

Worksheet: William Horton and the Royal Bull's Head Inn

One of the inhabitants of Drayton was William Horton, who was the proprietor of the Bull's Head Inn. In 1832, he was convicted of theft in England and transported to Australia for seven years. He was sixteen when he arrived. After serving out his sentence he worked as a stockman and became renowned as an experienced bushman. He was energetic, enthusiastic and determined to make the best of his situation. These were all good qualities for an ex-convict to start a new life in Australia.

Why might William Horton have preferred to remain in Australia, rather than return to England, after his sentence was completed?

In the early 1840s, William Horton worked in the Queen's Arms Hotel in Ipswich, where he met his wife Sarah Campbell. She was one of only three women living in Ipswich.

What were the challenges that Sarah Campbell might have faced, with only two other women for company?

What important role did women have in the colony?

In 1848, William and Sarah moved to Drayton to run the Bull's Head Inn. William named the inn after a prize Durham bull named 'Champion' on Cecil Plains station, and the image of a bull's head was used on advertisements (you can see one of these advertisements on this page). They made it into a very comfortable place to stay overnight, or to sit and have a drink and a meal.

Shingles are small pieces of timber, a bit like tiles.

The inn was simply built of timber slabs with a **shingled** timber roof, but it contained a fine parlour (a room for eating, drinking and relaxing) and high-quality meals were offered. There was a butcher's shop on site, enabling a good supply of fresh and salted meat, a blacksmith and a saddler for repairs, and stabling and hay were available for travellers to rest their horses.

Royal Bull's Head,
DRAYTON.



THE undersigned respectfully intimates to the gentlemen of the Northern Districts, his former customers, and the public generally, that having obtained a license for the above Hotel, the **TABLE** will be always supplied with the choicest viands of every description, got up in a superior style, and his guests will always find first-rate fare at reasonable rates.

The **WINES** and **SPIRITS** have been selected for him by one of the first houses in the colony, and he can warrant the genuine article to every customer who visits the house.

GOOD HAY, CORN, and **STABLING** for horses, with extensive paddocks.

He also notifies that it is his intention immediately to make an **EXTENSIVE ADDITION TO THE PRESENT PREMISES** for the accommodation of private families, with a number of bed-rooms, which will be fitted up in the best style, so as to make the Hotel second to none in the colony. **NEW STABLES** will also be erected, and other improvements made, in order to guarantee first-rate accommodation to his customers.

All, therefore, he need add is, that in soliciting from his old customers and the public a share of their patronage, he feels confident that they who favour him with one call will not fail to make a second, as he is determined to maintain the reputation the house has long acquired of being one of the best conducted Hotels in the Northern Districts.

WILLIAM HORTON.

Drayton, September 22, 1858.

In 1858, William Horton decided to build a large extension to the inn. This extension survives today. It is now a museum and people visit it to see what it was like to live 150 years ago.



The extension was a long two-storey building constructed of brick and timber, with a shady verandah on the ground floor. It provided numerous bedrooms and recreation rooms, private quarters for the Hortons, and even a bathroom, which was very unusual. In 1860, the Governor of Queensland, Sir George Bowen, stayed the night, which was a very special occasion.

THE different portions of the Bull's Head Inn premises, to be sold on the 13th October next, are as follow, viz:—
The Old Portion of the Hotel to be divided in two.

1. The West End of the Building. It contains two large Rooms, viz., the old Bar, and adjoining Room, and Bed-room. There is about 250 feet of Cedar lining the old Bar.
2. The Passage from Brisbane-street to the back portion of the house, the old Coffee-room, two Bed-rooms, Pantry, and passage leading to the new Hall; the Coffee-room has about 300 feet of Cedar Lining Boards in it.
3. The whole of the old Butcher's Shop, and three rooms.
4. The Passage from the house to the Kitchen and small Kitchen Verandah
5. The Back of the Kitchen, known as the Brick Portion.
6. The Billiard-room
7. The Back Portion of the Stables, with several old Horse Boxes.
8. The West End of the Stables, with an End Room and Six Stalls, with a Loft overhead.
9. The old Stables at the end of the flower garden.
10. One Large Kitchen Stove.
11. One Large Kitchen Stove.
12. One Large Copper Boiler.
13. One Filler Grate
14. A Six-Roofed Cottage, situated between the Hotel and the Post Office, with Kitchen, One Acre and Two Rods of Land, fenced in with a paling fence all round. Title unexceptionable.

The above Properties can be seen by calling at the Hotel any day previous to the day of sale.

Sketches and Plans of the Subdivided Portions of the Bull's Head Inn, Drayton, are now on view at the COMMERCIAL HOTEL, TOOWOOMBA.

W. HANDCOCK,
Auctioneer.

Drayton, September 23, 1875.

The newspaper article on the left describes the Inn in 1875, when it was sold at auction. Read the description then list all the different facilities that the Inn provided:

As well as running the Inn, William Horton helped to establish a racecourse at Drayton. He donated a handsome trophy for the winner and a generous sum of prize money. He was a keen gambler himself and was known by the nickname 'Bill the Fiver' or 'The Lucky Fiver' from the time when he won a hand in a bush card game.

William Horton died in 1864. During his life, he transformed from a convict to a successful businessman. His transportation to Australia had been the making of him.