

Health

Public health care and welfare has been administered unobtrusively by the Esk Shire Council for a century. Public expectations of Council's role have changed in dramatic response to epidemics and with the rise in living standards. The council's responsibility for health care involves water supply and sewerage undertakings, rubbish collection and cleansing, town drainage, mosquito and vermin control, water pollution, immunization and Health Education programmes.

From the opening of the Stanley Memorial Hospital (in Esk) the Council has had a representative on the Hospital Board. Methods of financing hospitals have caused great controversy at various times in the shire. Otherwise private hospitals, often owned and administered by the local doctor, served each town until costs, government health care standards and improved transport forced their closures. Before health insurance, payment for medical services was uncertain in poor seasons. Travelling dentists and optometrists visited regularly, advertising ahead in such newspapers as the *Esk Record* and *Toogoolawah Times*.

The first public water supplies were bores, wells, dams, and windmills. The McConnells provided a windmill and bore for their Cressbrook land subdivision which was taken over by the Council in 1911. Other wells and dams which the Council controlled were at Mount Beppo, Prenzlau, Esk, and Minden. It retained this system until the 1940s when town water supplies were first investigated by Council for Esk, Toogoolawah, and Lowood, following the inauguration of the Somerset Dam town supply from the dam.¹

At first the Divisional Board recoiled from involvement in town water supplies; in 1881 the Board passed and then rescinded a motion to fund the town wells pound-for-pound. That policy was quickly rejected at the November meeting when the Board funded the sinking of wells at Crow's Nest and Esk. William Smith won the contract to sink the Crow's Nest town well. The Board unanimously voted £50 for the Esk town well and pump, prompted by a petition from townspeople; John Milner did the sinking. Unfortunately the well was a failure because the water was undrinkable. Two years later they decided to sink another well on the water reserve near Sandy

Creek. Council passed its first water by-laws in December 1885. The Board would lease out the water supply service. Water was to be sold at 2d. per hundred gallons if obtained by the ratepayer, and 1s. 6d. per hundred gallons when delivered half a mile by the water carrier. Damage to the pump brought prosecution and fine.²

In the 1902 drought the well on the eastern side of town and Sandy Creek dried up, and a hand rotary pump was installed on the western side well. A tank of water carted to the house then cost 2s. 6d. When engineer P. Hill arrived in 1913 he said the pump in Sandy Creek was outdated and Council approved a new one, powered by an oil engine. The 2,000 gallon tank provided in January 1914 was a huge benefit to the newly-purchased traction engine which otherwise had to stop at a creek and take on water of doubtful purity. However for many years the water supply was insufficient especially for the sawmills and the butter factory. Through the Public Lands Department Lars Andersen had a water supply located in a 122 feet deep bore put down for his sawmill in 1920. Council supplied an extra tank in 1922 for the town water. These methods served the fairly stable Esk population throughout the 1920s and 1930s. P. Hill began investigating a new town water supply when the central flower gardens were established in the main street in 1936 and for fire fighting purposes.³

Council borrowed £600 in 1946 for investigations of Esk, Lowood and Toogoolawah town water supplies. Progress was slow. For Esk there were two possibilities — Sandy Creek or the Brisbane River. Borrowings and planning for a supply from Brisbane River were arranged in the 1950s. Construction was done in 1960-1961; James Hardie and Company, AIS, Port Kembla, and A. Sargeant and Company Pty Ltd supplied the materials at a cost of £16,500. H. Richter, Minister for Local Government, opened the scheme on 22 September 1962. A water treatment plant was not installed until 1979. Following the construction of the Wivenhoe dam some nearby landholders have had water reticulated to them from that dam.⁴

The Lowood Shire Council made several commendable efforts to provide water supplies. The council was responsible for pumps at **Hillside, Minden and Stone Gully**. Pollution by people

bathing in the town waterholes and shooting ducks on the dams was a problem and council impounded stock near water reserves. After much wrangling with the government Water Supply Department a site was selected in 1917 on Ruhl's farm for Prenzlau water supply. It was used by farmers and the Main Roads Department for decades.

At **Lowood** there was a constant string of carts going to the river for water, especially in the 1902 drought. In 1921 W.H. Vernor suggested that the Esk Shire Council construct a weir over the Brisbane River for Lowood water supply. Councillors Nunn and Seib thought that Nestle Company could be approached to supply water to Lowood residents. John Walters had the ingenious idea that town water could be obtained from the tanks being erected for roadworks. Walters and seventy other petitioners sought water pipes from the water tanks to the Lowood main street for townspeople- quite possible providing the Railway Department assisted with its Clarendon pumping plant. Council agreed, meters were installed, and Walters and C.H.D. Lindemann contributed towards the purchase of water troughs because the Railway Department could not remove its pump in 1924.

In 1933 a new water supply was obtained from A.C. Munro and Sons who owned the local dairy factory. By 1941 that water supply was in jeopardy because of the Munro's sale of the factory to Queensland Farmers' Co-operative Association. Council then obtained a Treasury Department loan of £9,500 for the water supply and other shire bridges; that enabled Council to continue the supply system from the factory.

With the increased military population in the area the water supply was insufficient and through the Local Government Department Council investigated the construction of a 250,000 gallon reservoir. A £4,000 loan was necessary. Short supplies of materials hampered them and some steel was obtained from the Stanley River Works Board. Then they installed a chlorination plant in 1947 at a cost of £19,500. However the water supply was insufficient; in the 1951 drought early risers used to fill their tins before the pipes ran dry. Larger fibrolite pipes were laid in 1952 for the fifty householders.

An upgraded water reticulation scheme was undertaken in 1954. Council borrowed £4,000 from Treasury with a £2,000 subsidy and that scheme was completed by October 1954. New pumps were installed in 1972. In 1977 filtration was introduced and it was hoped that the scheme would operate until 1990.

Tarampa water supply was added in 1979 when two bores were used with a 10,000 gallon reservoir supplemented by smaller storages. There were ninety users so supply to subdivisions could not possibly be contemplated. In 1982 council accepted the recommendation of Cameron McNamara Pty Ltd to augment the supply immediately and acquire land for a reservoir from 1995. Meanwhile council was also accepting financial contributions from land development companies towards water supplies and in 1984 Council commenced land acquisition for the new reservoir on Portion 376, Parish of Tarampa, near Fairfield Road. The new three million litre capacity reservoir, to be built at a cost of \$970,000, is to service Lowood and nearby rural residential areas and will be further upgraded at a cost of \$1,100,000 in 1989.⁵

Lowood Council was also responsible for the **Coominya** water supply and a benefitted area was declared in 1914 to pay for it. Lippke and Doyle located good bore water. Council bought a windmill from Toowoomba Foundry for £98 but it was unsuccessful because insufficient casing was inserted in the bore. The Hydraulic Engineer's Department made the bore operational in July 1915 and W.F. Lyons organized the water supply to residents. However the bore failed and a water famine ensued; Council had to obtain urgent assistance from Barety of Helidon in recasing the bore. Lowood and Esk Shire Council had constant trouble with the bore and windmill for years. In 1926 they retained a local man, Muckert, to look after the water supply for £12 per year. The old 1919 bore was used until the 1936 drought when J.R. Doyle, well borer, removed all the old casing and sank the bore down to 141 feet; engineer, P. Hill, obtained a 2hp engine to run it. The bore gradually went out of use as the townspeople bought their own tanks and attached guttering to their houses. The Coominya Soldier Settlement bore was also used from 1943 until comparatively recent times, but residents now use their own tank water exclusively.⁶

In the German farming areas around Toogoolawah the Esk Shire Council subsidized the farmers' water supply since the 1890s. During the 1897 drought they erected a new tank and pump at a cost of £400 at the **Mount Beppo** bore which then produced pure water instead of liquid mud. The board then appointed a committee of H.P. Somerset, Robert Soden, and G.A. Gillmeister to look after the tank, pump and the water hole which the government Hydraulic Engineer had selected on Carl Golenski's land. From then on the Council co-ordinated maintenance and upgrading of the water supply which serviced farmers within a 1.5



Esk Hospital. 1987.

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mile radius. As it had originally been a government dam, the Council always sought subsidies. In 1906 a new water reserve was set aside and two new wells were put down in 1907 — Varley's and Herman's. There was also Granzien's windmill on Mount Beppo road which Council controlled in dry weather; August Granzien became the first caretaker of the mill in 1914. The Mount Beppo dam served the district into the late 1950s when individual farmers began constructing their own farm dams. Further west at Ottaba the well put down in 1908 was used for travelling stock.⁷

By contrast, **Toogoolawah** had a consistent water supply by sinking wells on the old course of the creek. In 1912 a windmill and tanks were placed above the well on the recreation reserve. The council supplied the materials and the Progress Association did the work. Plumber W.C. Schank maintained the equipment from 1915. In 1922 the Toogoolawah Amateur Gardening and Progress Association resolved to advocate a new town water supply. However progress was slow and it took thirty-three years to obtain it, because of lack of funds and clear ideas as to the type of equipment necessary. In 1945 Water Supply Department investigators selected the crest of Bellambi Hill near the Nestle company house for a reservoir for water pumped from Cressbrook Creek river gravels. Council went ahead with the

Bellambi Hill reservoir project in 1952 obtaining an £8,000 loan. Contractors, E. and I. Pty Ltd of Brisbane began work in August 1953; K.D. Morris and Sons Pty Ltd had the major contract and there were protracted difficulties which had to be resolved through arbitration. The whole project cost £18,500 and the new water supply was switched on early in 1955.⁸

Toogoolawah water was filtrated in 1964 but water quality was generally unsatisfactory because the water was hard, corrosive and at times carried high levels of iron. Whilst the public complained about it, they were unwilling to pay an extra \$1 per week in rates for better filtration. In 1978 council borrowed \$50,667 for a water treatment plant. As the population was increasing rapidly in 1980 the council had to engage a local contractor, W.J. Somerville, to sink an extra bore to contribute an extra 4,000 gallons per hour to the town water supply.⁹

Fernvale's water supply was a fascinating example of private enterprise development. The water supply resulted from the subdivision developments of Peter Kurts Pty Ltd in the Fernvale area in the early 1980s on the Bambling and Powell subdivisions. Fernvale people all remember the huge trenchdiggers that invaded the town and dug up footpaths and roadways and

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altogether changed the town landscape temporarily. Peter Kurts Pty Ltd wanted Council to accept a lower standard of water supply for rural subdivisions and hoped that the Glamorgan and Tarampa Water Boards could be incorporated in the project. That idea came to naught. Instead Peter Kurts Pty Ltd financed external water works on the two estates and council drew water from the Brisbane River for the 1983 scheme.¹⁰

The Railway Department supplied town water at both **Linville** and **Moore** free of charge between 1946 and 1971. The cost of a new supply, from bores, in 1980 was \$195,000.⁰⁰

Concern about **pollution** of water supplies and the necessity of good town drainage were on the minds of Board members from the beginning. However there was little finance for drainage and pollution was only considered an issue when its obvious presence affected either the dairying industry or water supplies.

Butchers caused the main problems. Coal Creek had a slaughteryard which polluted the creek for many years. Council took responsibility in 1902 for regulating the slaughteryards. In July 1918 council decided to prosecute residents and companies polluting water supplies. There was a particularly bad incident with cattle in October 1936 when eight dead beasts were found in the Brisbane River near Lowood's town water supply. Two other sources of pollution were sawmills which dumped sawdust in creeks and dairy factories which drained buttermilk and dirty water into creeks. The Nestle Company drained polluted water into Cressbrook Creek and was the target of criticism in the 1920s.¹²

Periodically council endeavoured to remove **drainage** problems in the towns especially at the rear of hotels, hospitals, and in front of shops. Some of the earliest drainage work done in Esk was in the vicinity of the railway station, in order to allow waggons to ply to and from the station and to protect residences in Redbank and Highland Streets. However the first planned drainage programme was not undertaken until 1905. A contract was let for three chains of drainage in Ipswich Street near the Commercial Hotel. Further work was done in 1906 in Redbank street.

However the worst problems were stagnant drains and running water in backyards, particularly hotels; but Council was uncertain whether it had the legal basis to prosecute. All towns were the same. In the wet season streets and yards became quagmires and lakes that lay stagnant for weeks. It was just something that had to be coped with and Councils could not afford the

drainage works necessary to alleviate the public health implications.

In 1909 Council resolved to borrow £1,000 for a drainage scheme in Esk. There had already been a small drainage scheme done by council in Fernvale in 1907, as a precedent. However local government politics prevailed above public health. The council's difficulty was that the rate revenue from the towns was insufficient to fund major street improvements; if the council borrowed money there was no certainty that it could be paid back by the benefitted area. However Cr Lord and a couple of other councillors considered that the project could be achieved by using some of the credit the council had accumulated in its bank account. Naturally ratepayers outside the town were very sceptical. Led by F.M. Eugeman, they petitioned for a poll and defeated the town improvements proposal. That did not stop Cr Lord planning to finance a full drainage scheme rather than fritter money annually on small schemes. An engineer, Harding Frew, reported to Council in December 1912 that a scheme costing £4,000 could be done in Ipswich, Highland, Richard, Edward, Pryde, Redbank and Mary Streets in two sections. As Council had a credit balance of £4,000 in the bank for several years Cr Lord recommended to a special Council meeting in March 1911 that £2,000 of it be used on the Esk town improvements and the remainder borrowed. Council divided — Lord, Thompson, Handley, Smith FOR; McConnel, Brennan, Seib, Conroy, Poole AGAINST. At the same meeting Cr McConnel advocated borrowing about £20,000 for permanent roads, bridges, and drainage in all parts of the shire. However numbers changed and Cr Lord successfully moved at the July meeting of Council that the £2,000 be borrowed for the drainage scheme but Cr Conroy amended the motion so that Esk people would have to vote on it. An Esk Progress Association meeting, on 24 October 1911, decided the issue; they considered that the scheme would be too expensive because labour and material costs had increased so much since the scheme had first been proposed in 1909. The Esk people also asked that the cost of maintaining Ipswich Street be borne by the state government as it was a main road. Councillors' reactions were voiced clearly:

Cr McConnel: 'That is Esk all over.'

Cr Lord: 'That practically settles it.'

Cr McConnel: 'Take no more trouble about it,' and then went on to pronounce that Esk business people collected money from country people and they ought to pay for Esk's improvements.

The council continued to spend frugally on town improvements. Effective drainage was only done



Substantial concrete drain dug in 1932 down Highland Street and past the post office down to the creek to alleviate part of Esk's drainage problems. (1987.)

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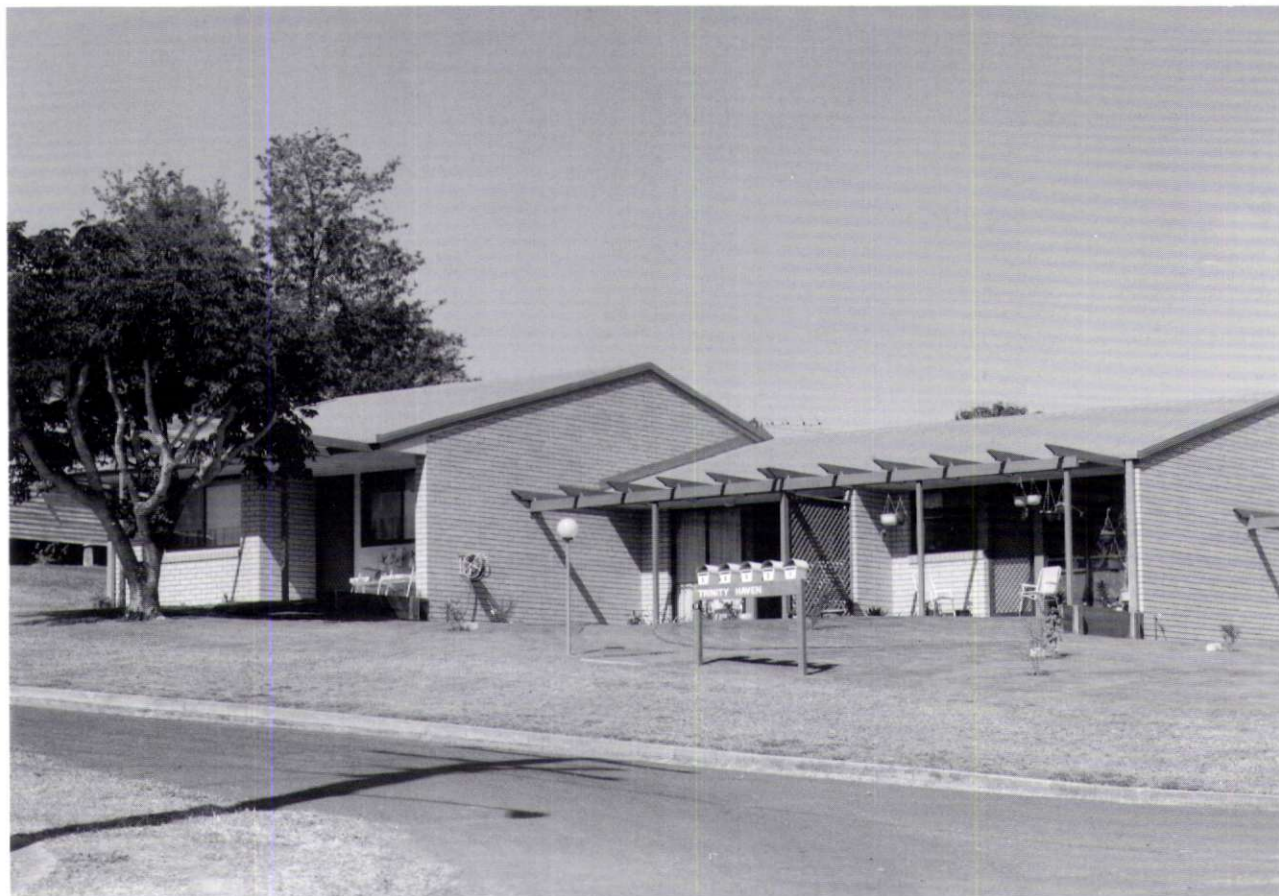
when public health standards were questioned. In 1915 Highland Street was so bad that August Blank, the sawmiller, provided the timber free for the box drain. There was also a constant problem with low lying areas around the huge Metropole Hotel as the water drained so slowly down Highland Street and across Ipswich Street towards the creek. Meanwhile council had to remind Lars Andersen of his promise to fill in an open earth drain running through the backyards of his mill cottages.

In the 1920s concrete drains were introduced. The Medical Officer and council inspector had condemned the drain in front of the Esk railway dining room in 1921 and council did a good job of piping the water to a ninety foot long concrete drain through the railway yards. Later in 1926 the Council had a frustrating task achieving agreement between the Works Department, Health Department, and the Hospital Board about a proper drainage scheme through the hospital grounds. That problem went on for years before resolution. It wasn't until the depression years that the open drain from the Metropole Hotel, under Ipswich Street, and past the Post Office was dug. George Williams of Ipswich did the excavation work and concreting for a substantial, deep drain which still survives.¹³

Drainage problems were overcome by the mid-1930s. The bed of Stinking Gully was cleared and the poor drainage from Fernvale railway

station and hotels was remedied by 1930. Lowood had constant problems with a large drain running under Minke's shop in 1915 and the council gang extended the water table in the Main Street. The railway land at Toogoolawah was the destination of all water that ran through Cressbrook Street from the shops, especially Flaskas's and later Neilsen's *Roseberry Cafe* (now *The Coach House*) and the garages. After finishing the Esk drain George Williams constructed a decent drain in Toogoolawah.¹⁴

Sanitary services for Esk were first considered by Council in 1892 but the depression precluded any action. Health risks of the 1902 drought reactivated the issue. Works Foreman Langton was appointed Sanitary Inspector at Esk. D. McCorry was the first contractor and the Council leased a sanitary depot on his land; John Simons took over in 1904 and Henry Hemstedt in 1907. There were constant complaints at the time especially about lack of provision for the fifty railway navvies camped in the Esk railway yards. The undercurrent of discontent over odours continued for a decade until the Council complied fully with the health regulations and improved the site. There were still several objectors and Council decided to sell the old depot to Cormack Brothers and buy a new site from Chaille in 1924. In the depression extra facilities had to be installed at the Showgrounds for the numbers of unemployed camping there. Montague George Hertrick who had worked for Hemstedt, and Walter Hinton took



Lutheran Trinity Haven Retirement Home, Lowood. 1987.

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over the contract for both Esk and Toogoolawah from Hemstedt in 1925; they later split up between the two towns. Montague's brother, George Hertrick had the Esk sanitary and garbage contract from 1947 to 1974.

A site for sanitary and rubbish depot was selected at Toogoolawah in 1908 and Hemstedt obtained the contract for the service in July 1909. C.B. Giles took up the contract for the Moore and Linville services in December 1910; W.J. Hoskings and S. Burns did it up to 1920. J. Berndt operated Lowood's service from February 1910, when it was still in the Walloon Shire. F. Gutzke took it over from 1915 and operated until 1937, when Bick and Kleinhamms took over. Five acres of J.O. Williams's land was leased at Colinton for a sanitary depot from April 1918; it was discontinued in 1925 after the population decreased. At Coominya all the land within half a mile of the Post Office was included in the sanitary service which was introduced at ratepayers' request in 1922. There were difficulties with the Walloon Shire Council over selection of a depot at Fernvale and W. Tebbett was the first contractor in 1915. At Somerset Dam the Stanley River Works Board contracted all public health services to W. Lobergeiger and then W. Mason in

1952. The Esk Shire Council took over these responsibilities from 30 June 1955.¹⁵

Garbage services started in 1903 and have continued almost unchanged. The sanitary contractor usually held the garbage contract as well and Patrick Shine, Sanitary Inspector, also supervised the local rubbish dumps. Residents were allocated a day per month to deliver rubbish to the Esk dump under the supervision of J. Thomas, caretaker. The first rubbish collection contractor in Esk and Toogoolawah was Henry Hemstedt in 1913. There was very little rubbish in the early days because people had fowls. It was Health Inspector Dudley Harris who first insisted on residents using garbage tins.

In the 1930s depression there were difficulties in policing the rules at the dump. Bottle collectors and cast iron scavengers spread the rubbish about the reserve. In 1932 relief workers put on to organize the dump put galvanized iron all around the boundary and carted rubbish in wheelbarrows to trenches to bury it. The galvanized iron offered a new opportunity and mysteriously disappeared to provide windbreaks on orchards. In later years the Health Inspector requested the garbage contractor

to fill the old gravel pit and waterholes around Esk with rubbish to eradicate mosquitoes. Some of Blank's sawmill site has been filled in this way.¹⁶

Sewerage schemes were first mentioned at Council in 1958. Nothing happened until 1961 when an Esk public meeting was held to consider the expense. People like 'Eskus' considered that overcrowded fowl sheds were no worse than a town without sewerage and less expensive, especially as sewerage connections were compulsory. However public functions with visiting dignitaries were difficult to organize when public facilities were primitive. It was not until October 1975 that council resolved to borrow \$390,000 for the Esk sewerage scheme; it was a compulsory scheme and town water connection also became obligatory. The work was done by Council day-labour.¹⁷

In 1961 council voted against proceeding with the Lowood sewerage scheme because of the cost. In 1971 the total cost was put at \$240,955 and rapid housing development in the area increased the size of the scheme. Now, with further subdivisions, Council plans to further expand the scheme.¹⁸

Toogoolawah was the first sewerage scheme proposed for the Esk Shire but it was shelved because local people opposed the scheme. A special meeting of Council on 20 August 1958 decided to borrow £750 for the scheme and Local Government Department prepared the preliminary plans but the scheme was not continued. Costs were escalating and it was feared that the scheme would never succeed. Council decided at a special meeting on 16 July 1970 to borrow £282,000 for completion of the scheme as per the Local Government Department's plan. Council had to borrow another \$72,000 before letting the contracts to R.J. and N. Smith Pty Ltd for \$217,197 for sewers and house drains, James Hardie and Company Pty Ltd for \$6,593 for AC pipes, Tubemakers of Australia Limited for \$1,787 for CI tubes, K and L Construction of Toowoomba for \$41,905 for the Sewerage Treatment Works, Underhill Day and Company Pty Ltd for \$2,794 for flowmeters and accessories, Forrers Contracting Pty Ltd for \$10,850 for pumps. A further \$354,000 had to be borrowed in 1971 to complete the project, including sewerage public conveniences at the swimming pool and caravan park. There were great difficulties with the contractor, R.J. and N. Smith Pty Ltd, who was unable to complete the contract; Council had to take over the contract with its own day labour work force and the sewerage scheme was eventually completed in 1972.

Brisbane City Council offered to contribute to sewerage Somerset Dam in 1977 and the Esk Shire

Council decided to proceed in 1979 but the scheme has not proceeded for fear of polluting the dams.¹⁹

Hospitals

From its inception the Esk Divisional Board was contributing towards the running of hospitals by deducting a penny in the pound off all contracts. The first hospital built in the region was at Esk in 1907. At the turn of the century Mrs Hill was the midwife at Esk.

The first efforts at obtaining a hospital at Esk were made in 1899. A committee of management was established in 1907 and the Esk Nursing Home was opened on 24 July 1907 with Mrs Lumley Hill as President of the Committee. However, by 1912 it could not pay its way funds were raised through the council and social functions such as a Rugby Union Rules benefit football match and a social evening in the Olympic Hall. Annie Chaille, the secretary managed the funds by careful budgeting. In 1914 she secured the services of Nurse O'Donnell, formerly of Dr Culpin's Nursing Home at Taringa. The hospital received annual donations from the Esk Shire Council, equal to the registration fee with the Home Secretary's Office for all hospitals. In August 1918 Matron Evoy resigned and was replaced by Nurse Tyrell. A range of leading citizens were on the Committee elected at the annual general meeting held in the Lyceum Hall — Mrs Lumley Hill, President, Mesdames Somerset, Lord, McConnel and Buchanan, Vice presidents, and Mesdames Williams, Peters, Callaghan, Chaille, Henderson, Tompkins, Pryde and Findlay and Revs. Henderson and Tomkins. Matron Tyrell resigned in March 1919. It was fortunate that Dr Porter advised the committee to appoint fully trained general nurses, as the serious flu epidemic appeared soon after. At that time there was also a private nursing home run by Mrs Hemstedt at the top of Middle Street. In January 1925 Nurse E.M. Baker applied for registration of a general private hospital to be called Glenrock Private Hospital at the corner of Russell and Francis Streets, Esk.²⁰

In 1922 general hospital licences were applied for at both Esk and Toogoolawah. A public meeting had been held at Esk approving a fund of £450 for the taking over of the Esk Nursing Home and the establishment of a general hospital and maternity home to be named the Stanley District Hospital. The proposal was unsuccessful as the Home Secretary's Office rejected the application. The private hospital continued operating as the Glenrock Private Hospital. They tried again in 1924 and 1925, the Works Department agreeing in 1925

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to prepare plans for a general hospital on a site near the Court House.

The Stanley Memorial Hospital was opened at Esk on 21 August 1926 by the Minister for Public Works, M.J. Kirwan. The Hospital Committee of A.J. Heap (President), J. Barbour Jnr, W.S. Cross, G. Launder and C.F. Russell, organized the day's festivities. The former hospital had been removed to the new site and remodelled by E. Theine. Extensive additions and a new maternity ward were constructed at a total cost of £2,800. President of the Hospital Committee, A.J. Heap, commended the voluntary work done by the committee over the previous five years in converting a £500 debt into a new hospital supported by Golden Casket funds. There were male and female wards, private rooms, casualty section, with nurses quarters at the rear. Adjacent were a new kitchen, pantries, and an operating theatre. The government funded the maternity section costing £2,000. Set aside in the grounds were an isolation ward with four rooms and a verandah all round. The building was erected on stumps and painted internally and externally. A memorial tablet was unveiled on the day:

Stanley Memorial Hospital. This hospital was erected in appreciation of those who enlisted and in honour of those who paid the supreme sacrifice in the Great War, 1914-1919.²¹

The Council regularly donated small amounts of money and many services in kind to the hospital. So did numerous local people even in the depression and they were all thanked through the reports of hospital meetings in the *Esk Record* newspaper — G. Graham — ice cream and books, B. White — *Punch*, T. Peters — vegetables, fruit, and cakes, W. Blank — cake and scones, Mrs Lynch Jnr. — cake, Mrs Turner — pumpkins, nuts, sweets and bonbons, CWA — fruit, Mr Pakleppa — melon and tomatoes, Mrs Ensinger — tomatoes and pineapples, L. Langton — two chocolates, Mr Hurford — cake and ice cream, Archie Ree — melons, Mr Lord — beef, Mr Gordon — shoulder of mutton, A.J. Heap — bag of chaff, K. Goddles — Christmas decorations, Mr Engerman — fowls, Leo Blank and Mr J. Salisbury — drinks, Messrs Davidson, H. Haack, O. Mollenhauer, Bailey, W. Robinson and Howe — potatoes.

The withdrawal of some Golden Casket funds from 1932 and the changing of the endowment system severely affected the hospital and this was a controversial issue throughout the 1930s. Also there were financial problems with the accounting practices at both the Esk and the Ipswich hospitals. There were added financial burdens for the Shire Council because of overlapping boundaries for the

two hospital boards. A deputation of the Hospital Committee, W.M. Gorrie and Wilfred Hawken, T. Pryde, Seymour, and Barr, met Council on 3 August 1932 regarding regular financial assistance from the Council who agreed to £30 per month, reduced to £25 per month from March 1934 because of the depression. However Council also had to support the Ipswich hospital because residents of Divisions 1 and 5 used that hospital. In September 1935 the Home Secretary's Office formed a new hospital board centred on Ipswich and including the Boonah, Esk, Harrisville, and Laidley hospitals under the *Hospital Act 1923-1932*. The financial arrangements with the Districting of Hospitals system would burden small councils because the financial contributions were based on a percentage of land valuation. All rural councils wanted the precepts to be based on population not valuation. In the meantime Esk Shire Council was represented on the Ipswich Hospitals Board. Councils had continually campaigned through the Local Government Association and deputations for the financial burden to be reduced but it was not until 1944 that hospital precepts were abolished. The government continued to pay for infectious diseases cases, providing the hospital kept accurate records of these.²²

In 1936 the government announced that an extra ward was to be built at Esk hospital out of Golden Casket funds. The additions costing £5,054 and comprising male and female wards, two private wards, outpatients room, consulting room, dispensary, office, nurses' room, kitchen, and store were necessary because of the increased population with the Stanley River dam construction. The extensions were opened by F.A. Cooper, MLA, on Sunday, 27 March 1938.²³

The Esk hospital became a training hospital for nurses in 1948 and the first graduation was held in December 1951. In 1953 Margaret Elizabeth ('Betty') Telfor was the first nurse to graduate as a sister at Esk after having started her training there in 1949. Additions costing £5,186 were made in 1964.²⁴

Sarah Ann Burt had a private general hospital in Lowood, at the corner of Prospect and Main Streets, in 1914. It comprised two tents supplied by the Lowood Shire Council and she nursed infectious disease patients for £3 per week paid by the Council. In 1915 Crs E. Nunn and Sakrzewski were keen for the Lowood Shire Council to establish a permanent hospital. However Sarah Burt continued a maternity home. Nurse C.M. Smith ran the Bush Nurses Association hospital at Coominya in the 1920s.²⁵



Toogoolawah Ambulance. 1920s.

John Oxley Library

Dr Crowley applied for a general private hospital licence for medical, maternity and surgical cases at Toogoolawah in January 1922. It was known as Beleura Hospital. Several other hospitals operated in the town over the years. Dr Edith Fox operated the 'Foxborough' hospital; it was filled during the 1919 influenza epidemic and had been isolated and specially disinfected in 1920 during the meningitis epidemic. In 1925 it was sold for £1,035 to the Toogoolawah Ambulance Committee for the superintendent's residence. The best known hospital was the one on 'Pieles Hill'.²⁶

The Blue Nursing Service was established in the shire in March 1974 serving Esk, Toogoolawah, Somerset Dam, Mt Beppo, Harlin, Colinton, Moore, Linville and surrounding areas. The council contributed \$400,000 towards the establishment of the service, and the Apex clubs also supported the scheme. The Rosewood Blue Nursing Centre serving Lowood was the fortieth centre to be opened in Queensland. In late February 1975 a special dedication service was held in the Methodist Church, attended by the Queensland Director General of Blue Nursing, the Reverend Ron Howe, the Member for Somerset, W.A.M. Gunn, and Esk Shire Chairman, Cr K.E. Haslingden. The centre was officially opened on 9 September 1984; the Esk Shire Council continues to support the service financially. The Toogoolawah centre for the Blue Nursing Service was

commenced in 1979, financed out of a bequest of Wilfred Hawken, who had been a patron of the service until his death. The building is dedicated as a memorial to him.²⁷

The first senior citizens home in the Brisbane Valley was conceived as a Bicentennial Project by the Toogoolawah committee. The idea has come to fruition with the assistance of the council and the Uniting Church. The site was dedicated by the Moderator of the Queensland Synod of the Uniting Church, the Reverend Ray Hunt, in May 1986. The Apex Club is also supporting this project and the federal government has granted \$884,800 for the home.²⁸

Ambulances

In 1916 Lowood was the first town in the Brisbane Valley to consider having an ambulance service. The Lowood Shire Council donated five guineas and contributed timber and labour for building the ambulance centre. In 1918 the Esk Shire Council donated ten guineas for the purchase of a motor ambulance, which was the first car in any honorary centre in Queensland. With the outbreak of the influenza epidemic all the centres appointed ambulance bearers — Lowood — W. Walters, Esk — G. Spencer, Toogoolawah — G. Launder and J.J. Tompkins, Harlin — P.J. Harding, Colinton — T. Barrass, Moore and Linville — G. Williams. In 1926

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W. Pagel's horse team moved the Lowood ambulance to an allotment adjoining the ambulance residence in Walter Street. Bearer Gambling and the committee organized carnivals and euchre parties throughout the depression years to raise money. However Lowood eventually lost its ambulance service and in the 1980s is again endeavouring to open a new centre.

Toogoolawah had an ambulance centre from 1923 and they were raising money to equip it with furniture to serve as a casualty room. The first annual general meeting of the Toogoolawah Ambulance Committee was held in Alexandra Hall on 31 July 1924. Chairman was Joseph H. Frisby, a Colinton farmer and former Brisbane storekeeper, one of the most go-ahead men in the Brisbane Valley in the 1920s. The meeting elected W.H. Tapsall as the new Chairman, H.V. Eastaughffe as Treasurer, A.J. St John Wood as Executive Representative, and W.H. Julian as Secretary. They proposed to erect a special shed to house the two cars. In 1925 they purchased Dr Edith Fox's residence, 'Foxborough', for the Toogoolawah Ambulance Brigade and superintendent's house. In the 1920s and early 1930s the bearer was H.G. Toner. They bought a new car in 1941 and again in 1947 when they sold the old one to N.W. Greinke for £473. One of the longest serving superintendents was J.L. McMaster who started on 6 May 1957 and served until transferred to Ipswich in July 1970.

In 1922 an ambulance centre to house litters was built at Coominya and in 1923 at Fernvale. The Toogoolawah Committee donated a litter to Moore in 1933. An ambulance car was provided at Somerset Dam in 1936 out of Golden Casket funds as the workers did not levy their wages.²⁸

Epidemics

The 1919 influenza epidemic was the worst epidemic to strike the region. There had already been outbreaks of diphtheria and whooping cough, when doctors treated patients in local fever wards.

In the 1870s the infectious disease outbreaks were reported as 'colonial fever' and 'virulent typhus fever'. In 1899 there were scarlet fever and diphtheria, and in 1900 whooping cough cases in the Esk district. The Esk Divisional Board refused to co-operate with Ipswich Hospital in having an isolation ward there because the Railway Department refused to transport patients to Ipswich. This problem of Joint Health Board boundaries made public health care difficult for decades. When there was a threat of the bubonic plague in 1900 the Board appointed a Health Inspector, Gore. Mothers coped as best they could, gaining knowledge by experience. At Moore in 1907 many more children than necessary contracted diphtheria by unwittingly visiting houses of infected children. In the following winter there was an outbreak of enteric fever at Mt

Moore Town. May 1977.

Main Roads Department



Brisbane and Mount Beppo. This resulted in extensive disinfection around residences, £56 of Council expenditure in treating patients, and the demolition of Mrs R. Kohn's house at Mount Beppo for which she received £20 compensation from the Council. Subsequently, all residents in the Mount Beppo area were instructed by Council to erect earth closets immediately.²⁹

Lowood Shire Council campaigned energetically to prevent typhoid outbreaks. In 1914 they distributed five hundred leaflets written by Dr Jamison on the prevention of typhoid. In February 1914 they purchased a fumigation plant which the Clerk, Walter E. Michel, learnt to operate. They also provided Mrs S.A. Burt with two tents to open a hospital in September 1914.³⁰

One of the worst fever outbreaks was in the winter of 1918 when the Toogoolawah school had to be closed. Drs Clipsham and Edith Fox found that twenty-six children had diphtheria. The school was temporarily closed on 17 June 1918 and the buildings were thoroughly disinfected by Esk Shire Council health Inspector, G. Spencer.³¹

Then came the tragic influenza epidemic of 1919 which swept Australia and many other parts of the world. Government instruction enabled Shire Councils to take public health precautions before the epidemic struck the country areas virulently. The Council purchased a mask and drums of disinfectant in February 1919. Inoculations and inspections of sanitary conditions in towns were carried out and mosquito regulations enforced. Esk, Toogoolawah, Lowood and Moore schools were requisitioned for isolation hospitals as necessary. In May 1919 fifteen beds were procured at Esk, Toogoolawah, and Lowood. Council organized furnishings. Nurses and ambulances were insured by Council for six months. Nurse Maude Hill was appointed to Esk, Nurse O'Sullivan at Lowood, and a volunteer was called for at Toogoolawah. They were paid £3 per week. Ten cases of the influenza were treated satisfactorily at Toogoolawah and Dr Edith Fox was treating fifteen cases at Linville in May 1919. At the same time seven cases had been notified at Esk. Dr A. Porter was inoculating people in various districts — 270 people at Esk, 29 at Colinton, 84 at Moore, 69 at Linville and 105 at Toogoolawah. A temporary hospital was set up in St Andrews Hall in Toogoolawah and the school was fitted out for emergencies. By mid July influenza was cleared from Toogoolawah, Esk and Lowood. The Queensland Influenza Regulations were lifted in July 1919 and schools were disinfected and reopened. There were no notified deaths from influenza in the Esk Shire.³²

Toogoolawah suffered more outbreaks of infectious disease than other towns in the shire, perhaps because of work practices in the dairy industry both on the farm and in the factory. In April 1920 there was a serious outbreak of meningitis; four people died. Although it was not a notifiable infectious disease Council isolated the homes of all patients and Foxborough hospital. A public meeting decided to establish an isolation hospital immediately. They chose a Marsham's cottage, loaned by A.A.C. Henning and situated two miles out of town on Ivory's Creek road. Two trained nurses were brought from Ipswich and the Esk Shire Council furnished the cottage in preparation for patients. However, it was not needed as no new cases were reported. In August 1921 nearly thirty of Nestle's employees were off work because of influenza. There was another serious outbreak of diphtheria in the whole of the Moreton region in 1929 which cost the Esk Shire Council £1,495 to treat. Committees of local residents advocated immunization and this was introduced by the government in 1932.³³

Epidemics were gradually reduced by better health care on farms. In the 1940s, after whooping cough and diphtheria immunization became routine, tuberculosis was the only serious infectious disease locally. The X-Rays were introduced in the mid-1950s. The Esk Shire Council Health Committee lobbied Federal and State politicians for free compulsory X-Rays for early detection of the disease. In the late 1940s and early 1950s poliomyelitis became a serious problem. In June 1951 young Shane Hannant, aged nine years, was Lowood's first polio fatality. The first Salk anti-polio vaccination in the Brisbane Valley was undertaken at the schools in May and June 1957.

In the 1970s and 1980s the Council has been concerned about hepatitis and vibro cholerae principally in the Tarampa area and in the Brisbane and Stanley Rivers. The influx of residents on rural subdivisions has once again necessitated strict supervision by Council of health requirements for rural lifestyles.³⁴

ENDNOTES

1. QT 20 July 1911 p2; ESKM 8 March 1944 p438, 12 April 1944 p450 and 10 October 1945 p616a.
2. ESKM 29 July 1881, 25 November 1881, 16 December 1881; 16 December 1881, 31 October 1884 and 15 December 1885; QT 7 March 1882.
3. QT 15 February 1900, 19 December 1913 p7 and 5 February 1914; ESKM 16 April 1902 and 19 February 1936; Reminiscences of Edith Carew, Wavell Heights, 1971 [In Esk Shire Library Local History Collection]; QPP 1921 Vol 1 p920.
4. ESKM 13 March 1946 p661, 17 May 1962 p2125, 29 August 1962 p2157, 12 July 1979 p776 and 11 February 1982 p2258; BVS 21 October 1960.

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5. ESKM 9 November 1921 pp133, 137, 10 May 1922 p198, 14 June 1922 pp215-216, 12 July 1922 p222, 12 March 1924 p499, 2 September 1925 p733, 8 November 1933 pp233-234, 20 August 1941 p280, 8 October 1941 p292, 10 March 1943 p372, 29 August 1945 p604, 19 September 1945 p605, 4 December 1946 p752, 16 April 1947 p799; CM 30 July 1945, 29 May 1947, 18 September 1952, 10 February 1954 p1,366, 15 April 1976 p10,401, 24 November 1977 p108,406, 20 September 1979 p888, 17 May 1982 p2392 and 10 February 1983 p2809; QT 25 September 1951; *Esk Shire Directory* 1986 p17.
6. QT 5 June 1900 and 17 July 1902; LWDM 15 September 1913 p165, 10 November 1913 p186, 8 December 1913 p193, 4 May 1914 p246 and 20 September 1915 p56, 3 August 1914 p275, 4 January 1915 p332, 28 June 1915 pp11-12, 10 July 1915 p18, 23 August 1915 p32 and 17 April 1917 p12; ESKM 9 June 1926 p85, 11 March 1936, 14 October 1936, 11 November 1936, 10 November 1943 p413 and 8 March 1944 p441.
7. QT 12 August 1897, 28 May 1898; ESKM 19 October 1898, 28 February 1906 p277, 10 October 1907, 19 December 1907 and 7 December 1908 p192; QT 5 February 1914.
8. QT 9 August 1912 p7, 2 December 1922 p13, 16 April 1945 p6 and 25 August 1953 p8; ESKM 20 October 1915 p139, 11 February 1948 p702, 9 July 1952 p1203, 20 April 1955 p1501 and 18 August 1954 p1419.
9. ESKM 8 April 1959 p1718, 20 February 1964 p2372, 26 October 1978 p447, 14 November 1980 p1557 and 4 February 1981 p4; QT 25 September 1964 p8 and 7 July 1979 p11.
10. ESKM 14, 22 and 25 October 1982 p2603, 10 February 1983 p2809.
11. ESKM 18 September 1946 p727, 7 September 1971 p279 and 25 September 1980 p1,432.
12. ESKM 27 May 1881, 21 November 1900, 21 May 1902, 31 July 1918 p502, 9 November 1921 p132, 22 February 1922 p164, 8 September 1926 p138, 6 October 1926 p146 and 11 November 1936.
13. ESKM 7 September 1886, 1 November 1892, 13 December 1905 pp271-272, 10 October 1906 p345, 20 February 1908, 4 June 1908 p148, 25 March 1909 p231, 13 May 1909 p238, 18 June 1909 p244, 28 July 1915 p118, 22 September 1915 p131, 23 January 1918 p417, 8 September 1926 pp128-129 and 11 May 1932 p709; QT 7 May 1910 p7, 30 September 1910 p2, 23 December 1910 p2, 23 March 1911 p5, 6 April 1911 p7, 20 July 1911 p2, 10 November 1911 p2, 10 November 1911 p2 and 18 November 1921 p6.
14. ESKM 23 February 1916 p170, 27 June 1917 p341, 23 January 1918 p418, 10 September 1930 p305, 8 July 1831 p520 and 15 April 1953 p1,272; LWDM 20 September 1915 p54; QT 6 June 1907 and 24 November 1923 p13.
15. ESKM 1 November 1892, 20 August 1902, 24 September 1902, 3 August 1904, 16 January 1907, 10 October 1907, 20 February 1908, 7 May 1908 p131, 19 November 1908 p189, 17 December 1908 p197, 25 February 1909 p209, 22 July 1909 pp259 and 264, 5 May 1915 p98, 3 April 1918 p452, 30 April 1918 p469, 28 August 1918 p508, 21 April 1920 p717, 12 July 1922 p228, 13 September 1922 p246, 11 October 1922 p262, 10 October 1923 p419, 12 December 1923 p454, 16 January 1924 p469, 9 April 1924 p524, 11 June 1924 p548, 9 July 1924 p561, 7 October 1925 p746, 13 May 1925 p680 5 August 1927 p566, 12 September 1934 p416, 17 November 1937 p41, 8 October 1952 p1228 and 18 May 1955 p1509; LWDM 2 November 1914 p310 and January 1915 p345; QT 5 February 1907, 10 February 1910 p2, 23 December 1910 p2 and 15 December 1911 p3; Interview with Mr George Hertrick, Esk, 24 May 1986.
16. ESKM 15 April 1903, 14 December 1921 p143, 5 August 1931 p535; QT 10 May 1912 p3, 24 June 1913 p7; Personal interview of author with Mr George Hertrick, Esk, 24 May 1986.
17. ESKM 20 August 1958 p1630, 11 November 1959 p1769, 18 January 1961 p1,912, 22 October 1975 p10,195, 10 February 1977 p108016 and 8 September 1977 p108297; BVR 19 September 1969.
18. ESKM 23 August 1961 p1994, 21 January 1971 p9329 and 23 August 1973 p9800.
19. ESKM 20 August 1958 p1630, 12 July 1961 p1986, 16 July 1970 p9,244, 19 November 1970 p9302, 21 July 1971 p9329, 26 August 1971 p9453, 23 September 1971 p9455, 18 November 1971 p9477, 26 May 1977 p10,855, 6 March 1979 p655 and 11 October 1979 p925.
20. ESKM 15 December 1882, 28 June 1899; QT 12 September 1874 p3, 29 June 1907, 3 August 1907, 28 June 1912 p2, 6 November 1912 p6, 5 March 1914 p2, 21 January 1925 p63 and 14 July 1926 p100; QT 7 August 1918 p7 and 26 March 1919 p6; Edith Carew's and Ann Ryan's reminiscences in 1971. (Esk Shire Library Local History Collection).
21. QPP 1926 Vol 2 p1242 and 1927 Vol 2 p1250; QT 29 June 1922 p3, 30 January 1923 p2, 9 February 1924 p3, 18 March 1925 p3 and 23 August 1926 p3.
22. ESKM 3 August 1931 p740, 7 September 1932 p2, 5 October 1932 p36, 14 March 1934 pp292-293, 9 October 1935 p670, 13 November 1935 p693, 11 March 1936, 20 January 1937 p1, 13 March 1938 p65 and 14 June 1944 p462; ER 17 January 1931 and 31 October 1931.
23. Department of Public Works *Annual Reports* 1936-1937 p16 and 1937-1938 p14; ER 8 February 1936 and 1 April 1938.
24. Department of Public Works *Annual Report* 1963-1964 p9; QT 7 April 1953 p4.
25. LWDM 4 May 1914 p243, 28 September 1914 pp294-295, 24 March 1915 p369; ESKM 19 February 1919 p562, 12 April 1922 p192, 12 September 1923 p398, 11 June 1930 p232 and 21 December 1978 p531.
26. ESKM 18 January 1922 p148, 13 March 1929 p735 16 January 1924 p470; QT 6 April 1920 p7 and 11 July 1925 p13; BVA 7 January 1931; *Toogoolawah State School Booklet* 1980 p7.
27. ESKM 17 January 1974 p9891 and 23 August 1984 p3800; QT 15 December 1973 p16, 20 September 1974 p14, 1 March 1975 p11 and 8 September 1979 p11.
28. CM 26 May 1986 p11.
28. LWDM 9 October 1916 p172; ESKM 23 October 1918 p524, 19 February 1919 p567, 11 October 1922 p258, 15 August 1923 p383 and 12 September 1923 p399; QT 17 March 1919 p6, 8 August 1924 p3, 11 July 1925 p13, November 1926, 23 September 1930, 9 May 1931 and 3 February 1947; DM 13 June 1929; ER 18 February 1933 and 8 February 1936; *Stanley Bulletin* 7 and 28 November 1947; BVS 24 May 1957 p1; BVR 26 June 1970.
29. ESKM 15 March, 26 April and 31 May 1899, 28 February 1900, 8 May and 13 June 1907, 26 March 1908 p124, 7 May 1908 p132 and 4 and 13 June 1908 pp142 and 150; QT 18 August 1874 p3, 30 January 1875 p2.
30. LWDM 12 January 1914 p201, 9 February 1914 p211, 9 March 1914 p225, 28 September 1914 pp294-295, 25 January 1915 pp337-338 and 1 March 1915 p350.
31. QT 20 June 1918 p7.
32. ESKM 22 January 1919 p558, 7 February 1919 p559, 15 May 1919 pp597-598 and 29 May 1919 p5; QT 29 May 1919 p5 and 24 July 1919 p5.
33. ESKM 7 August 1929 p63 and 11 May 1932 p693; QT 6 and 7 April 1920 and 10 September 1921 p2.
34. ESKM 19 September 1945 p607, 12 February 1947 p768, 16 January 1969 p6021, 20 March 1980 p1187 and 7 May 1980 p1253; QT 18 June 1951; BVS 10 May 1957.