

ST ALBANS PIONEERS



SETTLERS AND SPECULATORS FROM THE 1860s

Joseph Ribarow
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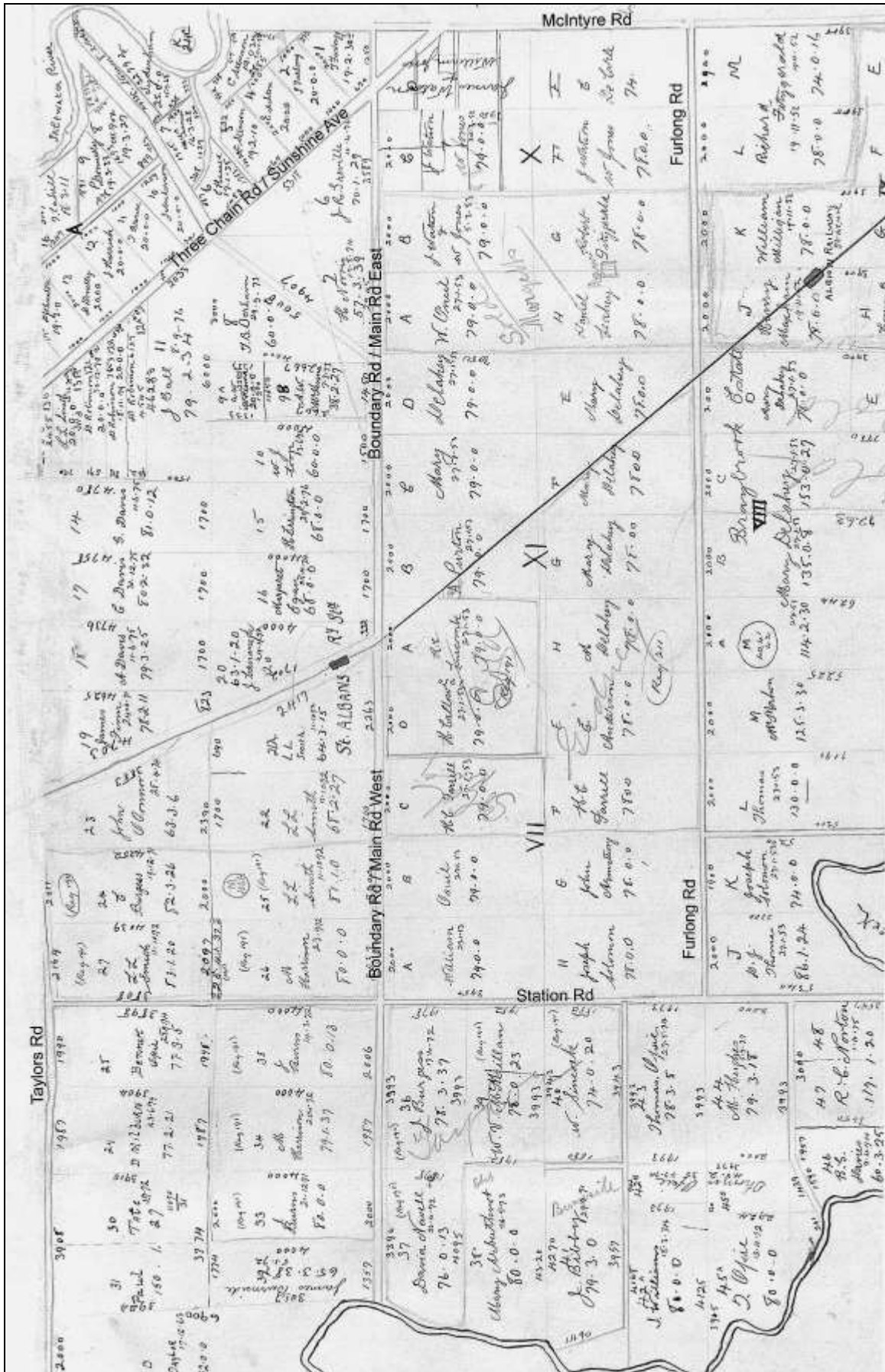
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Front cover

Fruit pickers with horse and cart on the Stenson farm, St Albans, circa 1920. Man on the left believed to be Frederick Charles Stenson. Stenson family archives.

The suburb of St Albans is an area hard to define. Originally, the area from St Albans to Sunshine was known as Keilor Plains and was a very busy farming area. The area bounded by Taylors Road, Main Road, Kororoit Creek and Maribyrnong River was the Keilor-Braybrook Farmers Common which was established in 1863 ... It was here that settlers for miles around could graze their stock.

Around and About St Albans
St Albans History Society, 1991



St Albans in the 1870s / 1880s. Source: Trove NLA <http://handle.slv.vic.gov.au/10381/170889>

Preface

When I came back to St Albans in the 1990s to work at the Migrant Resource Centre, I was fascinated to discover the local publication “St Albans The First Hundred Years 1887-1987” that had been prepared by the St Albans Railway Centenary Committee. It was an excellent introduction into the history of St Albans that aimed to show how the district developed from a tiny settlement of English-speaking colonists into a cosmopolitan community speaking over seventy languages,

The Railway Centenary Committee threw out a challenge for current and former residents to “provide more wide-ranging and detailed information about the people and events that shaped our community.” This publication is a response to that challenge. These stories focus on the people of the 1868 land selections that gave birth to St Albans, though some pioneers came earlier, from the 1830s to the 1850s. My thesis is that the neighbourhood of St Albans started in 1868 and consequently 2018 is the district’s 150th anniversary.

Thanks are due to several people for their assistance in the preparation of this document. Special thanks to Gwen and Wayne Kratsis for their assistance with the Stenson family history, and Pauline McIntyre and Helen Wardle for their history of the McIntyre family. Alie Missen provided information about local pioneers and land sales, and Gary O’Hagan provided access to his library material of pioneers in Victoria. Thanks also to Mario Viti, the local history buff who kept my computer operating efficiently. The National Library of Australia’s Trove online access to digitised newspapers and images was a wonderful resource. Mundia, the former family history site from Ancestry.com, was a good source of genealogical information.

Joseph Ribarow
November 2018

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INTRODUCTION

The history of St Albans is usually said to have started on the 1st of February 1887 when the station of St Albans on the Spencer Street to Sunbury railway line was officially opened. While this is a valid proposition, it is not entirely correct, because the genesis of the neighbourhood occurred two decades earlier, on the 2nd November 1868, when the Keilor Commons was put up for selection.¹

In the publication *St Albans The First Hundred Years*² it is stated that prior to February 1887 only an embryo settlement existed, comprising of 'The Circus' subdivision, Alfred Padley's 'Keighlo' and a couple of other houses. This is definitely not correct unless one takes a very narrow definition of a neighbourhood. From a broader perspective, the settlement at St Albans by the late 1880s comprised about 80 properties and included between 100 and 200 people, so it was already a well established but dispersed rural neighbourhood with a twenty-year history. These people who arrived in the 1850s and 1860s were the St Albans pioneers, because they were the first generation of settlers in the area straddling the boundary between the shires of Keilor and Braybrook and referred to as Keilor Plains.

The European settlement in the district occurred in three stages related to the time when Crown land was released to the populace. This first occurred in the 1850s on the Braybrook side to the south of Boundary Road in the area known as the Parish of Maribyrnong between Station Road and McIntyre Road; for example, Mary Delahey had several hundred acres between Boundary Road at St Albans and Ballarat Road at Albion. Some of the first pioneers came even earlier but they were few; e.g. Joseph Solomon came to Braybrook in 1836 as one of the first pioneers in Port Phillip and part of John Batman's syndicate from Van Diemen's Land, and James Watson came to Keilor in 1839 as part of the Watson and Hunter pastoral group. They had grazing properties fairly close together but would not have formed a separate neighbourhood identity at the time. At this stage, the Port Phillip colony had a population of about 3,500 people and Melbourne had about 600.

The population of the colony increased during the 1840s due to an influx of free settlers

looking for land and then skyrocketed when the gold seekers who stayed likewise demanded access to land. By 1851 the population of Victoria had reached 77,000 but a decade later it was over half a million and starting to impact on the claims of the squattocracy. The 1850s was a time of growth in Keilor. It was declared a township in 1850 by the colonial government in Sydney and became a major stopping point for hopefuls leaving Melbourne for the goldfields at Ballarat. When the gold rush was over many people returned to Melbourne looking for land and independence. The government's response to this growing pressure was through the Closer Settlement Scheme to open up the squatting and pastoral land for the benefit of the small farmer-settler – locally it meant that land on the Keilor Plains became available for selection.

This was the basis for the second subdivision, in November 1868, when the land in the old Keilor Commons was sold through the Closer Settlement Scheme. By this stage Keilor was a small village that was growing in influence; it was declared a road district in 1862 and by 1865 it comprised of about 60 houses and 250 residents. The Keilor Road Board governed the district that later became the core part of St Albans when the Commons was sold – it was the land on the Keilor side of Boundary Road from the Saltwater River to Kororoit Creek and included the land between Station Road and Kororoit Creek from Boundary Road (Main Road West) to Kororoit. This drew more of the established Keilor and Braybrook farmers into the St Albans arena, such as the Milburn, Delahey, O'Neil and Opie families.

The third sale in 1879 was the old Keilor Town Common land along Green Gully between Sunshine Avenue and the Saltwater River³ down to Boundary Road east, which attracted buyers such as Charles Stenson, Michael Fox and Patrick McShane. This was a smaller sale than the previous one in 1868 but it finalised the neighbourhood boundaries.

Thus it can be argued that the earliest settlers in the St Albans district go back to at least the 1850s, but the Closer Settlement land sale in 1868 brought in a lot more people to the district at one particular time with the specific aim of settling on their allotments as resident farmers. On 2 November 1868 about 300 persons came to Keilor village to select land on the common that had been available to farmers around Keilor, Maribyrnong, Kororoit, and Derrimut. It had been surveyed into sixty-

¹ This is referring to the history of European settlement in the district. The Aboriginal population had been resident in the district for some 40,000 years.

² Published by the St Albans Railway Centenary Committee in 1986.

³ The Saltwater River was renamed the Maribyrnong River in about 1913.

eight allotments of an average of eighty acres:

*"This, no doubt, was the great inducement that brought such a large number from all parts of the surrounding district, through such a miserably wet morning, and at such an early hour. From Gisborne and from Gipps Land, from Melton and from Melbourne, and from every known spot between these places selectors put in an appearance. Yet of the 300 persons present there did not appear to be more than one-tenth who really meant, or were capable, of complying with the spirit of the regulations—bona fide occupation and cultivation. The well-to-do farrier from Melton was not likely to leave his forge and take up his abode on the Keilor Plains, as he no doubt is more useful and better paid shoeing other farmers' horses than turning farmer himself. The storekeeper at Carlton is not likely to leave his shop to hold the plough. The publican at Footscray might possibly be looking out for a good site for a future "Plough Inn" amongst the new landed proprietary nominated yesterday; and the numerous members of the Legislative Assembly that put in an appearance might possibly have an eye to the remarkably easy-going constituency of West Bourke, and wish to qualify themselves as local men."*¹

But that is exactly what did happen: the medico from Melbourne, the storekeeper from Hotham, the publican from Footscray, and the politician from the Legislative Assembly jostled with the district farmers and land workers for their chance at a lottery win on the Keilor Plains. These selectors were pioneers of St Albans in its earliest stage. Who were they, where did they come from, what motivated their interest in the district, and what happened to them? These profiles of 70 pioneer families are an attempt to answer these questions.

The local newspapers of the time seldom included articles about the Aboriginal population who were the traditional landowners, the Marin Balug people of the Woi wurrung clan:

"Their clan estates extended from Sunbury, Kororoit Creek, Jackson's Creek and the Maribyrnong River. They belonged to the waa moiety. At the time of contact with Europeans, the ngurungaeta ('leader of the group') of the Marin balug was Bungaree. Bungaree was a highly influential man whose country included ... the most important source of raw material for stone axes in the region and the centre of a large trading network. Bungaree, as one of the ngurungaeta who was authorised to permit access of strangers to his country, was a signatory on Batman's 1835 treaty with the Woi wurrung and Bun wurrung. ...

"The Woi wurrung people were decimated by a combination of dispossession, massacres and

*the introduction of European diseases during the 1830s and 1840s. The British colonial government's attempts to establish a 'Protectorate' for Indigenous people were a failure and, although the Bun wurrung people were granted a reserve at Mordialloc in 1852, most of the remaining Woi wurrung people were left to fend for themselves on the fringes of white settlement from the 1850s onwards."*²

Other traditional landowners named in local history include William Barak, who was the headman of the Wurundjeri and said to be present at the signing of Batman's treaty;³ he died at Healesville in 1903 at the age of 85. Derrimut was another of the local Aboriginal chiefs whose name is recognised in the history of the region, as Mount Derrimut was named after him. Joseph Solomon, one of the earliest European settlers in the district, seems to have established a good relationship with local Aboriginal clans and had written employment agreements with some of their members, so he was a forward-thinking man in many ways.

Despite such occasional reference to the Koori inhabitants, their individual stories of life in the district were not recorded in the newspapers of the time. The following stories about St Albans pioneers are therefore stories about British immigrants and their settlement in what has become one of the most cosmopolitan districts in the nation.

A word of caution: these stories are based on articles included in the Trove database of digitised newspapers as well as some local references, but the information is likely to have gaps and errors. This is unavoidable when one is trying to trace links as far back as the 1830s, but hopefully the reader will still get a better understanding of the people and the circumstances that shaped the development of St Albans from the 1850s to 1900.

My thesis is that the origin of St Albans goes back to the 2nd November 1868 and that 2018 marks the district's 150th birthday. This book has been written to commemorate the occasion. If you have time to read only one story, read about the Stenson family and "Mr. St Albans," pioneers of the district from the 1860s.

Joseph Ribarow, November 2018

² <http://www.gml.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2010/09/Part-1-Maribyrnong-HMP-July-2007.pdf>

³ Myer Eidelson; *The Melbourne Dreaming: A Guide to the Aboriginal Places of Melbourne*; Aboriginal Studies Press, 1997. Barak was born near Croydon and in the 1860s was living at Coranderrk Station, Croydon.

¹ The Argus Tuesday 3 November 1868

ANDERSON, Francis

There's a lot of mystery with the occupiers of Block E, Section VII, which was near some of Mary Delahey's land on the St Albans side of Furlong Road west – the occupier in 1853 was initially listed as "E. Anderson" but in a later map was recorded as "F. Anderson." It is not clear who the former person was, but the latter may have been Francis Anderson, one of the pioneers of the Braybrook area. According to Gary Vines, Francis Anderson was from one of the smaller dynasties in the colonial squatters' era, exemplified in the west by the Taylors of Keilor and the Chirnsides of Werribee:

*"Francis Anderson leased between 6,000 and 9,000 acres (or 13 square miles) of prime grazing country in the parishes of Derrimut and Truganina, some time prior to 1849. Anderson was one of the first settlers in the district ... During the land sales of the 1850s he purchased 23 lots, which together with his pre-emptive right gave him 2,817 acres. Anderson eventually acquired about 4,000 acres of freehold."*¹

In 1846 he had the occupation license for at least 820 acres at Derrimut² and thus was a contemporary of other notable settlers such as Joseph Solomon, Joseph Raleigh and Hugh Glass.³ In the 1847 directory of Port Phillip residents he was listed as residing at Tea Tree Creek,⁴ parish of Truganina, county of Bourke, but he was not listed in the 1849 squatters' directory of the Port Phillip district.

In the 1850s Francis Anderson occupied several hundred acres between Tea Tree Creek and Skeleton Creek.⁵ He must have had a home there because he employed fifteen-year-old Mary Peacock,⁶ one of the Irish famine orphan girls who were shipped to Australia at the end of 1849; she was employed at an annual pay of £6 and may have worked as a milkmaid or domestic. Anderson was still in occupation there in the 1860s when he advertised that he was laying down poison baits as a deterrent against 'stray' dogs and that all dogs found trespassing would be destroyed – it was probably a problem of hunters and their dogs frequenting the district and causing mischief for the farmers. The Tea

Tree Creek station was used to raise cattle but in 1864 Anderson may have been withdrawing from this line as there was a sale of:

*"80 first-class well-bred cows heifers, comprising 36 cows in full milk, just newly calved, 45 cows and heifers in calf, the majority of them far advanced and some of them quite close to calving, 2 first-class pure Durham bulls (pedigree given), 25 young calves (very fat), 20 pigs, various ages, 20 horses, mixed, broken and unbroken, 100 milk dishes, nearly new, 1 large churn, and a great variety of other utensils, spring-cart, plough, hay-wagon and various other implements. Note - These cattle were all bred on the station of Mr. Anderson; are very well bred, being got by pure Durham bulls. Have been all hand-reared, and the cows have been always milked by females, and without the calves, and scarcely any of them are over five years old."*⁷

Anderson had hundreds of acres along the Kororoit Creek and his property in Braybrook was known as Glengala in the area later known as Glengala Estate in Sunshine West; it was south of Ballarat Road near the farms of Thomas Derham and George Mullenger.⁸ Glengala Road runs from Fitzgerald Road in Ardeer to Anderson Road in Sunshine, after which it becomes Durham Road. All three pioneers after whom the roads are named were involved with Braybrook shire council and put in many years of effort on behalf of their constituents.

Anderson was an inaugural member of the Braybrook Roads Board when it was established in 1860.⁹ He obviously took his fiduciary responsibilities seriously and at an early stage took a stand against waste and mismanagement:

"In the Melbourne County Court, yesterday, Edwin Brown, civil engineer, Boroondara, sued Francis Brown, the chairman of the Braybrook District Road Board, and Francis Anderson, another member of the board, to recover £16 13s. 4d., for wrongful dismissal from his office as engineer to the board. During the hearing of the case, it transpired that some members of the present Braybrook board, who were also members of the late board, had endeavoured to institute a more economical system in connexion with the management of the business of the board. ... Amongst other things, the majority of the late board had voted £159 as compensation for expenses incurred in connexion with an action brought against the board, in the County Court, by a contractor named Powell. ... A son of a gentleman named Adamson, a late member of the board, had also obtained a large number of contracts under the board, at prices which were thought

¹ Gary Vines *Pastoral Properties*

² Argus 26 June 1846 p2

³ Argus 26 June 1846 p2

⁴ This is an early district name for the Kororoit Creek that originates north of Sunbury and flows through the west of St Albans, Deer Park and Sunshine. Skeleton Creek is a shorter waterway to the west.

⁵ Argus 15 May 1858 p6

⁶ <http://www.familytreecircles.com/famine-orphan-girls-ships-to-australia-from-ireland-37811.html>

⁷ Argus 18 October 1864 p3

⁸ Prue McGoldrick p72

⁹ Edith Popp p34

*to be at variance with economy. The advocates of economy, however, scorned to have been defeated at the late board; but upon the new board coming into office they were more successful, and got a resolution passed which had the effect of dismissing Mr. Edwin Brown, the engineer ... in consequence of a suspicion that Mr. Brown was partly to blame for some disputes which had arisen between the board and one of the contractors, and which terminated to the disadvantage of the board. ... The judge, Mr. R W Pohlman, expressed an opinion that, while the chairman of the board was justified in viewing with suspicion the transactions out of which Mr. Brown's dismissal had arisen, there was no proof of any blame attaching to that gentleman; and he therefore gave a verdict for the plaintiff for the full amount, with costs."*¹

This striving for probity may not have been as universally applied as it might have been, because it has also been stated that Anderson:

*"... used his position on the Roads Board to obtain the closure of several public roads through his property."*²

Francis Anderson's involvement with the Braybrook Board continued during the 1860s but his name is not mentioned in the 1870s as a councillor when the district was promulgated as a Shire, so he either did not stand for re-election or was defeated, though he might have simply moved out of the immediate area.

In 1872 Anderson was working with the Melbourne Meat Preserving Company by agisting their cattle and sheep on his Derrimut farm³ and this continued for some years. He may have left Braybrook for a while, as in 1874 neither he nor his son Thomas are listed as Braybrook ratepayers, though Francis is listed again in the 1880 shire roll. In 1879 he had offered the property for lease:

*"It consists of 4,100 acres or thereabouts, divided into seven or eight stonewall fenced paddocks, watered by the Kororoit Creek, and furnished with sheep drafting yards, a good house, and other improvements. The land naturally is the most sweetly grassed country in Australia, and has been highly enriched of late years by the immense number of sheep passed through the paddocks by the above company with their thickly grassed rich soil, their closeness to Melbourne and the market yards, these paddocks are admirably adapted for running stud stock, or as material with which an active dealer might make a fortune."*⁴

¹ Argus 23 October 1862 p4

² Gary Vines

³ Bacchus Marsh Express 10 August 1872 p3

⁴ Argus 25 August 1879 p2

Between 1880 and 1888 the Glengala property was being farmed by Frederick Lewis Von Stieglitz⁵ who erected more fencing and ran cattle and milch cows. What happened with Francis Anderson is not known. In September 1888 Stieglitz held a clearing auction of equipment, stock, furniture and paraphernalia because his lease had expired.⁶ Anderson then sold the property in about 1892.⁷

The Anderson family is another of the Port Phillip pioneering families about whom there is very little personal information reported in local newspapers, which is surprising if they were major landholders in the district. Gary Vines in his book *Pastoral Properties* indicates that Francis Anderson had a wife – whose name is not stated – and a son named Thomas, which supports comments that they settled at Tea Tree Creek because there is a reference to an F. and T. Anderson from that area.⁸ Though several Thomas Andersons are noted in the references, none so far has been linked directly to Francis of the Glengala property, at least not by this author.

Francis is said to have died in the 1890s and his wife in the 1900s. The closest reference that I can find is a Francis Anderson who died in 1884 in Richmond, and his wife Isabella Gass who died in Richmond in 1901, but they do not appear to have had any children (or none that have been traced so far) so it is not possible to give a clear picture of what happened to the family after leaving Glengala. There were other Andersons living in Keilor in the late 1800s and some new settlers in St Albans from the 1900s, but these do not seem to be related.

For such early and apparently quite successful pioneers, Francis Anderson and his family have left very small media footprints. #

Reference:

Gary Vines *Pastoral Properties: Grazing on the Keilor-Werribee Plains*; Melbourne's Living Museum of the West Inc, 1993.

⁵ Footscray Independent 29 September 1888 p2. The Stieglitz brothers arrived in 1836. Frederick Von Stieglitz (1837-1913) was born in Avoca, Tasmania, married Katherine Langhorne (1852-1942) at Geelong in 1875 before moving to Gippsland and then Derrimut/Glengala by 1880. He bought some land in St Albans in the 1880s.

⁶ Footscray Independent 29 September 1888 p2

⁷ Gary Vines

⁸ Argus 18 November 1862 p6. In this court case John Williams was charged with uttering a forged cheque in the Anderson name. He was found guilty and sentenced to four years hard labour on the roads, cumulative to his other sentences.

ARBUTHNOT, George Snr. and Mary

There were two men named George Arbuthnot who were pioneers in the district. The elder George Arbuthnot (1833-1871) came to Keilor in 1854 from County Down in Northern Ireland. The younger George Arbuthnot (1872-1943) was the elder's nephew and came to Deer Park in 1877 from Doon in northeast Victoria. The younger George's father was James Arbuthnot, brother of the older George. James had left Keilor about 1868 and went to Doon looking for gold.

The elder George applied for selection on the Keilor Common through the Closer Settlement Scheme in 1868 but did not get it. He was the son of William Arbuthnot (1800-1855) and Elizabeth "Eliza" Ann Simpson (1809-1877), who, with their children Nancy, George, James, Charlotte, Isabella, Elizabeth, Joseph, and Alexander, had migrated to Australia, arriving at Port Adelaide on 13 October 1853. The family lived at Hobsons Place, Adelaide, until 1855,¹ but in the meantime William Arbuthnot and his son George came to Keilor to look for accommodation. William went back to collect the family but died in Adelaide on 28 October 1855.²

William Arbuthnot and Elizabeth Simpson had raised a large family:

- Mark Berry was born on 2 October 1828. He emigrated to Port Phillip in 1858 as an unassisted passenger and died on 29 June 1860.
- Anne "Nancy" was born 9 March 1831. She married Richard Dargan in Collingwood on 15 April 1858. He was also born in County Down Ireland in 1830, and became a miner and teamster who died in Keilor in 1867 after being run over by a dray. They had five children. After Richard died Nancy joined her family in Keilor and became the Post Mistress at the village. She died on 18 September 1924 at Brighton.
- George was born in 1833 and married Mary Normile c.1859. He was working as a herdsman in Keilor 1858-68, died 9 June 1871 and was buried at Keilor. Mary died in March 1903 and was buried at Keilor. They had a son named William (1862-1896).
- James, born 1835, died 23 February 1888 at Doon Creek. Worked as a herdsman in Keilor 1858-68 and then as a gold miner at Doon. Married Elizabeth Cummins on 26

December 1863; she was born c.1843, and died 1 October 1917. They had twelve children. Their fifth child, George, born 19 February 1872, became a farmer and quarry worker at Deer Park.

- William junior, born 25 August 1837 and died in 1838.
- Sarah born in 1838, married Thomas Smith at Keilor in 1859. Died about April 1860.
- Isabella born c.1841, died 10 June 1868. Married George Riddell on 2 March 1864.
- Elizabeth "Eliza" born 1843, died before 4 December 1877.
- Martha born 1845.
- Charlotte born 1845; had one son, John, who worked for the railways at Sale.
- Joseph born 1848, died February 1902 at Bonnie Doon. Married his brother James's widow, Elizabeth née Cummins c.1893.
- William Henry born 1850, died 1855.
- Alexander "Sandy", born 1852. First immigrated to Fiji and then to Australia. Worked as labourer in Collingwood in 1877. Married Florence "Florrie" White in Fiji on 17 October 1881; she was the daughter of Samuel White, an architect of Melbourne.

George Arbuthnot (the uncle) came to Keilor in 1854, where he and his brother James were employed as herdsman for Owen Connor and Patrick Phelan on the property known as 'Spring Park', east of Keilor. Connor and Phelan were also partners as Melbourne merchants supplying goods to the goldfields at Castlemaine and up to the Upper Goulburn.

George married Mary Normile³ in 1859. They became farmers and publicans and remained in the district for the rest of their lives. He applied for a publican's licence for the North Pole Hotel in Keilor in June 1864.⁴ The property owner was Patrick Phelan, for whom some of the Arbuthnot family members had been working on the Spring Park farm.

In 1868 George applied for selection on the Keilor Common through the Closer Settlement Scheme but did not get it. He died on 15 June 1871 at the age of 38 years and was buried at Keilor. In 1873 "Mrs George Arbuthnot" was listed as a ratepayer on the old Keilor-Braybrook Common with 80 acres on the Kororoit Creek, south of Boundary Road, between the allotments of David Newell and James Bibby. #

¹ www.kittybrewster.com/members/table_44.htm

² Keilor Pioneers p236

³ Also spelt 'Normoile' and 'Normoyle'.

⁴ Argus 18 June 1864 p3

ARBUTHNOT, George Jnr. and Mary

George Arbuthnot and Mary Smith were the Australian-born children of pioneer families who settled in the Deer Park district during the 1880s and 1890s.

George Arbuthnot was born on 19 February 1872 and came to Deer Park in 1877 when he was five years old. Mary "Molly" Ann Smith was born about 1884 at Deep Creek, Melton, and came to Deer Park in 1888 at the age of four years. George and Mary married on 7 June 1902, and they had six children:

- Eliza "Lizzie" Ellen, born 16 April 1903; married William Schultz. They had three children who died at birth. Eliza died in 1988 at Drouin, aged 84 years.
- Ann "Annie" Isabelle, born 7 June 1905, married James Pyers (d.1948) and lived in Brooklyn. They had one son.
- Alice Maud, born in Deer Park 24 June 1907, died Bunyip, 26 December 1981. Married in Footscray 4 April 1931 to Walter Dickson Russell (born 10 July 1906, Footscray, died 7 January 1968, Longwarry). They had two sons.
- Joseph William, born 7 August 1909 and died 8 February 1974 at Colac. Married Mary "Molly" Gladys Pyers (born c.1916, died 21 April 1971), daughter of James Pyers. They had a son and daughter.
- Albert died at birth.
- Mary died at birth.

George's father was James Arbuthnot (1836-1888) and his mother was Elizabeth Ellen Cummins (1843-1917). James had emigrated from Ireland with his parents and siblings and settled in Keilor in 1855, where he worked as a farm worker and herdsman.¹ James moved to the goldmining township of Doon (later known as Bonnie Doon) where George was born in 1872. James died on 23 February 1888 at Doon, so it is likely that the family moved to Deer Park after his death; they became farmers and long-term residents of the district.

It is interesting that the social mores of the time regarding permissible activities on "the Sabbath" were sometimes enforced through the courts. In May 1894 three young men, named John O'Shannassy, Thomas Riddell, and William Arbuthnot, all residents of Deer Park, were charged at the Footscray Court with carrying firearms on Sunday, even though they were not loaded at the time they were apprehended.

¹ Refer to article re George Snr. and Mary Arbuthnot.

They pleaded ignorance of the law and stated that they were going fishing, but took the guns as rabbits were plentiful and farmers wanted them destroyed. A fine of 40 shillings or seven days' imprisonment was imposed on each:

*"... to reflect on the immorality of whistling or shooting on the Lord's day. The chairman ... remarked that the law was an iniquitous one and should be repealed."*²

By 1901 George Arbuthnot is listed on the Braybrook ratepayer's roll as occupying land in the Northern Riding at Maribyrnong and Deer Park. He became a cartage contractor and competed for road making and pan service tenders against the likes of William Opie, Patrick O'Shannassy and William Arbuthnot. In the early days he did a lot of contract road-making and stone walling. Later he worked in Albion quarries for about 20 years.³

George and Mary appear to have been model citizens in that there are no complaints about their family reported through local papers. The only reported complaint made by George (and a couple of other residents) was in a general way that *"the pound seemed to be conducted by other people than the one appointed pound keeper, and that the pound was not administered as they thought it should be."*⁴

The issue was discussed at council but the complaints were too vague and the complainants were informed that council would only investigate specific complaints.

Mary Arbuthnot was of a quiet, unassuming nature, and was greatly attached to her home and family. She was a keen worker in all matters incidental to the welfare of the local Church of England and assisted with bazaars and functions as a way of raising funds. She would organise very successful entertainments, such as euchre and dance parties at her home, which were brilliant successes from both a financial and social point of view.⁵

Mary "Molly" Ann Arbuthnot née Smith died at Deer Park 20 August 1939;⁶ she was aged 62 years and had been living at Deer Park for 58 years. George Arbuthnot died at the Austin Hospital on 10 February 1943; he was aged 72 and had been living at Deer Park for 68 years. They are both buried at the Truganina Cemetery. #

² Footscray Independent 12 May 1894

³ Sunshine Advocate 12 February 1943

⁴ Footscray Independent 19 January 1907

⁵ Sunshine Advocate 27 November 1926

⁶ Sunshine Advocate 1 September 1939



George and Mary Arbuthnot



Gravestone for James Arbuthnot

BALL, Joseph and Elizabeth

Joseph and Elizabeth Ball lived in Keilor for about 46 years. Joseph was one of the earliest selectors on the Keilor Common, but not at the initial ballot in 1868. He applied for allotment 11 that had been forfeited by Thomas Hart and which was granted to Ball in April 1870.¹

Joseph Ball was listed as a farmer in Keilor's postal directory for 1868 but he was already active in the district a decade earlier. He was born in Oxfordshire, England, in 1824, and wed Elizabeth Brooks who was born in 1823. They arrived in Port Phillip in 1850 and joined thousands of others trying their luck on the goldfields. By 1856 they had returned to Melbourne and Ball established his business as a butcher in Keilor. He applied for and was granted a butchering license in 1856 and he and Elizabeth operated a small farm along Green Gully where they kept and slaughtered pigs and sold the meat from a small store in the village.²

Joseph would buy pigs in Melbourne and herd them back to his farm at Keilor, because an early reference to his business is his advertisement about two homeless white pigs:

*"Followed a drove of pigs from North Melbourne, on Monday, the 19th inst., two white pigs, about 60 lbs. weight each. The owner can have the same by paying expenses, and applying to Mr. J. Ball, butcher Keilor."*³

The business soon experienced financial problems, as in September 1858 Ball came before the insolvency court: his debts were £444 with assets of £184, leaving a deficiency of £260. The causes of insolvency were given as "an adverse verdict in the Supreme Court and pressure of a creditor."⁴

The farm obviously survived. They grew French beans and hay that Joseph would cart to Melbourne for sale. Theirs was a small farm but they leased some extra land and hired help at the busy times with farm chores; e.g. they had help with the milking. They had a hut where the farm workers would sleep and Elizabeth's work included cooking meals for the men who would come to the house for breakfast and dinner, and she would give them a billy and some food to take for lunch on the job. The farming chores might continue for several weeks or a few months.

¹ Argus 4 April 1870

² Keilor Pioneers p237

³ Argus 22 May 1856

⁴ Argus 16 September 1858

Joseph Ball was one of the local farmers involved in establishing the Keilor Common. An application for this was made in 1861. The Common was created by farmers who decided to appropriate Crown land within five miles of Keilor village and Joseph had 300 acres of which 30 acres was cultivated. Their strategy obviously worked because the Keilor Common was officially gazetted in July 1861 and the Braybrook Common was also established later that year.¹

Joseph and Elizabeth survived their earlier financial ordeal, though it was not their most infamous experience of the legal system in the colony, because in local history they will always be associated with the Green Gully Murder of 1867 – the victim and the alleged offender were working for them in bundling hay at the time.²

“A barbarous murder was committed at Keilor, between Monday the 23rd and Wednesday the 25th instant, the victim being an old labouring man, named John Fairweather, in the employment of a farmer near Keilor, and formerly in the service of Mr. Joseph Ball, of that place. The deceased went out on Monday afternoon, with a fellow-labourer, named Bernard Cunningham, and was not seen after five o'clock on that afternoon till the morning of Christmas Day, when his body was found in the Salt Creek, near the township. It was then found that a very brutal murder had been perpetrated, the skull having been fractured by a blow on the fore-head, and there being at least a dozen cuts over the head and face, and one on the right hand. Suspicion pointed to Cunningham, who was arrested by Senior-constable Flower, and evidence has already been obtained which seems to connect him with the crime - the only object of which appears to have been the possession of whatever little property the deceased may have had in his pockets.”³

Joseph Ball died on the 8th July 1901 at his residence in Keilor, aged 78 years. He had been a resident of Keilor for 46 years, having arrived as a young man in the mid 1850s.

Elizabeth Ball died on 16 March 1912, aged 85 years. She had no children. #

References:

Details of the murder case are reported in *Keilor Pioneers: Dead Men Do Tell Tales*, by Angela Evans and the Keilor Pioneer Research Collective; St Albans History Society, 1994. Also refer to articles in *The Argus* editions for 28 December 1867 and March 1868.

¹ Keilor Pioneers p86

² Keilor Pioneers p23

³ Argus 28 December 1867

BLACKWOOD, Alexander and Mary

Alexander Blackwood selected block 11 at the Closer Settlement ballot in 1868, which was also selected by Joseph Ball – it was along Sunshine Avenue, halfway between Taylors and Boundary roads, facing what is now known as Kealba. Joseph Ball obtained title to the land in September 1876, so he was the luckier selector.

Alexander Blackwood was born in 1822 at Craigallian, Scotland, son of William Blackwood and Helen Adam. Mary Hunter was born on 3 February 1826 at Renfrew, Renfrewshire, Scotland, daughter of James Hunter and Elizabeth Chalmers. The two married on 16 September 1852 at Neilston, Renfrew, Scotland, and also at Paisley (Abbey) on 16 September 1852. They sailed from Greenock in September 1852 in the ship Typhon, the first iron-masted vessel built, and reached Victoria early in 1853, after having been wrecked in the Bay of Biscay and spending ten weeks in Lisbon while the vessel was repaired. They spent some time in Keilor but then moved further out and were residents of Melton and Bacchus Marsh for 35 years.⁴

Alexander Blackwood was amongst the first residents on the west side of Toolern Creek. He came from the junction of the Castlemaine and Keilor roads, and started business as a blacksmith behind the Shire hall. His dwelling house was built near the Shire hall and was used as a vaccination point for children during the 1860s. He bought land on the opposite side of the road next to Augustus Shebler's property where he worked quite successfully as a blacksmith and general store merchant for many years.⁵

He ended up acquiring a good deal of land around the district, one of the properties being a farm of 195 acres known as 'Marystowe' on the road from Melton to Gisborne with a frontage to Toolern Creek. For much of the time it was leased out. Blackwood was an active man in public affairs and held a number of positions, including being President of the Melton Mutual Improvement Society; they put on free entertainment such as essay readings and recitations as well as musical selections and songs – Blackwood would contribute a song or two and encouraged his children to participate. The local paper was supportive:

“... the aims and objects of the Society deserve encouragement. Should they favour the public with a second entertainment an opportunity will then be afforded of gaining some idea of the

⁴ Bacchus Marsh Express 12 May 1906

⁵ Bacchus Marsh Express 11 November 1905

*improvement gained in essay writing, reading, speaking, and especially the latter, for we very frequently find people possessing common sense and a fair share of language fairly nonplussed when called upon to say a few words at local or other meetings, which defect could be easily overcome by a little attention being given to this subject in our local society in drawing out those gifted in that direction to express their views in public, coolly and clearly. It is said 'practice makes perfect' and I therefore throw out the hint to the promoters of the Society to encourage as much as possible the art of speaking in public."*¹

Blackwood and Augustus Shebler were instrumental in raising funds to build the combined church and school in the area. In recognition of his work the Melton congregation appointed Blackwood as trustee of the Presbyterian church:

*"There was no shaking him off. If you could not give money Mr. Blackwood would take a cow, a calf, pig, or firkin of butter, so long as money could be raised."*²

Mary Hunter and Alexander Blackwood had four sons and six daughters:

- Elizabeth Adam 1853-1942
- William 1855- 1940
- Christina 1856-1921
- Helen Chalmers 1859-1938
- Mary 1860-1935
- James Alexander 1862-1940
- John 1864-1946
- Agnes Ann 1866-1942
- Lillias McKenzie 1868-1951
- Robert Pollock 1870-1946

Alexander Blackwood died at his Malvern home in August 1901 at the age of 79 years, a colonist of 49 years;³ he was buried at Melton:

*"... another very fine specimen of the best class of imported men of the early days. And he was 'the village blacksmith' of Longfellow's description, to the life. He used to emerge every morning from his smithy and store ... to meet the coaches as they passed to and fro, and was ever a 'smiling morn' to all who saw his cheerfulness."*⁴

Mary Blackwood née Hunter died on 8 May 1906 at the age of 80 years at her daughter's home in Malvern, and was buried at Melton.⁵

The Blackwoods missed out on their St Albans selection and settled elsewhere; they did not return to the neighbourhood. #

BROWN, Thomas and Bridget

Thomas and Bridget Brown were residents of Keilor village but they also had 20 acres of land between Fox's lane and Three Chain road (Sunshine Ave) being block 11 in the old town common after it was divided up in 1879.

Thomas Brown was born in Sweden in 1831, the son of Charles Brown and Mary Kilman. Thomas came to Australia in the 1850s as part of a ship's crew and family legend is that he jumped ship when they docked in Melbourne.

Thomas married Bridget Fox at St Augustine's Catholic Church in Keilor in 1858. She was born in 1835 in Queens County, Ireland, the daughter of Christopher Fox and Margaret Byrne/Bourne – Bridget must have been a sister of Michael Fox of Keilor, as their parents' details are the same. Thomas and Bridget settled in Flora Street. Their children included:⁶

- Thomas 1859-1859
- John 1861-
- Charles 1863-
- Margaret 1864-1947
- Mary 1865-
- Michael 1867-1871
- Thomas 1869-1870
- Robert 1872-
- Alice 1874-1943
- William 1876-1964
- Kate 1879-
- Martin Joseph 1881-1964

Brown was a carpenter by trade and his family showed the versatility of their talents:

*"Four rooms were built first: as the family grew it was added to by a further 4 roomed house that was built on to the original after being shifted from elsewhere. The Flora Street frontage eventually had, as well as the house, a bootmaker's shop, blacksmith shop and stables, also a dairy and milking shed."*⁷

The daughters became fine seamstresses. The sons took up milking cows, bootmaking, road constructing and shearing; they developed an orchard and vegetable gardens at Arundel.

Thomas Brown died on 1 September 1914 at the age of 84 and was buried at Keilor. Bridget Fox died in 1918 at the age of 85. #

Reference: Angela Evans and the Keilor Pioneer Research Collective, *Keilor Pioneers: Dead Men Do Tell Tales*, published by the St Albans History Society, 1994.

¹ Bacchus Marsh Express 31 October 1885

² Bacchus Marsh Express 9 September 1905

³ Bacchus Marsh Express 3 August 1901

⁴ Bacchus Marsh Express 2 September 1905

⁵ Bacchus Marsh Express 12 May 1906

⁶ www.mundia.com/au/Person/23963315/12717086269

⁷ Keilor Pioneers

BURNS, John and Mary

John Burns settled in the Keilor district about 1859 when he became a dairy farmer on the Keilor Plains. In 1869 he became more directly involved with St Albans through a couple of farming allotments (33 and 35) along Boundary Road (Main Road West) west of Station Road.

It is not known when John Burns came to Victoria – his is not an uncommon name and thus it is difficult to differentiate individuals. There were at least two convicts by name of John Burns in Tasmania who received their tickets of leave in 1851 and 1852. There was also a John Burns as a passenger on the ship 'Janet Mitchell' who arrived at Port Phillip in January 1853.¹ There are also newspaper references to a John Burns in the Flemington area during 1855 and at North Melbourne in 1856, but there is no discovered direct link with the John from St Albans.

The John Burns who settled in Keilor and Braybrook was said to be the son of Patrick and Ann or Nancy Burns, of Sligo, Ireland. Patrick Burns is supposed to have died at Sligo about 1847 and Ann/Nancy about 1861, leaving several sons and daughters. John's sister, Mary, was living in Melbourne during 1870s as she had visited John during that time. He also had some nephews to whom he referred to in his will. Apart from these few items there is little information available about his family of origin.

The earliest traceable fact about the local John Burns in Melbourne is that he married Mary (whose maiden name is not stated) in July 1857 and that he "got some £600 with her."² Perhaps it was Mary's dowry that helped them become established as farmers on the Keilor Plains?

John and his son Patrick Henry Burns were living in the Keilor district in 1859, because in August they were charged at the Keilor Court for illegally rescuing cattle³ which suggests that they owned the cattle that were in the process of being impounded. Patrick was also charged with perjury in falsely laying assault charges against one John MacMiniman.⁴

¹ Argus 18 January 1853 p5

² Argus 17 July 1880 p10

³ <http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~pobjoyoneill/Keilor/keilcourt.html>

⁴ Argus 28 October 1859 p4. An affray took place in the Eldorado Hotel, Keilor, on 9 August 1859. Assault charges were reported to the police but witnesses at court disproved that any blow had been struck.

Patrick Henry Burns died in January 1862 at the age of 22 years and was buried at the Melbourne general cemetery. The death certificate indicates that he was born about 1840 in Sligo and his parents are listed as John and Mary Burns, so the Mary that John Burns married in 1857 may not have been the mother.

In August 1861 Burns advertised the sale of his 'Woolshed Dairy' on the Keilor Plains near McMahon's Hotel and the Keilor Railway Station, and adjoining the Rockbank Station run.⁵ His stated reason for selling was that he was leaving for Queensland. The sale must not have taken place because he put it up for sale again in April 1863, this time because he was retiring from business for domestic reasons.⁶ The sale was for the 'Lease of Farm' and first class dairy and other stock, including:

"80 splendid young cows, in full milk, very quiet 70 springers, first or second calf, many very fat; 40 two-year-old heifers, in calf; 80 heifer calves; 20 fat steers, very quiet; 2 first-class short-horned bulls, Royal Charlie and Young Buck; 8 capital saddle and harness horses; mares, with foal, and in foal; 1 first-rate spring-cart ... 1 tip-dray; 2 saddles and bridles; 1 set plated harness; 10 fat pigs; several pet lambs. The dairy utensils comprise 200 milk dishes; 20 butter tubs, 140lb. each; 2 butter boxes; 2 churns; several Birkett's coolers. Also, lots of fowls, ducks, geese, turkeys, &c.

*"After which, the whole of the household furniture, comprising tables, chairs, beds, bedding, medicine chests, complete, large boilers, carpenters' tools, grind-stone, and a variety of sundries. Also, unexpired lease of farm of 200 acres, not to be surpassed for dairy purposes, and adjoining a farmers' common of 6,000 acres. 10,000 of good pasture land, situated in Tasmania."*⁷

This time he was selling everything and it seems that he was successful in getting a good price. However, and perhaps indicative of things to come, it was later concluded that the claim to have 10,000 acres in Tasmania was untrue.⁸

Some time after the sale of the farm, the managers of the Keilor Road Board charged John Burns with refusing to pay the rates. His defence was that at the time the list of rate-payers was made out he was in the Braybrook district. As this was not clearly proved the Bench awarded the amount claimed.⁹

In March 1864 a rather bizarre occurrence was

⁵ Argus 3 August 1861 p2

⁶ Argus 2 April 1863 p3

⁷ Argus 2 April 1863 p3

⁸ Argus 17 July 1880 p10

⁹ Argus 22 January 1864

reported in the main daily newspaper:

*"A man named John Burns, a dairy-farmer at Keilor, came to town a few days ago with his wife, having suddenly sold off all his property. After spending a day or two in town, the disappearance of the husband excited the suspicion of the wife, the more so as he had about £2,000 in his possession. She made inquiries as to the movements of her husband, the result of which was the procuring a warrant for his arrest on the charge of desertion. He was arrested by the detectives yesterday, on board the Royal Standard, and brought back to town. He will be brought before the City Court."*¹

It is not known what happened to John and Mary in the five years after this episode as there is no mention of them in the available newspaper reports during this time.

The earliest-found connection of John Burns with St Albans is from December 1869, being an application for transfer of land under the Closer Settlement scheme from W. W. Sirrett to John Burns, for lot 33 at Maribyrnong. This was refused, as no improvements had been made on the land,² but the appeal of the decision appears to have been successful. Lot 33 was initially granted to James Harrick; it was next to the land where Dale's piggery was later established. Burns was also occupying allotment 35, which had been granted to John Delahunty.³ It is the land on the north-west corner of Station Road and Main Road West that was later farmed by the Clements family, part of which is now the Clements Reserve.

Once again it seems that Burns was keen to sell. In 1871 he decided to sell his farm that was on Kororoit Creek, near McMahon's Hotel, including the whole of his well-bred dairy herd, and sundries, comprising cows, with calves at foot, springers, dry cows, steers, a Hereford bull by Jerry out of Oestus, an Alderney bull bred from Edward Wilson's imported stock, also 6 horses, spring-cart and harness, 33 acres growing oats, and 60 acres grass.⁴

In 1873 Burns nominated for the Braybrook School Advisory Board against candidates Mark Paine, James Ebenezer Wilmore, James Fraser, John Ellis, Alfred Newman, and John Long. Burns was elected to the Board, as were Messrs. Paine, Wilmore, Fraser, and Ellis.

In August 1875 Burns became a Braybrook Shire councillor for the Northern Riding when

he replaced Mr. Henry who had declined to seek re-election.⁵ However, municipal governance was clearly not Burns' forte as his seat was declared vacant in July 1876 because of non-attendance.⁶ Cr. Powell later recounted that on one occasion he took Burns several times out from the council as having something important to say (though Powell objected that they did not leave a quorum), and Burns had nothing to say after all.

In November 1875 Burns took over the lease for the Kororoit Creek Hotel, which had been run by Thomas McMahon and Mary Brown.⁷ The hotel was described as being a bluestone, two-storey building containing nine rooms, with the necessary outbuildings and about five acres of land, situated about nine miles from Melbourne.⁸ The transfer of the publican's licence of the Kororoit Creek Hotel was made from Brown to Burns in September 1875.⁹

In October 1875 Burns decided to sell his 'New Park Estate'. The property was 400 acres subdivided into five paddocks and included:

*"A most comfortable six-roomed cottage, with veranda front and rear, stable, corn sheds, fowl house, and piggeries are built on the farm. There is also a fine fruit, flower, and vegetable garden, and all the necessary improvements for a first-class farm. It is within seven miles of the Melbourne Market yards and adjoining Mr. W. J. Clarke's Rockbank Station, and the properties of Mr. Wm. Taylor and Mr. Rich'd. Morton. Also, 100 head of cattle, comprising cows in full profit and springing, heifers, steers, and calves, 10 head of horses, suitable for farming work."*¹⁰

On 23 November 1875, Burns suffered a fit of epilepsy and was taken to Melbourne Hospital. He sold the lease to the hotel in February 1876 and went to live at Footscray. He must have been experiencing more severe health problems because on 20 March 1876 he was admitted into the Kew Lunatic Asylum under a medical certificate and remained there until his death on 10 March 1880.

The subsequent probate court hearings revealed some fairly odd behaviour. It transpired that when he took over the running of the hotel Burns became a "great drunkard." James Smith stated that Burns would do many extra-

¹ Argus 22 March 1864

² Argus 16 December 1869 p7

³ Argus 3 November 1868

⁴ Argus 20 November 1871

⁵ Bacchus Marsh Express 7 August 1875 p2

⁶ Bacchus Marsh Express 8 July 1876

⁷ Thomas McMahon established to hotel in 1865 but died in 1870. His widow, Mary McMahon, then ran the hotel. She later married James Brown.

⁸ Argus 17 August 1875

⁹ Bacchus Marsh Express 18 Sep 1875

¹⁰ Argus 23 October 1875

ordinary things, such as setting out at night to walk the 12 miles to Melbourne. He used to conceal jars of spirits underground outside his house, and bring Smith and others to drink there with him. He turned his wife out of the house at night. Other witnesses testified of his oddities for years, his being called "Cranky Burns" and that his conduct in bidding at sales was especially odd.

Justice Molesworth believed that at times it was hard to distinguish between drunkenness and madness in Burns' behaviour but that he had behaved in ways that went beyond the eccentricity of drunkenness:

*"I have to deal with the case of a man who had certainly acted as a madman or idiot in several instances shortly before he made his will, but had carried on the ordinary business of his life before and after it, so as to cause no doubt of his sanity in those with whom he dealt."*¹

Mary Burns appears to have been stoic with regard to her husband's behaviour, but Justice Molesworth's summation in the Equity Court was to the point:

*"As to his relations with his wife Mary, he married her July, 1857, and got some £600 with her. He afterwards ill-treated her, and was about leaving her destitute in Victoria, and was stopped by legal proceedings, and forced to make a provision for her. He afterwards, with some liberality, gave her £500, but got most of it back. Some of it she had invested as hers. He invited her to return to him, and she did, and remained with him to his lunacy, being sometimes beaten and very ill-used by him."*²

Justice Molesworth's judgment was that Burns was not of sound mind at the time of the execution of the will and refused probate.³

Burns' real estate had been valued at £946, his personal estate at £548, and the debts at £240, making his clear property worth over £1,200. Mary Burns, who was now the executor of the estate, decided to sell the remaining 125 acres situated near the township of Braybrook.⁴

Mary Burns' life in the district is so barely mentioned in the records that we do not even know her maiden name. We do know that at the time of her husband's death she was living at Bosisto Street in Richmond. #

¹ Argus 17 July 1880 p10

² Argus 17 July 1880 p10

³ Argus 3 July 1880

⁴ Argus 30 July 1880

BURNSIDE, James and Rachel

James Burnside was one of the early selectors in St Albans, having taken over block 32 that had at first been allotted to James Christie; that was the land along the Kororoit Creek where Dale's Piggery was later located.⁵

James was born in 1831 and in 1853 he wed Rachel Smillie (aka Smellie), who was born in 1834. They migrated from Lanarkshire, Scotland, to Australia in 1854 on the *Earl of Eglinton*. At first they camped in a tent at Essendon and James's first job was trussing hay at Broadmeadows. They lived at Footscray until 1861⁶ but by 1865 they had "settled upon Mrs Scale's pre-emptive right of 196 acres at Keilor Plains."⁷ In 1871 they applied for a selection at Deer Park; this may have been the original Crown Allotment 5B Section 21, which was granted to J. Burnside in 1872; the property became known as Raploch Farm, which was probably named after the district in central Scotland. The family became dairying and hay growing farmers who also achieved some early success with breeding horses, as in 1874 their draughthorse, 'Earl of Airly', won first prize at the National Agricultural Show in Melbourne.⁸

Not all the farming attempts were so successful. In 1879 Burnside leased some of his land and then his tenants left without paying the council rates, so Burnside was left to pay the arrears. Apart from rate problems, Burnside also wrote to council about a notice he had received from the Inspector of Nuisances:

*"... to keep his ducks, geese, and pigs off the water reserve, Derrimut. He denied having any pigs, and his geese might have strayed from his own water frontage. There were other geese on the ground beside his, and another nuisance which seemed to have been overlooked was cattle and horses standing about and in the water messing it tenfold more than a few geese; however, if he was to be singled out for geese wandering, the Council could say so and he would bow to the decision."*⁹

He doesn't appear to have stood for election to council though he was the correspondent for the School Board of Advice for some years.¹⁰

⁵ Burnside may have later acquired James Bibby's allotment 41 that was south of Boundary Road on Kororoit Creek between Isabella William's and Mary Arbutnot's blocks.

⁶ They may have been in Brighton in 1856.

www.mundia.com/au/Person/1141739/-1987228157

⁷ Edith Popp *Glimpses of Early Sunshine* p38

⁸ Argus 3 November 1874 p9

⁹ Bacchus Marsh Express 12 April 1879 p3

¹⁰ Edith Popp *Glimpses of Early Sunshine* p38

James Burnside became known as a grazier and took up sheep farming as one of his farming interests and his sons also took on this role, operating under the name Burnside and Sons. In 1886 they sold some of their land known as Derrimut Park to Alfred Padley's Cosmopolitan Land and Banking Company.¹ This estate was close to the state school, the post office, the Braybrook Shire Hall, the Hunt Club and both of the Kororoit hotels. Padley would later donate a block of this land to the Anglican Diocese so that a church could be built; two buildings were later located on the corner block in the first streets in Deer Park to be subdivided by Cosmopolitan.²

His farming business was successful enough for Burnside to consider investment in real estate and manufacturing. In January 1890 he was listed as one of the provisional directors of the Pickles' Melbourne and Suburban Carriage Company Limited.³ The company bought a factory site in Footscray and raised capital to establish a carriage manufacturing business. The managing director of the company was Mr George Pickles, who had been the general manager of G. F. Pickles and Sons, a well-established Melbourne firm. Unfortunately, the new venture was short lived as the company went into liquidation within the year.⁴ It was a time of financial turmoil that would lead to an economic crisis in the 1890s when many small investors and real estate speculators would lose their money.

Burnside had more success with buying some properties in Victoria Street, Footscray, though in 1896 he wrote to the council asking for a reduction in rates on some of these.⁵

In the mid 1890s the Burnsides were advertising "grazing accommodation for horses" with good grass and running water, for only two shillings per week.⁶ It is not known if anybody took up this offer. Access to water was always a problem on the Keilor Plains and during the 1890s Burnside tried pumping water using a windmill but ran afoul of regulations. The Braybrook Shire Council solicitor wrote to him in June 1896 to remove the pipe leading from his windmill to the water reserve at Derrimut. Burnside agreed

to comply with the request, but it was somewhat ruefully noted that:

*"It seems that, although the Council has control over the reserve, it has no control over the water, consequently neither has the owner of the windmill, without authority."*⁷

James and Rachel Burnside had seven sons and six daughters, though not all survived:

- William 1853-1853.
- Marion 1854-1933 married John Duncan in 1880; they settled in Neerim South in Gippsland.
- William 1857-1894.
- Margaret 1858-1875.
- Thomas 1858-1935 lived in Euroa South, Echuca, and died at Kyneton.
- Elizabeth 1861-1899 born at Footscray.
- Isabella 1863-1936 born at Footscray and died at Moonee Ponds.
- James 1865-1867 born and died at Kororoit.
- Rachel Ellen 1867-1929 married Allan Wallace Copley in 1893 in Bayswater, Perth; they lived in Claremont.
- Robert James Davidson 1869-1923 wed Mabel Alice Bloore in 1899 at Fremantle. Lived in Western Australia and died at Raploch Farm, Brookton, W.A.
- James 1871-1943 wed Margaret Robertson in 1910 and they became long term residents at Deer Park. Margaret's sister Mary and brother Hugh Robertson were living in St Albans in the 1930s.
- George 1873-1940 married Irenia Mary Jane Thompson in 1901 at Violet Town. They lived in Footscray South, where George died in 1940.
- Margaret Smellie 1875-1908 married John Hopkins in 1898 and died at Warragul in 1908.
- John Alexander 1878-1878.

James Burnside died on 11 August 1907 at his home 'Raploch' at Deer Park. He was aged 74 years and 11 months,⁸ a pioneer of 53 years.

Rachel Burnside née Smellie was born about 1833 in Dalserf, Lanarkshire, Scotland. She was the daughter of William Smellie (born about 1800) a weaver from Dalserf, Lanarkshire, and Marion Wallace (born about 1800). Rachel died at Moonee Ponds in 1929 at the age of 96, a pioneer of 75 years. #

¹ Blocks in the "Derrimut Park Extension" estate were advertised in November 1886 and could be bought for £1 deposit per lot.

² www.brimbank.vic.gov.au/files/381ec4bd-4aea-4196-b6f3-9f0500b56a86/

³ Footscray Independent 25 January 1890

⁴ Footscray Independent 20 December 1890 p2

⁵ Footscray Independent 11 April 1896 p3

⁶ Footscray Independent 22 December 1894

⁷ Bacchus Marsh Express 13 June 1896 p3

⁸ Argus 13 August 1907 p1



Four generations of the Smellie family



Ellen Abbott née McShane

BURNSIDE, James and Margaret

By the late 1890s there were two farmers by the name of James Burnside working in the district: they were father and son. James senior, the father, was born in 1831 and died on 11 August 1907 at the age of 76. James junior, the son, was born at Keilor in 1871, one of the thirteen children born to Rachel Burnside though three did not survive their infancy. James junior grew up in Deer Park before going to Western Australia where he worked for a number of years.¹ He must have returned to Deer Park before 1906 as there is a photo of him with the Duncan family in that year, so it might be reasonable to assume that James the son became involved in the family business during the late 1890s or early 1900s when he was in his twenties.

James Burnside junior married Miss Margaret Robertson in 1910 and they established themselves on the property 'Raploch' in Deer Park.

Like his father, James junior took up sheep farming. He established a shearing shed at Deer Park and made this available for other farmers to use during shearing season. The 1924 season had produced a record wool clip and that seems to have been an excellent promotion for his innovation:

*"Several prominent woolgrowers, including Messrs. J. Hesketh, R. Hopkins, J. Ross and others, had the whole of their flocks shorn and dipped at this shed, which is so conveniently situated on the main Ballarat road, and within one mile of the railway station. Mr. Burnside states that before next shearing season he intends to make additions to the plant, whereby a still larger number of sheep will be able to be successfully handled."*²

By 1925 James Burnside junior was in his mid fifties and was being referred to as "*the well-known pastoralist*" and occasionally seems to have lived up to this image of bucolic heritage. When his brother, George Burnside of Violet Town, was spending a few weeks holiday at Deer Park, it was an opportunity to explore one of the 'traditional' rural diversions:

*"Some good shooting is still to be obtained on the outskirts of the district, and on Easter Saturday, Messrs W. Burnside and Jock Guy of Sunshine, secured a nice bag of quail and four fine hares in a grass paddock between St. Albans and Deer Park."*³

¹ His brother, Robert James Burnside, went to Perth, so it's possible that James joined him there.

² Sunshine Advocate 6 December 1924

³ Sunshine Advocate 18 April 1925

James Burnside was also involved in traditional civic activities, as in 1925 he was elected as Vice-President of the Deer Park Progress Association, which had been started in 1919.¹ He was also involved with the church and assisted in their fund raising events which went beyond parochial interests, e.g. in 1928:

*“Mr. and Mrs. James Burnside gave a musical afternoon at their home, ‘Raploch’, Deer Park, on Saturday afternoon, in aid of the Church of England floral fete to be held in St. Albans, on Saturday, 26th inst. There were no fewer than 52 guests present, and the excellent program of vocal and instrumental music was thoroughly appreciated. Mrs. Cerutti’s pianoforte selections contributed greatly to the success of the function.”*²

Rachel Burnside née Robertson died on 21 December 1929 at the age of 96 and was buried with her late husband at Footscray; she was a colonist of 74 years. A more unexpected family tragedy occurred in July 1930, when Margaret Burnside’s brother, Hugh Robertson, committed suicide in the garage of his home in Victoria Street, St Albans. Mary Robertson, his and Margaret’s sister who found the body, was so distressed that she fled to Deer Park to report the discovery to James, her brother-in-law.³

By 1932 Burnside was in his sixties and his shearing shed in Deer Park was still operating, but this year it was through another operator, Mr J C Chisler of Werribee, who had leased it and was advertising that he was *“putting in extra machines, and is prepared to undertake contracts for shearing, large or small.”*⁴

In 1937 under the instructions of the Equity Trustees Company, several properties of the late James Burnside were auctioned off, revealing some of his earlier investments. There were four adjoining properties in Victoria Street, Footscray, on the corner of Buckley Street, comprising a brick shop and three single-front brick houses, bringing in a total rental of £108/10/ per annum. There were two other properties in Railway Street, Altona, being described as fine building sites handy to the state school.⁵ It is not known why it had taken so long to finalise the deceased’s estate.

On 15 August 1941, Margaret Burnside née Robertson died peacefully in her sleep. She was the loving mother of Robert, Jenny (Mrs

Frederick Burges Lewis), Annie (Mrs Ronald Joseph Govett) and Margaret.⁶

Eighteen months later, in 1943, James Burnside also passed away at Deer Park:

*“The district has lost one of its most respected citizens. Born in ‘Raploch’ 71 years ago, he went to West Australia, and worked there for a number of years. Returning later, he married and settled down to the pursuits of farming. His wife, one of Nature’s own, predeceased him 18 months ago. Jim, as he was best known to all in the district, was the last of a large and highly respected family. To his sorrowing family, Robert, Jenny (Mrs. F. Lewis), Vera (Mrs. R. Govett), and Esme (Mrs. E. Carrick) the whole community offer their sincere sympathy.”*⁷

James and Margaret Burnside had four children:

- Robert “Bob” born in 1911, died in 1957.
- Jenny Watt born 1912 at Footscray died 1941; married Fredrick B Lewis; they had at least one daughter, Dianne Margaret born October 1939; lived at Couch Street, Sunshine.
- Annie Vera born 1914, died 2008 at Melton; married Ronald Joseph Govett (1916-2007). They had been living at 21 Servantes Street, Sunshine.
- Margaret Esme born 2 March 1918, died 7 August 2007 at Footscray. Married in 1942 to Esmonde Richard John Carrick (1916-1986). They were living at 84 King Edward Ave, Sunshine. He was a clerk, born in Euroa. In 1942 he was living at 7 Drummartin Street, Sunshine, died in February 1986; buried at Altona. #



James Burnside

¹ Sunshine Advocate 12 September 1925

² Sunshine Advocate 12 May 1928

³ Sunshine Advocate 11 July 1930

⁴ Sunshine Advocate 5 February 1932

⁵ Argus 27 November 1937 p20

⁶ Argus 16 August 1941

⁷ Sunshine Advocate 15 January 1943

CAHILL, Edward, Mary and Margaret

Edward Cahill is listed as a selector at the Keilor Commons in 1869, having been allocated block 6. However, there were several Cahill families who settled in the Keilor district during the mid to late 1800s, which makes unravelling some of the relationships and activities rather difficult. The best local documentation available is about Thomas and Elizabeth Cahill née Webb and their children in *Keilor Pioneers: Dead Men Do Tell Tales* by Angela Evans and the Keilor Pioneer Research Collective (published by the St Albans History Society). Unfortunately this does not include any information about Edward Cahill and his family, so they might have not have been closely related.

Edward Cahill was born in 1823 in Ireland.¹ His parents were Thomas and Catherine Cahill of Thomastown in Co. Kilkenny. Edward migrated to Australia as a young man and was about 20 when he married Mary O'Brien in Sydney in 1843. Apparently they moved around a bit and ended up in Keilor. It is not known when they first moved to the district though Edward is listed as a complainant in the Keilor police court records as early as May 1858.

Keilor's postal directory for 1868 includes entries for both Edward and Thomas Cahill as farmers. Ray Gibb mentions that Thomas had some land on the Salt Water River on the St Albans side near Gumms corner, and Edward had 180 acres near the bend in Fosters Road in what is now Keilor Park² – this may be the home property that was named 'Springs Farm' and was formerly the home of John Foster.³

Edward Cahill must have been looking to expand his holdings in 1868 as he applied for selection on the Keilor Plains. His selection was block 4, which may have been alongside Stensons farm, but he acquired block 16 in 1885, which became known as 'Cahill's land'. It was later in the name of T. Cahill and eventually bought by Denis Cahill circa 1903. Margaret Cahill (possibly Edward's daughter⁴)

was listed as selecting block 15 in 1869 but on 6 January 1885 it was in the hands of William John Staines, who was another local farmer.

Edward and Mary Cahill's children included:

- Catherine Mary 1844-1905 born in NSW
- Thomas 1846-1913⁵
- Margaret 1849-1870 born in Sydney
- Elizabeth 1853-1893 born in Melbourne
- Mary 1859-1859 born and died in Keilor
- Mary Anne 1862-1912

Edward Cahill became involved in municipal affairs when he nominated for the Keilor District Road Board in 1866 against Samuel Mansfield and in 1868 against William Taylor, John Grant Barnard and James Cooke. The district had been subdivided into the three areas of Keilor, Tullamarine and Dousta Galla, with Cahill nominating for the latter. In 1869 he stood against James Sharp and was elected with a very clear majority of 34 votes to 15,⁶ but his term of office expired in August 1870. It is not clear if he stood again when his daughter Margaret died in November 1870.

Edward's daughter, Margaret, died at Dousta Galla in November 1870 and her remains were buried at the Melbourne General Cemetery.⁷ Her selection in St Albans was later acquired by Hannah Errington, who was able to secure the title to the land in 1876.

Edward and Thomas Cahill (and presumably other family members) seem to have moved to Rockbank in the 1870s as Edward sold off the farm stock and agricultural machinery on his Springs Farm in January 1871 because the lease was expiring.⁸ Gary Vines in his publication indicates that the Cahill family may have moved there somewhat earlier: "*the Cahill brothers selected several small blocks under the Closer Settlement Act in the 1860s.*"⁹ The Bacchus Marsh Express reports on an assault case involving both Edward and Thomas Cahill as being farmers at Rockbank in 1875.¹⁰

Then in 1880 it was reported that "Messrs. Cahill and Miss Cahill" were leaving Melton for

¹ Some entries indicate 1820.

² <http://www.familytreecircles.com/u/itellya/?format=&sort=alpha&next=41>.

³ William and John Foster had over 2,000 acres from Keilor to Broadmeadows. John Fitzgerald Leslie Vesey Foster, known as 'Alphabet Foster', was a member of parliament and served as Colonial Secretary. He added 'Fitzgerald' to his name to gain an inheritance from 'the old country'.

<http://www.familytreecircles.com/o-nial-and-beaman-of-tullamarine-and-melbourne-victoria-australia-43186.html>

⁴ One of Thomas Cahill's daughters was named Theresa Margaret so she is also a possibility, but

she seems to have had other land in her name to the east of the Keilor cemetery.

⁵ Some records suggest that two sons of Edward and Mary were named Thomas, indicating that the first might have died in infancy.

⁶ Argus 23 February 1869 p6

⁷ Argus 21 November 1870 p2

⁸ Argus 27 January 1871 p2

⁹ *Pastoral Properties Grazing on the Keilor-Werribee Plains*; Melbourne's Living Museum of the West, 1993.

¹⁰ Bacchus Marsh Express 25 September 1875 p2

Keilor¹ and selling off stock and machinery.

If this was the Edward Cahill who was from Keilor and St Albans, then he was soon on the move again and became the owner and publican at the Rising Sun Hotel in Footscray from 1882 through to 1892. Farming was obviously still in his veins as he rented some fields adjoining the hotel and advertised 'Chirside's Paddocks' as suitable for the convenient grazing of stock at a minimum cost. Perhaps someone was taking the minimum cost concept too literally as he was soon advertising that "Any Stock found in the Paddock without being entered will be impounded."² A much smaller financial loss for Cahill shows the seriousness with which the judiciary treated light-fingered adventurers:

*"At the Footscray Court yesterday, Charles Henderson (otherwise Johnson), John Perry, and Charles Smith, rag and bottle gatherers, were charged with stealing a bag, valued at 2s, the property of Edward Cahill, licensee of the Rising Sun Hotel. Henderson, who is an old offender, was sentenced to two months' imprisonment; Smith and Perry each to one month's imprisonment. Prisoners were also remanded to appear at Collingwood on Saturday next on charges of larceny."*³

Mary Cahill née O'Brien died on 28 August 1885 at her residence, Rising Sun Hotel, at the age of 64 years.⁴ No information has been found about her life and activities in the Keilor district. Edward remarried in 1888 to Eleanor Catherine Hall, in North Adelaide.⁵ She was born in 1864 at Brighton, Victoria, the daughter of Christopher Hall (1823-1877) and Sarah Eleanor Goldie (1842-1887).

Edward and Eleanor's children included:

- Thomas 1890-1895
- Eleanor Cahill 1891-1981.

Cahill was caught up in the financial problems of the 1890s when one of the people he'd extended credit to, and it appears to have been the new hotelkeeper, was declared insolvent due to "Inability to realise on land, pressure of creditors, and dullness of trade."⁶

Edward Cahill died on 4 October 1893 at his residence, the Rising Sun Hotel, in Geelong-road, West Footscray,⁷ at the age of 70 years and a pioneer of 50 years. #

¹ Bacchus Marsh Express 10 April 1880 p3

² Footscray Independent 30 June 1888 p4

³ Argus 3 November 1882 p8

⁴ Argus 29 August 1885 p1

⁵ www.mundia.com/gb/Person/26677315/12547988365

⁶ Argus 14 July 1893 p6

⁷ Argus 5 October 1893 p1

CALLOW, Henry and Maria Jane

In 1853 H. Callow was the occupier of block D near the south-west corner of Boundary Road and the railway line. Although the evidence is slim, this might have been Henry Callow, a hotelkeeper of Melbourne.

Henry Callow was born about 1801 and was one of 369 convicts who were transported on the 'Dromedary' departing England on the 1st September 1819 and arriving at Van Diemen's Land on 10 January 1820. Callow had been tried at the Surrey Quarter Sessions and was sentenced to 7 years. His early life in Hobart has not been reported but it appears that he served his time without any major problems as he received his ticket of leave in July 1826.⁸ By 1834 he had progressed even further as he was occupying land in Wellington Street at Launceston⁹ and transferred some of it to W Carr in May 1834.¹⁰

Callow ran a general store in Wellington Street during the 1830s. In 1839 he decided to close the business as in May he held a public auction for:

*"The whole of the stock-in-trade consisting of calicoes, prints, regatta, white and check shirts, slops of all descriptions, teas, sugar, tobacco, crockery, glass, pickles, mustard, &c &c. After which the whole of the household furniture, viz. tables, chairs, chests of drawers, beds and bedding, kitchen utensils, &c. One dray, one cart, a quantity of sawn timber, shingles and paling, and a small stack of fire wood. ... [and] the House and Ground where he now resides. The cottage is brick, with shop and three convenient rooms, with a large yard and garden attached, having a frontage of 90 feet, and 180 feet back. For a shopkeeper or tradesmen these premises stand unrivalled, as the situation is decidedly the best in the town."*¹¹

Late in 1839 Henry Callow became the licensed victualler, the publican, for the Commercial Inn in Collins Street, Hobart, so that was his new business venture. It is not known how long he worked in this capacity but it was probably for at least a decade. In June 1851 he and his wife left Launceston for Melbourne accompanied by five Misses Callows.¹²

Henry Callow had formed a relationship with Maria Jane Fitzgerald since at least 1839¹³ and

⁸ Hobart Town Gazette 1 July 1826 p1

⁹ Hobart Town Gazette 14 February 1834 p1

¹⁰ Launceston Advertiser 19 May 1834 p2

¹¹ Launceston Advertiser 4 April 1839 p2

¹² The Courier Hobart 4 June 1851 p2

¹³ Launceston Advertiser 4 April 1839 p1

had been living together for about seven years before moving to Melbourne in 1851, where they married some six months later.

Maria Jane Fitzgerald was born about 1808 in Tasmania, so she was a Vandemonian. Her father was Michael Fitzgerald (1771-1831) who was from Cork, Ireland, and her mother was Mary Wood (1790-1890). Her father was a convict who had been tried in Cork in 1797 and transported for life. Her mother may have been born on the 'Neptune' which was one of the notorious Second Fleet ships:

*"During the voyage 158 convicts died (31%) and 269 (53%) were sick when landed. The treatment of convicts aboard the Neptune was unquestionably the most horrific in the history of transportation to Australia. Convicts suspected of petty theft were flogged to death; most were kept chained below decks for the duration of the voyage; scurvy and other diseases were endemic; and the food rations were pitiful."*¹

Michael Fitzpatrick and Mary Wood married in Tasmania in 1811 and raised five daughters and two sons, with Maria Jane being the first-born child. Maria's early life is not documented.

In September 1851 Henry Callow had received his victualler's licence for the Royal Mail Hotel in Swanston Street, Melbourne.² By November 1852 he had acquired some government land in the County of Bourke, Parish of Jika Jika,³ so he was settling more permanently in the colony. Presumably it was about this time that he obtained the St Albans land in the parish of Maribyrnong, as a local map indicates that he acquired title to the property in January 1853.

Henry Callow died at his Melbourne residence, the Royal Mail Hotel, on 29 July 1854. He was aged 53 years and had been a pioneer of 34 years.⁴ Callow left his wife £5,000 and his land to his daughters, but Maria Callow later said that even though she was the executrix of his estate she had received none of her inheritance as it "was not taken care of."⁵

After Henry's death, Maria married William Tilke on August 1855; he was the landlord of Tilke's City Hotel in Bourke Street. In 1860 she took action against her husband in the Melbourne District Court for maintenance. Her testimony included some interesting revelations.⁶

Maria must have been a convicted person in Tasmania in her earlier years, as she had lived at Dr Cameron's place as his assigned servant. She left Dr Cameron's to marry John Summers and acknowledged that she was a convict at the time of her marriage.

Maria married John Summers (1798-1858) in about 1830. He was a convict in Launceston and they had a son and daughter. Summers left for California in 1827 (sic) and after many years information was received that he'd died – Henry Callow told her in 1849 that a tree had fallen on Summers in California, so he'd read in a newspaper.⁷ Maria said she later discovered his name was really Sumner and not Summers, but she was always known as Mrs Summers.

She stated that her three children were sent to the Orphan Asylum in Tasmania. She later took them from the Asylum but did not tell them that she was their mother as her husband at the time, Henry Callow, forbade that – she said she was their aunt.

While she was living with Callow, her first husband, John Summers, came to the gate and stole away her little boy. It was his boy.

Maria married Henry Callow without knowing whether Mrs Callow was alive or dead but "*she might have gone away with Callow's brother.*" Maria was with Henry Callow for about seven years before they married in Melbourne. Callow took a public house there, but being advised that he could not conduct the house or receive a license unless he was a married man.

Maria married William Tilke on August 1855; he was the landlord of Tilke's City Hotel in Melbourne. He had lately obtained a license for his restaurant and wanted a helpmate. They lived together for two years and then he discovered that John Sumner, Maria's first husband, was still alive. He confronted Maria with this information and she agreed to separation.

After hearing all the evidence and arguments, the Bench decided not express an opinion as to the validity of these several marriages as that was a question for another court. The Court ordered that William Tilke pay Maria Jane née Fitzgerald £1 a week as maintenance.

Maria Jane died at Fairfield in 1890. Maria and Henry Callow were pioneers and had colourful backgrounds but they had no connections of consequence with St Albans. #

⁷ Summers was living in Port Cygnet in 1850 and died in Port Huon in 1858 at the age of 60 years.

¹ <http://www.mundia.com/au/Person/26682698/1898630182>

² Argus 12 September 1851

³ Argus 18 November 1852

⁴ Argus 31 July 1854

⁵ The Star, Ballarat 5 January 1860 p3

⁶ The Star, Ballarat 5 January 1860 p3

CAVANAGH, John and Ellen

John Cavanagh was one of the first selectors of land on Keilor Common, on block 20, so he would have obtained it in November 1868, when he was 21 years of age. Under the Closer Settlement Act, a selector received a license to rent the land for three years, during which time they had to make improvements. After three years they could either buy the land outright or continue paying rent for up to seven years until the purchase price was paid in full.

John Cavanagh's selection of 60 acres was immediately east of the railway line between Boundary Road and Biggs Street. Having occupied his land for three years, he applied to purchase it in January 1872. The 'improvements' to the property were valued at £132 and included the fencing of the land, building a house, digging of a water hole, and putting about fifteen acres under cultivation.

Very little is recorded about John Cavanagh in the annals of St Albans' history, other than him being a farmer of Williamstown Junction and selling his selection to Francis Melbourne Cox, gentleman of 'Coringsby', Jolimont, on the 29th October 1885.¹ Mr Cox held onto the land only for 16 months before reselling it:

*"On the 9th March, 1887 at 3 p.m., William Colley received the title of Lot 20 - Transfer No.185383. Also on the 9th March 1887 at 3 p.m., William Colley transferred Lot 20 to the Cosmopolitan Land and Banking Co. - Transfer No.185384. After sub-division, buyers included: Frederick George Cross - the first land buyer in St. Albans (Today, No.11 Victoria Crescent); Alfred Henry Padley; Frederick Lewis Von Stieglitz; Edward Baxter Porter; William Colley; Clara Winchester Clark, ... Edward Joseph Baldon O'Keefe; Henry Servante; James Edgar Laing (site of Presbyterian Church); Joseph Livingston; David Alexander and Gordon Richard Calder."*²

John Cavanagh was born in Ireland on 4 February 1847. His father was William Alexander Cavanagh, who was born in 1824 in Kilkenny and married Ellen Fitzpatrick in Leighlinbridge, Carlow on 5 February 1846. They migrated in 1848 on the ship 'Adelaide' and arrived at Port Phillip on 14 March. John was aged only one when he arrived, so he was effectively one of the home-grown Australians as he wouldn't have remembered any other homeland.

William and Ellen established a farm at Newport,

which they named "The Summerhill Farm." It was about 163 acres with a frontage onto Blackshaws Road. Here they cultivated the land, growing hay and probably some other crops as well as a raising cattle and horses. They also raised a family, with Ellen giving birth to six more children between 1849 and 1864. Their children included:³

- John, born in Ireland 1847; wed Bridget Doran (b.1862) in St Patrick's, Kilmore.
- Mary born 1849 at Williamstown, died at Chelsea 1923; married John William Purcell (b. 1845 Queens, Ireland) in St Mary's, Williamstown 15.8.1873.
- Eliza born 1851 at Summerhill Farm, Williamstown; died at Perth 1930; married Thomas Brady (b.1846 Cavin, Ireland) in St Francis, Melbourne 21.7.1878.
- Patrick Alexander born Newport 1854, died at Yarraville 24.12.1924; married Jane Blandford (b.16.8.1868 at Reedy Creek Broadford) in St Mary's Williams-town 8.3.1886.
- William born 1859 in Cut Paw Paw, died 16.1.1933 at Glen Huntley; wed Georgina Eileen Watson at Newport, 1891.
- Ellen Jane Bridget born 1861 Williams-town, died 13.5.1920 at South Yarra; she married George Edward Joseph Quigley at Colac on 5.6.1889.
- Charles Alexander born 1864 in Williams-town, died 31.3.1918 at Dunolly, married Emily Helena McMannus (b.1873 Reedy Creek) at Newport, 1891.

William Cavanagh died in April 1888, aged 64 years, and was buried at Footscray Cemetery.⁴ The family's Summerhill Farm was auctioned off in three lots in October 1888, with the land being promoted as being "*unsurpassed for elevation, subdivision, and general excellence.*"⁵

In the following month the farm equipment was also put to auction, including:

*"150 tons of hay, 3 hay carts, 16 head of cattle, 9 horses, buggy and harness, 2 mowing machines, plough horse, hay rake, cock lifter,⁶ drays, harness and lots of farming implements."*⁷

Clearly, this farm was not being continued by the family. The property was up for sale again in 1891 and this time advertising that it was

³ <http://boards.ancestry.com/thread.aspx?mv=flat&m=119&p=surnames.kavanaugh>; accessed 16.7.2013

⁴ Argus 21 April 1888 p9

⁵ Williamstown Chronicle 6 October 1888 p3

⁶ A mechanical device for lifting heavy or bulky items such as bales of straw or hay.

⁷ Footscray Independent 3 November s1888 p2

¹ He may have sold the land to James Henry Kavanagh in 1872. Refer to Grow Church notes.

² *St Albans The First Hundred Years*

near the railway line and a bluestone quarry was opened on part of the land, so it must have been a versatile selection indeed.¹

It is not clear at what stage John Cavanagh, left his Williamstown Junction farming life, but it was probably between 1872 and 1880. Even though he did not sell his St Albans selection until 1885, in August 1880 Cavanagh was recommended for a selection of 256 acres in the Reedy Creek district, Broadford, near Kilmore.² His brother, Patrick Cavanagh, was also recommended for 320 acres.³

What was the attraction for Cavanagh to move to Kilmore and Reedy Creek when he had a selection at St Albans and some of his family remained in the Williamstown and Newport districts? Quite possibly the Keilor Commons selection was not large enough for a viable farm. Or was the allure of a gold mining district still holding sway?

*“During the 1850s there were numerous but insignificant gold finds made at Kilmore, King Parrot Creek, Strath Creek, Reedy Creek, and Prices Creek. This area became more recognised as a goldfield when quartz reefs yielding from 3 to 4 ounces per ton were opened at Reedy Creek. Reefs also discovered about this time at King Parrot and Strath creeks. From 1858 to the 1890s Reedy Creek was the district’s premier mining locality with Langridge’s and Doyle’s being the main reefs.”*⁴

Was it an Irish connection? Kilmore had many Irish settlers and was named after the town in County Cavan.⁵ Whatever it was, Cavanagh (and it seems some of his brothers) made his way to the former gold digging district as a selector and farmer rather than as a miner.

Things were not entirely uneventful for John Cavanagh on his new selection as he ran into trouble with his neighbours and the law. In 1883, he came before the Kilmore Court for slaughtering cattle without a licence and was fined for this offence.⁶ This might have been a problem for most farmers in the sense that it was normal to slaughter the occasional beast for domestic consumption. Several years later, he was brought before the Melbourne Court for alleged stealing a neighbour’s sheep and

slaughtering it. The problem was that the adjoining fence was not sheep-proof; hence, sheep from both properties often became inter-mixed. Cavanagh’s defence was that he thought the sheep was one of his own and offered to replace it when questioned. The matter was placed before a jury but *“The jury was unable to agree on a verdict, and after they had been locked up for six hours were discharged.”*⁷

John Cavanagh married Bridget Doran at St Patrick’s Church in Kilmore. They built a home on their selection at Reedy Creek; it was a three-roomed weatherboard house fronting Reedy Creek Road. Here they grazed sheep and cattle, and like most farmers, they had some horses. Nothing more specific has been traced about the history of John and Bridget on their modest country farm. They do not appear to have had any children. Judging by the later sale of their stock and farm equipment it was not a large concern.

John died at Reedy Creek on 21 November 1890 at the young age of 43 years. The farm was auctioned off in September 1891.⁸ It is not known what happened to Bridget.

Two years later there was a bigger sale that was advertised under the name “Messrs. W and D Cavanagh”,⁹ who were dissolving their business partnership and selling off all their dairy cattle, sheep, horses, pigs, machinery, farming implements, vehicles, harness, dairy utensils and Sundries, at Valley Field Farm, in Mclvor Road, near Kilmore:

*“Cattle - 171 head of cattle comprising 50 very superior dairy cows, in full profit; 91 selected young cows, forward and back-ward springers; 17 choice heifers, springing; 8 steers; 3 pedigree Ayrshire and 2 Jersey bulls. Sheep - 500 merino wethers, large frames; 170 crossbred and merino lambs (in wool); fat 200 merino ewes, 4-tooth. Horses - 16 draught and light horses - a first class lot. Pigs - breeding sows, porkers and stores.”*¹⁰

This was a bigger concern than a small family farm, so it is clear that several members of the Cavanagh family had settled in the district and they were successful in their farming enterprises, but it is not known if they were immediate relatives of John.

John Cavanagh became a successful farmer on his selection, but not at St Albans. #

¹ Williamstown Chronicle 12 September 1891 p3

² Kilmore and St Albans have a distant connection in that Hume and Hovell passed through both in 1824.

³ Kilmore Free Press 19 August 1880 p2

⁴ Historic Gold Mining Sites in the Kilmore –Yea Region of Victoria; Department of Natural Resources & Environment September 1999 p5

⁵ Kilmore Heritage Study April 1982 p5

⁶ Kilmore Free Press 22 November 1883 p2

⁷ Argus 3 March 1888 p6

⁸ Kilmore Free Press 24 September 1891 p3

⁹ Several Cavanagh sons had links with Kilmore and Reedy Creek but it is not known if these are immediate family or other relatives.

¹⁰ Kilmore Free Press 30 March 1893 p3

CHRISTIE, James and Elizabeth

James Christie, who was from Fifeshire in Scotland, was born in 1831. He was one of the early selectors on the Keilor Common, acquiring lot 32 in the 1868 ballot; it was 65 acres on the western end of Boundary Road (Main Road West) adjacent to the Kororoit Creek. Christie had more land in Deer Park that he used for grazing and dairying purposes. The St Albans block was later taken over by James Burnside, another of the early pioneers to the district; it is also the land where Nathaniel Dale's Piggery was located some decades later.

James Christie was the son of Alexander Christie (1804-1885) and Jean Smart (1803-1876), who raised a very large family. James migrated from Scotland as a young man of 20 years, arriving in Melbourne in 1852. After working on farms for a few months, he left for the goldfields where he was fairly successful.¹ Though his activities during his first decade of migration have not been traced, it appears that he worked as a road contractor and may have started a cartage service as early as 1855, because his drays were travelling regularly to Melbourne at that time.² He had 20 acres on the Keilor plains by 1856 and established his "Stoney Park" farm in the Kororoit Creek area about 1866 and operated from there at least until 1881 if not later.³ His farming was mostly dairying with some growing of crops and hay. He also leased other property in the district.

Christie became involved in municipal affairs not long after his arrival. In 1869 he stood against Mark Paines as a candidate for the Braybrook Shire Roads Board in its northern subdivision.⁴ It seems he was not successful. Then in 1870 he nominated for the eastern subdivision in a tougher competition against John Blair, Thomas Burge Derham, Samuel Sextus Ritchie, James Dickson, James McIntyre, and James Ebenezer Wilmore. Blair, Derham, and Ritchie were elected.⁵ In 1873 he ran again in the northern riding against William Hamilton Powell⁶ and in 1878 against George Missen junior.⁷ This time he was successful, receiving

44 votes compared to his rival's 31, a clear majority of 13 votes.⁸

In the meantime Christie was developing the other side of his business enterprise and that was in cartage and road surfacing, an activity for which several other farmers in the district were competing. In 1872 his £472 bid to surface half a mile of roadway in Braybrook to Ballarat Road was not successful.⁹

In 1873 he married Elizabeth Hendry of Broadmeadows. She was born in 1852 and was the daughter of Agnes Imrie and James Hendry, who were from Scotland and migrated in 1849. Christie was a storekeeper and the postmaster at Tullamarine between 1859 and 1866.¹⁰

James Christie became involved in action for a local school and a church at Deer Park. Parents in Derrimut were pleased when the new state School on the Ballarat road was opened on Saturday 29 August 1874. The event was celebrated by 300 people with a tea meeting and ball, and James Christie, Esq., of Stoney Park, presided. As was usual for such communal gatherings at the time:

*"After the tea meeting, the tables were cleared, and the juvenile portion of the audience had an opportunity of celebrating the event by dancing to the enlivening strains of the bag-pipes, and other popular instruments."*¹¹

Disquiet between neighbours happens in any community, which was the case on Kororoit Creek. In October 1877 James Christie sued Josiah Opie and Joseph Harrison for trespassing on his farm; the lads and their dogs were apparently in pursuit of game. Both the young men were fined in default of imprisonment, with Harrison, as the older one, being fined £2 and £1 10s costs in lieu of three weeks' imprisonment.¹² It seems a relatively harsh penalty for a couple of lads (Josiah was just 15 years) following a normal rural pastime.

In 1878 Christie decided to give up dairying and consequently auctioned off his stock, which illustrates the amount of stock that a

¹ Edith Popp *Glimpses of Early Sunshine* p38

² In 1897 it was reported, "*his drays have been going in and out of Melbourne for something like 42 years.*" *Footscray Independent* 7 August 1897 p2.

³ Gary Vines *Pastoral Properties* p55

⁴ *Argus* 29 November 1869 p8

⁵ *Argus* 7 September 1870 p4

⁶ *Bacchus Marsh Express* 20 January 1872 p3

⁷ *Williamstown Chronicle* 27 July 1878 p2. The Missen family was from Rockbank and became directly involved with St Albans when Roy Missen

married Jean Macrae, daughter of Farquhar and Annie Macrae of St Albans, on 27 November 1926.

⁸ *Bacchus Marsh Express* 17 August 1878

⁹ *Bacchus Marsh Express* 20 January 1872 p3

¹⁰ James and Agnes probably met when migrating from Scotland to Australia on the 'Duke of Roxburgh' arriving at Port Jackson on 13 August 1849. They married in Sydney on 28 September 1950.

avagoody.com/webtrees/individual.php?pid=I13715&ged=Bromwich April 2013

¹¹ *Bacchus Marsh Express* 5 September 1874 p2

¹² *Williamstown Chronicle* 10 November 1877 p3

small, mixed dairy farm would have carried at the time. The sale included:

*"45 cows, springing and in full milk, 10 heifers, springing, 10 steers and heifers; one pure shorthorn bull, eight months old (pedigree at sale); two well-bred young bulls; one Clydesdale mare, Blossom, eight years old by Sir William Wallace, out of a Dan O'Connell mare, and in foal to Canny Scotchman; one Clydesdale filly, three years old, by Earl of Airlie, well broken; one brood draught mare, five years old, by Lord Clyde; one colt foal, eight months old, by Lord Galloway (imported) out of Blossom; Berkshire sow, in pig, and one boar, by imported stock."*¹

However, Christie obviously retained an interest in stock as in October 1887 he was one of the judges at the Bacchus Marsh Agricultural and Pastoral Society show adjudicating entries for the Ayrshires and Alderneys section.²

He had also continued his involvement with the Kororoit Cricket Club. One of his entertainments for club members shows the bonhomie they achieved:

*"About twenty members and some friends went there about 2 o'clock, and cricket was indulged in until 5 o'clock. The stumps were put up, and as usual in a scratch match with members, the wickets fell pretty quick. After cricket the company gathered round the organ, which was played by Mr. J. Stevens, and sang the 'National Anthem,' after which the Queen's health was drunk. The company then adjourned to the dinner table, which was laid out splendidly, surpassing anything seen for a long time in Kororoit. The room was decorated with flowers, and the words "Welcome to all," and "Kororoit Cricket Club." The table was presided over by Messrs. Kingsbury, Christie and Hendry, well assisted by Mesdames Christie and Kingsbury, and the Misses Cousins and Christie. Mr. Kingsbury proposed the health of Mr. and Mrs. Christie, which was drunk with cheers. ... One of the tables was moved away, and singing was the next item, which was continued with zest for an hour or two. About 10 o'clock the company joined hands, sang 'Auld Lang Syne,' and gave three cheers for the kindness they had received at Mr. and Mrs. Christie's hands that night."*³

In 1890 Christie was President of the cricket club when their December match against the visiting Melton team was "a very pleasant and friendly game." The visitors were bundled out for 32 and Kororoit doubled their score. The spirit of friendliness continued as "In the evening

*the visitors were invited to an excellent dinner at the Hunt Club Hotel."*⁴

At the annual election for the Northern Riding in August 1890, James Christie was outpolled by Thomas Tolley Jones, 55 votes to 69.⁵ This was not the end of his career as a local councillor as he stood again in 1894. This time he was not opposed, and was duly elected to represent the Northern Riding.⁶

Christie may have given up his dairy business, but he did not give up the farm, as in 1880 James Burnside, James Christie, and Thomas Opie, applied for permission from Braybrook Council to use night soil on their farms.⁷

In August 1894 Cr Christie's daughter, Jean, married John Thomas Pendlebury, also from Deer Park.⁸

Then in November 1894 Christie held another clearing-out sale because the lease had expired, but this time it was a much smaller sale of stock and equipment, totalling 5 cows in full milk, 12 cows springing to calve to pure Ayrshire bull 8 two-year-old and 7 yearling heifers, 8 light harness horses, three-year-old filly by Merrybank, cock-lifter, hay-rake, three-roller mangle and wringer, washing-machine, and sundries.⁹

In 1896 James Christie came before the courts charged with depositing offal on his farm and "not having the same covered with a layer of earth or loam, not less than six inches in thickness."¹⁰ The Christies were collecting light manure from Brundell's and offal on a regular basis from Dagg and Smith, four or five days per week; it was deposited on the land and ploughed into the soil, with some of it heaped into an old quarry site from which stone had been taken. The usual practice was to cover the offal with a layer of lime, then a layer of horse-dung, and then a layer of earth six inches in thickness. The health inspectors contended that the earth covering was not to the required standard. A deputation from Braybrook later met with the chairman of the Public Health Board to argue that the particular health byelaws were not suited for farming localities and required amendment.¹¹

¹ Argus 7 September 1878 p2

² Bacchus Marsh Express 8 October 1887

³ Footscray Independent 29 September 1888 p3

⁴ Bacchus Marsh Express 13 December 1890 p7

⁵ Bacchus Marsh Express 23 August 1890

⁶ Bacchus Marsh Express 11 August 1894 p2

⁷ Bacchus Marsh Express 1 October 1890

⁸ Footscray Independent 25 August 1894 p2

⁹ Argus 18 November 1894 p3

¹⁰ Footscray Independent 1 February 1896

¹¹ Footscray Independent 22 February 1896 p2

By the end of the year Christie again applied to council for permission to deposit offal on his land, which was granted.¹

1898 was a year of bereavement for the family. On 4 April 1898 they lost their eldest daughter, Jean, after a very short illness; she had been ill and was apparently restored when it is supposed she took a chill and died within twenty-four hours, at the age of only 23 years.² Jean Smaw Christie (1874-1898) was born in Maidstone in 1874 and married John Thomas Pendlebury in 1894, so they had been together only four short years before she died.³

Then a few weeks later, on 1 May 1898, Mrs Elizabeth Christie also died, aged only 46 years.⁴ Little is known about her role in the district though the family was involved with the local church, St John the Evangelists' Church of England at Deer Park. James Christie ran the Sunday school activities at the church hall and his daughter was the organist. One of their regular activities was the annual tea party and concert at Dickson's Hall.⁵ It's interesting to note that people from other areas also attended, so these were broader district events. At the 1901 occasion "A good many visitors went from Footscray, and the Braybrook and St. Alban's contingents were in great force."⁶

Christie was also involved with the annual picnic for the Deer Park children, complete with toys, prizes, food, and a band:

*"The children were highly delighted at the treat afforded them, the parents were pleased, the committee were satisfied with the result of their exertions, and the donors had the pleasure of seeing the young folk enjoy themselves, so that the whole affair passed to the satisfaction of all concerned."*⁷

As in all communities the occasional dispute with neighbours was inevitable and for James Christie it happened once again in relation to breached fences and trespassing animals. In May 1903 Christie summoned one of his young neighbours, the son of Cr. Kendall, for illegally

rescuing horses that were in the process of being impounded. Christie was fed up with his neighbour's horses being "*continually in his paddock*" so took the matter to court to seek a resolution of the problem. The Bench imposed a fine of 10/, with 21/ costs,⁸ but it was undoubtedly the publicity against Cr Kendal and his son that achieved its main purpose.

In October 1903 Christie wrote to Braybrook council, asking for permission to close a road "*because it was never used, except by drovers to camp their sheep, and because the self same drovers, their dogs and their sheep were a nuisance to him and others in the locality.*"⁹

The Shire President remarked that the road led to a creek, and he was opposed to closing any such road, while the Secretary pointed out that it was a government road, and the council had no power to permit it to be closed. It was decided that Mr. Christie be informed that the council had no power to grant his request.¹⁰

But it was a time of further reduction in Christie's farming life, which is not surprising as he was in his seventh decade. In 1904 Christie leased his farm and held another clearing sale of stock, cattle, farming implements and household furniture.¹¹ This may have been his final sale, as he was now 73 years of age and there are no references to him in the local papers after this time. At some stage he moved to Southampton street, West Footscray, but he died on 21 April 1916 in Kurting, Inglewood, Victoria.¹² One of his sons, Alexander David Christie, is also recorded as having died in Inglewood, so perhaps James went to live there with one of his children in his frailer years. The Old Inglewood Cemetery is in Kurting, northeast of Inglewood, and there is a Christie Road in the district, which suggests that the family may have had some ongoing presence there.

James's son, George Christie, who became a quarryman, continued residing in the district, as did other family members. He married Lillian Maude Harrison of Maidstone and they had a least one son. George died in Deer Park in 1956. Today there are many descendents of the Christie pioneers located throughout Melbourne. #

¹ Bacchus Marsh Express 12 December 1896 p3

² Footscray Independent 23 April 1898 p2

³ Pendlebury was born in 1862 and died in 1922. Jean Christie was his second wife; he would later marry Catherine Crombie.

⁴ Footscray Independent 7 May 1898

⁵ The first church buildings were located on a corner block in the first streets in Deer Park to be subdivided by the Cosmopolitan Banking Company from the original surveyed Crown Allotment 5B Section 21, granted to J. Burnside in 1872. www.brimbank.vic.gov.au/files/381ec4bd-4aea-4196-b6f3-9f0500b56a86/

⁶ Footscray Independent 2 November 1901 p2

⁷ Footscray Independent 8 February 1902

⁸ Footscray Independent 16 May 1903 p3

⁹ This farm was about one mile from the railway station. Footscray Independent 17 October 1903 p4.

¹⁰ Footscray Independent 17 October 1903 p4

¹¹ Bacchus Marsh Express 23 April 1904 p2

¹² www.mundia.com/au/Person/10758893/-131275301 Inglewood was established as a gold mining town in the 1850s. In 2010 it had a population of 1,000 people.

CRANWELL, Thomas and Emma

Thomas Cranwell was originally from Chrishall, Essex, in England; he was born on 14 February 1824. His future wife, Emma Bolding,¹ was born on 23 March 1828 in Great Chishill Essex. They married in 1848 and had three children who were born in England and nine who were born in Australia:

- William b.1848 at Chrishall d.1908
- Agnes b.1849 at Chrishall d.1937
- Abel b.1852 at Chrishall d.1951
- Elizabeth b,1855 at Albion d.1937
- Joseph b.1857 at Flemington d.1928
- Sarah Jane b.1860 at Albion d.1940
- Emma b.1862 at Albion d.1930
- Alice b.1865 at Albion d.1865
- Albert b.1866 at Footscray d.1954
- John b.1869 at Maidstone d.1862
- Angelina b.1872 at Footscray d.1957
- George Thos. b.1874 Maidstone d.1875.

The family arrived in Australia about 1853² and soon after settled in Albion in the Shire of Braybrook. Thomas Cranwell took up dairy farming. He was one of the first selectors on the Keilor Common in 1868 when he was allocated Lot 15, which was 68 acres of farmland in Boundary Road near the railway line – it was the block that would later be acquired by Hannah and George Errington.

Cranwell forfeited his St Albans selection in April 1870 when the Commissioner of Crown Lands determined that no improvements had been made to his selection. The occupation licences for retaining the land were conditional on undertaking improvements within a couple of years.³ The conditions normally related to residing on the land, fencing it, and cultivating one-fifth of the land. The Commissioner of Crown Lands concluded that the requirements had been totally disregarded.

In April 1869 Cranwell was facing insolvency with the likelihood of losing his possessions except for his furniture and tools of trade. Cranwell objected to this in July 1869 saying he would appeal to have the certificate discharged. His appeal was denied on the

grounds that he had fraudulently transferred his property to his brother. Cranwell appealed again in 1873 but this appeal was also dismissed.

Despite the insolvency problems the family continued to acquire property in the region. There were several Cranwells registered as ratepayers on the 1872 Braybrook Shire roll, including Martha Jane (Braybrook), Thomas (Maribyrnong), and Benjamin (Pywheitjorrk).⁴ The names on the 1874 Braybrook roll include Thomas (Cut Paw Paw), James (Albion and Braybrook), Abel (Braybrook), and Benjamin (Pywheitjorrk).⁵ The James on these lists would be Thomas's brother and the others are probably their children. James settled on the corner of Sun Crescent and Anderson Street where St Marks Church was later built.

Emma Cranwell passed away at Braybrook on 23 December 1875 and her remains were buried at the Melbourne Cemetery. With a large family to look after she must have had her hands full, but other than that assumption there is no record of her involvement in local district activities.

Thomas Cranwell rebounded from his insolvency problems extremely well and by 1881 had again accumulated a number of properties in the Parish of Maribyrnong.⁶ About 1888 he and some of his children moved to Morwell where his brother-in-law, George Bolding, had settled in North Hazelwood. Thomas lived there for the rest of his life but retained connection with Braybrook through family members. In 1901 he wrote to Braybrook Shire Council regarding the valuation of properties in the municipality, so he obviously had retained some real estate in the district. On that occasion the council ignored his complaint on the grounds that the notice had been lodged too late for consideration.

In 1899 a relative, George Cranwell, nominated for the Braybrook Council at the extraordinary election held in November, and he was duly elected.⁷ George was born in Essendon in 1860, the son of James Cranwell, who had settled in Essendon by 1855 and then moved to Albion in about 1864. James was Thomas's brother.

George and his wife Joan Ann McLeod established a general store and post office on the corner of Butler Street and Ballarat Road in

¹ Has also been spelt as 'Bolden'

² Thomas's older brother, James Cranwell, arrived in 1853 and it's probable the families travelled together.

³ The land was to be held under license for three years during the first two and a half years of which the selector had to reside on the land, fence it, and cultivate a certain proportion of it. Then the selector could either purchase the land outright or obtain a further lease of seven years, with the right to purchase at any time during the term. Commonwealth Year Book 1911.

⁴ Bacchus Marsh Express 5 October 1872 p1s

⁵ Bacchus Marsh Express 10 October 1874 p2

⁶ Argus 17 February 1881 p3

⁷ Bacchus Marsh Express 2 December 1899 p2

about 1891.¹ He served on the Braybrook council for many years and was the Shire President in 1914/15.² There is no doubt that his role in council would have contributed to developments and improvements for residents in St Albans.

One of George's sons, also named George, worked with him in the family business. Another son was Joseph Archibald Cranwell, who was born on 22 February 1889. Joseph grew up in the area and captained the Sunshine Football Club "*when they were premiers of the Commonwealth Football Association in 1913.*"³ He had been interested in running for council in 1926⁴ but was also encouraged to stand for pre-selection in the state seat for Flemington.⁵ He was a carpenter by trade and worked at McKay's Sunshine Harvester Works. He was elected shop steward for the Amalgamated Engineering Union (AEU) and served as a delegate to the Trades Hall Council, to the State Labor Party conferences and to the wages board for engineers and skilled brass workers. In 1930 he obtained a position in Sydney representing Victoria, South Australia and Tasmania on the Commonwealth Council of the A.E.U. and became "*the most respected and perhaps the most competent chairman the A.E.U. ever had.*"⁶

He chaired the Trade Union Advisory Panel, established in 1940 by (Sir) Robert Menzies. Probably the height of his achievements was during the 'forties:

*"Following the conflict between pro-Lang and anti-Lang forces in the 1930s, Cranwell had been elected president of the New South Wales branch of the Australian Labor Party in August 1939 and played a critical role in stabilizing the party at a unity conference in Sydney. Although not a member of parliament, he chaired a parliamentary Labor Party meeting on 5 September at which (Sir) William McKell defeated Lang in a leadership ballot. Deposed as president, Cranwell supported intervention by the federal A.L.P. in August 1940 and remained on a provisional executive established by the federal party. He also represented the State on the A.L.P. federal executive in 1939-40."*⁷

¹ Just around the corner from Cranwell Street.

² Bacchus Marsh Express 27 February 1915 p2

³ Sunshine Advocate 17 July 1926 p3

⁴ Sunshine Advocate 24 July 1926 p6

⁵ Sunshine Advocate 4 December 1926 p3

⁶ Greg Patmore *Cranwell, Joseph Archibald 1889-1965*

⁷ Greg Patmore; *Cranwell, Joseph Archibald (1889-1965)*, Australian Dictionary of Biography, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/cranwell-joseph-archibald-9857/text17439>, accessed 6 July 2013.

Having removed himself to Gippsland at the age of 64, Thomas Cranwell continued his ambitions as a landowner and in 1882 applied for 319 acres at Traralgon through the Local Land Board.⁸ His application was recommended in November 1882, but Emma Cranwell's application was deferred for the next Board meeting.⁹ In April 1908, Thomas Cranwell died at his home 'Chishill' in North Hazelwood, and was buried at the Melbourne Cemetery with his late wife. He was aged 84 years and had enjoyed good health until he was 80, but then suffered a stroke and became an invalid. "*He was a man most highly respected by all with whom he came in contact, and much sympathy is expressed for members of the family in their sad bereavement.*"¹⁰

His estate was auctioned off by his executors and it appears that he had established quite a comfortable situation for himself during his two decades in North Hazelwood. His farm was advertised as being:

*"... of 320 Acres, being allotment 87 section A, Parish of Traralgon, suitable for Dairying or Cultivation and Sheep Farming; well fenced and subdivided into 8 paddocks, watered by Creek and 6 dams. A commodious good house, verandah on 3 sides, 6 rooms, large hall, pantry, store room, and wash house, underground tank, bricked and cemented, good out-buildings, barn, buggy shed, store room, man's room, cow shed, cemented floor to bails. Orchard in full bearing. Good roads, 5 miles from Morwell, 6 miles from Traralgon. 1 mile from State. School, Church and Mechanics' Hall."*¹¹

In retrospect, Thomas and Emma Cranwell did well for themselves and their family. They had no direct connection with St Albans after they had forfeited their selection, but their extended family has contributed to society via municipal, industrial and political engagement at local, state and commonwealth government levels.

Their daughter, Emma, moved to Traralgon and was granted land in 1889; she may have married a chap by the name of Thompson.

Agnes married Thomas William Abery Babb in 1878. She died in 1937 in Footscray.

Joseph married Emma Louisa Esnouf in 1889. He died at Traralgon in 1928, aged 70 years.¹²

Albert died at Traralgon on 14 August 1954 at

⁸ Gippsland Times 23 October 1882 p2

⁹ Gippsland Times 24 November 1882 p1s

¹⁰ Traralgon Record 5 May 1908 p3

¹¹ Traralgon Record 11 September 1908 p3

¹² Argus 28 July 1928 p17

the age of 88 years. He and his wife Barbara had several children: Nettie, Allan, Douglas, Ken and Rex.¹

Abel married Emmeline Gray in 1879 and they moved to Traralgon after 1883. They had five children: Emma Peers, Alice Maud, Percy, Harold, and Lucy May. He died at Malvern in October 1951, aged just six months short of his hundredth birthday.²

Sarah Jane married Neil Shaw McDonald in 1889 and they lived at Morwell. They had four children: Archibald, Emma, Grace, and Marion. Sarah died in 1940 at the age of 80 years.

Angelina married Samuel John Thompson in 1897 and they went to live at Traralgon. They had two children: Una Eileen and Ivor Vivian. Angelina died in 1957 at the age of 84 years. She had been involved with the Red Cross Society in Gippsland for many years and was active with the 1915 war effort.

Today the family's name in the City of Brimbank is remembered through municipal initiatives. There is a Cranwell Street in Braybrook, which was created in 1939 by the renaming of Raleigh Street from Duke Street through to Ashley Street.³ Just around the corner at the eastern end is where George and Joan Cranwell ran their grocery store and post office in Ballarat Road. Cranwell Park is further along Cranwell Street on the southern bank of the Maribyrnong River.

There are now many descendants of the original Cranwell families located throughout Victoria, and some are still around Sunshine, Ardeer, Newport, Essendon and Sunbury. This pioneer family settled in the district in the nineteenth century and continues to have representation in the region in the twenty-first century. #

References:

Family tree information is available at website:
<http://www.beamsley.com.au/aftcran.htm>
<http://mepnab.net.au.net/c/c31.html>

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¹ Morwell Advertiser 19 August 1954 p6

² Morwell Advertiser 4 October 1951 p9

³ Sunshine Advocate 1 December 1939 p1

CROAD, Samuel John Thomas

According to *St Albans The First Hundred Years*, Lot 22 of the Keilor Commons subdivision was selected by "Samuel I. T. Croad", who fenced the property before transferring it to Dr Louis Lawrence Smith in 1870.⁴ Croad was not on the original listing for the Keilor Commons selection for Lot 22 as it had been allocated to W. Cummins. However, this original selector obviously did not retain the property for long and his personal details have not been traced. It's likely that "Samuel John Thomas Croad" took it over and sold it to Dr L L Smith, as the two had been working together in Dr Smith's medical practice in Bourke Street, Melbourne.⁵

Samuel Croad was born in 1819 in Middlesex, England, the son of Samuel Croad (1791-1873) and Elizabeth Hoosse Barry (1791-). Croad junior had been an assistant to the London Quaker firm of Allen and Hansbury. He migrated to Australia about 1840 and started working as a chemist with Allen, Hansburys and Barry, in Lombard Street.⁶ He then established his own business as a Chemist and Druggist at his store 'The Melbourne Dispensary' that opened in Bourke street in 1849; it was sold to Mr. Henry Francis in 1860.

About 1866 Croad joined Dr L L Smith's medical establishment in Bourke street east, where his speciality seems to have been galvanism;⁷ he was "*the introducer of the galvanic battery in 1850.*"⁸ Even the Homeopathic Dispensary in Melbourne (predecessor of the Homeopathic Hospital and Prince Henry's Hospital) advertised cures for rheumatism under homeopathic treatment by the use of galvanism.

Samuel Croad married Elizabeth Wilks (1819-1865) and they had three children: Elizabeth Hoosse (1849-1862), Herbert (1850-1852) and Samuel Barry Croad (1852-1912). The family lived in Chapel street, Prahran. Samuel Barry Croad was an assistant to his father at his chemist store until the business was sold and then worked in the Assay Department of the Royal Mint until his death on 23 March 1912 in Elsternwick, at the age of 61.

Samuel John Thomas Croad was undoubtedly a Melbourne pioneer, but the family had only a passing connection with St Albans. #

⁴ St Albans The First Hundred Years p6

⁵ Argus 29 August 1866 p3

⁶ Argus 26 November 1849 p3

⁷ The therapeutic application of direct electric current to the body for pain relief.

⁸ Argus 29 August 1866 p3

CUMMINS, John and Bridget

Two selectors were listed for allotment 16 on the Keilor Commons in 1868: they were John Cummins and C. Quail. The block was in Main Road East between the farms of John Cavanagh and Hannah Errington and it was later acquired by Margaret and Patrick Egan.

John Cummins (born about 1831 in Co. Down, Ireland) and Bridget Cummins (born about 1837) were pioneers at Keilor as they had a farm near the Deep Creek road in the parish of Doutta Galla, from the 1860s to 1880. Though it is not known if they had other family ties in Keilor at the time, there were two local women who shared the family name. Jane Cummins, who was born about 1810 in Co. Down, Ireland, married William Cherry in 1829 and they came to Australia in 1841; she died on 12 May 1857. Elizabeth Ellen Cummins was born in 1843 at Seymour and married James Arbuthnot in 1863; she died in 1917 at Mansfield. The Cherry and Arbuthnot families were pioneers in Keilor.

John Cummins and family sold their Keilor farm in 1880 and moved to Yabba North, near Shepparton. Their Keilor farm was described as:

*"That valuable farm of land, containing 40 acres, being part of Crown Portion 21, parish of Doutta Galla, county of Bourke situated about seven miles from Melbourne, off the Deep Creek road. The improvements consist of a comfortable three-roomed house with verandah, stabling for three horses, dairy, chill house, etc. The whole making a complete property, well adapted for a trainer of racehorses."*¹

John and Bridget Cummins became graziers and wheat farmers in the Yabba North district, from about 1881. They raised several children:

- James, on 19 September 1906 married Catherine Crimmins of Invergordon.
- Jane Mary "Marie", in 1901 wed Martin Saunders of Geelong West.
- Johanna "Hannah" was born at Keilor and died at 81 years; married Charles McLaughlin, of Waggarandal at Dookie c.1901 and had 3 sons and 4 daughters.
- Sarah, became Mrs Saunders.
- Catherine, married Michael Smyth in 1908, died at Shepparton on 21 July 1941; they had a son and daughter.
- Edward John, on 4 February 1913 wed Honora L. Cullinan of Kyabram.
- Bridget E, became Mrs Ryan.

John died on 26 April 1887 aged 56 years, and Bridget died on 3 January 1985 aged 58

¹ Argus 9 October 1880 p2

years.² John's brother, Michael Cummins, also farming around Yabba North, died aged 78 years on 31 October 1912 at the home of his nephew, James Cummins.

James Cummins had selected 320 acres at Yabba Yabba in 1883.³ This was probably the older son of John and Bridget, though the records are a little ambiguous and there were several relatives in the district. James became a wheat grower and in 1915 won a prize in the Victorian crop competition.⁴

James became involved in civic activities. In 1884 he was winning races at Dookie North as a fundraiser for the Roman Catholic School,⁵ so he started early. In 1886 one of the family was involved in raising funds for the Irish Parliamentary Fund.⁶ James joined the Dookie Agricultural Society and was president of the group in 1900;⁷ they supported the Dookie Agricultural College and pushed for an irrigation scheme for the district. The Agricultural Society helped form a railway league to connect the Goulburn Valley and the North-Eastern districts. They held a public meeting where James occupied the chair as President of the Society and was elected as President of the League.⁸

James was active as a local representative on the Tungamah Shire Councillor for 27 years from about 1894; he was a commissioner of the waterworks trust also for 27 years. He was also a Justice of the Peace and served on the Dookie police court.⁹ He was with the Yabba Farmers Union and in 1904 he spoke at the Northern Farmers' League about the need for farmers to engage in the political processes:

*"In all districts there are a few men who step out and give their time and service to public affairs, but there is no cohesion amongst them. It was discouraging to see the poor vote at the federal elections. ... I have always taken an interest in politics and would like to see a fair thing between the farmers and the Labour party, but we will have to throw off our indifference to vote if we are going to get this."*¹⁰

Catherine Cummins née Crimmins died on 18 August 1940 at the age of 61 years. James Cummins died about January 1946. #

² Details from headstone at Dookie cemetery.

³ North Eastern Ensign 6 March 1883 p2

⁴ The Farmer and Settler NSW 20 March 1917 p7

⁵ North Eastern Ensign 16 April 1884 p2

⁶ North Eastern Ensign 13 August 1886 p3

⁷ Argus 2 November 1900 p8

⁸ Argus 20 July 1900 p6

⁹ Argus 12 August 1921 p9

¹⁰ Argus 26 April 1904 p5

DAVIES, Benjamin and Emma



In 1868 Davies selected allotment 46 in the Maribyrnong parish – it was 60 acres on the Kororoit Creek south of Thomas Opie's farm, in what is now Deer Park.¹ Davies acquired the title for the property in 1874.

Benjamin George Davies was born on 4 November 1822 in Llanstephan, Wales, and migrated to Australia on 'Monarch of the Sea' in 1857.² He was a printer, and after arriving in Melbourne he worked at the Government Printing Office for a few months. He left for the diggings but was not successful and became manager of the Prince of Wales Company on Poverty Reef to look after his brother's interests. He became popular with the Welsh community at Tarnagulla, and in July 1861 was elected to parliament as the MLA for Avoca.³

However, his popularity was not universal, as in September 1861, he was accused of jumping a neighbour's mining claim and the Court of Mines ruled against him. A disgruntled miner wrote to the editor of the Argus complaining about:

*"... the newly elected member for the Avoca – the chosen of Inglewood – the pet of Tarnagulla – the man of the people – was defeated in an endeavour to obtain his neighbour's property. It is not, however, with the legislator I wish to deal. Of course, 'he is an honourable man; so are they all, all honourable men,' ... It is to 'jumping' I desire particularly to draw public attention, in the hope that something may be done during the present session to rid the miners of this pest."*⁴

Davies continued in office until February 1880. His positions included Chairman of Committees 1871-1877, Royal Commission Friendly Societies

1875, and Goldfields Royal Commission 1862. He also went into partnership with a colleague, William Frazer, MLA, as B. G. Davies & Co., mining agents of Melbourne circa 1868-1870, and he was a director with other companies.

In 1880 Davies brought down the government:

*"Mr Davies was never a leading figure in politics, but ... upon one memorable occasion, his vote determined the fate of an important measure, and precipitated a general election. ... Mr. Davies supported the Berry Government for three years, but did not come into any prominence again until the last night of the sitting of the House under the leadership of Mr. Berry. The Reform Bill was about to be read a third time when one member after another of the Berry party rose and declared that they could not support the bill, and what had been considered an assured majority dwindled rapidly until there was only sufficient votes left to give the absolute majority required to carry the measure. It was at this juncture that Mr. Davies rose and amidst intense excitement declared his intention to cross the floor of the House, thus throwing the measure out. At the general election which followed Mr. Davies lost his seat. Soon afterwards he was appointed inspector of refreshment rooms by Mr. Bent the Minister of Railways of the time, and that position he held ever since."*⁵

Inexplicably, some critics were somewhat cynical about his appointment:

*"Mr. B. G. Davies was at one time an appreciable quantity in politics, but on the eve of the last general election, a position in the public service was allotted to him ... that of inspector of railway refreshment rooms, to which was attached a salary of £300 a year. By this appointment, a gentleman, who might have been a dangerous opponent to a Cabinet Minister, was put out of the running."*⁶

Benjamin Davies married Emma Sarah Meredith Sutherland on 27 December 1871 at Christ Church, Geelong. Emma was a daughter of Thomas Winter Meredith of Rhôs-ferrig-Vawr, from South Wales, and the widow of Thomas Stark Sutherland, of Rangoon, Burma.⁷ Emma Sarah Davies died at her home 'Rhôs Ferry' in South Yarra on Christmas Day 1884. Benjamin George Davies died of apoplexy and pleurisy on 25 July 1891 at his residence 'Rhôs Ferry' in Great Davis street, South Yarra.⁸

Although Davies selected land in Maribyrnong at the break up of the Keilor Common he was not involved with St Albans more directly. #

¹ Argus 3 November 1868 p6

² Argus 3 November 1857 p1

³ Five candidates nominated for the seat; B G Davies and J M Grant were elected. Argus 30 July 1861 p5

⁴ Argus 16 September 1861 p6

⁵ Argus 25 July 1891 p10

⁶ Horsham Times 9 February 1886 p2

⁷ Argus 28 December 1871 p4

⁸ Gippsland Times 27 July 1891 p3

DAVIS, Arthur, Edmund, and George

The Davis brothers were early selectors on the Keilor Common. The brothers – Arthur, Edmund, and George – had adjoining blocks 18, 17 and 14, south of Taylors Road and bordering the farms of Cavanagh, Egan and Errington who had frontages onto Boundary Road. George was a selector on the ballot held in 1868, while his brothers probably obtained their allotments after other people had forfeited or surrendered their licences. The three brothers met their obligations to improve their properties: they fenced the farms, sank a couple of water holes and started cultivating the basic portion that was set by the Closer Settlement Board. Their local ambitions must have been assessed as being rather modest as it has been noted that “*They built their house of corrugated iron.*”¹

The brothers came to Australia in the early 1850s, their parents being Septimus Davis (1794-1875) and Lucy Church (1797-1874).



Septimus was born on 13 December 1794 in Somerset, England, the son of John Davis and Sarah Hall. Lucy was born on 21 April 1797 in Chewton Mendip, Somerset; her parents were William Church and Sarah Bendall. Septimus and Lucy Davis's children include:

- William 1820-
- Jonah 1822-1875
- George 1825-1898
- Sarah Ann 1827-1903
- Maria 1830-1858
- Edmund 1833-1912
- Emma 1835-1836
- Arthur 1836-1893
- Henry 1839-1901.

The family migrated in three stages, with son George Davis being the first to migrate, arriving on the ‘Nelson’ in November 1849. Edmund was next to arrive in October 1851 on the ‘Constance’. Then the parents and other family migrated on the ‘Clara Symes’ in 1852 and

arrived on 7 February 1853. Their early settlement is unknown but Arthur Davis was in Wyndham in the 1860s and by 1873 the family was settled in Wyndham as tenants on the Werribee Estate in the Parish of Tarneit, a small agricultural area with crops and grazing as the main occupations. They later bought land in Werribee and elsewhere in Melbourne.

Arthur Davis was born on 7 December 1836 in South Stoke, Somersetshire, and married Ann Davis Cox in 1864 at St James Church in Melbourne. They became farmers at Werribee. Arthur and Ann had several children: Ernest Godfrey Richard Church, Minnie May, Amy Beatrice, Louisa Malvina Maud, Arthur Edwin Rupert, and Eva Ada Mabel. Their major tragedy was when their young son, Rupert, died on 27 March 1879; he had been playing with his sisters and cousins in a hay dray containing a large iron tank of water when the dray suddenly tipped up and the tank crushed him to death. One of his sisters was seriously injured but escaped with her life.²

Arthur and Ann had a house at Tarneit in the 1870s. At this time Arthur served on the Board of Advice at the district school. During the 1890s he was living in Williamstown. He died suddenly in July 1893 of a heart attack at lunch with friends at Wall's Werribee Club Hotel; he was 55 years of age.³ Ann Davis died many years later, on 18 June 1929, aged 84.

As Wyndham Shire developed as a farming community, two of the brothers, Edmund and Henry, became directly involved in municipal affairs, Edmund as a councillor and Henry as the Shire valuer and collector.

Edmund Davis was born 26 January 1833 in Somerset. He arrived in Australia on 27 October 1851 and married Ellen Arnold in July 1873; she was the daughter of Charles Arnold of Richmond. Their children included Emily Lucy Maria, Ellen, Violet Rose, Clarence Sidney Victor, Sidney Herbert Arnold, Rosalie Ida May, Edmund Arthur Lionel, and Hilda Amy Pearl.

Edmund Davis nominated for the Wyndham Shire Council as far back as 1866. In 1870 he was elected Shire President and was then re-elected in 1871. By 1885 the shire had a population of 1,500 occupied in agriculture, wool growing and dairy industries. The district was evolving; Werribee had a population of 320 and Little River had 125. Tarneit, where the family moved to, was a small agricultural town-

¹ St Albans The First Hundred Years

² The Mclvor Times 3 April 1879

³ Williamstown Chronicle 15 July 1893

ship with haymaking as its main industry. In August 1881 Edmund stood for election as the auditor for Wyndham Shire but was beaten by Phillip Reece. Interestingly, at this time Davis was identified as being a farmer of Toorak.¹ He was still a councillor in 1893 but resigned later that year and again nominated for the Auditorship. This time he was outpolled by Charles Schulze, a Werribee storekeeper.

The Toorak residence must have had some gravitas, as in August 1899 Edmund hosted his nephew's wedding ceremony at the premises – Frederick Davis of Werribee was marrying Leticia Wilson of Bendigo. After the ceremony the party drove to Parkville “*where a sumptuous wedding breakfast was partaken of.*”²

Edmund Davis died in 1913. His real estate included cottages in Toorak, East Prahran and North Melbourne, a building block in East Brunswick, and land in Maidstone. These were sold at auction and realized £1,400 – a good amount, reflecting his sound investments.

Henry Davis was born 2 June 1839 in South Stoke, and migrated in 1853. He married Mary Anne Berry in 1868 in St James Church, Melbourne; Mary was born in 1849 in Essendon. They were living at Little River and their children included Henry Claude Arthur, Lucy Lilley, Edith Maude, Herbert Arthur, Frederick Henry, Bertha Rose, Ada Alice Mary, George Victor, Charles Gordon, and Edmund Alfred.

Henry Davis became the Collector at Wyndham in 1875. In 1883 his services as Dog Inspector and Inspector of Thistles were disposed with, but he retained the roles of Valuer, Rate Collector, and Collector of Agricultural Statistics.³ He also acted as returning officer, such as when conducting elections for the School District's Board of Advice. He ended up working for council for 35 years.

In 1889 Henry rented a farm at Tarneit in the name of 'Henry Davis & Sons', from where he continued his activities as an agent for fertilizer, which he supplied to the Werribee and Little River districts. He was also the local insurance agent for the Royal Insurance Co.

He died unexpectedly in April 1901. He had been delivering Census papers in Mt. Cotterill when the dray overturned and he broke his leg. He was able to drag himself into the dray and drove for help. He was taken to Melbourne

Hospital where he was progressing well then died due to an obstructive embolism.⁴ His estate included five blocks of land, some cows and horses, and various farming machines.

His son, Herbert Arthur Davis, was born in 1873 and became well known in the Werribee district. Herbert died in 1949 at the age of 76.

George Davis was born on 18 June 1825 in Chew Magna, Somerset and arrived in Australia in 1849. He married Alice Prosser in 1863; their children included Alice Kinneston, Harry, Frederick, George Frederick Francis, Percival, Louis, Lucy Ester Maria, Elsie May Jane, and Archie. They were farmers at Tarneit though few details are known about George's activities or his farm on the Werribee in the late 1860s and beyond. He contracted pleurisy in December 1897 and died in January 1898; he was buried at the Werribee cemetery.



George missed out on the double wedding in 1902 when his son, Percival Davis, married a cousin, Bertha Rose Davis. The other groom was his nephew, Frederick Henry Davis, who married Elizabeth Cecelia Muir. About 300 guests helped the families celebrate.⁵

George's wife, Alice Davis née Prosser, was one of the longer-lived members of the family, because she died on 27 July 1920, at the age of 80 years.⁶

The Davis brothers did contribute to civic and municipal developments as farming pioneers in the state, but that was in Wyndham and Werribee; they did not play a major role in the development of St Albans. They were small farmers and investors in 1869, and in 1879 they sold their St Albans farmlets to Ferdinand Hann. He would later sell the land to Padley's Cosmopolitan Land and Banking Company ... so it is a case of small investors selling to the speculators. #

¹ Williamstown Chronicle 12 August 1893

² Bendigo Advertiser 3 August 1899

³ Williamstown Chronicle 8 September 1883

⁴ Bacchus Marsh Express 6 April 1901

⁵ Bacchus Marsh Express 23 August 1902

⁶ Argus 29 July 1920



Septimus Davis



Lucy Davis née Church

DE CARLE, Edward and Annie

Edward de Carle had a block of land in Keilor just east of the bridge across the Salt Water River and acquired land within the parish of Maribyrnong during the 1850s, being block E of 74 acres on the north-west corner of Furlong Road and Sunshine Avenue. He bought a large tract at Footscray and divided it into allotments in 1853, which was the start of Footscray. In 1855 he also purchased a town lot at the Salt Water River near Solomon's Ford.¹

De Carle was born in 1828 in Suffolk, England, the son of Benjamin de Carle (1788-1864) from Norwich in Norfolk, and Sophia Prentice (1788-1840) from Bury in St Edmund. Edward was one of nine children:

- Elizabeth 1815-1819
- Charles William 1816-1840
- Henry 1818-1903
- Elizabeth 1820-1899
- John 1823-1897
- Alice 1824-1847
- Edward 1828-1872
- Benjamin 1829-1855
- Sophia 1831-1905.

Edward and Henry migrated together, arriving in Adelaide about 1849 and coming to Melbourne in March 1850.² In 1851 they were operating as stationers and ironmongers before Edward de Carle joined Henry Holmes as wine and spirit merchants at 28-30 Little Bourke street east.

De Carle was the leading partner in the development of the Queen's Arcade, which was the first arcade to be built in Melbourne; his partners were Luscombe, Lee and Holmes. Henry Holmes and Richard Luscombe were also de Carle's partners in a 10,000-acre estate at Perth, which was not a particularly successful venture and action was later taken in the Supreme Court to resolve financial dealings.³

Then in 1857 de Carle formed a partnership with Thomas Hide; they founded a grocery, wine and spirit merchant's business in Elizabeth Street, which lasted until 1861. Theirs was an eclectic business venture as it also included a land and estate agency and they even issued "trade tokens" that they had made in England; they were in penny and half-penny sizes and have now become collectable items.

Edward de Carle married Annie Smoothey at Holstead, Essex, on 10 August 1854; she was

¹ Argus 5 October 1855

² Sydney Morning Herald 20 March 1850

³ Argus 15 July 1857

born in 1828, the only daughter of Joseph Smoothery of Hepworth Hall, Holstead.¹ In 1859 they were living in Sandhurst Street, North Melbourne but by 1863 they had moved to Albion Street East in Brunswick.

*"In the early days of Victoria he had a large place out at Brunswick in a kind of suburb known as 'Lyndhurst,' extending from close to the termination of Lygon Street, Carlton, in the south to Albion Street in the north, and from the Merrie Creek nearly to the Sydney Road, and which was then a very fashionable quarter."*²

He lived in a rather grand two-storey wooden house known as Lyndhurst Hall, which was thought to be one of the houses originally imported for erection on Lieutenant Governor La Trobe's land in Jolimont.³

Edward and Anne de Carle's children included:

- Edward Albert born c.1855
- Leslie Prentice born c.1858
- Florence Edward born c.1859
- Edith Isabelle born c.1861
- Charles.

The family moved to Dunedin, New Zealand, in the 1860s. Edward de Carle drowned in the Buller river harbour on 14 May 1872 at Westport on the west coast of New Zealand:

"It appears that he was going on board one of the steamers lying there ... when by some means he lost his footing and fell overboard. A pretty heavy fresh was on at the time, and he was swept rapidly down the river, though we hear he struck out manfully to save his life. How it was, if he kept himself afloat for any time, there were no boats to rescue him does not appear, more especially as the accident happened in daylight. Despite his exertions, he was carried over the bar and drowned, and the body was washed up on the north beach. ..."

*"Deceased was a most enterprising business man. He carried on a large business in Melbourne for a number of years, and subsequently conducted a large carrying agency in Dunedin. He had just started in the same line between Reefton and Westport, and had also taken out an auctioneer's licence, intending to conduct that business in conjunction with it. We regret to hear that he leaves a family behind him, who are in Victoria."*⁴

Edward de Carle's connection to early St Albans was as a real estate investor-speculator. #

¹ Argus 11 November 1854

² <http://museumvictoria.com.au/collections/themes/1926/e-de-carle-co-merchants-auctioneers-land-agents-melbourne-victoria>

³ City of Moreland Thematic History May 2010 p55

⁴ Argus 23 May 1872 p4

DELAHAY, John

John Delahay was one of the selectors on Keilor Common having been allotted block 9 on Boundary Road between the selections of Walter John Toop and Thomas Burge Derham.

Delahay's background in the district is difficult to pin down and this isn't helped by the fact that his surname has sometimes been spelt as 'Delahay' and at other times as 'Delahey.' John Delahay is mentioned in the Keilor Police Court records in 1863 as a complainant in recovering money for work done, but there was an earlier mention for 5 August 1862 when John Delahey was brought before the Keilor Police Court for shooting on a Sunday. It has been assumed that this was Palmer John Delahey,⁵ but he would have been aged only 11 at the time, so it seems unlikely. In 1869, John Delahey was listed as a witness in a perjury trial involving members of the Keilor Road Board.⁶ Quite clearly, he had settled in the district at least in the 1860s if not earlier.

Most probably, the 1868 selector at St Albans was John Delahey, the son of William Delahey and Ann Dodd, whose children were:⁷

- Henry born about 1811
- Bridget born about 1813
- William born about 1820
- Ann born about 1823
- John born about 1824
- Robert born about 1832.

William Delahey and Ann Delahey née Dodd had arrived in Melbourne on 27 June 1840. In 1849 William and his brother-in-law, George Dodd, bought land at Keilor in what is now known as Brimbank Park.⁸ Later, other family members joined them on the farm, and this is probably how John Delahey came to migrate.

John Delahey was not able to retain his farm selection at St Albans. In October 1872, the Victorian Minister for Lands was due to hear applications in a dispute between John Delahay, Thomas Burge Derham and Walter John Toop:

"John Delahey was called upon to show cause why the licence for the occupation of 60 acres of land under the 42nd section of the act of 1865, in the parish of Maribyrnong should not be forfeited. Three years and a half elapsed from the date of the issue of the licence before any improvements were effected. The chief

⁵ Keilor Pioneers p138

⁶ Argus 10 August 1869 p1s

⁷ <http://boards.ancestry.com.au/localities.britisles.ireland.off.general/409/mb.ashx>

⁸ Keilor Pioneers p111

reason urged by Delahay for the continuance of the licence, was the fact that in May last, T. B. Derham advanced him £118, to enable him to pay rent and improve the land, and he was just about to effect improvements when action was taken by other persons to obtain the forfeiture of the licence. The case was adjourned, for a week to enable Delahay to put in a declaration as to the value of the improvements which were made in June last.”¹

It was decided that the land should be sold by auction. Walter Toop, who had informed the department, objected to the sale because he wanted the block. Mr Casey said that whether the land should be sold or reserved for selection would be determined after Toop had an opportunity of proving his bona fides.² The following month Delahay's licence for the land was forfeited and the selection was put up for sale.³ It was later acquired by A W McKenna.

John Delahay became a road contractor and worked in the shires of Keilor, Braybrook and Melton. He submitted tenders under his own name as well as “John Delahey and Co.” He was known to have taken up road construction in partnership with George Staines and they submitted many tenders to Keilor shire for gravelling and pitching the roads and paths.⁴

Apart from his road contracts, Delahey worked on the Keilor Village lagoon and the Melton Reservoir. Notices about his contract work cease in early 1894 and it is not known what happened to him after this time. He would have been aged 70 years, so he might have retired, but where he was living is also unknown.

The late John Delahey, contractor, was buried at Keilor cemetery on 22 May 1906. He had died at the age of 84 and was buried in the same grave as Ann, Henry and Robert Delahey, thus adding credence to the belief that they were siblings. The Delahey and Dodd families were early pioneers in the district. Even though John Delahey lost his St Albans selection, he most probably contributed to the district through his road-building endeavours. #

Histories of the Delahey and Dodd families are included in Angela Evans' *Keilor Pioneers, Dead Men do Tell Tales* (1984) and in Joan Carstairs and Maureen Lane's *Pubs, Punts and Pastures, The Story of Pioneer Women on the Salt Water River* (1988); both published by the St Albans History Society.

¹ Argus 2 October 1872 p1s

² Argus 9 October 1872

³ Argus 20 November 1872 p2s

⁴ Keilor Pioneers p190-191.

DELAHEY, Mary and Henry

Early maps of the St Albans and neighbouring district show that Mary Delahey acquired many properties between Boundary Road and Ballarat Road along both sides of the railway line. The land was purchased before June 1896 so at first glance there is a choice of three women who might have been the owner:

- Mary Delahey née Dodd of Keilor, wife of Henry Delahey. She died in 1876.
- Mary Louisa Delahey née Egan of Keilor Plains was born about 1854 and married Richard Delahey on 18 September 1895. She died in 1921.
- Mary Delahey of Keilor Road in North Essendon was the daughter of William and Bridget Delahey and sister of Henry, Ann and William. She died in 1933.

Not unexpectedly, it was Mary Delahey née Dodd who selected 13 lots in the Maribyrnong parish on 27th January 1853.⁵ Her husband Henry had died in 1851, which is why Mary's name has survived as the listed owner of the properties. At one stage she had more than 900 acres in her name, stretching south from Boundary Road into the Braybrook Estate and past Albion railway station.⁶

Mary and Henry Delahey were from Kings County in Ireland. Mary was the daughter of William Dodd (1782-1840) and Margaret Loughnan (1780-1852), who died in Melbourne at the age of 75. Henry was a carpenter and Mary a dairymaid. They married in 1835 at Birr, Kings County, and had two children, Ann and William, before deciding to migrate to Australia. They came to Port Phillip in 1840 on the barque 'Andromache' with their children and many of Mary's relatives.

It is interesting to note the 'benefits' that the Andromache advertised for passengers heading to the colony:

“Emigration to Australia - The fine first-class ship - Andromache - of 458 tons register, and 750 tons burthen, will sail from Graces end on the 27th of June, and from Plymouth on the 10th of July direct for Sydney. This Ship's Poop and other accommodations are equal to those of a regular Indiaman; her 'tween decks unusually lofty and well ventilated; and the entire arrangements for the comfort of Cabin, Intermediate, and Steerage Passengers, cannot fail on inspection; to give satisfaction; an experienced Surgeon will proceed in her, and the day appointed for sailing will be punctually adhered to.

⁵ *St Albans The First Hundred Years* p6

⁶ *Keilor Pioneers* mentions 1,000 acres in the Parish of Maribyrnong on the Kororoit Creek. p132

Married Mechanics and Agriculturalists are greatly wanted in this Colony; such persons, of good character, and not exceeding 30 years of age, may obtain a passage by this Ship, at a very small cost to themselves.”¹

Henry and Mary Delahey lived in Melbourne for three years before moving to Keilor in 1846.² At this stage Port Phillip was still part of the Colony of New South Wales and Keilor village had not yet been promulgated – that would not occur for several years – so when the family was negotiating the purchase of land it was done through Sydney. The Delaheys were truly some of the very earliest pioneers in the district. Their children included:

- Ann born in 1838 and died in 1870 at Jolimont; never married.
- William born in 1839 and never married; was involved with Keilor Shire for at least 25 years and died in 1905.
- Margaret born and died 1841, Melbourne.
- Henry born in 1842 and died in 1931 at Moonee Ponds; wed Mary Prendergast in 1902 but they had no children.
- Bridget Mary born 1844, wed William John Rose of Essendon in 1871; she died of typhoid fever in 1876.
- James born 1846, wed Jessie McCormick in 1889; died in 1912 due to heart failure.
- Richard born 1849, wed Margaret Una Delaney of Footscray in 1876 and after she died he wed Mary Egan of Keilor Plains (St Albans) in 1895. Richard died in 1896 after being hit by a train.
- Palmer John born 1851, never married, lived at Bacchus Marsh; died in 1919.

Henry Delahey and his brother-in-law, George Dodd, bought about 590 acres south of the Keilor cemetery and bounded on the west by the Saltwater River. The property was at first known as ‘Oakley Park’ but was later renamed as ‘The Oaks’. They had an adjacent property of 316 acres as tenants in common with Patrick O’Brien.³

Henry Delahey senior died unexpectedly on 30 September 1851 as the result of an accident at Kings Street in Melbourne:

“An inquest was held yesterday at the Kilkenny Inn in Lonsdale-street on the body of Henry Delahey, a labouring man who resided at Salt Water River. The deceased was returning home from town with a dray load of timber, and having arrived at a deep gully at the intersec-

tion of King and Lonsdale streets, the dray was unfortunately capsized, and the driver buried under the load. The poor fellow was immediately extricated and carried into the Kilkenny Inn, but it was ascertained that life was quite extinct. Verdict, accidental death.”⁴

Mary Delahey was left with seven young children to provide for but she survived well with support from her brother, George Dodd, and her other family members.

“As Mary Delahey’s children grew and some later married they stayed close to their home in Keilor. Mary’s sons were either farmers or graziers in the Keilor district where they purchased land and established themselves into a position of wealth and high regard in the community.”⁵

Their activities included establishing a private school for their expanding families and other local children. The building was later moved to a new site and converted to a public school for the district. They also helped establish the Roman Catholic Church of St Augustine’s in Keilor and Patrick Phelan, George Dodd and William Delahey became trustees for the property. Bishop Goold was a frequent visitor to Mary’s home. The church was opened for service on 11 November 1863:

“On that day, St Augustine’s, a fine bluestone church built of locally quarried materials, opened with Pontifical High Mass and the music of Mozart. The church on the hill still looks down today on the village of Keilor – a grand memorial to the pioneering Irish families. Mary could stand at her farmhouse door, look across the river valley, and see the church on the other side.”⁶

Mary Delahey died on 12 September 1876 at her residence, Oakleigh Park, Keilor, aged 65 years; her body was interred at the Melbourne cemetery.⁷ She had obviously been a very hard-working matriarch, a strong mother and leader, and an astute businesswoman. Her personal indulgence seems to have been horse riding.

Mary left her Maribyrnong Parish properties to sons Richard and James, and the land she had bought in Bacchus Marsh was left to son Palmer John. William Delahey, the oldest son, inherited the Oakleigh Park farm and continued to operate it, but by 1892 it was divided into the Delahey brothers’ farm to the west and George Dodd’s farm to the east.

William Delahey became involved with local

¹ Andromache advertisement dated 19 May 1837. <http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~wbritonad/cornwall/1837/misc/may2.html>

² Victoria and Its Metropolis p423

³ Argus 1 February 1851

⁴ Argus 1 October 1851

⁵ Keilor Pioneers p133

⁶ Pubs, Punts and Pastures p112

⁷ Argus 13 September 1876

council as a representative for the Doutta Galla Riding. He was first elected about 1870 and his time with council spanned at least 25 years; he was Shire President in 1883-84. William died in 1905, leaving the Oakleigh Park property to his brother Henry.¹

Henry, the second son of Henry and Mary, also became involved with municipal affairs. His interest started through the Braybrook Road District Board in 1870² and he was a councillor for the Northern Riding in 1872-75.³ He nominated as a candidate for the Board of Advice for the School District of Keilor in 1873 but missed out in a close contest.⁴ Then in 1880 he was elected as Auditor for the Shire of Keilor,⁵ a position he seems to have held on several occasions and as late as 1894.⁶

In 1910 Henry Delahey was elected without opposition in the Doutta Galla Riding of Keilor Shire⁷ and was still on council in 1918⁸ but at this stage he was living at Mantell Street in Moonee Ponds.⁹ After this time there is a gap in the newspaper entries until the notice that he died on 20 September 1931 at Moonee Ponds.¹⁰ He was the last sibling of the original pioneer family to pass away.

The Delahey family name was accorded particular prominence in 1994 when it was adopted for the 'new' neighbourhood of Delahey, which is perched between the older areas of St Albans and Sydenham; its southern boundary on Taylors Road is where the pioneer families of the early 1900s, such as the Macauleys, Griffiths and Foxes, bought their farm selections after the break-up of William Taylor's Overnewton estate under the Closer Settlement Scheme. #

References:

Angela Evans et al; *Keilor Pioneers, Dead Men Do Tell Tales*; St Albans History Society 1984.

Joan Carstairs and Maureen Lane; *Pubs, Punts and Pastures, the Story of Pioneer Women on the Salt Water River*; St Albans History Society 1988.

¹ Brimbank City Council Post-contact Cultural Heritage Study; Dodd homestead ruins.

² Argus 24 June 1870 p3

³ Bacchus Marsh Express 3 August 1872

⁴ Argus 4 July 1873 p3

⁵ Argus 4 August 1886 p8

⁶ Argus 25 August 1894 p9

⁷ Footscray Independent 27 August 1910

⁸ Flemington Spectator 19 September 1918 p3

⁹ Flemington Spectator 3 August 1916

¹⁰ Argus 21 September 1931

DELAHUNTY, John and Maria

John Delahunty was a selector at the Keilor Commons selloff in November 1868, obtaining allotment 35, which was on the Kororoit Creek at the western end of Boundary Road. He did not have it for very long before David Newell acquired the title to the property in 1872 – Newell and Delahunty were residents of Footscray and had business connections.

John Delahunty was from Tipperary, Ireland. He was born in 1843 to John Delahunty (1815-1889) and Mary White (1815-1882), who were farmers in the Roscrea area.

John junior had migrated to Port Phillip in the late 1840s and worked for Michael Lynch, who may have been involved with the punt across the Saltwater River at Footscray in 1849, and who settled with other family members in Epping. Michael Lynch appears to have guided Delahunty's settlement in the colony.¹¹

John Delahunty married Michael Lynch's niece, Maria Kilmartin; she was born in 1841 in Queens County and came to Australia as a child with her father John Kilmartin (1817-1890) and her brother Michael (1847-1925). John and Maria wed at Epping in 1859; they had 11 children, their first two being born at Epping and Wollert and the others were mostly born at Footscray:

- John 1860-1933
- Mary Frances 1861-1889
- Catherine born 1863
- Michael Joseph 1864-1942
- Margaret 1866-
- Ellen Maria 1868-1929
- Eliza Lilly 1871-1903
- Catherine 1874-1953
- William Patrick 1877-1935
- Thomas 1879-
- Percy 1882-1918.

Delahunty became the landlord of the Punt Inn on the Saltwater River at 2 Geelong Road, Footscray, as early as 1864.¹² In 1870 he was preparing to move to Northcote as he had applied for a publican's licence for the Roscrea Hotel that he had rented in January 1870. The lease on the grazing land near Punt Inn had expired and he auctioned off his stock of 80 cattle and 6 horses as well as furniture and

¹¹ A Michael Lynch was involved with the punt on the Saltwater River as early as 1849 and a Michael Lynch was with the Roscrea Hotel in Northcote at which Delahunty became the licensee in 1870s, but it is not known if these Michaels were the same person or if they were related to John Delahunty.

¹² Argus 30 June 1864 p1

equipment.¹ In January 1870 he arranged for the publican's licence to be transferred to David Newell, a contractor of Footscray.²

Late in 1872 Delahunty became insolvent due to business losses and sickness in the family.³ Perhaps this occasioned the transfer of his St Albans selection to David Newell? Delahunty's insolvency was either a drawn-out affair or he experienced similar problems fairly soon, as in 1876 he applied for a discharge certificate but the insolvency court decided otherwise when his Honour "saw no grounds for doing away with the payment of the 7s in the £ dividend to creditors as required by the act."⁴

Delahunty may have had financial difficulties but he continued as the licensee of Roscrea Hotel until 1875,⁵ after which he was back at Footscray as the toll collector on the bridge across the Saltwater River.⁶ Toll collection had its hazards, as one day Delahunty seized the gun of a man who was attempting to cross without paying, and was sued for damages by the recalcitrant customer. The courts were not sympathetic to toll evaders:

*"John Holden was summoned for evading the Flemington road check gate ... also for using abusive and insulting language to the Toll Collector. John Delahunty, Collector, deposed that Holden was passing over private ground when he demanded the toll, 3d. Holden stated he would pay when he returned. However, on returning, instead of paying, he commenced to abuse the collector, shook a stick at him, and challenged him to come out in the road to fight. For the first offence he was fined £1, and £4 15s costs, and for the second a fine of 10s, and £1 6s was imposed, making a total of £7 11s 6d to pay in order to save 3d."*⁷

John Delahunty died on 8 March 1882 at Footscray.⁸ In 1894 Maria Delahunty née Kilmartin married William Francis Osborne, who was from Suffolk; they were together for 23 years in Footscray. William died in 1917 and Maria died on 18 March 1922 at her home in Studley Street, Maidstone.⁹ She was aged 81 years, a settler since the 1850s. They were all pioneers, but John and Maria Delahunty had only a brief connection with St Albans. #

¹ Argus 15 January 1870 p6

² Argus 19 January 1870 p8

³ Bacchus Marsh Express 9 February 1889 p2

⁴ Argus 1 April 1876 p9

⁵ <http://heritage.darebinlibraries.vic.gov.au/article/728>

⁶ Bacchus Marsh Express 8 April 1876 p2

⁷ Bacchus Marsh Express 8 April 1876 p2

⁸ Argus 9 March 1882 p1

⁹ Argus 25 March 1922 p11

DERHAM, Thomas Burge and Matilda

Thomas Burge Derham acquired allotment 8 at the Keilor Commons land sale in 1868; it was a triangular block of 60 acres on the old Three Chain Road (now known as Sunshine Avenue) and along Errington Road to Boundary Road.

Derham was born on 29 December 1825 in the hamlet of Knapp in the parish of North Curry, Somerset, England. His father was John Derham (1799-1877), a butcher by trade, and his mother was Mary Burge (1795-1890).

Thomas married three times. He wed Margaret Bulpin in 1846 but she died in 1848.¹⁰ Then he wed Elizabeth Wilks in 1850 and she died in 1855.¹¹ His last marriage was to Matilda Bryant in 1856. Thomas and Matilda sailed from Liverpool on the 'Eastern City', leaving England on 9 May 1857 and arriving in Australia on 11 August 1857. They lived in Swanston Street for a while and Thomas traded as a butcher in Latrobe Street before moving to the Braybrook district in 1858. They settled at Albion where they first rented and then purchased land.

Thomas and Matilda had eleven children:

- Elizabeth Johnson 1857-1937
- Emily Burge 1858-1944
- Eleanor Mary Burge 1859-1868
- Thomas Burge 1862-1925
- John Burge 1863-1932
- Ada Maud Burge 1865-1865
- Maud Mary (Matilda) Burge 1866-1944
- Ella Burge 1868-1932
- Olive Matilda Burge 1870-1953
- William James Burge 1872-1920
- Mabel Bowen 1874-1922

Thomas Derham became a very busy man in the shire of Braybrook. He took on his father's occupation as a butcher but also became a publican, a grazier and sheep dealer, as well as trading in horses for the Indian army. He was a member of Braybrook Shire council for over 30 years representing the Eastern Riding, which was later known as the River Riding; he was Shire President in 1882-83. His other community activities included membership of the Albion and Braybrook school committees.

Derham bought lots of property in Braybrook between Clarendon and Wood streets, plus other blocks in the area, more than several hundred acres in total. Thomas Burge Derham died in 1906, and his obituary describes him as "one of the most prominent figures in

¹⁰ Son Charles was born 1847 and died 1920.

¹¹ Son George was born 1852 and died 1937.

Braybrook, a man who has made his presence in the shire for a period extending over a half century ... a strong man, both physically and mentally" but his life and business ventures were much more enigmatic than this simple eulogy. Nevertheless, he was enterprising and hard working, and not afraid to push boundaries in pursuit of his interests.

Derham purchased the Braybrook Hotel in 1866 and ran that in conjunction with his wife. The hotel was built about 1859 and Derham bought it from William Land. Thomas and Matilda ran the hotel until the early 1900s.

Derham became involved in municipal activities early in his settlement as by 1866 he was acting as the returning officer for the Braybrook District Road Board.¹ He was soon testing the limits of neighbourliness. In March 1867 Joseph Haggard, a manager of the Braybrook Common wrote to the Board to prevent Derham from fencing in streets and water reserves in the township of Braybrook, but the Board thought that the matter was not within their jurisdiction.² However, the complaints kept coming. In 1892 the Crown Lands Bailiff charged Derham with being illegally in occupation of a reserve along the margin of the Saltwater River at Braybrook. Derham had some allotments facing the river, but there was also a reserve. Instead of fencing his land parallel to the stream he had run the side fences in to the water's edge, thus enclosing the reserve. The bailiff asked for the removal of the fence. Derham was fined £2 with £2 costs.³

In 1893 Derham was finally forced to act:

*"T. B. Derham was charged by the Crown Lands department with trespassing on the banks of the Saltwater River. The offence was admitted, and Mr Derham explained that the land was of no use to anyone but himself and that he had put up gates for the convenience of anyone wishing to pass, but the road led nowhere. The land was also covered with burrs and infested with vermin, and he had enclosed it to clear these off and thus protect his own property. Fined 20s with 23s 6d costs, and ordered to remove the fence within one month."*⁴

A much later and much more cynical evaluation of Derham's behaviour was that he was trying to force small landowners off their holdings by destroying their rock walls and denying them access to water.

In May 1867 the managers of the Braybrook Farmers' Common, proceeded against Derham for illegally depasturing 800 sheep on the common. His defence was that the common was only sixty acres in extent and that the sheep were not depasturing but only travelling. He was fined 40 shillings with 20 shillings costs.⁵ This was not an isolated incident. In 1867 George Evans took action against Derham for the trespass of 300 sheep on his property (case dismissed) and James Thompson also sued for the trespass of 350 sheep (case deferred for verification). In 1868 there was another case "illegally rescuing 550 sheep"⁶ which means they were trespassing and were being taken to the pound; Derham was again fined. Claims of trespassing stock, including cattle and horses as well as sheep, were not unusual at the time, but one view was that Derham made a fortune by selling horses that had grazed on other people's land.⁷

Derham's butchering business also ran into trouble, which may not have been unique to him but illustrates the various health concerns that were prevalent at the time. In 1867 he was brought before the Footscray Court for having in his possession 150 sheep infected with scab, and he was fined £15 and £3 3s costs. Derham appealed the decision and the Bench "*after some hesitation, consented to the withdrawal of the summons for the present.*"⁸

Much worse was to come, because in 1871 the Noxious Trades Commission visited Derham's premises as part of a broader inspection:

"... at Mr. T B Durham's piggery and slaughter-house everything was to be condemned. In the latter instance the place was filthy in every part, and the hasty attempts made to remove the traces of it only made it more painfully conspicuous. The front yard was in such a disgusting condition that it required some courage to enter it. Wading almost ankle-deep through dirt, putrid animal matter, and filth of all descriptions, the commissioners reached the slaughtering-house, which was in some respects more hideous than any other portion of the premises. The floor was constructed of paving stones, so loosely laid that a considerable quantity of the blood from the slaughtered animals was retained as in a sponge, and spattered up in a horrible manner whenever a person walked across. The only excuse assigned for this state of things was that the rats abounded on the premises, and loosened the stones.

¹ Argus 26 July 1866. Braybrook Road District was formed in 1860 and Derham may have started then.

² Argus 14 March 1867

³ Footscray Independent 31 December 1892

⁴ Footscray Independent 20 May 1893

⁵ Argus 3 June 1867

⁶ Argus 11 September 1868

⁷ <http://www.familytreecircles.com/keilor-historical-society-victoria-australia-newsletter-index-47095.html>

⁸ Argus 24 December 1867

"The place in which the animals were dressed was extremely dirty, though some attempts had been hurriedly made to obliterate the traces by the scattering of lime about. The yards in which the cattle were confined were ... in a most disgraceful condition. The open drains which ran round the main yard, conveying the blood and other refuse from the slaughtering-house to the creek or drain flowing into the river, were frightful to look into. Filled as they were with stagnant blood, putrefying animals, and filth of every description, they were in themselves sufficient to breed a pestilence. ...

*"There was a piggery attached to the premises, but the proprietor ... had taken steps to drive the pigs some distance away, so that their number could not be correctly estimated; the condition in which the place was showed that it must be considerable. The ground was routed up for some distance round one side of the premises, and the offal which was lying about in the mud seemed to show that this was at times the feeding-ground of the pigs. The load of tainted beef before alluded to was found in Mr. Durham's yard, and on being questioned as to what he meant to do with it, he said to boil it down and give it to the pigs. The condition of the premises was on the whole rather worse than when they were last visited."*¹

In May 1874 Derham was prosecuted for having at the Metropolitan Meat Market two carcasses of sheep "*being intended as food for human consumption and being then unfit for food*" because they were in the last stage of fluke disease.² The defence was that the sheep were for dog's food. The court was "*satisfied that the defendant must have been fully alive to the bad state of the meat*" and fined Derham £10, with £7 7s costs for the offence.³ A similar problem occurred in June 1874 at the Eastern Market, when Derham was charged with having "*a quantity of unwholesome meat, consisting of 17 legs of mutton, for the purpose of selling them for human consumption.*" The Bench was convinced by the evidence that the meat was sold on Derham's behalf and fined him £10 with £5 5s costs.⁴

In March 1883 Thomas Derham was granted a slaughtering license for his premises in Braybrook⁵ and he ended up with more difficulties. In 1887 he was prosecuted for refusing the health inspector entry into his premises but the case was adjourned. Derham complained of tyranny on the part of the health officer, which was emphatically denied; the matter was then

dropped.⁶ In 1891 Derham was summoned by the health officer for allowing offensive matter to accumulate on his hotel premises at Braybrook, referring to the piggery drain. The defence was that no written notice had been served. The Bench imposed a featherweight fine of one shilling and £1 1s for costs.⁷

Derham had problems in dealing with people. In 1886 he was charged with assaulting an employee, a boy named Joseph McFarlane:

*"Complainant said that he came home from his days work ... and defendant told him to water the horses. He declined to do so, and defendant threw two buckets of water and a bucket of pig's feed over him. ... Once defendant woke him up at one o'clock in the morning, and because he did not jump out of bed defendant threw a bucket of water over him. On several occasions he threw water over him ... Another time he threatened to beat him with a whip. ... Constable Kavanagh said that when complainant came to the police station ... the smell from his clothes (which were covered with pig's meat) was something unbearable. The lad was fly-blown at the time. Derham was locally known as the King of Braybrook. He had assaulted 'a good few' lads in his employ. A fine of 40s. was deemed sufficient punishment for this outrage. A police magistrate would probably have sentenced the "King of Braybrook" to three months imprisonment without the option of a fine."*⁸

In 1884 Derham was charged with assaulting a police constable, but the matter did not proceed as Derham had left for India with a shipment of horses.⁹ Derham had become a regular buyer of horses for the overseas trade, travelling to South Australia at least 15 times, bringing back horses to prepare for shipment to India as remounts for the British India Army.¹⁰ In 1891 Derham was shipping horses with Steve Margrett who married Maud Derham in 1892. Henry John Gidney was another Braybrook local shipping horses and he might have been a relative of Derham. The horse trade to India continued as a family business through the sons and in 1920 William James Derham went down with the ship 'Gracchus' while on a trip to Madras with horses for the British Army.¹¹

In 1892 Derham was defeated at the council election by Thomas Opie, the final tally being 63 votes for Opie and 47 for Derham.¹² He was probably re-elected later. His son, John Burge

¹ Argus 27 February 1871

² Argus 20 May 1874

³ Argus 20 May 1874

⁴ Argus 13 June 1876

⁵ Williamstown Chronicle 10 March 1883

⁶ Footscray Independent 8 October 1887

⁷ Williamstown Chronicle 28 February 1891

⁸ Williamstown Chronicle 30 Jan 1886

⁹ Argus 16 September 1884

¹⁰ T. Flynn, Footscray Independent 9 January 1909 p1

¹¹ www.mundia.com/gb/Person/29220391/12147844716

¹² Footscray Independent 27 August 1892

Derham, would later also serve on council and was President in 1909-10 and 1918-19.

Thomas Burge Derham died on 6 November 1906 at his residence in Ballarat road, Braybrook.¹ He was aged 81 years and had been a colonist of 51 years; his remains were buried at the Footscray Cemetery. The local paper's eulogy was impressive:

*"Seldom is it given to one man to impress his personality on the history of a district as did Thomas Burge Derham on Braybrook Shire and for so long a time. His was the best known figure associated with the fortunes of that shire and whoever heard of Braybrook knew of the man as well. Probably no one could live in the active and aggressive way in which he did without winning a wider repute and it was little wonder the name and man were known far and wide; It was natural for a man who had spent a busy life, extending over the long span of 81 years, engaging in varied pursuits and enterprises, to gain a wide circle of acquaintances and some friends and throughout Melbourne the figure of the man was as familiar as that of more noted men. He had been so long identified with Braybrook that the place seemed part and parcel of himself and at times he spoke as if that were the actual truth. Death came suddenly to the deceased on Tuesday last at the hotel where he had lived so long on Ballarat-road. He was a native of Bristol and a colonist of 51 years, 40 or 50 of which had been spent in Braybrook. The deceased was a member of the first Road Board in that shire and saw stirring times in the opening up of the colony. For 35 years he was a councillor of the shire, his extensive propertied possessions there almost making his seat assured. On several occasions he was President of the Shire. His business enterprises as a dealer in stock engaged him long and continuously in the export horse trade in which he was a well-known identity."*²

Thomas Burge Derham adopted some very confronting practices in his business life, and he was definitely a pioneer who left his mark on the district. He died on 6 November 1906. Matilda Derham died in 1915, but local papers of the time have no articles about her life.

In 2008, 260 members of the family met in Tullamarine to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the family's arrival in Australia. The reunion included people from all over Australia and some from Somerset UK and Wisconsin USA.³ #

¹ Footscray Independent 10 November 1906

² Footscray Independent 10 November 1906

³ <http://sunshine.starcommunity.com.au/star/2008-04-19/150-years-on/>

DONNELLY, Patrick and Bridget

Patrick and Bridget Donnelly were Irish immigrants who came to the Keilor district in the 1850s during the gold rush era. Patrick was born about 1811 in Dundalk, Louth, Ireland, the son of Daniel Donnelly and Mary Rice. Bridget Monaghan was born about 1820 in Dublin, the daughter of Patrick Monaghan and Mary Stafford. Patrick and Bridget married in 1853 at Essendon and their earliest connection with Keilor may have been about 1853 when Patrick obtained a Refreshment Licence to cater for diggers heading for the goldfields at Mount Alexander.⁴ The couple were definitely in Keilor by October 1854 because that's when their twin sons were born there.⁵ Patrick had block 9 near Fox's farm in Fox lane and his son Daniel had block 13 also along the lane.

Patrick and Bridget's children were born in Keilor:

- Daniel was born 9 October 1854. He worked as a labourer and played cricket with the Keilor Cricket Club. He died in Fitzroy at the age of 47 on 25 November 1901 and was buried at the Keilor cemetery.
- Patrick was born 9 October 1854, married Catherine Mary Staines in 1894 and they had five children. Catherine bred livestock. Patrick worked as a shearer and a gate-keeper at metropolitan racecourses. He died at the age of 64 on 9 January 1919 when a car ran into his bicycle.
- Mary was born in 1856 at Keilor, married George McCormick of Gisborne in 1876 and they had ten children.
- Thomas James was born in 1858 at Keilor and married in 1913 to Frances Regina Barber (1883-1966); they had a son Thomas Stewart (1916-1966). Thomas James died on 23 September 1906 at the age of 48.
- Margaret was born in 1859 and married David West of Sandridge.⁶

The Donnelly's land was in Keilor township between Flora Street and the river north of the crossing; it was the site that had been considered for the police station but in 1855 the site was appropriated for a Caroline Chisholm shelter shed.⁷ In 1856 Patrick and Bridget were employed as the keepers for the shelter, which provided basic overnight accommodation

⁴ Keilor Pioneers p39. His other occupations have been listed as blacksmith, labourer and caretaker.

⁵ Several local references state Patrick and Daniel were twins born on 9 October 1854. One genealogy website indicates that Daniel was born in 1854 and Patrick in 1855. Refer to <http://www.mundia.com/au/Person/32482442/18269071512>

⁶ Laszkowski

⁷ Keilor Pioneers p12

for one shilling per adult and sixpence per child. The main shelter housed the families and there were separate sheds for single men and women. The Keilor shed was the second one to be built on the road from Essendon to Elphinstone. The shelter sheds at Keilor were in use for a couple of decades before the service was discontinued.¹

In 1857 Patrick's sister, Anne McGuinness, and two of her children, Bridget and Patrick, came to stay with the family when they migrated from Ireland. Bridget the niece later married Richard Griffiths and raised a large family in Keilor. Patrick the nephew later married the widow Rose Butler née Smith who had migrated in 1844. Anne McGuinness (1809-1882) eventually acquired land near the Stenson's farm, so these families were also from some of the early pioneers to the district.

Keilor has had connection with several murder mysteries, and in 1865 Bridget Donnelly was a witness to the behaviour of a suspect in a murder at the Bald Hill vineyard, where a Swiss vigneron by the name of Henry Junod was found dead with a fractured skull. Patrick Bailey was one of the suspects in the case and came to Keilor asking for accommodation at the shelter shed at a time when Patrick Donnelly was in New Zealand. Bridget's statement in court was that:

"Bailey came to the Shelter-Shed about seven o'clock on the evening of Friday, the 7th inst. and asked if there was any place in the yard in which he could stretch himself for the night. ... She showed him where he was to sleep, and he went into the room pointed out to him, but he did not lie down. About twenty minutes afterwards, she went to the room, took away the light, and locked the door. Bailey was then sitting up with his clothes on, and he walked about talking to him during the whole night. In the morning witness listened to what he was talking about, and heard him say, 'God knows, I had no harm in the man, though many a one was taken innocent. I know the troopers are after me, and they will take me' ... Witness then opened the door, and Bailey asked her if the coroner had come yet. She asked him if he was speaking to her, and he said, 'No, to that man;' but no one else was present. She told him there was no other man in the house, but he said she had opened the door the previous night, and let in the coroner and the trooper, and that the inquest would be held there. ... he said he had come himself from Sunbury, where he worked in a vineyard with the deceased man, and that he had been in Mr. Riley's employment for three weeks. He

*said he did not know anything about the murder. Afterwards, he said he was going to Melbourne, but it was no use because the troopers were after him. ... He had a very wild and queer look about him, and his manner was that of a person very much frightened of something. ... Witness's impression was that he was deranged. During the whole of the time he was at the shelter-sheds he ate nothing, When talking to himself, Bailey said the police were after everybody, but that he had no hand in the murder."*²

A medical assessment was that Bailey was suffering from delirium tremens, was probably in the convalescent stage of the disease, and feared some imaginary enemy. The coroner concluded that Bailey was not the murderer, though he might have been accessory before or after the fact; but this was highly improbable. Ultimately, the jury found a verdict of wilful murder against some person or persons unknown.³ But it goes to show that being the manager of a Caroline Chisholm Shelter Shed was not a risk-free sinecure, especially for a woman on her own, even temporarily.

The Donnelly family's connection to St Albans goes back to at least the 1850s when they had land in section A of the Kealba area between the former Three Chain Road and the Salt-water River: allotment 9 was of 19 acres on the river, and allotment 13 of 20 acres was between Three Chain Road and Fox's Lane; the land titles were obtained in 1885. They had other property in Keilor and Patrick's sister, Anne McGuinness, had allotment 4 near the Stensons. These blocks were all part of the old Keilor Town Common which was put up for selection in 1879 with annual rentals from £2/4/- to £5/19/- based on acreage.⁴ In 1906 Patrick John Donnelly bought the old Caroline Chisholm shelter shed site from the government,⁵ thus returning to the family land that had been acquired by his father fifty years earlier.

Patrick Donnelly, a pioneer to the Keilor Plains district for 33 years, died on 5 August 1886 at the age of 75 years and was buried at the Keilor Cemetery.

Daniel Donnelly, son of Bridget and Patrick, died on 25 November 1901 at St. Vincent's Hospital, at the age of 47 years.⁶

Bridget Donnelly née Monaghan, a pioneer of

¹ Brimbank City Council Post-contact Cultural Heritage Study, HO 129 Caroline Chisholm Shelter Shed site.

² Argus 15 July 1865 p5

³ Argus 15 July 1865 p5

⁴ Keilor Pioneers p89

⁵ Brimbank Council Post-contact Cultural Heritage Study, HO 129 Caroline Chisholm Shelter Shed site

⁶ Argus 26 November 1901

the Keilor Plains for 50 years, died on 29 October 1903 at her home in Keilor. She was aged 80 years.¹

The family's presence in the district continued through their children. In 1908 Patrick Donnelly the younger challenged fellow residents Francis Butler, Edward Hassed, Frederick Stenson, William O'Neil and James Parr for a position on the Board of Advice for the school district. In 1911 he challenged the authorities by submitting an offer of 2s 6d a year for river frontages when the Government had been charging him 10s a year for the use of the ground, but he had refused to pay that amount for seven years because that was too much. It was decided that representations be made for a reduction as the land was only of use to water stock.² Donnelly's protesting against the rating of river frontage adjoining his property must have worked because the council agreed to advise the Lands Department that 2s 6d per year was sufficient rental for it.³

A few years later Donnelly was joined by other St Albans ratepayers in complaining about the council valuations of properties at £10 per acre. Mr Evans argued that his property was Closer Settlement land and should not be valued on the same basis as property purchased in fee simple – he assessed the difference between land held under absolute ownership and under closer settlement restrictions at £4 per acre in favour of the former, or a difference of 40 per cent. Mr. Morgan argued that the increase for him was from £240 to £380, the problem being that council was rating farmland as if it were cut up into building blocks when it was simple grazing land. Councillor Delahey argued that in order to exist as a shire the council had to increase valuations.⁴ It's a perennial debate about service provision and financial viability.

Patrick John Donnelly died on 9 January 1919 at his home 'Riversdale,' Mt Alexander road, Keilor, the dearly loved husband of Catherine Donnelly, and loving father of Vera, Daniel, Nellie, Jack, Rose, and Florrie; he was aged 64 years.⁵ #

References:

Angela Evans *Keilor Pioneers: Dead Men Do Tell Tales*; St Albans History Society, 1994.

Dearly Beloved: Burials in The Keilor Cemetery: 1856-1900; Christine Laszkowski, 2008.

¹ Argus 30 October 1903

² Footscray Independent 18 March 1911

³ Essendon Gazette 17 September 1914

⁴ Essendon Gazette 18 January 1917

⁵ Argus 10 January 1919

EGAN, Margaret and Patrick

Margaret and Patrick Egan migrated to Australia in 1850 and settled in Keilor where they leased some farmland. Patrick Egan was listed as a farmer at Kororoit Creek in 1856, in West Bourke, Keilor, the only Egan listed on the roll. In the 1868 postal directory Patrick Egan was listed as a farmer in Maribyrnong.

Patrick Egan was born about 1811 in County Clare, Ireland, the son of Patrick Egan and Mary Ryan. Margaret O'Shanassy was also born in County Clare, about 1826, the daughter of Thomas O'Shanassy and Bridget O'Loughlin. Patrick jnr and Margaret married in 1850 not long before migrating to Australia. They had six children, all born in Australia:

- Mary Louisa born 1854
- Thomas born 1855
- Bridget born 1858
- Patrick born 1860⁶
- Johanna (Ann) born 1861
- John born 1866

There is little detailed information available about the life of the Egan family in the district. A few reported newspaper articles regarding individual family members are about the older son, Thomas, and the older daughter, Mary. An interesting revelation made by Mary in 1911 was that a "*Patrick Guinane and his brother*" were their cousins who took the name Egan because they were raised in the family from childhood.⁷

The family experienced financial problems in 1865 when Patrick became insolvent due to the refusal of the landlord to grant a new lease, dryness of the season, and loss of cattle; his liabilities totalled £164 and his assets were £42, leaving a deficit of £112.⁸ Patrick was discharged by the insolvency court in February 1866.⁹

Margaret Egan acquired 68 acres in St Albans after the Keilor Common was subdivided in 1868. John Cummins was one of the original selectors of Lot 16, but the occupation licence was transferred to Margaret and by 6 January 1874 the improvements to the selection included 49 chains of stone fence and a house valued at £100.¹⁰ The family settled into their four-

⁶ May have died in July 1873 at 13 years 6 months; refer to Keilor Cemetery records.

⁷ Patrick Egan Guinane was son of John Guinane and Mary Egan, sister of Patrick Egan. Argus 28 April 1911

⁸ Argus 9 October 1865

⁹ Argus 17 February 1866

¹⁰ St Albans The First 100 Years p6

room weatherboard house and built a stone dairy, outhouses and established their fruit and vegetable gardens. It was a typical, small farm of the era, on the Keilor side of Boundary Road.

It's interesting to note that even in that era there was indifference about this municipal boundary. When Keilor wrote to Braybrook Shire in 1881 enquiring if they would join in forming the boundary road from Egan's to McIntyre's, Braybrook's decision was that "As the land is open on one side, the Council considers the work unnecessary at present."¹

Thomas Egan may have worked as a road construction contractor as he submitted bids to Braybrook Shire² and was employed as the pound keeper in 1881.³

In 1889 Thomas was brought before the Footscray court by a railway official for alleged use of insulting language. They obviously took such things more seriously in those days:

*"Thomas Egan pleaded not guilty to a charge of using insulting language. J. Mitcham, porter, stationed at St Albans, stated that on the 12th ult. defendant asked him a question in reference to the working of the signals. Witness told him it was his business, and defendant then made use of very insulting language. When he returned from town he again became insulting. S. Wilson produced by-laws, under clause 14 of which the action was taken, viz.: 'Any person making use of insulting language to any official in the execution of his duty, shall be liable to a penalty not exceeding £10.' H. Herd stated that he was standing on the platform at the time the occurrence took place but did not hear any insulting language used. He heard something about a 'pup', but defendant was addressing him at the time. Defendant said St. Albans was a flag station, and intending passengers had to tell the porter to stop the train. He did so in this case, and plaintiff laughed and grinned at him through the ticket window. He told him he could not go on that way off the platform, but did not make use of the language stated. He threatened to report plaintiff for his conduct. [The case was] Dismissed."*⁴

Mary Louisa Egan married Richard Delahey, son of Henry Delahey and Mary Dodd, on 18 September 1895. His parents were Henry Delahey who was born in 1811 in Birr, Offaly, Ireland, and Mary Dodd, who was born in 1811, also from Birr, Offaly, Ireland. They married in 1835 and migrated to Port Phillip Bay, Australia, in

1840. They settled in Keilor and raised seven children. Richard Delahey was their second-youngest son, born in Keilor in 1849. He married Margaret Una Delaney in 1876. She was born at sea in 1849 to Thomas Delaney and Ann Harrison Dowd. Richard and Margaret had six children though three did not survive their infancy. Margaret died at Maidstone on 19 February 1887, at age 38 years. After Margaret's death the surviving children were raised by the Dodd and Delahey clan at Keilor.⁵

Richard Delahey married Mary Louisa Egan on 18 September 1895.⁶ They had a son, James Palmer Delahey, who was born on 6 May 1896 at Maidstone.⁷ He was Mary's only child and born reasonably late in her life as she was aged 42 years at the time of his birth. Young James never got to know his father, because Richard Delahey died on 19 August 1896 near Footscray after being hit by a train. There was some conjecture whether it was suicide. At the inquest, Mary said that her late husband "was of lively disposition and temperate habits, had good eyesight, but was a little hard of hearing."⁸

The coroner said that it was a very strange, mysterious affair, because the deceased was in no trouble. The jury returned a verdict that a passing train killed Delahey, there being no evidence to show how he got on to the line.⁹

Things may not have been as they seemed, as Richard had left the home a few days earlier after an argument with Mary. According to the Argus reporter:

*"The deceased was a married man, 48 years of age, with a wife and four children, three of whom were the offspring of a former marriage. He had quarrelled with his wife, and had consequently left his home some days ago, since when he had wandered aimlessly about the suburbs. He and his wife met in Footscray about noon on Wednesday, but his wife did not suggest any reconciliation or show that she was in any way willing to receive him again - the house and property were hers - and he therefore parted from her in a despondent frame of mind."*¹⁰

Was Richard accident-prone around Footscray trains? He had nearly died a decade earlier on

¹ Bacchus Marsh Express 14 May 1881 p2

² Footscray Independent 6 August 1892 p3

³ Bacchus Marsh Express 14 May 1881 p2

⁴ Footscray Independent 16 February 1889 p2

⁵ Refer to chapter in *Keilor Pioneers*.

⁶ Some genealogy references refer to her as Monica Louise Egan.

⁷ St Albans school enrollment records. Victorian Births records indicate he was born in 1897.

⁸ Footscray Independent 29 August 1896

⁹ Footscray Independent 29 August 1896

¹⁰ The Argus 21 August 1896 p6

the same railway line, also in unusual circumstances, although on this earlier occasion he was under the influence of alcohol. At the 1896 coroner's inquest, Mary's statement mentioned that he would take a glass or two but that he was temperate.¹ According to the Footscray newspaper report of the December 1888 incident:

*"A well-known resident of Braybrook named Richard Delahey, met with a serious accident on Saturday night last, at the Nicholson street station. A train was standing on the up line blocking the crossing on the east side, Delahey went round the van, and tripping fell headlong down the new sub-way. When picked up he was insensible and it was thought that he would not recover. The injured man was conveyed to the hospital and he was found to have been wounded about the head and arms. He is now progressing favourably."*²

Margaret Egan née O'Shanassy, pioneer from 1850, died on 3 April 1880 at her residence on Keilor Plains, aged 51 years. Patrick Egan died on 17 October 1895, at St Albans, aged 84 years. The family property appears to have been taken over by their elder son, Thomas Egan, who died in early 1896, thus surviving his father by about six months. The property was put up for auction in March 1896.³ In local history, the land has been generally referred to as Margaret Egan's land from the 1870s. It was later subdivided as the Pinnacle estate, but that was during the 1920s through to the 1940s.

According to some local history recollections, Mary Louisa Delahey née Egan bought land in the new subdivisions of St Albans in 1901, "where she remained for the rest of her life."⁴ Presumably she was able to buy land because of some earlier family inheritance, because even in 1886 it was noted that the house and property were hers and not her late husband's.⁵

Mary Egan and Richard Delahey had had a son, James Palmer Delahey, who was born on 6 May 1896⁶ at Maidstone. He was enrolled at St Albans state school in December 1900 and left in December 1909, so that is a good indication that Mary and her son had left the district before 1910. As for their place of abode, some references indicate that they was living in White Street, Footscray, in 1911, then around

1915 their home was 'Kia Ora' in East Street, Daylesford. She later moved to New Street in Brighton.

Mary Louisa Delahey née Egan died in Brighton on 21 September 1921 at the age of 67 years.⁷

Mary's son, James Palmer Delahey, had been living for a while at Footscray and working as a fire insurance inspector before moving with his mother to Daylesford. Was there some animosity in the extended family towards James? The entry in Keilor Pioneers states: "According to Dodd / Delahey descendants, the baby James turned out to be a 'no-hoper' - just like his father."⁸ According to AIF records he appears to have volunteered his time for the good of his country, having served at least three years as a Senior Cadet and three years with the Citizen Forces. He joined the AIF in July 1918 and served in France during World War One as a gunner with the 36th Australian Heavy Artillery Group. He was awarded the British War Medal and the Victory Medal. In 1923 he married Agnes Genevieve Donnelly of Auburn, Melbourne. They moved to South Australia and had a son, John Henry Delahey, born in Adelaide in 1925. In the 1930s James was applying for mining leases on the Cracow gold field in Queensland. In 1934 he was living at 160 Whay Street, Brisbane,⁹ and may have remarried to Dorothy Coral Lose. He died in Queensland circa 1960.

In the 1920s, Margaret and Patrick Egan's former farm in Main Road East became known as the Pinnacle Estate with housing built by Walmer Coleman. Housing on the estate was again advertised for sale in the 1940s after the depression had receded.¹⁰ #

References:

Details of Mary Louisa Egan and the inquest into Richard Delahey's death are included in *Pubs, Punts and Pastures, The Story of Pioneer Irish Women on the Salt Water River*, by Joan Carstairs and Maureen Lane; published by St Albans History Society, 1988.

Information about the Dodd and Delahey families is included in *Keilor Pioneers: Dead Men Do Tell Tales* by Angela Evans et al, St Albans History Society, 1994.

¹ Pubs Punts and Pastures p132

² Footscray Independent 8 December 1888

³ Argus 7 March 1896 p2

⁴ Pubs Punts and Pastures p130

⁵ The Argus 21 August 1896 p6

⁶ St Albans school enrollment records and AIF enrollment records. The Victorian births records indicate he was born in 1897.

⁷ Argus 14 November 1921

⁸ Pubs Punts and Pastures p130

⁹ Letter to the Defence Department 7 July 1934

¹⁰ Argus 6 May 1946

ERRINGTON, Hannah and George

The background to Hannah and George Errington's arrival in Keilor is very sketchy; for example, Angela Evans notes that *"It is not known where or when they married, but it is more than likely that they were English."*¹ We do know that they were pioneers to the district because they arrived prior to the break-up of the Keilor-Braybrook Farmers Common and then acquired land in Boundary Road in the 1870s. The local lore is that they had settled in Keilor by 1860 and that the two sons, William and George, were born in the district, though there is some conjecture about this as some genealogy links suggest that William was born at Forest Creek, which is near Castlemaine.

Hannah's maiden name was Burnlee² and the English background is likely to be correct, as there was a Hannah Burnlee born in 1829 in the Northumberland and Durham districts.

George Errington was born in 1827 but where this occurred is not known. Hannah Burnlee married in 1857 in the County of Durham, district of Easington, but whom she married is not listed. The timing is right for migration to Australia in the late 1850s, and though it does not prove that the 'St Albans' George and Hannah married in England prior to their migration to Australia, it seems likely.

The Erringtons were said to have bought land in various parts of Melbourne but settled in the St Albans-Keilor area, where they eventually acquired about six farming blocks. Nothing is known about their initial settlement, whether they travelled alone to the colony or in company with relatives – there were people by the name of Errington who were at Forest Creek in the 1850s and others at Ballarat during the 1860s. Hannah and George moved to Keilor in 1860 and apart from their St Albans selection they eventually acquired a couple of others in the Northern riding of Braybrook; in a later listing for Braybrook the properties were in the names of William and George; these two had also been listed as rate payers for the Melton division³ so they may have had land there at some stage.

In the 1860s Hannah gave birth to two sons. William was born in 1860, possibly in Braybrook, and George was born in 1863, in Keilor. A daughter, Annie, died in infancy.

¹ Keilor Pioneers: Dead Men Do Tell Tales p249

² The name has been spelt as Burnlee, Burnlea and Burnley. Hannah was sometimes known as Annie.

³ Sunbury News 26 March 1904 p3

The Erringtons apparently became graziers and some of their properties were rented out for grazing purposes, but their names do not appear through stock sales or advertising, so they must have been only small-scale farmers.

Their St Albans homestead was a weatherboard house on the 68 acres that they had obtained under the Closer Settlement Scheme in 1870. It was in Boundary Road between Mary Egan's property on the west and Walter Toop's to the east. The homestead paddock would be later described as containing 68 acres:

*"... with a fine six-roomed weatherboard homestead, all conveniences, large fruit garden, the grounds being laid out for flower and vegetable gardens, and water laid on all around the garden with 2 in. gal. iron pipes, large stable accommodation, buggy-house, harness sheds milking-sheds and stock-yards, the yards adjoining the homestead being pitched with blue-stone, and replete with every convenience."*⁴

Neither George nor Hannah is listed amongst the original selectors at the Closer Settlement ballot for Keilor Common in November 1868, so they must have obtained it afterwards. The original selector for their block was Thomas Cranwell, a farmer of Albion. Cranwell became insolvent and forfeited his licence for the property in April 1870 because *"the conditions respecting the fencing of the land and the cultivation of one-fifth within a specified time, had been totally disregarded."*⁵

George Errington senior joined the Railways in January 1860 and served as a ganger and gatekeeper on the Bendigo line at the Keilor Road station⁶ and later at St Albans. Perhaps this was the incentive and the opportunity to apply for land on the Keilor Common?

In 1884 he was the gatekeeper at Keilor Road Railway Station (at Sydenham). That is when he purchased the land that was later to become known as Errington Reserve. The property changed hands several times over the next few years. Apparently George Errington senior was initially leasing the land from David Millburn and bought it in 1884. George sold it to Dr. George Le Fevre⁷ in mid 1888, who sold it to The Metropolitan Bank Ltd. Then William

⁴ Argus 9 April 1910

⁵ Argus 4 April 1870 p4

⁶ Missen & Rigg The Errington Reserve p7

⁷ Le Fevre was a member of parliament who was connected to two other companies buying and selling land in St Albans: The Cosmopolitan Land and Banking Co. Ltd. and The People's Freehold Land and Investment Company. The Metropolitan Bank also went broke, in 1904.

Errington bought it and left it in his will to Alice Errington. In 1910 after Alice donated the land for a recreation reserve the trustees were Frederick Stenson, Edward James Luxford and Claude Turnley.¹ The title was eventually transferred to the Braybrook Shire Council.

After Alfred Padley's Cosmopolitan Company went into liquidation in the 1890s, the Erringtons bought "large tracts of land" in the area of the St Albans station. For them it must have been a time of opportunity.

In May 1891, George sold some his land to Liardet's Patent Safety Blasting Company Ltd, who established a factory to manufacture explosives. In retrospect, it was not a successful venture. In April, the Shire of Keilor objected to the site chosen, arguing that the factory be built at Sydenham² but it ended near the St Albans railway station.³ The company itself was experiencing problems and in June 1892 a meeting of shareholders was held to discuss a proposal to wind up the company.⁴ By November the company was in liquidation and offering for sale the land that Errington had sold them.⁵ Some resolution of the financial circumstances must have occurred because the factory was still operating in 1894 when Errington took legal proceedings against the company to obtain possession of the land and premises because:

*"... the purchasers made default in payment of the final instalment of £1,678, whereupon he rescinded the contract of sale. In view of the recent accident ... the plaintiff now asked for an order restraining the defendants from using the premises for the manufacture or storage of explosives, pending the hearing of the action, or until further order."*⁶

The order was granted. The accident happened on 12 February 1894. William Ross and John Clarke were scraping a box of the explosive compound when it ignited. They were seriously injured and Ross died in hospital.⁷ The factory was liquidated in November 1894.⁸

George Errington died on 5 November 1907 at the age of 81, leaving all of his property to his wife. Hannah died a couple of years later on 23 October 1909 at the age of 80 years,

¹ The Errington Reserve p14

² Bacchus Marsh Express 11 April 1891

³ Age 16 November 1894 p2

⁴ Argus 20 June 1892

⁵ Argus 17 November 1892

⁶ Argus 21 February 1894

⁷ Argus 14 February 1894 p6

⁸ Age 16 November 1894 p2

leaving an estate valued at £7,912 being £2,893 in real estate and £5,019 in personal assets. She died without making a will and in one article it was reported that the estate was to be divided between "her son and grandson."⁹ (Her older son, William, died in 1907.)

The National Trustee Company's sale of Hannah Errington property containing 386 acres subdivided into six farms was advertised in the Argus on 15 April 1910:

"That well-known and valuable, conveniently situated farm, Boundary-road, adjoining St Albans Railway Station, only 30 minutes train journey of the city, and 11 miles by good installed roads, subdivided into 6 farms in areas ... Each paddock is well fenced with stonewall and wire fence, and each paddock being well watered by dams built of stonework, and nearly every acre fit for the plough, and in great heart, at the present time.

*"The auctioneer calls attention to this highly important subdivision sale of rich agricultural, arable, and grazing land, within 11 miles of the city, right on the railway station, with a good train service, and the markets so close at hand. This land is most favourably known throughout the district, and noted for its large crops of hay, &c.; its natural position with a fall to Boundary-road makes the land so easily drained that the dams are full throughout the year."*¹⁰

William Errington married Alice Hounslow on 4 October 1893 at her parents' home in Campbellfield.¹¹ Alice had been born in 1864 and was the eldest daughter of Joseph and Eliza Hounslow. It is not clear in which year Alice first came to St Albans, but it was probably between 1874 and 1880 with some other family members.

Some time in the 1890s Alice Errington bought two pieces of land from the Cosmopolitan Land and Banking Company near the corner of Adelaide Street and West Circus. There were several large homes built in St Albans, and the Errington home was one of these.

Alice and William Errington had only one child, a son called Bobby (Robert William), who was born on 22 May 1901. William Errington died on 27 July 1907 in Richmond at the age of 47 years. Alice's notice in the obituary columns included the poignant lines:

*"When I shall meet with those whom I have loved
Clasp in my arms the dear ones long removed
And find how faithful Christ to me hath proved
I shall be satisfied, be satisfied."*

⁹ Argus 15 November 1909

¹⁰ Argus 9 April 1910

¹¹ Argus 21 October 1893

In 1910 Alice Errington donated the six-acre "St Albans Recreational Reserve", later known as the Errington Reserve, to the people of St Albans to be used as a sports ground. She has been remembered for this philanthropic gesture to the district, as the reserve has been central to many clubs and events over the last century. An excellent review of the history of Errington Reserve has been published by Tom Rigg and Alie Missen.¹

However, Alice contributed another piece of land that has been pretty much forgotten, and that is a portion of the main connecting road to Sunshine. St Albans residents had struggled for many years to have a direct road connection along the railway line to Albion as it would save considerable travel time. One of the main problems was that some of the properties along the route were under private ownership. In 1914 Mr. H. V. McKay made an offer to the Braybrook Council of some land along the railway line to St. Albans to facilitate a direct route. Alice Errington had already made a similar offer regarding some of her land.²

Local politics being what it is, the attempt at cooperation between Braybrook and Keilor councils to construct the road was defeated. The matter was raised again in 1922 when Alice Errington reiterated that she was willing to give the land required for the proposed direct road.³ The matter was still not finished, however, because of problems in accessing other land. In 1928 the St Albans Progress Association approached Braybrook Council to acquire a final piece of unowned land, which would enable the road to be built. This time there was agreement.

Alice Errington died in June 1931 at the age of 67, after a long period of ill health. She was one of the St Albans pioneers and made an enormous contribution to the wellbeing of the district for over fifty years. One example of this was at the family level. Despite being a widow and looking after her own child, Alice Errington took on the children of her brother, William, when William's wife, Amy, died in 1917. These children were Rupert, Constance, Raymond, Beatrice, Edward and Joseph.⁴

Hannah Errington's second son, George junior, was born in Keilor on 23 September 1865⁵ and died at Hepburn in 1927, aged 64. Like his

father, George junior worked for the railways. He joined them as a twenty-one-year-old in February 1883, working as a labourer and engine cleaner on the northern line until April 1887. Why he left this work is not known. In later references he was referred to as being a farmer of Keilor by occupation.

There is some conjecture whether George jnr ever married. Alie Missen and Tom Rigg in their publication state that he did not marry,⁶ but a couple of newspaper articles indicate that he may have had a wife⁷ and son-in-law,⁸ this has not been verified. On the other hand Missen & Rigg state that when George jnr died Alice Errington inherited his estate, which suggests he had no other immediate family members.⁹ It's confusing.

During the 1890s, George jnr appears to have become an eccentric and developed behaviour that incurred fines through the local courts. The incidents were mainly rail travel offences, such as travelling without a ticket, smoking in a non-smoking carriage, travelling in first class rather than second-class carriages, swearing and using obscene language. The articles that appeared in the papers must have been an embarrassment to his family. As one example from 1894, the Argus, the main daily paper in Melbourne at the time, reported under the heading "Defrauding The Railways":

*"At the Footscray Court yesterday, before Mr. Perry, P.M., and a bench of magistrates, George Errington was charged with travelling on the Footscray to Williamstown line without having a ticket on May 2. The accused, who declined to pay the fare when asked by the porter at the wicket-gate, admitted the offence, and was fined 5s. with £2 2s. costs. As the man is in poor circumstances he was allowed three weeks to pay the penalty."*¹⁰

The use of the term "poor circumstances" is interesting as one would have thought his family was financially comfortable. Perhaps he was living independently. From other newspaper articles it seems likely that he had a drinking problem and apparently the police knew him as a chronic drinker.¹¹ The train travel offences were minor, but some of the road accidents had more serious potential.

In October 1911, George Errington, "a farmer at St. Albans" was charged with negligently

¹ Alie Missen & Tom Rigg; *Errington Reserve*; St Albans Historical Society, 2011.

² Footscray Independent 15 August 1914

³ Footscray Independent 25 March 1922

⁴ Correspondence by Wendy Taylor née Hounslow

⁵ The Errington Reserve p31

⁶ The Errington Reserve p7

⁷ Advertiser Footscray 9 June 1917

⁸ Sunshine Advocate 14 January 1928

⁹ The Errington Reserve p10

¹⁰ Argus 22 May 1894

¹¹ The Age 8 June 1917 p7

driving a horse and vehicle on Williamstown Road. He was fined 60 shillings in default 21 days' imprisonment, with 10s 6d costs.¹

In August 1912 Charles Seymour, a stock dealer of Fawkner, and Harriet Driver of Lysterfield, sued Errington for injuries they had received in a road collision after he drove his jinker into their car. They won their case.²

In another court appearance his behaviour suggests he was experiencing other problems:

*"A well-known local identity, George Errington, caused some consternation in the court on Thursday until the police explained that defendant was hardly responsible for his actions. The case was one in which the Railway department charged Errington with riding in the wrong class and with abusing a porter at South Kensington. A fine of 10/ for the wrong class and 40/ for the 'language' was inflicted. Defendant did not appear until after the verdict had been given. The bench told him he had been fined 10/. Defendant made some remarks rapidly. 'Speak up,' said Mr Caldecott. 'I've lost my teeth!' defendant replied, and tried again to explain his position. Mr Caldecott then said he was also fined 40/ for using bad language. 'Red light! Red light' shouted defendant, waving his arms. Mr Caldecott was about to deal severely with the man when the police interposed and, the wife paying the fines, hustled the unfortunate defendant out of court."*³

George Errington passed away on Christmas Eve, 1927, at Hepburn Springs where he was stopping at the home of his son-in-law.⁴ He was aged 64 years. The obituary report states that he was born and lived practically all his life in St Albans. His remains were interred in the Keilor cemetery where the funeral was attended by a number of St. Albans residents.

The sale of the family farm marked the end of Hannah and George Errington's direct contribution to St Albans. They were early pioneers in the district, having arrived just after the gold rush era and obtaining their Closer Settlement allocation a decade after arriving in the district. They had lived nearly half a century in their new homeland. Their lives have not been well documented but they definitely left a lasting legacy to St Albans that would come to fruition through their son, William Errington, and his wife, Alice Hounslow. #

¹ Footscray Independent 28 October 1911

² South Bourke and Mornington Journal, Richmond 5 September 1912

³ Advertiser Footscray 9 June 1917

⁴ Sunshine Advocate 14 January 1928

FARRELL, Henry Charles and Jane

Henry Charles Farrell owned land on the Keilor Plains in the early 1850s. It was on the Braybrook side of Boundary road and west of the railway station, two adjoining blocks C and F stretching from Boundary road to Furlong road; he acquired the titles to the land about 1853. It is not known to whom he sold the land, but in 1902 block C on Boundary Road was bought by Melford and Lucy King and where they established their dairy farm.

Henry Farrell was born in Dublin in 1812. He was the son of Michael Farrell (1774-1848) and Jane Bell (-1820).⁵ Henry migrated to Melbourne in 1841 and married Jane Nixon at the St James Church of England. Jane was born about 1815, her maiden name being Thompson; she had married previously but details are not available. Henry and Jane lived in Gisborne but when and why they moved there is unknown – there was another Farrell family in the district so there might have been a kinship connection.

In March 1851 Farrell took over the Pier Hotel at Sandridge from W. F. E. Liardet⁶ and soon introduced some innovations:

*"In announcing the opening of his new house at Sandridge, Liardet's Beach, H. C. Farrell respectfully informs the public that their convenience and comfort has been mainly considered in its erection, and that every accommodation can be afforded to those visiting the Beach. This spot is the nearest landing place for persons proceeding to Melbourne, and the proprietor of the above hotel has erected a Flag Staff, for the convenience of commanders of vessels in Hobson's Bay, whereby they will be enabled, upon leaving their flags on shore to make signal to their respective ships at any hour of the day."*⁷

Farrell seems to have taken to the nautical life because he became the secretary and a steward with the Sandridge Regatta, which was under the patronage of His Excellency the Lieutenant Governor.⁸ He was also involved with the local parish as a trustee of the Church of England land at Sandridge.⁹

Farrell purchased several properties around

⁵ *The Farrell Family: Genealogical description of Eileen Farrell, her siblings, antecedents and offspring*; James Thompson and Hugh Thompson.

⁶ Argus 5 March 1851 p2. Wilbraham Frederick Evelyn Liardet (1799-1878) was a hotel keeper and water colour painter and a colourful character.

⁷ Argus 7 July 1852

⁸ Argus 20 April 1853

⁹ Argus 9 March 1861

Melbourne so, like many other settlers, he wanted to establish some opportunities for his family through real estate. Not all of it was successful, as reported in the October 1853:

*"The four allotments sold yesterday at Sandridge, in Rouse street, facing the Government reserve, consisting of one quarter of an acre each, were originally purchased by Mr. D. S. Campbell and Mr. H. C. Farrell for £700, on which those gentlemen forfeited purchase. Lot 80 realised £4,200, sold to H. C. Farrell."*¹

Still, they were neither the first nor the last of early pioneers to forfeit their selections. Apart from his property in St Albans, in 1857 Farrell also acquired a town lot in Williamstown that was advertised for sale at £410.²

He developed an interest in politics and in 1855 he was supporting John Hood to stand for the Melbourne City council.³ In 1856 Farrell stood for the vacancy in the Macarthur Ward and was elected as a city Alderman.⁴ It was a short career, as on 10 August 1857 he died at his home in Sandridge.⁵ Jane Farrell died on 23 June 1860, aged 45 years.⁶

Henry and Jane had several children though information about them is not extensive:

- Michael, the eldest son, went to Scotch College in the 1850s and married Sarah Jane Clark of Benalla on 14 April 1866; they had at least 2 daughters.
- Henry, baptised 1844.
- Edward Thomas, baptised 1846.
- Susan Jane, wed Josiah Henry Waymouth in 1868 and had 5 children. Susan died in 1894 in Alexandra, aged 45 years.
- Marian, married Joseph John Tucker on 6 June 1872, the celebrant being Joseph's father, the Venerable Archdeacon Tucker. Joseph was principal of the Collegiate School at Wangaratta and his published poetry included *His First and Last Wooing, and Other Poems*, 1872.
- Jane, wed Dr. Benjamin Clay Hutchinson of Wangaratta on 9 November 1870; she was 16 and he was 36; they later moved to St Kilda. They had 3 sons, one dying in his first year.

The Farrells had 157 acres in the parish of Maribyrnong during the 1850s but no apparent connection with the district after this time. #

¹ South Australian Register, Adelaide 14 October 1853

² Argus 9 July 1857

³ Argus 29 October 1855

⁴ Argus 8 October 1856 p8

⁵ Argus 11 August 1857 p4

⁶ Argus 25 June 1860 p4

FINN, James and Mary

James Finn was one of the original land selectors on the Keilor Common subdivision in 1868. He was listed as a railway gatekeeper in Keilor's postal directory for 1868 so he was already a local resident. He was born in 1838 in County Clare, Ireland; his father was James Finn, a farmer, and his mother was Ellen McKean. James junior migrated to Port Phillip about 1853 at the age of fifteen or sixteen. He obtained employment with Victorian Railways as a line repairer. He married Mary Long in 1857 when he was eighteen years of age.⁷

Mary Long was the daughter of Thomas Long and Mary Gleeson from Tipperary. Their seven children (one of whom was also named Mary) were born between 1828 and 1845. About 1853 or 1854, after her husband died, Mary Finn came to Australia with her children; her daughter Mary was aged about 19 years at the time.⁸

James Finn junior and Mary Long junior married at Williamstown in 1857, moved to Riddells Creek in 1860, and then by the mid 1860s had settled in Keilor Plains. They were members of the Catholic faith and the children were baptised at St Augustine's Church in Keilor. They had eight children:

- Mary Ann was born in Williamstown in 1858; she married railway ganger Denis Healey in 1880. Their children attended St. Albans primary school: James Finn (1883-1906), Ellen Mary (1884-1911), Gerald Denis (1887-1920), Timothy Esmond (1890-1967), Denis Joseph (1899-1981), and Patrick Leo (1901-1962.) They lived in St Albans for at least two decades, between 1889 and 1909, before moving to Footscray. Denis Healey snr died of tuberculosis and heart failure at Footscray in 1919 and was buried at Keilor. Mary Ann Healey née Finn died of heart disease at Footscray in 1920 and was buried at Keilor.
- Thomas was born in 1860 at Riddells Creek and died in early childhood.
- Ellen Margaret "Nellie" was born 15 May 1862 at Lancefield Road, Riddells Creek, and died 24 March 1891 at St Albans aged 28 years; buried at Keilor.⁹
- Margaret "Maggie" was born 12 January 1865 at Riddells Creek, died at age

⁷ Laszkowski p188-121

⁸ <http://archiver.rootsweb.ancestry.com/th/read/CoTipperary/1999-10/0939465814>

⁹ Melbourne Leader 4 April 1891 p44

seven years on 23 October 1871 at Keilor Plains (St Albans) and was buried at the Keilor cemetery.

- Elizabeth Catherine was born on 19 April 1866 at Keilor. She married railway ganger Cornelius Devitt of Riddells Creek in 1887. Their children included Bridget (1887), Margaret "Maggie" (1889), Ellen "Nell" (1892), Mary "Molly" (1894), James Michael (1897), and Anastasia Kathleen "Kit" (1900). Cornelius died on 29 August 1938 at home in Richmond.¹ Elizabeth Devitt née Finn died in 1954 in Richmond at age 86 years.
- Bridget Irene was born in 1868 at Keilor, died in January 1886 at age 17 years, buried at Keilor.
- Catherine "Katie" was born 16 September 1870, died February 1873 at age 2 years 5 months, buried at Keilor.
- Anastasia "Stasia" Cecilia was born in Keilor in 1873; she married Francis "Frank" William Kavanagh in 1908, a railway employee. They had no children. Anastasia died on 24 May 1937 at 18 Burton Crescent, Ascot Vale, at age 64 years, and was buried in the Keilor cemetery.²

James Finn had obtained employment with the Victorian Railways and worked as a line repairer and the gatekeeper at No. 11 Gate on Keilor Road. The family had moved to Keilor Plains in the mid 1860s and may have been living in one of the railway houses. The Closer Settlement Board held their ballot for the Keilor Braybrook Farmers' Common allotments in November 1868 and James Finn succeeded in obtaining Lot 19, which was 78 acres on the southeast corner of Taylors Road and the railway line, to the south of the Boyds' farm. The selection was approved for purchase in October 1871 as Finn had made improvements to the land by erecting stone fencing and post and wire fencing as well as a water hole, kitchen, a stock yard with 23 head of cattle and 8 pigs, and 16 acres under crop.³

Unfortunately James Finn became ill and died of pulmonary consumption at No. 11 Gate, St Albans, on 26 May 1875. He died at the age of 36 years, still a young man, and his burial records list him as being a farmer. The family retained the property over the next decade and continued farming. The executors of Finn's estate were Michael O'Connor and James Dickson, who sold his farm in November 1887

¹ Age 30 August 1938 p1

² Argus 25 May 1937 p1

³ *St Albans The First Hundred Years* p3

to James Evans, who then immediately sold it to Alfred Padley's Cosmopolitan Land and Banking Company.⁴ The farm was subdivided into suburban allotments and put up for sale in the "St Albans Estate". A water reservoir was built towards the south-eastern end of the land to capture the natural waterflow along the shallow gullies and was intended to become the water supply for the new St Albans Estate residents. Unfortunately the land crash of the 1890s created a general economic depression and land sales dissipated.

Mary Finn had to work to keep the family fed and clothed. She was also employed with the Victorian Railways and was the gatekeeper at Keilor Road Station from May 1865. She worked there for the next 30 years:

*"It is hard to imagine how difficult life must have been for Mary Finn. She had eight children between 1858 and 1873 and a husband in poor health. She had to work to keep the family and records show that she was appointed Gatekeeper at Keilor Road Station on the 1st May 1865 - right in the middle of her child-bearing years. Mary retired from the Railways on 31st January 1895 when she turned sixty - thirty years of work, twenty years of widowhood and the rearing of a young family in the Gatehouse."*⁵

Mary Finn died on 8 December 1907 at the age of 72 years and was buried in the family grave at Keilor:

*"On the 8th December, at her residence, 3 Leithbride-sreet. Moonee Ponds, Mary, relict of the late James Finn, Keilor, beloved mother of Mrs. Healey, St Albans; Mrs. Devitt, Gisborne; and S. Finn, aged 72 years. A colonist of 53 years."*⁶

The Finn family connection with St Albans continued their daughter Mary Ann and her husband Denis Healey, who stayed in the district until 1909, so there was a family presence for over thirty years. #

Note: many thanks to Suzanne Uniacke, a great-great-great-granddaughter of James and Mary Finn for providing family genealogical information.

References:

- *Keilor Pioneers: Dead Men Do Tell Tales*. Angela Evans and the Keilor Pioneer Research Collective; St Albans History Society, 1994.
- *St Albans: The First Hundred Years 1887-1987*. St Albans Railway Centenary Committee; 1986.

⁴ *St Albans The First Hundred Years* p3. Evans was probably one of the directors of Cosmopolitan.

⁵ Keilor Pioneers p250-251

⁶ Age 9 December 1907 p1

FOLEY, John and Bridget

John Foley was born in 1816 in Co. Galway, Ireland, the son of Michael Foley (1791-1837) and Catherine Dadey (b.1806). John married Bridget Martin in 1845; she was from Limerick, and was born in 1815, the daughter of Michael Martin (1741-1831) and Mary Vianna Bolin (1776-1863).¹

John and Bridget with their children Patrick, Maria and Bridget, came to Australia in 1853. From 1854 to 1858 they lived in a tent on the reserve near the St Augustine's Chapel at Keilor, after which they bought 300 acres in the district and started farming.² Starting life in the colony by living in a tent was not unusual at the time, but four years in a tent with five children must have been difficult, but it was probably better than where they came from. The Foleys built their home in the Doutta Galla area.

Local historians believe that a large number of the first settlers in the Keilor district were Irish immigrants who had left Ireland after the potato famine of 1846 or who later came to the colony in the hope of striking it rich on the goldfields.³ As with most immigrants, new settlers often sent money overseas to support their families "back home" and it was no different here – the local community subscribed to the Irish Family Relief Fund as late as the 1880s with fundraising through St Augustine's and public meetings.⁴

John and Bridget's children included:⁵

- Patrick 1845-1922
- Betty 1850- died early
- Maria 1850-
- Bridget 1851-1916
- Anne 1855-1903 born at Keilor
- John 1858-1910
- Catherine 1861-1938
- Peter 1864-
- Martin 1869-

Bridget Foley's activities in Keilor have not been reported locally but John's have to some extent because he became involved in council affairs. In 1861 he became one of the witnesses (or 'memorialists') to the petition requesting that a Keilor Farmers Commons be formed, which was approved and gazetted in July 1861.⁶

In 1867 Foley complained to the Keilor Roads Board that Thomas Cahill had illegally placed a fence across part of the Mount Alexander road⁷ near the Keilor bridge. Mr. Cahill, who was present when the matter was raised, promised to pull down the fence⁸ but the matter was not resolved for some time and required Board intervention.⁹

In 1868 John Foley was one of the original applicants for land selection on the Keilor Commons when it was subdivided by the Closer Settlement Board.¹⁰ He was allocated allotment 23, which was on the south-west corner of Taylors Road and the St Albans railway line. It is not known how long Foley retained his selection before it was transferred to John O'Connor, but the latter acquired the property title in 1874, so Foley could not have had it for very long.

In 1873 Foley stood for election for the Board of Advice for the Keilor School District. The result of the voting was that David Milburn received 50 votes, John Grant 49, Crawford Harvie 49, Malcolm Ritchie 47, Henry Seuling 45, Henry Delahay 43, John Foley 42, and John Corcoran 41. Messrs Milburn, Grant, Harvie, Ritchie, and Seuling were duly elected as members of the Board of Advice for the Keilor Shire School District.¹¹ Despite this loss Foley retained his interest and was elected to the Board in January 1880, along with David Milburn, Henry Seuling, and James Delahay.¹²

John and Bridget Foley remained in the district for about 20 years until their children married and moved away.¹³ There is virtually no information published locally about other family members or their role in the community.

Bridget Foley née Martin died on 15 January 1888 at the age of 73 at Yabba Yabba.¹⁴ John Foley died on 21 November 1901 at North Melbourne. As a pioneer in Keilor he would have helped guide the early developments in the district, but neither he nor his wife had a major ongoing role with St Albans itself. #

⁷ So named because it led to the goldfields at Mt Alexander near Castlemaine. The road is now known as the Calder Highway.

⁸ Argus 22 May 1867

⁹ The Board took Cahill to court. He argued there were problems with land boundaries. Argus 9 August 1867

¹⁰ Argus 3 November 1868. Patrick Foley, who may have been John's son, also applied for selection but was not successful.

¹¹ Argus 4 July 1873

¹² Argus 27 January 1880

¹³ Keilor Pioneers p86

¹⁴ <http://www.mundia.com/gb/Person/12117041/-64534925>

¹ <http://www.mundia.com/gb/Person/12117041/-64534925>

² Keilor Pioneers p251

³ Brimbank City Council Post-contact Cultural Heritage Study, Harricks Cottage

⁴ Bacchus Marsh Express 31 January 1880 p3

⁵ <http://www.mundia.com/gb/Person/12117041/-64534925>

⁶ Keilor Pioneers p86

FOX, Michael and Rose

There were two families by the name of Fox who could be considered as early settlers in St Albans; the first was headed by Michael and Rose Fox and the second by Andrew and Gretta Fox. Michael arrived in Keilor about 1870 whereas Andrew came much later, in the early 1900s, when the Closer Settlement Board was again selling land in St Albans. However, Michael and Rose and their children were earlier pioneers to the district and though most of their land was east of Keilor they did have a farmlet on the river near the Stenson's orchard on Keilor Plains.

Michael Fox was born about 1842 in Kings County, Ireland, the son of Christopher Fox and Margaret Byrne (1806-1881). Michael migrated to Australia in 1866 with his widowed mother and a brother and sister; they settled in Keilor. On 29 July 1873 at St Augustine's Church, Michael married Rose Reilly (1848-1902). She was from Cavan, Ireland, daughter of Mary Hearnnes and Patrick Reilly. Michael and Rose's children were:

- Michael 1873-1885, died of an accident.
- Patrick 1875-1954.
- Mary 1876-1879, died of croup.
- Margaret 1877-1878, died of typhoid fever.
- Rose Anne (Rosanna) 1878-1880, died of an acute attack of croup.
- John Peter 1880-1961.
- Thomas 1880-1936.
- Martha 1881-1959.
- Philip 1883-1948.
- Catherine 1884-1889 died of diphtheria.
- Christopher 1888-1956.¹

Michael had been a farm labourer in Ireland and he continued in a farming life around Keilor as well as taking up road construction, a business in which his sons joined him in later years.

The family had about 23 acres (blocks 8 and 8A) in St Albans on the north side of Stensons Lane between Fox's lane² and the Salt Water River where the popular swimming spot was located. The family ended up owning or leasing a lot of farming land around the Keilor district. In 1900, Michael Fox owned Corcoran's North Pole Farm and Kelly's 163 acres, a total of 344 acres. Michael also bought Barbiston, which was a dairy property at Tullamarine.³

Michael Fox was a dairyman and farmer but he also turned his hand to other activities. In 1878 he was one of the managers of the Keilor Town

Common in conjunction with James McWhirter, and George Staines.⁴ He also had road-making contracts with Braybrook and Keilor councils about this time operating under the name "M Fox and Co" and "Fox & Anderson." He also had a small block on Essendon Hill where he probably kept the horses and drays used to carry the sand he obtained from the Moonee Ponds Creek.⁵

Another of Fox's farming ventures was running an orchard and garden. In 1908 he made an application to pump 80,000 gallons per year from the Saltwater River for irrigation purposes.⁶ David Milburn was the first of the local pioneers to introduce this irrigation system and other farmers along the river followed his example.

Michael's mother, Margaret Fox née Byrne, died at his home on 15 October 1881, having reached the "*ripe age of 75 years*."⁷ Then on 31 March 1902 Rose Fox née Reilly became very ill with pneumonia and died at the age of 53 years.

Michael Fox was elected to Keilor Council in Maribyrnong Riding in 1912⁸ before standing for the Doutta Galla Riding; he was the Shire President in 1917-18. He died on 3 September 1918 aged 78 years.⁹ As he died while still in office as councillor, there was an extraordinary election held and his son, John Peter Fox, stood for the vacancy and polled 84 votes against 49 votes for Edwin Roberts.¹⁰ It was a decisive victory and provided for continuity in family involvement with municipal affairs. #



Cr John Fox, front row, second on left.

¹ <http://www.mundia.com/gb/Person/13629146/-37490310>

² Now known as Driscolls Road.

³ <http://www.familytreecircles.com/keilor-historical-society-victoria-australia-newsletter-index-47095.html>

⁴ Keilor Pioneers p177

⁵ <http://home.vicnet.net.au/~strthmre/rgmccord.html>

⁶ Footscray Independent 11 August 1908

⁷ Bacchus Marsh Express 22 October 1881

⁸ Footscray Independent 5 October 1912 p1

⁹ Essendon Gazette 21 November 1918 p2

¹⁰ Flemington Spectator 10 October 1918

FOX, John and Mary



John Peter Fox was the son of Michael and Rose Fox and was born at Keilor in 1880. In 1912 he married Mary Ann Comerford (1880-1952). She was born at Oxley, which is near Wangaratta and is another place that Hume and Hovell passed through in 1824 – they named the area Oxley Plains after the Surveyor-General of New South Wales.

John Peter Fox was elected as Keilor Shire President in 1921-22. His history as a councillor has not been recorded in any detail but having spent almost 35 years of unbroken service from 1918 to 1953 is a credit to his commitment. He also took on other local responsibilities; for example, it was probably he who was appointed in May 1920 as one of the Keilor Cemetery Trustees.

John and Mary's children included:

- Rose 1912-1999 wed Thomas Reddan.
- William 1914-1986.
- Mary 1915-1995 wed Michael Reddan.
- Patrick Kenny 1921-1970 served in AIF.
- Martha Ursula 1921-1923, twin of Patrick.
- Philomena Josephine 1924-2011, married William Joseph Hyland.

Rose Fox was born 4.11.1912. In 1949 she wed Thomas Benedict Reddan (1915-1999) who was from Tullamarine. Their children were Mary Gemma (9.3.1950) and Luke Thomas (27.8.1953). Rose passed away on 23 April 1999 just a couple of months after her husband, who had died on 20 February 1999.

William was born 25.2.1914, became a farmer and with his father owned land that was subdivided as Quinn Grove, East Keilor. He wed William Mary Hogan in 1948; their children were Rosemary Anne (2.5.1949), John William (19.6.1950), Carmel (19.2.1955) and Cathleen (1.10.1959). William died in 1986

Mary Bridgid was born 2.7.1915 and married Michael Reddan. Their children included

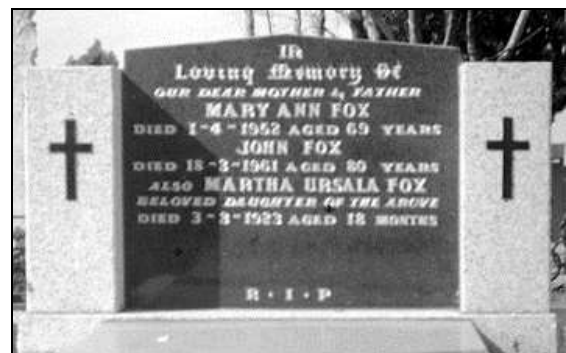
Margaret Mary (30.3.1942). John Francis (22.5.1944), Michael Patrick (20.10.1945), Mary Rose (28.2.1948), Leo James (17.7.1958), Gerald Anthony (9.11.1958), and Frances Mary (16.10.1961).

Patrick Kenny Fox was born 19.9.1921 at Keilor. He enlisted at Moonee Ponds on 24 September 1941 and served in New Guinea with 151 Australian General Transport Company as a driver and was discharged in 1946. He married Joan Morwood in 1960 and their children were Brendan Joseph (13.9.1963), Justin Patrick (11.4.1964) and Monica Anne (12.11.1970). Patrick Kenny Fox died on 8 July 1970.

Philomena "Phil" Josephine Fox was born on 26 December 1924 and wed William Joseph Hyland in 1953 at St Augustine's Church, Keilor. Their children included Bernard Joseph (21.2.1954), Mary Clare (14.9.1955), Loretta Anne (8.12.1956), Gregory William (11.3.1958), Martin Lawrence (20.8.1959) and Carmel Frances (13.9.1961). Philomena Josephine Hyland died in 2011 and was buried at Learmonth.

Mary Ann Fox née Comerford died in Keilor on 1st April 1952 aged 69 years¹ and is buried at the Keilor Cemetery. John Peter Fox died on 18 March 1961, aged 83 years, and is buried with his late wife.

The Fox family were undoubtedly pioneers to the Keilor district, with John Peter Fox and his father Michael Fox having served the community particularly well through their council work – between them they contributed nearly 100 years to the governance of the district. The former Fox's lane (in what is now Kealba) was named after the family but was later changed to Driscoll's lane, presumably because there might have been some confusion with Fox Street, which still survives in St Albans. #



¹ Sunshine Advocate 10 April 1952 p3

GREVILLE, John and Charlotte



John Roger Greville was an Irishman who came to Victoria in 1852¹ and was usually referred to as J. R. Greville. He was not one of the first selectors at the sale of the Keilor Commons in 1868 but soon afterwards he acquired block #6 that had been selected by Rody Kennedy and Joseph Watson; it was the triangular block on the north-west corner of Boundary and Three Chain roads. Greville got title to the land in April 1876. John and Charlotte Greville were a couple of akas – “also known as” – because they were a couple of actors who were mostly known by their stage names rather than their given ones. “J. R. Greville” was actually John Rodger – the Greville was his mother’s maiden name – though off stage he called himself John Greville Rodger. Charlotte, who used the stage name “Miss Webster” until she married and then became “Mrs J. R. Greville,” was actually Charlotte Augusta Marshall, but had adopted her father’s theatrical name when she started acting.

John Rodger was born 5 June 1834 in Henry Street, Dublin, close to the Nelson Column.² He was the son of John Rodger and Jane Greville or Greeville. John jnr’s first appearance on stage occurred when he was 17 at the Royal Phoenix Amateur Theatre near Dublin Castle, and it was with this group over the next year that he developed his theatrical interests. He migrated to Melbourne about 1852 at the age of nineteen, supposedly to “better himself.” He applied for a job at the Queen’s Theatre, which was Melbourne’s only theatre at the time, and sang one night at a concert. The pay was poor so he headed for the Sandhurst gold fields but, as did so many other diggers, found he wasn’t much used to digging as he was “a long lanky hobbledehoy” and “soon left the pick and

shovel for the sock and buskin.”³ His career as a gold miner lasted just six months, after which he worked for a storekeeper for another half-year before being employed at the Cairncross theatre where he sang and acted small parts, one of his small parts being the King in Hamlet.⁴

His path to success was on the stage and the pay was better than in Melbourne, where a leading actor got about £4 a week while at Bendigo the lowest pay was £10 a week. However, there was little opportunity of saving money with the existing prices of living, and actors had to provide their own wardrobe for each and every play and “*velvet and spangles cost money, gold and silver lace were at fabulous prices.*”⁵

Greville discovered the stage in some venues was as big as a billiard table and they charged ten shillings for admission to the front seats and five shillings for the back seats. That was a lot of money at the time but high prices were normal at the diggings. The performance in another place had to finish before 10 p.m. so the floor could be cleared for dancing:

*“What was wanted to make money was a dance hall and theatre like the Charlie Napier taken up at Ballarat ... where the performance of a drama, supported by a full dramatic company, was given until 10 o’clock, when the floor of the theatre was then given up to dancing each evening. Immediately on the close of the play a bell rang, the orchestra in its place, and dancing commenced without loss of time.”*⁶

Greville took on the management of several companies on the goldfields and thus began a 40-year career on stage and behind the scenes. He took up acting in Bendigo and adopted his mother’s name for his professional life. He became well known as a burlesque and comic actor under the name “J R Greville.” It was said of him:

*“Mr Greville has been a well known and popular comedian, possessing in a special manner the peculiar qualities which go to make a good burlesque actor. In the delineation of Irish character in such parts as Larry in ‘Youth,’ the title role of ‘O’Callaghan on his Last Legs,’ as well as eccentric impersonations of the style of a ‘party by the name of Johnson’ in ‘The Lancashire Lass,’ he was inimitable, and his face has for years been a familiar one in the sphere of pantomime.”*⁷

¹ Gibbney & Smith; *A Biographical Register 1788-1939 Vol. 1*; p284. There are conflicting dates as to when he arrived, with some references to 1854.

² The Mercury, Hobart 1 May 1897 p2s

³ Phillip Mennell FRGS; *The Dictionary of Australian Biography*; Hutchinson & Co, London, 1892; p198

⁴ The Mercury, Hobart 1 May 1897 p2s

⁵ Bendigo Advertiser 14 January 1899 p6

⁶ Bendigo Advertiser 14 January 1899 p6

⁷ Argus 30 April 1894

Charlotte Augusta Marshall was born on 19 July 1841 in Wellington, New Zealand, the daughter of Sampson and Charlotte Marshall; they were performers known as the Webster family who “*belonged to the Australian stage.*”¹ John Rodger and Charlotte Marshall jnr met on the stage and married at Bendigo on 21 May 1855. Charlotte continued her acting career that was later described as being “*worthily associated with such distinguished ones as Barry Sullivan and G V Brooke*”.²

John and Grace had four sons with two of them dying in their infancy:

- John Greville Rodger was born and died in 1857 at Ballarat.
- William Greville Rodger was born in 1858 at Adelaide and died in 1859 in Victoria.
- Sampson John Rodger Greville was born at Geelong on 7 March 1862. He went to Scotch College before studying medicine at Melbourne, Edinburgh, England and Vienna. He specialised in diseases of the eye, ear, and throat, and acted as the medical officer to several societies.³ He practiced in Albury, Talbot, Perth and South Melbourne.⁴ He was also well known in musical and dramatic circles.⁵ He married Clara Harper Bell in 1906 and they may have had three sons. Sampson died in 1919 at Ferny Gully in Victoria and was buried at the Melbourne general cemetery.
- Robert William Rodger Greville was born on 15 March 1865 in Victoria. In 1899 he married Florence Evelyn Stone at St George’s Cathedral in Perth; she had been born on 13 September 1873. They had two daughters, Thelma Florence and Mary Evelyn, and a son, John Rodger. Robert followed his parents into the world of theatre and was a member of the Maggie Moore company that performed at the Theatre Royal in Melbourne.⁶ Maggie Moore was the stage name of America comedienne Margaret Virginia Sullivan who married James Cassius Williamson in 1873; they came to Melbourne in 1875 and joined the Theatre Royal with which Greville

had connection.⁷ The “J. C. Williamson” group would eventually become major theatrical entrepreneurs in Australia and internationally. Robert Greville died in Perth on 24 December 1952. Florence Evelyn Greville née Stone died on 3 March 1954 also in Perth, Western Australia.

Charlotte and John Greville became involved in the management of various touring groups through all the principal towns in Australia as well as New Zealand. J R Greville, “*the droll and genial comedian,*” took on the management of the Theatre Royal in Melbourne.⁸ He still took part in regular performances including at Geelong, Sydney, Adelaide, and Tasmania.

J. R. Greville, the St Albans selector of 1868, became ill in 1893 and died of stomach cancer on 29 April 1894 at his home in Carlton.⁹ He was aged only 60 years, which was still comparatively young. His passing was even noted in the New York Dramatic Mirror,¹⁰ which would have been considered a well-placed note of recognition. The theatrical life must have been kind to the family because by the late 1880s they owned many freehold properties around Fitzroy.¹¹ An even nicer tribute was that people still remembered him 25 years later.

Greville’s passing must have been a sad event for his parents as they both outlived him. They had migrated to Victoria in about 1857 and settled at Vaughan near Castlemaine where they established a business for bottling aerated water. Other family members appear to have joined them as well.¹² John Rodger snr became a Justice of the Peace and was a councillor of the Mount Alexander shire for some years. Jane Rodger née Greeville died in 1893; she had been a pioneer in the district for about 36 years.

John Rodger snr re-married in 1894 to Hannah Rees. He died at the age of 85 on 19 May 1897 at Vaughan, some months after having a serious accident in Castlemaine.¹³ He had been a colonist for 40 years. Hannah Greville née Rees died at Vaughan in October 1899 at 84 years of age; she had been a resident of Vaughan for 44 years.¹⁴

¹ Bendigo Advertiser 14 January 1899 p6

² Barry Sullivan (1821-1891) was one of the finest actors of his period and was in Australia in the 1860s. Gustavus Vaughan Brooke (1818-1866) was a British actor who was at his best in Australia in the 1850s and 1860s.

³ The Cyclopaedia of Victoria, Vol. 2.

⁴ Argus 25 July 1919 p6

⁵ West Australian 30 April 1894

⁶ SA Register 30 April 1894 p5.

⁷ Dictionary of Australasian Biography p105

⁸ Sutherland, Victoria and Its Metropolis p515

⁹ Argus 30 April 1894

¹⁰ New York Dramatic Mirror 23 June 1894 p12

¹¹ <http://www.mundia.com/au/Person/18671954/1901599278>

¹² John and Jane Rodger had five sons: John, Robert, Richard, Matthew and William.

¹³ Bendigo Advertiser 20 May 1897 p3

¹⁴ Albury Banner 27 October 1899 p28

Charlotte Augusta Rodger née Marshall, aka Mrs J. R. Greville, died on 4 January 1912 in Melbourne, at the age of 71 years. She and J. R. Greville had lived in Victoria for most of their lives, but there is no evidence that either of them ever spent any time in St Albans, which makes you wonder how their connection with the district happened in the first place. A speculative answer is that it was probably mentioned as a potential investment opportunity through 'professional networks' in the theatrical and political spheres. Greville had joined George Croppin's company and became a partner with Croppin in the management of the Theatre Royal. Dr Louis Lawrence Smith was an avid follower and supporter of the theatre and was known to be a friend and backer of George Croppin,¹ so there is a possible connection – in fact Dr Smith had himself acquired several properties in St Albans during the 1870s for investment purposes.

The Grevilles and their theatrical companions may not have lived in St Albans, but they may have occasionally entertained some residents. #



Mrs J. R. Greville in costume as Sir Harry Wildair

¹ Dunstan, David 'The exhibitionary complex personified: Melbourne's nineteenth century displays and the mercurial Dr LL Smith'. *Seize the Day: Exhibitions, Australia and the World*, edited by Darian-Smith et al. Monash University, ePress; 2008. pp. 9.1–9.18.

HARRICK, James and Bridget



James and Bridget Harrick were farmers in Keilor since 1861. Their connection with St Albans is that in November 1868 James was allocated allotment #33 through the Closer Settlement scheme – it was west of the Station and Boundary roads intersection and was later transferred to James Burns. The Harricks had another 20 acres of land between Three Chain Road (Sunshine Ave) and Fox's (Driscolls) lane in the area now known as Kealba; the title was acquired in 1885 after the Keilor Town Commons was sold off in 1879.

James Harrick was born at Erinhead, County Longford, Ireland in 1828, the son of Patrick Harrick and Rose Mulligan. James worked as a farmer and forest ranger before emigrating to Melbourne on 5 June 1856 and arriving on 1 September.² He started his new life by milking cows and selling milk in Bourke Street. Then he took a job as a road builder at Tullamarine,³ which meant he was one of the early pioneers to the district during the gold rush era.

Harrick settled in Keilor and bought land near the St Augustine's Church site. He married Bridget Kiernan, another Irish immigrant, on 23 June 1861 at Williamstown. Bridget was born about 1839, the daughter of Thomas Keirman and Julia Fagan, also from County Longford. Bridget migrated to Victoria about 1860. James and Bridget Harrick became tenant farmers on 28 acres of land at Keilor (allotments 15 and 41 in the Parish of Doutra Galla held by M. Bourke). In September 1883 they bought two leasehold allotments (10 and 11) just north of the Catholic chapel to the east of the Salt Water River.

They raised a large family though several children died in infancy:⁴

² Brimbank City Council Post-contact Cultural Heritage Study: Harricks Cottage

³ Keilor History Society *Harrick's Cottage* p2

⁴ www.mundia.com/au/Person/23088455/13902616472

- Thomas 1861-1926
- James born 1863
- Mary Ann born 1864
- John born 1865?
- Patrick born 1866
- William born 1867?
- Peter born 1869
- Joseph 1871-1947
- Kate born 1873
- Catherine 1874-1941
- Frances born 1876?
- Francis 1878-1929.

Thomas Harrick was born in 1861 and worked in the dairy that he inherited with his brother Joseph. Thomas operated the dairy farm until he died at age 65, which was on 10 April 1926, at a private hospital in Moonee Ponds.

James was born on 21 May 1863 at Keilor. He was a bachelor at Yarraville and worked for the railways. He died on 19 December 1894 at the Melbourne Hospital, aged 31 years.

Mary Ann was born in 1864, did not marry, and worked as a farmer. She died at Keilor at the age of 20 years, on 3 December 1884.

Patrick Harrick was born in Keilor in 1866 and became a farmer in Boundary Road St Albans. He died in 1934 at St Albans.

Peter was born in 1869 and died on 3 August 1898 at Keilor after falling from his horse whilst under the influence of drink and fracturing his skull. He was a bachelor aged 29.

In 1894 John Harrick wed Florence Isabella Dezzille (1869-1939). They lived in Essendon and had two daughters, Florence Margaret and Mary Eileen, and one son, John Patrick.

Joseph Harrick was born in 1871 and died at Sunshine on 30 June 1947, aged 76 years. He had been a dairy farmer at Keilor before moving to Centre Road Sunshine in his latter years. He was appointed a trustee of the Keilor Cemetery on 20 March 1914. Joseph enlisted in the AIF 45th Battalion on 15 July 1915 at the age of 44 years; he went to Egypt and France but was discharged in November 1917 due to health problems that had been aggravated by active service.

Catherine Harrick was born in 1874. She wed Edmund Butler and they lived in Essendon. She died at Fitzroy in 1941 at the age of 67.

Francis Harrick was born in 1878 and died at Melbourne in 1929, aged 51 years.

James Harrick senior took an interest in local affairs and showed concern for the welfare of the numerous Irish settlers in the district.¹ He was appointed as one of the trustees for the Keilor cemetery in July 1896. In 1898 he was elected to Keilor Council as a representative of the Dousta Galla riding and served as a councillor until 1910. During this time he would have collaborated with fellow councillors and community leaders such as Taylor, Milburn, Dodd, O'Neil and Ritchie. One of his concerns was restricting the establishment of dangerous industries in the district, and in March 1908 he and Cr Taylor moved that the Commonwealth Government's proposal to establish a cordite factory in the shire be rejected. The motion passed unanimously.²

Bridget Harrick died of pneumonia at Keilor on 13 November 1906 at the age of 65 years – she was a diabetic and medication for the condition had not yet been developed.³ She was buried in the Keilor Cemetery. James Harrick died at the age of 86 years on 10 October 1912 and was also buried at Keilor.

Their son, Patrick Harrick, had married Alice Margaret O'Hagan and they became farmers along Kororoit Creek at Boundary Road (Main Road West) St Albans. Their children went to the St Albans Primary School:

- Catherine was born 29 June 1911 and went to St Albans Primary and then to study Domestic Arts at Footscray.
- Alice Eileen was born on 11 January 1915 and went to St Albans Primary and then to Williamstown High.
- Patricia was born on 2 April 1917 and went to St Albans Primary and then to the Sunshine Catholic school.
- Thomas Henry was born at St Albans on 5 November 1920. He was a dairy farmer before enlisting with the AIF in 1939. In the 1950s he may have worked from Centre Street, Sunshine, supplying and servicing refrigeration equipment.⁴

Little is known of the family's descendants in St Albans, Patrick and Alice and their children. They operated a 77-acre dairy farm on the Braybrook side of Boundary Road, at the western end on the Kororoit Creek between the Burnside and Arbuthnot sections. In 1926 Harrick was fined for allowing his stock to

¹ Brimbank Council Post-contact Cultural Heritage Study

² Argus 9 March 1908 p5

³ Angela Evans et al. *Keilor Pioneers Dead Men Do Tell Tales* p257

⁴ Sunshine Advocate 24 December 1953

wander, but he was in good company with the likes of E Davis, J Snaith, Mrs Dale, the Sassella brothers and others.¹

Patrick and Alice became involved in local community activities, as in 1926 Alice gave a house party to raise funds for Queen of Erin.² The only other local article published about Alice Harrick was about her getting injured while getting into her jinker: her pony started off and the wheel going over a large stone she was thrown out on the road, receiving a severe shaking, but the pony went home without damaging the jinker or itself.³

Patrick Harrick of St Albans died on 13 August 1934 at age 68 years:

*"An old St. Albans resident in the person of Mr Harrick passed away after more than two years of suffering, on Friday night last. He had farming interests in the district and his illness has of course made the task a very anxious one for his wife and family of three, who are left to mourn their loss. The funeral took place on Monday morning last, and was largely attended, as many as thirteen cars following the cortege. A service was held in the Keilor church and deceased was interred at the Keilor cemetery."*⁴

Alice Margaret Harrick née O'Hagan died on 6 May 1954 and her remains were also buried at the Keilor cemetery.

The Keilor Historical Society has preserved Harrick's Cottage and the family history, which is a wonderful monument to the pioneers. It is located in Harricks Road, in the light industrial part of Keilor Park, not far from St Augustine's Catholic Church. #



Harrick's Cottage, Harricks Road Keilor⁵

¹ Sunshine Advocate 16 August 1924

² Sunshine Advocate 28 August 1926

³ Sunshine Advocate 6 March 1926

⁴ Sunshine Advocate 17 August 1934

⁵ <http://mooneevalleyfamilylocalhistory.blogspot.com.au/2013/02/harricks-cottage.html>

HARRISON, Matthew and Mary Anne

Matthew Harrison senior and Mathew Harrison junior both applied for selection on the Keilor Common in 1869. They were father and son: the father opted for allotment 26, which was on the north-east corner of Station and Boundary roads, and the son chose allotment 34 on the western side of the intersection past the corner selection of James Burns. They acquired the titles to their selections in 1872.

Matthew Harrison snr was from Cumberland, England and was born in 1810. He married Mary Anne Armstrong on 9 November 1839 at the Parish Church of Newbiggin in Westmoreland. She was born on 10 April 1817 at Alston, Cumberland, England, the daughter of William Armstrong and Mary Henderson.

The Harrison family came to Victoria in 1856 and at first resided in Newport where Matthew worked as a plate layer with the railways.⁶ They later settled in Braybrook around the Kororoit Creek with other farming families such as the Burnside and O'Connors.⁷ Their property of 104 acres was known as 'Model Farm' and was used for growing crops. It was situated in Derrimut on Thomson's Road off Boundary Road, three miles from Kororoit Railway Station and 13 miles from Melbourne. It included an eight-roomed weatherboard house and stables.⁸ Matthew and Mary Anne had at least two sons: Matthew junior and Joseph.

Matthew Harrison junior was born in Cumberland in 1843 and was seven when he arrived in Melbourne. Matthew had a property in Derrimut and worked for a while as a contractor supplying road metal for the Braybrook Shire. He wed Ellen May Mansfield on 18 January 1882; she was the daughter of John Mansfield (1825-1912) and Eliza Jane Missen (1831-1875). The Mansfields were farmers from Tullamarine, having arrived in 1849. The three brothers, Samuel, John and David, acquired properties in Keilor, Tullamarine and Broadmeadows; Samuel also bid for an allotment at St Albans in 1869 but was not successful. Ellen and Matthew jnr's children included:

- John George 1883-1950
- William 1885-1964
- Matthew 1886-
- Isaac Mansfield 1887-
- Ernest 1889-1889

By 1885 Matthew Harrison senior was aged 75

⁶ Edith Popp *Glimpses of Early Sunshine* p 38

⁷ Prue McGoldrik *When the Whistle Blew* p11

⁸ Argus 28 October 1889

and must have been thinking of retiring. His wife, Mary Ann née Armstrong, died at Maidstone in 1885 at the age of 68 years. Matthew had a clearing sale at his farm to dispose of all his stock and implements.¹ Harrison snr died suddenly on 1 April 1889 at Kororoit Creek at the age of 79 years, a pioneer of 33 years.² Matthew Harrison junior died in 1923 at Footscray, at the age of 80, a pioneer of 73 years. Ellen Harrison née Mansfield died in 1938 at Ballarat, a home-grown Australian and also a pioneer of 85 years.

Joseph Harrison was born in 1851 and came to Australia with his parents at the age of five. In 1869 he married Caroline Opie, a daughter of Thomas Opie and Joey Kemp who had emigrated from Cornwall in 1849. The Opies were another pioneer family that acquired land at St Albans and in the parish of Maribyrnong, the two main persons being Bennett Opie who had land in the eastern part of St Albans, and Thomas Opie who had land near the Kororoit Creek towards Deer Park.

Joseph Harrison became the hotel keeper at the Barley Mow in Kororoit about 1880 when the license was transferred to his name from B Cunningham.³ The hotel burnt down early in 1886 and Harrison had it rebuilt as the Hunt Club, opening for business in December 1886; it was named after the Melbourne Hunt Club that held its meetings in the area.⁴ The family later moved to Pole Street in Footscray.

Joseph and Caroline's children included:

- William Thomas 1880-1889
- Matthew Christmas 1882-1954
- Joseph Bennett 1884-1951
- Lillian Maude 1886-1973
- Walter John 1889-1940
- Herbert Percy 1892-1951
- Harold Leslie 1894-1894
- Rhoda Doris Myrtle 1896-1909
- Carol Pearl 1898-1975

Joseph Harrison died in 1916 and Caroline Harrison née Opie died in 1941.

Whilst it is not known what the Harrisons did with their St Albans farms, they nevertheless were pioneers in the district. #

¹ Argus 5 March 1885

² Argus 3 April 1889 p1

³ The Bacchus Marsh Express 7 August 1880 p3

⁴ The hotel was used by ICI for a training centre and accommodation of staff. Sunshine Council developed it into a community arts centre. Brimbank City Council Post-contact Cultural Heritage Study p237.

HASSED, Edward and Ellen



Ellen O'Donnell and Edward Hased

E. Hased had land in St Albans circa 1885 on the south-east corner of Stensons Road and Sunshine Avenue. This block was part of the Keilor Town Common that was sold in 1879. The most likely purchaser of this block in 1879 is Keilor resident Edward John Hased, son of James Hased.⁵ There is a possibility that Edward's wife, Ellen Hased, was listed as the owner, but this is unlikely as they were married in 1884 and the selection of the Town Commons land occurred some years earlier.

Edward and Ellen experienced several traumatic deaths in their families but survived these to lead productive lives despite some disputes with neighbours.

The Hased family has a long history of settlement in Keilor. James Hased was born in 1818 in Nenagh, Tipperary, the son of Richard Hased and Mary Powell. In 1836 at Castletow, Tipperary, he married Mary Mullampy who was the daughter of Michael Mullampy and Bridget Duggan. They migrated to Victoria in 1852 and settled in Keilor where they opened a store and in 1858 they bought land in Bullengarook. Things did not go well: their young daughter Mary Anny died in 1860, and then in 1861 James was charged with attempted rape of a female employee, an allegation for which he was found not guilty. He died unexpectedly in May 1864.

At this time Mary was running the Keilor store and the beer house and also supplied meals for prisoners at the police lockup. On 26 November 1868 she married Ebenezer Rootsey, the local butcher, who was born in Suffolk in 1809. He committed suicide on 14 April 1870 at the age of 55:

⁵ There was another Edward who was the son of John Hased and Mary Duggan, also of Keilor, but this Edward died in 1871. See Laszkowski p165.

*"Deceased was a sober man, but of a strange nature, melancholy at times, and had lately complained of his head paining him. On Thursday morning, at about 6 o'clock, he got up, kissed his wife, told her he loved her in his heart, and then went into the shop, where he hanged himself. He was found about half an hour afterwards suspended from a beam. He was cut down, but was quite dead."*¹

Mary Hassed-Rootsey remained a widow for the next thirty years with only her son Edward as immediate family as he was the only one of her children who stayed in the area. She died on 23 June 1900 at the age of 84 years.²

Edward John Hassed was born at Keilor on 10 April 1856. He married Ellen Maria O'Donnell in 1884; she was born in 1857 at Bullengarook, the daughter of Thomas O'Donnell (1831-) and Ann Fitzgerald (1829-1883). The biggest tragedy in Ellen's life occurred in 1883 when her father murdered her mother,³ after which the family split up and went their separate ways.

Ellen's father, Thomas O'Donnell, killed his wife on 28 February 1883 whilst of unsound mind:

*"A horrible murder was committed this morning at Bullengarook by Thomas O'Donnell, an old and respected resident of the district, and in good circumstances. He got up about 6 o'clock, went into his bed-room, where his wife was sleeping, and with an axe nearly severed her head from her body. He then woke his son, who is about 13 years of age, and told him his mother was dead. The boy did not hear any disturbance. Death must have been instantaneous. It is supposed that O'Donnell is not in his right mind, as for several days he had complained of his head."*⁴

No one had any suspicion at the time that their father was experiencing paranoid delusions. Ellen said her parents had not been quarrelling though her father had been drinking as he was upset by the death of a daughter. On the night before the murder everything was calm and normal, but her father's reality seems to have been quite different.

"She was always tormenting me latterly. Every day she could disturb my mind she would. I went to town about a week ago with some butter. In my sleep that night I dreamed of my mother, who told me to look out, there was something plotting. Remark this. At home I had another dream. I saw a man running across the road. My missus opened the door, and I asked her for some tea, but she would not give it, as I

*ought to have been home earlier. I turned into bed. She was shaking. She got outside the bed and made me go away. I dreamt of my mother again. She told me to remark, and said, 'God help you'."*⁵

In the following year Edward Hassed and Ellen O'Donnell married at the Catholic Church in Gisborne. They had several children who were all born in Keilor:

- James Joseph was born in 1885, wed Veronica Maria Brown in 1922 and they had two children: Mary Patricia and James Thomas Keith. James Joseph died in 1966 and Veronica in November 1969.
- Annie Teresa was born in 1887 at Keilor and died on 13 March 1934 at Fitzroy.
- Mary Agnes was born in 1889 at Keilor and died in 1967 at Caulfield. She wed Harold Marshall Adams (1889-1974) who was from Dubbo, New South Wales.
- Margaret Alice was born in 1891 at Keilor and wed Archibald Calman (1893-1976) in 1924; they lived at Essendon North. Margaret died on 28 December 1956 at Coburg.
- Edward John (Ted) was born in 1894 and married Annie Frances O'Donoghue at St Michaels Roman Catholic Church in North Melbourne in 1934. They had a son and daughter who both died in infancy. Edward was a market gardener at Arundel and like his father took up community activities. He represented the Tullamarine Riding on Keilor Council in the 1950s and at one stage was the President of the Keilor Progress Association. Edward junior died on 18 June 1952 at Browns Road, Arundel, Keilor.
- Eileen "Ellen" Amelda was born in 1900 and married William Albert Fry (1899-1988). Eileen died on 3 January 1960.

Edward Hassed senior had taken over the role of Keilor Village storekeeper that his mother had conducted so efficiently. He became involved in municipal affairs in supporting the school district board⁶ and became a councillor. In 1889 he was challenged by Alfred Henry Padley of St Albans in the council election for the Maribyrnong Riding. Padley had nominated in the previous year and had lost to David Milburn, but this year he received 39 votes to Hassed's 33, so it was a loss by the local against a relative newcomer.⁷

¹ Argus 18 April 1870 p6

² Keilor Pioneers

³ Keilor Pioneers p278

⁴ Argus 1 March 1883 p9

⁵ Bacchus Marsh Express 10 March 1883 p3

⁶ Footscray Independent 5 September 1908 p2

⁷ Argus 10 August 1889

Ellen and Edward Hassed were fortunate in being able to acquire more land in Keilor, which the family used for market gardens. In December 1905 the whole of the Arundel and Annandale portions of the Overnewton estate were allotted to settlers and less than half of the applicants were lucky enough to get their selection. Edward and Ellen were even more fortunate to get adjoining blocks, a total of about 40 acres.¹ This was a major win as the Arundel estate was one of the best farming sites in the district.

Edward Hassed died at his home on 28 November 1929. At the age of 74 years he was one of the oldest and most respected residents of Keilor.² Ellen Maria Hassed née O'Donnell died in 1942 at Broadmeadows at the age of 85. She was another home-grown Australian, having moved from Bullengarook (near Gisborne) when she married to make Keilor her home. There is still a Hassed Road in Bullengarook.

Postscript: John Hassed

I've done a lot of research and think that my ancestors may have been known as Haskett before they were known as Hassed. The reason for this is that there was a family called Haskett on the Theodore in 1852 and they all matched the names and ages of the Hassed family. There wasn't any record of a family called Hassed in the ship's log. We know that they were illiterate and into the bargain they would have spoken Gaelic so they wouldn't have known how to spell their name. I wrote a letter to the parish priest of Nenagh in Ireland where the family came from but he said there were no Hasseds in the town though there were some Mullampys. Angela Evans rang me when she was researching Mary Mullampy's story for her book on Keilor pioneers and some information in her story came from me. I also have talked with Joan Carstairs who was part of that group. However, Gordon Lindner, who is one of the extended family, has compiled the best history of the Hassed-Mullampy family and there are more than 1,000 names in that genealogy, which is not bad going for a couple who arrived in Australia with three children.

James and Mary Hassed were my great-great-grandparents and they came to Keilor in 1852. Their three children were Sarah, Richard and Michael (who was my grandfather). There was a baby daughter (Mary or Anne) who died at

sea and she was buried at the Williamstown cemetery. The Hasseds were small people. My dad would have been about 5 foot 6 inches. The younger ones now are much taller; people were a lot smaller in those days.

James and Mary came here with nothing and when they disembarked it was noted that they were "on the road" which meant they didn't know where they were stopping. They went to Keilor and established a shop but I don't know where they found the money to set it up. They started making and selling 'sly grog' to the miners going to Bendigo and Ballarat. The original Hassed store was next door to the pub that eventually became a Shell service station. The store had three storeys, the visible ones being at ground level and upstairs, but there was another level going down to the creek at the back and that's where they had their whiskey still. If anybody came along and saw smoke coming out of the chimney, they would have thought that it was coming out of the kitchen but they wouldn't have known that it was connected to the still in the basement where they were making their poitin.

In 1857 James went to Bullengarook and I understood he took the older boys with him while his wife Mary stopped in Keilor. I'd say that they had split up. He was in Bullengarook in 1857 so he must have been in Keilor for five years. He left Edward, Sarah and Mary with their mother. James died not long after being acquitted of the attempted rape charge. Mary then married Ebenezer Rootsey, who was buried outside the cemetery because he had committed suicide. Mary must have had a lot of the up and go but she was also a bit of a scoundrel. I think she was involved in about 36 court cases for fighting with various neighbours and other breaches of the law. In one case she sued a man for assault and he sued her and Edward for assault. When you look at it, it was just a pub brawl, and she won. Then there were various cases of her having wandering pigs and her rescuing them from the pound at night, detaining geese that were not hers and other sundry disputes.

Richard visited Kyneton where he found romance (but which didn't work out). I understand that the romance resulted in a baby girl being born and Mary (the grandmother) intending to rear her but she then married Rootsey. It isn't known what happened to the child. Richard then went to New Zealand in 1868 where he married Jemima MacKintosh. He was there for four years and they had several children. He came back in 1872 and died in the Austin hospital, but he'd left his family behind.

¹ Bacchus Marsh Express 16 December 1905

² Sunshine Advocate 6 December 1929

There's now quite a lot of descendents over there in New Zealand. There's a Hassed Road in Bullen-garook and there's also a Hassed Road in New Zealand. We had a reunion here before Christmas five years ago and a lot of the New Zealand Hasseds came over. They wanted to know about their ancestor.

Sarah Hassed married James Healy in 1860 and moved to Bullengarook where her father had built the Five Mile Store. Their son Edward was born there. They left for Melbourne after a few years and then Michael became the settler on that property. His wife was Mary Bradshaw. Sarah and James Healy settled in Collingwood and had 11 children. Mary Norden was a granddaughter of Sarah Hassed.

My mother May (Tarry) was the daughter of Kate Haire and Charlie Tarry. Kate was a Bullengarook girl and was the first of a dozen children that were born on the 'little hill'. I don't think there's anything written about her. My mother always said those children were raised on potatoes and milk. The little hill where they were raised was a good farm. I think it was 240 acres and it was a rich red volcanic soil. That was good spud country and there would have been plenty of food there.

Kate Haire moved to Melbourne and married Charles Tarry who was a New Zealander. When she got married her father gave her a cow for a wedding present. She was living in Brunswick and she started milking this cow and selling the milk to the neighbours. Over time she got a few more cows and then she started buying milk in so she built up quite a big milk business. In fact, when she died she owned eight houses in Brunswick. They would have been peasant houses but today you would be looking at a lot of money. I remember her, she had red hair and was a very good business woman.

Apart from Kate, the rest of the Haire family married into the other Irish Catholic families in the district. All the families soon became related to one another. I've been told they mostly came from the same area in Southern Ireland so they would have been connected before they came to Bullengarook.

I remember the wedding of Nora Haire and Les Bailey in 1948. That was in the old Catholic Church next door to what was the Pride of Erin Hotel. The Gormans owned that. It was then the Bullengarook post office. The other post office was about three miles away at East Bullengarook and that was run by my mother. The first post office at Bullengarook

East was across the road at Kneebone's, who retired. Then they shifted the business to our place and my parents built a little addition on the side of the house for the people to come into. I remember operating the manual switch-board when I was very young. Most of the numbers were on a party line and everybody could listen in. There wasn't any privacy

The Irish people all went to Bullengarook because that was a predominantly Catholic area. I think St Albans was mostly a Protestant area. Religion was a big issue in those days. Bullengarook had its own Catholic church (St Columbians) and a Catholic primary school. They never had a state primary school there for many years because all the children went to the Catholic school. I don't know if they ever had nuns there.

My mother married my father James Hassed in January 1930. My sister Mary was born in December 1930, Anne was born in 1932, my brother Joe was born in 1934, and I was born in 1937. They were the Depression years. We had a farm so we had plenty of food. A lot of people came out of Melbourne and built little humpies in the bush in order to survive. They'd come to our place to get milk and they lived on rabbits and they grew vegetables. That was the good side of rabbits because they fed a lot of people. As a kid I used to go ferreting for rabbits and I used to sell them for two shillings a rabbit to the greyhound people.

My brother and I were sent to the Marist Brothers College in Kyneton while the girls were sent to Melbourne and went to Zercho's Business College in the city. I used to board at school during the week and come home from Kyenton on the weekend.

I remember dad selling wool in Geelong for 240 pence per pound, that's £1/4/- for one pound of wool. Ours were Corriedale sheep, not the Merinos. They were bred from Merino and Lincoln sheep. They were big, tough-looking sheep and you got good lambs. I think dad got £10,000 for that place when he sold it in 1952 and then we headed off to Western Australia.

Edward Hassed was my grandfather's brother. He was one of the two children born in Australia. He would have been in Keilor for a while because that's where they went after they landed in Williamstown. I think Edward bought the Keilor property that the family had acquired. Edward had several children with Ellen O'Donnell and all the Hasseds that live in the Essendon area are their descendants. I

remember my father talking about Uncle Ted. I never met any of the Keilor Hasseds. Ted Hassed was a Keilor Councillor and must of been of some standing in the community.

I don't know that Edward senior ever lived at Bullengarook. He might have gone there to visit his father and maybe that's how he met Ellen O'Donnell.

My grandmother's brother Frank Haire married a Gorman whose family had the Pride of Erin hotel, and their oldest daughter Mary married Tom O'Donnell. #

John Hassed
Donvale 2016



Annie Teresa



Mary Agnes



Margaret Alice



Eileen Amelda

References:

Gordon Linder; *The History and Family Tree of James Hassed and Mary Mullampy and Their Descendants*; 2011.

Angela Evans and the Keilor Pioneer Research Collective; *Keilor Pioneers: Dead Men Do Tell Tales*; St Albans History Society, 1994.

Christine Laszkowski; *Dearly Beloved: Burials in The Keilor Cemetery: 1856-1900*; 2008.



Mary Mullampy

In the Colony of Victoria. SCHEDULE 22.—25. VICT. No. 263. [ORIGINAL CERTIFICATE.]
CERTIFICATE OF MARRIAGE.

District of Ararat No. in Register 2083
On the 24th day of October 1883 at St. Francis Church, Ararat
Marriage by licence was solemnized between Els according to the
rites of the Roman Catholic Church

Signature of George Rootsey
Minister

Residence (Present) Ararat
(Usual) Ararat

Age 28

Rank or Profession Armatist

Condition Widower

Discussions: If Widower { Former } Deceased in { Children }
Wife. { Living } { Dead }

Birth Place England

Parents' Names and Rank or Profession: Father George Rootsey Armatist
Mother Mother and his name

Signature of George Rootsey
Minister

Residence (Present) Ararat
(Usual) Ararat

Age 49

Rank or Profession Widow

Condition Widow

Discussions: If Widower { Former } Deceased in { Children }
Husband. { Living } { Dead }

Birth Place County of Kerry, Ireland

Parents' Names and Rank or Profession: Father Michael Mullampy Armatist
Mother Elizabeth Rootsey

I, George W. Barry being a Roman Catholic Priest
do hereby certify that I have this day, at St. Francis Church, Ararat
duly celebrated Marriage between George Rootsey
and Mary Rootsey
after notice and declaration duly made and published as by law required.

Dated this 26th day of October 1883

Signature of Minister, Dispensation-Giver, or other Officer G. W. Barry

Witnesses James Barry
Abelina Lambeth

Marriage certificate of Mary Mullampy and Ebenezer Rootsey

JOHNSTON, David and Elizabeth

David and Elizabeth Johnston were Keilor locals from the 1850s. David was born in 1823 in Balmerino, Fifeshire, Scotland, the son of David Johnston and Catherine Faulkner. He married Elizabeth Dewar in 1846 at Cupar Fife; she was born in 1829, the daughter of George Dewar and Christina Smart. They sailed from Liverpool with their three children, arriving in Melbourne on 17 January 1854.¹

David and Elizabeth settled in Keilor in 1854 and raised a large family:²

- William born 1847 at Monimail, Fife.
- John born 1849 wed Catherine McShane of Keilor and moved to Violet Town.
- Christina born 1851.
- David born and died 1854 at sea.
- Catherine born 1856 at Carlton.
- Elizabeth born 1860.
- Alexander born 1861 died 1903 at Keilor.
- Robert born 1864 at Keilor.
- Jane born 1868 wed Thomas Trembath at Port Melbourne in 1894, died in 1947.
- James born 1870 at Keilor.

David was of a farming family and had worked as a blacksmith; in Keilor he worked as a farm-hand and herdsman on the Common.³ In 1858 he was before the police court for being drunk and disorderly, beating his wife and setting a mattress on fire. He was fined £10 4s with £2 costs.⁴ In 1862 he again faced wife-beating charges and was gaoled for two months.⁵

David probably applied for selection in St Albans in November 1868, but was not successful.⁶ However, he is recorded as occupying 19 acres between Fox's lane and Three Chain Road (now Kealba) in the old Keilor Town Common.

David died at the age of 75 on 23 November 1895 when he fell fifty feet down a precipice while herding cows. Elizabeth Johnston née Dewar died at Ascot Vale on 13 October 1911 at the age of 82; a pioneer of 57 years. #

References:

Angela Evans et al; *Keilor Pioneers: Dead Men Do Tell Tales* St Albans History Society, 1994.

Christine Laszkowski; *Dearly Beloved: Burials in The Keilor Cemetery 1856-1900*; 2008.

¹ <http://www.mundia.com/au/Person/32206939/18224896533>

² Laszkowski p180

³ Argus 12 March 1872 p7

⁴ <http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~pobjoyoneill/Keilor/keilcourt.html> -.

⁵ Keilor Pioneers p264

⁶ Argus 3 November 1868 p6

KENNEDY, Rody and Margaret

Rody Kennedy was a selector at the Keilor Commons sale in November 1868 and bid for allotment #6. Roderick "Rody" Kennedy was born in 1824 in Tipperary, Ireland, and was a carpenter by trade, the son of John Kennedy and Margaret Sheedy. He did not arrive directly from Ireland but via Van Diemen's Land where he was transported in 1844 on the 'Duke of Richmond'. There was another Rody Kennedy who was transported to VDL on the 'Egyptian', so one must be careful in tracing references.

The Rody Kennedy who applied for land at Keilor is probably the one had been convicted of assault on the dwelling of Thomas Abbott:

*"The Shinrone Police, ... having reason to believe a serious outrage was about to be committed in the neighbourhood of Laoka, in the county of Tipperary, proceeded there, and concealed themselves so as to observe whatever might take place. Towards morning a party of three mounted men came from the direction of Nenagh and immediately went to the house of Thomas Abbott, Land Surveyor, and being refused admittance, at once commenced to break in the door; and having succeeded in this, were in the act of beating Abbott, when the police ran into the house, and no doubt saved Abbott from being murdered. After a desperate fight with the police, the three ruffians were secured, and, with the horses, brought to Shinrone, where the prisoners underwent a long examination ... and are fully committed to abide their trial at the approaching Assizes. The cause assigned for the attack on Abbott is his being employed to value a tract of land by order of the Court of Chancery ... The three prisoners, Rody Kennedy, John Casey, and John Maher, are notorious characters, and have for a long time evaded justice, having charges of a similar nature against them. They came about twenty miles to commit this outrage, and brought the horses (which were stolen for the purpose) no doubt to get back so as to prove an alibi if necessary."*⁷

Rody was recommended for a conditional pardon in July 1848⁸ and his sentence expired in November 1850.⁹ He moved to Victoria in 1850 and married Margaret O'Halloran on 7 October 1854 at St Francis Church in Elizabeth street, Melbourne. She was born in 1833 in Ennis, County Clare, the daughter of William Halloran/Hallorine and Mary Malony. She came to Australia alone as an assisted migrant in 1850 to join her older brother in Geelong. Her marriage certificate states she came from

⁷ Reprint from Tipperary Constitution in the South Australian, Adelaide, 5 December 1843

⁸ Launceston Examiner 12 July 1848 p8

⁹ The Cornwall Chronicle 30 November 1850 p854

Ennis in County Clare.¹ Rody and Margaret must have become landowners as by 1856 Rody was listed on the electoral roll in Victoria.

Rody and Margaret's children included:

- Margaret Agnes 1855-1864
- John 1858-1934
- William Joseph 1860-1923
- Roderick Joseph 1862-1939
- Emily Josephine 1864-1951
- Stephen Edward 1867-1919
- Patrick Kenealy 1869-1883
- Margaret Kate 1871-1947
- Mary Ann 1875-1892

It is not clear when Rody and Margaret became associated with Keilor shire, but one of their descendants was named Keilora for the Keilor land connection.² There was another Kennedy family in the area during the 1850s, i.e. Honora and Daniel Kennedy,³ but they were Quakers and therefore unlikely to be related to the Roman Catholic Kennedys.

By the mid 1860s, Rody was working as a wheelwright and farmer in the Donnybrook-Kalkallo area where he was running sheep and some cattle. Other family members must have also settled in the district, as Rody's brother is identified as being there. The family history is that back in Ireland Rody was a Ribbon Man and a fiery political activist though his political activities were not made public locally. Locally, he raised a great deal of money for the Irish Relief Fund but came to the notice of the police as being a Ned Kelly sympathiser and a friend of Ned's father, and maybe he received some extra attention because of this.⁴

Rody came before the attention of the courts on various matters. In June 1862, he was tried for stealing timber and fittings from a house at Donnybrook. The jury returned a guilty verdict and Rody was sentenced to a year's labour on the roads. Things did not get any better. In April 1865, he was admonished at the Donnybrook Court for putting his brother in the witness box to perjure himself in the case of a dog that attacked someone.⁵ Rody allegedly started threatening and stalking a witness in the case, John Lynch, who was provoked to fire a pistol at Kennedy.⁶ In the ensuing court case, Kennedy alleged that Lynch was intending to commit murder. During the trial it was revealed

that over the previous five years Kennedy had been prosecuted on ten different occasions for assault, obstructing the police in the execution of their duty, trying to rescue prisoners from custody, and rescuing, stealing, and unlawfully detaining cattle. He had been fined and imprisoned for some of the offences, but many of the charges had been dismissed. After only a short deliberation the jury acquitted John Lynch of the charges of attempted murder and grievous bodily harm laid against him.⁷

In the late 1860s, Kennedy may have applied for more occupation licences; the Keilor selection occurred in November 1868⁸ but Kennedy's pick (block #6) was also chosen by Joseph Watson and was eventually acquired by Mr J R Greville. Kennedy seems to have applied for other land in the Gisborne area⁹ and then in 1876 he may have applied for 48 acres in the parish of Kororoit.¹⁰

In the meantime the problems with neighbours and police continued, though Rody had his sympathisers. In 1874, Mr Levien, a Member of the Legislative Assembly, raised a question in the House, asking the Attorney General why Roderick Kennedy had been summoned by the Donnybrook police for an alleged assault "*after proceedings had been taken and mutually abandoned by the persons immediately interested.*"¹¹

In 1878, John Lynch wrote to council asking them to remove a stone wall belonging to Rody Kennedy, from the centre of a street dividing Donnybrook from Wellington.¹² These two men obviously had recurring disputes.

In 1885, Rody was charged for grazing sheep on Crown land, which was a common problem for farmers looking for some extra grass for their flocks. The illegal occupation of Crown land was a vexed issue for farmers, as in some cases the Crown Lands Department would not prosecute "*if no trees were cut down, and the public had unrestricted access thereto.*" It might have been the bad luck of the lottery to be charged, but Rody was charged:

"Mr Whelan for the defence contended that by Sec. 128 of the Land Act, 1884, defendant was allowed the privilege of depasturing sheep whilst travelling, upon any Crown Lands within

¹ Information by Teresa Kemp, family descendant.

² Teresa Kemp

³ Keilor Pioneers p267

⁴ Teresa Kemp

⁵ Argus 28 March 1865 p5

⁶ Argus 17 May 1865 p1s

⁷ Argus 17 May 1865 p1s

⁸ Argus 3 November 1868 p6

⁹ Bacchus Marsh Express 15 February 1868 p4

¹⁰ Argus 29 July 1876 p10. The name Rody Kennedy is not uncommon and these selections may have been by another person of that name.

¹¹ Argus 12 June 1874 p6

¹² Kilmore Free Press 20 June 1878 p4

*a quarter of a mile on either side of any road, and would prove that the sheep were being taken from defendant's house paddock to the usual grazing ground, about half-a-mile distant, they were travelling cattle within the meaning of the section. Defendant's son Stephen Kennedy proved that he was in charge of the sheep, and was driving them to pasture as stated by Mr Whelan. The Bench held that from the evidence it appeared that the sheep were not being driven with the expedition required by the section relied on, therefore they considered the offence proved."*¹

In August 1902, Roderick Kennedy escaped death while walking over a railway crossing and being hit by a passing train. He was taken to Melbourne Hospital suffering a fractured leg and severe shock.² Roderick "Rody" Kennedy died at Woodstock on 2 January 1905 at the age of 81 years. Margaret Kennedy née O'Hallaran died at Donnybrook on 18 June 1913. She had been a resident of the district for many years, was 80 years of age at the time of her death, and had reared a large and respectable family.³

According to Teresa Kemp, a family descendant, Rody Kennedy was a fiery red head and a determined man with a great work ethic. Rody and Margaret's third son was named Roderick Joseph Kennedy, whose son in turn was named Roderick Kennedy. The latter Roderick was born in 1893 and fought in France, Belgium and Italy with the Australian 22nd Battalion Reinforcements. He was gassed twice and wounded by gunshot twice and received a shrapnel wound as well. He also got himself in trouble – smoking in a hut cost him five days pay! Truly the classic Australian larrikin!⁴ #



Many thanks to Teresa Kemp for providing extra information about the Kennedy family's history in the colony.

¹ Kilmore Free Press 19 March 1885 p3

² Argus 25 September 1902 p8

³ Kilmore Free Press 26 June 1913 p2

⁴ Teresa Kemp <http://www.news.com.au/national/photos-e6frfkp9-1225752194192?page=73>

LE FEVRE, Dr. George and Sarah



George Le Fevre was born in 14 March 1848 in Harrold (Bedfordshire, England) to a farming family. His father was Caleb LeFevre and his mother was Eleanor "Ellen" Kendal, whose children included Sarah, William, Elizabeth, George, Caleb jnr, Hugh, and Henry Thomas.

The LeFevres were of Huguenot origin, the family being one of a large number of French Protestants brought to England by the Duke of Bedford for draining the marshes. They settled in the Harrold area many years before George was born, with the family name being anglicised to Fever. Caleb Fever snr was a farmer, butcher and inventor. Caleb junior inherited his father's butcher shop and another son William became a dispensing chemist and dentist - they decided that the Fever name might reflect adversely upon their business prospects so they reverted to the family's original name of Le Fevre.

George Le Fevre migrated to Victoria about 1866 and was employed by his cousin, Mr. Gotch,⁵ of the firm of Gordon and Gotch, where he worked for many years. Mr John Speechly Gotch was from Ketterling, England, and in 1849 had emigrated to Philadelphia, America, before moving to New York. He arrived in Melbourne in 1853 at the height of gold rush era⁶ and headed for Castlemaine where he discovered £3 worth of gold and injured himself in the process, so he returned penniless to Melbourne. In 1854 he teamed up with Alexander Gordon and they commenced

⁵ Probably John Speechly Gotch, who came to Melbourne in 1853. Gordon & Gotch was formed on 1854. John's brother, William Gotch, also joined the firm.

⁶ Argus 25 September 1901 p5

their partnership,¹ which evolved into a news and advertising agency, branches of which would later be established in other Australian states as well as in London and Capetown.²

In 1873 George Le Fevre decided on a new career - at the age of 25 he left his mercantile life with Gordon and Gotch to study medicine. He married Sarah Lamrock on 23 April 1873 at her parents' home in New South Wales. She was born in 1853 and was the daughter of John and Ellen Lamrock of Kurrajong, north-west of Sydney. The young couple left for Britain where George was to study at the Glasgow University. He obtained his M.D.³ and Ch. M.⁴ degree at the Edinburgh University.

George and Sarah (with their baby) returned to Melbourne in 1877 where George started his practice and became an Honorary Assistant Surgeon at the Melbourne Hospital. In 1881 he went into partnership with Dr. Brett, and in 1882 he received his M.D. degree from the Edinburgh University for a thesis that he wrote.

In 1885 Le Fevre's rooms were at 93 Collins Street, Melbourne, from where he was soon spruiking the benefits of Bavarian Hop Bitters.⁵ Like his professional colleague, Dr L L Smith, he must have found that advertising products had benefits for doctor as well as patient. He later went more up market by locating his offices at 4 Collins Street, which even then must have been developing into the Harley Street of Melbourne, as over the years both sides of the road were filled with medical suites from Russell Street to Spring Street. A group of doctors occupied the offices at number 4, which was near the corner at Spring Street. Across the road and a bit further up was the Masonic Hall, not far from where Dr L L Smith had part of his empire.⁶

George and Sarah established their home, known as 'Belmont', in Studley Park, Kew, within a few minutes of the Yarra River and the trams along Victoria Street.

¹ When it was suggested that a lawyer draw up a partnership agreement, Gotch is reported to have said "If we are honest men we do not need a lawyer; and if we are dishonest, no lawyer can make us honest." <http://www.gordongotch.com.au/ggweb/Aboutus/OurHistory/tabid/105/Default.aspx>

² The Mercury, Hobart 25 September 1901 p3

³ Doctor of Medicine from the Latin *Medicinae Doctor*

⁴ Master of Surgery from the Latin *Magister Chirurgiae*

⁵ Footscray Independent 5 September 1885 p1

⁶ Dr Smith started off in Bourke Street but by 1907 had acquired more property in the inner city, including the property at Collins Street.

George became a well-respected member of Melbourne society and the medical fraternity. He was a member of the Freemasons, was appointed as an honorary surgeon for the Melbourne Hospital, sat on the Board of the Melbourne University and was a director of several companies. He was a Commissioner for the Melbourne Centennial Exhibition in 1888-1889. He became a member of the Melbourne and Victoria branch of the British Medical Association, which was the largest branch outside of Britain, and was elected President of the Branch in 1890; he represented the Branch at the Annual General Meeting of the Association when he visited England in 1891 as a Victorian Government representative.

Dr. Le Fevre was elected as member of the Legislative Council for North Yarra Province in 1887, which was well received in the local press:

*"The return of Dr. George Le Fevre for the North Yarra Province by an overwhelming majority ... [was] not unexpected but that a mere recruit in the arena of political contest, should so soundly thrash such a veteran politician as the ex-member for Williamstown caused considerable comment. There can be no doubt that from the first Dr. Le Fevre's suavity of manner, and the moderate and unassuming way in which he placed his services at the disposal of the electors, together with the temperate language in which he announced his principles, and his gentlemanly attitude towards his opponent, gained him many supporters, and when it is remembered in addition to this that the temperance vote⁷ was polled solidly in his favour, the magnitude of his victory may not, after all, be considered such a surprise."*⁸

He later resigned from his parliamentary seat because of a technical complication⁹ but was re-elected without opposition in 1890. Politically, he was regarded as a Liberal, was a staunch advocate of education, and also supported the policy of improving railway services for the northern suburbs.¹⁰

During the land boom of the 1880s Le Fevre speculated heavily in real estate with his purchases ranging from Melbourne and its

⁷ Le Fevre was active in the Young Men's Christian Association and the temperance movement.

⁸ North Melbourne Advertiser 12 November 1887 p2

⁹ Members of the Legislative Council had to declare all the properties on which they claimed to be qualified to sit and vote; and could not show any other landed property than that mentioned in the declaration. The act was ambiguous, and several legal authorities assured Le Fevre that he had fully complied with the act. Williamstown Chronicle 24 August 1889 p3

¹⁰ Footscray Independent 15 October 1887 p2

surrounds to as far afield as Tatura.¹ He was regarded as being quite astute in his business dealings² and at the end of the decade his assets were valued at £99,400 – this was an enormous amount given that someone on the basic wage would have had to work for many lifetimes to earn that amount. Le Fevre was a multi-millionaire in today's terms.

Le Fevre became involved in land sales in St Albans personally and through his corporate associations. He was involved with St Albans during the late 1880s when he bought property and helped with deputations about improving the water supply and railway facilities.³ He was registered on the Braybrook Shire ratepayers' roll in Maribymong in 1889⁴ which was probably the land on which Errington Reserve is now established, as it changed hands several times before being transferred to Le Fevre in mid 1888. Le Fevre later sold the property to the Metropolitan Bank Limited.

Le Fevre became a member of the Board of Directors of Alfred Padley's Cosmopolitan Land and Banking Company in 1888. He was also associated with Walter Smithers-Gadd and the People's Freehold and Investment Banking Company; he was Chairman in 1888.⁵ They were also selling land in St Albans late in the decade. (A couple of other M.P.s were also directors of the company, which must have come in handy for lobbying purposes.)

Le Fevre was associated with pressure on the Railway Commissioners to build a station at St Albans and he was involved in a deputation to have a goods shed and a crossover built. Some have claimed that he lobbied for the extension to railway services so as to benefit his property acquisitions in St Albans.

*"In yet another instance proven in court, Dr George LeFevre, M.L.C., agreed to pay half the cost of building a station near his land at St Albans, provided the Braybrook trains would stop there. Speight [chairman of the Railways Commissioners] agreed, the station was built, and Dr LeFevre was able to sell his land."*⁶

However, Le Fevre is said to have opposed the call to lobby the Minister of Railways for

the trains that Commissioners had refused.⁷ Allegations that the granting of train facilities at St Albans was a concession to Dr Le Fevre were supposedly refuted during broader investigations into railway services in 1889.⁸

There is no indication that Mrs Sarah Le Fevre ever had any involvement in St Albans. After settling in Melbourne she became connected with the Congregational Church in East Melbourne⁹ and joined the East Melbourne Dorcas society.¹⁰ She was a committee member of the Melbourne Ladies' Benevolent society, and *"endeared herself to the ladies with whom she was associated, and to the sick poor, which she visited in the slums and alleys."*¹¹

In this respect Sarah Le Fevre exemplified another expectation of women's work at the time, but at the opposite end of the spectrum from the domestic drudgery that Rose Mulligan had to confront in her Braybrook selector's cottage. Sarah Le Fevre's work was that of the gentility, which recognised:

*"... woman's duty to the poor and needy ... should also be part of a good woman's work. Benevolent societies, hospitals, house visitations and collections are all good and useful in their way, but these are not the greater part of the work, but rather a necessary machinery for carrying out the work. Rather to try and ennoble and purify those poor brothers or sisters with whom they come in contact and help them to become better sons and daughters, sisters, brothers, wives or husbands is woman's work in this department and to shed a humanising light over the meanest work by the magic of sweetness, grace and courtesy."*¹²

About 1883, at the age of 30 years, Sarah Le Fevre developed a most debilitating condition:

"... that fell disease, creeping paralysis"¹³ ... affecting first of all her lower extremities, causing first lameness, then absolute inability to walk. Steadily but almost imperceptible it continued to work its ravages, producing partial paralysis of the hands and arms. At length the lungs,

¹ Kyabram Union 8 January 1892 p4

² Yea Chronicle 22 October 1891

³ Footscray Independent 17 December 1887

⁴ Bacchus Marsh Express 26 October 1889 p6

⁵ Argus 11 August 1888 p10

⁶ Michael Cannon; *The Land Boomers: The Complete Illustrated History*; Lloyd O'Neill, South Yarra, 1986; p87. Cannon refers to Richard Speight as the 'pliant instrument' of the land boomers.

⁷ Argus 28 February 1888

⁸ Argus 23 November 1893 p3

⁹ The Congregational Church was also known as the Independent Church; it was on the corner of Collins and Russell streets.

¹⁰ The Dorcas Society was the first women's organisation to be established in Melbourne in 1845 to assist the most vulnerable members of society by providing clothing and emergency support for families.

www.womenaustralia.info/biogs/AWE0611b.htm

¹¹ Footscray Independent 25 October 1890

¹² Mclvor Times, Heathcote 23 January 1896 p3

¹³ Now known as Multiple Sclerosis.

*heart and throat became affected; these complications bringing about the fatal end.”*¹

Sarah Le Fevre died on 11 October 1890 at her home in Studley Park, Melbourne, aged 37.² She was buried at the old Melbourne Cemetery near John Pascoe Fawkner's Mausoleum.

In June 1891 Le Fevre went to England as the Victorian Government representative at the Congress on Hygiene and Demography, and also attended the Ecumenical Council. Quite unexpectedly he contracted typhoid fever in Glasgow, and died after a short illness on 17 October 1891, at the age of 43, just one year after his wife had died at a young age. It is sadly ironic that in 1878 Dr. Le Fevre, when he was appointed as honorary surgeon to the Melbourne Hospital, was recommending good hygiene as the best prevention in the combat of typhoid³ and yet he died of the same disease on the other side of the world.

Le Fevre had invested heavily in real estate in different parts of Melbourne and it had been thought that he had escaped the financial crises that had beset other property investors. However, his executors discovered that at the time of his death his estate was worth £99,000 and his debts were £113,000; his estate was insolvent by a substantial amount. Le Fevre's business affairs had been numerous and complicated. The estate was not able to pay the outstanding debts due to depreciation in the value of real and personal estate, and inability to realise on the property of the deceased.⁴ The Le Fevre estate was broke.

According to Michael Cannon's history of the Land Boomers:

“Dr George LeFevre, M.L.C. for North Yarra, was a Collins Street specialist who ... extracted diseased organs from his patients and a fortune from land deals with equal dexterity; while helping to make the State's laws in his spare time. ... LeFevre died in Edinburgh during the crash, and according to his will left an estate valued at £100,000. But within a few months of his death, most of the companies in which he owned shares had failed. Practically his entire fortune disappeared into the maw of the land crash. In 1913 LeFevre's estate paid a first and final dividend of 1d. in the £1. The Bank of Victoria, to which he owed £20,000, got £40. The Mercantile Bank liquidators got back £20; and the Federal Bank liquidators £14. Such sums were typical of the meagre repayments made to their

*creditors by many of the speculating politicians and businessmen of the land boom era.”*⁵

George Le Fevre and Sarah Lamrock had several children: George Louis (1874-1947) who was born in Scotland; Claude Henry (1879-1958); and Rosa Elsie (1881-1966).⁶

George Louis LeFevre was educated at Scotch College, Melbourne, and the University of Glasgow. He also became a physician and surgeon and was chairman of the Stoke-on-Trent Panel and Local Medical Board.

Claude Henry LeFevre married Florence Wilmot Hayley in 1908 and they settled in New South Wales.

Rosa Elsie LeFevre married Harry Budge in 1903; he was the secretary to the Governor of New South Wales, and was the first public servant in Australia to receive a knighthood. Rosa, the orphaned daughter of Sarah and George Le Fevre, became Lady Budge:

“A woman of charming manner ... [who] has never sought the limelight, but has devoted herself to her family of three daughters and two sons. ... As wife of the official secretary of the numerous Governors of New South Wales over the past 34 years, during which time several Royal visits have eventuated, Lady Budge has had heavy demands on her time and home life. Shortly after Sir Harry was appointed to his present post, His Majesty the King, then the Duke of York, visited Australia for the opening of the first Federal Parliament.

“Later, the Prince of Wales and then the Duke and Duchess of York visited us, and the recent visit of Prince Henry was another occasion of Royal importance.

*“Popular as her husband is, Lady Budge, with her charming manner and unflinching tact, courtesy, and readiness to help everyone, is equally popular, and rejoicings at the honor she shares are general in this State.”*⁷

Dr George Le Fevre was an urbane medico and Collins Street farmer, but with regard to St Albans he was a land boomer, a speculator, who for a brief period of time contributed to the development of the district. Both he and his wife died at relatively young ages, so it is impossible to know if they may have made any greater contribution to the area. #

⁵ Michael Cannon; *The Land Boomers: The Complete Illustrated History*; Lloyd O'Neill. South Yarra, 1986; p62

⁶ The Argus (10 December 1891 p6) mentions there being four sons; other sources identify three.

⁷ The Australian Women's Weekly 5 January 1935 p12

¹ Footscray Independent 25 October 1890

² Sydney Morning Herald 20 October 1890 p8

³ Kilmore Free Press 25 April 1878 p2

⁴ Yea Chronicle March 1893

LUSCOMBE, Richard Charles

Luscombe had land in St Albans during the 1850s. Richard Charles Luscombe was born in 1830 in Ashburton, Devon, England. He was the son of Richard Luscombe (born 1798) and Mary Downe (born 1800). Richard the son wed Sarah Ann Coles in 1849 in London. They migrated to Australia about 1850 and settled in Melbourne. Their children included:

- Henrietta Jane born 1850; married James Arthurs Maguire in 1868; settled in New Zealand and had 6 children.
- Elizabeth Mary born and died 1852.
- Rose Mary wed Arthur Charles (Horsefall) Haymes; settled in India but must have returned to NSW as she died on 14 January 1910 at King Street Sydney.¹
- Charles William born 1859 at Collingwood; married Susan Florence in 1883, eldest daughter of George Shekelton, of King's County. Charles died in 1903 at Leichhardt, NSW.

Richard senior had been a builder and when son Richard first came to Melbourne he was also working as a builder and general dealer in Little Bourke street east. In May 1852 he sold all his stock in trade and opened up a new business dealing in livery with stables and bullock yards at 87 Little Bourke Street between Elizabeth and Swanston streets:

*"Richard C. Luscombe begs to inform his friends and the public that he has opened very dry and convenient stables, with spacious and secure yards for bullocks and drays, adjoining. He has always on hand the best hay, corn, bran, &c, &c, which he will sell at the lowest possible price."*²

In 1854 the family was living in Nicholson Street, Collingwood, next to the Roman Catholic Bishop's place opposite the Collingwood Watch-house. In July 1854 all the household goods were put up for sale as Luscombe was about to leave for England.³ In January 1855 he was offering for sale 10,000 acres of land at Perth through the "Grand National Heir-Loom Society" with Edward De Carle and Henry Holme.⁴ The public response was not good and by the middle of February the scheme was withdrawn.⁵ (De Carle also purchased land in the Maribyrnong parish in the later St Albans area, being block E, comprising 74 acres on the north-west corner of Furlong Road and Sunshine Avenue.

¹ Sydney Morning Herald 15 January 1910 p12

² Argus 29 July 1852 p4

³ Argus 17 July 1854 p7

⁴ Argus 29 January 1855 p8

⁵ Argus 16 February 1855 p8

In 1855 he purchased a town lot at the Salt Water River near Solomon's Ford.⁶)

In May 1856 Luscombe was heading to England once again and this time he was advertising the sale of real estate including:⁷

- His share in the Queen's Arcade.
- His home in Collingwood.
- 10,000 acres in Western Australia.
- 5 acres at Elphinstone.
- 13 acres at Oakley, parish of Morang.
- 20 acres in parish of Lyndhurst.
- 99 acres at Port Albert.
- 18 acres at Ballan.
- 6 acres at Newmarket.

Richard Luscombe became a real estate agent and was selling land all over Melbourne, but not all went smoothly. In 1857 Edward De Carle sued Henry Holme in the Supreme Court and Luscombe was also involved. These erstwhile real estate partners had not been able to resolve their outstanding debts.⁸

In the 1850s Luscombe was at Queen's Arcade, which he had developed with De Carle, Holme and Lee, but he moved to 89 Swanston Street in 1856. Sometime during the decade he bought land in St Albans; it was part of Allotment A of Section 11, parish of Maribyrnong, and straddled the railway line south of the crossing on Boundary Road. In 1859 he advertised it for sale at £7 10s per acre. Money was Luscombe's new focus as a loan broker in conjunction with his real estate interests and in February he was advertising:

*"Money. Money. Money. One sum of £480, two of £500, one of £750, three sums of £1,000 and several sums of from £1,500 to £5,000 to lend at the lowest rates of interest."*⁹

The business venture did not last long as in April 1860 he appeared in the Insolvency Court¹⁰ after overstretching his financial capabilities:

"This insolvent carried on the business of a loan-broker and estate agent ... [and] received large sums of money on deposit at interest, which he invested ... in securities, but having involved himself by the purchase of the Grosvenor estate, he became insolvent, and a considerable sum of the money of the depositors, about £1,000, was lost. The estate ... shows a list of freeholds and leaseholds to the value of £7,000; but ... the valuations are altogether illusory. The house and land at Collingwood ...

⁶ Argus 5 October 1855

⁷ Argus 1 May 1856 p2

⁸ Argus 15 July 1857

⁹ Argus 7 October 1859 p2s

¹⁰ Argus 28 April 1860

have been surrendered to the mortgagee as no purchaser could be found to give that sum. The fixtures of the Grosvenor Hotel ... will not, I think, pay the mortgage of £1,500. The leasehold in Lonsdale-street, consisting of the Arcade ... [is] perfectly valueless. The leasehold in Collingwood ... is of no value whatever. ... [the] 3,333 acres in Western Australia ... is only an imaginary value.”¹

Although Luscombe possessed land in various places including at Perth, it had been almost all mortgaged to its full value or had suffered a depreciation. Furthermore:

“... he was rent collector for Meaney, and ought to have paid the rents in on the second of each month. He retained a portion, for which he has not accounted. His explanation is not satisfactory.”²

Luscombe applied for a certificate of discharge in October 1860, which was not approved, but it was allowed in June 1861 when there was a confirmed plan of distribution of his estate.³

There is then a gap in the records until 1876, when Luscombe had moved to Sydney and was listed as a master builder and insurance agent. For a while he was working as an agent for the Colonial Mutual Life Assurance Society Ltd but his time with them ended in 1876.⁴ He became involved in political activity and in 1881 with Ninian Melville established the Protection and Political Reform League; Luscombe became the secretary and later the president of the group. In 1883 he was elected as MLA for Northumberland.⁵ A story was later told about his introduction to parliamentary debate when he was continually interrupting members and one speaker, Mr. Fletcher, had had enough:

“Augh - haud your tongue, ye chatterin’ magpie, and let a MAN speak,” roared Fletcher at him. Poor Luscombe in his offended dignity appealed to Mr. Speaker against the unparliamentary language ... Mr. Barton, who was Speaker, rose, and, twiddling his thumbs, as was his wont, said: ‘The hon. member for Newcastle is certainly out of order in addressing any hon. member of this House as a chattering magpie. The hon. member for Newcastle is therefore directed to withdraw the offensive expression and apologise for having used it.’

“Mr. Fletcher ... said in his broad Scotch accent: ‘Meester Speeker, I regret varry much indeed that in the heat of debate I should have been led into the indiscretion of calling any honorable member of this House a chattering magpie,

but I regret more parteecularly, Mr. Speeker, that I should have been betrayed into likening the honorable member for Northumberland to so highly intelligent a bird. In accordance with your directions, Mr. Speeker, I withdraw the offensive expression, and I apologise, Sir, to the magpie, for the comparison.’ ...

“A few weeks afterwards Parliament was dissolved, and the ‘Chatterin’ Magpie’ so stuck to poor Luscombe that when he presented himself before his constituents he was overwhelmingly defeated, and lost his deposit.”⁶

Luscombe must have been an epithet magnet as (Sir) Henry Parkes, several times Premier and the Father of the Australia Federation, once referred to him as “a withered tarantula.”⁷

Luscombe next surfaces in the 1890s in Western Australia, where he was working as an estate agent and auctioneer. He formed a business partnership with W. F. Dixon; they were trading as Luscombe and Dixon, auctioneers of Hannan Street Kalgoorlie. In 1896 Luscombe was selling land in the Exeter Estate within a few minutes’ walk of the Burswood railway station.⁸ In 1898 he was enjoying the delights of a garden party at Government House⁹ and selling land in the New London Estate near Perth.¹⁰ In 1899 the partnership was dissolved.¹¹

By this stage Luscombe was aged about 70 and must have been thinking of retirement but once again there is a gap in the records and his movements are unknown. He visited South Africa in 1905 and ended up in the public hospital in Johannesburg, an experience he must have been very happy to survive.¹² He visited Sydney in 1906, where they still remembered him:

“R. C. Luscombe, inspector of scaffolding during Dibbs’s reign, has turned up after a visit to South Africa and W.A., looking younger than ever. Parkes styled him ‘a withered tarantula’ about sixteen years ago, but Mr. Luscombe has since then sacrificed his Dundreary whiskers, and grown so much plumper in the face that the simile does not fit.”¹³

Richard died in 1907 in South Melbourne. There are conflicting dates of when Sarah Ann died: it was either in 1903 or 1911. The Luscombes did not have any significant role in St Albans. #

¹ Argus 26 July 1860

² Argus 15 October 1860

³ Argus 7 June 1861

⁴ Sydney Morning Herald 28 March 1876 p4

⁵ Australian Town & Country Journal 31 May 1884 p16

⁶ West Australian Sunday Times 11 February 1900 p5

⁷ The Castlereagh NSW 2 June 1905 p2

⁸ Kalgoorlie Miner 21 October 1896 p2

⁹ West Australian 1 January 1898 p2

¹⁰ Kalgoorlie Miner 20 May 1898 p4

¹¹ Kalgoorlie Miner 27 December 1899 p6

¹² The Castlereagh NSW 2 June 1905 p2

¹³ Grenfell Record NSW 9 June 1906 p1

MANSFIELD, Samuel and Emily

Samuel Mansfield was a Keilor Shire resident and one of the selectors lucky enough to get an allotment in the 1868 ballot on Keilor Plains, but his selection was block 19, which was also chosen by James Finn and M. McDonald. James Finn ended up with the property: he obtained the title to the land in 1871 and farmed it with his wife Mary, who sold the farm to James Evans in 1887.

Samuel Mansfield was born in 1823 in Huddon, Suffolk, England, the first son of Isaac Mansfield (1800-1867) and Ann Seeley (1803-1871). In 1843 Samuel Mansfield married Emily Cooper, who was born in 1824 in Huddon, the daughter of Samuel Cooper (1789-1862) and Sarah Collen (1797-1858). In 1849 at the age of 26 years, Samuel with his wife, parents and four of his children immigrated to Australia.

The Mansfields arrived at Port Phillip Bay on 7 November 1849 on the *James T. Foord*. As was the custom of the era, Isaac, Samuel, John and other passengers submitted a 'thank you' article to the papers on their arrival in port:

"To Captain Elliot, of the 'James T. Foord.'

We, whose signatures follow, emigrants per the ship, James T. Foord, having arrived safe at our destined port, beg to thank you sincerely for the great care and attention you have paid to our safety during the voyage, for the good order and regularity that has been uniformly maintained, and the unwearied anxiety that you have always displayed for our personal comfort and convenience. Accept our united wishes for your future happiness and welfare.

*Hobson's Bay, Nov. 13, 1849."*¹

Just as politely and in the same Argus advertisement, Captain Elliot's response was:

"My Friends,

I accept with unfeigned pleasure the demonstration of your kind feelings towards me. It affords me much pleasure to reflect that I have discharged satisfactorily my duties towards you. It has been my constant effort to maintain good order in the ship, and to co-operate with the Surgeon Superintendent in carrying out the regulations, and in arranging everything for your comfort and happiness. Accept my sincere thanks for your good wishes, and allow me to express in return my own hopes for your future success in life.

*H. W. Elliot, Master."*²

For the first year the Mansfields lived in Coburg, which was known as Pentridge at the time,

where Isaac worked as a labourer in building the Calder Highway. Samuel also worked as a labourer while Isaac went to the diggings for a couple of years. Samuel and his brother John bought land near Bulla about 1850.³

Isaac Mansfield had no success at the gold-fields and settled in the Bulla-Tullamarine area where he commenced farming in 1852, digging his land by hand using only a spade. The family bought land through John Pascoe Fawkner's Victoria Co-operative Freehold and Land Investment Society. Isaac, John, George and Samuel Mansfield bought small properties in the area at the start and then added to their holdings and they also leased some land for grazing purposes. They eventually owned hundreds of acres in the region though they lost some during the financial recession of the 1890s. David and one of the neighbouring farmers, Malcolm Ritchie,⁴ became rivals in land acquisition, leading to an incident that is remembered in family history:

*"David once disguised himself as a swaggie and outbid Ritchie for some prime river frontage land. If Ritchie had known it was David bidding against him he would have kept bidding, but he was content to concede the bid to a scruffy stranger, as long as David didn't win. He was furious when the successful bidder was asked his name and revealed himself to be David."*⁵

The Mansfields became dairy farmers as well as growing hay and breeding horses. Isaac Mansfield died at the age of 67 years on 30 April 1867 at Deep Creek, Bulla and was buried at the Bulla cemetery.⁶ Isaac's wife, Ann Mansfield née Seeley, died on 9 January 1871 at Tullamarine and her remains were buried in the Bulla cemetery.

David acquired his father's property and became wealthy from the Boer War, when the sudden demand for hay for horses coincided with him having stock-piled a season's harvest.⁷

Samuel Mansfield was an agricultural labourer in England and became a farmer in Australia. His farm consisted of 300 acres straddling the

³ Heritage Citation Victoria Bank Melbourne Airport

⁴ The Mansfield and Ritchie families were the biggest lands owners in the area at the time. The Ritchies became connected with the McRaes of St Albans when Jean Ritchie married Farquhar McRae in 1899.

⁵ Neil Hamilton Mansfield *The David Mansfield Story: A Genealogical History of his Descendents in Australia*, 1999; p41

⁶ Argus 1 May 1867 p4

⁷ Heritage Citation Victoria Bank Melbourne Airport.

¹ Argus 19 November 1849 p3

² Argus 19 November 1849 p3

boundaries of Broadmeadows, Keilor, and Bulla shires. In the 1880s he was mainly growing hay but later he specialised in dairy farming. He became interested in the Keilor District Road Board in August 1866 when he nominated against Edward Cahill and the retiring councillors John Eagling and James Robertson. Unfortunately for both Mansfield and Cahill they received the fewest votes at the poll and the retiring members were re-elected.¹

Samuel became a member of the Fence, Field, and Chattel Preservation League, which was formed in June 1869 when more than 70 agriculturalists met to *"take into consideration the best means of checking the mischievous and wanton ravages of the reckless body, the Melbourne Hunt Club."*²

Members of the league were from throughout Melbourne, representing farmers who objected to having hunt clubs trespassing on their farms and damaging their crops and property:

*"Notice is hereby given, that all horsemen, whether under the pretence of hunting or otherwise, found trespassing on the freeholds or leaseholds of the above mentioned Individuals after this notice will be prosecuted according to law."*³

These farmers were particularly aggrieved with the Melbourne Hunt Club:

"In England it was generally the upper class - the landed proprietors - who took to the field, and it was to their interest to preserve the property they rode over. But here a body of men - a number of loafers from Bourke street - rode over and injured everything that came in their way without scruple, because they had no interest in the land. It must be remembered, too, that farmers out here owned their own property, and could not be turned off the land at very short notice, like mere tenants at will could at home. A higher class rode over the land of a lower class at home, but in this country it was, to a great extent, the reverse.

...

"Mr Jones ... complained of the manner in which the members of the Hunt Club persisted in riding through cultivated ground even when the road ran parallel to the direction in which they were going and quite at hand; and referred to the consideration exhibited by sportsmen at home to the farmer and agri-culturists. He did not consider the members of the club worthy of the name of huntsmen ... He did not believe the bulk of them ever owned a horse in their lives, and doubted if some would after paying all their debts, have enough to pay for the strings in their shoes. He contended the hunts-

*man had no right at all to go over a farmer's ground without first obtaining his permission. He would advise the farmers to stick together, and remember that in Victoria Jack was as good as his master."*⁴

However, not all the farmers on the Keilor Plains were against the equestrian fraternity. Locals such as William Taylor and later Farquhar McRae supported the Oakland Hounds whose members would meet at Overnewton and ride through the district.

The brothers John, David and Samuel were farming neighbours but had their own arguments - in 1890 John Mansfield sued his brother David in the Supreme Court for fencing off a road that he, John, claimed he had a right of use in order to access Deep Creek. The defence counsel tried to introduce evidence that John and Samuel were seen meeting and having discussions with one of the jurors who had been empanelled in the case. Despite this diversionary strategy the judge ruled that the fence had to be removed within one month.⁵

David Mansfield married Ann Faithful in 1866; she was the daughter of Thomas Faithful and Mary Ann Eggleton. They had five sons and five daughters and became a prominent family in the Keilor-Tullamarine-Broadmeadows district, which is where their properties were located.

David died on 26 August 1903 at the age of 59 years at the family property 'Glen Alice' in Tullamarine. His wife Ann died at Essendon on 18 August 1933 at the age of 87.

Samuel Mansfield died on 24 August 1905 at the age of 82 years at Keilor and was buried at the Bulla cemetery. His wife Emily died on 19 February 1914 at Flemington and was buried at the Bulla cemetery. Samuel and Emily had not had any children.

John Mansfield married Eliza Jane Missen in 1847, the daughter of John Missen and Mary Mitson of Suffolk. They had one son and nine daughters. John's farming specialty was in breeding heavy draft horses. Eliza died at Tullamarine on 11 May 1875 at the age of 45. John died on 5 May 1912 at the age of 86 years at Keilor and was buried at Bulla. #

The Mansfield family history has been recorded by Neil Hamilton Mansfield in his book *The David Mansfield Story: A Genealogical History of his Descendants in Australia*; self published, 1999.

¹ Argus 11 August 1866 p8

² Argus 8 June 1869

³ Argus 4 August 1869

⁴ Argus 27 June 1870

⁵ Argus 20 November 1890

MARGRETT, Stephen and Maud Mary



Stephen "Steve" Margrett¹ was a horse dealer and exporter. He was born circa 1860 in England and most probably was the son of Henry² and Elizabeth Margrett, of Cheltenham, Gloucestershire. His father was a master baker with the family business known as Margrett and Son, which had been established early in the 1800s. Several generations of Margrett men had served the town on its governing bodies. Stephen was one of 13 children; his father died in 1865 and his mother in 1868, so Stephen and his other young siblings were raised by his older step-brother, Charles Henry Margrett, and his wife Alice Walburn.³

Stephen Margrett was not one of the original land selectors on the Keilor-Braybrook Common, but he was a Braybrook ratepayer in 1892. About 1896 or later he bought over 300 acres in adjoining blocks from several of the earlier pioneers of St Albans who had farms to the east of the Errington properties between Boundary Road (Main Road East) and Furlong Road in the Parish of Maribyrnong. The earlier property holders are listed as William O'Neil, James Watson and William Jones, Daniel Leahy, and Robert Fitzgerald.

Margrett had also been leasing some property in the Braybrook Shire. In November 1898 he was leasing council land that had been taken for rates; this was 29 lots of about an acre each in Cut-Paw-Paw. His tender offer was for 1/3 per lot for 7 years, exclusive of rates and taxes, which was accepted.⁴ He was paying

rates for property in Albion between 1901 and 1907, according to the record of annual valuations by the Shire of Braybrook.

He arrived in Victoria after 1871, because at that stage he was an 11-year-old living with his brother's family in England. His first career in Victoria seems to have been as a roughrider with the mounted police. We know this because in August 1886 Constable Margrett and some other police riders took part in a "buck jumping" show at Government House:

*"In the exhibitions at Government-house the roughriders of the police depot usually bring horses which are confirmed buck jumpers, and with whose style and peculiarities they are familiar. The result is that while the exhibition partakes more of the character of circus riding, the variety of the devices by which the horse tries to unseat the rider make it much more interesting to the onlookers."*⁵

Margrett was still with the Police Department in 1888⁶ but by 1891 he had started shipping horses to India, and by 1892 he already had the reputation of being one of the experienced men in the trade. Did he start earlier?

In 1891 he was shipping horses with Thomas Derham, who was operating from Braybrook as a farmer, horse dealer, publican and butcher, as well as being one of the local councillors. The two men must have established a good working relationship that extended into the social sphere because Steve Margrett ended up marrying Thomas Derham's daughter, Maud Mary (Matilda) Burge, on 14 September 1892, at St. John's Church in Footscray.⁷

In 1901 Margrett was leasing grazing land from the Braybrook Council but applied to have the lease cancelled because he said he was leaving Victoria at the end of the month for India. Cr. Derham objected to the canceling of the lease as he said he had authority from Margrett to use the land for his own grazing purposes.⁸ The Council President, Cr Walden, put the issue to the vote and councillors decided to put the grazing rights on all 35 blocks up for tender. Whereas Margrett had been paying 1/3 per year per block, the tenders subsequently received were much higher: Mrs A. Schwartz offered 3/7 per block; James Rockett, 2/3 per block; and George Madler, 2/- per block. The highest tender was accepted.⁹ Was Margrett

¹ The name has several spellings, including Margetts, Margrette, Margrett, and Margretts.

² The father's name is listed as 'Henry' at Stephen's wedding but as 'George' for the golden wedding.

³ www.allen-family-tree.co.uk/henry-margrettcorrect.html

⁴ Bacchus Marsh Express 19 November 1898

⁵ Argus 28 August 1886

⁶ South Australian Advertiser 1 September 1888

⁷ Argus 1 October 1892

⁸ Footscray Independent 16 November 1901

⁹ Footscray Independent 14 December 1901

using the land for his own purposes, or had he leased it for his father-in-law's use, as is implied in Derham's behaviour?

In 1901 Margrett attended the first big horse sale that the late Sir Sidney Kidman conducted at Kapunda and never missed one after that. He was known far and wide for his cheerful outlook and he always looked debonair. In fact he was dubbed "The Colonel" because of his dapper appearance at the Kapunda horse sales. As one of the biggest buyers of horses for India, he made an annual trip there and always had his Christmas dinner in Calcutta.¹ Steve had a soft spot in his heart for Adelaide and had a lot of friends there:

*"Every old identity in Kapunda knows him, and he is the life of the town during the sales. When he arrived today he said to Ross Coles: 'I must go and give Bill Thomas (the local hairdresser and tobacconist) the signal that I have arrived.' Walking down the street he drew a large cracker from his pocket, lit the fuse, and, placing it on the doorstep of the shop, proceeded calmly on his way. There was a terrific explosion, and it was immediately recognised that Steve Margrett had reached Kapunda again."*²

Interstate travel by ocean was riskier back then and in 1904 Margrett might have drowned on the ill-fated mail steamer, *Australia*, when it was wrecked near Queenscliffe:

*"The P & O steamer 'Australia' was wrecked on Point Nepean yesterday morning. Nearly 300 people were on board. All saved. Pilot Dennis was in charge. He was seized with severe illness. Passengers and crew behaved splendidly. Captain complains of delay in answering signals. Passengers transferred to life-boat and brought ashore; then on to Melbourne."*³

The 1909 horse sales in Adelaide were not the biggest held there, but the scale of the endeavour, especially in terms of the distances travelled by the stock and the stockmen, are very impressive. Attendance by representatives from the Braybrook Shire included Steve Margrett, Henry John Gidney, and Thomas Burge Derham. The competition amongst the buyers was said to be remarkably keen.⁴

"The big Kapunda horse sale is now a thing of the past. Nearly 2,400 were sold, and of this number, Mr. Kidman yarded about 2,100. This constitutes a record for the Commonwealth, and probably the world. ... The animals have been gathered from Mr. Kidman's stations in South

Australia, New South Wales, Queens-land, and the Northern Territory. Many of them travelled 1,000 miles to the railway, to be trucked from Farina, whilst others came by way of the northeastern tracks, nearly 2,000 miles, to the yards at Kapunda. The animals comprised draughts, medium weights, gunners, remounts, lighter sorts, and ponies from the following stations: Annandale, Eringa, Diamantina Downs, Bullo Downs, Coongy, Koorabulka, The Peake, Mundowdna (some of the finest draughts ever gathered together), Dubbo Downs, Mirra Mitta, Mount Poole, and Norley ... Thargomindah, Durham Downs, Macumba, Monkira, and Spring Vale. Those who were responsible for the droving did some first-class work, and the local men also in drafting and delivering have little to learn. ...

*"One of the oldest droving hands in the State came in with the last lot of horses, Mr. W. Canny, known throughout the States more familiarly as 'Thackaringa Billy'. He is a typical bushman who has a great affection for his dogs. He owned a cattle dog that was a great favourite years ago. The owner would tell 'Needle' to fetch his horse. She would go out to the stable, mount the horse, and take the reins in her teeth, and bring him round to the door. Many tricks could she do, such as taking a copper into the bar for a biscuit, or to the stationers for a copy of 'The Advertiser'. If Mr. Canny wished to speak to anyone, all he had to do was point him out and say, 'Fetch him, Needle,' she would at once tug him back by the trousers."*⁵

By the end of the decade, there was a decline in the export demand to some extent and Margrett sold some of his stock by auction at Kirks' Bazaar, which was well known for its horse sales. Margrett's 'splendid horses' were:

*"... specially selected for the Indian Government for artillery purposes, and owing to the close of the war are not now required. These horses are suitable for hansoms, waggonettes, order cart, and delivery work."*⁶

His own business was changing too, as in the 1930s he took on his son-in-law, William David Murray-Smith, as a business partner; they became known as Margrett and Murray-Smith, horse dealers of Melbourne. Despite some optimistic assumptions during the decade, the business ended abruptly in 1938 when the Indian army mechanised.

But times were changing more significantly over the next two decades and in 1940 when he took "*the longest train in Australia*" Steve Margrett, now aged 80 years, did not see a soul he knew aboard the express. He said to a

¹ The Advertiser, Adelaide 4 June 1936

² The Advertiser, Adelaide 30 August 1932

³ Argus 21 June 1904

⁴ Chronicle, Adelaide 8 September 1906

⁵ The Advertiser, Adelaide 20 Oct 1909

⁶ Argus 13 November 1919

reporter in Adelaide that the horse market in Melbourne was still improving “*but Kirk’s Bazaar in Bourke Street is now filled with hundreds of motorcars.*”¹

Margrett was still active in 1940 and still travelling all over Australia. He had been known to go from News South Wales to Adelaide and then to Toowoomba in Queensland on his business trips, but this time it was up to Broken Hill “*in a land of almost perpetual sunshine.*” He had a great yarn with some old colleagues about the days when 3,000 horses would go into Bourke every year and be sold within a week. He recalled when Sir Sidney Kidman went to sleep sitting on the top rail of the fence, and how Mick Rasheed bought 300 to 400 horses, and everybody said he would go broke. He brought them to Broken Hill and had a wonderful sale.²

In 1942, Stephen and Maud Mary celebrated their golden wedding.³ Maud was in her mid seventies and was comfortably settled into the family home, Cotswold, in Macquarie Road, Toorak. Then on 16 February 1944, she died suddenly at her daughter’s home in Mt. Eliza; she had reached the age of 77 years. Her funeral service was conducted at St. John’s Church, Toorak, and her remains were interred at the Necropolis in Springvale. Stephen and Maud Mary Margrett had raised two daughters: Alice (1894-1980), and Cleeve Appleton (1900-1971).

Alice married William David Murray-Smith. He became a partner with her father in the business known as Margrett and Murray-Smith, horse dealers of Melbourne, exporting horses to Calcutta. Alice and William’s son, Stephen Murray-Smith (1922-1988) was a communist, an editor, a published writer, educator and a man of letters.⁴ Phillip Adams looked up to him.

Cleeve Appleton married Spencer Harper (born 8 January 1897) who was a son of Thorold and Isabella Winifred Harper. Spencer started in the family business of Thorold Harper and Co., manufacturers’ agents, of Flinders-lane, Melbourne; he later became the managing director of the company. He was chairman of the Melbourne Council of the Australian Association of British Manufacturers in 1936 and mayor of Prahran in 1955.

On Friday 26 September 1946, Mr. Steve

¹ The Advertiser, Adelaide 16 August 1940

² The Advertiser Adelaide 19 August 1940

³ Argus 14 September 1942

⁴ adb.anu.edu.au/biography/murray-smith-stephen-14885

Margrett passed away in Melbourne. He had been in hospital for a week, and died of a heart seizure.⁵ He was aged 86 years and was the last of the old-time Indian horse buyers.

Margrett may have been born in England but some of his extra curricula activities on his horse buying sprees were quintessentially Australian larrikinism. His typical calling card in Adelaide was a firecracker on the doorstep of the hairdresser’s shop, but it didn’t stop there. The jovial atmosphere at Kidman’s Kapunda sales was encouraged by the big man himself:

*“The sales were conducted in a carnival atmosphere with peanut and fruit vendors, hawkers selling frankfurters, and itinerant cheap-jacks proclaiming various wares in raucous tones. The place was thick with practical jokes and pranksters, and in the sale ring Sid’s boisterous chatty style and endless fund of humorous remarks kept the spectators in good spirits and constant roars of laughter.”*⁶

There are several stories about the Colonel’s pranks included in Jill Bowen’s biography about Sir Sidney Kidman. They relate to the practical jokes that Margrett and company would get up to in their travels. For example, it was a time when men wore shirts with a spare celluloid collar; they used to take the collars off for a wash up before dinner. One night while this was happening someone complained that the water wasn’t hot enough, so the Colonel threw all the collars into the chip heater and burnt them; he replaced them the next day. When the travelling troupe stopped overnight at pubs the shoes would be left outside to door to be cleaned and the Colonel would come along and mix them all up, including the women’s, just to cause a bit of havoc.⁷

Not too many other St Albans pioneers could boast about rubbing shoulders with “*the greatest pastoral landholder in modern history*” and even fewer would have had their names and pranks included in his biography.

Apart from owning land in the district, it is not clear whether Stephen Margrett ever became involved more directly in local affairs. He had stated in 1901 that he intended to be a candidate for a seat in the 1902 Braybrook Council elections,⁸ but this does not seem to have occurred. What a pity. He would have been a wonderful larrikin leader. #

⁵ The Advertiser, Adelaide 1 October 1946

⁶ Jill Bowen; *Kidman The Forgotten King*; Harper Collins Publishers Australia, 2007.

⁷ Jill Bowen; *Kidman The Forgotten King*

⁸ Footscray Independent 19 October 1901

McGUINNESS, Ann and Bridget

Ann McGuinness was from Louth in Ireland and migrated to Australia on the 'Almora' which sailed from Liverpool on 6 October 1857 and arrived in Melbourne on 30 December 1857. Ann was accompanied by her eighteen-year-old daughter Bridget and her twelve-year-old son Patrick. They came to Keilor and stayed with her brother Patrick Donnelly and his wife Bridget, who were managers of the Caroline Chisholm Shelter Shed in Keilor village.¹

Ann McGuinness née Donnelly was born about 1809, the daughter of Daniel Donnelly and Mary Rice. Ann married Arthur McGuinness in Ireland where their two children were born, Bridget in 1841 and Patrick in 1844. Very little has been recorded about the family and it's not clear what happened to Arthur as his name was neither mentioned with Ann's and her children's arrival in 1857² nor in Ann's death notice in 1882.³

Ann became a landholder in St Albans when the Keilor Town Common was divided up in the late 1870s. She had block 7 which was south of Stenson Road between the farms of E Hassed and W Sydenham. Ann McGuinness died at the age of 73 in September 1882. Ann died without leaving a will and it was her daughter, Bridget, who became the administrator of the estate, which again hints that Arthur McGuinness was not on the scene, as in that era it would have been unusual for a husband to have been bypassed in such a way without some very strong reason. Bridget died in 1896 without having fully administered Ann's estate and it was not until 1925 that the legal aspects of property transfer were finally tackled – and the notice confirmed that Ann McGuinness had been a widow at the time of her death:

"After the expiration of 14 days application will be made to the Supreme Court of Victoria, that letters of administration of the unadministered estate of Ann McGuinness, late of Keilor, in the state (formerly colony) of Victoria, widow, deceased, intestate, may be granted to National Trustees, Executors, and Agency Company of Australasia Limited ... having been duly authorised to apply for such letters of administration of such unadministered estate by Annie Teresa McGrath, of Keilor, in Victoria, married woman, a granddaughter and one of the next of kin of the said Ann McGuinness ... Bridget Griffith, a

*daughter of the said deceased, to whom letters of administration of her estate have been granted, having died without having fully administered the estate ... and Richard Patrick Griffith, a grandson of the said deceased, to whom letters of administration of the unadministered estate of the said deceased have been granted having died without having fully administered the said estate."*⁴

Bridget McGuinness had married Richard Griffith in 1867 at St Augustine's Catholic Church in Keilor; he was born in 1839 in Kilkenny, Ireland, the son of John Griffith and Jane Armstrong. Richard bought land in Hunter Street, Keilor in 1866, so Bridget and Richard settled into the village and raised several children, including:

- Mary Jane 1868-1919 wed William James Ryan from Daylesford in 1890 and had two children.
- John 1870-1887
- Arthur 1871-1930
- Annie Theresa 1873-1958 wed Matthew John McGrath of Keilor in 1895 and had eight children.
- Richard Patrick 1875-1924 wed Euphemia Liston of Ballarat in 1904 and had six children.
- Margaret 1876-1906
- Elizabeth Mary 1878-1936

Richard Griffith became overwhelmed by financial and personal problems, had many quarrels with his neighbours, and was confined for several periods in the Yarra Bend Lunatic Asylum. Bridget had to provide for the family through dairy farming and life must have been tough for her as she had a number of disputes with neighbours requiring appearances at the Keilor police court. She died of heart problems on 23 October 1896 and was buried at Keilor. Richard died in February 1901 of alcoholism and epilepsy and was buried at Keilor cemetery.

There is little recorded about Ann McGuinness' son, Patrick, though he may have been involved with the Keilor Common in 1862 when a group of residents asked for Patrick Phelan to be appointed as manager.⁵

Ann McGuinness was a pioneer of the district for 25 years and Bridget for 39 years. #

References:

Keilor Pioneers: Dead Men Do Tell Tales; Angela Evans et al; 1994.

Christine Laszkowski *Dearly Beloved: Burials in The Keilor Cemetery: 1856-1900*; 2008.

¹ Keilor Pioneers

² Christine Laszkowski notes that he was a boot-maker and farmer at Keilor (*Dearly Beloved: Burial in the Keilor Cemetery 1856-1900*; pp144, 223) but little else is known about him.

³ Laszkowski p223

⁴ Argus 8 April 1925 p12

⁵ *Keilor Pioneers* p86

McINTYRE, James and Bridget



James McIntyre applied for selection on the Keilor-Braybrook Common back in 1868, but the family came to the area much earlier, probably in the late 1840s before Keilor was gazetted as a village. Their property was along the Salt Water River at the eastern end of Boundary Road (Main Road East, St Albans) with its northern end in what became the quarry in Kealba and the southern end abutting Joseph Solomon's land. That road along the western edge of the property from St Albans to Albion became known as McIntyres Road.

The McIntyre family is an extended one as we have discovered in the past few years of record searching and in talking to those left in Offaly who remember many of the family stories. The genealogical research is a bit complicated because the family name has been spelt as McIntire, McEntire, McEntyre, McIntyre, McKintyre, McEntron, McEnteen, MacEntire, MacIntyre, M'Intyre, and MacAntire, all for the same family.

It seems that James McIntyre, who was born about 1818, was the first of the family to migrate to Australia so we commence with his story. James was from Offaly, Kings County, Ireland, his parents being Patrick McIntire and Mary Egan and as far as we can ascertain they had six sons and two daughters. James came to Australia in 1841 on the "Francis" a ship of 333 tons, which sailed on the first of her two voyages to Australia on August 20th, 1841, from Liverpool, and sailed again in 1843; the Master on both occasions was Capt. Sharp. The ship carried general merchandise, two saloon and six intermediate passengers, and 104 immigrants. The subsidised fare, supported from the sale of land in Australia, was £19 for adults and £5 pounds for children. James was a 24-year-old labourer and had

been, no doubt, attracted by the strong advertising campaign to settle in Australia.

The voyage would have been a cheery enough affair as travelling with James were thirty-two other adventurers from Kings County and we have some reason to believe that two may have been his cousins: Biddy McIntyre, a single woman of 27, and James Egan, 37 years, travelling with his wife Ann and their daughter Maria. James would have kept in close contact with those from his own county, as is still the practice today with Irish settlers into Australia. James encouraged his family to come to Australia and in 1854 he sponsored nineteen members of his immediate family: Stephen, Reuben and Bridget with their spouses and children; they had arrived on the ship 'Geelong'. Another sister Mary, who had married Owen Egan, arrived with her husband and nine of her children in the early 1850s. It seems that James had a hand in persuading some of his cousins to come over to Melbourne during the 1850s and 1860s and other McIntyres from Kings County came to Sydney in 1848 and Moreton Bay in 1852 and 1854. The last of the settlers arrived about 1997 with lots in between.

James McIntyre had arrived in Melbourne on 29 November 1841 as a young man at the dawn of public Catholic life in the colony of Port Phillip and would have found kinship with his fellow countryman who stayed in the port town to make their new life. The Colony of Port Phillip was for Catholics just a part of the continent diocese of Bishop Polding who arrived in Sydney in 1835. In Britain the Penal Laws had been removed from Catholics by the Catholic Relief Act of 1829 but the repeal of the laws could not be felt immediately as the burden had been borne over three hundred years of persecution. Catholics were impoverished and politically weak, had been denied education and were at the bottom of the ladder so to speak in the colony of New South Wales.

In 1839 Bishop Polding assigned Fr. Patrick Geoghegan to care for the mission of Port Phillip; he arrived in Melbourne in May 1839. The Government had allocated a site for a Catholic church at the corner of Elizabeth and Lonsdale streets, well away from the centre of the city whose heart was at William Street. Fr Geoghegan collected money to build a temporary wooden structure and the first Mass in the building was said in July 1839. On October 4th, 1841, Fr. Geoghegan laid the foundation stone for the permanent church of St. Francis and in October 1845 High Mass was celebrated in the building completed to the first plan.

James McIntyre married Bridget Dodd on 15 May 1845, at St. Francis Church. Bridget had been born at Birr, Kings County around 1823 and had arrived aboard the "Andromache" at Port Phillip on 27 June 1840 with her four sisters and three brothers, her older sister's (Mary's) husband and two children. Most of them settled in the Keilor and Braybrook area along the Salt Water River. The story of Bridget and her sisters is well documented in the book *Pubs, Punts and Pastures*, the story of the Irish women living on the Salt Water River. The Dodd sisters were neighbours and the families remained close until the economic circumstances forced them to leave the district and settle in other parts of Victoria. James and Bridget had a family of five sons and a daughter – we will talk about the family later.

James McIntyre may have started his life in Melbourne as a labourer, but in 1847 he was trading as a cattle dealer off Bourke Street.¹ McIntyre Alley was part of Corporation Lane and constructed in 1854; it was located behind St Francis Church off Little Lonsdale St, and someone named McIntyre, presumably James, contributed to the cost of building the alley. James' granddaughter Amy McIntyre said that James always retained premises near Lonsdale Street in order "to conduct his business".

James became interested in the pastoral leases that were available along the Maribyrnong valley during the 1840s; these pioneer pastoralists included Alexander Hunter and James Watson at Keilor, Joseph Solomon at Braybrook, and others such as Joseph Raleigh, James Johnstone, William Fletcher and James Aitken. In 1849 James joined them by leasing or buying Lot No. 129 in the Parish of Cut Paw Paw, County of Bourke, which was 326 acres on the Salt Water River at the Braybrook-Keilor boundary that was later to become part of St Albans; the price was £326.

Booms and busts came and went in the colony and the gold rushes drained the town of life. James and Bridget carried on with life between Melbourne and their property in Braybrook until 1851 when they built a house for themselves on the Salt Water River. At first their address was given as Braybrook and in later years the postal address was Maidstone, but the farm location would eventually become part of St Albans. The farming was mixed in the valley and included the grazing of sheep, cattle and horses. The land of the district was first surveyed by Charles Grimes in 1803, later

travelled by Batman and Gellibrand who used the ford along the river where James was to settle. Joseph Solomon was one of the earliest settlers in the valley and he brought sheep from Tasmania probably about 1835. The first sheep in the Melbourne district had been shorn in November 1836 on the banks of the Salt Water River (Maribyrnong) near Flemington racecourse and Dousta Galla parish on 1 March 1837.

James and Bridget named their home "Riversdale". It was situated at the northern end of McIntyre Road and overlooked the river towards Keilor Bridge and St. Augustine's Catholic Church. Municipal records from 1871 described his property as 326 acres and 2 roods with 326 acres cultivated. The house was of stone and wood and the net rate value was £34/0/0, the rate paid at 12 pence in the pound was £1/14/0 and the shire records showed that James was not in arrears. The landscape along the river was unspoiled: the land to the west of the river was volcanic plain and yielding basalt in abundance growing some she-oaks, honeysuckle and wattle with an amount of wildlife in the swamps and numerous fauna and flora. Alfred Solomon, who grew up in the area, described it thus:

"The river teemed with fish in the season and like the swamp – which then existed near the site of Maidstone – was covered with wild fowl. Though not in very large numbers, plover, quail, snipe, native companions, turkeys, and occasionally a flock of emus were found on the plains. Cockatoos, parrots and pigeons, with many smaller birds lived in the trees and scrub. At night the weird cry of the curlew could be heard. The river valley was the haunt of the kingfisher, and the merry companies of laughing Jackasses loudly announced the approach of morn and evening. ..."

"At Hampstead ... there was a grove of timber, about a square mile in extent, where sheoaks, gums, and blackwood flourished and provided cover for the opossum and native bear."²

Later, there were problems with the bullock drivers and diggers heading for the goldfields who camped on the riverbanks and cut down trees for firewood and to feed their cattle.

James and Bridget had a family of one daughter and five sons. They were all baptised at St. Francis Church, Melbourne, the first four being registered at Melbourne and the last two at Salt Water River:

- Patrick McIntyre born 8 March 1846, baptised 23 March 1846; sponsors

¹ 1847 Directory for the Town and District of Port Phillip.

² Thomas Flynn, 'A History of Braybrook District', 1906.

James and Ann Egan.

- Maria McIntyre born 9 August 1847, baptised 16 August 1847; sponsors Robert Dodd and Jane Dodd. Twin of William.
- William McEntire born 9 August 1847, baptised 16 August 1847; sponsors William Delahey and Ann Delahey. Twin of Maria. Died during first year.
- Francis McIntyre was born 11 June 1849, baptised 2 July 1849; sponsors George Petty and Ann Delahey.
- John McIntire born on 22 September 1850 at Salt Water River, baptised 7 October 1850; sponsors George Dodd and Mary Dodd. Died 1866 aged 15.
- James Joseph MacEntire born 1 April 1852 at Salt Water River, baptised 26th April 1852.

James and Bridget supported the establishment of the St Augustine's Catholic Church in Keilor and the Keilor Catholic Schoolhouse and that is where their children attended. The children probably took the shortcut to school by crossing the river at Delahey's ford and walking through their aunt's property. Interestingly, in 1853 the Keilor Catholic School had 103 students of whom 62 were Catholics and 41 Protestants.

Over the next 30 years the mortgage for the Riversdale property was transferred a number of times to McIntyre's sons and others: in November 1849 the mortgage was transferred to James MacIntire and James Hall, in January 1851 to Joseph Hill and Charles Payne, on the 2nd August 1851 it was altered to Charles Payne and James MacIntyre. On 10 January 1876 a lease or agreement for a lease was signed by James McIntyre Sr. and Patrick McIntyre, Francis McIntyre and James McIntyre Jr. for £6 monthly for five years at least, and these sons continued operating the family business under the name of McIntyre Brothers. Over the years James senior either bought or leased land in the names of his sons. This was scattered over Victoria at Fern Hill near Woodend, Samaria near Benalla, and on the Keilor Road. In 1868 he applied for a selection on the Keilor-Braybrook Common that had been available for use by the farmers around Keilor, Kororoit, Maribyrrong and Derrimut; he was not successful. This small-farm subdivision had been organized by the Closer Settlement Board and the former common land became central to the development of St Albans during the 1870s along the boundary between the Keilor and Braybrook.

The McIntyre farm was principally used for breeding and grazing horses and the McIntyre boys were known as rather wild horsemen. James snr was a capable amateur veterinary surgeon and his services as a horse breeder and vet were always at the disposal of his neighbours. He dealt extensively in Walers which were bred in every part of the country. These horses were army remounts, hacks and racehorses known for reliability, docility, good bone, good actions and sound constitutions necessary for combat. Limestone rich land and different grasses produced good bone; high stepping was essential as they were called to go on long journeys with scant food. For army requirements the horses were to be between 3 and 7 years of age and between 14 and 15 hands in height.

The trade in "New South Walers" began in the early 1830s in New South Wales to supply the army in India. MacArthur's interest in the trade of remounts commenced with one million acres at Port Stephens in NSW; later he transferred to the Liverpool Plains. The horse trade was booming until 1843 when it was hit by the acute depression of 1842-1850. The Port Phillip district eventually became the hub of horse trading for the Indian market. Loading was conducted from the Williamstown pier much faster than in other states. In Victoria, the total of horses for the 70 years from 1861-1931 was 152,747 at £21/11/10 an average. Kirks Bazaar in Melbourne was a well known name where sales were conducted by Adamson, Strettle & Company with shipping agents Boyd and Grice.

James McIntyre took a prominent part in the affairs of the district. Perhaps the earliest reference to this is in Flynn's booklet on Old Braybrook where he writes that McIntyre "*was not a public man in the usual sense of the term, but took the keenest interest in all that was going on in the young colony, and was an active supporter of the agitation for separation from New South Wales, which took place on the 1st July, 1851.*"¹

In November 1862 McIntyre joined a number of Keilor landowners in writing a letter to Patrick Phelan J.P. asking for the establishment of the Keilor District Road Board for the "*super-intending, providing for and completing the construction of roads in the district.*"²

He became a member of the Braybrook District Road Board for many years. The area

¹ Thomas Flynn *A History of Braybrook District* 1906.

² Angela Evans et al *Keilor Pioneers* p87

was declared a Road District on 28 May 1860 with a population of 1,100 people. It was proclaimed the Shire of Braybrook on 27 January 1871. It is said that James McIntyre was involved from the start¹ and he was mentioned in shire minutes, court records and newspaper articles. In the mid 1860s he was representing the district's eastern subdivision with Thomas Derham and Robert Dodd. Dodd had land at Albion and Derham had many properties in the district and, like McIntyre, was involved in the horse trade for the British in India. Local politics always has its complications and consequences. In 1870 Derham and McIntyre resigned as members of the Road Board, throwing out the other member for the subdivision, James Christie, who was the returning officer. The three vacant seats of this subdivision were keenly contested, with interest coming from "*A beer-seller, two publicans, a contractor, two graziers, two store-keepers, a shoemaker, and any quantity of agriculturists.*"² The result was that, of the old guard, Derham was re-elected but McIntyre and Christie missed out.³

The late 1870s must have been difficult for the family. In 1877 a valuable stallion died suddenly due to inflammation and the next day 123 sheep were smothered (attributed to predation from strange dogs) and four turkeys drowned.⁴ These were harbingers of worse to come. In 1880 the Insolvency Court of Melbourne sequestered the estates of Patrick, Francis and James McIntyre trading as McIntyre Brothers of Braybrook.⁵ James senior was declared insolvent in 1881 and in 1882 a settlement on his land was made in consideration of "*the premises and the natural love and affection James McIntyre the elder has for his son James McIntyre the younger*". Witnesses were Thomas Mullaly and James Egan; adjusted on the 11th November 1882 to Thomas Mullaly and Patrick Mulchay. In 1885 Francis McIntyre applied again for a certificate of discharge from the earlier debts attributed to McIntyre Brothers, but the application was dismissed.⁶

Perhaps because of these circumstances James left the family home sometime in the

¹ However, he was not one of the inaugural representatives nominated at the public meeting of 20 June 1860 when Messrs Adamson, Anderson, Ling, Opie, Brown, M'Mahon, and Pullar were elected. *Argus* 21 June 1860 p5.

² *Williamstown Chronicle* 6 August 1879 p5

³ *Bacchus Marsh Express* 10 September 1870 p2

⁴ *Williamstown Chronicle* 19 May 1877 p2

⁵ *Victorian Government Gazette* No.45, 30 April 1880.

⁶ *Argus* 18 July 1885 p5

early 1880s and went to live at Carlton at a private hotel owned by his cousin Mary McIntyre and her husband Thomas Mullaly while Bridget McIntyre remained at the Braybrook home. James's granddaughter, Amy McIntyre, thought we should not mention that fact as it was considered by her as not a good thing to remember.

Bridget McIntyre née Dodd died in April 1885 – the informant on her certificate was her son James. He stated that her parents were William Dodd and Mary Loughnan and that two of her sons, William and John, had predeceased her. Bridget died from exhaustion brought on by chronic bronchitis – her age was given as 65 years. Little has been recorded about Bridget's daily life. She was the only one of the Dodd sisters to be literate. One of her grand-daughters said Bridget was a champion cheese-maker and there is a medal in the care of Bill McIntyre at Tennyson which is inscribed "Mrs McIntyre, 1st Prize, Gisborne Show, 1854 – for butter-making". Her daughter Maria recollects the days of the bushrangers and tells how Bridget rescued one of these outlaws who had been captured by a party of returning diggers. The men held a council to decide the fate of their prisoner who was but a youth and had sentenced him to be hung on one of the trees near the house, but Bridget persuaded them to hand him over to legal custody instead.⁷

James McIntyre Snr. died at the hotel of Mary McIntyre Mullaly in October 1885 "being a colonist of 46 years". He was buried at Footscray with his late wife Bridget who had predeceased him in April of that year. His age was given as 72 years and the cause of death as Hemipligia of the lungs. Thomas Mullaly was the informant on the death certificate.

Bridget and James's grave is in the Catholic section of Footscray cemetery towards the west fence and is in very good repair. It is a family grave site that James jnr had erected with a substantial headstone to acknowledge the various family members buried there.

Patrick McIntyre was born 8 March 1846 and baptised 23 March 1846, his sponsors being James and Ann Egan. Patrick was another family connection with municipal activities during the 1860s and 1870s. In 1867 he was working as a pound keeper dealing with stock trespassing on the Keilor Common. Such trespass was treated seriously and the consequence was that if the owner did not pay

⁷ *Pubs Punts and Pastures*

the fine plus expenses then the animal would be sold.

In 1873 he was appointed by the Braybrook Shire to the offices of Rate and Dog Tax Collector, Inspector of Nuisances, Inspector of Revenue, Inspector of Abattoirs and Slaughter-houses, and Inspector of Thistles. In 1878 the shire council accepted Patrick's offer to collect the agricultural statistics for £10, which had been submitted by tender, so maybe he worked as a contractor. In 1880 his role was expanded to include slaughter-houses, dogs, thistles, weights, measures, health, nuisances, markets, revenue, revenue officer and collector of statistics.¹ Amongst the breadth of his responsibilities he also requested authority to sue property owners for arrears of rates that they refused to pay, which was granted.

In 1883 Patrick McIntyre resigned from his position on account of bad health.²

Francis McIntyre was born in 1850 at Melbourne and his sponsors at baptism were Ann Delahey and George Petty. Frank was farming at Keilor Road when he married Alice O'Neil of Keilor at St. Augustine's Church on July 30th, 1875. Frank and Alice had attended the local school together as her parents William O'Neil and Bridget Gorman farmed at Keilor from the early days. Not long after their marriage Alice became ill and was committed to the Kew Asylum in December of 1875; she was released into the custody of Frank and returned to their home which was a short distance from the Braybrook pound. On 5 February 1876, Alice suddenly became ill and died. On February 8th an inquest into her death found that Alice had died from "the rupture of an aneurism in her chest". Alice is buried with her parents in the Keilor cemetery.

Frank went up to the Benalla district, it is thought to the land at Samaria and according to his daughter Ivy Cowan was stripping bark from gum trees for some time when he met and married Emma Williams Harris at Benalla on August 23rd, 1882. Emma's parents were Edward Harris and Susan Johns of "Moir Park" and had come from Hamilton where Emma was born and both Emma and her father had selected land at Waggarandall; Emma transferred her allotments to her father the year she was married. Frank brought Emma to meet his parents and Emma always told her daughters that Bridget had been very kind and pleasant to her. They continued on to

Stratford where they stayed for a few years, then went down to Gembrook for nine years and over to Nar Nar Goon and at the turn of the century down to Pomorneit for a short while, over to Larpent and to Pirron Yallock which was Emma's last home.

Over the years Frank had worked at a number of jobs; Emma ran the Post Office at Gembrook although it was registered in Frank's name and she rented the farm at Larpent. The children born to them between Stratford and Nar Nar Goon were Francis Stephen, Frances Emily Jane (Florence), Freda Bridy May, John Edward Gembrook, Charles Frederick St. Clair, Ivy Constance Violet, Henrietta Lillian Alice Vynette, Bert Norman, William Gordon and Leslie Norman Wilson. Emma McIntyre was a dab hand at naming babies and she had had more names "up her sleeve" she told one of her daughters!

Freda and Bert died at Nar Nar Goon in 1898 and 1899 respectively. Frank was known in later years to his family as "The Boss" and "Grandpa Boss"; it must have been a reflection of his nature. He became very lame in his later years and walked with the aid of two sticks, his thick curly hair was matched by a flowing beard and people in the district called him The Russian Bear. He died at the age of 81 years on September 26th, 1930, and is buried at Colac. Emma lived on at Pirron Yallock till January 1954 where she died at the age of 97 years and 3 months; she is also buried at Colac with son Charles.

Maria Theresa McIntyre known as Ry and her twin William were born at the site of the Princess Theatre, Melbourne, on August 9th, 1847, and baptised on August 16th. Maria was registered as Maurice! Her sponsors were Robert and Jane Dodd. William was sponsored by William and Ann Delehay. Len Job, Ry's grandson, tells us that Maria was educated at a convent in Melbourne.

On 13th October, 1869, Maria married James Cherry, son of another Keilor landholder, at St. Augustine's Catholic Church at Keilor and at the Presbyterian Church at Footscray. Both ceremonies were witnessed by William Cherry and Margaret Delahey.

James Cherry had arrived from County Down, Ireland, with his parents, two sisters and a brother on the "Marquis of Bute" which sailed from Greenock (Glasgow) Scotland, on August 11, 1841, arriving in Port Phillip on November 30th 1841, one day after the arrival of James McIntire. James Cherry was four years old at

¹ Prue McGoldrick *When the Whistle Blew* p6.

² Williamstown Chronicle 12 May 1883 p2

that time and his father first settled at Williamstown then went to a property at Keilor in 1849. Later they moved to Wyndham, now the Werribee Shire, and bought a property which they named Truganina, on the western side of the Kororoit Creek. The selection stretched from Altona along the creek to the (now) crematorium at Geelong Road and as far as Boundary Road. The Cherry name is remembered at Cherry Lake (which began as Cherry Swamp), Cherry Avenue Altona, Cherry Street Werribee, and James Street, Maria Street and Cherry Lane all at Laverton.

James Cherry was given some of his parents' land which was named "Brooklyn" between Boundary and Geelong roads and it was mainly used for pasture: Walers were grazed there and shipped out from Williamstown. The milking paddock was situated where the crematorium now stands and Maria was known in the district as a champion milker. The home, a double story bluestone house, was near the Ten Mile post on the Geelong Road, the mailing address was Brooklyn. Between 1870 and 1885 Maria and James had a family of nine children: they were Eliza Jane, Anna Maria, James Francis, Hubert, Walter Henry, Emmaline Florence, Robert Oswald, William Edgar and Frederick George. Maria was well known to her cousins Egan at Kyneton and the Egan family at Ballan.

James Cherry died at age 51 years on 2 January 1889, so Maria at the early age of 40 years was left with a young family and a large property to attend; her mother and father had died but she did have her two brothers nearby to keep an eye on her. Hay was delivered to the property by carters from Werribee and on two separate occasions Maria was attacked by one of the men who were known as a "pretty wild bunch". How long Maria stayed at the property has been forgotten, but in the Melbourne directory of 1904 she is shown as being at the Horse Market Hotel, 51 Flemington Road, in 1909 at the Royal Hotel, 75 Flemington Road, she was also at the Turf Hotel at North Melbourne; she had taken up these leases as a means to keep the family together.

Maria was living at 9 Muir Street, Richmond, when she died on 12th July, 1927, at the age of 79 years. Her daughters Anna Maria and Eliza Jane predeceased her in 1905 and 1921 respectively.

Maria Cherry née McIntyre is buried at the Melbourne General Cemetery with James. Her funeral notice was:

"Cherry (née McIntyre) - On the 12th July at her residence, 9 Muir Street, West Richmond, Maria Theresa, relict of late James Cherry of "Brooklyn" Geelong Road, Brooklyn, and loving mother of Lizzie (the late Mrs. J.F. Hayes), Annie (deceased), James, Hubert, Walter, Emmie (Mrs. Norman Job), Ossie, Willie and Fred, in her 80th year, born in Port Phillip."

James Joseph McIntyre (James Jnr) was born on the farm at Braybrook on 1 April 1852; his birth was registered as being at the Salt Water River. He was baptised at St. Francis Church on April 26th, 1852. James junior became interested in the running of the property and kept it going after his parents died. He married Susannah Weate in 1886; Susannah had been born at Northcote, her parents being Joshua Weate and Eliza Wood.

After pulling the property back into some sort of order after the slump of the early 1880s, James was hit again by the land depression of the 1890s and was told by the bank to relocate. He looked at a number of properties held by the National Bank and finally decided to go to Yarragon as he assumed that land near a developing rail line would be sure to do well – how right he was! He transferred his family to Yarragon in 1900 and they remained there till the mid 1980s.

James and Susannah's children were born between 1887 and 1901 and include:

- James Reginald died at the age of two years and was buried with his grandparents at the Footscray cemetery.
- Stephen Walter was born in 1891; served in the First World War and did not marry. He was on the Board of the Butter Factory at Yarragon which was eventually sold to Peters. Became a Commissioner of the Yarragon Waterworks Trust in 1958. He was a keen rifleman and supporter of the Returned Services League. Died in 1980 at 89 years.
- Ellen/Helen Maria was born in 1892 and died 12 September 1975 aged 82 years.
- Olive Margaret was born in 1893, married George Forster and raised three children: Dudley, Olwyn and Megan.
- Mabel Beatrice was born in 1889 and married Samuel George Graydon in 1919. They raised three children: Kenneth, Letitia and Donald. Mabel died in 1960, aged 67 years.

- Kathleen Mary Elizabeth was born 2 April 1895 at Maidstone, married Carl August Praetz on 20 April 1926 and raised two children: Irma and Naida. Carl was of German descent, born 28 April 1897 at Warracknabeal, and died 26 August 1967 at Adelaide. Kathleen died on 9 November in Perth.
- Mary Victoria was born in 1897, did not marry, and died suddenly in 1954 aged 57 years.
- Amy was born in 1899 and became a nurse, did not marry, and died on 6 March 1988 aged 89 years.
- Veronica Thea was born in 1901 at Yarragon and married Alfred Jefferon Read at the St Albans Church of England in Armadale on 22 March 1939.

In Conclusion

In 1916 the lease on the Riversdale property was altered to James McIntyre Jr. and his children Helen, Mabel and Stephen, then in 1923 it passed from the family when a transfer was signed to Francis George Whitehall and Francis Alfred Whitehall and the State Electricity Commission of Victoria. The final search was confirmed on 18 December, 1925. And thus the direct connection of the two James McIntyres and their families of St Albans also passed into history. #



Family history researched and written by Pauline McIntyre and Helen Wardle.

For more information about the Dodd families, refer to Joan Carstairs and Maureen Lane *Pubs, Punts and Pastures: The Story of Irish Pioneer Women on the Salt Water River*, St Albans History Society, 1988.

McINTYRE, James and Susannah



James McIntyre junior was born 1 April 1852 at his parents' farm on the Salt Water River at the end of Boundary Road, so he was a home-grown St Albans boy a long time before the district was named. By that stage St Augustines Church in Keilor was established but James was baptised at St. Francis Church in Melbourne on 26 April 1852 – it was the church where his parents James and Bridget McIntyre had married and where all their children were baptized.

We don't have much information about young James's early life in the district. He probably attended the Keilor Catholic primary school as his parents were supporters of St Augustines Church and the adjoining Catholic school that several of their children attended.

The 1850s was a time of rapid change in the colony and in the valley. It was a time when Aboriginal people were still living in the district though their numbers were in decline. As a young lad James met some of them on their riverbank habitat:

*"He can call to mind the blacks and he speaks of a fight which, as a boy, he witnessed between the Doutta Galla and some of the Bachhus Marsh tribes."*¹

Alfred Solomon, a near neighbour, also referred to the local Aboriginal community of the time:

*"They appeared to be always on the move from one part of their tribal territory to another in search of food. He has witnessed the Corroboree and others of their customs, and was, when a boy, very much in touch with the tribe. He has often seen a black fellow stand in the river and display his quickness of eye and sureness of stroke by striking fish with his spear as they swam around him."*²

¹ Refer to Bridget Dodd article.

² Thomas Flynn *A History of Braybrook District*, 1906.

History tells us that about half of the local Aboriginals died between 1835 and 1839 when the district was being colonised by the likes of John Batman, Joseph Solomon, Anthony Cotterell and others from the Port Phillip Association. The diminishing number of indigenous people who survived in the district were probably moved to the Coranderk Mission in Healesville during the 1860s.

Keilor was declared a township in 1850 by the colonial government in Sydney and thus was "put on the map" in terms of local significance. The separation of Port Phillip from New South Wales was officially noted in November 1850 and the colony of Victoria came into existence on 1 July 1851. The gold rushes started in 1851 and within a few years the population in Victoria doubled and then doubled again – growing from 77,000 in 1851 to over half a million a decade later. Many of the diggers heading for the goldfields at Ballarat and Bendigo came through Braybrook and Keilor and had an effect on the countryside and the people catering for this transient population. Pubs grew to meet their demand.

The aftermath of the gold rushes was the return of many people to the Melbourne districts looking for housing and work. The government's response to the growing pressure was through the Closer Settlement Scheme to open up the squatting and pastoral land for the benefit of the small farmer-settler – locally it meant that land on the Keilor Plains became available for selection. In November 1868 the land in the Keilor-Braybrook Common was sold through this scheme, which included land on the Keilor side between Taylors and Boundary road and on the Braybrook side west of Station Road between Boundary Road and Deer Park. It was this event in particular that was the genesis of St Albans because it divided the local Keilor Plains into 80-acre farms and attracted many newcomers to the district. James McIntyre snr applied for selection as part of this allocation but was not successful.

James Jr. turned 21 in 1873 but his transition into adult life is also undocumented. He obviously worked on the family farm as a grazier as later comments state that he was interested in the running of the property. Over the years James senior either bought or leased land in the names of his sons, Patrick, Francis and James McIntyre who were trading as the McIntyre Brothers of Braybrook.¹ On 10 January 1876 a lease agreement was signed by James McIntyre Sr. and Patrick McIntyre,

Francis McIntyre and James McIntyre Jnr. for at least five years. The family business was mainly involved in horse dealing for the Indian markets but at some stage they were also grazing sheep.

The 1870s were a time of recession in parts of Melbourne but Braybrook and Maidstone survived because of their quarries, meat processing and explosives factories that provided employment.² It must have been difficult for the McIntyres because of financial hardship and other misfortunes. In 1877 a valuable stallion died suddenly due to inflammation and the next day 123 sheep were smothered (due to predation from strange dogs) and several turkeys drowned.³ In 1880 the Insolvency Court of Melbourne sequestered the estates of Patrick, Francis and James McIntyre.⁴ James Sr. was declared insolvent in 1881 and in 1882 a settlement on his land was made on account of "the premises and the natural love and affection James McIntyre the elder has for his son James McIntyre the younger".

James McIntyre jnr married Susannah Victoria Weate of Laverton on 18 August 1886 at St Francis Church, Melbourne. Her parents were Eliza Wood and Joshua Weate who migrated from Staffordshire, England. They came to Melbourne on the Columbia in 1857 with their first five children and settled in Northcote, where Susannah was born in 1859. The family later moved to 138 Kororoit Creek Road, North Williamstown. Susannah came from a large family as was normal at the time; she had a sister and ten brothers. Her mother, Eliza Weate née Wood, died at Williamstown on 17 July 1891 at age 61. Her father Joshua Weate, died on 18 July 1892 at the age of 65 years. They were well-known in the area, having been in charge of the railway gates known as "Weate's gates" across the train tracks in Kororoit Creak Road. Weate's Lead, the road to Werribee and continuation of Kororoit Creek Road, was named after the family.

James and Susannah McIntyre's children were born between 1887 and 1901. They were James Reginald, Mabel Beatrice, Stephen Walter, Helen Maria, Olive Margaret, Kathleen Mary Elizabeth, Amy, and Veronica Thea. James Reginald died at the age of two years and was buried with his grandparents at Footscray. Four of the children attended the first St Albans Primary School in Adelaide

¹ Victorian Government Gazette No.45, 30 April 1880.

² Susan Priestly *The Victorians: Making Their Mark*, Fairfax, Syme & Weldon Associates, 1984 p77

³ Williamstown Chronicle 19 May 1877 p2

⁴ Victorian Government Gazette No.45, 30 April 1880.

Street: Stephen Walter and Mabel Beatrice enrolled in October 1897, Helen Maria enrolled in 1898, and Olive enrolled in August 1899. It was a physical as well as educational challenge as the school was two miles from home and across the railway line to Bendigo. They all left the school in December 1899.



After pulling the property back into some sort of order after the slump of the early 1880s, James was hit again by the land depression of the 1890s. He wasn't the only one and one of the main casualties in the area was Alfred Padley, the land developer who had bought many of the small farms in St Albans for land speculation and then became insolvent. James McIntyre was told by the bank to relocate. Despite these worries he continued to be active locally.

Whereas James McIntyre snr was elected to Braybrook council for some years, James jnr was involved less directly. In 1895 he and Thomas Derham, George Mullenger and George Cranwell encouraged Charles Spong to nominate for council;¹ he became a representative for the River Riding which had replaced the old Eastern subdivision. Charles James Spong was a hotel keeper and bought the Bridge Hotel that was owned by the Melbourne Meat Preserving Company and was opposite the Anglers Arms at the Maribyrnong Road bridge.

During the 1890s McIntyre looked at a number of properties held by the National Bank and finally decided to go to Yarragon as he assumed that land near a developing rail line would be sure to do well. He bought a township allotment in February 1899 and in May contracted a house to be built; the family moved there in late 1899 and remained there till the mid 1980s. Yarragon was a small place that developed in the 1880s around the railway station – the main industries were timber harvesting and milling, and dairy farming that

supplied the Yarragon butter factory.

It's interesting to note that James "was told by the bank to relocate" during the 1890s, which is what he did, but it seems that he retained some part of the Braybrook property title because he was still listed as a Braybrook ratepayer in 1907. In 1916 the lease on the property was altered to James McIntyre Jr. and his children Helen, Mabel and Stephen, then in 1923 it passed from the family when a transfer was signed to the State Electricity Commission of Victoria and others.²

The relocation to Yarragon must have been a planned affair, because it started about 1896 when James either leased or bought a property at Yarragon. We know this because while still at Riversdale he advertised for tenders for "*ringing and cutting scrub, 1 mile from Yarragon Station known as Alcock's Land, 80 to 100 acres*". Then in 1898 he donated a prize for a Yarragon event: "*Another valuable prize has been presented to the committee of the forthcoming Catholic bazaar - a fine-bred Jersey heifer, springing. It is the gift of Mr. McIntyre, of Braybrook.*"³

It's possible that James might have gone to Yarragon before the rest of the family in order to prepare the way. There was a "Mr McIntyre" who purchased a township allotment with four-roomed house in January 1899 and later in the year there is a report that "Mr McIntyre's house is approaching completion". At least one of these references might apply to the St Albans McIntyres. Their property must have been well located because it was near the Roman Catholic Church and near the road to the creamery. In 1913 James bought another 18 acres in the township.

There is a bit written about the McIntyres in a book on Yarragon which is at least some public acknowledgement about their lives in the district. A Branch of the Red Cross Society was formed in 1914 and the inaugural membership included "Mrs McIntyre" as Vice-President and "Miss Mabel McIntyre" as the Treasurer.⁴

There are references in local papers about James McIntyre and some neighbourhood disagreements with fencing along roads and open spaces, which are similar in nature to those experienced by farmers in Braybrook. Susannah may have been the "Mrs McIntyre"

¹ Footscray Independent 27 June 1895 p2.

² Refer to Pauline McIntyre's family history.

³ Warragul Guardian 28 October 1892 p2

⁴ Sylvia Dalziel *From the Dawning: a History of Yarragon and District*, 1978; p77.

who won a prize for her fruit collection at the Yarragon Horticultural Society in 1917. And there was the reference to the "slight earthquake" that struck the McIntyre's homestead where the "crochery ware was shaken and the householders alarmed".¹

James McIntyre, farmer of Yarragon, died on 26 February 1937, and left real estate of a gross value of £2,299 and personal property of a gross value of £2,466 to his wife and family.² Susanna Victoria died on 14 March 1939 very peacefully at her home Tranmere, Yarragon, aged 70 years.³ They were both home-grown Australians and part of the pioneer families of early St Albans, with James living in the district for nearly 50 years.



Of their children, two girls became teachers and Amy became a nurse, the others became wives and mothers. Stephen enlisted in 1915 and joined several groups in Yarragon, so his involvement is better documented.

Stephen Walter



Stephen Walter McIntyre was born on the 30th November 1888 and attended the St Albans State School between 1897 and 1899. Nothing else is recorded about his schooling which would have continued in Yarragon. Stephen enlisted in July 1915 at age 25 years. He served in Pozieres, France, and was shot in

¹ Argus 8 August 1907 p7

² Argus 15 May 1937 p16

³ Argus 15 March 1939 p10

the head; after his medical treatment and convalescence he was discharged in October 1917. He was awarded the 1914/15 Star, the British War Medal, and the Victory Medal.

He became involved in several district civic organisations, including the Returned Soldiers' and Sailors' Imperial League. The Yarragon sub-branch of the R.S.L. was formed in 1919 and Steve McIntyre became the Yarragon delegate to the Thirty-ninth District Board. He held the positions of Secretary and Treasurer for the Yarragon RSL from 1921 to 1946 and took over the Presidency in 1964.

He joined the Yarragon Rifle Club where he was very active over a long period as a committee member and an accurate marksman in local and regional competitions.

In 1929 he was President of the Back-to-Yarragon movement that was formed to celebrate the township's history:

*"There was a pleasant motor trip to Picnic Point, a picturesque spot near the Tarago River. The greatest crowd ever seen at a dance in Yarragon attended the old-time hall ... Hundreds attended the 'Back to School'."*⁴

Steve was active in the dairy industry including the Yarragon butter factories and became the Chairman of Directors of the Yarragon Dairy Company, which was the rebirth of the sector in the district. He was a Commissioner with the Yarragon Waterworks Trust.

He was also a supporter of bowls and was the "Foundation President, Benefactor and Life Member" of the Yarragon Bowling Club. They purchased a block of land on the edge of town in 1960 and in 1965 the club house was shifted from Yallourn to Yarragon "through the generosity of Mr. S. McIntyre."

Helen Wardle states: "Great-uncle Steve never married; he was injured in the war and became an identity in Yarragon. He was involved with the Butter Factory there. I know he was a Director on the Board and the Water Board as well. He lived with Nellie and Vera at the old homestead and built a new house after Vera's husband died, on the same property. That is the house I remember, a grand place from a child's point of view; it had a pond with frogs."

Stephen Walter McIntyre died in 1980 at the age of 89 years.

⁴ Argus 12 March 1929 p27

Mary Victoria



Mary was born in 1897. She was active in the Yarragon Red Cross branch that was formed in 1915 at the start of the First World War. The branch went into recess in 1919 but re-formed in 1939 with the out-break of the Second World

War. Mary became the Treasurer of the group, thus following in the footsteps of her mother and sister Mabel. Mary died suddenly on 12th October 1954 aged 57 years and her body was interred at Springvale crematorium.

Mabel Beatrice



Mabel Beatrice, sometimes known as May, was born on the 1st July 1890. She was the inaugural Treasurer of the Yarragon Branch of the Red Cross society when it was active from 1915 through to 1919. She married Samuel

George Graydon in 1919 and they had three children: Kenneth, Donald and Letitia. Helen Wardle née Graydon, Letitia's daughter, says: "Grandma Mabel was lovely, she taught me card games and we had a lot of fun together."

Helen/Ellen Maria



Helen Maria was born on 13 February 1892. In Victoria McIntyre's probate application it refers to Helen Maria McIntyre as an executrix which indicates that she did not marry. Helen died on 12 September 1975 at the age of 82 years. She is buried at Yarragon.

Olive Margaret



Olive Margaret was born on the 19th October 1893. She married George Forster on 11th April 1923 at the Church of England in Yarragon. They had three children: Dudley, Olwyn and Megan. Olive died in 1970 at age 77 years.

Kathleen Mary Elizabeth



Kathleen Mary Elizabeth was born on 2 April 1895. She married Carl August Praetz on 20 April 1926 at Warragul and they raised two children: Irma and Naida. Carl was of German background and was born on 28 April 1897 at

Warracknabeal; he died on 26 August 1967 at Adelaide, aged 69 years. Kathleen died on 9 November 1977 in Perth, aged 82 years.

Amy



Amy McIntyre was born in 1899. She trained as a nurse and became matron at the Ouyen hospital for many years and was very well thought of there. She died in Dandenong on 6 March 1988 aged 89 years and is buried at Yarragon.

Veronica Thea



Veronica (known as Vera) was born in 1902 at Yarragon. She married Alfred Jefferson Read on 2 March 1939 at the St Albans Church in Armadale; he was the son of Mr and Mrs A Read of Prince's Hill, Melbourne. Veronica died on 10 June 1980 at age 78

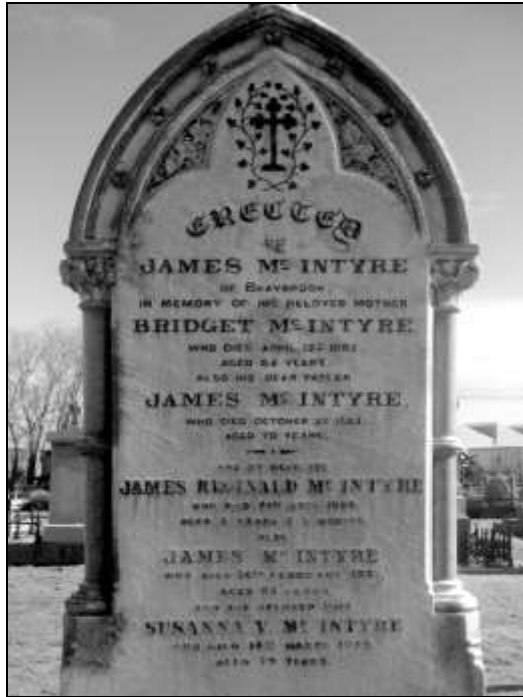
years and is buried at Yarragon. Alfred died before her.

These days there is little in St Albans to remind residents of the pioneering McIntyre family, apart from McIntyres Road which has become a major traffic conduit between old Braybrook and the new suburbs of Taylors Lakes, Keilor Downs, Watergardens and beyond. The once rustic Riversdale property has been converted to industrial purposes. The old farm is trisected by a freeway with accompanying high voltage power lines and the Melbourne-Sydney rail line. The northern end in Kealba became part of a quarry and landfill business that, fortunately, is at least hidden from the passing public. The southern part along the road to central Brimbank was developed for light industry and commercial

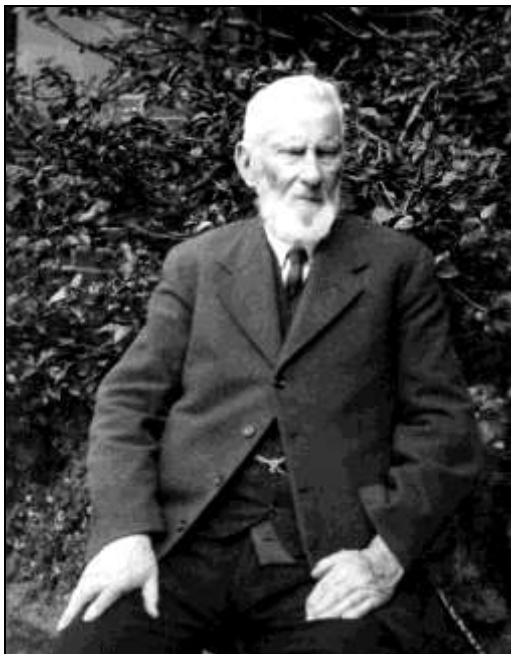
purposes that are functional but not attractive in their settings. That is progress.

The site of an historic Aboriginal silcrete quarry has been identified on the riverbank opposite the old McIntyre farm, south of the E. J. Whitten Bridge, and is included as part of Brimbank Park Quarry. #

[Family history researched and written by Pauline McIntyre and Helen Wardle.]



McIntyre family gravestone, Footscray.



James McIntyre junior, Yarragon.

McLELLAN, William MLA



McLellan, Wm. M.L.A. was one of the successful selectors in 1868, being allocated lot 25, which was west of the railway line along Boundary Road about halfway to Station Road; it was the land where the Stevens family would establish their farm in the 1900s.

William McLellan was born 12 August 1831 in Crieff, Perthshire, Scotland. His father was Peter McLellan and mother was Margaret Sim. William migrated to Australia as a young man of 19 years, arriving in Melbourne 11 November 1850. He headed for the goldfields of New South Wales and worked as a gold digger. In 1851, he returned to Victoria, attaining wealth through his success at various goldfields. He became a mining investor and agent.

McLellan became one of the first pioneers of Bendigo and entered public life in 1857 when he was elected to the Ararat Mining Board.¹ Ararat had come to prominence in 1857 when a group of Chinese miners discovered gold at the Canton Lead and started a rush to the district.²

In October 1859, McLellan was elected as a Member of the Legislative Assembly:

"He was a popular radical specially interested in unlocking the land. The election at Ararat attracted five candidates and caused some heat; McLellan's three opponents survived a show of hands but after declaration of the poll they were alleged to have 'found it discreet to make themselves scarce during the afternoon'. McLellan himself was described as being a 'mild mannered man as ever scuttled a ship or cut a throat'. Egalitarian radicalism charac-

¹ Bendigo Advertiser 14 April 1906 p5

² Ararat is the only city in Australia to be founded by Chinese immigrants. Canton Lead, the richest alluvial goldfield, was discovered by a party of 700 Chinese, June 29th 1857. Ararat and District Historical Society.

terized his attitude in his first decade in the Legislative Assembly. As a member of the Land Convention he also championed manhood suffrage in his successful campaign for re-election in 1861. He created a stir in 1863 when he formally moved that steps be taken 'to insure the representatives of the people against the undue influence exercised by bankers, squatters, agents of secret and corrupt associations and others'.¹

Amongst his achievements were the establishment of the Mental Hospital in Ararat and the decision to route the Melbourne to Adelaide railway through Ararat rather than Hamilton.

McLellan must have been an erudite speaker. In 1858 he was spruiking land reform before a "Monster Torchlight Meeting at Ararat" with five thousand persons in attendance. His proposal was for "declaring the uselessness of the Upper House."² With regard to land reform, he advocated giving selectors 640 acres and was against intrusive bureaucratic regulations. He wanted reform of the Upper House by reducing the tenure of office and the qualification of members and electors.³

Apart from politicking, he also spoke for charitable causes such as at fundraising events. For example, in January 1863 he gave a speech at the Royal Polytechnic Institute in Bourke street Melbourne on the topic "Practical Gold-mining and Reminiscences of the Early Gold-Fields."⁴ On another occasion he spoke on the theme "Life, Poetry, and Genius of Robert Burns," an evening that was illustrated by songs;⁵ the proceeds on this occasion were for the Benevolent Asylum and the Melbourne Hospital.

He maintained his interest in the mining sector and in 1881 was one of the provisional directors of Ararat Grand Junction Deep Leads Gold Mining Company.⁶

McLellan re-nominated for the Ararat electorate in 1881 and listed himself as a house and land proprietor of North Fitzroy. His opponents were David Gaunson of Melbourne, a solicitor and Ministerialist,⁷ and Charles Hadland of Ararat, an auctioneer.⁸ Gaunson beat McLellan by five votes⁹ but in 1883 McLellan was re-elected

and remained in parliament until 1897.¹⁰

*"During his Parliamentary experience Mr. McLellan saw many changes of Ministries, and he himself held different Ministerial offices. He first obtained office in 1870 as Commissioner of Public Works and Vice-President of the Board of Land and Works. He was subsequently Minister for Mines under Sir Charles Gaven Duffy from June, 1871, till June, 1872. He also held the same office under Sir James McCulloch from October, 1875, till May, 1877. On his re-election to Parliament in 1883, he was appointed Chairman of Committees, which post he held till 1892."*¹¹

An unusual memorial to McLellan is that in 1873 he had a fossil plant named after him by Baron Sir Ferdinand Jacob Heinrich von Mueller, of the Melbourne Botanical Gardens renown: *Trematocaryon mcllellani*.

Why did McLellan select land in St Albans? Clearly, he never lived in the area and it seems unlikely that he would have seriously contemplated the life of a small farmer given all his other interests. He did buy other property in the colony, one of these being several blocks in the first land sales of 1865 at Healesville:

*"He then gave the allotment to the people of Healesville because he was disappointed there were no regular church services in existence at the time. ... The McLellan gift was conditional upon any building erected on the land being known as the Mission Church and being non-denominational."*¹²

McLellan did not retain the St Albans property for long before transferring the land to Dr. L. L. Smith, who acquired the title in November of 1872 at the same time as he acquired the titles to several neighbouring properties.

William McLellan died on 12 April 1906 at his residence in North Fitzroy; he had been suffering from heart failure for some time.¹³ He was aged 75 years and had been a colonist for 55 years. McLellan's wife, Mary Eliza Moodie, died on 26 March 1923 at Mathoura road, Toorak.¹⁴ They had no children. #

Reference:

<http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/mcllellan-william-4126>
Stuart Macintyre "McLellan, William (1831–1906)"; Australian Dictionary of Biography, Volume 5, (MUP), 1974.

¹ <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/mcllellan-william-4126>

² Bendigo Advertiser 2 June 1858 p2

³ Argus 24 December 1879 p7

⁴ Argus 24 January 1863 p8

⁵ Argus 11 July 1866 p8

⁶ Argus 12 February 1881 p10

⁷ A supporter of the ministry in office.

⁸ Argus 15 September 1881 p9

⁹ Bendigo Advertiser 14 April 1906 p5

¹⁰ Bendigo Advertiser 14 April 1906 p5

¹¹ Bendigo Advertiser 14 April 1906 p5

¹² <http://upperyarra.starcommunity.com.au/mail/2011-12-20/worship-history/>

¹³ Bendigo Advertiser 14 April 1906 p5

¹⁴ Argus 27 March 1923

McMAHON, Thomas and Mary

It is not known what year Thomas McMahon arrived in Port Phillip, but he was an Irish immigrant who arrived earlier than many other settlers on Keilor Plains as he married Mary Fitzgerald in Victoria in 1839. The history of their initial settlement in the colony has not been recorded though part of it was spent in Geelong, as their only daughter, Mary Ann, was born there.¹

In the early 1850s Thomas McMahon acquired at least 255 acres of land (blocks L and M) in the Kororoit area; the two adjoining blocks were between Furlong Road to the north and Kororoit Creek to the south, and between Joseph Solomon's land to the west and Mary Delahey's to the east. McMahon established a farm on his property and it was probably aimed at horse grazing or breeding, as in 1854 about ten horses were stolen from his farm.² In May 1856 the Argus had mention of a "Thomas M'Mahon" as a farmer with 310 acres on the Saltwater River, which verifies an early presence in the district.³

In 1858 McMahon had his publican's licence approved for the Kororoit Creek Hotel, which was in Ballarat Road.⁴ This must have been the Old Kororoit Creek Hotel as McMahon did not build the New Kororoit Creek Hotel until 1865. He is best known for his connection with the hotel because it became his home and his main business in the district. It also became a focal point for some municipal activities when it was proclaimed a polling place for the northern division of the Braybrook Road District.⁵ McMahon would also receive nomination papers from candidates because he was appointed as a substitute returning officer.⁶ His support for the developing district included an application for aid to establish a local school.⁷

In 1867 McMahon nominated for council election against William Tulloch⁸ and must have been successful as by November 1868 he was listed as attending the annual general meeting of the Braybrook District Road Board and was

elected to the Bridge and Road Committee.⁹ He was the returning officer for the extraordinary election in 1869. Board meetings must have been convenient for McMahon as at that time the meetings were held at his hotel.

By 1868 McMahon was trying to lease the hotel and its surrounding paddocks:

*"To be let by tender, on a lease for five years (10 miles from Melbourne), M'Mahon's well-known Kororoit Hotel, with two paddocks, well and substantially fenced, containing 510 acres (150 acres cultivation and 400 grass). The Kororoit Creek, containing an inexhaustible supply of water, runs through the paddocks, the grazing capabilities of which are not to be surpassed in the colony. The hotel is a substantial two-storey bluestone, building, with bar, dining and sitting rooms and kitchen on one floor, and five bedrooms; stabling for six horses, with hay-shed; and yards to accommodate 20,000 sheep."*¹⁰

Thomas McMahon renewed his publican's licence in 1869, but then on 27 January 1870 he died at the age of 53 years¹¹ and was buried at Melbourne General Cemetery.

Mary McMahon married James Brown and continued operating the hotel for a while with new business challenges including having to settle with her late husband's creditors. She was declared insolvent in 1875 as a means of settling outstanding debts; the assets included about £1,500 invested in mortgages, a life assurance policy of £700, and the hotel with its adjacent paddocks.¹² After all the debtors were fully paid Mary was left with £135 so she was debt free but the hotel was sold. The transfer of the publican's licence occurred in September 1875 from James Brown to John Burns, who did not retain the hotel for very long as it was purchased by Alexander Dickson in 1878 and renamed as the Cricket Club Hotel. He built a hall next door and 'Dickson's Hall' became a popular social venue being used for concerts, dances and church services.¹³

Thomas and Mary McMahon's daughter, Mary Ann, married William Rees of Williamstown in October 1870.¹⁴ Mary McMahon-Brown née Fitzgerald stayed with her daughter and son-in-law for a while during her time of insolvency but the later part of her life is unrecorded. #

¹ www.mundia.com/gb/Person/53607553/13539198280

² Argus 19 October 1854

³ Argus 26 May 1856

⁴ Argus 24 April 1858

⁵ Argus 31 May 1865

⁶ Argus 26 July 1866

⁷ Brimbank City Council Post-contact Cultural Heritage Study H083DeerParkHotel.pdf

⁸ Argus 1 August 1867 p8. William France Tulloch was a farmer on his 'Strath Tulloh' property near Melton; he died in September 1869. The Strathulloh homestead is now heritage listed.

⁹ Bacchus Marsh Express 21 November 1868 p3

¹⁰ Argus 9 May 1868 p8

¹¹ Argus 28 January 1870 p4

¹² Argus 17 August 1875 p3

¹³ Brimbank City Council Post-contact Cultural Heritage Study H083DeerParkHotel.pdf

¹⁴ Argus 8 October 1870 p4

McMILLAN, William Vincent and Elizabeth

Wm. V. McMillan selected block 39 in the 1868 Closer Settlement ballot at Keilor. The block was on Station Road south of the Boundary Road intersection, adjacent to the selections of John Burgess to the north and William O'Neil to the east. McMillan acquired the title to his land in April 1872. The area is now part of the Deer Park shopping complex.

Very little is known about the McMillans, but it appears that they had little if any connection with the development of St Albans. William may have originated from Glasgow but it is not known when he migrated to Australia. William Vincent McMillan married Elizabeth Moles (aka Mowles) and they had five children, including:

- Emma Vincent was born in 1867 and died in 1873 at Footscray.
- Charles Edward was born in 1869 and became a bricklayer. He married Rose Harriet Ann Lowe and they had six children. Charles died in Fitzroy in 1948 at the age of 77 years.
- Joseph Rae was born in 1872 and wed Isabella Morris (1878-1963); they had a daughter Euphemia Isabela (1905-1965). He died in 1944 at St Kilda aged 72.

The first discovered reference in the Argus for "W. V. M'Millan" is in the 27 May 1864 edition, where he was listed as a Sheriff's Officer in Melbourne.¹ Later references to "William Vincent M'Millan" are from the 1870s when he was living in Footscray and was running his own business as a butcher.

William McMillan was already involved with the Borough of Footscray by August 1870, as he was elected as one of the auditors at the annual election² and re-elected in 1871,³ his fellow auditor on this occasion was David Newell, one of McMillan's near neighbours on his selection in the Parish of Maribyrnong.⁴

The McMillans were well established in the 1870s because they had a couple of properties in Footscray: a stone dwelling and butcher's shop on the corner of Whitehall and Bunbury streets, and a block of land in Yarraville on the corner of Lennox and Stephen streets.

¹ Argus 27 May 1864

² Argus 1 August 1870

³ Argus 29 July 1871

⁴ Newell's selection in St Albans was block 37 on the Kororoit Creek at the end of Boundary Road.

Their lives seem to have been unremarkable except for a couple of thefts that were reported in the papers. In 1873 their house was burgled and the severity of sentence must have been normal for such transgressions:

*"A youth of about 16, named Thomas Williams, was charged at the City Police Court on the 27th inst., with breaking into and stealing from the house of Mr. William M'Millan, of Footscray, in whose employment he had been at one time. Mr. M'Millan left the house on Christmas Day, and on returning at night found that the keyhole of the front door had been stopped up, so that he had to get in the back way. The furniture had been tumbled about, some jewellery had been stolen, and threepenny and fourpenny bits - amounting to several pounds - had been taken from a money box. The value of the property stolen was about £10. The prisoner, when arrested on suspicion, admitted that he was the culprit, and restored the greater part of the property. He did not seem to feel his position much, and was sent to gaol for three months."*⁵

In May 1873 William Vincent McMillan became ill to the extent that he was hardly able to move and drowned himself while in a state of delirium and of unsound mind:

*"A sad event occurred at Footscray on the night of the 16th April, between eleven and twelve o'clock. One of the oldest and most respected residents of Footscray, a butcher named M'Millan, had been suffering from fever and lung disease for about a week. His sufferings caused him to be light-headed at times. He was missed from his bedroom on Wednesday 16th April, by his wife, who could find no traces of her husband, through the darkness. A search was made on the river's bank, when traces of naked feet were observed in the soft mud. The tracks led to the water's edge, and immediately the drags were brought into requisition and used during the night without avail. On 17th ult., however, the body was found in the river, between the two hotels opposite Gibbon's floating dock, and an inquest held upon it, when a verdict was returned that deceased drowned himself while suffering from delirium caused by illness."*⁶

Elizabeth's grief must have compounded when her seven-year-old daughter, Emma Vincent, died in January 1875 after a short illness.⁷

It is interesting to note that when McMillan's estate was put up for sale there was no mention of a property at Keilor Plains, so he must have disposed of his St Albans selection sometime between May 1872 and April 1873. #

⁵ Williamstown Chronicle 4 January 1873

⁶ Illustrated Australian News for Home Readers (Melbourne) 20 May 1873

⁷ Argus 22 January 1875 p1

McSHANE, Patrick and Sarah

Patrick McShane was listed as the occupier of block number 17 in the parish of Maribyrnong at the time of the Closer Settlement ballot in 1868; his farmlet was on the south-east corner of St Albans road and Fox's lane down to the Salt Water River, but home was in the Keilor village.¹ Patrick and Sarah McShane were early pioneers to the district and were related through marriage to the McCusker family of Keilor, who also were pioneers.

Patrick John McShane was born in Armagh, Ireland, in 1830, son of Patrick McShane and Catherine McGuinness (1832-1887). In 1849 Patrick John married Sarah Ann McCusker (1829-1901) in Ireland. They migrated to Port Phillip on the 'Chance', leaving from Liverpool and arriving in Melbourne in 1852. They first went to Dandenong where Patrick had found work and then moved to Keilor where Sarah's family had settled.²

Most of Patrick and Sarah McShane's children were born in Keilor:

- Hugh was born in Ireland in 1850 and died in 1852 on the voyage to Australia.
- John was born in 1852 in Ireland. He was a keen footballer and cricketer and became a publican and councillor at Violet Town. He married Maria Teresa Moloney (1851-1925) and they had two children.³ John died in 1927.
- Hugh Edward was born in 1853 in Melbourne. He married Susan Joyce at Keilor in 1878 and they had seven children. He was a cricketer and became curator with the Williamstown club. He died on the 19th January 1936 of a heart attack at Williamstown.
- Catherine was born 30 October 1856, and married John Johnston of Keilor in 1881; they had a daughter. Catherine died in 1944 at Violet Town.
- Patrick "Paddy" George was born on 18 April 1858 at Keilor and married Jeanie Brown;⁴ they had eight children. Paddy became a sportsman and hotel keeper at Collingwood. He died of pneumonia on the 11th December 1903 at Kew.

¹ Two of their blocks were immediately south of Ailsa Street between Hunter and Flora streets. The family bought several properties around Keilor.

² Keilor Pioneers

³ http://records.ancestry.com/John_Mcshane_records.ashx?pid=185725454

⁴ http://records.ancestry.com/Patrick_George_Mcshane_records.ashx?pid=138414307

- Sarah was born in 1860. She trained as a nurse in 1882 with the Alfred Hospital. In 1897 she wed John Duncan McFarlane (1868-1935) and had two children. Sarah died in 1915. John McFarlane was from Kensington but became a farmer and orchardist at Arundel. He was elected to Keilor council in 1915 for the Tullamarine Riding and served on council until his death in 1935; he was Shire President in 1918-19 and again in 1926-27. He had served in the Boer War with the 1st Mounted Rifles during 1889-1890 and was awarded the Queen's South Africa Medal with clasp.⁵
- Ellen was born in 1863 and married William Abbott; they had several children. She trained as a nurse and established a private midwifery hospital in Perth. She died in Perth in 1916.⁶
- Mary Ann was born in 1864. She wed Thomas Robert Birch and they had one child.⁷ Mary Anne died in 1909.
- Rose Alice was born 1867 in Keilor and died on 30 January 1879 at the age of twelve due to typhoid fever. Her body was interred at the Keilor cemetery.
- Margaret Jane was born in 1868 at Keilor. She became a nurse, never wed, and died at South Yarra in 1900.



⁵ http://www.bwm.org.au/site/John_McFarlane.asp

⁶ The Daily News 24 June 1916 p9

⁷ http://records.ancestry.com.au/Mary_Ann_Mcshane_records.ashx?pid=174975608

While several of the daughters took up nursing as a career, several of the sons took to cricket and football, but Paddy McShane became a champion. In 1885 he was selected as the umpire for the Test match between Australia and England at Sydney. He was then selected as a player for the next match in Melbourne and was selected for two more Tests in 1887-88.¹ He played football with Essendon and was one of the founders of the Fitzroy Football Club in 1883. He was elected as the first captain in 1884 and again in 1885. McShane was a prominent player with the Club through to 1886² and was made a life member.

“Everything came easily for McShane in sport. Classed ‘the best all-round athlete in Victoria’ 120 years ago, he represented his colony at football as a ruckman, his country at cricket as a left-handed opening bowler, ran fast and jumped long. Daily cares took greater toll. Few sportsmen have met more squalid ends.

“For those fond of records, McShane’s name has never lost currency. Only one Australian has returned an analysis superior to his 9-45 at the Sydney Cricket Ground in March 1881, for a Combined Victoria–New South Wales XI against Billy Murdoch’s national team, then just returned from England garlanded with glory. And nobody has paralleled his feat at Adelaide Oval a month later: an all-run seven, without overthrows, from a straight drive.

“McShane has an indelible place in history, too. After a successful career at Essendon Football Club, including its vice-captaincy, he helped found Fitzroy Football Club in September 1883. Club meetings were held at his hostelry, the Leicester Arms in Leicester Street, and McShane became their inaugural captain in April 1884. Broad-shouldered, massively moustachioed, arms akimbo, he looks impatient for action in Fitzroy’s first team photograph.”³



Unfortunately his sporting career had a tragic consequence, as family legend is that Paddy McShane was struck in the head by a cricket ball and subsequently developed delusions of

grandeur.⁴ After he had retired from first-class cricket he worked as a grounds curator in Melbourne, and while looking after the facilities at St Kilda he developed mental health problems. He was admitted to the Kew asylum in September 1901 where he died in December 1903 at the age of only 46 years.⁵ His widow, Jeannie née Brown, was left to care for a large family of children.

Patrick and Sarah McShane were undoubtedly some of the early pioneers in the district and they may have achieved another first, because the sale of their farm at Fox’s lane Green Gully is the earliest-found reference to “St Albans” land sales amongst the Argus advertisements. It appeared in the edition for 29 January 1887:

“M’Clure, Valentine, and Co., have received instructions from Mr. P. M’Shane to sell by auction on Wednesday, the 9th inst, at twelve o’clock. His splendid block of land being Allotment 17, Section A, parish of Maribyrnong, containing 18 acres 1 rood and 10 perches securely fenced and well watered, having a frontage of 9 chains to Saltwater River, and two large dams. This paddock is situated about one mile from the new suburb of St Albans and Keilor, and adjoins the properties of Mr Thos. Hislop and Mr D Cahill. The auctioneers specially call the attention of farmers and graziers on the lookout for a snug farm near the city to this sale, as this is a chance rarely met with, and their instructions are to positively sell. Title Crown Grant. Terms Easy.”⁶

Sarah Ann’s father was Hugh McCusker (1827-1905) and her mother was Margaret Jane McLinden (1836-1865). They also settled in Keilor with four of their children. Their daughter Catherine married Thomas McKinley before migrating to Australia, also arriving in the colony on the ‘Chance’ in 1852. They opened a store in Keilor village and the family ran that for the next 60 years.⁷

St Albans pioneer Sarah Ann McShane née McCusker died on 14 May 1901 at the age of 72 years and was buried at Keilor. Her husband Patrick John McShane died on 23 January 1904 at the age of 74 and was also buried at the Keilor cemetery. #

Reference:

Keilor Pioneers: Dead Men Do Tell Tales, by Angela Evans and the Keilor Pioneer Research Collective; St Albans History Society, 1994.

¹ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Patrick_McShane

² <http://www.fitzroyfc.com.au/prominentvplayers.html>

³ Gideon Haigh *Silent Revolutions: Writings on Cricket History*; Black Inc, 2006, p242

⁴ Keilor Pioneers

⁵ <http://www.espnricinfo.com/australia/content/player/6596.htm>

⁶ Argus 29 January 1887 p2

⁷ Keilor Pioneers

MILBURN, David and Susan

David Milburn was a Keilor farmer and owned various farming plots on the Salt Water River near Keilor village. He obtained more land in the break up of the Keilor Common in 1868 by selecting block 29, which was 77 acres on the south-west corner of Taylors and Kings roads, between the blocks of Bennett Opie and Paul Tate.¹ Milburn acquired the title to his selection in 1879. He had land on Boundary road to the east of the railway line that he sold in 1893 to George Errington - this land was later developed into the Errington Reserve. In 1889 Milburn was Correspondent for the Keilor Board of Advice regarding the establishment of the St Albans Primary School, so he was involved in the neighbourhood in various ways.

David Milburn was born in 1830 in Sproatley, Yorkshire, England, the son of David Milburn (1798-1886) and Caroline Lightfoot (1795-1876). He arrived in Victoria in 1853 and headed for a stint at the Maldon goldfields before settling in Keilor where he worked for William Taylor at Overnewton for two years. In 1855 he married Susan Griffith who was from Scotland and born in 1836. They stayed in Keilor for the rest of their lives and became very successful as orchardists and market gardeners. They started by leasing land from William Taylor to set up their farm and selling their produce to travellers heading for the goldfields. They selected their St Albans land in 1868, obtained title to the land in 1879, and sold it in the mid 1880s.

By mid 1870 the Milburns extended their Keilor holdings to 197 acres² with 120 acres under cultivation and the rest used as pastureland:

"Mr. Milburn usually has from 40 to 60 acres of oats or wheat annually for hay, as it is an exceptional year when corn will come to maturity. He has 40 acres of prairie and English grasses laid down for some time, for pasture, and has sown 20 acres more this year. Prairie grass suits the soil best (red and black loam) and is most profitable. Lucerne he finds an excellent fodder plant when cut for green stuff, but it will not bear grazing. Root crops succeed well on this farm most years, as for instance in 1875 this gentleman had of potatoes, eight tons per acre, whereas in 1876 he had but two tons, with the ground equally well tilled. Of mangolds about three acres are grown every year for the use of the farm stock, the system of cultivating them is ploughing the ground early in the

season, and a second time before sowing, manuring before ploughing the second time, making the ground very fine and then planting the seed in shallow drills 30 inches apart. Mangolds are valuable as an article of fodder both for pigs and cows. About 30 head of cattle are kept on the farm for dairying purposes, there being about fifteen milking on an average. Mr Milburn has no particular breed of cattle, just buying up any cows he may fancy, selecting the good milkers and selling the rest. He thinks the best food for milking cattle, when grass is scarce, is green barley, with a little hay night and morning. For manuring, Mr. Millburn carts the black soil from the river banks onto the red with very good results; using the farm yard manure for the root crops. He has not tried much subsoiling, but believes in it, especially for fruit trees ...

"... there are two very fine orchards on this farm, and they show that particular care has been bestowed on the selecting and planting of the trees, none but the best sorts being planted. The outbuildings on the farm are all substantial and clean, the stables milking yards, &c., being all pitched and drained so that not a particle of manure is wasted. The dairy, which is commodious and well ventilated, is built of brick and cemented. The only product is butter, for the superiority of which Mrs Milburn bears a good reputation."³

One of Milburn's profitable innovations was the fattening of lambs within his orchards. Once the fruit was picked they would purchase lambs and let them run free in the orchards eating the grass between the trees so that the lambs "clean up the orchard from end to end."⁴

David Milburn became involved with a variety of local ventures and organisations. In 1867 he volunteered to act as the manager of the Keilor common after Mr. W. Duncan left the position⁵ then in 1869 he was appointed as the manager of the 'Keilor and Maribyrong United Common' after Mr. T. Somerville resigned.⁶ In 1869 he was appointed as one of the trustees for the Keilor cemetery⁷ and in 1871 he was elected to the Keilor District Board as the representative for the Maribyrong subdivision⁸ a position that he retained on the Keilor Shire Council for many years. In 1873 he topped the poll in the election for the Board of Advice for the Keilor School District.⁹ In 1877 he was elected president of the Keilor Cricket Club and also acted as Vice-President at various

¹ Sometime later Thomas Milburn married Edith Opie and Elizabeth Milburn married James Tate.

² By 1880 they might have been using another 400 acres in Tullamarine for grazing or hay growing. Ray Gibb <http://www.familytreecircles.com/u/itellya/?format=&sort=alpha&next=21>

³ Bacchus Marsh Express 16 June 1877 p3

⁴ The Bacchus Marsh Express 21 August 1909

⁵ Argus 13 August 1867 p6

⁶ Bacchus Marsh Express 20 February 1869 p2

⁷ Bacchus Marsh Express 31 July 1869 p2

⁸ Argus 17 June 1871 p1

⁹ Argus 4 July 1873 p3

times.¹ John Milburn was a club player, as was Paddy McShane who later played for Australia in several Test matches against England.

In 1879 there were further developments with land selection and the Keilor Common, the great dissatisfaction being that some pastoralists were using the common lands to the detriment of the locals when as many as 15,000 sheep were frequently grassed on the land and every blade of grass has been eaten up.² At a penultimate public meeting:

“Mr. David Milburn was unanimously appointed chairman, and did his very best to control and manage an unruly and boisterous meeting, as the majority of those present seemed bent on abusing each other, rather than deciding the question in a legitimate manner. Mr. D. Cameron, M.L.A. ... spoke a good deal about deputations, underhand influences, &c., the latter term being of course applied to those who had dared to oppose selection. ... the obstructionists ... failed to be convinced, and still fancy – poor infatuated beings – that they know what suits themselves best. Soon after ... it became evident that one or two individuals intended constituting themselves rulers of the meeting, for the first one who attempted to speak against the selection so he was promptly told, in a manner more forcible than polite, that ‘he did not know what he was saying.’

“It was then proposed that a portion of the common be set aside for the benefit of those who could not afford to select and this proposal, had it been a legitimate one, would have gone far to render the scheme palatable to those who now object to it as strenuously as ever ...

“A division was then made of the householders in favour of and against selection, the chairman declaring the former to be in a majority ... The meeting closed with a unanimous vote of thanks to the chairman, Mr. Milburn, whose position was certainly no sinecure.”³

The selections on Keilor Town Common took place in 1879 with 21 lots being released, but this Common was abolished in June 1885.⁴

Milburn prospered as a farmer and in 1888 won a prize for the best irrigated farm in the colony.⁵ He also experienced major problems several times when river floods washed away the dam he'd built for irrigation purposes.⁶ Less damaging but equally annoying would have been the problem of trespassers, e.g.:

“At the Flemington Court on Monday, three

youths were fined 21s each for stealing fruit from the garden of David Milburn, at Keilor. It appears on Sundays and holidays hordes of larrikins from the city and suburbs find their way to the plains beyond Essendon, where they make raids into the farmers' gardens, stealing fruit and destroying trees. They are generally provided with guns and dogs. One of the prisoners told the Bench that there were 30 youths lying drunk under a culvert on Christmas Day.”⁷

Some trespassers became quite aggressive in refusing to leave and occasionally matters escalated into physical confrontations that required police intervention and court action.⁸

During the 1880s some of Melbourne's land speculators started showing interest in the Keilor Plains district, and one who became central to the further development of St Albans was Alfred Padley – he also became one of Milburn's competitors in the council elections and stood against him in August 1888. Milburn beat him at the polls by 43 votes to 32⁹ and represented the district until his death in 1918.

Susan Milburn née Griffith died on 8 August 1893 at her daughter's home in Wonthaggi, aged 60 years. David Milburn died on 25 September 1918 at his daughter's home in Moonee Ponds.¹⁰ He was survived by nine children, fifty-three grandchildren and nine great grandchildren. His sons Albert, John, David and Frank, continued operating the orchards and market gardens under the name Milburn Bothers.

David and Susan Milburn's children included:

- David (1857-1871).
- William Alfred (1857-1937) married Emily Ellen Cahill on 22 March 1883 at Yea. He became a teacher and worked for the education department; they lived in Pascoe Vale Road Essendon. There were eleven children.
- Sarah Anne “Annie” (1859-1923) married William Lyne of Tooradin in 1890; they lived in ‘Lynburn’ at Lower Ferntree Gully and later at Wonthaggi. When living in Keilor, Sarah had been active with the Church of England and had been their volunteer organist for some years. Sarah died on 17 May 1923 at her Brunswick home; she was aged 62 years. There were two children.

¹ Bacchus Marsh Express 29 September 1877 p3

² Argus 6 October 1879 p7

³ Bacchus Marsh Express 19 July 1879

⁴ Keilor Pioneers p89

⁵ Argus 9 February 1888 p5

⁶ Bacchus Marsh Express 20 August 1887 p7

⁷ Argus 30 December 1884 p7

⁸ Sunbury News 12 January 1901 p3

⁹ Argus 11 August 1888 p6

¹⁰ Argus 26 September 1918

- John “Jack” (1861-1929) married Jane Goudie of Keilor on 8 August 1893; she died on 3 November 1896 aged 38 years. The Goudie family were early pioneers in Keilor from 1857; as well as being a farmer Matthew Goudie was the licensee of the Keilor Hotel. John remarried to Isabel Jane Walker in 1898; he died on 28 May 1929, she died on 20 March 1964. There were six children; their son John Roskel died as a prisoner of war in 1945.
- Elizabeth “Bessie” (1864-1931) married James Paul Tate on 28 March 1883; they took up sheep farming at Diggers Rest. The Tates were also early pioneers in the district and farmed around Diggers Rest and on Tullamarine Island. There were three children.
- Caroline “Lily” (1866-1930) married Lewis Ward. They moved to Sydney; she died on 2 August 1906 at the age of 40 years.
- Susan (1869-1942) married Albert William Augustus Rothwell. She died on the 12th February 1942 at the age of 72 years. He died in 1945 at the age of 81. There were two children.
- David William (1871-1944) married Mabel Edith McAdam. He became the licensee of the Racecourse Hotel in 1915, taking over from David Yates who had run the hotel for 29 years. Milburn transferred the licence in September 1919 to Gertrude Emily Kilroy. David and Mabel later lived in Sydenham and David worked in the chaff and grain industry. He was a judge in the annual flower show at Keilor and was with the Mechanics Institute and the Progress Association. He died on 29 May 1944 and Mabel died on 21 August 1952.
- Jane “Ginnie” (1873-1971) married John Robinson in 1897 and died at Caulfield in 1971 at the age of 97. They had one child.
- Frank (1876-1951) married Mary “Molly” Ann Glennon. Frank died on 22 May 1951 aged 75 years. Molly died in Keilor on 22 May 1960 at the age of 74 years. There were fifteen children.
- Thomas Herbert (1879-1959) wed Edith Opie, the youngest daughter of Elizabeth and Thomas Opie of Deer Park. Edith died on 29 April 1919 aged 33 years. Thomas remarried in 1935 to Miss Dimond. He died on 28 March 1959 at the age of 79 years. There was one child.

Frank Milburn took over his father’s role as a council representative, initially serving from

1918 to 1927 – he was elected Shire President in 1919-20 – and he also served from 1941 to 1951, a total of about twenty years. His defeat in the 1927 elections was at the hands of James Henry Stevens of St Albans, who won by a majority of ten votes. Milburn continued the family tradition of supporting local groups: he was interested in cricket and football and was President of Keilor Sports Club when it started about 1933; he was one of the mainstays of the Keilor Church of England, being secretary, treasurer and church warden over 30 years; and he was a member of the Keilor School Committee and the Keilor Progress Association for a long period. Frank died in February 1951 at the age of 75 years, leaving his widow and a family of 10 sons and 5 daughters to mourn their loss.¹

After the death of Cr. Frank Milburn in 1951, his nephew, Thomas Norman Milburn, entered the council in the Tullamarine Riding of Keilor by defeating Kenneth Horgan quite decisively with 102 votes to 70² and he was elected Keilor Shire President in 1952. His election meant that another pioneer dynasty could boast of a century of continuous involvement in local government.

Thomas Norman Milburn was born in 1910, the son of Thomas Herbert Milburn (1879-1959) and Edith Opie (1886-1919). He married Gladys Mona Webster (1917-1985) and they had at least three children. Thomas Norman Milburn died about 1996.

There were at least a couple of other family members who worked with council over the years. Julie Milburn, Frank and Molly’s daughter, became connected with Keilor council when she was appointed as an assistant in the office in 1926. Nancy Isabel, the daughter of John and Isabel Milburn, retired from the council office in 1938 after a decade of service as she was marrying Mr. Rene Bregozzo and going to live in Bologna, Italy.³

In December 1999 the market gardening business “G. S. Milburn and Sons” ceased production with the retirement of brothers, Bruce and John. It ended 146 years of family tradition that went back to the arrival of their great-grandfather, David Milburn, in 1853.⁴ #

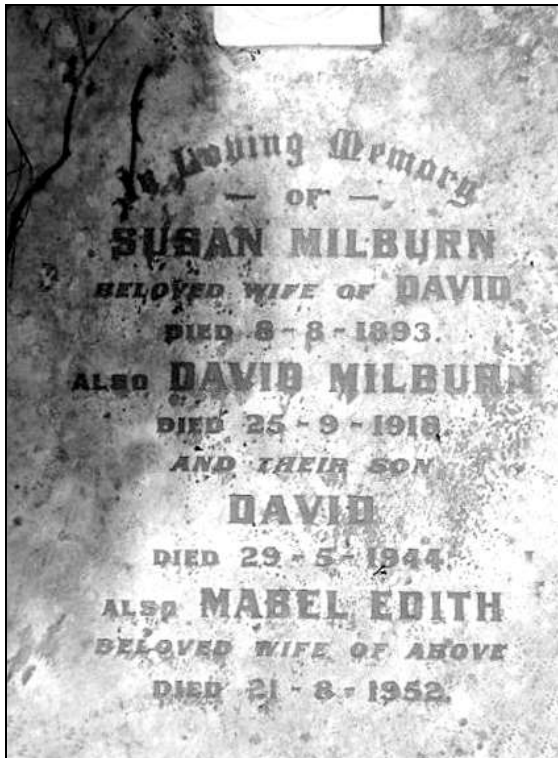
¹ Sunshine Advocate 9 February 1951

² Sunshine Advocate 9 March 1951 p5

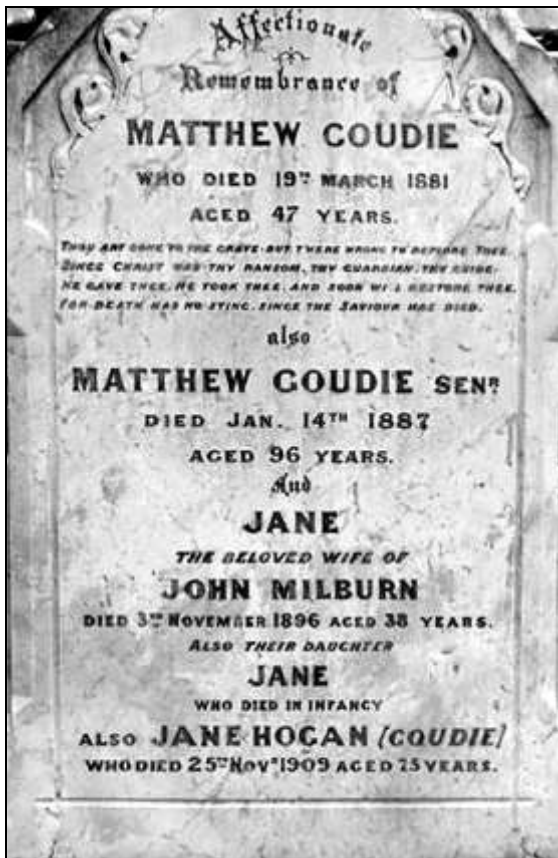
³ Sunshine Advocate 8 April 1938

⁴ Farm dynasty ends; by Chris Evans, 1999.

<http://www.mundia.com/gb/Person/24448399/13204571720>



Gravestone of Susan and David Milburn



Gravestone of Jane Goudie who married John "Jack" Millburn

CURIOUS CASE.

A peculiar case, and one which would appear to demand enquiry, has been the subject of much comment lately amongst the residents of Keilor.

A married man, named Richard Griffiths, the possessor of some little farm property in the district, and known as a quiet inoffensive character, was about a year ago made the victim of a senseless practical joke, and received a fright which appeared to partially unsettle his mind. His slight craze took the shape of betraying intense fear when the authors of the so-called joke appeared anywhere within his sight.

However, his wife made out that she was afraid to live with him, and he was consigned to the lunatic asylum. Upon the representations of some of the residents of Keilor, Griffiths was liberated on three months trial, on the 14th January, he having betrayed very little signs of lunacy while in the asylum, and Mr. David Milburn offered to take him as a ploughman, so that he would not be required to go back to his wife, if she did not wish to live with him.

From the date above-mentioned he has been working with Mr. Milburn, who asserts that he is quite sane, and none of his family have the slightest objection to his living on their premises. Lately, however, a letter was written to the lunacy authorities signed by Patrick M'Innes, brother of Mrs. Griffiths, asserting that Griffiths was a dangerous character, and that Mr. Milburn's actions in the matter sprang from interested motives. Milburn then got a copy of this letter, and upon threatening law proceedings M'Innes wrote a letter to the asylum negating his former statement. Mrs. Griffiths then wrote to the Chief Secretary, and on the 28th March Griffiths was arrested and taken forcibly from the plough, and again consigned to the asylum.

Mr. Milburn and another resident of Keilor waited on the Chief Secretary about a fortnight since as a deputation, asking that an inquiry might be instituted into the case, as he was willing to prove that the man was harmless, in support of which he offered to go bail for him. In answer to the charge of interested motives, Mr. Milburn says he has been paying him the usual wages, and his only motive for acting in the matter is that he is under the impression that Griffiths, whom he has known for thirteen years, is neither insane nor dangerous.

No definite reply to the request of the deputation has been received, and Griffiths is still in the asylum.

Border Watch, Mount Gambier 29 April 1874 p4



Milburn family, including Goudie and Tate family members



Horse buyers of Kapunda with Steve Margrett and Thomas Burge Derham, Adelaide 1903



William Barak



Derrimut



Charles Quail

NEWELL, David and Margaret

David Newell was a Footscray resident and one of the selectors on the Keilor Common in 1868, his selection of block 37 being on the western end of Boundary Road abutting Kororoit Creek; he acquired title to the land in 1872. He was born in 1835/6 in Headford, County Galway, Ireland, the son of Redmond Newell and Nora Glynn. On 30 November 1856 he married Margaret Mary (Ellen) Nilon (1840-1889), the daughter of Michael and Bridget Nilon, from Ennis, County Clare. David and Margaret moved to Australia in 1858 on the ship 'Dawn of Hope'.¹

David and Margaret set out for the goldfields and were successful. Newell became one of the biggest shareholders in the Hope Mine at Woods Point which:

*"... returned its shareholders many a rich dividend. ... [Newell] was one of the largest shareholders in that particular venture, and enjoyed the good fortune that sprung from the mine."*²

The family returned to Melbourne and settled in Footscray about 1867 so their acquisition of land on the Kororoit Creek came early in their resettlement phase. Their children, who were born between 1858 and 1889, included:³

- Catherine (1858-1888) died in Christchurch, New Zealand, 1888.
- Honora (1861-) wed William Adolphus Fehon, 4 September 1886.
- Bridget (1862-1864).
- Redmond (1865-1907) wed Eliza Jane Dean in 1889; Eliza Jane was born in 1875 and died 1917.
- Patrick Joseph (1867-1901) wed Isabella French Thomas Francis (1869 - 1951).
- Margaret (1871-1871).
- David (1873-1882).
- Hubert Vincent (1875-1911).
- John Adrian (1877-1967) in 1909 he married Beatrice Mabel Victoria Denton (1877-1947).
- Adrian (1879-1879).
- Winifred Agnes (1880-1965).
- Leo Francis (1882 -).
- Joseph V. (1889-1890).

David Newell was a man of many talents and aspirations. He became a contractor but was also involved in real estate, including holdings in Essendon and Footscray as well as the land at Kororoit Creek. He became the toll lessee

across the Maribyrnong River in the Footscray area, operating in a partnership as Mitchell and Newell. Newell was considered as "The contractor who became the mayor of Footscray." He was a Justice of the Peace and in the early years was superintendent of the Footscray Volunteer Fire Brigade, president of the Rowing Club, and leader of numerous institutions.⁴

One of his early contracts was operating the toll gate on the Salt Water River.⁵ These bridges were built at several points along the river to enable traffic movement and the operators charged a toll to recover the construction costs and operating expense. Some people tried to avoid the fees by circumventing the toll gates. In December 1869 Newell wrote to Footscray Council complaining that the Melbourne Meat-preserving Company had bought a piece of land, by crossing which their traffic avoided the check toll-gate near the new free bridge. The only means of checking this would be by moving the gate from its present position to near the Rising Sun hotel. The clerk was instructed to inform the Bridge and Road Committee that the Council gave their consent to the removal of the gate.⁶ Toll evasion was illegal and Newell took action against some 'offenders':

*"Frank Harard, a young man in the employ of John Brundell, was charged on summons at the District Police Court yesterday with evading toll. The prosecutors were Messrs. W. Mitchell and David Newell, lessees of a tollgate on the Brunswick road. The complaint was that in driving 1,000 sheep he had avoided the toll-gate by turning off the road into a common. Mr. Read contended that he had a right to go outside the toll if the way by the common suited him, but the Bench ruled that there had been evasion, and fined the defendant 40s. with £5 5s. costs. Mr. Read said he would apply for a prohibition. Mr. Brundell was sued for the toll, amounting to £3 12s. 7d., but the case was adjourned till Thursday."*⁷

In 1874 Newell applied for a license for the Punt Inn, near Lynch's bridge. The house was one of the oldest public houses in the district, but had not been licensed for some time past and Newell had done it up. There were thirteen rooms but only five were separated by substantial partitions, whereas the licensing act required a minimum of six. The Bench refused the application.⁸ However, Newell must have been successful eventually as he is later

¹ <http://www.cousinconnect.com/d/a/31809>

² Footscray Independent 8 December 1906

³ <http://www.cousinconnect.com/d/a/31809>

⁴ Footscray Independent 8 December 1906

⁵ The lessees were W. Mitchell and David Newell.

⁶ Footscray Independent 18 December 1869

⁷ Argus 13 May 1876

⁸ Argus 25 March 1875

referred to as a 'licensed victualler'.

In early 1874 Newell was already selling off some of his land acquisitions and advertised six large Government blocks of land:

*"These blocks of land are at the Essendon Railway Station. Some of them cannot be surpassed for position, scenery, and salubrity in this improving district, where railway accommodation renders it - although in the country - almost city property. The commodious sizes of the lots offers an opportunity to gentlemen on the look-out for a suburban site seldom, if ever, to be met with."*¹

Later in the year he offered for sale or lease a dairy farm of several hundred acres within three miles of the city as well as grazing paddocks and twelve acres with frontage to the Saltwater River suitable for factories.² Presumably this was at or near Footscray.

In 1875 Newell nominated as a councillor for the Borough of Footscray and was elected with William Mitchell and Alexander Fiddes Greig.³ Newell ended up serving on council for many years and was elected Mayor on several occasions. A political presence has often been beneficial for businessmen and perhaps it was to counter such perceptions that Newell wrote to the local paper in 1876:

*"I have been informed within the last few days of a rumour which is going the round of the Borough, that the lamp in front of my property at the corner of Hopkins and Moore streets, has been put there by and at the expense of the municipality. Those who know me best would not require my contradiction of the rumour, but to those who do not, I would simply say that the lamp was placed there to my order and entirely at my expense."*⁴

On the other hand within the following month Newell put out another public notice as the Mayor of Footscray stating that Council would apply to continue the collection of tolls on Lynch's Bridge.⁵

Newell was associated with several business ventures apart from the toll gates: in 1875 he became the director of the Footscray Brick-making Company;⁶ in 1878 he was one of the provisional directors of the Footscray Omnibus Company (Limited);⁷ in 1880 he was Chair-

man of the Board of the Footscray Gas and Coke Company;⁸ in 1883 he was on the provisional committee of the Footscray District Permanent Building and Investment Society;⁹ and in 1888 he was one of many provisional directors of the National Mutual Building and Investment Society,¹⁰ which decided to go into liquidation at its second annual general meeting in December 1890.¹¹ It was a time of financial crisis in Victoria and many companies that had invested in Melbourne's property boom became insolvent:

*"Unfortunately, the society had started at a time when business was very brisk, followed a month or two afterwards by utter collapse. At that time every man closed his pockets and every bank its safes. It was then impossible for the society to get money, and it had not sufficient to carry on. The society had endeavoured to get an advance from the bank, but when they required it most they could not get it. The securities which the society offered had the stamp of the land boom about them, and the society was accordingly compelled to rest on its oars for some time, and to do as little business as possible. As the shareholders would notice, properties had been thrown back on the society which had since been unrealisable. Hence the unsatisfactory position of the society at the present time."*¹²

In 1887 Newell came under some tough local scrutiny for one of his contracted ventures, and that was for the removal and disposal of night soil from Hotham. One of David Newell's properties at Footscray was a grazing field near the Saltwater River that became known as 'Newell's Paddock'. In the 1870s it was a perfect spot for young boys to gather mushrooms and catch yabbies or go swimming in the two large waterholes.¹³ This was no longer possible in the late 1880s because the paddock was being used to bury night soil from Hotham. In March 1887 the local paper reported the controversy as *"Illegal Deposit Of Night-Soil: Proceedings Against The Mayor Of Footscray"*:

"The Footscray Police Court sitting was yesterday taken up from 11 in the morning till a quarter to 6 in the evening, in the hearing of an action brought under the Health Act by Aquila Firth, a ratepayer in the borough of Footscray, against David Newell, for the illegal deposit of nightsoil in his paddock near the Saltwater

¹ Argus 16 February 1874

² Argus 4 September 1875

³ Argus 14 August 1875

⁴ Williamstown Chronicle 5 August 1876

⁵ Williamstown Chronicle 9 September 1876

⁶ Williamstown Chronicle 16 October 1875

⁷ Williamstown Chronicle 5 October 1878

⁸ Williamstown Chronicle 7 February 1880. The company was formed in 1877; the gasworks was in Moreland Street, at the corner of Lyons Street.

⁹ Footscray Independent 17 November 1883

¹⁰ Argus 8 September 1888

¹¹ Argus 11 December 1890

¹² Argus 11 December 1890

¹³ http://www.maribyrnong.vic.gov.au/Files/Maribyrnong_River_Heritage_Booklet.pdf

River. Great public interest was taken in the case for the court was crowded the whole day. Mr. C. A. Smythe appeared for the prosecution, and Dr. Madden for the defence.

*"The defendant who is mayor of Footscray, and therefore chairman of the local board of health, entered into a contract on the 1st of January this year with the borough council of Hotham for the removal of nightsoil from that locality. In the course of the carrying out of this work his men under his instructions placed the material in trenches dug in what is known as Newell's paddock on the bank of the Saltwater river. It was contended that this was a nuisance prejudicial to the public health, hence the action."*¹

After many witnesses argued for and against the public health and nuisance concerns, the Bench concluded there was a public nuisance that must be abated and made an order accordingly.² In recent decades this land was reclaimed as part of the renewal and beautification of the Maribyrnong River. Today the Newell's Paddock Wetland Reserve provides:

*"... a watery oasis for dozens of bird species, snakes and frogs. About sixty different bird species have been sighted in the reserve, including cormorants, herons, ibis, falcons and a pair of swans. The reserve contains a number of ponds which are interconnected and fed by a storm water system. ... Today the park is managed by the Council and is considered an important inner city conservation park."*³

Newell retired from Footscray council in 1891 and in December *"about fifty gentlemen assembled at the Footscray town hall for the purpose of paying a compliment to Mr. David Newell, formerly a member of the local council and three times mayor."*⁴

Margaret Mary Newell née Nilon died on 22 June 1889 at Footscray and was buried at the Footscray cemetery, a pioneer of 29 years. No newspaper references have been found about her life in Footscray. David Newell died on 3 December 1906 at his home in Nicholson Street, Footscray, at the age of 70 years; he was also buried at the Footscray cemetery. He was a pioneer of 46 years, having arrived in the gold rush era and having witnessed the federation of the colonies. Apart from his initial land acquisition on Keilor Plains he did not have much to do with St Albans. #

¹ Argus 8 March 1887

² Argus 8 March 1887

³ http://pandora.nla.gov.au/pan/134405/20120531-1406/footscray_life_may_2012_web.pdf

⁴ Argus 19 December 1891

NORRIS, Henry

For some reason allotment number 7 was popular at the sale of the Keilor Common in 1868 as there were three selectors listed for it: James Delahey, W Keating, and Michael Maher. It was the block on the corner of Boundary Road and what is now Errington Road, between the selections of T B Derham and J R Greville. Delahey was from a well-known family in the district but Keating and Maher were not locals. The selection ended up with Henry Norris, also from outside the district, but he did not retain it for very long.

In January 1874 the Crown Lands Department called upon Henry Norris as an absentee selector to make any statements he desired relative to his application under the 20th section of the Land Act. Mr. Jordan, solicitor, appeared for Norris, and urged that though Norris was not residing on the land, he had expended £2 an acre on improvements, and that he had cultivated 10 acres. The value of the improvements was estimated at £137. He was now living in Gipps Land, having accepted the offer of a partnership in a tannery there. The Department directed that the property be sold and that the valuation for the improvements should be allowed.⁵

It is not known if Norris was reimbursed for the claimed improvements, because when the land was put up for sale in March 1874 it had an upset (reserve) price of £3 per acre with a total valuation of £134.⁶

Henry Norris experienced similar problems in Gippsland, because in July 1874 he was asked to show cause why his selection containing 20 acres in the parish of Traralgon should not be declared forfeited.⁷

In November 1878 he was more successful with the Rosedale Land Board, as his application for a quite a small selection in Tinamba was recommended⁸ and his licence under the Land Act was approved in January 1879.⁹

Then in 1893 his application for a lease in Glenmaggie was approved.¹⁰ Glenmaggie and Tinamba are reasonably close and the area is known for its dairy farming. One might assume that he was trying to establish a dairy farm or grazing property. #

⁵ Argus 28 January 1874

⁶ Argus 2 March 1874

⁷ Gippsland Times 1 July 1876 p2

⁸ Gippsland Times 11 November 1878 p3

⁹ Gippsland Times 6 January 1879 p3

¹⁰ Maffra Spectator 26 August 1889 p3

O'CONNOR, John and Catherine

There were two John O'Connors who had some connection to the early history of St Albans: the older one was from Keilor and the younger one from the Kororoit-Derrimut area.

The older John O'Connor was a farmer who acquired land in St Albans in the early 1870s after the Keilor Commons was sold off. He obtained block 23, which was initially allocated to John Foley in November 1868. O'Connor acquired the title to the land in April 1874, so he qualifies as a pioneer. His farm of 63 acres was on the southwest corner at the intersection of Taylors Road and the railway line. This farm was probably sold in the early 1900s as the land was later bought by James Henry Stevens.

There is very little information recorded about the life of this John O'Connor in the district or whether he had any immediate family connections in the area. There were several O'Connors associated with the Keilor Plains during the 1870s: Maurice and William were at Keilor, while John and Michael were at Kororoit.

John O'Connor of St Albans was born about 1820 in Limerick, Ireland, the son of Patrick O'Connor and Catherine O'Callaghan.¹ John came to Australia about 1862 and settled into a farming life at Keilor. He married Catherine Rochford on 29 January 1874 at St Augustine's church in Keilor, the marriage witnesses being William Savage and Mary Egan.²

Catherine Rochford was from Tulla, Co. Clare, Ireland, and was born on 24 September 1832; her parents were Patrick Rochford and Mary Hennessy. Catherine migrated to New South Wales in 1856 on the *Ben Nevis*, arriving in Botany Bay on 6 July 1856. On the passenger list she was recorded as being an 18 year old farm servant, single and unaccompanied. There is something amiss in the records because if she was born in 1832 she would have been aged about 24 when she arrived. Catherine lived in Sydney for a while before moving to Melbourne and marrying John O'Connor, a farmer on the Keilor Plains.

John and Catherine had at least one son,³ Patrick Joseph, who was born on 28 October 1878. He was enrolled in the St Albans primary

school in October 1889, having transferred from Kororoit. Patrick left the school at the end of 1890 and presumably joined his father in working on the farm.

John O'Connor of St Albans died on 13 July 1900 at 80 years and was buried at the Keilor cemetery. Catherine O'Connor née Rochford died on 9 January 1903, aged 64 years, and was buried with her late husband at the Keilor cemetery. It is not known what happened to the son, Patrick Joseph O'Connor, but it's possible that he moved to Sydney by 1904.⁴

The younger John O'Connor was most likely a relative of Michael O'Connor and most of their history in the area is with the Braybrook Shire. The family was from Limerick, and Michael came to Victoria in 1857 when he was aged 26. He married Mary Corbett in 1859; she was also from Limerick. They lived in Melbourne and worked as carriers before moving to Braybrook in 1869 to take up farming, chiefly in the growing of hay.⁵ In 1876 Michael purchased the homestead property and added to it until he had 200 acres; their holdings were said to be on the Kororoit Creek with other farmers such as the Burnsides and Harrisons.⁶ John and Michael became cartage contractors and road builders and obtained contracts mainly through the Braybrook Shire. At one stage Michael was the pound keeper but then resigned and John offered to take on the job but only if the salary and 'sustentation' fees were increased – the offer was declined.

Michael O'Connor became involved with the Board of Advice for the Braybrook school district during the 1880s. John became a councillor representing the Northern Riding, possibly starting in the early 1890s, but he was beaten at the 1909 election by Thomas Opie. Michael died on 18 February 1903 at his home in Ballarat Road, Deer Park; his wife Mary died on 8 March 1906.

John O'Connor of Braybrook died in 1920; his estate included properties in Sunshine, Deer Park, and the parish of Maribyrnong. In 1921 two farms at St Albans in the names of the late John and Michael O'Connor were bought by James Henry Stevens, one of the new settlers from about 1905. #

¹ <http://www.mundia.com/gb/Person/29395497/12171859147>

² Christine Laszkowski, *Dearly Beloved: Burials in The Keilor Cemetery: 1856-1900*; 2008 p248

³ Some genealogy listings show that their first child was named John but there is no further information, so perhaps this may be an error.

⁴ This supposition is based on name, birth year and use of the mother's maiden name. Refer to website <http://www.mundia.com/gb/Person/18223245/5105084701>

⁵ Edith Popp *Glimpses of Early Sunshine*, Sunshine and District Historical Society, 1979 p39.

⁶ Prue McGoldrick *When The Whistle Blew: A Social History of The Town of Sunshine 1920-1950*, p11

O'NEIL, William and Bridget



William O'Neil was a former convict and a former policeman who became a farmer and grazier on the Keilor Plains; the family name is still associated with the Horseshoe Bend Farm on the Maribyrnong River. O'Neil had a number of blocks in the Keilor township, including some of the 2-acre blocks on the eastern side of the river. With Isaac Davis and William Robinson he had more than 220 acres to the east of Keilor Village. O'Neil later acquired blocks in Braybrook, Bulla, The Gap, Cut-Paw-Paw, Derrimut, Djerriwrrh, Gisborne, Yangadook and Maribyrnong. He leased Beggary Station in Omeo with Patrick and James McCormack.¹

In St Albans he had 240 acres. Two blocks were on the south-east corner of Station and Boundary roads; that is where the Opie Estate was later located. The other block was to the eastern end of Boundary Road, next to some of Mary Delahey's land; that block would later be sold to Steve Margrett, the well-known horse dealer for the Indian markets.

William "Bill" Henry O'Neil was born at Burslem, Staffordshire in 1811. While barely in his teens he was convicted for stealing a silver watch and transported to Van Diemen's Land for seven years; he arrived in Tasmania in 1833 on the convict ship Atlas.² He received his pardon in 1839 and after moving to Melbourne in November he joined some of his former Tasmanian colleagues in the police force and later became a District Constable. This is where he would have met Martin Morgan, who had married Alice Gorman and whose sister, Bridget, had also migrated to Australia.

Bridget Gorman was born about 1824, and was from Tipperary, Ireland. Bridget came with her sister and brother-in-law, Alice and Martin Morgan, to Port Phillip as a paid immigrant, arriving on 21 January 1841. She met William O'Neil through her brother-in-law and they arranged to marry but O'Neil didn't turn up on the wedding day. She sued him for breach of promise and won her case. They nevertheless did marry, but that was on 9 April 1842 at St James Church of England.³

O'Neil acquired land under the Crown Grant scheme when it became available. They may have come to Keilor as early as 1844 and by the late 1850s O'Neil had bought all the blocks on a bend of the Saltwater River south of the village where he established his Horse-shoe Bend Farm. Up until 1854 the area had been used as the village reserve, which meant that any travellers passing through the area could use it for temporary grazing.

William O'Neil was a colourful and sometimes troublesome character. In 1851 he was the victim of armed robbery and the court case was reported at great length in Melbourne's main daily newspaper.⁴ The trial publicity was more connected with the drama of armed highway robbery rather than the quantum of theft. O'Neil would later depose in court that:

*"They tied me to a tree by the wrists, in such a manner that it would have been impossible for me to get loose ... and I must have perished had no one come to loose me; my horse was turned adrift; some time after the men had left me, the man whom I had seen tied up got loose, and came and untied me; I asked him to come and give chase, but he said he had been robbed of some money and a spur, and that while he was safe he would keep so, and putting spurs to his horse he rode away."*⁵

In October 1858 O'Neil was charged with malicious assault and wounding of Thomas Cahill, who was his neighbour. Cahill stated that he had met O'Neil in Mr. Griffin's Hotel, where defendant "*made use of very bad language*" and then took up two pistols and struck Cahill several times with them; his face was cut, and bled a great deal. O'Neil wanted him to fight a duel.⁶ On this occasion the jury returned a verdict of not guilty, and O'Neil was discharged. Cahill was a neighbour and the bitterness surfaced on several occasions.

³ O'Neil had been previously married in Ireland. <http://history.thorogood.id.au/migrants.htm>

⁴ Argus 23 July 1851

⁵ Argus 24 May 1851

⁶ Argus 18 October 1858

¹ *Keilor Pioneers: Dead Men Do Tell Tales* p119, 268

² Laszkowski p253

Despite a tendency to litigation against some of his neighbours and business associates, O'Neil became an active citizen of Keilor:

*"In between a few dramatic brushes with the neighbours and the law, he was Manager of the Town and Farmers Commons, took his place on juries at coronial inquests, witnessed Wills and Statutory Declarations for his neighbours and generally busied himself with civic affairs. ... He was forever dealing in land – buying and selling for reasonable profit. ... He was definitely a fellow to be out and about minding anyone else's business. He somehow charmed his way out of some quite serious charges – he never gave up his predilections for trouble: was a caring father, a good friend to his friends, a hot-tempered antagonist to his foes."*¹

In 1862 O'Neil was one of the landholders requesting the establishment of the Keilor Road District Board, which was one of the earliest initiatives for local governance.

In 1868 he worked to preserve open space. He headed a deputation to the Commissioner of Lands objecting to an application under the 42nd clause for a piece of land known as the Pound Bend, at Keilor. It was stated that if it was granted, a great portion of what is known as the Keilor township would be deprived of water frontage. The Assistant Surveyor General thought sufficient had been stated to show that the application ought not to be granted.²

William O'Neil, Matthew Goudie and Henry Joyce were appointed as managers of the Keilor Town Common in November 1869. This might also have been a good source of information about prospective land developments in the district through schemes such as the Closer Settlement proposals.

Bridget O'Neil née Gorman died on 9 April 1870, at the age of 48 years and was buried at the Keilor Cemetery.³ She had died after twenty-five years of married life, and had given birth to nine children:⁴

- Mary Ann ("Polly"), born 11 April 1842 in Melbourne, wed James Hugh McCormack on 3 December 1860 in Keilor. They had thirteen children. Polly and James had settled in Omeo on the Beggary/Begry station which they had owned with her father. James died on 12 January 1916

in Tylden and Polly died on 11 January 1930 at Euroa.

- William (Polly's stillborn twin).
- Sarah, born 11 October 1845, married William Connor 30 July 1869, died August 1902 at Essendon. They had 8 children.
- Alice, born 1 November 1847, married Francis McIntyre 30 July 1874 at Keilor, died 5 February 1875 at Maribyrnong.
- Maria, born 24 December 1849 at Keilor, married 14 December 1874 at Keilor, died on 15 January 1929.
- Eliza, born about 1854, died about 1855.
- Emma, born 1855, married her cousin Edward Morgan (the son of Martin and Alice Morgan), died about 1875.
- William Alfred, born 25 October 1855 at Keilor, married Elizabeth Goudie 1 July 1882, died 25 March 1926 in Bendigo. They had twelve children.
- Louisa Victoria, born 11 April 1859 at Flemington, died 12 April 1861.

In November 1874 William Henry O'Neil married Elizabeth Agnes Perry of Hotham; she was aged 15 or 16 and he was aged 63 though he said he was 54. He had met her in Hotham, apparently during a time when he had been carousing or "under the influence" for some considerable time. The marriage did not last. In later court proceedings he would argue that he was so drunk that he did not know what he was doing; but it was clear that he knew the young woman and other members of her family and had previously associated with her and her sister. He petitioned for a divorce, which was granted in 1876. This achieved some notoriety in its day as it was even reported in some New South Wales papers:

*"The petitioner gave his evidence in a very confused way, and it was rather difficult to extract a detailed version of the facts from him. ... The petitioner appeared to have made a most unsuitable marriage, and also to have exhibited some indifference as to what became of his wife after she left him. Still that was no reason for refusing the decree. Decree granted for dissolution of marriage."*⁵

William O'Neil died a couple of months later, on 27 July 1876 at the age of 65; he had been staying at a hotel in Emerald Hill and had contracted typhoid. He was buried at the Keilor Cemetery.⁶ Family lore is that William O'Neil left the Horseshoe Bend property to his son-in-

¹ Joan Carstairs "Bidly and the Gay Lothario" in *Keilor Pioneers: Dead Men Do Tell Tales*; Angela Evans et al; St Albans History Society, 1994.

² Bacchus Marsh Express 14 November 1868

³ Argus 11 April 1870 p4

⁴ http://history.thorogood.id.au/morgan_martin.htm

⁵ The Goulburn Herald and Chronicle 10 May 1876

⁶ Argus 28 July 1876

law, James McCormack, who was not aware of the inheritance and therefore did not claim the property:

"Years later the family returned from the station and relocated back to the Keilor plains area. After James passed away his widow Mary Ann (O'Neil) McCormack found out about the property and went to claim it. ...

*"They found people squatting on the property, they had been there a long time, and were pleased to meet the owners of the property as they had been wishing to purchase it but could not locate the owners. Unfortunately because it had been so long, the rates and taxes had not been paid and there was a small fortune owed on the property. The McCormack family could not afford this and the property was let go."*¹

However, William Alfred O'Neil, son of William and Bridget, later purchased and extended his parents' farm at Horseshoe Bend into a large dairy property. He stood for election to Keilor Council in the Doutta Galla riding and was elected about 1917, though his municipal career was not an extensive one. He died on 25 March 1926, aged 71 years. His widow, Elizabeth O'Neil née Goudie, died a few weeks later on 1 May 1926 at the age of 65.² In the 1930s Horseshoe Bend Farm was once again subdivided into smaller lots that were sold off and used as orchards and market gardens.

Bridget and William Henry O'Neil were definitely some of the earliest pioneers in Keilor. Their extended family networks increased as their children married other local pioneer families. Collectively, they would have influenced the character of the district in various ways as it evolved during the late 1800s.

Some years ago a family reunion was held of the O'Neil and McCormack families of Horseshoe Bend Farm, to which more than 300 descendants came from all over Australia. #

References:

More detailed backgrounds to the histories of Bridget Gorman, William O'Neil and other relatives are included in *Keilor Pioneers: Dead Men Do Tell Tales*; Angela Evans and the Keilor Pioneer Research Collective; St Albans History Society, 1994.

Family tree information is available at website http://history.thorogood.id.au/morgan_martin.htm

¹ Karen McCormack <http://archiver.rootsweb.ancestry.com/th/read/AUS-MELBOURNE/2007-07/1183342588>

² Argus 18 August 1926 p27

OPIE, Bennett and Ann



Bennett Opie was one of the original selectors on the Keilor Common. Whereas the selection of his brother, Thomas Opie, was to the south of Deer Park, Bennett's was in the Keilor Shire part of the Commons. Bennett's allotment was number 28, on the corner of Taylors Road and what would later become Kings Road. The selection was later bought by Les King; that's where he would establish his dairy and that's why the road was named Kings Road.

There were two men named Bennett who were connected with the Opie family that migrated to Victoria.³ Bennett senior ("Uncle Bennett") was born in 1847 in Cornwall, England, and died at Shepparton in 1929; He was the fourth child of Thomas Snr and Joey Opie. He acquired land at Congupna near Shepparton in 1875.⁴ In 1875 Bennett married Ann Patterson, who was born in 1851 in Peterculter, Aberdeenshire, Scotland and died at Shepparton in 1919. Bennett and Ann raised nine children:⁵

- Catherine Joey Paterson b.1876 Maidstone, died 1968 at Mooroopna.
- James Bennett born 1878 in Shepparton.
- Jessie born 1880 in Shepparton, died 1936 at Shepparton.
- Caroline Jane born 1882 in Shepparton, died 1951 at Shepparton.
- Thomas John born 1884 in Shepparton, died 1969 at Bendigo.
- William Josiah born 1886 in Shepparton, died 1950 at Shepparton.
- Alexander Albert b.1888 in Shepparton, died 1965 at Shepparton.
- Henry born in 1891, died 1972 in Victoria.
- Ernest George born 1894 at Shepparton, died 1984 at Shepparton.

The younger Bennet was Bennett Boyd Opie,

³ Refer to article about Thomas Opie for details.

⁴ Vic. Government Gazette 25 March 1875 p597

⁵ <http://wc.rootsweb.ancestry.com/cgi-bin/igm.cgi?op=GET&db=greenthumbs&id=I20218>

who was the son of Thomas and Elizabeth Opie. Bennett Boyd was born in Deer Park in 1873 and died in Footscray in 1927.¹ His date of birth clearly indicates that he could not have been the person who was allocated a selection on Keilor Common in 1868. The young Bennett was a nephew of the older 'Uncle Bennett'.

Bennett Boyd Opie started his farming life by working on his parents' dairy but later in his life he was working as a labourer in Footscray. In the 1908 electoral roll he was listed as a dairy farmer at Deer Park. As well as having some cattle and horses, he also grew crops and must have experimented to some extent as some years later the local paper noted that:

*"As the demand for chaff has diminished greatly during the last few years, Mr. Bennett Opie, a prominent farmer in this locality, has decided to sow a large area of his cultivated land with peas this season. Mr. Opie says that in addition to being a payable proposition, the cultivation of peas has a very beneficial effect on the land."*²

Bennett did not marry and had no children. He was engaged for some time to Annie Louisa Day, a machinist of West Brunswick, but this ended disastrously in August 1924 when she drowned herself in the Maribyrnong River. A report of the coronial inquiry stated:

*"Bennet Boyd Opie, a farmer, of Deer Park, said that he had been 'keeping company' with Miss Day for about 14 years. She had frequently complained to him that he had kept her waiting too long before contem-plateing marriage. He last saw her on July 13, when she visited him in a motor-car. On that occasion she appeared to be excited and spoke of being kidnapped in a blue motor-car. She also referred to a neighbour saying that he had threatened to 'grab' her. Two other witnesses gave similar evidence. The coroner returned a finding of suicide while of unsound mind."*³

Bennett paid for a marble headstone to be erected on his fiancée's grave at Melbourne general cemetery in her memory and with his own name inscribed on it as well.

Bennett Boyd Opie became seriously ill in 1927 and went to stay with his sister, Mrs Ada Brown of Footscray.⁴ When he died and was buried at the Footscray cemetery his obituary notice read:

*"On the 15th February 1927, Bennett Boyd Opie, late of Deer Park, beloved son of the late Thomas and Elizabeth Opie, and dearly beloved brother of Thomas, Jane, Ann (Mrs. Stranger, deceased), William, Elizabeth (Mrs. James), James, and devoted brother of Ada (Mrs. Brown), and Edith (Mrs. H. Milburn, deceased), beloved uncle of Norman and Mavis Milburn and Cecil and Edith Brown, aged 48 years."*⁵

In order to wind up the estate, a clearing sale was held at the farm and the whole of the cattle, horses, farm implements etc were sold.⁶ Boyd's estate was valued at £1,500. He bequeathed £500 to his sister, Mrs. Ada Brown, whom he boarded with and who at this stage was living in Cathcart Street, Maidstone. He also provided for several small legacies and gave the remainder of his estate to the Melbourne Hospital. Ada Brown sued the executor of the will for £595, stating that this was the amount due to her for board and lodging, money lent, money that she had paid on behalf of her brother and other related expenses. Judge Macindoe in the County Court awarded her £500/16/10 with costs.⁷

Apart from his name appearing on the records for the Closer Settlement Board's land allocation in November 1868, Bennett Opie does not appear to have had any significant role in the later development of St Albans as a district. One wonders therefore whether his original acquisition was more of a speculative nature that he disposed of before or after he obtained his land selection in Shepparton, which was a larger acreage and likely to have been the better farming proposition.

Bennett's selection in St Albans was later acquired under the Closer Settlement Act of 1904 and became part of the Overnewton Estate sale, which attracted a new wave of settlers to the district. The area around Bennett's former selection was noted as being part of an old cultivation, well grassed and with patches of stone,⁸ so grazing may have been suitable land usage.

Neither Uncle Bennett Opie nor his nephew, Bennett Boyd Opie, became major players in St Albans, but their extended families were significant in the history of the district. #

¹ www.mundia.com/au/Person/39507684/20457993851
Some articles suggest he was born c.1929.

² Sunshine Advocate 24 July 1926

³ Argus 14 August 1924 p6

⁴ Sunshine Advocate 19 February 1927

⁵ Argus 17 February 1927 p1

⁶ Sunshine Advocate 5 March 1927

⁷ Sunshine Advocate 20 October 1928

⁸ Map: Plan of Overnewton Estate Acquired Under Closer Settlement Act 1904 Parishes of Kororoit and Maribyrnong. State Library of Victoria collection.

OPIE, Thomas and Josephine

Thomas Opie (born 1814) was a miner from Tremboath and Josephine "Joey" Kemp (born 1820) was from Polkanugga, both in Cornwall. They married on 7 March 1839 at St Stithians and a decade later migrated with their four children to Australia on the 'David Malcolm', arriving in South Australia on 7 April 1849.¹ They were economic migrants because the local mining industry was going bust:

*"Copper mining had become the mainstay of the Stithians economy, just as tinning had been in the centuries before. The reasons for the collapse were twofold: the importation of higher grade, cheaper copper ores from Chile, South America; and the replacement of wood by steel in the construction of ships - copper sheathing was no longer required. Copper prices collapsed and most of the Cornish mines shut down.... [There was] a significant decline in the local economy - fewer people could afford to marry and raise a family and / or the migration of younger adults out of the community. ... The men of Stithians, as with the men of other Cornish parishes, took their families to the far corners of the earth - to Australia, New Zealand, the United States, Canada, South Africa, South America etc. to improve their circumstances."*²

Their fifth child, Caroline, was born in Adelaide in 1851. The family then moved to Melbourne in 1852 where Opie worked as the publican at the Quarryman's Arms in Johnston Street, Collingwood³ and by 1856 they had already acquired some land at Albion. The family lived in Collingwood for a while before establishing a dairy farm at Kororoit, now known as Deer Park. Several children were born locally, so their full complement of children included:⁴

- Thomas Opie born 1839 at St Stithians, Cornwall. He married Elizabeth Osborne in 1866 and they had 11 children. He died in 1900 at Footscray.
- John Opie born in 1842 in Cornwall, died 1880 at Footscray, aged 38 years.
- Elizabeth Opie born c.1845, died 24 April 1916 aged 71; wed Simon Searle in 1867, they had 11 children.
- Bennett Opie born in 1847, died in 1929 at Shepparton.
- Caroline Opie born in 1851 in Adelaide, died 1855, aged 4 years.

- Ann Maria Opie born 1853 and died in 1854, aged 6 months, Collingwood.
- Caroline Opie born 1855 in Collingwood; married Joseph Harrison in 1880. Died in 1941 at Deer Park.
- James Opie born 1858, died in 1863 at age 5 years.
- Josiah Opie born Keilor 1862, married Flor Hart Lovelock in 1889; died in 1947 at Werribee.

The Opie family was one of the first living in the Deer Park area at that time and were prominent in community and municipal affairs. They probably arrived in the area about 1860 and by 1865 Thomas Opie Senior and his sons were farming on 280 acres, part freehold and the remainder on lease. The Opies' original family home was west of Robinsons Road, but they also farmed land north of Ballarat Road. Thomas Opie Senior became one of the first members of the Braybrook District Road Board, having been elected in 1860. He died 25 September 1873 at Derrimut, aged 59 years.⁵ His wife Joey (sometimes known as Ivey) continued to run their farm; she died in 1916 at Sunshine, aged 96 years.

After Joey Opie died the administration of her late husband's estate was granted to his eldest surviving son, Bennett Opie of Shepparton.⁶ Thomas and Joey Opie's late farm of 359 acres, which was situated between Deer Park and Melton and described as being "very good agricultural and grazing land," was sold to Mr. Thomas, a butcher of Footscray.⁷

Thomas Opie Junior commenced farming at a relatively young age when he acquired land in Braybrook in 1865. He bought 76 acres of land in Section 21, Parish of Derrimut, where the bluestone dairy was built, but he had 280 acres overall partly on lease which provided for cultivation farming and grazing. He married Elizabeth Osborne in 1866; she was also from Cornwall, having arrived in Australia with her parents in 1850. By 1888 they had four sons and four daughters surviving out of a total of eleven children altogether.

Thomas Opie Jnr also bought land under the Selection Acts. His initial selection was on the Kororoit Creek just south of Isabella Williams' farm; he later obtained more property to the east of her selection. In 1870 in conjunction with James Bibby he acquired 78 acres in Maribymong through the Melbourne Local

¹ South Australian Register 14 April 1849 p2

² <http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~stithiansopc/Marriages.htm>

The Scobles were another Cornish family who came to Sunshine and St Albans via Adelaide and the Victorian goldfields.

³ Argus 22 April 1863 p5

⁴ <http://mepnab.net.au.net/o/opie.html>

⁵ Argus 26 September 1873

⁶ Argus 26 July 1916

⁷ Albury Banner and Wodonga Express 12 May 1922

Land Board¹ which appears to be the property to the north of Williams' allotment. In 1888, he was cultivating 108 acres on his 280-acre holding and grazing cattle. He supplemented the income from the mixed farming business by working as a cartage contractor for Braybrook Shire council. The sons became involved in the farming business and Elizabeth also took part through the management of the dairy, the banking of money and payment of accounts for her husband and sons.² As the scope of work increased they would hire extra farm hands during peak seasons – when her husband was away Elizabeth was in charge.

The Opie women were feisty ladies who weren't shy of legal action to argue their case or assert their rights. In 1883 when Thomas Opie was sued by the truancy officer for not sending Jane Ann and William to school, it was Mrs Opie who appeared for her husband – the case against the daughter was withdrawn because she was 15 years old, but it was proved that the son had attended school only twice in the previous two years.³ Previously, Mrs Opie had not sent her child to school because of *"the dissipated and violent conduct of the schoolmaster."* On that occasion the truancy officer admitted that the department was investigating a charge against the teacher, and thought the truancy cases against 25 Kororoit parents might be withdrawn; the Bench agreed to this course.⁴ In 1911 a farm labourer sued Mrs Opie snr for recovery of wages; he was engaged as a ploughman, at 20s per week, but it was discovered that he was not up to standard, and he agreed to accept 17s 6d per week to do rouseabout work on the farm but now wanted to be paid the higher amount.⁵ The court backed Mrs Opie.

On a sadder note in 1900 Mrs Joey Opie sued her daughter-in-law, Mrs Elizabeth Opie, for an alleged debt of £11 10s that had accrued after she leased some land to William Opie (Joey's son and Elizabeth's husband). The court dismissed the case.⁶ In 1903 Elizabeth Opie sued a farm labourer for stealing a set of harness valued at £5 and the case illustrates the seriousness of the consequences:

"Accused, who is at present doing three other

*terms of imprisonment, was arrested at Brunswick on another charge, and when taxed with the theft of the harness admitted his guilt. He was sentenced to three months' imprisonment with hard labour."*⁷

Elizabeth Opie would also object to Braybrook council about the actions of her farming neighbours, and disagreements about access roads were one of the reasons:

*"A protest was received from Mrs Opie against an application made last month by ex Cr Christie to have a road between two paddocks belonging to him closed. Mrs Opie stated that she used the road by which to drive her cattle to the creek in order to water them. She said she had used it for 40 years as an approach to her property. Mr Christie, who was present, said the road led to a precipice on the side of the creek. It was impossible to water cattle there, and Mrs Opie never used it. Cr Casey moved that in the circumstances Mr Christie's application be not entertained. The motion was seconded and carried."*⁸

The family's cartage work for the council was mostly by tender, and much of it seems to have been for carting and laying down road metal in different parts of the shire. Having the drays and horses available for such work meant that Opie could hire them out when required by council or neighbouring farmers. The council work was obtained through a competitive process and it seems that Opie gave as good as he got. In 1875 he complained to council about the unfair way that cartage in the shire was apportioned, but *"it transpired that the same complaint had been made by others the last time Mr. Opie and his brother were carting for the Council."*⁹

Some of the other people tendering for cartage contracts¹⁰ included Augustus Shebler, John Flynn, Edward Toohey, P. Gilmore, Michael Fox & Co., E. Toohey, J. Egan & Co., John Fitzgerald, James Urquhart, and Edmond Downes. Council's policy was to accept the lowest tender price.

Though the Opies had connections with the shire council they still experienced the normal ratepayers' problems. In 1879 Thomas Opie appeared at one of the council meetings to

¹ Argus 6 July 1870

² She also wrote to Braybrook Shire Council on a variety of occasions regarding road conditions and reporting on problems in accessing water for her stock because of neighbours' actions.

³ Footscray Independent 25 August 1883 p3

⁴ Argus 19 September 1882

⁵ Footscray Independent 1 April 1911 p2

⁶ Footscray Independent 19 May 1900 p3

⁷ Footscray Independent 15 August 1903 p2

⁸ Footscray Independent 16 December 1905 p3

⁹ Bacchus Marsh Express 12 June 1875. Mrs Opie occasionally wrote to council complaining about the condition of some local roads and enclosing a quote from one of the Opie men to do the repairs, which was sometimes accepted by council.

¹⁰ Some cartage contracts were for delivery of road metal, others for removal and disposal of nighsoil.

complain about the Rate Collector for summoning him without giving any notice or demand for his rates. The Collector said that he'd served Mr Opie personally with notice in December, had asked him for the amount several times since, and Opie had paid rates on one of his places in June when he then got another statement of the balance due. The Council considered that Opie had failed to substantiate his complaint.¹

Occasionally, an attempt to maximise the family's potential influence in local affairs backfired. In 1889 Mrs J. Opie requested the council to take her name off the ratepayers roll for a property, stating that her son had agreed to pay the rates of the property for which she gets a vote, and she only left her name there to get the vote. However, she found her son had failed to pay the rates and she had been summoned for the amount owing. Mrs Opie was informed that as the property in question was untenanted the name could not be taken off the roll.²

More serious were the health related issues connected with their farming activities. In 1891, Dr Bowser, the Medical Health Officer for the Shire of Braybrook, took action against Thomas Opie for operating one of the worst dairies he had ever come across, and asked the bench to inflict the heaviest penalty.

*"Mr Taylor [the local inspector] said that when he visited Opie's dairy he found it the worst that had come under his notice for some time. The dairy is a sort of shed, and its state something disgraceful. The floor, table, shelving and cans were all very unclean. In the yard was a ground tank, covered by a board, which was lower than the level of the yard. The fowls deposited their manure on this board, and the drainage or rain water could carry it through the boards into the well, and thus contaminate the water. He took out his knife and scraped the dirt off the dairy table in strips. Dr Bowser, in his evidence, stated that Opie's premises had, during the past 5 years, been continually unsanitary."*³

Opie's dairy was not the only one to be investigated by the health officials; it was a problem with other small farms following mixed animal husbandry; such problems continued in the district for decades.⁴ Opie had further issues with health inspectors in 1896 when he

was prosecuted for permitting swine on his property to feed upon raw offal:

*"Mr. John Taylor, inspector for the Board of Health stated that on the 10th May, about 6 a.m., he, with Constable Wardley, visited the farm of Mr. Opie, at Deer Park, where they saw two drays loaded with offal in a paddock. There were a number of pigs feeding on the offal, and there were several other places in the paddock, where there were indications that offal had been thrown."*⁵

The defence was that the offal was used for manure, and was regularly ploughed into the land. The dray loads in question arrived the previous evening and were not unloaded until next day, so some of the stuff had fallen out and the gate not being fastened as usual the pigs had got at the offal. Opie was fined for the offence. At this stage as well as the dairy his main farming interests were in haymaking and running cattle and pigs. Later the family would also take up sheep grazing.

Opie also bred Clydesdale horses at least during the late 1880s and he was successful with the stallion "Highland Chief" which he had imported from New Zealand; it won prizes at several agricultural and pastoral shows.⁶

In May 1879 Thomas Opie was elected as a member of the Board of Advice for the School District of Braybrook⁷ and served in this group for a number of years.

When Opie stood for the Braybrook Council elections in 1892 for the Northern Riding it was against that experienced local campaigner, Thomas Burge Derham, who had sat on the council for nearly 20 years. At the final tally Opie had received 63 votes to Derham's 47, which was a clear majority of 16 votes.⁸ In 1895 Opie was elected unopposed. He held a seat on Braybrook Council for many years and was Shire President on three separate occasions, two of these being in 1894/95 and 1896/97. He resigned from council in 1898 due to serious health problems.⁹

In 1897, while Opie was still a Braybrook councillor, he faced allegations of conflict of interests in that as a councillor of the shire he had participated in decisions to award a contract for which one of his sons had tendered. (Cr

¹ Bacchus Marsh Express 13 September 1879

² Footscray Independent 15 April 1899 p3

³ Footscray Independent 31 January 1891

⁴ A fear with dairy products was contamination with the tuberculosis bacterium. In 1949 state parliament introduced the Milk Pasteurization Bill, which required the milk supply to be heat treated.

⁵ Argus 12 June 1896 p5

⁶ Bacchus Marsh Express 8 October 1887. James Christie also bred imported Clydesdales, as did Farquhar McCrea of St Albans in the early 1900s.

⁷ Bacchus Marsh Express 3 May 1879

⁸ Bacchus Marsh Express 3 September 1892

⁹ Footscray Independent 8 October 1898

Opie had finalised all his cartage contracts with council prior to standing for election.) The case was brought against him by Thomas Warr, a fellow shire councillor. Various witnesses were called to give evidence in the case and Opie was put through some pretty tough grilling, with a local newspaper wryly summing up the process as: *“Braybrook Councillors In Conflict. Lawyers Get The Benefit.”*¹

After a drawn out process the judge concluded:

*“... he was of the opinion that the defendant had not offended against the Act, but the circumstances were so suspicious that he thought the plaintiff was quite justified in taking the proceedings. ... The circumstances connected with the carrying out of the contract were very suspicious and he could hardly credit many of the defendant's statements. The defendant had been skating on very thin ice, and he hoped that the case would be a warning to councillors not to allow their sons, if they could help it, to enter into contracts, and make such extraordinary bargains as had been done here.”*²

Thomas Opie Jnr died at his home in Deer Park in June 1900. He had been suffering ill health for some time and his death had been expected; he was aged 61 and had been a colonist of 50 years.³ Mrs Joey Opie died at the age of 97 in June 1916; she had been a colonist of 68 years.

Children of Thomas Jnr and Elizabeth Opie:⁴

- Thomas John, born 1867 at Collingwood, married Ivy, was living in Main Road West, St Albans. Thomas John Opie, was a shire councillor between 1909-16 and 1917-19. He was the Shire President in 1915/16. Died 4 May 1951 in Main Road West St Albans,⁵ aged 84 years.
- Jane Anne, married Arthur Stranger. Died 19 March 1891 at Buckley Street, Footscray, aged 22 years and 9 months.⁶
- William “Bill” Osborne, born about 1865, married Violet, died 3 March 1950. Father of Ossie and Alice.
- Bennett Boyd, born 1873, died 1927.
- James Edward, born 1875, died in 1957 aged 81 years. He married Bridget Elizabeth Casserly (1878-1967) and had a daughter, Elizabeth Ena, and two sons, Thomas Roy

and Arthur James. James Edward was a hotel licensee and Thomas worked in the business with his father. Bridget was born in Footscray; her father was Thomas Casserly (1837-1899) and mother was Cecelia Cox (1836-1879).

- Ada, born 1877, married Mr Brown and lived in Footscray and later Maidstone. They had two children, Cecil and Edith. Ada died in 1961 at Tullamarine.
- Edith, born 1882, married Thomas Herbert Millburn in 1909; mother of Norman and Mavis Elizabeth. Died 20 April 1919 aged 33 years buried at Keilor. He was from the pioneer Milburn family in Keilor and would later consider running for Keilor Council against Mr Calder after Cr Evans died.⁷ Milburn was born 1879 in Keilor and died 28 March 1959 aged 79 years.

A tragedy in the family occurred in 1941 when William and Violet's son, Ossie Opie, died as the result of an accident at Nobel's explosive factory in Deer Park; the explosion was so great that it was heard miles away. Three men were injured, though two of them, Charles Copping, of Bishop Street, Yarraville, and Ray Clayton of Fitzroy Street, Footscray, were later removed from the danger list.⁸ Oswald Opie was the most severely burned; there had been hopes for his recovery as he was showing slight improvement in the hospital.⁹

Oswald “Ossie” Opie was born about 1902 and like his father started working in the family business of road and cartage contracting. He married a daughter of Cr and Mrs A. Dickson, of St. Albans, and they had a son born about 1933. In 1940, Ossie Opie started working at the Deer Park explosives factory.

Unfortunately, Ossie Opie did not recover from his serious injuries and died at the Melbourne Hospital on 31 January 1941 and his funeral took place at the Footscray Cemetery.¹⁰ The burial service was conducted by the Church of England, Footscray, and the Sunshine Buffalo Lodge service by Bro. Hamilton Drew, and the G.U.O.O.F. service by the Grand Secretary (Brother G L Coulter). It was noted that:

“He was a quiet reserved type of gentleman, a fond husband and loving father and his manner endeared him to a wide circle of friends. At the Keilor Council meeting on Saturday last one

¹ Footscray Independent 30 October 1897

² Footscray Independent 30 October 1897

³ Footscray Independent 23 June 1900

⁴ Argus 30 April 1919

⁵ Argus 5 May 1951 p18

⁶ Footscray Independent 19 March 1892 p2

⁷ Sunshine Advocate 18 December 1931 p4

⁸ Clayton died later.

⁹ Sunshine Advocate 31 January 1941

¹⁰ The coronial inquest recorded a finding of accidental death. The factory changed work practices to reduce risk. Argus 24 April 1941

minute's silence was observed in respect to the passing of Mr Opie."¹

William "Bill" Osborne Opie died 3 March 1950 at Deer Park, at the age of eighty-five, in the house in which he was born and lived all his life. He was Deer Park's oldest resident at the time. He had been a dairy farmer all his life and was survived by his widow, Violet, and one daughter, Mrs. Alice Fisher.²

However, these deaths did not mean the end of the Opie family's involvement in St Albans and the Maribyrnong Parish. Thomas John and Ivy Opie settled in Main Road West, St Albans, probably near the railway station,³ though when they moved there exactly has not been traced. Thomas died on 4 May 1951 and is buried at Footscray.⁴

"Opie Estate" in St Albans was advertised by Caldicott and Greenwood of Footscray, who were active in the early to mid 1920s,⁵ so that is probably when that estate was put up for sale. It was on the southeast corner of Main Road West and Station Road – it was William O'Neil's land selection from the 1870s so the family obviously must have purchased it after that. The blocks were advertised as 65 by 132 foot and selling from £35 each on no deposit.



The Opie family still owned property along Main Road West in the 1940s as their names were on the ratepayers roll. In 1970 there was a Mrs L. Opie living at Cleveland Street, St Albans. There is an Opie Road in St Albans and also the Opie Road Reserve. Regrettably, the more recent activities of the Opie family in St Albans and district have not been reported in the public media. #

¹ Sunshine Advocate 7 February 1941

² Sunshine Advocate 10 March 1950

³ Mrs T J Opie advertised a room for rent in Main Rd West "near station." Sunshine Advocate 19 July 1952.

⁴ Argus 5 May 1951 p18

⁵ Opie Estate is also mentioned in the 1924 excursion by the Oakland Hounds. Sunshine Advocate 23 August 1924 p5

O'SHANASSY, John

John O'Shanassy was one of the original selectors of Keilor Common, having selected block 21, which was on the north-west corner of the intersection of the railway line and Boundary Road. There is not much known about this selector and there were several men named John O'Shanassy in the district at the time, so some guesswork is required to settle on the most likely candidate. The main clue is that the land was transferred to Dr L L Smith in 1870 when improvements had not been made.⁶

The first possibility is John O'Shanassy MLA, (1818-1883) who was one of the first trustees of the Keilor cemetery from 1857 to 1869, so he was active in the district and could have bid for land on the old Keilor Common, as did other politicians. Sir John, as he was in later years, was an Irishman who came to Port Phillip in 1837. He became a businessman and property investor and by the 1850s was one of the wealthiest men in the colony. In 1851, he was a representative for Melbourne in Victoria's first parliament before taking up the Kilmore seat.⁷ He became the Chief Secretary (Premier) of Victoria and would have been a wonderful ambassador for the Keilor Plains and its Irish-born population if he had stayed in the district.

A less likely possibility is the John O'Shanassy who was working at the Australian Explosives and Chemical Company at Deer Park in the 1870s – less likely because he was probably born in the early 1860s and would have been too young to bid at the Keilor Commons ballot in 1868. This John died most tragically in 1898 in a massive explosion that destroyed him and the workroom.⁸ O'Shanassy was a competent and careful workman who had been working at the factory for 20 years and for 10 or 12 years had been in charge of the nitro-glycerine room where the explosion occurred.⁹ He was an unmarried man about 35 years of age, born locally, and supporting elderly parents. Patrick O'Shanassy was a relative from Deer Park, and other relatives were resident in the district.

The most likely candidate for the St Albans selector is the John O'Shanassy who was working as a road contractor for Braybrook Shire. He came from Limerick, Ireland, arriving

⁶ *St Albans The First Hundred Years* p6

⁷ S. M. Ingham, 'O'Shanassy, Sir John (1818–1883)', Australian Dictionary of Biography, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/oshanassy-sir-john-4347/text7059>, accessed 14 October 2013.

⁸ Argus 24 August 1898 p5

⁹ Argus 24 August 1898 p5

in Victoria in 1859 and settling on the Kororoit Creek at Derrimut where he took up road-making and general contract work in the shire of Braybrook. He had married Mary Key in 1848 and they raised two daughters and two sons.¹ John must have run into financial problems by the late 1860s:

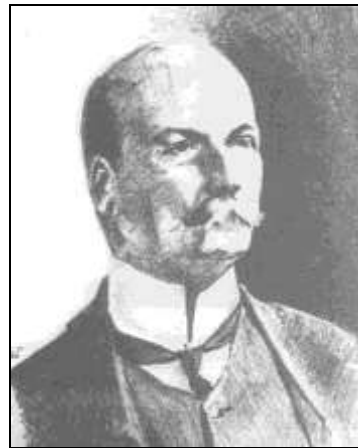
*"An application was made by John O'Shaughnessy (sic) to transfer an allotment to Mr. L. L. Smith. O'Shaughnessy had expended about £50 in fencing, and on the faith of a verbal promise made by the late President, of which there was no record in the office, Mr. L L Smith had spent £35 more. The matter was held over for the decision of the President."*²

O'Shanassy became insolvent in 1872 due to illness and loss of contracts.³ Later, he was still involved in road making but from the 1880s to 1900 it seems he was working as the pound keeper at Braybrook. In 1887 he complained that someone was using the pound overnight for their sheep; council resolved that placards be posted up warning of prosecutions.⁴ He said he'd resign as pound keeper in September 1887 but either changed his mind or returned, because in 1893 he was fined 20s with 20s costs for "neglecting to advertise a horse impounded" and cautioned that, in the event of any more irregularities, he would be relieved from his duties.⁵ In January 1900, he applied for an increase of salary but it is not known if he obtained it.⁶

O'Shanassy took up road contracting again in the early 1900s. The Braybrook Council had treated him well but in July 1904 fined him for an 'oversupply' of road metal because he had been repeatedly cautioned about supplying too much metal. O'Shanassy objected to the fine because he had been following orders from the Council's day man – Council took the diplomatic solution of refunding £1 of the fine.⁷

John O'Shanassy does not appear to have been directly involved with St Albans. He had forfeited his land because no improvements were made within the first two years and his selection was transferred to Dr L L Smith in 1870. In 1886, Dr Smith sold the land to Alfred Padley of the Cosmopolitan Land and Banking Company, who were land developers and speculators. #

PADLEY, Alfred Henry and Mary Elizabeth



Alfred Henry Padley was born on 21 March 1850 in Middlesex, England, the only son of Thomas Padley and Caroline Jeffs. He came to Australia with his parents as a two-year-old in 1852, started working as a grocer in the 1860s and then became a land speculator and property developer in the 1880s. His name is significant in local history as the man who subdivided a thousand acres of grazing land on the Keilor Plains around a little-used railway stop, paid for a station to be built, and named it St Albans.

Alfred Padley's family was of English and Welsh nationalities. Mr. Thomas Padley, his father, was born in 1818 in Chipping Norton, Oxfordshire, England. On 4 September 1842, Thomas Padley married Caroline Jeffs, who was also born in 1818, in England.

The Padley family emigrated from England under the assisted migration scheme and arrived in Australia on 25 December 1852 on the ship Persian, with daughter Elizabeth Mary aged nine and son Alfred Henry aged two. Thomas Padley was aged 35. At first they settled in Melbourne on the fringe of the inner city but by 1856 the family was living in Blackwood Street, Hotham.⁸ Padley senior was working in the building related trades, including periods as a plasterer, painter, bricklayer and builder. At least one of the buildings that he constructed is still standing in Gipps Street, East Melbourne. Padley had built it for German-born architect Carl Gustav Joachimi, who had married Padley's older daughter, Mary Elizabeth Purser.⁹ The building

¹ *Melbourne and its Metropolis Vol.2* p735

² *Argus* 16 December 1869 p7

³ *Argus* 8 May 1872 p5

⁴ *Bacchus Marsh Express* 10 September 1887

⁵ *Bacchus Marsh Express* 11 March 1893 p3

⁶ *Bacchus Marsh Express* 13 January 1900 p4

⁷ *Bacchus Marsh Express* 23 July 1904 p3

⁸ Hotham, the old name for North Melbourne, was named for Charles Hotham, the governor of Victoria, after the completion of the North Melbourne Town Hall and the Metropolitan Meat Market. By 1882 the population was 17,800.

⁹ The marriage occurred on 27 June 1859 by special licence as Mary was 17. Gustav was in his thirties.

is now registered with Heritage Australia, presumably because of Joachimi's prominence as an architect rather than Padley's as a builder.

Caroline Padley gave birth (in Melbourne) to three daughters who died in infancy: twins Louise and Amelia in 1853, and Clara in 1859. Emily Eliza was born in 1854 and survived. She ended up marrying Charles Servante of Kyneton on 14 July 1881; they would later move to St Albans and support Alfred Padley with his business ventures in real estate.

Thomas Padley may have originally been a plasterer or bricklayer by trade and he worked as a builder in the early settlement phase, but in 1857 he was working as a grocer in North Melbourne. He seems to have been successful in his combined occupations of builder and grocer. His son, Alfred Henry, became a partner in the grocery business that was later connected with properties located in Hotham, Fitzroy and Carlton. It is possible that Thomas Padley built these properties given his building background, and because he was known to have built the Joachimi house in East Melbourne in the early 1860s.

Alfred Padley grew up in Blackwood Street, North Melbourne and went to the schools connected with St James Old Cathedral, Melbourne.¹ After leaving school he worked with his father as a grocer under the name of Padley & Son. The family home and grocery store was at 20 Blackwood Street, Hotham. In 1873 the father and son business was sold.² Alfred moved to 276 Nicholson Street, Carlton, from where he continued working independently as a grocer; he was aged 23 years.

Alfred Padley was already involved in some groups during his early twenties. His introduction to local politics occurred in the 1860s when his father was elected onto the Hotham Borough Council.³ In 1870 Alfred was a member and treasurer of the Albert Rowing Club of Melbourne; the committee would meet at the Cavanagh Hotel in Swanston Street. In 1871 he was one of the "performing members" of the Philharmonic Society.⁴ His performance

specialty was not stated, but he was known to play the organ and the Society owned an organ so perhaps this was his specialty. In any case, he was either in the choir or in the orchestra, and he was also on the committee.⁵ He may have formed some connections with the Masons around this time because in 1882 he was directing their Provincial Grand Lodge choir at a town hall banquet.⁶

In 1874 at the age of 24, Alfred married Mary Elizabeth Clark, also of Hotham. Mary was born in 1853 in Kent, England, and was the daughter of John Clark and Susanna Ross, both from Scotland, who had settled in North Melbourne. At some stage after the marriage Alfred and Mary established themselves at Riverview Cottage, Clarke-street, Abbotsford.

On 19 May 1877 Thomas Padley died at his residence on the corner of Brunswick and Bell streets, Fitzroy, and his remains were buried at the Melbourne General Cemetery.⁷ He had arrived in Australia as a relatively young man at the age of 34 and lived the next 35 years around North Melbourne as a husband and father dedicated to supporting his family. Even his one-year stint on Hotham Borough council was a contribution to the good of the community. He would have been proud to have acquired some real estate that he could leave to his children and pleased to see his son take over the family business. His death at the age of 69 years would not have been unexpected. Thomas Padley was a successful pioneer of the colony, the sort of citizen that the assisted migration scheme had hoped to attract.

Then in 1878 at the age of 28, Alfred Padley made a major career change. He was a young man with ambition and energy, so after his father died he dissolved the grocery business, sold the assets, and went into hospital administration. The next decade would become the most positive and progressive decade of his career. He developed his business and political skills and put them to use as a real estate entrepreneur. He was extremely productive and apparently quite successful until the financial crash of the 1890s.

In 1879 he became the secretary⁸ of the Homeopathic Hospital in Melbourne, a position that he retained for a number of years, until

¹ The cathedral and school were on the corner of Collins and William Streets. The cathedral was first opened for worship in 1837. One of the first subscribers for the building fund was John Batman. Padley has documented the school's early history. The documents are in the State Library collection.

² They were insolvent – refer to Victorian Government Gazette 18 July 1873, p1302.

³ Argus 13 April 1869

⁴ The Melbourne Philharmonic Society started in 1853 with volunteers forming a choir and orchestra.

⁵ Argus 11 January 1871

⁶ Argus 2 December 1882

⁷ Argus 21 May 1877

⁸ This may have been the equivalent of a company secretary or executive officer in these days. The author assumes this was a paid position as there are no reports of other employment at the time.

mid 1885 at least. A homeopathic dispensary had been established in Collins Street in 1855 and by 1874 a group of influential Melbourne women were agitating for a hospital to be built; they obtained a government grant of land in St Kilda Road. In 1879 a temporary hospital was built at Spring Street, Melbourne. The new hospital opened in 1882 on the permanent site on St Kilda Road "*between the Immigrants Home and the Victoria Barracks*".¹ It was renamed Prince Henry's Hospital in 1934 in honour of Prince Henry, Duke of Gloucester, who was on a royal visit.

Padley appears to have made a number of business connections during his time with the hospital, which would later come in very handy in his future dealings in real estate. Quite probably his future connections with Keilor district were already developing; e.g. when the Marquis of Normanby² laid the foundation stone for the new hospital in 1882 and Padley was organising a bazaar that was to be opened by the Marchioness.³ The Marquis was the Governor of Victoria from 1879 to 1884; he seems to have had a good relationship with William Taylor of Keilor, which would not be unusual given Taylor's political connections. At one stage the Marquis used the baronial Overnewton as his country residence. In 1883 one of the local papers reported that:

*"Rumour has it that his Excellency the Governor is again to take up his abode amongst us. ... His Excellency lived in Keilor over three months of the present year. He occupied Mr. Taylor's house at Overnewton, in the absence of that gentleman and his family, who are on a trip to the old country for the past eighteen months. The dealers here are jubilant over the matter, as the presence of vice-royalty, with its train of attendants and followers, gave a great impetus to the trade of the township. It was only when local productions were exhausted that recourse was had to Melbourne for supplies. On coming to Keilor to live the Governor expressed a wish that the management should patronize all local productions, and I am glad to say they did on all occasions when the supply was equal to the demand."*⁴

It may be a long bow to draw, but some conjecture about the delights of the Keilor Plains may have been referred to in polite conversation with the Marquis and the Marchioness. Other future business connections that showed up at the hospital functions include representatives of Bliss & Peryman, and Troedel

& Company. They too would become part of Padley's future partnerships. It was the normal business networking that you would expect.

On 14 July 1881, Alfred Padley's younger sister, Emily Eliza, married Charles Servante, whose family was from Kyneton.⁵ Servante would later move to St Albans and support his brother-in-law's business ventures in selling real estate.

Charles Servante was born in Kyneton and trained as a cabinet maker, so why was he working as a real estate agent in the mid 1880s? The answer is the financial downturn that occurred at the time. Servante established his furniture factory in Barry Street, Carlton, about 1880 and built it up into a thriving business complete with showrooms and depot in Elizabeth Street North. The maritime strike of 1886 caused "*a wholesale cancellation of orders, and finally his well-equipped factory, which was employing some twenty tradesmen, did not have work for even one man, and Mr. Servante came out of it the loser of £25,000.*"⁶

Servante must have become a real estate agent during 1887 as a way of supporting his family until he could sort out his business affairs. However, this was still to come.

In 1883 Padley's involvement with the inner workings of the business fraternity became more evident with the inauguration of the Freemasons Grand Lodge of Victoria. Padley was appointed Grand Registrar⁷ at the age of 33 and undoubtedly the business connections of his fellow Freemasons would have been useful for his own entrepreneurial ambitions, which became more evident at this time; e.g. Joseph Flack, a chartered accountant, and Dr. George Le Fevre, a member of parliament, were also part of the select group of 200 gentlemen who sat down to the banquet at the Melbourne Town Hall. It was said at this meeting that Freemasonry had blended the two colonies together before they were blended together politically.⁸ This blending also seems to have worked with individuals, as both Le Fevre and Flack would later become associated with Alfred Padley's Cosmopolitan group.

Padley must have acquired some influence within the Freemasons, as in February 1884 he, with Charles Servante and James Snadden,

¹ The Argus 26 July 1882

² George Augustus Constantine Phipps, 2nd Marquiss of Normanby (1819-1890)

³ Laura Phipps née Russell (1816-1885)

⁴ Bacchus Marsh Express 18 August 1883

⁵ The Argus Thursday 21 July 1881

⁶ The Daily News W.A. 14 July 1931

⁷ In some jurisdictions this is the principal legal officer of a Grand Lodge, but perhaps the title is also used purely for ceremonial purposes.

⁸ Argus 3 July 1883.

proposed the formation of the Pentalpha Lodge. This was granted and the first meeting held on 7 March 1884 at the Grace Darling Hotel in Collingwood "with Alfred Henry Padley acting as Worthy Master, Charles Servante acting as Senior Warden and James Snadden acting as Junior Warden." The new lodge was officially consecrated in May 1884. Had Padley met Servante through the Masons, or did he introduce him to the Masons?

Alfred Padley's major business interest was the Cosmopolitan Land Syndicate Limited, which was formed in December 1884. Padley, who was approaching 35 years, seems to have been the main driving force in its development – either that or he was the front runner for a group of silent partners. Late in 1885 the company bought 7,000 acres of farmland from Mr. Hann at Cranbourne, with the aim of subdividing it into smaller lots for resale. It was their first major venture. How did a relatively new company led by an ex-grocer have the capital to buy such a large estate? Apart from the shareholders' contributions, the answer lies in the payment arrangement. The land was sold for £17,580 but Cosmopolitan only paid £1,350 deposit, with the rest to be paid progressively as sections of the estate were transferred over time.

Ferdinand Bond Brown Sharland Hann's Langwarrin Estate comprised 7,030 acres of land at Cranbourne in the Somerville district, county of Mornington.¹ It was halfway between Frankston and Cranbourne and three miles from each; public transport access was problematic at the time. The estate lands were originally in the names of Hann, Croker and Richardson, but Hann bought his partners' share and then sold it to Padley's company. Cosmopolitan held the first auction in March 1885 offering 50 township allotments, 100 ten-acre orchard lots, and 20 fifty-acre agricultural lots. It was an ambitious development for a relatively young company. The advertising mentions railway communication by the Great Southern line on the east and the Hastings line on the west, "with a projected rail or tram way right through the estate." Projected, but not quite ...

Ferdinand Hann and William Henry Croker² were stock and station holders and graziers in partnership under the business name of Hann and Croker and operating in New South Wales and also in Victoria from Yarram, Dandenong and Keilor.³ They advertised themselves as

being purchasers of large numbers of sheep and cattle and seem to have operated all over Victoria. They won prizes for their sheep at the Dandenong show of 1883 and had connections with sheep sales through Keilor, selling 600 lambs in January that year. At the Flemington market yards in February they sold 700 cows and bullocks. This sounds like it was at the smaller end of their repertoire because one of their NSW sales in 1882 was for 8,000 wethers. They were clearly big operators. Presumably they bought in bulk and on sold. The partnership was dissolved in March 1883 with Hann taking over the business operations.

Hann's connection with Keilor had occurred even earlier than Padley's, for in 1879 he had bought the land granted to the Davis brothers (Arthur, George and Edmund). They had obtained their selections after the break-up of the Keilor Common under the closer Settlement Scheme. Hann later sold this land to Padley's Cosmopolitan company.⁴ So maybe Hann was another of the early land speculators promoting the cause of Keilor real estate. Several other buyers who were associated with Padley were also involved in similar exchanges.

In 1886 the Cosmopolitan Land Syndicate Ltd became known as the Cosmopolitan Land and Banking Company Ltd and was extending its shareholder base:

*"... important alterations have been made in the articles of association, whereby the company has been made a permanent financial institution ... The future operations of the company will therefore include, in addition to buying and selling properties, the receiving of fixed deposits and lending money on mortgage repayable on fixed terms or by instalments."*⁵

It is difficult to know how it was all perceived at the time, but talk of having £100,000 in capital and each £100 share being worth £422 must have sounded very attractive to people looking for investment opportunities.

Padley and company pursued their ambition for public transport to their Langwarrin estate through the traditional lobbying channels. Mr. Bent, M.L.A. arranged for the directors of Cosmopolitan to present their proposal to the Minister of Railways, Mr. Gillies. The proposal was to provide easy access to Melbourne and to assist with this the Cranbourne Shire Council was willing to delegate to the company

⁴ Hann bought the land in July 1879. The Davis brothers were long term residents from Wyndham. It appears that they bought the land in St Albans as an investment rather than for residence.

⁵ The Argus 28 July 1886

¹ The Argus 30 December 1885

² Croker was also a member of the Freemasons.

³ The Argus 23 November 1882

“any powers which it possesses under the Amending Local Government Act to construct tramways in the locality.” A light railway from Cranbourne to a point at Somerville, on the Hastings line, was preferable for defence and commercial purposes, which was supported by the Defence Department. The other option was for a tramway from Cranbourne on the South Gippsland line, running south through the Company estate at Langwarrin. Regarding the railway proposal, Mr. Gillies said that the Government could not undertake to lend any money to persons who might seek for powers to construct, but if it were made they would be glad to work the line.¹

Cosmopolitan then acquired a significant area of land in the old Keilor-Braybrook Farmers Common probably during 1886 – the land purchased was predominantly to the east of the railway line between Taylors Road and Main Road East, though other directors of the company bought land on the western side between the railway line and Kate Street. The buyers included Canterbury, Bamber, and Biggs, who were connected with Padley, as well as Percy & Co., a company that was also headed by Padley as the Managing Director.

Similar to their plan in the Mornington area, Cosmopolitan saw the provision of railway transport as the key to attracting buyers in Melbourne’s western region. At Keilor their strategy was different because the Bendigo railway line already passed through the district. They took the proactive step of paying the Railways Department to build a station at the Boundary Road crossing; their earlier meetings with the Minister for Railways might have been productive to that extent. On 1 April 1886 the Cosmopolitan company wrote to the Railway Commissioners and by 25 May they had sent a £700 cheque to pay for building the station. The Railways agreed to the proposal, including the adoption of the name St Albans.

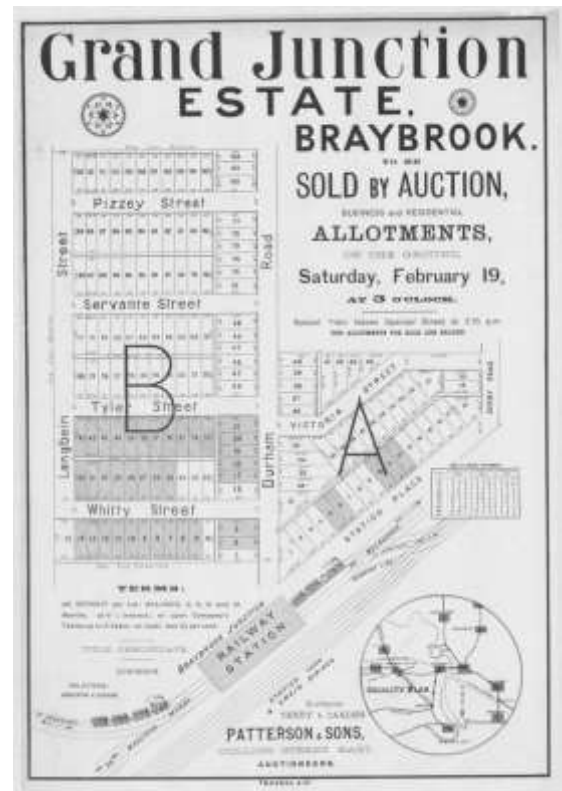
Cosmopolitan would later pay another £500 for a siding to be constructed into their property. Dr Le Fevre was involved in a further deputation to have a goods shed and a crossover built, which cost another £508.² One assertion is that Dr. George Le Fevre, member of the Legislative Council, had persuaded Richard Speight, chairman of the Victorian Railways Commissioners, to erect the station near his land, which he then sold to Cosmopolitan.³

¹ The Argus 22 July 1886
² St Albans The First Hundred Years p69-70
³ www.emelbourne.net.au/biogs/EM01297b.htm

The earliest found reference to St Albans’ land sales was in the Bendigo Advertiser in October 1886. It was touted as “a splendid opportunity for Bendigonians to speculate in a concern over which they could not possibly lose.”⁴ There was only one bidder for an allotment near the railway line, and after this solitary sale the auctioneers decided not to go any further.

The earliest reference to St Albans found in the Argus was in November 1886, a notice that Padley’s St. Albans Estate, of Maribyrnong, would be offered by auction in Melbourne “as soon as the railway station is completed, which will be about the end of November.”⁵

In the meantime, Cosmopolitan was already selling land in the shire of Braybrook in the Grand Junction Estate near the railway station “within 15 minutes of the city.” The estate was immediately adjoining the Braybrook railway junction that was claimed to become the most important point in the Victorian Railway system. The auction was advertised for 27 November 1886 and you could buy a block for £5 deposit and on easy terms.⁶



In November 1886, Cosmopolitan advertised 100 blocks of land for sale at “Derrimut Park Extension” which was near the Kororoit Creek

⁴ Bendigo Advertiser 29 October 1886 p3
⁵ Argus 13 November 1886
⁶ Argus 17 December 1886

railway station. You could buy your own block for £1 deposit per lot in this “centre of an old and well established populated district.” As a special deal you could get free deeds if you bought six or more lots. This land had the advantage of being close to the state school, the post office, the Braybrook Shire Hall, the Hunt Club and Kororoit hotels. Despite the advertising about how close the area was to the city by train, the area was quite some distance from other populated areas, especially on roads that were less than perfectly paved.



The St Albans railway station was completed in late 1886 and officially opened on 1 February 1887. It was a major acquisition for the district, but as some locals recall: “it was provided to serve the estate of the Cosmopolitan Land and Banking Company.”¹

Nevertheless, after the station was built the district became known as St Albans. Therefore, apart from subdivisions and a station, Padley gave us a name that has endured.²

Patrick M'Shane was one of the first selectors of land on the Keilor Commons when that was divided under the Closer Settlement Scheme in 1868 and he appears to have been one of the first to sell land under the St Albans name. This occurred in February 1887 when he advertised for sale his:

“... splendid block of land being Allotment 17, Section A, Parish of Maribymong, containing 18 acres 1 rood and 10 perches securely fenced and well watered, having a frontage of 9 chains to Saltwater River, and two large dams. This paddock is situated about one mile from the new suburb of St Albans and Keilor, and adjoins the properties of Mr. Thos. Hislop and

¹ St Albans The First Hundred Years, 1887-1987

² This may not have been the first reference to Saint Alban in the district, as in 1852 William O'Farrell, a Melbourne auctioneer, was advertising land for sale in the “new Township of Alban” in the Parish of Cut Paw Paw. The name apparently did not survive.

*Mr. D Cahill. The auctioneers specially call the attention of farmers and graziers on the lookout for a snug farm near the city to this sale, as this is a chance rarely met with.”*³

More sales followed, with Gemmell Tuckett selling 158 acres close to the St Albans railway station. Was this a Padley sale using a different company? Gemmell, Tuckett and Co. were auctioneers in Collins street west, and had conducted a valuation of Cosmopolitan properties in 1886.

When did Padley move to St Albans? He seems to have arrived in the mid 1880s though a family diary entry⁴ suggests it may have been as early as 1883. Local historians mention the company building several houses in 1886 and 1887. At least six large houses were built: two in Biggs Street, one on the corner of Biggs and Alfrieda Streets, one in the Circus next to the Presbyterian Church, one in Circus West, and the grandest of them all was *Keighlo*, his own home, in Winifred Street.



Keighlo as it was circa 1917⁵

People remember Keighlo as being “palatial” and that may have been so because most of the local buildings at the time would have been fairly basic. Keighlo had a platform lookout at the top with a flagpole where “At night when he was out the servants had to light the lights at the top of the flagpole on the house.” This was probably a necessity at the time because there were no street lights and it would have been difficult to find one’s direction in the dark. Old St Albans residents remember the place as being a showpiece in numerous ways:

“Around the back door at Keighlo was a big place all wire-netted in, where he kept all kinds of parrots, etc. On the west side of the house

³ Argus 2 February 1887

⁴ See reference to Kate Padley’s diary in St Albans The First Hundred Years 1887-1987

⁵ Photograph dated circa 1917. At this time the property was owned by Frederick and Eva Stenson and they are probably the people in the photograph.

there was a nice summer house with an aviary inside where kept canaries, 50 or more varieties. Leading out from this was a rose garden and rockeries. On the west side of that was an orchard and vegetable garden; also a lake with water-lilies. On the north extending up to the stables and shedding was an aviary with all kinds of birds. Over the well in the yard was a dome where he kept pigeons.”¹

Padley's property must have operated as a farm or was associated with a nearby farm, as in 1891 when he advertised a clearing sale of his property he included cattle, sheep, horses, pigs, and some farm equipment. The stock listed for auction included 60 steers, 60 heifers, 30 dairy cows, 10 store cows, 2 bulls, 1,000 merino wethers, “heavily fleeced, and in good condition”, 250 merino ewes, 300 merino ewes with lambs at foot, 250 prime fat lambs, 4 Southdown rams, 25 horses, including 5 draught mares in foal, 18 light harness horses and first-class hacks, 2 draught colts, and 25 pure Berkshire pigs. The sundries included a dray and a spring cart. Clearly this was a working farm and not just a family residence on a suburban block. It is hard to imagine all the mentioned stock being located on his ‘home paddock’ but he had access to other land in Biggs Street so most probably the animals were kept somewhere in the vicinity.

Despite moving to Keilor, Padley kept working on his business interests in the Mornington region. He adopted similar strategies in each area in order to promote and increase the value of his land holdings, i.e. to have public transport built or upgraded into the planned housing estates. To achieve this end Padley and his company would approach the local members of parliament to meet with relevant government ministers to advocate for the needs and interests of the constituents of the areas, which, fortuitously, also coincided with Cosmopolitan's business interests.

In 1887 Padley was instrumental in forming the North Western Suburban League with the object of “obtaining increased railway facilities and water supply and the advancement of the interests of the district.” Padley became the president of this group. Representatives at the early meetings were from Footscray, Braybrook, Keilor, Maidstone, Kororoit, Sydenham, St Albans, and Melton. Mr John Bamber² chairman of the St. Albans Works Committee was at the first meeting in Hocking's rooms in Elizabeth Street. Padley reported on the geo-

¹ St Albans The First Hundred Years

² Bamber became a Board member of Padley's St Albans Permanent Building Society in 1888.

logical advice he had received that large quantities of water should be obtained by boring; he recommended that the Government be urged to sink a couple of drills.³ That may have been sound professional advice but it was not particularly helpful for St Albans. In the early 1900s the government did drill about a dozen bores on the Keilor Plains and around Overnewton but found the bore water was not satisfactory. It cost the farmers £1,400 for the experiment.⁴ St. Albans did not get a proper water supply until it was connected to the Board of Works scheme in 1940.

The St Albans Estate was put up for auction on Saturday, February 11, 1888. It comprised of 56 allotments in the area north-east of the railway station with East Esplanade and Fox, Alfreda and Henry streets as the boundary. The allotments could be bought for a deposit of £3 with the balance payable on terms from 3 months to 3 years. At that time the minimum weekly wage for a male was £2 2s 10d, so it was an affordable start to suburban settlement for a homemaker, as well as being a good buy for a small investor.



The advertising set the style and standard for all future local sales, with its emphasis on “splendid views in all directions”, “all high land, 250 feet above level of sea”, and “no noxious trades or quarrying allowed.”

³ Argus 24 September 1887

⁴ Footscray Independent 22 February 1908

The Abbey Reserve was up for sale on 8 December. It was “90 splendid mansion and villa sites” between William and Biggs streets from Leslie Street to Sunshine Avenue. It too boasted of “the highest and best land in St Albans” with “a splendid panorama of Melbourne and the Bay, with the Dandenong Ranges in the distance on the one hand and the Macedon and You Yangs on the other.” You could buy a block for just £3 deposit.

In April 1888 Padley’s competition had arrived in St Albans, a challenge to his supremacy in local land sales, in the form of The People’s Freehold and Investment Banking Company run by Walter Smithers Gadd, who was advertising his land as “*The Coming Suburb for the People. Only 22 minutes from town, healthiest situation near Melbourne, 250 feet above sea level. This property is only 48 chains from the Railway Station.*”¹

This company advertised their land sale for 19 May at only £2 per block deposit - less than a week’s basic wage! The land was south of Main Road West between Adams and Garfield streets; the advertising map made it look like the land was relatively close to the railway station, which it wasn’t. Walter Smithers Gadd, who ran the company, was a financier and auctioneer, as well being a Fitzroy councillor; definitely a formidable operator.

In October 1887 Cosmopolitan held more land sales and disposed of 52 allotments that were offered. The attendance was reported as being fair but the bidding was exceedingly spirited.²

Cosmopolitan’s collective adrenalin rush at such success was running high. At the February 1888 meeting the President, Mr. James Evans, remarked that “*the progress of the company had been beyond expectations, and that the thanks of the shareholders were due to the directors.*” Mr. Joseph H. Flack, the auditor, was even more effusive as he wrote from overseas “*suggesting the opening of a London branch.*”³

The North-Western Suburban League also met in February. A letter was read from the Railways Department stating that an inquiry would be made as to the cost of giving a suburban train service to the two places the League had previously mentioned, but, in view of the present limited supply of carriage stock and the opening of new lines, the commissioners

would not be prepared to run even privately subsidised trains at the present time.⁴

About the same time Padley was organising a public meeting of the residents of Cranbourne, Langwarrin and Somers “and all interested” in the construction of a rail line from Cranbourne to Hastings via the Langwarrin township.

By now Padley’s involvement at the political level was becoming more evident. In 1888 his Board of Directors included Dr Le Fevre, M.L.C., while Padley himself stood for council in both the Braybrook and Keilor shires. In 1888 he nominated for the Maribyrnong Riding of Keilor but was beaten by the Keilor farmer and orchardist, David Milburn. Then in 1889 Padley ran against Keilor storekeeper Edward Hassad, and this time Padley was successful.

One of the local newspapers gave him good accolades for his ambition:

*“Mr. A. H. Padley, the President of the North Western Suburban League, and Managing Director of the Cosmopolitan Bank, has signified his intention of contesting at the elections on next Thursday, the vacant seats in two Shire Councils; for Braybrook, the Northern Riding, and for Keilor, the Maribyrnong Riding. Mr. Padley, who has braved all the attendant inconveniences of a city man, who acts as one of the pioneers in the settlement of a new suburb, has built a beautiful villa on the border of the two shires and established himself as a resident, and has now the satisfaction of seeing his efforts followed by many who are rapidly building and helping to popularise the district and bring it the comforts of the Metropolis. Mr. Padley is to be applauded for the good he has done the district already by his enterprise and energy.”*⁵

On Saturday 25 August 1888 the Boulanger Reserve went on sale; Charles Servante of Elizabeth Street North and St Albans was the local agent for Cosmopolitan. The Reserve included 64 allotments in the area between Fox and Biggs streets, with Walter Street at the western end and Leslie Street at the eastern. As with other local sales, this land was advertised as having some of the highest and best land in St Albans, convenient to the railway station and having splendid views. Reference to “*a large number of business places, villas and cottages are in course of erection*” was optimistic to say the least.

At the annual meeting of Cosmopolitan in 1888 it was announced that John Canterbury had recently retired from the company’s board

¹ Footscray Independent 14 April 1888

² Argus 24 October 1887

³ Argus 23 February 1888

⁴ Argus 28 February 1888

⁵ Footscray Independent 4 August 1888

of management and that Dr. Le Fevre, M.L.C., had been appointed to fill the vacancy.¹ Le Fevre was elected to the Legislative Council for the North Yarra province in 1887. He was a charismatic person and would have been an influential figure to have as a board member. He reportedly had a direct connection with St Albans through a brief ownership of the Errington Reserve land that he then sold to the Metropolitan Bank Ltd. He also lobbied the Railway Commissioners for the construction of the St Albans railway station. Unfortunately he died unexpectedly in 1891 at the age of 43 while on a government visit to England. He had speculated heavily in property during the land boom with some success but died insolvent.



On 18 July 1888 another Padley company was formed, the St Albans Permanent Building Society, with Alfred Padley as President. The purpose of this group was stated to be purely a lending institute rather than for investment in land. Branches were to be opened at Footscray, Braybrook and St Albans² but none of these seem to have eventuated. The board of directors appear to be substantially the same as for Cosmopolitan, with Padley as President and his brother-in-law, Charles Servante, as a board member. Why did Padley need another group? Presumably for the cash flow, as by this stage some of the money markets were starting to dry up as investment from the London markets was declining.

¹ The Argus 16 August 1888

² Independent Footscray 11 August 1888

As for Padley's local political ambitions, he lost to David Millburn in the Keilor election of August 1888. But this does not seem to have dampened his optimism because he was already active at Braybrook and took an early opportunity to impress his local government compatriots:

*"The Councillors of the Shire of Braybrook, at the kind invitation of Mr. Padley, the managing director, paid a visit to the rising township of St. Albans on Monday last. The township is at the station of the same name on the Sandhurst line, eleven miles from Melbourne, between Keilor and Braybrook, on the highest elevation of what used to be known as Keilor plains, but now bidding fair to be shortly covered with beautiful villas and comfortable residences. The growth of the township is wonderful; the land is tastefully and scientifically laid out, drainage and sanitary matters having had due consideration; the blocks are large, fronting wide streets, miles of which are already formed and metalled, there being a complete stonecrushing plant at continual work. The side walks [sic] are planted with quick-growing trees, which, in a year or two, will form beautiful avenues."*³

However, Padley was also involved in less publicly-highlighted events that were of true community benefit, such as his support for the Anglican Church at Kororoit Creek. The annual meeting of parishioners was held in January 1889 in Dixon's Hall, and it was reported that:

*"Matters in connection with progress of the church have been greatly retarded in consequence of the impossibility of obtaining a suitable piece of ground, on which to erect a building, but, thanks to the liberality of Mr. A. H. Padley, of St Albans, this difficulty has been removed. That gentleman generously offered an allotment of land in Derrimut Park for church purposes, which offer was unanimously accepted, and steps will be immediately taken to proceed with the erection of a church thereon."*⁴

Padley's Cosmopolitan company was selling land at the "Derrimut Park Extension" estate and his donation to the church was a good gesture, but in reality it was a donation from Cosmopolitan's shareholders.

In August 1889 Padley again nominated for the Maribyrnong Riding of Keilor Shire against James Anderson of Keilor, a farmer, and Edward Hassed, a storekeeper of Keilor. The election was held at Keilor and Alfred Henry Padley won with 39 votes to Edward Hassed's 33, a clear majority of 6.⁵ Although Padley served on Keilor Council his activities have not

³ Bacchus Marsh Express 15 September 1888

⁴ Independent Footscray 2 February 1889

⁵ The Argus 31 July 1889

been reported through the available local newspapers, so his performance as a Maribyrnong Riding representative cannot be detailed. Local residents did notice his attendance at district meetings:

“Mr. Padley was a councillor in Keilor and Braybrook Shires and drove a carriage drawn by four horses with a footman. At night when he was out the servants had to light the lights at the top of the flagpole on the house.”¹

The first school in St Albans was opened in August of 1889 in one of the Cosmopolitan houses in Adelaide Street.² The company had set aside a block of land for a school but the Education Department could not afford to build it. After lengthy negotiations they “agreed to pay a minimal rental of one shilling per week for a small cottage that could be used as a school house.”³ The classes may have been held in one of Padley’s houses but apparently it was one of the company’s rental properties that was being used by the Church of England, so it was probably the generosity of the local Anglicans that enabled the start of formal education in St Albans at such a peppercorn rental.⁴ The Anglican congregation did not have a local church at the time and used the cottage for their services on weekends.⁵

The school was undoubtedly a boon to the settlers on Cosmopolitan’s estates. The school started in August 1889 with 28 children though attendance was erratic. By 1893 the enrolment was up to 32, of which 7 were children of the Padley and Servante families. Children of the King and Bedford families were also attending, who were from early settler families.

A bit later that year Percy and Company Ltd was prominent in advertising land for sale in St Albans, which was a continuation of Padley’s local sales strategy. They advertised “some choice allotments” in the “new suburb of St Albans” on 10 November 1888. There was a mixed selection, partly in the east along Victoria Crescent and Alexina Street, as well as in the west along Albert Crescent, and Main, Kate and Ruth streets. Charles Servante was the auctioneer.

1889 was also the year when matters started unravelling for Padley and Cosmopolitan. It

seemed to start at the shareholders’ meeting of Percy and Co., at which Mr. L. V. Coburn, a solicitor, made some revelations about the purchase of land from Cosmopolitan. He stated that the profit existed only on paper, and that some of the directors of Percy and Co. were also directors of Cosmopolitan, and that they had purchased on behalf of Percy and Co. at a cost of £30,000 a block of land at St. Albans containing 140 acres from Cosmopolitan, which had cost the latter only £1,500. The directors were also accused of purchasing shares in Cosmopolitan as an investment for Percy and Co., and thereby assisting to raise the price of the shares of the former company.

When Padley was asked whether the statement regarding the land having been purchased by Cosmopolitan for £1,500 a few months ago was correct, he said although he was a director of that firm he could not divulge its business to persons who were not shareholders in that company.⁶ This was an evasive statement and would have been taken as such by the wary shareholders. After an acrimonious discussion the meeting rejected the balance sheet by 12 votes to 9.

In August 1890 the eleventh half-yearly meeting of the Cosmopolitan Land Banking Company was held and the report referred to the purchase of the Percy and Company’s assets for £10,000 worth of Cosmopolitan shares,⁷ which suggests that a settlement of sorts may have been made regarding the previous land transfers, but it was still at a considerable advantage for Cosmopolitan.

There was more bad publicity in December. Ferdinand Hann, who had sold Cosmopolitan their first estate in Cranbourne, sued the company for non-payment of land taxes which he had had to cover. His action was to recover about £57. The court decided in his favour but only for one month’s worth of land tax, i.e. one twelfth of the amount requested. It is difficult to understand why Cosmopolitan had allowed this matter to escalate into court proceedings, as the amount was minor for an apparently thriving company. The bad publicity generated by such action could have been avoided through a discrete settlement; undoubtedly the company’s legal expenses would have been far greater than the amount of the claim.

Meanwhile, Padley was still pursuing his aim of improving the transport system for the benefit of his buying public. In September 1890 Alfred

¹ Tin Shed oral history archives c.1986

² Footscray Independent 14 September 1889

³ St Albans The First Hundred Years

⁴ Classes continued in this cottage until the new school in West Esplanade was built in 1900.

⁵ St Alban the Martyr Anglican Church on East Esplanade and Alexina Street was built in 1910.

⁶ Argus 24 May 1889

⁷ The Argus Saturday 30 August 1890

Padley gave notice of motion for the next Braybrook council meeting:

*"That the council take into consideration the desirableness of subsidising the Railway Department so as to obtain further railway facilities for Deer Park and St Albans, and that a letter be written to the Railway Department enquiring what guarantee would be required to run two trains (morning and evening) between Braybrook Junction and Deer Park."*¹

On 7 September 1890, Alfred's mother, Caroline Padley, died at Keighlo, where she had been living. She was aged 72 years, having outlived her husband by 13 years. Little has been reported about her work and life experience because little has been recorded. One can imagine her working in the grocery store on a daily basis with her late husband, and even managing the store on her own while he was out on his building activities or council business. After all, she was the daughter of a grocer and probably learnt the business when growing up. In her later years she no doubt assisted with childcare for her growing number of grandchildren and would have been a great help when her daughter-in-law was raising eight children under the age of fifteen. More than that cannot be surmised. One can only feel pleased on her behalf that she was spared the indignity of seeing first her son-in-law and then her only son facing bankruptcy.

In July 1891 Charles Servante was declared insolvent due to depreciation in the value of freehold, land losses on land company shares and depression in business.² However, he was able to make a settlement with his creditors in November 1891. His estate was released from court, the creditors having accepted a settlement of one penny in the pound on their claims.³ As was mentioned earlier, Charles was Alfred's brother-in-law who was closely involved with Cosmopolitan. If Servante was experiencing such heavy losses might this also suggest that Padley would have been suffering financially as well?

The event indicating this might have been the case occurred on 1 September 1891, for that is when Padley arranged to have a clearing sale at his property the whole of his livestock, including cattle sheep and horses and some equipment; it was all up for auction.⁴ This sell-off suggests that Padley either needed some ready cash or was looking to reduce his level of involvement in the district.

¹ Footscray Independent 6 September 1890

² Argus 23 July 1891

³ Argus 17 November 1891

⁴ Argus 22 August 1891

Padley's time as a councillor at Braybrook expired in August 1891 and he did not nominate again. The incoming President, Cr. Mullenger, thanked ex-President Dickson and the retiring Cr. Padley for the efficient manner in which they had fulfilled their duties during their terms of office.⁵

Further bad publicity occurred in 1891 when a local newspaper reported on a sale by Cosmopolitan as "*an illustration of the extortion to which the Government is subjected by the owners of land required for railway purposes,*" referring to a case being investigated by the Board of Arbitration. The Railway department required a piece of land at Braybrook and offered the then owners, the Land Mortgage bank, a price of £140, based on local values at about £20 an acre. The bank demanded £708. After this loan was sold to the Cosmopolitan Land Banking Company, the company raised the figure to £1,063.⁶ The matter went to arbitration and settled at a much lower figure.

Cosmopolitan appears to have been operating normally according to annual reports in press notices, but in 1893 the company was put into liquidation because of insolvency and Padley was being examined about the company's affairs.⁷ Something major must have happened because Padley's name in connection with Cosmopolitan's affairs virtually disappears from the newspaper coverage from this time on.

There are conflicting accounts as to when the Cosmopolitan Land and Banking Co. went into liquidation. One local source states that it went into voluntary liquidation during 1908 whereas another notes that it occurred in 1903. Newspaper reports indicate that the company was brought before the Supreme Court regarding insolvency in 1893 when the liquidator applied for an order summoning Padley to be examined regarding the company's affairs.

The liquidator, Mr. E. N. Brown, had been appointed in March 1893 and was trying to recover any company assets that might still be in Alfred Padley's possession. The order was granted, calling upon Padley to appear before the Insolvency Court to give information and one such examination occurred in June 1893.⁸

Cosmopolitan was obviously in liquidation by 29 July 1895 because on that date the liquidator sold some of John Cavanagh's

⁵ Footscray Independent 19 September 1891

⁶ Footscray Independent 15 August 1891

⁷ Argus 4 May 1893

⁸ Argus 19 June 1893

original selection along Arthur Street to Anne Parry.¹



An awkward consequence of this and related proceedings was that the liquidator attempted to seize Mary Padley's furniture from the family home in St Albans, but she was able to convince the court that the items were her personal possessions.²

A rather enigmatic note in Kate Padley's diary is that "A.H.P. lived at St. Albans from 1883 to 1896."³ The available evidence suggests that Mary Padley continued to live in St Albans until mid 1902, because her youngest daughter was still attending St Albans primary school at that time. Is there an error in Kate's recollections or did her parents separate during this time?

Mrs Padley was lucky that Keighlo had not been seized by Cosmopolitan's liquidators, and it would be interesting to know how that came about. Perhaps it was judged to be personal rather company property and therefore out of the court's jurisdiction. Or perhaps Alfred Padley, like Charles Servante before him, was able to make a settlement with creditors that allowed him to retain his assets.⁴

¹ Transfer of Land document 29 July 1895.

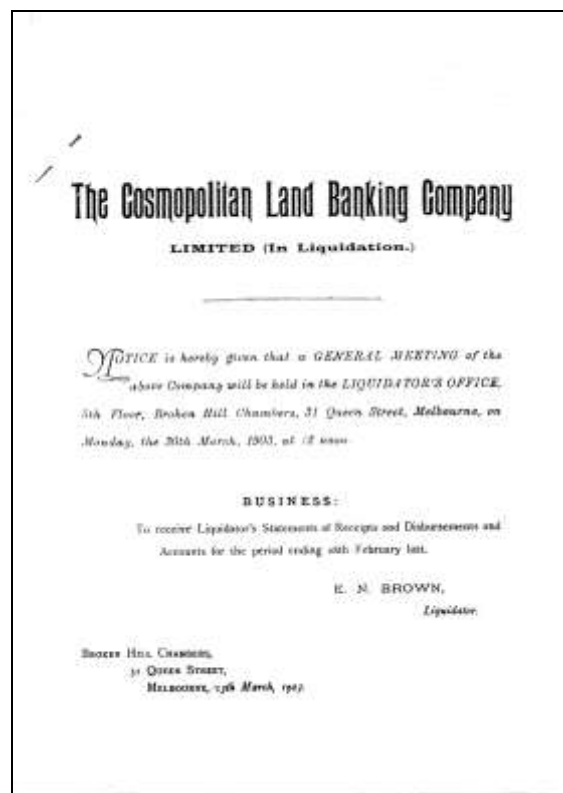
² Argus 16 December 1893

³ St. Albans The First Hundred Years

⁴ A provision in Victorian law allowed debtors to make a 'composition by arrangement' with their creditors, whereby debtors could be discharged from insolvency without a public investigation of their affairs. In some cases enormous debts were settled for a ha'penny in

Padley might have been down but he was certainly not out of business. In 1895 he was again advertising investment opportunities, this time via The Vincent Dredging Company, which was dredging for gold on the Clutha River in New Zealand. Padley was listed as the Managing Director of the company and was working from Collins street.⁵ It is not clear how long he was with this venture as there are no other published details in the available newspapers from that time. Several years later he was still located in Melbourne but working as an importer and dealer.

In about 1902 Mr. Padley (or should that be Mrs. Padley?) sold Keighlo to John Ellis of Joseph Ellis & Sons, Flinders Lane, who were importers and suppliers of plumbing materials and fittings. John Ellis and his wife lived at Keighlo for several years before selling the property in 1907 to Frederick Charles and Eva Stenson, who were local farmers with an orchard on the Salt Water river. The Stensons occupied Keighlo for the next fifty years.



In 1903 Padley was living with some of his family in Hawthorn while working with the new firm of Clarke, Padley and Co., which was in the city. The company was attempting to sell

the pound, leaving investors with enormous losses while some directors retained their assets. Illustrated History of Australia, Vol,2; p906.

⁵ Argus 9 March 1895

modern products and technology to state and local government instrumentalities. This included proposals for American-designed mills for re-rolling badly worn railway rails, the supply of electrical equipment for Melbourne's suburban railway lines, and the Delancy System of Rapid Automatic Telegraphy, or "the Girl-less Telephone," which was being used in America. But he wasn't happy with the Victorian Railway Commissioners and was threatening to take legal action over £700 owing to him for work done but not reimbursed. In this case he had been providing advice about the purchase of motor omnibuses as feeders to the railways but alleged that the orders were placed elsewhere.¹ His action was dismissed, as he was not able to proceed when it came to court.²

Padley had not yet severed all his connections with the area, as he was still a trustee for the reservoir in the St Albans Estate, which he was trying to sell to Keilor council. In July 1905 he wrote a letter to the Victorian Premier about the reservoir on St Albans Estate. Then again in 1907 he wrote under the business name of Clarke, Padley and Co. as trustee for the reservoir complaining that settlers from the Overnewton Estate were trespassing and stealing water from the reservoir.

Padley may have left St Albans but he was still occasionally arguing the merits of the district from his business office at Flinders Lane. In November 1905 he wrote to the Victorian Premier, defending the "excellent land" and claiming, "*The very stones that are complained of could be used for making the streets and supplying the Railways with ballast and screenings what is at present regarded as the most unlikely land would then become the pick of the place.*" (The Age had published an article that was highly critical of the Overnewton land that had been purchased by the Closer Settlement Board, the Age reporter referring to the land available for selection as being fourth grade grazing country.³)

Similarly, Padley had not severed all connections with the Mornington schemes because in 1908 he was still the secretary of the Cranbourne-Langwarrin railway scheme and still spruiking the advantages of building the railway line. He had 1,800 acres in Cranbourne that he was trying to sell through his new firm.⁴

As Padley approached his sixth decade he became more involved in other community

activities and not just his business concerns. History became one of his interests. In 1909 he convened a meeting of early colonists in Melbourne to discuss old times. Padley was still a smart operator and was able to have the Victorian Premier, Mr. John Murray,⁵ officially open the gathering in Collins Street. Over 300 people attended, which must have pleased all the organisers and was a very promising start to the formation of a group. Padley said that he wanted to form a historical society for seven years but couldn't find an organiser so he decided to take the matter up himself. The Premier encouraged the formation of a history group stating that:

*"Unless a society was formed to investigate the valuable records of the state our early history would become merely traditional, and in the course of time somewhat doubtful. Some of the early incidents in the history of the state were even now enveloped in the mists of obscurity, and one of the objects of the society would be to remove the mists and clear the atmosphere that surrounded the early history."*⁶

Padley's group became known as the Early Colonists Guild of Victoria and the idea was so popular that even the Governor General, Earl Dudley,⁷ had agreed to become an associate member. Before long there were 500 members of the Guild, many of them having arrived in the colony 50 or 60 years ago. The Guild later applied to the Premier for support and was offered the former offices of the Neglected Children's Department in King Street. However, this did not seem to eventuate as Padley was hoping for financial assistance as well as office space. The Premier was aware that another historical society had been formed and queried why the two did not amalgamate. The second group was formed in August 1910 and was known as the Early Pioneers Association of Australasia.⁸ The provisional chairman was Mr. R. R. Cowell and the honorary secretary was Mr. Walter Smithers Gadd,⁹ who had been one of Padley's earlier business competitors.

By 1913 Padley's Early Colonists Guild was having problems with membership meetings but he believed the group was still viable. He

¹ Sydney Morning Herald 29 November 1907

² The Advertiser, Adelaide 29 November p8

³ The Age 26 July 1905

⁴ Argus 8 May 1909

⁵ John (Jack) Murray (8 July 1851 – 4 May 1916), was the 23rd Premier of Victoria, from 1909 to 1912.

⁶ Argus 12 June 1909

⁷ William Humble Ward, 2nd Earl of Dudley, was Australia's Governor General from 1908 to 1911.

⁸ The stated reason for starting the new group was that the old one had disbanded.

⁹ This is the same Smithers Gadd who was with The People's Freehold & Investment Banking Company Ltd and also had acted as the trustee in Charles Servante's insolvency.

wanted to distinguish it from the Pioneers Association and wrote the occasional letter to the newspapers to clarify the difference. However, it appears that the Pioneers Association survived and later formed the Royal Historical Society of Victoria.

On the business front, Alfred Padley's new business lines can be described as eclectic. He was spruiking telephones, tramways, and omnibuses, arguing about the price of rice, the cost of clothing, and unfairness in the cotton monopoly. He even took the government to task about public health and the influenza epidemic, but that might have been a personal rather than a business concern.

In 1915 Clarke, Padley & Co. were advocating the production of cheap fuel for war purposes, stating that in Pennsylvania an inventor was able to produce a fuel equal to petrol at 1.5 cents per gallon, the principal portion being water with a small proportion of naphtha and two ordinary cheap ingredients not disclosed as trade secrets.¹ One wonders how much of their own money was invested in its production.

They also wrote to Keilor Council submitting plans for a motor tramcar scheme for the districts of Keilor, Bulla, St. Albans, Sunshine and Deer Park. Action on this was deferred. They wrote to Footscray Council regarding a new tramways system and suggested someone from Council visit India to see the system in operation. No action was taken by Council.

They even wrote to the Postmaster General regarding the latest American aeroplanes and hydroplanes that could be used for mail deliveries and for quick access for repairs to country telegraph lines. These were progressive ideas but possibly not timely in the sense that governmental and departmental budgets would have been focussing mostly on the war effort. The Department's views were not recorded.

In 1917 Padley established and became the secretary of the Old Melbourne Cemetery Preservation League, which campaigned against the planned relocation of graves from the old cemetery site to Fawkner Cemetery to allow for the expansion of the Victoria Market. Padley argued that the Melbourne Market Lands Act was "*really an Act to steal the property duly paid for as the last resting place of the pioneers to convert it into a vegetable market.*"² The campaign didn't succeed, despite some

¹ The Age 14 June 1915

² The Old Melbourne Cemetery; pamphlet published by Old Melbourne Cemetery Preservation League.

strong support from people like Sir John Monash. The bodies of the old pioneers were disinterred and relocated, and by 1923 all signs of the graves and tombstones of the old cemetery had disappeared.

In 1918 Padley was also attending meetings of the committee of the St James' and St Paul's Old Boys' Association, which he also seems to have established. They would meet in Collins Street, with Padley in the chair. In their plans for a reunion they reported that it "*should take the shape of a social smoke night, with a musical programme, at which the constitution should be laid down and officers appointed. Old boys of these schools are invited to send their names to Mr. Padley ... as soon as possible.*"³ How they fared is not recorded.

Insolvency and its consequences can be a drawn out process, as so it proved to be for both Alfred Padley and Charles Servante with regard to some of the land in St Albans. Because in 1918 Keilor council's solicitors published notice of properties due to be sold because of extensive rates arrears, and the two were still listed as owners of land in Victoria Crescent, Alfreda Street, Circus East, and Gertrude Street. Maybe it was an oversight by liquidators or an error in transfer details but the problems still continued.

Mary Elizabeth Padley née Clark died in Caulfield on 29 March 1925 at the age of 72. She must have been a very private person because there is virtually no information available about her in the newspaper archives.

In 1928 Alfred Padley was living at 217 Adderley Street in West Melbourne. He was 78 years of age but still active and enthused with nostalgia about his old school. He was about to publish a memorial document about the schools connected with St James' Old Cathedral, which he had attended as a day scholar during the 1860s.⁴ He must have succeeded in this ambition, as a copy of his documentation is still available at the State Library in Melbourne.

In December 1928 Padley would have been greatly saddened to hear that his only son, Thomas St Albans Padley had drowned on 12 December 1928. He had been working as the bookkeeper at the Minilya Station near Perth. Prior to his death he went to Mullewa and spoke with the Reverend Pratt, an Anglican minister. Several days later he was found

³ Argus 25 September 1918

⁴ Argus 20 November 1928

dead on the property of Mews and Wimbridge, about one mile from Mullewa; the circumstances indicated suicide.¹



Thomas St Albans Padley, who had been named after his grandfather, had enlisted in the Australian Infantry on 5 December 1916 and embarked with the 1917 Reinforcements, Field Artillery Brigade from Melbourne in May 1917. He

served in France and England as a private, gunner, driver, and sergeant. Following the Armistice served with the Australian Army Pay Corps. His awarded decorations included the 1914/15 Star, British War Medal, Victory Medal, and Kings Silver War Badge. He returned to Australia in May 1919 and was discharged from the AIF in August 1919. With regard to local history, very little is known of his life between the time he left the district as a child and his death in 1928.

It was only a few months later that Alfred Henry Padley himself passed away. He died on the first of April 1929, at the age of 79, at his home in Adderley Street, West Melbourne. It is a modest, single-front terrace house.

It is difficult to provide a detailed history of Mary Elizabeth Clark's involvement in St Albans or her contribution to her husband's career over this time. She is not mentioned as being a business partner in any of the available records. Women's roles as wives and mothers were seldom recorded in the daily newspapers apart from the brief family notices regarding marriages, births and deaths.



Mary Elizabeth may have continued living at Keighlo until June 1902, as that is when her youngest daughter is recorded as leaving the St Albans primary school. That is also about the time that John Ellis bought the Keighlo property.

In 1903 Mary was living with Alfred and the children at Mason Street in Hawthorn. In 1919 Mary and her daughters were in Arnold Street

South Yarra and in 1924 at Lambeth Street in South Malvern. Alfred Henry is not listed at either at these addresses, so one wonders if they had separated. In 1909 he was listed as being at Leamington Crescent Caulfield East, and in 1919 at Madeline Street Carlton.²

Regarding other family members, Alfred and Mary Padley had raised nine children, who were born between 1875 and 1890.

Mary Alfrida was born on 19 November 1875 in Melbourne. In 1890 she was enrolled at the St Albans Primary, having transferred from Lithgow street primary, probably in Abbotsford. She left St Albans primary at the end of 1890. During the 1920s she was working as a nurse. She died in West Melbourne in 1951.

Emily Caroline was born on 21 May 1877 in Carlton and enrolled at St Albans Primary in 1890, having transferred from Lithgow Street. She left at the end of 1890. In 1910 she married William Spencer Gordon Howard, who was born in Castlemaine.

Kate Constance was born on 2 April 1879 in Collingwood and enrolled at St Albans Primary from Lithgow Street in 1890; she left in 1894. She also was working as a nurse and later as a stationer during the 1920s. She died in Surrey Hills in 1966.

Amy Brucene Ruth was born on 6 April 1881 in Collingwood and enrolled at St Albans Primary from Abbotsford 1890; she left in June 1897. She was working as a nurse during the 1920s and died in 1963.

Winifred Shirley Clare was born on 2 April 1883 and enrolled at St Albans Primary in 1890. She married Gerald Oscar Turnley on 25 November 1908. Turnley was born in 1883 and was the second son of Harold H. Turnley from Shepparton. There were several Turnleys living in St Albans at the turn of the century. Winifred and Gerald had three children including Harold Claremont (1910-1971) and Thomas Eric (1918-2008). Winifred died in Ballarat in 1967.

Queenie Victoria was born on 24 May 1885 in Collingwood and enrolled at St Albans Primary in 1890; she left in 1901. In 1924 she married Thomas Richmond Gale. She was working as a typiste-clerk during the 1920s and died in 1956 in Heidelberg.

Thomas StAlbans Padley was born on 10 September 1887 in Collingwood. He enrolled at St Albans Primary in 1891 and left in March 1901.

¹ The West Australian 13 December 1928

² Electoral roll records.

He worked as a clerk. In 1915 he married Ruby Frances Mitchell, who was born in 1883 in Richmond. Her father was James Mitchell and mother was Jeannie Frances Warren. Ruby and Thomas raised three children: Mary, Betty and Gerald. Thomas died in Western Australia in December 1928. In 1954 Ruby was living at Royston Avenue, Malvern, with Elizabeth Jessie Padley. Ruby Frances Padley died on 4 May 1955 at the age of 72.

Helen Mary was born on 23 June 1890 in Keilor. She enrolled at St Albans Primary in 1896 and left in June 1902. She worked as a saleswoman during the 1920s and died in 1963.

Dorothy Martha, the twin of Helen Mary, was born in Keilor in June 1890 and died in Keilor on 24 September 1891.

For a few years, Alfred Henry Padley played an important part in the transition of St Albans from a small farming district to a rural village neighbourhood with surrounding farmlets. He was a businessman with a vision and a willingness to take risks with other people's money, and for a while he and his family were St Albans residents. Padley's role in the district was predominantly that of a speculator, a land boomer, and when his business collapsed he left the area. What he could have achieved if he'd stayed and continued pursuing his vision is anyone's guess, but he didn't stay. #



Padley (left) with the Masonic Lodge of Sorrow

PHELAN, Patrick and Ellen

Patrick Phelan was one of the Closer Settlement hopefuls in November 1886 with a nomination for block 37. Unfortunately that was also selected by David Newell, whose bid prevailed. Phelan still contributed to the district because he was already a Keilor resident.

Patrick was born 1 November 1815 in Raheen, Queen's Co, Ireland, the son of Patrick Phelan and Bridget Delaney. Patrick jnr migrated to Port Phillip in 1841 and started farming at Moonee Pond (1847); he also became a business man and politician. In the 1850s he was partner to fellow émigré Owen Connor as spirit merchants and land dealers known as "Conner, Phelan & Co." Phelan married Owen's sister, Ellen Connor in 1852; they settled in Keilor road Dousta Galla and established a farm where they built "*quite a baronial residence.*"¹

In 1856 Phelan was elected to the Legislative Assembly and expanded his business networks. In 1857 he was a shareholder with the Melbourne Fire and Marine Insurance Co. and was on the Board of the Colonial Bank of Australia. However, Phelan's re-election experiences were hampered by the unexpected:

*"Mr. Wilson Gray stated his belief that a friend of Mr. M'Culloch's had personated Mr. Patrick Phelan, M.L.A., in St. Francis's Division, at the late election for East Melbourne. ... [No one] suspected that a personation had been made until a short time afterwards, when Mr. Patrick Phelan, M.L.A., entered the room. ... I then endeavoured, with the aid of the scrutineers and policemen, to find out the party who had been guilty of the personation, without avail."*²

More serious problems occurred in 1859 when Phelan's election for West Bourke was challenged because one polling place was outside the district – the result was then nullified by the Committee of Elections and Qualifications.³ He was more successful at the local level where he sat on the bench of the Keilor Court from 1861 to 1865 and was elected to the Keilor District Road Board in 1864. He was also a trustee for the St Augustine's Church and the Keilor cemetery.

Unfortunately, Patrick Phelan and Owen Connor were not astute in business:

"For ten years, from 1859, Hugh Glass and his associates battled for a £40,000 debt owed by Connor and Phelan ... [who] had over-extended themselves, accepted promissory notes which

¹ Empire, Sydney 31 January 1860 p6

² Argus 11 November 1859

³ Argus 22 February 1860

were not honoured and in general showed little business acumen. As a result by September 1859 they owed the E.S.& A. Bank £37,000, so Glass and others paid this off and took over the acceptances for £40,000.”¹

Patrick Phelan became insolvent in 1865 and court hearings were held in 1866 to prove his debts and assets, at which Patrick argued that ‘Springfields’ was not his but his wife’s:

“Mrs. Ellen Phelan, wife of the insolvent, was also examined as to her possession of a farm of 160 acres at Springfield, near Keilor, which she stated was settled on her by her brother.”²

His Honour, Mr Justice Molesworth *“with much doubt and hesitation,”* held that the objections had not been sustained, and agreed with the Commissioner that the certificate of discharge should be granted to Phelan.³

Ellen Phelan née Connor was born about 1835 in County Kildare and had migrated in 1850. She was living with her brothers at ‘Spring Park’ before marrying Patrick and settling next door at ‘Springfields’, which her brother William had bought for her. She became ill with consumption in the late 1860s and died at home on 23 October 1870 at the age of 45; her remains were buried at the Melbourne General Cemetery.⁴ Ellen and Patrick had had several children with a number dying in infancy. Their eldest daughter, Bridget Maria, also died of consumption on 11 February 1872 at the age of 18.⁵ Their son Owen also succumbed to it in April 1882.

Phelan was not able to recover financially and Springfield was eventually lost as well. Patrick went to live in Richmond with his daughter, Ellen Judith, and her husband Charles Jewell. After Ellen died of consumption on 10 July 1894 Patrick was admitted to the Northcote Convent for the Aged as a destitute old man. He died there on 31st October 1898 and his remains were buried in a pauper’s grave at Melbourne General Cemetery.⁶ He had died at the age of 83, a colonist for 57 years. #

Reference: Details of the Phelan and Connor families are included in *Keilor Pioneers: Dead Men Do Tell Tales*, by Angela Evans and the Keilor Pioneer Research Collective; published by St Albans History Society, 1994.

¹ Keilor Pioneers p145

² Argus 19 July 1866 p6

³ Argus 6 August 1867

⁴ Argus 25 October 1870 p4

⁵ Argus 13 February 1872 p4

⁶ Keilor Pioneers p148

POWELL, William Hamilton and Mary

William Hamilton Powell was a property developer and also involved in other business ventures. He was born in 1831 in Ballyconnell, Co. Cavan, Ireland. He migrated to Australia on the *Marian Moore*, arriving on 15 February 1853 and quite possibly with his father as in 1854 the latter was buried at the Melbourne General Cemetery. Powell headed for the gold diggings and must have been successful as he donated ‘a handsome sum’ to the Benevolent Asylum and for many years was an active member of the management committee. He built the Railway Hotel in Nicholson Street Footscray in the early 1850s and the Church of England services were held there for years.

He married Mary Crawford in Victoria in 1857. She was born in 1841 in Kilmarnock, Ayrshire, Scotland, the daughter of James Crawford and Jessie Auld (1818-1902).

When Footscray was declared a municipality in 1859 Powell was one of the seven inaugural councillors. He went to New Zealand when gold was discovered there in the early 1860s. On his return he became a contractor and a Braybrook councillor for many years including a term as Shire President (1878/79). Some of the contract work he took on was as the toll collector for the Footscray and Braybrook districts (1867) and he was also the pound-keeper at Footscray at one stage (1867). In 1868 he missed out on being elected to the Footscray Council⁷ but was elected to the Braybrook Road District in 1870.⁸

William Powell’s connection with the Parish of Maribyrnong was through the Closer Settlement ballot in November 1868 when he selected block 47, which was along the eastern bank of the Kororoit Creek at Kororoit. In this instance Powell may not have been successful or he might have sold his selection relatively early, as blocks 47 and 48 were acquired by R C Norton in April 1875.

In 1873 Powell was the licensee for the Commercial Hotel in Ballarat Road Footscray.⁹ In 1875 he decided to sell his farming stock by auction at the hotel because his farm lease had expired and he was leaving the district.¹⁰ In December 1875 he advertised the sale of 106 building allotments adjoining the hotel:

“The auctioneers beg to draw special attention

⁷ Argus 14 August 1868

⁸ Williamstown Chronicle 6 August 1870

⁹ Argus 18 December 1873 p4

¹⁰ Argus 20 May 1875

to the above sale of land, which is situated on the highest and healthiest part of the rapidly improving borough of Footscray, as it offers a grand opportunity to working men of possessing a good home, being within easy distance of all the principal factories and the railway station. It should commend itself to all buyers.”¹

In February 1879 Powell nominated for the Legislative Assembly in the electoral district of Footscray, but the nomination was reported as being an afterthought because he did not follow it up further other than by publishing a short address stating that he was a Liberal, and the next day he withdrew.² In 1882 Powell was elected unopposed for the Southern Riding at Braybrook.³ In 1885 he was convinced to stand again at Braybrook for the Eastern Riding and was elected unopposed:

“Mr. Chalmers, Jun., Secretary to the Central Vigilance Committee, and the Gentlemen the Committee is composed of. I must feel thankful to you for your very flattering letter of the 26th ult. Gentlemen, I have carefully considered the matter and its responsibilities. After 26 years a Municipal Councillor of the Borough of Footscray and Shire of Braybrook, and for three years I served both at the same time, where I did good service for both, which any of the old residents in Footscray can verify. I for some time past considered I was pensioned off; but I suppose, as pensioners are called on to act in case of necessity, I suppose I must concede to the call. I do not stand for the Council for honour nor gain, but sheer need. Had I been in the Council this 6 or 7 years, the roads, foot-paths, and finances would have been in a different position. I remain yours faithfully.”⁴

Perhaps there had been some question about his bona fides from electors of the North Ward at the Footscray Borough election in that same year, because Powell’s response was:

“Ladies and Gentlemen. You want to know who Powell is? He is a Contractor of Roads, Bridges, Kerbing, and Channelling etc., for over 30 years. He is a carpenter by trade and therefore knows how plans and specifications are got out and how executed, and how to curtail them from waste of money and damaging property a want much needed a man or two or more or the above is wanted in every Borough, City, or Shire. Powell has from 6 to 8 horses and drays of his own constantly on the roads which is sufficient guarantee for his wishes to see the roads and paths looked after with economy. Powell pays nearly £15 rates with £25 license all money wasted nothing done for it. Powell had about 26 years

experience as a councillor and wants to learn nothing at the expense of the ratepayers. Powell was last week returned for the Shire of Braybrook unopposed, for the services he rendered that Shire for 12 or 13 years. Powell claims that his past services with his ability is a guarantee that he should have a walk over for Footscray as well Braybrook, but the Ballot Box will tell what man is wanted. Ratepayers do your duty, if not, grumble at yourselves for the time to come.”⁵

William Hamilton Powell died on 1 May 1894 – his eulogy in the local paper speaks for itself:

“One after the other the dauntless, sturdy pioneers, not of Footscray alone, but of Fair Victoria, men who by their intrepidity pushed the infant colony and themselves to the front are ‘crossing the Bar’ and joining the ‘Great Majority’. True, real Australians, not by deportation, or the mere accident of birth, but men of energy and stamina who were fearless enough to take a leap in the dark, become Australians by choice to build up new and mighty nations in unknown lands. Mr William Hamilton Powell was one of them, and therefore his demise, is more than a passing event so far as Footscray is concerned, as he took a large part in making it the prosperous city it was a few years ago. With a good trade of which he was a perfect master, unquenchable pluck and spirit which would yield to no adverse circumstances and self-reliance, the qualities which make a true man triumph over all obstacles. ... Like all early colonists he had his ups and downs and some sore buffetings, but on the whole providence was exceedingly kind as he married young, and secured that ‘Crown of glory’ to a man an excellent wife, who was not only a faithful helpmate, but as good as she was handsome, and therein his success lay.”⁶

Mary Powell née Crawford died in 1924 at the age of 83 in Footscray. Her children included:

- Jessie 1858-1932
- Jacob Robert William 1860-1862
- William Hamilton Noble 1863-1941
- Mary Maud Catherine 1866-1952
- Robert Gustavus John 1868-1934
- Herbert George Jacob 1870-
- Charles Henry Rowberry 1873-1945
- David Arthur Henry 1875-
- Reginald Crawford 1878-
- Margaret Jane Eileen 1879-1969
- Rupert Victor Octavius 1883-1945.

The Powells were true pioneers and early settlers in Braybrook and Footscray, but the family was not involved in St Albans itself. #

¹ Argus 18 December 1875

² Williamstown Chronicle 1 March 1879

³ Argus 29 July 1882 p11

⁴ Footscray Independent 11 July 1885

⁵ Footscray Independent 8 August 1885

⁶ Footscray Independent 5 May 1894

QUAIL, Charles and Christine

Two selectors were listed for allotment 16 on the Keilor Commons ballot in 1868: they were C. Quail and John Cummins; the block was in Main Road East between the farms of John Cavanagh and Hannah Errington. It is not known how this duplication was resolved but Margaret and Patrick Egan later acquired the property. Though there is no proven direct link, C. Quail could have been Captain Charles Quail or his wife, Catherine Quail; the family was living in Melbourne during the 1860s and would have had the opportunity to apply at the Keilor land selections in 1868. The other possibility is Charlotte Quaille, wife of Vere Quaille who was a Braybrook ratepayer in 1873 (q.v.).

Captain Charles Quail was born on 25 March 1823 in St Andrews, New Brunswick, Canada, the son of John Quail (a shipwright) and Grace Withers. Charles wed Catherine Bryan of Little Collins street, Melbourne, on 13 December 1855; she was born about 1840 in Glasgow. Charles and Catherine had ten children, all born in Melbourne between 1857 and 1878.

Captain Quail was a master mariner. He was master of the ship on which he sailed to Australia about 1850 and was master on clippers sailing between Launceston, Geelong, Melbourne and Sydney,¹ He was on the Eureka in Hobsons Bay in 1852 and was commander of the steamer Lowestoft when he rescued a shipwrecked man off Brighton Beach in 1859. In the 1850s, he had a regular passenger run between Sydney and the goldfields at Clarence River. His Sydney base was around Balmain and he and his wife were popular in that area.² By 1869 he was plying north as far as Brisbane.

He moved to the Gippsland Lakes in the 1870s and commanded a schooner in trading between Melbourne and the Lakes. The family must have settled there by 1878, because on 25 October, Harry, the youngest son of the family, drowned there at the age of seven.³

In 1882, Charles Quail was granted 84 acres in the parish of Colquhoun, presumably near Cunninghame, which is the old name for Lakes Entrance. In 1883, he was confirmed in the position of boatman and pilot at Gipps Land Lakes.⁴ He was lucky to have survived his first year in the position because in August 1883

his pilot boat capsized but he was rescued:

*"Mr Alexander Murray, seeing the accident from the shore, manned his boat with four men, and just managed to reach Pilot Quail in time to rescue him, afterwards picking up the pilot boat. The pilot received a hard shaking, but is now about again."*⁵

In 1884 Quail was also appointed as Assistant Inspector of Fisheries for the Gippsland Lakes, which meant policing twenty miles of inland waters for illegal fishing, especially within the spawning areas.⁶ In 1886 it was said of Lakes Entrance that *"The only government officials are the post and telegraph master, the school-master, and Pilot Quail."*⁷

In 1888 he was appointed manager of public wharfs at Cunninghame.⁸ He might have retired from his duties as a pilot in 1889, because the extent of his work was mentioned in state parliament:

*"Mr Foster complained that great injustice had been done to Captain Quail, late pilot at the Entrance. He had been called upon to do work beyond the actual duties of his office without extra payment. Those duties were now being performed by a number of other persons to whom the Government had to give considerable remuneration. Mr Harris said that Captain Quail was a gentleman highly respected by the residents of the Gippsland Lakes district, and a great deal of pleasure would be given to them if the injustice to Captain Quail could be rectified."*⁹

In July 1891 Quail headed an inquiry into the stranding of a schooner on the Ninety Mile Beach and later was sent to report on oyster dredging at Port Albert.¹⁰ In 1893 he was an inspector in connection with the fishing industry, so he was still active at the age of 70.

Captain Charles Quail died on 14 January 1899, at Bairnsdale,¹¹ and Catherine Quail died on 28 September 1904 at Fitzroy.¹² One of their grandsons, also named Charles (1893-1940), later settled in Footscray. He enlisted in 1914 and served with the Light Horse Regiment at Gallipoli; he was awarded the 1914-15 Star, the British War Medal, and the Victory Medal.

The Quail family were definitely pioneers of the era, but not at St Albans. #

¹ <http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~gordon/gordonfam/pafn912.htm>

² Maitland Mercury 29 September 1860

³ Illustrated Australian News 27 December 1876.

⁴ Argus 12 May 1883

⁵ Argus 27 August 1883 p5

⁶ Argus 2 December 1886 p9

⁷ Argus 13 March 1886 p4

⁸ Bairnsdale Advertiser 14 February 1888 p2

⁹ Bairnsdale Advertiser 12 October 1889 p2

¹⁰ Illustrated Australian News 7 November 1891 p8

¹¹ Argus 19 January 1899

¹² Argus 1 October 1904

QUAILE, Charlotte and Vere

Two selectors were listed for lot #16 on the Keilor Commons ballot in 1868: they were C. Quail and John Cummins; the block was in Main Road East between the farms of John Cavanagh and Hannah Errington. It is not known how this duplication was resolved but Margaret and Patrick Egan later acquired the property. Though there is no proven direct link, C. Quail could have been Charlotte Quaille, wife of Vere Quaille who was a Braybrook ratepayer in 1873.¹ The other possibility is Captain Charles Quail or his wife Catherine Quail (q.v.) who were living in Melbourne and also had the opportunity to apply for the land selections.

Quaille was a Braybrook ratepayer in 1873 but not in 1880, so the family did not stay long in the district. Vere Essex Quaille was born on 8 July 1823 in Dumfries, Dumfries-shire, Scotland. In September 1848, he departed England aboard the sailing ship "Bengal" bound for the Colony of Port Phillip and arrived in January 1849 after 128 days at sea. He settled in Bacchus Marsh and worked as blacksmith, farrier and coachbuilder from 1849 to 1866.

His wife-to-be was Charlotte Jackson, who was born in 1823 and emigrated from London in October 1848 on the "Francis Ridley" bound for Port Phillip Bay. She arrived at Melbourne in February 1849 after 105 days at sea.

Vere Quaille and Charlotte Jackson married in 1852. They had eight daughters and one son born between 1852 and 1868, mostly born in Bacchus Marsh.

The Quailes were among the earliest residents in Bacchus Marsh when they obtained land in 1852 from William Grant. The property had a stone cottage containing four rooms plus a weatherboard kitchen. Here Vere established his business as blacksmith, farrier, wheelwright and ironmonger. In December 1864 he put his business up for auction ostensibly as he was leaving the district for health reasons.² The family left the district in 1866, so the timing seems reasonable for applying for land at Keilor in 1868. In 1866, they had re-settled at Kororoit on the Keilor Plains. They became graziers at their property "Aintree" near Rockbank, 3 miles east of Melton. At this time, Quaille also worked as a blacksmith and farrier at Rockbank and continued as a committee member of the Bacchus Marsh Racing Club

(1867). The family lived at Kororoit for 11 years. A tragedy occurred in 1874 when their 10-year-old daughter died suddenly of an enlarged liver.³ In 1876 the family held a clearing sale of horses, cattle, pigs, fowls, farming implements, ploughs, harrows spring cart, dairy utensils, and a lot of good household furniture "nearly new". The livestock being sold included 30 well-bred cows, 30 well-bred heifers, 30 steers, two horses and one bullock.⁴

In 1877, the Quailes bought their "Mountain View" farm at Shean's Creek near Euroa. They continued their life as graziers at their new home at the foot of the Strathbogie Ranges, seeming to specialise in merino and crossbred ewes and lambs. The wool grown on the farm reportedly brought the highest prices in the district over a number of years. Vere and Charlotte stayed here for their final years.

Charlotte Quaille née Jackson died 10 March 1888 at her "Mountain View" home at Shean's Creek, Euroa, at age 65 years:

*"After a long and lingering illness, Mrs Vere Quaille, of Shean's Creek, breathed her last, on Saturday, dropsy being the cause of death. Mrs Quaille, who was 65 years of age, was well known and respected, and public sympathy with the bereaved husband found expression in the large cortege which followed the remains to the grave."*⁵

Vere Essex Quaille died on 10 June 1901 at his "Mountain View" home of 24 years:

*"On the 10th June, at his residence, near Euroa, Vere Quaille, aged 77 years, who for the past 24 years had resided at the foot of Strathbogie ranges, near Mountain View. Deceased was 77 years of age, and death resulted from general break up. Prior to settling in Euroa district he was engaged in blacksmithing at Bacchus Marsh, and afterwards removed to Keilor Plains. ... Deceased leaves a family of six daughters and one son."*⁶

His estate was valued at £864/4/, being realty £620/11/ and personally £243/13/, the whole of which was bequeathed to his children in equal shares.⁷

Charlotte and Vere Quaille were residents of the Keilor Plains during the 1860s and 1870 at Kororoit, so they were pioneers in the district for about a decade, but they do not appear to have had any direct connection with St Albans as such. #

¹ In some local newspaper reports Vere Quaille is occasionally referred to as Vere Quail.

² Leader 2 December 1864 p20

³ Bacchus Marsh Express 20 June 1874 p3

⁴ Bacchus Marsh Express 12 August 1876 p2

⁵ Euroa Advertiser 16 March 1888 p2

⁶ Euroa Advertiser 14 June 1901 p2

⁷ Argus 18 July 1901 p6

SERVANTE, Charles and Emily Eliza



Charles Servante was born on 17 April 1855 in Kyneton, a country town that grew as thousands of diggers headed for the goldfields of Castle-maine, Clunes and Bendigo. Charles was the oldest son of Charles Servante and Matilda Read. Kyneton has a cryptic connection to Alexander the Great and the Servante family has an intriguing connection to Don Quixote.

Charles Copsey Servante and Matilda Sarah Read came to Australia in 1850 as passengers on the Ship Culloden, and married at St. Paul's Old Cathedral in Melbourne on the 5th January 1851. They settled in the Malmsbury-Kyneton area and raised a large family:

- Matilda born and died 1852
- Charles born 1855
- Henry born 1857
- Athelinda born 1858
- George born 1860
- Edgar born 1862
- Arthur born 1864
- Frederick Read born 1866 died 1867
- Matilda Elizabeth born 1868
- Frank Edward born 1870 died 1878.

Charles Copsey Servante was born in 1828 in Bury St Edmunds, United Kingdom, son of John Servante of London. He died in South Yarra in 1914 at the age of 85. Someone in the family must have been a woodworker by trade as there are references to Charles, the cabinet-maker of Carlton, having inherited their skills.

Charles Servante (the son) initially trained for the drapery business but left a bit after three years because it was affecting his health. He

then trained as a cabinet maker. After he finished his apprenticeship he moved down to Melbourne and worked as a journeyman for a few years. He settled in Carlton and about 1880 established his own furniture business. He built a factory at 25-27 Barry Street, south of the Melbourne University with showrooms and a depot nearby at 65 Elizabeth Street North and advertised "*Household and artistic Furniture of every description in stock, and made to order*". For many years he lived opposite Victoria Square, near the Victoria Market, within easy walking distance of the factory and the showroom.

On 14 July 1881, at the age of 26, Charles married Emily "Lily" Eliza Padley.¹ She was the younger sister of Alfred Henry Padley. The Padleys were living in Blackwood Street, Hotham, near the Melbourne Metropolitan Meat Market, and not far from Servante's factory.

It is not known how the couple met but it was possibly through Alfred Padley and the Freemasons. Servante appears to have made a connection with the Freemasons not very long after arrival in Melbourne, as in February 1884 Servante and Padley proposed the formation of the Pentalpha Lodge. The first meeting was held on the 7th March 1884 "*with Alfred Henry Padley acting as Worthy Master, [and] Charles Servante acting as Senior Warden.*"

Charles became one of the founders of the Furniture Trades' Society² in Melbourne and one of the first manufacturers to agree to the eight hours day. He believed in piece-work as opposed to day labour because it encouraged ambition and good workers were rewarded for their labour.³ The thriving business ended up employing at least twenty craftsmen at peak production. He also had men out at work in various parts of the city and suburbs. Servante's business must have been run very efficiently, because in the 1880s there was increasing competition due to European imports and the rise of local Chinese workshops in Little Bourke Street. At first these workshops made cheaper items and were thus not in direct competition with their European counterparts, but the 1890s' depression led to fierce competition.

Servante's furniture production was quite varied especially given its modest size by today's standard. An article from the time mentions:

¹ The Argus Thursday 21 July 1881

² The Furniture Manufacturers' and Employés' Trade Protection Society was formed in 1880, and its main concern at the start was competition from local Chinese craftsmen. Argus, 21 May 1880.

³ The Daily News W.A. 14 July 1931

*"The articles manufactured by this firm are numerous and varied, comprising over-mantles, cabinets, side-boards, and bedroom suites, all of the latest designs ... some splendid early English duchess tables and washing stands, the backs of which are inlaid with Minton tiles besides unique wardrobes fitted with medieval mountings ... also some very artistic work in Australian Blackwood, which, after leaving the hands of the artificer and polisher, present a striking appearance. The polishing art is carried out to perfection in this establishment, nothing being permitted to pass muster that is calculated to lower the reputation of the manufacturer for quality and finish. ... At his showrooms in Elizabeth street north, he has some very creditable specimens of dining tables, sideboards, wardrobes, and chests of drawers, etc."*¹

The furniture was mostly handcrafted, as there was no special machinery capable of producing such intricate work. He took pride in following traditional methods. In his later years he would refer to himself as "an old-fashioned" cabinet maker, upholster and French polisher, someone who believed in faithful craftsmanship.

This business declined in the mid 1880s, and Servante attributes it to the strikes of the time. In particular he believed that his ill-fortune was because of the big maritime strike of 1886 as *"It caused a wholesale cancellation of orders, and finally his well-equipped factory, which was employing some twenty tradesmen, did not have work for even one man."*² Servante came out of it the loser of £25,000.³



Faced with the problem of supporting a young family, Servante took on a temporary career and became a real estate agent. This probably occurred about 1887. He joined Percy and Company Ltd, which was located in the city. Alfred Padley was the Managing Director of

the company and probably assisted in the connection. Servante moved to St Albans with his young family and became the local agent and auctioneer with regard to a number of the Percy & Co.'s land sales in St Albans. Charles and Emily had become land boomers.

Charles's brother, Henry Servante, is also said to have bought land locally after Cosmopolitan subdivided John Cavanagh's selection near the railway station. Henry's name is connected with the block on the north-west corner of Elaine and Alfreda streets.⁴

In the meantime the Servante children settled into their new home in St Albans. When a local school was proposed in 1889 the Servantes offered accommodation for the teacher. Victor Servante, born on 30 March 1886, attended the school in 1890 and left in 1894. Emily, who was born on 2 December 1887, enrolled in 1891 and left in 1894.

Servante became involved with early land sales in the district, including the Boulanger Estate (August 1888) and also the St Albans Estate (October 1888), which were part of Padley's Cosmopolitan group. Percy & Co. advertised "some choice allotments" in the "new suburb of St Albans" on 10 November 1888. Their first sale was a mixed selection, partly east of the railway line along Victoria Crescent and Alexina Street, as well as in the west along Albert Crescent and Main, Kate and Ruth streets. Servante's name was featured quite prominently as the local agent. He was based locally but the company office was in the city, so he must have been kept busy.

Charles was obviously working closely with his brother-in-law, Alfred Padley, and became one of the directors of the St. Albans Permanent Building Society when that was formed in 1888. Padley was the President of the group and several Board members were also on the Board of the Cosmopolitan Land and Banking Co., so Charles's role may have been to assist with Padley's latest venture. It is not known if the Servantes had any money invested in either company, but they had bought land in Victoria crescent near Elaine Street. Unfortunately for them the land was sold off in 1918 by Keilor Shire under the provisions of the Municipal Rates Recovery Act.⁵ It was probably another purchase and loss that they could not afford at the time.

The land boom phenomenon in Melbourne

¹ North Melbourne Advertiser 9 April 1887

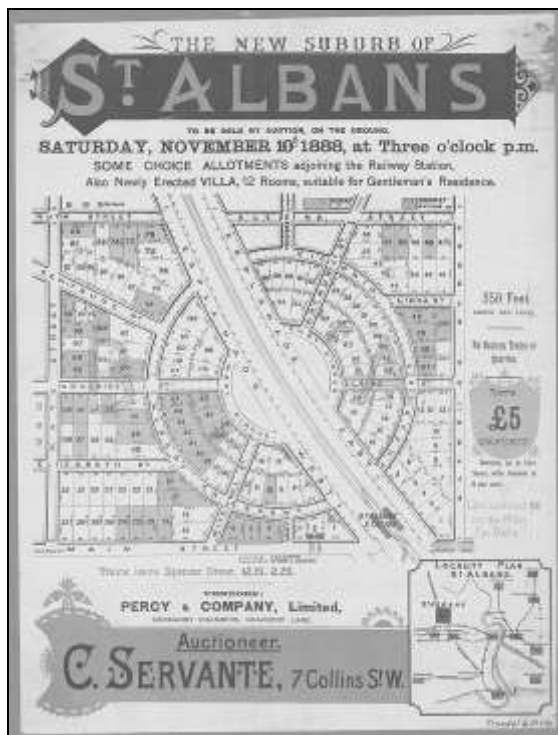
² The Daily News W.A. 14 July 1931

³ Servante became insolvent and his creditors accepted 1d in the £ on their claims.

⁴ St. Albans The First Hundred Years

⁵ Argus 16 May 1918

started to decline in the late 1880s and an extra complication for Charles Servante is that he was declared insolvent in July 1891. This action appears to have been a carry over of problems connected with this former business as he was referred to as a furniture manufacturer of Barry Street, Carlton, which was his former address and occupation, but it may have been connected with the financial difficulties that were becoming more prominent. The causes of the insolvency were listed as depreciation in the value of freehold land, losses on land company shares and depression in business. Servante's liabilities were £2,300 and assets £1,800.¹ However, he was released from insolvency by the court in November 1891 as he had settled his debts, the creditors having accepted a composition of a penny in the pound on their claims.²



It is not clear when Emily and Charles decided to leave St Albans. Charles probably kept working as a real estate agent while he could, but by this stage the financial markets and the lustre of land speculation were both declining rapidly. Percy and Co. pretty much closed their operations at the end of 1890, and the Cosmopolitan Land and Banking Company became insolvent in 1893, so most of Charles's work had probably disappeared with the burst of the land boom. The Servantes appear to have left St Albans at the end of 1894 or early in 1895. With their four children, they headed for Perth

¹ Argus 23 July 1891

² Argus 17 November 1891

to start a new life. They may have stopped for a while in South Australia, but that has not been noted locally.³ They spent Christmas Day of 1895 at sea on the old steamer Gabo.

On arrival in Western Australia Charles worked again in his old trade by making and installing the fittings in the Great Western Hotel when it was built in 1896. He then found employment with the Government Railways in order to re-establish himself, but he continued his cabinet making craft by building his own furniture and making exhibition pieces. He apparently assisted in the making of the beautiful exhibition of Jarrah furniture that was sent to the Paris exhibition.⁴

After a decade with the railways he again set up a business as a furniture manufacturer at 252 Hay Street, Subiaco. As well as running the business Charles and Emily became involved with civic causes. In 1905 Servante nominated as a councillor for East Ward at Subiaco: "*The poll was a large one, both in the contest for the mayoral seat and the ward elections. Messrs. White, Virtue, and Servante were declared elected.*"⁵ Unfortunately his life as a councillor has not been documented in the digitised newspaper archives.

In 1909, Charles Servante's mother died. Matilda Sarah Ann Servante née Read, was born about 1828 and died on 24 September 1909, at her home in Main Street, Kyneton,⁶ aged 82 years. Matilda came to Australia as a 22-year-old on the ship Culloden in 1850. She had worked as a servant and found employment in Melbourne at the Club Hotel. Little else has been recorded about her, except that she has been linked to stories about "The Needlewomen of the Culloden."⁷ Needlewomen were the sweatshop workers of London's garment industry in the 1800s, and Matilda's mother was one of these workers.

During the First World War, Charles and Emily assisted in the effort concerning the welfare of the men at the front, "*for which they received an official letter of thanks.*" Charles (and other tradesmen) promoted support for men at the front through the making of mobility aids such as crutches, walking sticks, splints, arm and head rests in connection with the medical treatment of wounded soldiers. This work was

³ Servante had stated that he had worked in Adelaide and Broken Hill, but details are not available.

⁴ The Mirror, Perth 5 June 1937

⁵ The West Australian, Perth 16 Sep 1905

⁶ Argus 25 September 1909

⁷ <http://hughanhistory.blogspot.com.au/2009/01/needlewomen-of-culloden.html>

being carried by volunteers and especially by students at the boys' school. Servante must have still been in contact with his old home town of Kyneton, because he reported in some detail that similar efforts were being carried out there in the eastern states.¹

Charles Servante retired from his furniture business in 1921 because of failing health. By that stage he was aged 66 years, had had three serious operations, and concluded that retirement was his best option. They sold their furniture-making business as a going concern to Lawson and Brittain. In retrospect Servante would marvel at the wonderful growth of business in Perth over two decades. When they arrived the population was less than 50,000 and in 1921 it was over 150,000.

Emily and Charles celebrated their Golden Wedding in 1931, with a photo and the story of their settlement in Perth being written up by the Western Australian Daily News. Lily and Charles were in their seventies and still recalled their tough experiences in Melbourne. With regard to Charles's woodworking achievements, the reporter noted that he was:

*"... a remarkable man for his 76 years of age, and still follows his profession of cabinet maker, and that his hand and eye still retain the skill that made him one of Melbourne's first class tradesmen as far back as 1880 is revealed by some perfect gems of the cabinet-making art which he has just completed. These include some beautifully inlaid jewel cases, in the manufacture of which Sandalwood, Banksia, Jarrah, and She-oak are used. The beautiful furniture in his home has been made by Mr. Servante's own hands, and he displays with pardonable pride a gorgeous bureau sideboard of unique pattern. Mr. Servante was so pleased with the pattern that, when perfected, he registered it."*²

Emily Servante of South Perth, died on the 12th February 1933; she was aged 78 years. Her body was privately interred in the Anglican Cemetery, Karrakatta.³ Once again we must lament that another early St Albans settler had passed away virtually undocumented in the public media. She was born in Hotham in 1854, in a decade of phenomenal growth as Victoria's population escalated from 98,000 to 538,000; it was the gold rush era. She moved to St Albans in the 1880s, which was the land boom era. She settled in Perth in the 1890s, and saw the birth of a new Commonwealth nation. In addition, she lived through the First

World War and the Great Depression.

Charles Servante died on the 3rd April 1942, at South Perth; he was aged 86 years.⁴ He and Emily were home grown Australians.

Charles and Emily Eliza Servante had raised four children, one having died in infancy, the survivors being Victor, Emily, Linda and Alma. Not much information is recorded about them in the newspapers except for Victor, the eldest child and only son.

Victor Padley Servante was born on 30 March 1886, in Carlton. In 1890 he was enrolled as a four-year-old in the St. Albans Primary School in Adelaide Street. By 1913 he was working as a clerk at the Labour Bureau in Perth, dealing with the reception of immigrants and placing them in work. He married Mabel Anderson and they had one daughter, Erica, born on 10 July 1911. In 1919 the family was at Robinson Street, Subiaco, and Victor had become the Chief Clerk of the State Children and State Charities Departments. In August 1919 he was travelling to Kalgoorlie for work in connection with the distribution of relief. He fell sick immediately on his arrival at Kalgoorlie and never rose again from his bed. He died of pneumonia at the age of 33.⁵ He was buried at the Congregational Cemetery in Karrakatta. He was well respected and his funeral was attended by many representatives of local and state government services. At the service he was acknowledged for his voluntary work, being described as:

*"... an earnest and zealous worker for the cause of temperance. He had been a member of the Orders of the Sons of Temperance for many years and served the Jubilee Division as their executive officer for a long period. He was the Grand Division auditor for many years, and though his voice was not frequently heard in the district meetings his energy for the cause never lacked zeal."*⁶

Caroline Freda Servante was born in 1887 at Hotham and died on 9 January 1888 at Elizaterrace, Barry Street, Carlton.

Emily St Albans Servante was born in 1887 at St Albans and attended the St Albans Primary School in Adelaide Street. In Subiaco she joined the "Band of Hope," a vocal and instrumental group whose members also performed recitations. On 14 July 1909, at the Wesley Church in Subiacao, she wed Tomas Stone, a railway official stationed at Southern Cross. She

¹ The West Australian, Perth 30 December 1915

² The Daily News W.A. 14 July 1931

³ Western Mail, Perth 23 February 1933

⁴ The West Australian, Perth 6 April 1942

⁵ Sunday Times, Perth, 17 August 1919

⁶ The Daily News, Perth 16 August 1919

died in 1925 in Guildford, Western Australia. Linda Copsey Servante was born in 1891 at St Albans. She studied bookkeeping and in 1915 received first class honours for her examination results held under the auspice of the Fremantle Chamber of Commerce.

Alma Leslie Servante was born in 1893 at St Albans. In Perth she was involved in voluntary fundraising, such as for "Home of Peace." In 1919 she married Neils Christian Sydney Mount;¹ they had a son, Ross Neils Mount. Alma died in 1987 in Subiaco.

There is little left in St Albans to remind people of the brief contribution that Emily and Charles Servante made to its development. There is a Servante Street in Sunshine, smack in the middle of Padley's former Junction Estate that was up for sale in 1886. Alfred Padley would have named that after his sister and brother-in-law, as he was known to use family names in his estates. Streets in St Albans that are named after the family include Emily, Charles, Victor, Alma, and Leslie.² However, their actual connection to a pioneer family of the 1880s is not visible to the public eye.

Where does the family name come from? When he was in his eighties the Western Australian newspaper interviewed Servante about his life and he explained the origins of the family name. He said that he was a direct descendant of a Spaniard from the Middle Ages – Saavedra Miguel de Cervantes, who was born in 1527.

When Catherine of Aragon came to England to marry Henry VIII, she brought a retinue of attendants and artisans, including some of the Cervantes family. Today many residents in Edmonds County have names of Spanish origin and are still carrying on the trade of their ancestors. Later, when there was growing animosity against Spain, the Cervantes family changed the 'C' into an 'S' and adopted English Christian names. Hence the Spanish 'Cervantes' became the English 'Servante'.³

Saavedra Miguel de Cervantes of the Middle Ages is probably best known for his classic literary masterpiece, *Don Quixote*. #

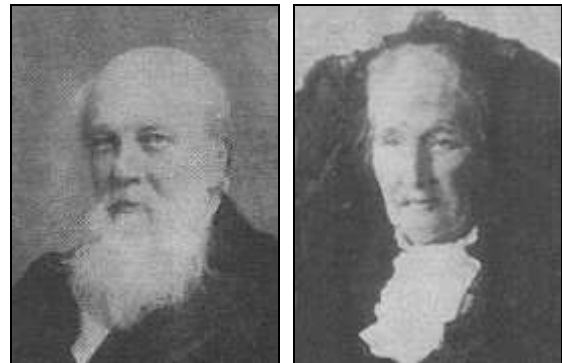
Note: some family details are available at www.mundia.com/au/Person/26894310/1942975526 Many thanks to Sherylanne53.

¹ The family name was 'Berg' but Neils changed his surname to 'Mount' on arrival in Western Australia. 'Berg' is the German word for 'mount' or 'mountain'.

² St. Albans The First Hundred Years

³ The Mirror, Perth; 5 June 1937

SINCOCK, William and Mary Louisa



Robert McNamara acquired allotment 40 at the land selection of 1868 – it was 74 acres in Station Road near Joseph Solomon and Thomas Opie. Block 40 was later acquired by Richard Gibbons, who then applied to transfer the land to W. Sincock in December 1869.

William Sincock was born in 1818 in Redruth, England, son of William Sincock (1790-1865), the master of St Ives Grammar School, and Joyce Flamank Jenkyns (1786-1818). William jnr married Mary Louisa Edwards in 1843 in London. She was the daughter of John Henry Edwards (1784-1824), a British Army officer, and Margaret "Peggy" Ross (1797-1821).

In 1861, William and Mary Sincock migrated to Australia on board the 'Maxwell' and settled in Melbourne with their nine children:⁴

- Joyce Flamank 1844-1904
- Mary Louisa 1846-1915
- Richard Jenkyns 1848-1868
- William Flamank 1849-1916
- Katherine Ann Connor 1852-1940
- Priscilla Flamank 1854-1872
- Phillis Treggerthen 1856-1947
- Francis Jenkyns 1858-1913
- Margaretta Ross 1860-1940.

In England, William was a chemist with his own business, ran the Andover Savings Bank and engaged in share transactions.⁵ In Melbourne, he helped establish the Land Mortgage Bank of Victoria and was Acting Manager⁶ until the beginning of 1876:

"... a company whose establishment he took a great part. He was also one of the first directors of the Mutual Store. After leaving the Land Mortgage Bank, Mr Sincock founded the Land Credit Bank, which, for some months, was under his management. In later years, he will be remembered by many as the acting manager of the Australian Freehold Banking

⁴ <http://www.mundia.com/gb/Person/13497811/9041122>

⁵ Footscray Independent 27 June 1891

⁶ Argus 5 April 1869

Corporation, and more recently as the founder and manager of the Equitable Deposit and Mortgage Bank.”¹

However, things were not always smooth in business and Sincock had to publicly face some of his problems through the courts. In 1873 he was before the Supreme Court to answer allegations by a widow that he had mismanaged her late husband's estate.² In a much bigger case in June 1876 he was charged with forging bills of exchange. The case by the Bank of New Zealand was that:

“... William Sincock did, with intent to defraud, forge, and utter an endorsement to a bill of exchange for the sum of £7,000, drawn by the said William Sincock ... the endorsement being that of the Land Mortgage Bank of Victoria (Limited). Warrants were issued on the 1st inst. for the arrest of the accused.”³

After lots of witnesses' statements in court the matter was resolved within three weeks when *“the Bench held that there was no forgery in the case,”⁴* and charges against Sincock were then withdrawn by the bank after having effected a satisfactory settlement.⁵

Despite some legal problems Sincock seems to have established himself quite successfully in Melbourne and was described as a man of:

“... kindly and gentle nature, and his persistent industry, which no failures or disappointments could damp, will be long remembered by those who knew him, and rendered him a general favourite. For many years he was an enthusiastic Freemason, and he also, in his leisure time, busied himself with the genealogies of the landed gentry of Cornwall, through some of which he could trace his own pedigree for nearly nine hundred years. His death at the age of nearly seventy-three years was caused by the exhaustion of old age, accelerated by business worries.”⁶

Mary Sincock has made a particular contribution to the history of the colony by writing a book about it: *The Diary of Mary Louisa Sincock*, which was completed in 1869 and describes family life in Melbourne at the time.

The Sincocks lived in Elsternwick and had some investments in land around Melbourne as well as the block near Kororoit Creek, but they had no role in the development of St Albans. #

¹ Footscray Independent 27 June 1891

² Argus 14 October 1873

³ The Mercury, Hobart 13 June 1876

⁴ Argus 10 July 1876

⁵ South Australia Register 4 July 1876 p5

⁶ Footscray Independent 27 June 1891

SMITH, Dr. Louis Lawrence



There were at least two doctors who were interested in the land sales happening on the Keilor Common in the late 1800s and they had several things in common apart from their interest in real estate. The two were Dr Louis Lawrence Smith and Dr George Le Fevre. As well as their medical backgrounds and having offices not far apart at the top end of Collins Street, they were both members of the Victorian State parliament and, unfortunately, neither of them ended up living in St Albans. Smith's interest in the district came earlier, probably in the late 1860s or in the early 1870s, whereas Le Fevre's was probably a decade later, during the 1880s.

Dr. L. L. Smith was not in the first group of selectors for the Keilor Common's distribution but acquired one of the forfeited blocks in April 1869.⁷ He later acquired other blocks that were forfeited or sold by the original grantees. He ended up with about 300 acres, with a small block (13A) near the Davis' farms in the east and several blocks west of the railway line along Main Road West and the block on the south-west corner of Taylors Road and what would later become Kings Road. He obtained the selections of Henry Parker (Lot 27), William McLellan MLA (Lot 25), W Cummins (22)⁸ and finally those assigned to William Murphy and John O'Shanassy (Lot 21).

O'Shanassy forfeited his land because improvements were not made within two years and his selection was transferred to Dr Smith in 1870. Smith sold Lots 21 and 22 to the Cosmopolitan Land and Banking Company in 1886 and was one of several people selling to Cosmopolitan.

Smith was a flamboyant and eccentric character

⁷ The Argus Friday 23 April 1869

⁸ Croad may have acquired Lot 22 from Cummins and sold it to Dr Smith. *St Albans The First 100 Years* p6

whose theatrical skills were inherited from his father, who was a theatrical entrepreneur. He was later described as:

*"Charming and a thorough Bohemian at home among all classes, he was small and dressed fashionably, often sporting a diamond ring. As a conversationalist he was sparkling and witty, and noted for his gaiety and boisterous mirth."*¹

Louis Lawrence Smith was born on 15 May 1830 in London, son of Magdalena Nannetta Gengoult (1797-1877) and theatrical entrepreneur Edward Tyrell Smith (1804-1877) who was the son of Admiral Edward Tyrell Smith who had distinguished himself in action. Louis Lawrence was raised by his French-born mother after his parents separated and she established herself as a shopkeeper in London; she was the Countess De Murat and E. T. Tyrell was her third husband. She died in Melbourne on 19 March 1887 at Brunswick Street, Fitzroy.²

Louis studied medicine in Paris³ and London where he practised for a while:

*"He was assistant pupil of Dr. Culverwell, was dresser consecutively to Mr Barnard Holt, Benjamin Phillips, and C J Guthrie, the great oculist and clinical clerk to Dr Basham and Dr. Hamilton Roe, certificates from whom can be seen in Mr L. L Smith's waiting room, and where the following prizes can also be seen:- First physician's prize, Westminster, July 14, 1861; midwifery and diseases of women prize, 1850 and 1851; first prize Materia Medica, July 13, 1850; surgery prize, 15th June, 1850; first prize chemistry, 10th April, 1850; and first class certificates for botany and medical jurisprudence."*⁴

In 1852 he took a position as a ship's surgeon on the *Oriental* and migrated to Australia, arriving in Melbourne on 11 December that year, a single man aged 22 years ready to take on the new world. He headed for the goldfields but digging was clearly not his métier and he was soon back in Melbourne making his fortune through medicine. In July 1853 he established his business and home at 192, 192½ and 194 Bourke street, with his own idea of a museum and a Polytechnic Hall; it was a one-man teaching school that was sometimes used as a theatre for the arts. Smith's office was close to the entertainment

and red-light district and the nearby suburbs of Collingwood and Richmond which all provided "a ready source of anxious patients."⁵

He wasn't shy of advertising and did it profusely, even publishing an annual Medical Almanac and Medical Household Sketches "for parlour and bush hut that could be yours for just two shillings and sixpence, post free."⁶ He proudly displayed his own medical certificates but then cautioned against:

*"... some medical men of the present day, by being crammed by a "grinder" before going up to examination, obtaining his diplomas, and then strutting about with ill-digested food which served its purpose for the time, but shortly leaves the mind as great a mass of vacuity as it was two months prior to the examination. Yet this class of idiots impose upon a too credulous public, who are dazzled by the diploma flaunted in their faces, as if that were a criterion of the owner's proficiency."*⁷

He introduced the novel idea of prognosis through the post, whereby people would write to him describing their symptoms and for £1 he would post them a prescription. Never one to do things in half measure, he divided his practice into departments and had specialists run them: Mr. S. J. T. Croad⁸ was a galvanist and the first introducer of the galvanic battery, Messrs Selim and Co. were surgeon dentists, and the midwifery department was under the care of Mr. A. Chester M.R.C.S.⁹ It must have worked very well for Dr Smith as by 1880 he was making £10,000 a year.¹⁰

About 1855 Smith married Sarah Ann Taylor (1838-1882) from Lancashire, England. Their children included:¹¹

- Magdalena Gengoult 1856-1856
- Louis Lawrence 1858-1861
- Edward Longmore Gengoult 1861
- Louis Lawrence 1863-1910
- Mary Chlotilde Grace 1866-1866
- Harold Tyrell 1866-1866
- Julia Maud 1867-1868
- Victoria Josephine 1869
- Minnie Lavinia 1870-1952
- Mary Louisa Kelshaw 1874
- Nanetta Rose 1877-1965

¹ Guy Featherstone, *Smith, Louis Lawrence (1830-1910)* <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/smith-louis-lawrence-4610/text7585>, accessed 6 May 2013.

² <http://www.mundia.com/au/Person/17901702/1668374142>

³ Smith is said to have absorbed Bohemian style and political radicalism and claimed to have been at the barricades with the Republicans in the revolution of 1848. Dunstan *The Exhibitionary Complex Personified*.

⁴ Argus 29 August 1866 p3

⁵ Dunstan *The Exhibitionary Complex Personified*.

⁶ Argus 18 January 1875 p8. Earlier publications had included Hints on Marriage (4/6), On Debility (4/6), Means of Prolonging Life (2/6), and How to Get Thin or Fat (1/-). Argus 18 September 1865.

⁷ Argus 29 August 1866 p3

⁸ Croad sold his St Albans selection to Smith.

⁹ Argus 29 August 1866 p3

¹⁰ Featherstone, op. cit.

¹¹ <http://www.mundia.com/gb/Person/50976071/13144336043>

Sarah Anne Taylor died in November 1882 at the age of 46 years and was buried at the Melbourne General Cemetery in Carlton.

Smith gained and lost several seats in the Victorian parliament. He nominated as early as 1859 though his popularity waxed and waned. He was MLA for South Bourke until 1865. He won the seat of Richmond in 1871 but was defeated in 1874. In 1873 he was accused of approaching the Commissioner of Railways to gain advantage, so approaching railway commissioners was another practice that he shared with Dr Le Fevre. Smith was elected as the member for Mornington, from 1886 to 1894.

Dr Smith did many things and had many claims to fame. He established his idea of model farms at Beaconsfield and Upper Beaconsfield, Dandenong, Nunawadding and Narre Warren. He had racehorse stables at Emerald Hill and Kensington. He was a patron of the Richmond Football Club, prominent in the Yarra Yarra Rowing Club, and bred bloodhounds. He sat on the Board of several companies. He was chairman of the Trustees for the Exhibition Building in Melbourne. He became the vice-president of the Chamber of Manufactures. He initiated the penny postal card in Victoria. He was associated with the Australian Journal, the Ballarat Sun, the Times and Mines and the Melbourne Journal. He was chairman of select committees. He kept an extensive art collection. He also ran his medical practice. He was a dynamo.

He became President of the Victorian Winegrowers' Association, grew grapes at his vineyard at Nunawadding and won success at overseas exhibitions.¹ He may have been the inventor of Australian Sparkling Burgundy in 1881, or maybe it was the Victorian Champagne Company that he had created who:

*"... employed the talents of French winemaker Auguste D'Argent. Their Sparkling Burgundy was described as being rose-coloured, which placed in very much in the European style, rather than the subsequent Australian style. The first commercial attempt it may have been, but it was short lived, as in 1884 the company went into voluntary liquidation and Auguste D'Argent died later in the same year."*²

¹ Held in Paris 1882 by the Société Philomatique of Bordeaux. "With her ordinary generosity, France treated Australia with the greatest fairness and courtesy ... the shares of prizes allotted to Victoria alone was nine gold medals and twelve silver ones." Hubert De Castella; *John Bulls' Vineyard*; Flinders Wholesale Wine & Spirits Pty Ltd; 1886, p160.

² "Australian History of Sparkling Red Wines" Peter Rumball, Adelaide, South Australia <http://www.rumball.com.au/history.htm>

The Murray grape growers of Victoria were so impressed by his promotions for the industry that they gave him a special souvenir, in the form of a dainty gold bottle, with a diamond taking the place of a cork.³

In 1877 Smith put one of his model farms up for auction and it certainly seems that he was genuine in his endeavour for innovation:

"Farm on the Dandenong Creek, 12½ miles from Melbourne, consisting of about 280 acres. It has been used as a model farm by Dr. L. L. Smith, and there has been expended on it nearly £25,000. It is well fenced in, and the gates throughout are made of quartering with patent bolts, &c. There are waterholes sunk in different parts, and a constant running stream flows through the property from the well-known Dandenong Creek.

"The orchards consist of about 2,000 fruit trees of every variety, large separate enclosures of goose berries, raspberries, &c., and paddocks of English grass, oats, mangolds, Belgium silver beet, peas, &c., and also a plantation of the newly discovered food plant "the Prickly Comfrey" in full leaf, and which yields 180 tons to the acre. The plants have been sent direct to Dr. Smith from Europe.

"The homestead consists of a comfortable six-roomed cottage, with well cultivated fruit and vegetable garden of about three acres surrounding it; stabling for six horses, piggeries, hay, produce, and sheep sheds, all newly and substantially erected; the whole of the area of floors being laid down with patent asphalt.

*"The view of the surrounding scenery can scarcely be equalled, and should be a most attractive and suitable property for a city magnate's country residence."*⁴

Mind you, it's doubtful that many of the ordinary folk in St Albans had a spare £25,000 to spend on sprucing up their selection.

It's interesting that with all this activity going on that Smith even had the time to look for extra property out St Albans way, but that's what he did, because he bought in 1870 and sold in 1886. Was the connection through his parliamentary colleagues? However, while he was bowing out of St Albans it seems that that his counter-part, Dr George Le Fevre, was taking the stage, because he bought land locally in the late 1880s and sold it pretty quickly.

Smith's first wife died in 1882 and on 15 May 1883 he married Mary "Marion" Jane Higgins (1854-1921), the daughter of Margaret Conran and James Higgins late of Kings County in

³ Argus 9 July 1910 p17

⁴ Argus 7 November 1877 p3

Ireland. Marion gave birth to four children:¹

- Louise Berta Mosson 1884-1962
- Louis Lionel 1887-1917
- Harold Gengoult 1890-1983
- Gladys Marion Grace Sherrard 1892-1902

Dr Louis Lawrence Smith, M.D. ex-M.L.A. died of pneumonia at the age 80 on 8 July 1910 at 41 Collins Street Melbourne and was buried at the Melbourne General Cemetery. Marion died on 27 June 1921 aged 68 years.

Gladys Marion Grace Sherrard Smith had died in 1902 from a fatal accident when she was only nine years old. She was attending a picnic with family and friends at Beaconsfield and, as they were descending a steep hill, the little girl missed her footing and slipped. She put out her hand to stop herself, and in doing so dislodged a large rock, which rolled on top of her, striking her on the head. Her mother was under the impression that her little daughter had fainted and carried the body all the long journey back to the house, where life was pronounced extinct.²

Louise Berta Mosson Smith was a talented pianist who went on to win the gold medal of the Royal College of Music, London. She became a patron of the arts, helped establish the British Music Society in Victoria in 1921, helped John Shaw Nielsen publish his first major book of poetry, and established the publishing company Editions de l'Oiseau-Lyre of Paris in 1932. She moved to Monaco with her second husband in 1945 and when she died in 1962 she left her assets worth about £240,000 to the University of Melbourne which renamed its music library to 'Louise Hanson-Dyer Library' in her honour; the university also founded Lyrebird Press to continue her work.³

Louis Lionel Smith worked as an agriculturalist and married Marjorie Anne Gromann. They had a son who enlisted in the Australian Infantry 51 Battalion in 1914 and achieved the rank of captain. He was killed in action in France on 2 April 1917 at the age 30 years.

Harold Gengoult Smith studied medicine in Scotland and was wounded in France during WWI while serving as captain with the 2nd Dragoon Guards. He worked as a doctor with his father and was elected Lord Mayor of Melbourne City Council in 1931. He married Cynthia Mary Emmerton Brookes, the daughter of Sir Norman and Lady Mabel Brookes. Sir Robert Menzies

was godfather to their second child⁴ and H.R.H. Prince Henry, Duke of Gloucester and Governor General of Australia, was godfather to their daughter Marion.⁵ Cynthia died on 21 November 1961 aged 49 years. Harold died on 16 April 1983 aged 93 years.

There was an unexpected connection between the Gengoult Smiths and St Albans nearly a century after Dr. L L Smith bought land in the district, and that connection was through Mary Aitken. Alby and Mary Aitken had acquired several properties around St Albans and their son Gavan Aitken is still a local resident. The unlikely connection is that Mrs Aitken baked a cake that so impressed Mrs Gengoult Smith that it led to Mrs Aitken baking a cake for H.R.H. Queen Elizabeth.

A cake that Mary had made for a charity tea was tasted by Lady Gengoult Smith:

*"... who became forthwith, one of Mrs. Aitken's most enthusiastic clients and recommended the cakes to her mother, Dame Mabel Brookes. As the Duke of Gloucester was godfather to Lady Gengoult Smith's daughter ... what should be more natural than that Mrs. Aitken should also make Christmas cakes for the Duke and Duchess at Lady Gengoult Smith's request? ... When the Queen's tour of Australia was announced, Mrs. Aitken wrote to the Queen's Lady-in-Waiting asking if the Queen would accept the gift of a fruit cake during her visit to Melbourne. Her answer came in a letter from Lady Rose Baring ... as Lady-in-Waiting to the Queen on her Australian tour: 'Her Majesty commands me to write and thank you for your letter and for your kind offer to make her one of your plum cakes when she is in Australia next year. The Queen bids me tell you how much she appreciates your thought for her, and I am to say that Her Majesty will have much pleasure in accepting your generous gift. Perhaps you would be good enough to send your present to the Master of the Household on board H.M.Y. Britannia.' "*⁶

What a shame Dr L L Smith didn't settle in St Albans, as the district certainly would have benefited from a doctor who could do just about anything. But he was a speculator, and, as stated in the advertising for the sale of his model farm at Dandenong, he was reaching out to a much bigger audience of "squatters, bankers, speculators, investors, farmers, breeders of stock, and others." #

¹ <http://www.mundia.com/gb/Person/50976071/13144336043>

² Argus 9 January 1902 p8

³ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Louise_Hanson_Dyer

⁴ John Young, 'Smith, Sir Harold Gengoult (1890–1983)', Australian Dictionary of Biography, National Centre of Biography, ANU, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/smith-sir-harold-gengoult-15901/text27102>

⁵ The Australian Women's Weekly 6 March 1963 p6

⁶ The Australian Women's Weekly 6 March 1963 p6



Mary 'Marion' Higgins



Louise Mosson Smith



Sir Harold Gengoult Smith and Lady Cynthia Gengoult Smith née Brookes



Mary Aitken with cake for Queen Elizabeth

Reference:

David Dunstan; "The exhibitionary complex personified: Melbourne's nineteenth century displays and the mercurial Dr LL Smith" in *Seize the Day: Exhibitions, Australia and the World*, edited by Kate Darian-Smit, Richard Gillespie, Caroline Jordan, Elizabeth Willis; Melbourne: Monash University ePress, 2008.

SOLOMON, Joseph and Sarah

Joseph Solomon was one of John Batman's Port Phillip pioneers from the 1830s. Solomon's link with St Albans goes back to at least 1849 when he obtained land at the eastern end of Furlong Road on the Saltwater River¹ and a couple of blocks at the western end near Station Road. Joseph Solomon was well known in the early history of Braybrook because he was a major landowner along the Kororoit Creek and the Saltwater River near Solomon's Ford. But which of the several related Joseph Solomons had the land in St Albans? Even one of the family biographers seems uncertain about who was in the district:

*"The Joseph who went to Port Phillip in 1839 and lived for a time at Saltwater River may have been [emphasis added] the son of Judah who contested the Huon electorate ... in 1880."*²

This does not appear to have been the case, though anything is possible with the several Joseph Solomons in the family. An entry in *The Cyclopaedia of Victoria* mentions that:

*"Mr. Solomon, of Launceston, who came soon after the first pioneers ... took up his abode ... upon the Saltwater River, where his name was commemorated by a crossing-place known as 'Solomon's Ford'."*³

The Solomon family's connection with Port Phillip was initially through two convict brothers, Judah (1778-1856) and Joseph (1780-1851), who were shopkeepers from Sheerness, London. They were transported to New South Wales in 1819 and then to Van Diemen's Land in 1820, but they were fortunate not to have been executed in England. Their heinous crime was that they had allegedly organised a burglary:

"Abraham Abrahams, aged 24, Judah Solomon, 36, Joseph Solomon, 35, were charged with procuring, counselling and hiring ... to commit a burglary ... The principle evidence was that Abraham Buckee ... who stated, that the above prisoners hired him, Jacobs, and Ball, to commit the burglary; that they afterwards deserted them in their necessity, and retained a considerable portion of the plunder. Enraged by this conduct the convicts gave such information as led to the apprehension of their employers. On trial, a surprising chain of circumstances corroborated almost every material part of Buckee's evidence; and the Jury, with very little

¹ Crown grant allotment B section 22 Cut Paw Paw.

² H. J. Solomon, *Solomon, Joseph (1780-1851)*, Australian Dictionary of Biography, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/solomon-joseph-2679/text3745>.

³ *The Cyclopaedia of Victoria* p56. This does not identify the particular 'Mr Solomon', but Joseph the brother of Judah was living in Launceston.

hesitation, found all the prisoners Guilty, but recommended them to mercy. Before the sentence, the Prosecutors, bathed in tears, also implored for mercy for the Prisoners.”¹

The judge sentenced each prisoner “to be hanged by the neck until he be dead,” which was later commuted to transportation for Joseph and Judah Solomon, but Abraham Abrahams was executed in August 1819.²

Within a year of their arrival in Hobart, Judah and Joseph Solomon had formed a business partnership under the name “J. and J. Solomon” and became successful drapers, jewellers, spirit merchants and moneylenders at Hobart and Launceston. They received financial support from their family and the Jewish community in Sheerness. In 1823, they were foundation subscribers to the Bank of Van Diemen’s Land³ and were participating members of the Port Phillip Association.⁴ The brothers must have drifted apart in the 1830s as in 1839 they were communicating their business intentions via advertisements in the Cornwall Chronicle and the Colonist Times, in which Joseph wrote that “no business whatever” had existed for some time between himself at Launceston and Judah at Hobart and to prevent mistakes he would carry on the business in his own name.⁵

The Solomon brothers set about renewing their personal lives soon after arriving in the colony. Judah had left behind 10 children and his pregnant wife, Esther Russell, when he was deported. In Hobart he built himself a mansion, formed a relationship with his housekeeper, Elizabeth Howell, and fathered a son, Joseph; but “his blossoming comfort was shattered when his long-forgotten wife arrived from England with several of their children.”⁶

Judah’s brother Joseph had divorced his London wife, Harriet Lazarus, and also abandoned his Jewish faith. In 1833, he married Eliza Backas née Graves (1810-1905) who was from Waterford, Ireland. They lived at Evandale, Launceston; Eliza did not have any children but

Joseph’s four children from his first marriage joined them from England. Joseph may have become involved with Batman’s Port Phillip Association through Anthony Cottrell.⁷ There were 15 members of the Association when it started and Batman is said to have held one share in trust for Joseph Solomon. Solomon’s name has been listed with the original members of Geelong and Dutigala Association but they may have been reluctant to acknowledge the Solomon brothers publicly because of their convict backgrounds. Batman seems to have had no problem with this as in 1835 he wrote that he “named Mount Solomon after Mr. J. Solomon of Launceston.”⁸

Prue McGoldrik states:

“Anthony Cottrell and Joseph Solomon arrived in 1836, Solomon bought 2,400 sheep to settle on land adjoining Glen Galla; he also owned extensive tracts on the Maribymong River. His property of 113 acres on the Kororoit Creek was sold and became Braybrook Junction and, still later, the suburb of Sunshine.”⁹

The Pastoral Pioneers of Port Phillip states that Joseph Solomon arrived in December 1836 and stayed in Cut Paw Paw until 1849.¹⁰ This may not have been Joseph senior as he was in Evandale during the 1840s. This Joseph withdrew from his Melbourne investments and concentrated on his business in Launceston. He died in 1851 and thus had no later role in St Albans, but as for central Braybrook:

“In 1889 the land on Kororoit Creek, formerly owned by Joseph Solomon, was surveyed and became the Railway Station Estate. This was the basis of the growth of the settlement of Braybrook Junction.”¹¹

Unfortunately, the above reference does not identify *which particular* Joseph Solomon was the owner of the land in central Braybrook, which is some distance from Solomon’s Ford.

¹ Article from Kent Assizes <http://www.mundia.com/gb/Person/10776090/-579905809>

² Jeremy I. Pfeffer *From one End of the Earth to the other: The London Bet Din 1805-1855 and the Jewish Convicts transported to Australia*, p235.

³ H J Solomon, *Solomon, Joseph (1780–1851)* <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/solomon-joseph-2679/text3745>

⁴ *A Biographical Register 1788-1939 Vol 2 L-Z* p271

⁵ Cornwall Chronicle 6 April 1839 p3

⁶ Mark Franklin “Hobart’s Historic Shul” http://pandora.nla.gov.au/pan/100466/20090611-0813/www.ajn.com.au/news/news_print4aa5.html

⁷ Batman’s “wider friends of influential friends that were drawn into lively conversations ... as they dreamed of fortunes that could be made on the mainland” included Anthony Cottrell and Joseph Solomon, a merchant, both of Evandale. Joy Braybrook *John Batman: An Inside Story of the Birth of Melbourne* p18

⁸ <http://www.emelbourne.net.au/biogs/EM00776b.htm>. This was near Ballarat. The name was changed to ‘Clarke’s Big Hill’ about 1836 and is now known as ‘Mount Blackwood’.

⁹ Prue McGoldrik *When the Whistle Blew : A Social History of The Town of Sunshine 1920-1950*; Gippsland Printers, Morwell, 1989 p8.

¹⁰ Billis & Kenyon *Pastoral Pioneers of Port Phillip* p16

¹¹ McGoldrick p12. Some of his land was south of Wright Street bounded by the Kororoit Creek.

Judah Solomon may not have had a direct and public involvement in Braybrook, but he backed family members in their move to the district and may have been involved in land speculation; e.g. Valantyne Jones states that the Solomon station that was proclaimed in 1855 was purchased by Mr Judah Solomon and that Solomon's Ford had been named after Michael Solomon. Michael (1817-1900) and the younger Joseph (1826-1894) were sons of Mr Judah Solomon. Gary Vines¹ identifies Michael and Joseph as having licences to depasture stock in 1840-41² and that in 1845 Joseph had purchased an occupation licence for property in Cut Paw Paw and later a homestead block of 100 acres. Vines mentions that Joseph Solomon was a personal friend of John Batman and came to Victoria in 1836 to occupy land allotted to him by the Port Phillip Association. This seems unlikely to have been Judah's son Joseph as in 1836 he was only a child.

Judah's son Joseph was born at Hobart in 1826; he married Elizabeth Davis Russell in 1849 and died in Hobart in 1894. The idea that this Joseph went to Port Phillip in 1836 or 1839 and lived there for some years seems unlikely, as there is no indication that Judah or his wife resided in Port Phillip at the time, though it is possible that Joseph the son might have stayed with other relatives. Of this Joseph it was written:

*"He was born at Hobart in 1831 [sic], and early in life amassed a competency. In 1880 he contested a seat in the Legislative Council for the Huon and was returned, but subsequently was unseated for an alleged infringement of the Electoral Act. He was for 25 years a justice of the peace of Hobart; was also a member of the Hobart Hospital Board and president of the Jewish Synagogue. Mr Solomon's wife predeceased her husband by some two years, and he leaves no family, although several of his relatives are in Tasmania."*³

The third Joseph is the most likely candidate for the landowner at St Albans, and he was a nephew of the convict brothers. He was known as Joseph 'Johnny' Solomon, Joseph Solomon jnr, Joseph Solomon the younger, and Joseph III to differentiate him from his cousins of the same name.⁴ He was born in 1819 in London, the son of Samuel Solomon (1776-1864) and Rachel Solomon (1782-). This Joseph migrated to Tasmania in 1831 and in August 1838 he married his cousin Sarah, who was the daughter of Judah and Esther Solomon. This is

¹ Gary Vines in *Pastoral Properties*.

² Also refer to *Glimpses of Early Sunshine* p22

³ Launceston Examiner 18 June 1894 p6

⁴ John Levi; *These are the Names: Jewish Lives in Australia, 1788-1850*, MUP 2013.

consistent with a Joseph Solomon joining the Port Phillip Association in 1836 and settling at 'Mereberriong' upon the banks of the Saltwater River in 1839. In 1846 the government sold a number of occupation licences and Joseph Solomon bought about 2,000 acres in the district.⁵ In 1849 he bought 353 acres on the western side of the river below the property of James McIntyre and it was on this property that had a river crossing known as Solomon's Ford.

In 1852 Johnny Solomon leased his property and returned to Tasmania for a decade to manage his uncle Joseph's property, though retaining connections with Braybrook. In 1854 he sold his 353 acres adjacent to McIntyre's farm to Richard Fitzgerald.⁶ In 1862 Joseph came back to Braybrook. He was elected auditor for the Braybrook District Road Board in 1867⁷ and 1869,⁸ so presumably there was more history of involvement in municipal affairs that has not been traced. Joseph continued farming until 1885 when he sold his homestead to William Blair and moved to Melbourne and then South Yarra.⁹

Alexander Sutherland in his book *Victoria and its Metropolis* states that Joseph:

*"... arrived in Tasmania in 1831, and resided there for five years. In 1836 he accompanied some relatives to Victoria and took up land at Keilor plains, and was, with his relatives, connected with a company, of which Captain Swanston and Mr. Gellibrand were prominent members, formed for the purchase of large blocks of land at Braybrook and Keilor. In 1838 he married his cousin, Miss Solomon in Tasmania, and returning to Victoria settled near Solomon's Ford on the Saltwater River, where he took up 133 acres of land on Kororoit Creek, 100 acres on the Saltwater River, and other lots, which he subsequently sold. In 1852 he leased all his property and left Victoria for Tasmania, where he resided for about ten years, keeping up his business connection with his old district, and making frequent voyages between the two colonies. The year 1862 found him re-occupying his original homestead near Solomon's Ford ... In 1885 he left the district for Melbourne, and in 1886 took up his residence in South Yarra, still maintaining his interest in the shire of Braybrook. ... Mr. Solomon was a personal friend of John Batman, the founder of this colony."*¹⁰

⁵ Argus 25 September 1846. Squatters occupied land under pastoral licenses valid for one year.

After 1847, they could lease land for 14 years with the option of purchasing when the lease expired.

⁶ Pubs Punts and Pastures p138

⁷ Argus 2 March 1867 p6

⁸ Bacchus Marsh Express 6 March 1869 p2

⁹ Victoria and its Metropolis p503

¹⁰ Victoria and its Metropolis p503

Alfred Solomon who born in Braybrook related some of the family history. He described how his father had established cordial relations with the indigenous tribes:

*"During the early days of his settlement he had many dealings with the blacks but they did not cause him much trouble. There were not many of them in the locality, as the absence of forests made game somewhat scarce. ... It was his rule not to allow them to bring their weapons, when visiting the homestead to receive food and presents, but they rarely showed any signs of hostility. A good deal of consideration was exercised towards them. They were very much interested in the ways of the white people, and nothing seemed to astonish them more than to see his father shave. ... They appeared to be always on the move from one part of their tribal territory to another in search of food. He has witnessed the Corroboree and others of their customs, and was, when a boy, very much in touch with the tribe. He has often seen a blackfellow stand in the river and display his quickness of eye and sureness of stroke by striking fish with his spear, as they swam around him."*¹

Joseph Solomon established good relationships with local Aboriginals and had written employment agreements with some, so he was a forward-thinking man in many ways.²

Johnny and Sarah's children included:

- Henry Lawrence 1840-1903 born at Hobart and died at Fitzroy at age 63.
- Joseph 1839-1854 born in Hobart and died there at age 15.
- Alfred 1844-1912 born in Hobart and died in East Brunswick, Melbourne, at the age of 67 years.
- Charles born in 1846 died in 1866 at Melbourne aged 19 years.
- Louisa 1848-1853 died at Hobart.
- Jessica 'Jessie' 1850-1923 born at Hobart, married William Phipps in 1876 in Sydney, died in 1923 at Ascot Vale.
- Francis 1851-1890 wed Mary Jane Susan Trugge in 1874, ran a confectionary business in Collingwood, died in 1890.
- Esther 1852-1853 born and died Hobart.
- Arthur 1854-1908 born at Hobart, married Elizabeth Ann Richards in 1878, lived in Carlton North, died at Footscray at 54.
- Frances Elizabeth born 1856 in Hobart, married Charles James Partridge in 1881 at Melbourne.
- Albert Lionel born in 1858, married Norma Elizabeth Bonner.

¹ Bacchus Marsh Express 30 January 1906.

² One of his contracts was with Robert Bullet who had worked for John Batman. The contract was for a year for £26 with board and lodging.

- Walter Wilsmore 1859-1884 born in Hobart, died at Maidstone at age 24.

Sarah Solomon, wife of 'Johnny' Solomon and daughter of Judah Solomon and Esther Russell, died on 20 March 1881 at the age of 61, when she was thrown from a buggy being driven by her husband and fractured her skull.³ Joseph 'Johnny' Solomon, long-term Braybrook resident, died at South Yarra on 25 April 1890 at the age of 71; a colonist of 59 years.

Postscript

John Batman was born in 1800 at Paramatta and died in Melbourne on 6 May 1839 at the young age of 39 years; he was buried in an inconspicuous grave. In 1881 it was decided to erect a monument on the grave in recognition of his contribution to the colony. Many people subscribed to the cause and at the commemoration ceremony one contributor who was specifically mentioned for his warm-hearted assistance was one of the oldest colonists, Joseph Solomon of the Saltwater River. During the 1882 memorial ceremony it was noted that Mr Solomon was the only signatory of John Batman's book of minutes from 1 June 1836 who was still alive.⁴

Joseph Solomon of the Saltwater River gained public office as the Auditor with the Braybrook Council in the 1860s. Some of his extended Tasmanian family connections followed suit with similar political ambitions which culminated in Albert Edgar Solomon becoming the youngest ever Premier of Tasmania in 1912.

Joseph Solomon (1826-1894)



Joseph was the son of Judah Solomon and Elizabeth Howell, and spent his early childhood at Judah's mansion in Hobart, known as Temple House. He was not the Joseph Solomon who was living in Braybrook for decades. When Judah Solomon died in 1856, his home known as Temple House passed to his son Isaac. Joseph bought the property from his half-brother in 1863 and lived there until he died. In 1880 he nominated for the Tasmanian parliament as the Legislative Council member for the seat of

³ Argus 14 March 1881

⁴ Argus 5 June 1882 p5

Huon but the vote was declared invalid. Joseph died in 1894:

*“Mr Joseph Solomon had died suddenly at 6 o'clock at his residence, Temple House, Argyle street. The deceased gentleman had only been ailing for a fortnight, and those in attendance upon him at the time of his death were under the impression that he was improving. He spoke audibly and distinctly in asking for a handkerchief, but before Mrs Hurtnell could comply with his request he was dead. ... The age of the deceased was 63. He was born at Hobart, and lived in the colony the whole of his life, having the reputation of being a man of considerable wealth. He mixed but little in public affairs, the only appointment he held at the time of death being those of President of the Jewish Synagogue, Territorial justice of the peace, and member of the Hospital Board of Management. He lived a particularly quiet and unostentatious life, but is known to have been of a very liberal disposition, entertaining decided opposition to any publicity being given to his benevolence. ... His wife, a sister to Mr Henry Davis, solicitor, Evandale, died some three years ago, and about the only relatives now in the colony are Mrs Hartnoll, Miss Fall, and two daughters of the late Mr Philip Davis.”*¹

Albert Edgar Solomon (1876-1914)



Albert Edgar was born on 7 March 1876 at Longford, Tasmania. He was a grandson of the convict Joseph Solomon of Launceston. Albert Edgar Solomon became a lawyer and politician. He was one of thirteen children born to Edward Solomon and Mary Anne

Trebilcock who were storekeepers at Longford. Albert was a man of “precocious intellect”. He matriculated at the University of Melbourne at age 13, and gained four degrees at the University of Tasmania. He was elected as the member for Bass in April 1909 and served as Attorney-General and Minister for Education and Mines. He was the Premier of Tasmania from June 1912 to October 1914, and was the Leader of the Opposition from April to October 1914. He died “in office” at his Hobart home on 5 October 1914 due to a small cut on his hand that had turned septic. He was survived by his wife Una Alice Hannah Mary Scott and two sons.² He is a good example that having convict heritage is no barrier to being a good citizen and progressive community leader. #

¹ The Mercury 18 June 1894 p2

² www.founders-storylines.com/accessible/assets/storyline_assets/04_jj_solomon/credits_04.html



Gravestone of Judah Solomon, brother of Joseph Solomon and backer of John Batman



Gravestone of Joseph Solomon, son of Judah Solomon.

STENSON, Charles and Emma

Charles and Emma Stenson were two young Britons who emigrated in 1855 and arrived in South Australia in September 1855.

Charles Stenson/Stinson was born about 1831 in Hansford, Somerset, England to Charles Stenson and Charlotte Collins who had raised five sons and a daughter. Charles jnr probably received little formal education as in making his last will it was noted that he was illiterate. In England he worked as an agricultural labourer but in Australia he became a farmer and property owner.

Emma Ashton was born c.1837 in Chard, Somerset, England. Her parents were Asenath Hopkins (1809-1848) and Simon Ashton (1803-1869) who raised five daughters and two sons. Emma did not receive an extensive education and by the age of 14 she was working as a servant to a lodging housekeeper.

Charles Stenson and Emma Ashton married on the 27 May 1855 at the St. Mary's Church of England, in Chard, Somersetshire, England. They signed their wedding papers with cross marks in lieu of signatures. Soon afterwards, on 14 July 1855, they left Southampton as steerage passengers on the ship Warren Hastings and arrived in Port Adelaide, South Australia, on 12 September 1855.

Charles and Emma were two of the young, adventurous colonists to Australia arriving at a time when gold fever was drawing in many thousands hoping for a better life. Port Phillip had recently separated from New South Wales and there was much optimism in Melbourne as the Sydney colonial administration was considered to be too aloof and overbearing. The Stensons were two of these young hopefuls; Charles was twenty-one years old and Emma was just twenty when they arrived. After arriving in South Australia it is not clear where they next travelled, but they might have ended up somewhere around Footscray, because at some stage they had acquired a property with a six-room weatherboard dwelling at Droop Street.¹ When they achieved this is not clear but, given that back in England Charles worked as a labourer and Emma as a servant, they must have worked pretty hard to acquire several properties in Keilor, Braybrook and Footscray.

¹ The Stensons were reportedly well known in Footscray because of their property there. They must have owned property there for some time as it was not until 1906, after Stenson's death, that there was an objection to his name being on the ratepayers roll.

Emma Stenson's younger brother, Charles Ashton (1847-1918) had also migrated to Australia. In 1873 he married Margaret Murdoch Gillespie (1851-1925) who was of Scottish heritage but born in Tasmania. They settled in Hotham (North Melbourne) where they raised a large family. However, there was a closer connection. It seems most probable that the "C Ashton" who owned block 4 adjacent to the Stenson property was Emma's brother Charles Ashton. Emma kept in contact with her brother, sister-in-law and nieces Emma and Alice until her death.

The Stensons might have been resident on the Keilor Plains since the 1860s² though their exact location at this stage is unknown. The district was still in its infancy. Keilor had been declared a township in 1850 and the police station was opened in 1853, but it wasn't until 1862 that Keilor was declared a road district. In 1865 the district comprised of 800 acres with 60 dwellings and 250 people. Therefore, even if the young Stensons had arrived in the district in the 1860s, they were indeed some of the earliest pioneers to the area.

Charles Stenson bought several blocks of land along the Maribyrnong River in 1883/4.³ The land was part of the Keilor Town Common that had been reserved from the 1868 selections but then was proposed for selection in 1879 against some strong local opposition:

"For some time there has been a widespread feeling among the people of Keilor that the common ought not to be allowed to remain in its comparatively useless condition, and that if it were thrown open for selection subject to certain reservations for the widows of Keilor, both the State and the residents would reap substantial advantages. The present meeting was accordingly convened to allow those interested an opportunity to express their views on the subject. Mr Donald Cameron, M.L.A. was present and explained the position of affairs. It was resolved by a majority "That a certain portion of Keilor common be reserved for local widows, to be called the Longmore paddock, and the remainder to be thrown open for selection by bona fide Keilor residents." ⁴

The common contained an area of 133 acres and was gazetted as being open to selection in September 1879, having been cut up into 26 lots.⁵ Supporters of this action argued that the commons was of little value to locals because

² Footscray Independent 3 June 1905

³ They acquired lots 3, 4a and 5 of Section A near the river. *St Albans The First Hundred Years* p7.

⁴ The Age 14 July 1879

⁵ Argus 26 September 1879

of trespass and often during market weeks up to 15,000 sheep driven there would eat every blade of grass. Under such circumstances it was time for the common to be opened to settlement and cultivation.¹ So the old Keilor town common was abolished.

At the stage St Albans had a population of about 200 people but had not yet been named as an independent neighbourhood; Stenson's selection would have been identified as being part of Keilor, which had a population of about 700. Keilor village was the closest population centre and provided for postage, banking and other services. Charles would have called into the post office in the township to collect his letters and it is where, once a crossing was built across the creek, they most likely bought their provisions and necessities that they could not grow on their farm. However, it was horse and buggy days for transport and until a bridge was built across Green Gully it would have been difficult to get to the village. It was easier to get your provisions from Braybrook because of the established roads and the flat terrain.

Charles and Emma Stenson named their farm Maribyrnong Vineyards, where they planted vines, vegetables and had fowls and cows. They soon discovered that their planned rural idyll was not going to be an easy life – despite their efforts the vineyard did not succeed,² so they planted an apricot orchard, which was successful. Keilor was well known for its apricots and David Milburn and his relatives grew tons of them on the flat riverbanks near the village, much of the fruit being taken by the canning factories or used for preserves. Other Keilor orchardists included the Cahill and Goudie families.

The riverbanks alongside Stenson's farm were fairly steep, so they formed the slopes into narrow terraces for planting their orchard. But as with all such small farms in the area, self-sufficiency and survival required more versatility than just relying on one crop, so they also grew vegetables, raised poultry, and even had a few dairy cows. That was the normal practice for small farmers anyway.

Crop losses in orchards may not have been extensive in normal circumstances but they did occur. Hailstorms can destroy the whole crop, but young fruit trees can be easily destroyed

within a short time by wandering stock, as did occur, which then requires the cost and labour of replacement and in the meantime there is the inevitable loss in productivity. The problem of wandering stock was a perennial issue in rural areas, and was probably more so on the Keilor Plains, when drovers would allow the travelling herds to stop and feed along roadsides on their journey to agistment or the sales paddocks. Eventually the Keilor shire council appointed a ranger, and wandering stock would then be impounded and the owners fined. Locals with a few cows and a deficit of grass would also use the long paddock.

Other orchard losses were minor in scope and part of the normal neighbourhood pilfering. The Stensons' orchard along the lane heading to the river behind Fox's selection was an easy target in season, as young lads heading for their favourite swimming hole would nip through the fence for a snack. You could do little about this, as it was a normal rite of passage for the youths of the area.

Emma's role on the farm is not recorded but can be surmised from the activities of women in similar settings.³ Having milch cows required the daily chores of milking and working to its final product in butter making, which involved skimming, churning, patting and moulding. Milking was normally done twice a day, early morning and late afternoon. This was often women's work, and though wealthier farmers may have hired dairymaids, for smaller concerns the farmer's wife and her daughters usually ended up with the tasks.

The chores started early in the morning, getting up at 4 or 5 o'clock to collect the cows and bring them to the milking shed, which was usually ready for action about 6 o'clock. The milking was all done by hand. Other tasks included separating the cream from the milk and this was all done manually. Before the mechanical separators came along the milk was put into large dishes, the milk allowed to settle, and the cream skimmed off by hand. When the first mechanical separators came along they were hand-operated anyway. Then there was the regular task of washing the separator parts in boiling water to keep it all clean and free of the diseases that could be carried from stale old milk. If you kept a few

¹ The Argus 6 October 1879

² Vineyards in Sunbury proved more successful, with James Francis establishing Goona Warra in 1863 and James John establishing Craiglea in 1865. Gary Vines; *Farm and Dairy*.

³ Joan Carstairs and Maureen have researched and documented some local women's experiences from the 1800s. Refer to *Pubs, Punts & Pastures, The Story of Pioneer Irish Women on the Salt Water River*, St. Albans History Society, 1988.

milk cows you probably had a few pigs, because the skimmed milk would normally be fed to the pigs. Cream was often stored in stainless steel containers and then sold to companies in the city to be made into butter. Some farmers traded their butter for groceries. At the time it was common practice for the farmer to provide meals for the workers employed on the farm. On bigger properties, such as Taylor's Overnewton estate, this would have been done by the cooks employed by the estate. For smaller, family concerns, this was a task for the farmer's wife. For a farm growing crops, for example, at harvest time the lady of the farm would be expected to cook for the men cutting the crops, doing the thrashing, or building haystacks. A thrashing team might have a dozen or more men and might require roasting a whole side of lamb to cater for their appetite. This would mean having the wood stove operating even in the hottest weather.¹ Fruit pickers had to be fed too.

Unlike some of the bigger farming families who had settled in the district, Charles and Emma were a couple on their own and did not have any relatives who could assist with the farming tasks. Apricot picking is a strenuous chore, concentrated around December and January; this was the peak season when some of the young men of the area could get employment on local farms. The Stensons had no children to help ease their farming labours,² so Charles eventually wrote to his brother in England asking for some help from the family. Thus it was that in 1888 Frederick Charles Stenson, a nephew, arrived to help out on the farm. He intended to stay for a couple of years but ended up staying for the rest of his life. He also became a central figure and leader in the development of the St Albans neighbourhood.

The farm must have been progressing successfully, though opportunities to expand the farm might have become difficult when the district was subdivided into smaller blocks and offered for selection – the farm on the Salt Water River became hemmed in by urban growth. In the 1880s Stenson applied for more land selection but was not successful. Then in 1898 he bought a retail property in Ballarat Road, Braybrook; it was known as Dickson's store, on the corner of Burke Street. This was obviously intended as an investment property, for there is no indication that Charles or Emma

ever lived or ran a business there. As a businessman, Charles was mindful of his expenses, and complained to the Braybrook council about the rate arrears that had been transferred with the mortgage; in this instance he was unsuccessful in getting any reduction. Worse came in 1916 when the store burnt down.

Frederick Charles quickly settled into local life. On 10 May 1899, at St. James' Old Cathedral, Melbourne, he married Eva Leah Shiner, the only daughter of the late Samuel and Mary Ann Shiner, of North Melbourne. Fred and Emma established their home at 202 Biggs Street,³ where they lived until the end of 1905. As well as helping his uncle on the farm, Frederick became a grower and dealer but details of such activity this has not been found. They also raised poultry, which was common practice at the time.

By the turn of the century Emma and Charles Stenson were approaching their half century as colonists in their adopted home. They had also reached fifty years of marriage and on 27 May 1905 they celebrated their golden wedding anniversary⁴ at Keighlo, the grandest house in St Albans and now the home of John Ellis. Amongst the guests helping them celebrate the occasion were a number of other early colonists, friends who had also landed during the eighteen-fifties:

*"On Thursday May 27, the golden wedding of Mr and Mrs Charles Stenson, of Keilor, was celebrated most enjoyably at the residence of Mr John Ellis, Keighlo, St. Albans. There were in all about 40 guests, amongst whom were 10 old colonists who landed during the fifties. Mr and Mrs Stenson have been very prosperous and are, we are glad to say, still enjoying good health. They have twice visited the old country' since they first settled in Victoria. Each time, after a good tour, they came to the conclusion that Australia is the best place to live in and gladly returned to their farm on the Saltwater river, which they have carried on for 43 years. The happy old couple, on their wedding day, were the recipients of many handsome presents."*⁵

By now Emma and Charles were considered to be prosperous: they owned real estate and were successful farmers, they were enjoying good health, and they had twice visited the old country. After each visit to their homeland they

¹ Refer to stories by Marion Mcauley and John Stevens in *Stories About St. Albans*; 2012.

² Alie Missen states that Charles and Emma's children died at a young age. Ref: *Areas to See in and Around St Albans*; p10.

³ The house was built by Alfred Padley's company, so there was an early link between the two families.

⁴ On the 27 May 1855, at St. Mary's Church, Chard, Somersetshire, Charles, son of the late Charles Stenson, married Emma, daughter of Simon Ashton.

⁵ Footscray Independent 3 June 1905

concluded that Australia was the best place to live in and they gladly returned to their farm on the Saltwater River.

Their extended family began to increase. Between 1900 and 1904 Eva Stenson gave birth to three daughters: Alice Eva in 1900; Mary Ruby in 1902; and Emily Leah in 1904. Charles and Emma were thus able to enjoy the company of young children in the twilight of their lives.

Charles Stenson died on 26 November 1905, aged 71 years, a colonist of 51 years. He was buried at the Keilor cemetery. He bequeathed property valued at £2,800 to his widow¹ to support her during her lifetime, and after her death his estate was to pass to his nephew Frederick Charles Stenson. The estate included 33 acres and a weatherboard dwelling at Keilor, land at Braybrook Parish with six-room bluestone shop and dwelling,² land and a six-room weatherboard dwelling at Droop Street, Footscray, land at Tarrangower Road in Yarraville, and shares in Footscray Gas & Coke Co.

Frederick and Eva Stenson moved with their children to the farm homestead in order to keep Aunt Emma company and to take care of her as she grew older and frailer. At this stage her brother Charles Ashton and family were living in North Melbourne and one married niece was in Ascot Vale, so there was still an extended family presence in Melbourne.

Emma Stenson nee Ashton died on 17 April 1914, at St Aidan's Private Hospital in Moonee Ponds, aged 77 years, a colonist of 60 years. She was buried with her late husband at the Keilor cemetery.

The Stensons were true pioneers in St Albans. During their lifetime they saw the transition of the district from large squatters' estates to smaller pastoral and farming pursuits. They came not long after the separation of Victoria from New South Wales and witnessed the federation of the states and territories into the Commonwealth of Australia. They took part in the growth of a St Albans identity through a community of mutual interests. Together they contributed to a half-century of neighbourhood development. #

¹ Ballarat Star 22 January 1906 p2

² Known as Dickson's Store, corner of Burke Street and Ballarat Road, near Duke Street. The property was put up for auction in 1898 but did not sell as it was still owned by Fredercik Stenson in 1916 when it was occupied Mrs. Geo. Howell as a confectionery store.

STENSON, Frederick Charles and Eva



Eva Leah and Frederick Charles Stenson © Gwen Kratiss

Frederick Charles Stenson was born at Yanton Somerset, England, on 16 April 1870. He had an older brother and six sisters. Frederick went to school until he was twelve years old, then worked with his father on the farm. Then in 1888, a century after the first fleet landed at Botany Bay, Frederick migrated to Australia. He came to help his uncle, Charles Stenson, who had established an orchard on the Saltwater River near Keilor. As an eighteen-year-old, Frederick was joining the challenge of confronting a strange land on the other side of the world. The colony of New South Wales had been declared a century earlier but life in the colonies was still a great unknown. Frederick intended to help his uncle for two years but ended staying permanently. His mother had died young and his father had remarried but died while Frederick was in Australia, so Frederick stayed on with his uncle and aunt. He went in for dealing and droving as well as helping his uncle. He probably saw the new township of St Albans, a name that had been adopted only recently, as his possibility for a challenging future.

In 1889 the Shire of Keilor was quite small. There were 133 ratepayers on the municipal roll and the total population was 689. Keilor village had been established in the 1850s as a major stopping point on the way to the gold-fields at Ballarat. The township had services such as a post office and money order office, a savings bank, a state school, general store, two hotels, two insurance agencies, a blacksmith, a police station, a court-house, and three churches. There was some notoriety because

of a couple of murders in the district and occasionally there were disputes about cattle trespass on the Common, but apart from that life was fairly staid. The municipal directory states:

“The neighbouring country is known as the Keilor plains, which are not cultivated, only a few chosen spots on the bends of the river being used for cultural purpose. There have been no pastoral tenants for nearly twenty years; most of the land that did not then belong to private owners has been granted for selection and is used for grazing purposes, with the exception of the small portions demanded for cultivation by the Land Act.”¹

This was hardly the picture of verdant pastures that might fire the imagination of a young farmer. And whereas land speculation may have given a false sense of optimism, farm work was about the only opportunity in the district available for a young immigrant. In fact, at the time there were few other possibilities because there were no other industries. The get-rich-quick-through-gold days were over, and the get-rich-quick-through-speculation days were about to crash. Frederick Charles probably arrived late enough not to be caught up in the speculation bubble, and his decision to stay despite the ensuing financial upheaval shows tenacity for perseverance and survival.

Little is known of the details of Frederick's first decade in the district, other than that his uncle's first venture into viticulture had not been successful and the vineyard had been converted to an orchard. Their main crop was apricots but they are said to have also planted apples. By all accounts it appears that Uncle Charles and Frederick did most if not all of the hard work on the farm.

Alfred Padley's land sales had brought in new people to the area while a number of the selectors from the 1870s had become important in the social and political life of the district. Frederick Stenson would naturally have met and interacted with families such as the Luxfords, Andersons, Delaheys O'Neils, Opies, Foxes, Erringtons, Furlongs, Hasseds, Milburns and Eaglings, to name a few. These associations continued for decades and no doubt were important in Stenson's future role as a local councillor with the Shire of Keilor.

On 10 May 1899, Frederick Stenson married Eva Leah Shiner at St. James Old Cathedral, Melbourne. Eva was the only daughter of the late Samuel and Mary Ann Shiner of Peel Street, Hotham. How and where did they

meet? ² That would be interesting to know.

Eva's mother, Mary Ann Shiner, was born in about 1842 and died in 1878 at the relatively young age of 36 years. It appears that Mary's father, Samuel, later remarried. He was one of the pioneers of the business strip in Elizabeth Street North, Hotham (or North Melbourne as it was later known). Samuel Shiner ran the Hotham Iron Foundry as a partnership for many years. He died in August 1893 after a few weeks of illness. The business then continued under the guidance of Mrs Shiner and the foundry manager, Mr. R. Lawrence.

Eva and Frederick set about establishing their new life together at 202 Biggs Street, St Albans. This was one of the first six homes built by Padley's Cosmopolitan Land and Banking Company, obviously meant as show-pieces for their land sales. Frederick continued to support his uncle on the farm as well as working as a dealer, but no details of this remain.

Between 1900 and 1904 Frederick's wife, Eva Stenson, gave birth to three daughters: Alice Eva in 1900; Mary Ruby in 1902; and Emily Leah in 1904. Uncle Charles and Aunt Emma were thus able to enjoy the company of grandchildren in the twilight of their lives.

Charles Stenson died on 26 November 1905, aged 71 years, a colonist of 51 years; he was buried at the Keilor cemetery. Frederick and Eva then moved with their children to the farm homestead in order to keep Aunt Emma company and to take care of her as she grew frailer.

Frederick continued farming on his uncle's estate but introduced a number of changes. In 1908 he installed an irrigation plant on the farm, which was designed to pump 50,000 gallons of water per day from the Saltwater River. Having now been farming in the area for twenty years, he was aware that the volume and quality of the water was quite variable. Sometimes, especially in times of low rainfall, the water was highly mineralised and in 1909 his crop of French beans³ was completely

² It may have been through Alfred Padley, who was from Hotham and was in St Albans in the 1880s.

The Stenson's first home was built by Padley's company, and they bought his former home, Keighlo, in 1907.

³ Peas were another alternative crop experimented with locally. James Stevens tried it in 1912 and reported it was a success: *“Peas are doing well. Calder has some very early ones and is starting to pick. He is getting 28/- per cwt. and says 12/- would pay well. So we shall have to put in a larger quantity next year.”* Letter to A. Stevens, 6 October 1912.

¹ Victorian Municipal Directory, 1889.

ruined. Several other farmers along the river were applying for water pumping licences. David Millburn¹ of Keilor was the original pioneer to introduce the practice in 1857 and he was very successful. He won prizes for the best-kept orchard in the state. In 1908 Michael Fox of Tullamarine had also applied to pump 80,000 gallons per day for irrigation purposes. Borrell might have been another farmer involved. There must have been some concern about potential problems as *"It was stated in a general way that if the stream were unduly depleted any ratepayer deprived of water had a redress through his riparian rights."*²

After the financial crash of the 1890s, the twentieth century had started with a decade of optimism. Locally, the population had grown to the extent that a larger school was required, and in 1901 the new school building in West Esplanade was occupied. The debate about national federation and its final adoption had created a wave of patriotism. Women in Victoria were "given" the right to vote in 1908. The land sales that occurred in Keilor in the early 1900s were a boost in confidence and farming activity around St Albans when the Closer Settlement Board bought sections of William Taylor's large estate and resold it for farmlets. The Overnewton Estate was thus divided into blocks of 200 to 300 acres and these were offered for selection. This attracted new families to the area, who extended the civic efforts of earlier pioneers in the progress of the district and provided the next generation of community leaders. New families included the McAuleys, Boyds, Andersons, Stevens, Griffiths, McRaes, King and others. Already established families included the Hounslows, Erringtons³ and Lewises.

Then things started to happen: a progress association was convened; shops, churches and a Mechanics Institute⁴ were built; and agitation commenced for improving roads and the water supply. Stenson became involved with these progressive thinkers in furthering the cause of the area. The start of a new era at the local level had begun.

¹ Gary Vines; *Farm and Dairy: the agricultural and dairy farms of Melbourne's West*; Melbourne's Living Museum of the West Inc, 1993.

² Footscray Independent, 11 April 1908.

³ In 1932 Edward James Luxford, who was the President of the St Albans Progress Association, stated that Alice Errington was *"foremost in all movements for the advancement of the district."*

⁴ The St. Albans Mechanics' Institute and hall, was established by local people in 1906. A typical event was a Shakespeare night held in June 1907, but there were also concerts and dances.

In 1907 the Stensons moved to Keighlo, Alfred Padley's former grand home in Winifred Street, which they had purchased from John Ellis. This was more central in relation to the growing village and provided the base for Frederick's work with the church and other groups. It was also much closer to the school for the children. In August that year he was elected as a councillor for the Maribyrnong Riding of the Keilor Shire and continued serving in this role for the next forty years; he was elected President of the Council on four occasions. By all accounts he was a conscientious and industrious representative.

It was undoubtedly his farming experience that made him such a strong advocate for a reliable water supply for the township. His involvement in groups such as the Progress Association, the Mechanics Hall Institute, the Anglican Church, the school committee and several other groups, meant that he was able to represent and promote the interests of rate-payers in a comprehensive way. Water, roads, electricity and housing became his chief concerns for the next four decades. These were traditional parish pump issues, but they were important for a developing community with a limited physical infrastructure.

In 1910 he was instrumental in having the pedestrian railway crossing installed adjacent to the primary school, linking East and West esplanades. Perhaps a small achievement at the municipal level, but a fantastic shortcut for the thousands of students over the years who went backwards and forwards in their daily trek between home and school. He had the road crossing at the railway gates surfaced to provide safer access.

Stenson was made a Justice of the Peace in October 1912, which is a necessary function in the witnessing of signatures and so on; a J.P. was seen as a person of some importance and authority in the community. Stenson's specific tasks as a JP have not been recorded, though perhaps some of his volunteer duties may have been related. For example, it had been a practice for the rate collector to attend St Albans, but one year this was stopped and Stenson was expected to help:

*"Ratepayers were not enthusiastic over having to pay their rates at Keilor this year. In previous years the rate collector attended St Albans on a set date to receive the rates. But Mr Sinclair has no means of transport and ratepayers had to be assisted by Crs. Evans and Stenson."*⁵

⁵ Sunshine Advocate 12 June 1926

The problem of developing a reticulated water supply spanned several decades, and included many disappointments, but opportunities were also taken. At one stage [in 1913] Stenson drove a number of residents over to the Maribyrnong River Konagaderra dam site, which was one of the schemes where St. Albans was to get their water, but this idea was abandoned when war broke out as the money needed was set aside for the war effort.¹

In 1912 the Progress Association discussed the possibility of buying the small local reservoir. Alfred Padley, who was a trustee, had offered the dam to the Keilor Shire, who refused to consider the offer. Stenson raised the issue with the Progress Association and members decided to take up negotiations for its purchase. Frederick Stenson, Jonathan Boyd and Peter Anderson were appointed as the trustees. Half of the purchase price was soon collected from members because possession of the dam was a matter of great importance to residents. The trusteeship of the water reserve was later offered free of cost to Keilor Council but a decision was postponed for a fuller council meeting. They took over responsibility for the dam some time prior to 1929.

In recent years there has been some uncertainty about the previous ownership of the dam in Theodore Street. One recollection is that it was there for the exclusive use of the Padley family for their homestead, and later by the Stensons when they took it over. This is not correct, because the Stensons have never owned the reservoir site. When they bought Keighlo in 1907 the dam was not included in the title certificate but remained under Padley's control, with two other trustees.

Alfred Henry Padley, Percy Oakden and John Horsefall were the trustees for the reservoir, which was intended to supply water for the residents on St Albans Estate but not for the whole district. In 1905, after he had already left the district, Alfred Padley wrote to The Hon. Thomas Bent,² complaining about the "Overnewton Closer Settlement folk" who were trespassing on the St Albans Estate and deliberately stealing the water from the dam.

¹ The Konagaderra water scheme had been talked about since the 1880s. The proposal was to build a dam on the Jackson and Deep Creeks on the Upper Maribyrnong River. One idea was to irrigate the Keilor plains, Melton, and parts of St. Albans, and divide the area up into blocks for settlement.

² Thomas Bent was a politician and land speculator. From February 1904 until January 1909 he was the Premier and Treasurer of Victoria.

Padley claimed that the government was ultimately responsible because it had sold the land.³ Padley was never shy in promoting his business or personal interests.

But having taken on the local reservoir as a communal interest, Stenson and his colleagues were then confronted with complications even after it was transferred to council. For example, in 1936 the St Albans Progress Association reported that the dam had become:

"... a favourite deposit of defunct animals ... several dead dogs and cats had been seen floating on the placid surface of the public water supply, but attempts to drag them out only made matters worse, as they were partly decomposed."⁴

Less dangerous but still concerning to locals was the practice of using the reservoir as a swimming pool. Some residents complained when newcomers started using the dam for recreational purposes and that all of them:

"... disregarded every claim by the inhabitant to having the one and only water supply within a distance of more than a mile kept clean. Evidently these swimmers have never felt the pang of being short of water, and of having to pay a big price for getting some carted from far away or they would have known better."⁵

The issue was raised in Keilor Council in December 1928. Cr. Stenson said that when the reservoir was under the control of the trustees they had stopped the practice, and now that it was under the control of the council steps should be taken to prevent the water being polluted. He moved that notice be erected warning persons against bathing in the water or otherwise contaminating it. Cr. Evans seconded the motion, which was carried.⁶ The reservoir was eventually filled and used as a children's playground, but that came later.

The Stensons were devout Anglicans and had much to do with the St Alban the Martyr Church in East Esplanade, of which Frederick Charles became the secretary for over fifty years. He was also a diocesan lay preacher⁷ with the church. The 'old' church was built in 1910 and became a hub for parishioners. Sunday school was a regular activity for the young folk and Stenson must have been proud to see his own children taking part. In 1914 Stenson officiated at the annual distribution of

³ St Albans, The First Hundred Years; p46.

⁴ Sunshine Advocate 7 February 1936

⁵ Sunshine Advocate 17 November 1928

⁶ Sunshine Advocate 8 December 1928

⁷ A person who is not ordained but is appointed to lead Church services in a religious denomination.

prizes to the scholars of St. Albans Sunday School. The vicar of the Parish was Rev. R. McCoy and the Sunday school instructress was Mrs Alice Errington, who had donated many of the prizes.

Stenson and Mrs. Errington, another strong community leader, also co-operated on other local ventures. When Mrs Errington donated land for a recreational reserve, Frederick Stenson was one of the first trustees to be appointed, the others being Edward James Luxford and Claude Turnley, who was later replaced by Alexander Dickson. Stenson's role would have been a logical extension of his support for the sporting fraternity, in part at least, because at that stage he was also the President of the St Albans Cricket Club, which became one of the main beneficiaries through its access to the ground. Errington Reserve became the focal point for sports in the district, particularly for tennis, cricket, and football, as well as the place for other youth activities and many fetes and bazaars. Stenson's stewardship of the reserve continued until 1930, but when the trustees were unable to meet the road construction costs levied by council, the property was transferred to Braybrook Shire.¹

Stenson's church-related activities targeted the older as well as the young members. In 1925 he was one of the elders who established the St Albans branch of the Church of England Men's Society. The first annual social was held at his home, where: "*A large number of members were present, also visitors from Footscray and elsewhere. Musical items were rendered throughout the evening by Mesdames Anderson and Moseley, and Messrs. Ball, Read, R. Kerdell, E. Blount, Rev. Kerdell, Rev. Batten, and several visitors.*"²

1914 had been a mixed year for the Stenson household. Frederick and Eva's fourth child, Winifred Jean, was born on the 17th March. However, the birth celebrations would have been constrained by the illness of Aunt Emma, who died on the 17th April, at St Aidan's Private Hospital in Moonee Ponds. Emma Stenson née Ashton had died at the age of 77 years, a colonist of 60 years, one of the earliest settlers in St Albans. She was buried with her late husband at the Keilor cemetery. As they say, one life replaces another, that perspective that links life and death in the continuation of society. And so life went on.

¹ For details refer to *The Errington Reserve*; Alie Missen & Tom Rigg; St Albans History Society, 2011.

² Sunshine Advocate 1 August 1925

Stenson was constantly supporting good causes. In 1916 he became President of the St Albans Repatriation Committee, in aid of the Australian Soldiers' Repatriation Fund. This fund was established by the Commonwealth in the expectation of raising private donations through patriotic endeavours to supplement the Commonwealth's contribution. Locally, this meant holding more fund-raising bazaars at the Mechanics Institute, which no doubt the ladies of the district conducted with their usual efficiency.

The first approach made to the Braybrook Shire Council about a direct road connection along the railway line between St. Albans and Albion occurred in 1914. Mr. H V McKay made an offer to the Braybrook Council of some land along the railway line to St. Albans, so as to enable a direct road from Sunshine. Cr. Opie proposed that the council accept the offer as the road would be a boon to the district and the neighbouring Shire of Keilor. Cr. Stenson who was present with a deputation from Keilor and the township of St. Albans said the land offered by Mr. McKay would allow for a direct road along the railway line from Sunbury to Ballarat road. Unfortunately, Cr. Opie's motion was lost by six votes to one.

This matter was raised again fourteen years later, in 1928, when Stenson, accompanied by James Stevens and Edward Luxford, of the St. Albans Progress Association, asked Braybrook council to acquire a small piece of land, which was not owned by anyone, so that a connecting road could be completed. Luxford mentioned that he was making his sixth appearance asking for direct communication. This time the proposal was approved, so the orphan land was acquired, but it still took a long time for a through road to be built.

Another important area with which Stenson became involved was the local building code, especially with regard to housing in St Albans. Generally speaking, building only part of a house and living in it was not permissible under the building regulations. However, Keilor Shire Council adopted a flexible approach to this requirement, which had a major influence over new housing developments in the district. This became especially noticeable in the 1950s when thousands of European displaced persons came to St. Albans because building a part house – the St. Albans bungalow – was an affordable proposition for them. But the origins of this started much earlier.

The first easing of regulations occurred in March 1924, when Cr. Stenson, the President of the Keilor Shire Council, brought before the

members a matter that was agitating residents of St. Albans. He said that Mr. Alexander Dickson was contemplating the erection of a shop in St. Albans that was to be built for a green grocery. Another contractor had in view a butcher's shop, but both would be unable to proceed if the council's by-law, compelling only brick or concrete buildings, was enforced. He thought that the council should assist the contractors in the matter. Mr. Andrew, the shire secretary, read the by-law and the building regulations, and advised the council that they had power to vary, and suggested that he be empowered to give the necessary permission for the contractors to erect the buildings in wood.¹ The authority to give that power to the secretary was carried unanimously.

Then an even more important decision was made in March 1938, when Stenson supported "the progressive construction" of a house at St. Albans. This would allow the owner living in a portion of the building for 12 months while he proceeded with the completion of the whole. The application was by Mr. Robert Francis Sulman, and the proposed building was in Gertrude Street. It was mentioned that Sulman had a wife and two young children. A plan was submitted, revealing that two rear rooms were to be erected first. Cr. Stenson said the council had refused similar applications in recent months as those to whom permission had been granted to erect houses on a progressive basis previously had not come up to scratch. In this case, however, the owner had given him the assurance that the building would be completed in 12 months, and he consented to put this promise before the council.²

The proposal was debated, but generally there was much sympathy for it. Cr. Stevens argued that council should encourage people who are struggling to make a home. Cr. Dickson stated that in the building boom, tragedies occurred when people built houses and later found out they could not pay for them. Cr. Stenson said he would be prepared to amend his motion so as to require three rooms to be completed before the house was occupied: two front rooms and the kitchen. The motion was then agreed to.³ This was the start of a flexible building code, which continued to evolve, because in the bungalow boom of the 1950s many houses started with only one or two back rooms, which were gradually extended.

1924 was an interesting year for its historical

¹ Sunshine Advocate 8 March 1924

² Sunshine Advocate 11 March 1938

³ Sunshine Advocate 11 March 1938

connections, because the Progress Association held a public meeting to organise the Hume and Hovell centenary celebrations. It was decided to erect a memorial cairn between St. Albans and Sydenham on the probable route that the explorers would have taken through the district back in 1824. Messrs. Stenson, Sheridan, Keidell, Dickson and Perrett formed a committee to arrange this. The ceremonial event occurred on 10 January 1925:

"On Friday afternoon the Hume and Hovell centenary memorial, situated at the corner of Taylor's and the Sydenham roads and at the railway crossing between the towns of St. Albans and Sydenham, was unveiled before a large gathering of residents and visitors. The unveiling was performed by Ellen McDonald, the youngest pupil of St. Albans State school, and Master Hume, a descendant of the explorer, while appropriate speeches were made by Sir James Barrett, Dr. Leach and Messrs. White, Stenson, Sheridan, Hume and Luxford. Much of the credit for erection of the memorial is due to Mr. A. Dickson snr., for the amount of time he put in and the running about he had in connection with it. Thanks are also due to Mr. A. McCauley for allowing the memorial on his property and carting the stone for the building, and to Mrs. Boyd for providing afternoon tea for the visitors. The memorial consists of a very neat bluestone cairn capped with white quartz, with the initials of the explorers worked in white quartz on either side of a brass tablet containing an inscription."⁴

It's interesting to note that the other famous colonial explorer, John Batman, who came through the St Albans area in 1835, has never received the same recognition in local history.

In 1926, Stenson experienced a period of illness and was confined to his bed for several weeks, which was described in the local paper as: "Cr. Stenson has been working very hard in connection with practically every local affair for over 20 years, and, in the last few months, has had a lot of work and worry in connection with some of them, and the strain has told its tale."⁵ However, this did not prevent Stenson from attending to his private concerns when he bought an extra seventeen acres of land near St Albans. This was probably more farmland, as there was never any mention of him taking on property development. Some people have mentioned Stenson being a farmer-grazier but his overall land holdings do not appear to have

⁴ Sunshine Advocate Saturday 10 January 1925.

The cairn was originally built on the north-west corner of the railway line and Taylors Road intersection. It was relocated to the south-west corner when the railway underpass was reconstructed.

⁵ Sunshine Advocate 23 October 1926

been very extensive.

In 1927 Cr. Stenson's efforts for electricity supply were looking more positive after he and the shire engineer interviewed officials of the Electricity Commission regarding the proposed lighting of St. Albans. As a result, a definite scheme was prepared for submission to the council. This came to fruition the following year when fourteen houses on the west side of the railway line were due to be connected and the lighting of Boundary Road as a joint task with Braybrook Council was agreed to. However, it was noted with some disappointment that the Railway Department was refusing to have the station properly lit.¹

Meanwhile, the hopes for a permanent water supply also looked brighter. In July 1932, Cr. Stenson, in his role as chairman of the Keilor-St. Albans Water Trust, reported to the Council that Mr. White, MLA, had presented the latest water scheme before the Premier, Sir Argyle, who promised to use his influence to have the scheme adopted under the unemployment relief schedule. Cr. Parsons moved a vote of thanks, saying Cr. Stenson had spent over twenty-five years advocating this scheme, which looked nearer to success than at any other time. Cr. Stenson had spent half a lifetime working for what seemed now to be achieved. The motion was carried, and as the President passed it on to Cr. Stenson, he said that he hoped he would live long enough to be privileged to turn the water on.² However, the water was not connected until 1940.

1932 was special because that it was Stenson's silver jubilee as a councillor. Representatives from the Church of England, the Mechanics Hall Committee, the School Committee, Keilor Council and the Progress Association organised a celebratory evening. This was held at Keilor at a specially invited supper, where Stenson was presented with a medal in the form of a Gold Albert³ to commemorate his 25 years' service as a member of Keilor Council. He was praised not only for his work as a councillor in general but also as a delegate to the municipal association and the water trust, the local progress association, the church and the school. The speakers also referred to the great assistance that Mrs. Stenson had given to her husband throughout his public career.⁴

¹ Sunshine Advocate 14 July 1928

² Sunshine Advocate 8 July 1932

³ This was probably in the form of a gold chain and medallion rather than the Gold Albert Medal *per se*, which was a war medal.

⁴ Sunshine Advocate 28 October 1932

During the 1930s Stenson was also involved with the Keilor Public Assistance Committee. Apparently Mrs. Agnes Stevens had proposed in March 1930 *"to form an organisation to raise money to help the unemployed in each Riding."*⁵ This was then raised in council by her husband, Cr. James Stevens, and was later taken up by Cr. Evans and Mrs Turner, who formed the St Albans Relief Committee.

As a result of these initiatives, *"Keilor shire council decided to cooperate with the St. Albans Relief committee and provide pound for pound with that body for its efforts to relieve unemployment problems in the area."*⁶

The Keilor Public Assistance Committee was established to oversee the administration of unemployment relief in the shire. The purpose was to support the unemployed but this was through material aid or vouchers (food, some clothing and shoes, and maybe firewood, etc) rather than with cash. Frank Farrugia recalls: *"I can remember going down to the Mechanics Hall about once a month for a basket of goodies; and sometimes, if your shoes were worn out, you might get them replaced."*

Unfortunately the affairs of the Assistance Committee became a bit of a political hot potato because of bruised egos and competing ideas. Some councillors wanted to provide employment rather than handouts. Others were disillusioned because relief seekers left the committee once they found a job.

The infighting about the Assistance Committee was partly about the kudos of claiming the initiative and partly about the mechanics of setting up appropriate administrative structures. As one person asked:

*"Why was it now necessary to have a Public Assistance Committee of 17, a sub-committee at North Essendon, and another at St. Albans, when previously a man in each centre (except for the ladies' auxiliary at North Essendon) was sufficient to carry out the work."*⁷

The answer was that it was done according to the Unemployment Relief Administration Act.

Some locals recall the depression as being a particularly hard time when *"nearly everyone in St Albans was on the susso."* Perhaps it wasn't quite as bad as that, because in December 1933 there were 36 men in the Shire of Keilor working for sustenance but more were assisted

⁵ Sunshine Advocate Friday 24 July 1931

⁶ The Age 9 June 1930

⁷ Sunshine Advocate 19 May 1933

over time. The “susso workers,” as they were known, were put to work around the municipality in digging trenches and repairing roads: *“It was only a gravel road and you would have a gang of men going up and down the road filling up the holes and tamping it down. It was like working for the dole.”*¹

Perhaps such activity encouraged more of the same, because in 1935 there was an unusual proposal for improving the roads, and that was for residents to do the work themselves. Stenson, on behalf of some of the residents in Biggs Street, said they wanted permission to put down the foundation of a road, and when this was done all the council would be asked for was a few loads of material for surfacing, and if the council would not give them a few loads of metal they would supply it themselves. Several councillors were not happy with this proposal because it was not clear what responsibilities Council would carry as a consequence. A motion that all action by the council regarding Biggs Street be temporarily abandoned was agreed to. This debate was continued at a later meeting when Cr. Stenson and Cr. Stevens supported the motion, saying the people were worthy of all the help the council could give them. The street was the worst in St. Albans. This time the proposal was carried. In fact there had been precedents where council delivered loads of screenings onto roadsides for residents to fill up holes.

The unmade roads in St Albans were a big problem in winter when the low lying areas became impassable quagmires. Mary Smith remembers her father with a shovel and wheelbarrow tackling a pile of road metal to fix their patch of Millawa Avenue.

St Albans was in celebratory mode in July 1940 because it was finally connected to the Board of Works water scheme! A “turning on the tap” ceremony was held to celebrate the event:

*“Before a large and representative gathering, the first water under the new Board of Works reticulation scheme at St. Albans was drawn by Mrs Hilbert, mother of the president of the Keilor shire (Cr. H. Hilbert) on Tuesday evening last. After assembling in the Mechanics Hall the party of ladies and gentlemen proceeded to near the corner of Boundary Road and The Esplanade, where a hydrant had been set up in readiness for the ceremony. As the tap was being turned by Mrs. Hilbert, the president of Keilor shire said he rejoiced that St. Albans at last had the water for which they had fought over the past 32 years.”*²

¹ Frank Farrugia.

² Sunshine Advocate 26 July 1940

Mr. Harry Owen White, M.L.A. paid a special tribute to Cr. Frederick Stenson and Mr Edward Luxford, saying that if ever a monument was raised at St. Albans, it should be in honour of these two gentlemen for their success with regard to the water supply. Luxford was a long-term member of the Progress Association³ and had been working with Stenson for many years regarding the water supply problems.

In 1942 the Keilor Shire Council finally took over the responsibility for the St Albans Hall. The Mechanics Institute hall and library had been managed for many years by a local committee and Frederick Stenson was the trustee for the building and had been one of the committee members for considerable time. The committee had wanted council to take over the hall as it was proving to be a burden, especially concerning the maintenance and repairs. There was still a small mortgage outstanding. The land was valued at £75, the hall at £300, piano £75, furniture £30 library £50, a total of £530. It was stated that if there were a foreclosure on the mortgage that St. Albans would have no public hall. Council agreed to take over the mortgage and thus also the responsibility for the hall.⁴

After a long illness Eva Stenson passed away on 29 May 1945 at the age of 75 years; the body was interred at Keilor cemetery. It is unfortunate that her involvement in the community was not as well documented as her husband's. Her background support role had been acknowledged to some extent at her husband's silver jubilee celebration, when *“Each speaker also paid a high tribute to the great assistance which Mrs. Stenson had given to her husband during his 25 years, for, without a sympathetic wife in these affairs, no man could get anywhere, they said.”*⁵

Apart from this rare acknowledgement, almost nothing had been reported in the local newspapers about Eva Leah Stenson's work and achievements in the district, which is a similar fate to that experienced by Aunt Emma. Such information would have been known and shared within a communal oral history tradition but unfortunately this has now been lost. After his wife died Frederick Charles decided it was time to retire. He announced that he would not seek re-election when his term of office expired in 1947. The decision capped 40

³ Edward James Luxford was the President of the St Albans Progress Association for nearly 30 years. It is said that he started the Association in 1907.

⁴ Sunshine Advocate 16 October 1942

⁵ Sunshine Advocate 28 October 1932

years of continuous representation on behalf of residents in the Maribyrnong Riding.

Stenson's retirement from council created an opening for other local aspirants and it ended as a three-way contest between James Eddie, Daniel Gavaghan, and Harold Easton. Eddie, a grazier, had arrived six years earlier and had a farm on Taylors Road. Gavaghan was the endorsed Labor candidate; he worked for the State Electricity Commission and had been a local resident for fourteen years. Easton had established a hardware store in East Esplanade in 1946, but earlier he had been involved in local youth activities through the Presbyterian Church. Agnes Stevens, widow of James H. Stevens, who had been a Keilor councillor for many years, was promised strong support if she nominated, but she declined due to the pressure of her community activities. She endorsed the candidature of James Eddie, whom she believed "*has all the qualifications of a live wire civic representative.*"¹

It's hard to know if Agnes Stevens's personal endorsement influenced many ratepayers, but people respected her enormously because of the decades of voluntary work that she had contributed to the township. In any case, James Eddie was elected comfortably after the allocation of preferences. Agnes Stevens was another woman whose leadership role in the community has gone largely unreported. She was a stalwart supporter of the church, had been on the parents committee at the primary school for many years, organised many fund-raising events in the district, and was the public face of the benevolent society. People still remember Agnes Stevens for helping distribute aid to families during the depression. On top of that she was an accomplished pianist and would readily support any local event and celebration in this capacity. She also donated land for a reserve, and that is Jamieson Reserve in Main Road West.

In October 1947, the local Mechanics' Institute was packed to capacity when residents throughout the Shire of Keilor paid tribute to Frederick Stenson, on his retirement from active municipal life after 40 years' continuous service. On behalf of the local residents, the Chairman of the Citizens' Committee thanked Mr. Stenson for his efforts on their behalf, both in municipal and private life. He was ably supported by the President of the Shire of Keilor, Cr. William Nathan Gooch, and Crs. James Eddie and Alexander Dickson. On behalf of the residents Cr. Gooch presented Stenson with a bank

cheque for a substantial sum as a mark of respect and appreciation for his past services. Stenson was given an enthusiastic reception when he replied.²

Little has been recorded about Stenson's activities in the decade after he retired. Undoubtedly he would have kept active within the church, but otherwise he seems to have withdrawn completely from public life. One can imagine a gradual decline in physical health and his financial position seems to have also deteriorated. As has been noted by local historians, the condition of Keighlo, his once grand home in Winifred Street, "*slowly went to rack and ruin.*" In fact when the house was occupied by the Catholic diocese there was talk of having it demolished. However, local builder Fred Barnard was able to restore it.

One can speculate that Stenson's finances dissipated because small-scale farming had become unviable. David Millburn and his sons were buying neighbouring land to extend their holdings, but that was not the case with the Stensons. The Stenson farm became hemmed in by the river at one end and urban growth at the other – there was nowhere else nearby to expand to. There was also greater competition from orchards in the Bacchus Marsh district, which had the advantage of a planned irrigation scheme, in contrast to Keilor, where farmers were installing pumping machines individually. Bacchus Marsh became one of the most successful districts for growing fruit and was especially noted for its prolific apple orchards. The development of irrigation farming around Shepparton after the war with its intake of experienced European farmers encouraged enormous investment in orchards, and the fruit preserving and canning industries very quickly followed – think of the Shepparton Preserving Company, SPC, as an example.

Frederick Charles Stenson passed away on 11 June 1958, aged 88 years. He was buried with his late wife at Keilor cemetery. He had seen enormous change in his community over his lifetime. When he arrived in 1888, St. Albans probably had a population of between 100 and 200 people and this remained pretty much unchanged for the next 40 years. By the time Stenson retired from public life the population had grown to about 800 people, so it was still a village, albeit a larger one than when he'd arrived. But he could not have foreseen the population explosion that occurred during the decade of his retirement, as by the end of that period the population had reached 6,000 –

¹ Sunshine Advocate 20 June 1947

² Sunshine Advocate 10 October 1947

Stenson's small farming village at the turn of the century had become a town of multicultural proportions.



Fred & Eva with daughters & grandchildren © G Kratsis

As his uncle before him, Frederick Stenson did not have a son to whom he could pass on the family farm. Frederick and Eva raised four daughters: Alice, Mary, Emily, and Winifred. None of the daughters appears to have inherited the family farm, so either they were not interested in it or it was already sold off by the time of their father's death. The eldest daughter, Alice, did become a farmer's wife, but that was on her husband's property, known as Burn Brae, in Taylors Road.

Alice Eva was born on 17 April 1900. She married Fred Anderson on 18 April 1923. The Andersons were farmers on Taylors Road. Peter and Hannah Anderson came from Campbellfield in about 1910 and became known as one of the greatest hay-growing families in the district. Fred was the eldest son and he continued in the farming tradition by establishing his own farm also in Taylors Road but on the western side of the railway line. Alice was also with the St Alban the Martyr Church and had acted as the secretary for parish fairs, raising funds to reduce the debt on the vicarage.

Mary Ruby was born on 9 February 1902. She wed Thomas Daniel Crawford in 1934 and had a daughter Kathleen Mary who was born on 30.3.1934 and a son Thomas Frederick born on 15.2.1937. Thomas Daniel Crawford was born in 1895 and was an ANZAC with the 3rd Battalion in World War One; he died on 24.7.1971 aged 76.¹ Mary Ruby died in 1974 and is buried with her late husband at Burwood. Kathleen Mary married Guenter Heinz Schultze (1929-1978); they had two children, Alan and Ann-Mary. Kathleen died on 5.6.2010 and is buried at Burwood. Thomas Frederick married

Elaine; he died on 3.7.1999 and is also buried at Burwood.

Emily Leah was born on 6 June 1904. She married Frank Hall of Sydenham in 1942 at the height of the World War II. Em, as she was known to her friends, was one of the longest-lived residents in St Albans. She had strong links with St Alban the Martyr Church, having been the organist for 50 years. She died in 2000 at the age of 96 years. At her funeral eulogy she was referred to as "*an icon of the St Albans community.*"

Winifred Jean was born on 17 March 1914. In 1943 she married John William Edward Honey, but everyone knew him as Jack, one of Honey family from the Opie Estate near Station Road. He was a blacksmith and worked with the Victorian railways. Winifred was the honorary secretary and treasurer of the St Albans sub-branch of the Red Cross Society around 1940. She had three children: John, who worked with the Lort Smith Animal Shelter and has retired to Port Fairy; Fred, who became a bank manager and has retired in Gippsland; and Gwen, who worked as a telephonist and clerk and is now living in Hoppers Crossing.

The Stenson family contributed enormously to the district. Between them, Charles and Frederick Stenson spanned a century of work in the district. Frederick Charles, with the support of his wife and daughters, became a senior statesman and leader within the church and in municipal life. It is fitting that he was given a Gold Albert for his work in the community and it is even more fitting that he should be remembered with respect as "Mr. St Albans." #



Auntie Em (Mrs Hall) with Jill and Wayne Kratsis
© Gwen Kratsis

¹ Information to be confirmed.

Discussions with Gwen Kratsis née Honey

Gwen is a descendant of the Stenson and Honey families, late of St Albans. Her mother was Winifred Jean, who was the youngest daughter of Frederick Charles and Eva Leah Stenson, a couple of early pioneers. Winifred's granduncle was Charles Stenson, who came to Australia in 1855. Her father was Jack Honey, who was born in Footscray but the family later moved to St Albans. After growing up in St Albans Gwen eventually moved to establish her own home and raise two children with her husband. She is currently living in retirement in Hoppers Crossing.



Winifred Stenson © Gwen Kratsis

I was born in 1950 and my mum was Winifred Stenson [see above] who married John Honey. Mum was born in 1914 and she was one of four daughters of Frederick and Eva Stenson. My aunts were Em, Al, and Ruby, who were all born in St Albans and all grew up in the big family home known as Keighlo. I have two older brothers, Fred and John. Fred was born in 1944 and John in 1946. Both my brothers have retired to the country; one is in Port Fairy and the other near Bairnsdale.

I remember St Albans when it was still a small town – there were fewer houses and lots of paddocks around. The shops were mostly near the railway station, along Main Road and East Esplanade. People still drove horses. I remember there were horses at the back of the Keighlo property and I have photos of my brothers sitting on a horse when they were quite young.

My granddad had a horse and cart and would go and visit Auntie Al who was living in Taylors Road where there were several farms. She was married to Fred Anderson and they had a farm along Taylors Road. Like my granddad, Fred's parents were some of the early settlers in the area who took up farming. In fact several of the Anderson sons became local farmers.

My grandfather was Mr. Frederick Stenson, who was from England. He came to St Albans in 1888 to help his uncle on the farm near the Maribyrnong River. He was involved in many things around St Albans, such as the Anglican Church, the Mechanics Hall and the St Albans Progress Association. I was quite young when he died so I don't remember very much about him. He was on the Keilor council for many years but retired a few years before I was born. He was living in Keighlo until he died and the Catholic Church bought the house and let us stay there for a while when they were building the school. The Catholic Church and the Sacred Heart School were built right opposite Keighlo. I still have a photograph of the old house not long after it was built by the Padleys,¹ and it was the biggest house in town at the time. My grandparents lived in that house for about fifty years. Grandpa died in 1958. Grandma Stenson had died about ten years earlier so I never knew her at all, but mum said she had grown up in North Melbourne. After Grandpa died the Catholic Church renovated the old house and that became the home for the priests.

My mum was the youngest of the Stenson daughters. She was involved with St Alban the Martyr Church near the crossing to the old primary school. My grandfather was one of the people who helped build the original church in the early 1900s and was a lifelong member. Auntie Em was their organist for many years. Mum was the treasurer at the church for some time and also ran some their social and fundraising events. The old church burnt down when I was about 10. I was born in 1950, so it must have burnt down in the late 'fifties.

Mum helped establish a branch of the Australian Red Cross Society and completed a first aid course with them in 1940; I still have her Red Cross certificate. She was on the advisory committee at the St Albans North Primary School when I was there. She was on that for a few years until I went to the high school.

¹ Alfred Padley built Keighlo circa 1887 and sold it to John Ellis in 1902. Frederick and Eva Stenson bought the property in 1907.

Mum was a singer and had a beautiful voice. I remember times where Aunt Em was playing the piano and mum singing. They were both linked strongly to the Anglican Church of St. Alban the Martyr.



Winifred Honey & children © Gwen Kratsis

Mum did not age well and later developed Alzheimers. Dad wanted to move to a retirement home but mum was set on staying at home as long as she could. She was very comfortable in her home and seldom left it. She passed away about 1997.

My father was Jack (John) Honey, who grew up in Footscray. He was a blacksmith with the railways in his working years. He became a foreman and was very well respected by his colleagues. His team made rail tracks and signals. He was very proud of his work and in particular the fact that he and mum were awarded free public transport anywhere in Victoria for life. He would proudly show people his pass but the funny thing is that he used it only a few times. He didn't drink or smoke and, like my grandfather, served on the Keilor Council. Not long before he passed away the Council named a street in St Albans East after him - Honey Grove.

He was a keen vegetable gardener and regularly went to the Senior Citizens in St Albans. He sold his veggies there to raise money for the club. Every Tuesday he would do the shopping at Selfs,¹ as he would call it, which is now the IGA, for himself and Auntie Em. He passed away of a heart attack at home in his sleep about 1991.

¹ Self Bros & Goddard in East Esplanade.

My aunt Em, Emily Hall, enjoyed much better health than my mum – probably because she had no children! She was very active and had many friends who would visit her in her William Street home. Her house was very basic with a wood stove that she still used and no hot water in the kitchen. She married Frank Hall from Sydenham who built the house. He later passed away fishing at Pykes Creek before my son was born. He was a heavy drinker. When the house was sold the real estate board read "The last cottage in St Albans." It was later knocked down for units.

Aunt Em lived alone for many years with her dog and a back yard with chickens. When she worked on the farm in Stenson Road she worked as hard as any man. She loved going to the Senior Citz Club as a social outing. I would take the children to her house on Saturdays and she would really spoil them. Aunt Em was the last of the Stenson daughters to pass away. She died about 2000 not long after mum. The reverend gave a fantastic ceremony at her funeral as he visited her every week for years and years and knew her like family.

When I was growing we were living on the corner of William and Arthur streets near the old water tanks not far from my grandparents' place. I have a photo of my brothers with the horse before the old house was sold. The horses were kept at the back of Keighlo because it had a big paddock as the back yard. Aunt Em was living in Williams Street and Aunt Al was on a farm in Taylors Road, which was further away.



Fred and John Honey © Gwen Kratsis

It was all unmade roads around us and there were no gutters but there were a lot of pot holes in the streets. When I first went to school there was still just the original primary school and that was in West Esplanade across the railway line from where we were living. It was crowded with children from all parts of Europe so you really noticed how multicultural St Albans was becoming. Then I went to the St Albans North Primary when they built that. That was up in Fox Street. Lucia Harricot was a school mate of mine there and we had some good times as friends. Mr Blain was the principal and I remember him because he used to hold school assemblies every Monday morning. Mr Giniifer was a teacher at the school when I was there. He was later elected as the local Member of Parliament and they named the railway station at Furlong Road after him. He died unexpectedly and when they built the new station they named it after him as a memorial. That's why it's called Giniifer Station. That was in the early eighties.

There was only one high school in St Albans in the 'fifties and that was in Main Road East. I started there in 1964. Mr Torpey was the headmaster when I started going there. He was alright as a headmaster but I don't remember any other teachers in particular. I didn't play any sports or anything like that at school; I mainly spent time with my friends. Margaret Watson lived near us and we'd get together for company. We enjoyed going to the Sunshine swimming pool, which was the closest one at the time. That was when I was about twelve. We'd catch the train to Sunshine and the pool wasn't far from the station.

Both my brothers went to the St Albans High School. My older brother Fred started there in 1957, which was the year it first opened in Main Road East. He liked sports and played football and cricket at the high school. Fred started playing football with the St Albans Police Youth Club team at Errington Reserve, and then for the St Albans Football Club in the 'sixties. He must have taken after my father's side of the family, because Norman Honey was a good football player. My other brother John was not so much involved in sports apart from school sports.

I was only a few years at the high school and then went to work. At first I worked in a handbag factory in the city. I would take the train to the city. It was messy work because you worked with glues. I was there a few years. There were quite a few people working there because there were the machinists and the bench hands and there was also a

despatch section. Every one had a particular job to do and I worked as a bench hand, which meant putting the linings into the bags. After that job I worked in the telephone exchange for a few years, which was also in the city, in Little Bourke Street. I was there about five years and finished in about 1972. Working as a telephonist was much nicer than the work in the bag factory. After that I worked as a clerical assistant with Telecom on the corner of Collins and Elizabeth street; it was known as the Postmaster-General's Department or PMG when I started.¹ I was there also about five years, but after I got married and had my first child I stopped working there so that I could look after my son at home.

I had married Zenny Kratsis in 1973. We had met through the St Albans Football Club at one of their social events. My brother Fred played for the football club in the 'sixties. The club held a dance at the Church of England Hall and that's where I met Zenny. His parents were of Greek background and migrated to Australia in the 'fifties. Zenny was quite young when they arrived here. He later worked at Angliss Meatworks, which was in Footscray.

After we married we lived in Norman Street. We had two children, Wayne and Jill. When they were little it was easy to take them on visits to my mum's place or Auntie Em's because we were all still living in St Albans. Mum adored seeing her grandchildren and Auntie Em had no children so she enjoyed our visits. Wayne now works in local government with the parks and gardens department. Jill became a naturopath and settled in Woodend. She liked athletics when she was young and I still have some of the certificates she received in her running competitions.

My brother John ended up working for the RSPCA in the office. We always had a dog or two as pets and he always liked animals so he joined the RSPCA and ended up working for the Lort Smith Animal Shelter. He's retired now and living by the sea in Port Fairy. My other brother Fred became a bank manager, and he's retired as well. He was with Westpac for many years and worked as a branch manager, which meant he usually worked in different places. He has now settled down in Kalimna, which is in country Victoria out past Bairnsdale towards Lakes Entrance. #

Gwen Kratsis, 2013

¹ In 1975 the Postmaster General's Department was split in two, with Telecom being responsible for telecommunications and Australia Post for postal services.



Jack Honey with grandchild © Gwen Kratsis



Marriage of Gwen Honey & Zenny Kratsis © G Kratsis



Gwen Honey with mother Winifred © G Kratsis

Note: Special thanks to Wayne Kratsis for helping with the Stenson family background.

TATE, Paul and Hannah

Paul Tate was born in 1827 in Skipton In Craven, Yorkshire, England. His father was William Tate (born 1785) and his mother was Isabella Hallam (born 1791).

Paul Tate married Hannah Hodgson (born 1827) in Leeds about 1847. They migrated with his father to Australia in 1850, so they were early pioneers in the colony. They had twelve children but most of them died in their infancy or in their youth, the longer-term survivors being James (1859-1920) and Hannah (1861-1878).

During the 1850s Paul and Hannah bought farmland on the eastern bank of Jacksons Creek at Bulla from John Pascoe Fawcner.¹ The area became known as Tullamarine Island because the Jackson and Deep creeks isolated it from the surrounding plains except for a northern entry point near Bulla village.

John Pascoe Fawcner was also known as "The Father of Melbourne" and was instrumental in opening up the land for small farmers:

"... about 1850 John Pascoe Fawcner purchased from the Crown land on the east side of what became Tate's ford ... By 1852 Fawcner's 'Victoria Cooperative Freehold and Land Investment Society' had subdivided the land into small parcels of about 20 acres and transferred these to purchasers from the labouring classes (e.g., a gold miner, labourer, carter). Fawcner's Land Society was a co-operative to which members contributed a joining fee and weekly instalments. Fawcner would then purchase the large allotments in which Crown lands were sold at that time, and which most aspiring farmers could never hope to acquire. The land was then subdivided into blocks of between 10 and 50 acres, and apportioned to the Society members in accordance with their contributions. Fawcner operated the scheme successfully for a few years in the late 1840s and early 50s."

The Tates named their farm 'Pleasant Vale' where they bred and sold dairy cattle, such as:

*"60 first class dairy cows, a few in full milk and a large majority of the whole within a few days of calving; 20 young cattle, including steers fit for yoke; 20 pigs 10 prime porkers, and 10 store pigs. ... The auctioneers have seen the cattle, and can with confidence pronounce them really first-class. They are all young, in high condition and full profit, and will be sold without any reserve."*²

¹ Isaac Batry "Historical Records of the Sunbury Region" Sunbury News 27 August 1910 p2

² Argus 27 September 1862

In the 1870s the Tates bought land to the west of the creek along Mcleods Road; that was their farm at Diggers Rest. They built a ford across the creek, which became known as Tate's Ford and was used by the Tullamarine Island settlers to access the Holden Common, the Diggers Rest railway station and the school.¹

Tate also acquired blocks 30 and 31 in St Albans, being 150 acres between the farms of William Taylor and David Milburn along the south west corner of Taylors Road and Kings Road. It is not clear if these blocks were selected in the first ballot of 1868, but Tate received the title for the land in 1872 and offered the land for sale in October 1877 as "*splendid grazing land*."² It was well grassed but with some stone patches and drained by shallow gullies into the Kororoit Creek. This farm was probably where graziers Henry and Mary Coleman would settle in 1904.

Paul and Hannah's longest-lived daughter, also named Hannah, was born in Tullamarine in 1861 and died of typhoid fever in 1878:

*"The deceased young lady, who, at the time of her death, was eighteen years of age, had been ailing for a considerable time, during which she had twice been in a fair way of recovery, but had on each occasion suffered a relapse; her death taking place on Monday week last. ... Great commiseration is felt for Mr and Mrs Tate in their affliction, this being the eleventh child they have buried, but one now remaining of a once fine family of twelve."*³

The son James Paul Tate, born in Tullamarine in 1859, married Elizabeth "Bessie" Milburn on 28 March 1883. The Milburns were Keilor pioneers renowned for their market gardens and irrigation system along the Salt Water River. Their daughter's wedding was such a grand occasion that it was described in a local paper as being a very brilliant affair:

"Long before 11 o'clock, the time appointed for the ceremony, numbers of buggies, carriages, and cabs were seen wending their way towards the township; some going onto Grange farm, the residence of the bride, while others contented themselves with driving to the Church. About 10.30 the cavalcade at the farm formed, and headed by the bridal carriage with its spanking greys, drove to the church, where they were met by the Rev. Mr. Rhodda the celebrant, and a large crowd, amongst whom the fair sex predominated. The church ceremonies over, the procession was reformed, and drove back to Mr. Milburn's, where a

sumptuous banquet was spread for over 150 guests. The long line of tables was laden with all kinds of luxuries. This magnificent spread was given to celebrate a "double event" as Mr. Milburn's eldest son, Alfred, was married at Yea a few days previously, and was, with his young bride, present to share in the festivities.

*"After the toasts usual on such occasions, the company adjourned to other parts of the house, where music, singing, dancing, etc, were indulged in to a late hour in the evening, when the happy pair took their departure amidst showers of good wishes, rice, and slippers. A grand ball was held in the evening, which was attended by 100 couples. The viands and wines and spirits at supper were dispensed with the same unsparing hand as at the banquet, so that the young people, and old too, returned to the ball-room with renewed energy and spirits. Dancing to the inspiring strains of a Melbourne band, was kept up till 5 in the morning. Mr. Tate gave a return ball on Thursday evening last, when nearly the same programme was successfully carried out. Over 100 couples were present."*⁴

Paul Tate was 56 years of age in 1883 when he decided to lease out his farm and held a clearing sale of his stock and farm equipment. There was a large attendance of buyers, the bidding was spirited, and the result proved to be very successful. The horse buyers were keen competitors, with the heavy mares realizing from £33 10s to £55, colts and fillies from £20 10s to £42 10s.⁵

Then in October 1885 at the age of 58 years Tate sold off his 300-acre 'Bright View Farm' near Bulla Bulla. Paul and Hannah retired to their home 'Bay View House', near Lincolnshire Park in Essendon. Paul Tate died on 12 November 1891 at the age of 65 years. Hannah Tate née Hodgson died on 18 April 1912, aged 86 years.

James and Bessie Tate seem to have taken over the family farm or extended it, though the business went by the name "Tate Brothers of Pleasant Vale, Diggers Rest."

James and Bessie raised a family of four sons and six daughters.⁶ One of their sons, Frederick Milburn Tate, died on 19 April 1915 at the young age of 22.⁷ Another tragedy occurred in the following week when their son Ernest James was killed in action at Gallipoli. Andrew Tate, a family descendent, would later write how his great-uncle Ernest James Tate

¹ The first school was built in 1874; a new school was built in 1901 in premises leased from James Tate.

² Argus 23 October 1877

³ Bacchus Marsh Express 6 April 1878 p3

⁴ Bacchus Marsh Express 21 April 1883

⁵ Bacchus Marsh Express 5 May 1883

⁶ Keilor Pioneers p284

⁷ Argus 21 April 1915 p1

of Diggers Rest landed at Gallipoli, aged 27, with the AIF 16th Battalion, 1st Reinforcement on April 25, 1915, and was killed a week later:

*“Great Uncle Ern did not get to spruik his adventures. He didn’t even get his last letter from home. Late in the afternoon on that first Anzac Day, Ern stormed the dark hills that would envelop him, while the same day in Diggers Rest his brother Herb posted a letter that would eventually be returned months later, unopened.”*¹

The body of Ernest James Tate was never recovered but he was awarded several medals posthumously, including the 1914/15 Star, the British War Medal, and the Victory Medal. A Memorial Scroll was presented to his father, and a Memorial plaque to his mother.

Bessie Tate also contributed to the war effort as she was remembered for her interests in community activities, especially her work for the Red Cross during the First World War.² The family’s contribution to the Australian cause would extend to the Second World War, when other relatives from Diggers Rest signed up: Alfred Frank Tate was with the RAN Reserve 1921 to 1925 and mobilized for service in 1942; and James Edward Tate (born 25 August 1919) enlisted at Sunbury in 1939.

James Tate died on 18 November 1920, aged 61 years, at his retirement residence ‘Lolona’ in Raleigh Street, Essendon. His remains were buried at Keilor Cemetery.³ A decade later, on the 2nd January 1931, Elizabeth “Bessie” Tate née Milburn died at Pleasant Vale, Diggers’ Rest, at the age of 66 years.⁴ Her remains were also buried at Keilor. The family farming business continued to operate as “Tate Bros of Pleasant Vale” from the Diggers Rest area. #



¹ Andrew Tate “True Remembrance” Sydney Morning Herald 22 April 2012

<http://www.smh.com.au/federal-politics/society-and-culture/true-remembrance-20120421-1xe1s.html>

² Keilor Pioneers p 284

³ Argus 20 November 1920 p13

⁴ Argus 3 January 1931 p9

TAYLOR, William and Helen



William and Helen Taylor

William Taylor was born 20 November 1818 in Glasgow, Lanarkshire, Scotland, the son of William Taylor and Martha Kirkwood. William junior migrated at the age of 22 to Port Phillip in August 1840 and bought a sheep-run on the Moorabool River near Geelong. In 1844 he acquired 206,000 acres in Wimmera with Dugald McPherson⁵ and explored even further in the Mallee and along the Murray River.⁶

In 1847 William Taylor was appointed as a territorial magistrate (later justice of the peace) of New South Wales “*having authority from Brisbane to the South Australian border.*”⁷ It was a mark of authority for a 29-year-old who had been in the colony for only 7 years. In 1847 he protested to Sir Charles Fitzroy, governor-in-chief of New South Wales, against the landing of London prisoners in Hobsons Bay. The Port Phillip colonists had decided that the dumping of Britain’s convicted criminals was not in the interests of the growing local populace, who aspired to a better future than just being a penal colony.

Taylor bought his Sydenham property in 1849 at the age of 31, naming it Overnewton and building it up into a sheep run. In that year he married 16-year-old Helen Wilson Fiskien, who was a younger sister of Archibald Fiskien, one of Taylor’s business partners.⁸ Helen was born

⁵ Dugald had been a fellow passenger on the barque Culdee when Taylor migrated to Australia.

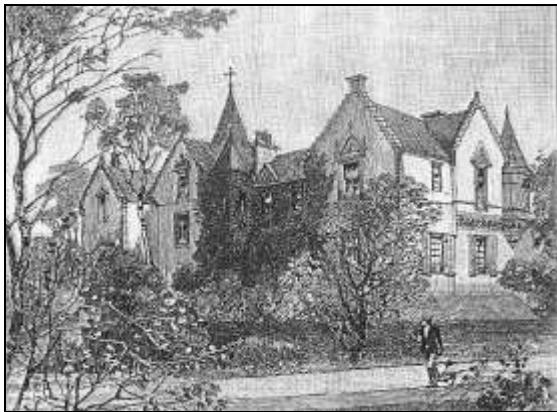
⁶ Hone, J. Ann, *Taylor, William (1818–1903)*, Australian Dictionary of Biography <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/taylor-william-1681/text7775>,

⁷ Argus 17 August 1934. The position was probably equivalent to the modern Justice of the Peace.

⁸ The marriage was at ‘Ingliston,’ the Fiskien family property between Ballan and Bachhus Marsh. Alie Missen *Sydenham Memorial Moments* p31

on 23 January 1832 in Glasgow, the daughter of Archibald Fisken (1796-1854) and Elizabeth Inglis (1800-1903). The family migrated in 1840 when young Archibald was eleven; he started his life as a grazier at 17 when he became the manager of a couple of family properties. In 1846 he joined William Taylor on the trek to the Wimmera and established a cattle grazing property east of Ballarat. When the gold rush occurred Fisken made his fortune by selling beef to the gold diggers.¹

The Taylors built their 'baronial castle' in stages near the Keilor end of their Sydenham property. In fact the Sydenham area was known as Overnewton at the time, because it was part of the Overnewton Estate² that stretched from near the Keilor village along Taylors Road and halfway to Melton, taking up much of the land to the west of the railway line that would later become parts of Sydenham and St Albans.



Overnewton from Victoria and Its Metropolis Vol. 2

Taylor became involved in politics during the 1850s. In 1854-56 he was the member for Wimmera in the Legislative Council and for a while he was a member of the Stawell Shire council. He ran for Creswick in the Legislative Assembly in 1859 and in 1864 stood for the Southern Province in the Legislative Council against J McKenzie of St Kilda and was elected. Taylor asserted that:

"... he was not a squatter in Victoria, but claimed their votes on the ground that he was really a country resident, and represented the best interests of the constituency. In the old times when squatting was not what it was now, he had been a pioneer settler on the Wimmera, and had, therefore, done something for the country. He then went through a brief category of his opinions, as contained in his advertised

*address, and ... avowed that he would now, as when an elective member of the old Legislative Council, be in favour of allowing the agriculturist to supersede the squatter when the progress of civilization required it - the evidence of such requirement being applications made at the land-offices."*³

Taylor's term expired in 1866 but he did not re-nominate due to the pressure of his business and personal interests. Then in June 1874 he stood again but was defeated.

At the local government level, Taylor had been elected to the Keilor District Road Board in 1861 and was chairman in 1863. He was President of the Shire Council in 1874-82 and 1884-94. He continued his involvement with Keilor Shire council until 1902, representing the ratepayers of Maribyrnong Riding.

*"He was a Justice of the Peace from the 1860s and involved in hospital and school councils. In the Taylor archive there are examples of cards by which he could recommend treatment at the Women's Hospital for those whose financial circumstances prevented them from seeking medical attention."*⁴

Taylor was based in Keilor but had property in other areas. He had a grand town house in East Melbourne and land holdings in other parts of Port Phillip including in Cranbourne, Williamstown and Queenscliff. His Melbourne appointments included being a director of the Union Mortgage and Agency Co, he was on the Council of Ormond College, and he was a member of the Scots Church congregation as well as being a trustee of church property.⁵

In 1861 he bought and improved the Euston Station on the Murray and spent large sums on the Darling, where:

*"More than 1,000,000 acres of this dry, risky country were brought into use by his expenditure on stock watering facilities. Droughts, disappointment, and loss merely spurred him on to new effort, 'if' as was written of him, 'he saw that he might convert an arid waste into useful and fitted for the habitation of civilised man'."*⁶

His New South Wales estates included Ariool, Bootra, Garnpung, Manfred and Salisbury Downs. In Queensland he had Darr River Downs in conjunction with his brother-in-law Archibald Fisken. He also had an estate in Scotland.

¹ Obituaries Australia, ANU <http://oa.anu.edu.au/obituary/fisken-archibald-1682/text1807>

² Sydenham was proclaimed in April 1953, the new name being selected for mailing purposes, because Overnewton as a district name was often confused with the Overnewton property in Keilor.

³ Argus 18 March 1864

⁴ Keilor Historical Society http://home.vicnet.net.au/~khis/william_taylor.html

⁵ <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/taylor-william-1681/text7775>

⁶ Argus 17 August 1934

To the Electors of the Southern Province

Gentlemen,

Having been solicited by many of your number to offer myself as a candidate for the vacancy in the representation of your Province caused by the lamented death of the Hon. Donald Kennedy, I accede with pleasure to their request. I have to offer the following as my opinions on some of the subjects at present more prominently before the public:

I am in favour of the disposal of the public lands in such manner as shall enable the intending agriculturalist to obtain a freehold with as little difficulty or delay as possible. I do not believe in the introduction of a system which, while rendering the population dependent on the Government of the day as their landlord, will entirely ruin existing landowners, whose hard earned money has been expended on the improvements which reflect such credit on the colony. Far better would it be in my opinion, to return to auction if no better scheme than leasing can be devised.

The Local Government Act of last session I look upon as a valuable addition to our statutes, although several clauses of that measure require, and should at once, be amended. This will receive my attention.

A larger assisted immigration shall have my zealous support, as population is essential to the prosperity of every new country.

I am in favour of the establishment of industrial schools and reformatories.

When the Government lines of railway are completed, and traffic developed, I am in favour of their being leased. I shall also give my support, as soon as the resources of the colony will admit to an extension of the railway system through the rich country west and north of Ballarat, and also towards Gippsland, as I believe such an expenditure will add largely to our prosperity.

In seeking your suffrages I may be allowed to state that I have been a resident of the colony for 23 years, that I am identified with the interests of your province having resided and owned property in it for the last 15 years.

That I am not altogether inexperienced in the duties of a legislator, having been an elective member of the old Legislative Council, and that, as showing my opinions on the question of transportation to the Australian colonies, I formed one of the deputation of magistrates who, in 1840, waited on the late Sir Charles Fitzroy, protesting against the landing of the convicts the colony was then threatened with, on which representation, many of you are aware, the ships were ordered to Sydney.

If elected, I shall give my support to any measure - no matter who may introduce it - which I believe to be for the benefit of the country, and shall as firmly oppose any measure which I believe to be prejudicial to its interests.

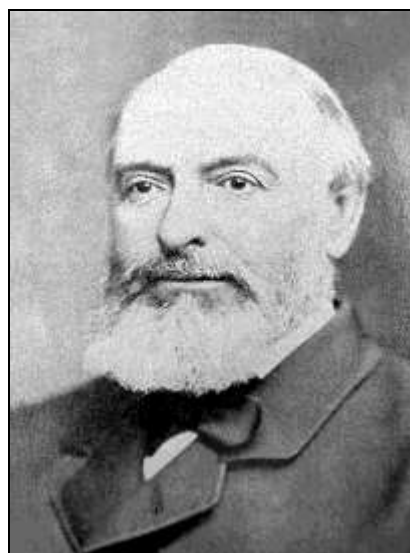
I have the honour to be, Gentlemen,
Your most obedient servant,

WILLIAM TAYLOR,
Overnewton, Keilor,
7th March, 1864.¹

William Taylor died on 21 June 1903 at his Keilor home, Overnewton, at the age of 84 years. He was survived by his wife, Helen Wilson Fiske, six of his seven sons and four of his six daughters. He was one of the earliest pioneers in the district and had contributed significantly to the development of the area. His 40 years of service to municipal affairs earned him the respected and well-deserved title of 'The Father of the Keilor District'.

The family had become one of the wealthiest land owners in the district, but Taylor's equity in various pastoral properties was eroded by heavy mortgage debts, and the valuation of his estate for probate purposes showed an overall deficit of £12,000:

*"His Victorian estate is valued at £115,983, and consists of realty £105,471 and personally £10,521. The deceased bequeathed to Mrs. Taylor an annuity of £1,200 with the use of the house and furniture at the corner of Clarendon and George streets, East Melbourne. To his eldest son he gave the property at Keilor. The residue of the estate is left in trust for the benefit of his children in the proportion of two shares for each son to one for each daughter."*²



William Taylor of Overnewton at Keilor

Helen Taylor née Fiske died at Overnewton on 18 December 1903 at 71 years of age.³ She had given birth to 13 children – 6 daughters and 7 sons – most of whom survived: Elizabeth Inglis (1850), Martha Mary (1852), Ellen (1854), Helen Florence (1856), William Henry (1858), Inglis (1859), Jessie Russell (1861), Charles Elphinstone Stirling (1864), Alfred Alexander (1868), Henry John (1872), Frank Norman (1872), and Claudia Helen (1874).⁴

² The Advertiser, Adelaide 3 November 1903

³ Argus 19 December 1903 p15

⁴ Alie Missen, *Sydenham Memorial Moments* p32, has a summary of the children's details. More

¹ Argus 18 March 1864

After William and Helen Taylor died, their family retained the Overnewton homestead and its surrounding 200 acres but sold the remainder of the property. The first sale of the Arundel, Annandale and Overnewton estates at Keilor was advertised in March 1904¹ and the state government acquired 11,500 acres through the Closer Settlement Board.² The Overnewton estate was initially broken up into sections of 640 and 320 acres, and over the next twenty years the various estates were subdivided into even small farming allotments that were made available for local settlers.

In about 1905 the Closer Settlement Board subdivided the Overnewton Estate along Taylors road into blocks of 200 to 300 acres and offered these for selection. This attracted 'new pioneer' families to the district, such as the McRaes, Boyds, McAuleys, Stevens, Griffiths, Andersons, Colemans, King and others, to acquire land along Taylors Road and in the western part of St Albans through to Sydenham. It heralded a new optimism after the recession of the 1890s.

William Henry Taylor, the oldest son, inherited the Overnewton homestead and started a two-decade task of dividing all the family estates amongst the descendants. He continued the family tradition in municipal affairs and was on Keilor council for about nine years, being Shire President for three consecutive terms between 1904 and 1907.

Much interest was aroused in 1911 when Henry Coleman, a new arrival to the district and one of the settlers on the former Overnewton estate, challenged Taylor for the seat in the Maribyrnong riding. The result was that Coleman polled 108 votes to Taylor's 107 votes³ but it was not a decision that was approved by everyone, as indicated by one anonymous writer to a local paper:

"As often happens some ratepayers are very forgetful of the good work done for them by councillors who retire and stand for re-election. Cr Taylor has done so much for the St. Albans district that one is surprised at any opposition being brought against him. He is the largest ratepayer in the Shire and the seat has been held by his father and himself for forty-eight years. The settlers on Overnewton should indeed be forever grateful to him in that through his selling that estate at a low figure to the Closer Settlement Board they were enabled to get

*cheap farms and much fencing on their allotments. Mr Taylor has never opposed the making of roads to their farms, but on the contrary it can be shown that when the first money was available an effort was made by another councillor to divert it to a road, which would serve at the most three selectors, he joined in having it spent where it would serve a dozen or more, and since then he has voted for every work which would further assist the selectors. The residents of St. Albans should also be grateful for the road and drainage works done in their private township, when they might have been asked to pay for them as in other places, and for the purchase of the new road connecting it with Sydenham, as part of the great scheme of a road along the railway to Sunshine. A new councillor may do well, but he cannot surpass him in the excellent work done by him during his term of office."*⁴

William Henry Taylor had been born on 18 June 1858 in Dunoon, Argyll, when his parents were visiting Scotland.⁵ He studied at the Scotch College in Melbourne and in 1877 went to the Euston station on the Murray to gain pastoral experience, becoming manager of both Euston and Manfred stations. He came back to Overnewton in 1901 to look after the property. In 1899 he married Beatrice Helen Rhind Burt (1872-1948) – "*the beautiful Bea Burt*" as one social commentator called her. Her father was James Burt (b.1838), a squatter of Glenmore, Bacchus Marsh, and her mother was Eliza Inglis Rhind (b.1846), a merchant's daughter of Melbourne.⁶



William Henry Taylor of Overnewton

William Henry and Beatrice Helen Taylor had three children:

- Aileen Ruby 1900–1970
- Beatrice Madge 1902–1988
- William Burt 1906–1957

detailed notes are included in "The Taylor Family of Overnewton" in *Victoria and Its Metropolis Vol. 2*.

¹ Argus 15 March 1904

² The Bacchus Marsh Express 2 December 1905

³ Footscray Independent 26 August 1911

⁴ Footscray Independent 19 August 1911

⁵ Taylor paid two visits to the old country the first in 1856, returning in 1859; and again during the years 1882 and 1883. *Victoria and Its Metropolis Vol.2*

⁶ Argus 30 December 1865 p4. Their marriage occurred 27 December 1865 at Hotham.

William Henry Taylor died at his Overnewton home in December 1939 at the age of 82 years. His role in the district is not well documented though he was well respected:

*"With the death of W. H. Taylor, Esq., of Overnewton on Monday, Keilor and Sydenham residents have lost one of their oldest and most respected citizens. Mr Taylor with his unassuming manner was respected by all classes of the community, and his helping hand to the needy of both Keilor and Sydenham will long remain a monument to his passing."*¹

His wife, Beatrice Helen Taylor, continued to live at Overnewton with other family members though it seems she later moved to Toorak. She died on 16 September 1948 at the age of 76.

Aileen Ruby became a "well-known Melbourne society girl" and her appearances at the races and such events would be reported in the social columns of the papers. She met her future husband, Captain (later Colonel) James Stewart of the Royal Artillery (Madras) while visiting relatives in India. They married in January 1929 at St. John's Presbyterian Church in Essendon. They lived overseas for some years then returned to Overnewton in 1947 to stay with her sister Beatrice and brother-in-law John Bloomfield who had taken up residence in the old home.



Aileen Taylor



Madge Taylor

Beatrice Madge had married John Stoughton Clark Bloomfield, of Gisborne, on 21 March 1931 at the St. John's Presbyterian Church in Essendon.² The reception was held at Overnewton which was adorned with many beautiful flowers and the rose blooms had come from Mrs and Mrs Alister Clark's garden at Bulea; of special note among them was a lovely specimen of *Madge Taylor* – the rose that Mr Clark named after the bride.³ Beatrice and

¹ Sunshine Advocate 15 December 1939

² Sun News-Pictorial 1 April 1931

³ Sun News-Pictorial 1 April 1931. The Madge Taylor rose is large, deep cerise pink, full, globular blooms with a moderate fragrance and distinct style.

John had a son and a daughter and lived at Overnewton for a time. John was a barrister, and served in the AIF 1940-1945. He was MLA for Malvern 1953-1970 and was Minister of Labour and Industry and of Electrical Undertakings in 1955-1956, and Minister of Education in 1956-1967. In the latter role he came to St Albans in 1958 to officially open the new High School buildings, such a noteworthy event that it was even reported in the Sun. Beatrice Madge died in 1988 and John Bloomfield died in 1989.



Sun News Pictorial 23 Aug 1929

(L-R) Aline Dowling, Aileen Taylor, Madge Taylor

William Burt Taylor was born 10 July 1906 and was educated at Geelong Grammar School. In September 1933 he married Edna May Saker; she was born in 1914 in Brunswick to Elsie Marguerite Perkins and Leslie Barton Saker before moving to Keilor and working at the hotel. They moved to a farm near Geelong and had at least one daughter, Judith Ann. William Burt Taylor died in South Melbourne on 16 September 1957 at the age of 51 years.

In late 1949, Aileen and Beatrice decided to sell Overnewton by auction in five lots, which realised £50,500. The homestead lot with 326 acres of land and the two-storey home was sold for £28,500⁴ but this may be been bought by Aileen and Colonel James Stewart as they were there in 1950.⁵ The Taylor family was one of the pioneer hunting families in the district and Aileen and her husband continued the tradition. Overnewton was a district meeting point for the Oakland Hounds, the Melbourne

⁴ Argus 18 November 1949

⁵ Argus 30 May 1950

Hunt Club and possibly the Findon Harriers. Aileen and the Colonel would hold cocktail-cum-buffet dinner parties at their home, which they did for Keilor's centenary, and held lunches for "40 or 50" of their friends and guests at the start of Grand National Week and the racing carnival.



James and Aileen Stewart

The Overnewton homestead was offered for sale in 1958 for £120,000¹ though at this stage the property was vacant and run down. It was eventually sold in 1959 to Keith and Rae Carr – and with that sale the last of the pioneer estate and its castle, the oldest and grandest home in the district, finally passed out of the Taylor family's possession.

Aileen Ruby Stewart née Taylor died at Toorak in 1970 at the age of 69. Colonel James Stewart also died in 1970, at the age of 65. #



Aileen Taylor, Mr & Mrs W. Taylor with Jack Hawkes

References:

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Laskowski, Christine; *Overnewton: the Castle on the Hill*; Essendon, 2005. First published in 1999 under the title *Overnewton 1849-1999.*

Keilor Historical Society website at http://home.vicnet.net.au/~khis/william_taylor.html

¹ Laszkowski *The Castle on the Hill* p19

TOOP, Walter and Elizabeth

Walter John Toop was one of the selectors on the Keilor Common after it was surveyed and subdivided in 1868. He was allocated block 10, which was 60 acres in central St Albans, immediately east of the Errington's property in what would later become Main Road East.

Walter (b.1829) and Elizabeth Toop (née Warder b.1830) were English immigrants who arrived in Melbourne with their daughter, Elizabeth Charlotte, sometime between the late 1850s and the early 1860s. They settled in Finsbury cottage, Canning Street, Carlton, where Walter's trade was listed as a chair carver.

Did Walter and Elizabeth acquire the St Albans land mainly for investment purposes or did they intend to take up farming? Given that his occupation was listed as a chair carver, it is unlikely that Toop was planning to establish a local furniture workshop on the empty Keilor Plains. And though Toop built a four-room bungalow on the property, he was still a resident of Carlton: in 1871 he was supporting Mr. Robert Richardson as the candidate for the Victoria ward in the City of Melbourne elections; and in 1874 the family home was still in Carlton.

What was the land being used for? Toop may have arranged with local businessmen, John Delahay and Thomas Derham, regarding the use of the land for depasturing stock. Delahay, who had selected land on the Common,² was probably one of the local contractors who were surfacing roads within the shires of Braybrook and Keilor. Thomas Burge Derham was a Braybrook butcher and publican as well as being a horse dealer; he had acquired land in the district no doubt for depasturing horses prior to their shipment overseas, probably to India, as well as for holding cattle and sheep for his butchery. Delahay and Derham had leant money to Toop in 1872 in order that he could meet his obligations under the Lands Act for making the necessary improvements to his selection. However, there must have been some disagreement between them as Delahay and Derham later challenged Toop's entitlement to the land.

It appears that Toop leased his land to Delahay, but Derham had then paid Delahay for rent and improvements, so Derham must have been using the land. The dispute was taken before the lands commissioner in 1872 because "An allotment taken up under the act

² Delahay forfeited his selection in 1872.

of 1865 had not been improved within the two years required by law.”¹

Walter Toop’s health probably interfered with what ambitions he may have had for his St Albans venture, because as early as January 1871 he had advertised his selection for sale, describing it as: “a frontage of 15 chains to a full Government road by a depth of 40 chains, containing 60 acres, all fenced with a strong stone fence, together with a four-roomed weatherboard cottage nearly new erected thereon, a large galvanised iron tank, and two waterholes.”²

Its use to that date is probably indicated in the sales spiel that stated: “This land is very well adapted for grazing purposes, and for stock-owners and others bringing cattle to the Melbourne markets. It would be a convenient place to leave stock for a short time, seeing its close proximity to town.” This would have been the main interest for a businessman such as Thomas Derham.

It is amusing to read of claims that the land had “a splendid situation on the crown of a hill,” as central St Albans was well known for the flatness of its topography. However, such claims have always been the exuberant marketing spin of the day, then and now, of the real estate profession.

Toop’s attempt to sell the property in 1871 was because illness prevented him for using it. However, the challenge by Delahay and Derham to the lands commission may have interrupted that aim. In October 1872, Mr Casey, who was the lands commissioner, decided that the land should be sold by auction, with a valuation for improvements in favour of John Delahay. Toop objected to this decision as he still wished to be allowed to select the property.

Whatever else was happening, Toop’s claim to have a serious illness cannot be doubted, because he died in July 1874 and was buried at Melbourne General Cemetery.

Walter and Elizabeth Toop had raised several children, including Elizabeth Charlotte (1854-1923), Walter Wesley (1857-1902), Alfred George (1864-1929), and Henry Albert (1866-1927). None of the surviving family appears to have been involved in the settlement of St Albans. #

¹ Argus 9 October 1872

² Argus 21 January 1871

VON STIEGLITZ, Frederick and Katherine

Frederick Lewis von Stieglitz bought land in Victoria Crescent, St Albans, in the 1880s, on the south-west corner of the Linda Street intersection. It was part of block 20 that had been selected by John Cavanagh in 1868, who sold to Francis Melbourne Cox in 1885, who sold to William Colley in 1887, who then sold immediately to the Cosmopolitan Land and Banking Company, who sold to Stieglitz.³ He was one of the early land buyers in St Albans who was of German heritage and can trace his family to Melcoir von Stieglitz, who was born in 1629 in Dresden, Saxony Germany.

Frederick Lewis von Stieglitz was born on 31 March 1837 at Rosemount, Avoca, in the north-east of Tasmania. His family’s migration history is interesting in that they were of German origin originally but had migrated to Australia from Ireland:

“Frederick Lewis Von Stieglitz (1803-1866), pastoralist, was born on 13 October 1803 in Ireland, the eldest son of Baron Heinrich Ludwig von Stieglitz and Charlotte, née Atkinson, and grandson of Christian Ludwig von Stieglitz who had been created a baron of the Holy Roman Empire in 1765. In 1802, the family moved from Pilsen, Bavaria, to a property known as Lewis Hill in Ireland and after nine years to Cooks-town, County Tyrone. When the baron's death in 1824 left the family of six sons and two daughters poorly provided for, they decided to emigrate to Van Diemen's Land. Frederick Lewis, Francis Walter and Robert William von Stieglitz arrived at Hobart Town in the Lion on 7 August 1829.”⁴

Frederick Lewis Stieglitz was the son of Henry Lewis von Stieglitz (1808-1876) and Helen Amos (1881-1890). Henry was from Armagh in Ireland, and arrived in Hobart in November 1830. In December 1834 at Campbell town, he married Helen Amos who had migrated from Midlothian in Scotland looking for better opportunities. They settled in Avoca and raised 12 children between 1835 and 1854. Frederick Lewis was their second son and was born at Rosemount, Avoca, on 31 March 1837.

The Stieglitz brothers were among the earliest pioneers in the colony of Port Phillip – their names are included in “Pastoral Pioneers of Port Phillip”. John Lewis (Ballanee at Westernport) and Robert William (Ballan at Portland) arrived in July 1836 and established sheep stations. Charles Augustus arrived in 1839 and

³ St Albans the First 100 Years p6

⁴ Australian Dictionary of Biography, Volume 2, Melbourne University Press, 1967.

settled at Portland (Did Did Warrah run). Charles discovered gold on his property, which led to the construction of a mine. The family name is commemorated through that old gold-mining town of Steiglitz [sic] so named after the family's pastoral property and the gold mine north-west of Geelong.

Frederick Lewis Stieglitz married Catherine Thomasina Langhorne on 14 December 1875 at Merchiston Hall, Geelong; she was youngest daughter of William and Elizabeth Langhorne of Melbourne. Frederick and Catherine made their home in Loy Yang, Traralgon, Gippsland.

In June 1878, Frederick, Adam and William Steiglitz [sic] had obtained the lease for 1,870 acres in the parish of Loy Yang, county of Buln Buln. They were cattle and sheep graziers. Frederick and Catherine's first two sons were born there. The Stieglitz brothers did not stay there for very long as in December 1878 they were all selling their livestock including 120 superior half-fat bullocks, 90 cows, several well-known hacks and fillies, double seated buggy with harness saddles and bridles, all the household furniture of sitting room, bedrooms, kitchen, etc, four 400 gallon water tanks, 2 grindstones, a lot of carpenters' and blacksmiths' tools, about 40 fowls and a quantity of grass seed.¹ Frederick and Catherine with their two children moved to Braybrook and leased the Glen Gala pastoral property from Frederick Anderson (q.v.).

Frederick and Catherine's children included:

- Henry Lewis "Harry" was born on 14 June 1878 at Loy Yang, Gippsland.² After the family moved back to Tasmania he became a pastoralist at Wilmot. He married Josephine Marjorie Lillias Headlam in 1920 and they had a son, Dennis Henry Alfred Harry Von Stieglitz. Henry remarried in 1937 to Una May Olding. He died on 14 May 1962 at Hobart at age 85 years.
- Frederick Langhorne was born on 14 June 1878 at Loy Yang in Gippsland and died on 16 May 1880 at Glen Gala, Derrimut, Sunshine.
- William Stanley was born on 19 January 1880 at Glen Gala, Derrimut, Sunshine. He wed Beatrice Ingram on 17 May 1920 and they had two children. Beatrice died in 1927 and William remarried on 25 January 1929 to Ruth

Margaret Ockerby. He died on 4 August 1943 at Launceston at age 63.

- Helen Eliza was born on 5 April 1883 at Glen Gala, Derrimut, Sunshine. She died on 24 May 1963 at Launceston aged 79 years.

Frederick Lewis Stieglitz was at Glen Gala between 1880 and 1888. The property was along Kororoit Creek near the Guiding Star Hotel and Sir William Clarke's property. Stieglitz had leased the property from Francis Anderson (q.v.) where he grazed sheep and some cattle. He became involved in municipal affairs to some extent because in 1882 he was part of the debate about the location of the shire hall. Ratepayers wanted to have the shire divided based on population or have the Eastern Riding separated from the Northern and Southern Ridings of the Shire.³

In January 1880, he sold 1,000 wethers and in September 1881 he had 520 merino wethers in the fat sheep market, but he experienced a major problem of "wholesale sheep stealing" in 1882 when 575 of his sheep were stolen. Fortunately he noticed the sheep were missing and the police caught the thief.⁴ In November 1888 he was back on track with 1,288 merino wethers for sale at the livestock market.⁵

Stieglitz must have been successful with his sheep breeding program because in 1885 he was advertising for three good shearers,⁶ in 1886 he wanted a general servant,⁷ in 1887 a respectable boy to help with the milking and be generally useful,⁸ and in 1888 a visiting tutor to teach three young students.⁹ On other occasions he wrote to council asking for repairs to the road near the Brooklyn station and that the train be scheduled stop there.¹⁰

Problems with his flock must have continued, as in 1885 he complained to the Braybrook Council of the destruction of his sheep by unregistered dogs:

*"From F. L. Steiglitz, Braybrook, pointing out the necessity of strictly enforcing owners of dogs to comply with, the requirements of the Act. He stated that he had lost scores of sheep by dogs chasing and worrying them."*¹¹

¹ Gippsland Times 16 December 1878 p2

² Australasian 14 August 1880 p14

³ Bacchus Marsh Express 4 November 1882 p2

⁴ Argus 17 January 1882 p8

⁵ Weekly Times 17 November 1888 p13

⁶ Footscray Independent 7 November 1885 p2

⁷ Footscray Independent 17 July 1886 p2

⁸ Footscray Independent 25 Apr 1885 p2

⁹ Footscray Independent 7 January 1888 p2

¹⁰ Bacchus Marsh Express 9 July 1887 p2

¹¹ Footscray Independent 14 Mar 1885 p3

Reports of livestock sales for Steiglitz of Glen Gala continue through to 1888, but there must have been tough times as well because he wrote to council asking for a reduction in rates. The council's reply was that "as the time of appeal was long past the Council could not entertain the matter".¹

A tragic accident occurred on their property in September 1888 when John Peach, a boy from the cadet corps at Yarraville state school, was shot in the head by one of his school companions. It was several hours before his unconscious body was discovered and though Stieglitz and emergency workers attended to him, the lad died in hospital.²

It must have been about this time that Stieglitz acquired the block of land in St Albans. It was in Victoria Crescent and was just a standard-sized suburban block, so it would not have been big enough for farming.³ It is not known whether it was intended as a future home site for the family or was part of the speculative land purchases occurring at the time.

The Stieglitz family left their Glen Gala farm about 1888 because their lease had expired. An auction was held in October. His level of stock and accessories are surprisingly small compared to other closing out sales:

*"George Howat has received instructions from F. L. Von Steiglitz, Esq. to sell by auction, at Glengala, on Friday, 5th October, at 12 o'clock. Milch Cows, Yearlings, Cattle, 2 Buggy horses, Buggy, Harness, Saddles, Spring Cart, Household Furniture, Dairy Utensils, Fowls, City Acorn Stove; Kitchen Utensils, Grindstone, Sundries, &c."*⁴

Frederick and Catherine must have returned to Tasmania after leaving Glen Gala because they are not mentioned in the local papers after 1888 or in the ratepayers roll after 1892. Frederick Lewis Stieglitz died on 16 December 1913 at Mt Leslie, Prospect, Tasmania, aged 76 years. Catherine Thomasina Stieglitz née Langhorne died on 25 November 1942 at the Corona Rest Home, Launceston, at age 92 years, and was privately interred.⁵

Apart from buying a block of land in St Albans in the late 1880s, there is no obvious evidence that the family ever lived in the area. #

WATSON, James and Elizabeth

James Watson was one of the earliest pioneers of Keilor as he settled along the Salt Water River in the 1840s. Watson's arrival in the district is usually associated with the pastoral firm of Watson and Hunter, who occupied 300,000 acres in Port Phillip with the head station in Melbourne being at Keilor. Locally, Watson's name is remembered in particular because he named the property after 'Keillor' in Fyfe. His more direct connection with St Albans is that he and William Jones had several properties on the south-west corner of Boundary Road (Main Road East) and Sunshine Avenue, for which they acquired the titles about 1853, but which they may have been occupying even earlier. They may have used this for grazing as this was the most likely use at the time. Nothing is known about William Jones or what became of him.

James Watson was born about 1811 in Angus, Forfarshire, Scotland, and is usually identified as the son of Hugh Watson though another possibility is that his father was James Watson:

*"There are frustrating discrepancies in published details of Watson's origins but the one supported somewhat by his death certificate, is that he was related in some way to Hugh Watson of 'Keillor', one of three farms long run by the Watson family, on the Belmont Estate south of Meigle in what was then Fyfe. There is a plethora of Hugh and James Watsons in the family and several of them married daughters of the Rose families."*⁶

The Watson and Hunter families had been friends for generations back in Ayrshire. James Watson went to Canada while in his early twenties to manage a property there but returned to Scotland in 1838 to look for better prospects. In the meantime John Hunter had emigrated to Australia in 1834 and wrote encouraging reports about Port Phillip. The firm of Watson and Hunter was thus started on behalf of several investors, including the Marquis of Ailsa and other nobles wanting to capitalise on business opportunities in the antipodes by buying up squatting, agricultural and city properties. James Watson came to Port Phillip in June 1839 accompanying and mentoring Alexander Hunter. In August that year they sailed for Sydney to buy cattle. They left Sydney on the 5 September 1839 with a party of others for the Murray River:

¹ Bacchus Marsh Express 9 April 1887 p2

² Williamstown Chronicle 29 September 1888 p2

³ Appears to be the block where the Goddard family later built their home and tennis court.

⁴ Footscray Independent 29 September 1888 p2

⁵ Examiner 26 November 1942

⁶ Judy MacDonald p23. Also e.g.: "James Watson also married and he had a son named James, who is the Watson of Watson and Hunter."
<http://archiver.rootsweb.ancestry.com/th/read/AUS-VIC-GIPPSLAND/1999-01/0917816800>

*"This party was then known as the Marquis of Ailsa's 'overlanders' and consisted of Messrs Hunter, Watson, Bell, Jack Hunter, Alex Hunter, and Jimmie Hunter, the three brothers Hugh, Bushby and Archie Jamieson; the Hon Gilbert Kennedy and John Bellow Graves. They left the Tumut for the Murray and Port Phillip with 20 assigned servants, 2200 head of cattle and 70 horses. Arriving in Port Phillip Messrs Watson and Hunter, for the Marquis of Ailsa's Co. occupied the Devil's (or Delatite) River country making their head station at Keilor."*¹

Edward Bell, one the overlanders on the trip, continues the story further down the track:

*"... on the 24th December Mr. Watson and I started in a tandem for Port Phillip. Near the Murray we broke both shafts, and had to take to our saddles ... On arriving at the Murray, we overtook several expeditions which were waiting for a favourable opportunity to cross. There were said to be 10,000 head of cattle on its banks, in various 'mobs.' Messrs. Bolden had crossed several hundreds that day, and at night we camped with their party. On the Ovens we overtook others. The natives had attacked some parties in this neighbourhood during the previous summer, and the places were pointed out to us where Faithfull's men were murdered, and where Snodgrass had had a 'stand-up fight with the blacks.' My own experience of the natives at this time led me to suppose they were a very inoffensive race; for all I had seen had been the Bogong blacks, on the Tumut, who came down in the summer from the ranges ... I think they were the handsomest natives I have ever seen; at all events they were the best conditioned. On the Ovens, however, we saw none."*²

Watson and Hunter established their headquarters in Keilor on the Salt Water River. An artist's impression of the station is very idyllic: a homestead and outbuildings along a winding road on the grassy plain of a shallow valley with a few trees in the foreground and more on the horizon. They must not have lived there for very long, because Hunter wrote in September 1841 that the four-roomed verandah cottage near the corner of Hunter and Macedon streets was then let for an inn at £300 per year rental.³ The Keilor run was still seen as the head station in 1846 when James Watson's name appeared in the Argus with regard to the sale of occupation licences:

"Mr. Watson, of Keilor, stated that the section about to be sold was the head station on the Keilor run, which with several other head stations in the same vicinity had been applied for and advertised for sale, but on a representation on the subject being made to his Honor the

*Superintendent, he had directed the withdrawal of the whole of the home stations put up with the exception of Keilor. Why so unjust an exception was made he (Mr. Watson) was not aware, but he was determined not to submit to it. Mr. Watson eventually became the purchaser of the occupation license for the section at the price of £25 5s."*⁴

More of the Hunter brothers had joined Hunter and Watson in its early days and established runs in different regions including Geelong, Portland and Lake Eildon with a concentration on the Devil's (Delatite) River near Mansfield where they had twelve stations. By September 1841 the firm employed 100 hands, had about 80 horses, 3000 cattle and 20,000 sheep.⁵

But there was obviously some discontent with Watson supposedly being the overall manager of the enterprise, or was it more personal:

*"The young Hunter brothers were openly disparaging of Watson in their journals. He couldn't mend harness. He preferred comfortable accommodation to a camp. He was disgusted by a breakfast of fly-blown beef, with no knives or plates, which was served up at Holland's near Devil's River, during one of his visits to the high country properties. In 1840 while living at Mrs Hamilton's for 28 shillings a week, Watson has an office at Craig's where he attempts to mend a bridle and offends Mrs Craig by tipping her servants."*⁶

The business and personal relationships must have become more strained when the firm became insolvent due to the depression and the failing agricultural markets of the 1840s. It took up to 1847 for the properties to be sold but creditors received only 2/6 in the pound of their investment. It must have been particularly difficult for James Watson because his wife Elizabeth died about the same time, in May 1847. James Watson had married Elizabeth Anna Rose in 1840; she was the second daughter of James Rose of Flemington in the Morayshire, Scotland. She came to Melbourne on 12 December 1840 and they married on 31 December. Their first home was probably in the County of Bourke, Parish of Keelbundora, on a property that Watson named 'Rose Anna Farm' and the area later became known as Rosanna. They had three children: Maggie, Elizabeth and James. Elizabeth Anne Watson née Rose died on 12 May 1847.

James Watson had also been declared insolvent in 1843 and this was finally cleared in 1848.⁷

¹ Euroa Advertiser 8 September 1899

² Letters from Victorian Pioneers p171

³ MacDonald p22

⁴ Argus 25 September 1846

⁵ Judy MacDonald p22

⁶ Judy MacDonald p21

⁷ Argus 20 October 1848

After his wife died in 1847 Watson started a new career as a stock and real estate agent. By June 1847 Watson had left the firm of Watson and Hunter, obtained an auctioneer's licence and started selling land and stock. His office was in Little Collins Street from an office situated at the city chambers of Hugh Glass, who was a wealthy pastoralist. Watson bought Crown land in the Parish of Dousta Galla and named his new estate 'Flemington' after a property in Scotland that had been managed by his late wife's father. He obtained his auctioneer's licence in June 1847. At Flemington he built his new home, a hotel, a blacksmith's and other shops and residences. It was built "*in the style of Scottish estates, an almost self-contained village with shops and an inn both serving the estate and bringing in revenue.*"¹

In June 1848 James Watson married Anne Hawker, a widow; they had a daughter, Anne, who was born in 1850 at Flemington. Watson experienced more financial problems and had to sell his 310 acre Flemington estate, which was bought in October 1849 by Hugh Glass. By 1851 the Watsons had moved to Cardigan Street in North Melbourne, where two children died that year.

In 1854 Watson went into partnership with Charles Blenheim under the name of Watson and Co.² They were auctioneers and horse dealers and had a sales yard in Bourke street west, but their interest in this was probably sold when they became insolvent in 1856 – their main creditor seems to have been Hugh Glass.³

James Watson died of cancer on 10 May 1869 at the age of 57, and left a large family in need of support. He died not long after the sale by the Closer Settlement Board of the Keilor Commons land that would be later named St Albans. He was one of the earliest settlers in the district and a colonist for 30 years.

Probably one of the few tangible reminders of Hunter and Watson's presence in the Keilor village is the naming of Hunter and Ailsa streets. Watson's contribution as a pioneer is sometimes remembered because he named Keilor. #

Reference:

Judy Macdonald; *James Watson and 'Flemington': a Gentleman's Estate*; La Troboeana, Journal of the C J La Trobe Society Inc. Vol. 8, No. 3, November 2009

¹ McDonald p25

² Argus 24 February 1854

³ Argus 14 March 1856 p2

The 1839 'overlander' experience from Sydney was recorded by one of Watson's party:

I accordingly purchased a horse off a Sydney dealer as a preliminary step; and, in five days from my landing, had made all the necessary arrangements with Mr. Watson for my forming one of his party. We left Sydney, I think, on the 3rd of October, and travelled by easy stages till we reached Sutton Forest, where we overtook Mr. Alick Hunter, who had gone on before with the drays and horse-stock. From this place we went on to Lake George, on the other side of which a property had been purchased for the sole purposes of procuring some assigned servants, of whom we had twenty in the expedition. In this neighbourhood I bought about 300 head of cattle, and made an agreement with Mr. Watson to run them with his stock, giving him half the increase for two years, and the benefit of my services during that time. I recollect nothing particular about the country we passed through, except that the bush was very thick, and that I was always afraid of losing myself if I left the road, or was out of sight of my companions for a moment. ...

The great scarcity of flour during the summer of 1839 was felt all over the colony, but in no part more so than in the interior, where it was selling at 60 a ton. Even at Government House in Sydney, it was said that Lady Gipps was restricted in her supplies for pastry. For some weeks our food at the Tumut was confined to beef and milk, and a little rice; but the incessant grumbling of the men at last induced me to send a cart to Yass for flour. The Tumut was flooded at the time, but I had seen a horseman cross, and ventured over myself at the same place. A hurdle was lashed on the dray, on which the bedding of the two men who were to accompany it was placed, and, with three horses harnessed to it, it went boldly into the stream after me. The leading horse, about half-way across, turned down the stream, and in a moment the cart was afloat, and soon capsized, drowning the two other horses and nearly drowning the two men on the hurdle. The one was a fine swimmer, and swam out to the leading horse, and eventually released him from his harness; the other clung to a log, and was hauled ashore by a rope about ten minutes afterwards. A few days after this, the river having partially subsided, and the grumbling continuing unabated, a second attempt was made, but at another crossing-place, and with only one horse. The same occurrence took place again, except that the horse swam for a quarter of a mile down the river with the cart after him, and was not drowned till a log turned the cart over and rendered him helpless, the driver, who remained till then on his seat on the hurdle up to his neck in water, calling out to me 'he was done like a dinner.' Three hundred pounds worth of horse-flesh went in these adventures. I then bought a team of bullocks, and eventually procured a ton of flour from Yass, which lasted the party till it reached Melbourne.

Edward Bell.

Wimmera, 10th September 1853.⁴

⁴ Letters from Victorian Pioneers

WILLIAMS, Isabella



Isabella Williams became one of the successful selectors on the Keilor-Braybrook Common in November 1868; her allotment #42 was 80 acres on the eastern bank of Kororoit Creek near Thomas Opie's selection. She was born in 1839, the daughter of John Williams (1810-1892) and Isabella Cassidy (1820-) from Liverpool.¹ Isabella came to Braybrook in the early 1850s as a servant to James and Rose Joy and lived with them for the next three decades in a close family setting, so her life in the district is inextricably entwined with her employers. She achieved independence after acquiring her own property in 1869 and by 1874 she was listed as a Braybrook Shire ratepayer and farmer on the Kororoit Creek in the parish of Maribyrnong. The Joys moved to Marnoo in 1875 so Isabella's independence was even more tangible, but it had been a long process.

James Joy (whose original name was James Joy Wheeler) arrived in Hobart on 7 October 1835 on the *Aurora 1* after being convicted for armed poaching and sentenced for seven years. He was born in 1811 in Chedworth, Gloucester, England. He wed Eleanor Stevens on the 11th December 1832 and they had a daughter, Charity Joy Wheeler. James did not see them again after his transportation to Van Diemen's Land and his wife later remarried.

Joy was assigned to Joseph William Storey of Eastern Marshes, Hobart, but absconded in 1837. Such matters were taken seriously by the authorities and the police department advertised a reward for his capture, the reward being "a ticket-of-leave to any convict who

shall apprehend and lodge in safe custody the said James Joy".

Rose Anne Milligan/Mulligan was a farm servant from Dunrock in Armagh, Ireland, and arrived in Hobart on 22 October 1837 on the *Platina*. She was 27 years of age and had been transported to Van Diemen's Land for 14 years for "stealing from the person £60." She was put to work as a farm servant around Hobart.

James Joy met Rose Mulligan not long after she arrived in 1837 and they must have formed a close relationship very quickly because they absconded together later in the year and survived for three years in the wild with another couple. They were captured in November 1840. At this stage Joy was a bushranger with a difference:

*"There is a peculiarity in the history of Joy, as a bush-ranger, that instead of obtaining his livelihood by the ordinary course of robbery, he earned a subsistence by catching kangaroo and bartering away the skins with certain parties who supplied himself and female companion with apparel, and the domestic comforts of tea, sugar, flour ... An extensive store of skins was then found in their possession, together with a vast quantity of snares of the most skilful construction ... Joy had likewise a pack of no fewer than fifteen dogs well trained, some of them for the purposes of hunting, and others to guard his temporary wigwam in the bush ... Joy and his female companion were extremely well clad in the costume of superior domestics, and appeared much attached to each other. Tears came into the eyes of both parties when, in the course of the capturing constables' evidence ... it came to be related that Joy when taken had conducted them to the spot where the woman was to be found, lest she should be exposed to hardships after his apprehension."*²

For all the harshness of their enforced servitude in a strange land they at least had this interlude of freedom that must have sustained their later complicated relationship. After her capture in 1840 Isabella was sentenced to 12 months hard labour. She was the assigned servant of Mr. Charles Currie for four years at Port Arthur and received her free certificate in June 1851.

After James was captured he was sent to Port Arthur with two years added to his sentence. He received his ticket of leave in June 1842³

¹ Illustrated Australian News, Melbourne 31 October 1878

² The Courier, Hobart 10 November 1840. There had been some reports that he was involved in sheep and cattle stealing. Hobart Town Courier, 3 August 1838.

³ Launceston Examiner 11 June 1842. A ticket of leave allowed convicts to work for themselves provided they

and a Free Pardon in 1844. Isabella and James married at Saint Peters Church in Hamilton, Tasmania, on 9 June 1844. James worked at farming and Rose was still an assigned convict. They had a son, James junior, who was born in 1845.¹

James Joy travelled to Victoria in the early 1850s, initially crossing in January 1852 and returning in August to collect Rose and James junior. James senior appears to have met Isabella Williams in Victoria in 1853 and she became part of their household. How they met is not clear but it seems likely to have been on the boat to or from Melbourne as the Williams were known to visit relatives in Van Diemen's Land. Perhaps the explanation is what has always been stated publicly, that Isabella joined the Joys as a domestic servant, a housemaid, which was a common occupation for young women at the time. Isabella would later confirm that she was living on the Yarra with her father when she met Joy and went to live with him as his hired servant.² Isabella's father was working as a shipwright on the south bank of the Yarra River but by 1858 was said to have gone to the diggings and later became a farmer at Newbridge on the Loddon river.

Isabella was with the Joy family when they visited Hobart Town in November 1853 and returned with them to Victoria on 10 March 1854: the family now comprised of James Joy senior, aged 37, Rose Joy, aged 43, James Joy jnr, aged 9, and Isabella Williams, aged 13 or 14.³ James senior had bought land in Ballarat Road at Deer Park, which became known as "Joy's Farm". It was situated at Derrimut and had 111 acres, "close to the Deer Park township and railway station, immediately opposite to Mr. J. Christie's farm, and is adjacent to the homestead of Sir W. J. Clarke's Rockbank estate."⁴

The nature of Joy's farm is not entirely clear, but he is known to have had up the 20 horses and 70 head of cattle at one stage.⁵ Isabella was also involved in the milking of cows so it must have been a typical, small farm of the times. A reported court statement about Joy's

home in 1858 was:

*"The house he now lives in is not a large one. It contains but four rooms, of which one is a kitchen, one is a lumber-room, one is occupied by his men-servants, and himself. Mrs. Joy, and their servant-girl, Isabella Williams, sleep in the fourth."*⁶

In fact, it was a very small farm compared to the neighbouring one of the M'Leans, which was a run of 30,000 acres on which he kept 28,000 sheep. Joy must have been a cantankerous man because when his sheep were being impounded after trespassing on M'Lean's property he became quite agitated; apart from becoming aggressive, Joy tried to sue for damages.⁷ It was not a wise decision because he lost the case. He also lost the case where he tried to prosecute William Firth, a shepherd employed by M'Lean, on a charge of perjury arising from a quarrel about impounding cattle.⁸

However, Joy had also taken on other more positive activities in the district and in the 1860s was associated with Martin Ivens and the consultations with local farmers about the Keilor-Braybrook Common.⁹

The family lived in an unconventional arrangement, with Isabella bearing multiple children over the next 22 years and Rose seeming to act as the midwife and carer. What was Rose's contribution to this relationship if the role of procreator had been usurped? Was she relegated to the role of the cottage house-mother, the one who carried the burden of daily chores that kept the household ticking over? Some of the children's birth records show that the midwife was Mrs Rose Joy and she was also responsible for having some of the children baptised at St Augustine's in Keilor, so their domestic relationship must have been quite amicable.

Isabella Williams had been born on 8th March 1839 at Norfolk Street, Liverpool, England. Her parents, John and Isabella Williams née Cassidy, had married on 24th July 1837 at St Philips Church of England, Parish of Liverpool. Isabella's mother did not recover from the birth and died 17th April 1839 aged 19 years. The cause of death was entered as "childbed".

John Williams continued his residence in Norfolk street (which was in the marine port

stayed in a set area, reported to local authorities and (if possible) attended divine worship on Sundays.

¹ It is not known what happened to James jnr. When Rose Mulligan died the paperwork noted that she had not married and had no children.

² Argus 16 November 1858

³ Keilor Pioneers, p218. However, children under 14 traveled half-price, which was an incentive to understate the ages of some minors.

⁴ Bacchus Marsh Express 31 October 1896

⁵ Argus 15 November 1858

⁶ Argus 16 November 1858

⁷ Argus 16 November 1858

⁸ Bendigo Advertiser 20 September 1858

⁹ Argus 12 November 1863

area of Liverpool) continuing his work as a shipwright, with young Isabella most likely being cared for by her grandparents Simon and Catherine Cassidy. John Williams then married Mary Walker also of Norfolk Street on 30th March 1840 at St Marks, Parish of Liverpool. Later that year John Williams and his young family boarded a sailing ship bound for Australia and settled on the south bank of the Yarra in the then Port Phillip district.

John with his wife Mary and young Isabella on arrival in Melbourne lived in a mud hut and then a timber house of only two rooms on the river bank close to the facilities for ship building and repair. On numerous occasions Isabella and her parents travelled to Hobart Town in the 1840s usually aboard the coastal sailing vessel *Flying Fish* to visit relatives. John and Mary's first born was John Arthur (1844-1846); then came William (1845-1926), Amelia (1846-1932), Mary (1848-1928), Elizabeth (1852-1854) and Harriet (1856-1924). Isabella would have been called on to assist with the care of her half-siblings which was valuable experience in those formative years.



During 1853 John Williams and his family left Melbourne for the Victorian goldfields, with John working as a gold digger until 1855 when he purchased 20 acres to become a farmer at Newbridge on the Loddon River near St Arnaud. The land wasn't selected, it was purchased, possibly at auction, and he purchased another 10 acres in August 1856. Isabella for reasons unknown did not join them

and at the age of 14 years remained in Melbourne to become the house servant for James and Rose Joy at Deer Park. Isabella travelled to Tasmania on several occasions with the Joys as they most likely had enduring friendships with others who had also been transported from England to the penal colony of Van Diemen's Land.

During 1855 Isabella gave birth to her first born, a son Joseph. His birth was not registered with the authorities nor were the next three (Mary, John, and Rose Anne) but all four were baptised on the 30th of May 1863 at St. Augustine's Catholic Church, Keilor, with the parents being recorded as James Joy and Isabella Williams.¹ Their next seven children were William, Amelia, Hester (who died in infancy), Elizabeth, Isabella, Sarah Ann and James. Except for William, all of the children were registered with the surname of Williams. William was registered with the surname of Joy. The twelfth-born was Tabitha and her birth at the Joy's farm on the Avon Plains in 1877 was not registered. Rose Joy was the attending midwife for the arrival of most of Isabella's children who would have all been very close with Rose who over the years adopted more of a grandmother-like role in the household.

PARISH OF Newbridge

ALLOTMENT 12 SECTION _____

AREA: 20 ; 0 ; 0

I, the undersigned, hereby apply to occupy under the 42nd Section of the Amending Land Act 1865, the land specified above.

Isabella Williams

Address Newbridge, Victoria

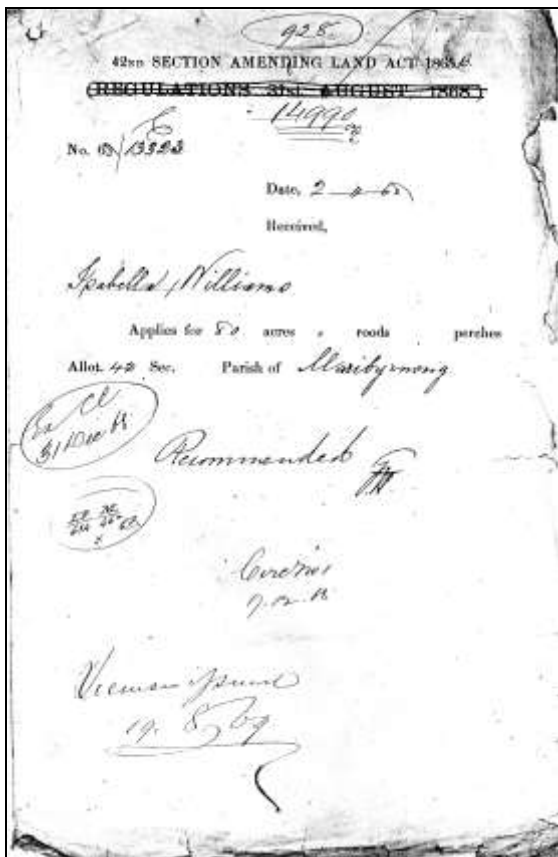
Date 9th October 1856

By Authority: James Esdaile, Government Printer, Melbourne.

¹ This was probably arranged by Rose Joy who was the only one in the family of Catholic background.

In 1868 Isabella Williams obtained 80 acres of land under the Closer Settlement scheme – it was lot 42 along the Kororoit Creek in the Parish of Maribyrnong. It was very stony ground with no timbers and the initial tasks were to fence and clear the land. Forty acres were cultivated under oats and 40 acres were cleared by collecting the surface stones into heaps. There was a quarter-acre kitchen garden and a stockyard, both enclosed by stone fences. A stone building measuring 30 feet by 15 feet comprising three rooms was finished in early 1869 and Isabella moved to her Kororoit Creek home in April 1869. As mentioned in Keilor Pioneers:

“... it must have been some family scheme as it is unlikely that Isabella would have had the money in her own right.”¹



The stone house had been put up in 1868. There was a kitchen garden, 40 acres were planted with oats and there was a stock yard where Isabella kept her cows. She had fulfilled her obligations under the Closer Settlement Scheme for land improvements and thus she received the title to the property. Then she divided the allotment into four paddocks and leased some of the land to John Henry Bate.

¹ Joan Carstairs, “Rose, Isabella and Rose Anne” in *Keilor Pioneers: Dead Men Do Tell Tales*; Angela Evans et al, St Albans History Society, 1994; p219

Isabella had lived and worked with James and Rose Joy until 1869 when she moved to her own small residence along the Kororoit Creek. Isabella’s block was on the eastern bank of the Kororoit Creek not far from James Joy’s property in Deer Park, so one could well imagine the children walking across the creek or taking a little pony between the farms. Her older children would have left school by that time and would have been caring for the livestock on both their mother’s and their father’s farm nearby.

Several official records survive with the entry “Isabella Williams, farmer” so she had finally escaped her “servant” role but the hard work would have continued. This included daily milking of the cows and tending to other livestock and crops would have required all able hands to assist, but with four more children arriving after 1869 Isabella’s role as a mother also continued.

About 1875 James and Rose Joy moved to Marnoo, near St Arnaud, where they had bought a farm. Some of James and Isabella’s children joined their father at Marnoo and some stayed on the Kororoit Creek farm with their mother.

Late in September 1878 Isabella’s resilience was regrettably tested once too often after a damp week. She became ill on 27 September 1878 through contracting a heavy cold which probably led to pneumonia. Her daughters Mary and Amelia did not recognise the danger of their mother’s condition and a doctor was not called for. Late in the evening of Wednesday 1st October 1878 at 11 p.m. the life of Isabella Williams ended, still a young woman at the age of only 39 years.

At the inquest it was concluded that her death was the result of “a severe cold and the jury do not attach blame to anyone [but] regret that assistance was not obtained in time.”²

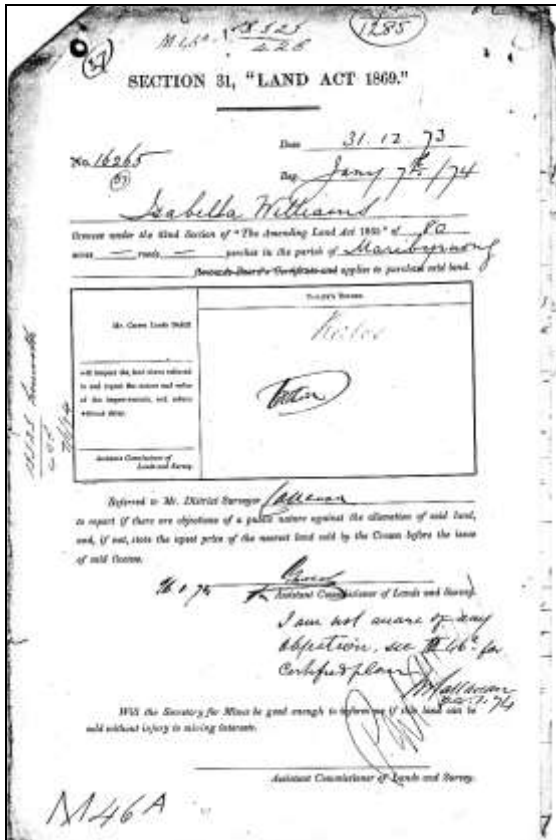
Isabella had died without making a will and consequently the administration of her farm and other property came under the control of the Curator of Estates of Deceased Persons. The estate was valued at £400³ and described as being of:

“80 acres land, more or less, has a frontage to the Kororoit Creek, is permanently watered, and is all substantially fenced. A comfortable small cottage, out buildings, and other improvements are on the property.”⁴

² Extract from Register of Deaths, 1878.

³ Argus 27 November 1878

⁴ Argus 6 December 1878



Even at this stage there were complications because after Isabella's death James Joy tried to lease her property to John Henry Bate. At the same time Isabella's father claimed that he was her only living relative and thus entitled to inherit the proceeds of her estate. Isabella's descendents believe he did this to keep the money out of Joy's hands and then passed it to her children in a private arrangement.

After Isabella's death, James Joy advertised a clearing-out sale of dairy cattle, horses, spring-cart, harness pigs, dairy utensils, and lease of 207 acres of "first-class agricultural or grazing land" on his Ballarat Road farm adjoining the property of Mrs Opie. It's particularly interesting that the advertisement includes the statement that "On account of his wife's death, Mr Joy is compelled to relinquish this farm, his intention being to reside on his other property."¹

In the following year on 23 December 1879 Rose Joy née Mulligan died at Marnoo; she was aged 72 years. Her grave was unmarked and its location is now lost to memory.

James Joy died on 25 November 1882, aged 71 years, having died of an inflamed bowel due to a bout of excessive drinking. He had been unwell for several days but had refused his children's offer to call for medical help. He was

buried in the Grays Bridge Cemetery at Marnoo and his grave is marked with a headstone. His remaining property in Derrimut was transferred to the Curator of Deceased Persons Estates and was sold in 1903 Mrs Elizabeth Opie.²



Isabella Williams had given birth to twelve children, one of whom, Hester, died very early in infancy. The children were Joseph (1855), Mary (1857), John (1858), Rose Anne (1861), William (1863), Amelia (1865), Hester (1866, died at 3 weeks), Elizabeth (1868), Isabella (1870), Sarah Ann (1872), James (1874), and Tabitha (1877). Though James Joy and Isabella were quite clearly husband and wife in common law, he would often deny this in public and refer to her as his servant, and he would also decline to admit that he was the father of her children. However, he appears to have had a change of heart towards the end of his life, because in a draft of his last will and testament he leaves his estate to Isabella Williams and refers to and names his children. However, Isabella Williams died before James Joy so she did not benefit from his estate.

James and Isabella's children and grandchildren have dispersed across the state and interstate, with one member ending up in Western Australia. After her death, Isabella was buried at Footscray in an unmarked grave. One hundred and twenty years after Isabella's death, her descendants erected a beautiful

¹ Australasian (Melbourne) 19 October 1878 p28

² Keilor Pioneers p232

marble headstone on her grave to commemorate her life and mark her final place of rest.

Isabella's life as a pioneer on the Keilor Plains is commemorated through the Isabella Williams Memorial Reserve in Albanvale, which was built by Brimbank Council. The playground is an extension to the shared trail network along Kororoit Creek, which is a fitting link to her former home.

Postscript: Ken Williams

Isabella's father was John Williams who is my great great grandfather. I am a descendant of William Williams, who was born in 1845 and was Isabella's half-brother. My people were all farmers and like all farmers they had booms and busts. When they had booms they tended to have family portrait photos taken so I'm fortunate that they did have some better years. We have a photo of Isabella's father but not of her mother, Isabella Cassidy, who died in Liverpool soon after childbirth. Amongst the Joy-Williams' family archives there is a photo of an unidentified woman that we suspect might be Rose Mulligan, but we have no way of verifying that.

How did Isabella meet the Joys? We don't know how this happened, but my speculation is that Isabella met the Joys on one of the trips between Tasmania and Melbourne. One author says they met on the *Picard* on one of these journeys. Earlier than 1852 the Williams went back and forth to Tasmania with Isabella so they might have met James and Rose on one of these trips. That's something I haven't been able to resolve: why did John, Mary and Isabella come to Australia? Mary Walker's sister Elizabeth was a convict and I think that's why they came out here. They wanted to get out of old Liverpool anyway. I think that John Williams was smart enough to realize that the steel-hulled steamships were going to overpower wooden ships because they were already starting to appear. Given that he was a shipwright he probably was pretty confident in finding employment in Melbourne and that's why he would have settled along the Yarra River.

My research shows there were at least three properties in the Derrimut area held in Joy's name. The first was the smallest lot and that was at Deer Park north of the Ballarat Highway, with a larger property just above that. The third and biggest property was at Rockbank to the east of Sinclairs Road on the northern bank of Kororoit Creek and set amongst the more extensive properties owned

by W.J.T. Clarke.¹ Clarke was probably the biggest land owner around that area and Joy's land was amongst that acreage. Rumour has it that Clarke was trying to squeeze Joy out of the ownership of his property which might explain some of the disputes they'd had. He wouldn't have liked James Joy at all because James had straying stock and didn't respect property rights.

Joan Carstairs writes that it must have been family money that helped Isabella acquire her land on the Kororoit Creek and I think Joy might have helped her. She was supposedly paid ten pounds a year as her servant's wage but I doubt that she ever received it. She gave birth to at least four children on that land and the last one born was at the Avon Plains at Marnoo where James and Rose had resettled with some of the children. That must have been quite a journey for Isabella as she would have gone by train and wagon, which must have been a risk in late pregnancy. I've been to all their places and at Marnoo the house was made of mud bricks and the walls had fallen down and were being dissolved by rain in the open weather. The farm is still there at Marnoo but it is really just wasteland. Joy bought more land for his sons Joseph and John. Some of the children never went there because they were too young and stayed with their mum in Deer Park.

There was a proper inquest into Isabella's death and an autopsy was carried out and the jury ruled that she died of a cold but they did not attach any blame to the children. When Isabella died she still had Tabatha on the breast and Amelia and Mary were in the house when she died but they didn't know the danger.

John Williams probably got a message about his daughter dying some days after it had happened, because the news had to come by the train and then horse. If you gave your letter to the train guard it probably got there quicker. He probably suspected that James Joy might be tempted to take advantage of the situation.

Joy had settled in Marnoo but also bought a block of land in the township of St Arnaud. I think he was going to send Rose there or use it as a stopping off point for journeys to and from Melbourne. We know through our research that Isabella's children probably did

¹ William John Turner Clarke was the son of Eliza and William Clarke who were squatters on many thousands of acres of Crown Land from Mt. Macedon to Williamstown..

not lose all connections with their grandfather, John Williams, because he had settled at Newbridge which is not that far from St Arnaud, and some of the older children who settled in Marnoo reportedly kept in contact with their grandfather.

Isabella's father put a notice about her death in the Illustrated Australian News, a monthly newspaper that went to England, and that would have been a way of notifying people over there. So there were still folk in England who would have been interested in news about the family.

Isabella never made a will and we think that James Joy tried to take control of her property and lease it to the grazing tenant just a few weeks after she died. Joy had no legal right to the property because he was not married to Isabella. The land title was in her name and he had nothing to do with it. That lease document was found amongst the family records; it was not actually signed by Joy though his name was pencilled in. I suspect that John Williams made the claim for Isabella's property to keep it out of Joy's hands and that's why he applied for probate. I wonder if the probate people became aware of Joy's lease agreement and ruled that it was not possible because if Isabella's farm was going to be leased by anyone it would be by the administrator of her estate as appointed by the official Curator of Deceased Persons.

After Isabella died in October 1878, Rose Mulligan died within two months in December 1878, and James Joy died in 1882. On Rose Mulligan's death certificate James Joy is listed as "friend" rather than as husband. I think that's how the younger children must have known the family relationships, i.e. that their mother Isabella was Mrs Joy and that Rose Mulligan was a family friend. There is no recorded evidence of conflict between the three adults. Rose's death certificate indicates that she was not married and had no children.

I'm not sure who started it, but Isabella's story was taken up by some history groups during the 1990s. Olwen Ford's¹ university thesis proposal had a brief story about Isabella's life on the Kororoit Creek,² and Anne Marie from Healesville was quite fascinated by Isabella's

¹ Olwen Ford is a member of the Sunshine Historical Society and author of *Harvester Town: The Making of Sunshine 1890 – 1925*; Sunshine and District Historical Society, 2001

² *Voices from below: family, school and community on the Braybrook plains 1854-1892*; Melbourne Graduate School of Education.

story and wrote it up after having discussions with me, but that was only a short article. The most detailed chapter about Isabella is by Joan Carstairs in the Keilor Pioneers book³ but there are some mistakes in that and I spoke to Joan about that. She told me about Isabella's unmarked grave and took me out to the park near Isabella's land and I thought I have to do something about that so I started talking to David Hickson who was another relative working on the family history.

I followed up with the grave at Footscray and we discovered that two members of the Birkill family were also buried there: Alice Birkill died in 1906 not long after birth and Robert Birkill died in 1919 at the age of 20 years. The big mystery is why they are buried in the same grave as Isabella. There is a John Birkill who was a convict during the 1830s and I've done quite a bit of research on that. There was also a James Birkill living at Albion in the 1870s. Annie Birkill knew Isabella and her children because there are references to them. In 1998 I arranged for a headstone that listed the names of all three people who are buried there. The headstone was unveiled and dedicated at a gathering attended by members of the Williams and Joy families and descendants on 4 October 1998.

David Hickson said now that we've done something about Isabella's grave and that was about the past, maybe we could do something about the future. I went home mulling about it and not knowing what to do. The park on Kororoit Creek was relevant because Isabella had land there and James Joy's land was to the west of that as well. David did the research about where Joy's other land was located and that was further north between some of Clarke's land. Joy had several blocks along Ballarat Road with three or four blocks fronting on the road and where Delfin Estates had their nursery to do all the gardens around Caroline Springs. When we went to inspect it the remnants of the original house and stables were still there with big blocks of fieldstone for the walls and foundations.

I spoke with Brimbank Council regarding the naming of the Isabella Williams Park and they eventually adopted the name. The park was officially opened by Mayor Brooke Gujinovic in 1999 and there were two of Isabella's granddaughters who were still alive and who

³ *Keilor Pioneers: Dead Men Do Tell Tales*; Angela Evans and the Keilor Pioneer Research Collective; St Albans History Society, 1994.

attended that event and they were Violet (descended from Tabitha) and Ruby. They've both passed away since. A Catholic priest, Joseph Holland, who is a descendant of John Williams, did the religious blessing which was quite a highlight. Judy Borthwick spoke on behalf of the family and referred to Isabella as a pioneer, a valiant woman, a woman of enterprise, a mother of numerous progeny, and that her true monument is probably not the park, which is indeed a monument, but her many descendants.

I also contacted the Melton Shire Council suggesting the name of Hester Glade for a street behind the lake in Caroline Springs, and that name was also adopted. Hester was Isabella's daughter who was born in 1866 and died within three weeks.

The extended Joy-William families have held a number of functions at the Isabella Williams Memorial Reserve Park and David Hickson celebrated his 90th birthday there. (He's now passed away.)

When my book about Isabella is published we will have the launch there as well. #

Ken Williams
Donvale 2016



Isabella Williams' grave at Footscray

IMAGES

Front Cover: Fruit picking on the Stenson farm, St Albans, 1920s. Stenson family archives.

piii. Parish of Maribyrnong SLV Haughton collection.
<http://handle.slv.vic.gov.au/10381/170889>

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p7. Gravestone for James Arbuthnot

p14. Four generations of the Smillie/Smellie family

p14. Ellen Abbott née McShane www.mundia.com

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p28. Benjamin Davis <http://www.parliament.vic.gov.au/images/members/bioreg/DaviesBenjaminGeorge200.jpg>

p29. Lucy Davis née Church and Septimus Davis
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p30. George Davis and Percival Davis

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p52. John Peter Fox and Mary Ann Fox née Comerford

p52. Fox family gravestone at Keilor

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p57. Harricks Cottage. <http://mooneevalleyfamilylocalhistory.blogspot.com.au/2013/02/harricks-cottage.html>

p58. Ellen O'Donnell and Edward Hassed
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p62. Hassed daughters: Annie Teresa, Mary Agnes, Margaret Alice, Eileen Amelda.

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- p92. Women of the McShane family – source not stated at time of publication
- p93. Patrick “Paddy” George McShane. http://expiredcricketer.blogspot.com.au/2013_08_29_archive.html
- p97. Gravestone of Susan and David Milburn mundia.com/gb/Person/24448399/13204571720
- p97. Gravestone of Jane Millburn née Goudie <http://www.findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi?page=gr&GRid=84171128>
- p98. The Milburn and Tate families of Keilor www.mundia.com/au/Person/24448399/12754623828
- p98. Horse buyers of Kapunda, 26 August 1903, The Chronicle, Adelaide, 20 August 1936, p8
- p98. William Barak c.1876. Unknown photographer, National Archives of Australia, Canberra. <http://www.cv.vic.gov.au/stories/contemporary-artists-honour-barak/12810/william-barak/>
- p98. Derrimut, 1837. Original image by Benjamin Duttereau; NSW State Library. http://localhistory.kingston.vic.gov.au/img/article/499_4.jpg
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- p111. Advertisement re sale of Opie Estate. Image from the archives of Frank Farrugia
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- p116. Grand Junction Estate, Braybrook. SLV Dyer collection of auctioneers' plans, Melbourne and suburbs. <http://handle.slv.vic.gov.au/10381/130966>
- p117. Derrimut Park Extension [Auction notice, 1886]. Troedel & Cooper Pty Ltd. digital.slv.vic.gov.au/dtl_publish/compleximages/31/1047840.html
- p117. Keighlo, the 1880s home of Alfred Henry and Mary Elizabeth Padley. Image circa 1917 from the Stenson family archives.
- p118. The New Suburb of St Albans. Advertising for auction February 1888. State Library Victoria.
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- p126. Studio portrait of T Padley, probably 34216 Gunner (Gnr) Thomas St Albans Padley. Australian War Memorial [https://trove.nla.gov.au/work/229134158?q="st+alban"&c=picture&versionId=251878091](https://trove.nla.gov.au/work/229134158?q=)
- p126. Mary Clark Padley image supplied by Gerald Padley for St Albans Railway Centenary Committee, 1986 included in *St Albans the First Hundred Years 1887-1987*.
- p127. The Masonic Lodge of sorrow at the Town Hall; F A Sleep (engraver). Master Bro. A H Padley standing in front. Melbourne, David Syme & Co., July 8, 1885. <http://trove.nla.gov.au/version/182147135>
- p132. Charles and Emily Eliza Servante. The Mirror, Perth; 5 June 1937.
- p133. The Abbey Reserve St. Albans: Splendid Mansion and Villa Sites. SLV Troedel collection. Land subdivision posters.
- p134. The New Suburb of St Albans, 1888. SLV Dyer collection of auctioneers' plans, Melbourne and suburbs. <http://handle.slv.vic.gov.au/10381/131998>
- p136. William and Mary Louisa Sincock
- p137. Dr. Louis Lawrence Smith (1830-1910) <http://www.upperbeac.rocke.id.au/p511.htm>
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- p144. Joseph Solomon, son of Judah Solomon
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p148. Frederick Charles and Eva Stenson. Image © Gwen Kratsis

p157. Fred and Eva Stenson with their daughters and grandchildren. Image © Gwen Kratsis

p157. Emily Hall née Staenson with Jill and Wayne Kratsis. Image © Gwen Kratsis

p158. Winifred Stenson © Gwen Kratsis

p159. Winifred Honey née Stenson with children John, Fred and Gwen © Gwen Kratsis

p159. John and Fred Honey © Gwen Kratsis

p161. John "Jack" Honey with grandchild © G Kratsis

p161. Marriage of Gwen Honey and Zenny Kratsis 1973 © Gwen Kratsis

p161. Winifred Honey née Stenson with daughter Gwen © Gwen Kratsis

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p163. William and Helen Taylor – Henderson Early Pioneers Vol II p153.

p164. Overnewton "baronial castle" from *Victoria and its Metropolis Past and Present Vol. II*, 1888.

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p167. Aileen and Madge Taylor images from the archives of Alie Missen

p167. Aileen Taylor and bridesmaids at wedding, Sun News Pictorial 23 Aug 1929.

p168. Colonel James Stewart and Aileen née Taylor, image from the archives of Alie Missen.

p168. Jack Hawkes the tennis player, Miss Taylor (Overnewton), Miss Eileen Taylor, Mr William Taylor (Overnewton), Mrs William Taylor; photograph by Edwin Adamson. digital.slv.vic.gov.au/dtl_publish/compleximages/22/2127261.html

p174. Isabella Williams image © Ken Williams

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p176. Isabella William's application for the Closer Settlement allotment 42 on the Kororit Creek, parish of Maribyrrnong, 1868, archives of Alie Missen.

p177. Isabella William's application for the Closer Settlement allotment 42 on the Kororit Creek, parish of Maribyrrnong, 1868, image from the archives of Alie Missen.

p178. James Joy and Isabella Williams
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p181. Gravestone of Isabella Williams
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