

LAUNCESTON AND THE NORTHEAST



NORTHERN TASMANIA is a clearly defined region. To the north, east and west are natural borders. Bass Strait and the Tasman play an obvious role while the sharp transition from savannah to wet sclerophyll forest along the 1000 mm isohyet marks a significant regional boundary on land, as farming methods developed for the North Midlands were unsuitable for the forest country beyond **Deloraine**. Only to the south is the region less precisely defined. The North Midlands, Midlands and South Midlands share a common tradition derived from their central role in the evolution of Van Diemen's Land. This has imprinted a basically uniform cultural pattern on the landscape between **Hobart** and **Launceston**. However, the almost simultaneous settlement of the island from north and south called for a division. One classic boundary lies along the 42nd parallel of latitude, a line adopted in October 1804 to separate the authority of Lieutenant-Colonel Collins at the Derwent River from that of Lieutenant-Colonel Paterson in command of the proposed settlement for the Tamar (see **George Town**). Within thirteen months after the British arrived in Tasmania, the island was divided. Most contemporary divisions of Tasmania focus on the hinterland boundary between Launceston and Hobart. This is usually placed slightly to the south of the previous line.

The hub of the north is the city of **Launceston**. Its population of 64 555 made up 54.9 per cent of the regional population in 1981. It dominates the region. The next largest centre, **George Town** (5592), is little more than an industrial satellite, while **Deloraine**, **Longford** and **Scottsdale** are country towns with about 2000 inhabitants. Not only is Launceston at the centre of the region, it also lies on the divide that cuts the north into two fundamental groupings of local cultural landscapes. In turn, this position, balanced between the North Midlands and the Northeast, has influenced the development of the city and explains much of its unique urban character.

Paterson's original settlements of 1804 were at **George Town** and York Town (see Beaconsfield) near the mouth of the Tamar. Serious site deficiencies led to a transfer to **Launceston** in 1806. Although 50 km from Bass Strait, Launceston was still a port with sufficient water in the estuary for sailing vessels of up to 100 tonnes. It also had access to the broad plains of the North Midlands. This meant little for many years. The muster of 1 March 1820 showed a population of 1330 in the north, exclusive of the military. It was almost entirely a penal settlement: of the 929 adult males, only 75 had arrived as free settlers while 712 were convicts under sentence and the rest were in military service. Population was concentrated at George Town and Launceston with only a small inland component at Norfolk Plains (**Longford**), where deportees from Norfolk Island had been settled in 1813.

The potential of districts to the south and west of **Launceston** had long been apparent. Lachlan Macquarie had noted extensive plains '... well calculated for the grazing of horned cattle and sheep' during his 1811 tour of Van Diemen's Land. Development awaited certain conditions and when these appeared in the early 1820s, they led to the rapid transformation of the country. One factor involved the decision to promote capitalist farming through making large grants of land to men of substantial means. Another was the proving of the wool export trade from Australia to Britain. The results were already visible by November 1823; the north then had a population of 2311 divided among three districts. **George Town** with a population of 543 was the administrative and convict centre. Launceston and the

North Esk valley had a shared population of 1211, and Norfolk Plains, the South Esk and the Western rivers had 557 persons. The population south of Launceston would have been 800 to 900 persons. More importantly, the North Midlands had 30 per cent of the colony's sheep.

European settlers had moved southwards, diverging along the valleys of the South Esk and Macquarie rivers and converging again at **Campbell Town** and **Ross**, having bypassed the Epping Forest. Others moved west along the Meander River and spread out towards the Western Tiers. In 1824 the movement south met settlement moving north from **Hobart**. A thin but continuous band of occupation had appeared in the Midlands and little open country was left unoccupied by 1830. The population of the north at this date was 4700, plus unlocated convicts and soldiers. Sheep were more precisely recorded: the 340 000 sheep represented 48 per cent of the colonial flock.

The European cultural landscape dates from this period. The Municipality of **Campbell Town** can be used to illustrate some of the processes that created that landscape. The most important was land policy. Land was granted on the basis of an acre (0.4 ha) for every pound of capital brought to the colony. The typical grant was just under 500 ha but some leading settlers acquired 5000 or 10 000 ha. In **Campbell Town**, just sixteen properties held two-thirds of the freehold land. Natural pasture, merino sheep and large homesteads with nearby clusters of cottages were the result. The land policy also had important social implications. The estate labour force evolved from assigned convict servants into a free working class without much change in status. The pastoral gentry controlled the law, the church, and the government: as late as 1881 only 41 per cent of adult males were qualified to vote for the Assembly.

Most of the properties face rivers rather than roads. The Georgian buildings of Vaucluse and Quorn Hall and the Regency edifices of Rosedale and Douglas Park are either isolated or screened by rows of English trees. The casual traveller obtains a landscape image not from the countryside but from the townships. Just over one-third of present dwellings in **Campbell Town** are period relics in the Georgian style. Small cottages and two-storey houses have the rectangular plan with central doorway, hip roofs and symmetrical windows and chimneys. Construction was in 'convict' brick or rubble stone more often than in timber. A particularly impressive Georgian streetscape is found on Bridge Street which served as the main road until 1840. Other examples are scattered throughout the suburban farm allotments within the town boundary. Stagnation since the 1850s has preserved the pleasant colonial atmosphere away from the main highway strip, a factor enhanced in recent years by sympathetic town planning with attention to detail as fine as the design of picket fences.

Launceston was an important Van Diemen's Land centre, yet the Georgian element in its townscape is subdued. Queen Anne housing in Elphin and West Launceston, the facades of Paterson and Cameron streets and the Albert Hall are three pieces in a mosaic that defines an urban image fixed in the late nineteenth century. In this respect **Launceston** is unlike **Hobart**. The capital retains a strong colonial element in its heritage, while **Launceston** is a city of the 1880s and 1890s. The explanation for the difference lies in the timing and scale of periods of rapid growth. **Launceston** grew by 55.5 per cent between 1881 and 1891. Obsolete dwellings were demolished and replaced in the inner city by houses in the new styles of the Federation period. City population also overflowed into vacant land in the nearby districts of Invermay and Trevallyn, creating new suburbs with the same general appearance. **Hobart** grew more slowly.

The late-nineteenth-century growth of **Launceston** was related to developments in its hinterland. One sector was static. The North Midlands increased its population from 20 201 in 1861 to only 24 787 in 1901. The wool industry had been in decline since the 1850s. Likewise, the wheat industry was uncompetitive with new wheat districts on the mainland. Population growth was less than natural increase in total and concentrated in areas marginal to the traditional areas of settlement. Localities such as the **Fingal** valley coalfields, the gold

towns of Mangana (see Fingal) and Mathinna and the pioneering farms towards Mole Creek accounted for most of the increase. However, Launceston consolidated its urban influence over the area following the construction of the Western and Main Line railways.

The critical area was the Northeast. In 1861, the population was an insignificant 4131 located near the Tamar. Mineral discoveries were the main factor taking the population to 14670 in 1901 and spreading it across the region. The Tasmanian Gold Mining Company supported **Beaconsfield**, a town of 2658. Lefroy (see George Town) and Lisle on the East Tamar were erratic gold producers but had a combined population of 828 in 1901, while the scale of the tinfields at the Blue Tier and along the Ringarooma River (see Derby) can best be judged by the number of working miners. In 1901, there were 216 and 504 miners in these two fields respectively. Nor can farming be excluded. There were three farmers for every two miners. Active agricultural frontiers were found on the basaltic soils around **Scottsdale** and Ringarooma. Agricultural systems similar to the potato-dairy economy of the Northwest Coast were being developed. The Scottsdale railway in 1889 brought these areas into closer contact with **Launceston**.

The mining boom was the main factor stimulating the growth of **Launceston**. That city organised and financed the mining companies, manufactured mining supplies, including heavy engineering products, and refined tin in two local smelters. Most of the profits flowed back into the city. For instance, the Tasmanian Gold Mining Company of **Beaconsfield** had paid £757 071 in dividends by 1901. The New Golden Gate at Mathinna paid £312 000. More income came from the tin mine at Mount Bischoff (see Waratah) and the silver mines at **Zeehan** on the West Coast. It is impossible to be precise about the actual returns to local investors, but one crude index can be extracted from the census of 1901: Launceston had 43 stockbrokers, dealers, jobbers and speculators while **Hobart** had 14 in the same categories.

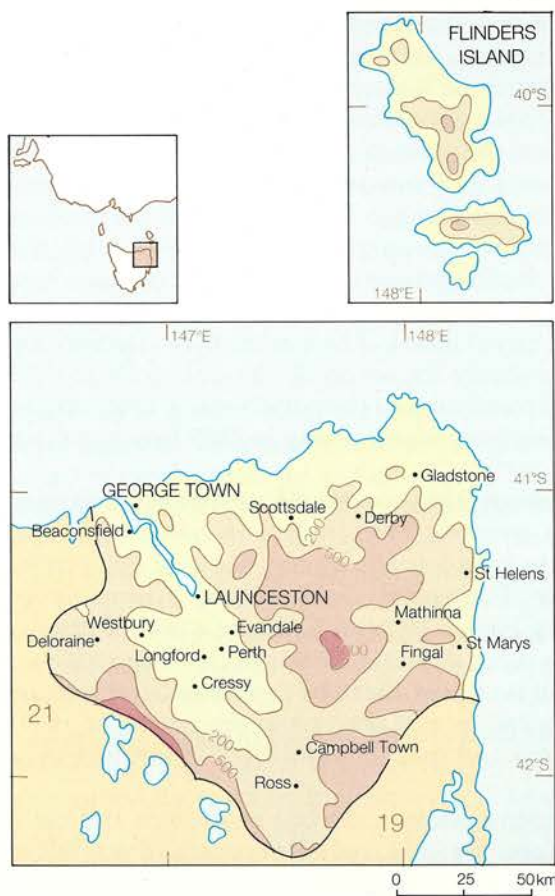
Mining wealth financed the rebuilding of **Launceston** in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Then the mines began to fade. By 1914, only **Beaconsfield** was left as a major gold producer and it collapsed during the first year of the war. The tinfields of the Northeast also waned. Shrunken towns and relics of the mining period litter the region.

New developments took two lines. **Launceston** returned to being a slowly growing provincial city with industrial growth focused on tariff-protected industries such as textile mills. Mining in the Tamar valley was replaced by an orchard industry. This grew from only 15 000 cases of fruit per annum at the turn of the century to 250 000 cases in 1920–21. By this time, it was the most important region after the Huon in the production of apples. It was not until the 1950s that a third force entered the area. It began with the construction of an aluminium smelter at **George Town** (Bell Bay). This has now grown to a major complex of energy-intensive and resource-based industries utilising the cheap hydro power of the Trevallyn and Poatina (see Great Lake) generating stations and the facilities of a new deepwater port at Bell Bay. It brought the focus of development in the north back to the site chosen by Paterson in 1804. However, it complements rather than competes with **Launceston**.

Roger Kellaway

SUGGESTED READING

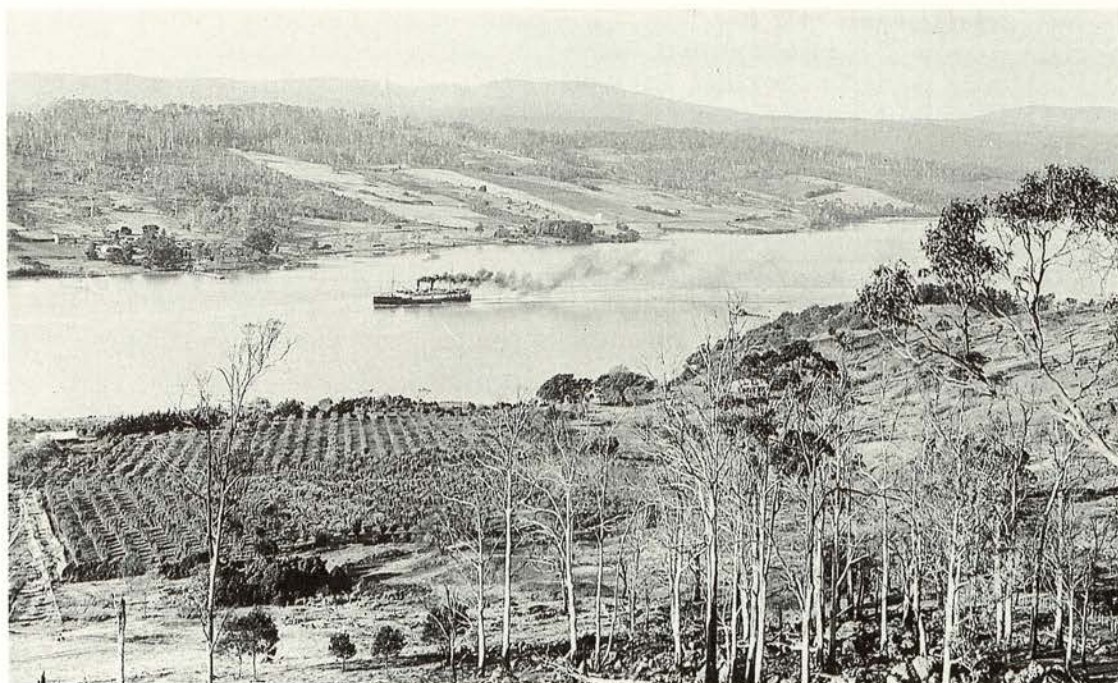
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 R.M. Fowler, *The Furneaux Group*, Bass Strait vol 1, Canberra 1980.
 J. Marwood, *Valley people*, Kenthurst 1984.
 J. Reynolds, *Launceston: history of an Australian city*, Melbourne 1969.

**BEACONSFIELD** [41°10'S 146°48'E]

Popn: 1520(1881), 2618(1911), 806(1933), 1028(1966), 898(1981). Named after Benjamin Disraeli, Earl of Beaconsfield, by Gov Weld in 1879 when town proclaimed. Earlier known as Cabbage Tree Hill and as Brandy Creek during gold rush. Settlement at York Town to north 1804–06. Settlers in immediate area in 1805. John Batman's ship built at nearby Rosevears in 1835 for voyage leading to founding of Melbourne. Gold possibly discov in 1847; alluvial gold discov in 1869; main lead in 1877. Tas Charcoal Iron Co at Ilfracombe failed in 1872 due to high chrome content of ore. Two other short-lived iron-smelting companies operated in the 1870s using local ore. Beaconsfield became richest gold town in Tas. In 1881, 53 companies worked field but all were absorbed by owners of Tasmania mine which produced about 26m g worth about £12m between 1877 and 1914. Closed in 1914 when pumps could no longer cope with flooding. Pithead buildings completed in 1904, now in ruins. First town in Aust to fluoridate water supply, 1953. Silica mined by BHP from 1965. Mine reopened for reassessment in 1980. Aust Maritime College opened at Beauty Point in 1980.

CAMPBELL TOWN [41°55'S 147°30'E]

Popn: 948(1881), 770(1947), 1040(1961), 879(1981). Named by Gov Macquarie after his wife's family when village founded in 1821: surveyed in 1823. Garrison post estab in the 1820s as one of a series between Hobart and Launceston. Saxon merino sheep introduced in the 1820s as foundation of district's fine wool industry. Foxhunter's Return Inn (RNE) estab



Tamar River, from Brady's Lookout near Beaconsfield. Postcard, rose series, c1925.

DAVIDSON COLLECTION

in 1833, Powell's Hotel in 1834. Bridge (RNE) built 1836–38 by convicts. Annual Midlands agric show estab in 1838, claimed to be oldest continuous one in British Commonwealth. St Luke's Church (RNE) built 1836–39. Brewery (RNE, now Masonic Lodge) and Campbell Town Inn (then the Beehive, RNE) both opened in 1840. Became a municipality in 1866. Rlwy opened in 1876. Wanstead Park homestead (RNE) built in 1827, The Grange (Nat T) in 1848: many homesteads in district built in the 1830s–40s remain, some listed on RNE.

CRESSY [41°41'S 147°06'E]

Popn: 291 (1901), 615 (1911), 370 (1933), 702 (1961), 640 (1981). Name of land grant taken up by British company formed to exploit Van Diemen's Land resources: company granted large areas in 1826 and farmed them until estate broken up in 1856. Richmond Hill granted to James Brumby in 1809. Rich wheat-growing area from the 1820s. Richmond Hill homestead built c1823; Woodside from 1827–35; Panshanger c1831 (all RNE). Cressy Hotel opened in 1845. Town grew near company's headquarters from c1855. Research farm estab by govt in 1937. Longford–Cressy irrigation scheme opened in 1974.

DELORAINE [41°31'S 146°40'E]

Popn: 836 (1881), 1811 (1911), 1586 (1947), 1931 (1961), 1793 (1966), 1923 (1981). Name probably from character in Walter Scott's 'Lay of the last minstrel': one of Scott's relatives surveyed district in the 1820s. Capt Roland sent to assess agric potential of district in 1823; two land commissioners studied possible use of district in 1825. European settlement hastened by liberalisation of land laws. Bonney's Inn built in 1831. Calstock property developed from 1838 as famous racing stud. Deloraine Hotel estab in 1848. Turf club estab in 1853. Bowerbank Mill (RNE) built in 1853: water-driven until converted to steam in 1871, closed in 1935. Terminus of broad-gauge Launceston and Western Rlwy opened in 1871. Dairy factory estab in 1900. Many other houses, mills and shops listed on RNE.

DERBY [41°07'S 147°48'E]

Popn: 273 (1891), 1126 (1911), 202 (1981). Govt surveyor James Scott was first European to explore Ringarooma R district in 1855. Branxholm property taken up in the 1860s. Tin discov near Derby in 1876 and Brothers Home mine estab. Track cut to coast at Boobyalla (see Gladstone). Briseis lease of 1882 became richest tin mine in the northeast. Popn of about 3000 in district in the late 19th cent. Briseis mine dam burst in 1929 and 14 people killed as water swept through town. Mine, largest and deepest hydraulic tin mine in Southern Hemisphere, never returned to full production. Classified historic town. Pioneer to northeast was also important tin mining centre: although main Pioneer mine closed in 1930 some mining continues. Weldborough was virtually a Chinese tin mining settlement with about 900 Chinese miners in 1890. Former mining towns to southwest include Branxholm (tin and gold, latter found in 1883), Ring-

Ringarooma (tin and gold) and Alberton (gold in the 1880s). Dorset tin dredge on Ringarooma R operated from 1944 until moved to Gladstone in 1965.

EVANDALE [41°34'S 147°14'E]

Popn: 564 (1881), 932 (1911), 472 (1971), 614 (1981). Named in 1836 after first Tas surveyor-general, G. W. Evans. Originally named Collins Hill; village of Morven slightly to southeast estab in 1809. Gov Lachlan Macquarie visited area in 1811 and 1821. Grazing licences replaced by firm titles when settlers from Norfolk Island took up land in district in 1816. Fallgrove built in 1826. Town founded in 1829, although some buildings date from 1809, and grew around convict station for construction of proposed Launceston water supply scheme. Patriot King William the Fourth Inn (RNE) opened in 1832, now craft gallery. Store built for Joseph Solomon in 1836: son Albert became Tas premier 1912–14. Prince of Wales Hotel (RNE) also built in 1836. St Andrew's Presbyterian church completed in 1840. Clarendon Arms Hotel (RNE) built in 1847. Link between Main Line and Launceston and Western rlwys made here in 1876. Proclaimed a historic village, listed on RNE. Clarendon (RNE) to south built in 1838; a Nat T property since 1962. Deddington to southeast was home to pioneer landscape painter John Glover and John Bateman, co-founder of Melbourne, in the 1830s.

FINGAL [41°37'S 147°58'E]

Popn: 247 (1881), 653 (1961), 424 (1981). Named in 1821 after town in Ireland. Malahide homestead (RNE) built in 1828 for William Talbot; Killymoon (RNE) from 1842–48 for Frederick von Steiglitz. First town settler in 1845. Talbot Arms (now Fingal) Hotel (RNE) built c1852. Coal discov in mid 19th cent. Rlwy built in 1886 to open Fingal valley coalfields. Production peaked at 300 000 tonnes in 1959, but fell to 77 000 tonnes by 1967: collieries still operative in the mid-1980s with annual production of about 300 000 tonnes or more. First payable gold found in Tas discov at Mangana to northwest in 1852; first attempt in Tas to obtain gold by crushing quartz made there in 1859.

FLINDERS ISLAND [39°58'S 148°03'E]

Popn: 616 (1911), 1407 (1961), 1039 (1981). Named after Matthew Flinders by Gov King. Furneaux group of islands reached by Tobias Furneaux, captain of Cook's support ship, in 1773. Important sealing area in the late 18th and early 19th cent. Many shipwrecks on islands of group, including *Sydney Cove* which foundered in 1797, the crew spending 6 months on Preservation Is before rescue. Remaining Tas Aboriges (about 160 people) forcibly settled at Wybalenna on Flinders Is in 1833: 45 remained alive when settlement abandoned in 1847 and they were moved to Oyster Cove (see Snug). Chapel restored by Nat T; whole area declared a historic site (RNE) in 1980. Grazing leases on island in mid- to late 19th cent. First permanent European settler on island was George Boyes at Palana in 1888. Successful soldier settlement schemes at Memana and Lackrana in the 1950s. Kent Bay on

Cape Barren Is became base for the Straitsmen, sealers and virtual pirates in the 1790s: perhaps first Aust settlement south of Sydney.

GEORGE TOWN [41°05'S 146°51'E]

Popn: 299 (1881), 292 (1947), 1868 (1954), 5592 (1981). Named after George III by Gov Macquarie in 1811. George Bass and Matthew Flinders named Tamar R here Port Dalrymple in 1798. First party of European settlers in northern Tas landed here under Col William Paterson in 1804. Within weeks Paterson moved settlement to west bank of Tamar at York Town (see Beaconsfield). Permanent settlement estab in 1811, surveyed in 1813. At Macquarie's request, administration of northern Tas moved here from Launceston in 1819, returned there in 1824. Cemetery estab c1816. Cloth factory opened in 1821. Signalling system in operation from 1825 to relay shipping news from Low Head to north of George Town to Launceston, 64 km inland. The Grove (RNE) built c1827. Port prospered in the 1830s, renewed activity with gold finds in the 1870s at Lefroy, once reputedly a town of about 3000. Beacon set up on Low Head and pilot station (RNE) built in 1833; lighthouse (RNE) built in 1889. Port and rlwy development at Bell Bay predicted from 1912. Aluminium smelter opened by federal govt as defence measure in 1955, acquired by Comalco in 1961 with production expanded to 120 000 tonnes per yr. Roll-on, roll-off cargo terminal estab in 1958. Tas's only (to 1985) thermal power station commissioned here in 1971. Two woodchip mills and freezer stores also estab in the 1970s. Connected to Launceston by rail in 1973. Broken Hill Proprietary Co ferro-alloy plant expanded in 1974.

GLADSTONE [40°58'S 148°01'E]

Popn: 341 (1911), 174 (1966). One of large number of small tin mining towns in the Northeast in the 1870s–80s: some tin still mined. Tin prospect discov at Mt Cameron in 1874, small-scale mining followed. Dredge moved from Ringarooma district (see Derby) to this area in 1965, operated until 1971. Number of goldmines on road to Cape Portland. Port developed at Boobyalla to northwest after tin discov in region in 1874, later virtually abandoned.

LAUNCESTON [41°27'S 147°09'E]

Popn: 276 (1806), approx 2500 (1830), 12 752 (1881), 32 833 (1933), 64 555 (1981). Named after Gov King's birthplace in Cornwall, England. Briefly known as Patersonia.

Foundations Port Dalrymple (Tamar R) explored to site of Launceston by settler William Collins in 1804. European settlement founded in 1805, became headquarters for northern Tas in the following yr. Road to Hobart opened in 1818. Batman–Fawkner Inn estab in 1822. First section (RNE) of Cornwall Hotel built in 1823–24: John Batman held meeting there to plan establishment of Melbourne.

Early town history Town proclaimed in 1824, chosen as official northern 'capital' in 1825. St John's Anglican church (RNE) begun in 1824. City Park laid out in the

1820s. First flour mill on Ritchie's Mill site (RNE) estab in 1835, the last operated until 1973. Penitentiary (remnants RNE) built from 1830. *Launceston Examiner* founded in 1842. Synagogue (RNE) built in 1844, second oldest in Aust. St John's Hospital estab in the 1840s, saw first use of anaesthetic in Southern Hemisphere in 1847. First home lit by gas in 1844. Launceston Grammar School estab in 1846.

Mature municipality Municipality proclaimed in 1852; declared a city in 1888. Telegraph to Hobart and first water supply scheme opened in 1857. Gas lighting from 1860. First section of King's (Trevallyn or Old Cataract) Bridge (RNE) built in 1863. Town hall (RNE) built in 1864. Prospered from mining boom in northeastern Tas in the 1870s–80s. Rlwy to Deloraine opened in 1871, line to Hobart in 1876. Smelters for Mt Bischoff (see Waratah) tin ore estab in 1874, closed in 1923. Waverley Woollen Mills to southeast opened in 1874, oldest woollen mills in Aust still operating. Customs House (RNE) built in 1885. Post office completed in 1889, tower added in 1903. Albert Hall (RNE) erected in 1891 for Tas International Exhibition. Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery estab in 1891. In 1895 became first city in Southern Hemisphere lit by electricity generated by water power: power station built by city council on South Esk R above Cataract Gorge.

Twentieth century provincial city Cataract Gorge area developed for public recreation by Launceston City and Suburbs Improvement Assoc from 1898–1907; suspension bridge built in 1904, chairlift in 1972. Electric trams introduced in 1911. Coats Patons knitting yarn mills estab in 1922. Serious flooding in 1929 caused evacuation of about 3000 people. Bulk handling and storage wheat terminal opened in 1959. Large number of buildings, including many Georgian houses and cottages, warehouses of the 1840s, and substantial public and commercial buildings of the 1880s–90s, listed on RNE.

LONGFORD [41°35'S 147°08'E]

Popn: 1286 (1881), 1674 (1911), 1085 (1947), 2027 (1981). Named after county in Ireland by surveyor Roderic O'Connor. Known as Latour until 1833. District explored by Europeans in 1805: Lieut Laycock camped here on his first north–south journey in 1807. Settlers from Norfolk Island were granted land in district in 1813 and area became known as Norfolk Plains: by 1818 successful wheat production with exports to Sydney and later Melbourne. Archer brothers important pioneers in area from 1813. Woollers (RNE) built from 1818–19 for Thomas Archer, replaced in 1834; Jessen Lodge in 1827; Brickendon in 1831 for William Archer. Town began in 1827 when first hotel (now guesthouse) built. Tollhouse built c1835. Christ Church (RNE) built 1839–44. Classified historic town (Nat T, RNE).

PERTH [41°33'S 147°11'E]

Popn: 478 (1881), 442 (1901), 614 (1911), 540 (1933), 1229 (1981). Named after city in Scotland by Gov Macquarie in 1821. Land grants in district from at

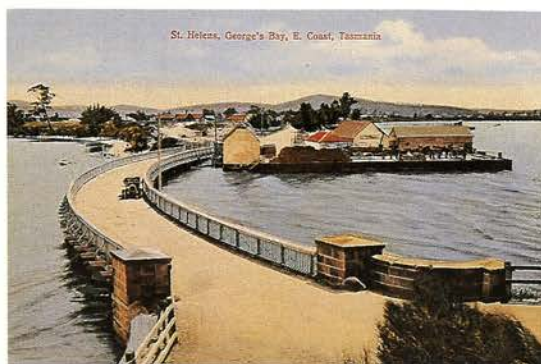
least 1809. Site for township selected by Macquarie in 1821: ferry over South Esk R estab and road to **Launceston** begun that yr also. Coach service in 1832. Hotel (now Jolly Farmer Inn, RNE) estab in 1826 as settlement's first. Proclaimed a town in 1836. Rlwy opened in 1871. Perth Bridge, built in 1842 and largest convict-built bridge in Tas, destroyed by floods in 1929. Recent growth has been as commuter town due to proximity to Launceston.

ROSS [42°01'S 147°29'E]

Popn: 353 (1881), 311 (1901), 585 (1911), 289 (1981). Named in 1821 by Gov Macquarie after Scottish country seat. Surveyor Charles Grimes travelled through district in 1807. Macquarie named district Argyle Plains on 1811 visit. Estab in 1812 as military post for protection of travellers, later also coaching stop. Man o' Ross Hotel opened in 1817, rebuilt in 1831. Rough bridge built over river in 1821. First land grants in district in 1823. Township surveyed in 1830; complete survey in 1844. Bridge designed by colonial architect John Lee Archer and built by convicts 1833–36 to replace earlier timber bridge. Scotch Thistle Inn built in 1826, first licensed in 1830. Wesleyan chapel built in 1837. Long Marsh Dam begun as irrigation storage c1840, but never completed as transportation ceased. Female factory estab in 1848, closed in 1854. St John's Anglican church built in 1869. Old barracks restored by Nat T. Classified historic town (Nat T, RNE). Mona Vale (RNE) to south built 1865–69 as third homestead on property: became training centre for Light Horse in World War I and for army in World War II.

SCOTTSDALE [41°08'S 147°31'E]

Popn: 636 (1901), 1659 (1911), 1175 (1933), 2002 (1981). Named after James Scott, govt surveyor who explored much of northeastern Tas 1852–55. Known unofficially as Cox's Paradise after first European settler. Other early names were Heazleton and Heazlewood. Name officially changed at local request in 1893 and town merged with Ellesmere. Town site surveyed in 1858–59. First district sawmills estab in 1862. Mechanics' Institute estab in 1872. Rlwy from **Launceston** opened in 1889. Butter factory opened in 1911. Armed Forces Food Science Establishment opened in 1958. Factory for deep freezing and dehydrating vegetables promoted intensive agric. First commercial crops of oil poppies harvested in district in 1973 after trials from 1964. Hop production at Tonganah helped lead to decline of southern Tas hop industry in the 1970s.



Postcard, c1905.

ARCHIVES OFFICE OF TASMANIA

ST HELENS [41°19'S 148°15'E]

Popn: 257 (1881), 815 (1954), 681 (1961), 1005 (1981). George Bay used as whaling base in early 19th cent. First land grant in 1830. Tin from Weldborough and Lottah to northwest exported through port in the 1870s, along with ore from other mineral finds. First land transport connection, a coach service, began in 1870. Tin found between here and Scamander in 1874: lode tin found at Lottah, reserves dwindled by 1900. Brief tin mining revival 1933–39. Since World War II has developed as a resort and fishing centre. Pulpwood for woodchip industry logged from 1970.

ST MARYS [41°35'S 148°12'E]

Popn: 673 (1911), 836 (1933), 592 (1954), 745 (1971), 653 (1981). First European settlers in district c1820. Falmouth on coast to northeast founded c1830 as whaling base and port for ships anchored offshore. Once a coal mining town serving collieries in Mt Nicholas Range to northwest: large-scale mining began in 1886; main mine closed in 1958, but new seam discov in 1979 and worked from 1980. Rlwy opened in 1886.

WESTBURY [41°31'S 146°51'E]

Popn: 1156 (1881), 908 (1947), 1161 (1981). District surveyed in 1823; became a town in 1828; a municipality in 1863. Survey for town included more than 200 km of streets for city, then planned as 'gateway' to Northwest Tas. First hotel (RNE), the Commercial (now the Olde English Inn), licensed in 1833. White House (RNE) built 1840–42 as Thomas White's Token Store. Many Irish military pensioners settled in district in the early 1850s. Classified historic town.