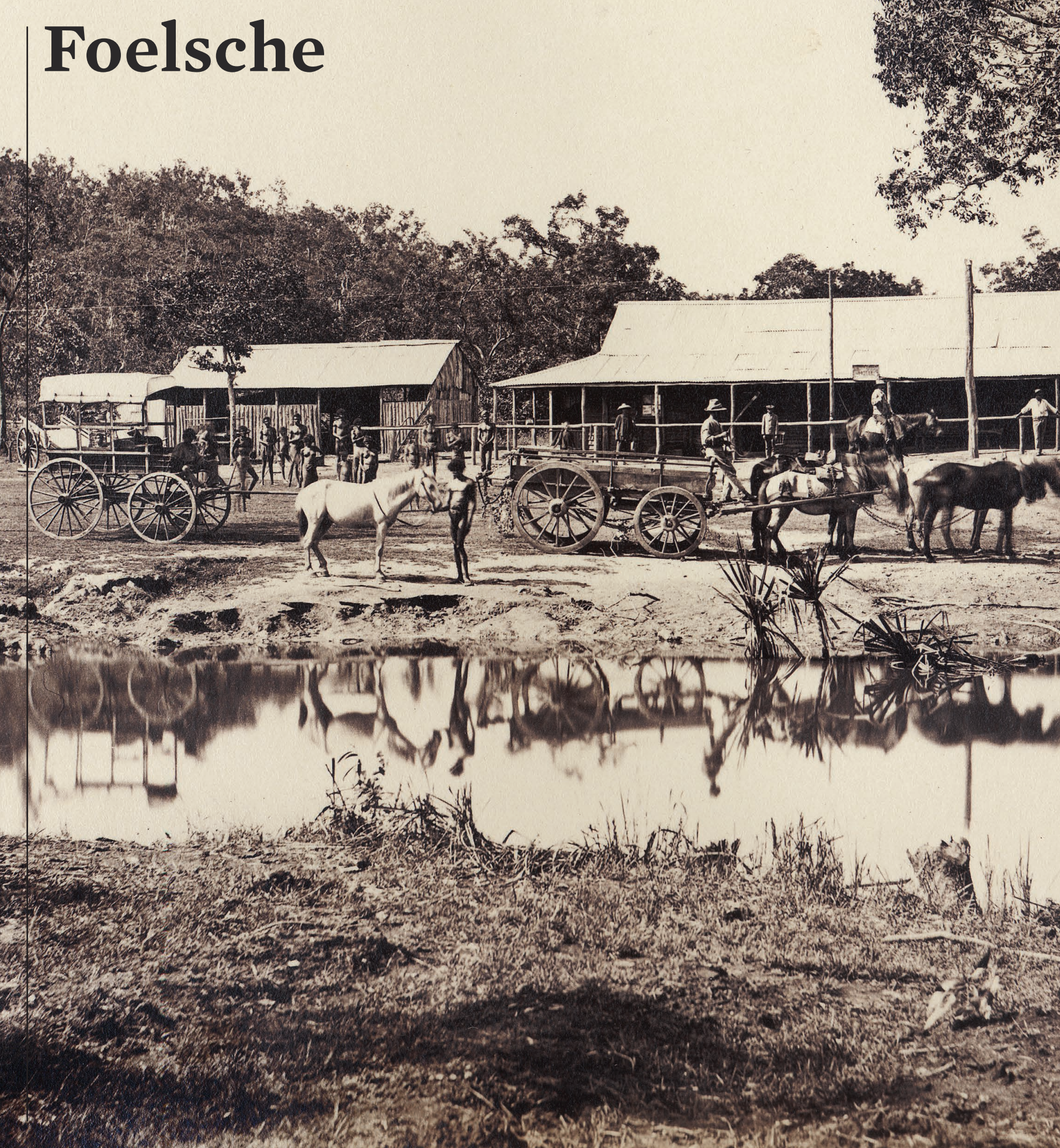


Foelsche









Paul Foelsche



detail of page 14

cover
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A chronology

1831	Born Paul Heinrich Matthias Fölsche on 30 March, at Moorburg, near Hamburg.
1854	Arrived in South Australia on 26 October, soon making his way to the Victorian goldfields.
1856	Joined the South Australian Mounted Police Force, transferring to Strathalbyn at the conclusion of his training.
1858	Given charge of the newly completed police station.
1860	Married Charlotte Georgina Smith on 5 January. Birth of a daughter, Emma Rosie, who later married H. W. H. Stevens.
1863	Birth of another daughter, Mary Jane, who later married W. W. Andrews.
1868	Appointed Masonic Grand Master.
1869	Appointed founding Sub-Inspector of Police for the Northern Territory. Left for Palmerston, Port Darwin, in December, after being naturalised.
1870	Took his first views of the temporary settlement.
1871	Joined in Darwin by his wife and daughters.
1872	Made Keeper of Palmerston Gaol, a position held till 1874.
1874	Took views of the Larrakia camp in Darwin in April.
1875	Travelled to Port Essington, his first photographic excursion outside Darwin. Victorian Intercolonial Exhibition, Melbourne.
1876	Promoted to Inspector. Centennial Exhibition, Philadelphia.
1877	Travelled to Port Essington in November, photographing the Iwaidja. Moved into his new residence, the Police Inspector’s House, in December.
1878	Exposition Universelle, Paris.
1879	Travelled to the goldfields in November and December. International Exhibition, Sydney.
1882	Published ‘Notes on the Aborigines of North Australia’, in <i>Transactions and Proceedings and Report of the Royal Society of South Australia</i> .
1884	Appointed J.P. and Special Magistrate. Switched to dry-plate photography. Escorted the Duke of Manchester on a trip throughout the Northern Territory in August.
1895	Published ‘On the Manners, Customs, Religions, Superstitions of Natives of Port Darwin and West Coast of Gulf of Carpentaria’, in <i>Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute</i> .
1900	Conferred Masonic Past Grand Rank.
1902	Appointed Inspector of Taxation in April.
1904	Retired from the police force in January.
1914	Died on 31 January in Darwin, where he was buried.

The Camp and Fort Hill August 1873

South Australia accessioned its ‘Northern Territory’ in the 1860s, to expand its pastoral holdings and establish a northern port for export, with a plan to fund the enterprise through land sales in Australia and Britain. During the second attempt to establish a settlement at Port Darwin in 1869, photographic documentation was included as one of the survey party’s responsibilities. However, it was soon realised that photographs could do much more. Wet-plate photography was a relatively new medium that was seen as providing an exact truth. As such, it could validate written claims and attract investors and migrants to the region.

The deployment of Captain Samuel Sweet, part-time commercial photographer and master of the colony’s supply ship, was immediately effective in this respect. Sweet became the colony’s official photographer, and his views of the infrastructure and the more striking landscape features of the new colony were widely circulated in Adelaide and London. After Sweet’s departure from the colony in 1872, Foelsche voluntarily took over his role, which principally involved supplying promotional photographs that presented the development and potential of the Northern Territory at a succession of international exhibitions.

The ‘Camp’ is the name given to the Northern Territory’s first temporary settlement, which was established in the saddle between Fort Hill and the Tableland on the north-eastern bank of the Port Darwin harbour. For some time, it was the principal landing place for the colony. The Camp was the first subject that Foelsche chose to photograph as a personal record of his surroundings. As he was still mastering the coating and processing of plates, Foelsche’s first nine subjects were within several minutes’ walk of his house.

The Camp and Fort Hill was his first whole-plate image. It presents a view of a made road meandering down the valley to the first temporary settlement. It adopts the classically picturesque structure of three distinct spaces, comprising an unruly foreground, a civilized mid-ground, and a wild background. The photograph is strongly indicative of Sweet’s influence on Foelsche at this time.

The trees on both sides of the image, and the fringe of vegetation that frames the lower edge, operate as a deliberate coulisse, so effectively used in Captain Sweet’s matching view of the Camp. The road directs the viewer to the settlement, which becomes each picture’s mid-ground. Beyond is the sea, which here dissolves into sky. This image of the Camp presumably held a personal meaning for Foelsche. As the entry point to the colony, it is where he had first landed, and where he lived for his first year in the north.





**View of Palmerston from
the Residence
October 1873**

This pair of photographs, individually titled *Telegraph buildings* (left) and *Corner of Esplanade and Mitchell Street* (right), forms a panorama of the southern end of Mitchell Street, where Foelsche's station and house were located. Foelsche took advantage of an interval between Government Resident appointments to take this view of the township from the steps of the Residence, the presence of which is evident in the shadow along the bottom edge of the two exposures.

Telegraph buildings is dominated by an impressive telegraph pole, with the offices of the Overland & British

Australian Telegraph in the background. For many, the arrival of the telegraph represented a sign of the permanency of the settlement. Foelsche's home is given prominence in *Corner of Esplanade and Mitchell Street*. The Government Residence provided the ideal vantage point from which to record the diminutive dwelling and the police barracks.

While there is only one known print of *Telegraph buildings*, its companion was reprinted many times. Foelsche would not have believed it at the time, but he was to remain in this location for the rest of his career.





**Two views of
Native camp, Palmerston
April 1874**

Foelsche's first photographs of Aborigines depicted the Larrakia, whose people are the traditional owners of the Port Darwin region. They are the earliest surviving images of Aborigines of the Northern Territory.

In April 1874, Foelsche took several views of Darwin's main Aboriginal camp, located at what is now Cavenagh Square, in the centre of the city. When the colonists arrived in 1869, they were welcomed by the Larrakia, who saw advantage in their presence, believing that the settlers would provide protection from warring neighbouring clans, and who imagined that, as with earlier settlement attempts, their stay would only be temporary.

Five years later, the settlement was progressively taking over Larrakia land, and, as can be seen by the littered foreground, the Larrakia themselves were becoming increasingly dependent on the colonists

for food. In part, this was due to the pressures that an increased population put on the natural supplies on which the Larrakia relied, but it also reflected attempts by the settlers to recruit labour, in both the townships and inland industries.

Foelsche's reasons for photographing the Larrakia camp are not recorded. While it is possible that the images were made for ethnographic purposes, it is more likely that they were part of his personal record of his surroundings. Indeed, it is Foelsche's perspective as a resident colonist that distinguishes his portraits of Aborigines from those by many of his contemporaries. Notable in Foelsche's views of the Larrakia camp is the presence of a trooper, standing amongst the group of 'friendly natives'. Fraternisation with the Aborigines was forbidden when the settlers arrived in 1869. This rule had clearly changed by 1874.





**Mitchell Street,
looking south-east
8 June 1875**

This view looks down Mitchell Street, towards Foelsche's house on the far left, but its purpose is really to illustrate the row of telegraph poles that lead back to the Overland Telegraph offices on the right. Harriet Douglas, eldest daughter of the Government Resident, planted the first pole of the Overland Telegraph line on 15 September 1870, to great fanfare.

Taken five years after the event, this photograph records a period of rapid development on Palmerston's Tableland. Foelsche embarked on illustrating the recent

progress in the main quarter of the settlement with a number of street views looking to the four points of the compass. These the *Northern Territory Times and Gazette* (10 July 1875, 2) described as an 'elegant series of photographic views, 24 in all... affording a better idea of the characteristics of Port Darwin than could be set forth in a dozen bluebooks'.



**New Police Station
December 1875**

The new Police Station, situated on the corner of Mitchell Street and the Esplanade, was intended to be both station and Foelsche's residence. (His first residence can just be seen to the far left of picture.) However, part of the building was commandeered by the Government Resident in 1877 and reassigned to other officials. Frustrated, Foelsche wrote to John Lewis:

The GR has shown his friendly feeling again by turning me out of my office and given it to the Gaoler Mr Laurie, McMinn has two and Mr Price one room in the new

*Police Station and when he ordered me out I requested him to reconsider his decision, when he snubbed me and said, he did see no reason for doing so as the gaoler required an office in the stone building, so you see what his feelings are towards me. I am to occupy the old GR office which [is] completely swarmed with white ants. Well! I suppose I have to grin and bear it.*¹

¹ Foelsche, Paul, letter to John Lewis, 19 December 1877, Lewis Papers, State Library of South Australia, PRG 247.



**Entrance to first
Government Gardens
January 1876**

The establishment of gardens was crucial to the survival and flourishing of any nineteenth century colony, promising a supply of fresh fruit and vegetables, and providing a means of determining the plant varieties that could be grown in the climate and soils. This was particularly true with the settlement of the remote Northern Territory, which is typically subjected to two seasons, described as 'the Wet' and 'the Dry'. Monsoonal downpours for half the year and no rain for the remainder make gardening difficult, and many nineteenth century observers regarded the climate as too hot for Europeans to do manual labour.

In January 1876, Foelsche photographed the first experimental nursery, situated at Fannie Bay. Supervised by a guard, five Chinese prisoners are captured while working the gardens. The Government Gardens were aimed at proving the viability of commercial export crops such as pineapples, rice, coffee, and cotton. Workers were in short supply, with many of the Chinese immigrants working on the goldfields or as cooks. Consequently, prisoners were indentured into gardening, and work on building and other labouring projects.



Esplanade
10 June 1875

In 1875, the Victorian Intercolonial Exhibition was held in Melbourne, in preparation for the Philadelphia Centennial Exhibition, to be held the following year. J. G. Knight, Government Secretary and Architect, was named Northern Territory Commissioner, charged with assembling a collection of materials that would show off the resources of the Territory. The *Northern Territory Times and Gazette* (15 May 1875, 1) praised the appointment, observing that Knight had ‘filled the offices of Secretary in connexion with six preceding exhibitions’. It also reported that Foelsche would provide ‘pictorial illustrations of Port Darwin’, of which this image is a fine example.



Picnic near Fannie Bay
30 March 1877

Picnic near Fannie Bay was taken to celebrate Foelsche's 46th birthday on 30 March 1877. Numerous family and friends are captured in the image, gathering on the flat land above the cliffs at Fannie Bay beach. As with many of Foelsche's photographs, Aborigines feature prominently, and their presence is less surprising than other aspects of the image. There is, for instance, a complete absence of food, rugs, and other typical picnic paraphernalia, while a large sheet of bark has been removed from a tree in the background, for reasons that remain unclear.

Close observation of this photograph reveals the way in which Foelsche presents an extraordinary window on the region's colonial life. The image is also an example of his increased photographic confidence in choreographing those within the frame as part of the composition. Here, on a blustery, end-of-wet-season day, we have two distinct foreground groups facing inwards, ringed by others looking straight at the camera.

Foelsche's wife, Charlotte, and his daughters, Rosie and Emma, pose in profile at right, holding parasols. While a number of Aboriginal helpers occupy the fringes, two men can be seen lying among the left hand group, as if they had refused to move. Reclining with heads propped up on their arms, they gaze back at the photographer. Disrupting the serene composure of the event, a gentleman stands among the ladies to the right, his hat at a rakish angle only slightly more exaggerated than his own.

Captain Henry Rolfe Marsh, with his long white beard and boater hat, can be seen in the centre back of the group, standing alongside a woman with a parasol. Master of a sluggish supply vessel that was inappropriately named the *Flying Cloud*, Captain Marsh is identified as the subject of a companion print. This second image indicates that Foelsche took his camera down a low cliff face to the shoreline below. The view looks back towards the scene of the picnic, capturing some of the guests as they are about to descend. In his index, Foelsche specifically notes the date as 30 March, but makes no mention of Captain Marsh as his subject, nor of the picnic held to honour his birthday.



**Native corroboree,
Port Essington
November 1877**

**Natives waiting to
be photographed
November 1877**

**Native camp,
Port Essington
November 1877**

Following a request for photographs of Aborigines for the 1878 Exposition Universelle in Paris, Foelsche responded enthusiastically. The most available and cooperative subjects at his disposal were Port Darwin’s Larrakia, and the Iwaidja, who lived at Port Essington, in the vicinity of the old Port Victoria settlement. Foelsche had previously photographed both clan groups at their campsites, but this was his first attempt at producing individual portraits. It is likely that he dedicated his old quarter-plate as a portrait camera, and acquired a studio tent, headstand, and white backdrop for the purpose.

In November 1877, Foelsche took his camera equipment by boat to photograph the Iwaidja at Port Essington. There he set up a studio tent on the beach, in the vicinity of where the resident population lived, and along from the trepang station that he had photographed in 1875. He managed to make upwards of 60 portraits, although he complained of the conditions, ‘I have worked till I worked myself into the doctor’s hands who is now trying to patch me up again. I worked in a tent, 110 [°F] in the shade, rather to [sic] hot for any European to work 10 hours a day in.’¹

Overcast conditions significantly increased exposure times and led Foelsche to comment in the margin of his catalogue of the event that the views were ‘Taken on a very dull day’. Perhaps forced to stop working inside the tent, Foelsche made a series of views of the location. One such view, *Native corroboree, Port Essington*, depicts members of the Iwaidja on the ruins of the settlement of Victoria. An engraved reproduction of the image appeared in the *Australasian Sketcher with Pen and Pencil* (23 November 1878, 134), along with a lengthy discussion:

We are enabled to present our readers with an authentic picture of a native corroboree at Port Essington, Northern Territory, from a photograph by Mr P. Foelsche, taken on the site of the old settlement abandoned 30 years ago. The blacks in the north are physically much superior to their southern brothers, being tall and well proportioned, and at Port Essington, where game is abundant, they may be fairly described as a fine race and very intelligent. They speak excellent English, and have learned sufficient Malay during their intercourse with the proas which visit their coast annually, to fish for trepang, to render themselves intelligible. Elderly matrons and warriors preserve a lively recollection of the inhabitants of the old settlement; and astonish the Europeans who occasionally visit them by chanting English patriotic and naval songs, varied by scraps of hymns and some responses from the Litany. A cattle station was formed here three years ago to utilise the progeny of the English cattle and swamp buffalo which were left when the settlement was abandoned, and which now number some thousands. A market will be reached by shipment to Port Darwin, distant two days’ sail, or by the overland journey. In their athletic exercises these blacks are conspicuous for their skill, and their mimic combat, or sham fight, with bamboo spears, is well worth seeing. The

¹ Foelsche, Paul, letter to John Lewis, 19 December 1877, Lewis Papers, State Library of South Australia, PRG 247.



combatants draw up in two opposing lines, distant about twelve paces, and armed with the wommera, or throwing stick, and a bundle of bamboos about 4ft long, commence the attack. These missiles are projected from the wommera with great force, and knock off a patch of skin and flesh when the body is touched, so that the competitor who would escape with a whole skin need exercise wonderful agility. For a corroboree the males group themselves, as shown in our illustration, and stamp the ground with both feet simultaneously, making a peculiar sound, and keeping tune with a guttural exclamation. The first who sounds a false note or misses a beat leaves the group amidst the ridicule of the bystanders, and this process is continued until the number of performers is reduced to a pair, who divide the honours.

A second view, *Natives waiting to be photographed*, is among Foelsche's most compelling images, made more so because it reveals his own photographic activity. Contrary to the popular belief that Aboriginal peoples were reluctant to be photographed, the Iwaidja wait in front of his studio tent for their turn in front of the camera. At the centre of the image, a queue of men and a single woman stand before a sliding curtain, which forms the studio's entrance. The Chinese cook, named Kite, and a trooper are also present, posed to the right of the tent. Several of the subjects Foelsche portrayed can be identified seated in the foreground.

Foelsche took a third view, *Native camp, Port Essington*, on the other side of the shed where his tent



studio was erected. This image is highly orchestrated, and the stillness illustrates the extent to which the Iwaidja cooperated in the photographic process. The central figure, Flash Poll, or Memorimbo, was a well-known member of the Iwaidja, who had learnt English in childhood, when she was an officer's servant in the former settlement. She was 60 years old in 1873, but, according to Lewis, 'looked about fifty years of age and was very active and straight as a die'.² Alfred Searcy concurred, later reflecting:

Poll remembered, as a woman, when the soldiers were stationed at Port Essington; yet, despite her advanced age, she was active and sprightly, with a good figure. Poll took a great fancy to me, promising that I should have her skull when she died, and in her last moments she gave

*instructions to the white man in charge of the camp that this was to be done. Twenty-five years after the grim relic reached me in the post. Poor old Poll. How the dear old girl could swear! and how fond she was of a nobbler! And then, generally at the most inopportune times, she would say the Lord's Prayer and sing odd fragments of the Psalms.*³

Not only valued for her knowledge and influence, Flash Poll was well trusted, and was frequently employed for her skills as a tracker. There is no known portrait of her alone, a fact Foelsche regretted, as he conveyed to Lewis after his visit in 1877.⁴

Perhaps because of his arduous experience, Foelsche's trip to Port Essington was the only occasion on which he made portraits away from his Palmerston studio.

² Carment, David, Robyn Maynard, and Alan Powell, eds, *Northern Territory Dictionary of Biography*, volume one (Casuarina, N.T.: Northern Territory University Press, 1990), 204.

³ Searcy, Alfred, *By Blood and Field* (London: G. Bell & Sons, 1912), 46-47.

⁴ Foelsche, letter, 19 December 1877.

**Police Inspector's House
(enlarged)
May 1878**

Foelsche moved into his new residence, one of the most splendid in the colony, over the Christmas of 1877. South Australian Parliamentarian W. J. Sowden wrote of the building:

*[It] is under the same roof as, and divided by only a slab fence from, the Public Offices. These offices, by the way, like all the Government buildings, are capitally designed for comfort in this "stifling" climate. What wind there is has free access from a hundred apertures, and it is not intercepted by ceilings. The walls are of stone, and these particular ones are architecturally pretty; some of the others, to put it mildly, are not.*¹

Although Foelsche had to relinquish the right-hand side of this building for government offices, he was clearly pleased with his new accommodation. In March 1879, he photographed the building from Fort Hill. In May 1878, he took this view, with family, friends, and a servant, sending a print to Lewis:

*With the Port Essington views sent by Mr Harvey you will find one of our new house; Mrs Foelsche, Emma, Mary, Goss, Whitelaw & Fisher on the verandah. The house is built according to my own plan and is very comfortable.*²



¹ Sowden, William J., *The Northern Territory As It Is* (Adelaide: W. K. Thomas & Co., 1882), 133.

² Foelsche, Paul, letter to John Lewis, 18 May 1878, Lewis Papers, State Library of South Australia, PRG 247.





**Telegraph Station,
Southport
June 1878**

The 1869 survey of the Northern Territory pegged out half a million acres around Darwin harbour. George Goyder, Surveyor General for South Australia, drew up plans for four prospective towns, of which two were established: the capital, Palmerston (now Darwin), and Southport, on the harbour's South Arm. Southport is situated on the junction of the Blackmore and the Darwin Rivers, an inland port that soon became the principal hub for the commercial aspirations of the new colony. Until 1885, the town was critical for supplying the Pine Creek goldfields, as well as to the construction of the Overland Telegraph line.

Southport's rise to prominence began in 1870, with the announcement that the South Australian Government had been awarded the contract to build

the Overland Telegraph from Port Darwin in the north to Port Augusta in South Australia, as part of the London to Australia line.

In this view by Foelsche, which marks the importance of the repeating telegraph stations, connecting the continent with their British headquarters, Foelsche demonstrates his skill in creating narrative layers beyond that of a record of the colony's essential infrastructure. While the precise purpose of this tableau is lost, his placement of the telegraph station as a background to a family group of Aborigines, seated before a group of settlers (of which one might even be the Inspector himself in official dress), presses home the imperial message of bringing civilisation to the region.



Southport Jetty
August 1878

Foelsche received high praise for his views of the burgeoning colony shown at the Victorian Intercolonial Exhibition in Melbourne. He was subsequently asked for photographs of the inland and goldfields for upcoming exhibitions in Paris and Sydney. Unable to find a cart strong enough to carry his heavy wet-plate camera and portable darkroom, in June 1878, Foelsche went by ship to the satellite town of Southport and made six plates.

In this photograph, the masts of the barquette *Estelle* can be seen dominating the background. The vessel, one of several that serviced the colony, arrived at Port Darwin from Sydney on 9 August 1878, with general cargo for V. L. Solomon and Co.¹ It departed for Mauritius a month later, to load sugar for Sydney.²

Foelsche uses the ship's masts to advantage as a means of indicating the proximity of the landing stage. To the right is the general store of W. E. Adcock, which promoted itself as selling 'new tea, new flour, new meats, old tom, old port, old claret, provisions of every description, clothing, boots, and ironmongery'.³

¹ *Northern Territory Times and Gazette*, 17 August 1878, 1.

² *Northern Territory Times and Gazette*, 14 September 1878, 2.

³ *Northern Territory Times and Gazette*, 29 May 1875, 1.



The Camp from Fort Hill
March 1879

This photograph illustrates the development in the first settlement area known as the Camp. It is likely that Foelsche planned to show it with an identical photograph from this position taken in June 1875, in which his house is seen still under construction. In both, he has carefully framed the image, so that the road leads the eye directly to emphasise his accommodation on the Tableland above.



**S.S. Atjeh at Port Darwin
May 1879**

S.S. *Atjeh* left Port Darwin for Adelaide on 22 May 1879 with 4,251 ounces of gold, valued at over £15,000. The *South Australian Advertiser* (24 May 1879, 4) pointed out that this official figure was likely to be lower than the actual one:

There will also, we understand, be parcels on board in private hands, besides lots of the precious metal taken from the Territory by other opportunities. It is calculated that the records of exports of gold from Port Darwin do not include more than half of the amount that leaves the Territory, as in the absence of any export duty or regular system of collecting information parties shipping gold or taking it away with them do not feel under any obligation to report the fact, much less to state the quantities in their possession.

Foelsche's photograph also shows the house of surveyor George McMinn, which was built on the place that George Goyder first established the Camp. The view was taken soon after McMinn returned from surveying a potential route between Palmerston and Pine Creek, the first stage of a railway that, it was envisioned, would connect the settlement with Adelaide. About this enterprise, the *Northern Territory Times and Gazette* (30 December 1882, 2) was upbeat, as ever, reporting, 'From what we hear, there are no special engineering difficulties to be encountered in constructing the line. It, therefore, seems likely enough that when the plans are laid before Parliament next session the bill will pass, and the first sod of the northern end of the great transcontinental line will be turned...'



**V. L. Solomon and Company,
Mitchell Street, Darwin
June 1879**

Vabian Lewis Solomon was a constant advocate of the Northern Territory, promoting it through public speaking, and through the use of a set of slides, many of which were taken by Foelsche. Born in Adelaide, Solomon came to Darwin in 1873, at the age of 19, in search of gold. He was actively involved in local government, as a member of the Palmerston District Council from 1874, and was also twice elected to the Territory seat in the South Australian House of Assembly.

In 1901, he was elected to the first House of Representatives for the South Australian seat that included the Northern Territory. He started an

importing, shipping, mining and insurance agency in early Darwin and was an instigator of the Northern Territory Reform Association, arguing for radical change to South Australia's early administration of the Territory. Solomon was a delegate to the Constitutional conventions at the end of the nineteenth century and helped to draft the Federal Constitution.

This view, facing east across Mitchell Street, was taken from the Overland Telegraph offices. It shows the premises of V. L. Solomon and Company on the left, and Foelsche's house and the Land Office on the right.



**Wesleyan Chapel
and Mission House
June 1879**

Reverend Archibald James Bogle and his wife, Hilda, arrived in Darwin on 16 August 1873, and founded a Wesleyan church on 9 September. The newly established *Northern Territory Times and Gazette* (14 November 1873, 5) described the prefabricated chapel:

This structure is of wood, covered by an iron roof, and will accomodate about 200 persons. There are plenty of doors and windows, and the ventilation is therefore sufficient. No bell has yet been added to the building, but as a substitute an iron bar has been suspended to a tree outside, and this is struck upon with another iron bar when the congregation is to [be] called together, which

of course sounds something like the "Anvil Chorus" done very slowly.

Foelsche had converted to Methodism before his marriage in Strathalbyn, and he and his family were among the regular members of the Wesleyan congregation. In later years, his daughter, Mary, played the church organ. Reverend Bogle's diary entry for 27 April 1876 notes, 'Mr [P. R.] Allen made us a very handsome present of a bell for the church.' Three years later, Foelsche took this photograph, showing the mission house, the church, and the bell, hanging in a tree, as its predecessor had done.



**The Gaol and Esplanade
June 1879**

Foelsche took 18 views within a kilometre of his house for the Sydney Exhibition of September 1879. Three panoramic views look towards the Government Residence from different vantage points. The majority, however, concentrate on the significant development that was taking place in the vicinity of his house, due in large part to an abundance of affordable Chinese labour.

Gaol and Esplanade looks in a south-westerly direction towards 'Foelsche's Corner'. From left to right can be seen the Government Residence, the Land Office, and the Gaol. In the left foreground is a collection of building materials, providing compositional balance, and serving as a common reference-point for this photograph and its companion, *Court House and Esplanade*.

It is tempting to see both images as reflecting Foelsche's sense of the state of his career. Foelsche had taken on his Northern Territory role with the expectation that he would be posted nearer Adelaide after a few years. Frustrated by the complete absence of any sign of progress, he wrote to Lewis in March 1879, commenting, 'I dare say everything will come right in time, but when one is waiting for anything the time seems so long and so it is with me, I have been now over 9 years here and got almost tired of thinking that I ever shall be able to better my position.'

Foelsche was never offered a South Australian policing commission, but he became increasingly involved in the Northern Territory's judicial system, being appointed Visiting Justice at the Palmerston Gaol in December 1879.

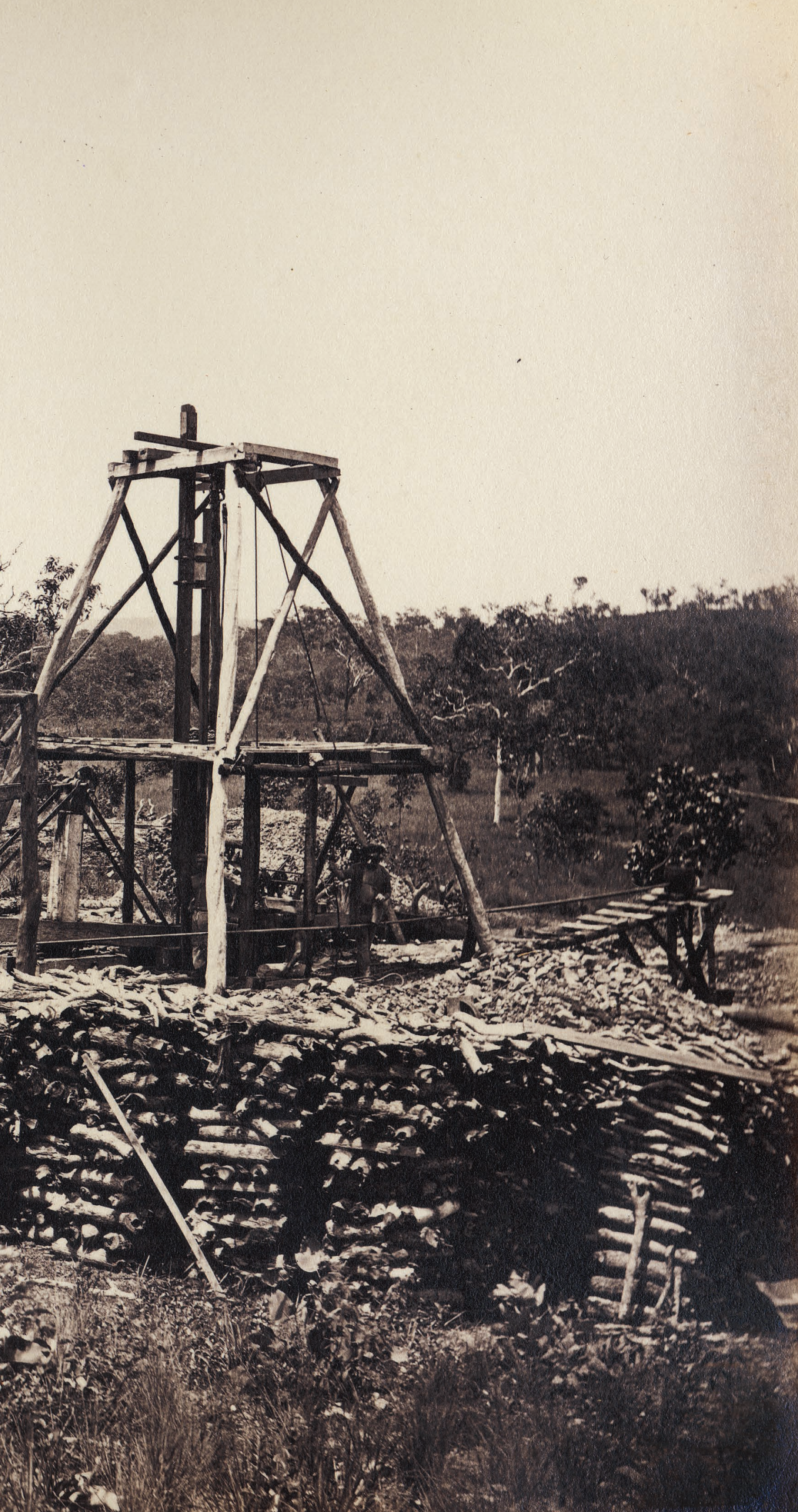


**Court House and Esplanade
June 1879**

Court House and Esplanade shows the view in the opposite direction from *Gaol and Esplanade*. The Palmerston Circuit District was first established in 1875. Court proceedings were conducted on the verandah of the Government Residency, before a temporary courthouse was established in a prefabricated hut.

Construction of a new courthouse and offices commenced in 1879, around the corner from Foelsche's residence, and next door to the lockup. While serving as Inspector, Foelsche was appointed stipendiary magistrate, coroner, tax inspector, and member of the Palmerston Licensing Bench. Some regarded these appointments as a conflict of interest with his policing role.





**Virginia Company claim,
Stapleton Creek (enlarged)
November 1879**

The discovery of gold between Adelaide River and Pine Creek during the construction of the Overland Telegraph line in 1872 precipitated a series of short mining booms. Foelsche made eight views of the goldfield sites and of individual mine workings during his tour of the diggings at the end of 1879. His increasing mastery of techniques that enhanced his photographic composition is apparent throughout the series. He often placed his camera on high ground to provide greater visual depth to his images, in the manner of his predecessor Captain Sweet. Elevating the camera both elongates and appears to flatten the foreground and mid-ground space, enhancing its suitability as a stage for a tableau scene.

Many of Foelsche's views of mines show their operators standing by or working the machinery. *Virginia Company claim, Stapleton Creek*, taken near the small township of Stapleton, illustrates the fuel required to operate the steam engines used in raising the lodes from the underground mine. In the background, a horse turns a whim to pump water for steam. The Virginia Company's shares were first offered in March 1874 for one pound each. By 1882, when the mine was yielding $1\frac{3}{4}$ oz of gold per ton, it was taken over by an English company, which deepened the mineshaft to 50 metres, in an effort to increase the yield.



**Wheal Margaret Company claim,
Extended Union
November 1879**

This photograph was taken at the profitable Wheal Margaret Company, or Bismark's, claim. A yield of 1,000 oz was expected from the mine in 1876. Several years later, the *South Australian Register* (22 August 1879, 6) observed, 'Messrs. Noltenius & Co., at the Extended Union (The Wheal Margaret Gold-mining Company), are doing very well. They have a large body of payable stone, and if it holds out they are likely to have a valuable property. Their crushings of late have been very satisfactory.'

Wheal Margaret Company claim, Extended Union is a particularly successful example of Foelsche's exploitation of vertical surfaces for visual effect. In this case, he creates a dramatic background from a cliff face, a compositional device that he had used previously. Three

men stand on the upper level of the cliff, looking towards the camera, while a trio with horse and cart approach the cutting that serves as an entrance to the mine. A man in a Chinese hat, moving at the back of the cart, is vaporized from the length of the exposure. The driver of the cart returns the camera's gaze, while the third man appears to be focussing on an upturned barrow, which is directly beneath the three men on the upper level. While it is probable that the barrow was placed in this position, Foelsche's image creates the possibility of its recent fall.

Similar theatrical constructions become a feature of a number of his later images, where, beneath their scenic façade, Foelsche frequently embeds anecdotes that were no doubt produced for a local audience.



**View on the McKinlay River
November 1879**

View on the McKinlay River represents Foelsche at his most lyrical. It shows a tree-lined bend in the river, with horses cooling themselves in the water in the background. Despite its picturesque qualities, this photograph depicts a profitable mining area. Nearly a decade later after it was taken, the *South Australian Register* (24 December 1888, 2) reported, ‘The ore from the McKinlay and Mount Wells Company’s Mine averages 250 ounces to the ton, and at present is being taken from what is believed to be a continuation of the Flora Bell lode. The shaft is down 50 feet carrying lode stuff 4 feet wide. The galena lies in a solid body on the foot-wall and is from 18 inches to 2 feet in thickness.’



Telegraph Station, Shackle
November 1879

This photograph depicts the Telegraph Station at the Shackle, or Yam Creek, 75 miles inland from Southport. The name 'Shackle' derives from the device used in connecting a telegraph station to the main line. The name was also given to one of the first inns at the Brocks Creek goldfields, which operated as a staging post between Southport and Pine Creek.



**Our House Hotel, Stapleton
December 1879**

67 kilometres from Southport, Stapleton Creek was named by George McMinn after James Stapleton, who was a telegraph officer with the Port Darwin Telegraph Station, before being speared on 22 February 1874. He died the following day, aged 41 years. In the early period of the North Australian Railway, trains stopped at the town, which, like Rum Jungle and Collett Creek, played home to a hotel. 'Our House Hotel', owned and operated by Edward D. Matthews from June 1874, was a staging post on the road to Pine Creek. In this photograph, taken during his goldfields trip, Foelsche cleared the foreground to create a picturesque reflection of his horse and buggy. An Aboriginal family poses for the camera, with the Chinese cook and mounted troopers.

**P. R. Allen and Company,
Mitchell Street (enlarged)
June 1883**

Philip R. Allen was one of a number of pioneers who were drawn to the business potential of the Northern Territory. He established P. R. Allen and Company in 1873 as 'General Storekeepers, Wine and Spirit Merchants and Commission Agents'. From 1882, the enterprise flourished with the investment of two prominent businessmen. Under the management of George McKeddie, it grew from two stores in Palmerston and Southport to include branches at many of the prominent goldfield locations, including Fountain Head, Brock's Creek and Katherine. The business also owned hotels in Darwin, Pine Creek and Katherine.

On Allen's retirement, a writer for the *Northern Territory News* (8 July 1882, 2) observed:

If P. R. Allen and Co. never before did a good thing for the benefit of the temperance members of the community, their recent introduction of Mackie's Islay Blend of whisky should secure to them undying fame. This Islay Blend is a real whisky, not sophisticated spirits of wine doctored up in imitation of the genuine liquor. It is soft, delicate, and well matured. I tested it by my own head before going to bed, and awoke 'fresh as paint' in the morning. I only hope that Messrs. Allen and Co. will keep up their importation, for I fear that when the public have acquired a taste for it, the demand, as in the case of Weston's Wizard Oil, will be in advance of the supply and we shall have to fall back on fiery or inferior brands.

P. R. Allen's building, pictured here, was destroyed in the cyclone of 1897.





P. RALLEN & COY.



**Duke of Manchester
at Glencoe Station
c. 1884**

Droving from Queensland and South Australia began as a means of supplying the construction crews of the Overland Telegraph line. With the gold rush came pastoralists. Glencoe, or Delamere, Station was assigned to Queensland graziers, Travers and Gibson, in 1878, making it the Northern Territory's second oldest pastoral lease.

On a visit to the station in 1882, W. J. Sowden wrote:
The country on this run is some of the best in the Territory. Its plan shows a perfect network of permanent waters and fine shady creeks, with lots of high country for the stock to retreat to in the wet season, and plains extending for miles along the McKinlay River, where they

*may feed by still waters and in green pastures in the dry weather.*¹

The Duke of Manchester visited the Territory in 1884, looking for opportunities to invest. Foelsche escorted him throughout the colony, and arranged a visit to Glencoe Station, one of several properties managed by H. W. H. Stevens, the Inspector's son-in-law.

¹ Sowden, William J., *The Northern Territory As It Is* (Adelaide: W. K. Thomas & Co., 1882), 150.



**Mr and Mrs Stewart at the
new Wesleyan Parsonage
c. 1884**

The Reverend William Stewart arrived in Darwin in 1882, preaching his first sermon on Sunday 4 June. The *Northern Territory Times and Gazette* (10 June 1882, 2) welcomed the Wesleyan minister, but warned that he had his work cut out for him:

Mr Stewart and his wife seemed determined, by a house to house visitation, to make personal acquaintance with the people among whom he has been sent as a minister of the Gospel. This seems to us to be the right plan to adopt to secure success; but the reverend, gentleman will find that we are not all Christians, although professing Christianity, and that he has plenty of work before him. During the next month he purposes visiting the country districts.





**View of new jetty
(enlarged)
December 1886**

This photograph is very similar to two others of the new Port Darwin railway pier, showing the same ships, but with the shed in the foreground in different states of demolition. In this view, the ships have their flags flying. It seems likely that the photograph was taken around 8 December, as indicated by an item in the *Northern Territory Times and Gazette* (11 December 1886, 2):

We understand that Mr Foelsche succeeded in taking an admirable photograph, by the instantaneous process, of the pier and the vessels in their festal garb on Wednesday [8 December].





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