

# Ngā Pūtahitanga / Crossings

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# Selective Consciousness: Re-crossing Heritage Narratives

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## **Abstract**

The Burra Charter: the Australia ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance *has evolved with a broadening of definitions, scope and acknowledgement of multiple values since first adopted in 1979. Accepted normative cultural heritage practices have been called into question in recent years, especially in places where settler colonial settlement occurred. These advances have unsettled previously accepted relationships between place, heritage fabric and community. This paper re-investigates the former Burns, Philp & Co Ltd Offices and Warehouse (1895) in the North Queensland regional centre of Townsville. It was identified in 1975 as a landmark and is at an important intersection of heritage buildings. The change from a hastily erected frontier settlement to a town confident in its future and place in the region is illustrated in this building.*

*The research found that the narratives underlying the cultural significance were incomplete and disconnected. This place was intrinsically linked with the foundation of Townsville and its early development as a port. Hence, it also symbolises the crossing of settler colonial and First Nations peoples' cultures. It was also evident that the relationship between ongoing commercial needs and the cultural significance of the place were unsettled due to the selective consciousness evident in the narratives. Re-crossing these narratives within the context of contemporary practice provides a framework to inform ongoing change. This is essential for a commercial use that is required to adapt to commercial reality while also responding to heritage constraints. The focus of the paper is then the underlying narratives rather than their possible interpretation. This study is timely in the case of the Burns Philp Building as new owners contemplate further change after a period of decline and Townsville City Council is rapidly constructing the East End boardwalk across the site.*

## Introduction

The Burns Philp & Co Ltd Townsville premises at 108-124 Flinders Street, built in 1895 (hereafter the Burns Philp Building; Figure 1), has been an acknowledged place of cultural significance since 1975 when listed by the National Trust of Australia (Queensland). It is a prominent building with a visually arresting corner tower in a heritage precinct of late nineteenth-century settler colonial buildings. The building was rescued from neglect in 1978 by an adaptive reuse project initially approved as thirteen individual offices with modern amenity. While this did achieve the preservation of the primary elevations and prevented the loss of the place, it has not prevented further decline as commercial uses changed in response to changing commercial conditions. Internal modifications demonstrate the unsettled relationship between ongoing use and heritage where change has occurred without consideration of the impact on the cultural significance.



TOWNSVILLE (HEAD) OFFICE OF MESSRS. BURNS, PHILP, AND CO., LIMITED.

**Figure 1.** Burns, Philp Co Ltd Building, Townsville, 1897  
(City Libraries Townsville, Local History Collection, “Burns Philp & Co., head office, Flinders Street East, Townsville. 1897,”  
<https://townsville.pydus.com/cgi-bin/spydus.exe/FULL/WPAC/BIBENQ/18682886/12533102,1?FMT=IMG>).

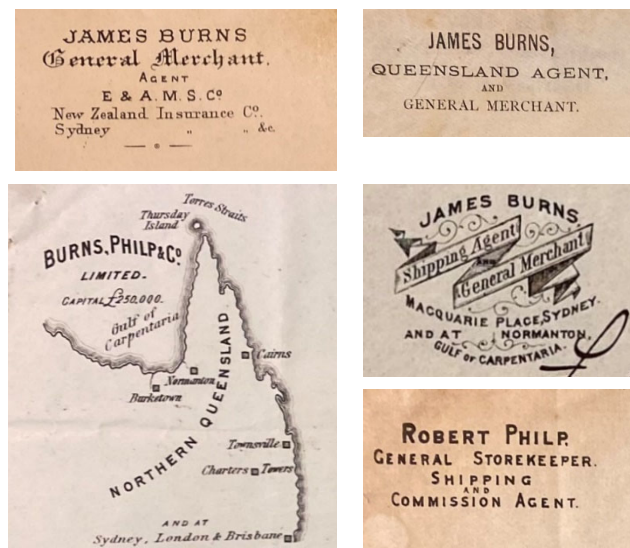
The focus on the external physical architectural object and its contribution to the streetscape is not surprising given that the adaptive reuse predates the adoption of the *Burra Charter* in 1979. This was the Australia ICOMOS response to the *Venice Charter* (1964) with the focus on “the single architectural work.” While the importance of “cultural significance” was noted, the term was not defined.<sup>1</sup> The early versions of the

*Burra Charter* followed a building focus but defined cultural significance as “aesthetic, historic, scientific, and social value for past, present or future generations.”<sup>2</sup>

The *Burra Charter* continued to be revised, reflecting significant changes in heritage practice. Place no longer includes the term “building” and “may have tangible and intangible dimensions.” The document now also acknowledges that places “may have a range of values for different individuals or groups” and the term “spiritual”<sup>3</sup> has been added to the definition of cultural significance. Over the same period, the Burns Philp Building has become more insular and detached from its cultural significance including the underlying narratives.

The historiographical understanding recorded in the entries associated with the listings for the National Trust and Queensland Heritage (QHR) registers are not consistent. Both acknowledge the start of Burns Philp & Co Ltd in Townsville and its importance in the development of north Queensland, as well as a link between this site and the founders of Townsville. One entry suggests Philp acquired the land and built the infrastructure including wharves, whereas the other links the acquisition to Burns, Philp & Co Ltd with “their offices in an old building which had been erected in the 1860’s for Robert Towns and John Melton Black.”<sup>4</sup> The building’s plaque, the most recent and public record, adds further interpretations suggesting that the site was acquired from Robert Towns and the 1895 building was “erected as the principal offices and warehouse” of the company. These inconsistencies suggest that the underlying narratives have not been fully understood. The primary role of this paper is to establish a clear understanding of how this place relates to the colonial settlement of Townsville and how it became part of Burns, Philp & Co Ltd. The research clearly shows that the site was the location of Townsville’s first wharf and store, the primary reason for the settlement’s founding. Tracing the acquisition of the property also shows how Burns and Philp conducted their businesses prior to the registration of Burns, Philp & Co Ltd in Sydney. Paul Walker and Amanda Achmadi have highlighted the “geographical spread and ambition” of Burns Philp. As the authors rightly point out, “this is a geography organised neither by colony nor country... but an organisational one.”<sup>5</sup> Townsville was the starting point of the business. Philp expanded westward and into Cairns after Burns relocated to Sydney in 1877. Relocation to a different colony did not prevent Burns from starting new ventures in northern Queensland, serviced by a growing fleet of ships with the two men in constant communication.

Business letterheads illustrate this pragmatic approach (Figure 2). The 1884 company letterhead identified the branches but without any indication of a principal place of business. London and Sydney are coupled with Brisbane reflecting the contribution of branches to profits. Northern Queensland accounted for 84%. London, the centre of a global empire, averaged just over 2% in the first decade of operations. Over this period the business continued to operate with a flat organisational structure controlled by Burns in Sydney and Philp in Townsville. Even after the completion of the Sydney Bridge Street branch, the company's own illustrated publications refer to "principal buildings" and location without identifying any single head office (although company letterhead from the time designated Sydney).<sup>6</sup> Burns and Philp were responsible for different regions, had different business interests and operated independently, yet seemed to act as one and were in constant communication.



**Figure 2.** Business letterheads, 1873-1884, clockwise from top left: James Burns - Townsville to 1877; Sydney to 1879; expansion to Normanton from 1879; Philp's Townsville business from 1877; and the company letterhead 1884 (John Oxley Library, State Library of Queensland, Sir Robert Philp Papers Box 8583 OM 65-32/6 3/2, 3/19; Box 8585 OM 65-32/25 RP Letter to Jas. Cook, 9 September 1878; Box 8585 OM 65-32/6 3/173; Box 8583 OM 65-32/8 3/393, OM 65-32/12 3/908).

The close association of this place with the founding of Townsville, assessed with the broadened *Burra Charter* framework, opens several narratives in addition to the settler colonial associations. This includes the impact on the First Nations people and the Pacific Islander labour trade. A deeper understanding of the place and its associated

rich narratives offers opportunities to inform both the adaptive reuse, current works and future projects not yet considered. This raises the further question of what narratives an owner/client would be open to considering?

### **The Crossing of Cultures**

The Burns Philp building site on Ross Creek is located on Country of the Bindal and Wulgurukaba First Nations peoples. The creek was called Cal'ghimg'a<sup>7</sup> and was a tidal mangrove estuarine environment, an important source of food and material, although inhabited by crocodiles and with the creek frequented by sharks. Michele Bird and Nicolaas Heijm, in conjunction with the Bindal and Wulgurukaba peoples, have undertaken several cultural heritage studies in the area including Ross Creek. These studies highlight the importance of an enduring and close connection with Country despite more than 150 years of intense settler colonial development.<sup>8</sup>

Written accounts from expeditions prior to settlement indicate that the land supported a large local population with evidence of cultivation and some noteworthy habitations. The early coastal surveying expeditions included Philip Parker King in the cutter *Mermaid* (1819), accompanied by the botanist Allan Cunningham, and Joseph Jukes' 1839 survey voyage in the *Fly*. Interactions between the different cultures were friendly and mutually inquisitive. Later voyages such as the *Santa Barbara*, seeking a "Northern Port in the year 1859," and the subsequent 1860 expedition in the Queensland Government schooner *Spitfire* under Joseph Smith with George Dalrymple, were specifically directed to assess the country for colonial exploitation. Interactions included more violent confrontations. Dalrymple's writing illustrates the narrow self-serving views of the settler colonist. He noted a "country swarming with hostile natives" and had no doubt they practised cannibalism, although had not witnessed this first-hand.<sup>9</sup> However, he did concede the "workmanship and ingenuity displayed in the erection of their huts, and formation of their canoes, nets, fishing lines, dillybags, clubs, and weapons, is superior to anything I have seen elsewhere in Australia."<sup>10</sup>

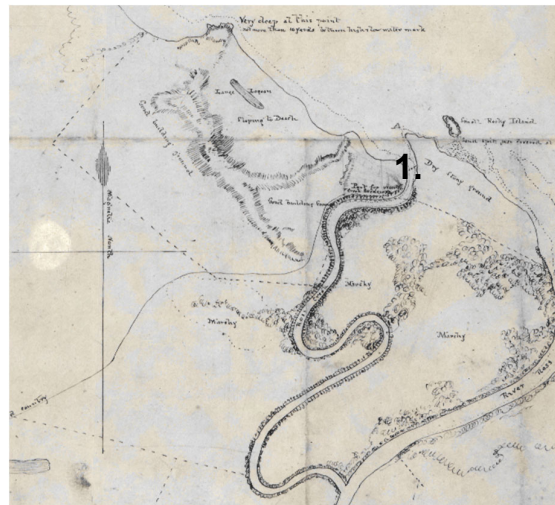
James Morrill's reminisces of seventeen years spent living with one of the local groups after being shipwrecked in 1846 and washing up on the shores of Cleveland Bay provide a very different perspective. This is a unique record of the First Nations people at the start of settler colonial expansion. Morrill reported several of Dalrymple's confrontations from their perspective and noted the devastating impact of settler



colonial expansion on their lives. The increasing violence prompted Morrill to reconnect with “civilisation” in 1863.<sup>11</sup> He went on to act as interpreter between the two cultures until his death in 1865.

### Founding a Settler Colonial Port

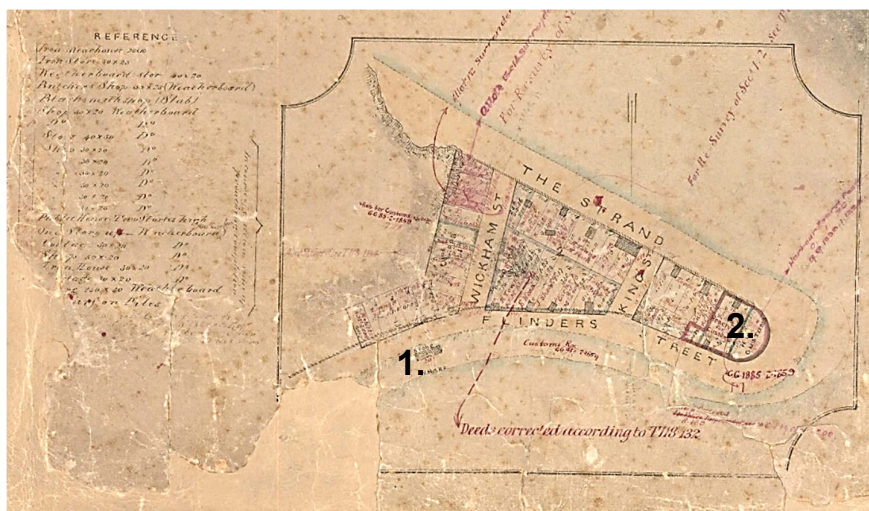
The narrative surrounding Townsville’s founding is an exercise in settler colonial private entrepreneurship. Expansion into North Queensland was driven by the pastoral industry after the establishment of Port Denison (now Bowen) by the Queensland Government in April 1861. This opportunity encouraged John Melton Black to relocate from Melbourne after operating a successful carrier business servicing the Victorian gold rush. He arrived in Port Denison the same month as the founding of the settlement and proceeded to obtain pastoral leases north of the Burdekin River. Lack of capital eventually led Black into a partnership with the Sydney-based ship owner, merchant, businessman and banker Robert Towns in 1864.



**Figure 3.** Detail from Black’s sketch showing “Port for Vessel” (1.). (Queensland State Archives, PR626278 (L6 1864; SRS1848/1/15), Mouth of the Ross River and Ross Creek drawn by J Melton Black to illustrate its discovery by his employees. Ca 29 chains to the inch (2 copies, quarter size map) [from Lands and Works Office in-letter 2205/1864] Copy 2).

Black, with his carrier background, considered access to Port Denison difficult due to distance from the northern pastoral areas and the Burdekin River becoming impassable in the wet season. Towns was also keen to build a boiling-down works to process livestock which was not supported by the residents of Port Denison.<sup>12</sup> Acting on the report of two of his stockmen, Black set out from Fanning River Station to examine a river entering Cleveland Bay in May 1864. His resulting map clearly shows

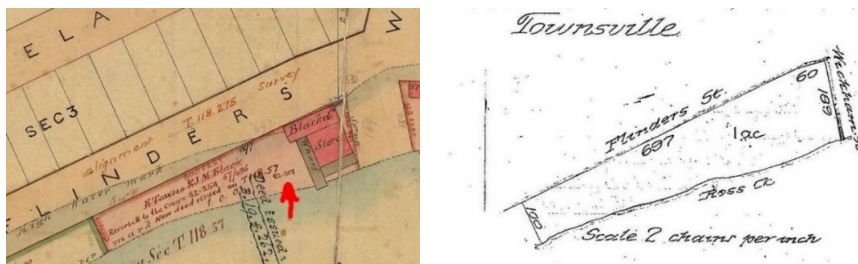
the location of the port, Towns' boiling-down works to process stock and a "Road to interior over sound country" (Figure 3). However, the Government would not commit to the venture on the terms sought by Towns and Black, having established Port Denison and the new port at Hinchinbrook in January 1864. The partners decided to proceed anyway, and a covert overland founding party arrived on 5 November at Ross Creek to commence clearing.<sup>13</sup> By the end of November, mangroves had been removed to access the creek, and Black had laid out a plan shoehorned between Cleveland Bay, Ross Creek and the rocky outcrops, with several structures under construction (Figure 4).<sup>14</sup> The purely commercial focus of the settlement can be seen in the first survey. Unlike Port Denison, there were no reserves for public infrastructure such as a market, water supply or municipal council building apart from the Customs House which was essential for a port of entry. Parts of the main commercial road adjacent to the wharf would have been inundated at high tides according to the survey. Towns and Black had proceeded on the basis that site improvements such as fencing and even partially constructed buildings were a pre-emptive form of possession. After further discussions with Government, the Government Surveyor was dispatched to survey Black's layout for land sales in 1865. Black and Towns obtained Townsville's prime sites, including the settlement's wharf area, without having to compete on the open market. Townsville's first wharfage, the "100 x 30 Timber Store" and "Wharf on Piles," was clearly identified on the first official survey plan of 1865 (Figure 4).<sup>15</sup>



**Figure 4.** Detail from Stuart's 1865 survey showing Blacks layout and improvements including: 1. "Store 100x30 Weatherboard" and "Wharf on piles" and 2. Reserve for Customs House (Survey T118.1. © State of Queensland (Department of Resources) 2023).



By 1866, the settlement was a gazetted port of entry, declared a municipality named after Towns, with Black the first Mayor, and had an operational boiling-down works. In January 1887, Towns and Black obtained the title for the 1-acre Crown Allotment encompassing the Store and Wharf with 152 metres of street and creek frontages (Figure 5). Shortly after this, the fledgling settlement experienced their first cyclone, the partnership dissolved, Black left town and the title was transferred to Robert Towns by the end of the year. Some sources suggest that Black was simply an employee of Towns. However, their many town properties were in joint names, suggesting more of a partnership. While Towns did provide the financial backing for the enterprise, Black was instrumental in assessing the suitability of the location for shipping and carrier operations inland, laying out the settlement and construction of the first buildings including the boiling-down works. This was a collaborative endeavour between two men operating from two locations separated by a vast distance.



**Figure 5.** Left – Part Townsville Survey T118.2 of 1866 showing the extent of the title and expanded wharf stores. Note high water mark in Flinders Street reserve. Right - Plan of Survey taken from Certificate of Title N<sup>o</sup> 40.367 Vol.274 Folio119 County of Elphinstone, Parish of Coonambelah; © State of Queensland (Department of Resources) 2023).

### Merchants, Ship Owners and Partners

Past heritage listings have focused on Burns, Philp & Co Ltd and its establishment in Queensland. However, it is the founding partners Burns and Philps that are critically important to the narrative of this place and Townsville's growth into the major regional port.

Townsville's potential attracted the attention of James Burns on his return to Australia in 1872 and he promptly purchased land. Burns had previously worked in his brother's Brisbane merchant business. He established several stores in and around Gympie to service the gold rush before returning to Scotland to settle his father's estate. By 1873 he had opened the store, James Burns General Merchant, on Flinders Street. Erratic

shipping connections to Sydney largely monopolised by the Australasian Steam Navigation company (ASN) led Burns to charter his own vessels to ensure a reliable supply chain, eventually becoming a shipowner.<sup>16</sup>

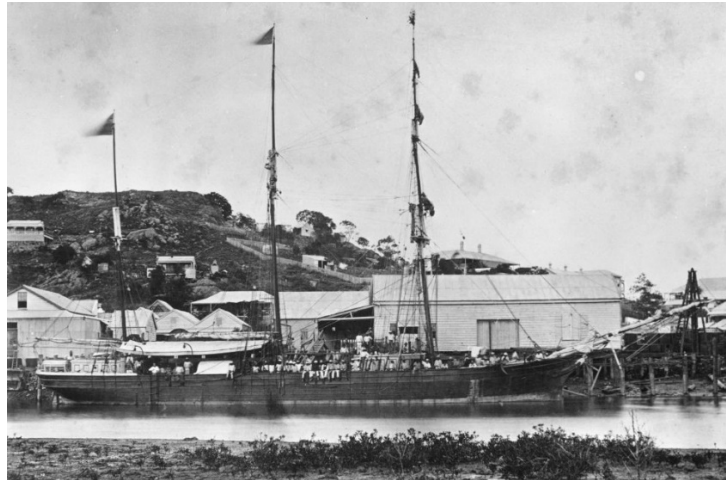
Robert Philp started his working life with the shipping company Bright Brothers in Brisbane and knew Burns from business interactions. They crossed paths again in 1874 when Philp was in Townsville on business and Burns quickly offered him a position.<sup>17</sup> Philp bought into the business in 1876 with the majority of the funds provided by Burns. The continuing effects of malaria led Burns to relocate to Sydney in 1877 where he initially acted as a Queensland Agent, expanded his shipping interests and soon started up another mercantile business that serviced Normanton and surrounding areas.<sup>18</sup> The Townsville operation was renamed Robert Philp General Storekeeper although the land title remained in Burns' name.

In late September 1877, a "disastrous fire" broke out in a store belonging to the merchants Messrs Brodziak & Rogers, destroying "two thirds of that division of Flinders Street," including Philp's store.<sup>19</sup> The State Library of Queensland holds the Sir Robert Philp papers, which include a large number of letters from Burns. On 15 October Burns wrote to advise against Philp's initial idea for "contraction" of the business to wholesale only and that Philp "would run large risks on small profits something like myself here."<sup>20</sup> It is evident that Burns' share in the business was significantly larger than Philp's and yet Burns acknowledged Philp had to make the final decision.<sup>21</sup> On 3 November Burns enclosed "plans and specification for what I would consider a suitable building" and "I now leave it all with you."<sup>22</sup> The letter of 28 November indicates Philp had decided to continue and Burns expressed that he was "enchanted" on hearing from a separate source "you only paid half the true value for Towns wharf."<sup>23</sup> The more senior Burns, with his heavy financial exposure, didn't refrain from expressing strong views on the direction of Townsville but also acted as friend, mentor and psychologist. It was a collaborative approach based on mutual respect and trust.



**Figure 6:** Ross Creek ca 1890. The Burns Philp site is in the lower right-hand corner with the company name on the roof of the original 100x30 foot store. (John Oxley Library, State Library of Queensland Negative number: 12649, *Shipping companies and wharves on the Ross River, Townsville, ca. 1890.* <https://collections.sq.qld.gov.au/viewer/IE259645>).

The correspondence suggests Philp had secured the former Black and Towns wharf site (Figure 6) by 1877. However, the title did not transfer from the Executors of Towns' estate into Philp's name until 1880.<sup>24</sup> The 1-acre site had plenty of room for expansion, included wharfage, and several buildings with extensive street and creek frontages to support their growing shipping and lighterage services. Lighters were small vessels required to run between the Ross Creek wharves and larger vessels anchored in Cleveland Bay unable to enter the creek. By 1883, Philp had ten vessels of various sizes and Burns had a similar number.<sup>25</sup> Their move into shipping, initially to support their mercantile enterprises, also demonstrates their lateral approach to business opportunities. Burns and Philp were part of a consortium that established the Queensland Steam Shipping Company (QSS) in 1881 to improve services along the Queensland coast and connections with Asia and the United Kingdom via the Torres Straights, making Queensland the first ports of call in Australia rather than the last. Becoming ship owners also meant they directly experienced the high cost of shipping insurance. This spurred them on to establish the North Queensland Insurance Company Ltd (NQI) for their shipping needs in 1886. This new entity was the first to benefit from a purpose-built and imposing headquarters completed in 1892 across from their Townsville offices and wharfage. NQI continues today as QBE Insurance.



**Figure 7:** The schooner *Heath* docked in front of the original wharf. (John Oxley Library, State Library of Queensland Negative number: 24441, Labour vessel, the *Heath*, arriving in Ross Creek, Townsville, Queensland, ca. 1878, <https://collections.siq.qld.gov.au/viewer/IE1182100>).

Not all business ventures undertaken by Burns and Philp were successful. Several of Philp's vessels including the *Heath* (shown docked at the original wharf in Figure 7) were involved in the Queensland labour trade from 1880. This trade had been initiated by Robert Towns in 1863 when he imported indigenous Pacific Islanders to work his cotton plantation in Logan, south of Brisbane. Burns expressed concern over this activity, suggesting "we should say goodbye to the labour trade at whatever loss to the firm."<sup>26</sup> Unfortunately they were unable to exit before Philp's vessel *Hopeful* became embroiled in a Royal Commission that resulted in successful criminal prosecutions against the captain and several crew members. It appears that the company had exited the trade by 1885, well before it was discontinued in 1904. Only Robert Towns' involvement in this trade is acknowledged in Townsville.

Burns, Philp and Co Ltd consolidated the partners' common business interests into one Sydney registered entity. However, it continued to function as a series of branches with joint managing directors based in Townsville and Sydney. Townsville's operations generated 49% of profits in 1882. This dominance steadily declined to 15% in 1894 as more branches were established.<sup>27</sup> Townsville's preeminent position was further weakened when Philp relocated to Brisbane in 1886 after being elected to the Queensland Parliament.<sup>28</sup> Philp resigned as a director in 1893, liquidating his shares to cover poor private business ventures with Burns, the sole Managing Director. Philp had served as an Alderman of Townsville Municipal Council before being elected to

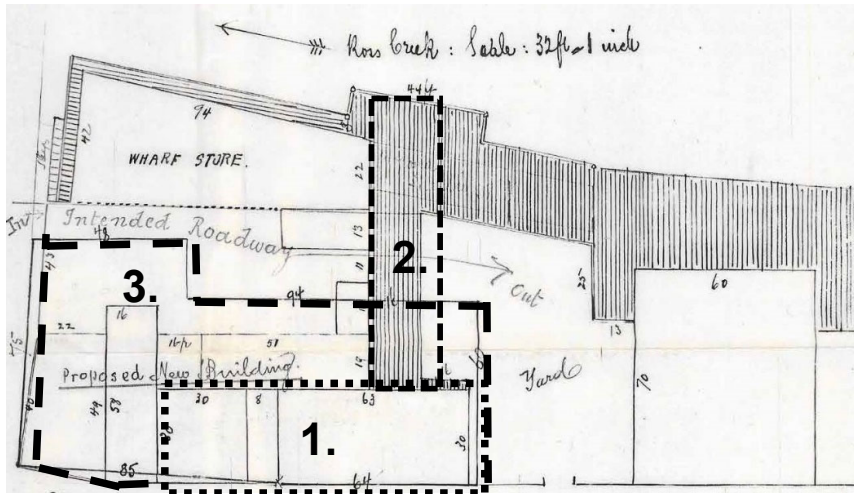
Parliament. He went on to serve twice as Premier and held various portfolios over a 29-year parliamentary career.

It is the initial Townsville partnership between Burns and Philp that laid the foundations for Burns, Philp & Co Ltd that continued to expand and adapt for a further 100 years. Sydney certainly became the headquarters of Burns, Philp Co Ltd, but this was a gradual process. Even after the completion of the company's "most celebrated architectural artefact"<sup>29</sup> at 2 Bridge Street in 1901, company publications continued to refer to "principal buildings" without nominating any one primary office.

### **A New Office and Warehouse**

The 1895 building marks the transition from "shabby timber and iron buildings" (captured in Figure 6) to a "most solid and impressive appearance on Flinders Street,"<sup>30</sup> portraying a business and town confident in their future. The building was designed by the Sydney architects A. L. & G. McCredie who had warehouse experience and had recently completed the Norman Wharf for Australasian United Steam Navigation in Brisbane in 1892 (the company formed after the amalgamation of the ASN and the QSS in 1887).<sup>31</sup> The Townsville building is in a classical revival style constructed from rendered local masonry with a prominent corner tower atop the heavily stepped parapet. The two functions of office and warehouse are integrated into a single unified structure even though the warehouse includes an additional floor. The office corner includes an impressive "verandah arcade" formed with large arched pilasters. The waterfront and west and elevation are devoid of any decoration, emphasising the importance of the street frontages. While the tower makes the corner a clearly defined landmark at the street intersection, Philp's memoir indicates that the extensive views served the practical purpose of identifying ship arrivals for prompt servicing.<sup>32</sup> While the Figure 1 photograph includes the designation "Townsville (Head) Office," the company structure, with a Managing Director located in Sydney, suggests this was a local designation only.





**Figure 8.** Probable first wharf and store configuration:  
1. 100x30 Store; 2. First Wharf; 3. 1895 building outline. Base drawing titled “Plan showing extent to which old buildings will be replaced by New Building,” on Proposed New Premises for Messrs Burns Philp & Co Ltd @Townsville, AL & G McCredie Architects & Consulting Engineers, ca 1894 (Queensland State Archives, Item Representation ID PR3861086).

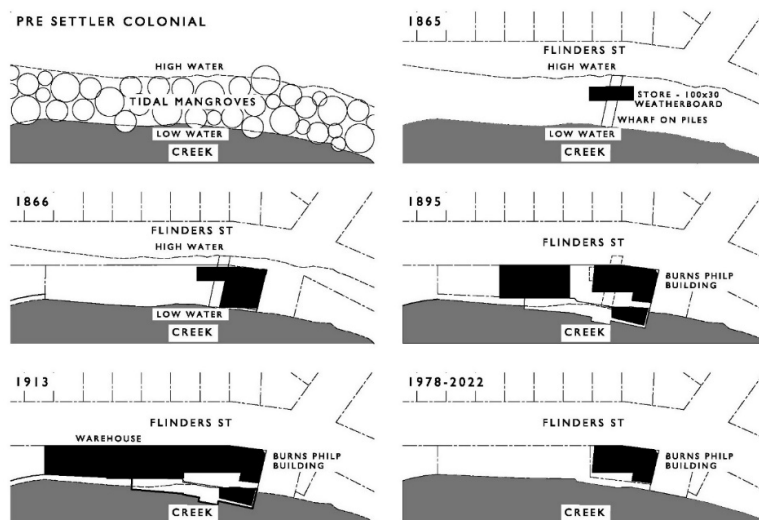
A facsimile of the original tender drawing held by Queensland State Archives includes a “Plan showing extent to which old buildings will be replaced by New Building.”<sup>33</sup> One building to be replaced adjacent to Flinders Street has dimensions that corresponded to Towns and Blacks’ original store (Figure 8).

### Commercial Adaptation

The site associated with the Burns Philp Building encompasses the original Crown Allotment (Figure 5) and has undergone continual adaptation since 1864 (shown diagrammatically in Figure 9). The 1895 building removed the original stores and constructed the hard edge to what was previously an ephemeral water boundary. A large single-storey warehouse addition to the west was completed in 1913. There were alterations to the 1895 building in 1922 to increase the public areas by expanding into the original warehouse. The hipped warehouse roof was destroyed by fire in 1949<sup>34</sup> and replaced with a bow-line truss.

Ross Creek had become largely redundant as a port by the 1930s. The company relocated to new premises in 1967 and the building remained vacant with minimal maintenance undertaken. C. Krogh & Co Pty Ltd purchased the site in 1977 with the initial plan to convert the building into thirteen strata-titled offices with new services. Three of the ground-floor offices at the Wickham Street intersection end were

reconfigured into a cabaret restaurant which expanded into the first floor. Over time the remaining culturally significant internal fabric was concealed. This adaptive reuse saved the building but effectively isolated the fabric from the creek (reinforced in the sub-division plan), internalised the activities and did not connect the narratives outlined in this study. The land associated with the 1913 warehouse (132 Flinders Street) was subdivided and sold.



**Figure 9.** Diagrams of adaptation over time  
(Studio Tekton Pty Ltd).

### Re-crossing Narratives

The sale of the Burns Philp Building to Flinders Street Wharves Pty Ltd (FSW) in 2021 required a review of the place in the context of current heritage frameworks. The author was engaged by FSW to undertake a Conservation Management Plan and Heritage Impact Statement. This suggested a connection between the Burns Philp Building and Townsville's first wharf and store and the 1-acre Crown Allotment issued in 1867. This paper has clarified these relationships. There are important narratives connected with the Burns Philp Building and place encompassing 108-132 Flinders Street. These include narratives associated with: 1) people and businesses (Towns, Black, Burns and Philp; Burns, Philp & Co Ltd); 2) pastoral expansion; 3) port development; 4) shipping and lighterage; 5) the Pacific Islander labour trade; and 6) and the impact on First Nations peoples and the landscape.

Identification of the rich history connected with this site raises the question of whether a client or landowner would be willing to engage with these narratives in an adaptive

reuse, informing interpretive material or even guiding projects not yet undertaken? FSW have expressed an interest in engaging with these narratives, while limited by commercial constraints. However, the Burns Philp building site represents only one third of the total place. Townsville City Council is the owner of the balance land which has operated as a public car park until it closed recently to allow for the construction of the East End Boardwalk. This 5-metre wide, 280-metre long structure across the Ross Creek frontage (including the Burns Philp site) is an important piece of infrastructure to reconnect Townsville to the creek. In moving rapidly to undertake the boardwalk, Council has yet to consider the heritage opportunities that the place offers. While this research will not affect the form of the boardwalk itself, it can potentially inform interpretive material to be incorporated after construction. More importantly, this research puts on the public record the narratives associated with this place and the settler colonial founding of Townsville. This is important in the context of selective consciousness when recalling settler colonial heritage. The question of whether Townsville City Council would be open to engaging with the material identified is not addressed in this study. However, Council has shown a willingness to engage with complex and difficult narratives previously. The Jezzine Barracks and Garabarra (Kissing Point) redevelopment 3.4 kilometres north of Ross Creek was a joint Townsville City Council, State and Federal Government project opened in 2014. This project illustrates how a range of complex narratives can be addressed. The redevelopment includes interpretive material, artworks and an “ethno-botanical walk” while also addressing more traditional nineteenth-century heritage fortifications. Some of the material incorporated in this project directly applies to Ross Creek where settler colonial settlement started in Townsville. The redevelopment shows that Townsville City Council is willing and capable of engaging with multiple and difficult narratives. This paper identified collaborations between key individuals at critical times in the evolution of Townsville. It is an opportune time to undertake another collaboration to ensure the rich historical narratives are no longer selectively overlooked but become a part of Townsville’s collective consciousness.

## Endnotes

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<sup>1</sup> The International Charter for the Conservation and Restoration of Monuments and Sites, The Venice Charter (1964), [www.icomos.org/en/participer/179-articles-en-francais/resources/charters-and-standards/157-thevenice-charter](http://www.icomos.org/en/participer/179-articles-en-francais/resources/charters-and-standards/157-thevenice-charter), accessed 20 November 2022.

<sup>2</sup> Australia ICOMOS, *The Australia ICOMOS Guidelines for the Conservation of Places of Cultural Significance ('Burra Charter')* (Australia ICOMOS, 1979), 1.

<sup>3</sup> Australia ICOMOS, *The Burra Charter*, 2.

- <sup>4</sup> Queensland Department of Environment and Science, Certified Copy Entry in the Queensland Heritage Register for the former Burns, Philp & Co Ltd Building, Place ID 600914, State Heritage Place Reference: CC0334, 28 April 2022, 3.
- <sup>5</sup> Paul Walker and Amanda Achmadi, "For Export: Buildings for Colonial Commerce in the Asia Pacific," in *Fabrications* 31, no. 3 (2022): 6-7 DOI: 10.1080/10331867.2022.2121528.
- <sup>6</sup> The organisational approach without an emphasis on a country or hierarchy is a key aspect of Walker and Achmadi, "For Export." This approach is evident from 1877 in correspondence from Burns to Philp, with both men noted as "Managing Directors" in annual reports after the registration of Burns, Philp & Co Ltd.
- <sup>7</sup> Charles Price, Notebook, *Language of the Townsville area ("Coonambela")*, Royal Commonwealth Society, RCMS 291 (1885), <https://cudl.lib.cam.ac.uk/view/MS-RCMS-00291/1>, 46-47, accessed 1 November 2022.
- <sup>8</sup> Michele Bird and Nicolaas Heijm in Conjunction with Bindal and Wulgurukaba Aboriginal Parties, *Cultural Heritage Report, Indigenous Cultural Survey and Impact Assessment, City Port Precinct Project, Ross Creek ('Galginga') for Port Of Townsville Limited*, September 2013, 63.
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- <sup>21</sup> Burns to Philp, 15 October 1877. Sir Robert Philp Papers, Box 8583 OM65-32/6, 3/6, 3/7.
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