TWO BRISBANE SHIPOWNERS OF THE LAST CENTURY

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Ship-owning in Brisbane today is limited to a very few vessels indeed. Cargo carriage beyond the confines of the river and bay is continued by John Burke Ltd., now overseas controlled, and by a few barge-towing contractors. River and bay traffic is on the increase, but apart from the Riverside Coal Transport Company and some of the small gravel companies, ownership is vested outside Brisbane.

This was not always the case. From the time when Brisbane became a port of registry in 1851 ship-owners resident in Brisbane played a very large part in the development of trade along the coast of what is now the State of Queensland, and in trade to southern areas.

Two ship-owners who were mainly involved in the timber and passenger trades between near ports and Brisbane are the subject of this paper. Both of them were mainly interested in the trade to the small timber ports north of Brisbane, and carried passengers as an additional income earner. Their ships were frequently chartered for river and bay excursions but I have not looked further into this activity, rather confining myself to their other trading activities. To understand their ship-owning activities, it is necessary to have a broad outline of the general business of the ship-owners, though I have provided this in only limited detail.

Fleet lists and registry details of ships are provided as an appendix.

WILLIAM PETTIGREW

William Pettigrew was prominent in the development of our State from his arrival in January of 1849 until his death 57 years later in 1906.

He was born in Scotland at Burton, Ayrshire, on the 26 August 1825. He was one of four sons of the Laird of Tarshaw, a property situated near the town of Ayr. The other
brothers were Robert, Adam and John. He also had a half-brother named David McKergow. Robert lived on in the United Kingdom, but William, John and David McKergow migrated to Australia.

Pettigrew was educated in Ayrshire and undertook training in surveying. After he completed his training, he became associated with Dr. J. Dunmore Lang and his Cooksland Colonisation Company. Engaged as the surveyor and land agent to the company, Pettigrew travelled to Brisbane in the *Fortitude*, arriving in January 1849.

The promised land to meet the land orders held by the migrants was not forthcoming, and the venture failed. Some of the settlers received land, but Pettigrew, as an employee of the company, found he had no entitlement, despite the promises made at the time of his engagement. He had to seek employment and took a job with the Government Surveyor, Mr. Warner. After eight months he left this job and was then employed by Dr. Simpson, Commissioner of Crown Lands, preparing a map of the Moreton district. This work occupied the next two years.

As he travelled the district he saw the fine stands of timber, and as there was a considerable demand for sawn timber in the rapidly growing town and district, he decided to build a steam sawmill. All timber up to that time had been cut by pit sawyers, whose premises were mainly on the south bank of the river.

Site preparations were commenced on the 18 October 1852. The mill was built on the north bank of the river, in the South Brisbane reach, where William and Margaret Streets join.

Following the establishment of the mill, Pettigrew's fortunes fluctuated with the economic climate of the colony. The mill was burnt down within a year of being built, the fire being set by a pit sawyer who, along with others of his trade, was afraid of being put out of work. It was quickly rebuilt and working again.

Pettigrew established another mill at Dundathu, on the Mary River, seven miles below Maryborough. For this mill, which commenced work in March 1860, he formed a company — W. Pettigrew and Company, with ownership distributed between himself and members of the Sim family (Sim worked for him at the mill, and after his death, his wife and children were given the shares). Pettigrew controlled two-thirds of the shares, Sim the other third.

In 1863 he surveyed the Noosa River area and reported that the area was not particularly suitable for timber-getting.
He also began to bring timber from the Maroochy-Mooloolah area to Brisbane and as well was involved in milling and timber transport from the Cooloola region.

Pettigrew married a Mrs. Davis, a widow, who came out in the *Fortitude*. They had three children, Margaret, Robert and Mary Ann.

**HIT BY DEPRESSION**

A considerable economic depression in the 1890's with the large floods of 1893, caused the decline of Pettigrew's fortunes. By 1898 he was bankrupt and lost all of his timber and other interests to his foreclosers. He did some survey work for the Government but lived mainly in semi-retirement, dying on the 28 October 1906.

His public offices had included membership of the council of the Presbyterian Church; membership of the Committee of Brisbane Building Society, and being a founder member of the Queensland Steam Navigation Company. He was elected to the Brisbane City Council in 1868, was Mayor in 1870, and was appointed to the Legislative Council in 1877.

I want to return now to the start of the Brisbane Saw Mills, and the shipping interests of Pettigrew, expanding on the other aspects of his activities where they are related.

It appears that Pettigrew's involvement in the steam saw-mill, in shipping and ship-building, and in Council works programmes, was attributable to his enthusiasm, as an amateur, for engineering matters. Throughout his diaries, of which a large but unfortunately incomplete collection is held by the Royal Historical Society of Queensland, references are made to engineering design and practice, and to ship design. He spoke on one occasion at the School of Arts on steam engines, and prepared a paper on the proper design for the hulls of vessels.

He observed a Mr. Taylor, from the firm of P. N. Russell & Co. in Sydney, fitting an engine in the *Hawk* in 1850, and from his notes we may assume he gained some useful knowledge.

Pettigrew built his wharf on the river bank by the saw-mill site in November and December of 1852. In February of 1853 he travelled to Sydney to supervise the trans-shipping of the machinery for the saw-mill. This machinery had been procured by his brother Robert and shipped out in a Dutch vessel, the *Anna En Elise*.

He leaves us a brief but interesting record of his voyage south. In his diary he states:

"23 February 1853: Left Brisbane per *Eagle* about 6
a.m. Got safely down river and over the bar. Rather rough crossing bay. Wind from south, and anchored at Cowan Cowan. Cloudy, rained about 1½ hours p.m. Passengers in cabin, Messrs. McDonald and Lawless, several ladies and a whole mob of steerage passengers. 24 February 1853: Fires got up and we started from anchorage about 8 a.m. Saw a bark making for bay. Wind in east. Went on at a good pace all day. Heavy swell from S. Sky clear now.

25 February 1853: Eccentric rod bolts broke, thereby disabling port engine. Had a northerly breeze all day. Passed Solitary Isles about 2 p.m. Wrote letters to John, Michael Kidston, began one to R. Pettigrew.

26 February 1853: Wind fair all night and this day till about 5 p.m. At this time, a little past Pt. Stephens, wind came from the south-S.E., stood out to sea. Rain from 3 p.m.

27 February 1853: Rained during night. Left off this morning. Overcast, wind S.S.E. About 4 p.m., 8 or 9 miles north of light house, Sydney stood out.”

Pettigrew went ashore on 28 February but had a lot of trouble getting his machinery cargo cleared and loaded into a ship for Brisbane. On 3 April 1853, he and his cargo sailed for Brisbane in the brig Palermo.

MILL STARTS OPERATIONS

The mill commenced operation on 28 June, 1853. Timber was obtained by purchasing rafts of logs from timber-getters. The logs were floated down the various rivers and streams which ran into Moreton Bay and were then towed across the bay and up the river. This was a slow business and the timber was liable to deterioration, and loss by weather.

Timber was also purchased from further afield. It was carried to Brisbane in coastal sailing ships of small size.

The Brisbane Saw-mill was fairly well established by the mid-1850’s, and Pettigrew began to plan his new mill at Dundathu, near Maryborough. To power this mill he agreed to purchase a steam engine removed from an old paddle-steamer. This ship was the Ben Bolt, formerly General Urbistando. Probably built in New York in 1852, this paddler was of 182 tons, with a beam type steam engine. She was one of the first steamers to cross the Pacific Ocean, coming via the Philippines. She was sold and renamed on arrival in Australia, but hulked by the A.S.N. Co. within three years. This engine proved to be a liability and was
replaced quite early in the history of the mill.

The Dundathu mill, having commenced operations in 1860, began to ship its products to both the north and the south of the newly-separated colony. Some of the ships recorded by Pettigrew as having served on this work were the *Margaret Mitchell*, *Elizabeth Butler*, *Vanquish*, *Wave of Life*, *Marion Renny*, *Unknown*, *Spray*, *Policeman*, *Susannah*, *Fairy*, *William*, *Louisa Maria*, *Elizabeth*, and *Julia Percy*.

These vessels were owned by various people, but certainly Pettigrew had a partnership share in more than one of them. The tendency of persons not to register changes or partial changes of ownership of vessels has unfortunately made the preparation of accurate ownership records impossible. It is only from Pettigrew's diaries that some of his shipping interests have become apparent.

In 1862 Pettigrew contracted with Alexander Low Smith and Thomas Miller to build him a schooner, at Doughboy (Doboy) Creek. On Christmas Day of 1862, Pettigrew travelled to the building yard to view the new hull.

The ship was registered in 1863, and named *Elizabeth*. She was a two-masted schooner, 69ft. in length, of 46 tons register.

The *Elizabeth* served mainly on the voyage, Brisbane-Dundathu, but Pettigrew sold his share in 1865. He had mortgaged her soon after she was built, possibly to raise money for his next ship, and first steamer.

**STERNWHEEL PADDLER**

For some time Pettigrew had made use of the sailing ship *Granite City*, owned by Messrs. Low and Gregor, of Mooloolah. In the first days of 1863 he arranged with the owners to convert the ship into a paddle-steamer. He and Low designed a stern wheel, and on 11 February 1863 the vessel went on the slipway to be lengthened in the stern by 18ft. While the ship's history is not clear (like so many she was not registered) it is believed she was originally built by John Williams, possibly near Doughboy Creek, in 1856.

The engine was ordered from Britain, from an engineering firm called Barnett & Andrews. The engine was of 10 h.p., and cost £230, the boiler £100, and sundry fittings cost a further £130.

The *Granite City*, having been converted to a stern-wheel paddle-steamer, was renamed *Gneering*, an Aboriginal word meaning Black Swan. She, by this time, was partly owned by Pettigrew, who held 22 shares, the others owning 21 each, of the usual total of 64.
The *Gneering* went on her steaming trials on 23 June 1863, and two days later the "Courier" reported:

"The *Gneering* stern wheel steamer had made a trial trip on 23 June 1863. This craft was formerly known as the *Granite City*, and was employed in the timber trade. At that time she had a square stern and was a sailing vessel. Since then she has been considerably altered, having had 18 feet added to her length and her stern changed to its present shape. Her engine and boiler are of English manufacture, and were fitted up by Mr. Pettigrew's engineer (Hiley). During the trip on Tuesday last she steamed at the rate of from four to five miles per hour against the tide — this when the small power (10 horses) of the engine is taken into consideration, is a very fair speed. She has been fitted with a steam winch to load and discharge cargo. She is the property of Messrs. Low and Gregor, and will be employed by them as a timber drogher."

The *Gneering* rapidly settled into cargo and passenger carriage between Brisbane, bay and coastal ports, and was a major income earner for her owners. In her first six months' trading the profit earned exceeded £500, with a reserve fund of £315.

While the *Gneering* was becoming established Pettigrew began to expand his shipping again. He purchased a half share in the *Louisa Maria*, a schooner trading from Dun-dathu to Port Denison. He paid £600, on 17 February 1864. This was an unregistered purchase as the official register shows Richard Symes Warry as owner. The *Louisa Maria* is recorded as burnt by natives at Whitsunday Island, 15 August 1878.

Pettigrew also apparently bought a share in the brigantine *Julia Percy*, again, if true, unregistered. He records that the share in the ship belonging to Andrew Muir (who was the sole registered owner) was bought by his associates Low & Gregor in November 1865, and notes the profit from the ship's trading. She was wrecked at Port Denison some time prior to March 1867.

Late in 1864, Pettigrew made an order for machinery from T. J. Wenham in England. This machinery was to be for a new small steamer he was planning. This ship was to be named *Tadorna Radjah*.

In December 1865, John & Matthew Miller began to prepare the site where the little steamer was to be built. This site belonged to Pettigrew and was at South Brisbane. They built a shed so that the ship would be built under cover.

He recorded in June 1866 that he was dissatisfied with
the standard of build and ordered some changes. On 14 July
the ship was launched, and on 1 August she went on trials.
Trouble immediately followed. The fire did not draw well
and the steam pressure was not adequate. Another trip was
made on 7 August, but again the steam pressure was low,
boiler water was too low, and a refill was necessary at the
Hamilton Hotel.

An attempt to remedy the trouble by fitting a forced
draught fan failed when the fan flew to pieces. A new
funnel was fitted and this cured the trouble.

**HIGH CHARGE FOR TOWAGE**

The reason for the building of the *Tadorna Radjah* was
the need for a small tugboat. Pettigrew had been paying
what he felt were exorbitant sums for the towage of rafts of
logs from the Logan and Albert rivers, via the Boat Passage
to his mill. The *Premier* and *Bremer* charged £20 per day,
and the full tow price was between £30 and £45 usually.
That he was right was shown by his costs in running the
*Tadorna Radjah*; only £7 a day.

Within a year of being built, the little ship was altered by
repositioning the boilers and engines and enlarging the hatch.
She ended with boilers, and consequently funnel, in the
bows, and engines in the stern.

His ships continued to trade, with occasional digressions
from their usual timber hauling activities, and some
accidents.

On one occasion in June 1865, the *Gneering* was aground
on the Noosa Bar and was nearly wrecked.

The *Tadorna Radjah* made the occasional visit to Ipswich
with cargo, and in August 1867 the *Gneering* ventured as
far as Bustard Bay carrying part of a new lighthouse.

In October 1867, after gold had been discovered at
Gympie, Pettigrew began to build a road from Mooloolah to
the diggings. He was assisted by Low and Gregor for a short
time, but they then left for the diggings. The shorter road
from Tewantin was developed and became the major route,
allowing rival interests to capture the increased passenger
trade.

In 1870 the *Gneering* was fitted with a dredge ladder,
possibly for channel dredging in the Mooloolah and other
rivers.

In October of that year, a man named Dick Edwards,
while oiling the paddle wheel shaft, in the Boat Passage, fell
overboard and was drowned.

In 1873, from the careful detail he recorded, it appears
that Pettigrew began to consider the building of a larger ship. He checked the cost, capacity and economy of several of the well-known vessels working in the area, including the *Arakoon*, *Louisa*, *Enterprise*, and the newly arrived *Culgoa*.

He had recently acquired another small ship, the *Hercules*. She was built in Maryborough in 1869 by Thomson and Linklater, with a wooden hull and one mast. The ship operated in the Mary River and Wide Bay, and was sold to W. Pettigrew & Co., the owners of the Dundathu Saw Mill, in 1872. *Hercules* was not fitted with engines until 1877, when a compound engine was installed. This engine was ordered via Robert Pettigrew in Scotland. The ship was not registered until 1891.

The *Hercules* was already old when registered, and was in 1893 laid up in the Mary River. She sank on 2 July 1894 at Pettigrew’s wharf. It was noted then that she had sunk twice in the last year and had been burnt badly once. The register was closed, with the note that the ship was broken up, in 1896.

After the purchase of the *Hercules*, another sailing ship was acquired by Pettigrew. This was the *Marchioness of Lorne*, bought in January 1875. She was a wooden two masted topsail schooner of 82.8ft., 78 tons register.

She sank in the Mary River in the February 1893 floods and was abandoned as a total loss.

Within two weeks of the purchase of the *Marchioness of Lorne*, the *Gneering*, lying with a load of coal near the south bank above the Victoria Bridge, sank. It took five months to bring her back into service, so the new ship must have proven useful as a replacement.

The idea for the new ship apparently continued to develop, and machinery was planned in 1882. The machinery was delivered at the end of 1885, and the new ship, the *Tarshaw*, was launched on the 6 March 1886. Evans, Anderson & Phelan were the builders, and the ship was a wooden twin-screw steamer of 109.9ft., 72 tons register. Her first trip to Maroochy was made on 17 July 1886.

Before the *Tarshaw* was complete, screw propellers were ordered for the *Gneering* as well. These were fitted, changing her from a stern-wheeler to a twin-screw steamer. They were driven by a geared system from the engine, and were contra-rotating, of 4ft. diameter with 3 blades.

Pettigrew’s fortunes were already on the decline, and he records business problems of increasing magnitude. When the *Gneering* grounded on a sand bank in the Maroochy River in 1892, she was already in a poor state. Con-
sequently Pettigrew began to dismantle her on the spot on 25 July 1893, and the first of his steamers was gone.

Then in the floods of 1893, the *Tadorna Radjah* sank on 9 February. She was beached in June, found unfit for repair, and broken up.

This left the *Tarshaw*. The business struggled on, but the mill was foreclosed, and the *Tarshaw* was finally sold on 13 July 1899, by mortgage sale, for £1250, to the Broadsound Meat Company. She went to Sydney in 1903 and worked there for some years before being hulked, then broken up.

**McGHIE, LUYA AND COMPANY**

Timber sales in the Colony of Queensland had fallen off severely in the depression of the mid 1860's. The industry was in a very sad state when the discovery of gold at Gympie caused an upsurge in business and the need for timber for the mines and for housing caused a general increase in the demand for sawn timber both in the Gympie district and elsewhere. The timber trade had begun on the Noosa River in 1865. Prior to this the area had been visited and surveyed by William Pettigrew. His report, somewhat disparaging and certainly not enthusiastic about the district as a source of timber appeared in the "Guardian", 30 September 1863. This report mainly covered land on the seaward side of the river and lakes, whereas the later industry was mainly on the western side and to the north.
The first known timber-getters were Thom, Scott and Kinmond, who also worked in Maroochy and later the Kin Kin district. In 1866 Mr. C. S. Russell visited the area and reported on the vast stands of kauri, hoop, cypress, cedar, beech, yellow-wood, ash, tulip and hardwood.

Four men, some at least of whom apparently made their way to Gympie as miners but rapidly saw the better prospect in trading with the community, were the founders of McGhie, Luya and Company. Their names were James McGhie, Abraham F. Luya, John Woodburn and F. G. Goodchap. They acquired land on the shores of Lake Cootharaba at what was known as Elandra Point. The area is now to be found on Elandra Plains Station, a cattle property owned by the Kelmans.

By 1870 the saw-mill had been built and they commenced to cut and ship sawn timber to Gympie and to Brisbane.

The original trade in timber to Brisbane was not without hazard. The river had been surveyed by Commander G. P. Heath, Port Master of Queensland, in 1869. He proceeded there in the Government tug *Brisbane* and on finding the bar to have a depth of 8 feet and the river channel a depth of 10 to 15 feet, he gave a qualified approval to the use of the place as a port. His qualification was presumably due to the tendency of the bar to shift and to shoal. A year later the schooner *Titania* grounded on the bar but was later refloated.

The first steamer to carry timber from the Noosa River

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The site of the boiler-house at the Elandra Point mill of McGhie, Luya, with the remnants of the wharf piles in the background.
was Wm. Pettigrew's *Gneering*. She stuck on the bar on leaving and was only able to cross by jettisoning some of her cargo of logs.

McGhie, Luya & Company developed their Elandra Point mill and established timber yards at South Brisbane, where the South Brisbane Dry Dock Breasting Wharf now stands. Their address was recorded as the corner of Stanley and Sidon Streets.

In 1872, Governor Normanby visited the Elandra Point saw-mill and commented as follows:

"On entering the works we found the machinery covered by a shed 120 feet long by 33 feet wide, containing circular saws and travelling benches of the latest make and largest capacity, and a vertical saw frame capable of taking logs 4ft. 6ins. in diameter, one of the finest in the Colony, the ironwork weighing over 20 tons. To this is attached ingenious machinery by which logs of the largest size can be drawn directly out of the water and up on to a platform level with the vertical saw, thus saving time and labour considerably.

"The machinery is driven by a 25 h.p. engine, supplied by two boilers 20ft. and 13ft. 6ins. in diameter respectively. At the rear are blacksmiths' and carpenters' shops and every appliance for executing repairs and requirements rendered necessary by its long distance from any other means of assistance. To the rear of the mill we found a regular township of workmen's houses and others directly and indirectly connected with the establishment, a goods store, well supplied, and a butcher's shop, and there seemed to be nothing wanting to complete the comfort of all connected with the establishment."

**SHIPS TO SERVICE MILLS**

Up to 60 families lived in the area throughout the working life of the mill. In order to service their mills McGhie, Luya and Company developed their own shipping service. The first and major vessel they acquired was the paddle steamer *Culgoa*.

The *Culgoa*, official No. 43151, was built by T. Cruikshank of Port Adelaide in 1865. She was composite built, having iron frames and wooden planking and was 91.8 feet in length, 17.3 feet in breadth, with a depth altogether of 5.7 feet. Her tonnage was 79 gross and 56 net. The engines were recorded as being two in number (this may have referred to the number of cylinders) with a total nominal horse-power of 30. The paddles were side-paddles. Her original owners were Messrs. Acraman, Main & Company of
Port Adelaide. She was built for the Murray River trade.

The description of the ship at the time of building, as recorded in the “Adelaide Observer”, stated:

“This is the first vessel built entirely at Port Adelaide and is named after one of the tributaries of the Darling River. She is to be used in the Darling River trade. The boiler is designed to work at 60 lbs. per square inch and the wheels to work at 26 revolutions per minute. Planking is Swan River mahogany to 4 feet and pine above that. She can carry 80 tons of cargo and tow barges. She was launched on Tuesday evening, 10 July 1865 and left for Goolwa on August 17. The engines are direct acting, high-pressure, made by Mr. G. Wyatt, Port Adelaide, and she made an average of 7 knots.”

In September 1865, she was snagged and sunk near Wentworth, N.S.W., but later refloated.

The Culgoa was sold to McGhie, Luya & Co. in late 1872. Her two masts and schooner rig were fitted before she was registered in Brisbane. The Culgoa came to Brisbane under the command of Captain Brasil, leaving Adelaide on 1 February 1873 and arriving on 12 February 1873. Her registry had been transferred from Port Adelaide to Brisbane on 3 February in the name of John Woodburn, still recorded as a miner of Gympie. He was, of course, one of the members of McGhie, Luya and Company. However, the ownership was re-recorded on 1 March 1873 as being 42 of the 64 shares to James McGhie and 22 of the 64 shares to John Woodburn.

**BRISBANE-NOOSA RUN**

Her first voyage from Brisbane was on February 14 with Capt. Clark as Master. He was soon succeeded by Capt. Alexander Goodall, who ran the ship for most of the 18 years it remained in the trade. Capt. Goodall was credited with holding Home Trade Master’s Certificate No. 1 in a later Marine Board enquiry, but this must be in doubt as this honour is claimed for Capt. Wm. Collin as well and a photograph of the latter’s certificate seems to support this claim.

The Culgoa would enter the Noosa River and berth at the Company’s wharf, which at first was situated at the north bank of the river, opposite Munna Point, at the seaward end of the area now known as Noosaville, opposite where Weyba Creek enters the Noosa River. The wharf later was removed to Tewantin and was situated on the Tewantin (south) side, on the shore below the present Post Office. Just up-stream was the Government Wharf and just down-stream was the
wharf of Dath, Henderson and Company, another timber group. The remnants of these wharves were still visible into the late 1940's. The timber had to be brought down river from the mill on Lake Cootharaba, as the channel up to the mill varied in depth, at places only being two or so feet. Small flat-bottomed paddle-wheel steamers were built to tow punts loaded with sawn timber from the Lake down to Tewantin.

McGhie, Luya and Company built and operated two such steamers, the *Black Swan* and the *Elandra* — one launched on 5 June 1873, but the date of the other is not recorded. It is interesting that the name *Black Swan*, in its Aboriginal form *Gneering*, had already been used by Pettigrew for his first steamer. Another such steamer (popularly called *droghers*) was the *Alabama*.

*Culgoa* settled down to a run which usually meant three trips a fortnight. Shortly after this service was established a major disaster occurred at the Elandra Point saw-mill.

On 29 July 1873 the men were warming themselves before the boiler at 8.30 a.m. before they started to work. It was noticed that the boiler was beginning to bulge and they rapidly tried to leave the area. However, it exploded and as a result five men were killed instantly or later died from their injuries. The investigation held subsequently established that the cause was due to a faulty valve.

In December 1873 the *Culgoa* was slipped for repairs and became the first ship to be serviced by Mr. Peters who had, in conjunction with others, just acquired Parker’s Slip at Kangaroo Point. The records of this slipping and repairs made still exist. This slip celebrates its centenary as Peters’ Slip in 1973.

Freight on the *Culgoa* from Brisbane usually consisted of supplies for Noosa and district, equipment for the mill, and passengers *en route* to Noosa or Gympie. The passengers travelled on from Tewantin by co-ordinated service which operated in conjunction with Cobb & Co’s coaches. The fares from Brisbane to Noosa were 25/- in the saloon and 20/- on the deck. Later on, in 1882, competition from D. L. Brown and Co’s *Arakoon* forced fares down to the level of saloon passengers 15/-, deck passengers 7/6d. Other competitors included the *Adonis* of Dath, Henderson and Company. Freight to Brisbane from Noosa was mainly timber. The *Culgoa* could carry up to 35,000 feet of timber on each voyage.

In 1875, when the demand was at its peak, the company began to operate another ship. This was the famous ketch
Enterprise, built along the lines of a Thames barge by Capt. Wm. Collin and Thos. Burnett Ward in 1864. Collin sold the Enterprise on 12 May 1875, and the ship was then registered in the name of John Woodburn, timber merchant, Gympie. The records of the company show that the Enterprise made her first trip from Noosa to Brisbane on behalf of McGhie, Luya and Company on 21 May 1875, and she managed one trip every 10 days with a cargo totalling up to 46,000 feet of timber. The ship was sold in 1880.

Culgoa continued on in the trade after the sale of Enterprise, with the competition of the other ships reducing profitability. In 1879 she was lengthened to 107.4 feet, the tonnage being increased to 100.7 gross, 63 net, and at this time the deck-houses were altered to make her more suitable for open sea work.

DEATH OF A VETERAN

On Thursday, 13 May 1891 Culgoa sailed from her Tewantin wharf at 10.30 a.m. loaded with timber to a draught of four feet. As she approached the bar, she grounded on the river flats. Efforts on the same and next tide failed to re-float her. On the next day it was felt her back was broken, but this proved not to be so. Further attempts at re-floating were made, but the vessel fell over on to her side, a bank of sand built up around her and she filled with water. She was abandoned to the insurers on 18 May, the amount of insurance being £2,000. On 30 May she had moved closer to the north beach and it was hoped she could be floated on the next spring tide. This proved not to be so and the wreck was sold at auction on 8 June. The compasses, ropes, etc. brought £22, but the hull was sold for £6 to Dath, Henderson and Co. The engines were removed and used in a saw-mill at Brooloo, but were broken for scrap in about 1960.

Capt. Goodall was found not to blame in any way for the loss of the Culgoa and shortly afterwards he took up command of the Aquarium Company’s steamer Alice. The company failed, and then he proceeded north to take command of a vessel at Thursday Island. I understand that he retired later to Brisbane and died at Wynnum.

With the loss of the Culgoa, McGhie, Luya and Company did not seek a replacement ship, presumably because the roadway link between Brisbane and Gympie was completed in July 1891 and so the seaward passenger traffic would have
fallen off very considerably. They had chartered ships previously to import cargoes of timber from North America and from coastal ports, and at the time of loss of the Culgoa had the Coquette, a large three-masted schooner on their berth.

However, the mill at Elandra Point closed in 1892 and after the major floods of 1893, which virtually destroyed many of the riverside businesses, McGhie, Luya and Company’s Brisbane timber yards ceased to trade also. The Tewantin part of the business was still recorded as operating for another year. This then also closed down and was not listed after 1895. The wharf continued to be in use but was leased out to other operators, Mr. Goodchap collecting the rentals. Records exist of this to 1901 and 1903.

Though the number of ships operated by McGhie, Luya and Company was small, they were significant because of their long period of activity in the trade and their close concern with the transport of passengers for the Gympie goldfields.

FLEET LISTS

WILLIAM PETTIGREW

*Elizabeth*: Official number 32684. Wood 2 masted schooner, built Doughboy Creek, 1862 by A. L. Smith and T. Miller. 69.0 x 16.6 ft. 46 Tons Register. Registered 1863 by W. Pettigrew, A. L. Smith, T. Miller; 27 July 1865 by Smith, Miller, Hugh Hughes; 24 September 1865 by Miller, Hugh Hughes. Lost on voyage to Sydney 1868.

*Granite City*: Unregistered — see Gneering.

*Gneering*: Official number 40946. Wood Brigantine, built Brisbane 1856, engined and lengthened 1863 — stern wheel steamer, 88.5 x 17.4 feet. 62 tons gross, 48 tons net. Engine 10 h.p., by Barnett and Andrews. Registered 31 December 1863 by Pettigrew, Low and Gregor; 5 August 1868, Pettigrew sole owner. Stranded 1892, Maroochy River, broken up.

*Louisa Maria*: Official number 32310. Wood 2 masted schooner, built Bateman’s Bay N.S.W. 1853. 54.5 x 14.8 feet. 39 Tons Register. Registered 27 October 1863, Richard Symes Warry. Burnt by natives at Whitsunday Island 15 August 1878. In 1864 Pettigrew recorded purchasing a half share in the vessel.

Condemned, purchased by Government of Queensland. Used as a hulk. Sold to Andrew Muir. Registered 27 October 1864, Andrew Muir. Wrecked Port Denison, March 1867. Pettigrew records purchasing a share in the vessel, and also records that his associates Low and Gregor purchased Muir's remaining shares in November 1865.

_Tadorna Radjah_: Official number 52227. Wood stern wheel steamer. Built South Brisbane 1866. 63.7 x 12.1 feet. 32 tons gross, 21 tons net. Two cylinder engine, 12 h.p. 12 3/8” diam x 6 1/4” stroke, by J. A. Wenham, Union Road, London. Registered 1866 Wm. Pettigrew. Stranded, and broken up 1893.


_Marchioness of Lorne_: Official number 64373. Wood 2 mast topsail schooner, built Jervis Bay 1871. 82.8 x 19.1 feet. 78 Tons Register. Previously registered Sydney. Registered Brisbane 1875 Wm. Pettigrew. Registered Maryborough 1882 Sim, Dawson, Sim, Pethebridge. Sank Mary River in floods 1893, total loss.


**McGHIE, LUYA AND COMPANY**


_Black Swan_: Unregistered, paddle wheel drogher, Noosa River.
Elandra: Unregistered, paddle wheel drogher, Noosa River.

Enterprise: Official number 32681. Wood ketch, built Brisbane 1864 by W. Collin and T. B. Ward. 77 x 19.7 feet. 70 Tons Register. Registered Brisbane 1864 Collin and Ward; 1875 John Woodburn; 1880 Sold under mortgage to James Campbell. Various owners to 1901, register closed.

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