

Entries for the Croker Prize for Biography in 2022

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CROKER PRIZE FOR BIOGRAPHY 2022

2201 The Black Sheep? Oh Well ...

by Anne McEncroe

The black sheep? - Oh well ...

All the branches of the family tree on which I was a statistic for 70 years, were lopped off recently, when I discovered I was adopted! Instead of a Scottish Stephenson, I was now an Irish O'Halloran!

So far I have unearthed that my new found O'Halloran ancestors were an illustrious Irish family who had been dispossessed of lands in Galway at the end of the 12th Century. My new found grandfather's Aunt, Marianne Lacathon de la Forest (nee O'Halloran), relates the story this way:

“...One evening, my grandmother's grandfather was seated, surrounded by his family, in the principal room of his castle. Suddenly the door opened, and one of the farmhands all out of breath came in to announce that a party of English soldiers was about to enter the courtyard in order to search the castle and obtain a list of rebels which was known to be in possession of the master, their leader. Before the officers, who could be heard approaching, had entered, the latter had time to hide the list in question behind a brick in the fireplace, making each one swear to reveal nothing, no matter what might happen. Questioned by the English officers, he refused to reply. Threatened with being hanged at dawn if he continued to keep silent, he did not yield and, despite their great fear, those with him likewise remained silent. In the morning, before sunrise, our ancestor was hanged, the castle burned and the whole family was driven out of their country ...”ⁱ

The Eighteenth Century O'Hallorans continued in the persons of eminent Doctor Sylvesterⁱⁱ and his brothers, Michael – a Surgeon, John – Secretary to the Governor of the Bahamas, Joseph – Major General in the British Army and Thomas – a Pewterer. The distinguished military and colonial services rendered to the British Empire in the Nineteenth Century by Sir Joseph, Matthew, George and various others of the O'Halloran line, had ensured their secure social and economical position in the world. The author of *A General History of Ireland (1788)*,ⁱⁱⁱ the said Doctor Sylvester “created a stir, his tall slender figure attired in French costume, and with an impressive wig, cocked hat, and gold-headed cane.”

The Australian branch of O'Hallorans took root when two of Joseph's sons came to the newly founded colony of South Australia – William O'Halloran, as Secretary to Governor Grey in 1836, and Thomas Shuldham O'Halloran, Chief of Constabulary in 1839, establishing a farm and vineyard on O'Halloran Hill, where their descendants still live.^{iv}

However the (one could say ‘black sheep’) Sydney branch was sprouted on board the convict ship “Isabella” arriving at Port Jackson on 16 December, 1823 from Ireland. On board was one John O'Halloran, the father of the aforementioned storyteller Marianne. Her brother William was my great Grandfather. My new found forbear John was tall, fair haired, with blue eyes and aged 25. He could read and write; and plough and shear”. He was assigned to one Robert Crawford who had two grants of land one at Hill End and one near Camden.^v The circumstances of John's arrest and sentence of seven years transportation unfolded this way:

“(... altho (sic) a man of comfortable circumstances) he was principal in the disturbances in the North Liberties of this city, and where he was apprehended having been found out at an unreasonable hour of the night of the 24th inst. on which night a most serious outrage took place, the fourteen cows and the coppice in which they were confined having been destroyed by fire and he was taken just convenient to the place when the fire immediately after broke out.”^{vi}

The Chief Magistrate of Police was convinced, with this (to my mind) very circumstantial evidence enough to say,

“... I am satisfied that the conviction that took place in Limerick last week and particularly of Halloran (sic) will have a good effect in this County. Halloran has been a long time on my list as a notorious leader and sending him out of the Country was a most valuable proceeding ...”^{vii}

Fortunately for John and his descendants, and no doubt with a little help from his extended and eminent family, an Unconditional Pardon was eventually issued to John by the Governor in 30 March 1828.^{viii}

Between 1828 and 1849 not much is known of his whereabouts until records of his two children come to light in Capetown, South Africa. Marianne in 1850, and William Peter in 1851. After a two year stay in Cape Colony they moved to Tasmania in Australia. Tellingly, John’s Death Certificate notes a ‘short’ stay in South Australia. His two cousins were by then very well established in a colony that prided itself that it had never known convict transportation. As well they were Anglican. He was Catholic. It is very possible he would not have been welcome there! When he died in 1880 his address was Paddington Sydney.

John’s son William, my great grandfather, did not enjoy a happy relationship with his father. After (black sheepish-ly) being dismissed from the family home he went to live in Orange NSW where he met and married Helena Matilda Curran. The wedding took place on 28 January 1877. Children John (1879), my grandfather George Sylvester (1881) and great aunt and great uncles Lilian (1883), William (1885), Edmund (1888), and Fergal (1890) were the result of this union.^{ix} However that black sheep stain has persevered in this tree branch – unfortunately, I now find, in the form of myself. Born in 1944, I am the illegitimate offspring of George Sylvester’s daughter, Helena Mary O’Halloran.

But move over ersatz Stephenson forbears, thanks to dear pardoned convict ancestor John O’Halloran, my real family tree is blossoming and I am sharpening my gardening skills!

ⁱ deBérard, Pierre, letter dated 10.1.1983. (Stories told to him by Marianne Lacathon de la Forest (née O’Halloran the eldest daughter of John O’Halloran) translated by Anthony Hunt, O’Halloran family Archivist.

ⁱⁱ Widdess, J., *A History of the Royal College of Physicians of Ireland*. E&S Livingstone Ltd, Edinburgh and London. 1963

ⁱⁱⁱ O’Halloran, S., *A General History of Ireland*. Publisher Hamilton, 1788

^{iv} The O’Hallorans in South Australia in *The Old Limerick Journal* (Australian Ed) Spring 1788. Pp 30-34

^v Convict Muster, 1827

^{vi} O’Halloran, J., *(1800-1880) Raheen, the Liberties, Limerick*. March 1823

^{vii} *ibid*

^{viii} Huskisson, Rt. Hon .W., Colonial Secretary. *Letter from Downing Street, London to Governor Darling*. 20.9.1827 (received by Governor Darling 26.2.1828)

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Papers of Ms Margaret Milne

Letters of Alice Miller, Fullerton, South Australia

Letters of Faith Beresford, Perth

CROKER PRIZE FOR BIOGRAPHY 2022

2202 A Sensitive Subject

by Glen Martin

A Sensitive Subject

Once, I didn't come from anywhere. We had parents, that's all, and they said they had parents once. I had the idea that once you grew up, your parents disappeared from your life. All the time I was growing up, my mother said she thought she would die before she turned fifty. Just before I turned seventeen, my father died suddenly of a heart attack; he was fifty-three.

Nor did I come from a place that had a past. Until I was four, we lived with my father's older brother. Then we moved to a new suburb of Sydney, Chullora, into a 'temporary dwelling', a fibro shack. The surroundings were scrappy bush: not a forest or a meadow, the seaside or a riverside; not the hills. In time, we built a new, modest house. Around us, other families built their own modest houses. There was no past.

But I did wonder. However, life is busy. There was work, my own family, getting my own house, surviving.

When my mother turned ninety, she had a lunch, and I looked around at the folks, which included a few cousins. I knew nothing, and suddenly I felt that I should know. That's when my family history search began.

There were few people left to ask. I did get some stories from mum. As I progressed, I found that some of those stories were not quite right. That was interesting, because I wondered why that was. Progress was based on certificates, once I learned how to acquire sufficient details to order the right ones. It was a step-by-step process. Mum showed me the certificate from her marriage with dad, and his death certificate.

My mother's parents were Thomas Richard Archer and Margaret Florence Mackie. That information came easily enough. And yes, Thomas died in 1936 at age fifty; my mother had been twelve. Margaret died in 1941 at fifty-three (mum was seventeen). Perhaps this was why my mother had the irrational belief that she would die before she was fifty.

Much harder to find were my father's parents. All I had from dad's death certificate were the names: William Thomas Martin, blacksmith, and Elizabeth Eggleston. Blacksmith? Dad had been a painter; no connection. He had been a quiet man, and had never said anything about his past. But now I had this obstinate idea that I did have a past, and William and Elizabeth were part of it, whoever they were.

My mother's side had a story. There was a hotel, the Duke of Edinburgh at Pymont, and an ancestor had built it. Then there were lots of children, who also had children, and my mother was one of the descendants. I didn't know the details, but it formed a picture. For dad's family I had nothing. Or, perhaps what I had was silence; so, I was determined.

I never pressed my mother. That would have been wrong, as well as unproductive. I could tell there were sensitivities around dad's past. When I visited her, I talked generally about my inquiries into family history, and I told her about people I had found that were interesting, if I thought it would not be threatening. And she used to write me short letters occasionally.

One time she said, "Keep looking. You never know what you will find." Amidst the guardedness that I felt from her about areas of the past, this was encouragement. I wondered if she was encouraging me despite herself. Then, on one of my visits she said, "I think your father's mother was admitted to Callan Park around 1920." I had gathered enough already to suspect that something like this had happened (although I didn't know what or why), and this was the clue I needed. I think she was letting me know before she died. (She died a couple of years later.)

She talked about it then: that the mother had a baby and she was not in her right mind to look after the baby; she was raving, she tried to poison herself. And the family was split up and dad was raised by an uncle and aunt (he was seven). She also said that when she and dad were getting married, they asked a doctor if this could be hereditary. The doctor said no.

My quest now was straightforward. I wrote to the Department of Health, enclosing proof of my connection to Elizabeth Martin, and requested access to her file. When I went to the counter at State Archives to retrieve the file, the lady opened it and showed me a photo. She said, "It is rare to find a photo in these files." It was Elizabeth Martin, probably in the late 1940s. Finally, a person. Not a happy one, but a real person, my grandmother.

The file was unhappy reading. She had not got out of the institution. She was transferred to a new hospital at Orange (Bloomfield) in 1930 and had died there in 1957. That was a shock: she had not died until I was seven. On my parents' marriage certificate (1947) she is described as 'deceased'. I understand why: conventions are implacable, but it is still painful knowledge.

In the wake of this discovery, I was able to find the death of William Thomas Martin. He had died at Annandale in 1955: another grandparent who had been alive when I was born. Much later I found that there was a rich history of miners in the Martin family, going back to Cornwall, and the 'blacksmith' label was, from our time's perspective, a misnomer. He was more of an engineer.

Does it matter that I have a past? Yes, it does. Not to have a past is to be marooned. We all come from the earth, however rough or bitter. We all have a long past. We dwell in its surprises.

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CROKER PRIZE FOR BIOGRAPHY 2022

2203 The Untold Story of 'Queenie' Foulds

The Untold Story of ‘Queenie’ Foulds

Where did I come from? Well, on my mother’s side there is Cornish and English ancestry and the main surnames include Dansie, Virgin, Dunstall and Taylor. Most of these ancestors immigrated to Australia and settled in rural or regional areas of South Australia (SA) and Victoria (VIC). But, what about my father’s family?

Like many other Australian women, my mother was impacted by domestic violence. Being estranged from my father, there was no-one I could ask about my heritage. I knew very little about my paternal ancestry and this is what sparked my interest in family history and genealogy.

I began my journey by asking my mother what she knew about my father’s side and came up with a list of names to research. I then verified the details using the New South Wales Births, Deaths and Marriages website. I scoured TROVE for any mention of these names and eventually signed up to Ancestry.com in the hope of learning something new. I soon discovered the name of my paternal great grandmother, Elizabeth Mary Irene Foulds or “Queenie” for short.

Elizabeth was born in 1908 to parents Frances Louisa Bowers and Allan Foulds who resided in far west New South Wales (NSW).¹ Allan’s family immigrated to Australia from Stevenson, Ayrshire, Scotland.² Allan and Louise were married in Melbourne, VIC on 26 November 1896.³ Allan worked as an opal miner in White Cliffs, NSW where his wife Frances intended to purchase an allotment of land.⁴ Allan became bankrupt in 1903 after failing to generate adequate income from mining.⁵ After a brief time in Wilcannia, the family relocated to Broken Hill and took up residence in the South of the city.⁶ Elizabeth had five siblings named Archibald, William, Janet, Ruth and Grace who passed away in 1907.⁷

I was unable to find much about Elizabeth’s youth apart from a brief mention in the classifieds section of the local newspaper. A bereavement notice placed in the *Barrier Miner* on 23 August 1930 by Mr. R. Rendell acknowledges Elizabeth and another woman named Mrs R. Baynes for assisting his family during their time of grief.⁸ This notice provides insight into Elizabeth’s character as she is thanked for her ‘sympathy and kindness.’⁹

When Elizabeth was 20 years of age, her older brother Archibald (affectionately known as Archie) passed away suddenly whilst working on Broughton Vale Station.¹⁰ The station was owned by their uncle, Angus Robert Foulds and was located approximately 56 miles from Broken Hill. Based on newspaper articles about the incident Archie had complained of having a sore head and suffered from fits or tremors due to a previous accident in 1927.¹¹ He died on 7 June 1928 after an operation at the local hospital.¹² A coronial inquest was held during the following week and Archie’s death was attributed to natural causes.¹³ Archie’s remains were interred at Broken Hill Cemetery according to Presbyterian rites.¹⁴ This incident undoubtedly had a profound impact on Elizabeth and her family.

Elizabeth married Thomas John Frederick Manly on 29 December 1931 in Broken Hill.¹⁵ The couple had three sons Allan, Keith and John, who died in 1939 at just three years of age.¹⁶ Thomas was a labourer from Illewong, NSW and his parents were Peter Frederick Manly and Margaret Ethel Payne. Thomas enlisted in the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) on 8 July 1941 and worked as an aircraft hand or machinist.¹⁷

Earlier that year, Elizabeth moved to Adelaide and gained employment at Patawillya Maternity Hospital as a cleaner or domestic.¹⁸ My grandfather Allan Albert Manly resided with her and was enrolled at Glenelg Infants School.¹⁹ Based on his schooling record, Allan

was nine years old and his earlier education had been conducted via correspondence in NSW.²⁰ In the remarks section of the document the school has recommended that Allan be placed in an Opportunity Class at Norwood.²¹

Thomas filed for divorce in 1943 on the grounds of desertion, claiming that Elizabeth had been absent for a period of three years.²² Elizabeth made a submission that she would accept the divorce on these grounds, but wished to apply for custody of Allan.²³ Elizabeth stated that the weekly income from her husband was only 14 shillings a week and that she supplemented her income by working as a housemaid at the Royal Adelaide Hospital.²⁴ In her submission she stated that she had no property or other means and did not have an order in place for alimony.²⁵ During the court proceedings, Allan was placed in a boy's home run by the Salvation Army in Kentwood.²⁶ The issue of custody wasn't resolved until 20 April 1945, and Elizabeth was unsuccessful in gaining guardianship of her eldest child.

During the same year, Thomas married Mary Jane McGrath in Canowindra, NSW.²⁷ Despite, the fact that Thomas' character is described as being 'very good' during his time in the RAAF, I located several newspaper articles which suggest otherwise. In 1929, Thomas was convicted of stealing four motor coils and was sentenced to one month imprisonment.²⁸ But, this was not an isolated incident. In 1948, Thomas raped a 14-year-old girl who was staying at the family home to care for their youngest child whilst his wife Mary Jane was in hospital.²⁹ A Jury found him guilty and he was put on bond for a period of five years.³⁰ However, the Judge inferred that he may have been too lenient stating that 'I have grave doubts whether I am doing right or not.'³¹

Elizabeth continued to live and work in Adelaide and eventually passed away on 8 April 1982.³² Apart from these scant details I still know very little about her later life. I can only imagine how difficult it must have been losing custody of her children and being married to someone capable of such violence. I have been unable to find a photograph of 'Queenie' but I do hope that there is some sort of resemblance. I would like to think that she would have been short, dark-haired and sassy – just like me!

¹ Birth of Elizabeth Mary Irene Foulds, 1908, *Australia Birth Index 1788-1922*, Registration Number 1939.

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⁶ Entry for Allan Foulds, 1913, Willyama, Wilcannia, New South Wales, *Australia Electoral Rolls 1893-1949*, Elector Number 127.

⁷ Death of Grace Elizabeth Sophia Foulds, 1907, *Register of Birth, Deaths and Marriages NSW*, Registration Number 8322/1907.

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¹⁰ 'Death of Man in Hospital', *Barrier Miner*, 7 June 1928, p. 4; 'Death of Mr. A. Foulds', *Barrier Miner*, 14 June 1928, p. 3.

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¹³ 'Death of Mr. A. Foulds', *Barrier Miner*, 14 June 1928, p. 3.

¹⁴ 'Funeral Notices – Foulds', *Barrier Miner*, 8 June 1928, p. 2.

¹⁵ Marriage of Thomas John Frederick Manly and Elizabeth Mary Irene Foulds, 1931, *Australia Marriage Index 1788-1950*, Registration Number 3094.

¹⁶ Death of John Frederick Manly, 16 November 1939, *Register of Birth, Deaths and Marriages NSW*, Registration Number NSW BDM, 26828/1939.

¹⁷ Record of Service - Thomas John Frederick Manly, Service Number - 37711, National Archives of Australia, NAA: A9301, 37711, 4591555, pp. 1-107.

¹⁸ Divorce papers for Thomas John Frederick Manly - Elizabeth Mary Irene Manly, NSW State Records, 13/07/1943 to 20/04/1945, Item Number 2046/1943, pp. 1-49; Roll Record of Allan Albert Manly, *South Australia, School Admission Registers, 1873-1985*, Glenelg Infants School, 1941.

¹⁹ Roll Record of Allan Albert Manly.

²⁰ *Ibid.*

²¹ *Ibid.*

²² Divorce papers for Thomas John Frederick Manly - Elizabeth Mary Irene Manly, p. 3.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 23.

²⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 47.

²⁷ Marriage of Thomas John Frederick Manly (*sic*) and Mary Jane McGrath, 1945, *Register of Birth, Deaths and Marriages NSW*, Registration Number 20412/1945.

²⁸ 'Alleged Theft - Defendant is Remanded', *Barrier Miner*, 12 April 1929, p. 5; 'Theft of Motor Coils - Young Man Gaoled', *Barrier Miner*, 15 April 1929, p. 3.

²⁹ 'Actual Belief as to Age', *Barrier Daily Truth*, 2 June 1948, p. 1; 'Man Guilty of Serious Offence', *Barrier Miner*, 2 June 1948, p. 2.

³⁰ Thomas John Frederick Manly, *Criminal Depositions (Deposition Books) Index 1849-1949*, NSW State Records, Series: NRS 849, Item No: 19, Page No: 132, Entry No: 274 40; 'Judge puts Man on Bond for 5 Years', *Barrier Miner*, 3 June 1948, p. 3.

³¹ 'Judge puts Man on Bond for 5 Years', *Barrier Miner*, 3 June 1948, p. 3.

³² 'Elizabeth Mary Irene Manly', *Centennial Park*, <https://www.centennialpark.org/memorial-search-list/elizabeth-mary-irene-manly-151559/>.

CROKER PRIZE FOR BIOGRAPHY 2022

2204 From the Ashes of Lost Chastity

by Nereda Shute

Submitted by Nereda Shute

Croker Prize for Biography 2022 - Society of Australian Genealogists

From the ashes of lost chastity, children and respectability - secrets, skeletons, scandals

I never really knew where I came from on my father's side of the family. He was from Sydney whilst I was raised in Melbourne where my mother's family were so I grew up learning very little about the Sydney side.

My paternal grandfather had died in 1929 and was never mentioned. My grandmother however loomed large although she had died when I was only three years' old. She was referenced in snippets of family stories, not always in a positive light, and I grew up thinking of her as quite formidable.



Elizabeth Ann Jane Shute (née Power)
c.1930

Perhaps that intimidating image came from being a descendant of First Fleet convict Jane Langley and soldier Thomas Chipp¹ (which I only learned much later). Or perhaps because she was always referred to by all three of her christian names "Elizabeth Ann Jane", not just her first name as if it was one, hyphenated word, the way your mother enunciates all your names when you are in trouble.

Despite this, I had assumed she was just like my maternal grandmother and other women of that era – respectable, conservative, unassuming.

The family story was that Grandma had been married twice. The first to George Chapman, with whom she had two children and the second to my grandfather, George Shute, with whom she had four children.

Only when I recently started researching Grandma's first marriage and descendants did I unearth her various surprises. By then, my father and his siblings were deceased, and I had no connection with any living descendants.

I could find no marriage records for Grandma except the one to my grandfather, and interestingly, that listed her maiden name, Power². Her death certificate listed only one marriage and its children, not the two "Chapman" children³.

I found birth records for the two known children of the supposed earlier "Chapman marriage" – with no father specified, given Elizabeth's maiden name. So, both illegitimate! But I then also discovered two other, previously unknown, children - also with no father's name on their birth records.

One illegitimate child c.1900 was scandalous, let alone four! Elizabeth had been a housemaid - had the master been the impregnator? Was that George Chapman? But how could she look after four children whilst working? And what happened to the two children no-one had known even existed?

Additional digging revealed a death certificate for one child but no further records for the second "missing" child. It seemed I had hit a dead-end.

Submitted by Nereda Shute

Croker Prize for Biography 2022 - Society of Australian Genealogists

Then, fortuitously, in the midst of COVID, I was united through Wikitree with a half-cousin. She informed me of another half-cousin ... a son of the "missing" child, Freida.

It was only upon the death of his mother in 1979 that this half-cousin found Freida's birth certificate listing her mother as Elizabeth Power and realised Freida had been adopted. He then connected with several biological cousins.

We three half-cousins got together, pooling information from our different family recollections and own research. Using electoral rolls, newspapers, police gazettes and other records, I dug further and was able to piece together a coherent story.

Elizabeth Ann Jane Power would have been only 16⁴ and unmarried when she first became pregnant. Rieta was born in 1893 in Ermington⁵ and a second illegitimate child, Mervyn, born in Newtown (both Sydney suburbs) four years later⁶.

In the years between it is believed that Elizabeth worked as a house-maid in Forster, about 300km north of Sydney. George Chapman lived in a neighbouring area with his wife, Caroline Croker, and family^{7,8} (a Croker connection!).

Elizabeth's next illegitimate child, Freida, was born in that area in 1899⁹.

Then in 1900 ... a terrible tragedy! Rieta was killed in a fire in Ermington. Inquest reports^{10,11,12,13} revealed Rieta, and her two younger siblings, were living with Elizabeth's parents in Ermington whilst Elizabeth lived and worked elsewhere.

Not long after this, Mervyn (aged about 3), was sent to George Chapman to be raised and took on Chapman's name^{14,15,16}. At the same time the baby, Freida, was "given" to a family friend - a childless widow - and Freida took on her surname^{9,17}.

Not long after, in 1902, back living with her parents, Elizabeth had her fourth illegitimate child, Alma^{18,19}. Elizabeth married my grandfather three years later².

Alma was raised with the later Shute children, and no-one knew of Mervyn's existence until he came to find his mother when he was 21 (c.1918) and established a relationship with his half-siblings. But none of the siblings knew of Freida's existence. And thus the mystery remained.

So, having uncovered all these skeletons, for me the question remained ... was George Chapman the father of all four illegitimate children?

Well, geography seemed to discount Rieta being his. Mervyn was likely his son, as why would he take in a random 3 year-old boy when he already had a large family? But Chapman did not take Freida.

Then I discovered Elizabeth had taken James Massingham to court for child support just after Freida was born²⁰. She lost the case. But recent DNA testing has confirmed a connection²¹.

Police Reports were also uncovered of Elizabeth filing for child desertion in 1902 a few months after Alma's birth²². The alleged father, Alfred Wicks, skipped town to New Zealand²³. Alfred Wicks has no descendants but DNA has revealed Alma and Freida did not have the same father²⁴.

It appears all four illegitimate children had different fathers!

Submitted by Nereda Shute

Croker Prize for Biography 2022 - Society of Australian Genealogists

So ... I come from a woman who held many secrets, led what would have been considered a very scandalous life for that time, and went to her grave with no-one knowing those secrets until now, over one hundred years later. She obviously had a strength of character to bear the many shames and hardships which would have befallen her.

So much for a conservative and respectable grandmother! But nevertheless her legacy lives on through her children, both illegitimate and legitimate.

So I know where I came from now – like it or not!

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Submitted by Nereda Shute

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Submitted by Nereda Shute

Croker Prize for Biography 2022 - Society of Australian Genealogists

CROKER PRIZE FOR BIOGRAPHY 2022

2205 Shipwreck, Survival and Shady Deals

by Sharyn Merkley

Shipwreck, Survival, and Shady Deals

A few ill-chosen and overheard remarks caught the attention of the law. Afterwards it was known as the Great Spirit Fraud but for my 3rd great grandfather John Austin it was an ambitious mistake. The Austins' miraculous survival of the wreck of the *Netherby* in Bass Strait in 1866, and their subsequent settlement at Pine Rivers, north of Brisbane, are vivid handed-down tales. We come from a tradition of determination, resilience, and hard work. But there was an untold story, a surprising twist, shining a new light on where our character lies. For a few weeks in early 1879, John Austin's involvement in the largest illicit liquor fraud yet attempted in Brisbane was splashed across the newspapers.¹

It wasn't the Austins' first encounter with the law. Agricultural workers living on the edge of Dartmoor in Devon, they struggled to feed their family. Aged seven, John saw his father Josias arrested and marched away.² After Josias Austin was sentenced to transportation for life on 17 March 1835 for stealing sheep, John never saw him again.³ He was separated from his mother, Catherine, and siblings, and the insecurity of his early years haunted the rest of his life, testing his relationship with the law.⁴

In 1848, aged 21, he married Elizabeth Heard, already a grieving mother, having lost her infant son fathered by her abusive employer.⁵ With four children born in their first ten years of marriage, John and Elizabeth needed security.⁶ Supplemented by John's seasonal work, the lease of a 10-acre farm near Newton Abbot, Devon, was enough to feed the family, but when the property was put up for sale in 1857, they moved on.⁷ During their tenancy of their next farm, 44 acres at Great Parford on the edge of Dartmoor, it was advertised for sale three times between 1861 and 1864.⁸ Yearning for some security for their seven children, John and Elizabeth were enticed by the prospect a land order for each passenger immigrating to Queensland, passing off their two elder teenage sons as over 21 hoping to increase their allocation.

They left Plymouth on the *Netherby* on 11 April 1866, bound for Brisbane.⁹ After more than three months at sea, approaching Bass Strait, the *Netherby* was off course. On the night of 14th July, "she took ground on a rocky bottom" on the edge of King Island, uninhabited except for the lighthouse keepers at Cape Wickham.¹⁰ After a terrifying night in the bitter cold, on board the listing vessel, all the passengers and crew made it ashore. The survivors used rescued supplies to build a make-shift village.¹¹ A party trekked to the lighthouse to raise the alarm.¹² After nine days camping in the dunes, a rescue ship arrived, and the passengers waded back through roaring surf to the waiting vessel and safety in Melbourne.¹³ The Austins bravely continued on to Brisbane, arriving on 6 August 1866 to city in turmoil.¹⁴ The Queensland government, short of funds due to a London banking crisis, was unable to pay the minimal wages of thousands of new immigrants allocated to public works, including John.¹⁵

Eventually John was able to purchase land at North Pine, now Petrie, north of Brisbane.¹⁶ Farming was hard work; no cosy stone house, established orchards or yards like in Devon. Far from prying eyes, John, and his sons, soon explored more nefarious solutions to enhance their income. Eldest son William was jailed on a charge of breaking and entering. John was acquitted of cattle stealing. A charge of "furious riding" against William, and disagreements with neighbours hinted at the Austins' wild side.¹⁷

But when John began making bootleg liquor, it all unravelled. In March 1878 the Inspector of Distilleries, not convinced of John's insistence that the equipment he owned was not capable of distilling liquor, pushed the charge of possession of an unlicensed still to the Supreme Court. A former employee alleged that on discovering John manufacturing spirits in his barn, John had threatened her and her husband if they went to the authorities. He was found guilty and fined £100 or four-months imprisonment, but that didn't stop him from expanding his operation.¹⁸

A year later, thanks to an undercover informant who befriended John, authorities uncovered an elaborate operation, manufacturing and distributing fraudulently labelled illicit liquor throughout Brisbane. Much of it was distilled by John at a house in South Brisbane, specifically leased for that purpose. A witness in the case against John testified to finding seven vats of wash capable of producing up to 120 gallons (586 litres) of spirits. The judge reminded him that on his previous appearance at court he'd been warned that should he appear on a similar charge, the penalty would be severe.¹⁹ He was found guilty of his part in the Great Spirit Fraud, and unable to afford the steep fine, he was jailed for 12 months.²⁰

Afterwards, he returned to farming and a quiet life at North Pine, until his death in 1903.²¹ His wife, Elizabeth died in 1913.²² Their daughter Sarah, passed their stories through my Aunt to me. Generations of the extended Austin family still live in the Petrie area, proud of their origins, if still in the dark on the finer details.

Sometimes we forget that ingenuity, cunning, lapses of judgment, and hidden talents are also part of where we come from.

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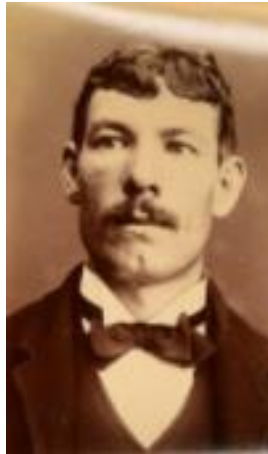
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CROKER PRIZE FOR BIOGRAPHY 2022

2206 The Gadigal Hawker

by Jo Callaghan

The Gadigal Hawker



The land of the Gadigal people stretches from Burrawara (Sydney's South Head) through Warrane (Sydney Cove), across to Gomora (Cockle Bay, Darling Harbour) and south to Cook's River. ¹ It encompasses what we know as Sydney's inner-city suburbs, and includes the suburb that we call 'Redfern'. ²

In 1817, Governor Macquarie 'granted' 100 acres of pristine Gadigal land to former convict and surgeon Dr William Redfern. Waves of immigrants had begun arriving from all over the world and many made themselves at home in the new city of Sydney. A multicultural melting pot began bubbling on Dr Redfern's land, and from it, a working-class community emerged. By August 1859, Dr Redfern's land had become the Municipality of Redfern. In one part of Redfern a railway terminus was constructed and in another, a market garden sprang to life. ²

My great grandfather was born into that Redfern melting pot on Christmas Eve 1875. He was born to Irish parents and was given the name Eugene on the day that he was born, but throughout his life he was known as Matthew. ⁴

In adulthood, Matthew Callaghan was a 'hawker'. ⁵ He sold his wares on Gadigal land, in days when hawkers commonly sold rabbits. Legend has it that during the early days of Sydney's Rugby League, players from South Sydney hawked rabbits in the morning, before playing their match in the afternoon. They say the opposing players mockingly chanted "*Rabbitoh!*" at the South Sydney team, giving birth to the football club's nickname, the South Sydney Rabbitohs. ³

¹ Indigenous name of Cook's River has not been verified ²

Website: *Gadigal People – Redfern Oral History*

<http://redfernoralhistory.org/timeline/gadigalpeople/tabid/240/default.aspx/>

² Website: *Redfern New South Wales*, Wikipedia, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Redfern,_New_South_Wales

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³ Website, *History of the South Sydney Rabbitohs*, Wikipedia,

The cry of "*Rabbitoh!*" also echoed through the narrow streets and lanes of the inner suburbs of Sydney, announcing Matthew's arrival. To be a Rabbitoh was a messy and malodorous affair. Rabbits were skinned and gutted as they were sold, and the blood and fur of the skinned rabbit would still be clinging to his hands and his clothing as he moved on to the next sale.

In the 1890s, Matthew became involved with a woman who was sometimes known as Sarah Scowen and sometimes as Sarah Goddard. Sarah's lengthy prison record shows she was commonly in trouble for indecent language, assault, and vagrancy.⁴⁵ Newspapers described the way she spoke as a "lingual performance... something painful to listen to...".⁸

In December 1897 Sarah and Matthew were arrested for stealing from a man named George Jones.⁶⁷⁸ George had just arrived from Cobar with £25 in his pocket. He met Sarah in the Haymarket, and after a few drinks, he accompanied her home. During the night George discovered that his money was gone. He accused Sarah of theft, and when the police arrived, they found Sarah holding George down and Matthew hitting George with a bottle. Matthew claimed he was protecting Sarah from George's attack. The police found £10 in notes under the wood heap in the yard, and another note rolled up on the sofa.¹⁰

Sarah had been arrested in October 1895 in very similar circumstances, but on that occasion a charge of 'stealing in company from the person' was dismissed.¹¹ This time Sarah was found guilty of theft and in early February 1898 she was sentenced to twelve months in Darlinghurst prison.⁹ Matthew's case was delayed to allow time for further investigation, and on 15 February 1898, Matthew was sentenced to three years in Darlinghurst prison for receiving stolen goods.¹³ Matthew's only other recorded offence was in March 1895 when he spent seven days in Darlinghurst prison for 'riotous behaviour'.¹⁰

Out of prison and apparently behaving himself, Matthew married Lillian Dean in November 1903. They made their home at number 1 Boundary Street Redfern, where five children, including my grandfather, were born.¹¹ During this period of his life, Matthew was settled and busy. He ran a greengrocer's shop in Chippendale, and also hawked his wares at Coogee, Long Bay, Yarra and La Perouse.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_the_South_Sydney_Rabbitohs

⁴ New South Wales, Australia, Gaol Description and Entrance Books, 1818-1930, *Sarah Scowen [Sarah Goddard]*, Ancestry.com.

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¹¹ Sydney, Australia, Anglican Parish Registers, 1818-2011, 18 November 1903. New South Wales, Australia, marriage record *Matthew Callaghan/Lillian Dean*, 1903/00776. Ancestry.com.

On Monday 9 February 1914, life for Matthew and his family took a dramatic turn. He was taken into custody on the corner of Hay and George Streets because he was behaving strangely. The police report stated that he was *'dragging several shirts that were tied together... said he was going fishing... states that he can fly through the air without any aid but his arms'*.¹²

Matthew was admitted to the Callan Park Institute for the Insane. He was delusional, believing that *'he has lost his nose and ears and is rapidly shrinking away... Wonders what he'll be like in the morning. Very amused over it.'* Matthew's condition rapidly deteriorated. The final entry in the record was on 22 June 1914, stating that he was restless, noisy, dirty, and covered with scabs. That evening he *'gradually declined and died'*.¹³

The cause of Matthew's death was 'General Paralysis of Insane'¹⁴, the fatal consequence of an untreated social disease. It was characterised by grandiose delusions, a staggering gait, and muscular weakness.¹⁵¹⁶¹⁷ Today, it is commonly referred to as tertiary or neurosyphilis.

Matthew's funeral left from his Redfern home. Nine funeral notices tell a story of the deeply felt loss of a husband, a father, a son and a brother.

*...the loved husband of Lillian, and son of Timothy..., and brother of Cis., Julia, Dan, Nellie, and Agnes, aged 36 years, after short and painful illness. R.I.P.*²⁰

*In loving memory of our dear father... who departed this life June 22 1914... inserted by Lily, Frank, Jack, Bob...*²¹

Perhaps in deference to Matthew, my family always was and always will be avid followers of the South Sydney Rabbitohs. Whenever I hear "*Rabbitohs!*", I think of Matthew Callaghan, the Gadigal Hawker, selling his wares on the lands of the Gadigal people. That's where I come from.

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CROKER PRIZE FOR BIOGRAPHY 2022

2207 Nature or Nurture?

by Kerry Close

NATURE or NURTURE?

Oxford, UK.

6 September 1778¹

The man knelt in the shallow, murky water of the River Cherwell under Napper's Bridge² and peered around several times. Confident that he was camouflaged in the shadows, he hurriedly dug a deep hole in the stinking mud and buried the large cloth-wrapped bundle,³ weighing it down with heavy stones. Ensuring it was well hidden, he memorised its position then rose to his feet, trousers and boots sodden. He wiped his muddied hands on his rag of a handkerchief and, pulling his old coat more tightly around his shoulders and his tattered cap a little lower over his eyes, he scurried away.

Suspicion of him, however, was already afoot at the home of Sir Bankes Jenkinson in nearby Headington where a quantity of silver-plate had gone missing. Our villain had been cleaning the house locks there a day or two previously and staff had noted that he 'had been particularly attentive to the Butler's Pantry, the Repository of the Plate', slyly questioning a servant as to its value. After he was reported skulking near the bridge, and with the loot recovered from the mud by the constabulary,⁴ the jig was up. He was arrested and charged with grand larceny⁵ and numerous burglaries from London to Manchester.⁶ Thomas Storer, alias Timothy Sampson⁷/Simmons⁸, was about to have the book thrown at him.

Oscar Sherwin describes the 18th Century as a 'brutal, bawdy, filthy, stinking age...an age in which life was terribly uncertain',⁹ and for Thomas, born about 1748 in overcrowded London,¹⁰ perhaps such a description rang true. Little is known of his early years, but from the age of 30 he served time for his crimes on the hellish hulks on the Thames,¹¹ as well as in the Stygian gloom of Lincoln Castle,¹² a fortification constructed by William the Conqueror¹³. But even this formidable stronghold couldn't deter Thomas from his nefarious ways. Evidently resourceful, this 'old and most notorious Offender' made his daring escape from it in 1782 and headed for Birmingham where he was eventually recaptured as he slept, shopped by 'two Ladies of easy Virtue.'¹⁴ With pick-lock keys as well as pistols in his possession,¹⁵ he had been well-equipped for further villainy and a possible bloody showdown. Seven years transportation to the new Colony in New South Wales¹⁶ was his grim punishment...or, ultimately, his unforeseen reward.

And so, confined in the claustrophobic bowels of the Third Fleet's *Albemarle*¹⁷ as it lurched its way across the vast ocean, Thomas, my 4th great-grandfather, lay wretched and frightened, forlornly pinning his hopes on a future filled with sunny skies, a full belly, perhaps even the companionship of a wife and family. Adding to the misery, 32 of the 282 male convicts died en route, including two supposed ringleaders of a thwarted mutiny who were hanged on board as a dire warning to the rest. No doubt, when the ship reached Sydney Cove on 13 October 1791 after a harrowing 200-day voyage,¹⁸ immense relief washed over Thomas.

Three months before Thomas's arrival in NSW, a drama unfolded in Ireland which was to have ramifications for Thomas in Sydney. A trio of brazen women, including one Mary Curran, boldly held up and robbed the Wicklow Mail at pistol point. Subsequently tried and convicted of highway

robbery at Dublin Assizes, their death sentences were mercifully commuted to transportation for life to New South Wales. They arrived in 1793 in the *Boddingtons*¹⁹ which, coincidentally, also experienced a threatened mutiny.²⁰ Mary was about to storm into Thomas's life.

Although they never married, Mary and Thomas embarked on a relationship which, in 1798, caused Mary to apply for a warrant for the 'maintenance of two bastard children', declaring that Thomas was 'dissolute, drunken and disorderly', that he had beaten and ill-treated her a fortnight after she had given birth.²¹ In 1809, three months after my 3rd great-grandmother, Charlotte, was born,²² an exasperated Thomas was pleading with the Judge Advocate for some measure 'to restore tranquility of mind to one who has long been made miserable by an abandoned, villainous woman.' When he referred to Mary as his 'late housekeeper', she maliciously laid waste to his large cabbage patch!²³

Despite his turbulent domestic situation, or because of it, Thomas wisely toed the line in his public life. He established a blacksmith's forge on land he leased in O'Connell Street,^{24,25} garnering the support and respect of 'all the officers and respectable persons in the Colony',²⁶ while Governor Macquarie appointed him to a 4-man committee to survey and value the Rose Bay salt pans, and also Simeon Lord's premises on Windmill Hill (now Observatory Hill) which the Government wished to purchase for its own use.²⁷ He was granted £10 towards a wheat mill²⁸ and £8 for a 'steel mill'.^{29,30} He drew cattle from the Government herd³¹ and was later issued with a publican's licence for his 'Crown and Anchor' establishment.³² The 1814 Muster records him as a free man.³³

In 1810 Thomas escaped Mary's clutches by tying the knot with another convict.³⁴ When he died in July 1821 after a long illness,³⁵ he was remembered as a man of 'good character'.³⁶ Sadly, Mary's drowning in a ditch in Hunter Street just 10 days later, elicited a more ignominious response – she was, according to the *Sydney Gazette*, 'a victim of that horrid colonial calamity – drunkenness.'³⁷ Unlike Thomas, she seemed incapable of shedding her shameful past.

As yet, it has proven difficult to trace my 4th great-grandparents' roots, but I can only generously assume that their crimes were driven by poverty, desperation and hopelessness, particularly in Mary's case, when the future for impoverished, uneducated, single women was bleak. Although not condoning her actions, I admire her imagination and feistiness, and am proud of Thomas's determination to overcome his criminal ways.

So, where did I come from? The genetic melting pot is huge and the mix unpredictable, but the hope is, that between nature and nurture, integrity will prevail.

And so far, I haven't stooped to highway robbery!

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- ² *Northampton Mercury* 28 September 1778 p.4, British Newspaper Archive
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- ³⁰ TROVE: The Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser (NSW: 1803-1842) 31 Oct 1818 p.4
- ³¹ Ancestry.com, New South Wales, Australia, Colonial Secretary's Papers, 1788-1856:
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- ³² TROVE: The Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser (NSW:1803-1842) 11 Jul 1818 p.2
- ³³ Ancestry.com, New South Wales, Census and Population Books, 1811-1825 for Thomas Storer:
Population Muster 1814, p.96
- ³⁴ Ancestry.com, Australia Marriage Index, 1788-1950, Volume Number: V A
- ³⁵ TROVE: The Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser (NSW:1803-1842) 28 Jul 1821 p.4
- ³⁶ STORER Thomas, New South Wales State Archives and Records, Index to the Colonial Secretary's Papers,
1788-1825, Ship: Per *Albemarle* Citation: [4/1832], File no. 368A, pp.6-12, Start Date: 05/07/1822
- ³⁷ TROVE: The Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser (NSW:1803-1842) 4 Aug 1821 p.3

CROKER PRIZE FOR BIOGRAPHY 2022

2208 There's No Other Way ...

by Roland Bannister

Submitted by Roland Bannister

Croker Prize for Biography 2022 - Society of Australian Genealogists

THERE'S NO OTHER WAY ...

Where did I come from? Easy ... the corporeal 'I' descends from lines of English immigrants. Half a dozen were convicts, the rest were free. Most eventually settled in the Hunter. The first were a pair of 5g maternal grandparents - both felons - transported on separate Second Fleet ships and met and married in Sydney. A pair of 3g maternal grandparents - he a convict - settled near Paterson by about 1830. All came to Australia by boat: there was no other way. Over the next century all streams on both Mum's side and Dad's moved to Newcastle seeking relief from economic depression, isolation, and the vagaries of climate and weather that plagued family farmers.

Questions about from whence comes the inner 'me' are not so easy. Yet I do have clues as to who 'I' am and how I got to be 'me'. Eliza Bannister (née Elliott), my paternal great grandmother left a diary of family life, a document which I know well now that I have transcribed it, a task I began with a sense of duty and a sense of enquiry but which progressed to become an act of love: a love of the people in the diaries; Eliza and her deceased husband William Henry Bannister, and their ten children; my father and his ten siblings, my fabulous aunts and uncles. While the diary records snippets of the lives of ordinary people, they add up to an extraordinary epic about where I came from, and who I am.

Eliza's daily diary entries - all 200,000 words of them - are a pretty tedious read, but in transcribing them I was drawn deeply into family life in Graman, Howell and Tingha in the Inverell district at the time of the depression of the 1890s, and of the Federation Drought.

Fourteen years old Eliza and her parents and three siblings travelled from their home in Paddington, London, to Botany Bay on the *Lord Hungerford* in 1855.¹ When she and William Henry Bannister married in the 'Free Church, Macquarie Street Sydney' in 1863² Eliza had been '... for some time in the employ of Lady Denison, wife of the Governor of NSW'.³ We can speculate that the couple met in Sydney, and when William went to manage Nee Nee station, near Dirrinbandi in southern Queensland they kept in touch by mail. But how - we might ask - did Eliza and William court, at that distance, and How did he travel Sydney for the wedding? And how did the newlyweds return to Nee Nee?



Eliza Bannister (née Elliott)

The birth registrations of their children show that they left Nee Nee to live at Anvil Creek, NSW from 1868 to 1873 and from there they made conditional purchases of two 40 acre land portions fronting Redbank Creek,⁴ at Graman and there they endured the vicissitudes of farming life.

Sometime after William's death in 1898 Eliza took her family to the Tingha tin fields, firstly to the ephemeral mining village of Howell and then, in about 1906, to Tingha itself, a flourishing new town where Eliza exercised her religious faith, taking her children to the Church of England, Presbyterian, Methodist, and Catholic churches on special occasions and her core church - the Salvation Army - on Sundays. They even attended the open day at the Chinese Joss house.

Submitted by Roland Bannister

On her death in 1921 the *Inverell Times* described Eliza as an 'old and respected resident of the District'.⁵ Eliza bequeathed to her descendants tangible values and world views: a strong love of family tradition, a tradition evident in her own life. Eliza demonstrated a generous nature in 'taking in' and raising an orphaned girl;⁶ her encouragement of family music making resonated down the generations to me who spent much of my working life as town band director and music educator in Glen Innes and Wagga Wagga. Eliza's values were in good measure those of the Salvation Army, and many of her descendants are Sallies. I'm not, but the hairs on the back of my neck do stand on end when I hear a Sally band. Eliza's diary sketches a picture of everyday farming life in Graman, and life in Howell and Tingha where her son Herbert - my grandfather - contracted his bullock team's hauling services to the mines.

There is in Eliza's diary jottings an appreciation of friendship among women, a love of community life, an enjoyment of the beauty of the Australian bush, and stoicism in the face of the isolation and hardship she - a widowed Englishwoman living in remote rural Australia - endured.

Eliza's grandson, my father, demonstrated a practical ability in country tasks, an inheritance for which I am grateful. Dad taught me - among other wonderful things - how to butcher a chook, and how to straighten used nails and flatten old, corrugated iron to use in building a shed. I served a carpenter's apprenticeship and worked in the trade for seven years before I became a musician.

My love of rural Australia, practical work, family, music, and the arts has antecedents in Eliza's life.

Where did I come from? prompts the question Who am I; the 'I' of my senses and sensibilities, my character, my likes and dislikes, my interests, my personality: all the things of my thinking and feelingful life. Each of us is shaped by elusive eddies of genetic inheritance, personality, relationships, society and culture that lend structures and order. The 'me' of my ninth decade is a me moulded by the inchoate and configured by those who came before. There is no other way.

¹ SANSW NRS 5316/4-4792 Lord Hungerford, 20 March 1855,

² NSW BDM Marriage Registration Transcription, Ref. No. 1863/261

³ *Inverell Times*, 11 Feb 1921 p.5

⁴ NSW Land Registry Services, *Parish of Redbank 1881* (map), <http://hrrv.nswlrs.com.au>

⁵ *Inverell Times*, 11 Feb 1921 p.5

⁶ Bannister, Roland, *Saving Grace: an Orphan Girl in Graman, Howell, and Tingha, NSW, 1898-1912*. (Newcastle NSW: Self-published, 2020)

CROKER PRIZE FOR BIOGRAPHY 2022

2209 William Parsons Meeker: Rich Man, Poor Man, Beggar Man, Ancestor

by Terry Joyce

William Parsons Meeker: Rich Man, Poor Man, Beggar Man, Ancestor



Portrait of William Parsons Meeker by Gilbert Stuart c1803

Two engraved family silver serving spoons are a tangible link to my American great great great grandfather William Parsons Meeker. The initials 'EV' (Emanuel Vandenbrandt) are engraved on one spoon handle and the other has 'WPM' (William Peter Meeker). Emanuel Vandenbrandt was William Parson's father-in-law and William Peter Meeker, his son and heir. The paper's focus is an adult William Parson Meeker. William worked as a merchant trader and obtained great wealth and social standing when money was plentiful in Philadelphia, America. He lost his fortune and reputation during his stay in England due to rising financial crises throughout the Napoleonic wars. He enjoyed a relationship with an English lady who bore him a son in 1810. Proof of the timing and circumstances surrounding William's death are yet to be located.

The parents for William born c1769 and his four siblings were Matthias and Jane (Parsons) Meeker who lived in New Jersey, America.¹ William worked as a merchant trader in the city of Philadelphia (the then American Capital city) towards the end of the eighteenth century.² He often worked in partnership with his cousin Samuel Meeker and/or Samuel Denman, his cousin's brother-in-law.³ They traded dry goods and hardware, sold land and William was a part owner of the schooner *Sally*, which transported cargo for sale from places such as Santiago de Cuba to Philadelphia.⁴

Recently, evidence of William's success came to light. A 'lost' Gilbert Stuart portrait of William painted c1803, appeared at a 2009 American art auction.⁵ The rich and famous including George Washington, America's first president, and the established merchant and landed classes commissioned Stuart to paint them.⁶ Thus, William likely sat for the artist to signal his own commercial achievements.

In 1806, it was a prosperous, self-confident and optimistic William Parsons Meeker who sailed to London, England with hope of increasing his wealth and social standing. He continued as a merchant trader with his business partner Samuel Denman who remained in Philadelphia. Denman advertised the wares that William bought and shipped from England and sold them to Americans at discount prices.⁷ While in England, William lived and worked at a large fashionable five-bedroom dwelling with attached warehouse and offices at 64 Basinghall Street, London.⁸ The property, which signified wealth and success for the occupant, cost William £40 rent/year and £8.00 Land Tax.⁹

By mid-1807, William found it difficult to pay his London creditors which caused an abrupt cessation of Denman's weekly advertisements. The seriousness of the situation is realised when William was declared bankrupt in London on 9th July 1808.¹⁰ Samuel Denman subsequently announced the dissolution of his trading partnership with William.¹¹

Each phase of the bankruptcy process was reported in England's newspapers including the individual's name, trading title and address.¹² It is easy to imagine the compound effect of this public exposure on debtors. For William, the worst was yet to come; liquidation of his assets was William's final 'fall from grace'. During December 1808, he was forced to sell his leasehold home and his *genteel effects* to repay creditors.¹³

It would be difficult to blame William entirely for his own financial losses when you consider how Britain's high taxes plus trade restrictions associated with the Napoleonic wars led to abject poverty among many of the British population and subsequent financial losses for merchants such as himself.¹⁴

William was now homeless, unemployed and without family support. He would be reliant on others to provide shelter and employment. It is possible that Emanuel Vandenbrant responded to William's predicament. Emanuel who was a London merchant 'taylor' (and owner of the cited silver serving spoon) lived and worked at 32 Maddox Street, St George, Hanover Square.¹⁵ His thirty-four-year-old spinster daughter Elizabeth Vandenbrant not only lived with her father, she also enjoyed a romantic relationship with the handsome Mr. Meeker.¹⁶ Their relationship may have motivated Emanuel to address some of William's needs.

Not long after William's house was sold, it was reported on 18th March 1809 that he would receive a bankrupt discharge certificate.¹⁷ This event was followed by the birth of his son in 1810.¹⁸ The Parish baptism entry dated 9th September 1810 for William Peter Meeker (my great great grandfather and owner of the second silver spoon) shows he was born on 1st January 1810 and that William and Elizabeth Meeker are his parents. Sadly, William's relationship with his father was cut short.

It is said (without evidence) that William Parson Meeker died at sea during a trip to America in 1812.¹⁹ If these claims are proven, it raises questions about William's timing of his travel. Sailing to America was risky business because it coincided with Britain and America's battles on the high seas.²⁰ Perhaps William's desire to return home was so great that it outweighed the dangers posed by British ships.

Regardless of the circumstances surrounding William's travel and his death, William Peter Meeker lost his father and seemingly never learned of his American family. This assumption is based on the content of Matthias Meeker's will dated 22nd August 1826.²¹ All of Matthias' grandchildren except for William were mentioned as beneficiaries of his estate

Until further evidence is found, circumstances surrounding William's death and his motivation for travel are speculation. Bankruptcy stole William's aspirations and soon afterwards he became a parent. Would these combined events have challenged William to take control of his own destiny? If so, was he returning home to find opportunities which would allow him to regain an 'acceptable' lifestyle for himself and for his family in England?

Upon reflection, many of William Parson Meeker's descendants (including myself) have 'inherited' and acted upon a belief that we should help ourselves when faced with adversity and not sit back and wait to be rescued. Perhaps this was Mr. Meeker's gift to his descendants? After all, William wasn't born with a silver spoon in his mouth. Yet, two family heirlooms - silver serving spoons bear testimony to his fluctuations of wealth.

¹ Meeker Leroy J. *The Meeker family of New Jersey as revealed in the correspondence of Charles H. Meeker, Junior*. (Charleston, West Virginia, 1973), Chart 1V 193.

² Ancestry Newspapers.com *Philadelphia Gazette & Universal Daily*, (Philadelphia) 28 October, 1797. Advertisement for Meeker, Denman, & Co., Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2001.

³ Ancestry.com. *Sir Edmund West, comp. Family Data Collection- Births*. [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations Inc, 2001; *Family Data Collection- deaths*. [database on-line]: Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2001.; Find a Grave, database and images. *Memorial page for Samuel Denman* 2 July 1774–8 September 1816, Memorial ID: 11323461, Christ Church Burial Ground, Philadelphia, Philadelphia County, Pennsylvania, USA. (<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/11323461/samuel-denman>; (Accessed 17/5/22).

⁴ Google Books. *Hamilton County, Ohio- Deed Records. Deed Records-Deed Book D-1*. 10 March 1804 p 568: https://books.google.com.au/books?redir_esc=y&id=V5cl8YcmaNOC&q=meeker#v=snippet&q=meeker&f=false; Ancestry.com. *Pennsylvania, U.S., Arriving Passenger and Crew Lists, 1798-1962* [database on-line]. Lehi, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2006.

⁵ Ahrens Elizabeth 2008 *Gilbert Stuart Blog*. Bill Parsons Meeker; a sad fate, but his image survives, testimony to troubled times, 17 August 2009. <http://gilbertstuart.blogspot.com/2009/08/bill-parson-meeker-sad-fate-but-his.html> .Accessed/ 2010.

⁶ Ancestry Newspapers.com - *Aurora General Advertiser* (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania) 18 December 1801, p 4. (Downloaded on Mar 29, 2022); The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica. Gilbert Charles Stuart – American painter. <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Gilbert-Stuart>. Britannica, T. Editors of Encyclopaedia (Accessed 29/11/21).

⁷ My Heritage Ltd., *General Advertiser Philadelphia* April 11 1807 p 1. Newspapers.com [online database], <https://records.myheritagelibraryedition.com/research/record-10606-1016862/general-advertiser?snippet=9cd83b94803f28c2b30fc032bcec40a2> (Accessed 18/5/22); Ancestry Newspapers.com *General Advertiser* (Philadelphia, Philadelphia County, USA) 12 May 1807 p1. Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2013.

⁸ Ancestry.com. UK, *City and County Directories, 1766 - 1946* [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: 1808, *Post Office Annual Directory UK*. p 195.

⁹ Ancestry.com. *London, England, Land Tax Records, 1692-1932* [database on-line]. Lehi, UT, USA: Call Number MS 11316/327 for WP Meeker. City of London, Bassishaw Ward. 1808 p3. Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2011.

¹⁰ Office of the Commissioners of Bankrupts and Court of Bankruptcy: Bankruptcy Commission Files. Reference: 3/3214 In the matter of William Parsons Meeker of Basinghall Street, London, merchant, bankrupt, 9 July 1808. Held by: The National Archives (UK), Kew Reference: B 3/3214; *The National Register Bankrupts* July 10 1808.

¹¹ Newspapers.com. *Aurora General Advertiser* (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania). 26 September 1808.

¹² British Library Newspapers *Morning Post*, July 15, p 4, Issue 1189, 1808: Meeting of creditors at Guildhall tomorrow https://link-gale-com.ezproxy.sl.nsw.gov.au/apps/doc/R3209480438/BNCN?u=slnsw_public&sid=bookmark-BNCN&id=1054ca88. (Accessed 28/3/21); British Library Newspapers *Hampshire Chronicle*, 18 July 1808, p. 1, "News." link-gale-com.ezproxy.sl.nsw.gov.au/apps/doc/JL3241392428/GDCS?u=slnsw_public&sid=bookmark-GDCS&id=dd3dbfdd. (Accessed 19/5/22); British Library Newspapers: *Morning Chronicle*, December 16, 1808, Issue:12353. Advertisements & Notices: Creditors of William Parsons Meeker may receive a dividend. Gale Document Number GALE|BB3207110111 link-gale-com.ezproxy.sl.nsw.gov.au/apps/doc/BB3207105291/GDCS?u=slnsw_public&sid=bookmark-GDCS&id=6193d48c. (Accessed 19/5/22).

¹³ British Library Newspapers: *Morning Post*, December 21, p 2, 1808. Advertisements & Notices. https://link-gale-com.ezproxy.sl.nsw.gov.au/apps/doc/R3209698555/BNCN?u=slnsw_public&sid=bookmark-BNCN&id=a31d174f. (Accessed 29/3/2022); British Library Newspapers, *Morning Chronicle* 20 March, 1809. link-gale-com.ezproxy.sl.nsw.gov.au/apps/doc/BB3207105939/GDCS?u=slnsw_public&sid=bookmark-GDCS&id=5dfe0e0d. (Accessed September, 2020).

¹⁴ Fontana History of Europe Library, 1967. *Rudé George Revolutionary Europe 1783-1815*. Collins, London, England.

¹⁵ Find My Past. *Westminster Rate Books 1634-1900* for Emanuel Vandenbrandt, 1786, in Maddox Street, St George, Hanover Square; *Grosvenor Book, Dover, Conduit Wards Poor, Highway Rates 1786-1789; Lists of streets in the Parish, Persons in arrears 1790*. Find My Past, *Westminster Rate Books*; Ancestry.com UK, *Register of*

Duties paid for Apprentices' Indentures, 1710-1811. For Emanuel Vandenbrandt, City (Town) Registers 1788 Aug-1791.

¹⁶ Ancestry.com. *Westminster, London, England, Church of England Baptisms, Marriages and Burials, 1558-1812* [database on-line]. Lehi, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2020; Westminster, London, England, Church of England Baptisms, Marriages and Burials, 1558-1812, St. James, Piccadilly (St James Westminster) 1761-1786 London, England.

¹⁷ British Library Newspapers *Morning Chronicle*, (from the *London Gazette*, 18 March) March 20, 1809, Issue 12435. https://link-gale-com.ezproxy.sl.nsw.gov.au/apps/doc/BB3207105939/GDCS?u=slnsw_public&sid=bookmark-GDCS&xid=5dfe0e0d. (Accessed 18/5/22).

¹⁸ Essex Archives [Online] Essex England, Church of England Baptisms, Marriages and Burials 1538-181 p 142. Reg no. 42 for William Peter Meeker. Certified Requested Image 76 Ref. D/P 302/1/7; Ancestry.com *Essex, England, Select Church of England Parish Registers, 1518-1960*. Ancestry.com. Operations, Inc.2014

¹⁹ Ahrens Elizabeth 2008 Gilbert Stuart Blog. *Bill Parson Meeker; a sad fate, but his image survives, testimony to troubled times* 17 August 2009. <http://gilbertstuart.blogspot.com/2009/08/bill-parson-meeker-sad-fate-but-his.html>.

²⁰ Juliet Gardiner 1995 *History Today: The companion to British history*. Eds. J Gardiner & Neil Whenborn. Anglo-American War 1812-15 p 26. Collins and Brown, London.

²¹ Ancestry.com. *Louisiana, U.S., Wills and Probate Records, 1756-1984* (Wills, 1805-1824) [database on-line]. Lehi, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2015.

Image: William Parson Meeker by Gilbert Stuart p1

Personal Knowledge: Elizabeth Ahrens: Image courtesy of James D. Julia Auctioneers. Auctioneer stated the present owner of this portrait was told at the time of its purchase that William Parsons Meeker died enroute to New Orleans in 1812.

CROKER PRIZE FOR BIOGRAPHY 2022

2210 Terror in the Hull Skies

by Lesley New

Terror in the Hull Skies

We may gaze into our loved ones' eyes, in search of clues from the past. In their glints, we hope to find stories, memories, traits that make us, allowing us to understand. Often, paths lead to those who proudly served in wars, easily we forget the impact on those left behind.¹ My journey was no different. Between 7th and 9th May 1941, Hull faced the most air-raids of WW2.² How could I understand? Memories of my treasured weekly visits to Nanna, the sights, sounds and aromas would help me discover. In my Nanna's honour, I remember...

The dark eerie passageway led to a flickering flame in the room beyond. "*Sing something simple*" harmonised from the radio. Mary sat, keeping warm close to the open fire. Deep in her thoughts, longingly waiting for her weekly visit. The room was filled with the aroma of burnt newspaper, the scorched remnants on the hearth beside the crimping irons. Mary loved to crimp her hair, creating her distinctive wave. As usual, she had left them far too long heating in the cinders of the open fire. The newspaper catching fire, as she tested them before grabbing a lock of her hair. She smiled as she knew her grandchildren would laugh, "*Nanna have you been curling your hair again?*" Laurie will shake his head in dismay, knowing full well his Mum liked to look her best for her family.

The past week had seemed never ending. Mary longed more than usual to see her son and two grandchildren. Soon, she would hear excited children's chatter with their adventurous enquiries of, "*Nanna why do you sit in the dark? And tell us again Nanna about...*" Her grandchildren's faces would light up and their gazes fix upon her lips, with enchantment. She never tired of their questions.³ Forever thankful. Mary glanced impatiently towards the front door, her thoughts wandered, sending an icy chill up her spine. It was so long ago, yet the terror she felt remained, as clear as if it were yesterday...

¹ The National Archives, '*The Home Front*', <https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/education/resources/home-front/>, Accessed 19th May 2022.

² Hull History Centre, '*The Hull Blitz*', <https://www.hullhistorycentre.org.uk/research/research-guides/Hull-Blitz.aspx>, Accessed 16th May 2022; Mike Covell, 'Hull Blitz: Five tragedies from the city's Second World War bombing', *Hull Daily Mail*, <https://www.hulldailymail.co.uk/news/history/five-tragedies-hull-blitz-ww2-78134>, Accessed 17th May 2022.

³ Oral History Record, digital recording, original in author's possession.

Darkness falls on May 8th 1941, the sky lights up with floodlights chasing attacking planes. The air is filled with the whirling noise as the siren sounds for the 3rd time this week.⁴ People scramble to shelters in the dark. Feeling for familiar things. Some stumble. Nothing seems the same, since the house railings have been taken for the war effort.⁵ Shouts to take cover ring out from everywhere.

Some shelters had taken direct hits last week; so Mary preferred to take her chances and stay put.⁶ “Where’s Dad? He’s late home. Do you think he will be hiding too, Mam?” cried Laurie, as he and his sister are frantically pushed into the small cupboard under the stairs. Each of them grabbing their gasmask boxes, from hooks inside the cupboard; before coming to rest on old mattresses on the floor. The windows rattle, as the engine roar comes closer. The monster descends into its attack, lining up the power-station tower once again, into its sights. Innocence hide from the danger ascending from the skies.

Ears covered and eyes closed, whilst being held in the arms of their protectors. Some pray. The hidden are in the tight grasp of each other. The bullets fly, ricocheting along the walls before the whistling starts. Suddenly an explosion! “That one was close,” Mary murmurs, as the ground trembles with aftershocks. Mary whispers to her cowering children, they listen with baited breathe. That is it from the Luftwaffe for now, she thought with sighing relief. It is over, for tonight but where will the smouldering rubble be this time? She despairs.⁷

A few minutes pass, when the family’s fear is disturbed by someone staggering in the front door. Muffled voices are heard from their cupboard of safety. Could this be Horace being helped home, again? A few too many drinks in the pub after work.

⁴ Historic England, ‘Hull: A Northern Coastal Town’, <https://www.historicengland.org.uk/whats-new/features/blitz-stories/hull-a-northern-coastal-town/>, Accessed 16th May 2022.

⁵ My Learning, ‘The War Effort’, <https://www.mylearning.org/stories/leeds-in-world-war-2/145> Accessed 10th May 2022.

⁶ World War 2 Today, ‘Heavy Casualties in raid on Hull’, 18th July 2021, <https://www.ww2today.com>, Accessed 15th May 2022.

⁷ Sheila, Betty, ‘A Child’s War: In Hull’, WW2 People’s War, 23rd November 2003, <https://www.bbc.co.uk/history/ww2peopleswar/stories/14/a2073214.shtml>, Accessed 17th May 2022; Pritti, Mistry, ‘Hull blitz children commemorate WWII 70th anniversary’, BBC News, Hull, 5th May 2011, <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-humber-13202859>, Accessed 19th May 2022.

People need to understand everyone is doing their bit, even the men left behind. Horace had served courageously in WW1, she hoped he would never have to witness such evil again.⁸ Content to be welcomed back into the family's embrace on his return.⁹ Both wished for a simple married life ahead; however things didn't turn out that way. The guilt and the demons followed, even into her husband's dreams. Mary knew of his torment but did others? What was it all for? The enemy were back. Bombing the towns and the innocent.¹⁰ Mary tried to help Horace, somehow nothing helped except his visits to the pub. It was happening all too often. She sighs deeply, as he stumbles to his bed.¹¹

Oh wait, the front door is still open! The Warden's bellows are heard.

"Light! Put that light out, now!"¹²

With a jolt, Mary startled from her fearful memories, *"it's that familiar front door noise again,"* she thought surprisingly. Only this time it wasn't Horace being carried home from the pub, with the sirens sounding in the distance. She squints to see Laurie's tall figure brushing past the thick velvet hallway curtain. It had hung there for as long as anyone could remember, to block the light in either direction. As it wafted in the draught, the lingering smell of stale tobacco with a faint, fusty-odour, filled the air.¹³ The dark figure held his children's hands, to guide them towards the fire glow.¹⁴ Mary's gaze caught a sudden shudder from the image. She gasped, as she watched her son pause at the cupboard under the stairs. He too, has memories of those fearful times still. The sunshine days of the country's triumphs had moved into years. Not even the brightness of peacetimes were able to erase the memories of the terror from the skies.

⁸ Ancestry, UK, WW1 Service Medal and Awards Rolls, 1914-1920, Horace Dyke, The National Archives of the UK; Kew, Surrey, England; WW1 Service Medal and Award Rolls; Class: WO329; Piece Number: 1239, Ancestry.com, Accessed 15th May 2022; Ancestry, 1939 Register of England and Wales', Horace W Dyke, Ryde Street, Kingston Upon Hull, England, Page 3, The National Archives; Kew, London, England; 1939 Register; Reference: RG 101/31571, Ancestry.com, Accessed 17th May 2022.

⁹ Ancestry, 1939 Register of England and Wales', Horace W Dyke, Accessed 17th May 2022.

¹⁰ Len Markham, *Homefront Yorkshire, 1939-194'*, Pen & Sword Military Books Ltd, 2007, page 7 & 8, ebook, Accessed 15th May 2022.

¹¹ Oral History Record, in author's possession.

¹² Careless Black-out Breakers, *Hull Daily Mail*, East Riding of Yorkshire, 8th October 1940, <https://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/titles/hull-daily-mail>, Accessed 13th September 2014; Sheila, Betty, *'A Child's War: In Hull'*.

¹³ Oral History Record, in author's possession.

¹⁴ Dyke Family History Group Sheet, in author's possession.

No wonder my Nanna's weary eyes show courage and pride. Her need to protect her own, at all costs, even outspoken for what is right. I am honoured, to be known as a lass from Yorkshire!¹⁵

¹⁵John, Malam, '*Yorkshire, A Very Peculiar History*', The Salariya Book Company Ltd, 2002, page 5-14, ebook, Accessed 11th May 2022; The Yorkshire Regiment-History, '*Regimental Day-Yorkshire Day*', https://www.army.mod.uk/yorkshire_regiment/history/battle_honours/honours/yorkshire_day.htm, Accessed 18th May 2022.

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CROKER PRIZE FOR BIOGRAPHY 2022

2211 A Miner's Ancestry

by Claire Williams

A Miners Ancestry: Henry Robert James (1869 – 1902)

Commonly known as Harry, Henry Robert James was born to unwed parents David James and Isabella Rixon in 1869 at Mount Kembla, NSW. Harry was most likely raised by his paternal grandparents as his birth was quite the scandal of the Mount Kembla mining village. Harry's mother, Isabella Rixon, was the daughter of the famed Benjamin (Ben) Rixon who married Margaret Phinamore (Finnamore) in 1829 in Campbelltown. After Harry's birth she went on to marry William Simpson in 1874 in Wollongong, NSW. Ben was the son of James Rixon and Amelia Burrows from the Hawkesbury, NSW. Ben Rixon was a famed bush mailman confidentially navigating the track over Mount Keira to Campbelltown. Ben was also known as the "best white tracker in Australia". His father James Rixon was born in 1770 in England and tried in Derby as 'James Hickson' before being sent to Australia aboard the Barwell in 1798. Similarly, Ben's mother Amelia Goodwin was born in England, tried in Kent and sent to Australia arriving in 1800 aboard the ship Speedy. Together, James and Amelia had 6 children, including the first non-Indigenous triplets to be born in Australia which included Ben. Today, there are over 15,000 descendants of James and Amelia.

Harry's father is unknown. In the 1800's there were three James' families living in Mount Kembla. We know that Henry is directly descended from Robert James, a Scottish convict. Robert was born in 1782 to David James and Janet Cumming. David and Janet had six children together. Robert married Catherine Flanagan in 1801 in Ireland before being tried in Scotland and transported to Australia in 1824 aboard the Countess of Harcourt. A decade later, Janet and the children set sail aboard the George Hibbert as free passengers to join Robert in Australia.

Harry's fathers true identify is currently unknown as there are 3 David James' directly descended from Robert James and Catherine Flannagan. These are Robert and Catherine's son David James (1816-1876), and two grandsons, one born to David James (1816-1876) who married Catherine Munro, and the second grandson born to their son William Charles James who married Isabella Rose Munro. Grandson David James (1846-1920) married Margaret Amelia Payne whilst grandson David James (1847-1915) married Anna Maria Sales.

Oral family history tells us that Harry was either raised by his paternal grandparents and passed off as their youngest son. Given Robert James and Catherine Flannagan passed away

before Harry's birth, it is not possible that they raised him. Thus, Harry must be the son of either David James (1846-1920) or David James (1847-1915), both of whom were the grandsons of Robert James and Catherine Flanagan. This would mean that he was raised by his paternal grandparents David James (1816-1876) and Catherine Flanagan or William Charles James and Isabella Rose Munro respectively. This would make respectively Harry 21 or 13 years younger than his paternal grandparent's youngest child.

Whatever the case, Harry attended Mount Kembla Public School as a child. He married Elizabeth Peace in Wollongong, NSW in 1892. Elizabeth, one of the 12 children of Jonathon Peace and Jane Foster who married in England in 1860 and arrived in Australia aboard the HMMS Himalaya. Harry and Elizabeth lived at miner's cottage 118 in Mount Kembla with their children - Ester Jane (1893-1976), Henry Robert (1895-1964), Percival Robert (1900-1968) and David William (1903-1973). Harry was employed as an engine man, driving haulage engines to haul tubs of coal from the coal face out of Mount Kembla Colliery pit.

Harry and eight of his in-laws were working in the Mount Kembla Colliery on 31 July 1902 when a mixture of gas and coal dust caused an explosion. Harry died on 16 November 1902 succumbing to afterdamp following his heroic efforts to help save others trapped in the mine, never having had the chance to meet his youngest son David, having died months before he was born. Harry is buried in the Wesleyan / Presbyterian section of the Wollongong General Cemetery being the 96th and final victim of the disaster. Harry's headstone was vandalised in 2009.

Harry's widow moved with the children to Corrimal, NSW. She met and married James (Jim) Jones in 1906, who was later killed at the Newnes Shale Mine in 1921. Elizabeth and Jim had four children— William John (1909-1982), Ellis (1912-1964), Gwendoline (1915-unknown) and Dorothy (1917-unknown). Elizabeth lived at 35 Wilga Street, Corrimal for the rest of her life caring for her brother Isaac (Bob) who was injured during the Mount Kembla Mine Explosion. Her son William was charged with failing to support his first wife and their child in 1930. Ellis was a local bus driver, living at 38 Wilga Street with his wife and children for many years.

Of Harry's children, Esther never married and lived with her mother throughout her life. Henry and Percy were miners like their father. They were fined 45 pounds in 1945 for taking street bets. Henry married Annie Elizabeth Padget in 1917 and had four children, living at 14 Wilga Street for much of their lives. Their son David James worked in mines rescues most of

his career. Percy married Mary Ellen Carmichael and had 3 children. David married Eileen Muriel Whymss. Harry's widow Elizabeth died on 3 May 1950 in her Wilga Street home. She is buried in the Presbyterian Cemetery in Wollongong.

Henry did not die in vain. The 1902 Mount Kembla Explosion resulted in a Royal Commission, which declared safety lamps should immediately replace naked flames to prevent further disasters. This made mining safer for thousands of Australian miners working over the next century, with their use continuing today.

Henry's life is commemorated on the Mount Kembla memorial amongst the names of his fallen mates. His memory lives on in the hearts of his descendants who continue to live in the Illawarra today.



CROKER PRIZE FOR BIOGRAPHY 2022

2212 I Am an Australian

by Joan Lewis

I AM AN AUSTRALIAN.

My great grand-father, Antonio George Patrech, was a Pontic Greek¹ and a descendant of the Greek colony that settled on the shores of the Black Sea c800 BC.² He was born on the 17th of April 1857³ to George Papadopoulas and Clothe Cleanthe in the village of Kerasundi (now Giresun) when the Ottoman Empire was in power. The Pontic Greeks and the Armenians had co-existed for many centuries with the Greeks keeping their own language and religion, whilst their music, dances and food were influenced by their Middle Eastern environment.⁴ George and his eldest son were priests of the Greek Orthodox Church and they both died during a cholera epidemic, possibly an expected result of working amongst the sick and dying.

Antonio had also been expected to become a priest. He had a permit, written in “old” Russian which stated that he was 19 years old, had black hair, dark brown eyes and a “medium” nose with numerous moles on his face and a scar on his right hand. His religion was Orthodox and occupation Seaman. The permit allowed him to travel within the Empire of Russia, called him a Turkish citizen and named him as Anton Georgiu. (I have been told that Georgiu means “son of George”). It was witnessed by the Russian Consul at Kerasundi on 26th of March 1876 and finalized by the Mayor of Kerch on 13th April 1876; it also stated that he had to produce this permit and a police certificate of no objection, to leave the country.⁵

The two dates on the passport indicate that the family had left Kerasundi by April 1876. Family story tells us that the Russians, fearing Christians were in danger, had advised them to move to the Sea of Azov. They would have gone by boat across the grey green waters of the Black Sea, the graveyard of many wooden ships still preserved after 2000 years,⁶ and settled in Kerch, which had been ceded to Russia by the Turks in 1774.⁷

Antonio had earned his title of Seaman by working on a merchant vessel owned by an uncle. He was said to have been in Australia twice, the second time deserting ship and staying, leaving behind his mother and three sisters. We know he sent money home as there was a letter saying “thank you son for the two pounds you sent me;” today this amount would be valued at \$432.⁸

He was living in Moruya NSW before his marriage to Sarah Annie Bettini 15th May 1887 in St. Paul’s Anglican Church at Batemans Bay.⁹ He purchased 4 acres, 3 roods and 8 poles (almost 5 acres) of land and built a family home on Beach Road overlooking the Clyde River.¹⁰ They went on to have 11 children, 2 of whom died in infancy.¹¹ Cleanthe, my grandmother was the eldest daughter and was born 27th February 1888¹² and had a talent for painting which encouraged her father to arrange art lessons for her. At the time of his death in 1929, a painting of his mother was buried with him. Who painted that and was it someone back in Kerasundi such as one of his sisters? This is of particular interest as some of his descendants are artistic.

He had several occupations; fisherman, oyster farmer, mail contractor and cattle farmer.¹³ He carried mail by motor boat up the Clyde River to outlying families. The family then moved to Townsville in Queensland where they lived on Ross Island and had oyster leases. A son Alfred George was born on 7th April 1892 and we know they were back in NSW in 1894 as a daughter Lucy was born in that year at Moruya.¹⁴

Alfred George was the father of my family story-teller Marie Bateup. As a child she had known Antonio and told me of his standing before the open fireplace, bushy moustached and with the family twinkle in his eye he informed her he “was warming the whole of his body.” She had asked, “Where are you really from?” His answer was “I am an Australian.”

Antonio George Patrech became an Australian citizen on the 6th day of December 1898.¹⁵ It states on his Certificate of Naturalization that he arrived in the Colony of NSW on the ship “Alexandria” in the year 1881. Was that his Uncle’s ship or did he go to England and ship out from there? No amount of searching has found the “Alexandria”.

The family members that he left behind were destined for a cruel fate. His mother and sisters were probably safe but the many extended family members were to suffer dreadfully at the hands of the Turks. Some were sent to Greece, but millions of Armenians and Greeks perished during the Genocide carried out by Ataturk.¹⁶

At the time of the Genocide, (1914-1923) some of our people were forced to convert to the Muslim faith in order to survive and maybe some had intermarried. Whatever the case there is evidence of my DNA across Turkey, Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia.¹⁷

Back in Australia a curious thing had happened; sometime prior to 1914 Antonio George received word that a lawyer was coming to see him about a land inheritance. This news apparently sent him and Sarah Annie into a mad scramble to burn records and costumes from his old life in Kerch. Did he leave illegally? He was a white Russian; a supporter of the Tzar and he could have been subjected to severe punishment upon his return.¹⁸ (The Tzarist regime was overcome and the Royal family executed in 1917.¹⁹) World War 1 was beginning and they needn’t have worried as the boat carrying the lawyer was torpedoed and the poor fellow didn’t get here.

Antonio George may have been covering his tracks when he changed his name to Patrech and then deserted ship. He died a free Australian 29th March 1929²⁰ and I am left with a glow of awe and pride to see where I came from.

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3 Russian permit N237 issued 13th April 1876 at Kerch, Ukraine, witnessed by Russian Consul at Kerasundi, Turkey 26th March 1876.

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CROKER PRIZE FOR BIOGRAPHY 2022

2213 A Canine Tale

by Lee McKerracher

A CANINE TALE

“How does she do that?” This phrase has followed me since childhood due to an uncanny connection I have with our canine friends. For some unknown reason, I have the ability to understand their needs and they mine. It is almost telepathic. Where did this come from and why do I have such a strong bond with these creatures?

When researching my family history I never expected to find an answer to this phenomenon. However, the discovery of my fourth great-grandfather revealed a life that explained exactly where this had come from.

John Peel (c.1776 – 1854) was born in Caldbeck,^{1, 2, 3} a sleepy village in the county of Cumberland in the north-west of England ^{Fig 1}. The oldest son of William Peel (1752 – 1828) and Lettice Scott (1759 – 1840),^{4, 5, 6} John and his siblings grew up on the family farm surrounded by horses and dogs. This rural life gave John the opportunity to develop superior horsemanship and to learn how to work the farm dogs. These skills eventually led to a career that was in great demand by the local farmers, as a fox hunter^{7, 8}.

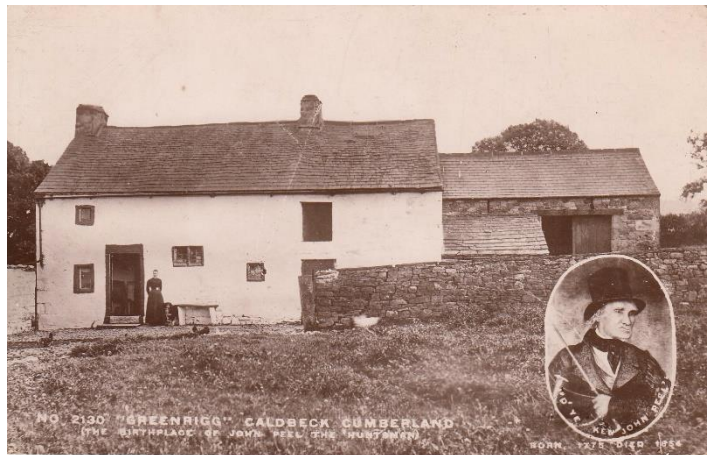


Fig 1 Greenrigg Farm, Caldbeck, birthplace of John Peel in 1776

Though abhorred now^{9, 10}, fox hunting was a normal part of country life. Foxes would attack flocks of sheep, killing and maiming many, severely impacting the livelihood of farmers. Thus fox hunters were in great demand, with those more skilled being called upon regularly, becoming vital to the local community^{11, 12}.

Before he became the legendary fox hunter of the song *D’Ye Ken John Peel*^{13, 14, 15}, John longed for a family. In his twentieth year he met and wooed Mary White (c.1777 – 1859)¹⁶. Sadly, Mary’s mother was not terribly in favour of the proposed union^{17, 18} but this did not stop the couple. They fled to Gretna Green sneaking away at midnight on John’s trusty horse Binsey, to tie the knot as local poet Hugh McKay noted:

*“So light to the croup the fair lady he swung
So light to the saddle before her he sprang!
She is won! We are gone! When Binsey shows heel
They’ll be swift steeds that follow, quoth young Johnny Peel”*¹⁹

John and Mary went on to have thirteen children^{20, 21, 22} establishing their home in nearby Ruthwaite.^{23, 24, 25} To make ends meet, John worked hard to establish his reputation with the local farmers, demonstrating his hunting skill in protecting their flocks from predators. His team of 24 hounds were highly trained and kept not only at his farm, but across a number of adjoining properties, always ready to answer his call. As his reputation grew, John’s prowess was rewarded with the title Master of the Foxhounds.²⁶

Hunts would be conducted at least weekly. To gather his pack of hounds, John would blow on a small hunting horn^{27, 28} and the hounds would come running. One such hound, named Towler, was kept at a farm in nearby Aughtartree and according to local legend *“when Peel came round with his horn, if he was a quarter mile away when he sounded it, Towler was off to him like a shot out of a gun. If that dog had been fastened up in the house it would have gone through the window to be with him.”*²⁹ Such was John’s connection to his hounds, they would break through any barrier to answer his call.

Ruby, Ranter, Ringwood, Bellman, True and Towler^{30, 31} were some of his treasured hounds who seemed to know instinctively what John wanted of them. A hunt would start early in the morning with the gathering of the hounds and horses. Most hunts were conducted on foot as the terrain could be difficult for the horses, thus the relationship between John and his hounds was critical. The hunt could last as long as 12 hours and cross up to 11 parishes over difficult and boggy countryside³².

As John’s reputation grew, increasing crowds of locals would come out to watch the spectacle as soon as he sounded his horn. One young couple at the altar preparing to marry were startled when, upon the sounding of the horn, the parson threw off his surplice and told the couple to come back the next day as he was off to watch the hunt³³. People were keen to witness for themselves the connection between the hounds and their Master.

Horn sounding, dogs barking, horses stamping – this cacophony would signal the start of the hunt. John’s dogs were referred to as a *“rare mongrel pack of hounds”* of all shapes and sizes with a profound loyalty to their Master. Observers noted the keen affection between John and his hounds and the mutual connection between them. If he ever raised his voice to a hound, John could be seen wandering aimlessly over the fields almost in apology for his harsh words³⁴.

As they approached their quarry the communication between Master and hounds was heightened with one observer noting *“he (John) was sure to be found talking to some favourite hound as if it had been a human being”*^{35, 36}. It could be said there was a kind of telepathic communication between them as his dogs understood what was needed at all times during the hunt. It was not unusual for John to be seen talking to his hounds, oblivious to the outside world³⁷.

John spent more than 60 years hunting across the county of Cumberland^{38, 39, 40} and in 1854 at the age of 78 he died from injuries received after falling from a horse. His funeral attracted several thousand people and when the cortege passed the kennels where his hounds were kept, it is said that mournful cries filled the air as his beloved canines expressed their grief^{41, 42, 43, 44}.

Such a palpable connection to these animals has somehow trickled down through the generations. The mystery of how I can sense a dog’s thoughts and they can sense mine may have been solved – an unusual tale about where I’ve come from.

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Fig. 1 Original postcard of Greenrigg Farm, Caldbeck, Cumberland from Author's personal collection

CROKER PRIZE FOR BIOGRAPHY 2022

2214 Collits Inn

by Bob Wright

COLLITS INN

Nestled in a stunning location in the Vale of Clwydd, where the old Cox's Road completes its descent from Mount York, lies Collits Inn. The first inn west of the Blue Mountains, it was built by ex-convict Pierce Collits in 1823. For the next decade the inn enjoyed a crowded hour of glorious life, bustling with brisk activity as travelers came and went, ate and drank, and exchanged news of the growing colony of New South Wales and its expansion to the west. The Collits family filled the inn with hospitality and good cheer. If I can be said to have come from anywhere in Australia, it is here, for Pierce Collits was my great-great-great-great-great grandfather.

Pierce Collett, as the name was originally spelt, was born in Thomas Town in County Kilkenny, Ireland circa 1763.¹ He is next heard of in London, where he married Mary Hardwick in 1795.² Pierce and Mary had four children in London, two daughters and two sons.³ Both sons died in infancy.⁴ In July 1800 Pierce was convicted at the Old Bailey of receiving stolen goods and sentenced to 14 years transportation to Australia.⁵ Mary elected to join him in exile as a free settler and secured a passage for herself and their two young daughters on the ship Pierce was to be sent out in. The Collits family arrived in New South Wales on the 'Minorca' in 1801.⁶

On arrival Mary, as a free settler, was granted 70 acres of land at Castlereagh on the River Nepean by Governor King.⁷ Pierce had the good fortune to be assigned to his wife as a convict servant, and thus right from the start he was working for his own advantage.⁸ The Collits' farm prospered despite recurrent flooding of the River Nepean, and Pierce and Mary raised a large family, having a further eight children in Australia.⁹

Over the years they earned a reputation as industrious and respectable settlers, and Pierce found favour with Governor Macquarie, who granted him a Conditional Pardon in 1811,¹⁰ and in 1815 appointed him Chief Constable of the District of Evan.¹¹ During these years Pierce subscribed money to local funds to build a bridge and a schoolhouse in Castlereagh, to relieve flood victims on the Hawkesbury and to relieve veterans of the Battle of Waterloo.¹² He also donated large amounts of fresh meat to the Government Stores,¹³ and in 1820 Governor Macquarie appointed him Pound-keeper and Inspector of Cattle for Slaughter on the River Nepean.¹⁴

The crossing of the Blue Mountains by Blaxland, Lawson and Wentworth in 1813 and the completion of Cox's Road in 1815 opened up new opportunities to the west, and Pierce with his energy and entrepreneurial spirit was just the man to take advantage of them. In 1821 he received permission from Governor Macquarie to settle beyond the Blue Mountains and to construct an inn in the Vale of Clwydd at the foot of Mount York.¹⁵ Work proceeded slowly as Pierce had to transport all his materials, including timber, hand-made nails and shingles, across the mountains,¹⁶ and the convict labourers assigned him had no carpentry experience.¹⁷

By August 1823 the building was complete, and Pierce moved his family to their new home, bringing to an end 20 years on the farm at Castlereagh.¹⁸ He was already 60 years of age, and was embarking on a new business venture which was not without risk. He named the inn the 'Golden Fleece',¹⁹ but it became popularly known as Collits Inn. It proved a great success, affording travelers shelter at the end of their

second day's journey from Sydney on the road to Bathurst.²⁰ There, according to one account, one partook of 'the good cheer of mine host of the Golden Fleece, whose humour and hospitality will tend to smooth the rugged asperities of the way.'²¹

Pierce had built his inn on land he did not yet own however, and so in 1825 he requested and received a grant of 200 acres in that location from Governor Brisbane.²² There followed some intricate manoeuvring over a number of years in which Pierce apparently tried (successfully, in the finish) to claim the 200 acre grant twice, alleging that he had been promised a 200 acre grant by Governor Macquarie, thus becoming embroiled in a long-running dispute with the Surveyor-General, Major Mitchell.²³ To further confuse the issue, Governor Darling granted Pierce a further 150 acres at the rear of the inn in 1830, and he subsequently also tried to claim that grant twice!²⁴

The 1820s were the heyday of Collits Inn. Pierce hosted many hundreds of travelers to and from the interior, culminating in a visit by Governor Darling in 1829.²⁵ He had come a long way since he stood in the dock of the Old Bailey nearly 30 years before. However the golden days of prosperity were already passing, never to return. In 1830 Major Mitchell began construction of his new line of road through the Victoria Pass, which bypassed the steep and perilous descent of Mount York. When it was completed in 1832, Collits Inn was stranded, and Pierce closed it for business.²⁶

Pierce died at the age of 85 in 1848,²⁷ predeceased by Mary, who died in 1841.²⁸ They were both buried in the bush cemetery behind their inn at Mount York, where their tombstones may still be seen today.

Collits Inn eventually passed out of the hands of the family.²⁹ It underwent extensive restoration work in the late 1990s, and in recent years has enjoyed a renaissance as a guest house, French restaurant, and wedding reception venue.³⁰ I have visited there many times, and stayed in the home of my ancestors. That quiet spot, with the wide sweep of picturesque valley in front, the dramatic bulk of the mountain behind, and the gentle breeze sighing through the bushland on each side, is where I come from, and where my heart belongs.



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- ² Ancestry.com, *London, England, Church of England Marriages and Banns, 1754-1936, Pierce Collett, 1795*, (database on-line).
- ³ Ancestry.com, *England, Select Births and Christenings, 1538-1975, Maria Collett, 1795, Sarah Collett, 1797, Henry Pierce Collett, 1799, Pierce Collett, 1800*, (database on-line).
- ⁴ The deaths of the two sons are not recorded in the Parish Registers, but they did not accompany the family to Australia.
- ⁵ Proceeding of the Old Bailey, *London's Central Criminal Court, 1674-1913, Pearce Collett, 1800*, (database on-line).
- ⁶ *Convict Records*, <https://convictrecords.com.au/convicts/collets/pierce/65664>, accessed on 24 May 2022.
- ⁷ NSW State Archives & Records, Index to the Colonial Secretary's Papers 1788-1825, Fiche 3268, [9/2731], p.132.
- ⁸ Lorna Hawkins, *Our Innkeeper*, (Orange, 1995), p.27.
- ⁹ The 1788-1820 Pioneer Association, *A Register of Pioneer Families, Vol.2*, (Croydon, 1996), pp.101-111.
- ¹⁰ Ancestry.com, *New South Wales, Australia, Convict Registers of Conditional and Absolute Pardons, 1788-1870, Pierce Collitts, 1811*, (database on-line).
- ¹¹ NSW State Archives & Records, Index to the Colonial Secretary's Papers 1788-1825, Reel 6011, [4/3509], p.398.
- ¹² W.L. Havard, 'Pierce Collitts and His Inns', *Journal of the Royal Australian Historical Society*, No. 26 1940, pp.393-394.
- ¹³ *Ibid.*
- ¹⁴ NSW State Archives & Records, Index to the Colonial Secretary's Papers 1788-1825, Reel 6011, [4/3509], p.398.
- ¹⁵ NSW State Archives & Records, Index to the Colonial Secretary's Papers 1788-1825, Reel 6052, [4/1751], pp.48-49.
- ¹⁶ William Dumaresq, 'A Ride to Bathurst', *The Australian*, 24 March 1827, pp.2-3.
- ¹⁷ NSW State Archives & Records, Index to the Colonial Secretary's Papers 1788-1825, Reel 6055, [4/1760], p.98.
- ¹⁸ Havard, *op. cit.*, p.396.
- ¹⁹ *The Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser*, 25 March 1824, p.2.
- ²⁰ Havard, *op. cit.*, p.396.
- ²¹ *Ibid.*
- ²² NSW State Archives & Records, Index to the Colonial Secretary's Papers 1788-1825, Fiche 3269, [9/2740], p.7.
- ²³ Havard, *op. cit.*, pp.398-403.
- ²⁴ *Ibid.*
- ²⁵ *Ibid.*, p.399.
- ²⁶ *Ibid.*, p.404.
- ²⁷ Date as inscribed on tombstone of Pierce Collitts in Mount York Cemetery.
- ²⁸ Date as inscribed on tombstone of Mary Collitts in Mount York Cemetery.
- ²⁹ Hawkins, *op. cit.*, p.121.
- ³⁰ Christine Stewart, *Collitts Inn: Uncovering the Past*, (Tellwell, 2021), p.v.

CROKER PRIZE FOR BIOGRAPHY 2022

2215 I Am Australian

by Barbara Reen

I Am Australian

I come from Sydney, Australia — not from a line stretching back tens of thousands of years, but from a line that began to call Australia home with the arrival of my great-great grandparents, Maria Young (nee Warren) (1829-1908) and Edwin Young (carpenter/joiner) (1828-1880), as unassisted immigrants, in Sydney, Australia, from England, aboard the *Meteor* in 1853¹ I come from a line of strong women that extends from Maria to her daughter and my great grandmother, Emma Maria Hanson (nee Young nee Johnson) (1854-1922), and then to her daughter and my grandmother Olivia Margaret Connolly (nee Hanson) (1891-1970).² In this age of female empowerment it is instructive and humbling to look back at the lives of these women who preceded me in my family, to acknowledge the debt that I owe them as exemplars of strength and courage in the face of adversity, to hope that I have inherited some of their grit and determination and to acknowledge that they laid the foundations for the strong family culture and traditions that I have inherited, and for the benefits that I enjoy as an Aussie in Australia today.

This is the story of my great grandmother, Emma Maria Hanson, the first Australian-born member of my family. Her parents were surely hoping for a more prosperous life in Australia when they arrived with their 12 month old daughter Maria Sarah (1852-1853).³ The Great Exhibition in 1851 had portrayed Australia as having a booming economy and the official discovery of gold in Australia in 1851 prompted a surge in immigration to Australia.⁴

However, prosperity eluded them and tragedy struck with the death by drowning of their daughter, Maria Sarah just one month after their arrival.⁵ Emma Maria was born the

¹ Baptism of Maria Warren, 04 August 1833', *England, Select Births and Christenings, 1538-1975*, <https://www.ancestrylibrary.com.au>, accessed 18 May 2022; Register of Births, Deaths and Marriages NSW, 'Death Certificates of Maria Young, 19 September 1908, 8366/1908 and Edwin Young, 30 July 1880, 1329/1880; Baptism of Edwin Young, 28 December 1828', *Twyford Baptisms 1626 - 1837 Revised 7 July 2008.xls*, <http://grke.net/family/images/tbaptisms.pdf>, accessed 18 April 2022; List of Immigrants per Ship Meteor as Inspected by the Immigration Board on 6th July 1853, Index to Bounty Passengers, Reel 2465.

² Anglican Parish Registers, Sydney, Australia, 1814-2011, Baptism of Emma Maria Young 09 July 1854; Register of Births, Deaths and Marriages NSW, Birth Certificate of Olivia Margaret Hanson, 01 December 1890 3531/1890), Death Certificates of Emma Maria Hanson, 02 November 1922, 17086/1922 and Olivia Margaret Connolly, 05 July 1970, 30943/1970.

³ Church of England Births and Baptisms, London England, 1813-1920, All Saints, Islington, 1839-1855, Baptism of Maria Sarah Young, 1 August 1852, *London, England, Church of England Births and Baptisms, 1813-1920*, <https://www.ancestrylibrary.com.au>, accessed 18 April 2022; Anglican Parish Registers, Sydney, Australia, 1814-2011, St Stephen, Newtown burial, 08 February 1849-31 December 1853, Death of Maria Sarah Young, 27 August 1853, p. 136, 2714), <https://www.ancestrylibrary.com.au> accessed 22 May 2022.

⁴ Louise Douglas, Representing Colonial Australia at British, American and European International Exhibitions, *ReCollections*, Volume3, No. 1 https://recollections.nma.gov.au/issues/vol_3_no_1/papers/representing_colonial_australia; Defining Moments: Gold Rushes, <https://www.nma.gov.au/defining-moments/resources/gold-rushes>.

⁵ *ibid.*

following year, on 09 June 1854, in Cumberland Street, in the Rocks area of Sydney.⁶ Between 1857 and 1872, Maria and Edwin had another seven children, five of whom died in infancy or early childhood. When Emma Maria was eight years old in 1862, she experienced the death of her 5 year old sister Elizabeth Sophia from typhus. The following year, 1863, saw the deaths of her one year old sister Sarah Anne from ‘mesenterio disease and exhaustion’ and her four year old sister, Maria from diphtheria. When she was fourteen, in 1868, her brother Alfred died at the age of two from a brain tumour and when she was eighteen years old, in 1873, her sister Louisa Kate died, aged eleven months, from bronchitis. During this time, the family moved to the Ryde district, then to Waverley and finally back to the Rocks area where Edwin and Maria resided until their deaths, Edwin in 1880 and Maria in 1908.⁷

Family insecurity, poverty and tragedy therefore, marked Emma Maria’s childhood. It seems probable that the family lived in some of the “wretched dwellings” that were “worse than those even of the crowded cities in Europe”, as a Report of a Select Committee into the living conditions of the working classes in Sydney in 1860 found. The Report also found “a great amount of distress from want of employment, in addition to that caused by intemperance”. Thus it is also probable that Emma Maria’s father, Edwin, experienced unemployment, as carpenters were high on the list of the unemployed.⁸ As to intemperance, Edwin was imprisoned in Darlinghurst Gaol in 1868 for drunkenness.⁹

On 06 November 1875, at the age of twenty-one, Emma Maria married John Johnson, a Swedish seaman.¹⁰ They had five children over the next twelve years.¹¹ This would have been challenging enough, but on 13 April of 1888, John Johnson was killed at the Government Printing Office on the corner of Phillip and Bent Streets, Sydney. He was in charge of transporting goods from the yard to the basement of the building by means of a

⁶ *ibid.*

⁷ Register of Births, Deaths and Marriages NSW, ‘Birth Certificates of Elizabeth Sophia Young, 04 January 1857’ (9430/1857) Maria Young, 27 January 1859, 12259/1859, Sarah Anne Young, 17 July 1863, 13267/1862, Edwin Henry Young, 18 May 1864, 3741/1864, Alfred Young, 1866, 1678/1866, Emily Anne Young, 1869, 844/1869, and Louisa Kate Young, 21 July 1872, 2087/1872, <https://familyhistory.bdm.nsw.gov.au>, accessed 23 May 2022; Register of Births, Deaths and Marriages NSW, Death Certificates of Elizabeth Sophia Young, 10 January 1862, 9430/1857, Maria Young, 28 October 1863, 2336/1863, Sarah Anne Young, 17 July 1863, 2325/1863, Edwin Henry Young, 08 February 1868, 3717/1831, Alfred Young, 23 February 1868, 247/1868, Emily Anne Young, 09 July 1930, 14477/1930, and Louisa Kate Young, 21 July 1873, 976/1873, <https://familyhistory.bdm.nsw.gov.au>, accessed 23 May 2022.

⁸ State of the Working Classes in Sydney, *Illawarra Mercury*, 1856 - 1950, Wollongong, NSW, 27 April 1860, <https://trove.nla.gov.au>, accessed 04 May 2022.

⁹ ntrance Book Darlinghurst 1867-1868, *New South Wales, Australia, Gaol Description and Entrance Books, 1818-1930 for Edwin Young*, 1868, <https://www.ancestrylibrary.com.au>, accessed 26 May 2022.

¹⁰ Register of Births, Deaths and Marriages NSW, Marriage Certificate of John Johnson and Emma Maria Young, 06 November 1875 1025/1875, accessed 27 May 2019.

¹¹ Register of Births, Deaths and Marriages NSW, Birth Certificates of Maria Johnson 206/1877, Lillian Johnson, 1086/1879, Frederick Johnson, 3710/1882, Oscar Henry Johnson 2343/1885 and George Johnson, 746/1888, accessed 27 May 2019.

lift when his head was crushed between the floor of the building and the lift.¹² Emma Maria successfully petitioned the Civil Service Board for compensation, pleading for relief from "the utter devastation into which we have been so suddenly plunged". She was awarded the maximum gratuity of £199.11.3.

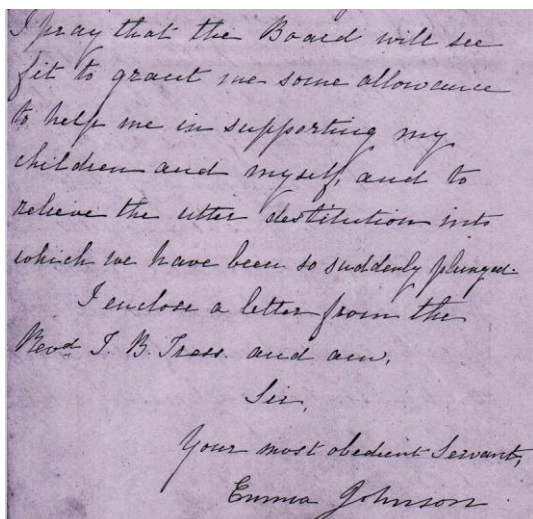


Figure 1: Extract from letter from Emma Johnson to the Civil Service Board dated 11 May 1888¹³

Two years later, on 12 April 1890, Emma Maria married Oliver Hanson (1852-1924), my great grandfather, also a Swedish sailor.¹⁴ Another four children were born, the first born being my grandmother Olivia Margaret, on 01 December 1890.¹⁵ Two of Emma Maria's sons fought for Australia in World War I: Albert Edwin Hanson was discharged as medically unfit after having been gassed in France, and tragically, George Johnson, was killed in action at Gallipoli.¹⁶

¹² Anon., Inquests. Killed in a Lift, *The Daily Telegraph*, Sydney, 17 April 1888, p. 3, accessed 01 June 2019.

¹³ Emma Maria Johnson, Petition to the Civil Service Board for Compensation Following Husband's Death, 26 April 1888, State Archives and Records NSW.

¹⁴ Register of Births, Deaths and Marriages NSW, Marriage Certificate of Oliver Hanson and Emma Maria Johnson, 12 April, 1890, 513/1890; Register of Births, Deaths and Marriages NSW, Death Certificate of Oliver Hansen, 10 February 1924, 3814/1924, <https://familyhistory.bdm.nsw.gov.au>, accessed 27 May 2022.

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¹⁶ National Archives of Australia, Hanson, A. E., <https://recordsearch.naa.gov.au>, accessed 25 May 2022; Australian War Memorial, Private George Johnson, 20th Battalion, 2019, <https://www.awm.gov.au/collection/P10247153>, accessed 25 May 2022.

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Figure 2: Emma Maria Hanson pictured seated at left with her daughter Olivia Margaret Connolly (nee Hanson), her first two grandchildren Oscar and Albert Connolly (my uncles), her son William Hanson, her sister Emily Anne Young, and an unknown girl seated in front. Standing behind are Lilian Johnson, Oscar Connolly, Anne Hanson and George Johnson.¹⁷

Emma Maria Hanson died on 02 November 1922, aged 68 years. In the photograph above, surrounded by members of her family, she epitomises that indomitable spirit that allowed her to transcend the traumas of her childhood and the challenges and hardships of her married life. She nurtured all her children to adulthood and established a flourishing family. The photograph also shows my grandmother, Olivia Margaret Connolly with the two eldest of her six sons, Oscar and Albert.¹⁸ She was the only child of Emma Maria to have established a family that, to my knowledge, continues to this day. She and my grandfather, John Oscar Connolly (known as Oscar) (shown standing behind her in the photograph) established the Connolly family, now numbering in the hundreds, to which I proudly belong. We are a typical Aussie family: cricket and football mad, fond of practical jokes, with a dry sense of humour, easy going but hard working, egalitarian and all for giving everyone a fair go. My life as an Aussie in Australia today, with its comforts and opportunities for education, travel, entertainment and leisure, owes so much to the struggles of people like my great grandmother, Emma Maria Hanson, who had none of these things.

¹⁷ Anon., *Emma Maria Hanson with Members of Her Family*, photograph, n.d., original held by Connolly Family.

¹⁸ Register of Births, Deaths and Marriages NSW, 'Birth Certificates of Oscar James Connolly 6612/1910, Albert Francis Connolly 46835/1912, Leslie Edmund Connolly, 43387/1911, George Connolly, 28676/1915 John Oliver Connolly, 18213/1918 (my father), <https://familyhistory.bdm.nsw.gov.au>, accessed 25 May 2022; Birth of Frank Kevin Connolly 25 November 1925, in Frank Kevin Connolly, *My Olden Days* unpublished, p.1, 2001.

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CROKER PRIZE FOR BIOGRAPHY 2022

2216 What Say You, Amelia?

by Sharyn Parker

What Say You, Amelia?

On Census night, April 7th, 1861, Adam Gregory, 21, and Amelia Ball, 17, had been married just 7 months¹ and had a 4-month-old daughter, Mary Ann.^{2,3} Like other silk-weaving families living in Lowton,³ and for those in other villages of Lancashire, things weren't looking rosy. First, those damned power looms; now, it's the politicians in London. Their new trade agreement with France might just be the last nail in the coffin for the English silk industry. What a way for a young couple to start married life!

My mother's maternal grandfather was born in Pennington, Lancashire, in 1840.⁴ When Adam was growing up, most silk cloth in England was woven on domestic handlooms in upstairs rooms of thousands of weavers' cottages across the county. But, even then, things were changing; powered weaving machines were becoming more common, and silk mills were starting to appear. Indeed, there were already two in Leigh, a bit over an hour's walk away.⁵ "In the peak years of handloom weaving around 1820, there were 170,000 handloom weavers in Lancashire. The 1851 census recorded 55,000 while the 1861 census records 30,000 and the 1871 census, 10,000. By 1891, few were left."⁶ Of course, Adam would not have known that the actual numbers had dropped by nearly 50% in the last 10 years, but he would have sensed that things were not right from the things his parents said around the dinner table.

By 1860, though, now an adult, he knew about the impact of tariffs and levies on family incomes. That was the year "a commercial treaty had been negotiated with France which, although it helped some British exports, worked against silk by allowing cheap French silk of lower quality to be imported into this country in competition with the domestic silk industry."⁷ If the silk road to Adam's and Amelia's future was disappearing from view, maybe they should take another one. The road to Bolton, perhaps?

At some point after Mary Ann's death, in 1862,^{8,9} they made the difficult decision to leave. Industrialised Bolton was just 12 miles from Lowton, but it was a world away from the life they had lived, in Lowton. On the 1871 Census, Adam is now a cotton weaver and he, Amelia and 3-year-old son, John Thomas, live at 10 Parrot Street.¹⁰ By then, Bolton had been home since at least 1868, because that's where John Thomas was born.¹⁰ The next Census shows Adam, Amelia and 2 sons- John Thomas, now 12, and James, 9, living at 40 Parrot, Street. Adam is still weaving cotton, but the boys are listed as "scholars".¹¹ This is probably the first time, ever, that any Gregory children had been listed as "scholars". If for no other reason than this, the short move had already paid-off; the age-old cycle of rural illiteracy had been broken. Had they stayed put, there would certainly have been precious-little money left over for "luxuries" like education. Back there, the boys would have started work from a very tender age- just as their parents and grandparents had.

It was the 1891 Census, though, that really confirmed that Adam's decision to leave Lowton was, indeed, a very-wise one. On it, he is no longer a Cotton Weaver; he is now a *Grocer*, and the family lives at 17 Hammond Street.¹² Even if his "shop" were just goods on shelves in the front room of their Hammond St home, he and Amelia are definitely a rung, or two, up the social ladder in the class-conscious world of Victorian England. This Census reveals other information, too. Both sons are young men and gainfully-employed as Cotton Weavers, although John Thomas-now married, with a 1-year-old daughter- lives at 26 Keswick St.¹² A "surprise" entry on the Census shows that our proud grandparents are actually new parents, themselves: a daughter, Amelia, was born to them in 1887.^{12, 13}

The start of the 20th-Century brings still-more surprises for what is now 3 generations of the Bolton-based Gregory family (thankfully, more children for Amelia, senior, were *not* among them!). Adam and the 2 Amelias now live at 82 Noble St, as does 29-year-old, James.¹⁴ However, it's James- *not* Adam- who is now the resident Grocer. Adam, has retired, and is listed as a "*Gentleman*", no less.¹⁴ John Thomas, is a grocer, too, and lives at 17 Hammond Street¹⁴, which had been the Gregory family home in 1891. ^{12,14} Did he coincidentally rent the same property the family had lived at 20 years earlier? Or, had Adam owned it, then, and rented it to John Thomas when he wanted to set up a grocery shop of his own?

Whether Adam was a property owner as well as a retired "*Gentleman*" I really can't say. But I do know that, on his death in 1910,¹⁵ he left an Estate of almost £1,000.¹⁶ Not bad, really, for a young man who faced financial ruin as a silk weaver in a Lancashire village, until he dared try his luck elsewhere. He was not the only Gregory to do so, though. Both John Thomas and James left the mills and set up separate grocery stores for themselves.¹⁷ Their sister- my maternal grandmother, Amelia Gregory- demonstrated this, too. Soon after her mother's death, in 1911,¹⁸ she married Gustave Adolph Luders¹⁹ and, 2 years later, they boarded the SS "*Osterley*"²⁰ to start a new life, half a world away from everyone and everything in Bolton.

I am, indeed, fortunate to have come from a line of people like these: people who believed that things would improve if they dared to take a chance. Adam, in particular, demonstrated this when he left Lowton. His example showed his children the importance of these two traits. And, over a hundred years later, he is still a shining example that, with a dash of daring and a heartful of hope, you can actually change things- probably not the whole world, of course; but, certainly, your place in a small part of it.

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CROKER PRIZE FOR BIOGRAPHY 2022

2217 The Force of Charles Higgs

by Emily Purser

The Force of Charles Higgs

NSW, 1850s, west of the mountains blue... strange territory to me, until I started searching for signs of my father's mother's mother's father. My quest to know Charles Henry Higgs began with an intriguing obituary¹. Apart from informing me that he died in Carcoar in 1904 and that he was born in England a good 82-year innings earlier (county of Lincolnshire, borough of Boston, parish of Kirton to be precise), that account also said his first job in the colony was with the police. Apparently, his role in the mounted patrol force gave him some "thrilling experiences with the bushrangers" before he settled down to a doubtless quieter life for the next 30 years, employed as district bailiff and Carcoar's mining registrar. Wanting to know more of what he did, I started mining other records.

Turns out young Charles had been on the beat back in England, as police there were being offered free passage to NSW in the 1850s in return for at least 3 years' service here². After landing in the colony in 1855³ Charles would have had a few months' training in Sydney⁴ before being assigned, with only the best recruits⁵, to the mounted patrol and posted to a rural area in need of more police. He was sent to the recently established town of Cowra⁶, through which many prospectors were passing on their way to the tent city gold fields at Lambing Flat (Young) and Grenfell⁷. It seems a lot of nouveau riche miners and other settlers needed protection from all the wild colonial bush-ranging going on. Lowry "the Lachlan horse stealer" was tracked down and caught by Corporal Higgs and three colleagues, according to a report in the *Empire*⁸ in 1858.

Stationed next in Carcoar, Sergeant Higgs may have crossed paths with Lowry's notorious associate Ben Hall, who moved there in 1859 and was soon helping police with their enquiries into horse thieving, before starting his rampaging career there in the early 1860s⁹. Higgs is praised again in 1860 in a *Goulburn Herald* article¹⁰, along with colleagues from the western mounted patrol, for valiant efforts in relation to thieves near Binalong, which, it was lamented, had no police force of its own. Much more than for quaint heroics of the colony, though, my quest to know more about Higgs is kept going by the stories local rags do not tell. What else exactly were the 'traps' doing out west, that warranted all the extra recruits from England?

Bushrangers posed a real threat in the Central West, even before the gold rushes¹¹. They regularly raided the vast and prosperous Coombing Park estate of Thomas Icely¹², which was built up into an empire in the 1830s with the help of convict labour¹³. Icely requested the establishment of a town nearby to protect his interests, and so Carcoar was gazetted in 1839 to provide various

Submitted by Emily Purser

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services as well as a local mounted troop¹⁴. But the threat of bushrangers was not the only reason the district mounted police force was begun in 1826¹⁵. The other was something noted in that and other historical records as “outrages committed by the blacks”. I dread to read and write on, worrying about the hand Charles Higgs may have had in displacing Wiradjuri people from their lands¹⁶, but here I am and go there I must.

Accounts written in the 19th century often blame Aboriginal people for the violence occurring¹⁷. The usual pattern around first encounters of our very different cultures was curiosity and tolerance followed by insensitive violation of boundaries, anger, reaction and savage revenge attacks by colonisers¹⁸, who tended to construe any opposition to their enterprise as outrageously unfair. The established facts are that explorers relied on Aboriginal people and their established tracks to get across the Blue Mountains to the Central West, and that subsequent settlers relentlessly pressured the Governor to ‘open up’ the area south of Bathurst, reserved since 1815 for use as a government cattle station¹⁹. Cancelling the cattle reserve in 1829 enabled settlements in Wellington, Molong and Blayney, and more land grants for pastoral squatters along the Lachlan river. Settlement stayed close to the rivers until the gold rush and the 1861 change in law that allowed small-scale farmers to move in. Many fights for land occurred, given that the best sites for homesteads and villages were exactly wherever there was a perfect site for camping or large ceremonial gatherings²⁰. Indigenous people of the Central West who failed to go away quietly, and weren’t killed by the smallpox, influenza and pneumonia, or the disruption to their traditional food supply, were all too often murdered - “shooting and poisoning were widespread”²¹.

In 1860, Senior-Sergeant Higgs married a young Mary Ann Fox and settled down on Icely St²², where they seem to have led a happy and fertile life, before being moved over to the cemetery at St James. He was still serving the force in the mid 1860s²³, and my mission is to find out exactly when he quit and why. He became the district bailiff in 1870²⁴. As I continue to pursue more certain knowledge of whether he had little or much to do with the outrageous displacement, I have at least found meanwhile that even a small snapshot of a life story from the past gives me an up-close and personal sense of both the family and the nation I come from. A little detective work on just one life has shifted my abstract kind of knowing about the process of colonisation to a clearer view of realities on the ground that shape the whole cultural heritage. Telling family tales, one by one, is connecting me to the larger narrative, and giving me a reason to tour the Central West, Hawkesbury and Hunter regions where many of my ancestors bided their time, and to take real steps towards a reconciled future.

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CROKER PRIZE FOR BIOGRAPHY 2022

2218 Not Royal But Gentrified

by Louise Barker

NOT ROYAL BUT GENTRIFIED

“Where did I come from? I asked my father. I was seven years old and had a family tree school project. There was no extended family in our lives and a family tree was a mysterious thing. *“We’re descended from royalty.”* My father answered, ruffling my hair and turning away so no further questions would follow. Many years later, embarking on family research, I searched for this royal ancestor but the closest I found was landed gentry. This would prove to be a connection not to be proud of.

My third grandfather Henry Hawke Peard (1804-1858) was an Esquire from Fermoy in County Cork.¹ Henry had inherited Coole Abbey, a manor built by his grandfather in 1765², on 157 acres. He also owned another 129 acres and four houses in the same parish.³ Coole Abbey was described as a *‘large and handsome mansion ... situated in an extensive and well-planted demesne.’*⁴

The landed gentry were esteemed as *‘... northerners, protestants, well educated, industrious, they are a credit to the country.’*^{7 5} while the catholic tenant farmers who rented bits of their land were viewed with derision. In the 1836 Poor Law Inquiry Henry stated that, *‘the devoutness of many Catholic labourers prevents them from earning more money as they observe too many church holidays and attending stations to confess, [which] take a good deal from what a labourer could earn, there are 11 holidays kept.’*⁶



7

Henry Hawke Peard married Elizabeth Cathrow (1803 – 1848) on January 26th, 1826 in Great Amwell, Hertfordshire, England,⁸ Elizabeth’s father, George, was also an Esquire, owning substantial land, including a brewery and ale houses in Hoddington, Hertfordshire.⁹ Henry and Elizabeth resided mostly at Coole Abbey and between 1826 and 1848, Elizabeth gave birth to thirteen children; Elizabeth Catherine, Richard McCullough, William Henry, Anne Mary, Marion Cotton, Alberta Disney, George Spottswood, Henry Turner, Emma Fanny, Charles Harte, Augusta Maria, St Helier Phillip and Alice Cathrow.¹⁰

In early 1843 the Peards moved to the Channel Islands, settling in St Helier on Jersey,¹¹ part of an influx of wealthy immigrants in the 1840s.¹² Five thousand English had already settled in St Helier and Irish immigration was also prolific.¹³ The family lived in a house on Royal Crescent¹⁴ *‘inhabited chiefly by the English considerably improved in its appearance by the Theatre, which forms the centre of the arch, and whose pretty Greek porticos an agreeable relief to the plainness of the of the buildings that flank it.’*¹⁵

Little Augusta Mary died of the 'bloody flux' in May of that year at 9 months old.¹⁶ The following year my second great grandfather was born on March 25th.¹⁷ He was named after his birthplace, St Helier, but known fondly as Sainty.¹⁸ When Sainty was one, while the family were living abroad, healthy and well fed, the potato blight took hold in Ireland, causing mass starvation, disease and death.¹⁹ While their tenant farmers starved, the Peards, along with other wealthy expats, continued to enjoy quality Irish foods such as peas, beans, rabbits, fish, butter and honey which were exported to England right through the famine years.²⁰

Previously at the Poor Law enquiry of 1836 Henry had touted that his tenants' wellbeing had greatly improved since 1815.²¹ *'You now never see a person without shoes and stockings, which used to be the case, clothing is much cheaper, they are also improved in cleanliness of the house.'* He described their diet as *'potatoes with milk in summer, which is very cheap and in winter those that can afford it, the addition of bacon, salt fish etc.'* He gave details about the rent and quality of their dwellings, *'The usual rent was 'with a small patch of garden ... from £1 10s to £2 ... Their dwellings were composed of mud walls, thatched [and] in almost all you will find good bed and bedding'.*

In 1846 Henry went back to Ireland to attend several hearings regarding the starving masses.¹ Listed as a non-resident he subscribed the paltry amount of £2 to the Poor Fund in his Parish.²² In December of that year his brother in law Richard Campion, attended another Parish hearing on Henry's behalf. Richard described Henry's rents as fair with no small tenants, (a direct contradiction to Henry's 1836 description of holdings with *'a small patch of garden'*.) A man named Eugene Byrne disputed this strongly stating that *'rent was too dear'* and *'tenants were leaving fast.'* He continued on stating that when Henry *'was home up to 40 people were employed and now these were all unemployed.'*²³

By 1848 the Peard family had left the Channel Islands and at least Elizabeth, pregnant again, went to Cornwall, perhaps having a sibling there to stay with. Baby Alice Cathrow was born in Marazion on May 2nd 1848.²⁴ Elizabeth may have known that she was ailing, for despite the horrors of the famine still unfolding, she returned to Ireland and died at Coole Abbey on July 11th, 1848.²⁵ An unknown relative posted a notice in the Maitland Mercury and Hunter Valley Advertiser on December 30th, 1848 attesting to Elizabeth's death and the twelve children left *'to deplore her loss.'*²⁶

Henry lived for another ten years,²⁷ leaving his Estate worth £5000 to his eldest son Richard McCullough Peard who also claimed Elizabeth's estate.²⁸ The other eleven children were left to get by without any inheritance. All six girls married, staying in Ireland²⁹ and George joined the Royal British Navy.³⁰ Between 1852 and 1860 the other four boys made their way to Australia.³¹, their listed occupation of 'Gent' the only vestige of their former privileged life.³² St Helier married, settled in Lismore NSW and had many children including my great grandmother Florence.³³ However, as a seven year old I knew nothing of this. I proudly made my tree recording my parents, my five siblings and my grandmother the Queen.

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CROKER PRIZE FOR BIOGRAPHY 2022

2219 The Very Artistic Genealogist

by Andrew Palmer

The Very Artistic Genealogist.

Where do I come from? A simple question, but in the case of my family, the answer is frustratingly incomplete as I have struggled to comprehend my family lineage, just as my cousin Maria did over a century ago.

Maria Emma Palmer, who was born at Wollongong New South Wales to Edward and Jane Palmer on 24 May 1859 was my first cousin, twice removed.¹ The families of both her parents had emigrated to the burgeoning colony of New South Wales in search of better opportunities for their families.

Maria married Robert McBurney at St Mary's Church, Kangaroo Point Brisbane on 22 May 1874.² They made their home in Mackay, where he was the first surgeon-superintendent of the Mackay District Hospital.³

Not content to be just the doctor's wife, Maria used her considerable skill as a watercolour artist to record the beauty of her local landscape and its animal life. She was recognised as an exceptional painter and was lauded for her 'paintings of Australian flora and fauna, mostly of those around Mackay'.⁴ Three of her flower studies were accepted for the Franco-British Exhibition in 1908 and she was accorded 'the honour of an acceptance of a picture by the Royal Academy'.⁵

In 1884, Robert McBurney took his wife and daughter on a trip 'to the USA, UK and Ireland, a great adventure for the time' before returning to practice medicine in Mackay until 1899, when the family left Mackay.⁶ McBurney had been suffering from ill-health for some time and died in 1899, whilst working as a ship's doctor.⁷

Maria's daughter, Laura, married Walter Preedy in Sydney on 22 November 1904. Shortly thereafter, they left Sydney for Preedy to take up a position in the New South Wales Agent-General's office in London.⁸ Maria joined them, hoping to experience a more sophisticated artistic life in London, whilst undertaking further research on her other love – the genealogy of the Palmer family.⁹

Maria warmly embraced the lifestyle of a colonial in Edwardian London, promoting and exhibiting her paintings 'of the brilliant tropical foliage and flowers of North Australia'.¹⁰ She led a very active social life, regularly attending functions at the Austral Club in London or entertaining friends to tea at the Ladies Empire Club, when not travelling or undertaking family research.¹¹ In London, her twin passions of painting and family history truly intersected.

From 'England, she contacted the family of Carleton Reeves Palmer in Roscrea, Ireland, attempting to identify common ancestors.¹² She also wrote to her only surviving uncle, Henry Palmer in Maryborough, Queensland, seeking his recollections of living in both Birr and Durrow in Ireland as a youth and possible family connections. His response was unhelpful – merely a suggestion that she contact 'a solicitor in Birr named Julian I think who did some work for Father'.¹³

On two occasions, Maria visited both Birr and Durrow researching her family story. In a sketchbook of paintings entitled *A visit to Durrow Queen's Co and Birr King's Co April 16th 1907*, she depicted scenes from her family's past.¹⁴ A report in the social pages noted she had 'just returned from a visit to King's County, Ireland' in November 1910.¹⁵ She also travelled to Snodland in Kent, as her sketchbook includes a sketch of the Palmer window in All Saints church.



Watercolour from Maria McBurney's sketchbook of Palmer's property in Durrow.

She recorded her research in *A Few Notes of the Palmer family pedigree etc*, contending that her ancestors descended from some of the prominent Palmer families in Kent.¹⁶ She also concluded that Henry and Robert Palmer left Kent and purchased Ballyknocken Castle in Ireland in 1664 - 'the first of the family of Palmers to settle in Ireland. They were officers serving under Oliver Cromwell and our ancestors'.¹⁷ The integrity of her research is underpinned by her access to records in the Public Records Office, Dublin, which was later destroyed by fire.

Her conclusions echo our oral family story, but her pedigree provides no conclusive evidence that our ancestors came from Kent to Ireland in 1664 or that Thomas Palmer, the earliest ancestor that we can confidently claim, is descended from Henry and Robert Palmer.

Where do I come from? Although illuminating and thorough, Maria's extensive research does not provide an answer. It remains as elusive as ever - the conundrum unresolved!

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CROKER PRIZE FOR BIOGRAPHY 2022

2220 Frances Reed Pioneer of Burke

by Jim Fleming

Frances Reed was the matriarch of a large pioneer family that played a significant part in founding the town of Bourke in far-western NSW.

During her childhood in England, her Irish father Benjamin Heazle (a sergeant in the British Army) fought against Napoleon's forces at Merxham, the siege of Antwerp and the subsequent storming of Bergen op Zoom in March 1814¹. After he returned, the family lived an itinerant lifestyle in England (8 postings), Scotland (5), Ireland (3), Gibraltar and Malta². Nevertheless, Frances knew exactly where she had come from and passed on to her children and grandchildren that she had been born at Canterbury in 1812 and that her mother was Elizabeth Wilson³.

Margaret Ann Wilson (possibly an aunt or cousin) witnessed Frances' marriage to James Reed (a private in her father's regiment) at Monkwearmouth (Sunderland) on 28 June 1830⁴. The young couple was immediately posted to Kephallonia in the Ionian Sea². Upon their return to England, their first child was baptised William at Portsmouth on 24 April 1831⁵.

During the next five years the regiment had three postings each in England and Ireland². By the time the family embarked with the regiment for Australia aboard the *Earl Grey* in 1836⁶, two more sons had been born (John Benjamin⁶ and James⁷) but their brother William had died.

The Reeds served for seven years at Linden⁸, Windsor⁹, Illawarra⁹ and finally Sydney¹⁰ before the regiment was posted to India in 1843⁹, but Frances and James elected to settle permanently in Australia.

For the next two decades Frances raised their children in central Sydney while James worked as a grocer¹¹, a constable¹² and a labourer¹³. The family grew with the birth of Alexander (1837)⁸, twins Prudence¹⁴ and Sarah (1839)¹⁵, Eliza Emily (1841)¹⁶, Sarah Ann (1844)¹⁷, Prudence (1846)¹², Frances (1848)¹³, George Charles (1851)³, Mary Ann (1852)¹⁸ and Jane (1856)³. Unfortunately, the twins died in childhood. Frances and James may have eventually run a hotel or boarding house¹⁹.

By 1856 their son James had moved to Wellington in central NSW²⁰ at the western edge of the nineteen counties that comprised the "limits of location." Permanent settlement outside these limits was not permitted until 1861 when government policy changed to allow selection and purchase of land in non-settled areas. Frances and her family decided to take advantage of the opportunities that this offered. After initially joining their son at Wellington, Frances and her husband journeyed by bullock wagon to Bourke, a further 420 kilometres north-west.

Bourke comprised just a few cabins, a goods depot and two pubs²¹. Supplies came by wagon from Maitland (720 kilometres away) or by unreliable paddle-steamer from Adelaide (about 3,000 kilometres by river). Immediately on arrival, Frances had to call on her life experience and resourcefulness in assisting at the birth of William Wright in November 1862, just the eighth birth recorded in the district²².

Despite her worldly background Frances faced significant new tribulations in this hot, dry, dusty and very isolated fledgling town. There were very few women²³ but plenty of wild

men. Even the newly arrived policemen were erratic, with Constable Elliott having shot and killed Sergeant Webb a year earlier²⁴.

She had wisely left her younger children in the care of their older siblings in Sydney and Wellington. Nevertheless, soon after 19-year-old Sarah Ann married Michel Brennan in Sydney on 8 January 1863, she and her husband brought the rest of the family to Bourke¹⁸.



Frances Reed with John Benjamin and Eliza Reed, circa 1879.

Frances purchased land on the corner of Darling and Glen Streets on 18 December 1863²⁵ and her husband bought three adjacent blocks a year later²⁶. They also selected eighty acres of land at Oxley's Tableland (40 kilometres from Bourke)²⁷ where they built a successful hotel called the Mountain House²⁸. Frances soon earned a reputation as a good hostess and was lauded for her clever technique of preserving butter (by burying it)²⁹ while James earned plaudits for his ability to source fodder for guests' horses and bullocks during times of drought³⁰.

She was a member of the Anglican Church and provided supper for the congregation after the opening of the new church on 26 August 1874³¹.

Nevertheless, the challenges of the frontier lifestyle continued for many years. In 1871 bushrangers took refreshment at the Reed's Mountain House hotel unaware that they were being surrounded by a party of police who had tracked them from the Murrumbidgee District.

They were captured when they emerged³². Seven years later, constable James Murphy (Frances' son-in-law) was severely bashed with a stirrup iron by bushranger Captain Midnight³³, who later died from wounds received in a gunfight with Bourke police while trying to again elude capture³⁴.

There were also the regular difficulties posed by droughts, dust storms, heat waves, floods and economic recessions. The 1890 flood was a particular trial for Frances, now 78 years old. The town was inundated and she and hundreds of others had to live in tents on higher land at North Bourke for months before returning to a town now coated with stinking, disease-ridden mud³⁵.

Frances died five years later³. She had endured much tragedy during her lifetime. Her younger brother James died during an epidemic in Malta in 1824³⁶; she buried three of her own infant children; and seventeen grandchildren pre-deceased her. Perhaps the bitterest blows were the drowning of her 7-year-old grandson William John Reed in the Darling River at Bourke on 7 October 1865³⁷ and the death of his only sibling, 15-year-old Frances Eliza Reed, when her clothes caught alight at Bourke on 8 July 1875³⁸. Their broken-hearted parents (John Benjamin Reed and Eliza nee Green) both died within five years³⁹.

Despite these sorrows, Frances' life story is one of a resilient and resourceful woman whose initiative and enterprise helped to forge a better life for her ten adult children and ninety-one grandchildren. She was one of a few strong, brave women who helped found the town of Bourke. Her descendants (including the Brennan, Farrell, Gibb, Johnson, Maxwell, Murphy and Whye families) honoured her with a prominent memorial stone in Bourke cemetery.

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² 80th Regiment, "Record of Stations 1793-1905," digital images, AJCP, Trove (<http://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-1379847382>).

³ Death Certificate, Frances Reed, Registry of Births Deaths and Marriages, NSW, Vol 1895 No 4274.

⁴ James Reed and Frances Heazle marriage, 28 June 1830, in Bishop's Transcripts, DDR/EA/PBT/2/182 number 587, St Peters church, Sunderland (Monkwearmouth), Durham.

⁵ Baptisms 1828-1837, CHU 5: page 25, William Reed, 24 April 1831, St John's church, Portsea, accessed through FindMyPast.

⁶ Surgeon's Journal: "Earl Grey" 1836, (MS, 1836); ADM 101, Archives Office of NSW; Kingswood.

⁷ Baptism Register, 5 April 1835: page 42, James Reed, St Philips church, Manchester.

⁸ Baptism Register: number 321, 10 July 1837, Alexander Reed, Christ Church, Cumberland.

⁹ 80th Regiment, "Diary 1793-1897," digital images, AJCP, Trove (<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-1379847325>: online 14 January 2022).

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¹¹ Low's City of Sydney directory for 1844-45.

¹² Baptismal Record: Reed, Prudence, Vol 31, (30 August 1846), NSW Registry of Births Deaths and Marriages, Sydney

¹³ St James church (Sydney, NSW), Baptisms, FHL film number 993935, Frances Reid, 2 Jul 1848; digital index, Ancestry (www.ancestry.com.au: online index 1 February 2022).

¹⁴ NSW Registry of Births Deaths and Marriages, *Index to NSW Births and Baptisms*, (Registry of BDM), 518/1839 V1839518 23A.

¹⁵ St James church (Sydney, NSW), FHL film number 993952, Sarah Reed, 1 Dec 1839; digital index, Ancestry (www.ancestry.com.au: online index 31 January 2022).

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- ¹⁶ Anglican churches (Sydney), page 8, St Michael's church, Wollongong, number 113, Eliza Reed, 7 Nov 1841; Sydney Anglican Church Diocesan Archives, Sydney.
- ¹⁷ St James church (Sydney, NSW), Baptism, FHL film number 993955, Sarah Ann Reed, 26 May 1844; digital index, *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.com.au: online index 1 February 2022).
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- ¹⁹ Advertisement, *Sydney Morning Herald, Sydney*, 24 November 1858, Notice re board; online image, *Trove* (<https://trove.nla.gov.au/>: online 23 January 2022), Newspapers and Gazettes; National Library of Australia.
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- ²² Bourke and District Historical Society, *History of Bourke Journal*, (Bourke NSW: Bourke and District Historical Society, 1966-1992), First Births at Bourke volume, William Wright, 27 November 1862.
- ²³ Lyne's "Industries of NSW", (1881), quoted on page 61, volume 7, *History of Bourke Journal*, (Bourke NSW: Bourke and District Historical Society, 1966-1992).
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- ²⁷ NSW Land Transfer, CPs 1 and 7 of 1869, book 378, numbers 473 and 474, NSW Historical Land Viewer. Also - "Approved Claims for Pre-emptive Leases," notice, *NSW Government Gazette, Sydney*, 10 June 1870; online image, *Trove* (<https://trove.nla.gov.au/>), Newspapers and Gazettes.
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- ²⁹ Sydney Mail newspaper, 11 November 1871, page 1168 quoted on page 447, volume 10, *History of Bourke Journal*, (Bourke NSW: Bourke and District Historical Society, 1966-1992).
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³⁹ NSW Registry of Births Deaths and Marriages, *Index to NSW Deaths*, (Registry of BDM), John Benjamin Reed, 5516/1881; Eliza Jane Reed, 4610/1879.

CROKER PRIZE FOR BIOGRAPHY 2022

2221 The Price of Love

by Kathryn Taylor

The Price of Love

By trawling through newspapers, I have uncovered family secrets that were buried almost one hundred years ago, and the two people at the very heart of them, James and Daniel Price, my great-great grandfather and 3rd great granduncle respectively, lived two intertwined and tragically paralleled lives.

James was born to James Flynn and Ellen Price – a couple who were never legally married, but spent their whole lives together – on the 25th of July 1898 in an industrial town in the Northwest of England named Widnes. A few months later, on the 2nd of October 1898, James' uncle Daniel Price was born.

The parallel nature of their lives begins, rather frustratingly, with their absence on the 1901 England census. Ellen Price appears on the 1901 census with her parents, Edward and Margaret, as well as all four of her siblings, with one noticeable exception – Daniel. Despite being almost three years old by this time and a completely legitimate son of a couple in their 40s, he is nowhere to be found. James Price's absence can perhaps be more easily explained – by 1901, Ellen Price and James Flynn have had a second child, John, who is also missing from the census. Ellen and James were living a few streets away from each other at the time, and they both list themselves as 'single,' rather than 'married' – it's important to remember that in 1901, census forms were not filled out by the head of the household, but rather by an enumerator who travelled round to each house collecting data. Being an unmarried couple living apart from each other, it seems likely that James and Ellen's sons were purposely left off the census in order to hide the scandal from the enumerator. The answer to Daniel Price's absence, however, may simply be lost to time.

In 1911 James and Daniel were living together in a 5-room house which they shared with seven other people – James' younger brother John, five of Daniel's older siblings, and their mother Margaret. During the First World War, they moved to a house a few streets away, but stayed together. James and Daniel lived together, attended school together, and grew up together. In December 1919, Daniel married Sarah Jane Barnwell; she lived just a few streets away. They moved in together shortly after their marriage, and Daniel was separated from his nephew for the first time in his life - however, this was far from the end of their parallel lives.

Daniel and Sarah would go on to have a number of children. In early 1920 – just a few months after they were wed, they welcomed their first child, John, who was closely followed by Monica in 1921, then Elizabeth in 1922. Sadly, 1923 seems to be the beginning of the end for Daniel. On the 29th of November, he is called up to court and fined £2 for assaulting a railway employee.^[1] He and Sarah have another child, Jean, in 1924, before Sarah summons him to court for desertion. She gives "evidence of general neglect,"^[2] and the magistrate orders Daniel to pay 25 shillings a week to his wife. Surprisingly, the couple have one last child, Teresa, in 1926. Later that year Daniel is summoned to court for a third time on another count of assault, this time for hitting the licensee of a pub over the eye whilst drunk, and is fined £2.^[3] At some point during the next year, Sarah leaves Daniel, moving away from Widnes and finding a new man – in March 1927, desperate to provide for his children, Daniel gets caught stealing coal and two pairs of boots. He pleads guilty, and expresses that "he had been out of work for nine months... his wife had left him,"^[4] and he "had five little children." He states that the boots were for his son, but that they were too small for him.^[5] It is unclear exactly when, but at some point during the following years, Sarah returns to Widnes and takes

on the children to raise with her new partner. In subsequent years, Daniel is charged with drunkenness a number of times, and is never able to raise his children again.

On the 28th of December 1921, at age 24, James Price married Hannah Mary Elizabeth Keough, a 19 year old from Toxteth Park. At the time of their marriage, Hannah already had a one-year-old daughter named Edith, whose father is unknown, but James happily took her on and raised her as his own. In the years that followed, they had many children together, the first of whom was Patrick James Price, my great-grandfather, in 1922, followed by Helen in 1924, and John in 1926.

In July of 1926, James was sent to prison for one month and fined 10 shillings after drunkenly assaulting the owner of a chip shop. Upon his release, he “said that he was very sorry. It was all through drink. He admitted to several previous convictions.”^[6] This case came only two months after Daniel’s second assault charge. James and Hannah had their final child in early 1929; a daughter named Mary.

Tragically, on the 24th of April 1929, Hannah died of pulmonary tuberculosis, followed closely by her newborn daughter, Mary. James’ life came crashing down around him. Just two months later, he was summoned to court for neglect of his children, and ordered to place them into the care of an institution. He was out of work, just as his uncle had been when his children were taken from him, and though he was actively searching for work, he was unable to stay at home and care for his children. The case was adjourned for three months, under the condition that the children stay in “the institution” in that time.^[7] In September, James was summoned to “the local branch of the NSPCC for neglecting his [four] children in a manner likely to cause unnecessary suffering and injury to health.” He pleaded relentlessly with the courts, refusing to give up custody of his children, stating “I shall not always be out of work.” Eventually however, the courts ruled against him, and he was stripped of custody. A police inspector who gave evidence stated that “the home was in a much-neglected state, the bedding dirty, and the whole place dilapidated,” and earlier in the year, he had “found the children on an old rubbish heap sucking dirty pieces of bread.”^[8]

It is unclear just how long the children were institutionalised for, but he seems to have been able to turn his life around and find work, as by 1939 he was once again living with his eldest daughter, Edith.

When I first began searching through these old newspapers, I couldn’t help but feel that I was disrespecting my ancestors by uncovering all the dirty laundry they thought was long buried - but whatever grim story I found, whether it was a petty theft, a drunkenness charge, or outright neglect, I thought no less of them as people. Their crimes weren’t born of malice or hate, they were the product of their surroundings. They lived in a town known for its poverty and pollution, in a time when unemployment was at an all time high. They stole because they had to, they drank to drown their sorrows, and their children were neglected because they simply couldn’t afford to care for them. So, when I look back to where I came from, I don’t resent them for their wrongdoings – even if I never met them, who they were and how they lived are part of me, and I wouldn’t be here now if it weren’t for their strength.

Reference List

1. Runcorn Weekly News, 30th November 1924
"ASSAULT.- At Widnes Petty Sessions yesterday, Daniel Price, 29, Farrant Street, pleaded guilty to assaulting Michael Connor, a railway employee. He alleged that Connor persistently spoke to his wife. This the prosecutor denied.- The Bench imposed a fine of £2."
2. Runcorn Weekly News, 3rd July 1925
"WIFE DESERTION. - At Widnes Police Court, yesterday, Daniel Price, 95, Timperley Street, was summoned by his wife, Sarah Price, for desertion. The complainant gave evidence of general neglect, and the magistrates made an order for the defendant to pay his wide 25s. a week."
3. Runcorn Weekly News, 30th April 1926
"PUBLIC HOUSE ASSAULT.- At Widnes Petty Sessions yesterday, Daniel Price, 29, Farrant street, was summoned by James Catterall for assault. The defendant did not appear. Mr W. S. Knowles, on behalf of the complainant, stated that his client was the licensee of the Stonemason's Arms. On Saturday night Price was in the taproom, and in consequence of the noise he was creating Catterall spoke to him and told him to be quiet. He continued his noisy mis-conduct, and when the complainant was removing some glasses Price hit him a violent blow over the eye. When Catterall was being assisted by some of the customers, Price hit him a second time. The bench imposed a fine of £2."
4. Liverpool Echo, 4th March 1927
"FATHER OF FIVE AT 26 - Superintendent Jackson's plea for leniency on behalf of his five children saved Daniel Price (26), 20, Farrant Street, Widnes, from going to gaol. Defendant was charged at Widnes today, with stealing a sack of coal from the L.M.S. siding at Lugdale Crossing, and two pairs of boots from outside the shop of Tyler's, Limited. Price, who pleaded guilty, said he had been out of work for nine months. He had five children and his wife had left him. Alderman Neale (to prisoner).- You have to thank the superintendent for speaking on your behalf. Instead of sending you to prison you will be fined £1 in each case. The prisoner expressed his thanks."
5. Runcorn Weekly News, 11th March 1927
"WIDNES MAN'S THEFTS. - APPEAL FOR LENIENCY. - At Widnes Police Court on Friday, a young man named Daniel Price (26) of 20, Farrant Street, pleaded guilty to stealing 42lbs. of coal from the Lugsdale sidings of the L.M. & S., and also to stealing two pairs of boots from outside the shop of Tyler's Ltd. Superintendent Jackson stated that shortly after noon on Thursday, Detective Sergeant Rigby saw prisoner coming from the direction of the railway sidings. He had the bag of coal produced, and when questioned said that he picked the coal from between the wagons. With regard to the second charge, two pairs of boots were missed on the 19th of last month. When charged on the previous day with this theft Price admitted the offence. He had sold one pair for 3/-, remarking that he had bought the boots for his boy but that they were too small. Accused said that he had five little children and he had not been working for some months. Superintendent Jackson said that Price had previously been before the court, but in view of his

position and for the sake of the children he appealed to the magistrates to inflict a fine instead of sending the man to prison. If that were done he would see what could be done for him. The magistrates (Alderman G. I. Neil and Mr. M. Ford) said that under the circumstances they would take a somewhat lenient view of the case and inflict a fine of £1 in each case.”

6. Runcorn Weekly News, 9th July 1926

“A WIDNES ASSULT CASE. – SENT TO PRISON FOR ONE MONTH. At Widnes police court yesterday James Price, 95, Timperly street, pleaded guilty to assaulting James Brandeth. The complainant said he had a chip potato shop, and on the night of June 26 Price came in. As he was drunk witness pushed him outside. On Saturday night last he again came into the shop in a drunken state and he again put him out. While witness was standing at the door Price rushed at him and struck him in the face, causing a black eye. He was locked up the same night for dunrkenness. Price now said that he was very sorry. It was all through drink. He admitted several previous convictions. He was sent to prison for one month. At Monday’s court Price was fined 10s. for being drunk of Saturday night.”

7. Runcorn Weekly News, 7th June 1929

“FOR THE CHILDREN’S SAKE. Mr. T. Swale (Messrs. Poole, Swale and Co.) applied to the Widnes magistrates yesterday for an adjournment in the case of James Price, 95, Timperley Street, summoned for neglecting his three children. He said that the children were now in the institution on Dr. Patton’s order that they had been neglected. It was a serious case. The wife was dead, and the defendant, who was out of work, was searching for work, and, of course, could not look after the children and be out. The case was adjourned for three months on the understanding that the children remained in the institution during the adjournment.”

8. Runcorn Weekly News, 13th September 1929

“CHILDREN’S WELFARE. – Widnes Magistrates’ Decision – FATHER’S APPEAL REFUSED. [...] Inspector Martin said that from the 12th February the children were not in a satisfactory condition, the home was in a much-neglected state, the bedding dirty, and the whole place dilapidated. On the 27th March he found the children on an old rubbish heap sucking dirty pieces of bread.”

CROKER PRIZE FOR BIOGRAPHY 2022

2222 What Mary Kate Said

by Sue Bulbrook

What Mary Kate said

Every time I cross the Hawkesbury Nepean River, its majesty takes my breath away. Each journey draws me to my forebears who twice attempted to endure life on “the beautiful, the beautiful the river”ⁱ. Both attempts at survival alongside this enormous life force were ineffectual. The river was the victor. Consequently, my mother’s grandmother, Mary Kate Tompkins, instructed her sons to, “Always keep your hands clean at work, Son.”ⁱⁱ I come from Mary Kate Tompkins, my mother’s paternal grandmother. Mary Kate was adamant her sons were not going to depend on the river.

My family’s first encounter with the river was when James Styles settled his family at the Nepean. James had arrived in the NSW Colony as a convict on the *Scarborough* in 1790. He was granted an absolute pardon in 1795 and enlisted in the NSW 102nd Foot, NSW Corps. He married Mary Wilson in 1811 at Windsorⁱⁱⁱ and was appointed town constable there in 1811^{iv}. In 1823 James and his family had left the Nepean River and moved to Sydney, where he was granted a lease at Lot 20, Upper Pitt Street^v. James’ family included his stepdaughter, Eliza Jane Leonard, Mary Kate Tompkins’ grandmother. As a 2year old, Eliza Jane had arrived in the Colony in 1806, accompanied by her convicted mother, Mary Wilson.^{vi}

In 1822 Eliza Jane Leonard and Joseph Emmes married in Sydney^{vii} and Eliza Jane never lived by the river again. Her daughter, Elizabeth Jane Emmes, born in 1828 in Sydney^{viii}, was mother to Mary Kate Tompkins.

Unlike her mother, Elizabeth Jane Emmes was not brought up on the Hawkesbury Nepean River; she was brought up in the hustle and bustle of Sydney Town. Her father, Joseph Emmes had been granted an absolute pardon in 1820 and purchased a shop in George Street, Sydney^{ix}. When Elizabeth Jane Emmes married John Tomkins in 1856 in Sydney^x her father, Joseph Emmes, was visiting family in Honolulu^{xi} and her mother had died four years previously^{xii}.

A young John Tomkins and his convict mother, Anne Dunne arrived in Sydney in 1832^{xiii} and his convict stepfather, James Tomkins, in 1820^{xiv}. In 1835 they married at Castlereagh^{xv}. I have a copy of their marriage certificate.

Soon after Tomkins married Elizabeth Jane Emmes a “p” appeared in Tompkins^{xvi}. Was this a breaking of the dirty past and cleansing of yesterday? And yet, Elizabeth and John were drawn back to the river life after their marriage. This was where the work was; carting and farming, dirty work, survival work. Thus began my family’s second encounter with the Hawkesbury Nepean River. My mother’s grandmother, Mary Kate Tompkins, was born as the eighth child in this family in 1866^{xvii}, on the river.

Do you know the Hawkesbury Nepean River, Dyarubbin, or “yam river”^{xviii}? Do you know its moods? It runs around reaches and corners for more than 100km beginning somewhere near Robertson in the NSW Southern Highlands and settles at Broken Bay, north of Sydney^{xix}. Almost annually, it surges and becomes an uncontrollable deluge of water. Prior to the 2022 floods, Grace Karskens wrote, “The greatest and most terrible flood on the

Hawkesbury-Nepean in recent times occurred in 1867 when the river at Windsor rose 63 feet (19 metres) above its normal summer level, and at Penrith to 27.5 metres above sea level.^{xx} This 1867 flood was the beginning of the end of my family's liaison with "the beautiful, the beautiful the river"^{xxi}.

The 1867 flood occurred following Mary Kate's birth. The consequence of this event is found in this newspaper article - "A farmer, named John Tompkins, living some distance down the river has lost everything."^{xxii} Family folklore supposes John's father, James Tompkins, drowned in this disaster as there is no record of his death. Some European families stayed on the river: the Tompkins family surrendered, and moved north, to the gold fields at Gulgong, where John Tompkins worked an approved gold lease with Lambert and Co^{xxiii} and the family lived at Red Hill^{xxiv}.

However, after a life spent scraping and trudging for work and money, John Tompkins died in 1879^{xxv}. Mary Kate was 13yrs old. It would be reasonable to assume Mary Kate's elder brothers, Henry and George, supported their mother and siblings after their father died, although oral history has always mentioned Mary Kate's mother, Elizabeth Tompkins, nee Emmes, being an excellent seamstress^{xxvi}.

The year 1894 saw Mary Kate Tompkins marry William Rudolph Bentzen, at Gulgong, NSW^{xxvii} and, I suspect, river life became a reminiscence for Mary Kate. William Rudolph was a bank manager^{xxviii}, where it is reasonable to say he was able to keep his hands clean! The Bentzens had three sons, all born in Gulgong, the youngest being my maternal grandfather, Thorvald Eames Bentzen^{xxix}

In 1907 Mary Kate and William Bentzen moved their family from Gulgong to Paddington, Sydney^{xxx}. It was her husband's squeaky clean and orderly career that Mary Kate is remembered for! You see, my grandfather, Thorvald Eames Bentzen, was told by his mother Mary Kate, "Always keep your hands clean at work, Son." Her father had been a "dirt farmer" on the River^{xxxi} and Mary Kate would have none of that for her three sons. They all worked in the commercial world and all kept clean hands.

I come from Mary Kate Bentzen nee Tompkins, a River girl, granddaughter to a River family, daughter of a dirt farmer, wife of a commercial agent, mother to a CBC bank manager, grandmother to my mother and a woman who always carried her bank deposit book in her handbag: she was never going to be without money.

ⁱ Winton, Tim, Cloudstreet, Penguin Imprint 1992, p.2

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- ^{viii} Elizabeth Jane Emmes, b 4 February, 1828, Australian Birth Index (1788-1992), V1828349 12; Ancestry.com; *The New South Wales Pioneers Index: Pioneers Series 1788-1888*
- ^{ix} A.B.G.R. Series 1, 1788-1841, published by A.B.G.R. in association with the Society of Australian Genealogists, Sydney 1992, p.127, Emmes, Joseph
- ^x <https://www.ancestry.com.au> Australian Marriage Index 1788-1950, Registration No.791; married 23 December 1856, Christ Church Sydney; *The New South Wales Pioneers Index: Pioneers Series 1788-1888*; See also <https://trove.nla.gov.au> – The Empire (Sydney, NSW: 1850-1874), 24th December, 1854
- ^{xi} <https://trove.nla.gov.au> – The Empire (Sydney, NSW: 1850-1874), 24th December, 1854
- ^{xii} <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/203797846/eliza-jane-emmes>; 2nd February, 1852; gravestone restored by family, St Stephens' Camperdown.
- ^{xiii} Anne Dunne and son John, aged 3yrs, arr *The Hoogley*, 1831. Sent to Female Factory at Parramatta. Convicts Index 1791-1873 Citation: [4/4340; Reel 999]
- ^{xiv} James Tompkins, arr *Agamemnon*, 1820, 7 year sentence, [General Muster List of New South Wales 1823, 1824, 1825.](#)
- ^{xv} Author has photocopy of Banns Marriage Certificate No.96, married by Henry Fulton in the Parish of Castlereagh, 16th April, 1835.
- ^{xvi} As evidenced by marriage certificate above (endnote xv), and newspaper article (endnote x) and continuous use of "p" in Tompkins.
- ^{xvii} NSW BDM's, #14633/1867, Penrith NSW (born 12th November, 1866 – author has copy of birth certificate).
- ^{xviii} Karskens, Grace, *People of the River*, Allen & Unwin 2020, p.45
- ^{xix} Wikipedia source (apologies!)
- ^{xx} Karskens, Grace, *People of the River*, Allen & Unwin 2020, p.261
- ^{xxi} See Winton endnote #1
- ^{xxii} <https://trove.nla.gov.au> – Queanbeyan Age, 5th July, 1867, p.2
- ^{xxiii} <https://trove.nla.gov.au> – New South Wales Government Gazette, 1832-1900, Fri 19th February, 1875 (Issue No. 38), p. 496
- ^{xxiv} <https://trove.nla.gov.au> – Govt. Gazette NSW, 4th February, 1874, #28 Supplement, p.372
- ^{xxv} NSW BDM's, 7094/1879, Gulgong
- ^{xxvi} Oral history, author's mother, Mrs Maureen Dagmar Upfold (nee Bentzen)
- ^{xxvii} NSW BDM's, #3990/1894, Gulgong
- ^{xxviii} Photocopy of marriage certificate #3990/1894, Gulgong
- ^{xxix} NSW BDM's, #321355/1899 Gulgong (11th July, 1899)
- ^{xxx} Oral history, as told to Mrs Maureen Upfold (nee Bentzen) by her father Thorvald Eames Bentzen
- ^{xxxi} Oral history, as told to Mrs Maureen Upfold (nee Bentzen) by her father Thorvald Eames Bentzen

CROKER PRIZE FOR BIOGRAPHY 2022

2223 If You're Lucky Enough

by Andrew Redfern

If You're Lucky Enough...

When Robert Redfern stepped ashore in Sydney Cove from the Phoenix in 1825¹ with his son, he looked forward to a future of prosperity and good fortune. He hoped to leave behind his chequered past that included arrest, imprisonment, destitution, and press gangs. As a free settler, he carried a letter of authorisation² for a land grant which would allow him to establish himself and build a respectable life. But where had Robert come from, and could he escape his past? Or would his own experiences and indeed his ancient ancestral roots continue to follow him?

Little is known of Robert's early life and in fact his five siblings are also a mystery in terms of their birth dates and locations. Their English surname³ gives a clue with the name Redfern originating around Rochdale, Lancashire with a village named in honour of the "red ferns" that grew in the vicinity. However no direct link to Lancashire has been found for Robert's line. Previous researchers have suggested links to Trowbridge through a brother, Thomas, who was practicing medicine there, but again, no documentary evidence has been found to substantiate this as the foundation point of this particular Redfern branch. In fact, his English surname proved to be somewhat of a red herring and Robert's true ancestral roots were only revealed through DNA analysis, particularly Y-DNA and investigation of the paternal line. It turns out, Robert and his forebears, have distinctive Irish roots with connections to the O'Neill clan back into the 15th Century.⁴

One of the first records found regarding Robert is a May 1797 article in The Belfast Newsletter⁵, reporting him as one of eleven prisoners being sent to Dublin on a charge of high treason. Certainly not an auspicious beginning. During his time in Kilmainham Gaol his letters of petition⁶ tell a story that becomes more desperate as his four-year internment drags on. His wife and three young children are destitute, and his own business fails. He desperately tries to find a way to care for his family, even requesting materials in prison to continue his work. Named in the Banishment Act of 1798⁷ which prevented him from returning to His Majesty's Dominions or passing into any country at war with His Majesty," Robert suffered greatly for his involvement with the United Irishmen as a divisional military committee member in Belfast.

¹ The Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser, Thu 3 Mar 1825, Page 2, Shipping Intelligence. <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/2183783>

² New South Wales Government. Main series of letters received, 1788-1825. Series 897, Reels 6041-6064, 6071-6072. State Records Authority of New South Wales. Kingswood, New South Wales, Australia. Number 807, Page: 287-90

³ The Internet Surname Database. <https://www.surnamedb.com/Surname/Redfern>

⁴ O'Neill Project. Family Tree DNA. <https://www.familytreedna.com/public/oneill?iframe=yresults>

⁵ The Belfast Newsletter, Monday May 1, 1797, Page 3. Accessed via <http://newspapers.com>

⁶ Robert Redfern State Prisoner Petitions (SPP), 1797-1799, Kilmainham Prison Ireland Transportation Database. State Prison Petitions. Numbers 39, 261, 379 & 795. <http://findingaids.nationalarchives.ie/>

⁷ Irish Legislature "Banishment Act" 38 George III c.78 March 24, 1798. Accessed Online. <http://redfern.s3-website-ap-southeast-2.amazonaws.com/banishment-act.pdf>

Although his prison record states he was transported⁸ following his release in 1801, it seems that this did not happen, and we next learn of Robert in Portugal. Baptismal registers at the British Factory in Porto, record Sarah Redfern, born to Robert and Margaret in 1803⁹ although tragically she died as an infant. A second Sarah Redfern, born to the same parents arrived in 1805¹⁰. Redfern continued to fall under the watchful eye of authorities. His past involvement with rebellion was difficult to escape. He wrote a letter, telling of his plight, stating he was torn from his wife and family and press ganged as a common soldier into the Portuguese Army with the connivance of the British authorities. This letter was brought to the attention of Percy Bysshe Shelley in 1812 who set about publicising Redfern's situation and outlined plans for a campaign to free him, including sending copies to prominent individuals, such as Sir Francis Burdett in the House of Commons in London.¹¹

We don't know exactly what steps were taken to free Robert but his name first appears in the Philadelphia Directory¹² in 1817, listing him as a saddler which corroborates with his prison register of Ireland. In fact his work as a saddler led him to receive his first contract in 1819¹³ to manufacture military caps for the US Army. Over the following four years he created 7000 Infantry Shakos, two of which are still in existence with his name written on a yellow label pasted in the crown. His saddler business on High Street, continued to be listed annually in the Philadelphia directory up until 1824. In the 1820 US Census¹⁴ Robert is recorded as the head of a household of nine with no slaves. From poor beginnings, it appears that Robert's life had begun to change fortunes and perhaps he had finally escaped his defiant past.

Writing from London in 1824¹⁵ to the Principal Secretary of State for the Colonies, Earl Bathurst, Robert requested a land grant in New South Wales, indicating he understood agricultural pursuits. Where and how he gained this knowledge is not known, given his previous occupation as a saddler. Nevertheless, the answer to Robert's request was

⁸ The National Archives of Ireland; Dublin, Ireland; Ireland Prisoner Registers. Ireland, Prison Registers, 1790-1924. Accessed via ancestry.com

⁹ "Portugal Batismos, 1570-1910", database, FamilySearch (<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:F2H7-CV5> : 9 February 2020), Sarah Redfern, 1803.

¹⁰ "Portugal Batismos, 1570-1910", database, FamilySearch (<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:F2H7-CVY> : 9 February 2020), Sarah Redfern, 1805.

¹¹ O'Brien, Paul. Shelley and Catherine Nugent: spirits of the age. Published in History Ireland. Issue 3 (May/June 2005), Vol 13. <https://www.historyireland.com/18th-19th-century-history/shelley-and-catherine-nugent-spirits-of-the-age/>

Ingpen, Roger. 1914. Letters of Percy Bysshe Shelley. 1792-1822; Accessed online: <https://archive.org/details/letterscontainin01sheluoft/page/274/mode/2up>

¹² Philadelphia Directory. 1817. Page 360. Accessed online: <https://archive.org/details/philadelphiadire1817phil/page/360/mode/2up>

¹³ Howell, Edgar M. & Kloster, Donald E. 1969. United States Army Headgear to 1854. Smithsonian Institute Press. Washington. Pages 18 & 71

¹⁴ "United States Census, 1820," database with images, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:XHLN-87K> : accessed 31 May 2022), Robert Redfern, Philadelphia, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, United States; citing p. , NARA microfilm publication , (Washington D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, n.d.), roll ; FHL microfilm .

¹⁵ mfm PRO 1-5950 (Various)-Records of the Colonial Office (as filmed by the AJCP)/Fonds CO/Series CO 201/Subseries Pieces: 1-629/File 160. AJCP Reel No: 139/Settlers. M-Z

positive¹⁶ and he received a grant of 2000 acres near Bathurst, which he set to cultivation assisted by several convicts assigned to him.¹⁷ It seemed Robert had indeed built a better life on the plains beyond the Blue Mountains.

However, this good fortune was somewhat short lived. In 1831¹⁸ he was declared insolvent to the value of 2000 pounds, stating that “his embarrassments arose out of the serious depreciation of the price of livestock during the last four years.” And then in 1836¹⁹, his son was arrested, charged with cattle stealing and transported to Van Diemen’s Land. Separated from his family he remarried in 1840²⁰ and with further land grants he died in September 1853²¹ with an estate approximately to the value of three hundred pounds.²²

One wonders how a man faced with so many setbacks could continually rebuild himself. From a chequered past, his tenacity and willingness to overcome hardship are in many ways inspirational. And while he lived and travelled throughout the world, his Irish origins remained strong, encapsulated in the old saying, “If you’re lucky enough to be Irish... you’re lucky enough!”

¹⁶ Series: NRS 899; Reel or Fiche Numbers: Fiche 3001-3162. Ancestry.com. New South Wales, Australia, Colonial Secretary's Papers, 1788-1856 [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc, 2010.

¹⁷ Great Britain. Colonial Office - New South Wales Governors' Despatches, 1813-1879. Governor Darling Despatches. Microfilm. State Library of NSW. Reels CY539-545

¹⁸ The Sydney Monitor (NSW : 1828 - 1838), Wed 2 Feb 1831. Page 4. Domestic Intelligence. <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/32074912>

¹⁹ The Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser (NSW : 1803 - 1842) Sat 10 Dec 1836, Page 4. FIFTY POUNDS REWARD; OR A CONDITIONAL PARDON. <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/2208237>

²⁰ NSW Births, Deaths and Marriages. Register Number 284/1840 V1840284 130

²¹ NSW Births, Deaths and Marriages. Register Number 975/1853 V1853975 119

²² Records NSW. Probate Pack. Robert Redfern Date of death 3 September 1853, Granted on 5 October 1853. NRS-13660-1-[14/3258]-Series 1_2723

CROKER PRIZE FOR BIOGRAPHY 2022

2224 Resilience, Bravery and Love

by Jody Taylor

Resilience, Bravery and Love.

Where did I come from? As a child, I would have answered that I came from Australia. My mother, her mother and all the relatives that I knew were born in Australia, so I figured that's where I came from. To properly answer the question, let's go back to my great-great grandfather Fred Suley and his young love Elizabeth, and their determination to be together and subsequent journey to Australia. Their story shows the resilience, independence, strong work ethic, bravery, faith and strength of spirit which lives on through the Suley descendants today.

Fred Suley was born on 22 February 1862, the seventh child, to publican and farmer George Suley (1829-1920) and Ann Baxter (1825-1908) in Sutton Bridge, Lincolnshire, England.¹ Elizabeth Frances Wastling was the first child born to James Wastling (1840-1895), a cow keeper, and Mary Elizabeth Moate (1842-1916) on 1 February 1870 in Beverley, Yorkshire, England.²

It was around 1886 when Fred and Elizabeth met, aged approximately 24 and 16 respectively. It is unknown the circumstances of their meeting, but in time they became sweethearts, with her parents forbidding the relationship.³ The young couple took matters into their own hands, deciding that the only way for them to be together was to travel to the other side of the world, choosing Australia as their destination.⁴

In late 1886, Elizabeth told her parents that she was going to visit a nearby aunt, and they were never to see her again.⁵ The young couple had arranged that Elizabeth was to go on ahead, alone, to Australia. She made her way to London, falsely stating her age as 18 and boarded the British India steamship *Duke of Sutherland*, leaving England on 1 November 1886 and disembarking at Brisbane, Australia on 30 December 1886.⁶

She didn't stay in Brisbane long and headed to Rockhampton a few weeks later.⁷ She found work at a boarding house and whilst there had a visit from the police enquiring if she was Elizabeth Wastling.⁸ The police told her that her parents were worried for her welfare and

¹ Birth certificate of Fred Suley, born 22 February 1862, General Register Office, UK, 1862, M Quarter in Holbeach, Volume 07A, pg. 329, Ancestry.com; Census record for George Suley, Census of England and Wales, 1911, Lincolnshire, Cowbit, Spalding, ED 1, Folio 13, pg. 19, Ancestry.com.

² Birth certificate of Elizabeth Frances Wastling, born 1 February 1870, General Register Office, UK, 1870, M Quarter in Beverley, Volume 09D, pg. 102; Census record for James Wastling, 1871 England Census, Yorkshire, Beverley Parks, ED 41, Folio 151, pg. 1, Ancestry.com.

³ Personal recollection of Alma Evelyn Suley, c 1994, original held by Dave Mackay.

⁴ Personal recollection of Mary Rita nee Suley, interview by author, Toowoomba, Queensland, 24 April 2022, original held by author.

⁵ Personal recollection of Alma Evelyn Walker nee Suley.

⁶ Passenger list of Duke of Sutherland record for Elizabeth Frances Wastling, Queensland State Archives, Assisted immigration 1848-1912, Series S13086, pg. 422.

⁷ Personal recollection of Alma Evelyn Walker nee Suley.

⁸ Personal recollection of Rosemarie (Hazel) Rose, c 1996, original held by Dave Mackay.

⁹ Personal recollection of Rosemarie (Hazel) Rose.

wanted her to return to England, but Elizabeth refused to go.⁹ She remained steadfast that Fred would meet her in Australia as planned.

Meanwhile, back in England, Fred booked his passage on the *Oriana*, which set sail on 6 July 1887.¹⁰ You could only wonder how confident he was feeling when leaving London as it had been many months since they had last seen each other. He disembarked at Maryborough, Australia on 14 October 1887 before making his way to Brisbane.¹¹

Elizabeth was indeed still waiting for him, and the couple reunited. They moved to Dulacca, a small Queensland town, approximately 400 kilometres west of Brisbane.¹² Fred became a labourer for the railways and Elizabeth worked as a domestic servant.¹³ On 19 August 1889, already with their first child James Ernest, they married in Dulacca.¹⁴

Eventually, the family moved to Toowoomba, settling in Sir Street, adding another nine children to the growing family.¹⁵ In 1907 Fred purchased 320 acres at Maida Hill, near the township of Bell on the Darling Downs, Queensland.¹⁶ His eldest child, James Ernest (Ern), took up the lease on the land and started a dairy farm, naming it *Peak Hill* after the hamlet where Fred's parents lived in Lincolnshire, England.¹⁷ Fred and Elizabeth moved to the Greenmount railway reserve at Nobby where another two children were born, taking the number of children born to 12.¹⁸

After almost 22 years working for the railway, Fred resigned in 1910.¹⁹ A few years later in 1914, Ern enlisted to fight in the Great War, leaving Fred to take over the lease of *Peak Hill*.²⁰ His other sons George William Frederick (Bill) and Charles Albert also enlisted and joined their elder brother in Egypt with the Light Horse Brigade.²¹ Now in his 50's, the running of a dairy

¹⁰ Passenger list of *Oriana* record for Fred Suley, Queensland State Archives, Registers of Immigrant Ship's Arrivals, Series ID 13086, Roll: M471.

¹¹ Passenger list of *Oriana* record for Fred Suley.

¹² Personal recollection of Rosemarie (Hazel) Rose.

¹³ Personal recollection of Rosemarie (Hazel) Rose.

¹⁴ Marriage record of Fred Suley and Elizabeth Frances Wastling, Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages, Queensland, 1889/C/1725 (index only, no image currently available); Birth record of James Ernest Suley, born 8 September 1888, Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages, Queensland, 1910/C/2860 (index only, no image available).

¹⁵ Suley Family Tree, Ancestry.com.

¹⁶ 'Property Sales', *Darling Downs Gazette*, 15 June 1907, p. 8

<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/179989838>.

¹⁷ Australian Electoral Roll record for Fred Suley and Elizabeth Suley, Queensland, 1903 Greenmount, Darling Downs, Ancestry.com; Birth record of Ivy Hillsborough Suley, born 11 January 1909, Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages, Queensland, 1909/C/12380 (index only, no image available); Birth record of Alma Evelyn Suley, born 23 September 1911, Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages, Queensland, 1911/C/12620 (index only, no image available).

¹⁹ Queensland railway service record for Fred Suley, Queensland State Archives, Queensland railway removals 1890-1915, Series ID 6598, Suley, F.

²⁰ Service record of James Ernest Suley, First Australian Imperial Force Personnel Dossiers, 1914-1920, National Archives of Australia, B2455, SULEY JAMES ERNEST; Australian Electoral Roll record for Fred Suley and Elizabeth Suley, Queensland, 1919 Maranoa, Dalby, Queensland, Ancestry.com.

farm would have been hard work for Fred, but for those that stayed behind they did what they had to do to keep life moving.

Eighteen months after enlisting, Ern was wounded by a bullet in Gallipoli, being permanently damaged in his right eye and was discharged from service with defective vision.²² He arrived home in Australia in June 1916 but instead of returning to work on the farm, he gained employment with the railway and in January 1918, he married Annie Berkley.²³

Charles returned home in February 1919 with Bill following in August 1919.²⁴ It was a miracle that all three enlisted sons had come home safely. It wasn't all good news though for the family as Fred passed away from lung cancer on 9 September 1919.²⁵ Sadly, it was unlikely that Bill saw his father before his passing, as he had disembarked in Sydney only 12 days before.²⁶ Fred's last days were spent in Brisbane Mater Private Hospital, and he was laid to rest at the Drayton and Toowoomba Cemetery.²⁷

With Ern's vision permanently impaired making him unsuitable for running the family farm, it was left to Bill to step up and take it on board, which included taking care of his mother and younger siblings.²⁸ In August 1922 Bill married Annie's sister Margaret (Tot) Berkley and they went on to have six children.²⁹ His mother Elizabeth lived with them until 1930, before moving to live with her youngest daughter Alma Walker at Porter's Gap.³⁰ Elizabeth passed away in 1955, being laid to rest alongside Fred.³¹

Both Fred and his wife Elizabeth are remembered by their children and grandchildren as caring, loving, and a favourite of everyone who knew them.³² Their descendants are numerous

²¹ Service record of George William Frederick Suley, First Australian Imperial Force Personnel Dossiers, 1914-1920, National Archives of Australia, B2455, SULEY GEORGE WILLIAM FREDERICK; Service Record of Charles Albert Suley, First Australian Imperial Force Personnel Dossiers, 1914-1920, National Archives of Australia, B2455, SULEY CHARLES ALBERT.

²² Service record of James Ernest Suley.

²³ Marriage record of James Ernest Suley and Annie Berkley, Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages, Queensland, 1918/C/676 (index only, no image currently available); Australian Electoral Roll record for James Ernest Suley, Queensland, 1925 Maranoa, Roma, Ancestry.com.

²⁴ Service record of George William Frederick Suley; Service record of Charles Albert Suley.

²⁵ Death record of Fred Suley, died 9 September 1919, Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages, Queensland, 1919/B/30350 (index only; no image currently available).

²⁶ Service record of George William Frederick Suley.

²⁷ Find a Grave memorial for Fred Suley, 'Frederick Suley', <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/149519174/frederick-suley>, accessed 5 September 2021.

²⁹ Marriage record of George William Frederick Suley & Margaret Berkley, Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages, Queensland, 1922/C/2576 (index only, no image currently available); Photograph of the Suley family, 13 August 1966, original held by author.

³⁰ Australian Electoral Roll record of Elizabeth Frances Suley and Alma Evelyn Walker, Queensland, 1934 Maranoa, Dalby, Ancestry.com.

³¹ Death record of Elizabeth Frances Suley, died 21 January 1955, Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages, Queensland, 1955/B/6139 (index only; no image currently available); Find a Grave memorial for Elizabeth Frances Suley, 'Elizabeth Frances Wastling Suley', <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/149519175/elizabeth-frances-suley>, accessed 30 May 2022.

³² Personal recollection of Mary Ward, 10 January 2000, original held by Dave Mackay.

³³ Suley Family Tree, Ancestry.com.

with the majority scattered throughout Queensland, right where it all started.³³ I am proud to be descended from a young English man and his courageous runaway sweetheart who together lay the foundations of a rich full life. This legacy is where I come from.

CROKER PRIZE FOR BIOGRAPHY 2022

2225 Finding Anne Jane, Finding Myself

by Rosalie O'Neale

Finding Anne Jane, finding myself

'You're one of us, you know.' The tiny, very elderly woman fixed me in her view, coming up right close to deliver that blunt opinion. There was no question in it, just a statement of fact based on an assessment made within minutes of our meeting.

It was October 2016, and I'd travelled to Northern Ireland for the first time, to learn more about the places and the people who had shaped my family, and to find the source of the extraordinarily strong sense of connection that had bound my father's family together, parent to child, sibling to sibling over continents and generations, extending out to the furthest twig on the furthest branch of the family tree. And on this day, I'd called in to Annie Eileen's on spec as I passed through Lack on my way back to Belfast, to say hello and pay my respects.

My journey began years before, with a family tree¹, drawn up for a 1987 reunion of descendants of an uncle and nephew (both named David Weir) who left Glasmullagh, Fermanagh in Ireland and settled on the South Coast of NSW, before migrating up to the Richmond River region. According to this drawing together of family lore, the people at the top of the tree were my 3x great grandparents: Robin (or Robert) Weir and his wife 'Miss Phillips'. 'Interesting,' I thought.

When my chance finally came to delve further into my family story, not only did I want to learn more of the where and when of the Weir family in Ireland, I was determined to find out more about the mysterious Miss Phillips.

Except...I could find no evidence that she ever existed.

After endless – and fruitless - searches through available records online, I changed tack and checked the marriage² and death certificates³ of David Weir senior, my 2xgreat grandfather. No Miss Phillips there - his mother was named as Anne Jane Funston. Final proof was found in the death certificate of Robert and Anne Jane's daughter, Jane⁴. And with that, things clicked into place. Of course her name was 'Anne Jane'! Just look at the family's very strong adherence to Irish/Scottish naming conventions and the fact that this name, and permutations (Anne Jane, Jane/Janie, Anne/Annie, Anna and so on), have been such a strong thread down the generations!

Available Irish parish records are patchy. To date I haven't been able to locate Anne Jane's baptism records, or anything confirming her marriage to Robert. However, in transcribed baptism records for Fermanagh⁵, I found records for four children with parents Robert and Ann: Jane (1825), William (1832), John (1837) and Robert (1840) showing that they were born in townlands (Mweelbane and Tirmacspird) within a mile or two of Glasmullagh⁶.

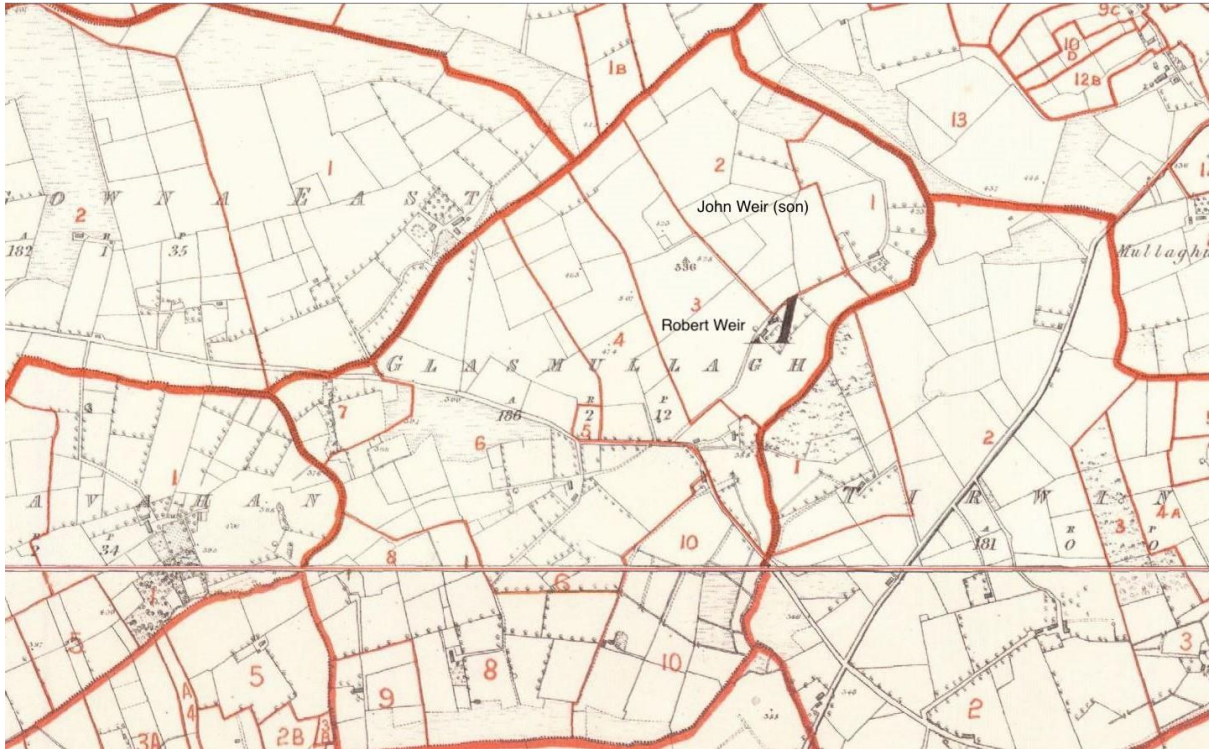


Image 1: The townland of Glasmullagh in Fermanagh, Ireland, showing the portions farmed by the Weir family. (Griffith's Valuation.)

With the coming of civil registration, Anne Jane crossed that great divide into the state records system. And so, I found absolute proof of her life via the record of her death: Anne Weir, farmer's wife of Glasmullagh, died aged 77 in 1873, of senile debility⁷. Husband Robert was present at the end.

A name, a lifespan. A series of key events. Stepping out of the shadows and taking form. But only visible in relief -- there are no photos or paintings, no letters that mention her, no captured, contemporaneous memories. Anne Jane remains elusive, leaving only the very faintest footprints in time.

Anne Jane was not a person with a high profile, not an adventurer or pioneer, nor someone close to heart of power. But between the span of her years, 1796 to 1873, the Irish endured poverty, attempted revolution, great wind, killing winters and cruel famine⁸, so she was someone who lived an ordinary life through extraordinary times. Someone - like so many of her sex and of the age - who faded quickly from sight and became lost in time, but who lived her life - was born, married and became a mother, who worked and died - with the same clamour as every other person no matter where they are in place or time.

She was someone who lived as generations before her had done, as a tenant farmer's wife, with horizons reaching not much further than the family church. But she was someone who nurtured the generation that spilled out across the world, across the Irish Sea to Scotland, and across the oceans to America and Australia, and who helped lay the foundations of the world of her children, grandchildren and beyond.

The search is not over, not yet. But what I have discovered so far about Anne Jane has revealed a strong truth about the unbreakable bonds of family, and a continuing link to that small area of Ireland, connecting us down – and across – the generations, between cousins, second, third and fourth, all over the world. It has given me a clearer picture of my own identity, of where I came from.

Fast forward to 2016, and finally an opportunity for me to travel to Northern Ireland. Time to wander the narrow roads and laneways, to visit the Colaghty church⁹ - epicentre of the family's religious life for more than 180 years. The place where so many Weirs (and others who joined the clan over the years: the Bartons, Coopers, Johnstons, Irvines, Martins...) were baptised, married and where they found their final resting place.

Including Anne Jane. Standing there, amongst the graves in the Colaghty churchyard, I found a sense of the circle closing.



Image 2: Colaghty Church in 2016. A Weir family grave is towards the back, near the church entrance. (Photo: author)

On, then, to that day in Lack, when I met and spoke with my second cousin (once removed), Annie Eileen, 2x great granddaughter of Anne Jane and Elder of the branch of the family that remained in Ireland. She remembered my own grandmother from a visit made in the 1950s, and noted that I look very like her. And in that knowing, beyond-argument way, she claimed me with ‘you are one of us, you know.’

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- ³ Death certificate 17386/1914 David Weir, District Kiama; NSW Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages,
- ⁴ Cooper, Jane (Statutory registers Deaths 573/1 227) Scotland, 1865 Deaths in the parish of High church in the Burgh of Paisley.
- ⁵ Ireland Genealogy Project (IGP) Archives: Births recorded in Tubrid Church Kesh, Co Fermanagh, Ireland. Accessed through <https://www.igp-web.com/IGPArchives/ire/fermanagh/churches/tubrid-births.htm>
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CROKER PRIZE FOR BIOGRAPHY 2022

2226 Silent Partner: The Life of Mrs E. R. Symes

by Eleanor Snibson

Silent Partner: The Life of Mrs. E. R. Symes

My great-grandmother Mrs. Elizabeth Rogers Symes was a woman who lived in a small town seemingly near nowhere, where she raised eight children.

She did not sign the 1891 Women's Suffrage Petition. She did not write a book, or a brochure. She never went to university or was awarded any qualifications that I could find. She never waited for her husband, brothers, or sons to come home from a war. She seemed so distant from me.

Is this where I come from? Where did I come from?

*

Alfred Symes was oiling the engine on his chaff cutter in the Autumn of 1910, when his sleeve was caught in a spindle. Suddenly, all his clothes were torn from his body, and he was badly knocked about.

He returned home to his wife and family, but developed a cold, then pneumonia and bronchitis. He wrote a new will, leaving everything to his wife Elizabeth. Six days later Alfred was dead, aged 45.

Elizabeth had eight children: two sons under four years-old, and the rest daughters aged under sixteen. Elizabeth was under pressure to sell – who could now run a sheep farm and dairy? Without Alfred, it was now up to Elizabeth alone what she would do.

*

On 16 May 1869, Elizabeth was born to Mary and James Mitchell at Purnim, near Warrnambool, in the Colony of Victoria.

In 1875, when Elizabeth was aged about six, her parents uprooted the family, travelled over 200 kilometres north, and selected land at “Werrigar” in the newly opened Wimmera district. A reporter wrote at that time that the country was “desolate and famine-like in the extreme [...] a poor prospect both for the selector and squatter.”¹

However, after the land had been cleared of mallee, the district proved suitable for wheat. The country's proneness to drought was lessened by an expanding irrigation system.

A community settled on the banks of the Yarriambiack Creek. “Warracknabeal” was proclaimed there in 1884, home to 200 people. Two years later, a new rail line allowed wheat to be easily transported to Melbourne for exportation.

On 30 March 1892, Elizabeth, aged 22, became the first of nine siblings to marry. Alfred Symes, a 26-year-old farmer, was Anglican, but Elizabeth was Presbyterian. In a curious compromise, the pair married in a Methodist ceremony. The new couple became devoted adherents of the Methodist Church.

*

Elizabeth settled into married life eight kilometres east of Warracknabeal at *Woodlands*, clearing it of mallee aided by stump jump ploughs. The 640-acre farm was held by Alfred under the *Mallee Act*. The lease ended in 1903, after which Alfred purchased the property.

This is where Elizabeth gave birth to eight children: Gladys Evelyn (born 1893); Roselyn May (born 1894); Doris Winifred (born 1897); Lillace Mary (born 1899); Effie Victoria

¹ ‘Farm and Garden Miscellany’ *Leader* (Melbourne, 20 February 1875) 9.

Submitted by Eleanor Snibson

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(born 1901); Edith Eileen (born 1903); Francis Thomas James (born 1906); and Arthur Laurence (born 1907). Apparently, they all preferred to be known by monosyllables: Glad, May, Dot, Lil, Eff, Ede, Frank and Art.

In 1904, Alfred purchased 281 acres at nearby Challambra to keep sheep.

*

In July 1908, Alfred purchased *Woodbine* (539 acres) for £5120 10s, a record sale price for the district. *Woodlands* was sold to make the payment.

Woodbine was used as a dairy. The family moved into a six-bedroom homestead, the grandest home Elizabeth had ever lived in. It had a large garden with Morton Bay figs, palm and mulberry trees, and an olive grove. A gardener was employed to manage the vegetable garden.

*

Alfred's death less than 18-months after purchasing *Woodbine* was undoubtedly a shock.

On 21 May 1910, Elizabeth had woken up as a wife and mother, with only a few personal items to claim as hers alone. But at 8am that day, Elizabeth was a widow with a total estate worth £7154, which included 820 acres of land, over 300 sheep, 20 cows, and 14 horses. She was the sole operator of one of two dairies in Warracknabeal.

Alfred J. Symes is replaced with Elizabeth R. Symes in public documentation. Where he was recorded as "farmer," she is "widow".

Elizabeth worked and managed the farm throughout the 1910s. She dealt with all the droughts, floods, and other problems which beset Warracknabeal farmers. But as the years went by, she continued to brand her stock "A. S."

Her children were not excused from being financial contributors to the family. Each morning before school, Elizabeth's sons rode out to attend the sheep at Challambra, aged only nine or ten. Her daughters Dot, Lil and Eff become teachers at the Warracknabeal State School when they are fifteen or sixteen years old.

*

In 1919, the family moved to *Riverview* on the bank of the Yarriambiack Creek. Elizabeth gradually retired. She saw all her daughters and one son marry, and found time to assist with her grandchildren.

On 20 July 1935, Elizabeth died at *Riverview*, aged 66, from myocarditis complicated by cardiac failure. She was buried with her husband at the Warracknabeal Cemetery two days later. It was written that "she was greatly respected and esteemed for her kindly nature and the successful fight she had made against great difficulties, which she had so courageously overcome".²

*

In 1994 (two years before I was born), the Australian Law Reform Commission acknowledged that farming women were still being treated as non-productive silent partners. The convention held that farmers were men, and women did home duties.

Elizabeth fell into this misused silent category. She was never recorded as a farmer or manager. She was recorded as Mrs. E. R. Symes. Widow.

² Obituary.: Mrs. E. R. Symes.' *The Warracknabeal Herald* (23 July 1935).

Elizabeth's life could easily be forgotten by her community and descendants. Her actions alone may be unheroic – unless they are viewed strung together.

*

Some years ago, my grandfather Graeme Symes Bell sent an old spice jar containing the Wimmera dirt where my mother played as a child. The bottle was proudly emblazoned:

WARRACKNABEAL.

Never forget where you came from.



The spice jar in question

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CROKER PRIZE FOR BIOGRAPHY 2022

2227 A Coal Miner and Leading Orchardist

by Karen Lonsdale

A Coal Miner and Leading Orchardist

My paternal grandmother, Kathleen, passed away when I was six months old. She had lost her husband, Percy, less than two years earlier. Similarly, my father only knew his maternal grandmother. So, I knew almost nothing about my paternal ancestors. Who were they? Where did they come from? What traits and characteristics did I inherit from them? This biography focuses on my paternal second great grandfather, Charles Hall, who lived most of his adult life in Cardiff, New South Wales.

Charles Hall was born on 9 August 1848, in Horton, Staffordshire, England, the son of Elizabeth Hall and an unknown father.¹ At the age of 23, he married Ann Turner in 1872, at Norton in the Moors, St. Bartholomew, Staffordshire.² Charles and his family emigrated to Australia in 1878, departing London on 19 July 1878 as government assisted immigrants on the barque, *Scottish Admiral*, arriving in Brisbane on 30 October 1878.³ The barque was berthed at Raff's Wharf and the passengers were transported by steamer to Brisbane, arriving at Queen's Wharf⁴, now considered "The Birthplace of Brisbane".⁵ Travelling with Charles (29), were his wife, Ann (24) and their children, Sarah (5), Mary (3), and Thomas (1).⁶ The day after they arrived, the Brisbane Courier reported that "The immigrants by the ship Scottish Admiral were safely landed, and housed in the immigration depot, at half-past 5 o'clock yesterday afternoon, where they now wait employment, and can be engaged from and after half past 9 o'clock this morning."⁷ No time to rest for these weary international travellers!

Their fourth child, Henry Hall was born in Queensland, a few weeks after their arrival, on 18 December 1878.⁸ Soon after they moved interstate to New South Wales, where the rest of their children were born. Sadly, they lost two infant children in 1880⁹ and 1882¹⁰. My great grandfather, Daniel Hall¹¹, was born in Wallsend in 1882. Charles and Ann had five more children: Ellen Hall (1884)¹², Charles Turner Hall (1886)¹³, Ann Hall (1890)¹⁴, Samuel (1891)¹⁵ and Arthur Edmund (1893). Sadly, Samuel also passed away as an infant in 1891.¹⁶

In the early 20th century, Cardiff, New South Wales had a thriving fruit-growing industry, in which many of the gardeners, like Charles Hall, were coal miners whose orchards would provide them with income during their retirement. Charles built a homestead and orchard on about 10 acres of land, which he purchased for £25 per acre.¹⁷ He was considered one of Cardiff's leading growers of citrus and stone fruits¹⁸ but also sold sorghum by the ton or bundle¹⁹. Despite this success, he and other orchardists were negatively impacted by heavy rains and pests during some seasons, which causes significant financial losses to their businesses.²⁰

Tragically, in 1905, Charles and Ann lost their eldest daughter, Sarah Hayward (nee Hall) who died by suicide at age 32, through self-administered carbolic acid poisoning.²¹ Allegedly, Sarah had been depressed for several years, due to experiencing frequent epileptic fits.²²

In September, 1915, Charles's and Ann's youngest son, Arthur Edmund Hall, a 22-year old mine machinist, enlisted in World War 1. He was appointed to the 16th Reinforcements, 3rd Battalion, embarking from Sydney on 1 April, 2016. Private Hall was wounded in action

in France in May, 1917²³. Charles Hall wrote to the AIF on 8 June, 1917, to enquire about his son's condition. They informed him that "His wound was not stated to be serious, and in the absence of further reports, it may be assumed he is progressing satisfactorily...". Arthur rejoined his unit on 13 June 1917. He was awarded three medals during his service and was promoted to the rank of Lance Corporal. He returned to Australia in April 1919.²⁴

A few months prior to his son's return, at the age of 70, Charles Hall advertised the sale of "6 acres of land, 5 acres with fruit trees, together with 6-roomed House, horse, cart, harness, and all implements; 5 minutes from station."²⁵

Sadly, Charles and Ann lost another child before the end of their lives. My great grandfather, Daniel Hall, a coal miner, passed away from pneumonia, chronic myocarditis and myocardial degeneration at the age of 52, in Cardiff on 14 August 1935²⁶. Charles Hall would live almost another three years, passing away in Cardiff, with acute bronchitis on 9 August 1938, at age 89. My father, Peter, was only three weeks old at the time of his great grandfather's passing²⁷.

DNA evidence shows that I am biologically matched with many descendants of Charles Hall through my grandmother, Kathleen Lonsdale (nee Hall). Do I take after Charles, my second great grandfather? Unfortunately, I have not inherited his aptitude for gardening, being being better known for my unintended killing of plants! But I believe I have inherited some of his fine qualities, such as showing resilience during tough times, being goal-oriented, having an entrepreneurial spirit, and a willingness to take on leadership roles, including running my own business.

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CROKER PRIZE FOR BIOGRAPHY 2022

2228 North and South

by Gordon Hughes

North and South

I opened my mother's birth certificate expecting to see my grandmother's name, Mary Whyte Hay, and my grandfather's name, Frederick Firth. What I saw was her mother named as Mary Smith and a birthplace not in Edinburgh on the 11th October, 1919, but at Bournemouth, on the south coast of England.ⁱ

It was 1968, I was 17 and had just returned from my first trip to Orkney, where my mum's family originated. I had become obsessed with her family tree and was rifling through the family bureau that housed certificates and documents. I asked my mum about it. After so many years she was still embarrassed by her origins and after she told me her story, she asked that I not tell anyone until she died. At that time, I thought it would be impossible to trace her birth mother.

My mother died at the home of my sister Sheila in South Africa in 2007. She had been the person that built a home and cared for her three children through some turbulent times. In 2016 Sheila visited me and brought packets of family documents and photos to contribute to the family archive. One of these was a birth certificate that mum had obtained in 1996 in connection with her British pension. There was no Mary Smith listed as mother, but Irene Alice Firth, formerly Clarkⁱⁱ.

I have always been proud of my Orcadian and Scottish heritage. The Firth family in Orkney can be traced back to the early 16th centuryⁱⁱⁱ. The Hays were latterly from Kirkcaldy, Fife, on the north bank of the Firth of Forth, but formerly they were seafaring folk from Peterhead,^{iv} on the north coast of Aberdeenshire, and had married into a prominent whaling family^v, the Ogstons^{vi}. Mary Whyte Hay's grandfather, Alexander, had been a sea captain^{vii}.

Who was Irene Alice Clark and how did Fred Firth meet her? The search was to reveal many typically English family stories.

Fred was a sefarer and when war broke out in 1914, he joined the RNVR and served on coastal motor boats, ending the war engaged in shore duties in Portsmouth, 50 miles along the coast from Bournemouth^{viii}, where Irene's parents ran a boarding house where she and Fred lived^{ix}. He had married Mary Hay in 1903^x and there is no evidence that he and Irene married, but it seems to have been a long-term relationship. My mother thought that Irene intended to migrate with her to Canada, presumably as Fred was returning to his wife. At this point the remarkable Mary Hay, Fred's wife, comes into focus: 'If she is your daughter then she belongs in this family.'^{xi} By 1921 Irene was living with her parents without Fred or her 20-month-old baby^{xii}

So, my mother was brought up in Fred's marital home with an older sister, Freda, with whom she had a close and enduring relationship. Her adoptive mother, Mary Hay, loved Betty as her own until she died in 1952.^{xiii}

Irene's father was Francis Clark, born 1853^{xiv} who, like his father James, was a baker.^{xv} In later life he became a gardener^{xvi} and his wife Elizabeth Atterbury ran guesthouses in Bournemouth; St Heliers, by 1891^{xvii}, and Everley by 1911.^{xviii}

James Clark, born in 1819^{ix}, was working for baker John Shirvell in 1841 and lived with his household in Christchurch.^{xx} By 1861 he was a baker, and a farmer of 90 acres employing two labourers and one boy^{xxi}. In the 1867 Swanage Trade Directory James is also listed as being a bathing machine proprietor^{xxii}. His address in 1861 is at the Royal Oak Inn at Swanage, Dorset,^{xxiii} but he wasn't the innkeeper. The 18th century inn has evolved from a row of cottages^{xxiv} and in 1861 Royal Oak was used to describe a number of premises occupied as residences and businesses, as well as the inn.^{xxv}

James married Jane Webber in Swanage in 1847,^{xxvi} the daughter of Henry Webber and Mary Briggs^{xxvii}, Both Jane's brother Henry and her father were quarriers^{xxviii} and this echoes my own Orcadian ancestors who also worked with stone.

Irene's mother, Elizabeth Atterbury, born about 1861, emerged from a cluster of Atterbury families who dwelt in Buckinghamshire and Northamptonshire.^{xxix} Elizabeth's father, George, born in 1826^{xxx} left his home parish of Bow Brickhill as a young man and moved up to a coal-mining area in Staffordshire. The Union Canal ran close by his home and perhaps he enjoyed a yarn with the bargees about job opportunities further north and worked his passage on a barge up to Tipton, which was also on the canal, to work in the mines.

George settled in Tipton and acquired both a job in the mines and a wife, Sarah Fisher, in 1847.^{xxxi} George's brother-in-law, James Fisher, was a bricklayer and by 1861 George Atterbury was a both a miner and a furnace maker.

Although George was still resident in West Bromwich in 1871^{xxxii} he was in Bow Brickhill in the May of both 1868 and 1869 when he was involved in a celebrated campaign of civil disobedience protesting about encroaching private ownership of the Heath, which was historically public land. In 1869 he, and his son John, 16, were fined for the deliberate destruction of a crop of potatoes planted on the Heath by Benjamin Holton, who paid rent for the land to Mr. Pettit, who claimed ownership of this once common land^{xxxiii}.

Where did I come from? From birth granny Irene Clark and her very English heritage, with hints of Thomas Hardy? Or from adoptive granny Mary Hay, with her Scottish seafaring roots? Nature or nurture? I think I'll go for the fusion of the two that combined in my mother, Mary Elizabeth Firth. She loved her home and the stability that she built there with my father, but a wild streak of longing for the ocean and the unknown was never far below the surface.

ⁱ This certificate is now lost.

ⁱⁱ GRO Birth Certificate no. BXBZ 954799 for Christchurch, Bournemouth issued 16 April 1996.

ⁱⁱⁱ Clouston, J. S. Records of the Earldom of Orkney, 1914, page 280.

^{iv} 1841 Scotland Census. Aberdeenshire, Peterhead, schedule 32. Charles Hay.

^v The Peterhead Almanac for 1853 contains details of many whaling voyages over the previous 30 years. Captains J. Ogston and A. Ogston made over 25 voyages between them.

^{vi} Charles Hay, Sailor, married Margaret Ogston, 20 August 1818, in Peterhead. Scottish Old Parish Registers.

^{vii} 1871 Scotland census. Fife, Kirkcaldy. District 19 schedule 89. Alexander Hay, Ship Master

^{viii} Photo of service record in family collection.

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CROKER PRIZE FOR BIOGRAPHY 2022

2229 A Legacy of Resilience and Love: Annie May

by Lynette Weir

A Legacy of Resilience and Love - Annie May

It's easy to dismiss less glamorous 'ordinary' lives, but oftentimes when you scratch the surface you find a rich legacy in the essence of their character. My grandfather, Herbert George Perkins, mother was Annie Elizabeth May Schaumann and his father was 'Walter Arthur Perkins,' who enlisted in WWI and never returned. When visiting the Australian War Memorial in Canberra, my father requested I place a poppy on the wall of remembrance for his grandfather. We found there was no Walter Arthur Perkins who died in WWI. There was one who enlisted, whose record did not appear to be our Walter Arthur,ⁱ but in untangling the complex storylines of Annie May's life, I found he was. Then I discovered Walter Arthur 'Wally' Perkins was not my great grandfather.

Annie Elizabeth May Schaumann called 'May' by family but often recorded as 'Annie May', was born 5th May 1881 at Yamba.ⁱⁱ The granddaughter of Canadian Master Mariner, Captain Francis Freeburn, the first Pilot at Yamba, and his English born wife Elizabeth McEvoy. Annie May was the eldest child of Frances and Elizabeth Freeburn's daughter, Jane,ⁱⁱⁱ who married a seaman named Johann Friedrich Schaumann from Elmshorn, Germany,^{iv} who settled in Yamba in 1879.^v Annie May grew up in Yamba, an isolated river town, attending the little local school,^{vi} then working as a maid for a tailor in nearby Maclean.^{vii}

No birth record has been found for Walter Arthur 'Wally' Perkins, only a death certificate.^{viii} Goal and marriage records report he was born 1881,^{ix} the fourth child of Sarah Ann Bishop and 'Arthur Elton' James Perkins known as 'Daziane' a well known 'wire walker' and traveling performer.

On 11 July 1902 Annie Elizabeth May Schaumann married Walter Arthur Perkins at the Church of St James in Maclean, NSW.^x Annie May's father was a witness, perhaps an incentive for the groom to 'do the right thing'.

Annie May and Wally Perkins' only child, Daphne Pearl, was born in Yamba on 23 December 1902. Wally Perkins deserted them by the end of 1903. He never returned. In a missing person report filed in 1911, Annie May confirmed that Walter had '*left his home eight years ago*'.^{xi}

Annie May's second daughter Myrtle Faith was born 26 November 1904^{xii} at the maternity hospital and Home of Hope for Fallen and Friendless Women in Newtown. My grandfather Herbert 'George' was born on 22 October 1907^{xiii} in the Lady Bowen Hospital in Brisbane. Neither child's father was recorded. Daphne was raised in Yamba with her grandfather as her guardian.^{xiv} Annie May went to Queensland recording her address as Dugandan on George's birth record but also Yamba on electoral rolls until 1909.

Against all the odds at that time, Annie May kept Myrtle and George with her. There is just one record found between 1909 to 1914, the missing person report filed by Annie May in Boonah in 1911 looking for Wally Perkins.

Both Myrtle's and George's births were registered as Schaumann, but they used 'Perkins' listing Walter Arthur Perkins as their father on school records. These records from five Brisbane schools, show Annie May became a 'widow' with numerous addresses, working as a 'Charwoman', 'Laundress', 'Cafe Hand' from 1914 to 1919 to support her children.^{xv}

In 1919 Annie May moved in with returned Serviceman Herbert Henry Russell.^{xvi} Despite no divorce records, they married 5 December 1924 at the Joyful News Mission Hall, Valley, Brisbane.^{xvii} May and Herb Russell returned to Yamba in 1930,^{xviii} they cared for Annie May's elderly mother until her death and were active community contributors.

Tracing Wally Perkins was an adventure. He went to gaol, then on to have two more children with Mary Jane Bean nee Johnson, who was already married with seven children. She left them to have two children with Wally, leaving him with two children to return to her first family after her husband died.^{xix} Walter Arthur 'James' Perkins adapted his name marrying Hilda May Whiteley in 1927,^{xx} they had four sons. Hilda raised all six children. These families never knew of his first marriage and daughter Daphne, but Wally made one mistake in covering his tracks providing a link to Annie May. On 27 April 1919, Walter Arthur James Perkins was born in Goulburn, Wally was the informant for the birth certificate where he records '*Date of marriage: 13 March 1902 Place: 'Macleay NSW'*'.^{xxi} There's enough truth in case caught, but not quite. He was married in 1902 at Maclean, but to Annie Elizabeth May Schaumann on the 11 July, not to Mary Jane Johnson, the mother of his new son.

On 28th January 1933 at the Methodist Church in Grafton,^{xxii} my grandfather George 'Perkins' married my grandmother Marie Jane Gray. They had three children, Lorna Marie, Colin George and Beryl Emma, and the family myth of Walter Arthur Perkins, son of a circus performer and father of George, was entrenched.

Annie Elizabeth May Russell died on 14 May 1963 at Grafton Base Hospital aged 82 years,^{xxiii} taking many of her secrets with her. She died just eight weeks before I was born.

We know the clear family lines of Annie May, but we now know of her strength and fortitude in the face of adversity. Final pieces and circumstances of George and Myrtle's father/s remains elusive. We may never know.

Annie May's life is one experienced by many women. It included much hardship and hard work, but she was very much loved by my grandfather and all her family. She is remembered as a lovely and kind soul, someone who helped her friends, family and community. She was strong and resilient, going against the tide by keeping and raising her children. Hers is just one of the stories of a woman's love and resilience in my family, but it is less about who or where, and more about this legacy of love, caring for others and resilience from Annie May which is the real essence and guide for where I came from.

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- ⁱ National Archives of Australia - PERKINS Walter Arthur : Service Number - Depot : Place of Birth - Windsor NSW : Place of Enlistment - Liverpool NSW : Next of Kin - (N/A) JOHNSON Mary Jane - NAA: B2455, PERKINS WALTER ARTHUR
- ⁱⁱ NSW Registry of Births, Deaths & Marriages - Birth Reg Number: 13421/1881
- ⁱⁱⁱ NSW Registry of Births, Deaths & Marriages - Marriage Reg Number: 7737/1859
- ^{iv} Evangelische Kirche Elmshorn (Kr. Pinneberg): Verein für Familienkunde Elmshorn Film Number: 1337520 - Baptismal Record for Johann Friedrich Schaumann Birth Date: 17 Mrz 1839 (17 Mar 1839) Baptism Date: 24 Mrz 1839 (24 Mar 1839) Baptist Place: Elmshorn, Schleswig-Holstein, Deutschland (Germany)
- ^v National Archives of Australia - John Friedrich SCHAUMANN Naturalization NAA: A1, 1911/3607
- ^{vi} Port of Yamba Historical Society - Yamba Public School records
- ^{vii} Home of Hope for Friendless and Fallen Women (South Sydney Women's Hospital) Admissions Register (1903 - 1905) Nursing History Research Unit, University of Sydney - Verbal notes from archivist. Records currently under review to be transferred to NSW State Library
- ^{viii} NSW Registry of Births, Deaths & Marriages - Death Reg Number: 3360/1959
- ^{ix} NSW State Archives - NX-84-8093 - PERKINS Walter Gaol Inmates/Prisoners Photos Index 1870-1930 Item No: [3/6071] | Digital ID: IE42459 | Series: NRS2138 | Page No: 93 | Photo No: 10016
- ^x SW Registry of Births, Deaths & Marriages Birth - Marriage Reg Number: 7010/1902
- ^{xi} Queensland State Archives – Queensland Police Gazette page 64 Missing Friends Report Walter Arthur Perkins 3 February 1911
- ^{xii} NSW Registry of Births, Deaths & Marriages - Birth Reg Number: 35122/1904
- ^{xiii} Queensland Registry of Births, Deaths & Marriages Reg Number: 1907/B/15697
- ^{xiv} Port of Yamba Historical Society - Yamba Public School Admission records
- ^{xv} Queensland State Archives - School records for Myrtle and George Perkins at Dunellan, Coorparoo, East Brisbane, Petrie and Windsor State School student records
- ^{xvi} Queensland Electoral Roll 1919
- ^{xvii} Queensland Births Deaths and Marriages – Marriage – Herbert Henry Russell & Annie Elizabeth May Perkins – Registration details: 1924/B/36086
- ^{xviii} NSW Electoral Roll 1930
- ^{xix} Victoria Registry of Births, Deaths & Marriages - Death Reg Number: 12412 / 1961
- ^{xx} NSW Registry of Births, Deaths & Marriages - Marriage Reg Number: 3679/1927
- ^{xxi} NSW Registry of Births, Deaths & Marriages - Birth Reg Number: 19035/1919
- ^{xxii} NSW Registry of Births, Deaths & Marriages - Marriage Reg Number: 3068/1933
- ^{xxiii} NSW Registry of Births, Deaths & Marriages - Death Reg Number: 16303/1963