port Alma: 32,007 tons.
1925	Railway line extends to Callide and Thangool.				Town wharves: 76,269 tons; Broadmount: 0 tons. Port Alma: 37,815 tons.
1926	Preliminary report on ports of Queensland by Sir George Buchanan suggests Brisbane, Cairns and Rockhampton/Gladstone are the only ports necessary and consideration should be given to abandoning Rockhampton as an overseas port due to high costs and concentrating on Gladstone development.		Hopper-trailing Suction Dredger <i>Fitzroy</i> commences and is deemed a success in that several oil tankers (largest 363ft long) can reach the town wharves. Due to financial problems, RHB can only employ the dredger at half capacity. Shoal Island Wall raised to 8ft above LW. Survey of river from Sea Reach to Town Reach by government with permanent bench marks every 200ft and automatic tide gauges at Thompson's Pt and town wharves.		Town wharves: 91,109 tons; Broadmount: 0 tons. Port Alma: 26,822 tons.
1927	Public meeting by Rockhampton City Council on the plight of RHB resolves that the continuation of dredging is imperative and Shoal Island Wall must be continued to keep the river open to town wharves. Also resolves that RHB should ask for a government loan of £5,000 to continue river work; and that locals should subscribe to Treasury bonds to assist government's finances. Both fail.		Raising of Shoal Island Wall continues. Report on Queensland ports by Sir George Buchanan states <i>Fitzroy</i> is 'all that could be desired to assist engineers in the work of improvements and regulation with a view to its becoming a first-class waterway' but requires uniform work over the whole length and not localised work. W.H. Flowers appointed RHB Engineer.	Severe drought	Town wharves: 71,912 tons; Broadmount: 0 tons. Port Alma: 25,753 tons.

	Lakes Creek Meatworks does not reopen for the new killing season.				
1928	<p>RHB decides problem is not a trade shortage but rather funding shortages interrupting river works and hence navigation.</p> <p>Lakes Creek Meatworks purchased by Angliss-F.J. Walker syndicate but is unprofitable.</p>			Flood in April (8.27m)	<p><i>SS Mildura</i> leaves town wharves with record cargo of 8,901 bales of wool and 200 tons of general cargo.</p> <p>Town wharves: 68,288 tons; Broadmount: 0 tons. Port Alma: 27,826 tons.</p>
1929	Rockhampton and Townsville HB's protest over unfair competition from cheap government rail charges drawing trade to Brisbane.		<i>Fitzroy</i> in South Brisbane Dock for maintenance.	Flood in February (7.62m) and April (7.37m).	<p>1930's Depression sets in: trade and waterfront employment drop.</p> <p>Town wharves: 75,889 tons; Broadmount: 0 tons. Port Alma: 24,828 tons.</p>
1930			<i>Fitzroy</i> in South Brisbane Dock for maintenance.		Town wharves: 66,223 tons; Broadmount: 0 tons. Port Alma: 25,924 tons.
1931	Government abandons Broadmount				Town wharves:

	<p>as a deepwater port and removes railway line from Nankin junction.</p> <p>Government's Inquiry into Railway Competition with Ports states river is too expensive to maintain for the amount of trade; overseas and coastal steamers have grown too large for the river.</p>				<p>65,292 tons; Port Alma: 21,847 tons.</p>
1932	Wool dumping plant set up at Port Alma to attract trade but fails.				<p>Town wharves: 66,226 tons; Port Alma: 20,485 tons.</p>
1933	Efforts to promote Thompson's Point as a coal facility and make it 'the Cardiff of Australia', but also fails.		Intermittent relief work on bank protection and extension of Shoal Island Wall to ease unemployment under a government loan of £10,000.		<p>Town wharves: 72,549 tons; Port Alma: 25,441 tons</p>
1934	Imperial Preference Scheme ensures beef trade with Britain. This encourages purchase of Lakes Creek Meatworks by British-based global firm of Vestey which keeps the name of CQME Co Ltd. Installation of modern chillers and a new cannery to process 500-700 cattle per day. Season extended to 10 months.				<p>Town wharves: 82,845 tons; Port Alma: 33,065 tons</p> <p>First shipment of chilled beef to Britain on <i>SS Doric Star</i> (10,066 tons) from Port Alma.</p> <p>Drop in total port trade of 41% since 1930.</p>
1935					<p>Town wharves: 80,795 tons; Port Alma:</p>

					34,399 tons
1936			New training wall (Central Island Wall) commenced on north side of the channel opposite Hawk Point. Bank protection and wall facing continues.		Town wharves: 92,563 tons; Port Alma: 40,051 tons
1937					Town wharves: 115,920 tons; Port Alma: 46,590 tons
1938					Town wharves: 110,302 tons; Port Alma: 52,102 tons
1939					Town wharves: 122,035 tons; Port Alma: 44,521 tons. Chilled beef exports cancelled due to war in Europe.
1940	Increased employment at Lakes Creek Meatworks (2,200) for war effort.		<i>Fitzroy</i> pumps 459,600 tons of spoil behind walls.	Flood in March (7.92m)	Town wharves: 115,301 tons; Port Alma: 26,932 tons
1941					Town wharves: 99,328 tons; Port Alma: 20,052 tons
1942	All CQME Co Ltd canned and frozen meat purchased by Allied Forces.	Little war-time use of Port Alma by shipping.	<i>Fitzroy</i> leaves to do work for Allied Works Council. RHB uses clam dredge and a makeshift suction pump on a stone punt, <i>Billy M</i> , is used to remove shoals at Central Island.	Flood in February (7.24m)	Town wharves: 71,796 tons; Port Alma: 4,748 tons
1943				Flood in February	Town wharves:

				(7.16m)	55,842 tons; Port Alma: 6,120 tons
1944					Town wharves: 59,058 tons; Port Alma: 4,273 tons
1945	RHB debt to Queensland Treasury = £922,328.		<i>Fitzroy</i> returns and, with <i>Billy M</i> , resumes dredging to regain pre-war depths and conditions. Total walls and dykes constructed since commencement of training = 15 miles; Bank protection by stone pitching = 4 miles.		Wool trade non-existent.
1946					
1947	Rockhampton Chamber of Commerce sees Fitzroy River as 'our greatest asset' but for irrigation (and regional development) and not shipping.				
1948					
1949		Government post-war reconstruction loan funds the construction of equipment for coal/pyrites loading at Gavial Creek wharf.	<i>Fitzroy</i> reclaims 4 acres of land at Port Alma with sand pumped from Cardigan Point		
1950					
1951					
1952					
1953					
1954				Flood in February (9.26m)	
1955	Lakes Creek Meatworks processes 987 head of cattle per day for export.				
1956					
1957					

1958					
1959					Renewal of chilled beef trade to Britain.
1960					
1961	Road connection to Port Alma facilities completed.				Chilled beef trade with Britain suspended as uneconomical.
1962					
1963		Maximum draft of shipping in Fitzroy River at high water is 15ft; river is not navigable by ships at low water due to minimum depth of 6ft. Reconstruction and development of facilities at Port Alma			
1964	2000 ton cold storage facility at Port Alma.				
1965	RIVER PORT CLOSES Wharves and facilities demolished in 1968.				