

Dust of Ages

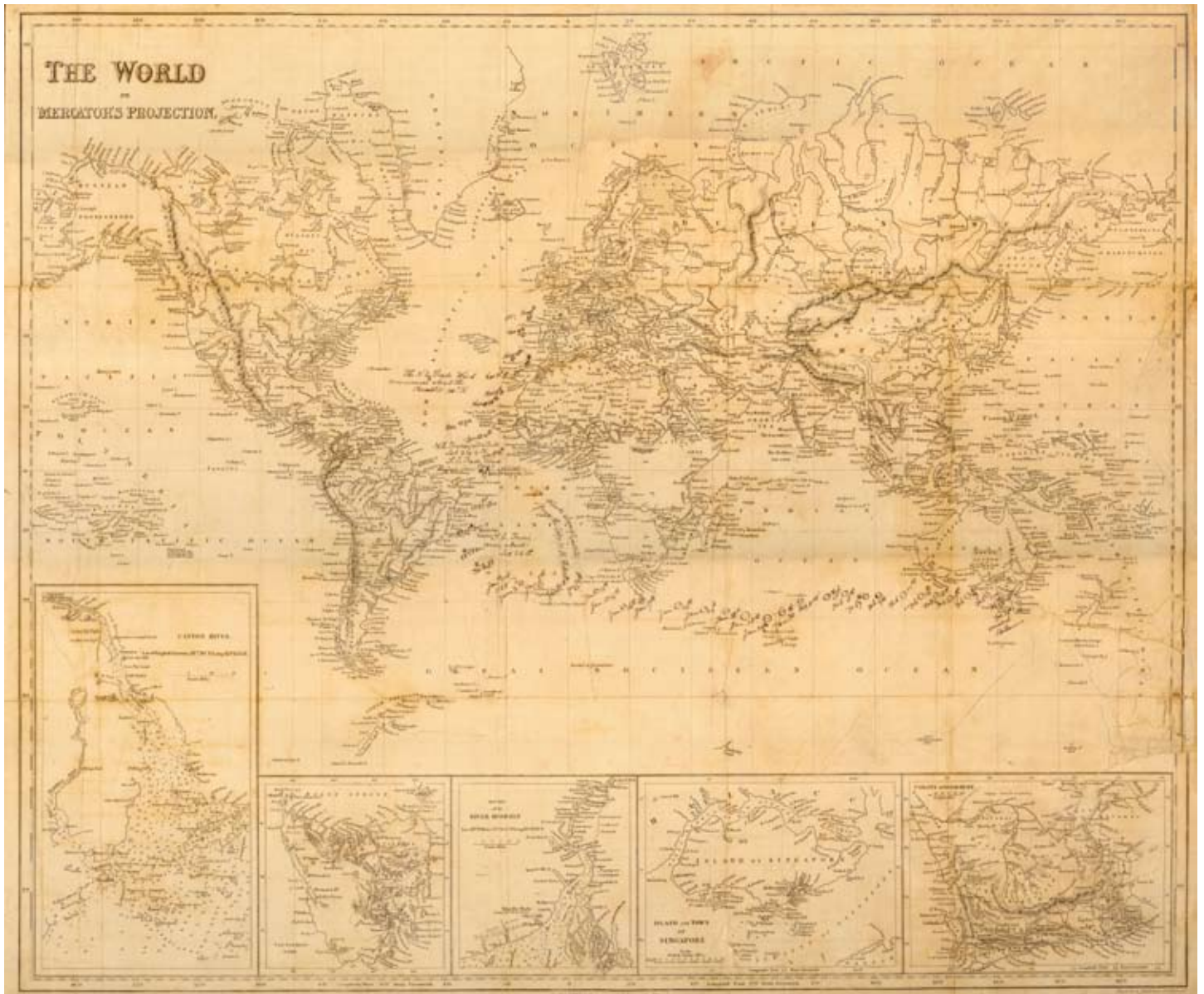


Journal of the Armidale Family History Group Inc.

Issue No. 135

February 2009

The Mystery Map: Whose Family History?



This map, which documents a voyage made from Europe to Australia between November 1857 and February 1858, was found by me in a chest of drawers at our home in Sydney during the late 1960s whilst I was still a schoolgirl. The map's origins, and how it had journeyed to that chest of drawers, were at the time a complete mystery. No-one in our family recalled seeing it before, and it certainly wasn't the journey of any of our relatives as their earliest migration to Australia was in 1890.

The antiquity of the map, and the interest of the regular recordings of the ship's positions made it an attractive item, and it was duly taken to Crows Nest for framing. After I moved away from the family home in 1972 the map moved house with me many times. Eventually, with its glass shattered, the map was left in a tin trunk where it survived many years storage in a leaky farm machinery shed. In 2008 conservation framing of my grandmother's 1783 Austro-

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Dust of Ages Journal

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Errors and Omissions Every effort has been made to ensure that *Dust of Ages* is free from errors or omissions. Should these occur AFHG Inc. apologises for any inconvenience caused.

Research Requests – Only basic research is possible in response to clear and concise written requests. A fee of \$20 (cheque or money order) **per surname researched**, applies to all requests. Information found will be photocopied, and if considerable, will attract an additional charge. All requests are handled by our volunteers in the order in which they are received. Please be patient!

Family History Research Centre Opening Hours

Monday 2.00 p.m. – 5.00 p.m. – weekly

Wednesday 10.00 a.m. – 4.00 p.m. – weekly

Non-members using the Library or attending Workshops are charged \$5 per visit.

The Centre is staffed by friendly volunteers who will assist you with your family history research.

Please note that the **Centre is closed on public holidays.**

Workshops

Saturday 10 am – 12 noon (see Diary Dates)

Open to all AFHG members and visitors (Workshop Fee of \$5.00 applies to non-members only).

NB No individual research can take place during Workshops.

Please Note: Workshops are provided to members by volunteers who freely give their time and enthusiasm in their preparation. RSVPs are appropriate and appreciated.

Meetings

General Meetings: Tuesday, second in the month: February–May, September–November, commencing at 7.30 p.m.

Second Saturday in the month: June–August commencing at 2 p.m.

Interested members of the public are invited to attend our general meetings.

Committee Meetings: Tuesday (first in the month – February-December inclusive) at 7.30pm.

Diary Dates

February Meeting – Tuesday, 10 February at 7.30 p.m.

Business meeting only. See following notice.

February, Thursday 19 February at 7.30 for 7.45 p.m.

Topic: Baby Farming in England in the 19th Century.

Speaker: Lady Teviot, President of the Federation of Family History Societies in England. Please note that this is a special meeting to take advantage of Lady Teviot's visit to Armidale.

March Meeting – Tuesday, 10 March at 7.30 p.m.

Topic: The Digital Detective – Family Photos and Family History. Speaker: Mick Reed

March Workshop – Saturday, 21 March from 10 a.m. to 12 noon.

Topic: Want to make a start on family history? Come along! Speaker: Robyn Crosslé

April Meeting – Tuesday, 14 April at 7.30 p.m.

Topic: We continue the topic from Remembrance Day, 2008, when members were invited to speak about a family member who served in the Armed Forces during wartime. Five minutes each.

May Meeting – Tuesday, 12 May at 7.30 p.m.

Topic: Introducing the Australian Joint Copying Program, an under-used resource for family historians. Speaker: Robyn Crosslé

June Meeting – Saturday, 13 June at 2 p.m.

Topic: To be advised. Speaker: Graham Wilson OAM

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Hungarian Empire postal map, prompted concern about the mystery map's preservation.

In Armidale the mystery map was taken to Stuart and Anne Boggs' Gallery 126 for conservation framing, and to the New England Regional Art Museum's collections manager for assessment. I was advised that the backing board on which it had been mounted in the 1960s now threatened its survival and would need to be removed. The 'fugitive' nature of the hand-inking and the extreme thinness of the map's paper, would make this a painstaking and costly project. Was the expense warranted? Time for further research!

During subsequent discussion of the matter my mother, Lottie MOTTRAM, recalled that my grandmother had been given some family papers, which included maps, by a close friend, Irene MAHER. The papers had belonged to Irene's late husband Raphael ('Ray') Septimus Maher, who was Speaker of the NSW Legislative Assembly from 1959 to 1965. The Mahers were childless and, as my grandmother had her 1783 map displayed in pride of place over our sideboard, Irene must have felt that the maps and papers were going to a good home.

Perhaps our mystery map recorded the migration of a Maher family member? If only I knew something – anything – about Raphael Maher's ancestry!

To my delight a family tree search on ancestry.com was immediately productive. Ray had been born in Grenfell in 1911, to parents Laurence and Anne, both born in Forbes, NSW. Laurence was born in 1865 to James and Bridget, both born in Thurles, County Tipperary, where they were married in 1847. James Maher would have been thirty-six when the map's voyage was made in 1857. Was James our immigrant and record-keeper?

Ray's mother's parents were Thomas and Margaret McKEON. Thomas was born in Ireland and would have been sixteen in 1857. His wife, Margaret BYRNE, was born in 1847 in Oberon, NSW. Did sixteen-year-old Thomas pen the records on our mystery map?

A Google search located another Maher family tree, property of Joe SLAVEN. Attached to James Maher's record on this tree were details of his 1880 death certificate. James MAHER, selector, father of nine living children, had died of 'inflammation of the lungs' at 59 years of age. His time in the Australian colonies was recorded as 25 years. That put his migration date at 1855. I wondered whether James' grieving son James, informant for the death certificate, might have said 'about 25 years'. Joe Slaven's site also gave Thomas McKeon's date of arrival in Australia – 1841 on the *Canton* – so Thomas was, presumably, not our voyager.

Did James and Bridget flee poverty in Ireland following the Great Famine of 1846? Or were they hastening to the Victorian Goldfields during the 1850s gold rush? Map owners or not, they did migrate during the 1850s with a young family. The map entries are in a beautiful hand – and one wonders how the position information was gleaned from the ship's crew. Did James write the entries in pencil whilst aboard ship, and then ink over them when safely ashore, under better conditions and with access to better

materials? Or perhaps Bridget was the more educated one in the family and keeper of the log?

Time for some expert advice. A phone call to family history mentor, Robyn Crosslé, provided direction for further research. Robyn recommended consulting the Melbourne newspapers of the time to find details of ships arriving in Melbourne on February 24th 1858. *The Argus* and *The Age* were duly consulted at UNE's Dixon Library. Shipping intelligence entries revealed three ships which arrived from Europe having departed before the earliest map entry of 5th November in the Bay of Biscay. The *Siam*, *Hindostan* and *Ferdinand Brumm* were the shortlist. For good measure I also investigated arrivals on the 25th February in case the ship had arrived by night and been recorded on the following day. This added one more vessel, the barque *Rialto*, which had departed Bordeaux on November 1st.

I had decided that it would be wise to take a copy of the map before it was mounted and framed. As it was a large format copying job I was referred to Big Print Central in Barney Street. Here Michael Croft scanned the map, and made quality copies using pigment dyes on archival paper. Michael, a former surveyor, was intrigued by the map and keen to show me the scanned version on his very impressive computer monitor. We talked about my shipping intelligence findings and looked together at the hand-written entries. Zooming in on the Bay of Biscay we were able to read a previously baffling entry; what had looked like 'Noojst', entered close to Bordeaux, was actually 'Nov 1st'. This newly revealed entry corresponded exactly with the date and port of departure of the barque *Rialto*. With its arrival date in Melbourne also matching that on the mystery map the *Rialto* was, presumably, 'our' vessel.

Time to investigate the *Rialto* further. The *Argus* shipping intelligence arrivals entry gave the following: '*Rialto*, barque, 312 tons, A. McFie, from Bordeaux 1st November. Passenger – cabin: Miss Banfield. De Pass Brothers and Co., agents.'

The *Argus* imports entry added: '*Rialto*, from Bordeaux: 909 railway chairs, Railway Trustees, Victoria; 4 cases liquor, 385 cases sardines, 4 cases hats, 9 cases glass, 44 cases 40 qr.-casks wine, 1,175 cases wine, 379 halfpipes brandy, 1,910 cases brandy, Order.

Internet searching revealed more. The *Shipslist* website stated that the *Rialto* was built in 1852, and sold by de Pass and Company of London to Archibald CURRIE and T.E. BOYD in 1860 in order to carry passengers to the Port Curtis goldfields on 'The Currie Line'. In 1862 she was sold again, to L. ROSTRON of Melbourne.

The *Heritage Council of NSW Maritime Archaeology* site stated that the *Rialto* had been built in New Brunswick, Canada, and was wrecked at Stockton Beach, Newcastle, on Boxing Day of 1870 on a voyage from Melbourne to Newcastle. She was 113 feet in length. A large, well-preserved copper-sheathed rudder uncovered by wild storms in 1999 on Stockton Beach, and protected by Stockton Historical Society, is considered to be from either the *Rialto* or the *Berbice*.

The *National Shipwrecks Database* added that the *Rialto* was of wood carvel construction, was built in Miramichi, New Brunswick, had a net and gross tonnage of 303, an overall

length of 34.6200 metres, and a beam (width) of 7.3760 metres. She was, at the time of shipwreck, registered in Geelong, manned by nine crew and sailed under Captain HODGE. The wreck was reported in *The Sydney Morning Herald* of 27th December and 29th December 1870. There were no deaths.

The Public Records Office of Victoria (PROV) online passenger lists indexes confirm 'Miss' Banfield's reported arrival on the *Rialto* in 1858. Their *Index to Unassisted Inward Passenger Lists to Victoria 1852-1923* records forty-seven-year-old 'Miss BUNFIELD' as the only unassisted passenger. The PROV *Index to Assisted British Immigration 1839-1871* does not list any passengers for the *Rialto*, which is not surprising given its tiny size and its ports of departure being 'foreign'. It has not been possible at this stage to view the original PROV passenger list records on microfiche.

There is no sign of any Mahers on board the *Rialto* in 1857, and with the evidence available to date I'm adopting the *Rialto* as our vessel and the intrepid Miss BANFIELD as our voyager. But how did the now not quite so mysterious map journey to my childhood chest of drawers? What was its journey from the hand of the unaccompanied Miss Banfield to that of Raphael Maher MLA? That might have to be another story.

Post Script #1: Miss/Mrs Banfield

An unaccompanied 'Mrs BANFIELD' arrived in Sydney from Melbourne on the *Wonga Wonga 2*, just 8 days after the *Rialto* arrived in Melbourne. The PROV *Index to Outward Passengers to Interstate, UK, NZ and Foreign Ports 1852-1896* records 47-year-old 'Mrs BANFIELD' departing for Sydney in March 1858 on the *Wonga Wonga 2*.

Ten years later a Mrs BANFIELD, dressmaker, appears in the *Sands Directory* as the owner of 86 Harrington Street, Sydney, a central CBD location suitable for an up-market salon. Perhaps our 'Miss' BANFIELD was in France to source materials and research the latest Paris fashions? I wonder if our Miss/Mrs Banfield was responsible for the *Rialto's* '4 cases hats'.

Post Script #2: James and Bridget Maher

A search of assisted immigration to NSW gave details of a James MAHER and a Bridget MAHER of Thurles, Tipperary, arriving in Sydney on the *David McIver* on 23rd December 1854. Their approximate ages are younger than those of our James and Bridget but were not necessarily recorded accurately.

Post Script #3: A Slight Possibility

Many, many Mahers came to NSW from Thurles, Tipperary, including three on the notorious *Stebonheath* – Mary, Mary and James. The *Stebonheath*, intriguingly, had to stop at Pauillac (Bordeaux) for several weeks due to extensive storm damage sustained in the Bay of Biscay. Like the *Rialto*, she left Pauillac on the 1st November 1857, arriving in Sydney on the 27th of February 1858, just three days after our mystery map's last recorded entry at Melbourne. I have found no record of the *Stebonheath* arriving in Melbourne, but that last entry could, just possibly, record the *Stebonheath's* (documented) sighting of Wilson's Promontory en route to Sydney. Could

the mystery map possibly have been handed down by Maher relatives who migrated on the *Stebonheath*?

The story of the eventful voyage of the *Stebonheath*, the subsequent inquest and public meeting of passengers can be read on Peter Noone's *Martin's Journey Out On The Stebonheath* webpage.

[Contributed by member Lydia Martin]

From the President

Welcome back to another year of family history research and to our Journal. I hope that things have gone well for you over the summer holidays and that you are looking forward to 2009.

Members have been telling me recently how much they enjoy articles in *Dust of Ages* written by our members, outlining their successes or looking for solutions to problems in their too-hard baskets. If you have a research difficulty that could perhaps be solved by sharing it with readers, please do send it to us. Similarly, success stories are always encouraging. We would love to tell others who may have faced a similar dilemma. They can be emailed to us at: afhg@nsw.chariot.net.au or sent by post to PO Box 1378, Armidale, NSW 2350.

Some of our members have undergone surgery or been unwell in recent months, and in fact some people are still unwell. We want you to know that you have been, and still are, in our thoughts and we hope that each day makes a difference to you.

Our sympathy is extended to member, Wendy Handes, who lost her 97 year-old mother, Lorna Harris, on 2 December. Mrs. Harris was a keen family historian, and long-time members of our Group may remember her at our meetings in the late 1990s. Mrs. Harris was enthusiastic about the past and lived life to the full. Wendy has kindly given us a copy of the eulogy given at her mother's service for inclusion in this journal. We hope you will enjoy it and the wonderful photograph of her mother and 'friends'.

We look forward to seeing you soon, and if you find you have a spare few hours on a Monday or Wednesday, you might like to consider joining the team of volunteers in the library. I can assure you that it is not in the least intimidating, the fellowship is excellent, and it is a good way to learn what is on the shelves. You would be made most welcome.

I have just received the sad news that long-time member of the Group, Sandra Guthrey, passed away on Saturday, 17 January. Sandra's membership number was 18 so she joined the Group in its earliest days. Our sincere sympathy is extended to John and their family at this sad time and the days ahead.

I wish all members success with their family history research in 2009 and look forward to seeing you in the library again soon.

Robyn Crosslé
President

The Story of John Mills – Convict

1810–1841

[Continuing Robert Backhouse's story from *Dust of Ages*, Issue No. 134, October 2008, pages 5–6.]

Melbourne in 1837 was only a small straggly village, with vestiges of a more orderly town gradually appearing. Many houses were crude wattle and daub structures with earth floors. The few framed prefabricated structures in use by officials and more affluent people had been brought from Sydney, while many people lived in tents along the river-bank.

Returning to Launceston to fetch his sixteen-year-old wife, he sailed for Melbourne again in late October 1837. It seems to have been a busy year for John and Hannah because there was another land sale in Melbourne in November that year, at which John bought a block on the corner of Bourke and Elizabeth Streets for £50. This was immediately opposite the site of the future General Post Office in Bourke Street.

John's lands provided a rental income while he went ahead to build the Melbourne Brewery, which depended for its water supply on the Yarra River.

At first the couple made their home on the banks of the Yarra, in a wattle and daub hut. On 10th January 1838 their daughter, Emma, was born, and although she was not the first child to be born in Melbourne, she was a close third on the baptismal register. Her life was to be a rise from such humble beginnings to wealth and high society, as well as to be a source of loving and generous security for more than one generation of her descendants.

Next to the site of the brewery John built a shanty for the sale of his beer, and Hannah worked behind the bar; the building became known as the Hotel Adelphi. At one point they were found to be in breach of the licensing laws and were summonsed. I don't know of any penalty. Also John was refused permission to lay a pipe directly from the Yarra to his brewery. He was also fined for selling poor quality barley. Perhaps his convict past had some bearing on this sort of problem.

By 1841, when he was just 31, he had built two more public houses, The Dundee Arms, and the Crown Inn, and had extended the Adelphi to include a room sixty feet long in which balls and meetings could be held. He had contributed to a fund to get Flinders Lane repaired, and increased his standing in the community by joining the Wesleyan church. With some knowledge of that church, Brenda Niall expressed the opinion that John may have been publicly declared *free of shame* during a prayer meeting.

Being now regarded as respectable, John was on the verge of becoming a wealthy pillar of society, but his life was cut short by an illness, perhaps contracted during his convict experiences, and possibly tuberculosis. He died later in 1841. This untimely death left young Hannah Mills a widow at 20 years of age with a small daughter, Emma Mills, and the ownership of prime land with a steady income in Melbourne, which was showing signs of becoming a very prosperous town.

Now while this story is intended to be about John, it would

not be fair to him if I don't give at least a sketchy description of some events consequent upon his remarkable efforts to establish a name for himself, so successfully, by his age of thirty-one years, from very humble beginnings.

John's will which he made not long before his death, evidently presuming that he had not long to live, was quite generous. His choice of executors of the will could well have included a William SIDEBOTTOM, his wife's sister's husband. But knowing that Sidebottom was unreliable and a bit of a loose liver, he was wise enough to by-pass him, and chose two members of the Wesleyan church to be co-executors with Hannah. Brother-in-law Sidebottom was later one of the litigants who sought to get part of Emma's money. The will provided bequests to John's brothers and sisters, and a secure income for Hannah, but, to his daughter Emma, John left the greater part of his estate, with a provision that she be brought up as a well-educated lady, attending the best of schools for that purpose.

About five months after John's death, Hannah married again. The apparent haste of this second marriage could have been caused by Hannah's immediate need to find security, and to have assistance with written accounts and business.

A conjecture might be that an unmarried widow of 20 in those days would feel the need for protection, as well as a father figure for her child. She chose Tom ROBINSON, who thereafter depended to a large extent on her wealth, and she bore him seven children before they separated twelve years later in 1856. She appears to have given her marriage with Tom a reasonably thorough trial!

Tom had been an employee of John Mills, but in the economic depression that occurred not long after the latter's death, he used John's daughter, Emma's, bequest for a boisterous lifestyle rather too lavishly. He was later charged with mismanagement of Hannah's and Emma's assets for his own use.

There were several other legal battles about the will, particularly those initiated by John's brothers who migrated to Australia with the express purpose of getting good slices of John's estate. John had mentioned them in his will, but their bequests were subject to the condition that the brothers collectively should give £100 to each of the family's four sisters - and that to be done within 3 months of John's death.

He must have known that news of his death would probably not reach the brothers in Gloucestershire earlier than 3 months after his death because of the slowness of communication with Britain, and that they would only be annoyed by his action. Later they came to Melbourne to test the will anyway.

John must have known that his farm labourer brothers would be unlikely to be able to honour the requirement to raise six hundred pounds for the sisters at all, let alone within the 3 months specified. In the Melbourne Court, partly because of their obvious delay in following the binding terms of the will, their case for a claim on the estate failed.

The terms of John's will required that Emma had to be educated at the best available schools, and this requirement inevitably and unavoidably caused her to be separated from

the rest of the family, including her illiterate mother and her seven siblings.

Boarding away from home for several years and studying languages, art and music, deportment and good social behaviour, put her in a position that gave her entry to what was termed 'polite society' in Melbourne, with plenty of respectable young lady acquaintances and their families. To secure her future in that society would require the safety of a good marriage that would safeguard her fortune from predators.

In England, Emma's husband-to-be, a William a'BECKETT (later Sir William) had been born out of wedlock to an English Solicitor. He had been given an English upper class education at Westminster School, and in his solicitor father's office, he read Law and became a Barrister.

The original ancestral a'Beckett family was descended from Sir Thomas a'Beckett, best known for his death by murder in Canterbury Cathedral in 1170. But he had held estates in England for many years. One of them, 'Penleigh House', was much desired by William but he could not inherit it because of his illegitimacy. He decided to go to the colonies where he might prosper sufficiently to buy that English estate one day.

Arriving in Sydney, William (later Sir William) soon did very well in legal circles and within four years had reached the position of Acting Solicitor-General with a salary of £800 a year and the right to private practice. He became an acting judge of the Supreme Court of New South Wales in 1844, and later a provisional judge in the Port Phillip District of NSW. He and his wife and sons moved to Melbourne and his appointment as judge was made permanent. His first wife, Emily HALEY, having died, William married her younger sister, Matilda HALEY, in 1849. This would not have been legal in England at the time but was allowed under Australian Law because the Deceased Wife's Sister's Act was not proclaimed in Australia. The children of the first marriage were William Arthur Callandar a'Beckett (W.A.C.), and Malwyn, Edward and Reginald a'Beckett.

Soon after the creation of the new State of Victoria, William was appointed as its Chief Justice of the Supreme Court. Feeling that his office might deserve a knighthood, he managed to obtain the honour and thereafter became Sir William a'Beckett. His brother Thomas followed Sir William to Melbourne and they became pillars of colonial society.

Both the brothers supported efforts to fight alcoholism particularly after the discovery of gold, which had resulted in many former disreputable people becoming suddenly very rich, as well as causing many folk to fall under the influence of the demon drink!

Sir William was given the task of trying gold miners after the Eureka Stockade episode and, in spite of his direction to the jury, strongly hinting that the men were guilty of treason in his opinion, the jury declared them innocent. This was a bitter blow to Sir William. In the same year he discovered that his son, William Arthur Callandar (known to his friends as WAC) a'Beckett, had been taking an interest in Emma Mills, the daughter of a convict. He failed to break that relationship, and his son married Emma at a very private wedding in 1854.

In the face of his failure in court where his lofty words on the subject of treason had been ignored in the controversial verdict, and the blow to his pride when his eldest son married the daughter of a convict, Sir William retired to England and never returned.

Emma's marriage was strongly supported by WAC's uncle, Thomas a'BECKETT, whose family welcomed her into the a'Becketts, at the age of seventeen. She was apparently a very charming and pretty girl. The quiet wedding that was arranged must have suited Sir William whose position technically had been to oppose it on the grounds that Emma was the under-age daughter of a convict brewer. But his brother, Thomas, managed to persuade him to issue the permission to marry, even though Emma was a Ward of Sir William's own Supreme Court.

The marriage was a happy one, and while the differences in social status of the parties were well-known to the colonists, they were soon disregarded. But it would be most entertaining to have been able to study the potential embarrassments surrounding Sir William's introduction of his son's wife into English upper crust society when they went to England to visit their relatives there. They would have asked, "Who is she?"

Emma and WAC, however, had four daughters, the eldest of whom, Emily, married my Grandfather, Benjamin Talworth BACKHOUSE. As a matter of interest the second sister, the artistically inclined Emma Minnie, married Arthur Merric BOYD.

So, John Mills, convict, was one of my great-great-grandfathers, of whom everyone has eight. The other seven were The Reverend Ben Backhouse Snr., John BURDER Esq., Sir William a'Beckett, Chief Justice, John MILLS, a convict, John BULL, a farmer at Cabramatta, Anthony HORDERN (I), Coach builder, Anthony Horderm (II), Businessman, and William MONGER, Ship's Captain and Entrepreneur. I wish I could meet them all in the one room, with their wives, to see their reactions and to hear their opinions of each other.

I wish to thank you for inviting me this evening, and for listening to my little bit of colonial society history.

I congratulate members of this Family History Group both for their hard work on their own research, and for the way you inspire others to get interested, and for supplying many useful aids for people to use to find fascinating things they never knew about their forebears.

[Contributed by member Robert G. Backhouse, who presented the above as a talk to Armidale Family History Group on 13 May 2008]

Childrens' Books from the Museum of Education in Armidale

The UNE Heritage Centre has a new display to show off a little-known collection of books from the Museum of Education's Library. The display is arranged to cover themes in the collection – Australiana, religious books, girls' books, boys' books, fairy tales and classics. The books are not in pristine condition. They are tattered and worn and reflect a lifetime of loving by generations of children.

The display includes rare items such as *Stout fellows Caum, Angelina Wallaby, Um-Pig and Flip* by Dorothy Wall (1936) and *King Bungaree's Pyalla and stories illustrative of manners and customs that prevailed among Australian Aborigines* by Mary Fitzgerald (1891). The Museum of Education library collection is largely uncatalogued, and we are looking for a volunteer with some cataloguing experience, or a team of volunteers, to begin the arduous task of cataloguing the collection onto an Inmagic Database.

[Contributed by Christine Bryan, member and University Curator, UNE Heritage Centre, Armidale.]

[Editor's note: Please make a visit to this stunning display at the University Archives a top priority. It is a lovely display of old and rare books which, for many, will remind them of a visit to the home of their grandparents.]

Ryerson Index Update

This update was recently provided by John Graham, chief organiser of the Ryerson Index, and given to us by our member, Wendy Handes, who supplies the Index with information from our Armidale newspapers.

"We have just had our tenth birthday – Ryerson was born at the Sydney Dead Persons' Society (DPS) Meeting in October 1998, and the first entries went into the database on October 11th.

Of the seven original indexers covering *The Sydney Morning Herald* and *The Daily Telegraph*, we still have three of them who have continued their work since the beginning – Sybil Jones (*DT* every day), Pauline Kettle (*SMH* on Wednesdays) and Neville Arrowsmith (*SMH* on Thursdays). That's real dedication - thank you!

So give yourselves a big pat on the back everyone, as we look forward to the next ten years.

The Ryerson Index plugs a hole in available resources for those researching in Australia. There are no official records available for deaths post 1985 (in NSW), and from varying dates for other states. By indexing the deaths published in all major, and many smaller newspapers in NSW, we continue to make that gap in the records less of a brick wall for researchers. We have also expanded to include other states of Australia, and now have a large number of entries from the major newspapers in Victoria, Queensland and South Australia. Combined, these four states cover about 85% of the Australian population.

We have this month celebrated our tenth birthday. In that time, we have indexed over 1.84 million entries, and are currently adding entries at the rate of more than 250,000 per year. There are approximately 120 active indexers, all

volunteers, covering the 139 newspapers we include. Many indexers have taken on the task of back-indexing their local paper, with some papers complete for between 40 and 60 years back from the present.

The Ryerson Index is now recognized as an essential resource for Australian research. We look forward to indexing our two millionth record (around mid-2009), and to continuing to expand in the future.

John Graham"

[Contributed by member Wendy Handes]

Lest we forget

My book on the history of the 2/20 Battalion AIF is progressing well. The Battalion's war diary and routine orders give an official version of events and interspersed are the letters home from Captain Bill GADEN.

In all these letters and accounts many names were mentioned so I've tried to give a brief snippet about the people, and what happened to them. For example one letter to Bill told him *Young Proudfoot from Scone died of wounds, his father is the man from Assers*. This has led to information about Edward PROUDFOOT, when and where he died, and Assers shop in Scone which sold 'drapery, mercery and boots'.

Initial letters from home following the Japanese surrender were full of anxiety... was Bill dead, alive, injured or, as his mother put it, 'whole'? Once replies had been received the joy was unbounded and letters full of news. One delightful story was how Bill's sisters had an Armidale lass they had befriended, Joan JOHNSTONE, lined up to become Mrs Gaden when he returned, but Joan had other ideas and was already married with a baby boy. I was interested to see if I could find her as the Johnstones knew the Gaden family and could perhaps add to the story. Through AFHG member, Ian Johnstone, I was able to contact Joan's sister, Jennifer, who showed me Joan's wedding photographs. The beautiful bridal gown of ivory satin had a very distinctive neckline and sleeves. It had been borrowed from a friend, not uncommon in the austerity of wartime. By comparing photographs we realised Joan Johnstone was married in the wedding dress originally worn by Bill's sister, Sue.

My biggest challenge was a letter to Bill from Banbury in England, written in early January 1946. It was signed John, he said he was lucky to still have a wife, Jean, most of his men had arrived home to find their wives had small children to other men and didn't want to know the returning POWs. John mentioned South Tonchan, so he had been a POW, and his batman, so he was an officer. So who was Officer John of Banbury? The genealogical mailing lists on the internet were consulted and I had people all over Oxfordshire trying to identify John and his army unit for me, no mean feat as some British units were merged several times before arriving in Singapore in 1941. The wonderful folk on the mailing lists succeeded; Officer John of Banbury was Major John TURRELL of the 85th Anti Tank regiment, his wife, Jean, was a daughter of the local MP. Thanks to the vast genealogical network of friends on mailing lists on the internet, I can now put a surname to Officer John and I'm in contact with John Turrell's son.

[Contributed by member Caroline Gaden]

Brays, Lanes, Pearses from Cornwall

My father, Milton BRAY, was once told by a cousin that the Brays were First Fleeters. Dad was deeply sceptical – he'd been told by his father that his forebears came between 1827 and 1837, and that his great grandfather, Samuel Bray, had been the last to arrive as he was completing his apprenticeship as a tailor. Still, Dad was intrigued enough to mount an expedition to Bathurst, where he and Mum transcribed the headstones of all the Brays in the Bathurst and Kelso cemeteries.

At Bathurst Cemetery they found his grandparents, John and Rachel Bray, his great grandparents, Samuel and Joanna Bray, and Samuel's first wife, Ann, together with a selection of children and siblings. At Kelso in one grave, they found James Bray, Mary Ann Bray and James BAYLIS. Who were they? The cousin had said that Samuel had a brother – perhaps this was James. At this point I was drafted into the project – as a librarian it was assumed that I knew how to “do” family research – well, I had the theory, now I had to put it into practice. I ordered death certificates for John, Samuel and James, found some references to Ann's and James' deaths in *The Sydney Morning Herald*, and some information about the Baylis family in various reference books. I also found a Private Bray on the First Fleet and a couple of Bray convicts. My research confirmed Dad's information – Samuel and Joanna were born in England.

We lost interest at this point. On several occasions I almost threw out the folder of information, but fortunately didn't, as a quarter of a century later I was seized by the desire to know more, and within months I had several over-full folders of transcripts of birth, death and marriage certificates, a filing cabinet drawer full of photocopies and half a shelf of books on my family.

The Bray family seems to have come as a group around 1837 and comprised parents, Nicholas and Johanna, sons Samuel and William, daughter Mary, her husband Thomas PEARSE and Thomas's young sister, Joanna (who married Samuel seven years later when she was still only sixteen), although I so far have not been able to identify the ship on which they travelled – they seem not to have been assisted immigrants. Samuel may have come on a later ship as family legend suggests, but he was certainly here in January 1838 when he purchased a block of land in Bathurst, where he'd set up in business as a tailor and draper. As Nicholas's death certificate states that he had two sons and a daughter, I was content that I had found all the family, and that James Bray of Kelso was not related.

Then I read Patricia Lay's excellent book *One and All: Cornish in New South Wales*. She tells the story of the arrival of William and Ann TOM and their family in 1823: Tom was an important character in the establishment of the village first known as Cornish Settlement, later renamed Byng, and in the spread of Methodism in the Central West of NSW. With the Toms came William and Catherine LANE and their children, Mrs. Lane's companion, and an unnamed nephew. William Lane, Ann Tom and Johanna Bray were siblings and Catherine Lane was William Tom's sister. The Toms and Lanes must have had some capital as they were granted land, something which at that time was related to



bvgh

the applicant's financial resources. They travelled over the mountains, and after a false start at Tarana, the Lanes settled at Queen Charlotte Vale near Bathurst, while the Toms selected land a little closer to Orange. Over the years many Cornish immigrants joined them, including the Brays, who moved onto a block adjacent to the Toms.

It was a footnote to a discussion on chain migration among the Cornish that grabbed my attention:

Another daughter [of James and Johanna LANE] married a man called Bray (presumably the parents of James Bray who accompanied his Tom and Lane relatives to NSW in 1823) and came to NSW...

Now, I had already established that Johanna Bray was the daughter of James and Johanna Lane so it was looking as though James was a relative after all. James Hugh Donohoe's *Free Settlers of Australia 1788-1828* and *People arriving in Australia 1788-1828* (both in the University of New England's Dixon Library in Armidale), listed James Bray, aged 13, arriving in 1823 on the vessel *Jupiter*, the same ship as the Tom and Lane families. At the time of the 1831 census, William Lane employed James, aged 18, on his property, "Orton Park", at Queen Charlotte Vale. It was only after this that I thought to look him up on the ancestry.com.au website, and there, sure enough, was a pedigree for James, compiled by a descendant. I tend to take such pedigrees with a grain of salt, but this had a precise date of birth (15th July 1810) and place (Launcells, Cornwall) which fitted in well – Nicholas and Johanna were married in 1809 at St Clether, Cornwall and the first child I was aware of, Mary, was born in 1812.

Why then was he missed from Nicholas's death certificate? Perhaps the informant, Nicholas's grandson, Thomas Sargeant Pearse, only reported the children still living – James died in 1848, well before Nicholas' death in 1864. It's also possible that Thomas, who was only born in 1840, simply didn't remember his uncle.



James married Mary Ann Baylis in 1835. She was a widow, having married the convict, George PALMER, in 1829, only for him to die five years later, leaving her with two young sons. Here was a Second Fleet connection – Mary Ann's father was Private Joseph Baylis who arrived on the *Surprize*, coincidentally the same ship as a convict ancestor of mine on my mother's side. James died in 1848, the death notice in *The Sydney Morning Herald* of November 4th 1848 stating that he died "after a long and painful illness, leaving a wife and four children to lament their loss".

Clearly Dad's cousin had either invented a pedigree, or he was actually a First Fleeter courtesy of his mother's family, a possibility I haven't investigated. It is ironic, however, that James Bray, whose relationship to my family I'd discounted, should give the Brays the closest connection with the earliest English settlers.

[Contributed by member Margaret Small]

Preserving those precious photographs

Have you ever thought of creating a photobook of all those precious photographs? It's easy to do and you can make 'themes' to suit your story.... it may be a year in your life, your wedding day, your hobby, a place you lived, the kids growing up, photos of your parents, that super holiday. Most importantly you can print several copies to make sure the record won't be lost.

If you have old prints they can be scanned to give a digital image that can be downloaded onto a program and made into a book. Text can be added to tell a story. Once it's all been put together, you select the cover – hard or soft and an appropriate colour, and you can get more than one copy. I've done 10 each of the children's Pelican story books I've put together for my grandchildren. You send the information to the company, online or on CD, depending on whose product you use. They then post you the finished books, or you may be able to collect them from a local store.

There are a number of photobook programs available if you have internet access and broadband. If not, try asking at Eastmon's Armidale store. I have tried several but my favourite is Snapfish. The URL is:

<http://www4.snapfish.com.au/home>

I find it's easy to download photos and add text and the finished product is excellent quality – and they keep sending you offers of 20-40% discount if you get your order in by a certain date, so I have several in the pipeline waiting for the next offer!

My main tip is that you select and save your photographs into a separate file before starting. Place them in the order you want them to appear and number them 0001, 0002, 0003 and so on before you download them into whichever photobook program you choose.

I've put together one for my Mum with all the photos I can find of her life in England prior to 1973.

My next task is to go down memory lane to the places we have lived, a record for my children and grandchildren.

Try photobooks they're easier than you think.

[Contributed by member Caroline Gaden]

My name is Robert Luxton

I know that, you say. So what? Many of us may have wondered at times why we were given our name. What is its significance?

In the course of pursuing my family history, I have become acutely aware of the burden of responsibility a name can carry. At least since the middle of the 18th century, there has been a Robert Luxton, in every generation of the family. Usually this has been the eldest son, but not always, as I will explain.

The name Robert seems to be very closely associated with the Luxton family. For example, I have visited the area in the county of Devon from which the Luxtons originate. If you would like to research the origins of your surname, an excellent source is the series of maps on the *ancestry.com* website, showing distribution of families in England and Wales. For the Luxton family, the greatest concentration is in Devon, with London not far behind. Elsewhere, the numbers are very thin, especially in the east and north of England, and in the west of Wales.

The other evidence was even more convincing. In the churchyards of the villages of Winkleigh and Brushford Barton there is/are a remarkable number of Roberts! In addition, a book entitled *Earth to Earth*, by John Cornwell tells the story of a notorious murder/suicide which took place in the area of Winkleigh in the 1970s, which involved a Luxton family. One brother was named Robert. The family tree shows that for a number of generations the eldest son was always Robert. A search in the IGI indexes, and the British censuses for the 19th century also reveal the popularity of the name in the Luxton family.

Without suggesting any direct relationship with a surviving family in Devon (the Luxtons were well known landowners), it is clear that my own ancestry shares the same tradition, for whatever reason.

So let me outline what I know about my line of Robert Luxtons. The earliest ancestor I have been able to identify was a farmer, born about 1750. I only know of him because his son was married for the second time in 1841, and the marriage certificate states his father's name and occupation.

The son is a key figure in my family. He married, in 1806, a widow named Sarah THOMPSON. Sarah was the eldest daughter of Thomas and Jane EASLEY, and in 1797 had married George Thompson. They had three daughters. Sarah then remarried, to Robert, and they had four children, two girls and two boys. Three of these died in childhood, only the second child, Robert, survived. He was born in 1809, and married Ann PRICE in 1835. The witnesses were Robert Luxton (his father, presumably), and one of the Thompson daughters. Of Robert and Ann's family, I only have a record of one, their eldest son, Robert, born 1836.

This is a period in my family story that proved difficult to disentangle for a long time. Which Easley girl had married Robert Luxton proved difficult, until I found the Luxton/Thompson marriage. Then I had to discover the facts about two Robert and Ann Luxtons. It turned out that the elder Robert had survived Sarah, who died in 1840 (and so missed the census of 1841). Robert then remarried, to Ann WHITE (née SMITH) in 1841. Only the record of this marriage established that the Robert and Ann Luxton who died in 1850 and 1852 were the older couple, not Robert and Ann (née Price). Is it clear why inheriting a name can be a burden sometimes?

Having established the generational relationships, I was left (and remain so) with the question of what became of the younger Robert and Ann. I still have no information on what other family they had, and when their deaths took place. You can see why I thought the deaths in the 1850s were so convincing.

Once again, I only have a record of one child, who else but their son Robert, born 1836. At this point the facts become better known, partly through family records, and partly by checking birth, death and marriage records (at St Catherine's House, in the 1990s, and then, later, the Family Record Centre, both in London), and the online census records for the relevant decades. But now a new mystery enters the picture.

Robert (b. 1836) married Jane Ann HUNT in 1861. They produced a large family, all of whom survived childhood. There was in my list one exception. Their third child, and first son, was born in 1866, and named Robert William. I have his birth certificate, and also that for his brother, my grandfather, Robert Henry! This led me to believe, as you might expect, that Robert William had died as a child. He was present at the 1871 census, and my grandfather was born in 1873. For years I searched in those intervening years for the relevant death, without success. So I let it go. Further census records gave me the details of my grandparents, in 1891 and 1901, and their family. For a long time, I was unaware of how to access the 1881 census, and when I did, at first could not find them.

Then came a breakthrough in the International Genealogical Index. The name was wrongly spelt as LAXTON. Then the mystery deepened. There was Robert William, aged 15, still living! So where was my grandfather? A child of the right age, named George, was listed. Actually, this did not prove too great a problem. In fact, in one or two places (e.g. my uncle's birth certificate, and my father's marriage certificate), their father's name was given as George. Also, the eldest son had been named, not Robert, but George



Henry. My grandfather did re-adopt his birth name on other occasions, and is so identified on his death certificate. But clearly, for a period of his life, he could not use the name Robert, because he had an older brother with the same name. Robert William's later marriage and the birth of a daughter are also on record. What the family thought they were doing giving two boys the same name, I have yet to understand. The fact is, they did.

My father was the second last of seven sons, born to Robert Henry and Elizabeth Maria (née EVANS) Luxton, who had married in 1894. Various names had been given to each boy, beginning with George, the eldest, and my father was named Frank William. A seventh son arrived, and whatever objection my grandfather had to the name must have evaporated by then (in 1916), and the boy was called Robert Cyril. My father was very attached to his little brother, and was deeply affected when little Robert died in 1923 of meningitis. The next year an older brother, Arthur, migrated to Victoria, and in 1927 my father also came to Australia, under the NSW Dreadnought Scheme. He moved to Victoria, became a Salvation Army Officer, met and married another SA Officer, Dorothy GALES, from Gippsland, in 1936, and they named their eldest son, born in 1937, Robert Bruce; my first name is in memory of my deceased uncle, and my second name in recognition of my Scottish ancestry. My eldest (and only) son is, of course, Robert Gordon Frank – these other names are for his grandparents. His eldest son, however, has relegated the name to second place. I fear for the future!

[Contributed by member Robert B. Luxton]

VALE
LORNA JEAN HARRIS
AN OBITUARY

Lorna Jean GRIBBLE was born in Heyfield, Gippsland, in Victoria in 1911. She married Frederick John (Eric) HARRIS in Griffith in 1933 and died in the Private Hospital in Armidale on 2 December 2008, aged 97 years. Those are the bare facts but her long life was a very interesting, varied and often adventurous one. Even towards the later days of her life she was described as dynamic and feisty, words that would not have been used to describe anyone in her younger days!

Lorna was the second youngest in the family of nine children of Arthur Gribble and Alice (formerly RIXON). Arthur was ordained as a priest in the Church of England in 1907 in the Diocese of Gippsland in Victoria. Over the years he served in four States and many parishes. The many location moves may have influenced Lorna because, over the years, she moved house many times in her life and was later passionate about travel.

As a small child Lorna lived through World War I, a war in which her father, Rev. Arthur Hazlehurst Gribble served as a Chaplain to Australian servicemen. He travelled on a number of troopships taking the men to the Middle East and to England and also sadly, on many ships bringing wounded men home to Australia. Lorna's two oldest brothers whom she barely knew, Norman and Clem, volunteered and unfortunately were killed at Gallipoli and in France respectively. She lived through the Great Depression, a situation that led to her husband, Eric, losing his business and having to sell his two trucks and Austin 7 car and move away from home and family searching for work. The Depression had a very influential effect on their lives that stayed with them until the end of their days. Lorna walked the Harbour Bridge on its opening day in 1932 and always loved Sydney Harbour and its ferries. She also lived through World War II, with Eric volunteering in May 1941 at a time when the war was not going well for Australia and its allies. He trained at Goulburn and then served overseas for 4½ years with the 6th Division AASC (Australian Army Service Corps) as a driver and mechanic. That war dominated the lives of Australians, and particularly Lorna's family which had many members on active service from both the Harris and Gribble families.

Lorna joined the Women's Australian National Service, the "WANS" for short. (This was later known as the "Land Army"). She learned signalling with flags and some other military tasks and also helped with fruit picking, vegetable packing, etc. Lorna, like many other women at that time, became the head of the family. She cared for her two children, Wendy, born in 1938, and Clem born in 1934 and later, Len born in 1945 and became the decision maker, a new role for her. She moved out of her new home and let it, and travelled where she could find employment, because army pay was minimal early in the war years. She moved to Griffith and shared half a house with the owner. There her mother came to join her and helped by looking after the children. The four of them later moved to Manly where Lorna continued working in retail stores and as an usherette at the local picture theatre. She was there when the Japanese planes flew over

Sydney. When things improved in 1943 Lorna and family moved back to Leeton and she took in boarders to help make ends meet and for company. Eric was very lucky and reached Sydney for a wonderful family reunion just before Christmas in 1945 and then it was back to Leeton to rejoin family and civilian life.

Ex-servicemen were offered the opportunity of applying for sub-divided rural land under the Soldier Settlement Scheme with some financial assistance to set them up as farmers. After a number of unsuccessful attempts, Eric's name was pulled out in a ballot in 1949. He accepted very promptly and within a month the recently renovated Leeton house was sold and the family moved to "Grimer Downs". This was somewhat heartbreaking for Lorna but she willingly packed up her household goods and 2 younger children to follow her husband to the life for which he longed. The eldest son, Clem, aged 15, was left to continue high school and board in Leeton but unfortunately this did not prove to be satisfactory and in 1950 he left school and joined the family on the land.

"Grimer Downs" was a 3,000 acre irrigation property in the Wakool Irrigation Area of southern NSW. Almost all the area was grey heavy clay soil on the floodplain. The homestead was old and neglected, there was no electricity or telephone, and the house was four miles across neighbours' paddocks from the road and the mailbox. Petrol rationing was still in force so trips to town were rare. Equipment, tools, machinery and household goods were almost unobtainable because Australia was still recovering from the long period when its industries and imports were all designed to assist the war effort. There was no accessible school so daughter, Wendy, completed her primary education with the help of the Blackfriars Correspondence School in Sydney, and Lorna supervised all of Len's early education until the age of 11 years. Even this was not reliable as mail to that southern part of the state came by a very long and roundabout route and with the roads not gravelled and inclined to be either slippery or boggy after a small amount of rain, the mailman often had difficulty delivering the mail with their lessons.

All these problems meant that Lorna's life was not an easy one. The property grew rice (on irrigated land), wheat and other crops; it produced lucerne for hay from a red sandhill, and ran sheep and cattle. On top of all her other duties, Lorna assisted with the farm tasks. She drove the tractor, helped with haymaking, mustered, drove and sorted sheep and cattle, and helped with lamb and calf marking, etc. At shearing time she cooked and provided three meals and 2 smokes per day for shearers.

A huge flood in 1956, never since repeated, inundated the property when, after some heavy maintenance on their own flood bank, a neighbour's floodbank upstream burst. Except for three small red sandhills, the property remained underwater for five months. This destroyed all the hard work that had been put into establishing irrigation banks, perennial and permanent pastures and the property never fully recovered. The pasture grasses were replaced with weeds, reeds and rushes. Eric and Lorna hung on there until 1967 but then the property was auctioned and their hopes of handing it on to one or both of their sons were dashed.

After travelling extensively by station wagon and caravan

through the four eastern states over a period of months, Lorna and Eric chose to settle in Port Macquarie. The next seventeen years spent living there were certainly the most comfortable and enjoyable of their lives.

Lorna had been born into the era when travel was only by horseback or horse-drawn vehicle, by train or by ship, and radio was in its infancy. She lived, however, to experience the huge changes of the 20th and 21st centuries and she embraced the advances in communication and travel. In her 80s she used first an electronic typewriter and then a computer. She learned, with great difficulty, to ride a pushbike, in the late 1940s. In the 1950s she gained her driver's licence and drove many thousands of miles in the southern Riverina, mainly over terrible roads and often in bad weather. Lorna travelled a lot. She did trips on her own in recent years by coach and by train. She travelled on the old Ghan and on the Indian Pacific to Perth and then travelled north from there to Carnarvon, searching out locations which had featured in her family's history. She went by plane to New Guinea twice, and to New Zealand with Eric as part of the celebrations for their 50th Wedding Anniversary. In 1973 Lorna and Eric travelled around Australia in a station wagon and camped in a canvas tent, often bush camping. Roads and camping areas were not of the quality of current times but they both enjoyed the experience immensely. In 1978 she went on an extensive tour by plane and coach through Great Britain and Europe with her two older sisters, Hazel, then 83, and Dot, aged 81. Lorna helped them to enjoy the experience and had a wonderful time herself, seeing the sights, taking photographs, and meeting new people.

Lorna was a woman of many talents and interests. She was Champion Athlete and Dux of her school, St Gabriel's at Waverley in Sydney, in 1928, boarding there from the age of 9 years. After completing the Leaving Certificate she returned there as an Assistant Teacher. She loved her dogs and horse riding, played tennis and lawn bowls and loved ballroom dancing, enjoying helping to teach dancing. Lorna enjoyed living near the beach, loved walking on it and swimming and surfing, and enjoyed games of strenuous beach cricket with her grandchildren. She painted in oils, watercolours and with pastels, and was involved with various crafts. Flowers and gardening were a lifelong passion for her.

In Leeton, Coleambally and Port Macquarie, Lorna was an active member of her church and at Port Macquarie she acted as a volunteer guide at the historic St. Thomas' Church and church tower. Commencing in the 1970s she researched and put together much of her family's very interesting history, most of which was unknown to her family at that time.

Family meant a great deal to Lorna Harris. In later years especially, she kept in close contact with her surviving brother and sisters, Hazel PROCTER, Dot GRAY, Gwen LUFF, and Roy and Aubrey GRIBBLE and their families. In the late 60s, 70s and early 80s they would meet regularly and spend a lot of time together, including sharing holidays. Lorna loved to visit, meet, contact and hear from her many nieces and nephews. She helped celebrate some great 80th and 90th birthdays, her own 50th Wedding Anniversary and many other important anniversaries. In 2001 here in Armidale a great 90th birthday celebration for Lorna was held.

In June 2008, initiated by one of her grandsons, Greg Harris,

a wonderful and informal weekend gathering of many of her descendants, then numbering 30, was held. Lorna had a wonderful time, as did the many family members present. Her grandsons had her reminiscing and playing 500 (a card game and a family tradition), and on the Sunday evening, members of the family, including Lorna, were eventually asked to leave the Bowling Club at closing time as they had been having such a great time they hadn't noticed the time!

Lorna and Eric Harris have 31 descendants – 3 children, 10 grandchildren, 15 great-grandchildren, including a new great-granddaughter born in September 2008, and 3 great-great grandchildren.

In the last few days of her life Lorna spoke of her husband, Eric, and how much she had missed him since he passed away in 1985. She said again, as she had said many times in the previous months, "I have been very lucky. I have had a wonderful life. We have had some hard times and some sad times but on the whole I've had a wonderful life."

[Contributed by Lorna's daughter and AFHG member, Wendy Handes.]

Editor: We thank Wendy for providing us with such a wonderful history of her mother's very full life. It reminds many of us of the old days and how life was once lived.

Victorian Probate Index Online

On 16 December 2008, the Public Record Office in Victoria officially launched the Probate Index, a work in progress.

Searching the net under *Victorian Probate Index* will probably bring it up, but the URL is:

http://proarchives.imagineering.com.au/index_search.asp?searchid=54

Enter text in one or more of the fields and click on *Search*. The results screen, showing name, title, date of death, date of the grant, occupation, residence, file and series numbers, will appear. The link to the item will take you to the details and if the digitized will/probate papers are available, you will see a *View Digitized Item* button at the bottom of the box.

The digitizing of wills and probate papers is yet to be completed and will be added as they become available.

The index up to 1925 is now completed and later years will be added over time, thanks to the work of many volunteers. One of these is Mechele Collins of the LDS Church here in Armidale, and we thank Mechele and the other 249 people who have made access to this index possible.

Anyone visiting Melbourne, however, can access these records by visiting the Public Record Office in North Melbourne.

Land, Probate, Deceased Estate, Divorce and Inquest Files

Following our Seminar in October, members asked about charges for searches done by professional researchers, Helen Dickinson and Sandra Jordan, in Sydney. We have contacted both researchers and their charges and costs are as follows:

Searches at the Department of Lands

Helen Dickinson charges a basic rate of \$40 per hour.

Title Deeds, Crown Plans and most other documents cost \$12.50, the fee charged by the Department of Lands. These are sent out by either Express Post (\$5.30) or Registered Post (\$2.75) for security purposes as Helen doesn't keep copies of purchased documents.

Parish Maps – full size, in colour, and rolled – cost \$25 plus cost of a cylinder and postage at cost.

A hands-on guided group tour of the records at the Department of Lands as an introduction to researching there is \$18 per person with a minimum of 4 people. Due to space limitations, the maximum number on a tour is 12 people.

Payments can be made either by direct deposit online, over the counter in a bank, or by cheque or money order.

The Department of Lands is located at:
1 Prince Albert Road
Sydney

between Hyde Park Barracks and St Mary's Cathedral at the top of Hyde Park near Macquarie Street.

Opening hours are 8.30 a.m. to 4.30 p.m.

The Department charges \$55 per quarter hour for research (\$220 per hour), and the Local Land Board – Crown Land Offices, have varying charges.

Helen's contact details are as follows:
PO Box 3117
St Pauls NSW 2031
Email: nswlandrecords@yahoo.com.au
Phone/Fax: (02) 9662 6629
Mobile: 0410 971 257

Searches for probate, deceased estate, divorce and inquest files

Sandra Jordan charges \$25 for the supply of up to 25 A4 pages for Probate, Deceased Estates, Divorce and Inquest files located at State Records at Kingswood.

Files containing more than 25 pages, or pages in A3 size, cost extra.

Sandra provides free quotes on files and also offers free searches of most indexes. It should be noted that there is less information available on older probate documents. Her brochure, which contains further information about searches in other records, is available in our library.

Sandra's contact details are as follows:
PO Box 4184
Penrith Westfield NSW 2750
Email: estatecopies@hotmail.com
Phone: 0410 625 323

From the Research Desk

Some of the names we researched in 2008:

ADAMS, Francis J. and Robert
BETTERIDGE/GILLETT
BETTERIDGE, James/Mary
BINDLEY, Daniel Howard/McCOLL
BOARDMAN, Joseph
BURT/CURRY
BYRNES/BURNS
CLUTTERBUCK, George
COCHRANE, Lot H./HOOKER, Eva M.
COCHRANE/NORTON
COOK (née WHITE)
CRIMMIN, James/EDWARDS
DAWSON/MOORE/CHAPMAN
DOWNEY/DUNCAN
DOYLE/BEHREND
ELLIS/BARNES
FARRELL, James/DOOLAN, M.
FITZGERALD
GIBSON/HAWKE/WALLACE/PIPER
GOODWIN, Charles
GRAY, Alfred Davis and William
HARVEY, Robert
HEATHFIELD
HETHERINGTON/STITTS
HOWARD, Alice, Francis Burns, James
HOY
JACKES/MOSS Wedding Report
JONES/BURGESS
KIOLA HOSPITAL (2 requests)
LUCAS

McEACHERN, Donald
 MAHER, Patrick
 MARCHANT Families
 MARTIN, Edward and George
 MARTIN/POLLINGTON
 MOORE Family
 MULRY, Thomas (2 requests)
 O'SULLIVAN/SULLIVAN
 POST Family
 POTTS
 REID, Fergie
 REUBEN/ROAN, Charles
 RICKETTS, William
 ROWSELL, Evan Edward
 SCOTT, Thomas/CLARK, Ellen
 SHEILS, Owen
 SMITH, Charles Henry
 STEELE, Mary Jane
 STOCKBRIDGE
 STRANDT/AITKEN
 TAYLOR, Robert (of Hillgrove)
 THORPE/LANE
 TRIM Family, Dominic/Amelia
 TYSOE, particularly JOEL
 VINCENT PRINTERS
 WILLIS, Charles

If any of these names sound familiar, we would love to hear from you. Our contact details are on page 2.

Royal Australian Historical Society New England and North West Affiliated Societies Regional Conference

This year the Annual Conference will be held on Saturday and Sunday, 28th and 29th March at The Salvation Army Citadel in Vivian Street, Inverell.

It is being hosted by the Inverell District Family History Group Inc., with the major sponsor being Joblinkplus.

Sessions on Saturday include:

Goonoowigall – Our Story, Growing up at the Gully

Sharing records and stories in the digital era

Researching the Environmental History of the Paterson Valley, NSW: People and the Environment

Women's Work – Researching Women in Colonial Australia, and

The Catholic Diocese of Armidale: Writing its history.

Representatives of the various Societies have been asked to present a 35 minute verbal report on their work, and the RAHS Report will be presented by Marie Metzke, Manager, will speak about the Outreach Programmes of the RAHS.

There will be a Conference Dinner on Saturday evening, during which the Inverell District Family History Group will make a presentation entitled *Researching Our Place – The Byron Arcade Story*.

At 8.30 on Sunday morning, participants are requested to meet at the Tourist Centre in Campbell Street, prior to proceeding to the Inverell Pioneer Village to view their col-

lection and/or chat over a BBQ lunch. The area is flat and the walk will be leisurely paced. Please remember to bring a hat, sunscreen, walking shoes and a camera.

Costs are as follows:

Saturday – Full Conference Session	\$50
Conference Dinner	\$25
Sunday walk, Entry to Pioneer Village and Lunch	\$25

To assist with catering, registrations would be appreciated by 12 March 2009.

Registration forms and details of motels, caravan parks and Bed & Breakfasts in Inverell are available from the Armidale Family History Group Research Centre in Kentucky Street, Armidale.

This conference will also mark the 25th Birthday of the ID-FHG and the 150th Anniversary of the sale of the first blocks of town land at Inverell.

Further details regarding the RAHS Conference may be obtained from Jean Pettit (02) 6722 1629; Muriel Resta (02) 6722 1893; Ann Hodgens (02) 6721 1487

It would be good if we could make a weekend of it in Inverell so please speak to a committee member to see what plans have been made.

Church Records post 1856

In her recent work on early burials in Armidale, member Marj Hague came upon some entries in the microfilmed records of St Peter's (Anglican) Church, Armidale, which could lead researchers to become confused.

Most people looking for birth, death and marriage records in N.S.W. use civil registrations from 1856 onwards. In her wisdom, Marj wondered if burial records, available in Armidale on microfilm for later years, might provide some extra information. Indeed they did!

In the SPBR3 (St Peter's Burials, Reel No. 3), register numbers 55–67 were allocated twice, the first time in the period from 30 December 1862 to 22 August 1863, and from 6 September 1863 to 11 August 1864. [There were apparently no burials between 22 August and 6 September 1863.]

The names of those involved were:

55	UNKNOWN Charles/ALLINGHAM Andrew William
56	MULLIGAN Robert/GREENWOOD Thomas
57	LUCAS George/RICHARDSON Edward
58	MILLS Charles/RILEY ?
59	FARDELL Betsey/LONSDALE Joseph
60	EWART James/HOLLOWAY ?
61	ALEXANDER Charles Bowman/MAISTER William
62	DORAN Mary Amelia/McCROSSIN Margaret
63	PAYNE George/DUFFERTY John
64	O'DELL Edward (105)/PERROTT Isaac
65	DORRINGTON Emma/SHAW John (supposed name)
66	DORRINGTON Jessie/CARTER Vashti
67	ALLINGHAM William/BULL Edward

A search in the civil registrations showed that Isaac Perrott's death was not recorded, although this may be a matter of spelling, or rather misspelling. Edward Bull was recorded as being 42 years of age at his death. Of the above-named,

the deaths of J. Lonsdale, W. Maister, J. Dufferty, V. Carter and E. Bull (in that order) were registered in 1864.

Readers who would like to search these church records for themselves, will find the following reels at The University of New England and Regional Archives in Dangar Street, Armidale. Available are:

Baptisms: 1845 – 1902; Marriages: 1845 – 1924; Burials: 1846 – 1935, although the years 1924 to 1927 are missing.

Dixson Library at The University of New England has further reels covering baptisms from 1902 – 1913, marriages to 1953, and burials to 1973.

If there is a chance that more information may be available, it is certainly worth taking a look. Thank you Marj for drawing this subject to our attention.

[Contributed by member Robyn Crosslé]

From *The Armidale Express Extra* 24 December 2008

Learn about diggers with new website

Thousands of Australians across the nation are discovering more about World War I diggers and their communities by visiting *Mapping our Anzacs*, a new website developed by the National Archives.

“We wanted to provide a way for people to explore the impact of World War I through their own community,” said web content developer Tim Sherratt from the National Archives, who designed the project. “But the website does far more than that. ...”

By browsing a series of maps, website visitors can view the names of Anzacs who were born or enlisted in more than 10,000 places across the world. Links provide more details on each individual, including access to digitised copies of their service record.

Visitors can also attach mementoes of their own World War I diggers through the online scrapbook. Before *Mapping our Anzacs* was available, researchers had to know who they were looking for. “Now they can just dive in and start following the connections they’ll find between people and places,” Dr Sherratt said.

“... The site encourages you to browse. With each record, you have links to others who enlisted or were born at the same place or who had the same next of kin.”

The project has been enormously popular with Australians across the nation, receiving 9000 visits in the first month, with 60,000 views of individual service files. More than 100 scrapbook entries have been added by visitors to the site, including 50 photographs.

“The entries include newspaper death notices, and photographs of medals and plaques, as well as family pictures of and stories about those who served,” Dr Sherratt said. “It really is a scrapbook. ...”

Mapping our Anzacs is available for exploration at mappingouranzacs.naa.gov.au

[Picked up by member Marj Hague]

**** Remember ****

Writing Your Life

Member, Caroline Gaden, has kindly offered to run this course again over four Wednesdays in February.

Where? At the Family History Research Centre in Kentucky Street, Armidale.

The sessions run from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. and begin again on Wednesday, 4 February 2009

Bring your pen, paper and sense of humour.

A gold coin donation towards Library Books for the Research Centre would be appreciated.

U3A MEMBERS WOULD
BE MADE MOST WELCOME
Bookings to Caroline 6775 2324 or
cagaden@iprimus.com.au

FOR SALE

Pioneer Register of New England From First Settlement to Federation

Published 2003
by Armidale Family History Group Inc.

Features:

Biographies of almost 1,300 pioneers
in the New England

108 portraits of early pioneers

An introductory paper,
They Called New England Home,
written by the late Dr John Ferry

A map of New England showing
towns and villages
early pastoral runs and stations
roads, railway lines and old coach roads,
the latter as they were in 1895,
drawn by Mr Peter Chambers, Curator,
Armidale Folk Museum

An index of pioneers, their spouses and parents
A bibliography of New England's people and places

The *Pioneer Register* is available from:

Armidale Family History Group Inc.
PO Box 1378, Armidale NSW 2350
or from our Research Centre and Library in
Kentucky Street, Armidale.

Price: \$40 plus \$10 P&P if ordering by mail.

The *Pioneer Register of New England* received
Armidale Dumaresq Council's Award for
Best Historical Publication in 2004.