

Entries for the Croker Prize for Biography in 2021

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CROKER PRIZE FOR BIOGRAPHY 2021

2101 The Curious Case of Raymond Moulton O'Brien

by Dean O'Brien

The curious case of Raymond Moulton O'Brien



Raymond Moulton O'Brien, circa 1930.
Photograph courtesy of Caro Thistlethwait

The most unexpected find during my research was discovering that my first cousin, two times removed, thought that he was a direct descendant of Brian Boru, the King of Ireland. Not only did he believe this, he went to extraordinary lengths to convince the world that it was true.

Raymond was born on the 29th of December 1905 (1) in London, England. His parents were Marian Moulton and Dudley O'Brien. They were married in August 1905 at Saint Matthew's Church in Kensington, London (2). Marian was four months pregnant as she walked down the aisle although with the aid of a clever dressmaker, nobody noticed. It wasn't long before they realised that they were spectacularly unsuited to each other for they were divorced within five years. In December 1911 Marian married the dashing Guy Athol Wilson-Weston of the Indian army, in Bombay (3). He was Lieutenant Governor of Punjab Province when he married Marian (4) and they lived in the Governor's House in Lahore, a sprawling mansion with arched colonnades. This suited Marian perfectly and the little Raymond loved to be fussed over by their Punjabi au-pair and their many servants. Guy and Marian were divorced a few years later. At the time Raymond believed Guy to be his true father. A fact he was to discover was a lie, with dire consequences.

It was in New York that Raymond met Vassilia Guliari Yentis, better known as Queenie. They married in March 1936 in New Jersey (5). The newly weds must have spent the next five months feeding each other's delusions of grandeur because on the 27th of September, the first of many articles in the American press was released, with headlines such as: *'A New Little Lord Fauntleroy Who Drove an Oil Truck! The British Forced the Yankee's Son Whose Parentage Was in Doubt, to Discover He Was an Earl and a Baron'* (6). In *Time Magazine*, they published: *'Because the identity of his father was long kept secret from him, not until four years ago did Raymond Moulton O'Brien, British-born Manhattan oilman, suspect he might be the Right Honourable the Earl of Thomond of County Clare, Ireland. Son of his mother's first husband instead of her second, as she had lead him to believe, he first learned of his claim to nobility when she was unable to provide him with a proper birth certificate, admitted that she had deceived him. Because no O'Brien has claimed the peerage of Thomond since 1774, the title had become extinct. Last week, though in London representatives of the British Crown denied resurrecting the title, oilman O'Brien proudly exhibited elaborately stamped documents which, he announced, entitled him and his wife to make their bow before King Edward VIII at his Coronation next May.'* (7)

Raymond tried to get his title recognised by the Irish authorities after the Mexican court issued a decree stating that he was the 'Earl of Thomond'. This was also the year that he employed the services of a well respected law firm in Dublin, Thos. Crozier & Son, who sent a letter and document to the Secretary of the Department of External Affairs in support of his claim to the peerage in Ireland. Meanwhile, Raymond wrote to the president of the Executive asking permission to carry the titles, explaining that, *'the Decree which I hold adjudicating to me the Conveyance of title to the Titles EARL of THOMOND and BARON IBRACKEN have been legalised by the governments of Germany, Mexico, France and the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg'*. The authorities responded that only an Act of Parliament could facilitate his request and this was not going to happen. However when he contacted the Office of Arms they told him that, *'there (was) nothing in law to prevent a man assuming and bearing any name he (wished) whether that name be in the form of a title or otherwise, provided that in doing so he (did) not infringe the rights of another individual'*. (8)

Raymond managed to get an article published in one of Belgium's leading newspapers, the *Nation Belge*, which translated as, *'For nature lovers, do you know the Principality of Thomond?'* Informing readers that the principality was set up in 1948 and was recognised by many countries. The small state was a haven for nature lovers and hunters. Game was plentiful and there were, *'hundreds of old castles, abbeys and monasteries, all built by the O'Briens'*. Raymond enlisted the help of the illustrious Russian aristocrat, Prince Nicolas Vladimirovich Galitzine who had been appointed head of the Munster College of Arms. Galitzine's world would be in for a rude awakening and it remains a mystery how Raymond was able to manipulate a serious newspaper like the *Nation Belge* and someone like Galitzine (9).

A living cousin, Caro Thistlethwaite recalls a childhood experience when she was about 11 years old. She was rummaging through a box of letters when she found a typewritten sheet of paper, dated 1955. It was titled:

'MEMBERS OF THE IRISH ROYAL FAMILY IN LINE OF SUCCESSION TO THE THRONE OF IRELAND'. Raymond was number one on the list followed by his two children. Caro noticed her own name as number 21 in line to the throne (my grandfather, Charles O'Brien and issue were 9th in line). She was very excited and ran downstairs with her 'proof' of royal lineage. She remembers her parents rolling their eyes and telling her about uncle Raymond's lifelong delusion.

Raymond was in serious trouble when he issued his own set of stamps in 1961 (10). He wrote to the Thistlethwaites in 1974, forbidding them to have any communications with his 26 year old son, Turlogh, *'by design or by accident'* on his short visit to London. Raymond died on the 31st of March 1977 in Saint John of Gods, Stillorgan Castle, an asylum near Dublin, when he was 72 years old (11).

It may have been an asylum but he was finally living in a castle!

References

- (1) Essex, England, Church of England Births and Baptisms, 1813-1918
- (2) Church of England Marriages and Banns, 1754-1921
- (3) India, Select Marriages, 1792-1948
- (4) UK, Registers of Employees of the East India Company and the India Office, 1746-1939
- (5) New Jersey, Marriage Index, 1901-2016
- (6) *The Detroit Free Press*, September 27, 1936
- (7) *Time Magazine* October 12, 1936
- (8-9) *The Principality of Thomond and His Royal Highness Raymond Moulton Seaghan O'Brien, 1936-1963; Ireland's greatest diplomatic farce.* Dr. Jermone aan de Weil 2007.
- (10) *The Irish Times* June 28, 1962
- (11) <https://neiljeffares.wordpress.com>

CROKER PRIZE FOR BIOGRAPHY 2021

2102 Thank You George

by Marianne Young



Spencer Family Grave
Bendigo Cemetery

On a hot summer's day in 2014, in search of my father's ancestral family grave, I traced the steps of thousands of mourners and visitors who had tread the parched cracked earth of Bendigo (Back Creek) Cemetery since 1858 to locate Grave MON/B5/4732ⁱ. As I stood beside what was once an ornate place of rest, now with its chocolate coloured rusted railings, collapsing floor and huge granite headstone, it was the last three lines of the fading inscription that caught my attention.

GEORGE SPENCER

DIED July 3rd 1873

Aged 22 years

As a family historian, I have always had what some people may refer to as a morbid fascination with causes of death, inquests, cemeteries and obituaries. It's not the common childhood diseases, childbirth fatalities, war or natural demises, but those unusual prime of life deaths. George sparked my curiosity as if he was calling me from the grave "*come find me — I have a story you would never expect*".

I began with George's death certificate. My first surprise was that as the eldest son he had not followed in his father's and grandfather's rather bloody occupation as a butcher, but had chosen the more sedate trade of "grocer" — perhaps an indication of a gentle character. The most shocking of all was the cause of death column filled with extensive descriptive text. "*Suicide by hanging himself to a tree whilst of unsound mind caused by severe trouble coming upon his family. Verdict of Inquest held by D.B. Pounds Coroner on 7th July 1873.*"ⁱⁱ Suicide — what a revelation. But what was the event within the family so traumatic as to be an influencing factor in the death of my great-great uncle? It turns out George's story was filled with tragedy, malicious threat, paedophilia, social stigma and public abhorrence.

The Inquest into George's death began to unravel the "*severe trouble*" described on his death certificate. The primary family witness at the Inquest, Richard Spencer my two times great grandfather and head of the household testified —

*"But for some days he seemed in low spirits, and when he came home at nights he did not as usual take up his violin, especially since our family affliction — He was concerned about young Rae [sic] telling my wife he would shoot me if I prosecuted his father ... he felt our trouble referred to very acutely"*ⁱⁱⁱ

It was the newspapers, most especially the Bendigo Advertiser, that produced the most dramatic and heart-breaking depiction of my family's "*trouble*" —

SHOCKING SUICIDE

“The neighbourhood of Back Creek was thrown into a state of great gloom yesterday afternoon when it became known that a young man named George Spencer, aged 21, a brother of the two children whom the gunsmith Rea is alleged to have criminally assaulted, had committed suicide by hanging himself from a tree, near the Grassy Flat reservoir.”^{iv}

The family trouble had now extended beyond threats of violence to criminal assault (child molestation). Further investigation uncovered even more sadness when a timeline showed that while George remained hanging at his place of death his parents Richard and Jane and sisters Elizabeth and Margaret appeared in the police court to present the case against Thomas Rea. The Argus newspaper describes the scene —

“A shocking case ... came before the Sandhurst City Bench on Friday morning, when Thomas Rea, who has for many years carried on an extensive business as a gunsmith in Howard place, was charged with having criminally assaulted two little girls under 12 years of age, named Elizabeth and Margaret Spencer ... The prisoner is an old man said to be fully 70 years of age, having children and grand-children ... Rea admitted having tampered with the girls, but said it was not so serious as they had represented.”^v

On the 9th July, George was laid to rest. Despite the Ovens and Murray River Advertiser describing the suicide as a consequence *“of the disgrace brought upon his family,”* the large attendance at the young man’s funeral was testimony to *“the respect and sympathy with the bereaved mother and father.”^{vi}*

Multiple court appearances of both Rea senior and junior with obligatory testimony from the two young girls and their parents filled the newspapers over the following days. The cruel and dastardly treatment of the victims by the court and it’s officers is reported in The Australasian

“The man Thomas Rea was charged ... having committed a capital assault on the person of Elizabeth Spencer a girl under 12 years of age but the case for the prosecution broke down owing to the inability of the police of the Bench to induce the girl to complete her evidence ... she could not be prevailed upon to proceed and when asked why she did not answer the questions put to her, she burst into tears. The Bench spent full three quarters of an hour in trying to elicit the facts but eventually gave up the task as hopeless.”^{vii}

The case against Thomas Rea continued and testimony by my two time's great grandmother Jane uncovered Rea's history of child abuse revealed by Rea's own daughter-in-law who stated during a conversation that "*he had been mixed up with a similar affair in Geelong.*"^{viii}

On 22 July 1873, Thomas Rea was sentenced to two years for the assault on Margaret Spencer and 20 months for the assault on Elizabeth Spencer, and even as Rea was awaiting transportation to Pentridge Gaol,^{ix} the Bendigo Advertiser editor expressed his outrage at the magistrate's leniency citing unequal sentences in cases against children.^x

The suffering caused by this event was shared across the Spencer family but it was George, described as "*a quiet reflective character*"^{xi} who paid the ultimate price for Rea's crimes. His anguish, fear for his parents' lives and perhaps the worst, guilt that he was unable to protect his sisters from an evil predator, was what led to his tragic death. Thanks to George, I found an unexpected story that needed to be told.

ⁱ Remembrance Parks Victoria www.rpcv.com.au/deceased-search/deceased/?=id95974

ⁱⁱ Vic BDM Reg. No. 1873/8135

ⁱⁱⁱ PROV Vic. Inquest Deposition File VPRS 24/P0 Unit 291 Item 1873/594

^{iv} Bendigo Advertiser 7 July 1873 Pg.2 www.trove.nla.gov.au

^v Argus 5 July 1873 Pg.5 www.trove.nla.gov.au

^{vi} Ovens & Murray River Advertiser 14 July Pg2 www.trove.nla.gov.au

^{vii} Australasian 19 July 1873 Pg.23 www.trove.nla.gov.au

^{viii} Bendigo Advertiser 5 July 1873 Pg.2 www.trove.nla.gov.au

^{ix} PROV VPRS 515 P0001 Item 18 Vol. 18 Prisoner No 11131

^x Bendigo Advertiser 25 July 1873 Pg.2 www.trove.nla.gov.au

^{xi} PROV Vic Inquest Deposition File VPRS24/P0 Unit 291 Item 1873/594

CROKER PRIZE FOR BIOGRAPHY 2021

2103 Why Did Stefano Haskitt Change his Name to John Stanton?

By Lynette Stanton

Why did Stefano Haskitt change his name to John Stanton

I came across the following names while I was researching my convict ancestor: STEFANO HASKITT, STEFANA HASKITT, STEPHANO POWSEITCH, STEFANO HASKETT, STEPHANE HASKETT, STEPHANO HASKETT, STEPHAN HASKITT, STEPHENS HASKETT, STEPHANO HASKITT, STEPHEN HESKETH, JOHN STANTON, JOHN POSICK, JNO POSECH, STEFANO PAUSICCIO, STEFANO POWZZEITIC

Stefano is my 4th great grandfather on my paternal side. From what I have been able to gather in my researching of him he had many aliases, maybe some of the names had been transcribed wrong. His birth name may have been Stefano Haskitt who was born in Palermo, Italy in 1782. It is rumoured that he was a Sicilian fisherman who was captured by the British and this is how he came to be in England.

I found 2 records on ancestry library about his trial: 1. Stefano Haskett (Stephano Powseitch) sentence was other. ¹ 2. Stephano Powseitch ([Stefano Haskett) sentence was recorded as death. The location of the trials was Middlesex September 1812. ² On 11th July 1812 he stole a watch, chain, two seals and a waistcoat from Savery George who lived in the same dwelling house of Antonio Corsetto. Stefano then sold the property to Johanna Paredo. ³ The life sentence meant transportation. While waiting to be transported to Botany Bay, Stefano Hasket was transferred to the *Retribution* a hulk moored in Woolwich on 6th January 1813. ⁴ He came to Australia on the ship *Earl Spencer* setting sail in May 1813 and arriving in Port Jackson in October 1813. ⁵ *Earl Spencer* was built in 1803 in London - Thames, 672 ton,

¹ https://search.ancestrylibrary.com.au/cgi-bin/sse.dll?_phsrc=Awg45&_phstart=successSource&usePUBJs=true&indiv=1&dbid=1590&gsfn=stefano&gsln=haskitt&cp=0&gskw=convict&msydy=1813&msrdy=1812&_F0004ABB=Transportation&_F0004B77=1812&new=1&rank=1&uidh=2yd&redir=false&msT=1&gss=angs-d&pcat=36&fh=1&h=961028&recoff=&ml_rpos=2&queryId=2ce1ff8cbf29ff086d4eae2508a6a56a

² https://search.ancestrylibrary.com.au/cgi-bin/sse.dll?_phsrc=Awg45&_phstart=successSource&usePUBJs=true&indiv=1&dbid=1590&gsfn=stefano&gsln=haskitt&cp=0&gskw=convict&msydy=1813&msrdy=1812&_F0004ABB=Transportation&_F0004B77=1812&new=1&rank=1&uidh=2yd&redir=false&msT=1&gss=angs-d&pcat=36&fh=0&h=961405&recoff=&ml_rpos=1&queryId=2ce1ff8cbf29ff086d4eae2508a6a56a

³ <https://www.oldbaileyonline.org/browse.jsp?name=18120916>

⁴ https://search.ancestrylibrary.com.au/cgi-bin/sse.dll?_phsrc=Awg48&_phstart=successSource&usePUBJs=true&indiv=1&dbid=1989&gsfn=stefano&gsln=hasket&cp=0&msbdy=1782&_81004261_date=1812&new=1&rank=1&uidh=2yd&redir=false&msT=1&gss=angs-d&pcat=36&fh=0&h=145430&recoff=&ml_rpos=1&queryId=15e04396151068220ad87c571a772edb

⁵ *The Digital Panopticon* Stefano Haskitt, British Transportation Registers, May 1813, Record ID btr111322 (<https://www.digitalpanopticon.org/life?id=btr111322>). Version 1.2.1,

required 56 crew and mounted with 16 guns. The average sentence for convicts aboard was 11 years, 108 life sentences and 200 convicts.⁶ William Mitchell was the commander. Four convicts died on the voyage. The surgeon on this voyage was D. Mackenzie. It took 126 days to sail here.⁷ When he arrived in NSW, Lachlan Macquarie was the governor, this was also the year that Blaxland, Lawson and Wentworth navigated the Blue Mountains. Stefano was described as: 5 feet 5 ¾ inches, dark complexion, black hair and blue eyes aged 30 and a sailor from Italy.⁸

Stephen Hasketh was listed as a Seaman when he was sent to Windsor NSW in October 1813 assigned to William Cox Esq. In 1814, Governor Lachlan Macquarie approved Cox's 'voluntary offer of your superintending and directing the working party' that would build a road crossing the Blue Mountains, between Sydney and Bathurst. The completed dirt track was 12 feet (3.7 m) wide by 101 ½ miles (163.3 km) long, built between 18 July 1814 to 14 January 1815 using five free men, 30 convict labourers and eight soldiers.⁹ I wonder if he was one of the 30 convict labourers. John Posich was sentenced to 1 year in Newcastle in November 1815 along with 5 other prisoners aboard the *Estramina*.¹⁰ On 15th May, 1816 John Posich (Powitz alias J Stanton) a former servant of Rev Robert Cartwright was given remission of his sentence and allowed to travel from back to Sydney from Newcastle aboard the *Lady Nelson*.¹¹

From my investigations I can only surmise that Stefano married the same woman twice. After receiving permission to publish their banns in December 1819 John Posich (Stefano Haskitt) married Mary Stanton (Elizabeth) both convicts¹² in the Church of England Parramatta NSW BDM 952/1820.

John Stanton (John Posich, Stefano Haskitt) married Mary Stanton in St Marys Roman Catholic Church in Sydney 332/1829.¹³ Mary Stanton *aka* Reilly arrived onboard *Elizabeth*

⁶ <https://convictrecords.com.au/ships/earl-spencer>

⁷ Bateson, Charles, *The Convict Ships, 1787-1868*, Sydney, 1974. Page 173 ISBN 0-85174-195-9

⁸ https://www.ancestrylibrary.com.au/discoveryui-content/view/30546:2024?tid=&pid=&queryId=ba3c8c355d74c99558ae584d6e8b3e82&_phsrc=gqD15&_phstart=successSource

⁹ [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William_Cox_\(pioneer\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William_Cox_(pioneer))

¹⁰ https://search.ancestrylibrary.com.au/cgi-bin/sse.dll?indiv=1&dbid=1905&h=149694&tid=&pid=&queryId=10ed4fd647917312b9b5610e2cacbce7&usePUB=true&_phsrc=gqD1&_phstart=successSource

¹¹ https://search.ancestrylibrary.com.au/cgi-bin/sse.dll?indiv=1&dbid=1905&h=56305&tid=&pid=&queryId=10ed4fd647917312b9b5610e2cacbce7&usePUB=true&_phsrc=gqD3&_phstart=successSource

¹² NSW Registry of Births, Deaths & Marriages

¹³ NSW Registry of Births, Deaths & Marriages

in 1818. When she arrived in the colonies she was forwarded to the Female Factory in Parramatta and was noted as Margaret Staunton.¹⁴ She was tried in County Mayo, having forged notes in paper, and sentenced to 14 years. Jno Possech was

residing in Windsor in the 1814 Census and Population books 1811-1825¹⁵ In the New South Wales and Tasmania, Australian Convict Musters in 1825 Stephen Asketh (Stephen Haskett) was listed as living in NSW, estimated birth year 1807.¹⁶ Stephane Haskitt resided in Castle Hill with his wife Mary, children: Margaret, John, Mary Ann and Annah (? Hannah) NSW for the 1828 Census. At the time of this census, he was a labourer, and his religion was Catholic. There were also 3 servants living there.¹⁷ John (287/307/1823) and Mary Ann (452/480/1825) births were registered under the surname of Stanton in the NSW BDM. Stephen Haskitt was given conditional pardon on 20th November, 1830. He was recommended for this by Rev Samuel Marsden, Rev Robert Cartwright, John Palmer (magistrate) and Edmund Lockyer (police magistrate of Parramatta) Stephen Haskitt had held his TOL since 1820 at this time of pardon.¹⁸ Stephano Haskitt was given absolute pardon in 1836 after being in the colony for 23 years. This pardon was given by Major General Sir Richard Bourke.¹⁹

John Stanton resided in South Coolah, Parramatta NSW in the 1841 census. In this census the household had 1 male aged between 14 and 21, 1 male 60 plus (I think this was him), 2 single

¹⁴ https://search.ancestrylibrary.com.au/cgi-bin/sse.dll?_phsrc=RVq3&_phstart=successSource&usePUBjs=true&indiv=1&dbid=1905&gsfn=mary&gsln=stanton&cp=0&_81004401_date=1818&new=1&rank=1&uidh=2yd&redir=false&msT=1&gss=ang-s-d&pcat=36&fh=0&h=152315&recoff=&ml_rpos=1&queryId=97e4fbba2db85763433517a9f58d5ec5

¹⁵ https://search.ancestrylibrary.com.au/cgi-bin/sse.dll?indiv=1&dbid=8813&h=66886&tid=&pid=&queryId=68a4fe5cb8c8ae371e335e8499eac89d&usePUB=true&_phsrc=RVq12&_phstart=successSource

¹⁶ https://search.ancestrylibrary.com.au/cgi-bin/sse.dll?indiv=1&dbid=1185&h=140166&tid=&pid=&queryId=453a9d5c62f712c644525c629aef22e&usePUB=true&_phsrc=RVq14&_phstart=successSource

¹⁷ https://search.ancestrylibrary.com.au/cgi-bin/sse.dll?indiv=1&dbid=1224&h=2712&tid=&pid=&queryId=1c63914a5ad30e6027f124244e11361f&usePUB=true&_phsrc=RVq16&_phstart=successSource

¹⁸ https://search.ancestrylibrary.com.au/cgi-bin/sse.dll?indiv=1&dbid=1657&h=50180&tid=&pid=&queryId=ba3c8c355d74c99558ae584d6e8b3e82&usePUB=true&_phsrc=gqD11&_phstart=successSource

¹⁹ https://search.ancestrylibrary.com.au/cgi-bin/sse.dll?indiv=1&dbid=1657&h=21309&tid=&pid=&queryId=ba3c8c355d74c99558ae584d6e8b3e82&usePUB=true&_phsrc=gqD17&_phstart=successSource

males, 1 male born in the colony, 1 free male person, 2 Roman Catholics, occupation-gardeners, stockmen and persons employed in agriculture.²⁰ John Stanton resided (freehold) in South Colo, Cumberland in 1856.²¹ John Stanton Jnr (son) was listed as living with John Stanton Snr (freehold) residence in South Colo in 1861- 1862²²



Text on Headstone:

Gloria in Excelsis Deo. Sacred to the memory of MARY STANTON died Augt 17 1830 aged 36 years also JOHN STANTON Husband of the above died Augt 29 AD 1861. Aged 80yrs May the- rest in peace Amen²³

²⁰ https://www.ancestrylibrary.com.au/discoveryui-content/view/3617:1214?tid=&pid=&queryId=70be9221a91cc1888ee8a628a0293b43&_phsrc=gqD25&_phstart=successSource

²¹ https://search.ancestrylibrary.com.au/cgi-bin/sse.dll?indiv=1&dbid=1310&h=47202&tid=&pid=&queryId=9d46450f718df9f51ae32b8ac08781f5&usePUB=true&_phsrc=gqD30&_phstart=successSource

²² https://search.ancestrylibrary.com.au/cgi-bin/sse.dll?indiv=1&dbid=1310&h=43010&tid=&pid=&queryId=446b347d2df9471029c7dbb4d9eb5143&usePUB=true&_phsrc=gqD28&_phstart=successSource

²³ <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/166303345/john-stanton/photo>

CROKER PRIZE FOR BIOGRAPHY 2021

2104 A Shattered Life

by Bob Wright

A SHATTERED LIFE

My blood ran cold as I scrolled down the page containing my grandmother's baptism entry, and I stared at my computer screen in disbelief. Having obtained a copy of her birth certificate many years earlier, I had never before gone looking for her baptism record. Now that I had found it, I had also stumbled across my most unexpected research finding.

Born Phyllis Bowden in the north London suburb of Enfield Lock in 1909,¹ my maternal grandmother had a difficult and tragic early life. Her father, Frederick Bowden, died in 1912 when she was very young,² and a few years later her mother Celia remarried.³ But her mother was very bad tempered and tyrannical, and over time became more and more difficult to live with.⁴

At age 21 Phyllis escaped from this trying situation, marrying Freddie Pratt in 1931.⁵ During the 1930s Phyllis and Freddie had three children.⁶ But Freddie was frequently out of work due to the Great Depression, and Phyllis was forced to go out to work herself in her trade as a milliner, to make ends meet. As time went on she discovered that her husband was selfish, lazy, and abusive.⁷

In 1937, when Phyllis was pregnant with their third child, Freddie began an affair with a woman they shared their flat with. Phyllis could hear them having sex in the next room, but she was very ill at this time, and could do nothing about it.⁸ After her child was born and she was sufficiently recovered, Phyllis confronted Freddie about his behaviour, and he reacted by losing his temper and trying to strangle her. Fortunately the neighbours heard her screaming and called the police, who arrived in time to prevent murder.⁹

Freddie was taken away, and then he disappeared completely with his lover. Phyllis never saw or heard from either of them again. She was left with no husband, no money, no job, and no support for her three children, at a time when there were no jobs for single mothers with young children (even in millinery), and no social security.¹⁰ The next few years were a terrible struggle for survival. Phyllis had to move from place to place, because she could not afford the rent, and was sometimes homeless. She ended up having to give up all her children (she eventually recovered her daughter, but her two sons were gone for good).¹¹

Her fortunes improved when she met my grandfather, Ernie Edwards, in 1940 and formed a new relationship with him, from which my mother was born.¹² Phyllis and Ernie eventually married, but not for some years, as Phyllis could not find Freddie to serve divorce papers on him.¹³ Phyllis's marriage to Ernie was a happier one, but she suffered from a chronic nervous condition as a result of her experiences in the earlier part of her life.

In time to come my mother migrated to Australia,¹⁴ and Phyllis and Ernie followed her out.¹⁵ Ernie died in 1967,¹⁶ and Phyllis in 1989.¹⁷ As a widow, Phyllis lived with us throughout my childhood, and I came to know something of her tragic past, though she was reticent about it and did not go into great detail. It was only in more recent years that I became curious to learn a little more about the circumstances and began researching Phyllis's early life.

The electoral rolls for Enfield told me that the woman living with Phyllis and Freddie in 1937 was one Helen Portlock.¹⁸ The previous year, Helen and her husband James Portlock had been living just around the corner from Phyllis and Freddie, in the next street.¹⁹ In 1937 James Portlock was living with his parents.²⁰ Clearly then, Helen and her husband had separated, and Helen had moved in with Phyllis and Freddie. I next found that Helen had married James Portlock in 1934 and that her maiden name was Dunklin.²¹

I'm not sure exactly why I went looking for my grandmother's baptism entry at this time, but when I found it I saw that the entry immediately above it was the baptism entry for – of all people – Helen Dunklin. They had been baptised in the same church (St. James Anglican Church in Enfield Highway) on the same day, 21 January 1910.²² Shocked, I investigated further and found that Helen's father, Harry Dunklin, worked at the Royal Small Arms Factory – the same place as Phyllis's father Frederick Bowden.²³ Clearly the two families knew each other.

I then discovered that the man who was to become Phyllis's step-father, Joe Edmondson, rented a room from Helen's grandmother, Ellen Dunklin, before he married Phyllis's mother Celia in 1916.²⁴ Further research revealed that the two families – the Edmondson/Bowdens and the Dunklins – lived in close proximity to each other for some years when Phyllis and Helen were young, and may have even have shared a flat at one time.²⁵ Phyllis and Helen undoubtedly also went to the same local school – St James Church of England Primary School.

The awful truth now crashed in on me with full force. The woman who had so grievously betrayed Phyllis by stealing her husband and shattering her life had been her friend since childhood, perhaps even her closest friend. I hadn't expected this. My grandmother had never mentioned this part of her tragic history, and I can well understand why. The wound must have cut too deep. I could not even begin to imagine her pain. My discovery filled me with sadness. Perhaps, after all, there are some things it is better not to find out.



PHYLLIS BOWDEN

Submitted by Bob Wright

Croker Prize for Biography 2021 - Society of Australian Genealogists

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CROKER PRIZE FOR BIOGRAPHY 2021

2105 Selective Memory

By Alison Ferguson

Selective Memory

In today's world, we carefully curate the story of our lives through selective display of our best selves on Instagram and Facebook. For the privileged class in the 1800s, the memoir served the same purpose and with similar selectivity. Just as the most powerful meanings arise from what is left unsaid, so too do the most compelling stories emerge from what the memoirist chooses not to display.

On first reading, the typescript copy of the 1875 memoir of Harriet Mary Dowling^[1] (née Blaxland) revealed so much of her character that it seemed inconceivable that she had left out anything of significance. Lively, gossipy, and impetuous, this ancestor of my husband shone from the page, demanding attention. Born in 1799, she was six-years old when her father, John Blaxland, left Kent to bring his family out to join his younger brother, Gregory, to build a new life in colonial Sydney.

As the eldest daughter of a family that prided themselves on their social standing, Harriet appeared to notice none of the convict misery upon which the family depended for labour in building their estate at Newington. Nor did she mention the indigenous inhabitants they dispossessed. For Harriet, the most significant event of her early teens was falling in love on first sight of the handsome Captain Cowin, whose regiment was soon to head to India. This first love inspired her at fourteen to leap at the chance to travel to Calcutta to live with relatives, ostensibly to further her education, in reality to find a husband.

The social curriculum of dancing lessons and balls meant that it was not long before she was pressured to accept a rich, but elderly, suitor. Rebellious, sixteen-year-old Harriet manoeuvred to marry Alexander Macdonald Richie, her impecunious second cousin. Her uncle made Richie a partner in his agency for the East India Company, and they took up residence in Agra, with views of the ruins of the Taj Mahal across the river. However, with effect of the Charter Act of 1813^[2] biting into their business, they struggled financially and Harriet's resilience was tested by childbirth and illness. Fleeing back to her family home in Sydney, Harriet found herself marooned. Her father refused to fund her return trip to Calcutta (unreasonably, in her opinion) and so, in her own words,

“Under this unjust restriction I was detained four years solely against my will”.

In her memoir Harriet glided swiftly over Richie's arrival to collect her. A chance reading of a blog^[3] by journalist Pamela Mawbey pointed me to how angry Harriet was about her husband's delay. Further research revealed the depth of this most unexpected finding. Richie's arrival coincided with that of the handsome Baron Hyacinthe de Bougainville, son of the famous explorer Louis-Antoine de Bougainville. Harriet embarked on a flirtation with Bougainville that was spectacularly successful in inflaming Richie's jealousy. However, it also shattered Bougainville's heart.

On Monday 12th September 1825, Bougainville wrote in his personal journal^[4]:

“I found that I was more and more attracted to Mrs Ritchie, perhaps too much, and even now as I look back, how I miss her!”

By Saturday 17th September, Bougainville made sure he visited mutual friends,

“...where Mrs Ritchie had pledged she would be; we enjoyed a romantic tête-à-tête and promised to meet the next day at midnight on board.”

However, Harriet failed to make their assignation. Richie took matters in hand, writing a challenge to Bougainville to meet him ashore. Like Harriet, Bougainville reconsidered his position. In his personal journal, Bougainville wrote movingly of their affair. Finally, on Wednesday 24th September, when he set sail, he wrote:

“My heart is heavy and I wish now that we had sailed a month earlier...At 4.30 pm, we lost sight of the lighthouse from the topmast and, a little later, of the land from the deck. Everything then faded into the distance. I shall perhaps never again set eyes on these shores where on two separate occasions, at different stages of my life, I have experienced the joy of loving and of being loved! Farewell, happy days spent under the spell of mutual love! Alas, how fleeting you were! And how painful are the days that follow a parting that is bound to last forever!”

Bougainville never married, becoming Rear-Admiral of the French Navy in 1838 and dying in 1846. Bougainville’s ardour was intense but Harriet’s feelings were harder to know. Perhaps she found herself swept up by her own unexpected return of Bougainville’s passion but then, with time to reflect, found herself making the first truly mature decision of her life. She left no hint in her memoir of Bougainville other than writing that she and her husband left quickly for Calcutta and describing the entertaining band music played on the voyage back to India, where financial ruin awaited them.

Within the year, Richie was dead and Harriet was living back in Sydney, in the unhappy situation of being financially dependent on her father to keep her in the manner to which she felt entitled. At this point in her life, Harriet was only twenty-five, and with many more developments in her life still to come, her memoir was deftly crafted to obscure what she had carefully elided.

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CROKER PRIZE FOR BIOGRAPHY 2021

2106 Conduct Unbecoming: Matthew Burnside and the 'Providence' Scandal, 1826

By Michele Bomford

Conduct Unbecoming: Matthew Burnside and the *Providence* Scandal, 1826

My great great great uncle Matthew (c1785-1869) was one of twelve children born to Matthew and Jane (McFarland) Burnside of Newtown Stewart, County Tyrone, Northern Ireland.¹ Matthew became a Royal Naval surgeon during the Napoleonic War, gaining his seniority in 1813 when promoted from assistant surgeon on the *Monmouth* to surgeon on the *Griffon*.²

In subsequent years Matthew maintained an exemplary record and obtained regular commissions that allowed him to travel the world. He experienced the vibrancy of the West Indies while surgeon on the *Briseis* in 1816.³ From 1817 until 1822 he was the surgeon on the *Tyne*, *Slaney*, *Creole* and *Owen Glendower* at the South America station, sailing backwards and forwards between the exotic ports of Rio de Janeiro, Buenos Aires, Montevideo, Valparaiso and Callao. He once rounded Cape Horn during a severe gale, visited the Galapagos Islands, and witnessed both an altercation with the Chilean fleet and the discussions leading to the formation of the Republic of Peru.⁴

On 8 March 1823, Matthew married Selina Blaskett (1801-1839) at Camberwell, Surrey, and on 19 May he sailed with the *Clio* to observe scientific nautical experiments off the north-eastern coast of Scotland and chase smugglers in the Moray Firth.⁵ In 1825, as surgeon superintendent on the *Regulus*, he relayed impoverished Irish immigrants from Cork to Quebec.⁶

On 2 November 1825, the Admiralty appointed Matthew surgeon superintendent of the *Providence*, a convict transport relaying one-hundred female prisoners to Van Diemen's Land. The ship sailed from the Downs on 24 December 1825 and arrived at Hobart via Teneriffe on 16 May 1826, after a journey of 143 days.⁷ What happened next is my most unexpected research finding, a bizarre scenario with all the ingredients of a comedy, but tragic in its consequences.

When the colonial secretary stepped aboard the *Providence* to muster the convicts on 18 May, Quartermaster Samuel Johnson of the 57th Regiment reported 'great irregularities' during the passage. No fault could be found with the surgeon's care of the sick and the prison and hospital were clean, but the allegations against Matthew were such that a government order called for a Board of Enquiry.⁸

Matthew, whose duties extended from the medical care of those on board to the supervision of his convict charges, was accused of allowing, or perhaps even encouraging, prostitution on the *Providence*. Some of the girls, dressed in sailors' clothes, loosened a plank under the bed places in the prison and squirmed into the hold to cavort with the seamen on at least two occasions. Matthew could not deny it, but said that he stopped it.⁹

Samuel Johnson and his wife occupied the cabin next door to Matthew, the two separated by a thin partition. Of all the evidence, Johnson's was the most damning and, as a battle-hardened soldier with an impeccable record, there was little reason to doubt its veracity.¹⁰ He maintained that Matthew had two or three women in his cabin at any one time, drinking, until late at night. In a weak defence, Matthew claimed they were hospital attendants bringing him an update on the sick. Johnson swore on oath on 1 June that, from what he heard through the partition, they were not there on hospital business and not engaged in hospital talk.¹¹

Even more amusing was Matthew's response to the allegation that he cohabited for much of the journey with a seventeen-year-old convict, Julia Mills. On 29 January 1826, Julia presented at the ship's hospital complaining of feeling feverish, light-headed and sick, with pain under her breast and in her back. Matthew discharged her on 10 February feeling quite cheerful and well and grateful for her treatment.¹² Thus began the dalliance that was common knowledge aboard the *Providence*, but the surgeon maintained that she was in his cabin to look after his wardrobe, and the claims were an injustice against an innocent girl. According to Johnson's testimony on oath, Julia was anything but innocent as he revealed all the salacious details. He swore he heard Matthew and Julia having 'criminal intercourse' – apparently distressing for Johnson's wife – and peered through a hole in the partition to see Julia either in the surgeon's bed, or half-naked in the cabin. When he remonstrated with Matthew, the surgeon told him to mind his own business and on one occasion a heated argument saw Matthew threaten to horsewhip the quartermaster.¹³

During the Enquiry, the principal superintendent of convicts came very close to accusing Matthew of misappropriating some of the convicts' clothing, bedding and even money. Disembarkation was hours behind schedule because the women were 'washing'. They were not properly dressed, some had been drinking, a few were intoxicated and there was an inappropriate familiarity between the girls and the seamen as they left the ship.¹⁴

Lieutenant Governor George Arthur considered Matthew's conduct 'disgraceful' and 'most unworthy of the trust reposed in him'. He refused to issue a certificate of good conduct and recommended that the Commissioners of the Navy withhold his gratuity and dismiss him from the convict service.¹⁵ Governor Ralph Darling in NSW supported Arthur, deploring Matthew's immoral and 'highly improper and indecorous conduct'.¹⁶

Matthew sailed with the *Providence* when it left Hobart for Sydney on 13 June.¹⁷ Between 1827 and 1862 he was an insolvent debtor on four occasions, spending time within the grim walls of both the Marshalsea and Horsemonger Lane prisons in London.¹⁸ With no appointments for nearly four years from December 1826, and only a few short commissions in 1830 and 1831, when his service record ends, he was surviving on half pay.¹⁹ Matthew never upgraded his qualifications to work as a surgeon in civilian practice; from 1839 he occasionally held a job as a hop officer in Her Majesty's Excise.²⁰ Matthew, with his second wife Sarah Badham (1822-1914) and their growing family, moved regularly around South London, perhaps having difficulty paying the rent.²¹

The *Providence* scandal irreparably damaged Matthew Burnside's career and his life unravelled. For a man who defined himself as a Royal Naval surgeon, it was an ignominious fall.

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CROKER PRIZE FOR BIOGRAPHY 2021

2107 My Kingdom for a Crown – Francis Jacob Grose

by Patricia Braden

MY KINGDOM FOR A CROWN - Francis Jacob Grose

For many years I had known that my great grandparents George John Chidgey (b.1780) and Eliza Browning Grose (b.1791) had married in 1814 in London.ⁱ I also knew that Lt. General (Governor) Grose was a “distant relative” who had replaced Governor Arthur Philip when he became too ill in 1792 to administer the newly established Colony.ⁱⁱ But I didn’t know “how close” my relationship was and I had too many other direct-line branches to explore - rather than spending my precious time trying to link to “distant historical figures”.

However, in a Covid-19 lock-down situation, with time on my hands, I contacted a brand-new “DNA cousin” and we decided to research the Grose family together.

We first found that Governor Francis Grose was our 1st cousin x 6 times removed. Oh gosh, what on earth did that mean?

Gradually we began to research the Grose family, working our way backwards from our own Eliza Browning Grose and her elder brother, Joseph Hickey Grose (b.1788). We ascertained that they were Governor Grose’s niece and nephew, and that Joseph was quite a noteworthy convict. But thankfully he was sent here a few years after the Governor had returned to England - or I’m sure it would have created quite a scandal.ⁱⁱⁱ

It therefore came as no surprise to find that our famed relatives had both been well-documented in many articles and biographies. We now had to follow up and confirm the information we found.

These biographies, and a great deal of further research, led to the awareness that Eliza and Joseph’s father, Howell Grose, was a well-known Solicitor in London. He moved in elite circles of very highly regarded families. What a shock it must have been to Howell when his son Joseph was transported to Australia for purportedly stealing money from his employer (which he adamantly denied).

Howell’s own father John Henry Grose was a brother to Francis Grose (an eminent Antiquarian) who was the father of Lt. General Francis Grose (Governor) of Australia.^{iv} So now I knew that this Military Governor was the nephew of my 5 x Great Grandfather and where he fitted into my family. But I was still not overly impressed, especially as Governor Grose had had a rather checkered history.

It came as a wonderful surprise though, when we found that his father Francis (the Antiquarian), in following his passion of Antiques and Heraldry was appointed *The officer of Arms in charge of the Arms & Heraldry office* in 1755.^v

Of course (*and lucky for me*) being in such a position enabled Francis the perfect opportunity to extensively research his family’s heritage. He then applied for and was granted the Pedigree and Coat of Arms of the Grose Family!^{vi} WOW, we not only had his family Pedigree chart – and permission to use the Coat of Arms, but we also had details of our forebears. Francis’ father (my 6 x times Great Grandfather) was (another) Francis Grose (who thankfully this time, had a middle name of Jacob).^{vii}

Francis *Jacob* Grose was born to John Henry Grose and Ann Tebr in Berne, Switzerland in 1696, towards the end of many uprisings and disturbances in their tiny country.^{viii} However, as middle-to-upper-class citizens he and his siblings were provided with a good education

which enabled them to obtain worthwhile occupations. Francis himself was trained as a Jeweller and became very well-respected in his hometown.

However in 1723 there was a revolt in Switzerland against the domination of Vaud of Bern, and this may have been the trigger for Francis *Jacob* Grose to make his life-changing decision to move to England.^{ix}

If this was a Mills and Boon novel, it would be written that he attended the Society Balls when he arrived in London and within a short time of his arrival, met and married his “perfect match” Anne Bennett of Oxfordshire. Francis Grose and the beautiful Ann Bennett were indeed married in 1725 at St. Mary Overy in Southwark.^x With my (now) knowledge of the future events, I often wonder if this was a love-match or an arranged marriage for mutual benefit?

Francis established his Jewellery business here in London-town and his reputation quickly grew to such an extent that he was soon mixing with aristocracy and nobility. His most famous client was King George II and from all historical records it is written that Francis Jacob Grose fitted the jewels in the Coronation Crown in 1727.^{xi}

Perhaps feeling he had to prove his loyalty to the monarch, he was naturalised as a British citizen on 20th December, 1744 and continued to serve the royal household as their jeweller for many years – possibly until his death in 1769.

Thus, my most unexpected research find was that my 6 x Great Grandfather was a Jeweller, who’s most famous client was King George II. It’s also possible that he had a hand in the minor refit in the same crown for King George III in 1760 (after his predecessor had suddenly died from a rupture of the aorta while sitting on the toilet.^{xii}).



The State Crown was manufactured for King George 1st in 1714, and modified for each of the subsequent monarchs over the next 100 years. The arches were pulled up for George II, and minor modifications for George III.^{xiii}



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- ⁱⁱ Australian Biographical Dictionary – Francis Grose - Lieutenant-Governor of Australia – 1792-1794.
- ⁱⁱⁱ Old Bailey Records on Line – Joseph Hickey Grose (1788-1849) – Tried at Old Bailey on 15.9.1813 – Theft – Transported for 7 years.
- ^{iv} National Dictionary of National Biography; England, Select Births and Christenings, 1538-1975; Ancestry.com; Wikipedia; and numerous other confirmations.
- ^v The Oxford Dictionary of National Biography.
<https://www.oxforddnb.com/search?q=Francis+Grose&searchBtn=Search&isQuickSearch=true>
- ^{vi} Genealogy Society of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints.
- ^{vii} Ancestry.com. *Biography & Genealogy Master Index (BGMI)* [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2009.
- ^{viii} Dictionary of National Biography, Volumes 1-22 (Ancestry.com)
- ^{ix} Timelines of Switzerland - <https://www.timelines.ws/countries/SWITZERLAND.HTML> - accessed 7/4/2020.
- ^x As per the Arms and Pedigree of the Family of Grose – accessed via Ancestry.com 2/4/2020 by myself.
https://search.ancestry.com.au/cgi-bin/sse.dll?db=FLHAUS2006_0990330_5&h=59081&ti=5544&indiv=try&gss=pt
- ^{xi} National Dictionary of Biography - Google Books – Francis Grose – Page 272 - Notes King George II.
<https://books.google.com.au/books?id=Jy0oAAAAYAAJ&pg=PA308&dq=Francis+Grose+crown+King+George&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwjBibLV5arpAhVjwzGHcarALsQ6AEIKDAA#v=onepage&q=Francis%20Grose%20crown%20King%20George&f=false> and page 308:
<https://books.google.com.au/books?id=Jy0oAAAAYAAJ&pg=PA308&dq=Francis+Grose+crown+King+George&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwjBibLV5arpAhVjwzGHcarALsQ6AEIKDAA#v=onepage&q=Francis%20Grose%20&f=false>
- ^{xii} Horace Walpole, *Memoires of the Last Ten Years of the Reign of George the Second* (1822), vol. 2, p. 454. – via Wikipedia - https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Toilet-related_injuries_and_deaths#cite_note-20
- ^{xiii} The State Crown of George I, and subsequent refitting for George's II and III.
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/State_Crown_of_George_I - accessed by Miriam Baker-O'Donnell & myself on 11/5/2020. (Watercolour of the crown in its original form by Bernard Lens III, 1731).

CROKER PRIZE FOR BIOGRAPHY 2021

2108 The Prisoner Haynes, Said Nothing in her Defence

by Denise Cameron

The Prisoner Haynes, Said Nothing in Her Defence.

Historical records focus on dates, places, and events, but from time to time we gain a surprising and personal insight into the real life of our forebears. Finding both the spoken words recorded in courtroom documents and letters written from prison provide an insight into the convict, Ann Foss née Gilbert.¹ Firstly, at her trial at the Old Bailey, Ann stood in the dock silently while her partner in crime betrayed her.² During a coroner's inquest held 12 years later in Sydney, an enormous amount had happened in her life revealing Ann's outspoken nature in her witness statement.³

Ann Gilbert was 11 years old when her mother, Grace died in 1787 leaving her father, Joseph to raise her in the parish of St John-at-Hampstead, Middlesex.⁴ Ann's playground was London's bustling, noisy streets, and alleyways. Marrying, Henry Foss in 1798 at St George's Bloomsbury, London, Ann aged 22 years signed the church's registry *This marriage was solemnized between us – Henry Foss X (his mark) Ann Gilbert.*⁵ They lived around London's White Horse-Alley, near Clerkenwell⁶ often supplementing Henry's sail making income unlawfully.

On 12th March 1804, Ann Foss alias Haynes accompanied an older Sarah Whiley into Mr Hind's shop 134 Whitechapel Road, London. The women asked to purchase a brass footman with iron legs. Sarah handed over a £1 note. Doubts were raised and after closer scrutiny of the bank note, and despite the women's strong denial '*it wasn't a bad one,*'² they were arrested. On 11th April 1804, Ann, and Sarah, infant in arms, stood in a dock of the Old Bailey Criminal Courts. *Sarah Whiley and Ann Haynes, otherwise Foss, were indicted for feloniously forging and counterfeiting, on the 12th of March, a certain Bank note for the payment of £1. with intention to defraud the Governor and Company of the Bank of England.*²

Prisoner Whiley's defence. I leave it to my Counsel, and the mercy of the Gentlemen; I had the notes from Haynes.

The prisoner, Haynes, said nothing in her defence

Sarah Whiley, GUILTY, Death, aged 34.

Ann Haynes, GUILTY, Death, aged 28.

Criminal Registers Old Bailey 1804 Whiley & Haynes defence statements.

Both sentences were reprieved to transportation to NSW for 14 years. The Bank of England⁷ offered aid to prisoners who were charged with forgery and waiting transportation. The solicitors of the law firm Freshfields,⁷ well-respected in the City of London, assisted prisoners in writing their petitions and letters. Ann wrote five letters to the Bank while in Newgate Prison, these make for tragic reading. She writes of her abject poverty, and misery and begged for support to cope with the poor prison conditions and for the journey to Australia.

Gentlemen In Expectation of being sent abroad in a few days I humbly implore you to have pity on me, it is well known in the Prison that I am reduced almost to poverty not having sufficient to pay for a Bed to sleep on.

39. [F25/1/129] Ann Foss, Newgate, 9 July 1805⁷

On 13th July 1805, twenty-five female convicts including Sarah and Ann were taken from Newgate Prison to join the 117 women prisoners embarking the *William Pitt*. Unfortunately, the ship sailed 8-10 hours before the Bank's agent, James Tippet reached the docks at Falmouth. The money of £5 was returned to the Bank. Ann, Sarah and three other women who were promised money found little comfort during the difficult voyage. The *William Pitt* arrived in Port Jackson on 11th April 1806.⁸

Likewise, in 1806 Henry Foss guilty of possessing forged bank notes and sentenced to 14 years transportation on the *Fortune and Alexander*.⁹ Henry was assigned to work in the Hunter Valley region.¹⁰ Ann and Henry's daughter Elizabeth Catharine Foss was born on 20th January 1810.¹¹ By October 1816, Henry was sent to Newcastle on the *Lady Nelson* for three years to serve a secondary punishment for possessing forged bank notes.¹² By April 1819, Henry aged 57 years died and was buried in Old Sydney Cemetery, George Street.¹³

In July 1816 Ann was a witness at the inquest of Mary Ann Swinton held in the Coroner's Court. Mr and Mrs Swinton had disembarked the *Lady Elliot*¹⁴ in Sydney and Ann Foss was assigned to wash the Swinton's clothes 'eight dozen in very bad and disagreeable state'. Later, Ann and neighbour Mrs McMahon visited the Mary Ann. In Ann's statement 'she entered the house; she saw the deceased lying on a bed and observed to Mrs McMahon she thought the woman was dying'. Ann assisted by 'finding her jaw falling and took a handkerchief and tied it up and washed and laid the deceased'. Ann was questioned by the J.W. Lewin, Coroner 'whether the deceased had received at any time ill treatment or was denied proper nourishment, bedding, or clothing'¹⁵ Ann's answer '**No!** The verdict concluded that Mary Ann Swinton's death was caused by the Visitation of God.³

Ann Yellop per *Louisa*¹⁵ and Elizabeth Cotterill per *Lucy Davidson* from the Parramatta Female Factory were assigned to work in Ann's laundry at 18 Pitt Street, Sydney,¹⁶ well-positioned to entice customers arriving in Sydney Cove. Convict women provided essential domestic services such as washing and sewing, played an important part in the colony's developing commercial and social life.

Finally, Ann received Absolute Pardon from by Governor Lieutenant General Sir Richard Bourke in November 1837¹⁷ five years before she died in 1842 in Sydney, aged 66 years.¹⁸ She was described as 5 feet 1 inch tall, complexion fair and ruddy, brown hair and brown eyes. Her daughter Elizabeth, a 'currency lass'¹⁹ with her husband William Brown per *Elizabeth*²⁰ raised 11 children.

Reading through archival documents and transcripts provides the researcher an extraordinary insight into the actual words spoken, the emotions and opinions expressed by their forebearers as in the case of Ann Foss née Gilbert, my 4th great grandmother.

¹ London, England, Church of England Baptism, Marriages & Burials, 1538-1812 for Ann Gilbert.

² England & Wales Criminal Registers Old Bailey Online refer ID: t18040411-50 Whiley & Haynes. ©Tim Hitchcock, Robert Shoemaker, Clive Emsley, Sharon Howard and Jamie McLaughlin, et al., *The Old Bailey Proceedings Online, 1674-1913* (www.oldbaileyonline.org, version 8.0, 24 March 2018). *Proceedings of the Old Bailey, 11th April 1804, page 48.*

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- ³ NSW, Australia Colonial Secretary's Papers 1788-1856 Inquest Mary Ann Swinton 28th July 1816.
- ⁴ London, England, Church of England Baptisms, Marriages & Burials, 1538-1812 for Grace Gilbert.
- ⁵ St George's Bloomsbury, London Parish register entry 196 London, England Church of England Baptisms, Marriages Ref No; p82 geo1/018
- ⁶ England & Wales Criminal Registers Old Bailey Online refer ID: t18040411-51 Henry Foss.
- ⁷ <https://www.british-history.ac.uk/london-record-soc/vol42/pp1-34#p77>
- ⁸ British convict transportation registers 1787-1867 State Library of Queensland from British Home Office (HO) records [https:// Convict Records](https://www.slsq.gov.au/convict-records) > [Ships](#) > [W](#) > [William Pitt](#) > 1805
- ⁹ British convict transportation registers 1787-1867 database compiled by State Library of Queensland from British Home Office (HO) records [https:// Convict Records](https://www.slsq.gov.au/convict-records) > [Ships](#) > [F](#) > Fortune and Alexander 1806
- ¹⁰ *Free Settler or Felon* - Copyright Jen Willetts. All Rights Reserved Convicts of the Fortune in the Hunter region. <https://www.freesettlerorfelon.com/index.htm>
- ¹¹ NSW Births, Deaths & Marriages. FHL Film Number: 993949 Registration no. V18102026 1A
- ¹² NSW, Australia Colonial Secretary's Papers 1788 – 1856 recorded that on 30th October 1816.
- ¹³ Old Sydney Cemetery Records No. 799 St Phillips Parish Register. Record Thomas D Mutch, Mitchell Library, Sydney. Death registry - V181943002B
- ¹⁴ Macquarie, Lachlan. *Diary 10 April 1816 - 1 July 1818*. Mitchell Library, Sydney. ML Ref: A773 pp.19-28. [https://www.mq.edu.au/macquarie archive/lema/1816/1816june.html](https://www.mq.edu.au/macquarie_archive/lema/1816/1816june.html)
- ¹⁵ NSW 1828 Census at Government Factory, Parramatta. New South Wales Government Gazette (Sydney, NSW: 1832 - 1900) Wednesday 18 July 1832 - Page 192 No.463
- ¹⁶ Government Gazette Notices - New South Wales Government Gazette (Sydney, NSW: 1832 - 1900) Wednesday 11 July 1832 - Page 177 No. 53
- ¹⁷ NSW Government Gazette Index 1832-1863 1st Jan 1837 Colonial Secretary's Office, Sydney Absolute and Conditional Pardons Haynes alias Foss Ann, William Pitt.
- ¹⁸ NSW Births, Deaths & Marriages. Registration no. V1842440114
- ¹⁹ [Lexico.com/definition/currency](https://www.lexico.com/definition/currency) lass
- ²⁰ NSW Births, Deaths & Marriages registration no. V182550 149 Registered at St. James, Sydney.

CROKER PRIZE FOR BIOGRAPHY 2021

2109 Oh Brother

by Jo Callaghan

OH BROTHER!

On Thursday 13 November 1913, at the Women's Hospital in Crown Street in Sydney, my great grandmother Miriam Willock gave birth to an illegitimate baby boy.¹ She named him Jack Willock. Miriam obviously expected Jack's arrival, but he was a surprising addition to my family tree. Most unexpectedly, his records may have solved a mystery about my grandmother.

Jack Willock's records proved quite difficult to find. A handful of men named Jack Willock lived in New South Wales in the 20th century and for one reason or another, none of them could have been Miriam's son. A fireman named Jack Willock lived near Newcastle but he married in 1929, when Miriam's son was just 16. Another man named Jack Willock was arrested near Kempsey in 1921 but that man was born in 1901. One Jack Willock lived in Mallanganee and another one lived in Wellington; they were Miriam's brother and cousin, whose names were really John Willock but they were commonly called Jack.

Examining other Willock records of the era, I learned that on Christmas Eve 1913 in Darlinghurst, six weeks after Jack's birth, a warrant was issued for the arrest of a man named David Donald for child desertion. The complainant's name was May Willock.² The case came before the courts in February 1914 and was heard 'ex parte', meaning without the parties present. David was ordered to pay for the maintenance of his child but whether David paid any money to May Willock is unknown.³

Then, on 27 June 1915 in the Parish of St Stephen in Newtown, a couple named Duncan and Euphemia McLaurin baptized a child. They said they were his foster parents, his name was John Willock, he was born in November 1913, and his mother's name was May Willock.⁴

Were baby Jack Willock and little John Willock the same child?

The Ryerson Index revealed that in May 1971, a man named John Willock died in Sydney.⁵ He was aged 58 and was therefore born about 1913. His death record revealed a few details such as the date and cause of his death, his age, his occupation, and his address, but curiously not his parents' names. Those fields were marked 'Not known'.⁶

John Willock's marriage record provided a few clues. On 18 December 1947, John Willock married Doreen Johnston at the Congregational Church in Perry Street, Marrickville. Once again John's parents' names were not recorded, suggesting that John didn't know or wouldn't say the names of his parents. Helpfully, the witnesses to the marriage were both named

¹ New South Wales Register of Births, Deaths and Marriages, Births, 1913/39978.

² New South Wales, Australia, Police Gazettes, 1854-1930, 24 December 1913.

³ 1914 'Apprehensions.', New South Wales Police Gazette and Weekly Record of Crime (Sydney: 1860 - 1930), 25 February, p. 99.

⁴ Sydney, Australia, Anglican Parish Registers, 1818-2011, St Stephen Newtown, 27 June 1915.

⁵ Website, The Ryerson Index to death notices and obituaries in Australian newspapers, <http://ryersonindex.org>

⁶ New South Wales Register of Births, Deaths and Marriages, Deaths, 1971/51987.

McLaurin. I had most likely found the child that was baptized in 1915 but I couldn't say he was the same person as Miriam's son Jack Willock.⁷

John Willock's probate records revealed that lawyers made numerous searches of Registers in New South Wales seeking to find any person, other than his widow, who might have had a legitimate claim on John's estate. Lawyers eventually located two people who had important information.⁸

The first was Miriam's brother Albert, who explained what he knew.

In about 1914 I was told by my mother that my sister had a child in Sydney and that she was unmarried. I believe that the child's name was Jack and that he was born in Sydney in late 1913.⁹

The second was John's 'brother' Major Murdoch McLaurin, who quite unexpectedly told the entire story of John's life and confirmed that John and Jack Willock were the same person.

My mother was Euphemia McLaurin, and my father was Duncan McLaurin...

Late in 1913 my mother read an advertisement in a local newspaper... placed by a young woman asking for someone to take care of a male child while she worked. My mother and my sister... collected a little baby boy who was at that time about six weeks old. This story was often spoken of and it was common knowledge in my family.

... the little baby boy became known to my family as Johnnie.

Johnnie's mother was Miriam Willock, and she visited our home on many occasions in late 1913 and early 1914. Mother and father loved Johnnie and wanted to adopt him. Johnnie's mother seemed to agree to this, and my parents signed adoption papers, but Johnnie's mother disappeared and was never heard of again by my family.

Late in 1914 my parents were contacted by a man who claimed to be Johnnie's father, wanting information about him. He said that he was going away to the war and that he would contact her again as soon as he returned. He was never heard of again by my family. This is another story that was often spoken of in my family.

Johnnie continued to live in our home and quickly became a member of the family, yet my parents were always under a cloud that someday his mother or father might return to claim him. He was always known as John or Jack McLaurin.

... He knew his name at birth had been Jack Willock, but it was never clear to us whether he had been adopted. He obtained a copy of his birth certificate, confirming that his surname was Willock and from that time on he called himself Jack Willock but everyone who knew him called him John McLaurin and I always regarded him as my brother.¹⁰

⁷ New South Wales Register of Births, Deaths and Marriages, Marriages, 1947/25152.

⁸ New South Wales State Archives and Records, Probate Packets, NRS-13660-66-41-Series 4_745493.

⁹ Ibid. From the hand of Albert Joseph Willock.

¹⁰ Ibid. From the hand of Major Murdoch McLaurin.

In March 1914, just a few weeks after disappearing from the McLaurin home, my great grandmother married in Brisbane and never returned to her life in Sydney. Her marriage record revealed that her middle name was May.¹¹ Miriam May Willock died in Queensland in 1929.¹²

My grandmother Edna and her brother Jack were raised by two different families, each probably never knowing of the existence of the other. Jack Willock's probate record unexpectedly helped me to understand why my grandmother wasn't raised by her parents and perhaps explained how that might have come about.

¹¹ Queensland Register of Births, Deaths and Marriages, Marriages, 1914/B/14737.

¹² Queensland Register of Births, Deaths and Marriages, Deaths, 1929/C/3613.

CROKER PRIZE FOR BIOGRAPHY 2021

2110 The Long Lost Brother and his Heirs

By Toni Glasson

THE LONG LOST BROTHER AND HIS HEIRS

Charles Skey, who was transported to Van Diemen's Land in 1835¹, married – or maybe did not marry, since no record has been discovered - one Mary Anne Kirkwood, and had four children with her, one of whom was my husband's great grandmother, Fanny Skey.²

Mary Anne Kirkwood was the daughter of John Kirkwood³, a Scottish army veteran who came to Van Diemen's Land in 1826 as part of a Veteran Company employed to keep order in the colony.⁴ He had had several daughters, but apart from Elizabeth, who appeared as a witness on the birth registrations of most of Mary Anne's children, most of the others seemed to have died young⁵. Another daughter, Ellen Kirkwood, appears to have neither birth nor death record, although she had married William Cordwell in 1848 in a marriage witnessed by Elizabeth⁶. This was the same William Cordwell who, in 1852, married Mary Anne after the death of her husband, Charles⁷. Ellen, it seemed, was dead by that date.

It was Ellen whom I was researching when I was scouring Ancestry records for the Tasmanian Kirkwoods. But then – lo and behold! – I discovered a John C. Kirkwood, whose existence as a son of the veteran John Kirkwood had been hitherto completely unknown to me, despite my having spent quite some time researching this family. Not only did I discover his existence, but with it a veritable trove of information contained in a series of documents entitled 'Hawaii, Wills and Probate Records'⁸. John C. Kirkwood, it seemed, was living in Hawaii where, over a period of years until his death in 1887⁹, he had amassed a considerable fortune. A Commission was established to find the living

¹ Skey, Charles, Convict Record, [https://stors.tas.gov.au/CON31-1-40\\$init=CON31-1-40p146](https://stors.tas.gov.au/CON31-1-40$init=CON31-1-40p146)

² Skey, Fanny, Birth, Libraries Tasmania
[https://libriariestas.ent.sirsidynix.net.au/client/en_AU/names/search/detailnonmodal/ent:\\$002f\\$002fNAME_INDEXES\\$002f0\\$002fNAME_INDEXES:1089730/one?qu=fanny&qu=skey](https://libriariestas.ent.sirsidynix.net.au/client/en_AU/names/search/detailnonmodal/ent:$002f$002fNAME_INDEXES$002f0$002fNAME_INDEXES:1089730/one?qu=fanny&qu=skey)

³ Kirkwood, Mary Anne, Birth, Libraries Tasmania
https://libriariestas.ent.sirsidynix.net.au/client/en_AU/names/search/results?qu=mary&qu=ann&qu=kirkwood

⁴ Webb, Gwenda M, 'The Royal Veterans in Van Diemen's Land' in *Tasmanian Ancestry*, Vol 16, No 1, June 1995

⁵ Louisa Skey, daughter of Charles Skey and Mary Anne Kirkwood, birth registration showing Elizabeth Hopkins nee Kirkwood as witness Reg no 323/1847, Hobart

⁶ Marriage, Ellen Skey and William Cordwell Hobart, Reg no 37, 1550/1848, *Ancestry.com*

⁷ Marriage, Mary Anne Skey and William Cordwell, Hobart Reg no 397, 1604/1848, *Ancestry.com*

⁸ Hawaii, Will and Probate Records, 1822-1962, Case no 2531, First Circuit Court, Probate Packets, 2567-2548, *Ancestry.com*

⁹ 'To the next of kin of John Kirkwood or John C Kirkwood, formerly of Hobart Town, Tasmania' in *Australian Town and Country Journal*, 28 Jan 1888.

heirs of John C. Kirkwood, who had died intestate. It examined many witnesses and the result was over 400 pages of evidence.¹⁰

When Jack passed out of his sisters' lives around 1847, rumored to have left on an American whaling ship, he didn't surface again until about 1873 when a childhood friend, John George Whitehouse, met him in the Sandwich Islands. Whitehouse reported this meeting to the Commission, saying that he was certain that the man he had met was in fact Jack, and Jack had told him that he was second mate on a ship¹¹.

By the time Jack wrote in 1887 to William Jarvis, another childhood friend from Veterans Row in Hobart, all of his sisters were dead, so William passed the letter on to Elizabeth Mackay, Elizabeth Kirkwood's daughter by her second husband, James Robertson.¹² This letter was later to become evidence to the Commission of the relationship between John C. Kirkwood and his likely heirs: the descendants of the Kirkwood sisters, Elizabeth and Mary Anne.

In terms of confirming the offspring of John Kirkwood senior, and their descendants, the documents collected by the Commission are extremely valuable. They confirm Ellen's existence, for instance, and give details of her death.

In his evidence to the Commission, William Jarvis said that

'Ellen...was coming out of the Huon River in a vessel called the *Gumboat*, ... Ellen used to live ... on the vessel and during this trip she was knocked overboard by the boom of the vessel, and was drowned in the Derwent, the vessel having reached that river on her trip from the Huon River.'¹³

How Jack made his money is uncertain. Around 1872 he was still a whaler, but in an entry in the Hawaiian Kingdom Statistical and Commercial Directory and Tourists' Guide in 1880-1881 he was listed as a General Storekeeper at 170 Maui Street, Lahaina, Maui. The inventory prepared after his death and presented as part of the probate papers showed that he had owned both property and cattle and, interestingly, it is claimed there that he inherited one of the properties from his wife.¹⁴ (That wife seems to have predeceased him.)

The exhaustive search for Jack's heirs culminated in 1891, when the disbursements were made from what remained of his estate after costs. This amounted to \$16,041.45, which was divided equally between his sisters' descendants.¹⁵ Of most interest to me

¹⁰ Hawaii, Will and Probate Records, 1822-1962, Op. cit.

¹¹ Affidavit, John Whitehouse in Hawaii Will and Probate Records, *ibid*.

¹² Affidavit, Elizabeth Mackay in Hawaii Will and Probate Records, *ibid*.

¹³ Affidavit, William Jarvis in Hawaii Will and Probate Records, *ibid*.

¹⁴ Inventory in Hawaii Will and Probate Records, *ibid*.

¹⁵ Order of Distribution in Hawaii Will and Probate Records, *ibid*.

was the naming of these descendants and their lineage, complete with birth and death certificates. Truly a pot of gold!

I am still not sure where Jack was born. His gravestone, in the Aloha Cemetery of Lahaina, Maui, proclaims that he was born in 1820 in Hobart Town, New South Wales.¹⁶ He may well have been born in 1820 – John Kirkwood, his father, would by that time have been twenty-seven years of age - but the family didn't come to Hobart until around 1826.

No doubt Jack's relations and heirs were very pleased to learn of his existence, just as I, the family researcher, was *extremely* pleased with the information that came with the surprising revelation of his existence.

¹⁶ John C Kirkwood, Grave, <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/80286904/john-c.-kirkwood>

Submitted by Toni Glasson

Croker Prize for Biography 2021 - Society of Australian Genealogists

CROKER PRIZE FOR BIOGRAPHY 2021

2111 My Most Unexpected Research Finding

By Stephen Payne

My Most Unexpected Research Finding

The son of a First Fleeter, born on Norfolk Island, a convicted sheep thief and Publican!

Joseph Risby (1800 – 1863)

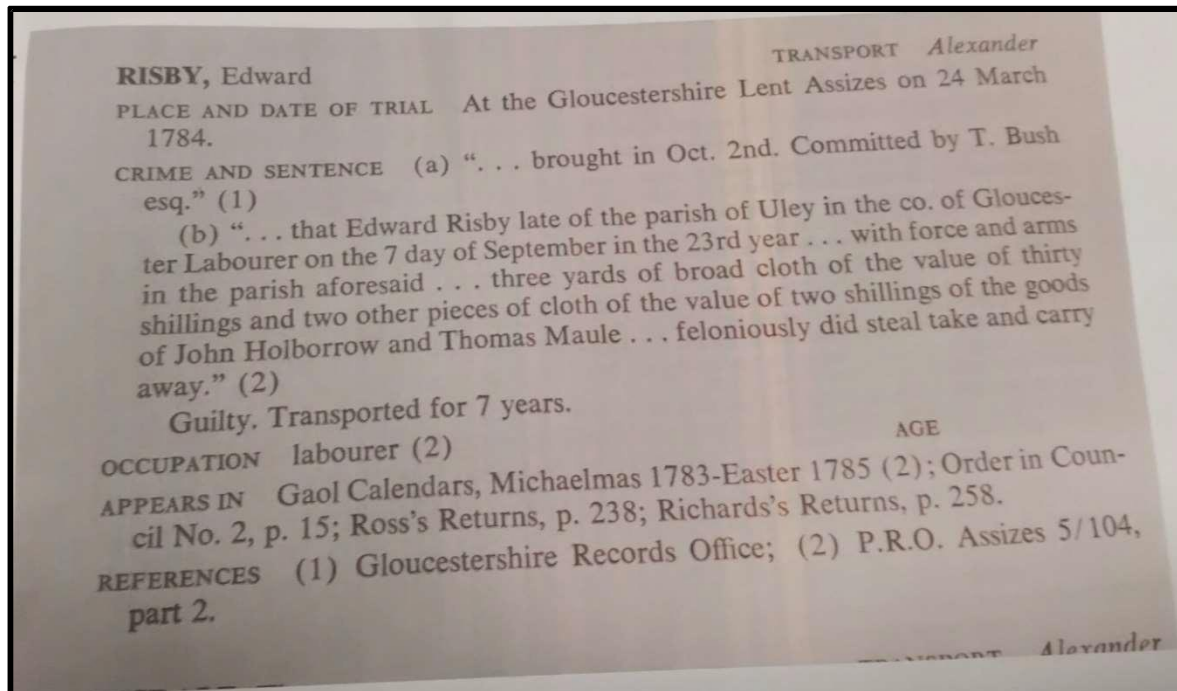
Joseph Risby is the husband of my 4th Great Aunt, Mary Robson.

From my research, I noted that Joseph Risby had married Mary Robson in West Maitland on 8 November 1838 and I was keen to research and record more information on Joseph Risby's family.

My search produced many a most unexpected find, namely:

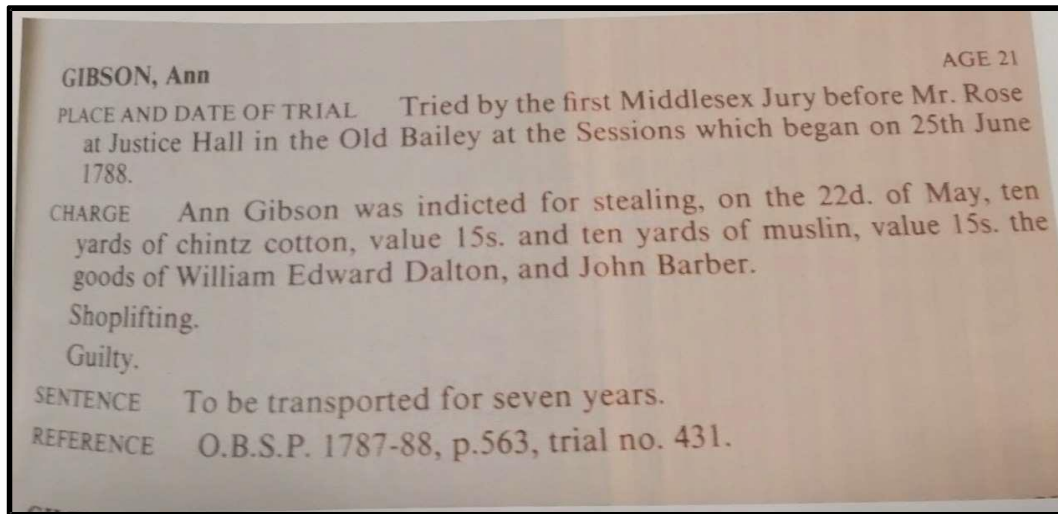
1. Joseph's father arrived with the First Fleet;
2. Joseph was born on Norfolk Island in the first decade of that colony;
3. the Risby family were one of the founding families in Van Dieman's Land (Hobart); and
4. Joseph, with his brother Benjamin and Patrick Murphy, was convicted of stealing 600 sheep.

Joseph's father, Edward Risby arrived on the First Fleet as a convict from Gloucestershire, England. Edward's crime was noted on 24 March 1784 in the Gloucestershire Lent Assizes:



Edward was sent to the Hulk Censor on the Thames where he stayed for 3 years prior to his boarding the "Alexander" for Port Jackson.

Joseph's mother, Ann Gibson arrived on the "Lady Juliana" with the Second Fleet as a convict from London:



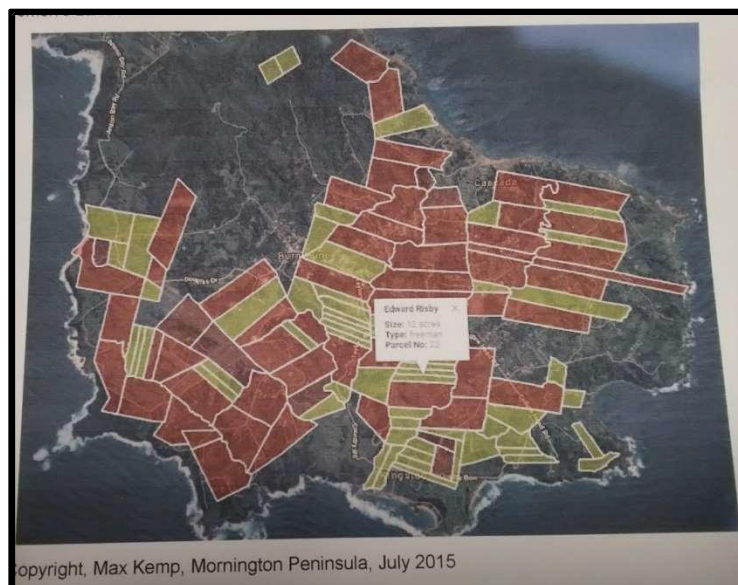
Ann arrived in Port Jackson on 3 June 1790.

Shortly after arriving in Port Jackson, Ann and 114 female convicts were transferred to Norfolk Island aboard the "Surprise" on 1 August 1790.

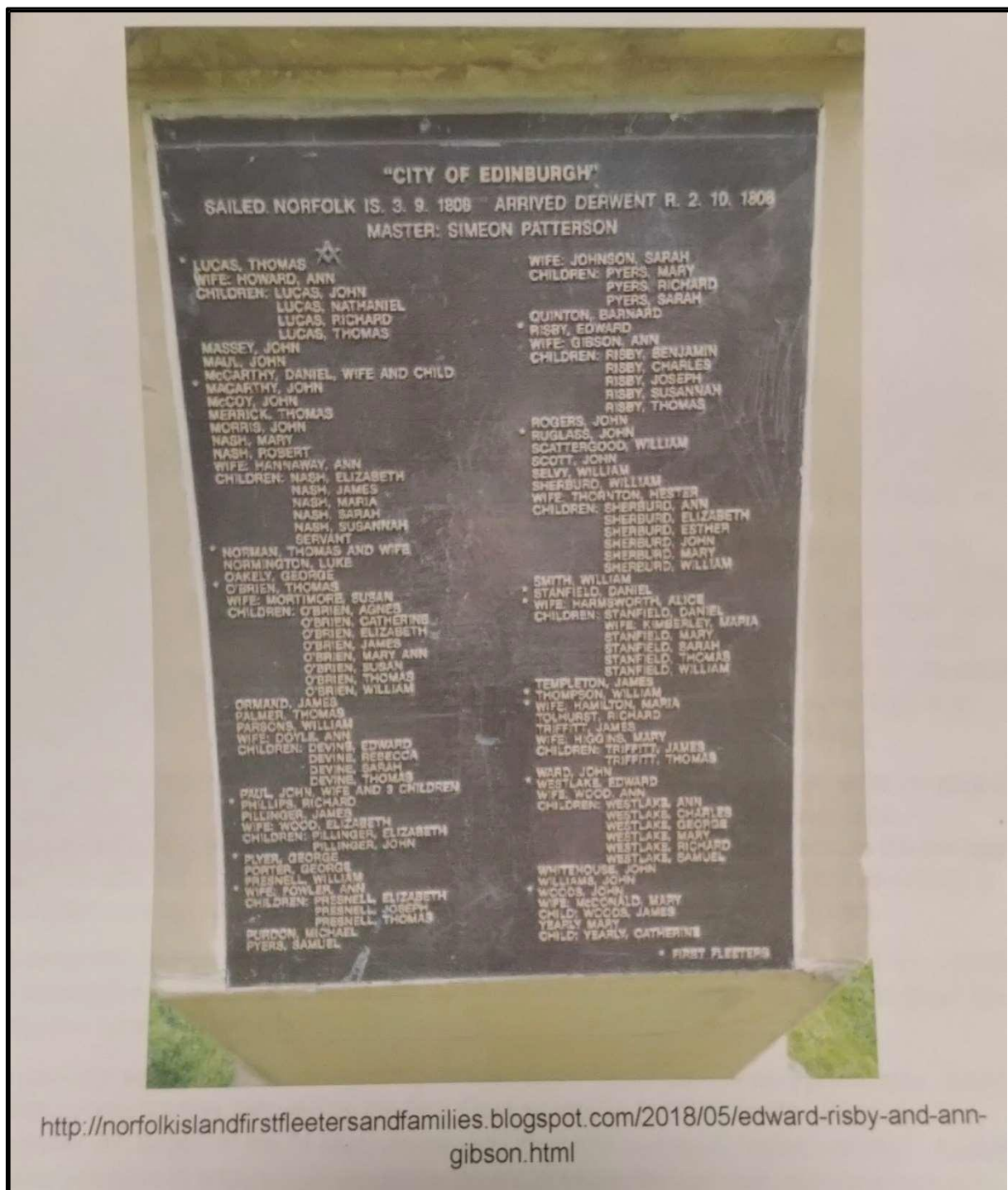
Ann later met and married Edward Risby on 17 November 1791 and together they had 7 Children - 6 of those children were born on Norfolk Island and 1 in Hobart:

1. Thomas born 30 July 1792;
2. Hannah born 1 March 1794, died 20 June 1795 aged 15 months;
3. Susannah born 1796;
4. Joseph born 20 May 1800;
5. Charles born 6 September 1804, died 25 September 1805 aged 12 months;
6. Benjamin born 25 September 1805, born the day of his brother Charles' death;
7. Edward Mellows born in 1810 (in Hobart Town).

Edward and Ann were granted 12 acres on Norfolk Island to raise pigs and grow maize and wheat.



Edward, Ann and the children left Norfolk Island on the "City of Edinburgh" on 3 September 1808.



<http://norfolkislandfirstfleetersandfamilies.blogspot.com/2018/05/edward-risby-and-ann-gibson.html>

Thirteen years later in 1821, Joseph Risby, together with his brother Benjamin and Patrick Murphy, was convicted of stealing 600 sheep from Daniel Stanfield of Broad Marsh over a 3 year period.

BENCH OF MAGISTRATES.—Benjamin and Joseph Risby, the two brothers lately noticed in our paper as having been apprehended for sheep-stealing, were on Saturday last fully committed to take their trial before the Criminal Court at Sydney; as was also their shepherd, Patrick Murphy, crown prisoner, for being concern-ed in the same robbery. Mr. Daniel Stanfield, a settler of Green Point, who is one of their prosecutors, has had no less than 600 sheep stolen from him at different periods within these three years.

Hobart Town Gazette and Southern Reporter (Tas. : 1816 - 1821), Saturday 10 June 1820, page 2

For his crimes, Joseph was transported from Hobart to Newcastle on 7 July 1821 per “Mermaid” and under sentence on 27 December 1821.

On 23 February 1823 Joseph was on the monthly returns of convicts assigned to Alexander McLeod.

Joseph’s brother Benjamin, convicted at the same time as Joseph, was transported to Newcastle on “Elizabeth Henrietta” on 20 November 1821.

Benjamin did a runaway and when seized shortly afterwards was sent to Port Macquarie.

In 1823, Benjamin once again did a runaway from Port Macquarie and when recaptured was sent on “Deveron” back to Van Dieman’s Land (Hobart).

When eventually released, Benjamin made his way to Glenlyon (Bendigo) where he married Sarah Cooper in 1858.

Benjamin & Sarah remained in Glenlyon and Benjamin died in Glenlyon on Christmas Eve, 24 December 1875.

In 1830, Joseph was given permission to marry Grace Bryant. Joseph and Grace did not marry (although Grace was married twice – to John Hodgkiss in 1832 and James Connel in 1841).

Some 8 years later on 18 April 1838, Joseph was given permission to marry Sophia Adams. Joseph and Sophia did not marry.

Five months later, on 2 October 1838, Joseph Risby married Mary Robson. Joseph was 37 years of age and Mary was 22 years old.

Joseph and Mary had 9 children, all born in Maitland district:

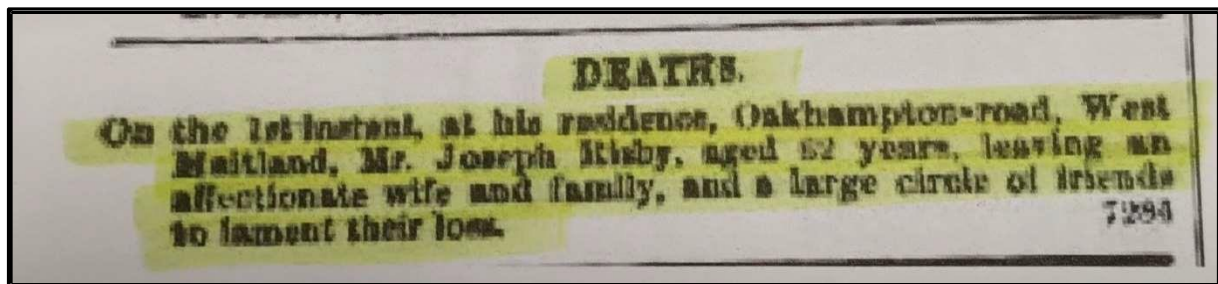
1. Joseph born 1841;
2. Thomas born 1843;
3. Mary Ann born 1845;

4. Henry Benjamin born 2 September 1847, died 26 February 1852 aged 4 years;
5. Elizabeth born 30 January 1849, died 26 February 1849 aged 1 month;
6. Susan born 7 March 1852, born the week following her brother Henry Benjamin's death;
7. John born 20 December 1853, died 6 July 1854 aged 7 month;
8. Charles born 9 May 1855; and
9. William born 20 June 1859.

On 30 July 1847 Joseph received a Conditional Pardon.

Joseph was granted a Publican Licence in the district of Maitland on 16 May 1854.

Joseph Risby died in West Maitland on 5 November 1863 aged 63 years.



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2. Joseph Risby Birth Certificate (FHL Film Number: 993949)
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4. Ann Gibson: Crimes of the Lady Juliana Convicts by John Cobley, Page 51.
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– Once Punished, Thrice Exiled by Max Kemp.
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CROKER PRIZE FOR BIOGRAPHY 2021

2112 Carving the Future

By Kerry Close

CARVING THE FUTURE

My third great-grandfather John Harriott was an artist, at least according to the 1841 England Census. He lived in North Shields, on the River Tyne in Northumberland. Most of his male neighbours had occupations such as grocers, cordwainers, cabinetmakers etc., as well as shipwrights and mariners, as Tyneside during this period was the busy hub of shipping and shipbuilding. But John appeared to be the only 'artist',¹ although his brother, Archibald, was recorded in the same census as 'carver'.²

Intrigued by these rather vague descriptions of the brothers, I resolved to discover how they were able to provide for their growing families in a place so centred on the shipping industry.³ John, born in North Shields in 1808,⁴ and his wife Ann,⁵ already had four children to support in 1841,⁶ and it seemed highly unlikely that he was a portrait painter to the rich and famous, or a sought-after landscape painter, as I certainly had never come across him in that regard. And what could Archibald possibly be carving that would enable him to feed *his* brood?⁷

Because of the plentiful supply of coal in the area, the banks of the Tyne were also crowded with factories, factories which produced sulphuric acid, soda and bleaching powder, essential requisites for the finishing processes used by the numerous woollen mills that had sprung up across the country since the Industrial Revolution. This toxic mix resulted in many tons of hydrochloric acid escaping into the atmosphere⁸ and one can only imagine the devastating effect it may have had on the health of all who lived there. According to a talk given by Mr W.A Campbell for the Northumberland and Durham Family History Society in 1987... "By the middle of the 19th century the banks of the Tyne were laid waste from Newcastle to Shields. No grass, trees or flowers grew there due to this 'acid rain'..."⁹ A truly appalling scenario.

Britain was the world leader in shipping from the Industrial Revolution to the 20th century and the North-East of England was the main ship producer with shipyards such as Young's, Forsyth's and Wright's dotted along the river.¹⁰ The wooden tall ships built there were used in warfare and for transporting goods, soldiers and colonisers overseas. It was a chaotic, smoggy and dismal environment in which to nurture a family. But what other skills did John possess to enable him to eke out his family's existence? Keen to find out, I made enquiries to the Northumberland and Durham Family History Facebook group and was fortunate to receive a post of the baptism certificate of John and Ann's son, which noted John's occupation as 'ship carver'.¹¹ Now I was getting somewhere.

Following up this clue led me to the website of Maritima Woodcarving in Oxfordshire, England, managed by Andy Peters, a carver himself, who restores, as well as creates, ships' figureheads. From a reference book he had he was able to provide me with a copy of an advertisement of an auction held in 1843 at the premises of

‘A. & J. HARRIOTT,
CARVERS, GILDERS, JOINERS, &c.,
LOW END of BELL-STREET.

*NEAR THE UNION WHARF, NORTH SHIELDS.*¹²

The stock for sale included ‘several Carved Male and Female Busts and Figureheads for Ships of various sizes. A quantity of Stars, Drops, Brackets and Lions’ Faces for Ships’ Sterns and Catheads’.¹³ It also states that John and Archibald had worked on at least seven vessels for H.S. Edwards, shipbuilders of South Shields, between 1836 and 1840, creating figureheads from American fir for the *Mary Muir*, *Caroline* and *Janet*. Erica McCarthy writes in ‘Ship Carvers in 18th and 19th Century Britain’ for *Sculpture Journal 2015*, ‘... Some carvers stockpiled their carvings in quieter times. One example was that of Archibald and John Harriott of North Shields....’. The brothers had set up business in 1828 and in 1834 had moved to larger premises – hopefully that meant business had been booming – but by 1840 John had gone his own way, although the title of A. & J. Harriott was retained until 1847 when it was altered finally to ‘Archibald Harriott’.¹⁴

From very early times figureheads represented many things; lions for strength, horses’ heads for vision and swiftness, serpents, bulls or dragons to strike fear into the enemy. They were also a means of identifying ships in the days when many sailors couldn’t read. Often a figurehead was fashioned after the wife of the captain or owner of a ship, and although women themselves were considered bad luck on board a ship, figureheads of naked and semi-naked women ‘were supposed to be able to calm a storm at sea’.¹⁵

By 1851 John and his family had given up the polluted environment of Tyneside for the similarly polluted one of London.¹⁶ Brother Archibald had died in 1848 aged just 44¹⁷ so perhaps John hoped a better life awaited them in the big city. The census for 1851 has the family living at 55 Robin Hood Lane, Poplar, with both John and his son described as ‘carver’ and ‘gilder’.¹⁸ By 1855 there were 9 children.¹⁹ Since the call for figureheads had dwindled dramatically by this period, was John reliant only on carving and gilding mirrors and picture frames to earn the family’s keep? Most likely, as in September 1859, following the brave journeys of daughters Ann in the *Admiral Lyons* in 1857²⁰ and Jane in the *David McIvor* in 1858,²¹ the Harriott family arrived on the welcome shores of Australia aboard the *Parsee*,²² eager to start a new life.

And so, the mystery of ‘artist’ was resolved most unexpectedly and to my delight. My ancestor had been a creator of figureheads, those wonderfully whimsical adornments on ships’ prows. He had been an artist after all, but in a field I had never imagined and one which is rare today.

John Harriott arrived in Australia as a ‘carpenter’²³ but was a ‘medical herbalist’ when he died in 1879 at his residence in Goulburn Street, Sydney.²⁴

Yet had he ever hankered after his rather romantic trade left behind in Tynemouth a world away?

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CROKER PRIZE FOR BIOGRAPHY 2021

2113 The First Wife of George Moss

by Louise Briffa

The first wife of George Moss

I have been researching Gabriel aka George Moss for the past 13 years. He is my great, great, great grandfather. While I have not found a photo of him, I know that he was 5 feet 5½ inches tall, with a ruddy complexion, dark brown hair, hazel eyes, a large nose and a scar on the outer corner of his left eye. He was a convict and was literate.¹ Later, he was a merchant,² a publican,³ a man of property and wealth,⁴ and no doubt charismatic as he fathered 19 children to three women. He is buried with a stately monument at St Jude's Cemetery Randwick NSW Australia.⁵

I have found these details quite remarkable for a poor Jew born of immigrant parents in Aldgate London⁶ circa 1812. But there is something I have recently found that was unexpected. I'll get to that later.

During the cholera epidemic which hit the poor of East London hard, a National Day of Fasting and Prayer was declared by the Parliament to be held on 21 March 1832. The upper classes believed that cholera resulted from sin and vice. The poor and working classes of east London took to the streets to protest against the declared day and it was this day that Gabriel and his friends, taking advantage of the large crowd gathered at Finsbury Square, decided to go pick-pocketing.⁷

He was caught. The 20-year old Gabriel was sentenced to transportation for 14 years.⁸ He arrived in Sydney via the Mary III (4) on 5 January 1833.⁹ On arrival he was assigned to J. T. Bayles.¹⁰ We then don't hear from him until 1837. While assigned to Terry Hughes Esq., he was arrested for being out at night without a pass and was sentenced to the Woolloomooloo iron gang for 12 months - a sentence that he petitioned against for clemency, which was rejected.¹¹

In 1839 Gabriel petitioned the Governor for permission to marry Sarah Ann Davies. This was initially rejected until Sarah Ann could prove she came free and on what ship.¹² Sarah had arrived free in 1833, aged 16, on the Layton.¹³ She and George (as he was now calling himself) already had a baby¹⁴ and another on the way,¹⁵ when they married at St Lawrence Church in Sydney in July that year.¹⁶

George and Sarah were married for 23 years and had 12 children. During this time, George's circumstances changed significantly and newspaper notices referred to him as "George Moss Esq, Wine and Spirit merchant."¹⁷

Sarah died 30 December 1862 aged 47 years.¹⁸ Her epitaph reads:

*Death's restless hand hath
snatched away in prime of life
a tender mother and a virtuous wife...
...Her sorrows and her sufferings now are o'er
Which she so long with Christian patience bore...*¹⁹

I've wondered who chose these words. Did they relate to the death of two of their children? Or perhaps it had something to do with young Jane Batwell, George's mistress. Six months before Sarah died, 20-year-old Jane bore George a son. Jane thought George was 39, when he was about 50, and that his name was Morris not Moss.²⁰

Although Jane claimed they were married in 1861,²¹ Sarah was still very much alive and there is no marriage record. Three years after this alleged marriage, George married the daughter of an inn keeper, Mary Ann Heuston.²² He was then about 52 (claiming to be 48) and Mary Ann was only 22. Less than a year after marrying Mary Ann, Jane gave birth to her third and last child to George.²³ Poor Jane.

Throughout the 1860s George was buying and selling property including a terrace at 164 Victoria Street Darlinghurst.²⁴ When the house was let and the furniture auctioned in 1870 the listed contents were testament to George's wealth, containing a Rosewood cottage piano, valuable oil paintings, and collection of Australian birds, amongst other expensive items.²⁵

The house was to be auctioned because George and Mary Ann were moving to Melbourne. George, at about 59 years old, had four young children with Mary Ann.²⁶ While in Melbourne, George was charged with deserting Jane and his three illegitimate children, so there was no marriage after all.²⁷ The case was dismissed on a legal technicality.²⁸ Poor Jane again.

In the year before his death and after the embarrassing arrest which was covered in various newspapers,²⁹ George transferred property to his wife Mary Ann.³⁰ A year later they were in her hometown of Singleton NSW when George died on 13 June 1874 of "softening of the brain." His coffin was transported from Singleton to the family vault in Randwick where he was buried...with his first wife Sarah.³¹

My most unexpected discovery was that Sarah Ann was not George's first wife. During the COVID lockdown, I was trawling through the UK National Archives and there I found a document I hadn't seen before. In the Cumberland Hulk Gaoler's report was the unexpected, Gabriel Moss, aged 20, Pen & Quill dealer, was married and his wife was living in London.³²

If Mrs Moss of No.11 Roberts Place, Commercial Road, London, had a child or was expecting a child, then George would be the father of an even number of 20 children to four women.

So, I can add bigamist to my descriptive list – convict, merchant, publican, man of wealth and property, and a bigamist. I do so without judgement. George and number 1 Mrs Moss were unlikely to meet again. Who can blame him, on the transportation journey, deciding it would be a good idea to be single when asked from now on? I do feel for Jane Batwell and her three children. Just four months after George's death, Jane married James Naphthali and for the record, her conjugal status was spinster.³³

Finding the first Mrs Moss was most unexpected when I thought I had found all the 'wives' of this prolific patriarch.

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CROKER PRIZE FOR BIOGRAPHY 2021

2114 The Day the Spanish Raiders Went out the Window

by Vicki Hetherington

The Day the Spanish Raiders Went Out the Window!

'Look out Jack!', Colin yelled as he hurled the venomous snake that had just crawled out of the cane field, in Jack's general direction. Jack hollered back and flung his machete high. Whether it was aimed at Colin or the snake, we cannot be sure!¹

Oh, those family trees! Certified documents become the leaves, and once they are in your hands, the tree can be added to - or pruned, with confidence. However, the fruit of growing a family tree, is the discovery of the human stories hidden behind those leaves. They are sweet morsels! Like the wedding location at the 'Hit or Miss Hotel'; or the baby born 'onboard' just shy of Sydney; or the young man mysteriously changing his name, affecting six generations; or brothers working in cane fields.¹⁻⁶

'Who *are* these people?!' I have asked myself.

I had never wanted to be a family history buff, but I too have had my historical epiphany. One day a simple question came up, needing an answer.

'Did we really come from Spanish Raiders, like Nana said?'⁷

I decided to find out, and the rest as they say, is history - family history to be exact! The Spanish Raiders quest had not been underway for very long however, when it dawned on me, that my Nana had two little brothers who enlisted in World War 1. I had *never* heard of Jack and Colin being soldiers. Ah, a morsel!⁴

I spread two sets of war records across my dining table and began to absorb the details. As I did so, out the window went the Spanish Raiders! I also pieced together the family story that was rolling out around the brothers as the war broke out. It was fascinating. Their father had died suddenly in 1915, and the future was changed forever. Letters were written to request Jack be released from duty because his mother needed him. He was sent home before he saw combat. Some months later, his younger brother enlisted, and when Colin embarked from their nearest capital city, it is assumed that Jack was there to send him off because the following day, Jack re-enlisted. He seemed determined to go.^{8,7,4}

I learned how young they were when they each signed up and what battalions they joined. I discovered who was injured and where they rested and recovered. I learned if they were sick with Spanish flu or not, or if they went AWOL or not, and how they both survived the Western Front and returned home to make their way back into civilian life.⁸ On the day I found a confirmed photograph of Jack with a group of soldiers, I stared at him for a long time. I could see my Dad.⁹



The type of details I had found – wars, marriage, children, occupations, residences etc - was where online websites came into their own, but in this next moment, so did the phone book. Digital white pages to be exact!¹⁰ I knew Jack and Colin's home region. My Nana had spoken of those days a little bit, and I had one childhood memory of a visit to an old aunt there.⁷

'How hard could it be to find their descendants?', I thought as I typed their last name into the white pages. On my third attempt, I found a third cousin. We connected instantly, sharing family details.¹¹ This cousin turned out not to be a direct descendant to the soldiers, and those lines of our family were no longer in the town at all. I kept searching.

Real breakthrough came when I received a reply to an online message I had sent.¹² Yes, they knew who I was looking for. Their great aunt had married my great uncle, Jack-the soldier! They were also sure their Uncle Lenny might be helpful. Helpful indeed! Lenny was in touch with a living daughter of Jack's. He also connected me to a relative on my side that he thought could lead me to Colin's family. As I tapped in the phone number, I sensed that this time, I was on a roll.¹³

Gordon was over ninety. The old aunt I recalled meeting, turned out to be his mother. Gordon remembered everything, and had all kinds of stories, phone numbers and photos. Yes, he had the phone number of the two living daughters of Jack, and the one living son of Colin. Twelve months after I set out to search for Jack and Colin's family, I introduced myself to their children. Everyone was very kind. Delightfully, Colin's son Harry, lived less than an hour from me! He and his wife and I had catch ups over cuppa's, whilst I asked questions and they shared stories and photographs of Harry's father.¹⁴ At last, I had a photograph of each of my Nana's brothers in their AIF uniforms. I could also see my Nana reflected in Harry's real-life face. Amazing!

All this connecting made me realise how late a bloomer I was with my family history, and how much story I had missed. I was so grateful for the openness of others, like Gordon, to share their morsels with me.

Story is important. It gives life to certificates and faces to names and connects you to your lineage. You know you belong there. I was so impacted by the stories of the war¹⁵, I wrote an ode¹⁶; and on an ANZAC Day during the 100th anniversary years of WW1, I laid a wreath in honour of Jack and Colin. Their story and my response to it, was complete.

So, don't waste another minute – get your genealogy on! Like a beautifully hedged maize, you will get lost, stumped, turn back, double check, follow your instincts and find your way to the end. It will turn out to be very fruitful.

...Now, where was I? Oh yes, those Spanish Raiders ... google Scotland¹⁷ ... oh, wait just a minute ... click here, click there...

'Ah! This is a bit unexpected ... perhaps they were Vikings!'¹⁸

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CROKER PRIZE FOR BIOGRAPHY 2021

2115 Nun on the Run

by Michelle Goldsmith

Nun on the run

Coming from a long line of, shall we say, religious sceptics, it was most unexpected to discover not only a Catholic nun in the family tree but one who served with Australia's only Saint, Mother Mary Mackillop.

My maternal Irish Catholic ancestor, John Hiney, arrived in Sydney, New South Wales with the 17th Regiment of Foot (Leicestershire) in 1830.¹ I am still to confirm if wife Ellen Mooney and children Patrick and Catherine travelled on the same ship although I do know the children were born in Ireland.² Elizabeth and Ellenor (Ellen) were born soon after in Sydney as the family followed John and the Regiment around the colony.³ After leaving the nomadic Regimental lifestyle in July 1835, the family continued moving, eventually settling on Norfolk Island when John became Chief Constable in 1837.⁴ Despite the relocations the family grew to include Hester, John Joseph, Sarah Agnes, James, Alice and Mary.⁵

Searching the historic digitised newspapers via Trove, I discovered an erratum in the Freeman's Journal, a publication dedicated to Catholic news. It corrected a misspelling of a surname from the previous edition; 'Hiney' had been incorrectly written as 'Heeny'.⁶ Following the trail, I discovered that Ellen, John and Ellen's fourth child, had taken the white veil of the Sisters of Mercy in St Patrick's Catholic Church in 1869.⁷ As I couldn't locate a marriage or death notice for Ellen here was a possibility I hadn't even considered!

The family had continued to move around after John was pensioned from his position on Norfolk Island in 1849, returning to New South Wales and living in Sydney, Lansdowne and finally to Campbelltown by about 1866.⁸ It made sense that the St Patricks mentioned in the newspaper was the Church at Parramatta as it was the closest to them. Unfortunately, to date, attempts to obtain information from the Sisters of Mercy about their early Sisters has been unsuccessful.

A now archived database called 'Women of Vision: An Index and History of Nuns and Sisters of the Catholic Church in Australia 1838-1918' provided answers.⁹ Expecting to find information about Ellen being a Sister of Mercy, it showed she had joined the Josephites in Penola, South Australia, on 27 May 1872.¹⁰ Her religious name had been Paulina and she died in 1917.¹¹ Ellen's mother's maiden name, Mooney, was also listed, providing vital confirmation.¹² Purchasing the death certificate for Sister Paulina Hiney confirmed she died on 27 May 1917 in Kensington, South Australia.¹³

Whilst I admit that my entire knowledge of nuns and the Catholic Church comes from watching the 1991 ABC series 'Brides of Christ', I harboured a suspicion that information about individual Sisters may have been difficult to obtain. However, discovering Sister Paulina's personal story has proven harder than I anticipated. Newspaper articles about the Order's schools or activities rarely identify the nuns individually. They are simply referred to as 'the Sisters'. No such censure occurs with the priests who are always named in full! Additionally, inter library loan arrangements have not yet resumed, thanks to COVID, rendering potentially useful items listed on Trove unavailable.

I discovered that many records concerning religious orders are held in private Church or University archives and are inaccessible to the general public. Thankfully, Roslyn Kennedy, Congregational Archivist, Sisters of St Josephs, was very helpful. Whilst I am unable to view these private records, Ms Kennedy confirmed (via email) that Sister Paulina had entered the Congregation in Adelaide and then taught at the Order's South Australian schools in Manoora (1879-1885), Burnside (1885) and Laura (1886).¹⁴ Ms Kennedy also advised that private letters in their archives prove Sister Paulina corresponded with Mother Mary Mackillop on school matters.¹⁵

Ms Kennedy provided an obituary from the newsletter 'The Garland of St Joseph', dated 16 June 1917.¹⁶

On the 16th of June a very old member of the Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph of the Sacred Heart was called to her reward. Sister M. Paulina spent many years of her religious life in the schools, and she bore the trials and hardships of the early days with a sweetness and patience which won her the love and esteem of all her companions. She worked well and faithfully till her advancing years deprived her of the ability of carrying out what her still unflagging zeal prompted her to undertake, and at length a severe illness warned her Sisters that the end was approaching, and it came quietly on the day following the Feast of the Sacred Heart. A solemn Requiem Mass and Office were celebrated for the repose of her soul at the Convent, Kensington, where she had breathed her last. The interment took place at the Mitcham Cemetery, where rest many of Sister's early companions.—R.I.P.

Being a family historian, I still have many questions about Ellen. Why had she taken the veil? Did she feel it was her only choice, still single at 39 and from a large Catholic family? Some supposition – her younger brother, John Joseph, presumably there for the gold rush, had died in 1868 in Boatman's Creek, Inanghua, West Coast, New Zealand. A notice appeared in the Freeman's Journal in July 1868, announcing that John had died on 28 February of that year.¹⁷ Discovering a loved one's death five months after it occurred would be a blow for any family. Perhaps the grief of losing a brother moved Ellen to the religious life.

How did Ellen end up as a Josephite in South Australia in 1872 when it was reported she had taken the veil in New South Wales as a Sister of Mercy in 1869? Did she complete her Mercy novitiate training? Are nuns able to transfer between Orders? Did she prefer Mary Mackillop's philosophy or was it as simple as the Order sharing a name with her lost brother? Did she maintain contact with her family in New South Wales throughout the remainder of her life? I suspect answers to my questions will be hard if not impossible to come by - not that I will stop looking! What I do know is that literature detailing the early days of the Josephites reveals they were pioneers of social welfare, believing in free education for all as well as assisting women and children in distress.¹⁸ I like to believe these

ideals inspired Ellen to become part of a community devoted to helping those in need, whatever her personal circumstances may have been.

Ellen Hiney, a single woman and thus a category often forgotten in family history research, now has her own story- albeit with many unanswered questions. She spent a lot of time on the run, moving around New South Wales as a child with her family and then as Sister Paulina, in South Australia, serving as a Josephite with Mother Mary Mackillop- an icon of Australian history. As part of that long line of religious sceptics, even I admit this most unexpected research finding makes one interesting tale!

¹ Sydney Gazette 29 July 1830, p. 2. <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article2195668>

² Patrick Hiney GRO Regimental birth indices Vol 1005 page 38 (1761-1924) [Accessed via Find my Past Sept 2019]; Catherine Hiney GRO Regimental birth indices Vol 1005 page 24 (1761-1924) [Accessed via Find my Past Sept 2020];

³ Birth of Elizabeth Hiney, GRO Regimental birth indices Vol 1005 page 36 (1761-1924) [Accessed via Find my Past Sept 2020]; Ellenor GRO Regimental birth indices Vol 1005 page 42 (1761-1924) [Accessed via Find my Past Sept 2020]; Biographical Database of Australia (B.D.A.) Source Description Pages : 17th regiment of Foot (Leicestershire) 1830-1837 www.bda-online.org.au/files/MR15_Military.pdf [Accessed online 15 April 2021].

⁴ Muster Books and Pay Lists General – April 1835-March 1836 17th Regiment of Foot (Leicestershire) PRO Records of the War Office (as filmed by the AJCP) 1770-1960 File no.: 3438 Reel no.: 3750 p. 37. <http://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-1688110355>; Norfolk Island; Returns Colony Establishment, 1833-1844 Volume 4/7330. NSW State Archives and Records. [Accessed online via Ancestry.com April 2021].

⁵ John Hiney Death certificate, DOD 16 July 1881, Registrar of NSW Births Deaths and Marriages 5728/1881.

⁶ Freeman's Journal 28 August 1869 p. 10. <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article115431855>

⁷ Freeman's Journal 21 August 1869 p. 2. <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article115433661>

⁸ 'Death of an Old Colonist' Newcastle Morning Herald and Miners' Advocate 22 July 1881 p. 2. <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article136049732>

⁹ 'Women of Vision: An Index and History of Nuns and Sisters of the Catholic Church in Australia 1838-1918'. St Bedes Catholic College, p. 113. <https://sites.google.com/stbedes.catholic.edu.au/womenofvision/home> [Accessed May 2021]

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 113.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 113.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 113.

¹³ South Australian District Death certificate transcript, Norwood District 1917 : Sister Mary Paulina Hiney. Provided by Genealogy SA.

¹⁴ Private email between author and Roslyn Kennedy, Congregational Archivist, Sisters of St Josephs, April 2021.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ 'The Garland of St Joseph', 16 June 1917, held in the Archives of Mary MacKillop and the Sisters of St Joseph, North Sydney, NSW.

¹⁷ Freeman's Journal 25 July 1868 p. 8. <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article119441394>

¹⁸ M. T. Foale, 'The Sisters of St Joseph: Their Foundation and Early History 1866-1893'. A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of philosophy in the department of history at the University of Adelaide December 1986, p. 111. The University of Adelaide. <http://hdl.handle.net/2440/21566> [Accessed online 15 May 2021].

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CROKER PRIZE FOR BIOGRAPHY 2021

2116 Fraudster or Upright Banker?

By Anne Ridley

FRAUDSTER OR UPRIGHT BANKER?

You wouldn't think that a man on trial accused of conspiracy to defraud could later become an upright banker, would you? And yet, when I started to investigate my great-great uncle's life in detail, I discovered that this had indeed happened.

I had been told that my great-great uncle, Martin Loughlin, had been successful on the goldfields and that this had allowed him to indulge in his love of horse racing. He had been successful there, too, winning both a Melbourne Cup and a Caulfield Cup¹. There had been little mention of a court case (perhaps not surprising!).

My great-great uncle, Martin Loughlin, arrived in Australia from Ireland in 1854 at the age of 21². He headed for Ballarat to dig for gold. Eventually good gold was found near a claim of his, according to the *Australasian*³, and he was able to sell some shares for about a thousand pounds. "This gave Martin a start," as he used to say. He never looked back. He must have worked hard as he was listed as a working shareholder of the Golden Gate Co-operative Company⁴, the Koh-i-Noor claim⁵, and later the Great Extended Gold Mining Company, Redan Lead, Ballarat⁶, presumably not all at once!

At the same time he started investing in other gold mining companies including the Alston and Weardale Company¹, as well as a hotel⁷ and a shop⁸ in Ballarat. And it was his decision to buy the Mt Egerton mine, a gold mine owned by the Learmonth brothers and managed by William Bailey, which led to the court case. Martin managed to raise the money to buy the mine by selling a quarter share of the mine each to his bank manager, Williamson, a Ballarat stockbroker, Edwards, and had retained Bailey as a manager by selling him the third quarter share in the mine. Within weeks the mine started to produce large quantities of gold. When Somerville Learmonth heard that Bailey, after valuing the mine as only worth £15,000, had bought a quarter share in the mine he was very suspicious. The net result was the court case in the equity court against Bailey and Loughlin alleging conspiracy to defraud the Learmonth. The trial went on for three years. In the end the defendants were found not guilty in 1876⁹. The court case has continued to attract interest with a paper published on the internet as recently as 2012¹⁰, with the debate on whether Bailey and Loughlin were guilty continuing.

Not long afterwards, in December, 1877, Martin bought the Duke and Timor Gold Mining Company in Timor¹¹. It was renamed the Duke and Timor Company and Martin was elected one of its directors¹². Martin went on to be involved in the float of three more gold mining companies in the same area, one of which was the Duke Estate Company¹³. It was while reading about the Duke Estate meeting on August 4, 1881 in the *Ballarat Courier* that I made my unexpected research finding. At the conclusion of the meeting a gentleman present introduced the subject of establishing a mining and agricultural bank in the district¹⁴. That gentleman may have been Benjamin Fink, as the bank would much later be referred to as Fink's bank¹⁵. At the meeting which followed the idea was taken up with enthusiasm. The meeting was then adjourned to the following Saturday. At the adjourned meeting, it was resolved to establish a banking company, to be called the Mining and Agricultural Bank of Australasia¹⁶.

They issued a prospectus for the floating of the new bank. There were twelve provisional directors including several well-known mining figures from Ballarat and surrounds. Among them were Bailey, Fink and Martin. Benjamin Fink was the member of the Legislative Assembly for Maryborough¹⁷.

In late September the meeting of shareholders in the Mining and Agricultural Bank was duly held and the decision was made to change the name to the Joint Stock Bank of Victoria. Surprisingly Martin, and not Fink, chaired the meeting. A board of five directors, including Fink, Williamson and Martin, was appointed¹⁸.

The bank commenced business in early October, 1881 in temporarily rented premises¹⁹. By the end of October there were some complaints about the transfer of a large number of the

best mining accounts in the district to the new Joint Stock Bank of Victoria and blaming the directors of some of these companies for thus furthering the interests of that bank²⁰.

In August, 1882 a preliminary agreement for the amalgamation of the Joint Stock Bank of Victoria and the City of Melbourne Bank was signed²⁰. This amalgamation was largely the result of Fink's efforts. What was not stated was that Benjamin Fink had reached a private agreement with City Bank's manager, Colin Longmuir, who had agreed to finance Fink in a wide variety of enterprises¹⁵.

At a meeting of shareholders in September, 1882, chaired by Martin, the amalgamation was approved. It was announced that, in future, the business in Ballarat would be carried on under the name of The City of Melbourne Bank²¹. In October at its half yearly meeting the City of Melbourne Bank announced that three of the directors of the Joint Stock Bank, Messrs Gore, Loughlin and Sargeant had accepted appointment as local directors and regretted that they had been unable to secure the services of the other three directors²².

Martin resigned as a director of the City of Melbourne Bank in 1883 when he was leaving on a trip overseas. He was not re-elected on his return²³. As it turned out he was fortunate. In 1891 both the share and mine booms collapsed. In September, 1892 Fink owed over £1 ½ million. He was only able to pay ½ penny in the pound on his debts¹⁵. In May 1893 the City of Melbourne Bank crashed, one of many casualties of the economic crash of the 1890's¹⁵.

And that was the end of Martin's short-lived and unexpected career as a banker.

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5. Robert Gay, *Some Ballarat Pioneers*, Mentone [Vic.], T.H. McBean, Printer 1935, pp. 11-12.
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CROKER PRIZE FOR BIOGRAPHY 2021

2117 I Now Pronounce You Man and Wife

by Mandy Gwan

I now pronounce you Man and “Wife”.

Genealogical research inevitably uncovers many surprises. What often makes these discoveries so surprising is that they were never intended to be unearthed by future generations in the first place. Significant efforts can be made to hide a scandal: the black sheep of the family is disowned, or certain events are simply never discussed - all in an attempt to eradicate a past shame from a family's history and preserve its pride. However, with the development of the digital age, it is easier than ever before to uncover documentation that shines a light on these family secrets and leads to some unexpected, perhaps even shocking, research findings. While researching the life of Charles George Gwan, one such finding was revealed.

Having been under the impression that his marriage to Frances Emma Smedley was his first and only marriage, a search on Trove provided evidence to the contrary. George – as he was always known – married Frances on 20 January 1940 at his and his parents' residence in Erskineville, Sydney. They were married under Anglican rites; he was forty-two and would turn forty-three in a matter of days, and Frances was twenty-three.¹ Hoping to find an engagement or marriage notice in a newspaper, a search of “Charles George Gwan” was undertaken. Instead, a series of articles pertaining to the divorce of George and a woman by the name of Juaneta Irene Rossa Buckley appeared in the search results.²

It might be expected that unearthing a marriage that had never been hinted at in family folklore was a relatively minor research surprise – multiple marriages are not uncommon - but on reading these articles, the reason for its secrecy became more evident.

At the age of twenty-eight, George married Juaneta (aged twenty-one) on 25 February 1925.³ Immediately after the Methodist ceremony, Juaneta suggested that she should reside with her friends for a month and George should return to his parents' home, promising him they would look for their future home together after the month had passed. However, Juaneta did not fulfil her promise and despite George's repeated attempts, she refused to live with him. She claimed the marriage had been a mistake and should never have happened.⁴

In a final attempt to have his marriage presume some semblance of normality, in May 1927 George took the matter to court. News of his unusual circumstance was not confined to Sydney, but was also reported in far-flung country towns. According to a report on the case in the *Armidale Express and New England General Advertiser*, George petitioned for the

¹ Marriage certificate of Charles George Gwan and Frances Emma Smedley, 1940, Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages, New South Wales, 6048/1940.

² Spelling variations between 'Juanita' and 'Juaneta' exist in the records. For consistency 'Juaneta' is used here due to multiple historical records recording her name as the abbreviated pet-name 'Neta'.

³ Marriage certificate of Charles Givan [sic] and Juaneta I. R. Buckley, 1925, Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages, New South Wales, 585/1925.

⁴ 'They were Married Two Years but Never Lived Together; Curious Divorce Story', *Daily Telegraph*, 19 May 1927, p. 10, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article245746587>; 'Marriage Never Consummated', *North West Champion*, 6 June 1927, p. 6, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article185526169>; 'Marriage Never Consummated', *Richmond River Herald and Northern Districts Advertiser*, 27 May 1927, p. 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news->

restitution of conjugal rites. The judge was aghast and ordered Juaneta to return to her husband.⁵ She defied the court's order and refused to live with her husband.⁶

The reason behind Juaneta's decision to marry George and then refuse to be his wife has not been unearthed in any historical documents nor discussed amongst George's descendants. It could be assumed from the initial newspaper coverage of the debacle that George himself was never made aware of her thinking. When questioned by the judge in the matter of seeking restitution of conjugal rites, George was asked that specific question and admitted he had no answer.⁷

Perhaps his bride's hesitancy – fear, even – was racially or politically motivated. George was the son of George Wing Lee Gwan and Catherine Lum Tin. George senior had migrated to Australia in the early 1870s from Canton, China; Catherine was the half-Chinese daughter of Lum Tin (also a migrant from Canton) and his wife of English-Irish descent, Lavinia Hampton.⁸

The refusal of his wife to make a life with him eventually drove George to file for divorce and on 6 February 1930 – his thirty-third birthday – he was once again a free man.⁹ Or so he thought. Further research into Juaneta Buckley-Gwan's fate after her divorce from George revealed another bizarre and unexpected tale.

Although it would be another ten years before George remarried, the same year her divorce from George was final, Juaneta married Norman Lang, registering her maiden name as Buckley, not Gwan.¹⁰ The couple had homes in various Sydney suburbs and lived for a time in the Blue Mountains, but eventually came to reside at 44A Oatley Avenue in the southern Sydney suburb of Oatley – three houses away from George and his new bride, Frances, who were living at number 36. The earliest record discovered of the Langs living in Oatley is the electoral roll of 1943.¹¹ George and Frances Gwan moved to their Oatley home sometime between their marriage in 1940 and the death of George's father at the residence in 1942.¹²

⁵ 'Married but a Bachelor: Peculiar Legal Puzzle', *Armidale Express and New England General Advertiser*, 24 May 1927, p. 3, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article192070391>.

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¹⁰ Marriage certificate for Norman H. Lang and Neta I.R. Buckley, 1930, Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages, New South Wales, 4826/1930.

¹¹ Australia, Electoral Rolls, 1903-1980, for Norman Harold Lang, Neta Irene Rossa Lang, Frances Emma Gwan, Charles George Gwan, Ancestry.com.

¹² Death notice of George Gwan, *Sydney Morning Herald*, 10 July 1942, p. 10, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news->

Whether the Langs knew prior to their move to Oatley that they would be living in such close proximity to the Gwans will probably never be known. However, both couples remained at their Oatley Avenue addresses in excess of twenty years, with the Langs mysteriously moving to the nearby suburb of Kingsgrove for approximately five years and then returning to 44A Oatley Avenue in 1954.¹³ There must have been a degree of tolerance, or even forgiveness, between George and Juaneta for the Langs to willingly return to Oatley Avenue and remain at that address until Juaneta's death in 1964.¹⁴

George passed away on 20 February 1960 in his Oatley home, leaving his forty-three year old widow to raise their two teenaged sons and infant daughter.¹⁵ Although he effectively lost five years of his life in a farcical marriage, the twenty years he spent with Frances, who loved him and embraced his Chinese heritage, are presumed to have been worth the wait.

An unexpected research finding can, while conceivably bringing shock and disbelief, also instil a pride for one's ancestor. The descendants of Charles George Gwan are proud of his tenacity. They are proud of the capacity he displayed to recoup his self-respect and live a happy and meaningful life after a cruel humiliation he never deserved.

¹³ Australia, Electoral Rolls, 1903-1980.

¹⁴ Ibid; Juanita Irene Rossa Lang, Australia Cemetery Index, 1808-2007, Ancestry.com.

¹⁵ Death certificate of Charles George Gwan, 1942, Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages, New South Wales, 7086/1942.

CROKER PRIZE FOR BIOGRAPHY 2021

2118 Where the Coolabahs Grow

by Jim Fleming

Where the coolabahs grow¹

William Kemp 1826-1897

William Kemp was a stockman and blacksmith who, with his wife Emma Elliott, raised a family of sixteen children before he died at Coonamble Hospital on 29 April 1897, aged 71 years². Superficially, he lived the life of a typical currency lad who grafted a living using the skills of a station hand that had seemingly been absorbed during childhood like the nutrition in his mother's milk. But his story is much more interesting because of the unexpected fact that his mother, known to him as Mary², was a member of the Mowgee clan of the Wiradjuri nation.

Mary had survived the brief Bathurst War of 1824 when Wiradjuri resistance warriors faced a detachment of the 40th Regiment under martial law. Their leader Windradyne had taken a large party to Parramatta where he sued for peace. Her tribe thus lost their lands and their means of making a traditional living³.

Mary had entered a relationship with Isaac Kemp (a convict from Sussex⁴) that may have been part of her clan's strategy to peacefully integrate outsiders into their world. According to research by Phillipa Gemmell-Smith⁵:

Offers of sexual relationships with women were encumbered with intricate kinship relationships and expectations of continuing obligations to [her] kin ... as a means of bringing newcomers into appropriate relationships with country.

Two years later, William was born on the Blackman family's *Cooyal* station near Mudgee² where his father was a stock keeper⁶. Isaac worked there on and off for twenty years, even after he gained his ticket of leave in 1828⁴. He and Mary probably had a hut in nearby Kemp's Valley. Mary must have died before William's tenth birthday because Isaac married Margaret Murphy in 1836⁷ and Sarah Shervington in 1839⁸. Consequently, he did not absorb his aboriginal heritage but instead spent his childhood learning the skills of a stockman from his father.

When Isaac finally got his pardon in 1842⁹, he bought a dray and bullocks and reverted to his earlier work as a carrier¹⁰. William probably acted as his off sider, slowly traversing many bush tracks.

William worked most of his adult life on cattle stations in the Macquarie Marshes near Quambone. He probably first journeyed to this area with his father carrying supplies for the Blackman family station *Nugal* near Walgett.

In July 1855, father and son were in Dubbo at the same time as George Gibson¹¹, an ex-convict who had become a wealthy station-owner based in the Marshes¹². He may have hired Isaac's bullock dray to bring his newly arrived sister (Frances nee Gibson) and her teenaged children (Emma and George Elliott) from Sydney to Mudgee¹³.

While her mother and brother stayed in Mudgee, Emma continued to Gibson's station (*The Molle*) where she was to be a companion to her aunt and governess to her cousins. But things did not work out¹³.

In November 1856, Emma eloped with William Kemp who had probably been working on nearby *Canonba* station on Duck Creek. They married at Montefiore¹⁴ (Wellington) before continuing east to the familiar Mudgee District where their eldest son (William) was born in 1857¹⁵. Two years later, Emma's mother Frances (a nurse and midwife) was present for the birth of her granddaughter Frances at *Warrangee* station (near Rylstone)¹⁶.

Isaac Kemp was run over by his dray and killed at Cobbora (between Dubbo and Dunedoo) on 11 April 1857¹⁷. Before the news reached William, the police had informed their superiors in Sydney that "he has no relative as next of kin in the Colony" and the Supreme Court had promptly authorised the Curator of Intestacy to administer the estate¹⁸.

William's solicitor provided a copy of Isaac's 1856 will¹⁹ but the embarrassed official, referring to William as "a half caste son of the deceased", reported that "I am unable to say whether [the will] was executed prior to the death of the deceased"²⁰. The clear implication was that William was multi-racial and therefore unreliable and had probably forged the will. Thus, William was denied his inheritance. The net proceeds from the sale of Isaac's dray and bullocks was paid into the NSW Treasury and his fourteen horses were not accounted for at all²¹.

Soon afterwards, Bathurst detectives investigated the written allegations of Mr Joseph Cope that William Kemp, Pat Donohoe and Thomas Sinden were cattle thieves²². He wrote that "this William Kemp is a half caste and is supposed to be good for some more [stolen cattle]" and suggested that they target William first as he would probably give up the others. Nothing came of this except that Sinden sued Cope for libel and won damages of twenty-five pounds.

These incidents illustrate that William almost certainly experienced racial prejudice and associated bullying throughout his life. This could explain why his family moved around so much during the early years of his marriage. Between 1861 and 1868, seven children were born on *Merri Merri Creek*²³, *Mobala*²⁴, *Mungrabambone*¹⁵, *Carrabear*²⁵ and *Quambone*²⁶ stations.

Five more children were born during a decade of stability at *Bokemah* station where William worked as a blacksmith between 1869 and 1877²⁷. But he also had to bury his mother-in-law Frances Gibson there in 1870²⁸ and his daughter Elizabeth in 1877²⁹.

William and Emma's first grandchild (Edgar Kemp) was also born at *Bokemah* in 1877³⁰, son of their eldest daughter Frances Kemp and station owner Samuel Elliott (who was middle aged and married). It was probably this breach of trust that prompted William to move his family once again. His last two children were born at *Emby* station in 1879 and 1881³¹. In his later years, the family settled in the town of Coonamble.

Emma survived him by 34 years³², by which time their dynasty included 130 grandchildren, 90 great-grandchildren and three great-great-grandchildren³³.

Despite losing his aboriginal culture, William Kemp successfully integrated into colonial Australia and raised a large family out where the coolabahs grow.

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- ⁶ *Colonial Secretary - James Blackman Jr*, 14 June 1823, page 519, Archives Office of NSW. Also - *Colonial Secretary - James Blackman Jr*, 26 July 1824, page 327, Archives Office of NSW. Also - *Colonial Secretary - James Blackman Jr*, 16 May 1825, page 322-3, Archives Office of NSW.
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- ¹⁷ Death Certificate, Isaac Kemp, Registry of Births Deaths and Marriages, NSW, Vol 1857 No 9.
- ¹⁸ Kemp, Isaac 1857 file 2042 (Probate Packets), NSW State Records, Kingswood, NSW. Affidavit of Constable James Samuels, 24 Apr 1857. Order of the Supreme Court dated 8 May 1857.
- ¹⁹ Kemp, Isaac 1857 file 2042 (Probate Packets), NSW State Records, Kingswood, NSW. Undated letter from Stuart Darby to Alfred Pickwood.
- ²⁰ Kemp, Isaac 1857 file 2042 (Probate Packets), NSW State Records, Kingswood, NSW. Memoranda written by Alfred Pickwood (Police Office Dubbo) on 8 May 1857 and 24 May 1857.
- ²¹ NSW Government Gazette No 96, 13 Jul 1858, page 1091, retrieved May 4, 2021 from <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-page12610236>
- ²² Monday March 22nd, 1858. (1858, March 27). *Bathurst Free Press and Mining Journal (NSW: 1851 - 1904)*, p. 2. Retrieved May 23, 2021, from <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article64377272>
- ²³ Birth Certificate Vol 226 No 7043, Emily Kemp, (20 Jun 1861), NSW Registry of Births Deaths and Marriages.
- ²⁴ Birth Certificate 7923/1864, Lucy Kemp, (1 May 1864), NSW Registry of Births Deaths and Marriages.
- ²⁵ Birth Certificate No 763, Henry Isaac Kemp, (1 May 1864), NSW Registry of Births Deaths and Marriages.
- ²⁶ Birth Certificate No 902 8651/1868, James Kemp, (1 May 1864), NSW Registry of Births Deaths and Marriages.
- ²⁷ Birth Certificate Vol 1869 No 10207, Sydney Edward Kemp, (9 December 1869), NSW Registry of Births Deaths and Marriages. Birth Certificate No 706 1872, Ada Louisa Kemp, (1 May 1864), NSW Registry of Births Deaths and Marriages. Birth Certificate No 2209 10607/1877, Marita May Kemp, (1 May 1864), NSW Registry of Births Deaths and Marriages.
- ²⁸ Death Certificate, Frances Pirie, Registry of Births Deaths and Marriages, NSW, Vol 1870 No 3353.
- ²⁹ Death Certificate, Elizabeth Kemp, Registry of Births Deaths and Marriages, NSW, 4825/1877.

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- ³⁰ Birth Certificate No 21 11460/1877, Edgar Kemp, (26 Nov 1877), NSW Registry of Births Deaths and Marriages.
- ³¹ Birth Certificate 22587/1881, Edith Ivy Kemp, (18 Jun 1881), NSW Registry of Births Deaths and Marriages.
- ³² Death Certificate, Emma Kemp, Registry of Births Deaths and Marriages, NSW, Vol 1931 No 19973.
- ³³ Country News (1931, December 14). *The Sun (Sydney, NSW: 1910 - 1954)*, p. 5 (Final Extra). Retrieved May 23, 2021, from <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article224276980>

CROKER PRIZE FOR BIOGRAPHY 2021

2119 A Connection to the Sea-Faring Cat, Trim!

By Rhonda Kroehnert

A CONNECTION TO THE SEA-FARING CAT, TRIM!

ANDREW GOLDIE, GUNNER, ROYAL NAVY

Having had a longtime interest in the story of Matthew Flinders (1774-1814) and his cat, and best friend, Trim, I could hardly believe it when I encountered an unexpected research finding: my four times great grandfather, Andrew Goldie, was a gunner on the discovery ship *HMS Reliance*, where Trim had been born in 1797. Flinders and Trim were to serve together on ships *HMS Reliance*, *HMS Investigator*, *HMS Porpoise* and *HMS Cumberland*. Unfortunately, Trim suffered an untimely death while on Isle of France (Mauritius), where Flinders was kept prisoner for seven years on his way home to England.¹ France, at this time, was at war with England. I was so thrilled to have a connection to this adventurous feline. Now I needed to find out more about my ancestor, Andrew Goldie.

Statue of *Trim* on outside window sill,
Mitchell Library, Sydney.



The son of James Goldie, a bricklayer, and Agnes Blackstock, Andrew Goldie was Baptised on 25 August 1765 at Dumfries, Scotland.²

In his teens, Goldie commenced a seven-year apprenticeship by joining the London Guild of the Company of Watermen and Lightermen in January 1784. From early times, the river Thames had been used as a main highway for moving people (Watermen) and goods and cargo (Lightermen).³

This apprenticeship led to Goldie becoming a warrant officer in the Royal Navy, joining when aged about 26 years.⁴ Goldie's birth year varies from 1766-1769 in the British Royal Navy Ship's muster records.

Goldie served on *HMS Reliance* from 1794 to 1801.⁵ During the ship's trip to Port Jackson, arriving in September 1795, Andrew would have spent many hours interacting with the colony's future notable residents. On board were Commander Henry Waterhouse; George Bass, the ship's doctor; Matthew Flinders, navigator and hydrographer; John Hunter, the newly-appointed Governor of the colony of New South Wales; and Woollarawarre Bennelong. An Aboriginal man, Bennelong was returning to Sydney after a three-year visit to London with Governor Arthur Phillip, who had been learning the customs and language of the Indigenous people. Also carried on board, and stored in the cutter of *Reliance*, was the six-foot boat named *Tom Thumb*, which Bass and Flinders would use to charter the coastal inlets and rivers around Port Jackson.⁶

My four times great grandparents, Margaret Fogarty and Andrew Goldie, produced a child, Mary, who was born on 25 August 1800,⁷ six months after Goldie left the colony.

Margaret had arrived on the convict ship *Britannia* III in July 1798. For at least two months, Margaret was living on *HMS Reliance* and Mary was conceived on or about 25 November 1799. The ship was on a two-month round voyage, carrying passengers to and from Norfolk Island.⁸

While based in Sydney, *HMS Reliance* made four trips to Norfolk Island in 1796-99, and to the Cape of Good Hope in 1796, returning in 1797 to secure supplies of live animals to improve the Government meat stocks in the colony. Goldie (Mr. Gouldie [sic]) purchased six calves for the mess, and a goat and kid.⁹ One might imagine the later were for Margaret. Trim the cat was born on this voyage in early 1797.

Goldie had been involved in affairs of the settlement, including serving in the Vice-Admiralty court with naval colleagues, Waterhouse and Flinders.¹⁰ Governor Hunter was very impressed with Goldie and hoped to keep him in the colony as chief gunner and ordnance storekeeper. Due to the ship being low in officers, he was unable to stay.¹¹ Waterhouse wrote a letter of recommendation for Goldie to return to the colony and take up Hunter's request,¹² but this did not eventuate.

Before Goldie left the colony in March 1800, it is possible that he introduced Margaret to Richard Cheers, a moderately successful butcher, publican and land owner thinking he would look after her. However, their relationship was a volatile one, with Margaret taking Cheers to court for selling her house, and for maintenance of their first child, although they went on to have two more children. Margaret died in 1810 aged 39 years; an inquest revealed her death was due to "excessive inebriety."¹³

Serving in the English Royal Navy firstly as able seaman on the ship *HMS Assistant*,¹⁴ Goldie rose through the ranks from quartermaster, gunner's mate, master's mate, acting gunner and gunner from 1794-1818 on *HMS Reliance*, *HMS Overijssel*, *HMS Defence* (on which he fought in the 1805 *Battle of Trafalgar*), and *HMS Princess Augusta*.¹⁵ Listed amongst professions such as mariners, shipwrights and boatswains, Goldie was made a mason with the Lodge of Moral Reformation on 23 November, 1800.¹⁶ He received his pension Certificate of Service for service in the Royal Navy of over 20 years on 9 October 1818.¹⁷ A parish official of St. Nicholas, Deptford from 1825-1830, Goldie was responsible for administering funds to the poor.¹⁸

The Battle of Trafalgar was fought near Cape Trafalgar, Spain between the 27 ships of the British fleet, and a total of 33 French and Spanish ships. A naval engagement of the Napoleonic Wars, it established Britain's naval dominance for more than 100 years.¹⁹

After returning to England, Goldie, resided in Chatham, Kent (Royal Navy Dockyard), and married Mary Fearnall in 1806 at St. Margaret, Lee Terrace, Kent.²⁰ They had two sons, Andrew and James.

Towards the end of his naval career, Goldie went into the coal merchant business, firstly with his in-laws, under the firm Joshua Fearnall and Co. This partnership was dissolved by mutual agreement in 1813.²¹ Another partnership was with Joshua Fearnall and John Brown. That venture ended in 1815.²² A final partnership with John Brown ended in bankruptcy.²³

Goldie died in 1839 at his home at Union Street, Deptford, Kent. In his Will his possessions were left to his wife.²⁴ He was buried on 5 June at St. Paul's Church of England, Deptford aged 73 years.²⁵

Whenever I leave the State Library of New South Wales, after an afternoon of family history research, I always look for Trim on his window sill, right where I expect him to be. Now I am also reminded of my unexpected ancestor, Andrew Goldie.

¹ Flinders, M, *A Biographical Tribute to the Memory of Trim*, Angus & Robertson, An imprint of Harper Collins Publishers, Australia, 1997.

² Family History Library, SLC Utah, Church of Scotland parish registers for Dumfries, Dumfriesshire, Scotland, 1605-1855, Film No. 1067959, 1067960.

³ *Find My Past*, Binding Records 1692-1949, Thames Watermen & Lightermen 1688-2010; *The Company of Watermen & Lightermen of the River Thames*, <https://watermenscompany.com/>

⁴ *Find My Past*, British Royal Navy, Ships' Musters, record transcriptions 1791.

⁵ TNA, Navy Pay Office, Entry Books of Certificates of Service, Admiralty: gunners, UK, *Naval Officer and Rating Service Records, 1802-1919*, Catalogue ref: ADM 29/3.

⁶ *HMS Reliance (1793)* Wikipedia - information from: Colledge, J. J. and Warlow, Ben (2006). *Ships of the Royal Navy: the complete record of all fighting ships of the Royal Navy*, Rev. ed., London: Chatham. ISBN 9781861762818. OCLC 67375475; George Bass

http://www.davidreilly.com/australian_explorers/bass/bass.htm; Matthew Flinders,

http://www.abc.net.au/navigators/captains/flinders_print.htm

⁷ SRNSW, Reel 5001, St. Philip's Church of England baptism register, Ref: V18001100 1A/1800.

⁸ Family History Library, SLC, Utah, Film No. 2206102, Muster-Table of His Majesty's Ship Reliance 1 Nov & 31 Dec 1799, PRO ADM 36/13399, Admiralty muster books (series 1), 1766-1807. (Margaret Fogarthy [sic] mustered on the ship at Port Jackson on 30 Oct 1799 and mustered off at Port Jackson on 26 Dec 1799).

⁹ Cumpston, J. S., *Shipping Arrivals and Departures, Sydney, 1788-1825*, Vol. 1, 2nd edition, pps. 30-33, 35, A Roebuck Book, Canberra 1977; *Historical Records of New South Wales*, Vol. 3, 1796-1799, Livestock re Reliance, pps. 237-238.

¹⁰ *Historical Records of New South Wales*, Vol. 3, 1796-1799, Mutiny on the Barwell, pps. 453-472.

¹¹ *Historical Records of New South Wales*, Vol. 4, 1800-1802, Hunter to Portland, p. 60.

¹² TNA, Series: CO 201/17, p. 308-9, Reel PRO 8 & 9, New South Wales. Original Correspondence. Waterhouse to Rose & Ong, Joint Secretaries of His Majesty's Treasury, Despatches Apr-Dec 1800 (AJCP ref: <http://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-1234>).

¹³ SRNSW, Colonial Secretary's Papers, 1788-1856, NRS 898, Reel 6021, 4/1819, pp. 77-82, Inquest of Margaret Cheers.

¹⁴ *Find My Past*, British Royal Navy, Ships' Musters, record transcriptions 1791-93.

¹⁵ TNA, Trafalgar Ancestors, www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/trafalgarancestors, Catalogue ref: ADM36/15942 & ADM 29/3.

¹⁶ *Ancestry.com*, United Grand Lodge of England Freemason membership registers 1751-1921, Folio No. 335.

¹⁷ TNA, Navy Pay Office, Entry Books of Certificates of Service, Admiralty: gunners, UK, *Naval Officer and Rating Service Records, 1802-1919*, Catalogue ref: ADM 29/3; *Find my Past*, British Royal Navy Ship's Musters 1791-1800.

¹⁸ Family History Library, SLC, Utah, Register of Electors, Kent, England, 1570-1907, microfilm No. 1656725, 1656726, 1656900, Churchwardens and Oversees of the Poor of Saint Nicholas, Deptford, Kent.

¹⁹ Britannica, Battle of Trafalgar, <https://www.britannica.com/event/Battle-of-Trafalgar-European-history>

²⁰ *Ancestry.com*, London Metropolitan Archives; London, England; *London Church of England Parish Registers*; Reference Number: DW/T/1000.

²¹ *Find My Past*, London Gazette 27 November 1813, p. 2391.

²² *Find My Past*, London Gazette 13 May 1815, p. 905.

²³ *Find My Past*, London Gazette 9 March 1816, p. 473, 8 August 1818, p. 1430, 8 March 1823, p. 385.

²⁴ TNA, Cat. Ref.: Prob 11/1912, Records of the Prerogative Court of Canterbury.

²⁵ Family History Library, SLC, Utah, Film No. 254588, Bishops transcripts for St. Paul's Church, Deptford, Kent, 1801-1843, burial of Andrew Goldie.

CROKER PRIZE FOR BIOGRAPHY 2021

2120 My Most Unexpected Research Finding

By Gordon Sanson

'My most unexpected research finding'

One character in my ancestry, on my mother's side, is Agnes Prowse who lived in Devon, England between 1576 and 1672. I certainly didn't expect that through her, I'd work out a further 1000 years of my ancestry.

In August 2013 I watched an episode of *Who Do You Think You Are*, the celebrity was Cindy Crawford, an American supermodel who was finding out all about her family. Her first day pursuing genealogy, in the first part, she was given a 12 generation family tree and in the second part, she was given a 43 generation chart tracing her ancestry all the way back to Charlemagne by none other than historian and editor of *Burke's Peerage and Baronetage* 106th Edition, Charles Mosley. What stirred me was that her family tree included a Prowse. Agnes Prowse married John Trowbridge on 31 July 1597 in Tiverton, Devon. It was their son Thomas (1598-1672) who went to America in 1636, settling in the New Haven Plantation, from whom Cindy Crawford was descended.

Up to the point in seeing that show, the oldest ancestor I had got back to was John Prowse, christened on 8th November 1741 at the Parish Church of St. Buryan, county of Cornwall, England. I wanted to see if I could link back from him to Agnes Prowse, but I could only get back to Robert Prowse b1593 who was the father of Bednego Prowse b 1625, but there were simply no green leaves on either Robert or Bednego. I had hit a dead end.

COVID-19 afforded me the time to return and try afresh, and it was on 13 November 2020 that I made an amazing breakthrough, from a Pedigree Resource File database in Family Search, which linked Bednego Prowse born in St. Buryan, Cornwall in 1625 with the Prowse's from Devon. Submitted by a Randall Prowse, who had been researching Prowse Genealogy both traditional and with DNA for over 50 years, his family tree included both Robert and Bednego, and these linked back to Agnes Prowse. Both the Prowse's that went to America in 1650 and my family that came to Adelaide in 1860 came from this family line. Randall described visiting Tiverton, Devonshire, England for two weeks in September 2018. There he met other Prowse researchers and visited a home a few miles north of Tiverton where a Great Aunt lived in 1575 – it was the home of Agnes Prowse. He also described how another ancestor, Richarda Prowse, lived in Tiverton Castle, and Randall was privileged to stay there for two weeks. It was a great pity I did not know at the time or I could have joined them. Now I'll have to wait for the end of this Covid period before I can travel to Devon.

Getting back to Agnes Prowse in that way immediately linked me to the research of another American, Lt. Col Paul L Nichols (accepted by the Order of Charlemagne in USA), presented by Charles Mosley on the show, which took our tree down to Charlemagne. This connected me with original research which showed the way the Prowse spelling had evolved from the French adjective "Preuz" meaning gallant or valorous, to Preaux, Prouz, Prouse, and Prowse (and in some cases the Latin variation, Probus, was used).

In Family Search Books section, I found a Prowse Family History by Susan Prowse Tako on a celebration of the deeds and daring's of the descendants of Osbert Probus c 1080 son of Eudo de Preaux which revealed how my ancestors came to England from France, describing a village of Le Preaux near Rouen, Normandy, and Eudo de Preaux, owner of Castle Preaux. Eudo married the cousin of Guillaume de Normandie (William the Conqueror), who inherited the right to the throne of England as a child. Eudo was called the "family uncle" and served as cousin protector of him, and in that role, protected William from assassination (indeed four of my ancestors lost their lives in thwarting such assassination attempts on him). Over 50 of my ancestors served as leaders in William's army and arrived in England with him in 1066. They were also involved in the preparation of the famous Domesday Book. In recognition of their service, William as the new King of England granted them land at Chagford in Devon and our family occupied this site and still live there today. Many early Prowse's in England married into leading English aristocratic families, and several took an active part in major events in British history, they were involved in each of the 3 Crusades also Lawrence Prowse as Captain of a Fireships in 1588 Spanish Armada, and alongside Nelson at Trafalgar William Prowse commanded the "Sirius".

Following the link from Agnes to Eudo, it was easy to connect with my Viking ancestry (seen in my DNA with 7% Norway and a further 4% Denmark and Greenland). Eudo's wife, Rohaise de Clare, was a descendant of Rollo the Northman, as detailed in *Trowbridge Viking Ancestry and the Normans*. King Charles of France had allowed Rollo to settle with his people in Normandy on the provision of abandoning plundering and accepting life under Christian principles. As a reward for his success in governance, Rollo was made the first Duke of Normandy. His grandson Richard, the third Duke of Normandy with William the Conqueror the 7th.

Another source used to check the information describe above was *Ancestral Roots of certain American Colonists Who Came to America before 1700* Eighth Edition by Frederick Lewis Weis.

So really it has been a most unexpected research finding, all turning on the mention of Agnes Prowse in a TV show. It is just as Charles Mosley said, that through Agnes Prowse we were descended from European royalty in abundance. William the Conqueror 1027-1086 is my 23rd GGF, Hrolf Rognvaldson Rollo 842-931 is my 30th GGF, and Charlemagne 747-814 is my 39th GGF. It is all remarkably interesting and exciting to find all this family history.

CROKER PRIZE FOR BIOGRAPHY 2021

2121 Mrs Bebtzen's Walnut Workbox

By Sue Bulbrook

Mrs Bentzen's Walnut Workbox



I suspect my workbox, photographed here, has known its history for almost 150 years. Whilst recently researching my Bentzen family, I unexpectedly discovered an 1873 Illawarra Mercury newspaper articleⁱ describing my very workbox as a “very elegant walnut workbox”ⁱⁱ. This fortuitous find has caused excitement in my family, as the stories of both Mrs Bentzen and her walnut workbox have been unintentionally overlooked. There is beauty in the box itself, particularly the mother-of-pearl decorations. However, it is Mrs Bentzen’s hands and seemingly gentle natureⁱⁱⁱ that have given rise to this story.

In 1873 Mrs Syrena Bentzen accepted a gift, “a slight souvenir of our affection”^{iv} because she and her husband were to leave the Church of England Wollongong School and move to Rylstone, near Bathurst. Mr Bentzen had been the teacher at the school, but he was to become a Curate in the Bathurst Diocese of the Church of England^v. The Wollongong families were saddened to see them leave, particularly as Mrs Bentzen had assisted with sewing instruction in the school. The parents and children gave my walnut box to her, accompanied by beautiful sentiments and speeches. The newspaper article describes a memorable farewell.^{vi}

Leaving Wollongong, Mrs Bentzen filled her workbox with sewing notions and moved to Rylstone. In 1875 Mr Bentzen was ordained as a Priest to serve at the Church of England in Rylstone.^{vii} The Bentzen family moved to Rylstone with no less than seven children^{viii}. The eldest, born in 1859 and named William Rudolph^{ix}, is my great grandfather. It is reasonable to suppose Mrs Bentzen was a busy sewer and you can imagine the weekly mending she had to contend with. Two more children were born at Rylstone^x, where Mrs Bentzen and her workbox were constantly together. In 1879 the Reverend HTA Bentzen was asked to act as “locum tenens” at St John the Baptist Church in Mudgee and became the incumbent minister the same year^{xi}.

And so, Mrs Bentzen, her family, and her walnut workbox moved to Mudgee. She formed wonderful friendships among the families in Mudgee and was considered an active church worker^{xii}. As a teenager, Mrs Bentzen had learned skills as a servant in her English home^{xiii} county of Somerset^{xiv}, however the skills taught and practised during her voyage as an assisted immigrant^{xv} to the colony of New South Wales proved invaluable. The 1857 *Herefordshire's Matron's Work Book*, kept faithfully by Matron Kentish, details the reading, writing and sewing that was deemed imperative by the British Ladies' Female Emigrant Society^{xvi}. I speculate that these learned skills enabled her to work confidently in the Mudgee Parsonage and Parish, as the minister's wife.

Grief struck the Bentzen household when Mrs Syrena Bentzen died in 1892^{xvii}, at not quite sixty years old. She was held in high esteem within the church family and the Women's Guild placed a stained glass memorial window in the Mudgee church in her honour. It still looks beautiful today and complements the stained glass window memorialising her husband, HTA Bentzen.^{xviii}

The Venerable Reverend HTA Bentzen remarried in November 1893 and Miss Emily Jane Rouse became the Reverend's second wife^{xix}—a second Mrs Bentzen to care for my workbox. However, sorrow quickly filled the Mudgee Parsonage again when the Reverend died, just three months later^{xx}. The grieving Mrs Bentzen moved into Mortimer Street, Mudgee,^{xxi} along with some of her stepchildren, namely Thirza and Sigward Bentzen^{xxii}.

Mrs Bentzen's (Emily Jane) death^{xxiii} in 1934 resulted in another move for my walnut workbox. This move was to Sydney and Thirza safeguarded the walnut workbox inside her cedar chest.

When Thirza Bentzen died in 1945^{xxiv}, my mother—who was born a Bentzen and is great granddaughter to Syrena Bentzen—remembers my workbox arriving in her Campsie family home, some time after the Second World War. Mrs Bentzen's walnut workbox was extracted from its cedar custodian^{xxv} and placed into gentle hands. These hands belonged to another Mrs Bentzen, a Dorothy Hester^{xxvi}. I remember seeing this Mrs Bentzen (my grandmother) using the elegant workbox for her particular sewing purposes.

As the current carer of Mrs Bentzen's workbox, I am obliged to treasure its beauty but, more importantly, to capture its story, the story of Mrs Bentzen and her walnut workbox.

ⁱ <https://trove.nla.gov.au/search/category/newspapers?keyword=bentzen&l-state=New%20South%20Wales&l-decade=187&l-title=669> Illawarra Mercury, 4 Nov 1873

ⁱⁱ <https://trove.nla.gov.au/search/category/newspapers?keyword=bentzen&l-state=New%20South%20Wales&l-decade=187&l-title=669> Illawarra Mercury, 4 Nov 1873

ⁱⁱⁱ <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/62726847?searchTerm=bentzen>

^{iv} <https://trove.nla.gov.au/search/category/newspapers?keyword=bentzen&l-state=New%20South%20Wales&l-decade=187&l-title=669> Illawarra Mercury, 4 Nov 1873

^v <https://trove.nla.gov.au/search/category/newspapers?keyword=bentzen&l-state=New%20South%20Wales&l-decade=187&l-title=669> Illawarra Mercury, 4 Nov 1873

^{vi} [https://trove.nla.gov.au, Evening News \(Sydney, NSW: 1864-1931\)/ Wed 24 Jan 1894/ page.4](https://trove.nla.gov.au, Evening News (Sydney, NSW: 1864-1931)/ Wed 24 Jan 1894/ page.4)

^{vii} [https://trove.nla.gov.au, Evening News \(Sydney, NSW: 1864-1931\)/ Wed 24 Jan 1894/ page.4](https://trove.nla.gov.au, Evening News (Sydney, NSW: 1864-1931)/ Wed 24 Jan 1894/ page.4)

^{viii} William Rudolph, Thirza Eliza, Thorvald Sigward, Eva Dagmar, Albert A, Victor Valdemur, Adolph Sigward (original birth certificates held in family)

^{ix} NSW BDM #2542/1859 Balmain, William Rudolph Bentzen

^x Violet Victoria NSW BDM #19262/1875; Claude HJ NSW BDM #20235/1877

^{xi} 125 Years of Parish Life, St John the Baptist Church, Mudgee, published by church 1966

^{xii} <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/162179631?searchTerm=bentzen> Sat 4 Jun 1892, The Sydney Mail and New South Wales Advertiser

^{xiii} https://www.ancestrylibrary.com.au/search/categories/34/?name=clyrena_harris&birth=1832 Syrena Bentzen, nee Harris, born 30 Dec 1832, South Petherton, Somerset, England

^{xiv} <https://www.ancestry.com.au> 1851 English Census, Syrena (misspelt "Lyrena") is listed as a servant in the Hurd household, Seavington St Mary, Somerset

^{xv} http://indexes.records.nsw.gov.au/ebook/list.aspx?series=NRS5316&item=4_4793&ship=Herefordshire NSW State Archives, Index to Assisted Immigrants Arriving Sydney and Newcastle, 1844-59

^{xvi} Matron's Work Book, sighted by author at NSW State Archives Kingswood, NRS-5239-3-[9/6213], 1857 papers

^{xvii} NSW BDM, #8622/1892 Mudgee, Syrena Bentzen death 26th May, 1892, Mudgee

^{xviii} From St John the Baptist Church, Mudgee, Window booklet held by author. Mrs Syrena Bentzen is window #6, Archdeacon HTA Bentzen is window #8.

^{xix} NSW BDM 4994/1893 Bentzen marriage to Rouse (original held by family)

^{xx} NSW BDM 8733/1894, HTA Bentzen death 23rd January, 1894, Mudgee

^{xxi} <https://www.ancestrylibrary.com.au> Electoral Rolls, 1903-1980

^{xxii} <https://www.ancestrylibrary.com.au> Electoral Rolls, 1903-1980

xxiii NSWBDM #11059/1934 Emily Jane Bentzen death 5th May 1934 Mudgee

xxiv NSWBDM #14362/1945 Thirza Eliza Bentzen death 12th July 1945 Lewisham

xxv Oral history, Mrs Maureen Dagmar Upfold (nee Bentzen), January 2021 at Pennant Hills, NSW

xxvi NSWBDM #17010/1929, Hurstville Dorothy Hester Smith married Thorvald Alexander Bentzen (original held in family)

CROKER PRIZE FOR BIOGRAPHY 2021

2122 Fifteen Words

By Sarah Hewitt

Fifteen words...

Fifteen words started it all. Fifteen words on an Administration which I had purchased in my youthful naïveté. Fifteen which words said:

"The marriage of the said intestate with Fanny Venn having been dissolved by Decree Absolute..."ⁱ

Fifteen words which lead to the story of a woman who, up until then, was expected to have had a normal upper middle-class life of marriage and children. Fifteen words that were my most unexpected research finding.

Fanny Venn was born Fanny Keeling in 1837 in Tottenham, Middlesex (now London) to John Keeling 1796-1884) and his wife Maria nee Howard (1800-1880). Her father was a "Colonial Produce Broker"ⁱⁱ and the family lived an upper middle-class life. This included spending time with her grandmother Ann Keeling (nee Robinson) (1760-1856) at the Keeling home in Broxbourne, Hertfordshireⁱⁱⁱ.

On 7 January 1858 she married William Webb Venn (1838-1896), son of William Webb Venn (1812-1894) and Jane Wilson (1807-1884) at St Mark's Church, Clerkenwell. William was a notary public and worked for the firm established by his grandfather John Venn and Sons. In his spare time, he was a member of the London militia.

The newly-weds lived in Tottenham and then Manor Park Lee, London. Nine months later they welcomed their first daughter Florence Marion (1858-1941). She was followed by a son William Eustace (1861-1922) and a second daughter Ethel Mary (1865-1867).

In 1865 William Frederick Ebbs (c.1836-1880) entered their lives. Ebbs was a surgeon (often used as a catch-all phrase for doctor) and an "intimate friend" of the family as well as their "medical attendant". He occasionally would stay overnight at their home.

On the 20 June 1868, William left the Venn house to inspect his troops. Fanny also left the house saying she was going to visit her sister Marion-Howard Francis (1833-?) in Northampton, some 70 miles away. A few days later William went looking for her. She was not to be found in Northampton, but was traced to Dublin, Ireland in the company of Ebbs. There they had been living as husband and wife for five weeks.

William immediately sued for divorce^{iv} citing adultery which has occurred not only at in Dublin but at their home in Manor Park Lee. Meanwhile Fanny and Ebbs decided to leave the country for Australia. Newspapers reported "Mr Venn met them at the docks as they were about to embark and gave Mr. Ebbs a good thrashing"^v.

William had claimed damages from Ebbs in the divorce case. However, "considering that there was little chance of recovering such, and thinking he had taken his damages out of the co-respondent by the pounding he had given him, the claim was abandoned"^{vi}. William was granted a *decree nisi* on 8 May 1869. The *decree absolute* to follow on 16 November 1869.

It is unlikely Fanny and Ebbs spent any time in Australia. Ebbs is found advertising his services in Oamaru, New Zealand in March 1869^{vii}. Living together as husband and wife, it is likely that it wasn't long before Fanny got pregnant. This would explain why in early September 1869, they took a trip to Dunedin, over 110km's away to get married^{viii}. If there was a pregnancy, no live child was born from it. It is not known how much Fanny knew about the divorce proceedings back in London. The decree absolute was yet to be granted so her marriage to Ebbs was slightly bigamous.

Fanny and Ebbs had a son Charles Frederick Ebbs in July 1870 in Oamaru. In early 1871, they moved north to Wanganui (now Whanganui) where they lived on Victoria Avenue "opposite the English Church"^{ix}. There they had a daughter Alice Emily (1872-?). While little is known of her activities, she was a member of the Christ Church Choir^x.

Two years after arriving in Wanganui, in April 1873, the family returned to Britain on the *Zealandia*. An advertisement to auction their furniture and household items states they are "leaving for home on important business for a few months"^{xi}.

They returned to Ireland and lived in Co Waterford. On the death of his youngest brother in 1876, Ebbs inherited some of the family estate - Leabeg at Newtownmountkennedy, Co Wicklow. Ebbs died there in 1880 aged only 44^{xii}.

Fanny's father John Keeling died in August 1884. He left an estate of £40,618 1s 8d^{xiii} - a fortune worth millions in today's terms. His six surviving children appear to have been divided into two groups - the "good" ones and the "naughty" ones. The naughty ones got a small annuity. The good ones split his fortune. Widowed Fanny's annuity may have been very useful.

In December 1885, Fanny and her Ebbs children left Ireland for Preston, Lancashire. There they stayed with Ebbs' sister and brother-in-law Elizabeth Martha Ebbs Sibthorp and the Rev Henry James Myler Sibthorp. There she met her third husband.

Fanny married William Henry Phillips (1843-Bef 1911) in 1886 in nearby Ashton-on-Ribble. They had no children, but he had a daughter Ethel Marian (1876-1959) from a previous marriage. Phillips was a "licensed lay reader" and appears to have travelled around a lot. In 1901 they were living in Welwyn Garden City, Hertfordshire.

Tragedy was to strike Fanny in July 1908. Her son Charles committed suicide by taking prussic acid in Bath, Somerset. Testimony from Phillips suggests he may have been estranged from his mother as they had not seen Charles for some time^{xiv}. The inquest also found that he was an alcoholic. Everything suggested he was an unhappy soul.

By 1911, Phillips had died and Fanny was living in Banwell Somerset with her stepdaughter Ethel. It was there she died in 1915.

Fifteen words. Fifteen words opened up a life that involved travelling half way around the world. And back again. Fifteen words that had taken one husband to three and a life that was most unexpected.

ⁱ Administration of William Webb Venn, 8 May 1896.

ⁱⁱ 1851 Census

ⁱⁱⁱ 1841 Census

^{iv} The National Archives of the UK; Kew, Surrey, England; Court for Divorce and Matrimonial Causes, later Supreme Court of Judicature: Divorce and Matrimonial Causes Files; Class: J 77; Piece: 85; Item: 858, 1868.

^v 'Venn v Venn and Ebbs', *The Times* (London), 10 May 1869.

^{vi} 'Venn v Venn and Ebbs', *The Standard* (London), 10 May 1869.

^{vii} 'Business Notices', *North Otago Times*, 19 March 1869, 1.

^{viii} New Zealand Marriage entry for William Frederick Ebbs and Fanny Keeling, 1869/1569

^{ix} *Wanganui Herald*, 11 May 1871, 4.

^x Harding and Denton Photograph Collection, National Library of New Zealand, Photograph of Christ Church Choir includes Fanny and Ebbs.

^{xi} 'Sales by Auction', *Wanganui Herald*, 29 March 1873, 3.

^{xii} Ireland Civil Registration, Death Entry for William Frederick Ebbs, 1880, South Dublin.

^{xiii} National Probate Calendar, Entry for Keeling John Esq, 1884.

^{xiv} 'The Widcombe Suicide', *Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette*, 23 July 1908, 8.

CROKER PRIZE FOR BIOGRAPHY 2021

2123 Mary's Ordeal

By Jacqueline White

Mary's Ordeal

Annie Elizabeth Dyer was born sometime between 1833 and 1838, possibly at Parramatta. This is all I could guess about her early life.

She married James Henry Dixon in Maitland in 1853 and they had at least nine children. Widowed in 1869, she married John Adams in 1878 and bore another child before being widowed again in 1879. Many of her children predeceased Annie, but it appeared that her life was well-documented, if a bit obscure as to some details – e.g. her exact age and place of birth. With the registration of the birth or death of each child, there were inconsistencies and in the pre-digital age when I began family history research, I pursued the most accessible records. So I left Annie there. After all, there were another 63 great-great grandparents to research. Years later I met some distant cousins and looked at their chart – they said her name was Moore. I had relied on information from the marriage certificate of her daughter Henrietta in 1884 and there was no mention of that name. One of my sisters is very skilled at historical research, and together we concluded that the name Dyer probably referred to William Calvin Dyer of Maitland. The convict records showed that Mary Ryan was granted a Ticket of Leave in 1837 and permission to marry William Dyer in 1838. Mary had been transported to NSW on the *Surrey* in 1833. There were two women named Mary Ryan on that voyage. One from Tipperary accompanied by her son. The other, younger, Mary Ryan from County Clare, was accompanied by her baby daughter, Ann. That must be her! The prison records my sister discovered referred to Ann's father as "Maule".

Having trouble with the computer in the SAG's reading room in Kent Street, I began looking at The Hunter Valley Register, bound volumes of typed summaries of family notices and found an entry for Mary Dyer's death on 3 August 1895. The Maitland Mercury noted that "Mary was relict of late William Calvin Dyer, formerly of Raworth Farm near Morpeth. Daughter was A.E. Dixon". I couldn't wait to tell my sister - and she couldn't wait to tell me that she had found Annie's parents in a transcript of the birth registration of Annie and James Dixon's daughter, Clara. The informant was William Calvin Dyer, grandfather. Mary Dyer was a witness. To have found these records independently on the same day was a breakthrough and we regarded the date, March 17, as an omen. It was St Patrick's Day!

Now we were sure that Annie had been born in Ireland. There are gaps in the convict records of the 1830s but I found a reference to Mary on a microfiche index at the State Library. The records themselves are at the Kingswood State Archives Office. When the folder containing the document was delivered I sat down and with gloved hands unfolded yellowing and brittle pages which seemed to have been untouched since 1833. As I was trying to flatten the pages I saw the words "Court House, Goulburn Plains 20th June 1833 - Proceedings of an enquiry into the cause of the death of a female child which took place at this Township last night-".

This document was a record of the terrible ordeal of Mary Ryan and her infant daughter Annie. Lachlan McAlister, JP, conducted the hearing. He had taken depositions from Mary as well as traveller Catherine Lawless, settler William Merritt and Trooper Martin Doyle of the Mounted Police. Mary said that yesterday week she was assigned out of the Factory at Parramatta. From the time she left Malachi Ryans between Liverpool and Parramatta her master did not supply either herself or her baby with any food and she was obliged to beg for charity. One night she

had to sleep with her baby in the open air. She said that on Monday Wells had left her at Joseph Peters' public house about twenty miles away. Catherine Lawless said she had met Mary at Peters Inn and found her "in great distress" with the baby appearing to be "in a dying state". Miss Lawless gave her a bed alone with her own servant woman, got her supper and then brought her to Goulburn Township. She said "nothing could be more decorous and proper" about Mary's behaviour. About four hours after they arrived at Goulburn, the baby died.

William Merritt and Martin Doyle both had a low opinion of Wells and his wife. The record of these proceedings was enclosed with a letter to the Colonial Secretary requesting information as to how Wells was able to obtain a servant and advising that Mary would stay with a decent household until her future was decided by the Governor. A reply from the Female Factory enclosed the original typed application form with which Wells applied for a Dairy Maid. George Bunce, JP noted "the Applicant is a very decent man and his wife just about to be confined". William Wells was later placed on the register of convicts banned from obtaining female servants. There was no note of where or when the baby was buried.

In August 1895 The Maitland Mercury reported that the late severely cold weather has proved very trying on aged and infirm people of the district and during the last few days more than the ordinary number have succumbed. One was Mary Dyer, who had lived in Morpeth Road before it was even formed. She had become bent with age, though up to a comparatively short time before her death she had been seen about town. She leaves numerous descendants residing in East Maitland. The funeral procession left the residence of her daughter, Mrs Dixon. How much did Mrs Dixon know about her mother's life? Did her mother tell Annie about Ireland or what happened at Goulburn? Or her father?

Annie Elizabeth Dyer was born sometime between 1833 and 1838, possibly at Parramatta. This is all I can guess about her early life.

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CROKER PRIZE FOR BIOGRAPHY 2021

2124 Elenor McGuinn – A long Journey Home

By Andrew Redfern

Elenor McGuinn – A Long Journey Home

The nightly mail train pulled into Dubbo just before 9am on Monday, September 16, 1907, having left Central Station, Sydney twelve hours before.¹ Onboard was Elenor McGuinn, returning to her birthplace for the first time in seventeen years. The family were well known in Dubbo, her father Luke had been the first Clerk of Petty Sessions and her elder brother, Denis had recently been elected mayor.² Elenor's ticket had been paid for by her family at a cost of seven pounds, one shilling and sixpence, more than three times the first-class single adult fare³. Calculated at sixpence per mile, Elenor was given her own special compartment, clearly identified with her name for the 283-mile journey. This special treatment had also been afforded her mother some two years previously in 1905. Despite the expensive fare and special treatment, Elenor knew nothing of her journey. The special compartment was in the brake van, and she was being transported to her own funeral. She was dead. Having passed away ten days earlier on 14th September 1907 at the age of 42⁴, this would be her final journey.

Born on 12th June 1865,⁵ Elenor was the third eldest daughter and sixth child of Luke McGuinn and Sussanah Carroll. Her mother and maternal grandparents emigrated from Ireland, aboard the Duchess of Northumberland, arriving in Hobart in December 1854. Also on board was her father as the ship's schoolmaster.⁶ The journey to Australia proved to be a successful courting period for her parents it seems, as they were married in January 1855 at St Joseph's Catholic Church, Hobart and subsequently moved to New South Wales, settling in Dubbo in the early 1860s.

Affectionately known as Nellie, Elenor grew up in Dubbo. At the age of eight, she had an attack of Scarlet Fever which caused her to become deaf.⁷ Despite treatment for her condition, there was little to no improvement. Nellie became quite an accomplished musician.⁸ Her sister, Mary, says, "She was of a bright happy disposition, but rather excitable and most particular about her appearance."⁹

Following the death of her father in 1887, Nellie, her mother and some of her siblings moved to Sydney, settling in a home at Railway Parade, Marrickville which they named Dubboville – the connection with the Central West town remained strong. The family relocated to Elizabeth Bay for two years before returning to Dubboville where her life changed dramatically. At the age of thirty-eight, on 28th October 1904, Elenor was declared medically insane and was admitted to the Callan Park Asylum for the Insane at 5pm the very same day.¹⁰ Research at the State Records, NSW had produced the most unexpected research findings. A copy of her death certificate in the Deceased Estate Files¹¹ led to the discovery of her extensive mental health records.¹²

A statement by her sister Mary,¹³ found within these records, recounts the full story of Elenor and her struggle with mental illness over several years. The statement speaks of the many attempts of the family and various doctors to assist Elenor but despite their efforts, appeared to have little effect. This emotional narrative shows Mary's despair who had lived with and cared for her sister for many years, becoming her primary carer following their mother's death. Elenor's medical history includes details of the removal of most of her teeth and

Submitted by Andrew Redfern

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episodes of nervousness and suspicions of people talking about her and the family, including a fear that people were trying to kill them. Elenor broke her leg sometime around 1903, and this, as predicted by her doctor, had a good effect on her mind until a fever attacked resulting in her decline and ultimate institutionalisation. The medical notes from her time in Callan Park continue a sad story of hallucinations, hearing voices, episodes of paranoia and depression. She is reported as constantly talking nonsense and did have violent outbursts towards other residents. The ultimate cause of her death was recorded as tuberculosis.¹⁴

Following her requiem mass at St Brigid's Church, Dubbo, she was interred in the Roman Catholic section of the Dubbo cemetery in the McGuinn family plot along with her brother, father, uncle, and mother. Elenor's other sister, Susan was also interred with the family after her death in 1948.¹⁵ Elenor never married and her obituary states she was remembered as a kindly, helpful, and popular lady before her illness.¹⁶

Elenor died intestate but in 1951, letters of administration were applied for by Rosa Mary McGuinn,¹⁷ the wife of Elenor's brother, Denis who had died in 1940. When prospective purchasers of a property in Mary Street, Dubbo enquired as to the owner, it was discovered that Elenor held the title. Letters of administration were granted, and the sale of the property proceeded.¹⁸

While there are no living relatives who knew Elenor directly, her memory continues to live on with a great-grandniece as well as a 3rd great-grandniece both having her first name. The uncovering of unexpected records has led to Elenor's story being told, one which may have been forgotten over time. The story of Elenor McGuinn demonstrates the love and support of family, despite mental health difficulties. The special treatment she received on her final train journey to Dubbo shows great care and attention from her family as they returned their dear Elenor home.

¹ Research conducted via email from NSW Railway Historical Society, Alexandria.

² Dubbo City Council annual report to ratepayers 1989, Richmond Villa, Society of Australian Genealogists, Item Number: 04/017819

The Dubbo Liberal and Macquarie Advocate, Wed 6 Feb 1907, Page 3, ELECTION OF MAYOR.

<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/77238934>

³ Information from Railway Historical Society, research conducted by email.

⁴ NSW Births, Deaths & Marriages, 8051/1907

⁵ NSW Births, Deaths & Marriages, 8227/1865

⁶ Archives Office of Tasmania; Tasmania, Australia; Descriptive List of Immigrants; Film Number:

SLTX/AO/MB/138; Series Number: CB7/12/1/1-3. Source Information:

Ancestry.com. Tasmania, Australia, Passenger Arrivals, 1829-1957 [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA:

Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2011.

⁷ Statements Re E McGuinn by her sister, M. McGuinn. Contained with Medical Case Books, Callan Park Mental Hospital, State Records, NSW. NRS-4994

⁸ Dubbo Dispatch and Wellington Independent, Wed 18 Sep 1907, Page 3, Death.

<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/227034833>

⁹ Medical Case Books, Callan Park Mental Hospital, State Records, NSW. NRS-4994

¹⁰ Admission Files, Callan Park Asylum for the Insane, State Records, NSW. NRS-4984

¹¹ Probate Packs, State Records, NSW. NRS-13660-31-10143-Series 4_377957, Elenor McGuinn - Date of Death 14/09/1907, Granted on 12/07/1951

¹² NSW Births, Deaths & Marriages, 8051/1907

¹³ Statements Re E McGuinn by her sister, M. McGuinn. Contained with Medical Case Books, Callan Park Mental Hospital, State Records, NSW. NRS-4994

¹⁴ Medical Case Books, Callan Park Mental Hospital, State Records, NSW. NRS-4994

¹⁵ <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/182426088/eleanor-mcguinn>; Dubbo and District Family History Society; Collection Title: Dubbo and District Cemeteries, Vol. 5; Reference: Dubbo Cemetery. Source Information: Ancestry.com. Australia Cemetery Index, 1808-2007 [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations Inc, 2010.

¹⁶ The Catholic Press, Thursday 26 September 1907, pg 27;

<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/106297204>

Dubbo Dispatch and Wellington Independent, Wednesday 18th September 1907, page 3.

<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/227034833>

¹⁷ Probate Packs, State Records, NSW. NRS-13660-31-10143-Series 4_377957, Elenor McGuinn - Date of Death 14/09/1907, Granted on 12/07/1951

¹⁸ Dubbo Building Permits & Land Transfers, The Dubbo Liberal and Macquarie Advocate, Wednesday 5 September 1951, page 2. <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/131341198>

CROKER PRIZE FOR BIOGRAPHY 2021

2125 The Coffey Connection

By Sharon Greene

The Coffey Connection

DNA testing has become the latest trend in family history researching and with very clever advertising, a phenomenal success with television adverts where a possible ancestor will whisper: I have stories to tell - come find me! After thirty-three years of research I took a leap of faith with my parents, the three of us tested with FamilyTreeDNA in 2015, a year later with Ancestry.com.

Triangulation of results with my parents and me became invaluable, as I was readily able to see which side of my family the results belonged. Plus the confirmation my long and careful research was correct. Over the next few years results were to prove both puzzling and a revelation, in more ways than one.

My reason for DNA testing was my fraternal great grandfather, George Arthur FRANCIS. Years of checking at every opportunity: shipping arrivals, BDM's, books, databases, Trove, State and National Archives, anywhere I happened to be with any possible link to genealogy, for this elusive ancestor. The perplexing thing was George had potentially 'three Christian names' which needed checking, rightly or wrongly, under any of these three names George, Arthur or Francis.

His marriage in Bathurst, NSW on 4 January 1882ⁱ stated he was born in NSW, a miner, 36 years of age; his parents were listed as John FRANCIS and Margaret MANNING. Most of this information was added later in 1931 when the registers were recalled to Sydneyⁱⁱ. Birthplace NSW, now that really narrows things down! I could never locate his parents' marriage or their arrival into Australia separately, as a couple or George's birth.

This line remained dormant until my DNA results started to arrive in mid 2016. Of my initial thirteen results, seven had a COFFEY surname as very close markers to my father. Coffey was a name I had never encountered in my research. DNA was still very new to me and Jim Coffeyⁱⁱⁱ in New York advised me that my father was a Coffey descendant, as DNA does not lie. FTDNA provided accurate connections back eight-twelve generations (200-300 years) however I needed a connection closer in time and Ancestry appeared to offer that. My parents and I tested with Ancestry.com.

So began my search for a Coffey connection. Using Trove again I reduced my search strategy to 'George Arthur' and did not include the usual Francis name. Immediate results appeared with two advertisements, in the Sydney Morning Herald, Tuesday 27 April 1858^{iv}:

We hereby caution the public against harbouring or employing the undermentioned Boys – four in number – having left their homes on last Sunday afternoon, named respectively Alfred BURNS

age 15; George Arthur F COFFEY, aged 14; Edward James GEIGIAN, age 13; Tobias TURNER age 12 years. Any person harbouring these said boys after this notice, will be prosecuted according to law.

Signed: John COFFEY, Thomas WORMBARTON, John TURNER. Castlereagh-street.

Oh my goodness! Could it be? Could my George Arthur FRANCIS be this lad George Arthur F COFFEY and he simply dropped the Coffey surname? The second Trove result confirmed my suspicions and gave me that ahhh!! moment.

Sydney Morning Herald, Persons Advertised For: Thursday 3 June 1858^v:

George Arthur F. COFFEY, who left his home on 23rd April, in company with three other boys, age fourteen, height five feet, light complexion, full light blue eyes, dark hair : supposed to be in the Swamp slaughter-houses. Any information of his whereabouts will be thankfully received by his afflicted mother, who is in very bad health since he left, and she offers £2 reward to anyone that will bring him home, and his mother promises him forgiveness and kind treatment. John COFFEY 303 Castlereagh-street.

With this information I went back to NSW BDM and found a George Arthur F Coffey born 1844^{vi}. Because it was pre-1856 I was able to confirm these details on microfilm at my local library^{vii}. George Arthur COFFEY was born 19 April 1844 to John COFFEY and Margaret LEGASS^{viii}. George continued his trend of using their correct Christian names.

Genealogy is about discovery, checking, re-checking and the odd hunch. Emailing an Ancestry cousin^{ix} I put forward my theory about George, he gave me contact details to a living Coffey person. Long story short: I asked a total stranger to test with FTDNA, Robert Coffey, a 3xgreat grandchild of John Coffey. FTDNA results gave zero genetic distance between Robert and my father^x. Thus proving my theory correct and discovering new ancestors: John^{xi} and Margaret^{xii xiii} both from Ireland.

John was soldier, a mounted policeman, a labourer and a drunkard^{xiv} and perhaps George had much to flee. Margaret was a needlewoman and dressmaker^{xv}, and a survivor; she supported herself and her remaining family for well over forty years.^{xvi xvii}

DNA enabled me to continue this line of research and my most unexpected research finding was to discover that my parents are related. No, not through marriage alone, as my mother said when I told her but through blood. My parents share a set of great grandparents (1xgreat for father and 2xgreat for mother) perhaps not unusual considering Sydney's population in the 19th century. In 1848 George and Sarah GREEN (nee Skidmore) arrived in Sydney aboard the *Waterloo* ^{xviii} with their six adult children. My father is descended from the eldest son Mark with my mother via the youngest son Jesse. It was through triangulation of my Ancestry results I discovered George and Sarah Green on both sides of my family.

I have attended many workshops over the years and one presenter spoke of the importance of recording your own family history because within three generations the

family stories are lost: it made an impression on me at the time and after my discovery became more poignant. Discovery and connection is what family history is all about however we need to record our stories for our families and generations to come.

My Ancestry research did 'have some stories to tell'.

NB: John died 1861^{xix} and Margaret died 1906^{xx} ^{xxi}, George never returned home.

ⁱ New South Wales, Birth, Death and Marriages, purchased 29 May 1986

ⁱⁱ *ibid*

ⁱⁱⁱ Email: received from Jim Coffey, New York USA, arrived 4 Apr 2016

^{iv} Sydney Morning Herald (NSW : 1842-1954) Tues 27 Apr 1858, p. 1, Trove: trove.nla.gov.au, accessed 2016

^v *Ibid* ... Thurs 3 Jun 1858, p. 1, Trove: trove.nla.gov.au, accessed 2016

^{vi} NSW, BDM, pre 1856 microfilm, 1040/1844 V134, accessed microfilm in Campbelltown library

^{vii} *Ibid*

^{viii} NSW Transcription agent, Joy Murrin, Baptisms transcription (1040/V134), supplied 7 April 2017

^{ix} Email: received from Steven Williamson, Newcastle NSW, arrived 8 June 2017

^x FamilyTreeDNA: www.familytreedna.com/my/y-dna-matches, accessed 30 Sep 2017

^{xi} John Christopher Coffey: native of Kerry Ireland, arrived in colony 1824 as a soldier in 3rd Regiment of Buffs

^{xii} NSW, Australia, Assisted Immigrants Passenger Lists, 1828-1896: *Red Rover* 10 August 1832: accessed via Ancestry.com.au account, Sep 2017

^{xiii} Rushen, Elizabeth and McIntyre, Perry; *Fair Game : Australia's first immigrant women*, Spit Junction, NSW: Anchor Books, 2010

^{xiv} Empire (Sydney, NSW : 1850-1875) Central Police Court - Thursday, Fri 7 Oct 1859, p. 2

^{xv} Margaret Legass: native of Wicklow Ireland, arrived in the colony 1832 needlewoman aboard the *Red Rover*

^{xvi} Sands Directories: Sydney and NSW, Australia, 1858-1933, 1865: p. 33 (listing), p. 196 (index): accessed via Ancestry.com.au account, Jan 2018

^{xvii} Sands Street Index, 1861-1930, 1885: p. 52: accessed via Ancestry.com.au account, Jan 2018

^{xviii} NSW, Australia, Unassisted Immigrant Passenger Lists, 1826-1922: *Waterloo* 11 Dec 1848: accessed via Ancestry.com account, Sep 2017

^{xix} SMH, family notices, death: Tues 5 Nov 1861, p. 1, John Christopher Coffey: native of Kerry Ireland, arrived in this colony in 1824 as a soldier in 3rd Regiment of Buffs

^{xx} NSW Transcription agent, Marilyn Rowan, Death transcription (1906/8820), supplied 2 June 2017

^{xxi} SMH, death notice: Sat 8 Sept 1906, p. 12, at Protestant Hospital, Newington, Parramatta River

CROKER PRIZE FOR BIOGRAPHY 2021

2126 Arthur

Arthur

“Arthur James Donnelly” was the name his son had wanted to know all his adult life, but unfortunately, was never told. Discovering Arthur a century later was an unexpected research find made possible by combining DNA genealogical research tools with traditional research methods.

The task of analysing and mapping DNA matches onto a hypothetical tree was a painstaking but essential process to help identify possible candidates for further research. This analysis led to a convincing cluster of DNA matches and ultimately the breadcrumb trail to “Arthur J Donnelly”. Unexpectedly, Arthur’s 81-paged war service record revealed a note acknowledging his “ex-nuptial son”.^{1 2} This, along with DNA matches, confirmed it was Arthur.³

North Sydney railway camp sounds like an unusual birthplace, unless like Arthur, you are the son of a railway employee. Arthur James Donnelly was born on 20 March 1892 to John Henry Donnelly and Jemima Absalom.⁴

Arthur was a middle child with 3 sisters and a younger brother.⁵ The Donnelly family lived in Bellevue Street, North Sydney, before moving a stone’s throw away to Raleigh Street, Cammeray, around 1908.^{6 7} Family members would call Raleigh Street home until the 1980s.⁸

Arthur’s father fell ill in 1898 with Acute Phthisis (Tuberculosis).⁹ The Donnellys would spend the winter of 1901 mourning the death of John, with his widow, Jemima, left to raise five children aged 4 to 13 years.¹⁰

¹ National Archives of Australia [NAA], Australian Imperial Force, Base Records Office; Series: B2455; *First Australian Imperial Forces Personnel Dossiers 1914-1920*; DONNELLY, A J. Item Title: DONNELLY Arthur James: Service Number - 2136; Place of Birth - Sydney NSW; Place of Enlistment -Liverpool NSW; Next of Kin - (Mother) DONNELLY Jemima. Department of Defence Minute Paper dated 17 February 1921, p 39. Service number 2136 is a common identifier across multiple sources. No BDM certificates acknowledge a paternal connection.

² NAA:B2455, DONNELLY A J. Notation about distribution of medals, exact date unknown, p 14.

³ Ancestry.com.au. Ancestry Family Trees, W & R’s Tree, Owner: Folium. q.v. Arthur James Donnelly (1892-1918). 2020.

⁴ New South Wales Registry of Births, Death and Marriages, Birth Certificate of Arthur James DONNELLY (1892 No. 32828). Transcription.

⁵ Ancestry.com.au. Ancestry Family Trees, W & R’s Tree, Owner: Folium. q.v. Arthur James Donnelly (1892-1918). 2020.

⁶ Ancestry.com.au. *Sydney, Australia, Anglican Parish Registers, 1814-2011* [database online]. Lehi, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2017. Original data: Sydney Diocesan Archives, Anglican Church Diocese of Sydney. Sydney, New South Wales, Australia. Hilda May DONNELLY, Baptism, June 1897, North Sydney, NSW, Australia. Residential address listed on record.

⁷ Liz Agnew, Local History/Reader Services, North Sydney Council, Raleigh Street Cammeray/Donnelly enquiry, email to author, 21 April 2021.

⁸ New South Wales Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages. Death Certificate of Ann Amelia JACKSON (1983 No. 25771). A A JACKSON (né DONNELLY) was also known as Millie.

⁹ New South Wales Registry of Births, Deaths, and Marriages, Death Certificate of John Henry DONNELLY (1901 No.11235). Transcription.

¹⁰ Ancestry.com.au. Ancestry Family Trees, W & R’s Tree, Owner: Folium. q.v. Arthur James Donnelly (1892-1918). 2020.

Arthur became a carpenter by trade, which his mother believed was a “good trade” with a good income.^{11 12} It is likely that Arthur’s employer was JW Eaton Limited given his younger brother, John, also initially a carpenter, completed a 2-year apprenticeship at Eaton.¹³ The timber company operated at McMahan’s Point, not far from where the brothers’ lived.¹⁴

Aged 19, Arthur learned he was to become a father. It was not happy news given the views of the day about children born out of wedlock.¹⁵ No marriage eventuated with one theory being a difference in religions may have played a part.

In the autumn of 1912, the Donnelly family celebrated the marriage of Arthur’s sister, Jennie.^{16 17}

With the birth of his own child imminent, Arthur attended the wedding festivities knowing there was no approval for any marriage of his own with the mother of his child.

¹¹ NSW State Archives, NRS-13660-7-1062-Series 4_97745, Arthur James Donnelly, Date of Death 15 April 1918. Probate Granted on 20 November 1919.

¹² NAA:B2455, DONNELLY A J. Handwritten letter from Jemima Donnelly dated 2 February 1920 to the Australian Imperial Force Base Records Office in Melbourne, Australia, p 41.

¹³ National Archives of Australia [NAA], Australian Imperial Force, Base records Office; Series: B2455; *First Australian Imperial Forces Personnel Dossiers 1914-1920*; DONNELLY, J L. Item Title: DONNELLY John Leonard: Service Number - N/A; Place of Birth - Sydney NSW; Place of Enlistment - Sydney NSW; Next of Kin - (Wife) DONNELLY Maude. Occupation details shown, p 1.

¹⁴ Warne, Catherine, *Pictorial History of the Lower North Shore*, (Australia: Kingsclear Books, 2005), p.27. Illustration of JW Eaton worksite. John Leonard Donnelly lived at 26 Thomas Street, North Sydney, close to the site of JW Eaton. Originally the company was located in Arthur Street, North Sydney.

¹⁵ NAA:B2455, DONNELLY A J. Handwritten letter from Jemima Donnelly dated 2 February 1920 to the Australian Imperial Force Base Records Office in Melbourne, Australia, pp 41-42.

¹⁶ Ray Flarey, Email correspondence to author entitled ‘Our tree connection’, 10 January 2021. Advice in part was that Arthur is pictured in the wedding photos alongside his sisters, Millie and Hilda. However, without any remaining older generations, Ray was unable to refer to anyone with a view to identifying Arthur from the two brothers pictured.

¹⁷ New South Wales Registry of Births, Deaths, and Marriages, Marriage Certificate of Jemima Jane DONNELLY and William Alfred FLAREY, (1892 No. 32828). Jemima (daughter of Jemima) known as “Jennie”

Child maintenance was sought which Arthur paid.^{18 19} The amount was appealed with court dates published in the papers.^{20 21 22 23}

Arthur enlisted on 18 April 1915.²⁴ Private Arthur James Donnelly's first experience of war was Gallipoli.²⁵ He survived, only then to be sent to the trenches of the Western Front.

Another unexpected research find was the discovery of the diary of Lieutenant Ben Champion, who fought alongside Arthur in the 1st Battalion. In fact, their campaigns were to end on the same day, in the same place.²⁶

Arthur first emerges from the pages of Champion's diary on 26 July 1916 at Pozieres:

*"Our worst day ever... Today we lost more men than in the hop over... This was a so called wood called Pozieres. Lieut. Beavis took charge of A company and under him, we did our best, but casualties were high. Of course Fritz shelled us unmercifully absolute murder infilade fire, dozens buried alive, most awful sights I've ever seen, awful. Trenches on trenches of mutilated bodies. Digging one another out. I was buried twice. Reg Oram lost nerve – shellshock – was buried. Donnelly wounded."*²⁷

Arthur survived Pozieres, albeit with a gunshot wound to the right arm.²⁸ After time spent in Colchester Military Hospital in England, he would later return to his Battalion in France.²⁹

¹⁸ NSW State Archives: Supreme Court of NSW, Probate Division; NRS 13660, Probate packets. Series 4-97745 Arthur James Donnelly - Date of Death 15/04/1918, Granted On 20/11/1919.

NSW State Archives: Supreme Court of NSW, Probate Division; NRS 13660, Probate packets. Series 4-90040, Arthur James Donnelly - Date of Death 15/04/1918, Granted On 20/11/1919.

¹⁹ NAA:B2455, DONNELLY A J. Handwritten letter from Jemima Donnelly dated 2 February 1920 to the Australian Imperial Force Base Records Office in Melbourne, Australia, p 41.

²⁰ National Library of Australia, Trove, Sydney Morning Herald (NSW: 1842-1954), Saturday 6 July 1912, 8. Appeal for Arthur Donnelly.

²¹ State Records Authority of New South Wales; Kingswood, New South Wales, Australia; Clerk of the Peace: NRS852, Registers of Appeals from Courts of Petty Sessions to Sydney and Country Quarter Sessions 1903-1922, 1910-1917: Series Number:852; Reel:3664. New South Wales, Australia Criminal Court Records, 1830-1945. Checked but depositions were not retained for Petty Sessions in 1912.

²² LAW NOTICES. FRIDAY, JUNE 21. SYDNEY QUARTER SESSIONS. *Daily Telegraph*, (Sydney, NSW: 1883-1930), Friday 21 June 1912, 5. Notification of venue and Court number. No. 2 Court, Darlinghurst, on Thursday 27 June 1912.

²³ LAW NOTICES. FRIDAY, JUNE 28. SYDNEY QUARTER SESSIONS. Appeal Fixtures. *Daily Telegraph*. 28 June 1912, 4.

²⁴ NAA:B2455, DONNELLY A J. AIF War Service Record, p 1.

²⁵ NAA:B2455, DONNELLY A J. AIF War Service Record, p 3.

²⁶ Penny Ferguson, (Granddaughter of Ben Champion), Multiple email correspondence to and from author, including 15 April 2021.

²⁷ Ferguson, Penny. *Ben and His Mates: The War Diaries, Letters and Photographs of Lieutenant Ben Champion 1st AIF, 1915-1920 / Edited by Penny Ferguson*. (Australia: Echo Books, 2018), p 241.

²⁸ NAA:B2455, DONNELLY A J. Casualty Form – Active Service, 5.

²⁹ NAA:B2455, DONNELLY A J. Casualty Form – Active Service, 5.

Arthur may have reflected during his recovery, on his maternal grandfather's own experience of war. James Absalom, a Crimean war veteran, had spent over a year in the trenches at Sebastopol.^{30 31}

Arthur loved football.³² Newspaper articles in his pre-war years appear to suggest he played rugby and cricket.³³ Even in the carnage, Arthur didn't lose his love of football.³⁴ The 1st Battalion's diary in 1918 records Arthur in a game of rugby union against the 13th Battalion.³⁵ The 1st Battalion won.

In April 1918, the Battalion moved up Pradelles Road and set down outside of Hazebrouck.³⁶

Lance Corporal Arthur James Donnelly's survival skills and luck abandoned him on 15 April 1918 in Pradelles, France.³⁷ His service record provides few details other than a reference to a "special death report".³⁸ Insight on that final day, however, is found in Ben Champion's diary.

*"We had been resting around the hedges of Pradelles all the morning which were occasionally being shelled when I was hit on the left leg at the shin and knocked over and turned the other way...It appears HQ had been shelled out of their possey as well and were all out in the fields."*³⁹

Arthur was killed in the attack.⁴⁰ Ben survived, only to lose his lower left leg in surgery.⁴¹

³⁰ "A Veteran's death". *Cumberland Argus and Fruitgrowers Advocate*, (Parramatta, NSW) 17 November 1909, 2. James came to Australia from England with his wife, Mary Anne (Brown) on the *Golconda* in 1857. "Absalom" and "Absolom" variations can appear across multiple sources.

³¹ Ancestry.com UK, *Military campaign Medals and Award Rolls, 1793-1949* [database online] . Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2010. National Archives of the UK; Kew, Surrey, England: Class: WO 100; Piece: 34. Entry for James Absolom, Service Date: 1854-1855; Service Place: Crimean War; Regiment or Unit: Transport Corps; Regimental Number: 405.

³² League Rugby. Comments and Personal Pars. *Sun* (Sydney, NSW: 1910-1954) 24 May 1912, p 10.

³³ How's that? *Sun* (Sydney, NSW:1910-1954), 17 November 1911, p 11.

³⁴ NAA:B2455, DONNELLY A J. Personal items returned to his family included a football cover, p 53.

³⁵ Australian War Memorial: *Australian Imperial Force Unit War Diaries; 1914-1918 War*, AWM4 Subclass 23/18; Unit: 1st Infantry Battalion; <https://www.awm.gov.au/collection/C1347465?image=2> Item Number: 23/18/28; Title: 1st Infantry Battalion, February 1918. [war diary].

³⁶ Ferguson *Ben and His Mates*, p 433.

³⁷ NAA:B2455, DONNELLY A J. Field Service Army Form B, p 9.

³⁸ National Archives of Australia, Donnelly, Arthur James – Service Number 2136 [file cover only], Series: C138; Item Barcode: 22382716, Sydney, Access Status: Open, Date of Access Decision: 16 March 2021. Access requested in March 2021, but this revealed the file contained a file cover only.

³⁹ Ferguson *Ben and His Mates*, p 436.

⁴⁰ NAA:B2455, DONNELLY AJ. Casualty Form – Active Service, p 2.

⁴¹ Ferguson *Ben and His Mates*, p 436.



*Pictured: Lance Corporal Arthur James Donnelly's headstone.⁴⁸
(Image courtesy Chris and Jean Cosgrove and www.inmemories.com).*

Initially buried 200 yards northwest of the church in Pradelles, Arthur now rests in Le Grande Hasard Military Cemetery, Morbecque, France.^{42 43}

A special enquiry officer concluded that Arthur's son, Reginald, was his closest male next of kin and deemed him the rightful recipient of his father's 1914-1915 Star Medal, Victory Medal, and Memorial Scroll.^{44 45} These would be held in trust for his 8-year-old son. The items were issued but his son never received them.⁴⁶ Nor was he told about Arthur. A final unexpected research find was discovering Arthur's medals etc., were sold at auction in 2010.⁴⁷

Arthur's discovery, while unexpected, is very welcome. His descendants and extended family from hereon will know his name and his service to his country remembered.

⁴² NAA:B2455, DONNELLY AJ. AIF correspondence to Jemima Donnelly, dated 30 September 1919, letter in war service file, p 54.

⁴³ Commonwealth War Graves Commission, <https://www.cwgc.org/find-records/find-war-dead/>, Lance Corporal Arthur James DONNELLY (No. 2136)

⁴⁴ Jane Peek, Curator, Military Heraldry and Technology, Australian War Memorial, email to the author, 23 April 2021. The author sought clarification on *Military Order 119 of 1919* with a view to who decided on the medal allocation. If alive, medals were issued to the nearest NOK male relative.

⁴⁵ NAA:B2455, DONNELLY A J. Department of Defence Minute Paper, p 39.

⁴⁶ NAA:B2455, DONNELLY A J. Department of Defence Minuter Paper, pp 39, 81.

⁴⁷ Noble Numismatics Pty Ltd. Auctions, Sale 94, Lot 4318. 29 July 2010. 1914-1915 Star; British War Medal, 1914-1915, Victory Medal 1914-19. Serial No. 2136 Private A J Donnelly, 1st Battalion, AIF. <https://www.noble.com.au/auctions/lot?id=258968>.

⁴⁸ Inmemories.com. Image of LC Arthur James Donnelly's headstone in Le Grand Military Cemetery, France, courtesy of Chris and Jean Cosgrove. Permission to utilise photo sought 6 February 2021 and approved by Pierre Vandervelden, 7 February 2021.

<http://www.inmemories.com/Cemeteries/legrandhasard.htm>



CROKER PRIZE FOR BIOGRAPHY 2021

**2127 Phantom – Richard Henry
Thompson**

By Allison Peters

***Phantom* – a very real presence in the life and maritime legacy of Richard Henry Thompson**

My grandfather, Richard Henry (Dick) Thompson, has been described as ‘probably Tasmania’s most prolific [boat] designer’¹, believed to have designed his first boat at around age 13². Dick lived on or near the Tamar River, Launceston for most of his life.

His boating life included racing speed boats³, qualifying as Master for the Marine Board of Mersey⁴ where he worked as tugmaster and also dredgemaster⁵, being appointed as Secretary and Harbour Master of the Marine Board of King Island⁶, founding and owning a boatyard at Blackwall⁷, running the first Johnson outboard agency in Tasmania⁸, owning a variety of boats (up to 22⁹) across his life, and designing over 500 vessels¹⁰, ranging from cattle barges to ferries, fishing boats, tugs, yachts and dinghies, many of which are still in service in Tasmanian waters and further afield, including on the Queensland coast.

One boat, possibly more than any other, had a great influence on his life. As a young man, Dick would give part of his wages to his mother to save for the dream boat he wanted to build. It took such a long time to save enough that “his mother would speak of his ‘phantom’ boat”¹¹, and therefore, once it was built, what else could it be called, but *Phantom*?

Dick designed *Phantom* himself and oversaw the building at Jack’s boatyard on the Tamar River. Built of huon pine, *Phantom* was launched on 17 March 1937 and was described as “one of the largest and most graceful looking pleasure yachts on the River Tamar...of most pleasing appearance with clipper bow and attractive lines”¹². Dick lived aboard for several years, fitting out the interior, moored in Cataract Gorge, or sailing between ports on Tasmania’s north-west coast,

¹ Ritchie, Philip, ‘After 60 years, Dick still loves creating boats’, *The Mercury*, 16 April 1980.

² Percy, Betty, *The Tamar Boats: A Complete Reference Book*, Foot & Playsted Pty Ltd, Launceston, 1993, p128.

³ Percy, Betty, *The Tamar Boats: A Complete Reference Book*, Foot & Playsted Pty Ltd, Launceston, 1993, p79.

⁴ Family documents: The Marine Board of Mersey, Tasmania, Certificate of Competency as Master, River or Harbour Trade, dated at Devonport 11th July 1933.

⁵ Family documents: Letter from J Laker, Harbour Master, Devonport dated 5 March 1936 & Memorandum from Netherlands Harbour Works Co, Devonport, dated 5 May 1939 & Letter from J N Wesselingh, Manager, Netherlands Harbour Works Co, Devonport, dated 16 June 1939.

⁶ Family documents: Letter from L Birch, Harbour Master, King Island, dated 19 June 1939.

⁷ Percy, Betty, *The Tamar Boats: A Complete Reference Book*, Foot & Playsted Pty Ltd, Launceston, 1993, p128. & *On The Tide 3 - More Stories of the Tamar*, ‘Dick Thompson’s First Boatyard’, Richard Curwen, edited by Peter Richardson, published by Launceston Library, 2007, p130. & *On The Tide 3 - More Stories of the Tamar*, ‘Stony Creek Boatbuilding’, Gus Green, edited by Peter Richardson, published by Launceston Library, 2007, p132.

⁸ Percy, Betty, *The Tamar Boats: A Complete Reference Book*, Foot & Playsted Pty Ltd, Launceston, 1993, p128.

⁹ Percy, Betty, *The Tamar Boats: A Complete Reference Book*, Foot & Playsted Pty Ltd, Launceston, 1993, p128.

¹⁰ *On The Tide 3 - More Stories of the Tamar*, ‘Dick Thompson’s First Boatyard’, Richard Curwen, edited by Peter Richardson, published by Launceston Library, 2007, p130. Boat plans held by the writer of this essay.

¹¹ Percy, Betty, *The Tamar Boats: A Complete Reference Book*, Foot & Playsted Pty Ltd, Launceston, 1993, p96.

¹² ‘Large Pleasure Yacht Launched on Tamar’, *The Mercury*, Hobart, 18 March 1937, page 7

<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/25385474?searchTerm=ketch%20phantom#>

both working and holidaying. All in all, his life comprised “simply messing about in boats”, an idyllic pastime it would seem.¹³



Figure 1 - *Phantom* under sail, photographer unknown, collection of RH Thompson

However, by 1943, now married to Marjorie Marsden Waterhouse, and with a baby daughter, World War II was impacting daily life. *Phantom* was requisitioned for war service¹⁴. Seven months and many bureaucratic delays elapsed between *Phantom's* departure and the compensation payment finally being made, and not before solicitors were called in. Dick's letters to the Department¹⁵ seeking payment set out the impact of changed living arrangements and having to move ashore, the ability to obtain only temporary accommodation given the difficulty of renting houses in a wartime rental market, and the struggle with ongoing illness and medical bills.

Family legend held that *Phantom* was sunk in Papua New Guinea and one source suggests operations in PNG waters during WWII¹⁶. My family is not given to making up tall family tales, and much of the source history I have discovered so far tallies closely with family recollections.

¹³ Grahame, Kenneth, *The Wind in the Willows*.

¹⁴ Requisition order under regulation 57 of the National Security (General) Regulations, dated 12 October 1943, in file NAA: MP138/1, 603/246/4072

<https://recordsearch.naa.gov.au/SearchNRetrieve/Interface/DetailsReports/ItemDetail.aspx?Barcode=1325141&isAv=N>

¹⁵ NAA: MP138/1, 603/246/4072, letters from RH Thompson to Department of the Navy, dated 17 November 1943, 15 December 1943, 20 January 1944, 25 February 1944, letters from Rodda, Ballard & Vroland Solicitors to The Secretary, Department of the Navy, Melbourne, dated 30 May 1944 and 13 June 1944

<https://recordsearch.naa.gov.au/SearchNRetrieve/Interface/DetailsReports/ItemDetail.aspx?Barcode=1325141&isAv=N>

¹⁶ Percy, Betty, *The Tamar Boats: A Complete Reference Book*, Foot & Playsted Pty Ltd, Launceston, 1993, p97.

I therefore decided to see if I could unearth any documents relating to the requisition and confirm this family story. This led to my most unexpected research finding: there is overwhelming evidence from various sources that *Phantom* definitely was not sunk during the war years, nor for many years after, and served in Australian waters (albeit sometimes very close to PNG).

Phantom's War Service Movements card¹⁷ shows the departure from the Tamar River on 2 November 1943. *Phantom* was then remodelled and refitted under the supervision of Officers of the Commonwealth Navigation Board¹⁸, including removal of the bowsprit, addition of a wheelhouse and conversion to carry cargo. *Phantom* departed Melbourne for Northern Australia on 31 March 1944. Routes between Townsville, Cairns and Thursday Island were standard from May 1944 to May 1945, and the last entry on the movements card shows *Phantom* arrived in Darwin on 21 May 1945. In 1948, *Phantom* was purchased by the Northern Territory Administrator¹⁹ and was used for transporting supplies and people between settlements, and for coastal patrols and inspections of mission settlements^{20,21}.

In September 1952, *Phantom* was declared surplus to requirements²² and sold by tender for £1,500 to the Methodist Overseas Mission²³. In March 1954, The Methodist newspaper noted *Phantom* had been refitted, that other over-worked district boats would “be relieved of a great deal of work, and that the timber output from Croker Island would increase considerably”²⁴. I am still working to uncover how long *Phantom* served the missions, and what followed.

The final unexpected twist in the tale? The Methodist Overseas Mission, operated by the Methodist Church, was essentially begun in Tasmania by Reverend John Waterhouse, Marjorie's great great grandfather. Reverend Waterhouse was a member of the legislative body of Methodism and became the General Superintendent of the South Sea Missions, sailing from England to Van Diemen's Land in 1839 to take up the position. He also purchased the mission ship Triton to visit his areas of responsibility, including many islands.

¹⁷ https://www.navy.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/PELEUS_TO_POLYDORUS.pdf, page 94, downloaded 17 January 2021.

¹⁸ NAA: MP138/1, 603/201/2062, including blueprint of alterations

<https://recordsearch.naa.gov.au/SearchNRetrieve/Interface/DetailsReports/ItemDetail.aspx?Barcode=1185680&isAv=N>

¹⁹ Department of Defence, Naval History Section, image of page from Disposals book, file no: 603/246/6977, sold to Northern Territory Administration Darwin, receipt 144158 of 12/3/48, £3,000 (emailed to the writer on 1 February 2021)

²⁰ NAA: A452, 1953/331,

<https://recordsearch.naa.gov.au/SearchNRetrieve/Interface/DetailsReports/ItemDetail.aspx?Barcode=3434810&isAv=N>

²¹ Exploring the legacy of the 1948 Arnhem Land expedition, edited by Martin Thomas and Margo Neale, National Museum of Australia Press and ANU Press, 2011. *Phantom* and *Victory* being unloaded at Oenpelli Landing, 20 September 1948, p183 <https://press-files.anu.edu.au/downloads/press/p116081/pdf/book.pdf>

²² Northern Territory Administrator, Memorandum dated 1st September 1952 To The Secretary, Department of Territories, Canberra, in file NAA: A452, 1953/331,

<https://recordsearch.naa.gov.au/SearchNRetrieve/Interface/DetailsReports/ItemDetail.aspx?Barcode=3434810&isAv=N>.

²³ Northern Territory Administrator, Memorandum dated 10th April 1953 To The Secretary, Department of Territories, Canberra, in file NAA: A452, 1953/331,

<https://recordsearch.naa.gov.au/SearchNRetrieve/Interface/DetailsReports/ItemDetail.aspx?Barcode=3434810&isAv=N>.

²⁴ *The Methodist* 20 March 1954, p5,

<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/155622618?searchTerm=phantom%20methodist>

Boats have always been an integral part of life in the islands of Australia and the South Sea and *Phantom* carried on that work, starting with my grandfather's vision and design, and moving to serve my grandmother's ancestor's dedication to helping others through the Methodist Overseas Mission²⁵.

This is just one example of how Dick's "all consuming passion...with every aspect of boat design and construction"²⁶ has produced a legacy of boats which have provided, and continue to provide transport, cargo capacity, leisure, and service to many thousands of people around Australia. A vast maritime legacy, with unexpected stories to tell along the way. Tracing the final fate of *Phantom* and Dick's many other designs has become my mission. The physical property (and not just houses) that was important in, and sometimes defined, our ancestors' lives may also have their own stories to tell through various record sources.

²⁵ Olsson, Marilyn, *The Waterhouse Padman family history*, Boolarong Publications, Brisbane, 1987, pp11, 41-47, 520-522, 537-538, 542-544.

²⁶ Percy, Betty, *The Tamar Boats: A Complete Reference Book*, Foot & Playsted Pty Ltd, Launceston, 1993, p128.

CROKER PRIZE FOR BIOGRAPHY 2021

2128 Where the Dickens is Prince Albert?

By Elizabeth Michell

Where the Dickens is Prince Albert

I have centred my research on my great grandmother, Elizabeth Chard and a pastel drawing of Charles Dickens that was drawn by her. According to my mother, the portrait was exhibited in the Sydney International Exhibition in 1879¹ and won third prize.² Or so I was told. Elizabeth received a bronze medal which is in the possession of our family. Similar medals from the Exhibition are held in the collection of the Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences³ and Museums Victoria.



Figure 3 Bronze Medal obverse

Materials: crayon and pencil on brown paper. Technique: drawing in crayon.

Support: paper.

Primary Inscription: none visible.

Dimensions: portrait is 11" (28cm) in width x 14" (35.5cm) in height. Within Frame: 14" (35.5cm) in width x 17" (43.5cm) in height.

Frame Dimensions: 16" (41cm) in width x 19" (48.5cm) in height.

Elizabeth Chard was the youngest of twins born on the 14th September 1858, to Elizabeth and John Chard. Mary and Elizabeth were born in George Street, Sydney.⁴ Their father, John Chard was a

¹ State Library of NSW, 'Sydney International Exhibition 1879', <https://www.sl.nsw.gov.au/stories/exhibition>, Accessed 15 November 2019.

² Valerie Michell, interview by Elizabeth Michell, tape recording, Sydney, NSW, from Valerie's Story 7 January – 20 February 2009, in author's possession.

³ Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences, 'Sydney International Exhibition 1879', <https://collection.maas.museum/object/307657>, Accessed 15 November 2019.

⁴ Birth Certificate for Mary and Elizabeth Chard, born 14th September 1858, Sydney, Registrar of Births, Deaths and Marriages, New South Wales, 1858/001957.

publican and had been granted a publican's license to the Dublin Tavern a few months before.⁵ In 1861, the Dublin Tavern is listed as 188 George Street, Sydney.⁶ Elizabeth began her early life here, in George Street North until they moved to George Street South where her father opened another public house. Mary and Elizabeth were the fifth in line, with siblings, Emily, William Henry, John Sofala, Robert Coulton, born before them, and Frederick Sydney to follow, in 1865.

Elizabeth Chard was an amateur artist, her art being a genteel pastime for a lady of Victorian times.⁷ She mainly used pastels or crayons as they were called. She became a member of the New South Wales Academy of Art in Sydney and is mentioned in the newspapers in 1878 with an exhibition that the Academy was conducting, held at Elizabeth Street, Sydney. 'Miss Chard's portraits of Charles Dickens and Guido are deserving of praise' and were highly commended.⁸

The Academy exhibited as a group in the Sydney International Exhibition.⁹ This Academy of Art became the forerunner of the Art Gallery of NSW after receiving colonial government money to acquire artworks in 1874, and dissolved itself on the foundation of the Art Gallery in 1880.¹⁰



Figure 4 Photograph of Elizabeth Withers nee Chard, c1921

The staging of the Sydney International Exhibition was important. The idea of an exhibition to showcase both Australian and International industrial, agricultural, and cultural achievements had never been done before in Australasia. The exhibition was to open on the 17th September 1879 and remain open for six months. A new building was built in the Botanical Gardens to house the exhibition and it was called 'The Garden Palace'.¹¹

⁵ Publicans' License Index 1830-1861 NSW State Records and Archives, NRS 14403 [7/1510]: Reel 1240 License No.935.

⁶ Sands Sydney Directory for 1861, p 51, p 149, p 257, <http://www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au>, Accessed 30 May 2021.

⁷ Howard Harris Studio, Sydney, Hand coloured photograph of Elizabeth Withers nee Chard, c1921, original held by Valerie Michell, Sydney.

⁸ 'N.S.W. Academy of Art', *Evening News*, 26 June 1878, p 3, Accessed 30th May 1878

⁹ 1879 'Exhibition of the Academy.', *The Sydney Mail and New South Wales Advertiser (NSW : 1871 - 1912)*, 2 August, p. 168. , viewed 22 Nov 2019, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article161873140>.

¹⁰ Dictionary of Sydney, 'NSW Academy of Art', https://dictionaryofsydney.org/organisation/new_south_wales_academy_of_art, Accessed 15 November 2019.

¹¹ State Library of NSW, 'The Garden Palace', <https://www.sl.nsw.gov.au/stories/exhibition> and 1879 'The International Exhibition.', *Newcastle Morning Herald and Miners' Advocate (NSW : 1876 - 1954)*, 6 January, p. 2. , viewed 22 Nov 2019, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article136000793>.

In the Official Catalogue, the Official Awards, and in the newspapers of the day, Elizabeth Chard is incorrectly written as Miss S.W. Chard.¹² See Figure 5. The mistake of her initials was subsequently corrected but the information my mother told me, that Elizabeth had won third prize, was also incorrect.

The prize of the bronze medal was for a fourth award, not third. See Figure 6.¹³ Our modern interpretation of gold, silver, and bronze equating to first, second and third given to prize winners was not how they were attributed at the Exhibition. Most gold medals went to royalty and important public figures. There were two silver medals, one large and one small and these were served as thanks to office bearers and the organisers of displays of special note.¹⁴ The bronze medal was also in two sizes.

This factual difference of being fourth award instead of third was minor. However, the medal she had won was not for the portrait of Charles Dickens, as I had been told, it was for a portrait of Prince Albert! This was a major difference to my mother's oral history.¹⁵ The portrait of Charles Dickens was not entered into the Sydney International Exhibition. So, where is the portrait of Prince Albert?

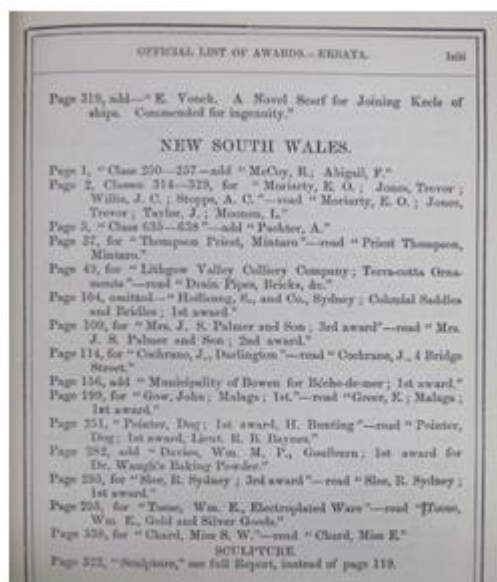


Figure 5
Official Awards,
Sydney International Exhibition, 1879
Errata page

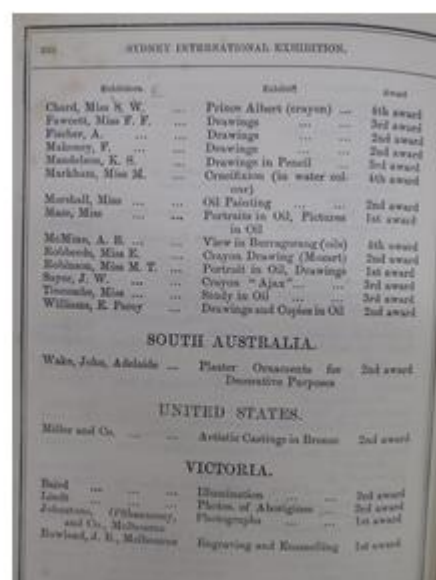


Figure 6
Official Catalogue, Awards
Sydney International Exhibition, 1879

The Sydney International Exhibition closed on the 20th April 1880. The Melbourne International Exhibition followed shortly and Elizabeth's portrait, 'Prince Consort and Prince of Wales' was exhibited there. Imagine her excitement of being selected to exhibit in both exhibitions of national importance.

¹² 1880 'ENGRAVINGS, PHOTOGRAPHY, LITHOGRAPHY.', *Australian Town and Country Journal (Sydney, NSW: 1870 - 1907)*, 17 April, p. 6., viewed 22 Nov 2019, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article70942894>

¹³ Mitchell Library, *Official Awards of the Sydney International Exhibition 1879*, Accessed 15 November 2019.

¹⁴ Sydney 1879 International Exposition Award Medal, <https://www.expositionmedals.com/1879/>, Accessed 30 May 2021.

¹⁵ Mitchell Library, *Official Catalogue of the Sydney International Exhibition 1879*, Accessed 15 November 2019.

After the exhibitions many of the exhibits were selected to be on display in the Technological, Industrial and Sanitary Museum (now the Powerhouse Museum). The Garden Palace itself was used by the government until a fire destroyed the building in 1882.

As to the whereabouts of the missing portrait, this is a subject for another investigation. Whether it was sold, donated, stolen, or even in the fire of 1882, I'll probably never know but its partner, Charles Dickens still hangs proudly in the corner of our living room.

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1880 'ENGRAVINGS, PHOTOGRAPHY, LITHOGRAPHY.', *Australian Town and Country Journal (Sydney, NSW : 1870 - 1907)*, 17 April, p. 6. , Accessed 22 Nov 2019. Art Gallery of NSW, 'NSW Academy of Art', <https://www.artgallery.nsw.gov.au/about-us/history/>, Accessed 15 November 2019.

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Evening News.

Photograph of Elizabeth Withers nee Chard, c1921, original held by Valerie Michell, Sydney.

Michell Valerie, interview by Elizabeth Michell, tape recording, Sydney, NSW, from Valerie's Story 7 January – 20 February 2009, in author's possession.

Mitchell Library, *Official Awards of the Sydney International Exhibition 1879*, Accessed 15 November 2019.

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CROKER PRIZE FOR BIOGRAPHY 2021

2129 A Voice Immortalised in Fiction – Nurse Mary Ellen Warmington

By Sonya Russell

Nurse. Suffragist. Matron. Veteran.

Mary Ellen Warmington (1860-1941) was a woman of conviction, who used her nursing expertise, courage, and leadership to minister ordinary New Zealanders and wounded soldiers, support women's rights, and advocate the development of the nursing profession.

Born in Bradford, Yorkshire on 17 November 1860,^{1,2,3,4} Warmington emigrated to the far-flung colony of New Zealand in 1883 aboard the SS Rimutaka.⁵ Despite nursing then being "regarded as a very low occupation... done by women regarded as below the status of a domestic servant"⁶ she found her calling, going against the wishes of her friends by enrolling in a two-year nursing course at Christchurch Hospital in 1891.^{7,8}

As an educated, driven woman, Warmington supported universal suffrage. While studying, she made her voice count: signing the 1892 Women's Suffrage Petitions.^{9,10} 31,872 New Zealand women, approximately a quarter of the eligible voting population, supported the petition.¹¹ At the 1893 New Zealand General Election, she would have been one of the first women in the world to cast a vote.

Warmington completed her training at Christchurch Hospital in 1893.¹² She commenced her nursing career at the Whanganui Hospital as a junior nurse before being selected as Matron in 1894.¹³ She was a popular Matron, but her commitment to her staff and propensity for voicing strong views led to professional difficulties in 1898. The newly appointed House Surgeon, Dr Anderson, ignored Warmington and tasked nurses and probationers without her knowledge, disrupting the efficient running of the hospital.¹⁴ In late 1898, Anderson dismissed the Hospital's servants with claims of insubordination. Warmington resigned in protest over their treatment.¹⁵ In their deliberations, the Board noted that nearly all hospital staff were

¹ Ancestry.com. *1861 England Census* [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations Inc, 2005.

² Ancestry.com. *West Yorkshire, England, Church of England Baptisms, Marriages and Burials, 1512-1812* [database on-line]. Lehi, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2011.

³ Ancestry.com. *1871 England Census* [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations Inc, 2005.

⁴ Ancestry.com. *1881 England Census* [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations Inc, 2005.

⁵ *The Cyclopaedia of New Zealand [Wellington Provincial District]* (Wellington: The Cyclopaedia Company, 1897), p 1384.

⁶ 'The International Council of Nurses', *Kai Tiaki: The Journal of the Nurses of New Zealand*, 1 April 1925, p 72.

⁷ Ancestry.com. *New Zealand, Registers of Medical Practitioners and Nurses, 1873, 1882-1933* [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2014.

⁸ *The Cyclopaedia of New Zealand [Wellington Provincial District]*, p 1384.

⁹ 'New Zealand women and the vote', URL: <https://nzhistory.govt.nz/politics/womens-suffrage>, (Ministry for Culture and Heritage), updated 20-Dec-2018 (accessed 27 May 2021).

¹⁰ Archway. *Digitised 1892 Women Suffrage Petition Roll - Sheet 242 - Region: Christchurch (R25672874)* [record online]. Wellington, NZ: New Zealand Archives, 2021.

¹¹ 'New Zealand women and the vote', URL: <https://nzhistory.govt.nz/politics/womens-suffrage>, (Ministry for Culture and Heritage), updated 20-Dec-2018 (accessed 27 May 2021).

¹² 'Town and Country: The Hospital Nurses', *The Lyttelton Times*, 7 April 1893, p 5.

¹³ *The Cyclopaedia of New Zealand [Wellington Provincial District]*, p 1384.

¹⁴ 'Hospital', *The Wanganui Herald*, 7 September 1898, XXXII (9535), p 3.

¹⁵ 'Why the Matron Resigned', *The Wanganui Chronicle*, 8 September 1898, XLIII (15000), p 2.

prepared to resign in support of Warmington. Despite a divided vote, Warmington's resignation passed, and she retreated to private practice for several years.¹⁶¹⁷¹⁸

When the South African War (1899-1902)ⁱⁱ broke out on 11 October, the colonies were quick to volunteer. After initially rejecting New Zealand's offer of nursing personnel, the Imperial Government declared it would accept a small contingent.¹⁹ Of the approximately 25 nurses known to have deployed, only six travelled officially as part of the New Zealand Government's war effort.²⁰²¹ Despite the continued poor attitude towards nurses and often limited or no pay²², women actively sought to serve with some paying their own way. Others were sent on behalf of patriotic towns and communities, which raised funds to support the nurses' journeys.²³ Even as independent volunteers, the Government insisted the nurses were to be formally trained.²⁴ Warmington departed for Cape Town on 28 March 1900²⁵ after Whanganui raised funds to support her deployment.²⁶

Upon arrival, the war authorities assigned Warmington to Number 8 Bloemfontein General Hospital,²⁷ amid an enteric fever epidemic. The horror of Bloemfontein was acute. Fellow nurse, Elizabeth Teape, described the outbreak:

*...the place was a hotbed of fever – enteric raged everywhere... with no sanitary arrangements, animals lying dead everywhere, water bad, buildings covered black with flies, and patients covered with vermin.*²⁸

An estimated 6000 troops were ill at Bloemfontein.²⁹ Warmington described the cemetery as "literally packed" with 50 to 60 personnel dying every day.³⁰ While Warmington's service at Bloemfontein was praised by returning troops,³¹ she inevitably succumbed to enteric fever.³²³³ She departed on the casualty ship *Britannic* on 6 October 1900 to England.³⁴³⁵

¹⁶ Ancestry.com. *New Zealand, Registers of Medical Practitioners and Nurses, 1873, 1882-1933* [database online]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2014, No. 5; p 19.

¹⁷ 'Presentation at the Hospital', *The Wanganui Herald*, 1 October 1898, XXXII (9556), p 2.

¹⁸ 'Hospital', p 3.

¹⁹ Joan Rattray, *Great Days in New Zealand Nursing* (London: Harrap, 1961), p 126.

²⁰ Rattray, p 126.

²¹ Sheryl McNabb, *100 Years New Zealand Military Nursing : New Zealand Army Nursing Service : Royal New Zealand Nursing Corps, 1915-2015* (Hawke's Bay: self-published, 2015), p 29.

²² Ellen Ellis, 'New Zealand Women and the War', in *One Flag, One Queen, One Tongue: New Zealand, the British Empire, and the South African War 1899-1902* (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2003), p 129.

²³ McNabb, p 20.

²⁴ *The Weekly News*, 9 February 1900.

²⁵ Sheila Grey, *The South African War 1899-1902: Service Records of British and Colonial Women* (Auckland: self-published, 1993), p 77.

²⁶ 'Miss Warmington on Duty', *The Wanganui Chronicle*, 9 June 1900, 15000, p 3.

²⁷ 'Miss Warmington on Duty', p 3.

²⁸ A New Zealander, *New Zealanders and the Boer War, or, Soldiers from the Land of the Mōa* (Christchurch: Gordon and Gotch, 1907), p 227-228.

Initially published anonymously, the work was later credited to Sarah Hawdon.

²⁹ Ellis, p 132.

³⁰ 'Nurse Warmington's Experiences', *The Wanganui Chronicle*, 6 March 1901, p 2.

³¹ 'Returned Troopers', *The Lyttelton Times*, 15 September 1900, p 7.

³² 'Nurse Warmington's Experiences', p 2.

³³ 'Illness of Nurse Warmington', *The Wanganui Chronicle*, 27 July 1900, 15000, p 2.

³⁴ 'War Casualties', *The Morning Post*, 19 October 1900, p 3.

³⁵ 'Return of Sick and Wounded Officers', *The Mail*, 31 October 1900, 6256 edition, p 5.

Never one to rest, Warmington used her time in England to enhance her nursing skills, focussing on massage.³⁶ Committed to serving the war wounded, she tried to return to the front but was deemed too weak and returned to New Zealand.³⁷

Upon her return, Warmington voiced the need for greater organisation of New Zealand military nursing practices. She argued military nursing should be treated as a professional formed element, attached to military units, in line with international standards.³⁸ She argued for nurses to receive the medallic recognition.³⁹

During the royal tour of 1901 the then-Duke and Duchess of Cornwall presented Warmington with the Queen's South African Medal on a rainy day in Wellington in front of large crowds.⁴⁰⁴¹ The nurses of the South African War joined the returned services leagues, attending meetings with their military counterparts.

She married the young widower, Archibald Thomson in 1904 in Sydney, becoming stepmother to his young daughter Christine.⁴²⁴³ She remained close to Christine following her husband's tragic drowning in Wellington Harbour; her stepdaughter contributed to Joan Rattray's *Great days in New Zealand Nursing* many years after Warmington's death to ensure her war service was recorded.⁴⁴

Warmington was an active member of the New Zealand Trained Nurses Association for over a decade, serving as President of the Wellington Branch.⁴⁵⁴⁶⁴⁷ She used her experience and public conviction to improve pay, conditions, and education for nurses. In 1925, Warmington represented New Zealand at the 5th International Council of Nurses Congress in Finland alongside two thousand nurses from 35 countries.⁴⁸⁴⁹ Travelling aboard the SS *Ulimaroa*, she was accompanied by Christine, herself a newly trained nurse at the Napier Hospital.⁵⁰

³⁶ 'Nurse Warmington's Experiences' p 2.

³⁷ 'Nurse Warmington's Experiences', p 2.

³⁸ 'Nurse Warmington's Experiences', p 2.

³⁹ *Warmington, M.E. Letter to Officer in Command, Wellington Military District (AD34 2) 12 Jun 1901; Wellington, NZ: New Zealand Archives, 2021.*

⁴⁰ 'Loyalty of New Zealand: An Interesting Day at Wellington', *The Courier*, 20 June 1901, p 5.

⁴¹ McNabb, p 32.

⁴² Ancestry.com. *Australia, Marriage Index, 1788-1950* [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2010.

⁴³ Marriage Certificate – Thomson/Warmington; New South Wales Registrar General's Department (1904), 8112/1904.

⁴⁴ Rattray, p i.

⁴⁵ Rattray, p 128.

⁴⁶ 'The International Council of Nurses', p 72.

⁴⁷ 'Wellington Branch', *Kai Tiaki: The Journal of the Nurses of New Zealand*, 1 October 1914, p 149.

⁴⁸ Rattray, p 128.

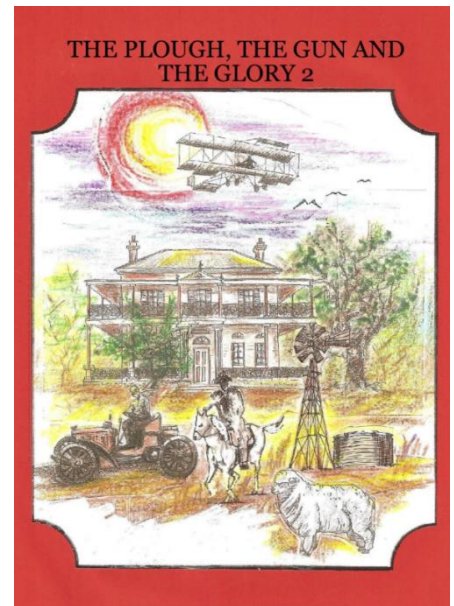
⁴⁹ 'The International Council of Nurses', p 72.

⁵⁰ 'The International Council of Nurses', p 72.

Warmington died on 10 March 1941 in Wellington.⁵¹⁵²⁵³

A century after her heroic service at Bloemfontein Hospital, she was given voice once again, in a most unexpected research finding: as a character in a novel. In Angus Hyslop's *The Plough, the Gun, and the Glory 2*, a fictional Warmington appears as the tent-mate and fellow nurse of the romantic heroine, Christiana.⁵⁴ The novel's hero, James, travels across war-torn South Africa seeking Christiana with little success. He tracks Christiana, over the dry veldt, to Bloemfontein Hospital but is met by Warmington's news that Christiana returned to Australia only three short weeks beforehand. Warmington assures James of Christiana's evident love, and he begins the long journey to the colony, buoyed by Warmington's guarantee.⁵⁵ Even in fiction, Warmington used her voice to help those in need.

Efforts to contact Hyslop have been unsuccessful. His reason for highlighting Nurse Warmington may never be known. However, the inclusion of Mary Ellen Warmington, a hard-working professional nurse in the midst of the South African War's trauma and bloodshed has ensured her voice will remain immortalised in fiction.



Angus Hyslop's self-published novel "The Plough, the Gun, and the Glory 2" which features Nurse Warmington.

ⁱ While known as "Wanganui" during Warmington's lifetime, the city is now officially known as "Whanganui".

ⁱⁱ Commonly known as "The Boer War", the author has used the South African War per current academic standards.

⁵¹ Death Certificate – Thomson, New Zealand Birth, Death and Marriage Registry (1941), 1941/17483.

⁵² "Mary Ellen Thomson", headstone Taita Cemetery, Photograph held in Private Collection.

⁵³ *Napier Probate Files - Thomson, Mary Ellen* [R23221606]; [record online]. Wellington, NZ: New Zealand Archives, 2021.

⁵⁴ Angus Hyslop, *The Plough, the Gun, and the Glory 2* (Lulu.com, 2008), p 15.

⁵⁵ Hyslop, p 16.