

## **Archibald Laurence Wilson (1852–1935): Uncrowned King of Ravenswood**

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Situated some 130 kilometres inland from Townsville, Ravenswood is a small north Queensland town with a fascinating and lively past. It boasts several heritage buildings and industrial remains that remind the visiting tourist that Ravenswood in the early twentieth century was a growing, prosperous community with the utmost faith in its long-term future. This was thanks in large part to one man: Archibald Laurence Wilson, the uncrowned king of Ravenswood. Wilson's talents as a mining engineer and innovator helped transform this struggling goldfield and town into a major north Queensland mining hub, with Wilson at its very centre. Even as Ravenswood became economically stagnant in the 1920s and 1930s, A.L. Wilson never fully gave up hope that the goldfield would rise again.

Wilson's historical reputation largely rests on his period as General Manager of the New Ravenswood Ltd company (1899 to 1917) and related ventures. The *New Ravenswood Mines Records*, held on microfilm at the James Cook University (JCU) Library, are the main primary sources for this biography of A.L. Wilson, and have been used to facilitate a balanced portrayal of Wilson and the times in which he lived.

### **Archibald Laurence Wilson: The Early Years**

The son of an architect, Archibald Laurence Wilson was born in Edinburgh in 1852. After gaining a Diploma of Mining Engineering, he worked as a miner in New Zealand and on the Palmer River, Queensland, finally settling in Ravenswood during 1878. In addition to becoming a mine manager, he became a publican in the 1880s, owning the Silver King Hotel at Tottle, near Ravenswood. He subsequently married Rosie Annie Casey in 1887 at Townsville's Criterion Hotel on the Strand: the marriage service was conducted according to Presbyterian rites. A carpenter's daughter, the Irish-born Rosie (b. 1862) migrated to Australia as a seventeen-year-old, and after some time in Mackay, she moved to Ravenswood where she was courted by Wilson. Together, the couple would have four children: Archibald (b. 1888), Maud (1890), Mabel (1892), and Douglas (1894).<sup>1</sup>

By the early 1890s, Wilson's high profile as a businessman and mining expert undoubtedly transformed him into a well-respected and trusted figure within the small town of Ravenswood, which was struggling to survive as a viable goldfield because of its 'mundic ore' which made extraction of gold very difficult and costly. Local businessmen helped finance Wilson's successful journey to London in 1893 to secure capital to develop the John Bull leases, which Wilson had recently purchased.<sup>2</sup> The shareholders and directors of the John Bull Gold Mining Syndicate were predominantly shipowners and

merchants from Liverpool and Cardiff, men with a vested interest in fostering a large range of overseas industries. Under the terms of the company's agreement, Wilson, as vendor of the properties, received £6,000 cash and 4,000 free shares in the John Bull Gold Mining Syndicate.<sup>3</sup>

As General Manager of John Bull from 1893 to 1898, Wilson displayed a flair for innovation. He was markedly concerned with saving on labour and handling costs and took pains to improve the efficiency of machinery. An example of these factors can be seen in Wilson's extensions to the John Bull treatment plant. Warden Kelly-Cusack reported:

A small engine hoists the sand, as it comes from the battery, by an endless chain and iron bucket elevators into a "shoot" at such a height as commands, by gravitation, a full blow into the six different vats ... and thence onwards right through the cyanide process.<sup>4</sup>

According to the Queensland government geologist J. Malcolm MacLaren, Wilson set a 'record for economical mining and treatment, having made 5 [pennyweight] at £3 5s. per [ounce] per ton pay all expenses of development, raising and milling [at the John Bull].'<sup>5</sup>

Despite Wilson's management skills, John Bull does not appear to have paid any dividends throughout its life as a British concern, the lack of access to high grade ore being an obvious contributing factor. The company's failure to provide returns was undoubtedly disappointing to British shareholders, but Wilson's incumbency as General Manager earned him a high status in the local community. This was especially because his extended operations on the John Bull gave steady employment to a considerable workforce.<sup>6</sup>

### **New Ravenswood Limited: Origins**

After resigning as John Bull's Manager in the late 1890s, Wilson re-visited England, this time taking his wife Rosie and the children along with him, and while in London, he again sought out British investors willing to place their capital in Ravenswood gold mining ventures.<sup>7</sup> Wilson was successful in forming two British companies in early 1899: the Donnybrook Blocks Mining Syndicate Ltd (registered 20 February 1899),<sup>8</sup> and New Ravenswood Ltd (registered 23 March 1899). At its formation, New Ravenswood Ltd's total authorised capital was £20,000, divided into 20,000 shares of £1 each.<sup>9</sup> By contrast, the Donnybrook Blocks Mining Syndicate Ltd had a nominal capital of £12,500 in £1 shares.<sup>10</sup> Wilson was appointed General Manager of both companies.

Of the two companies, New Ravenswood Ltd was the most important. A substantial proportion of its initial capital was used to acquire a number of mines which had been lying idle for some time. These mines - for example the Black Jack, and the General Grant - had been top producers for Ravenswood during the early 1890s. Subsequently, however, the Queensland National Bank had taken possession of the relevant mining leases, due to non-payment of debts.<sup>11</sup> New Ravenswood Ltd purchased four gold mining leases from the bank totalling 149 acres, plus a tailings area and a crushing mill known as the Mabel.<sup>12</sup>

When seeking British capital in 1899, Wilson did not return to the shipowners and merchants who had sponsored the John Bull GMC. Instead, it appears that he deliberately targeted British investors with a clear interest and expertise in overseas mining. For example, several of the original shareholders of New Ravenswood Ltd (including two of its directors) held shares in the United Limmer and Vorwohle Rock Asphalte Co. Ltd.<sup>13</sup> This company was formed in the 1870s and based its mining operations in Hannover, Germany. Josiah Thomas Poyser, a small shareholder in United Limmer, had been a director of the Queensland Smelting Company throughout the 1890s,<sup>14</sup> and on 3 January 1899, that Company underwent a major reconstruction. The new board comprised of Poyser (the only survivor from the previous board); Edward Palmer Landon (solicitor); Herbert Jackson (chartered accountant); and Charles Poston (member of the London Stock Exchange).<sup>15</sup> Interestingly, Poyser, Landon, Jackson and Poston were subsequently appointed the first directors of New Ravenswood Ltd, in March 1899,<sup>16</sup> while Arthur Kift (Australasian merchant)<sup>17</sup> was appointed secretary to both companies. Notably, Kift was also secretary and managing director of the Queensland Smelting Company, and when Poyser died in 1902, Kift succeeded him as a director of New Ravenswood Ltd.<sup>18</sup> The multiple links between the Queensland Smelting Company and New Ravenswood Ltd are certainly worth investigating for their significance.

Evidence exists which implies that the British-owned Queensland Smelting Company was, in fact, the crucial player in securing the flotation of New Ravenswood Ltd. The Queensland Smelting Company was first registered in London in July 1888 with an authorised capital of £200,000.<sup>19</sup> N.M. Rothschild and Sons were the company's 'financial agents and bullion buyers in London',<sup>20</sup> and held progressively larger numbers of preferential shares in the concern.<sup>21</sup> The company operated its public smelter in Aldershot, near Maryborough, and dealt chiefly with gold, silver, lead and copper ores.<sup>22</sup> It ceased to function actively in March 1906.<sup>23</sup>

Throughout much of its life, the Queensland Smelting Company found it difficult to maintain the steady flow of ore which would make its custom smelter consistently profitable. Queensland mining companies with the largest productions - for example Mount Morgan, Chillagoe and Mount Perry - each had their own private smelters, and took business away from Aldershot by also treating the material of other companies.<sup>24</sup> In addition, from the north Queensland perspective at least, carriage costs meant that only the richer hand-picked stone could be economically sent to Aldershot for treatment.<sup>25</sup>

The connection between New Ravenswood Ltd and the Queensland Smelting Company seems more than co-incidental. New Ravenswood Ltd, it could be strongly argued, was viewed by J.T. Poyser and his associates as one of a number of possible sources of ore that could help solve the Aldershot smelter's problems by securing a continuous supply of ore to process. That the Queensland Smelting Company was also heavily investing in mines in several Australian states during the same period lends weight to this argument,<sup>26</sup> as does the fact that New Ravenswood Ltd sent its mundic ore to be processed at Aldershot exclusively between 1899 and early 1906.<sup>27</sup> Finally, there is evidence which suggests that Ravenswood's mining industry had been interested in forging closer links with Aldershot for some time. For instance, in 1897, Ravenswood's Warden wrote:

Our mundics want reduction, concentration, and smelting in nine cases out of ten.... If our chief mines can fall fortunately into the hands of either the Aldershot people or the Illawarra [N.S.W.] people, Ravenswood *must* advance. But if we have to still continue exporting our ores to those places ourselves, the want of capital ... eventually ... will “freeze us out”. Aldershot has been our great salvation so far, and anything that brings us nearer to it, or it to us, *must* benefit Ravenswood.<sup>28</sup>

Apart from its business connection with the Queensland Smelting Company, there were other striking factors concerning New Ravenswood Ltd’s formation. Indeed, it differed from many of the British mining companies listed at the turn of the century. Chairman and director Charles Poston explained: ‘Whilst I am speaking upon the subject of shares, I think it is as well to point out the unique position of this company with regard to its subscribed capital, which is all represented by actual money, no promotion money having been paid in either cash or shares. The original properties were purchased for cash and the mines since acquired also for cash’. New Ravenswood’s distinctiveness was also highlighted by its small nominal capital (initially £20,000 and increased to £50,000 in 1902), of which £35,559 had been subscribed by 1902.<sup>29</sup> Also significant was the absence of a ‘guinea pig director’ on the London board (a ‘guinea pig director’ was a notable person, such as an army officer, who would be added to the board to attract public attention to the company).<sup>30</sup> In this case, such a director was unnecessary. The original shareholders of New Ravenswood Ltd were primarily stockbrokers, clerks and solicitors working in the City of London; the obvious implication is that the City-based New Ravenswood Ltd directors offered shares to their close business associates.<sup>31</sup>

The management of the New Ravenswood Ltd ostensibly followed the pattern set by the majority of British companies operating in Queensland between 1886 and 1914, when it left practical mining responsibilities in the hands of local men as opposed to importing a British nominated manager.<sup>32</sup> In 1902, The Hon. Harold Finch-Hatton, a London director of Roger’s Golden Gate (operating in Croydon, north Queensland), justified a ‘local management’ policy in these terms:

[T]he ultimate success of a mine ... must rest to a great extent on the local management. All we can do is to select the best man ... and ... give him a free hand ... it is impossible at such a distance away from the scene of action for your [London] directors to successfully interfere with the management.<sup>33</sup>

Wilson as General Manager enjoyed the trust and confidence of the New Ravenswood Ltd board for much of the company’s existence.

The flotation of the New Ravenswood marked a new era for A.L. Wilson, who worked hard in the period from 1899 to 1917 to ensure that the New Ravenswood company dominated the Ravenswood goldfield, and to bring people and prosperity to the town.

### **New Ravenswood: new technology**

As a result of sustained high dividends for over a decade, New Ravenswood Ltd achieved a considerable reputation among north Queensland gold mining interests in the early

1900s. The New Ravenswood mines were also largely responsible for Ravenswood's revived prosperity at the turn of the century. Astute management practices and the introduction of innovative mining technology were the main reasons for New Ravenswood Ltd's success as a mining company.

In May 1899, A.L. Wilson returned from London to take charge of the New Ravenswood Ltd properties, namely the Sunset, General Grant, Shelmalier, Melaneur and Black Jack leases, and also the Mabel Mill.<sup>34</sup> He spent a great deal of time refurbishing and re-equipping the mines, as well as improving the tramways and machinery on each individual lease.<sup>35</sup> Wilson placed most emphasis during this preparation phase on modern treatment methods at the Mabel Mill, with a key innovation being the installation of Wilfley tables with which he hoped to effectively overcome Ravenswood's mundic ore problem. Invented in 1895, the Wilfley table was first introduced to Queensland by Wilson for New Ravenswood Ltd, and was subsequently adopted on a number of fields.<sup>36</sup>

Wilfley tables were vibrating tables (five by two metres) which concentrated minerals according to their specific gravity. Parallel slats of wood were nailed to the table's linoleum surface to act as riffles.<sup>37</sup> As Menghetti reports, 'the grooves so formed were shallow on the feed side of the table [progressively] deepening towards the other side.'<sup>38</sup> As the ore was washed onto the table, the machine's vibrations caused the lighter particles to accumulate in the deeper grooves at the other end of the table. Heavier and more valuable minerals, such as gold, remained in the shallower grooves.<sup>39</sup> The whole apparatus was suspended and placed on a slight slope, both longitudinally and transversely. This arrangement allowed the specific gravity of each heavy mineral to be the main factor in determining each individual mineral's position on the table. In this way, for example, gold's specific gravity influenced the gold particles to settle exclusively in one riffle of a particular depth, thereby separating gold from all the other minerals in the ore.<sup>40</sup>

New Ravenswood's Mabel Mill began to crush profitably in 1900. The two new Wilfley tables installed at the plant produced concentrates which were remarkably free from extraneous material,<sup>41</sup> and with this initiative, New Ravenswood Ltd demonstrated that the goldfield's refractory ore could be treated. Wilson increased the number of Wilfley tables at the mill from two to six by 1903,<sup>42</sup> and the effectiveness of the Wilfley concentrators can be illustrated by the fact that the value of the gold yielded by New Ravenswood Ltd increased from £46,797 in 1901 to £91,124 in 1903.<sup>43</sup> Admittedly, New Ravenswood Ltd was fortunate enough to possess two rich mines, the Sunset and the General Grant, which produced large quantities of high grade ore between 1900 and 1910.<sup>44</sup>

Throughout the 1900s, the company's major innovation, the Wilfley table, remained the most crucial part of New Ravenswood Ltd's crushing operations. The importance of the introduction of the Wilfley tables can be understood in the context of the following explanation of the New Ravenswood Ltd's milling system *circa* 1899 to 1906. First, crushed ore was fed directly onto the Wilfley tables: mercury-coated copper plates were not used at all in the process.<sup>45</sup> The free gold concentrates were 'ground in Berdan pans with mercury',<sup>46</sup> retorted and smelted locally, and the gold obtained in this way was forwarded monthly to London via Townsville.<sup>47</sup> After the free gold had been

removed, the remaining concentrates plus the slimes were sent to Aldershot for further treatment.<sup>48</sup> In the early years of the company, there was a distinct emphasis on local processing: for example, the large Sunset mine, produced prolific quantities of stone yielding 3 ounces per ton. On average, 2 ounces was free gold – thus only 1 ounce per ton material was sent to the Aldershot smelters. After Aldershot closed in 1906, New Ravenswood Ltd sent ore to the Cockle Creek Smelter near Newcastle in New South Wales.<sup>49</sup>

**Figure 1:** *Archibald Laurence Wilson*  
c.1906.



Source: State Library of Queensland.

In 1905, New Ravenswood Ltd introduced another important innovation, for in that year, it was the first company in Queensland to use tube mills.<sup>50</sup> The tube mill was invented by Dr Ludwig Diehl of the London and Hamburg Gold Recovery Company at Kalgoorlie in the late 1890s.<sup>51</sup> Specially designed for fine grinding, the tube mill was a steel ‘pipelike structure ... closed at each end except for a scoop for intake and a funnel for discharge’.<sup>52</sup> The interior of the tube was filled with hard flint pebbles. Water and gold-bearing ore were passed through the cylinder while it rotated, thus causing the pebbles to grind the ore into fine powder. The *Ravenswood Mining Journal* described the tube mill-centred processing system Wilson introduced: ‘At the delivery end of the tube there is a baffle plate, with holes in the periphery, through which the powdered material passes. The discharged product is

picked up by a series of centrifugal ribs, which deliver it out of the tail trunnion, direct into the discharge launder along which it is conveyed to the [New Ravenswood] Wilfley tables.’<sup>53</sup>

New Ravenswood Ltd purchased two tube mills.<sup>54</sup> Between 1906 and 1908, the tube mills treated the company’s tailings which had accumulated since 1899. In this way, the tube mills ‘materially contributed to the amount of gold produced’ in those three years.<sup>55</sup> The *Queensland Government Mining Journal* expressed surprise at the slowness of other Queensland gold fields to follow New Ravenswood Ltd’s example: ‘Considering that the tube mill ... [is] an integral part of the mining industry on the Rand ... it is rather surprising that the use of this machine has not become more widely adopted in this state.’<sup>56</sup>

As the years progressed, Wilson continued to upgrade the Mabel Mill. A £3,000, Elmore Vacuum Concentrator for further treatment of the tailings was erected in 1907-8, and when it proved a failure, Wilson shrewdly converted the concentrator into a cyanide plant.<sup>57</sup> A more successful innovation occurred in 1910, with the introduction of a

Crossley No. 9 suction gas producer with a powerful two-cylinder engine. Charcoal was used as a fuel, as it was found to be more efficient than coke. The use of the suction gas producer plant resulted in considerable savings in fuel and running costs for the company. The Warden wrote:

The 201-b.h.p. which is developed drives two stone-breakers, thirty head ... of stamps, eighteen Berdan pans, two settlers, six Wilfley tables, and ... two air-compressor engines, [which in turn] ... drive one large battery, water supply pump, one engine for driving the 40-ft. Raff wheel that elevates the tailings sands, and one engine for hoisting cracked ore after having passed through the stone-breakers.<sup>58</sup>

**Figure 2:** *Sunset Mine 1905. On the extreme right of the photo is A.L. Wilson and next to him is his son Archie.*



Source: North Queensland Photographic Collection, Special Collections, James Cook University Library, NQID 17363.

### **Dividends**

The increasing yield from the New Ravenswood mines was not immediately reflected in dividends. It was nearly three years before New Ravenswood Ltd provided its first return to shareholders, and the manner in which that dividend was declared suggests that the company was under pressure to deliver. On 23 January 1902, a 50% dividend was declared for the year 1900-01. However, this figure was deceptive, because only 10% of the dividend was paid in cash—the remaining 40% was paid in free shares in the company.<sup>59</sup> Conforming with the nature of company promotion at the time, the British directors soon capitalised on this so-called ‘50 percent dividend’ by selling the shares at

up to £4 to £5 per £1 share.<sup>60</sup> During February 1902, £10,000 worth of shares were sold at these inflated prices within the space of two weeks.<sup>61</sup>

New Ravenswood Ltd's status as a leading north Queensland gold mining company was confirmed by large dividend payments (paid exclusively in cash): 1901-02 (50%), 1902-03 (75%) and 1903-04 (50%), all calculated as a percentage return on the nominal value of the shares. As the following table illustrates, New Ravenswood Ltd managed to sustain high dividends over a lengthy period.

**Table 1:** *New Ravenswood Ltd Dividends: 1900-1 to 1911-12.*

Year		Year		Year	
1900-01	50.00%	1904-05	25.00%	1908-09	31.25%
1901-02	50.00%	1905-06	12.50%	1909-10	12.50%
1902-03	75.00%	1906-07	25.00%	1910-11	6.25%
1903-04	50.00%	1907-08	37.50%	1911-12	18.75%

Source: R.L. Nash, *The Australian Joint-Stock Companies' Year Book 1914*, Sydney, 1914, pp. 457-8.

Wilson's willingness to introduce innovative machinery to the field was undoubtedly a major factor which enabled the company to pay handsome dividends up to 1912. His general policy was to replace machinery and equipment once it became inefficient.<sup>62</sup>

### **Wilson the Manager**

Wilson's emphasis on milling technology was matched with a genuine concern with long-term profitability:

Our experience', he wrote, 'is that the more heavily mineralised the ore is, the greater the loss ... [therefore] we generally manage to have the ore mixed, that is to say, we have so many faces of ore exposed, some of which are heavily mineralised and others of white quartz containing a very small percentage of the mineral, and we try to average the output from each face ... to balance the percentage of Mineral in the quantity that is being crushed.'<sup>63</sup>

New Ravenswood Ltd's policy of mixing low grade and high-grade ores during the crushing process to maintain a steady output of gold was not widely practised on north Queensland goldfields, as 'Picking the eyes out of a mine' was still common at the turn of the century. For example, lack of adequate capital on the Etheridge and Croydon no doubt contributed to the tendency to exploit only the richest lodes.<sup>64</sup> Charters Towers, however, did not have this excuse. From 1902 to 1905, the Queen Cross Reef was the chief mine in Charters Towers, producing dividends of £614,166 by gutting out the lodes until the gold pinched out in 1905. Clearly, the management was more concerned with share market developments than with prolonging the life of the mine: no effort was made to balance the output by mixing the grades of ore crushed at the Queen Cross Mill.<sup>65</sup>

Besides technology, the other significant reason for New Ravenswood Ltd's success was Wilson's keen attention to keeping costs down. He placed great importance on the accuracy of assay values,<sup>66</sup> which he used to determine the economic viability of

exploiting particular portions of ground. A 1907 progress report to the directors of the Donnybrook Blocks highlighted this aspect of his management style:

I took samples of the reef ... the assay value was only 9 pennyweight per ton ... I should not advise you to exploit this portion of the ground at present ... [because] to drive a crosscut level from the main ... shaft into the monkey-shaft (a distance of 220 feet) would cost approximately £800.<sup>67</sup>

No aspect of company mining escaped Wilson's obsession with cutting expenditure: he minimised company income tax; carefully negotiated cartage contracts; and monitored the purchase and use of stores.<sup>68</sup> Certainly, Wilson's concern to save on fuel consumption tied in neatly with his passion for installing modern machinery, such as fuel-efficient air compressors.<sup>69</sup> By the careful use of code words, he also reduced the cost of cables to London, an example of this being seen in a letter from Wilson to the directors in 1908: 'Kindly insert on page 2193 of Moreing & McCutcheon code book, opposite the word "Speculiez" ... the phrase "Approximate value of bullion obtained, including amalgamation on plates at Second Treatment Works"'. Wilson explained that this message previously took four words to transmit: using the one word thus constituted a small cost saving measure for the company.<sup>70</sup>

There were, of course, factors outside management which kept down costs. New Ravenswood Ltd was given special railway concessions for many years,<sup>71</sup> and the local bank allowed the company to overdraw up to several thousand pounds on its account.<sup>72</sup> The General Manager also blatantly used his position as a local councillor on the Ravenswood Shire Council to assist New Ravenswood Ltd financially with its infrastructure. In 1906, for example, Wilson reported that his recent re-election as a local councillor had since resulted in 'getting a good deal of money spent by the [Ravenswood] Council on the road leading up to the Grant and Sunset mines'.<sup>73</sup>

Another means by which Wilson kept expenditure down was through paying his workers smaller salaries than they would have received in Charters Towers. As J.K. Caspani has observed, employment opportunities were extremely limited in Charters Towers, which already had a 'fully employed' workforce, and consequently, many miners felt compelled to accept lower wages in Ravenswood.<sup>74</sup>

Thus, through a mixture of technological innovation, cost saving measures and favourable circumstances, New Ravenswood Ltd had become a prestigious and long-lasting north Queensland mining company. Inevitably, the success of the New Ravenswood mines had an enormous impact on the local community and facilitated the massive growth in locally owned Ravenswood companies in the district. A significant player in this respect was Sydney Hood Thorp, a Charters Towers sharebroker who greatly expanded the Ravenswood branch of his business during the 1900s, floating numerous companies. Other Charters Towers businessmen, such as E.D. Miles and Joe Millican, were also quite active in promoting Ravenswood ventures.<sup>75</sup>

#### **Wilson and The Ravenswood Boom: 1900-1904**

The population of Ravenswood grew from 2,816 in 1899 to a peak of 4,707 in 1903.<sup>76</sup> This rise reflected the intense growth in mining activity on the field. Permanent settlement

increased dramatically in the 1900s,<sup>77</sup> which encouraged many tradesmen to open shops in Ravenswood and nearby Donnybrook.<sup>78</sup> Several hotels were erected in this period, and two Ravenswood hotels, both constructed in 1902, are still operating: The Railway Hotel and The Imperial.<sup>79</sup> Wilson himself privately owned a hotel from 1902 to 1911, which he called the 'New Ravenswood Hotel'. New Ravenswood Ltd had no financial connection with the venture.<sup>80</sup>

The height of public interest in Ravenswood mining shares occurred in 1903. In that year, the share prices of an average of 30 to 40 Ravenswood companies were being quoted each week in the *North Queensland Herald*, a Townsville newspaper.<sup>81</sup> According to the *Herald*, 'The Ravenswood Stock Exchange and the Free Exchange (Stitt and Keller's) both hold calls twice weekly, and the public roll up in crowds to hear the prices of the different stocks.'<sup>82</sup>

Ravenswood in the 1900s was also rich in social and sporting clubs. These included the Caledonian Association (with its annual Halloween Festivities), a rifle club and a well-patronised Ravenswood Amateur Dramatic Society which performed regularly at the School of Arts.<sup>83</sup> Further, the town enjoyed many amenities such as schools (Catholic and government), a newsagency, butcher, barber and a post office, along with Edward Bussey's general store ('Groceries, Crockery, Glassware and Cutlery ... always stocked'), J. Podosky's drapery (boasting of imported goods from London), J. Lowe (the cabinet maker, upholsterer, and picture frame maker), and James Squire's nice cool butter 'just out of his Ice House'.<sup>84</sup> During the good times of the 1900s, it must have been easy to forget that the little luxuries, large social occasions and convenient services that Ravenswood folk enjoyed were largely dependent on the well-being of the local mining industry, dominated by one man, A.L. Wilson.

Wilson played an important role in attracting capital to the field during Ravenswood's boom period. As Ravenswood Warden W.G. Kelly-Cusack reported, Wilson

has the facility, the knack, as it were, of flotation, and the introducing quietly and unostentatiously of English capital into any speculation he appears to undertake. Whether he goes into it direct or through others the capital comes here the same.<sup>85</sup>

Wilson became the director of at least eight local mining companies. In 1902 he also persuaded British capitalists, many associated with New Ravenswood Ltd, to finance a new venture, the Ravenswood Deep Mines, with Wilson as mine manager. The Deep Mines company sought to intersect the Sunset reef at a vertical depth of 1,200 feet. Based on the unscientific theory that ore values of reefs found near the surface improved as mines were sunk deeper, over £65,000 was wasted on deep sinking and excavating the Deep Mines property to a level of over 1,500 vertical depth. No gold of any significance was found in the mines' most active period (1902–11), but Wilson's bloody-minded determination to make the Deep Mines venture pay suggests that, despite the rational, orderly management skills he possessed, he was at least in part driven by a gambler's 'gut instinct' that sometimes failed him.<sup>86</sup>

Wilson's Deep Mines fiasco was an unfortunate product of the optimism which New Ravenswood Limited had brought to Ravenswood. Notwithstanding Ravenswood's

flurry of speculation in the early 1900s, it gradually became clear that the town's fortunes were inextricably linked with New Ravenswood Ltd. Indeed, the annual returns from New Ravenswood's Sunset and General Grant mines in the decade 1900-1910 outweighed their nearest competitors on the field by a very long margin.<sup>87</sup> The Donnybrook Blocks Mining Syndicate Ltd rapidly faded after an over-optimistic dividend of 8 shillings per share in 1901.<sup>88</sup> Most significantly, the Ravenswood share boom of 1903 collapsed the following year, provoking Queensland Undersecretary for Mines, A.R. MacDonald, to remark that

Ravenswood has proved keenly disappointing. Few of the projects originated during the fervour of a period of illusive confidence survive ... The Rob Roy and Sunset ... the La Parouse [sic], and other mines, with whose names the mining public were a short time ago familiar, have suspended operations or have been abandoned.<sup>89</sup>

The quality of ore in Ravenswood's mines was simply not rich enough to support so many companies.

### **Wilson and the Rise of Unionism**

Clearly, the difficult times for Ravenswood's mining industry after the early 1900s boom might have been expected to spark off industrial conflict. However, before 1912, unionism in Ravenswood was somewhat inactive compared with developments in other Queensland mining districts such as Gympie and Charters Towers. This was, in part, a reflection of the delayed growth in Ravenswood mining due to its refractory ores. By 1897, for example, there were only eight struggling companies on the field. Consequently, there were few wage-earners with collective grievances against employers.<sup>90</sup> Even though the early years of New Ravenswood Ltd stimulated much company formation on the field, industrial disputes remained a minor concern. With little chance for wage-earning miners to secure work for wages in Charters Towers and other nearby mining centres, Ravenswood workers were more concerned with job security than in improving conditions.<sup>91</sup>

Outside Ravenswood, workers were less compliant. Having endured over a decade of low morale in the aftermath of several industrial defeats in the 1890s depression,<sup>92</sup> Queensland unionism underwent a revival from 1905 onwards. As Doug Hunt argues, it was Queensland's economic upturn after years of drought, together with growing disillusionment with predominantly moderate Labour politicians, which revitalised the union movement in the 1900s. In order to improve collective bargaining power, the union movement began a series of amalgamations. Formed in 1907, the Amalgamated Workers Association (AWA) was a key player in the movement, merging with several smaller unions in subsequent years.<sup>93</sup>

The true value of the amalgamation process was illustrated during the strike at the Colonial Sugar Refinery mills in 1911. By this stage, the Sugar Workers Union had amalgamated with the much larger AWA, and with the support of other unions, sugar workers and field labourers, were able to secure better working conditions. The strong

State-wide emphasis on amalgamation ultimately resulted in the AWA amalgamating with the Australian Workers Union (AWU), completed on 1 July 1913.<sup>94</sup>

Wilson was concerned about the growing strength of unionism in Queensland, and was particularly unnerved by the Brisbane general strike of January–February 1912, which was supported by the AWA and several other large union organisations.<sup>95</sup> Seriously disrupting communications and business within the State, the strike was seen by Wilson as ‘a determined attempt ... to establish “mob rule”’, and a dangerous threat to property owners.<sup>96</sup> Although the Brisbane strikers failed to achieve their objectives, the AWA emerged unscathed, for it was becoming a potent political force in Queensland, growing in strength and numbers during the following months. Significantly in this respect, the Queensland Parliamentary Labour Party developed a strong bias towards the AWA over other, more radical Queensland unions as 1912 progressed. The Brisbane *Worker*, an influential newspaper within the labour movement, was also showing signs of AWA influence.<sup>97</sup>

Around the time of the Brisbane general strike, Ravenswood’s climate of apathy towards unionism began to change. In February 1912, for example, a large proportion of its miners joined the AWA after a union representative visited the goldfield.<sup>98</sup> The impact of trade unionism on the local scene provoked Wilson to become politically more active. He was branch president of the People’s Progressive League, which provided campaign support for O.J. Fenwick, Liberal (anti-Labor) candidate for the state seat of Kennedy, which included Ravenswood electors. Wilson believed that if the current ‘rabid Socialist Labour member’, James O’Sullivan, was returned in the 1912 April elections, a strike would take place for ‘shorter hours of work and higher wages.’<sup>99</sup> Much to Wilson’s disappointment, Fenwick was defeated by O’Sullivan. ‘Taking the State as a whole, however’, Wilson informed his London directors, ‘the Liberal Party have secured a decisive victory over Socialism, and the Government Party are returned with 46 members ... against the Socialists’ 26 members.’<sup>100</sup> Further, the widespread post-election industrial dislocation which Wilson had anticipated did not eventuate. Business went on as usual, at least for a month.

The first industrial action against the New Ravenswood Ltd management occurred in May. In that month, two rock-drill miners from the Sunset presented Wilson with a petition ‘signed by all the machine men in the company’s service asking for a rise of 5 [shillings] per week in their wages—from 10/10 to 11/8 per day’. Wilson agreed, but on the clear understanding that the company’s ‘bonus system’ for machine men would no longer operate.<sup>101</sup> Under the bonus system, machine men generally received an extra 5s. a week for the amount of time it took to sink a winze or shaft. This payment, however, depended upon whether Wilson believed the men had done ‘a fair thing, or a little better than a fair thing’.<sup>102</sup>

The machine men undoubtedly saw the wage increase as a minor victory against the company. But as Wilson informed London, ‘At Charters Towers ... this rate of wages has been in vogue for the past fifteen years, so that in reality I am conceding nothing’. Unquestionably, Wilson had saved the company ‘thousands of pounds’ in wages since the company’s formation in 1899. Moreover, New Ravenswood Ltd was still able to cut

costs through the removal of the bonus system—a system the machine men had naturally hoped would continue.<sup>103</sup>

### **1912-13: The Time of the Great Strike**

Despite his tough persona as a mining boss, there was another side to A.L. Wilson. He enjoyed playing an energetic part in the life of the town, tirelessly supporting ‘social and sporting activities, dramatic societies and Rugby Union football clubs’ in his beloved Ravenswood.<sup>104</sup> By 1913, he had been ‘re-elected Chairman of the Ravenswood Shire Council for the eighth successive year’: a testament to his popularity as a civic leader.<sup>105</sup>

On the other hand, because of their wealth, status and position, Wilson and his family were somewhat out of touch with the realities of the average Ravenswood mining family. In the 1900s, Wilson could afford to send his children to elite private schools in Armidale (N.S.W.) and Ipswich (Qld), with Mrs Wilson accompanying them as they journeyed down south to start the school year.<sup>106</sup> These circumstances set them apart from most Ravenswood families. Yet there is no doubt that the Wilsons identified strongly with the town and goldfield on a personal level. With the passing of time, the Wilson family would nostalgically refer to Wilson’s period as Ravenswood Shire Chairman, as the time when he and Mrs. Wilson ‘served as Mayor and Mayoress of Ravenswood.’<sup>107</sup>

For much of 1912, the accepted image of Wilson benignly presiding over the mines and town of Ravenswood seemed unshakeable. In July of that year, an English civil and mining engineer, George Blake Walker, visited the town as guest of New Ravenswood Ltd. Because he was a friend of Charles Poston, a director of the company, Walker was allowed to thoroughly inspect the company’s mines. He

was glad to learn that the prospects were of a bright nature ... it would be his pleasure to relate to ... Mr. Poston ... the good work being done by the general manager and his staff and the harmony which evidently [exists] ... amongst them’.<sup>108</sup>

The rosy picture painted by Walker proved wildly inaccurate. With the quality of ore rapidly diminishing in the Sunset mine, New Ravenswood Ltd experienced a sharp decline in profits during the latter half of 1912. Wilson’s response to the company’s financial troubles was to abruptly retrench 33 New Ravenswood Ltd employees on 11 November—around 15% of his workforce.<sup>109</sup>

The retrenchments were followed by intense negotiations between the AWA’s Northern District Secretary John Dash, from Townsville, and the General Manager of New Ravenswood Ltd, A.L. Wilson. Surprisingly, the immediate re-instatement of the sacked workers was not an important item on the AWA’s agenda during these discussions. Rather, Dash chose to push for an increase in wages for the company’s truckers from 8s. to 9s. per day,<sup>110</sup> and the AWA subsequently demanded that all workers of New Ravenswood Ltd receive a reduction in hours from 45½ hours to 44 hours per week.<sup>111</sup> Wilson was willing to compromise by increasing the trucker’s wages to 8s. 4d. per day, but balked at the idea of a 44 hour week. He later wrote: ‘44 hours per week ... [has] always been the weekly working hours on Charters Towers, but not on Ravenswood, and on principle I could not see my way to agree to this.’<sup>112</sup>

Wilson made it perfectly clear that he would not give in to the AWA's demands. As a consequence, the union declared a strike on 20 November to secure a 44-hour week and a minimum rate of 9s. per day for the truckers. Union picket lines were established at all of New Ravenswood Ltd's shafts and works.<sup>113</sup> The town divided; longstanding friendships became strained; the public harmony which Ravenswood seemed to exude for more than a decade gave way to tensions and anxieties.

By mid-December 1912, there were 75 New Ravenswood Limited employees on strike,<sup>114</sup> who were joined in solidarity by the majority of miners from the separately owned Grant and Sunset Extended mine.<sup>115</sup> As well as this, carters refused to tender for any further carting contracts with New Ravenswood Ltd in the new year.<sup>116</sup> During November and December, some of the strikers left Ravenswood for the north-western Queensland copper districts, such as Cloncurry.<sup>117</sup>

While productive work was severely disrupted by the industrial dislocation, New Ravenswood Ltd was still able to conduct operations on a small scale. Indeed, 70 of its 145 employees decided not to participate in the strike. All but four of the company's 18 engine drivers, for example, refused to quit work, despite being directed to join the AWA strike by their own union executive, the Federated Engine Drivers' and Firemen's Association.<sup>118</sup>

The sharp division between the strikers and those who remained loyal to Wilson soon developed into open hostility during the Christmas holidays, leading to frequent street fights, 'slanging matches and stone-throwing' between the strikers and the loyalists.<sup>119</sup> On the night of New Year's Eve, strikers walked down the main street pelting non-strikers with stones. At the approach of midnight, a revolver was fired, seriously wounding Mick Gorman in the knee: Gorman was a visiting Cloncurry miner who was walking with the strikers.<sup>120</sup> Dash claimed in the *Worker* that the shot was deliberately fired at the crowd of strikers.<sup>121</sup> In contrast, the Ravenswood correspondent for the *North Queensland Register* believed that the injury was an accident, caused by a careless person firing a few shots to create a 'sensation' while the fire-crackers were 'being let off'.<sup>122</sup> Despite police investigation, the culprit was never found.

During January 1913, many more strikers left Ravenswood to find work in north-western Queensland,<sup>123</sup> but prospects for an end to the strike remained as bleak as ever. Ever since 28 November, for example, Wilson had refused to meet deputations of the AWA.<sup>124</sup> The General Manager was determined to break the strike, however long it took: 'Even though the strike should last another three or four months, I am looking forward to being in a position to pay expenses during that time.'<sup>125</sup>

Wilson was committed to keeping New Ravenswood Ltd in operation until the AWA was defeated. In this he was given only lukewarm support by the London board. Despite the fact that the company's working capital was seriously diminishing, the directors would not replenish the coffers with the £2,500 placed in general reserve after the 1911-12 fiscal year.<sup>126</sup> 'It is greatly to be regretted that [the directors] could not do so,' Wilson wrote, 'So as to keep faith with the shareholders'. The directors' decision clearly resulted from fears concerning the uncertain future of the company.<sup>127</sup>

The British directors went so far as to suggest to Wilson that the mines be shut down entirely until the industrial dispute was over, but the General Manager rejected the idea, claiming it would be ‘playing into the hands of the A.W.A.’. If the loyalists were retrenched, Wilson reasoned, they would be likely to swell the Union’s ranks: ‘There then would be no question as to them being masters of the situation and the company their slaves.’ In addition, Wilson calculated a loss of £700 a month if the company closed down temporarily, as no income would be coming in to offset the cost of maintaining the mines and keeping on a skeleton staff.<sup>128</sup>

During February and March, there remained little hope for an end to the dispute, even though the strike was taking its toll on the Ravenswood unionists. Some strikers had been receiving strike pay from the AWA, with married men given an allowance of £1 weekly. Single men received 10s. a week. By mid-February, however, the married allowance had decreased to 10s. weekly, with nothing left over in the strike fund for single men. ‘This would seem to indicate’, Wilson surmised, ‘that local strike leaders are coming to the end of their resources, and other branches of the A.W.A. are refusing to assist them with funds.’<sup>129</sup> Some strikers were forced to go prospecting, achieving varying degrees of success.<sup>130</sup>

In February 1913, Wilson travelled to Brisbane to consult with the Queensland Minister for Mines and other officials about the strike. He also took the opportunity to secure the employment of 16 non-unionists from Brisbane and Gympie.<sup>131</sup> A small number of local miners re-joined the company as well, and the New Ravenswood Ltd payroll had 94 members by 6 March.<sup>132</sup> Wilson’s efforts to regain a full non-union workforce in defiance of the unionists stalled after that point.<sup>133</sup> This was mainly due to the work of the AWA, which informed unionists through the *Worker* not to seek work in the Ravenswood area.<sup>134</sup> Furthermore, union organisers successfully blocked New Ravenswood Ltd’s attempt to recruit men from an immigrant boat, *S.S. Roscommon*, when it berthed at Townsville in March. AWA organisers had forewarned the immigrants of the strike. According to the *Worker*, the ‘new chums’ gave the New Ravenswood Limited representative R.B. Barrett ‘a rough five minutes.’<sup>135</sup>

Another serious blow to Wilson came in May when the Grant and Sunset Extended mine employees returned to work. Although their salary remained at the pre-strike level, the Grant and Sunset Extended workers were guaranteed a 44-hour week. Although disappointed, Wilson soon decided that it was politically expedient to grant his New Ravenswood loyalists the same hours, as ‘A number of the new arrivals from the South were beginning to get discontented at the jibes of the Unionists through their working longer hours than the [Grant and Sunset] Extended men’.

The dispute was finally settled on 16 July 1913. Justice A.W. MacNaughton of the new Queensland Industrial Court summoned both the Queensland Branch of the Australian Workers Union (formerly the AWA until the 1 July merger) and New Ravenswood Ltd to a compulsory conference in Townsville.<sup>136</sup> The judge recommended that the company pay the 9s. minimum wage demanded for the truckers. Wilson complied, and the strike was called off.<sup>137</sup> It was, as Hunt puts it, a mere ‘paper victory’ for the AWU, as only 20 to 30 unionists were able to regain employment at New Ravenswood Ltd. Further, the continuing poor quality of the ores made it harder for wage-

earners to secure a position in Ravenswood generally, inducing many families to leave the town.<sup>138</sup>

### **From Gold Town to Ghost Town**

Although Ravenswood was starting to decline before the dispute, the Ravenswood strike of 1912 sealed the fate of the town, as the British directors of New Ravenswood Ltd withdrew much of their financial support. The company's reserve fund was £34,543 7s. 1d. in 1913; by 30 June 1917, reserves had increased to £35,031 13s. 11d. through the transfer of £488 6s. 10d. from Queensland to London.<sup>139</sup> This large reserve fund was indicative of a disenchanted board playing safe while the fortunes of the New Ravenswood mines dwindled in the wake of the strike.<sup>140</sup>

From 1913 onwards, the prospects for the New Ravenswood mines became increasingly limited. 'As depth is attained,' the Ravenswood Warden remarked, 'the erratic nature of the deposits become more emphasised, and values show a strong downward tendency.'<sup>141</sup> Even the quality and production of ore from the Sunset mine increasingly diminished.<sup>142</sup>

Wilson's attempts to improve New Ravenswood Ltd's financial position were ultimately frustrated by a number of factors, not least of which was the London board's refusal to supply more working capital for exploration and development. The price of mining materials rose sharply during World War One, and higher wages placed a further strain on the company's meagre resources.<sup>143</sup> From 1913 to early 1917, New Ravenswood Ltd was able to 'make its income cover expenditure',<sup>144</sup> but this was only achieved through scrupulous attention to expenses and a massively reduced workforce. In March 1917, Wilson reluctantly ceased all mining operations when it was clear that New Ravenswood Ltd was no longer financially viable.<sup>145</sup>

After New Ravenswood Ltd closed down, mining activity in the district rapidly declined. By 1918 Ravenswood's population had dwindled to 981,<sup>146</sup> with the total gold yield for that year being just 685 ounces. This was a far cry from the goldfield's peak output of 42,465 fine ounces in 1905.<sup>147</sup> Over the next six decades, Ravenswood's 'golden years' receded into memory and folklore.

### **Epilogue**

Archibald Laurence Wilson remained active in Ravenswood mining until well into the 1930s. He worked mines in outlying districts, such as Sellheim, and helped finance some of the mining ventures of his son, Archie. A Shire Councillor in the Dalrymple Shire Council between 1930 and 1934, A.L. Wilson continued to be strongly involved in public affairs until his death on 16 October 1935, aged 83. Mrs. A.L. Wilson (Rosie Annie) moved to Townsville after World War Two and died in 1954. Her children Mabel (1892-1973) and Archibald Woodville Wilson (1888-1973) also resided in Townsville in later years. The Wilson's eldest daughter Maud (1890-1944) married Ewan Cameron in 1922 and moved to Sydney. Their youngest son Douglas Wilson (1894-1951), a marine engineer, passed away suddenly on the road from Ravenswood to Mingela. Of the four Wilson children, only Maud appears to have married.<sup>148</sup>

Poignantly, one of Wilson's duties in his declining years was acting as a director of the Mother Lode Gold Mines Limited (registered 1927).<sup>149</sup> Wilson had been searching for the Mother Lode for decades, and he would never find it. Indeed, as someone who had spent over fifty years committed to the town and goldfield of Ravenswood, Wilson's inability in the 1920s and 1930s to recapture his 'glory days' (the 1900s) must have proved very frustrating. But Wilson probably also reflected on the reality that there were only two long-term mines in Ravenswood of persistently high quality – the Sunset and the General Grant. As both mines were in the hands of New Ravenswood Ltd after 1899, Ravenswood became, in essence, a 'one company town'. Therefore, when the gold petered out in the New Ravenswood mines, Ravenswood's decline was inevitable.

Yet new mining processes and technology in the modern era subsequently produced the rich Ravenswood revival for which Wilson had hoped. Carpentaria Gold (an MIM Holdings Ltd subsidiary) interrupted Ravenswood's peaceful slumber in the late 1980s.<sup>150</sup> The company used the relatively modern carbon in leach method to process low grade ore taken from an extensive open-cut mine near the town. The new mine encompassed much of the former territory of New Ravenswood Ltd.<sup>151</sup> From 1987 to September 1995, 'over 212,000 [ounces] of gold was produced' at the Carpentaria Gold's first open-cut mine.<sup>152</sup> Production ceased at the first open-cut mine in the mid-1990s, but careful exploration of neighbouring leases led to the opening of two further gold mines. In April 1996, MIM Holdings estimated that its remaining gold reserves at Ravenswood stood at over a million ounces.<sup>153</sup>

It took the pioneering Ravenswood miners fifty years (1868-1917) to produce 865,054 fine ounces of gold, and from 1918 to 1986, relatively little gold was recovered by the locals.<sup>154</sup> And yet it took Carpentaria Gold less than ten years in the 1980s and 1990s to produce 212,000 ounces from a goldfield that was widely assumed to have had its day! There is a sad historical irony in Carpentaria Gold's success in Ravenswood during the late twentieth century, and the fact that many of the company's deposits lay above 150 metres (roughly 500 feet)<sup>155</sup> highlights the futility of the Deep Mines saga. At great expense, Wilson had burrowed deeper and deeper into the ground in search of a 'mother-lode' which did not exist. Several decades later, innovative technology and treatment methods allowed the successful exploitation of formerly worthless low-grade ore very near the surface. Using treatment plants similar to those of Carpentaria Gold, other companies profitably re-opened the mines at Mount Leyshon, Kidston and many other north Queensland mining centres during the 1980s and 1990s.<sup>156</sup>

The Xstrata Company took over MIM (and, hence, its Ravenswood assets) in June 2003.<sup>157</sup> Xstrata subsequently sold its Ravenswood mining interests to the Resolute Mining Company in early 2004, and mines in the Ravenswood area such as Mount Wright have allowed Resolute Mining to continue operations for over a decade.<sup>158</sup> In September 2016, Resolute announced that their Ravenswood mining revival would be sustained until 'at least 2024'; that is, a 'Further 13 years of operations at average gold production of 120,000 ounces.'<sup>159</sup> Archibald Laurence Wilson would have been pleased that there was life in the old goldfield yet; but given his great personal ambition and enthusiasm for mining, he would have regretted that it was not he that gave Ravenswood its extra time in the sun.

**Figure 3:** View of the Ravenswood townscape 2015. St Patrick's Catholic Church is the prominent building in the foreground.



Source: Photo by R.G. Megarrity 2015.

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### Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> For Wilson's early years, see Jennifer Kathleen Caspani, 'A.L. Wilson and the New Ravenswood Company: A Study of the "Wilson Era" in Ravenswood 1894-1917', BA (Hons) thesis, James Cook University of North Queensland, 1987, pp. 6-7; Peter Bell, Ravenswood: Conservation Plan: Report to the Ravenswood Restoration and Preservation Association Inc., Historical Research Pty Ltd, Adelaide 2000, p. 24. See also Lyndon Megarrity 'A History of New Ravenswood Limited 1899-1917', MA thesis, James Cook University, 1997. The earliest reference to Wilson mining at Palmer River is from 1902. In a short biographical portrait in the *Queensland Government Mining Journal* (hereafter *QGMJ*), it states that Wilson was only briefly (in 1878) working on the Palmer River goldfield. See 'Queensland Mining Identities No. 6: Mr. A.L. Wilson' [biographical portrait], *QGMJ*, 15 April 1902, unpaginated. For Wilson family details see Archibald Laurence Wilson and Rosie Annie Casey, Queensland Marriage Certificate, 1887/C1875; Archibald Laurence Wilson, Queensland Death Certificate, 1935/C4484; Archibald Woodville Wilson, Queensland Birth Certificate (hereafter Q.B.C.), 1888/C5509; Adeline Maud Wilson, Q.B.C., 1890/C7082; Mabel Annie Wilson, Q.B.C., 1892/C7520; Douglas Henry Radcliffe Wilson, Q.B.C., 1894/C6348; 'Obituary', *Northern Miner*, 15 August 1954, p. 2. Adeline Maud Wilson was known as 'Maud'. On the Wilson – Casey 1887 marriage certificate, Rosie is listed as 22 years old (making her born either in 1864 or 1865). However, Douglas Wilson's birth certificate lists Rosie as 31 in 1894, and the *Townsville Daily Bulletin* (hereafter *TDB*), 27 December 1949, p. 5, announced that Mrs A.L. Wilson had reached her 87<sup>th</sup> birthday on 24 December 1949. This would suggest a birth date of 1862.

<sup>2</sup> 'Ravenswood Mining News', *North Queensland Register* (hereafter *NQR*), 16 August 1893, p. 38. Wilson bought the 'John Bull Block' lease on 12 August 1893 from K.A. Sidley, A. Trenfield, H. Aplan, J. MacPherson and Andrew Ball. He also purchased the 'John Bull P.C.' lease at around this time. See John Bull Gold Mining Syndicate, Public Record Office [hereafter PRO] Company File No. BT 31 5778/40493.

<sup>3</sup> John Bull Gold Mining Syndicate, PRO Company File No. BT 31 5778/40493.

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- <sup>4</sup> Warden (Ravenswood), *Queensland Votes & Proceedings* (hereafter *QVP*), Vol. 4, 1897, p. 87.
- <sup>5</sup> *QGMJ*, 15 January 1901, p. 19.
- <sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 15 March 1901, p. 141; Warden (Ravenswood), *QVP*, Vol. 4, 1897, p. 87; Warden (Ravenswood), *QVP*, Vol. 4, 1896, pp. 112-4.
- <sup>7</sup> 'Queenslanders in London', *Brisbane Courier*, 25 July 1898, p. 7; 'Queensland Mining Identities No. 6: Mr. A.L. Wilson' [biographical portrait], *QGMJ*, 15 April 1902, unpaginated.
- <sup>8</sup> R.L. Nash, *The Australasian Joint Stock Companies' Year Book 1904*, McCarron Bird & Co., Melbourne 1904, p. 280.
- <sup>9</sup> New Ravenswood Ltd, PRO Company File No. BT 31 16166/61222. The nominal capital of New Ravenswood Ltd was increased to £50,000 in 1902. It should also be noted that on 30 June 1904 each £1 share was subdivided into five shares of 4s. each: consequently, the nominal capital changed to £50,000 divided into 250,000 shares at 4s. each.
- <sup>10</sup> Wilson was the vendor of the three properties purchased by the Donnybrook Blocks Mining Syndicate Ltd, receiving £7,500 fully paid shares and £250 cash as his purchase price. See Donnybrook Blocks Mining Syndicate Ltd, PRO Company File BT 31 8363/60768.
- <sup>11</sup> Joan Neal, *Beyond the Burdekin: Pioneers, Prospectors and, Pastoralists: A History of the Dalrymple Shire 1879-1979*, Mimosa Press Publishers, Charters Towers, 1984, p. 135; Warden (Ravenswood), *QVP*, Vol. 4, 1897, pp. 86-92.
- <sup>12</sup> Neal, *Beyond the Burdekin*, p. 135; New Ravenswood Ltd, PRO Company File No. BT 31 16166/61222.
- <sup>13</sup> This fact was established through comparing the shareholders lists of the PRO Company file for United Limmer (BT 31 37646/5717) with those of New Ravenswood Ltd (PRO Company File No. BT 31 16166/61222). Herbert Jackson and Charles Poston, directors of New Ravenswood Ltd, were on the board of United Limmer. See Thomas Skinner, *The Directory of Directors for 1899*, T. Skinner, London 1899, p. 411 and p. 631.
- <sup>14</sup> Queensland Smelting Company (hereinafter QSC), PRO Company Files No. BT 31 4194/27126 and BT 31 8283/60151.
- <sup>15</sup> Walter R. Skinner, *Skinner's Mining Manual and Yearbook for 1899*, Skinner, London 1899, p. 275. For directors' occupations, see 'Memorandum and Articles of Association of the New Ravenswood Ltd,' PRO Company File No. BT 31 16166/61222.
- <sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>17</sup> Thomas Skinner, *The Directory of Directors for 1908*, T. Skinner, London, 1908, p. 516.
- <sup>18</sup> QSC, PRO File No. BT 31 8283/60151; New Ravenswood Ltd, PRO Company File No. BT 31 16166/61222.
- <sup>19</sup> Nash, *Year Book 1899*, p. 166.
- <sup>20</sup> George E. Loyau, *A History of Maryborough and Wide Bay Burnett from 1850 to 1895*, Pole Outridge, Brisbane, 1897, p. 340. The British and French Rothschild families had extensive financial interests in international smelting and refining companies. See Robert Vicat Turrell with Jean-Jaques Van Helten, 'The Rothschilds, the Exploration Company and Mining Finance', *Business History*, Vol. 38, No. 2, 1986, p. 182.
- <sup>21</sup> Lord Nathan Meyer Rothschild held over 16,000 preferential shares in the Queensland Smelting Company by 1907. See QSC, Company File Nos. BT 31 4194/27126 and BT 31 8283/60151.
- <sup>22</sup> William Lees, *The Goldfields of Queensland: Gympie*, Outridge Printing Company, Brisbane, 1899, (back page advertisement).
- <sup>23</sup> See *QGMJ*, 15 December 1906, p. 629 and *QGMJ*, 15 May 1908, p. 224.
- <sup>24</sup> William Lees, *The Copper Mines and Mineral Fields of Queensland*, Country Life, Brisbane, 1907, unpaginated.
- <sup>25</sup> Undersecretary for Mines, *QVP*, Vol. 3, 1894, p. 817.
- <sup>26</sup> D. Clark, *Australian Mining and Metallurgy*, Critchley Parker, Melbourne, 1904, p. 295.
- <sup>27</sup> See Warden (Ravenswood), *QVP*, Vol. 2, 1900, p.234; Wilson to directors, 5 March 1906, *NRM*, Letterbook 3, p. 75.
- <sup>28</sup> Warden (Ravenswood), *QVP*, Vol. 4, 1897, p. 92.
- <sup>29</sup> New Ravenswood Ltd, Fourth Ordinary General Meeting, 24 December 1902, cited in *QGMJ*, 15 January 1903, pp. 44-5. Nominal capital (also called authorised capital) was the maximum financial total of the shares which a company could issue to shareholders. However, nominal capital does not mean *actual* capital raised.
- <sup>30</sup> For guinea-pig directors see J.H. Curle, *Gold Mines of the World*, 2nd edition, London 1902, p. 338. Kift and Landon were the other directors. Donnybrook Blocks Mining Syndicate Ltd, PRO Company File No. BT 31 8363/60768.

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- <sup>31</sup> 'Summary of Capital and Shares 15 May 1899', New Ravenswood Ltd, PRO Company File No. BT 31 16166/61222. Poyser held 2,000 out of the 5,950 shares subscribed by May 1899.
- <sup>32</sup> J.W. McCarty, 'British Investment in Overseas Mining 1880-1914', PhD thesis, University of Cambridge, 1960, p. 59.
- <sup>33</sup> Roger's Golden Gate, Ordinary General Meeting, 30 December 1902, cited in *QGMJ*, 14 February 1903, p. 82.
- <sup>34</sup> *North Queensland Herald* (hereafter *NQ Herald*), 15 May 1899, p. 13.
- <sup>35</sup> Warden (Ravenswood), *QVP*, Vol. 2, 1900, p. 234.
- <sup>36</sup> Di Menghetti, 'Extraction Practices and Technology on the Charters Towers Goldfield', *North Australian Research Bulletin*, No. 8, 1982, p. 13; John MacLaren, 'Queensland Mining and Milling Practice', *QVP*, Vol. 4, 1901, p. 540.
- <sup>37</sup> Menghetti, 'Extraction Practices and Technology', pp. 13-14; MacLaren, 'Queensland Mining and Milling Practice', p. 540.
- <sup>38</sup> Menghetti, 'Extraction Practices and Technology', pp. 13-14.
- <sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 13-14.
- <sup>40</sup> MacLaren, 'Queensland Mining and Milling Practice', p. 540.
- <sup>41</sup> Neal, *Beyond the Burdekin*, p. 135.
- <sup>42</sup> Caspani, 'A.L. Wilson and the New Ravenswood Company...', p. 10.
- <sup>43</sup> List of Crushings 1899-1917, Misc. Correspondence, Reel 6, (unpaginated section), *New Ravenswood Mines Records* (hereafter *NRM*), held on microfilm at the James Cook University Library.
- <sup>44</sup> Caspani, 'A.L. Wilson and the New Ravenswood Company...', p. 39.
- <sup>45</sup> Warden (Ravenswood), *Queensland Parliamentary Papers* (hereafter *QPP*), Vol. 2, 1905, p. 744.
- <sup>46</sup> Walter E. Cameron, 'Recent Mining Development on the Ravenswood Gold Field', *Queensland Geological Survey Report No. 183*, Queensland Department of Mines, Brisbane, 1903, p. 4.
- <sup>47</sup> The gold undoubtedly underwent refinement in Britain, possibly at Swansea. Warden (Ravenswood), *QPP*, Vol. 2, 1903, p. 978.
- <sup>48</sup> There was no cyaniding done at the Mabel Mill, because the ore was too refractory. Warden (Ravenswood), *QVP*, Vol. 2, 1900, p. 234.
- <sup>49</sup> Warden (Ravenswood), *QPP*, Vol. 2, 1903, p.978. *QPP*, Vol. 2, 1907, p. 1132; Wilson to directors, 5 March 1906, *NRM*, Letterbook 3, p. 75.
- <sup>50</sup> Undersecretary for Mines, *QPP*, Vol. 2, 1907, p. 1010.
- <sup>51</sup> Geoffrey Blainey, *The Rush That Never Ended: A History of Australian Mining* (4<sup>th</sup> ed.), MUP, Carlton, 1993, p. 196.
- <sup>52</sup> John Reynolds, *Men and Mines: A History of Australian Mining 1788-1971*, Sun Books, South Melbourne, 1974, p. 106.
- <sup>53</sup> *Ravenswood Mining Journal*, circa August 1905, cited in *Northern Miner*, 15 August 1905, p. 6.
- <sup>54</sup> 'Ravenswood: Warden's Monthly Report', *QGMJ*, 14 December 1907, p. 662; Undersecretary for Mines, *QPP*, Vol. 2, 1907, p. 1010.
- <sup>55</sup> Tenth Annual General Meeting of New Ravenswood Ltd, 18 October 1909, cited in *QGMJ*, 15 January 1909, p. 46.
- <sup>56</sup> *QGMJ*, 15 May 1909, p. 217.
- <sup>57</sup> *QGMJ*, 14 December 1907, p. 662; Neal, *Beyond the Burdekin*, p. 137.
- <sup>58</sup> Warden (Ravenswood), *QPP*, Vol. 3, 1911-12, p. 375.
- <sup>59</sup> 'List of Dividends Paid Since Formation of Company', *NRM*, Misc. Correspondence, Reel 6, unpaginated.
- <sup>60</sup> Wilson to directors, 18 June 1902, *NRM*, Letterbook 1, p. 315.
- <sup>61</sup> 'Return of Allotments 19 February 1902 to 28 February 1902' New Ravenswood Ltd, PRO Company File No. BT 31 16166/61222. The company's original authorised capital (£20,000) was paid up by 1901. Taking further advantage of the dividend, the nominal capital was increased to £50,000 in February 1902. See PRO Company File No. BT 31 16166/61222 and W.R. Skinner, *The Mining Manual for 1901*, Skinner, London 1901, p. 210.
- <sup>62</sup> G.C. Bolton, *A Thousand Miles Away: A History of North Queensland to 1920* (1963), ANU Press, Canberra, 1972, p. 261; Undersecretary for Mines, *QPP*, Vol. 3, 1912, p. 623.
- <sup>63</sup> Wilson to directors, 24 September 1901, *NRM*, Letterbook 1, p. 177.
- <sup>64</sup> Bolton, *A Thousand Miles Away*, p. 260.
- <sup>65</sup> Diane Menghetti, 'The Gold Mines of Charters Towers', in K.H. Kennedy (ed.), *Readings in North Queensland Mining History*, Vol. II, James Cook University, Townsville, 1982, pp. 108-10.
- <sup>66</sup> To 'assay' is to determine the metal content of rocks and minerals. An 'assay' involves testing crushed ore samples using chemical analysis. See Janice Wegner, 'Croydon: Technology Transfer on a North Queensland Goldfield 1885-1915', PhD thesis, James Cook University of North Queensland, 1995, p. 514.

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- <sup>67</sup> Wilson to directors, 21 December 1907, *NRM*, Donnybrook Blocks Letterbook, p. 397.
- <sup>68</sup> Wilson to directors, 15 April 1903, *NRM*, Letterbook 1, p. 490; *ibid.*, 5 May 1911, *NRM*, Letterbook 4, pp. 765-6.
- <sup>69</sup> See Doug Hunt, 'The Ravenswood Strike', in B.J. Dalton (ed.), *Lectures in North Queensland History No. 4*, James Cook University, Townsville 1984, p. 163.
- <sup>70</sup> Wilson to directors, 11 June 1903, *NRM*, Letterbook 3, p. 889.
- <sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*, 25 June 1908, *NRM*, Letterbook 3, p. 900.
- <sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*, 9 November 1903, *NRM*, Letterbook 1, p. 626; Wilson to directors, 31 January 1901, *NRM*, Letterbook 1, p. 39.
- <sup>73</sup> Wilson to directors, 22 May 1906, *NRM*, Letterbook 3, p. 174. Wilson was also Chairman of the Ravenswood Shire Council on occasion, including the period between 1906 and 1909. See *Brisbane Courier*, 15 February 1909, p. 7.
- <sup>74</sup> Caspani, 'A.L. Wilson and the New Ravenswood Company...', p. 65.
- <sup>75</sup> Nash, *Year Book 1904*, pp. 275-96; D.C. Roderick, 'Ravenswood: 1868-1917', in B.J. Dalton (ed.) *Lectures on North Queensland History Second Series*, James Cook University, Townsville, 1975, p. 164.
- <sup>76</sup> *QVP*, Vol. 2, 1900, p.235; *QPP*, Vol 1, 1918, p. 1425.
- <sup>77</sup> Warden (Ravenswood), *QVP*, Vol. 4, 1901, p. 421.
- <sup>78</sup> *NQ Herald*, 26 November 1900; Warden (Ravenswood), *QVP*, Vol. 4, 1901, p. 424.
- <sup>79</sup> For more information on other surviving buildings, see Di Menghetti, *Ravenswood: Five Heritage Trails*, James Cook University, Townsville 1992, pp. 13-19.
- <sup>80</sup> Caspani, 'A.L. Wilson and the New Ravenswood Company...', p. 31.
- <sup>81</sup> *NQ Herald*, 29 August 1903, p. 9. See also *NQ Herald* for 9 May 1903, pp. 9-11 and 13 July 1903, p. 44.
- <sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*, 9 May 1903, p. 13.
- <sup>83</sup> Special Collections at the James Cook University Library holds records for the Ravenswood Amateur Dramatic Society and the rifle club in its Ravenswood Historical Collection. See also Menghetti, *Ravenswood*, unpaginated, for a photo of admission cards for various 1900s Ravenswood performances and social events.
- <sup>84</sup> *Ravenswood Mining Journal*, 31 October 1906, front page of advertisements reproduced in Ian Black, *Ravenswood*, Church Restoration Committee, Ravenswood, 1976, unpaginated section. See also Roderick, 'Ravenswood 1868-1917', p. 167.
- <sup>85</sup> Warden (Ravenswood), *QPP*, Vol. 2, 1903, p. 977.
- <sup>86</sup> Wilson held directorships with the following companies: Donnybrook Extended Gold Mines Ltd, Grant and Sunset Extended Gold Mines Ltd, Politician Blocks Ltd, Politician P.C. GMC Ltd, Premier Consolidated Gold Mines Ltd, New Premier Ltd, Trieste Gold Mines Ltd and Grand Junction Consols Ltd. See Nash, *Year Book* for the years 1902, 1904 and 1907; Wilson to Directors, 8 July 1903, *NRM*, Deep Mines Letterbook, p. 52. For details of the Deep Mines venture see Lyndon Megarity, 'The Deep Mines Fiasco 1902 to 1920', *Journal of the Royal Historical Society of Queensland*, Vol. 17, No. 1, May 1998, pp. 463-476.
- <sup>87</sup> Black, *Ravenswood*, p. 5.
- <sup>88</sup> Nash, *Year Book 1904*, p. 280; see also Donnybrook Blocks Letterbook, 1902-11, *NRM*
- <sup>89</sup> Undersecretary for Mines, *QPP*, Vol. 2, 1905, p. 645. The correct spelling is La Perouse.
- <sup>90</sup> Neal, *Beyond the Burdekin*, p. 133.
- <sup>91</sup> Caspani, 'A.L. Wilson and the New Ravenswood Company...', p. 65.
- <sup>92</sup> Ross Fitzgerald, *From the Dreaming to 1915: A History of Queensland*, UQP, St. Lucia 1982, p. 151.
- <sup>93</sup> Doug Hunt, *Labor in North Queensland: Industrial and Political Behaviour, 1900-1920*, VDM Verlag, Saabracken (Germany) 2010, pp. 3-4.
- <sup>94</sup> John Armstrong, 'The Sugar Strike, 1911', in D.J. Murphy (ed.), *The Big Strikes: Queensland 1889-1965*, UQP, St. Lucia 1983, pp. 100-15; K.H. Kennedy, 'Theodore, McCormack and the Amalgamated Worker's Association', *Labour History*, No. 33, 1977, p. 26.
- <sup>95</sup> For details see A.A. Morrison, 'The Brisbane Strike of 1912', in D.J. Murphy, R.B. Joyce and Colin A. Hughes (eds), *Prelude to Power: The Rise of the Labour Party in Queensland 1885-1915*, UQP, St Lucia, 1970, pp. 127-40.
- <sup>96</sup> Wilson to directors, 7 February 1912, *NRM*, Letterbook 4, p. 979.
- <sup>97</sup> See Kennedy, 'Theodore, McCormack and the Amalgamated Workers' Association', pp. 24-5.
- <sup>98</sup> Hunt, 'The Ravenswood Strike', p. 161.
- <sup>99</sup> Wilson to directors, 14 March 1912, *NRM*, Letterbook 5, p.11; 'Send-off to Mr. Fenwick', *TDB*, 4 May 1912, p. 3.
- <sup>100</sup> Wilson to directors, 30 April 1912, *NRM*, Letterbook 5, p. 40.
- <sup>101</sup> *Ibid.*, 29 May 1912, *NRM*, Letterbook 5, p. 59. 10/10 was shorthand for 10 shillings and 10 pennies (and so on).

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- <sup>102</sup> A.L. Wilson, cited in 'Royal Commission: Health Conditions in Queensland Mines', *QPP*, Vol. 3, 1911-12, p. 840.
- <sup>103</sup> Wilson to directors, 29 May 1912, *NRM*, Letterbook 5, p. 59.
- <sup>104</sup> Roderick, 'Ravenswood 1868-1917', p. 367.
- <sup>105</sup> *Brisbane Courier*, 26 February 1913, p. 6.
- <sup>106</sup> See *NQR*, 6 February 1905, p. 57; *TDB*, 12 May 1944, p. 2.
- <sup>107</sup> 'Obituary', *Northern Miner*, 14 August 1954, p. 2. The information gathered for Mrs. Wilson's obituary undoubtedly came from her surviving children Mabel and Archie.
- <sup>108</sup> *TDB*, 10 July 1912, p. 5; Wilson to directors, 30 July 1912, *NRM*, Letterbook 5, p. 114; Wilson to directors, 16 October 1912, *NRM*, Letterbook 5, p. 114; *ibid.*, 4 July 1912, *NRM*, Letterbook 5, p. 87.
- <sup>109</sup> Neal, *Beyond the Burdekin*, pp. 140, 163.
- <sup>110</sup> The task of the trucker was to transport ore to the surface.
- <sup>111</sup> Hunt, 'The Ravenswood Strike', p. 164.
- <sup>112</sup> Wilson to directors, 30 July 1913, *NRM*, Letterbook 5, p. 358.
- <sup>113</sup> *Ibid.*, 14 December 1912, *NRM*, Letterbook 5, p. 210; Wilson to directors, 30 July 1913, *NRM*, Letterbook 5, p. 358.
- <sup>114</sup> J. Snelham (New Ravenswood Ltd local secretary), letter to editor published in *Northern Miner*, 18 December 1912, p. 5.
- <sup>115</sup> Hunt, 'The Ravenswood Strike', p. 164.
- <sup>116</sup> *Worker*, 16 January 1913, p. 18.
- <sup>117</sup> *NQR*, 2 December 1912; *NQR*, 9 December 1912.
- <sup>118</sup> *NQR*, 9 December 1912; Neal, *Beyond the Burdekin*, p. 139; Hunt, 'The Ravenswood Strike', p. 164.
- <sup>119</sup> Hunt, 'The Ravenswood Strike', p. 166.
- <sup>120</sup> *Ibid.*; Wilson to directors, 9 January 1913, *NRM*, Letterbook 5, p. 235.
- <sup>121</sup> *Worker*, 16 January 1913, p. 18.
- <sup>122</sup> *NQR*, 6 January 1913.
- <sup>123</sup> *NQR*, 20 January 1913.
- <sup>124</sup> Wilson to directors, 14 December 1912, *NRM*, Letterbook 5, p. 213.
- <sup>125</sup> *Ibid.*, 24 January 1913, p. 243.
- <sup>126</sup> *Ibid.*, 21 January 1913, p. 240. For details of New Ravenswood Ltd's annual report for 1911-12, see *QGMJ*, 15 March 1913, pp. 126-7.
- <sup>127</sup> Wilson to directors, 21 January 1913, *NRM*, Letterbook 5, p. 240.
- <sup>128</sup> Maintaining the mines included keeping the mines free from water. Wilson to directors, 24 January 1913, *NRM*, Letterbook 5, pp. 242-3.
- <sup>129</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 258.
- <sup>130</sup> *NQR*, 10 March 1913.
- <sup>131</sup> Wilson to directors, 6 March 1913, *NRM*, Letterbook 5, p. 264; *Worker*, 27 March 1913.
- <sup>132</sup> Wilson to directors, 6 March 1913, *NRM*, Letterbook 5, p. 264.
- <sup>133</sup> *Worker*, 10 April 1913, p. 18.
- <sup>134</sup> See *ibid.*, 27 March 1913, p. 7; *ibid.*, 3 July 1913, p. 18; Wilson to directors, 3 June 1913, *NRM*, Letterbook 5, p. 310.
- <sup>135</sup> *Worker*, 27 March 1913, p. 15.
- <sup>136</sup> A settlement between the AWU and a number of the large Cloncurry copper companies was reached at the Industrial Court in Townsville during mid-July. This may have influenced the timing and location of the final settlement of the Ravenswood strike. *Worker*, 17 July 1913, p. 10. Note on the Industrial Court: this court was set up by the Queensland Government led by Liberal Premier Digby Denham in the wake of the Brisbane general strike of 1912. It effectively marked the beginning of compulsory conciliation and arbitration in Queensland. See Lyndon Megarrity, 'The 1900s: A Forgotten Turning Point in Queensland History', *Queensland Review*, Vol. 11, No. 1, 2004, p. 76.
- <sup>137</sup> Neal, *Beyond the Burdekin*, p. 140.
- <sup>138</sup> Hunt, 'The Ravenswood Strike' pp. 168-9.
- <sup>139</sup> See New Ravenswood Ltd's Balance Sheets for 1912-13 to 1916-17, in PRO Company File No. BT31 16166/61222.
- <sup>140</sup> 'List of Dividends Paid Since Formation of Company', *NRM*, Misc. Correspondence, Reel 6, unpaginated.
- <sup>141</sup> Warden (Ravenswood), *QPP*, Vol. 3, 1914, p. 800.
- <sup>142</sup> 'In the lowest workings a fissure characterised by extreme looping carried only erratic bunches of ore.' K.R. Levingston, 'A Survey of the Geology and Mineralisation of North Queensland Mining Fields', in K.H. Kennedy (ed.), *Readings in North Queensland Mining History*, Vol. 1, James Cook University, Townsville 1980, p. 8.

- <sup>143</sup> Warden (Ravenswood), *QPP*, Vol. 1, 1918, p. 1507.
- <sup>144</sup> Undersecretary for Mines, *QPP*, Vol. 3, 1917, p. 723.
- <sup>145</sup> Neal, *Beyond the Burdekin*, p. 140. For the calendar year 1916, the company had mined 1,649 tons for 1,629 ounces, valued at £5,363. Warden (Ravenswood), *QPP*, Vol. 3, 1917, p. 835.
- <sup>146</sup> Ian Black & Co., *Ravenswood: A Report for the National Trust of Queensland*, Ian Black & Co., Townsville, 1975, p. 42.
- <sup>147</sup> *QPP*, Vol. 2, 1906, p.1149; *QPP*, Vol. 3, 1919-20, p. 43.
- <sup>148</sup> Neal, *Beyond the Burdekin*, p. 274. For further details of Wilson's later life, see Caspani, 'A.L. Wilson and the New Ravenswood Company...', pp. 96-100. See also Wilson's obituary in the *NQR*, 19 October 1935. Wilson had also been active for over twenty years in the Ravenswood Shire Council, which by 1930 had been merged into the Dalrymple Shire Council. For details of the Wilson family after 1935, see Douglas Wilson, Queensland Death Certificate, 1951/C5476; A.W. Wilson, Queensland Death Certificate, 1973/C7491; Mabel Wilson, Queensland Death Certificate, 1973/C7486; A.M. Wilson and E.C. Cameron, Queensland Marriage Certificate, 1922/B31414; *TDB*, 12 May 1944, p. 2; 'Obituary', *Northern Miner*, 14 August 1954, p. 2; *NQR*, 13 October 1973, p. 3.
- <sup>149</sup> *Northern Miner*, 3 November 1927, p. 2.
- <sup>150</sup> MIM Holdings Ltd, *1989 Annual Report to Shareholders*, MIM, Brisbane 1989, p. 7. Held at the James Cook University Library.
- <sup>151</sup> F.J. Bruvel, 'Queensland Mineral Commodity Report', *QGMJ*, January 1994, p. 18.
- <sup>152</sup> D. Wilkinson (ed.), *The Australian Miner Handbook 1997/1998 edition*, Louthean Publishing, West Perth 1997, p. 119.
- <sup>153</sup> 'Ravenswood Reveals More Gold', *QGMJ*, April 1996, p. 20.
- <sup>154</sup> *QPP*, Vol. 1, 1918, p. 1425.
- <sup>155</sup> 'Ravenswood Reveals More Gold', *QGMJ*, April 1996, p. 20.
- <sup>156</sup> Bruvel, 'Queensland Mineral Commodity Report', pp. 10-23.
- <sup>157</sup> Resolute Mining, ASX announcement, 'Resolute Acquires Ravenswood Gold Operations from Xstrata for US\$45 Million', 13 January 2004: <http://www.asx.com.au/asxpdf/20040113/pdf/3kbj0gdb1cdcd.pdf>
- <sup>158</sup> See *Age* (Melbourne), 14 January 2004; 'End of Life Beckons New Hope', *Industry Advocate*, posted 29 May 2015: <https://industryadvocate.com.au/end-of-life-beckons-new-hope>
- <sup>159</sup> Resolute ASX Announcement, 21 September 2016.