CONTENTS

Acknowledgements xi
Foreword by Henry Reynolds xiii
Preface by Rob Pyne (MP for Cairns) xv
Introduction xvii

Chapter 1: Not A Virgin Land - The Bulmba of the Bama (1770-1875) 1

1.1 European Expansion - North Queensland 21
1.2 'Queensland' Created 28
1.3 The Green Island Tragedies 34
1.4 Inland and Coastal Explorations of the early 1870s 36
1.5 Reflection 47

Chapter 2: Trinity Bay Country (1876 - 1882) 51

2.1 Growing European Interest in the Region 53
2.2 Early European Exploration of the Future Cairns District 55
2.3 The Sacks Party 56
2.4 Explorations From the Coast 62
2.5 From the Hodgkinson to the Coast 65
2.6 The Founding of Cairns 66
2.7 'Dray Roads' to the Hodgkinson? 72
2.8 The Tentative years 73
2.9 'The Natives Are Growing Restless' 75
2.10 Timber, Tin, Resistance & Early Selection 78
2.11 Cyclone, Floods and 'Expediting' 81
2.12 Chinese Faith in the District 84
2.13 Realities On the Frontier 85
2.14 Changing Fortunes 89
2.15 Reflection 95

Chapter 3: Frontier Cairns (1883-1887) 97

3.1 Colonial Settlers & Selections 97
3.2 Cairns & District 1886 Population 101
3.3 Health & Lifestyle 103
3.4 The New Guinea Annexation 106
3.5 The Impact of the First Griffith Ministry 108
3.6 The Railway Surveys 116
3.7 Frontier Conflict 118
3.8 Loyal Colonial Subjects 134
3.9 Local Government 137
3.10 Cairns Fortune Enhanced by the Railway 139
3.11 Attitudes of the Times and Continued Resistance 141
3.12 Agricultural Endeavours 144
3.13 The First Section of the Kuranda Railway 149
Chapter 4: Turning of the Tide (1888 - 1893)

4.1 The Second Section of the Kuranda Railway 156
4.2 Coaching Days 164
4.3 The 1888 Elections in Cairns 167
4.4 Hambledon Plantation 169
4.5 South Sea Islander (Kanaka) Labour 173
4.6 Other Contracted Labour 177
4.7 Population Diversity 179
4.8 Changing Patterns on the Frontier 181
4.9 Beebe-de-Mer Fishing 192
4.10 Cairns Chinese 193
4.11 Working Conditions and the 1890s Depression 199
4.12 J.B. Gribble and the Establishment of the Bellenden Ker Mission 204
4.13 Reflection 208

Chapter 5: The New Century (1894 - 1907)

5.1 Firm Footing for the Sugar Cane Industry 218
5.2 The Cairns-Mulgrave Tramway 222
5.3 Continuing Population Diversity 230
5.4 Rabelaisian Cairns? 231
5.5 The Fading Frontier 236
5.6 Bellenden Ker to Yarrabah Mission 244
5.7 Contracted Labour 250
5.8 Federation 255
5.9 Impact of Federation in the Cairns District 258
5.10 Local Government 266
5.11 Turn of the Century Developments 268
5.12 Town & Country 275
5.13 Health 285
5.14 Reflection 289

Chapter 6: The Advancing Century (1908 - 1919)

6.1 A Silent Fall from Grace 302
6.2 Population 306
6.3 A Calamitous Year - 1911 310
6.4 The Pre-War Years 315
6.5 Back O'Cairns 319
6.6 Cane and Labour 321
6.7 Schooling 327
6.8 Flying 328
6.9 World War I & the First Australian Expeditionary Force 330
6.10 Wartime Cairns 335
6.11 Wars End & Health 343
6.12 Tramway to Railway 348
6.13 Local Government 350
6.14 Reflection 351

Chapter 7: The Nineteen Twenties (1920-1929)

7.1 Health 357
7.2 Mt Mulligan 1921 Mining Disaster 360
7.3 Expansion of Transport Links 364
7.4 Strikes: Man-made & the 1927 Cyclone 367
7.5 The Post War Decade 375
7.6 'Smoothing the pillow…'? 382
Cairns, City of the South Pacific, A History 1770-1995

Chapter 8: Depression & Recovery (1930-1939)

8.1 Unemployment & the Depression
8.2 Opportunities
8.3 The Battle of Parramatta Park
8.4 Economic Recovery & Infrastructure Developments
8.4.1 Reclamation & Roads
8.4.2 The First Barron Falls Hydro-Electricity Scheme
8.5 Shipping
8.6 Aviation
8.7 Cane
8.8 Aspects of North Queensland Society in the 1930s
8.9 Yarrabah & ‘Outside’ Bama
8.10 Reflection

Chapter 9: Front-line Cairns (1940 - 1946)

9.1 The Cairns-Kuranda Range Road
9.2 The Coming of War to FNQ
9.3 Evacuation & Internment
9.4 ‘The Lull Before the Storm’ – Cairns, 1942
9.5 Front-line Cairns
9.6 Public Health During the War
9.7 Women at War
9.8 War-time Cairns
9.9 Riots and Redlights
9.10 Local Authorities
9.11 Reflection

Chapter 10: Post War & Changes (1947 - 1995)

10.1 Cane: Manual Labour to Machinery
10.2 Waterfront, Coastal Shipping & Railways
10.3 Post-war: Changes and the 1950s
10.4 Cyclone ‘Agnes’, 1956
10.5 Yarrabah: From Mission to State to Autonomous Community
10.6 ‘Old-Style’ Cairns
10.7 Population & Health to the early 1970s
10.8 The Fourth Quarter of the Twentieth Century
10.9 The Technological Revolution & Social Change
10.10 Reflection

Conclusion: The Inheritance

Bibliography see www.cairnshistory.com.au

Chronology

Index
# Maps

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Map No.</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page No.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Cairns &amp; District Shoreline</td>
<td>xxii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Tribal Locations</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Cook’s Sea Route – Fitzroy-Cape Grafton, 1770</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Bama Bulmba c.1770 to 1875 (a) English (b) Ngirrma</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Cairns Bama</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Dalrymples’ Map</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Exploration in Far North Queensland 1872-1876</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Cairns Swamps</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Smithfield</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Hap Wah Sugar Mill &amp; Plantation 1882</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>1886 Land Selection</td>
<td>129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Sketch Redbank</td>
<td>145</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Railway Survey Plans, Cairns, 1886</td>
<td>152</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Cairns Kuranda Railway</td>
<td>161</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Mulgrave Tramway 1897-1911</td>
<td>222</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>South Sea Island Recruitment Routes</td>
<td>250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Cairns &amp; District 1899</td>
<td>256</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Far North Queensland Roads &amp; Railway, 1913</td>
<td>299</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Location Map - Cairns Cooktown Region</td>
<td>396</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Road/Railway Map of the District, 1935 to 1941</td>
<td>416</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20(a)</td>
<td>Barron Falls Hydro-Electric Power Site 1935</td>
<td>426</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Cairns in relation to the Pacific War &amp; the Battle of the Coral Sea</td>
<td>479</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Cairns 1950</td>
<td>517</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Cairns 1967</td>
<td>549</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

# Figures

3.1 Cairns Settler Population, 1886. 102
3.2 Cairns District Population, 1886. 102
4.1 Cairns District Non-Indigenous Population, 1891. 181
4.2 Hap Wah Enterprise 1878-86 - Chronology 197
5.1 Cairns & District 1901 Population Census. 229
5.2 Development of Local Government Authorities in the Cairns District. 265
Abbreviations

ABM  Australian Board of Missions
AILAS  Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies, which changed to:
AIATSIS  Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies
BDioA  Brisbane Diocese Archives.
BOHC  Black Oral History Collection (JCU, School of History & Politics)
COHP  Cairns Oral History Program
CPP  Commonwealth Parliamentary Papers
CUP  Cambridge University Press
EHS  Eacham Historical Society
HSC  Historical Society of Cairns
JCU  James Cook University
JOL  John Oxley Library, State Library of Queensland
JRHSQ  Journal of the Royal Historical Society of Queensland
ML  Mitchell Library, State Library of NSW
MSHS  Mulgrave Shire Historical Society
MUP  Melbourne University Press
NQOHP  North Queensland Oral History Program (JCU, School of History)
OUP  Oxford University Press
QSA  Queensland State Archives
QV&P  Queensland Votes & Proceedings
QPP  Queensland Parliamentary Papers
QPD  Queensland Parliamentary Debates
UQ  University of Queensland

Common Abbreviations

c.  ‘circa’ – about (in dating)
et.al.  ‘and others’
facs.  ‘Facsimile’ (a modern reproduction of an original work)
n.  ‘note’: footnote
n.d.  ‘no date’
ibid.  ‘in the same place’ (i.e. as cited in the previous footnote)
op.cit.  ‘in the work cited’ (i.e. as in an earlier footnote)
pers.com.  personal communication
rpt.  ‘reprint’
[sic]  thus, to show that an obvious error is an exact reproduction of the original
£  Australian pound [doubling the £, does NOT equate with the current $ value]
/- (or ‘s.’)  shilling [i.e. 3/- = 3 shillings, 3/3 = 3 shillings and threepence]
d.  penny (pence)
A Guide to Djabugay/Yidiny (& Gunggay) Pronunciation

Vowel Sounds

For simplicity, the linguistic approach of using [:] which indicates a lengthened vowel sound, such as [a:], [i:], or [u:], has been disregarded and the doubling of the letter has been adopted.¹ For example - [a:] is pronounced as [aa], [i:] as [ii], and [u:] as [uu].

[a] is pronounced like the vowel in come, some.

[i] is pronounced like the vowel in lit, bit, bin.

[u] is pronounced the vowel in look, look or book.

Consonants

[b], [d], [l], [m], [n], [w] and [y] are pronounced as in English

[g] is pronounced as in gas, gun or gate.

[r] is pronounced as in ring.

[rr] is rolled like the scottish ‘r’.

[dj] is pronounced as a ‘d’ and a ‘j’ at the same time, but sharper, as in the ‘j’ sound in judge or jury.

[ay] like ‘eye’ - in Djabugay, Gunggay.

[ng] like singer, if you omit the first and last two letters.

[ny] like onion, or bunyip.

[,] separates two consonants and indicates that one should pronounce both consonants individually. e.g. Giyin,garra [pronounced ging garra].

Please Note: There is a difference in pronunciation between Djabugay and Yidiny (and Gunggay). For a more precise approach, reference should be made to M. Quinn’s work, in particular, Djabugay Ngirma Gulu, Cairns, 1989, pp.110-111; and R.M. Dixon, A Grammar of Yidiny, CUP, Melbourne, 1977, p.xxiii.

¹ Contact with Bama communities suggests this is the preferred approach, similarly with retaining the ‘dj’ sound, as in Djarrugan or Djabugay.