

The Palais Theatre

**A Social History of Franklin's
Town Hall 1912–2012**

Ruth Young

Ashwood Books

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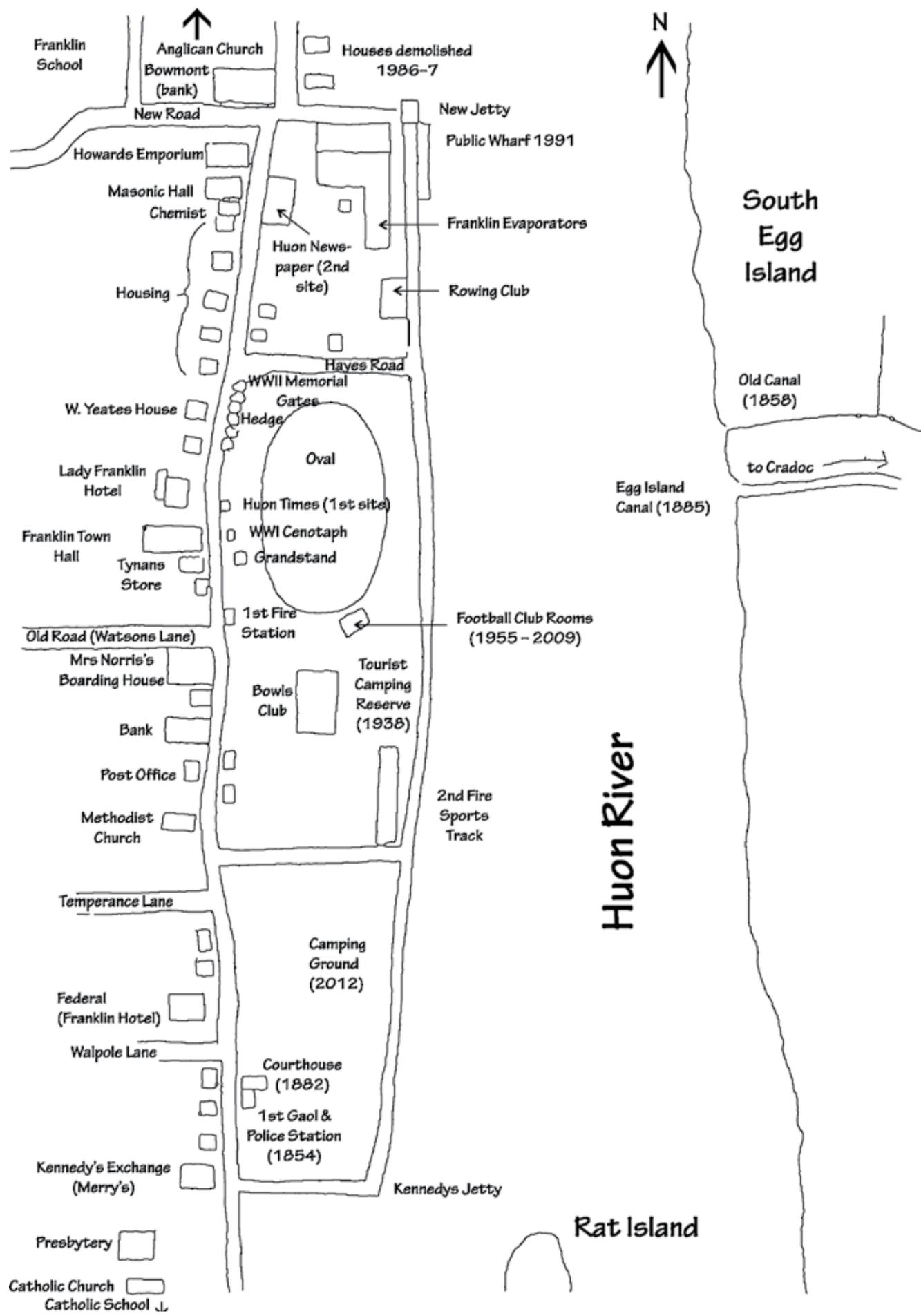
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Huon Mechanics' Institute with flagpole on the site of the present Palais Theatre

[PH30/1/2824, TAHO]

Introduction

Franklin Hall, now the Palais Theatre, was built in the centre of the small riverside town of Franklin, in southern Tasmania, to hold five hundred and sixty people. The arresting presence of the Theatre raises immediate questions in the mind of a thoughtful visitor: why was it built? Why is it so large? What is its present purpose? How has it survived? This book, written to celebrate the Theatre's centenary, aims to provide some of the answers. It explores the origin of Franklin Town Hall as the successor to the Huon Mechanics' Institute of 1858, the enduring connections between the two buildings, the part both buildings on the same site have played in the lives of the local community, the ways in which the fortunes of the buildings have reflected the priorities and the aspirations of the people they served, the reasons for the survival of the building through a century of momentous change, and why it still fulfils the original purposes for which it was built.

You can learn a lot about a place and the people who live in it from the store they set by what they have inherited from earlier generations, and how they see their obligations to the community of the future. The present population of Franklin celebrates in 2012 the centenary of the most conspicuous building in the town, formerly known as the Town Hall though it was never the seat of local government. The Theatre and the continually changing Franklin community have both survived a series of economic and social crises in the last hundred years, from the First World War through the Great Depression, the Second World War, the "Twenty Good Years" of post-war recovery, and then the "Recession We Had to Have" and the Global Financial Crisis of 2009. Both the people and its most important public building have adapted to the chronic instability of a dependent economy and the momentous social and technological change of this period. Now, after a life of vigorous and sometimes boisterous use, tender care, indifference, sometimes less than adequate maintenance and narrow escape from demolition, the Palais is in better condition than it had been for the last third of its life and, when fully restored, will be ready for a long and useful life in the future.

It may be that it has done as well as it has thus far because it never was the seat of local government. Lacking the priority that goes with civic necessity and hence the reliable maintenance allocated to Town Halls that were seats of government, it has relied, in times of difficulty, on the strong support of those who have enjoyed it as a place of entertainment, education, inspiration and delight, a place of celebration, of mourning, welcoming, farewelling, and romance. Successive generations of old families and successive waves of new families have found common ground in collective experiences of many different kinds including, in recent times, the joys of lobbying, grant writing and the physical labour of repairing, restoring and construction.

The foundation of the relationship between the building and those who use it was inherited from its predecessors — the men and women who in 1858 had a vision of what might become of the violent and dangerous society from which they had recently emerged — and the motley collection of wooden shacks and watering-holes they inhabited. They formed a Mechanics' Institute as a path to enlightenment through mutual education and raised the funds to build a handsome stone building to house the library they pulled together for it. As one of Franklin's few public buildings that was not a pub, it soon became known and used as "the Franklin Hall."

Fittingly, the land on which the Mechanics' Institute was built was donated in 1911 as a site for a new Town Hall, which eventually became the Palais Theatre, thus building on an established relationship. A significant condition of the gift was that the new building should include the Mechanics' Institute Library.

Graeme Davison in an examination of the factors that make a building "historic" explains:

It is a principle of historic interpretation that a building acquires significance only in relation to its context ... How can a country flour mill be understood except by reference to the local patterns of grain production, transport and consumption that once supported it ... It may require a good deal of ... research and historical imagination to discover the links between some old buildings and their spatial context, but it is the only way in which the modern observer can truly enter into the social world of which they were once a part.¹

This is the reason for the particular approach I have chosen for writing the history of Franklin Hall in its centenary year. Every development and activity in the town of Franklin and many developments outside it have impacted on the hall, the people who built it, used it, what they used it for and why. It is therefore inevitable that this book is neither a history of only a building or only the people of Franklin, or only an aspect of local Government, or of changing societies and economies, but of the dynamic relationship between all of them as well as the global and local context in which they have influenced each other.

Very little scholarly attention has been paid to Franklin, despite its historic significance as the first organised settlement of free white people in Tasmania and one of the first in Australia. Even less attention has been paid to the Palais Theatre. Archival records for Huon Council begin in 1916, eight years after it was formed and four years after Franklin Hall was built. Source material concerning the Huon Mechanics' Institute is very scant. For this reason, I have relied on newspapers as a primary source of information about both the Mechanics' Institute and the early history of Franklin Hall. Thankfully, until the post World War II period in Australia, newspaper editors and journalists prided themselves on reflective and intelligent editorials and accurate and detailed reporting. They distinguished between opinion and fact in a way that few newspapers in 2012 even attempt. As a result of examining newspapers – colonial papers and *The Huon Times* and *The Huon & Derwent Times* – in close detail, and comparing them with other primary source material that exists, I am inclined to agree with John Anderson that

Newspapers are accused, sometimes justly, of many sins, but they do more than is often realised to further knowledge."²

While there are many reasons for the survival of the Palais Theatre, all of which are entwined with the history of Franklin and the activities of the townspeople, some activities have been determinants. While researching material for this book, it seemed at first that particular details were a distraction from the central story of the Palais, for example, the significance of Franklin's sporting activities, the ways in which Franklin library developed with the changes in the attitudes towards and policies of governments and Council, the rise and fall of the apple industry, the beginnings of a tourism industry, or the details of the lives of film projectionists. But the foremost question in the mind of a historian, as opposed to that of a chronicler, is *why* things happened and as research proceeded, it became clear that without the detail, explanation is impossible. The significance of sport for instance, in relation to the survival of the Palais is borne out by the fact that as the use of the Theatre by sporting clubs declined, so did the building. The existence of a library inside the building for seventy eight years was a vital economic reason for the building's longevity, as was the function of the building as a picture theatre, which might not have continued as long as it has had it not been for the presence of particular individuals of unusual talent.

The role of local government as the builder and custodian of Franklin's Hall for a century has been of extreme importance and often high drama. In 1911 Huon Council took a bold step to borrow a significant sum of money in order to build a very large hall to serve the imagined needs of future populations as well as the existing one, in a town it believed could only prosper and grow. The population of the time shared this vision. But the vision was realised for a very brief period. The achievement of local government in retaining the building in spite of the decline in importance of the town it was built to adorn is no small feat. With the exception of a relatively short period of neglect, local government and a determined citizenry have been the main agents in achieving the survival of one of Tasmania's important heritage buildings and the centre of Franklin's cultural life.

Endnotes

- 1 Davison, Graeme & McConville, Chris, 1991, pp. 74 – 75.
- 2 Anderson, John, quoted as dedication in Hayward, Peter, *High Latitude Crossing—The Viking Route to America*, Adlard Coles Ltd. London, 1968.

Chapter 1: The Huon Mechanics' Institute (1858—1911)

Though now a century old, the Palais Theatre occupies the site of an earlier nineteenth century building, the Huon Mechanics' Institute, which set an important precedent for public purposes and architecture in Franklin. The functions of both buildings changed with successive stages in the transition of Franklin from pioneering settlement to modern township, but they had in common the adaptability that enabled them to cater to the various and changing needs of the community and foster the development of a civic society. This means that the history of the Palais Theatre is historically entwined with that of its predecessor, and both buildings are part of the tumultuous history of Franklin and the Huon Valley.

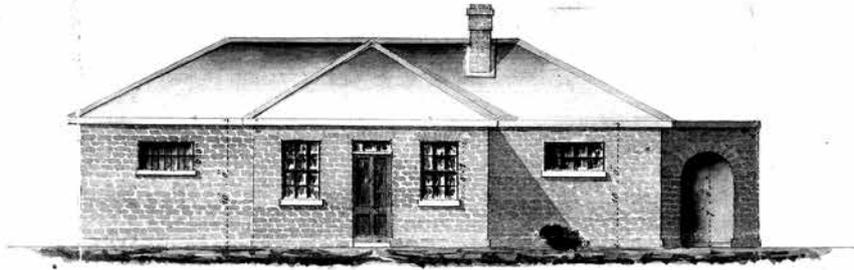
Just as the arrival in Tasmania of Sir John and Lady Franklin coincided with a sense of optimism after the dark days of Lieutenant Governor Arthur, the foundation of Franklin as an organised settlement coincided with a period of extreme confidence throughout the British Empire, in the central tenets of the Enlightenment. Ideas such as those of Edward Gibbon Wakefield had a strong influence on British Colonial policy, and envisioned an alternative future for social development in the Australian Colonies. Rather than a simple opportunity for the mother country to expunge itself of its criminal class, they were to provide the conditions for the development of social replications of an idealised British society, with which the mother country could expect to have mutually advantageous trading partnerships.

Central to this vision was the question of public education and practical training for the masses as well as the élite, and in the case of Tasmania, a means of improvement from the chronically disadvantaged background of a convict society. The "Fernlands Settlement" planned by Lady Franklin envisaged tenants who would have the opportunity to become freeholders. It was fortunate in experiencing locally the stimulus of the Victorian gold rushes, which spawned a timber industry in Tasmania. This added to the idealism for the future. The reality of prosperity, temporary though it was, encouraged the belief that this remote outpost of colonial civilisation, given an opportunity for self-improvement, contained the seeds of greatness. Churches of several denominations were taken for granted as essential pillars of colonial civilisation and orderly behaviour, but an equally powerful engine of temporal self-improvement was the creation of Mechanics' Institutes, which had already become a feature of industrial society.

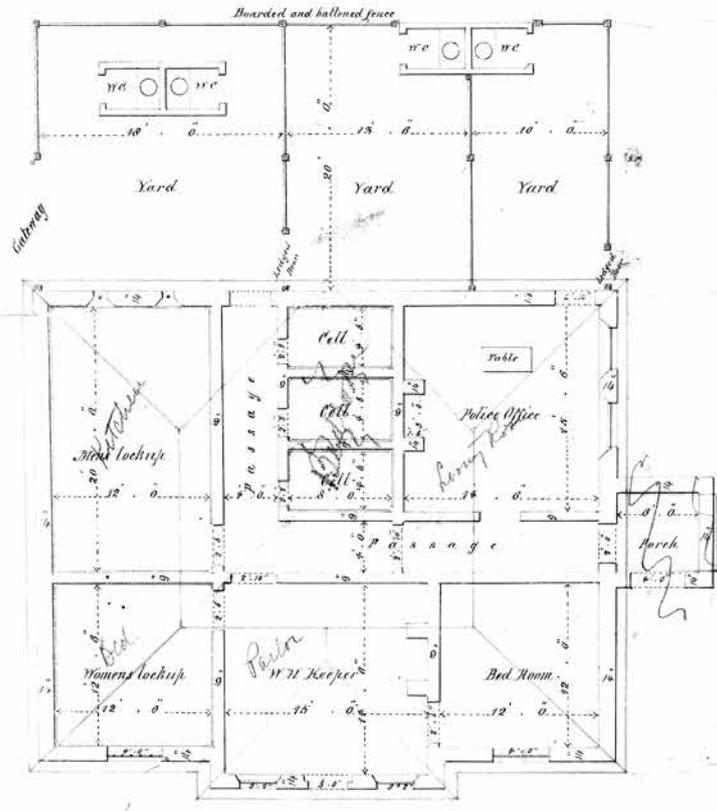
Dr. George Birbeck, Professor of Natural Philosophy at the Andersonian Institute in Glasgow is generally credited as the originator of the Mechanics' Institute movement. He gave a series of free lectures on the "mechanical arts" to manual workers in 1800. The lectures gained popularity and by the fourth lecture Birbeck had attracted an audience of five hundred people.¹ After his departure for London in 1804, the lectures in Glasgow continued, ultimately resulting in the incorporation of the first Mechanics' Institute in Glasgow in 1823. Birbeck's original lectures and his later activity in London helped to set up the London Mechanics' Institute in 1823 and the Ipswich Mechanics' Institute in 1824. These achievements were instrumental in establishing a movement that rapidly spread through the United Kingdom and later to its colonies and to America. By 1826 there were one hundred Institutes.²

The original object of Birbeck's lectures was simply to explain to ordinary tradesmen the scientific principles behind their daily work. But the social and economic value of the idea of educating the working classes and "improving" their minds quickly gained favour among philanthropists, humanitarians and industrialists, who soon funded the Institutes. Humanitarians were attracted by both the egalitarian aims of the Mechanics' Institute movement and the opportunity it presented for social intervention by providing moral as well as technical education. The Institutes were seen as a possible solution to the problems of idleness, gambling, drunkenness and violence which beset the working classes. With increasing industrialisation and increasing numbers of workers living in cities, the working class came to be considered as an unpredictable social force in need of stabilisation for the security of society as a whole. For industrialists, the logic of increasing the technical knowledge of their workforce, particularly given the increasing mechanisation of work in general, was inescapable. In addition, the notion that everyone had a right to education was becoming more prevalent.³

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Elevation



Plan

Sketch plan of proposed Watch-house and Police Office Franklin

Scale Eight feet to an inch

M. J. Kay

PWD
266
1277

F80
290/1110

Proposed plan of Franklin "Watch-house and Police Office," c. 1850

[PWD266/1/1277, TAHO]

The Mechanics' Institutes of the United Kingdom originated as scientific and technical institutions, almost always incorporating libraries that charged very low subscription fees which working people could afford.⁴ The Australian Institutes, whilst sharing the same aims as their predecessors in the United Kingdom, developed more quickly into literary and social centres rather than technical and scientific institutions⁵ and were the forerunners of Schools of Arts, Workers Education Associations, Adult Education, Technical and Further Education Colleges and Public Libraries.

The first Mechanics' Institute in Australia was the Van Diemen's Land Mechanics' Institute formed in Hobart Town in 1827. Launceston Mechanics' Institute, established in 1842, and the Huon Institute, established in 1858 were the second and third Tasmanian Institutes. By 1900 there were a thousand Australian Institutes, each with memberships of between one and two hundred people. On the Australian mainland, the relative isolation of settlements from one another and the vast distances between many small towns and the main centres ensured that Institutes would develop differently in country areas. The need for human company apart from one's family must have been as strong a motivation for the establishment of Institutes as the desire for learning or any moral considerations. At the local level, the Institutes exceeded their original brief and became the focus of community life, often attracting women and professional people, but few of the people they were set up to attract. Over time, the social benefits of the Institutes encouraged voluntary effort and helped to create communities and an ethos of civic responsibility in many small towns throughout Australia.

In 1857 when a Mechanics' Institute was first discussed for the Huon, Franklin was a town with a reputation for turbulence. It had not become the idealised rural idyll of yeoman farmers that Lady Franklin had aimed to transplant from England, although this was the shared hope of her determined early settlers. By the 1850s their reputation as a sober and hardworking community was overtaken by the reality of an influx of unruly timber workers who flocked to the Huon to take advantage of the huge demand for construction timber on the Victorian goldfields. The Huon district came to be considered a wild, dangerous and lawless frontier, the last place anyone would have expected to found a Mechanics' Institute. Timber workers or "sawyers and splitters" as they were then known, earned £7 to £8 a week by 1854,⁶ a good wage compared with for example, the wage of £3 6s a week, earned seventy years later by a worker in an apple drying factory, or about £6 a week earned by a picker of small fruits.⁷

In 1851, three quarters of Tasmania's adult male population were still — or had been — convicts.⁸ The lure of fabulous wealth to be had on the Victorian gold fields depleted Tasmania's population in general, but in the Huon district, the population steadily increased because of the timber boom. While not offering the remote chance of enormous wealth, cutting timber guaranteed, in theory, a more reliable and relatively substantial income. Indeed, the Huon forests may well have saved Tasmania's economy and its status as an independent colony at this time. Between 1847 and 1851, fourteen hundred people left the colony.⁹ The gold rushes had a reverse effect in the Huon district which experienced a rapid increase in population. In 1841 Franklin's population had been a hundred. By 1851, it had quadrupled to 434.¹⁰ The original bridle track from Hobart, completed in 1829, was the only land access to the Huon district and to traverse it was a difficult and time-consuming exercise, made more dangerous by frequent attacks by bushrangers.¹¹ The Huon River was the real highway, carrying most travellers and all produce and timber.

Franklin in the early 1850s was the most populous centre in the Huon and a vital river port, where cargoes of timber, potatoes, peas and wheat were loaded onto sailing ketches for shipping to Hobart. The foreshore was a tea-tree swamp with no real landing place, apart from a small wharf opposite John Clark's house in North Franklin. In the absence of a proper wharf in the town itself, vessels anchored off and produce and supplies were ferried to and from the shore in flat-bottomed punts, through a network of narrow canals dug through the mudflats by landowners. Cargo was loaded to and from the ketches by block and tackle.¹² There were few buildings in the town. Lady Franklin had built a small wooden church, St. Mary's Church of England, at the northern end of town. There was also a school room, believed to have been built by Lady Franklin before she left the colony.¹³ Members of the Wesleyan and Congregational churches met in private homes for their religious services. The



Watson's Hotel

[AUTA S0016125144295, TAHO]



Breaking up new ground, Franklin, E.R. Ash.

[WITH PERMISSION, DON ASH, GREG CLARK COLLECTION, KINDLY LOANED BY JOAN CLARK]

first store in Franklin, the "Commercial Store," was opened by Thomas Frodsham in 1849.¹⁴ George and Elizabeth Sherwin, later the parents of the "Tasmanian Nightingale," soprano Amy Sherwin, opened the Franklin General Store in 1852.¹⁵ By 1852, Thomas Merry and James Dunn had a store. Within two years, John Parish arrived in Franklin with eighty head of cattle and a hundred head of sheep and opened a butcher shop. Meat at 1s 3d a pound was expensive in isolated areas such as the Huon. Parish intended to sell meat more cheaply, at "Hobart prices," and also to deliver his goods by sea to other towns and settlements such as Victoria (Ranelagh), Flight's Bay (Waterloo) and Hospital Bay in a boat he called his "floating shambles."¹⁶ Franklin had a Post Office, courtroom and a number of storehouses, such as the store house of the Derwent and Huon Steam Navigation Company which operated the paddle steamers, *Culloden*, from 1853, and *Cobre*, from 1856, on the Hobart-Huon route.¹⁷ The "*Culloden* Stores" or "steamer stores" as they were variously called, were stores for freight unloaded by the steamers and were located at the mouth of Price's Creek on its south side. The site was later used by W.D. Peacock as a jam factory in the 1870s and this northern area of town became the centre of trade and shipbuilding.¹⁸

By far the most numerous businesses in Franklin by 1854 were public houses, six in all, proliferating to cater to the demands of the well paid, poorly educated sawyers and splitters, including convict pass holders¹⁹, who, with nothing else to do in their free time, drank their wages, rampaging through the formerly peaceful settlement, brawling and fighting. The secondary benefit of the gold rushes thus passed rapidly from the timber workers to those who saw their dependence on alcohol as a business opportunity. Thomas Kellaway converted his store into a thirteen-roomed hotel, the Franklin Hotel, later the Federal Hotel in 1853.²⁰ There was also the Shamrock Hotel and the Sawyers Arms (one of which became the Kent Hotel in 1855), the Lady Franklin Inn, the Huon Hotel and the Odd Fellows Hotel, located between Franklin and Castle Forbes Bay.²¹

In a letter to the Editor of *The Courier* in 1854, a correspondent complained of the terrible effects of drink in the Huon, declaring the Public Houses

no better than sponging houses where the day's wages are squandered in an hour and the morrow's earnings pawned and anticipated ... They are the curse of the Huon — the bane and ruin of the unhappy splitter.²²

Franklin's contingent of five policemen, some of them ex-convicts themselves, had their hands full as the crime-rate soared, the majority of the population consisting of rowdy, drunken timber-workers, convicts, escapees and ex-convicts. In addition to the licensed public houses, there was a roaring sly grog trade. A succession of Police Magistrates determined to end this, but their good intentions were thwarted by the size of their area of authority and the difficulty of travelling such long distances by sea or by land. Franklin got its first resident police magistrate, Edward Atkyns Walpole, in 1854, and many of the cases brought before him related to drunkenness, selling sly grog, or infringements of licence conditions.²³ By 1855, tenders had been advertised for the building of a Gaol and House of Correction²⁴ which was operating by 1859 on the banks of the Huon River.²⁵

It was not until the demand for timber slumped, and the worst of the migratory population left, that Franklin became a more stable, settled and civic society. Some of the timber workers themselves bought land and settled, combining timber work, when they could get it, with agriculture.

By 1858, Franklin was a more peaceful place to live. The road to Hobart had been improved. There was a brewery, but the number of public houses had decreased to four: the Franklin Hotel (Elijah Brown), Lady Franklin Inn (Robert Watson), Kent Hotel (Henry Chesterman) and the Odd Fellows Hotel (James Chitty).²⁶ Southern Tasmania contributed almost a third of the exports from Hobart Town.²⁷ Potatoes were still the main agricultural crop, with increasing areas of land cleared for oats, wheat, barley, turnips, other vegetables and fruit.

The district was almost self-sufficient in flour with several new local flour mills in operation, but some wheat was still imported from Hobart. Settlers planted apple orchards and sold apple seedlings. The steamship *Culloden* called twice a week and Franklin could be reached from Hobart by land or water within eight hours. The town began to change, not only because a lawless element of the population

departed, but also because new people settled. The main occupation of several of the new immigrants was to service the farming population rather than to grow crops themselves.

Whatever the range of high moral reasons for establishing Mechanics' Institutes elsewhere in the world, in the Huon the motivation was quite clear: the Huon people wanted to educate their young people and provide them with a meeting place that was not also a Public House. After Franklin's very recent experience of the effects of alcohol, the risk of children growing up in a desert of booze and stupidity was high, and moral edification was certainly one motivation. Another was the desire to be recognised as "decent" people. But Henry Judd Junior, one of the original promoters of the Huon Mechanics' Institute, speaking and writing fifty-two years later, made it plain that he and the others who had started the Institute recognised that their children were deprived of the educational facilities that were readily available to "their more fortunate fellows in the city." Their first priority was the establishment of a library and a proper school.²⁸

By late 1857 a Huon correspondent to the *Hobart Town Daily Mercury* lamented the absence of "a Mechanics' Institute in which public meetings could be held" and drew attention to the change in the population, which he put down to the influence of religion:

The character of the people is rising in the scale of humanity, and drunkenness, formerly the "terror," as well as the bane of the district, is greatly on the decrease ... The subject of a "mechanics' Institute" only requires to be brought prominently forward, to attract the favourable notice of the public and to ensure success.²⁹

On 6 January 1858, a public meeting was held in the *Culloden* steamer stores in Franklin to float the idea of establishing a Mechanics' Institute. Magistrate Edward Atkyns Walpole presided at the meeting. Political opponents, John Balfe MHA and George Whiting combined to propose and second the principal motion:

That this meeting fully recognizes the importance of establishing, on a permanent basis, a Mechanics' Institute at Franklin, for the advancement of science, and the especial benefit of the rising generations in the Huon District.³⁰

Walpole was elected President; five Vice-Presidents were also elected: John Balfe, John Kellaway, E. Scott, H.T. Daldy (all Justices of the Peace) and George Whiting. John Hay became Treasurer and John Surtees White, the Secretary. A Committee of Management was appointed to publicise and raise subscriptions throughout the Huon and Hobart to buy land and erect a building. The Committee consisted initially of twenty four members,³¹ "all the respectable and moral inhabitants of the district":³² Thomas Kellaway, Henry Judd Jnr., Samuel Page, John Hay Jnr., the policeman A.G. Pogue,³³ Matthew Fitzpatrick, Thomas Inches, Joseph Skinner, Isaac Geeves, James Horton (or Hortin), J. Smith, J. Brittain, Thomas Walton, James Thomas, Richard Hill, the doctors, William Dawson and Robertson and the clergymen, H.B. Giles, W. Barnett, Father J. Murphy, D.B. Tinning and Reverend Robert Crooke.

While most of the Committee consisted of upright settlers with the best of intentions, several of the "respectable and moral" men had gained something of a reputation in Tasmania. Walpole came to the colony as a teenager in the 1820s. In 1830 he was part of a skirmishing party on the "Black Line" under the administration of Lieutenant Governor George Arthur and was the only person who actually captured two Aborigines. At the time, he was publicly reprimanded for doing so, but was later granted land at Prosser's Bay as a reward for "his energy in this affair."³⁴ John Balfe was a politician and journalist and later became the Editor of the *Tasmanian Tribune*. He was sometimes admired and sometimes despised but always feared throughout his political career because he drank too much and tended towards violence to solve disagreements. He seems to have been an excellent debater in Parliament and on the hustings, but also something of a bully.³⁵ However, it was Reverend Crooke's appointment to the Mechanics' Institute Committee that resulted in "a rather angry discussion" and the immediate resignation of both John Balfe and George Whiting who had proposed the motion to found the Huon Mechanics' Institute.³⁶ Other resignations followed, in particular, the resignation of John Surtees White, the Institute's principal promoter. White arrived in the Colony in 1839 and began

practising as a barrister and solicitor in Macquarie Street³⁷ before becoming Deputy Clerk of the Peace for the Franklin District³⁸ and later holding many offices in the Huon.³⁹ With the resignation of White, the idea of forming a Huon Mechanics' Institute looked like foundering before its first real meeting.

The resignations were provoked by the very recent and well publicised activities of the Anglican priest, Reverend Robert Crooke. His career in Tasmania is an example of the fractious nature of small societies and a reminder of the distraction and damage that can result when local antipathies and unsubstantiated accusations are whispered in private and eventually publicly aired. Crooke's alleged actions affected not only the reputations of individuals but also the existence of institutions, in this case, both the Huon Mechanics' Institute and the Anglican Church in Tasmania.

Initially, Crooke was well thought of and had been influential in applying for a Board of Education grant to provide schools to serve the children of Castle Forbes Bay, Shipwright's Point and Hospital Bay.⁴⁰ Crooke sued a number of people for libel in 1857 including Charles Hall, proprietor of the *Hobart Town Daily Advertiser*⁴¹ and also one of his own parishioners, Samuel Page. Page accused Crooke of

abusing the people of Victoria [Ranelagh] and myself in particular ... We shut our eyes as long as we could to his general loose behaviour and conversations before females but we cannot allow him any longer to vilify our wives and daughters or to tell us that if he told what he knew about our families he could set all the men of Victoria fighting.⁴²

The Anglican Church struggled to deal with complaints from Crooke's parishioners, the embarrassment of his court appearances and his correspondence in the press. But he continued to receive a stipend. As word about Crooke's poor relations with his Huon flock spread amongst the Anglican congregation of the Colony, who contributed the funds for stipends, the contributions virtually ceased, leaving the Anglican Church unable to pay any of its Tasmanian ministers for several months.⁴³ An internal enquiry could not reach a verdict about Crooke's alleged behaviour because no witnesses would appear⁴⁴ — a predictable response given Crooke's apparent litigious nature. He was later removed from the Huon and finally left Tasmania, but the Huon districts of Franklin and Victoria were left without an ordained Anglican minister for two years, dependent on ministers from other religions for attendance at births, deaths, illnesses and funerals.⁴⁵ Much damage was done to the Church by the publicity given to Crooke's affairs. *The Courier* reported that "the English Churchmen of the Huon have been annihilated as a religious community."⁴⁶

For the Huon Mechanics' Institute, there was a happier result. The first general Committee meeting of the newly formed Huon Mechanics' Institute took place on 26 January 1858 at the Police Office in Franklin and the first item of business was to record that Reverend Crooke had resigned. Those who had been previously elected officers of the Institute withdrew their resignations⁴⁷ and the Committee set about organising an appeal for funds to erect a building, nominating members in different districts to collect subscriptions from individuals and businesses.

The Appeal for funds, written by John Surtees White, was published in February 1858:

An intelligent and philanthropic public are earnestly appealed to for pecuniary support on behalf of the above Institute. Of its utility and worth there can be no question, particularly when it is considered that hundreds of our native population in this rising district are almost totally destitute of the means of secular institutions. Deprived of those many advantages which so richly contribute to the intellectual culture and improvements of the city, they are exposed to the dreadful evils of ignorance and its deplorable concomitants of recklessness and crime. Surely the establishment of a Mechanics' Institute under the able management of those gentlemen whose names appear as its officers, cannot fail to be productive of the most beneficial results. Confident in this expectation, the Committee rely upon the liberal sympathies of their fellow colonists to enable them to carry out their useful design.⁴⁸

Thirteen Institute representatives were assigned to gather subscriptions at Franklin, an indication of Franklin's population at the time. Three people sought subscriptions at Victoria, two at Castle Forbes Bay and Hobart Town and one at each of Shipwright's Point, Port Cygnet, Flight's Bay (Waterloo), Petchey's Bay, Hospital Bay, Lightwood Bottom and Port Esperance.

HUON MECHANICS' INSTITUTE.

LIST OF OFFICERS.

President—E. A. WALPOLE, Esq., P.M.
 Vice Presidents.
 The Hon. R. CLEBURNE, M.L.C.
 J. D. BALFE, Esq., M.H.A.
 JOHN KELLAWAY, Esq., J.P.
 H. T. DALDY, Esq., J.P.
 E. R. L. SCOTT, Esq., J.P.
 GEORGE WHITING, Esq.
 Treasurer—Mr. JOHN HAY, Franklin.
 Committee.
 Revs. W. BARNETT, ~~J. BARNETT~~,
 D. B. TINNING, H. B. GILES.
 Franklin.
 Drs. DAWSON AND ROBERTSON, Franklin.
 MESSRS. THOS. J. KELLAWAY, Franklin
 RICHARD HILL, Hospital Bay.
 HENRY JUDD, JUN., Franklin.
 J. S. WHITE, Franklin.
 SAMUEL PAGE, Victoria.
 JOHN HAY, JUN., Franklin.
 A. G. POGUE, Franklin.
 MATTHEW FITZPATRICK, Petchey's Bay.
 THOS. INCHES, Shipwright's Point.
 JOSEPH SKINNER, Victoria.
 ISAAC GEEVES, Honeywood.
 JAS. HORTIN, Franklin.
 J. SMITH, Castle Forbes Bay.
 J. BRITAIN, Flight's Bay.
 THOS. WALTON, Victoria.
 JAS. THOMAS, Port Cygnet.
 Secretary—JOHN SURTEES WHITE.

Franklin
 20th March 1888
 Dear Sir
 I take the liberty of sending
 you of our minutes & sincerely trust
 that you will contribute to the
 success of the institution of which you
 are the Governor has given us a
 valuable present of 87 volumes of
 standard works of the Masters of the
 Art which have adopted my humble
 suggestion of getting up a bazaar
 in aid of the Institute. The
 Committee are very zealous in the
 discharge of their duties -
 I enclose a cheque
 for £6. 8. 0. please to forward
 per return of post (£6. six pence)
 Yours very truly
 J. S. White
 To G. W. Walker
 Secretary
 Savings Bank
 Hobart

Letter from J.S. White to G.W. Walker, Savings Bank Hobart requesting a donation to Huon Mechanics' Institute.

[TAHO]

The formation of the Institute was widely publicised and provoked an outpouring of support from the press. The *Launceston Examiner* thought it "an event to be hailed with delight" and a cure for intemperance.⁴⁹ The *Hobart Town Daily Mercury* saw the Institute as a moral and educational necessity but was restrained in voicing its opinion of Huon people:

It is well known that in other places a Mechanics' Institute has been productive of great benefits, both moral and literary and has been a means of diffusing knowledge amongst a mass of people who otherwise would have remained in their pristine ignorance. But the benefits of such an institution are not restricted merely to affording knowledge on a variety of subjects, or even engendering a love of knowledge; but they higher [sic] the moral tone of individuals, and in spite, as it were, of themselves, give them a more comprehensive idea of humanity and its obligations.⁵⁰

The Courier, which agreed that the Institute was "a movement in the right direction," was less restrained and provided some detail about the way the people of the Huon were viewed in Hobart Town:

It has been the custom to regard the Huonites as a semi-barbarous, savage people, entirely beneath the notice of the intelligent and enlightened people of the older settled districts. But gradually, like truth, their true character is being developed and during the last twelve months, their influence and importance have been felt ... Beyond all rivalry, the Huon district now stands pre-eminent as to importance and influence, beyond every other rural division of the southern end of Tasmania ... The Huonites are entitled to the greatest credit for the anxiety they have displayed in this matter, and we need not say that no effort upon our part will be spared in assisting them in so laudable an undertaking.⁵¹

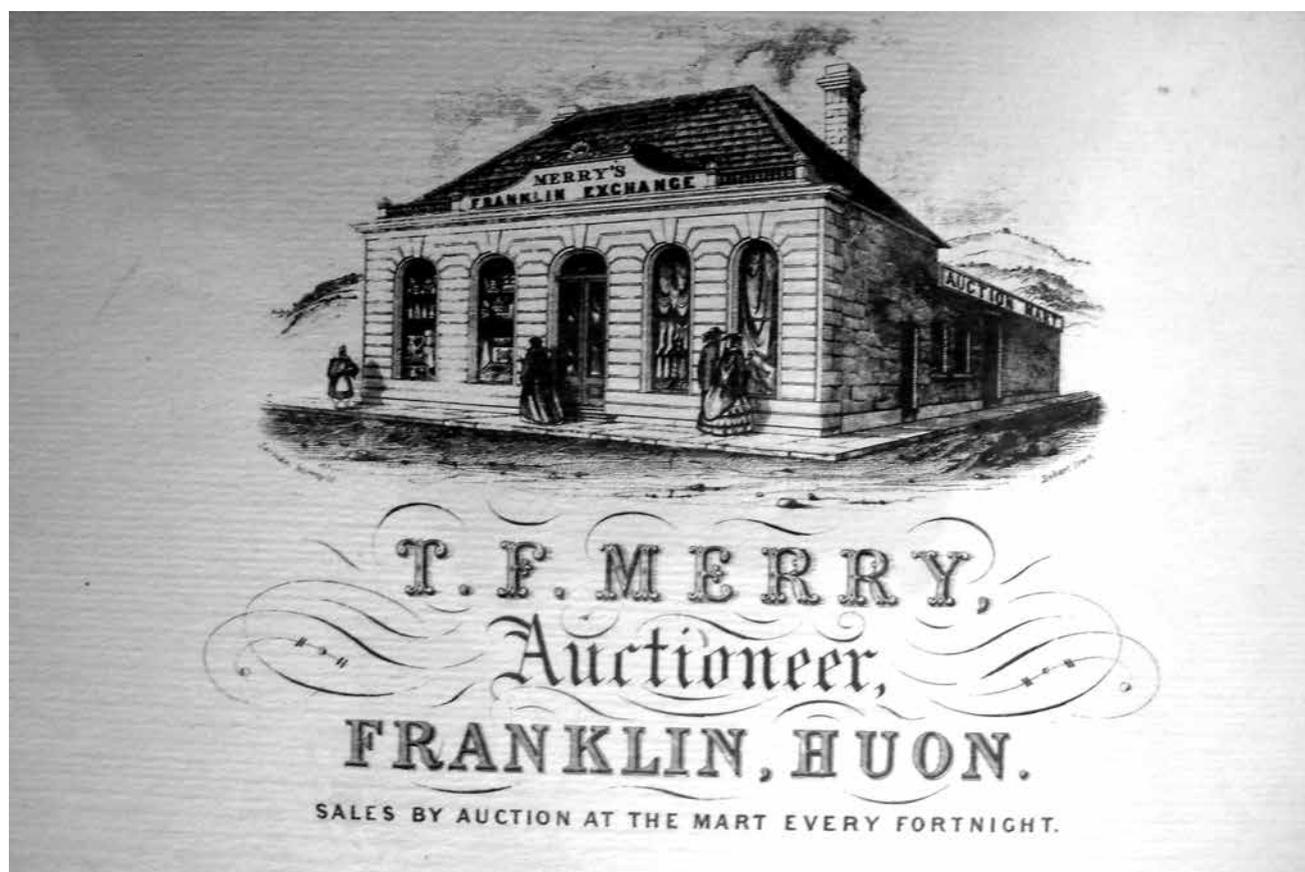
The formation of the Mechanics' Institute showed the Huon in a sparkling light and substituted the image of the "despised" sawyer and splitter with that of "pioneers to the same advanced civilisation which we ourselves enjoy."⁵² One writer, clearly aiming to encourage settlement in the Huon district, commented that

The Franklin settlement, from being a caricature upon the very name of a Township, can now boast its Hotels, its houses of brick, its shops, places of public amusement and instruction, its churches and schools."⁵³

The first Huon Mechanics' Institute lecture was delivered by the Colonial Treasurer, the Hon. F.M. Innes, on 28 June 1858 in the "assembly room" which Elijah Brown had built specifically as a meeting room, adjoining his Franklin Hotel. The room was reportedly crowded with "Nearly all the respectable inhabitants of the Franklin settlement" as well as "many respectable ladies." The theme of Innes' lecture was the benefits of Mechanics' Institutes, from the "the moral and mental improvements" standpoint. The Institute Committee reported that donations towards its building fund were increasing.⁵⁴

The Institute's lectures were keenly anticipated by many settlers, for both intellectual stimulation and also for companionship in an otherwise isolated, grinding existence. The sacrifice and effort that was made by people in other small settlements to get to Franklin for lectures is proof enough that the Mechanics' Institute was a welcome addition to their lives. Between fifty and a hundred people regularly came from Victoria alone, which involved a two-hour row each way. When the weather was bad and the trip was not possible, the absence of the Victorian contingent was significant enough to be always commented upon.

By October 1858, the Institute had about eighty members and an operating library, consisting partly of "a handsome donation of rare and valuable" works of English Literature donated by the Governor, Sir Henry Fox Young,⁵⁵ and housed in a room at James Hortin's house. Hortin opened his room to the public on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 6 to 9 pm for a subscription of ten



Merry's Exchange

[GREG CLARK COLLECTION, KINDLY LOANED BY JOAN CLARK]

shillings a year.⁵⁶ The library benefitted from a grant in aid of £50 from the Colonial Government, but money was scarce as the market for timber and potatoes was very depressed,⁵⁷ and the Institute had not yet been able to raise enough money to erect a building. An application to the Surveyor General for a donation of land on the "Esplanade" at Franklin was rejected. The Institute Committee decided to petition Parliament for this land, described as "a mere swamp of no possible good to anybody excepting for jetties." At the same time, the temperance movement was in full swing. Lack of work in the Huon at this time contributed to a further increase in drunkenness, which had the effect of increasing the vigour of the now well-established temperance movement. The prevailing theory was that drunkenness was caused by ignorance and could be cured by "the moralising influence of sound, useful knowledge,"⁵⁸ so some pressure was felt by the Institute Committee to build its own building and remove its meetings and lectures from the vicinity of the Franklin Hotel.

To this end, a three-day bazaar was held in December 1858. As an incentive to the Hobart Town population, the Institute Committee arranged with Captain Gourlay to put on a pleasure trip from Hobart to Franklin on board the paddle steamer *Culloden*, for a fare of eight shillings. A band played during the voyage and "a liberal supply of refreshments" was provided.⁵⁹ The bazaar took place in Elijah Brown's assembly room, which was decorated with "ferns, evergreens and flowers" for the occasion. The women of the district were largely responsible for the organisation, in particular, Edward Walpole's wife Anna, and their two daughters, with the help of Mrs. Kellaway, Giles, Tinning and Judd and Misses Lawrence, Hay, O'Reilly and Ife. When *Culloden* arrived with one hundred and fifty people on board, the steamer was greeted with a six gun salute. Reverend Giles presided over a book stall and John Hay Jnr, James Hortin and Edward Walpole acted as doorkeepers. Mr. Lawrence supervised a refreshment stall and John Surtees White, a ginger beer stand. A band concert took place throughout the proceedings.

After expenses, about £106 was added to the Institute's coffers. This was a considerable sum of money for volunteers to raise in 1858, and reveals very high morale in the community. To put this in chronological perspective, much later in 1911, public subscriptions sought from a more populous and prosperous Huon community, to raise a deposit of £200 to buy the Shipwright's Point Regatta Ground from the Huon Timber Company, did not reach that figure,⁶⁰ which would have been worth £117 in 1858.⁶¹

The *Hobart Town Daily Mercury* congratulated the Institute's organisers for their leadership, pointing out that there were "many older and far wealthier districts in the Colony, not one of which can claim an equality with the Huon in this respect" and adding that

the ladies of Hobart Town need not be ashamed of their fair brethren on the scarcely reclaimed banks of the Huon. Their untiring industry in this good cause entitles them to the respect and good wishes of all.⁶²

The Courier, while hinting that the establishment of an Institute had its detractors, also reported the event in glowing terms:

We would say to those who predicted the downfall of this institution and have stood aloof from supporting it, frankly confess your error and generously promote its objects.⁶³

The bazaar had other benefits in addition to raising money. It introduced many people from Hobart Town to the Huon district and this led to something of a tourist boom of "invalids ... in search of health in the soft and mild climate of the Huon." Franklin was described in favourable terms in the press:

The Franklin Township, notwithstanding the depression in the timber trade, is greatly improving, new houses are being erected rapidly. A large stone store of great stability is in the course of erection by Mr. J.F. Merry, [most likely Thomas Merry] adjoining to whose land, Mr. Spong has built a handsome house and shop which he has opened as a dispensary.

The bazaar also resulted in an offer of land, valued at about £50 or £60, for a Mechanics' Institute building from Mr. John Thorp Senior.⁶⁴

The year 1858 had been an eventful one for Tasmania and the Huon. It had begun with reports of bushranger attacks, a depressed market for Tasmanian timber and potatoes, and brassica crops ravaged by aphids. Tasmania suffered an exodus of people to other colonies and depressing talk of the

colony becoming a dependency of the colony of Victoria. The potential for an alliance between France and Russia had created an atmosphere of fear, resulting in an explosion of rifle clubs and volunteer defence corps. But the year ended on a brighter note: New Zealand promised a potential new market for Tasmanian timber; wool was selling well; horses were tamed for agriculture and transport; and an increase in the ladybird population ensured cabbages and turnips were free from aphids. Mining companies, searching for gold, issued promising reports. Options for leisure activities were more varied with cricket clubs, regattas and pleasure cruises on steam vessels becoming popular. Hobart Town had an opera company, a vaudeville ballet, performing magicians, a circus, and the hope of a museum. Temperance associations multiplied. The laying of a telegraph cable across Bass Strait between George Town and Melbourne promised to increase communications with other colonies reducing Tasmania's isolation.⁶⁵

In the same year important new legislation encouraged fresh settlement and provided commercial opportunities which attracted shopkeepers, tradesmen and professional people to serve remote regions such as the Huon district.⁶⁶ Most importantly a new system of "grants in aid" of provincial Mechanics' Institutes and Public Libraries was introduced, which would help the Huon Institute to erect its new building.⁶⁷

In Franklin, the mood was buoyant. The Mechanics' Institute provided intellectual stimulation which had hitherto been missing, and alternative recreation in the form of a library. During 1858, after the inaugural lecture by Innes, two other free public lectures were organised: "The Trees of our Forests" (R.E. Dear)⁶⁸ and "Human Happiness – illustrated from Pope's *Essay on Man*" (Mr. Prout Hill of *The Mercury*).⁶⁹ The contrasting lecture topics, one utilitarian and the other philosophical, each drew audiences of at least a hundred people.

Settlement in the Huon was increasing and many hundreds of acres had been cleared and cultivated. This created the need for more stores and services. William Ayton opened a general store in March 1859⁷⁰ and, in May, Thomas Merry held the first auction in his new stone Exchange.

Settlers flocked to the opening and the luncheon that was provided. Merry auctioned a huge variety of goods including pigs, cows, clocks, wallpaper, china, Manchester, books and firewood. Later in the year, he auctioned Lady Franklin's land, consisting of twenty two building blocks "in the centre of the rising and improving Township of Franklin."⁷¹ Mr. Chopping opened a bakery and confectionary store, and Pogue and Hortin opened an Emporium. Spong, and Hortin and Propsting opened stores. Judd, Thomas and Mitson built houses, and a row of new stone cottages was built by J. Griggs. The police buildings had been erected. The Lady Franklin Inn was enlarged and several boats were built.⁷² A "Reserve for Canal" through South Egg Island had been created by 1858⁷³ in response to expansion on the eastern side of the Huon River. While the date of excavation is still uncertain, there is a range of evidence which indicates that the first canal through Egg Island was dug within a few years of that date.⁷⁴ The canal increased the hinterland for which Franklin provided services and facilities.

More settlement also led to larger religious congregations and the need to provide proper places of worship. The Roman Catholics initially built a rough chapel with timber donated, cut and sawn by formerly "unruly" sawyers and splitters of the district and, in 1856, a weatherboard church. The following year, a residence was built for the priest, Father Murphy. In 1859 the Wesleyans (Mr. Caseley) completed a chapel and the foundation stone of the Congregational Church (Reverend Giles and Reverend W. Barnett) was laid. Lady Franklin's small wooden Anglican Church, St. Mary's, had been erected many years before and was now considered "really a disgrace to the district" and the Huon Anglican congregation was in disarray. *The Courier* concluded that only "a feeling of public shame" would lead to the building of a new Anglican church.⁷⁵

The list of lectures and classes delivered at the Mechanics' Institute in 1859 reflects an attempt to cater for the expanding interests of a more diverse population. A series of chemistry and singing classes took place⁷⁶ as well as a number of lectures including "An anecdotal treatise on ancient and modern horse training" (F.D. Hamilton)⁷⁷; "Astronomy" (W. Johnston)⁷⁸; "Agricultural Chemistry" (J.T. Chambers)⁷⁹; "The Travels of Dr. Livingstone in South Africa" (Reverend H.B. Giles)⁸⁰; "The Functions of the Skin and their importance to Health" (A.N. Spong)⁸¹; "Flowers and their associations"

(Archdeacon Davies)⁸²; “The Present War” and “The origin and causes of earthquakes and volcanoes” (Mr. Stutzer)⁸³; “The Earth, its formation and early inhabitants” (George Whiting),⁸⁴ and, in association with the Franklin Public School, a Mr. Cairnduff “nearly exhausted” his audience with a lecture on the subject of “Education.”⁸⁵ Some lectures were more popular than others but, in general, apart from a few occasions when the weather was very bad, one to three hundred people from Franklin and other Huon settlements attended the Institute’s edifying public offerings.

Like other Mechanics’ Institutes in the British Empire, the Huon Institute grappled with the problem that its lectures attracted audiences composed of everyone except “mechanics.” The Huon’s correspondent to the *Launceston Examiner* commented on the “revival of intellectual life” that the Institute stimulated, but bemoaned the fact that some lecturers were entertaining rather than enlightening. He complained that some of those who came

from the city with good intentions ... have failed to introduce the most appropriate topics. We want our Institute to become thoroughly educational and moral in its tendencies. The combination of amusement is useful, but it should only be employed as an auxiliary to the object in view.⁸⁶

The “object in view” was education. Illiteracy was the norm. Given that school attendance was very low and it would be expected that parents who happily attended a lecture on the subject of “the functions of the skin,” for instance, would probably have sent their children to school, it is likely that the people who attended the Institute’s lectures were drawn from a wide catchment which did not include many of the struggling orchardists with four to six children who were attempting to make a living from small acreages. In 1859, the only school in Franklin was “inadequate to the requirements of this rising township” and “decidedly unhealthy for the poor children.”⁸⁷ H.C. Cotton, the Inspector of Schools, claimed that “education in the Franklin district is at very low ebb.” Between eighty and one hundred children should have been at Franklin School, “if there was a suitable school house and a competent Master.” Attendance was less than a third of that, and those who did attend were not doing well. Inspector of Schools, Thomas Arnold, commented that “no plea is thought too trifling to excuse a child’s absence from school”:

I enquired the reason why the children of a certain family living within reasonable distance never attended school — “They don’t come in Winter Sir” was the reply, “because their mother says the roads are so bad.” Yes but why do they not come in Summer? I asked. The answer was “Because the Father says there’s snakes about.”⁸⁸

In reality, many children were occupied working on the land, rather than attending school. In a colony, most of whose white male population had been ill-educated convicts, education was seen as the single most urgent priority for the creation of a “moral” society in the future, and the Huon was lagging far behind:

Dr. Johnson was once asked who was the most miserable man, and the sage replied: — “the man who cannot read on a rainy day.” Now if there is truth in this trite observation, the Huon can unhappily supply a large number of miserable men and still larger numbers are rapidly swelling their ranks and filling up vacancies caused by removal or death.⁸⁹

In spite of a serious bushfire, which caused great damage to houses and crops, the attention of the Institute and Franklin people turned towards raising money for a new school on half an acre of Lady Franklin’s land.⁹⁰ Elijah Brown’s assembly room began to host fund raising events for the new school as well as meetings of the Institute and other organisations.⁹¹

At its second annual meeting, the Institute Committee, now reduced in size from twenty to twelve⁹², revealed that not only Thorp but also Elijah Brown had offered a piece of land for an Institute building. Brown’s land was said to be “almost immediately opposite the Courthouse.”⁹³

In 1859 the Institute had seven hundred books in circulation, some donated, some purchased, and it paid a librarian. However, the rooms that it hired for its library, lectures and classes had become inadequate and the new building to which the Institute aspired was now essential. Several architects,

among them Robert White, Mr. Thomas, and Davidson and Spong⁹⁴ supplied plans and specifications. Davidson and Spong won the contract in December 1859⁹⁵ and a further offer of land came from Thomas Merry.⁹⁶ Of the several donations of land that had been offered, a block in the centre of the town, donated by Robert Watson and located south of Watson's Lady Franklin Inn, was accepted for the Institute's new building. The builder, Mr. Stone of Hobart, was to complete a brick building with stone foundations, 52 ft 6 in long, 27 ft 6 in wide with a height of 16 ft, in July 1860 for £439.⁹⁷ Funds in hand amounted to £235. Excitement mounted as preparations were made for the laying of a foundation stone.

It was an impressive occasion. The *Culloden* brought guests from Hobart and Melbourne, including the Hon. R. Cleburne, MLC and Governor Sir Henry Fox Young, who had agreed to lay the stone. On the 26 March 1860, a procession consisting of a band, followed by members of the Odd Fellows, Rechabites, Teetotallers, Bands of Hope⁹⁸, the officers and committee of the Institute and school children from the Huon district walked to the block of land, 90 ft by 45 ft, situated in the centre of Franklin. A temporary stage was erected on the site for the speech makers.

John Surtees White reported that the library had forty six subscribers per quarter and an annual issue of eight hundred books. He thanked all those who had donated books, offered land and raised funds, and acknowledged Elijah Brown, for the use of his meeting room, and Archdeacon Davies, who donated "a valuable assortment of Fijian war and fishing implements," which would form the "nucleus of a museum" for the Institute. White reminded his audience that donations of books by Cooper, Bulwer, Ainsworth, Disraeli and Dickens "would prove highly acceptable." A time capsule, in the form of a glass bottle, was then placed under the foundation stone. It contained

some coins of the realm, a copy of the [Mechanics' Institute] Report, a colonial almanac, the latest Tasmanian newspapers; also a scroll, containing the names of the committee, trustees and other usual particulars ...⁹⁹

Governor Fox Young had not had a good trip from Hobart on *Culloden*, and was said to be "suffering from an indisposition," but was "determined to make a sacrifice, so as not to disappoint the good people of the Franklin." He was given a trowel and he spread the mortar on which the foundation stone of the first provincial Mechanics' Institute in Tasmania was then lowered and adjusted. A plate was laid on top of it to receive donations.

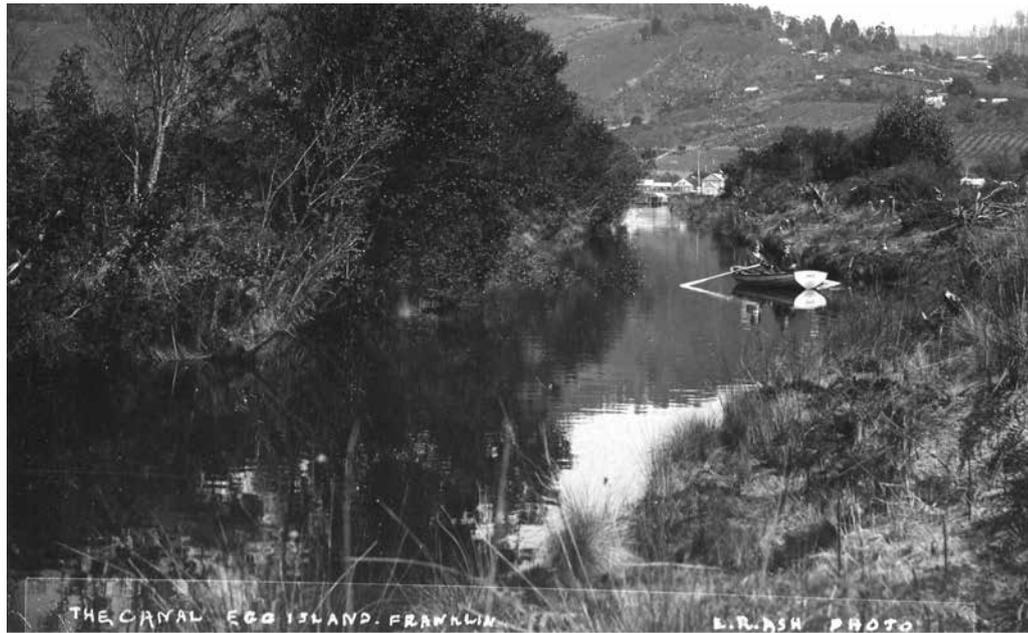
The Governor expressed the hope that

the institute would be the constant means of promoting the literary, moral and mental improvement of the residents of the district (applause). It was most pleasing to find that settlers who had been waging war on the wilderness had uniformly found inclination and time to promote literary objects, without which a home in the wilderness would be barbarous and uncivilized (cheers).

A party of thirty or forty men, including Cleburne, MLC, the Colonial Treasurer, Hon. F.M. Innes, John Balfe, MHA and representatives of the clergy, police and storekeepers then retired to Brown's meeting room for a "cold collation" dinner. The Governor himself was too ill to attend. Innes, proposing a toast to the Institute at the dinner, said that he was "struck by the contrast" between the Huon and "some other districts in the colony on the northern side":

There was the appearance of life, energy and self reliance on the part of the settlers, which was not witnessed in many other parts of the colony ... In many places where there were long cultivated fields and indications of prosperity, they found no such indications of care for the mental, the intellectual culture of the people.¹⁰⁰

In his speech, the Governor mentioned that he regretted that the building was to be built of brick, since "they had so much valuable stone" in Tasmania.¹⁰¹ This revelation presented the Institute with a dilemma. On the one hand, the building had been costed and designed for brick construction; on the other hand, the Governor was already a major donor to the library and a powerful ally. By mid-April 1860, the plans had been redrawn and arrangements made with the builder to build in stone, at an



South Egg Island Canal

[E.R. ASH, WITH PERMISSION, DON ASH, CATO COLLECTION]

extra cost of £40.¹⁰² Stone for the building was quarried at what is now Huonville by John Skinner, who brought it across the river and down to Franklin in punts.¹⁰³

While the new building was under construction, the Institute continued with its lecture programme in Brown's room. The Lord Bishop of Tasmania gave a lecture on "Recollections of Vesuvius and Pompeii" to an audience of two hundred. Mr. S. Prout Hill of the *The Mercury* lectured again, this time on the subject of "Eloquence." Mr. E. Pears, a public school teacher, gave a talk on "Food, its nature and productions" and, in the face of the formation of a Volunteer Rifle Corps in the Huon, George Whiting presented a lecture on the "History and use of Firearms."¹⁰⁴ The Institute's example of promoting intellectual pursuits had influence. The residents of Honeywood (Geeveston) formed the "Honeywood Debating and Mutual Improvement Society" and *The Mercury* commented:

Of all the districts in the Colony we should have selected the Huon, from the popular idea entertained of its inhabitants, as the last likely to make such efforts ... These "Sawyers and Splitters" are setting an example to the Metropolis which is not much to our own credit.¹⁰⁵

Almost three years after its first meeting, the new stone building of the Huon Mechanics' Institute was opened on 26 November 1860.

The inaugural address was to have been given by the Colonial Treasurer, Hon. F.M. Innes, but, when the Institute Committee arrived to meet *Culloden* and greet him, they received the news that he had not been able to come. Mr. Stutzer, the Inspector of Schools and lecturer in History, stepped into the breach. The building was decorated with "large and handsome flags streaming from the windows" and floral decorations. Proceedings began with a "social tea meeting" with "long rows of tables literally covered with good things" to eat for the men, women and children of the district. John Surtees White once again thanked the Institute's supporters, but indicated that the Institute now owed a debt to the Government of "upwards of £200." Mr. Stutzer then gave a short "but spirit stirring" speech, congratulating the people for their efforts in erecting the building and proclaiming that "Franklin was destined to become the third town of importance in the Colony."¹⁰⁶

The "élite" of the Huon began arriving to celebrate the opening of the new building with a ball, organised by the Volunteer Rifle Corps, dressed in blue uniforms with red collars and cuffs and a red stripe on the trousers. Refreshments were "strictly temperance" and served from a large tent that had been erected next to the building. The ball opened with

the Triumph Country Dance, which was danced with a spirit and vigor that could scarcely be excelled. Polkas, Quadrilles, Waltzes, Schottisches and other recherché dances followed in brisk and quick succession ... the Circassian Circle, the Lancers, the Varsoviana, the Polka Mazurka, the Caledonians, the Spanish Circular Waltz etc speaking much for the progress of taste and refinement ...

It ended at dawn with "the good old Sir Roger de Coverly."¹⁰⁷

By 1860 the Huon was a relatively civilised and stimulating place to live. Roads at the back of Franklin were being surveyed, promising yet more new land for settlement. A meeting at the Franklin Hotel determined to hold a Regatta and a preliminary meeting to form a Rural Municipality in the Huon was held at the Kent Hotel. Although the community still suffered the effects of occasional terrible crimes, such as the rape of a child by the ticket-of-leave holder Martin Lyden at Port Cygnet, such reports were rare.¹⁰⁸

While some speakers at the Institute still came from Hobart, such as F. Packer, speaking on "The Poets of the Present Day" and W. Johnston on "Ancient Rome," at least as many were now local people. John Surtees White gave a course of lectures on "The Conveyance of Real Property by Registration instead of Deed in accordance with the principles of the 'Torrens Act'." The attendance was said to be "remarkably good." The following week Reverend R. Caseley talked for an hour and a half about "Sir Walter Raleigh" and, later, J.S. Chambers, the school teacher, lectured on "The Advantages of Friendly Societies."¹⁰⁹

However, the Institute was in financial trouble, partly because of the Committee's desire to please the Governor by building in stone. Lack of money ultimately led to a broadening of the public use that was to be reflected in the history not only of the Institute, but of Franklin Town Hall which succeeded it. As Franklin grew it needed a multi-purpose public building. It was the capacity for adaptability of both the Mechanics' Institute and the Franklin Town Hall that was to ensure their survival and that of the successive communities that needed them.

The Institute's debt to the government attracted interest and at a public meeting on 26 February 1862, its Committee revealed that it did not have the £25 needed to pay it. Without the money, the Institute would be forced to sell its building. A decision was taken to canvass the Huon population for subscriptions in the hope that "the people will put their shoulders to the wheel, and that henceforth the progress of this district will be more certain, although perhaps less rapid."¹¹⁰ To help to raise money, Mr. R. Chick of Ironstone Creek organised an "entertainment" for the benefit of the building.¹¹¹

In the nick of time, John Balfe moved in the House of Assembly that £250 be placed on the Estimates in aid of the Institute, but he later amended the figure to £125, on condition that a similar sum be raised from the public, the money to be vested in the Institute's Trustees "who shall not have the power of sale or mortgage."¹¹² But the money was slow to materialise. Seven months later, in September 1862, Balfe asked for it again, explaining that the hall was about to fall into the hands of creditors. Finally, in October the £125 was granted.¹¹³

At this time, the Temperance movement was the main client of the Mechanics' "Hall," as it was increasingly called. A temperance conference was held over several days under the auspices of the Rechabites and the Tasmanian Temperance Alliance. One of the attractions of the temperance meetings for young people was a demonstration of the technology of the lantern slide show and dissolving views.¹¹⁴ It was not until 1870 that public dramatic entertainments began to be performed at the Institute. The first of these was "a dramatic, farcical and vocal entertainment" to raise funds to enlarge the Institute's library. It consisted of scenes from *Hamlet*, comic songs and the performance of a farce called "The Lion Slayer."¹¹⁵ Since the hall was increasingly used for "social teas," musical evenings and now drama, events generally staged to raise money for the churches, the Institute held a bazaar in 1871 to pay off a debt of £32 remaining on the price of a £50 piano bought from Mr. Walch. The bazaar was held in Brown's assembly room. An attempt was made "by some contemptible and malevolent individuals" to deter people from attending by posting placards "calculated to enlist the prejudices of a section of the community" against it.¹¹⁶ Who these people were or why they objected remains locked in the past, but the bazaar was successful and raised £55 10s, leaving money for purchasing more books for the library.

The "ladies" had been largely responsible for organising the bazaar and at the Institute Committee meeting in February 1871, a letter was tabled from Anna Walpole, Emma Innes and Emma Dawson which was to have an important bearing on the Franklin Hall which later occupied the site of the Mechanics' Institute. The letter explained that the ladies had paid off the piano and were handing it to the Institute with one condition: that their husbands, Messrs. Dawson, Walpole and Innes "be named permanent trustees, in whom all property in the instrument shall vest, in trust, for the library of the Huon Mechanics' Institute," preventing further sale and also "for its safety in the event of no committee being appointed." This suggestion provoked considerable debate.

Reverend Stansfield took offence at the condition, saying that it implied a lack of trust. Mr. Yeoland thought a permanent Trust was a sensible suggestion that did not reflect badly on the committee. Mr. Innes read "Rule 17," which stated that property of the Institute could not be sold, except for articles deemed to be "surplus, unnecessary or useless," without the consent of nine tenths of the members at a special meeting called to discuss it. This meant that if nine tenths of the members agreed, the piano could be sold in the future and they could "divide the proceeds." He added that for some time, the Institute had been "in a state of desuetude and its property in books etc. under no control or supervision." Innes claimed to have seen books taken and about one hundred and fifty were missing. While he did not want to be one of the permanent trustees, he thought it reasonable for the ladies to "consider their husbands the most likely parties to interest themselves as trustees" — and the suggestion was a wise one. Judd then proposed that the condition should also apply to the books in the library. Walpole, Reverend J. Murphy and J.C. Judd were elected trustees for the piano and also "the books and other property of the Mechanics' Institute."¹¹⁷

The building everyone had worked so hard to erect was almost lost in September that year by fire. An amateur dramatic event and ball, held by the newly formed Franklin Reading Club to raise funds for the widow of Dr. Dawson, attracted about one hundred and fifty people. An oil lamp hanging from the ceiling fell, spilling oil which ignited causing panic among the ladies. The building itself would certainly have caught fire had it not been for the fact that the floor boards were not fitted closely. The burning oil escaped through the gaps and burnt out on the earth underneath the building.

This ball was opposed by an element of the population. A newspaper report indicates that the people of the day knew who was opposing them: "Many more tickets would ... have been sold had it not been for an adverse influence in a quarter from which, considering the object, a different course might have been expected."¹¹⁸ It is clear that the Institute had its enemies, but not at all clear who they were, although the implication is either that they frowned on dancing and drama or, alternatively, they disapproved of the absence of alcohol at the function.

After twelve years of operation, the Mechanics' Hall received its first facelift. With the help of J. Davies, the Member of Parliament for the Huon who raised £25, it was repaired and redecorated inside and out.¹¹⁹ The Institute's success led the people of Honeywood to discuss building a Mechanics' Institute of their own.¹²⁰

Tasmania's relative prosperity in the 1870s, after the discovery of profitable deposits of minerals on the West Coast was in sharp contrast to its earlier economic circumstances and it is clear, in retrospect, that apart from the period of the Victorian gold rushes, Tasmania had been in the grip of economic recession since white settlement began.¹²¹ The prosperity of the 1870s improved the lives of many people in the Huon, even though they were far from the mineral bonanza of the West Coast. New industries, such as jam making and hop growing were providing employment. In 1874, eight Huon hop growers employed two hundred pickers.¹²² Jam factories were set up locally because even when transported to Hobart by steamer, as opposed to sailing ketches, small fruits often began to ferment by the time they arrived.¹²³ Local jam factories added some security for small fruit growers, reducing transport costs and increasing the likelihood that their fruit could be sold in good condition.

In addition to the new Huon road and stage coach to Hobart, local roads between the smaller settlements began to be constructed. A road was made between Victoria and Port Cygnet.¹²⁴ A proper bridge over Surges Bay Creek replaced a fallen stringy bark tree that had served the purpose of a bridge for many years and the residents were delighted with their new 4 ft wide track.¹²⁵ By 1875,

the road between Franklin and Victoria was better and could not “be complained of.” Money was approved by Parliament for the construction of a bridge over the Huon River and, although many people objected to this as an obstruction to navigation,¹²⁶ the bridge was completed in 1876. Only the track covering the 16 miles between Port Esperance and Franklin was still described as “that length of miserable road.”¹²⁷

Franklin was now “a pretty township”¹²⁸ with four churches and attached Sunday Schools, “several stores which would not disgrace the capital and a number of substantial private dwelling homes” as well as the three hotels, “the drinking customs of the people have become so modified of late years.” In 1875, its population was six hundred and the town was described as “still more forest than field.” The main industry was ship building. Robert and William Cuthbert, and William Thorp all built ships at the northern end of the town, between what is now New Road and Kent Street. In July 1875, four barges were being built simultaneously in the Franklin yards, all of them sold before completion, and a high proportion of the male population was employed either directly building ships or indirectly, felling or sawing the timber required in twelve local sawmills.¹²⁹ An old resident of Franklin, reminiscing about his youth recalled that in the 1870s Franklin was not

the proverbial one horse village ... but really a thriving community, for shipbuilding was carried on so extensively that the clang of the hammers from the building of several vessels at the same time lent an air of importance to the place.¹³⁰

The area around Peacock’s jam factory was a hive of activity, “crowded with carts and vehicles of all descriptions.”¹³¹ Although there was a daily coach service between Franklin and Hobart, almost all produce was carried by water. By 1877, thirty sailing craft traded constantly on the Huon River and the population of the town and its surrounding “district” was a thousand.¹³²

Clark’s water-powered flour mill ground wheat for local consumption but by this time, little wheat was grown locally. In and around Franklin, the orchards were small, about 5 acres, compared with much larger ones at Victoria. Franklin’s Public School, completed in 1860 and described as “a very handsome new building” had almost eighty children enrolled, about half of whom attended.¹³³ There were five or six small private schools, each with about ten pupils. Franklin’s people were said to be

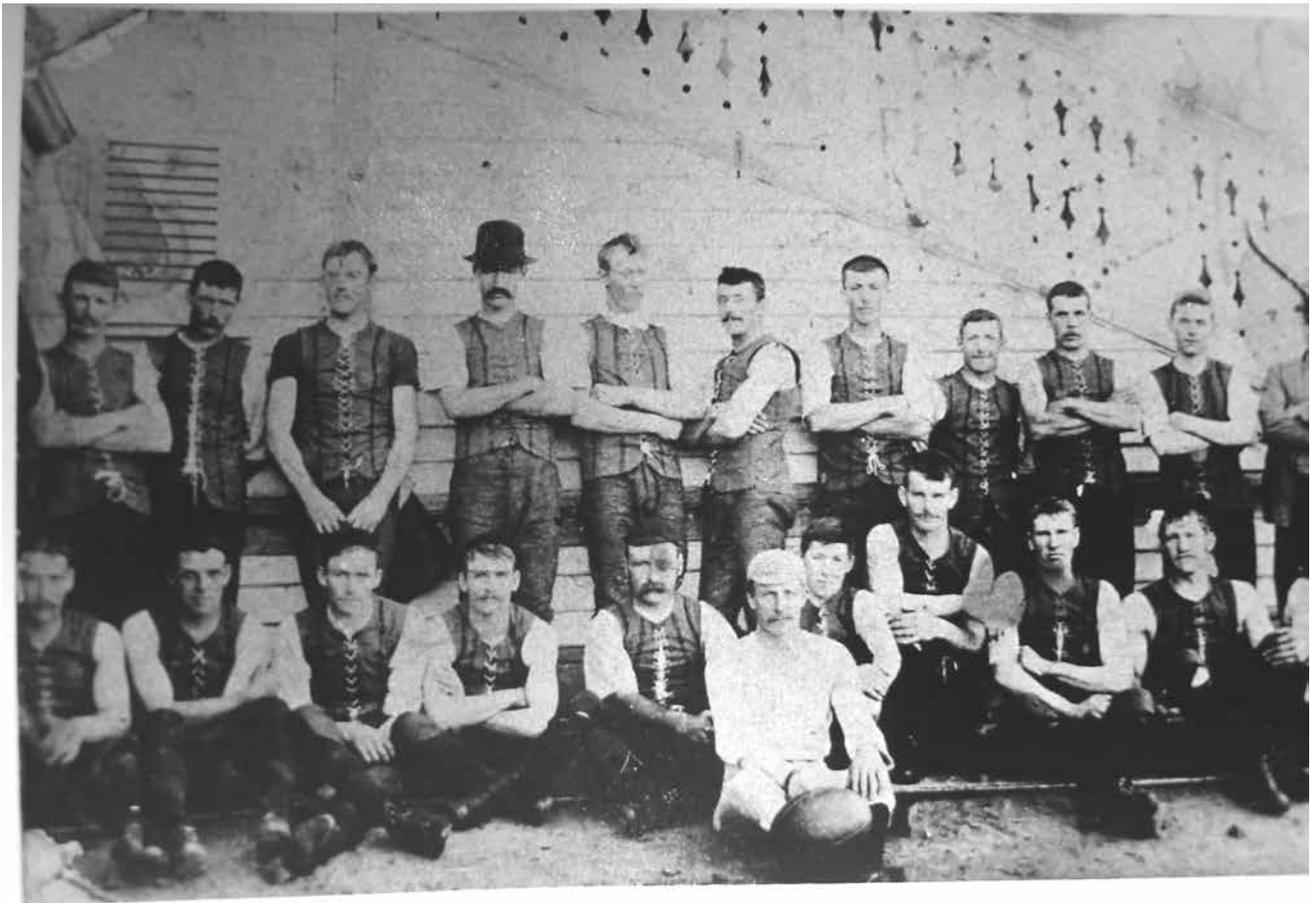
proud, as they have a right to be, of their Mechanics’ Institute. It is, indeed, the only building of its kind south of the capital, and having been erected by subscription, it betokens the existence of a public spirit which the inhabitants of some larger towns would do well to imitate. It ... has become quite an indispensable institution.¹³⁴

Lectures at the Institute became increasingly moral, rather than technical and scientific in tone, and were mainly delivered by clergymen: Reverend R.E. Dear lectured on “Our British Bible”;¹³⁵ Reverend J. Moyneux Bayley on “Pride, Passion and Prejudice” and Reverend M.W. Bradney on “Total Abstinence.” Abstinence became so popular in Franklin that a Temperance Hotel was considered a commercially viable proposition and Bonney’s Temperance Hotel was opened by December 1878.¹³⁶ The Temperance Hotel was said to be “thronged with visitors” in the summer months.¹³⁷ By 1882, its new owner, N.A. Woods expanded the Hotel’s accommodation capacity from eleven to twenty rooms.¹³⁸ At this time various attempts were made by some local men to reduce the number of licensed public houses in Franklin. Three were considered too many. Speaking on this matter at a public meeting held at the Institute in 1882, a Mr. Blackett compared Franklin’s public houses to beaver traps:

If the first one failed to catch one, the chances were the second would entrap the victim, who, if fortunate enough to escape the first and second, would certainly drop in at the third.¹³⁹

In the 1880 – 90 period, it was much easier to get to Franklin than it had been twenty years before. With more and better roads, the bridging of the Huon River and in 1885, the complete reconstruction of the canal through South Egg Island, travel to and from Franklin was relatively easy.¹⁴⁰

Other public works like the new Franklin court house (1882) were built or envisioned. It was in this period, as a small but vital port and ship building centre, that the need for a place for secular public



First Franklin Football team

[GREG CLARK COLLECTION, KINDLY LOANED BY JOAN CLARK]

activity was securely established. Until the end of the nineteenth century this need was supplied by the Mechanics' Hall but the modernity of the twentieth century was destined to demand a building of superior quality that would enable it to resist demolition for longer than its predecessor.

In the busy little town of Franklin people ceased to crave uplifting lectures. The demand for entertainment took precedence over the demand for education. The Institute's lectures appear to have become less frequent. Reverend Bennett of Latrobe lectured on the Mt. Bischoff tin mine, Theo. Jones on "Life Insurance," and Prof. S.J. Mitchell on "Phrenology and Mesmerisms." Phrenology, the attempt to map the human cranium assigning functions and "humours" to all parts of it, was popular much earlier in the rest of the western world, but proved a winner in Franklin during this period, so much so that J. Sheridan enticed audiences for two lectures on "Phrenology and Physiognomy."¹⁴¹ However, bell ringers, balls, tea parties, concerts, meetings and bazaars, one of which attracted six hundred people in one day,¹⁴² became the principal uses to which the Mechanics' Hall was put. Rent was paid for this kind of function, which enabled the Institute to pay for the maintenance of the hall. To keep the library functioning, the Institute formed a debating and literary society in 1883, but the library appears to have closed for a period until 1886, when it was resuscitated with James O'Beirne as the librarian. New subscribers were encouraged and a hundred new volumes were added to the shelves.¹⁴³

By 1887, the Institute was almost thirty years old. Its Officers had changed and its Committee had become smaller. The school teacher, Mr. Kildea, was President, James O'Beirne, Secretary and Treasurer, E.H. Thompson, Boyd, Cuthbert, Innes, W.J. Thomas and Philp made up the Committee. As all the original Trustees, appointed in 1858 and the "permanent" Trustees, appointed in 1871 as a result of the piano donation had either died or left the district, the Committee passed a resolution that the existing Committee act as Trustees for the time being. This resolution may have been unconstitutional,

given the problems that later arose when the Trustees tried to dispose of their building. Unfortunately, the Rules of the Huon Mechanics' Institute have not survived. The Committee also decided to close the library from the beginning of October to the end of March each year as "very little interest" was taken in the library during the busiest season for orchardists. It also appears that the Committee had begun charging for lectures, as it intended holding a lecture in March 1887 "with a view to raising the necessary funds" to re-open the library.¹⁴⁴

Besides the work of growing fruit, other outdoor activities including sport competed with the Institute's library during the summer months. Most sports in Franklin prior to this time had been casually arranged at various "picnic grounds," to which people would travel with their families and enjoy informal running races, high and low jumps, caber tossing and hop, skip and jump events in which everyone participated. In the last week of March 1887, W.H. Kennedy founded the Franklin Football Club, the first Australian Rules football club in the Huon Valley.

The Club followed rules then known as Victorian Football Rules, which had been formulated in 1866. Local competition was quickly arranged when a week later Harry Geeves formed the Liverpool (later Kermandie) Club, followed immediately by T.A. Frankcomb's Victoria Club and George Nicholson's Picnic Club. Franklin's steep terrain and marshy foreshore made it difficult to establish an oval and so Woodstock on the eastern side of the Huon River became Franklin's home ground, the team travelling through Egg Island Canal to get to games.¹⁴⁵

By mid-June 1887, the private Mechanics' Institute library was suffering, even when it was only open during the cooler months. *The Mercury's* correspondent reported that the library

is not well patronised and very little encouragement is held out to the committee to invest in new books. The facilities for obtaining books from the Hobart circulating libraries are now greater and perhaps that is one reason why our attentive librarian has so little to do on Saturday evenings.¹⁴⁶

In an effort to revive public interest in reading, the Committee decided to build a new room at the rear of the hall to be used exclusively for a library and reading room.¹⁴⁷ This was completed late in 1887.¹⁴⁸ It seems to have been a successful move. A profit of £4 for 1888 was considered "very encouraging," given the expenses of building and also supplying new books, particularly "the most popular novels." At its 1893 meeting, attendance was once again small, but the Institute was holding its own with a credit balance of £7 4s 1d from the hall, despite the purchase of a new piano, and 19s 1d from the library. Kildea and O'Beirne still held their offices, but the Committee had changed to Barnett, Hall, Leitch, Chopping and Thomas.¹⁴⁹ In 1894, the Committee stayed largely the same, with W.J. Thomas as President. The library had twenty two subscribers,¹⁵⁰ including the Committee, despite a conscientious effort to top up its shelves with recently written novels at quite short intervals. It was suggested that this was because the opening hours were too short.¹⁵¹ An annual government subsidy of between about £6 and £10 helped to keep the library functioning combined with the 2s 6d paid quarterly by each subscriber. The subsidy ensured that the librarian, V. Griggs could be employed at £2 a year. Griggs left this job in 1906 and was replaced by G. Coleman at a salary of £6 a year. The number of subscribers varied between twenty and twenty eight throughout the 1890s. By 1910, there were just fourteen subscribers.¹⁵² The Institute battled to keep the library functioning, but it is very clear that by this time, any aims the Institute had fifty two years before, to educate workmen in technical and scientific principles, had completely dissipated.

As early as 1887, the Mechanics' Institute began to be referred to as "Franklin Town Hall."¹⁵³ By 1910 the population had changed quite dramatically and this was reflected in the developing function of the Institute building as a multi-purpose centre of community activity. Only the very oldest of Franklin's residents remembered the building's original purposes and still called it the "Institute" or the "Mechanics' Hall." To everyone else it was Franklin Town Hall, the place for entertainment, dancing, fund raising and celebrations. By then, the need to replace the hall with a much larger building that could cope with what was seen as the inevitable future growth of the town of Franklin was already apparent. Apart from its function as a public meeting place, all that remained of the Huon Mechanics' Institute's original purposes was its dying library.

Endnotes

- 1 Smith, Mark K., 1997, www.infed.org/walking/wa-birb.htm
- 2 Evans, Richard, 2012, Chapter 5.
- 3 Roh, D, 2006; Kelly, Thomas, 1952, pp. 17 – 27.
- 4 en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Talk:Mechanics%27_Institutes; www.mechanicsinstitute.co.uk/ Firth, Ann, 2005.
- 5 Libraries in Australia, 2011; Petrow, Stefan, "Mechanics' Institutes" in Alexander, Alison 2005.
- 6 *The Courier*, 28 April 1854, p. 3.
- 7 Watson, Catherine, 1987, Evelyn Helm, p. 55.
- 8 Boyce, James, 2008, pp. 224 – 225.
- 9 hccda.ada.edu.au/pages/TAS-1842-census-01_1 and hccda.ada.edu.au/documents/TAS-1851-census
- 10 Woolley, Richie & Smith, Wayne, 2004, pp. 100 – 101.
- 11 *Colonial Times*, 8 November 1853.
- 12 *Centenary of the Settlement of the Huon*, 1936, "Early Transport Difficulties."
- 13 *The Courier*, 12 February 1859, p. 2. There was a school in Franklin by 1848, see Woolley & Smith, 2004, p. 134.
- 14 Woolley, Richie & Smith, Wayne, 2004, p. 133.
- 15 *The Mercury*, 22 May 1934, p. 7.
- 16 *The Courier*, 4 January 1854 p. 2.
- 17 Norman, L, 1938, p. 147.
- 18 *Huon and Derwent Times*, 24 March 1938, p. 1.
- 19 Woolley, Richie & Smith, Wayne, 2004, p.176.
- 20 *The Courier*, 4 January 1854, p. 2.
- 21 Woolley, Richie & Smith, Wayne, 2004, pp. 134 – 5.
- 22 *The Courier*, 28 April 1854, p. 3.
- 23 For example, *The Courier*, 12 June 1854, p. 2.
- 24 *The Courier*, 11 June 1855, p. 2.
- 25 *The Mercury*, 3 October 1859, p. 2. The gaol was located immediately south of Franklin Courthouse (1882).
- 26 *The Courier*, 3 December 1858, p. 2.
- 27 *Hobart Town Daily Mercury*, 9 April 1858, p. 2.
- 28 *Huon Times*, 10 December 1910, p. 6; 23 December 1911.
- 29 *Hobart Town Daily Mercury*, 11 December 1857, p. 3.
- 30 *Hobart Town Daily Mercury*, 20 February 1858, p. 3.
- 31 *The Courier*, 28 March 1860, p. 2.
- 32 *Launceston Examiner*, 4 February 1858, p. 2.
- 33 *The Mercury* 23 July 1862, p. 3.
- 34 *The Tasmanian Mail*, 23 March 1889, p. 30.
- 35 Robson, L.L, "John Donnellan Balfe, 1816 – 1880," [Australian Dictionary of Biography. adb.anu.edu.au/biography/balfe-john-donnellan-2924](http://AustralianDictionaryofBiography.adb.anu.edu.au/biography/balfe-john-donnellan-2924); Martin, John, 1970, passim.
- 36 *Hobart Town Daily Mercury*, 7 January 1858, p. 3.
- 37 *Cornwall Chronicle*, 3 August 1839, p. 3; *Colonial Times*, 3 September 1839 p. 1.
- 38 *Launceston Examiner*, 7 March 1854, p. 2; *Cornwall Chronicle*, 24 November 1855, p. 5.
- 39 J.S White was appointed Registrar to the Court of Requests, Franklin, Dover, Port Cygnet and Port Esperance, and Returning Officer for the Electoral District of Franklin in 1860 (*The Mercury*, 30 October 1860, p. 2; *Launceston Examiner*, 12 May 1860, p. 4; *The Mercury*, 30 October 1860, p. 2); he was later Chairman of the Surges Bay Road District (*The Mercury*, 4 March 1876, p. 3).
- 40 *Colonial Times*, 5 July 1855, p. 3.
- 41 *Colonial Times*, 25 July 1857, p. 3.
- 42 *The Courier*, 23 September 1857, p. 3.
- 43 *The Courier*, 22 January 1858, p. 2.
- 44 *The Courier*, 26 July 1858, p. 2.
- 45 *The Courier*, 30 November 1858, p. 2.
- 46 *The Courier*, 30 November 1858, p. 2.
- 47 *Launceston Examiner*, 4 February 1858, p. 2.
- 48 *Hobart Town Daily Mercury*, 20 February 1858, p. 3.
- 49 *Launceston Examiner*, 2 October 1858, p. 2.
- 50 *Hobart Town Daily Mercury*, 6 February 1858, p. 3.
- 51 *The Courier*, 8 February 1858, p. 2.
- 52 *Hobart Town Daily Mercury*, 28 June 1858, p. 2.
- 53 *Hobart Town Daily Mercury*, 9 April 1858, p. 2.
- 54 *The Courier*, 1 July 1858, p. 3.
- 55 *The Mercury* 28 March 1860, p. 2.
- 56 *Hobart Town Daily Mercury*, 15 September 1858, p. 3.
- 57 *The Courier*, 1 January 1859, p. 2.
- 58 *Launceston Examiner*, 2 October 1858, p. 2.
- 59 *Hobart Town Daily Mercury*, 30 November, p. 3; 2 December, p. 3; 16 December 1858, p. 3.
- 60 *Huon Times*, 13 December 1911.

- 61 www.measuringworth.com/ukcompare/result.php converted using the “average earnings” method.
- 62 *Hobart Town Daily Mercury*, 2 December 1858, p. 3.
- 63 *The Courier*, 22 December 1858, p. 3.
- 64 *Hobart Town Daily Mercury*, 28 March 1860, p. 3.
- 65 *The Courier*, 1 January 1859, p. 2.
- 66 The *New Land Sales Act*, for example, enabled intending settlers to elect to pay for land by instalments at purchase. The *Unsettled Lands Act* granted free 10-year leases to those who could put stock on land, and free land grants of up to 640 acres for those who would occupy and bring 10% of the land into cultivation within 5 years and also owned £1 of capital for every acre applied for. *The Courier*, 1 January 1859, p. 2.
- 67 *The Courier*, 1 January 1859, p. 2.
- 68 *The Courier*, 10 November 1858, p. 3.
- 69 *Hobart Town Daily Mercury*, 2 December 1858, p. 3.
- 70 *Hobart Town Daily Mercury*, 7 January 1859, p. 1.
- 71 *Hobart Town Daily Mercury*, 12 May, 30 June, 14 October 1859, p.4; *The Courier*, 18 May 1858, p. 2. Merry’s Exchange later became Kennedy’s Exchange.
- 72 *Hobart Town Daily Mercury*, 3 October 1859, p. 2.
- 73 Kent County Survey Diagram No. 2/63. I am indebted to Richie Woolley for this information.
- 74 Young, R., 2010.
- 75 *The Courier*, 29 April 1859, p. 2. A new Anglican Church, St. John’s, designed by Henry Hunter was built in Franklin and consecrated in 1864.
- 76 *Launceston Examiner*, 2 August 1859, p. 2.
- 77 *Hobart Town Daily Mercury*, 12 January 1859, p. 1.
- 78 *Hobart Town Daily Mercury*, 17 March 1859, p. 1.
- 79 *Hobart Town Daily Mercury*, 8 December 1859, p. 2.
- 80 *The Courier*, 18 January 1859, p. 3.
- 81 *Launceston Examiner*, 2 August 1859, p. 2.
- 82 *Launceston Examiner*, 30 August 1859, p. 3.
- 83 *Hobart Town Daily Mercury*, 7 September 1859, p. 3; 15 September 1859, p. 3.
- 84 *Hobart Town Daily Mercury*, 3 October 1858, p. 2.
- 85 *The Courier*, 29 April 1859, p. 2.
- 86 *Launceston Examiner*, 30 August 1859, p. 3.
- 87 *The Courier*, 12 February 1859, p. 2.
- 88 AOT ED11/1/792, - 268/8/36, 1936.
- 89 *Hobart Town Daily Mercury*, 1 September 1859, p. 3.
- 90 *Launceston Examiner*, 18 January 1859, p. 2.
- 91 *The Courier*, 12 February 1859, p. 2.
- 92 *The Mercury*, 28th March 1860, p. 2.
- 93 *Launceston Examiner*, 18 January 1859, p. 2. The courthouse mentioned is the first Franklin courthouse, not the building Franklin people know now as the old courthouse, which was built in 1882. It is possible that the courthouse mentioned was built on the same site.
- 94 *Launceston Examiner*, 2 August 1859, p. 2.
- 95 *Hobart Town Daily Mercury*, 8 December 1859, p. 2.
- 96 *Hobart Town Daily Mercury*, 28 March 1860, p. 2.
- 97 *Hobart Town Daily Mercury*, 28 March 1860, p. 2.
- 98 All temperance associations, *Hobart Town Daily Mercury*, 3 March 1860, p. 2.
- 99 *Launceston Examiner*, 12 April 1860, p. 4.
- 100 *Hobart Town Daily Mercury*, 28 March 1860, p. 2; *Launceston Examiner*, 12 April 1860, pp. 4 – 5.
- 101 *Launceston Examiner*, 12 April 1860, p. 4.
- 102 *The Mercury*, 30 November, 1860, p. 2.
- 103 *Huon Times*, 23 December 1911.
- 104 *Hobart Town Daily Mercury*, 11 February, 1860, p. 2; 23 April, p.2; 6 June, p. 3 1860; *The Mercury*, 6 July 1860, p. 2.
- 105 *The Mercury*, 3 October 1860, p. 3.
- 106 *The Mercury*, 30 November 1860, p. 2.
- 107 *The Mercury*, 30 November 1860, p. 2.
- 108 *The Mercury*, 24 December 1860, p.2; 26 July 1860, p. 2; 20 December 1860, p. 3.
- 109 *The Mercury*, 10 September 1861, p. 3; 26 June 1862, p. 3.
- 110 *The Mercury*, 3 March 1862, p. 3.
- 111 *The Mercury*, 7 October 1861, p. 3.
- 112 *The Mercury*, 31 January 1862, p. 3.
- 113 *The Mercury*, 26 September 1862, p. 5; 4 October 1862, p. 4.
- 114 *The Mercury*, 21 July 1862, p. 2.
- 115 *The Mercury*, 14 July 1870, p. 4.
- 116 *The Mercury*, 24 January 1871, p. 3.
- 117 *The Mercury*, 18 February 1871, p. 3.
- 118 *The Mercury*, 6 September 1871, p. 3.
- 119 *The Mercury*, 28 October 1871, p. 2; 16 April 1872, p. 2.
- 120 *The Mercury*, 18 March, 1874, p. 4.
- 121 Boyce, James, 2008, p. 228.
- 122 *The Mercury* 18 April 1874, p. 1S.

- 123 *The Mercury*, 4 November 1868, p. 2.
 124 *The Mercury*, 25 March 1873, p. 3.
 125 *The Mercury*, 28 March 1870, p. 2.
 126 *The Mercury*, 27 August 1874, p. 2.
 127 *The Mercury*, 26 September 1874, p. 3.
 128 *The Mercury*, 28 February 1870, p. 2.
 129 *The Mercury*, 15 July 1875, p.3; *Balliere's Tasmanian Gazetteer*, 1877, pp. 78 – 9.
 130 *Huon Times*, 26 January 1923.
 131 *Huon and Derwent Times*, 24 March 1938 ,p. 1.
 132 *Balliere's Tasmanian Gazetteer* 1877, p. 78 – 9.
 133 AOT ED11/1/72, - 268/8/36, 1936.
 134 *The Mercury*, 15 July 1875, p. 3.
 135 *The Mercury*, 13 March 1875, p. 3; 1 April 1875, p. 3; 27 November 1876, p. 2S.
 136 *The Mercury*, 24 December 1878, p. 2.
 137 *The Mercury*, 19 September 1882, p. 4.
 138 *The Mercury*, 2 December 1882, p. 1.
 139 *The Mercury*, 22 July 1882, p. 2S.
 140 Young, R., 2010.
 141 *The Mercury*, 4 May 1882, p. 2; 4 August 1883, p. 3; 30 March 1883, p. 3; 3 February 1892, p. 2.
 142 *The Mercury*, 30 March 1883, p. 3.
 143 *The Mercury*, 15 May 1883, p. 3; 7 April 1886, p.1S; 7 June 1886, p. 3.
 144 *The Mercury*, 23 February 1887, p. 4.
 145 *Huon Valley Sporting Gazette*, 22 June 1962, p. 4.
 146 *The Mercury*, 10 June 1887, p. 4.
 147 *The Mercury*, 8 August 1887, p. 4.
 148 *The Mercury*, 19 November 1887, p. 4.
 149 *The Mercury*, 1 March 1893, p. 2.
 150 AOT NS 55/1/1, 1 January 1894 to 31 December 1905 (actually includes intermittent entries to 1919).
 151 *The Mercury*, 12 June 1894, p. 3.
 152 AOT, NS 55/1/1.
 153 *The Mercury*, 15 December 1887, p. 1.



Franklin from the North

[GREG CLARK COLLECTION, KINDLY LOANED BY JOAN CLARK]