

FEEZ RUTHNING & CO
THE FIRST 100 YEARS

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BY
GRAEME O. MORRIS

FEEZ RUTHNING & CO – THE FIRST 100 YEARS

**BEING THE HISTORY, TO 1946, OF THE FIRM THEN KNOWN AS
“FEEZ RUTHNING & CO”, INCLUDING ITS PREDECESSORS:**

ROBERT LITTLE 1846-1885

PETER MACPHERSON 1865-1900

HEINRICH RUTHNING 1876-1912

ADOLPH FEEZ 1912-1942

WILFRED ROWLAND 1927-1972

AND OTHERS

BY

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SOLICITOR OF THE HIGH COURT OF AUSTRALIA

NOTARY PUBLIC

PARTNER, FEEZ RUTHNING & CO (SUBSEQUENTLY FEEZ RUTHNING), 1954-1994

SENIOR PARTNER, 1972-1994

CONSULTANT, 1994-1996

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INTRODUCTION

Law firms come and sometimes go. They wax and sometimes wane. One generation builds, another consolidates, a third dissipates, a fourth re-constructs.

For a law firm to be able to point to a continuous history of 150 years of more or less steady growth and development is rare in Australia and unique in Queensland, but then Feez R uthning's ultimate predecessor, Robert Little, had been practising law in Brisbane since 1846, twelve years before Queensland came into existence as a separate Colony.

The name R uthning dates back to 1877 when Heinrich Ludwig Eduard R uthning joined Little & Browne to form Little Browne & R uthning.

The name Feez first appeared in the law in 1885 when Adolph Feez became the junior partner in MacPherson, Miskin & Feez, a firm which itself dated back to 1865.

In 1912 the two practices were merged to form Feez R uthning & Baynes, a firm which recaptured the pre-eminent position enjoyed by Robert Little some sixty years earlier, and ensured its position in the first rank of Brisbane law firms for the rest of the Twentieth Century.

This monograph traces the history of the firm and its predecessors over its first one hundred years, leaving others to complete the story of the next fifty years whilst much of it is still within living memory.

Such a firm does not just happen: it is the result of the conscious effort of fifty or more partners, each in his or her own time, and over the years as many as a thousand employees. In the course of time the firm has taken more than 250 articled clerks and given practical experience to a like number of graduate lawyers, some of whom have become Judges of the Queensland Court of Appeal, Supreme Court, and District Court, and the Federal Court of Australia.

ROBERT LITTLE, ATTORNEY – 1846 TO 1860

In order to appreciate some of the history of the firm, it should be remembered that until about 1950, the practice of the law was the preserve of the few, in that articles of clerkship (or reading for the Bar) meant several years with little or no income, which could only be accommodated with the financial backing of a well-to-do family, or in a few cases by exceptional hard work and privation. Thus lawyers tended to be from the more affluent sections of urban society, well-educated and having wider interests than most in business, or property or both. Further, setting up in practice required still further financial resources, effectively excluding all but the most determined or fortunate.

A law firm is also the creature of its environment and depends much for its growth and prosperity upon the growth and prosperity of the city and state (or colony) where it is established. Feez Ruthning owes much to Robert Little's choice of Brisbane in which to commence practice, and to the rapid growth and diversification of the Queensland economy. Robert Little could barely have foreseen the growth of the Queensland economy in the Twentieth Century when, in 1846, he commenced practice in the small settlement at Moreton Bay.

The year 1846 was notable not only for Little's commencement in practice but also for the establishment of another of Queensland's oldest institutions - *The Moreton Bay Courier*, eventually to become *The Courier-Mail*; the explorations of Ludwig Leichhardt and Sir Thomas Mitchell, which opened the central and northern reaches of what is now Queensland to agrarian settlement; and the purchase of, and extensions to, Newstead House as the official residence of John Clements Wickham RN, the Resident Police Magistrate.

Robert Little was born in November 1822 at Dungiven, Londonderry, Ireland, apparently of well-to-do Anglo-Irish parents, who were able to provide him with a private education (a tutor perhaps); the wherewithal to train as a lawyer (then quite a financial undertaking); and eventually a letter of credit for the substantial amount which he would require for the adventures ahead. He was admitted as a solicitor in Ireland and practised there briefly, but Ireland was in deep depression (as indeed was much of Europe), and the great potato famine of 1845 and 1846 drove Little and a million other Irish folk to emigrate to the New World, or even further afield.

Young Little, and his brother John, decided upon New South Wales as their destination and booked passage on the *Ganges*, sailing in April 1846 from Liverpool via Capetown to Sydney. Little packed his law books; the few precedents that he had managed to collect; a certified copy of his Certificate of Admission; a letter of introduction from his family's banker to the Bank of New South Wales in Sydney; some character references; and, of course, his precious letter of credit.

The *Ganges* arrived in Sydney in June 1846 after an apparently uneventful voyage. On disembarking, Little and his brother must have found lodgings, and Little went about his purpose with the thoughtfulness, skill and determination which marked his whole life. No diary survives, but a number of clues have been found from which it is possible to reconstruct this period in Little's life.

It is known, for example, that Little went almost immediately to the Bank of New South Wales, Sydney; negotiated his letter of credit; and opened an account, which he conducted with the Bank for many years. As a tall, distinguished-looking young gentleman of means, with a glowing letter of introduction from the Bank of Ireland, Little would certainly have been warmly welcomed at the Bank of New South Wales and accorded an interview with its manager, if not general manager. Little undoubtedly sought advice as to the prospects for law practice in the Australian colonies. The manager probably had little knowledge of the subject but offered to arrange an appointment for Little with the Bank's solicitor, Mr. George Allen, who would be able to give him more informed advice. It seems more than likely that the Bank gave Little a note of introduction to Mr. Allen at his premises in a cottage in Elizabeth Street, and that Little quickly pursued such introduction, calling at Allen's office and seeking an appointment for a day or two later.

Allen's son, George Wigram Allen, then aged twenty-two, had just completed five years as an articled clerk to his father and was just about to be admitted as a solicitor. That in later life Little and the younger Allen were firm friends points to such friendship having been struck up immediately upon Little's first visit, from which we can deduce that Little and young Allen spent considerable time together, exchanging new ideas from the Old Country for practical knowledge of

legal practice in the Colony. It seems likely that young Allen and some of the law clerks from the office accompanied Little to the various courts and government offices, introducing him to other members of the legal profession, clerks of the courts, and so on. It is also highly probable that Little was allowed the use of a table in the office where he could read and copy the many precedents which he would need in later practice.

One of his first tasks was to secure admission as a solicitor of the Supreme Court of New South Wales, and since Allen had just gone through that process he was able to assist with forms, procedure, and further character references, and on 8 August 1846 Little was duly admitted.

The effects of the recession in Europe were already being felt in New South Wales. Mr Allen Snr. considered that Sydney and Melbourne were both well supplied with lawyers, and that Little would do well to look further afield. There should be a good opportunity in the Northern District of Moreton Bay, which had recently been thrown open to free settlement, and in which direction many clients of both the Bank and of Mr. Allen were hastening with a view to taking up squatting rights. The Bank was considering a change in its Charter to allow it to open a branch at Moreton Bay, and it was possible that in due course it would need the services of a competent local solicitor. Little made a point of gathering and copying precedents of the sorts that he would need if such good fortune came his way.

It seems that in about September, Little made his first voyage to Moreton Bay, being a three day voyage by steamer. His purpose was to choose between the settlement at Brisbane and that at Limestone Hill, now Ipswich; and having made

that choice, to secure suitable premises. We do not know for certain whether he lodged at Wright's Hotel (being the only public house in Brisbane) but it seems likely that he did, for the premises which he found comprised the next door cottage, previously occupied by Mort the milkman (so described in the map of Brisbane in 1844 appearing in "*Moreton Bay Courier to Courier-Mail*", 1992 Portside Editions, p.14). Clearly, Little would have travelled up-stream to Limestone Hill to consider the possibilities there, and returned to Brisbane convinced that the latter would be the logical centre for future growth.

Since he by now had made up his mind to "hang his shingle" in the district, he would certainly have made an appointment to see Captain Wickham at his office in William Street, to announce his intention and to discuss his future. Captain Wickham, having just that year refurbished and moved into Newstead House some miles downstream from Brisbane at the confluence of Breakfast Creek with the Brisbane River, left Little in no doubt that Brisbane was the right place to choose.

Little was fortunate to find an established cottage with outbuildings, since there were few available and they changed hands but rarely. It is thought that "Mort the milkman" had aspirations to take up a squatting area and was planning to leave Brisbane within a month or two. Little wrote what was his first conveyancing document in the Colony, being a lease commencing 1 December 1846 with an option to purchase to be exercised within one year, at an agreed price.

These arrangements satisfactorily in place, Little seems to have taken the next available steamer back to Sydney and to have occupied the next two months to

good purpose, seeking letters of introduction to customers of the Bank of New South Wales and clients of Mr. Allen's law firm known to be present in the Moreton Bay district or making plans to head in that direction; also in gathering yet further precedents and spending all his remaining time attending the law courts to observe the procedure and practice of those courts and to study the techniques of the barristers and other lawyers appearing therein.

At around the time of his 24th birthday in November 1846, Little packed his books, belongings and precious precedents, and headed north once more, taking possession of Mort's cottage early in December, and opening for business a few days later. Amongst the necessities which Little brought with him were supplies of stationery, particularly vellum, which were not procurable in the district, and of course the proud name-plate "Robert Little, Attorney". Another necessity was a box of coins, for there was no bank in the district.

The population of Brisbane in 1846 was 960, being 614 in North Brisbane and 346 in South Brisbane, males outnumbering females two to one. Of convict origin, there were 48 ticket-of-leave persons, 22 in government employ and three in private assignment. Dr W Ross Thompson *The First Thirty Years (1988)* describes Brisbane in 1846 as consisting of three villages, at North Brisbane, South Brisbane and, presumably, Kangaroo Point.

The official history of the Queensland Law Society Incorporated records that Little was the first solicitor in Brisbane, making the point that solicitor John Ocock was located at South Brisbane. In fact, research suggests that there were two other attorneys, one M E D Ward and one Thomas Adams, but little is known of

any of the three others except that they soon passed from view, apparently leaving no successors in practice.

Little occupied the cottage as both his residence and his office. It was a substantial building with two chimneys and a set of out-buildings from which Mort had carried on his trade. It was very centrally situated, within 50 metres of the old convict barracks, by then being used as the Court House, and opposite the hospital which stood directly across the George Street intersection looking north-east along Adelaide Street - or what would, when properly formed, constitute Adelaide Street. (It was not until about 1970 that Adelaide Street was extended south-west past George Street).

In such a small community the better class of legal work was slow in coming to Little's office, and he probably spent much of his time out and about: attending the police court when in session; cultivating the few business people of the township; meeting incoming vessels and farewelling others; and travelling around the district taking advantage of letters of introduction to make himself known to the squatters to whom they were addressed. The well-educated, well-dressed, distinguished-looking young man must have made a favourable impression, because legal work soon began to flow, with conveyances to be prepared, partnership agreements and dissolutions to be documented, and wills and marriage settlements to be written down.

The years 1847 to 1850 marked a rapid expansion of the township at Brisbane; its confirmation as the port for the district; and consolidation of its lead over Ipswich as the administrative centre of the Northern District. Little's law practice grew apace, and another attorney named Parker appears to have set up in practice in

Brisbane. Little is said to have tried sheep farming - presumably with a share farmer - but such endeavour was apparently not successful and was abandoned.

The year 1850 was a significant one for Little, for the Supreme Court of New South Wales conducted its first circuit in Brisbane, with Mr Justice Therry presiding. Apparently the rules of Court had to be changed to allow the attorneys, Little and Parker, to appear.

The steamer which brought the circuit to Brisbane usually also brought a barrister or two, and Little and Parker would find themselves opposed by them. (No other record can be found of Parker).

Later in the year the Chief Justice of New South Wales, Sir Alfred Stephen, presided at another circuit session. A fine dinner was arranged at the Sovereign Hotel to welcome the Chief Justice and his retinue at which Little proposed the toast to "The Law"; was responded to by the Chief Justice; and Captain Wickham gave the address of welcome.

By this time there were about 2,000 inhabitants of Brisbane and about 10,000 in the Northern District. Victoria was about to be separated from the Mother Colony; and the Northern District was beginning to clamour for Separation. (In 1850 Sydney had about 54,000 residents, Hobart and Melbourne each about 23,000 and Adelaide 14,500).

There were less than 1,000 squatters in all of Eastern Australia in 1850 and only about 100 in the Northern District. They and their families, often in partnership, constituted a self-appointed ruling class which saw itself as providing the

impetus for the growth of the fledgling economy and entitled as such to the benefits of cheap labour in the form of ex-convicts and ticket-of-leave men and women. With this in mind they clamoured for Separation in the hope that the colonial authorities in London would agree to the resumption of transportation to Moreton Bay, even if not to Sydney, as had already long been decided. The people of the townships, and of Brisbane in particular, were opposed to such resumption, since they would have to cope with gaols and a convict presence in their close proximity. (In the event, transportation was resumed briefly from 1851 onwards, but only to the penal settlement at St. Helena in Moreton Bay, which represented a fair compromise between the competing views).

Putting aside his developing friendship with, and clientele amongst the squattocracy, Little became a spokesman for the concerns of the people of Brisbane. Russell's "*Genesis of Queensland 1888*" refers to Little as a "patriarch of progress and practice, pioneering powers of pleading in the pristine period", and records how at a public meeting in Brisbane to discuss possible resumption of transportation, Robert Little spoke out against the idea:

"The high standard of address made by that early and ever-esteemed settler at Brisbane, Robert Little, and the sensible quiet and conciliatory tone in which he declared himself opposed to resumption, produced but for a little time a hopeful lull in the storm around him. (The clamour for resumption)"!

In May 1850 another event occurred which was to have a profound impact on the firm, which was that Master Heinrich R uthning, then aged eight, arrived with his family in Adelaide, per the vessel "*San Francisco*" from Bremen via intermediate ports - a name to which we shall return time and again.

Most significantly for Little and eventually for Feez R  thning, there arrived in Brisbane in November 1850, one William Richardson, sent by the Bank of New South Wales to make arrangements to open a branch at Moreton Bay, the Bank's first branch outside Sydney. It is not known whether Little had advance notice of this happening, but it is certain that he welcomed it, as did the other residents, and probably greeted the vessel when it arrived, and that Little made himself known to Richardson. Little had a compendious knowledge of Brisbane property matters and doubtless assisted Richardson to find temporary quarters for the Bank in part of Captain Colley's store and warehouse, 250 metres down George Street from Little's office, towards the Government (now Botanical) Gardens. It is also likely that Little helped Richardson identify Pickering's land and building at the corner of George and Queen Streets where, within a few months, the Bank took more permanent premises, and in fact soon acquired the site, said to be the longest surviving privately owned title in Queensland. Soon after Pickering's arrival, Alexander Knowles also arrived to act as Richardson's accountant and deputy manager, bringing with him the box of coins so necessary to replace the system of barter and IOUs on which the township had depended since its inception.

Soon Little began to receive a steady flow of work from Richardson's Bank, including the collection of dishonoured IOUs, and mortgages, bills of sale and all the other paraphernalia of the banking trade.

Still the agitation went on for Separation, and for a particular Judge to be appointed to Brisbane, as had occurred in respect of Melbourne. In the event, Mr Justice Samuel Frederick Milford was appointed "Judge at Moreton Bay" on 1 January 1856, but did not take up residence; he visited several times on circuit but

found Brisbane less to his liking than Sydney. By this time Separation was beginning to be regarded as inevitable and Mr Justice Milford concentrated his efforts on lobbying the authorities in Sydney to retain his seat on the New South Wales Bench when Separation eventuated; he was successful, and became Principal Judge in Equity (based in Sydney) in 1859, remaining on the bench until 26 May 1865. Mr Justice Milford plays a minor part in our story, since his daughter Sophie married one Albrecht Feez of Rockhampton, and had sons Adolph, born in 1858, and Arthur, born in 1860.

The years from 1850 to 1857 provided much growth for the practice of Robert Little, who was not only the leading attorney and solicitor, but also very active in community and Church of England affairs. It is said that he was very athletic and a good horseman and rower. The oldest surviving documents in the firm's possession are from 1854 and comprise copies of mortgages and crop liens covering loans of £4,000 and £7,000 respectively, from the Bank of New South Wales to two Darling Downs graziers. One of them is witnessed in the distinctive handwriting of "Robt. Little".

The Bank quickly became Little's key client, not only for its own securities and other work, but also for the many squatters and business people who were thus introduced to him, and who were impressed by his obvious competence and the trust reposed in him by the Bank. It seems that by 1853 or thereabouts, Little had engaged a law clerk, probably from Sydney.

The logistics of law practice in Brisbane were difficult, to say the least, by reason (if for none other) of the length of time taken for communication to and from Sydney. Although coastal vessels were beginning to ply at more or less regular

intervals, it might well be ten days before the next sailing, and at least three days later - sometimes much more - before the arrival of mail in Sydney, and the like delays before answers could come back. Often there was no opportunity to search a title in Sydney before entering into a contract or lease, and here Little's compendious knowledge of property in the district as its longest practising solicitor gave him a great advantage. Also he had a strong and mutually respectful association with Allen & Son; and employed them exclusively as his "town agents": receiving, of course, their best service in registering documents and filing court process. Little sometimes made the voyage to Sydney, carrying with him the most important documents for filing or registration.

From the various clues, it seems probable that Little created and maintained what we would now call a data base of property in the Northern District, both urban and rural, which made him a sort of unofficial Titles Office, and made his services virtually indispensable to anyone wishing to transact property business in the District.

By 1856, Little could foresee a rapid expansion of Brisbane, as a centre of both society and commerce, and he decided to take advantage thereof and of his knowledge of property to set up a real estate business, despite being already fully occupied in his law practice. It was then quite permissible and common practice for a solicitor to engage in real estate agency work, so Little found himself a suitable real estate dealer named Rawlings and established with him a partnership under the name Little & Rawlings, to be carried on from separate premises; financed largely by Little; and for which Little would generally do any conveyancing which might flow. It was a separate and distinct business from his law practice, but the appearance of frequent notices in the *Moreton Bay Courier* of

land for sale under the name Little & Rawlings doubtless gave rise to the innocent but mistaken report in the *Australian Dictionary of Biography* that Rawlings was at some stage in partnership with Little in his law practice. It is not unlikely that Little also bought and sold land as principal, which would have made good sense and good profits in the boom which was to follow.

By 1857 it was regarded as inevitable that the Northern District would soon achieve Separation from the Mother Colony; that Brisbane would be the capital, and would grow apace; and that it would be a good place to be for those prepared to suffer its hot summers and relative lack of amenities. Ratcliffe Pring Esq., Barrister-at-Law, was one who heard Brisbane's call, as was Daniel Foley Roberts, a solicitor of the New South Wales Court. One report has Roberts arriving in Brisbane in 1851, but elsewhere it is said that he commenced practice in Brisbane in 1857: one obvious answer to this apparent inconsistency is that he may very well have worked for Little as an employed solicitor, being one and the same as the nameless "law clerk" whom we had postulated. If so, it goes a long way to explain the high esteem in which Little and Roberts held each other in later years; how Roberts quickly rose to success and prominence, and became one of the select band of citizens nominated to the Legislative Council in 1861, where he rose to be Chairman of Committees.

One of Little's problems had been that in his position as the only law practitioner he had frequently been called upon to arbitrate in minor disagreements between businessmen of the town, and ran the risk of losing both protagonists as clients. With the commencement in practice of Roberts he found a sensible fellow practitioner to whom he could safely refer cases of conflict.

It is clear that Roberts and his successors have the distinction of being the next longest surviving law practice in Brisbane. In 1993 Roberts had successors in business practising as Conwell Kirby & Lilley, although one lineage from Roberts, via his partner for a short period in later years, Graham Lloyd Hart, can be traced also to the present day firm of Flower & Hart.

An even more significant event for Little in 1857 was his appointment as Crown Solicitor for criminal and civil cases in the Northern District, an appointment which Little was pleased to accept, since he retained the right of private practice whilst having the best of all excuses for rejecting the sort of work which he no longer wished to do. Little remained Crown Solicitor after Separation, and indeed until his retirement from practice in 1885.

The year 1859 was a momentous one for Little, as it was for the Northern District's community, then numbering less than 25,000 of whom 5,000 were resident in Brisbane. Mr Justice Lutwyche arrived as the first resident judge and with a commission to remain after Separation. Later in the year there arrived Shepherd Smith, as the new manager of the Moreton Bay branch of the Bank of New South Wales. Finally, Sir George Ferguson Bowen and his consort, the Countess Diamantina Roma (daughter of Count Giorgio-Candiano di Roma, President of the Senate of the Ionian Islands, and titular head of the Ionian Republic), arrived on 10 December and the proclamation was read whereby Queensland was transmogrified into a separate colony, with Brisbane as its capital city.

Little, Pring and Roberts had each been very active in the preparations leading up to Bowen's arrival, including a welcome ball at the Immigration Centre, Brisbane,

and preparations for the formation of the Queensland Club. On 6th December, just four days before Bowen's arrival, a group of twenty men gathered at the Exchange Rooms with a view to founding a gentleman's club worthy of Brisbane's new-found status as a colonial capital. The meeting was chaired by Dr. Cannon and amongst those present were Little, Roberts, Pring and Shepherd Smith.

Bowen brought with him his private secretary Robert Herbert, a member of the London bar. Each of these new arrivals soon met Robert Little, Crown Solicitor, and Roberts, Pring and Smith, and each saw much of the others over many years. Herbert became Queensland's first Premier, and Pring was appointed Attorney-General in Herbert's first government.

With the exception of Western Australia, never before or since has such a vast area as Queensland with such undreamt of resources been committed into the hands of such a small far-flung community with such meagre human resources and an exchequer containing 7½ pence (and that 7½ pence stolen within a few days!)

Little's extensive experience in local land matters and his knowledge of local conditions were heavily relied on by Governor Bowen and Premier Herbert, who took advice from Little, Pring and Roberts on all manner of local subjects.

Shepherd Smith also played a significant role in Little's life and in the growth of his law practice. He had emigrated from England in 1853, joined the Bank of New South Wales in Sydney and had a meteoric rise, being sent as manager to Tamworth and Deniliquin before being sent to Brisbane at the age of twenty-four.

Robert Little saw in Smith a reflection of himself at twenty-four when he had come to Brisbane thirteen years earlier. Little and his wife, Medora, quickly took Smith and his wife under their wings, so to speak, and introduced them to town and country people, most of whom were in any case customers of the Bank (still the only bank in Brisbane), and making sure, for example, that Shepherd Smith was invited to the Queensland Club's inaugural meeting. During the four or five years that Smith remained in Brisbane, he and Little lunched frequently together and they and their wives dined often at the old Government House in George Street. Little and Smith were both strong adherents of the Church of England (Little later becoming a Warden); strong supporters of the Queensland Club; founders of the Queensland Turf Club; and active in all community affairs.

After Smith left Brisbane in 1863 to take up his appointment as general manager of the Bank in Sydney, at the exceptionally young age of twenty-nine, the two remained good friends and regularly visited each other when in the other's town. In Sydney, George Wigram Allen, by now the Hon. G W Allen MLC and shortly to become President of the Bank's board, would usually join them for lunch when Little was in Sydney. Thus was cemented a relationship with the Bank which has continued to this day.

LITTLE & BROWNE – 1860 TO 1877

By 1860 Little had more work than he could handle, being both Crown Solicitor and solicitor for the State's only bank (and for the Queensland Club), and sharing with Roberts virtually all the legal work in Brisbane and much of the surrounding country - so much so that Little decided to take in a partner.

Eyles Irwin Caufield Browne was the person whom Little chose as his partner. Browne was three years older than Little, having been born in 1819 at Stroud, Gloucestershire, England. He practiced as a solicitor at Bath, Gloucester, and Kidderminster until 1857, when he and his wife decided to emigrate with their daughter to New South Wales. After practising briefly in Sydney and a little longer at Newcastle, something drew him to Brisbane – perhaps an invitation from Little - where he arrived in 1860, and entered into Articles of Partnership under the name Little & Browne.

Little much welcomed being able to share his workload with Browne, who proved not only an able lawyer but also one who was experienced in supervising law clerks (by this time three or four) so that both Little and he could get out and about and develop wider interests beyond the more mundane work of a law practice. It is not known whether the house at Adelaide Street was sufficient to contain the partners and staff but an old photograph shows an addition on the north side of the cottage which probably allowed at least some expansion before further premises would have to be sought.

In 1863 Browne was invited to become a Member of the Legislative Council as the Hon. E I C Browne MLC (Pring and Little having no doubt decided that Little

could still be responsible for Crown work and that Browne was not disqualified merely by being a partner of Little's).

The Australian Dictionary of Biography 1851 to 1890 says of Browne that:

“Although busy with his practice he regularly attended the Council and was active in debates. He often had to explain legislation coming from the assembly, especially bills on legal subjects. His trenchant criticism of loosely drafted legislation and his knowledge of English statutes and legal procedures won him much respect. Jealous of the privileges of the Legislative Council he argued that without independence it was ‘nothing but a mere court of registry for the Acts of the other House’. He acted several times as chairman of committees, sat on select committees and for nineteen years served on the library committee. Worried by the colony’s precarious finances, he voted for delay in building the new Parliament House and deplored hasty proposals to build railways which would pay only a fraction of the high interest on the borrowed capital. He had little sympathy with the squatters and their constant pleas for financial help; maintaining that their large holdings hindered development and much-needed immigration; he later predicted that sugar-growing and other industries would become the colony’s mainstays.”

In 1863 the firm’s practice received a very large boost for, as Crown Solicitors, they were assigned the task of resuming land for the Railways which were now being proposed. This task continued and expanded over the next twenty or thirty years and provided Little & Browne with handsome incomes, sometimes criticised in Parliament.

In the same year, 1863, Graham Lloyd Hart was admitted as a solicitor; went into partnership with D F Roberts & Hart; but later went out to form Hart & Flower, which eventually became the modern day firm Flower & Hart.

In 1865 Peter MacPherson was admitted as a solicitor. He went on to form the partnership of MacPherson & Miskin, later MacPherson Miskin & Feez, of which further mention will later be made.

In 1873, Little chaired a meeting of attorneys which resulted in the formation of the Queensland Law Association. One report has it that Little presided over the Association for the next seven years, whilst another report has it that Roberts became president. Without a legislative framework, the Association had no means of enforcing any of its rulings or decisions; members failed to pay their dues, and by 1880 it had ground to a halt.

Brisbane continued to grow, as did Queensland. The Bank of New South Wales continued to send work and clients to Little & Browne. Other banks were established. Trade and commerce flourished, as did Little & Browne, and MacPherson & Miskin. By the mid-1870s Little and Browne were both men of considerable wealth, much derived from their flourishing practice, but also some inherited from their respective parents. In 1875, each bought substantial estates on the outskirts of Brisbane and set about building homes worthy of their position.

Browne bought five hectares at New Farm with a frontage of 140 metres to what is now Brunswick Street, and extending some 400 metres north-east up the hill to what is now called Teneriffe. He built a substantial home at the highest point, “Kingsholme”, with extensive views to the river in all directions.

Not to be out-done, Little bought five hectares at Albion with a frontage of 260 metres to Sandgate Road, and commissioned John Petrie (son of Andrew Petrie,

Brisbane's first free settler) to build a very substantial sandstone mansion called "Whytecliffe" for Little and his new second wife. This house was eventually acquired by the Christian Brothers and became the central building of St. Columban's College.

Both establishments boasted servants' wings and stables. Each of the two lawyers needed grooms to drive them to and from the office.

LITTLE, BROWNE & RÜTHNING; RÜTHNING & JENSEN – 1876 TO 1900

We have mentioned the arrival in Adelaide in 1850 of the eight year old Heinrich Ludwig Eduard RÜthning with his family. He had been born in Paderborn, Westphalia, Germany, on 7 March 1841, where his father owned a hat factory. The family decided to sell the factory and emigrate to a warmer climate, choosing Adelaide, as many German émigrés had already done.

H L E RÜthning attended St. Peters College, Adelaide, where he made friends with Samuel Way, later Sir Samuel Way, Chief Justice of South Australia, a friendship which extended throughout his life. The family moved to Melbourne where RÜthning became a bank clerk. After some years he accepted an invitation of employment as accountant to the old Bank of Queensland in Brisbane, but after a few years in that position he decided to study law and was articled in 1871, at the mature age of thirty, to Robert Little. He apparently applied himself assiduously, particularly to bank work, and soon made himself almost indispensable, leaving Little and Browne time to pursue their many outside interests.

About this time Browne purchased, for £15,000, a one-third interest in *The Brisbane Newspaper Company Limited*, publisher of *The Brisbane Courier*, as the former *Moreton Bay Courier* was by then called. A few years later Little acquired a one-sixth interest in the same company, so that the two of them, Little and Browne, virtually controlled the company.

Rüthning was admitted as a solicitor in 1876 but was not immediately offered a partnership, although it is clear that Little and Browne would have wished him to stay. Being thirty-five years of age and confident of his own training and ability, Rüthning decided to set up in practice on his own account in Toowoomba, where the Bank of New South Wales had opened a branch and would doubtless introduce him to many of its customers.

Within a year Little and Browne realised how much they needed Rüthning and invited him to return to Brisbane and become a partner with them, an invitation which Rüthning gladly accepted, well knowing that he would be expected to carry the brunt of the practice, Little being then fifty-five and Browne fifty-seven.

Thus was formed the firm of Little Browne & Rüthning, which continued to prosper.

In 1880 Little Browne & Rüthning acted for the Queensland Club in the purchase of its present-day site at the corner of George and Alice Streets, Brisbane. On being presented with their bill for seventy guineas, the Club committee resolved that such bill be considered three months thence !

By this time, 1880, Browne's health was deteriorating and he spent much of his time at his home. It says something for the skill, diligence and work-ethic of R uthning that, in November 1880, Little and his second wife, Eliza, sailed for England on what was to be an eighteen month stay in England and Ireland.

On Little's return in April 1882, he was pressed by the Attorney-General to play a more active role as Crown Solicitor, and indeed to give up private practice. Now that R uthning had the Bank and other clients of the firm in such competent hands, and as the railways resumption work could generally be handled by the law clerks, Little bowed to such pressure, although of course he continued to give advice on other questions of importance arising in the course of the practice.

Despite his heavy workload, R uthning found time to write a book on "The Bills of Exchange Act 1884" which drew not only on his erudition as a lawyer but also on his practical experience as a bank officer. This book remained the standard work on the subject for many years.

Little and Browne retired from the practice in 1885 and R uthning promptly adopted the name and style, "H L E R uthning Solicitor, Successor to Little Browne & R uthning". After all, he had been doing the bulk of the legal work for several years and enjoyed the high regard of the Bank and the firm's many other clients.

Browne died in 1886, Little in 1889.

After a few years R uthning took in a partner, Byram, as R uthning & Byram, but this seems not to have been a great success, and Byram faded from view.

Some years passed before R uthning tried another partner in the person of Magnus Jensen, who had been a Deputy Registrar of the Supreme Court, after practicing as a solicitor at Herberton. Like Browne before him, Jensen became the Hon. Magnus Jensen, MLC. Nomination to the Upper House seems to have followed often enough from partnership in an old established Brisbane law practice. Peter McGregor and D F Roberts achieved the like distinction, but it meant much absence from the office; more work for the other partners; and consequent friction. R uthning likewise developed outside interests, became a Trustee of the Agricultural Bank, and in about 1895 a director of the Brisbane Newspaper Co. Ltd., the latter until his death in 1916.

MACPHERSON, MISKIN & FEEZ – 1885 TO 1911

By 1885 another powerful firm had emerged in the form of MacPherson Miskin & Feez, all three of whom were members of the Queensland Club and prominent in social and community affairs. Little need be said of MacPherson and Miskin since they were not central to the firm's lineage, and by about 1900 had been relegated from the letterhead of "A F M Feez, Solicitor".

Adolph Friedrich Milford Feez, born in 1858, was the elder son of Albrecht Feez, and grandson of Mr Justice Milford of the New South Wales Supreme Court. Albrecht Feez is believed to have been of Polish extraction, but was born in Bavaria, before the family moved, first to Morocco, then to Argentina, and eventually settled in Rockhampton in about 1850. Albrecht has been described as "a wealthy merchant of Rockhampton", at least wealthy enough to send both Adolph and his younger brother Arthur to the King's School, Parramatta, where

both of them achieved much success, each being both dux and captain of the school (at a an interval of two years). Arthur went on to become a prominent King's Counsel first in Brisbane and then in Sydney; founding president of the Queensland Bar Association in 1903; best man at the wedding of Dame Nellie Melba; and the builder of Admiralty House, Kirribilli, Sydney.

Adolph Feez was slight of build, whilst Arthur was big and robust. Adolph trained first as a surveyor, and in 1878 to 1879 led a survey party commissioned by the Queensland Government, ostensibly to trace the path of Burke and Wills on their ill-fated journey to the Gulf of Carpentaria many years earlier, but in fact (so it is believed) to mark correctly the western boundary of Queensland, and thus bring within the true boundary several miles of country previously thought to lie within the Northern Territory of South Australia (as it then was).

Whilst recovering in Rockhampton from the rigours of the expedition, Feez was persuaded to pursue a profession in law and was articled to the family solicitor named Melbourne and then in Charters Towers to another solicitor, before being admitted in 1885. He worked briefly with the Cairns law firm now known as MacDonnells before gravitating to Brisbane to take up the offer of a partnership with MacPherson & Miskin as MacPherson Miskin & Feez. At about the time that Feez joined them, the firm moved to Lutwyche Chambers, just across Adelaide Street from Little's old cottage, and (whether by coincidence or not) also housing the chambers of the rising young barrister Arthur Feez.

Adolph Feez saw himself as a man of property and of wider interests than just the law, and he was a founder of the Queensland Lawn Tennis Association, and of the Queensland Polo Association. Whether these outside interests brought new

work to the firm is not known, but they would not necessarily have endeared Feez, the junior partner, to his seniors. Nor perhaps would the practice which he soon adopted of briefing out any litigious or difficult work to his brother along the verandah of Lutwyche Chambers; and acting as broker for the money-lending business that the Feez brothers began to build up, often in association with their father Albrecht. Not that there was anything particularly usurious about such lending, which was usually in amounts (and at interest rates) which seem modest today, of £300 or £500, yet which would in those days have represented the purchase price of a decent dwelling. The lending of money brought good conveyancing and security work to the practice; Peter MacPherson was, or had been a member of the Upper House; and Arthur Feez was the rising star of the bar, particularly after Sir Samuel Griffith became Premier, then Chief Justice of Queensland.

Whatever the reasons, the firm of MacPherson Miskin & Feez began to break up within five years of Feez's arrival, with first Miskin (1890) and then MacPherson (1900) retiring, leaving Feez with the bulk of the practice, including the firm's best client - the Union Bank of Australia - and many others, and with the library, the counsel's opinions books, deed registers and so on. By 1901 Feez was practising as "A F M Feez, Solicitor and Notary Public". He was free to pursue his wider interests without demur, including his appointment as honorary Vice-Consul for the Argentine Republic, a reminder of the family's sojourn there many years earlier.

RÜTHNING & JENSEN; FEEZ & BAYNES – 1900 TO 1911

As the new century arrived, on 1st January 1901, and with it Federation, the two practices likewise moved on, and typewriters and typists made their appearance. Interestingly, counsel's opinions now became very much longer than the two or three pages which they had occupied when hand-written! Now, instead of merely conclusions, it became the custom to canvass theories and thought processes.

The "Opinion Books" from both sides of the practice in the period 1876 to 1920 still survive in the firm's archives. These are great leather-bound books, one marked "Counsel's Opinions R & J" (Rüthning & Jensen) and the other marked simply "Counsel's Opinions", but obviously from the MacPherson & Feez side of the practice. When the opinion of counsel was obtained, the original hand-written opinion was usually handed to the client, after being laboriously copied by hand by one of the law clerks in the Opinion Book. On the Feez side, it appears that in about 1905 a box containing some 120 loose opinions extending back many years was located and transcribed in no particular order into yet another Opinion Book.

These Opinion Books give a remarkable picture of the life and times of the period; of wills from forty years earlier being interpreted; of vast pastoral holdings being amalgamated or distributed; of the banking crisis of 1893 and its aftermath; of loss and damage sustained in the floods of 1893; of concerns about forthcoming Federation; of the incorporation of tramway companies (at first horse-drawn, then electric) and hopeful mining companies and collieries; and of shipping and commerce. These opinions are the obverse side of the impression which one can

derive from reading the printed law reports of the period: these are the cases which often did not go to court.

The same names appear as in the reported cases: Griffith, Patrick Real, Stumm, Chubb, O'Sullivan, Byrnes, Lilley, Shand, Power, Lukin and the rising young star, Arthur Feez. Far and away the most frequently sought opinion between 1876 and 1892 was that of Samuel Griffith, of Town Hall Chambers, Queen Street, Brisbane. Some eighty of his opinions survive in these Opinion Books. A collection has been transcribed, edited to protect client confidentiality, and supplied to Griffith University.

The Opinion Books reveal the depth and strength of both sides of the practice. Feez and his partners had taken opinions on behalf of the following parties (whether all of them were regular clients is not now known):

The Union Bank of Australia Ltd.
The Bank of Australasia Ltd.
The Commercial Banking Co. of Sydney Ltd.
The Commercial Bank of Australia Ltd.
The Australian Joint Stock Bank Ltd.
The Royal Bank of Queensland Ltd.
The Australian Union Steam Navigation Co. Ltd.
Singer Manufacturing Co. (USA)
The Municipality of Brisbane
The Caboolture Divisional Board
South Australian Land Mortgage & Agency Co. Ltd.
Kilkivan Mines Ltd.

Ann St. Presbyterian Church
The Brisbane Tramway Co. Ltd.

The R uthning & Jensen side much parallels that of Feez, opinions having been taken on behalf of an even more “blue chip” list of clients:

Bank of New South Wales
Brisbane Newspaper Company Limited
Brisbane Permanent Building and Investment Society
The Municipality of South Brisbane
The City Mutual Life Assurance Society
The Bank of Adelaide
The Mutual Life Association of Australasia
The North British Association Co. Ltd.
The Queensland Investment and Land Mortgage Co. Ltd.
The Manchester Unity Independent Order of Oddfellows
The United Pastoralists’ Association
The Wienholt Estates Company of Australia Ltd.
The Australian Joint Stock Bank Ltd.
Dalgety & Company Ltd.
Bowen Meat Export and Agency Ltd.
Mossman Central Mill Co. Ltd.

One of the highlights of law practice in Brisbane in the first decade of the new century was the leading case of *Anning v. Anning* which commenced in the Supreme Court of New South Wales in 1899 and was raised again in the Supreme Court of Queensland in 1906, before going on to the High Court of Australia in

1907. In the Supreme Court of Queensland, Arthur Feez appeared for the appellant, instructed by A F M Feez, whilst Percy Hart appeared for the respondent, instructed by R uthning [still with the *umlaut*] & Jensen.

In the High Court the next year, Feez again appeared for the appellant, now instructed by Feez & Baynes, whilst Hart again appeared for the respondent, instructed by Ruthning & Jensen (this time without the *umlaut*). It may well be the case that the *umlaut* was dropped at about this time, as a token gesture towards Anglicization, at a time when anti-German feelings ran high in the lead-up to the First World War. By a curious quirk of fate, the great-nephew of the William Anning, about whose estate *Anning v. Anning* turned, was admitted as a partner in the firm nearly sixty years later.

Arthur Baynes joined Adolph Feez in 1905, having been admitted as a solicitor some eight years earlier. Baynes was just the sort of solid hard-working backroom partner that Feez sought, who would look after the day-to-day practice and thus allow Feez to go about his wider interests in tennis, polo and money-lending. At about this time, Feez acquired a country estate at Yeronga and built an imposing residence in the street which still bears his name.

FEEZ, RUTHNING & BAYNES – 1911 TO 1927

Ruthning & Jensen continued as such until the latter part of 1911, when Jensen was under pressure to admit Ruthning's son Adalbert to partnership, but was resisting such pressure because he, Jensen, could see that he might soon realise his long-held ambition to be senior partner. Adalbert Friedrich Theodor Ruthning was born in Brisbane 1874 whilst his father H L E Ruthning had been articled to Robert Little. He was educated at the Brisbane Grammar School, and after matriculating in 1892 served articles of clerkship with his father before being admitted as a solicitor on 5 December 1899. He worked in the practice as an employed solicitor for the next twelve years, and by 1911, with his father due to retire, he felt entitled to become a partner, a view which H L E Ruthning strongly endorsed. Jensen seems to have felt sufficiently strongly about the matter to threaten to leave, hoping, no doubt, to take a significant part of the practice with him.

At almost exactly the same time, Adolph Feez had been talking to his brother Arthur Feez, now a KC, about possible forward-looking moves in law practice in Brisbane, and brother Arthur (who enjoyed good relations and much mutual respect with the Ruthnings) pointed out what a good fit would be a merger of the firms. Besides which (doubtless they thought), with all things German being then increasingly unpopular, there would be a good opportunity for Adolph to aspire to seniority, certainly over young Adalbert. With a merger in view, it is very probable that Arthur Feez acted as intermediary, sounding out, first HLE Ruthning, then aged seventy. When Arthur Feez learned that there was discord within Ruthning & Jensen; that H L E Ruthning was contemplating retirement; that Jensen had threatened to leave; and that young Bert Ruthning would

probably be the key player: Arthur advised Adolph that the way forward was clear, and a meeting was arranged.

Adolph Feez was, at the age of 53, at the peak of his redoubtable intellectual and social powers, whilst the elder Ruthning was in his declining years. Although determined and ambitious, Feez could be charming and persuasive, and no doubt was so at this important meeting, or series of meetings: with the result that a merger was agreed upon. Jensen would be “let go”; Bert Ruthning would be a partner in the merged firm, senior to Baynes; H L E Ruthning would be free to retire; and Feez would, of course, be senior partner.

A fine dinner was held at Feez’s Club – the Queensland Club – to mark this most important occasion, inviting many of the most important clients from both sides of the practice and establishing Feez in his new-found dignity.

The Ruthnings with their staff and papers moved from their former premises in Queen Street to join Feez in Lutwyche Chambers, which had an imposing façade to Adelaide Street and extended through to Burnett Lane at the rear, where a verandah and exterior staircase gave access to other tenants, including several members of the bar, particularly Arthur Feez. The Adelaide Street frontage was almost directly opposite the cottage occupied by Little some sixty-six years earlier. In 1925 the firm’s managing law clerk overlooked exercising an option for renewal at Lutwyche Chambers, with the result that the firm moved to the newly completed T & G Building at the north-east corner of Queen and Albert Streets, Brisbane, taking the eastern half of the 6th floor (out of eight), where it remained until 1962.

Jensen may well have hoped to take a significant part of the practice with him but this does not appear to have happened. Certainly the library, Opinion Books, and Deed Registers remained with Feez Ruthning & Baynes, and Jensen seems to have taken a few months to find himself a suitable arrangement, in the form of a partnership in the rising young firm of Morris & Fletcher, which thus became Morris Fletcher & Jensen, where Jensen survived but a few years before his death in 1915.

H L E Ruthning was pleased to see his son, Bert, thus established in a strong merged firm, and to retire gracefully to his home “*Walderon*”, South Brisbane, and his seaside house at Gordon Parade, Manly, where he died in 1916.

The Great War of 1914 to 1918, and the anti-German feeling which it engendered, had a serious effect on the practice, as quite a number of private and corporate clients decided to take their work to firms with more English sounding names, notwithstanding that both the Feez and Ruthning families had been in Australia for more than half a century. Many of such former clients stayed away after the war had ended.

FEEZ, RUTHNING & CO. – 1925 TO 1946

In 1920 Wilfred Prosser Rowland entered into Articles of Clerkship with Adolph Feez. “Bill” Rowland had been born in Winton, Western Queensland, in 1904 and had been educated at St. Joseph’s College, Nudgee, although not of the Roman Catholic faith. Even as an articled clerk he had shown himself quick to learn, diligent and with a ready grip of legal principle. “Jock” Robertson (later of the firm of McCullough & Robertson) was articled to Ruthning at much the same time, and these two young men soon assumed a substantial share of the burden of practice. Feez began to take a more leisurely role as senior partner, whilst the articled clerks reported to A F M Ruthning on bank and commercial work; to Baynes on conveyancing and estate work; and to Feez on the occasional litigation which came the firm’s way.

Baynes retired in 1923 and in 1925 Rowland, newly admitted as a solicitor, took his place; but only as a salaried partner and with an increasing workload.

In 1927 the name of the firm was changed from Feez Ruthning & Baynes to Feez Ruthning & Co., which latter name continued until 1986 when the “& Co.” was dropped.

Rowland quickly emerged as the powerhouse of the firm, pacifying clients who sometimes became disenchanted with the imperiousness of Feez.

Both Feez and Ruthning developed a liking for large and powerful motor cars, Ruthning driving in early and leaving late for his home at Albion; Feez at more

salubrious hours from Yeronga, in a Daimler Benz of quite impressive proportions.

Feez used to take long weekends at his polo horse stud near Clear Water, South of Gatton, whilst Ruthning spent part of his time as a director of the R uthning Works Limited at Woolloongabba run by his uncle, Julius, the manufacturer of the famous “JR” wood-burning stove then used in nearly every country home in Queensland. The R uthning Works long remained a valued client of the firm, eventually being merged into United Metal Industries Ltd and finally being taken over by Malleys Ltd, then Email Limited.

The depression of 1929 onwards caused most legal work to dry up, yet Rowland remained quite busy, for example with his involvement on behalf of the Bank of New South Wales in the long-running Mungana Royal Commission into the dealings of former Premiers E.G. Theodore and W. McCormack with the Mungana Mine in North Queensland, and their alleged trafficking and profiteering in the sale of the mine to the State. Rowland’s brief was at first a watching one to protect the Bank’s interests in the event of its being subpoenaed to produce its confidential records. When the commission found Theodore and McCormack to have been guilty of impropriety, the two went to the Supreme Court and themselves requested the bank documents and records to be produced, and in the result the Court overturned the findings of the Royal Commission and Theodore and McCormack were fully exonerated.

Bill Rowland’s memoirs, dictated after his retirement as a partner in 1972 and before his retirement as a consultant in 1980, paint a colourful picture of litigation in his forty-five years of practice, thirty of them as senior partner of Feez

Ruthning, but since many of the companies and personalities are still extant, we do not here publish matters which ought to remain confidential within the firm.

In 1934 Feez asked Rowland to recommend a new junior partner to help with the workload of the firm, suggesting that the depression was not so severe in the firm as elsewhere in the community, and in the result Vincent David McCarthy was invited to join; and did so.

As seems to have happened time and again, the admission of a new partner concentrating on securities work freed Rowland up for more outside activities, in his case as a member of the Council of the Queensland Law Society Incorporated and subsequently its Vice-President and in 1938/9 its President. In this capacity Rowland became well-known in Melbourne and Sydney, an advantage which he was able to exploit in later years, to the vast benefit of the firm.

When in 1939 war again engulfed the world, Rowland and McCarthy with one law clerk, Green, conducted not only the practice of Feez Ruthning but also that of Kinsey Bennett & Gill. Most of the bar answered the call to arms, and there were only two barristers (B Fahey and T Lehane) left in Brisbane to conduct what limited litigation remained to be dealt with. Rowland had two secretaries start work at 7.00am daily, to whom he dictated for three hours without pausing, before hastening to court for the rest of the day and attending to the business of the Civil Defence Corp in the evenings. In 1942, Feez and Ruthning retired from the firm. Feez died within a year.

After an absence of six months, Ruthning returned to the firm to consult, particularly on securities matters, which had long been his *forte*, but his health was failing, and he died in 1952.

When the war ended, Victor Pontifex Dean returned from active service, qualified as a solicitor, and in 1947 joined the firm as junior partner, eventually taking over the bank work from McCarthy.

We had intended to end the present history at 1946, but the next few years saw the foundations of the modern firm, and it will take but a page for some brief notes which may assist a later scribe.

McCarthy retired from the firm in 1953. Graeme Oriel Morris joined in 1954 and Peter Ronald Rowland (son of W P Rowland) in 1956. Ernest Paul Stevens joined in 1960, as did Eric Tunbridge Anning and Peter William Bray in 1964. Dean retired at the end of 1966 to be replaced for a space of five years by Duncan Edward Ian Thompson. Howard Leigh Stack joined in 1968; Peter John Short in 1970, as did another twenty or more over the next fifteen years.

Thus the torch set alight by Little in 1846 was carried through many hands down the firm's first one hundred years. That torch kindled the great expansion in the firm's practice in the years following the second world war, as the resource boom overtook Queensland and changed a largely rural economy into a bustling commercial one, and Brisbane into a busy financial centre. Little's successors 150 years on remain, like him, active members of the community, as well as forward-looking businessmen and women.

EPILOGUE

The foregoing pages were written by Graeme Morris in 1995 during his time as a consultant, and without any inkling on his part of the merger which occurred within a few months thereafter, whereby Feez Ruthning became part of Allens Arthur Robinson.

It remains only to record a few further items of relevance to the old firm. Paul Stevens retired in 1985, Peter Rowland and Peter Bray in 1986, and Eric Anning in 1993. From 1970, the firm had a rule that partners must retire by age 65. Morris retired in 1994 (but remained as a consultant until 1996, his 65th birthday). No other partner has yet reached the mandatory retiring age.

It is worth pointing out that Allens Arthur Robinson is descended from the very same George Wigram Allen who had in 1846 encouraged Robert Little to hang his shingle in the Moreton Bay district of what was then New South Wales.

Graeme O. Morris
“Gleavesley”, Hamilton
August 2004

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