

FROM THE ARCHIVES

The first ever advertisement for the Townsville Grammar School appeared in the local paper in March, 1888. The advertisement stated that the School would open on Monday, 16 April and that the fees would be 4 guineas for each boy over twelve years of age and 3 guineas for each boy under twelve years of age. Resident boarders were to be charged an extra 11 guineas. Fees were to be charged quarterly. A discount of half a guinea would be given for a second member of the same family. The minimum age of entry was eight years of age and all boys had to pass an elementary examination consisting of Reading, Writing from Dictation and the first two rules of Arithmetic. When **Mr E.F. UPWARD**, the interim Headmaster, welcomed the first intake on April 16 there were twenty-three students answering the School roll.

It has been an interesting research exercise tracking down the background to the first twenty-three Grammar students. While we know the names of all the students it has been more difficult to discover the finer details of each student. It can be assumed from the sketchy material available that at least nine of the first intake were boarders. The parents of **A. APLIN, H. APLIN, T. GORDON, W. GORDON, F. HAMILTON, S. HAMILTON, and W. PRICHARD** were all squatters while the father of **H. TRENFIELD** and **K. TRENFIELD** was the butcher at Ravenswood. The Aplin family were squatters in the Cluden region and I am assuming that the boys were boarders as daily access from that part would not have been easy in 1888. More research, however, will have to be undertaken before this can be confirmed.

As I was unable to find addresses for any of the students enrolled I have assumed the remaining fourteen students to be day-students, based on the employment status of their fathers. I list the students as follows with their father's career in brackets:

BRAND, D	(Contractor)
BUTT, H	(Solicitor)
CASTLING, J.R.	(Butcher)
CLAYTON, C.C. and CLAYTON, W.G.	(Pharmacist)
CUTHBERT, J.A.	(Clerk)
DEAN, T.H.	(Registrar)
HENRY, A.D. and HENRY, R.D.	(Editor of Townsville Daily Telegraph and Age)
HOPKINS, S.	(Merchant)
ISLAY, A.F.	(Police Inspector)
JACK, R.	(Government Geologist)
NORRIS, E.	(Solicitor)
POTIER, R.A.	(Insurance Agent)

Ten more students enrolled at the start of the School's second term. It can be assumed that eight of the new enrolments were boarders as their parents were listed as squatters with five coming from Charters Towers, one from Hughenden and one from New Zealand. No regional address is available for **G. JONES** except that his father was a squatter. Jones has the distinction of being the first student to leave the Grammar School. He left after the first month and the reason given was that he could not read and write. Somehow he had missed out on undertaking the entrance examination when he enrolled.

It is also interesting to note the age range of the students enrolling in 1888. T. Gordon was the oldest at nineteen years of age while S. Hopkins, A.F. Islay and R. Jack were ten years of age. The majority of students were to be in the fourteen to fifteen year range. Hopkins and Islay were both to have a long association with the Grammar School with Islay being Secretary of the Old Boys' Association until the 1940's and Spenser Hopkins served on three occasions as Chairman of the School Trustees, retiring in 1960. He now has a building named after him at the School and there are still direct descendants of the Hopkins' family presently enrolled in the Grammar Junior School.

Henry Aplin was appointed the first Head Prefect of the School and at Speech Night was presented with a handsome writing desk. H. Butt was awarded the majority of the academic prizes heading the list in English, Mathematics, Latin and Modern Languages. A sports' day was also held during the year with the Aplin Brothers winning the majority of events between them. Henry Aplin won the 100 Yards Handicap race in ten seconds. He must have had a good handicap to run the distance in that quick a time. His brother, A. Aplin, threw the cricket ball 91 yards. This remained a record until **GEORGE HALL**, Grammar's first Rhodes Scholar, threw the cricket ball 108 yards.

The first year of the School must have been a success as there were fifty-eight enrolments for the year 1889. It was to go from strength to strength in its first five or six years culminating with the enrolment of two girls, **MARY FOLEY** and **LETITIA CROWTHER**, in 1894. In doing so we became the first independent co-educational School on the Australian mainland.

Mr W.J. Muller
School Archivist