

Memories of Ironpot mountain

Few Rockhampton-Yeppoon Road travellers who admire the striking shape of the volcanic plug, Ironpot, imagine it as a butcher's boiler turned upside down. In this article ANNE LLOYD outlines a part of the family history of the Athertons, who pioneered a cattle station about 1km from the mountain. It was Edmund Atherton who dubbed the mountain Ironpot, after his family settled the area in 1860. The article is based on a handwritten transcript of the reminiscences of Edmund's son, Richard. It is believed to have been written in the 1920s or 1930s.

Both Edmund Atherton and his wife Esther came of old Lancashire farming stock, Edmund taking on the farm where his forefathers had spent their lives for generation after generation.

But, when the couple's family had grown to seven, they agreed there was not enough room and decided to look for a new home in a new country.

In 1844 they set sail from Liverpool, taking four months to reach Sydney. After one day ashore they sailed to Newcastle and set out bush to look for a home.

The children were James, 14, with Alice, Rebecca, John, Edmund, Henry and Thomas in descending order spaced about two years apart.

A third daughter, Esther, was born in Australia the following year and the author, Richard, in 1847.

In 1848 Edmund Atherton secured a lease on part of Tillenster Station, about 8km from Armidale, in the New England district of New South Wales.

Edmund's rent for the land and sheep to stock it amounted to half of each year's wool clip. He agreed also to replace the sheep with an equivalent flock at the end of the term — five years.

When the term of the lease expired, Edmund Atherton bought a station with some cattle about 40km north of Armidale. It proved unsuitable for sheep because of foot rot.

Archer brothers

Edmund's son, Richard, continues the story:

In consequence of which it was decided in 1856 to start them under my brother James' charge out to what is now Queensland, but at that time a portion of New South Wales, known as Morton (sic) Bay, and further north as Fort Curtiss, (sic), the latter included in the Rockhampton District, where the sheep eventually got to after a whole year or more on the road.

There was no Rockhampton at that time, only a shed the Archer brothers had built to land goods brought from Gladstone in their own cutter.

The Athertons leased or were lent a piece of country by the Archer brothers, a portion of Grace mere about 24km south of Rockhampton, until a suitable place could be found to form a station.

About that time my Father and my brother Edmund came out bringing a mob of horses, some for use and some for sale, Father taking part in exploring for suitable sheep country. On one trip Mount Hedloo (sic) was found and taken up, but was not thought suitable for sheep, and later a piece of country was taken up on the Fiteroy River, in a direct line about 40 miles west from Rockhampton and named Rosewood and the sheep taken there.

After the sheep left the Armidale station, cattle were brought to restock the country. But the family moved to a 70ha property about 5km from Armidale, naming the place Mount Pleasant.

Three of us — Thomas, Esther and myself — were sent for the first time to a public school ... We walked in and out to School fully three and a half miles each day. About 30 acres of Mt Pleasant was farmed, the ploughing was done by bullock team with big wooden ploughs, hard work and slow, the balance of the land was used as a grass paddock for the working stock.

Unlimited space

After Mt Pleasant was put in order, Edmund Atherton, his son Edmund and one hired man left with the horses for Rockhampton. He was away for about a year, during which Mount Pleasant was successfully managed by Esther.

My Father seemed taken with the country about Rockhampton by the unlimited space and about a year after his return to Armidale he decided to sell out there and move out to Mt Hedloo. My brothers John and Edmund were sent for to assist with the moving of the cattle.

The trio made the trip in three weeks. Six months came the big move, involving 100 cattle, 70 horses, three bullock teams, a dray and a covered cart.

The whole family, except James, travelled with the cattle. They took four months on the road.

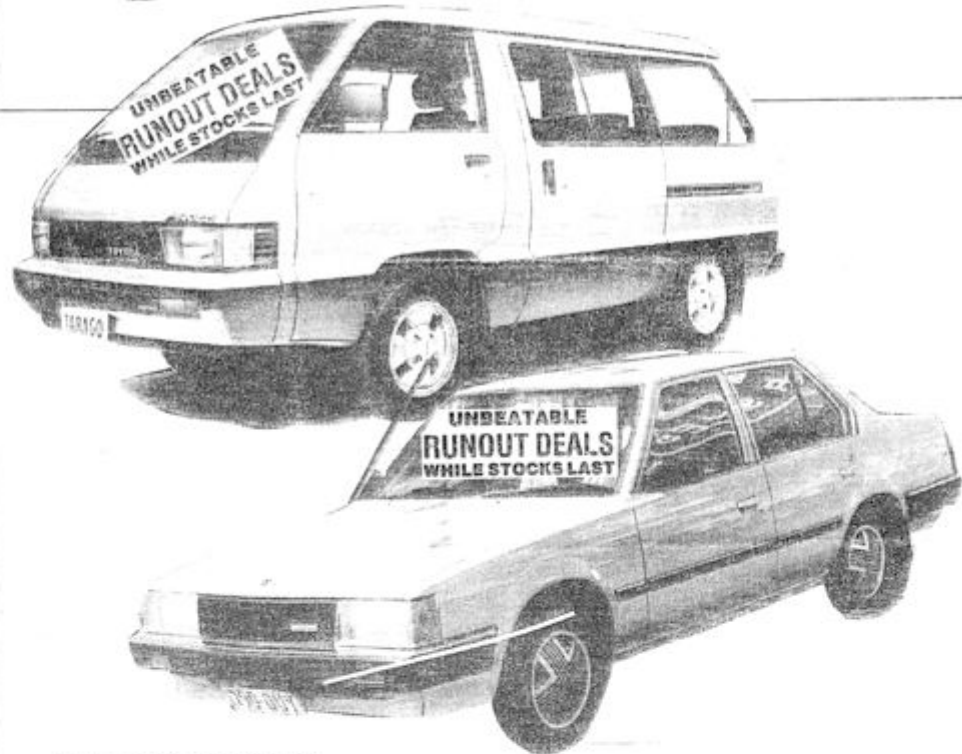
We arrived at the place that had been picked for a homestead about the end of July; the country was in splendid order, plenty of water everywhere and much of the country covered with lush green grass, four to six inches long.

The name of the place, Mt Hedloo, was taken from a black's name or rather it was the blacks' name for a Mountain about a mile from where the station was formed, and afterwards named by my father the Iron Pot from its resemblance to a butcher's boiler turned



● Ironpot, as seen from the Yeppoon road ... named by settler Edmund Atherton.

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ATHERTON burials at Yeppoon Cemetery:

ATHERTON, JAMES; 74 y ME.C. GRAZIER 23/12/1903 1A 24 HEART FAILURE

ATHERTON, THOMAS HENRY J.; 42 y ME.C. SETTLER 1A 47 17/1/1918 Accident
Also wife Laira Eliza; 77 y C of E 11/09/1957 1A 47 Pensioner

ATHERTON, ANN; 74y C of E HOUSEWIFE 25/03/1922 1A 72 HEART FAILURE

ATHERTON REBECCA 88y Cof.E. LADY 1B 9

ATHERTON Edward Charles E 85 Appears in Rockhampton Burial Index - probably ashes buried with a family member..

Burials in the Shire of Livingstone.

18/06/1863 ATHERTON Edmond 60 Mt. Hedlow
(Husband of Ester)

05/10/1883 ATHERTON Jessie 28 Mt Hedlow
(Daughter-in-law to Edmund & Ester)

28/03/1887 ATHERTON James Edmond 23 Mt. Hedlow
(Son of James & Mary & grand son of Edmond)

19/12/1887 ATHERTON Mary 56 Mt. Hedlow
(Wife of James, daughter-in-law to Edmund & Ester, mother of James Edmond)

25/12/1888 ATHERTON Ester 82 Mt. Hedlow
(Wife of Edmond)

24/12/1903 ATHERTON James 74 Yeppoon Cem.
(Son of Edmond & Ester, husband of Mary)

17/01/1918 ATHERTON Thomas Henry John 43 Yeppoon Cem
(Husband of Laura Eliza)

25/03/1922 ATHERTON Ann 74 Yeppoon Cem
(? Wife of James of Adelaide Park)

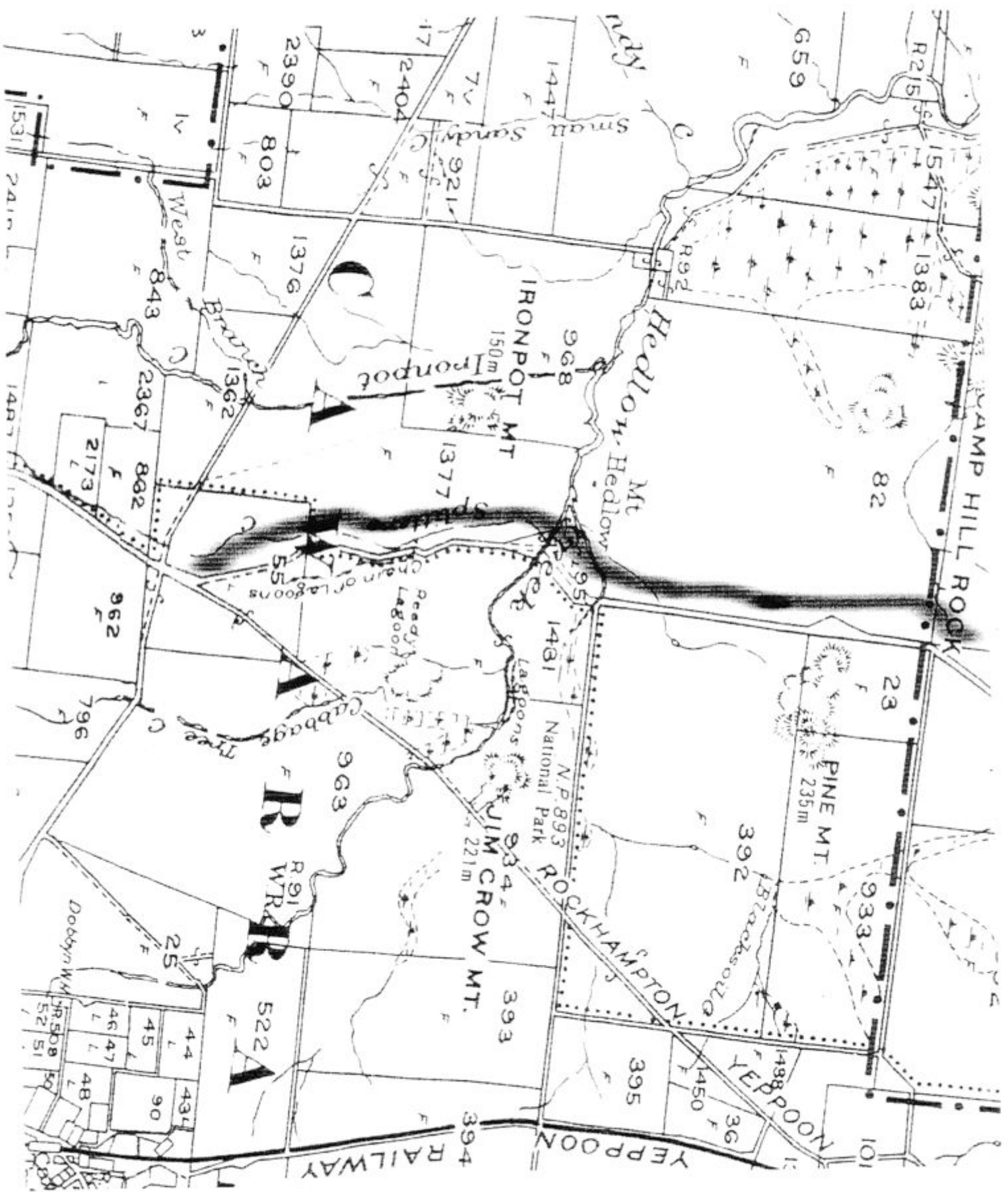
11/05/1924 ATHERTON Rebecca 88 Yeppoon Cem
(Daughter of Edmund & Ester)

11/09/1957 ATHERTON Laura Eliza 78 Yeppoon Cem
(Wife of Thomas Henry John)

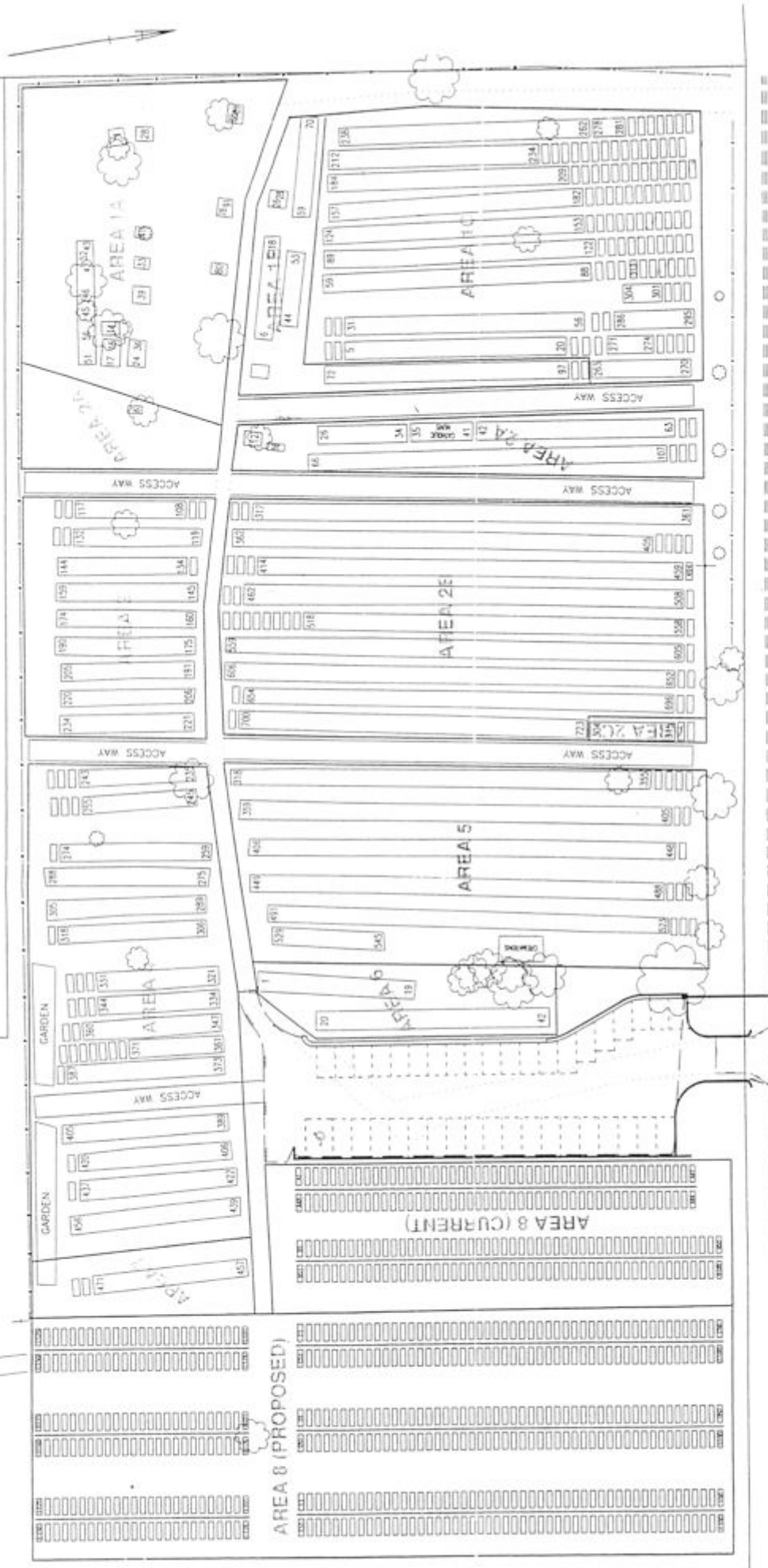
20/01/1968 ATHERTON Edward Charles E 85 Yeppoon Cem

10/04/1948 ATHERTON Cecil Francis S 68 Long Island,
Kunwarara

29/11/1893 ATHERTON Thomas 49 Yingerrioy Stn.
(Husband of Jessie) Torrilla



Parish of Yeppoon



LEGEND

- Gravel Edge
- Bitumen Edge
- Fence
- Kerb & Channel

CORDINGLEY STREET

Table 1. Establishment of burial sections of the Yeppoon Cemetery

Section	Burial Period	Grave Numbers	Religion
1A	1888 - 1923	1 - 91	Protestant
1B	1923 - 1929	1 - 100	Protestant
1C	1929 - 1945	1 - 314	Protestant
2A	1888 - 1948	1 - 107	Roman Catholic
2B	1945 - 1977	315 - 723	Protestant
2C	1977 - 1977	304 - 315	Protestant
3	1948 - 1970	107 - 234	Roman Catholic
4	1971 - 1995	235 - 456	Roman Catholic
5	1977 - 1995	318 - 545	Protestant
6	1996 - 2000	1 - 42	Protestant
7	1995 - 2002	457 - 472	Roman Catholic
8	1997 - present	A1 - E150	Protestant

If a marked grave was used, the burial date should be converted to either the date of grave purchase or the date at which the first death in a contained grave occurred.

N.B: For simplicity, the length of individual gravestone rows was established using the first and last physical feature in a row for a consecutive numbering pattern.

Family Tree

