

# Insolvency and liquidation records

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## CAUSES OF INSOLVENCY.

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Depression of Trade. Inability to collect book debts  
High rates of interest - paid for money borrowed Losses  
on flood of 1887. Heavy expenses incidental to the  
business. Falling off of business owing to Anti Chinese  
feeling since May 1888.

Losses in Stanthorpe business owing to mismanage-  
ment by managers.

DR1918 - Document showing causes of insolvency of Kwong Nam Tai, Chinese importing company in Brisbane City and Stanthorpe, 24 October 1889

Research Guide to insolvency and liquidation records at Queensland State Archives

Queensland State Archives (QSA) is the official repository for Queensland Government records selected for permanent retention because of their continuing value. The archived public records are from state government departments, state courts, local government authorities and statutory authorities. The records are in our facility at [Runcorn, Brisbane](#), and open records are available for viewing in the Reading Room, free-of-charge.

Queensland State Archives holds insolvency and liquidation records. Insolvency is a financial condition experienced by an individual or business entity when their liabilities exceed their assets and debt obligations are unable to be met. Liquidation refers to the process by which a company (or part of a company) is brought to an end, and the assets and property of the company are redistributed. Liquidation can also be referred to as winding-up or dissolution. Legally declared insolvency is called bankruptcy. When a person, business or partnership with unlimited liability is unable to pay debts as they become due, the debtor or the creditors may petition the Supreme Court to make arrangements for the settlement of debts. For more information about insolvencies and liquidations, refer to the [Australian Securities & Investments Commission webpage](#) about regulatory resources.

Insolvency records date approximately from the separation of the Colony of Queensland from New South Wales in 1859. The *Moreton Bay Supreme Court Act 1857* included the appointment of an official Assignee of Insolvent Estates. Liquidation records date from the *Insolvency Act 1874*. In 1928, responsibility for bankruptcy matters was transferred from the state government to the federal government. Initially, records of all liquidations and insolvencies were filed in the Brisbane Registry of the Supreme Court. However, with the establishment of separate Supreme Court Districts and registries, files were registered in the relevant district. The years when the separate Supreme Court registries were established are Northern District, Bowen in 1875, transferred to Townsville in 1889; Central District, Rockhampton in 1896; and, Southern District, Brisbane in 1857.

When searching for information on persons unable to pay their debts it may be necessary to check both the insolvency and liquidation records. Usually the insolvency and liquidation files include the petition for the insolvency or liquidation, the debtor's statement of affairs, lists of creditors and proof of amounts owed, minutes and resolutions of meetings of creditors, appointments of Trustees, bills of costs, affidavits of creditors and in some cases a certificate of discharge of the debtor.

The main finding aid for records held at QSA is the [Queensland State Archives' online catalogue](#) (known as ArchivesSearch).

The following citation abbreviations are used throughout our catalogue:

ITM	QSA Item (describes the item)
PR	Physical Representation (generally the original or microfilm copy)
DR	Digital Representation (for a digital image)
S	QSA Series ID (for a series of records)
A	Agency ID (for the creating or responsible agency).

**Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander readers are advised that our catalogue contains images, names and voices of people who have died.**

## Supreme Court Records

### Supreme Court, Southern District, Brisbane

#### **Insolvency Registers**

Circa 1/1/1866–31/12/1928

[S6334](#)

These registers are used to find the insolvency files, [S15499](#). Details include number of file, name of insolvent, residence, and occupation of insolvent, and the official trustee.

#### **Insolvency files**

1/1/1857–31/12/1928

[S15499](#)

To find insolvent estate files, search the insolvency registers, [S6334](#).

#### **Indexes to liquidation files**

Circa 1/1/1874–31/12/1928

[S15500](#)

These indexes are used to find the liquidation files, [S15501](#)

#### **Liquidation Files**

Circa 1/1/1874–31/12/1928

[S15501](#)

To find liquidation files, search the indexes to liquidation files, [S15500](#).

### Supreme Court, Central District, Rockhampton

#### **Insolvency registers**

Circa 1/1/1896–31/12/1928

[S7278](#)

These registers are used to find the insolvency files, [S7307](#). Insolvency registers may include the year of case, name of insolvent, residence (occupation), petitioning creditor, attorney, date of adjudication, official trustee, date of filing petition, close of insolvency.

Rockhampton files may also be listed in the following Supreme Court, Brisbane insolvency registers, [S6334](#).

#### **Insolvency files**

Circa 1/1/1879–31/12/1928

[S7307](#)

To find the insolvency files, search the insolvency registers, [S7278](#). Insolvency files may include petitions, adjudications, proofs of debt, minutes of meetings, reports.

### **Liquidation Register**

Circa 1/1/1896–31/12/1927

[S7280](#)

This series is used to find the liquidation files, [S7308](#). Rockhampton files may also be listed in the Supreme Court, Brisbane indexes to liquidation files, [S15500](#).

### **Liquidation files**

Circa 1/1/1896–31/12/1927

[S7308](#)

To find liquidation files, search the liquidation registers, [S7280](#). Files may include petition, receivers report, proofs of debt, creditors, minutes, resolutions, certificates of appointment of trustee, and taxation, bill of costs.

## Supreme Court, Northern District, Townsville

### **Registers of Insolvencies**

4/1/1892–27/6/1928

[S9302](#)

These registers are used to find the insolvency files, [S16112](#). Townsville files may be listed in the Supreme Court, Brisbane insolvency registers, [S6334](#).

### **Insolvency files**

Circa 1/1/1879–31/12/1928

[S16112](#)

To find insolvency files, search the registers of insolvencies, [S9302](#).

### **Indexes to liquidation files**

Circa 1/1/1874–31/12/1928

[S15500](#)

These indexes are used to find the liquidation files, [S16108](#). Townsville files may be listed in the Supreme Court, Brisbane indexes to liquidations, [S15500](#).

### **Liquidation files**

Circa 1/1/1876–31/12/1928

[S16108](#)

To find liquidation files, search the indexes to liquidation files, [S15500](#).

### Public Curator Records

#### Public Curator, Brisbane

##### **Insolvency registers**

15/4/1857–31/10/1928

[S9589](#)

These registers are used to find details about insolvents, when a file is not found in [ArchivesSearch](#).

##### **Insolvency files**

15/4/1857–24/10/1969

[S15200](#)

Items in this series are searchable by the name of the insolvent in [ArchivesSearch](#).

##### **Audit insolvency files**

27/5/1866–19/4/1966

[S15201](#)

To find files in this series, search the name of the insolvent in [ArchivesSearch](#).

##### **Audit liquidation index**

1/1/1894–31/12/1928

[S9619](#)

This index is used to find files in [S15202](#).

##### **Audit liquidation files**

1/4/1894–31/10/1928

[S15202](#)

To find audit liquidation files, search the audit liquidation index, [S9619](#).

#### Public Curator, Rockhampton

##### **Register of liquidation returns**

28/4/1898–16/11/1926

[S9839](#)

This register may include name, place and occupation of the estate, date the petition was filed, and the names of the trustee and the judge.

### Public Curator, Townsville

#### **Insolvency files**

Circa 1/1/1876–31/12/1928

[S17800](#)

These files relate to legal proceedings in insolvency for individuals, and may include letters from and to creditors, and statements of the insolvent's assets.

### Other sources of information

- An index titled *Intestacies, Insolvencies, Wills 1859–1900* created by the Queensland Family History Society is available on the QSA Reading Room computers.
- Notices of insolvencies and liquidations were published in the *Queensland Government Gazette* (QGG). The full text of the QGG from 1859 to 1900 are searchable as PDF files in [Text Queensland](#).
- For the winding-up of companies, refer to the [Research Guide to Company records](#).
- Search [ArchivesSearch](#) for references to insolvency using agencies and series such as Public Curator Office, Judges' Notebooks (Supreme Court), Official Trustee in Insolvency, Accountant in Insolvency, District Receiver in Insolvency, Commissioner in Insolvency Office, District Receiver in Insolvency, Insolvency, Intestacy and Insanity Office.

### Need more information?

Check our online catalogue [ArchivesSearch](#).  
Phone us on (07) 3037 6777 or you can [email](#) an archivist.