

C - Muster

Central Coast Family History Society Inc.

December 2016

Number 16

AS THE SUN WENT DOWN

Two soldiers lay on the battlefield

At night when the sun went down

One held a lock of thin grey hair

And one held a lock of brown

One thought of his sweetheart...all his own

Happy and young and gay:

And one of his mother, left alone

Feeble and old and grey

Each in the thought that a woman cared

Murmured a prayer to God

Lifted his gaze to the blue above,

There on the battle sod

Each in the joy of a woman's love

Smiled through the pain of death

Murmured the sound of a woman's name

Though with his parting breath

Pale grew with dying lips of each of

Them, as the sun went down

Author: Unknown

Artwork: Maureen Innes



**The Official Journal of the Central Coast
Family History Society Inc.**

Central Coast Family History Society Inc.

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Lucy Wicks, MP Federal Member for Robertson

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RESEARCH CENTRE

Building 4, 8 Russell Drysdale Street, EAST GOSFORD NSW 2250
Phone: 4324 5164 - Email admin@centralcoastfhs.org.au
Open: Tues to Fri 9.30am-2.00pm; First Saturday of the month only
Thursday evening 6.00pm-9.00-9.30pm
Research Centre Closed on Mondays for Administration

MEETINGS

First Saturday of each month from February to November
Commencing at 1.00pm – doors open 12.00pm
Venue: Gosford Lions Community Hall
Rear of 8 Russell Drysdale Street, EAST GOSFORD NSW

MEMBERSHIP FEE - GST INCLUDED

Single Membership \$45.00 Joining Fee \$10.00
Joint Membership \$65.00 Joining Fee \$10.00

The E-Muster

December 2016 – No: 16

The **e-Muster** is the Official Journal of the Central Coast Family History Society Inc. as **The Muster** it was first published in April 1983.

The new **e-Muster** is published to our website 3 times a year - April, August, and December.

The Society does not hold itself responsible for statements made or opinions expressed by advertisers or authors of articles appearing in **e-Muster**.

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JOURNAL EDITOR Sue Breckenridge

All articles to:
admin@centralcoastfhs.org.au

e-Muster deadlines are
March 20
July 20
October 23

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EDITORIAL – SUE BRECKENRIDGE



Christmas isn't a season.
It's a feeling.
Edna Furber.

Here we are at the end of another year and what a year it has been for the Central Coast Family History Society Inc. Like so many aspects of life there has been much change within our organisation. We have seen the passing of several valued members; celebrated our Society's 35th Birthday; renewed friendships and connections with earlier members; we have commemorated significant world events such as the centenary of World War 1 and enjoyed some wonderful speakers at our meetings as well as the camaraderie among fellow members.

In August we were honoured to host the Royal Australian History seminar "Unlock the Past". Who will forget the delicious morning tea provided by "A Taste of the Bush"?

As the Editor of your magazine **e-Muster**, I thank the many contributors who have provided such interesting stories resulting from researching their Family History. They are not always "good news" stories but they do tell the lives of those who lived before us. It is in this way that we come to understand the human aspects of the factual history. I also thank the Committee whose varied talents enhance the character of the Central Coast Family History Society.

Do you have a character in your family history who you would love to have a chat with to via a letter? You do not have to disclose to true identities. Maybe your letter would relate to a brick wall you have encountered? Maybe there is an event you have discovered but would love to understand more about. During our summer break you may enjoy writing such a letter for submission in the New Year.

I wish to acknowledge the enormous help so generously given to me by our Secretary, Heather Yates. Heather has far superior technical skills to me. Hopefully, I will become more competent with time and experience. To all our members, I trust you will enjoy reading the December edition of **e-Muster**. To the families who have been recently bereaved, we think of you and trust that there are many happy memories to comfort and strengthen you at this time. To all our members, I trust that you will enjoy the peace and joy of Christmas.

Wishing you wonderful memories as you reflect on this joyous time.

Sue BRECKENRIDGE -Muster Editor

PRESIDENTS REPORT – WENDY CONDON



Wow! What a busy year with all the changes- yet we survived! I would like to give a big thank you to Margaret Ertner for all the help that she has given me.

We held a very successful Seminar on the 5th March and our speakers Amanda Ianna from BDM, Ben Mercer from Ancestry.com.au, Joy and Alan Murrin Transcription Agents and

Andrew Gildea from Finders Cafe all presented amazing and informative sessions.

Lorraine Greve won the Epson Photo scanner which was donated by Andrew Gildea of Finders Café.

We also celebrated our 35-year birthday and presented certificates to our long-standing members.

On the 20th August we hosted the Royal Australian Historical Society “Land Research Seminar” at the Lions Hall, East Gosford.

The speakers were Professor Carol Liston, Christine Yeats and Dr. Katherine Reynolds. What a great day it was. Top class speakers, a huge response from those who attended and a fabulous Raffle!

We signed our new Lease with the Council and so we have another 5 years at our present site AND we got a good deal.

Marlene has been very busy with grants and has been very successful in her endeavours.

Eight of us went to Camden for the NSW & ACT State Conference and we went very well again, next year will be at Orange, Margaret and I have booked our accommodation already.

To my committee, thank you all for the hard work you have all put in to make this such a successful year.

Merry Christmas to everyone and to your families, wishing you all the best in the New Year.

Wendy CONDON-President

NEW MEMBERS

We wish to extend a very warm welcome to our new members. We hope they have many happy researching and social hours with us. Please remember to lodge your Members' Interest with Belinda Mabbott for inclusion on the Website.

2019	Robyn Krahe	2023	Peter Adderley
2020	Marion Morahan	2024	Stuart Ridgway
2021	Pamela Lois Ayre	2025	Jan Adeney
1568	Libby Gill	2026	Christine Curtis
2022	Remona Hayes	2027	Patricia Millar-Williams

You've read the books. You've searched in the databases. But did you know that one of the best resources in a genealogy library is often the Librarian? Get more out of your visits to our library by asking these three things.

1. "Can you help me?" I've noticed that there seems to be a hesitation about asking a Librarian anything. The reasons people give are often, "She looks busy" or "He'll think this is a stupid question." Here's the scoop: *The librarian wants to help you.* Yes, she has some work with her while she's at the reference desk. But when she is at the desk, her main responsibility is to help you. As for the "stupid questions," I think most Librarians would agree with me that the only truly stupid question is the one that isn't asked.

2. "Do you have any collections that aren't in the catalogue?"

Just because the library has it, doesn't mean that it's in the catalogue. Things like obituary files, newspaper clipping collections, vertical files, and rare books may not be included. Be sure to ask the librarian about these hidden gems.

3. "Are there other places that could have the resources I'm looking for?"

This is an especially useful question when you have a very specific research focus. The Librarian might be able to point you to those "off the beaten path" places — the tiny historical society, the obscure museum, the church archive — that could have just what it is you're looking for.

SPEAKERS FOR 2017

February 4th. Wayne Peake. Pioneers of Peakhurst

Wayne's latest book is *Wandrin' Star: Wild Jack Peake of Peakhurst*, a collection of stories about his father, who he describes as "a blue-singletted drinker, gambler, yarn spinner and spieler" native to the district bounded by Hurstville, Bankstown and East Hills in south-western Sydney.

March 4th. Seniors week begins. Planning ahead - with Geoffrey MORGAN-SMITH Solicitor.



MEMBERSHIP FEES 2017 – effective 1st April



MEMBERS - REJOINING Membership Fees for 2017-2018 will be:

Single Membership	\$45.00
Joint Membership	\$65.00

A Members Day user fee of \$2.50 now applies to assist in offsetting the cost of online subscription sites.

All Saturday workshops will incur a fee of \$10 for members and \$15 for non-members unless otherwise stipulated.

OUR MEMBERSHIP FORM is available to download from the website. From the front page click on the ...read more information under Membership on the banner and all will be revealed. Remember the website is www.centralcoastfhs.org.au

Please read the two additional questions on your membership form regarding the Rotary Raffle donations to the Equipment Maintenance and Replacement Fund. You can chose to have Tickets sent to you to the value of \$10 or if you prefer you can make a once per year donation of \$10.00 to the Equipment Maintenance Fund.

EFFECTIVE 1 OCTOBER OF ANY GIVEN YEAR

A half yearly membership is offered

Joining Fee \$10.00

Single Membership: \$22.50

Joint Membership: \$32.50

No. 17

April 2017

e-Muster

Deadline for articles for the April edition of the Muster is 20th March 2017.

SOCIETIES MAILING LIST

The email address for our Society is admin@centralcoastfhs.org.au

You can also Like Us on Facebook!



ASSIGNED DUTIES

The following is a list of who does what to keep the society running as smoothly as it does.

Assistant Treasurer	Carol Evans
Bookstall Coordinator	Margaret Ertner
Bookstall meeting helpers	Lyn H & Carol Evans
Bus Trips and Tours	Marlene Davidson
Christmas Party Organiser	Wendy Condon
Event Coordinators	Marlene Davidson
	Wendy Condon
Grant Applications	Marlene Davidson
Grant Application Proofreader	Committee
Guest Speakers	Marlene Davidson
Housekeeping	Rosemary Wiltshire
IT and Computer Network	CC Mobile Computers
LDS Film Hire – Family Search	Kay Rawnsley
Librarian	Bennie Campbell
Librarian's Assistant	Belinda Mabbott
Membership Secretary	Wendy Condon
Membership Secretary's helper on meeting days	Kay Rawnsley
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Pelican Press Editor	Heather Yates
Overseas Book Monitor	Heather Sushames
Property Officer	Margaret Morters
Publication Projects & Public Officer	Marlene Bailey
Publicity and Advertising	Bennie Campbell
Raffles	Rosemary Wiltshire
Catering	Trish Michael
Research Officer	Margaret Morters
Rotary Raffle	Wendy Condon
Unrelated Certificates	Kay Rawnsley
Website Administrator	Margaret Ertner
Website Designer	Zac Hall – Websiteguy
Welfare and Hospital Visits	Marlene Bailey

BOOK REVIEWS

The SPIRIT of the DIGGER

Then and Now

Author: Patrick Lindsay, Journalist.

This book was first published in 2003.

“In many ways the Digger is a study in contradictions: he doesn’t crave war yet he will fight with unequalled ferocity; he hates spit and polish but will hold his discipline under the most trying conditions; he is tough yet compassionate; he hates his enemy until he surrenders, then he is generous in victory; he despises histrionics but will cry unashamedly at the loss of a mate.....”

The book begins with a Prologue, “The Bali Experience”, Kuta Beach, 2002. The author had begun his research for this book when the Bali bombing of October, 2002 happened. As he watched the shocking television images and stories so many of us saw and heard, he was struck by the spirit of the Digger being played out before his eyes.

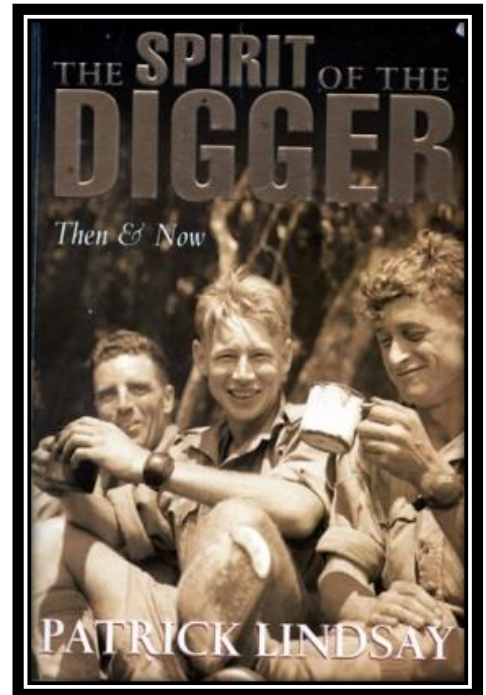
The Prologue concludes, that *“all Australians have the spirit of the Digger within them. In times of crisis....terrorism, bushfires, floods, accidents, disasters, conflicts.....the spirit shines through. It’s a spirit we must cherish.”*

The book chapters work through subjects such as “Digger’s Talk” and characteristics of the Digger. Mateship, courage, compassion, endurance, and selflessness were each explored as underlying values of the Digger. The chapter, “Today’s Digger”, looks at our Diggers in Timor.

“The Origins” deals with the early beginnings of the colony and the birth of modern Australia. The following chapter is entitled “Gallipoli: The spirit of Anzac”. From the Gallipoli experience the Australian Army had a distinctive character and style of its own. Chapter five is entitled “Shelled to hell”, covering the battles of the Western Front.

The Spirit of the Digger works through the wars Australia has been involved in, as well as our Peace Keeping efforts.

This book concludes with an Epilogue followed by an excellent section of End Notes. The End Notes would be of great assistance to researchers or anyone wishing to expand their knowledge and understanding. There is a Bibliography and a comprehensive Index.



A LONG WAY HOME

One POW's story of escape and evasion during World War II.

Author: Charles Grandquist.

From the back cover of the book--

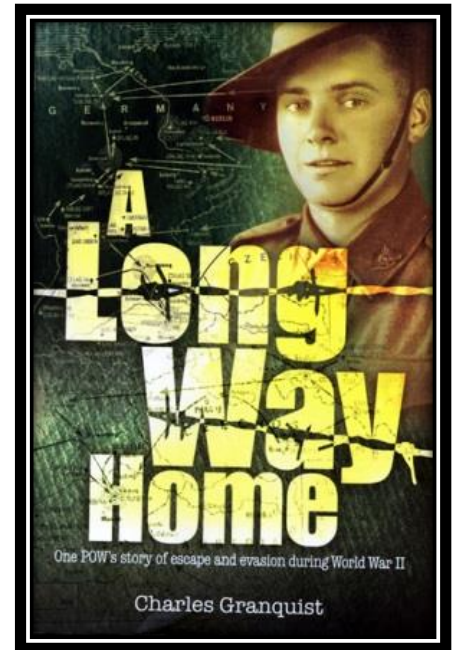
"The scariest part of this escaping caper was the point of re-capture. Staring down the barrels of a number of rifles and wondering whether some nervous and trigger-happy German might tighten his finger, was to say the very least, discomforting."

Charles Grandquist was the "son of a World War I veteran. Charles Grandquist was 17 when war was declared with Germany in 1939. He lied about his age, joined the infantry and was sent to the Middle East. Like so many other young men at the time, Charles did not really know what to expect. His only thought was to do his duty and serve his country. As he set sail from Australia's shores on board the Strathnaver he never contemplated that he would become a prisoner of war."

The book covers Charles' experience in North Africa and Greece before being captured by the Germans. There is a vivid description of his five escape attempts and his 196 days of solitary confinement.

This book is a worthwhile read for those who wish to enhance their knowledge of World War II while, once again, demonstrating the mateship, spirit, persistence and determination that characterised the Australian Digger.

This is not a large book (180 pages) it is an easy read, complete with photographs, maps and a citation.



DESTINED TO LIVE.

One Woman's War, Life, Loves Remembered.

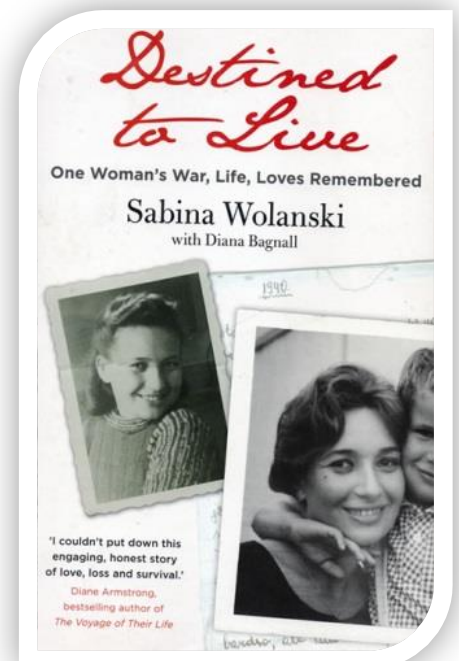
Author: Sabina Wolanski with Diana Bagnall

From the back cover-

"Sabina Wolanski was just 12 years old when her home town in Poland was invaded by Nazis. In her diary, along with innocent adolescent longings, she recorded family and the startling story of her own survival."

This is a story of a new life forged after the horrors of the war; of a life in a new country (Australia); the launch of a new business that came to be a success story in itself.

This is the story of a remarkable life where the survivor questions her own survival. The loss of her mother affected the remainder of her life in that she constantly sought love.



There are confronting statistics e.g. 80% of Polish Jews were deported to Nazi concentration camps and died there. Sabina Wolanski was one of the 10% who survived.

Many of you will remember in May of 2005, when Germany opened the Berlin Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe. Sabina was chosen to speak as the voice of the six million dead. Even though the holocaust took everything she valued, Sabina believed her experience taught her that hatred and discrimination are doomed to fail. For Sabina, her speech at the Memorial and her life experiences demonstrated the ability to survive, to love, and to live well. These were her greatest achievements of triumph over the evil of her early life. The speech she delivered at the opening of the Berlin Memorial is printed in the book.

The book is written in the first person which emphasises the personal and courageous memoir this book is. Family photographs are included in the book. The book concludes with a time-line of the life of Sabina Wolanski.

Sabina featured on “Australian Story” in 2011, just weeks before her death at the age of 84. The book concludes with a time-line of the life of Sabina Wolanski.

THE WAR IN THE AIR.

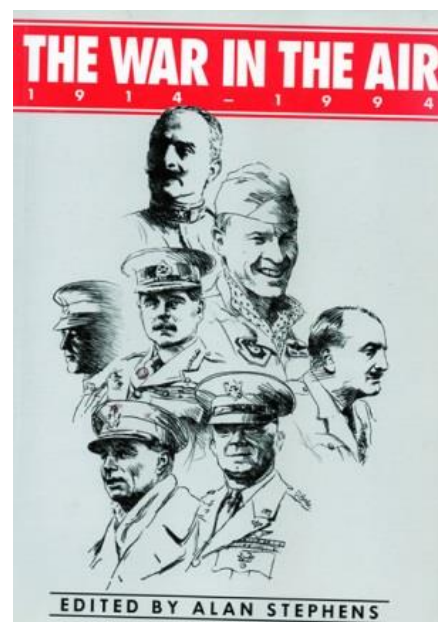
Edited by Alan Stephens.

“From the time aircraft became a weapon of war, airpower has been a controversial subject.”

This book reports on the proceedings of a conference held by the Royal Australian Air Force in March of 1991. The reports feature *“some of the world’s leading air power scholars and practitioners”*.

Combat power is evaluated from the First World War up to the Gulf War.

This book provides an excellent review of combat power in war-time from 1914-1994. The controversial aspects of modern air power are debated by many well-qualified persons who contributed to the conference. The reports are very analytical in style and for the enthusiast of wartime air power, the read is highly recommended. Each page is foot-noted.



Books reviewed by Sue Breckenridge.

Purchased for our Library with a kind donation from Lindsay Watts.

FAMILY STORIES

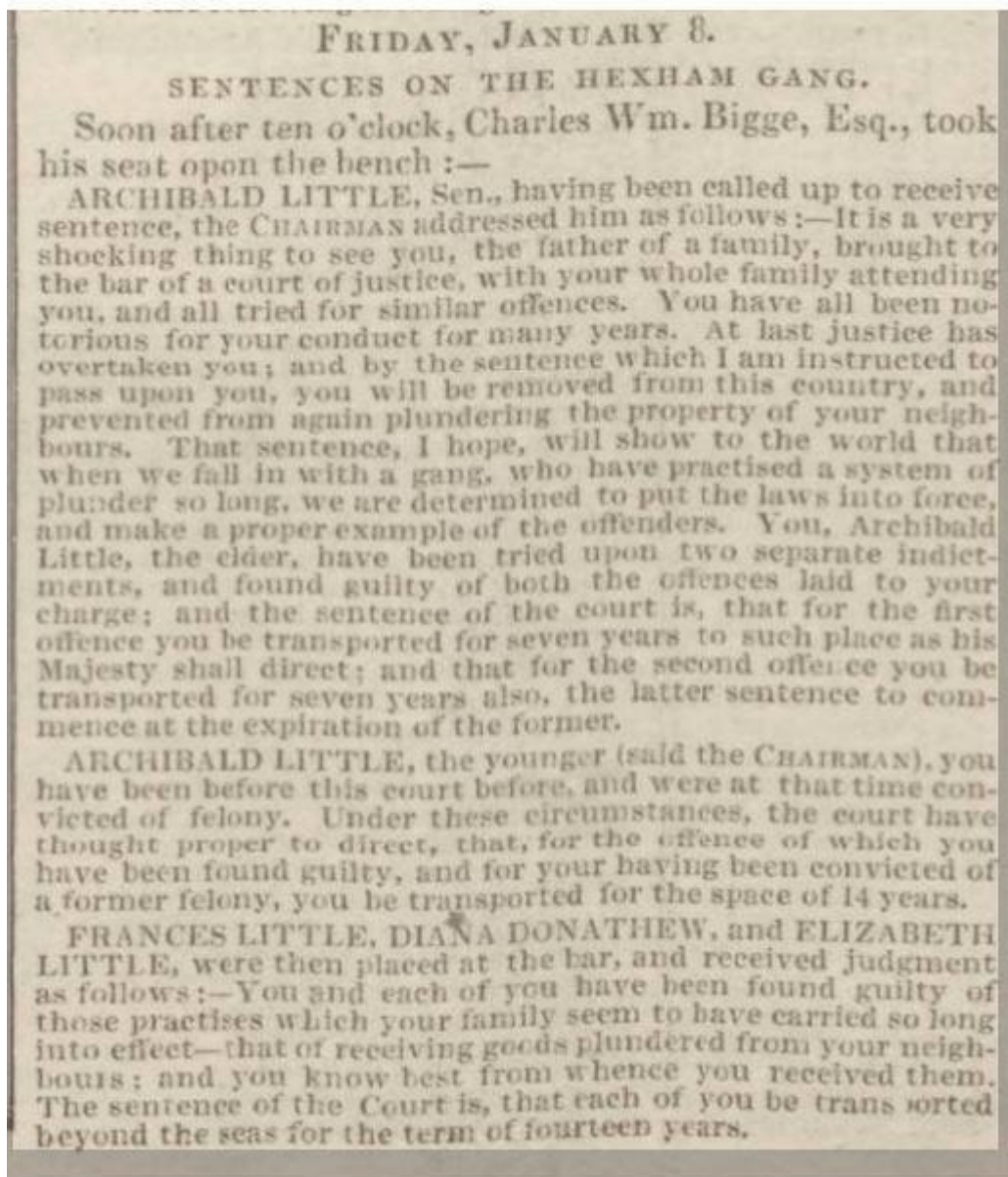
Story of a Convict Ancestor- Frances LITTLE. 1811-1859.

Frances Little was born to **Archibald and Mary** in 1811 in Bewcastle, Cumberland, England and baptised at Scots Kirk. **Frances** was a dairymaid/cook and needlewoman. She could not read or write.

Her whole family received notoriety in the district when tried for “receiving stolen goods” - as Reported in the Newcastle Journal 8th Jan 1836 and Carlisle Journal 9th Jan 1836

“GANG of THIEVES AT HEXHAM”

4 Article: THE NEWCASTLE JOURNAL. SATURDAY, JANUARY 11, 1836. The usual



Frances, along with her 2 sisters were sentenced to 14 years transportation to NSW on 7th January 1836 and after spending time in Morpeth Gaol were sent per *Elizabeth 5* leaving Downs on 23 April arriving 12 October 1836.

Her father **Archibald the Elder**, and brother, **Archibald the Younger** were transported per *Lady Kennaway 2* also arriving in NSW on 12 October 1836.

Alas, her mother **Mary Little** was deemed unfit for transportation and was initially sent to Morpeth Gaol- several intercessions were made on her behalf due to her very poor health. She was 54 years of age and suffering from Dropsy, inflammation of the tissues which would have caused severe pain. Her body would have most likely been swollen and filled with water and her liver affected.

Frances was described, in the indent as 25 years old, **R. Cath.?** (**actually, she and her family were all Protestant**) Single with 1 female child. 5 feet 5 and a half inches tall, ruddy and freckled complexion, brown hair and dark hazel eyes. She had a small mole on her right cheek, small mole left cheek, little finger R. hand crooked, scar on forefinger R. hand.

Her crime was stealing a gold ring. She had no previous convictions, nor did her sisters.

In all documentation, she and her 2 sisters, **Elisabeth Little and Dinah Donathew** are listed together.

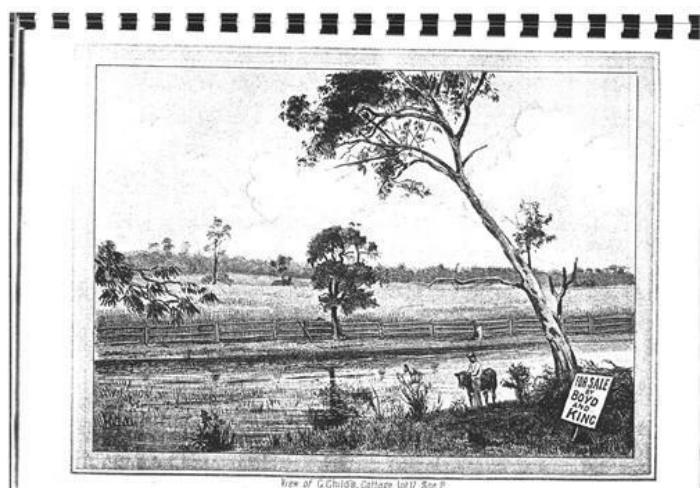
On arrival in the colony she was assigned to R. Crawford, Sydney, Principal Clerk, Colonial Secretary's Office.

Frances married **William Childs** (free) previously a convict per *Royal George 1828*, after application was made on 21 June 1839 and approved on 25 June 1839. They were married by Rev. J.M. Garvie at the St. Andrews Presbyterian Cathedral in Sydney on 15 July 1839.

William had been given a ticket of leave on 15th Oct. 1833 and allowed to remain in the district of Camden.

Due to his part in the apprehension and capture of a dangerous felon he was rewarded and given a grant of land east of Liverpool, at Moorebank, NSW. His full pardon/ Certificate of Freedom came on 18th March 1835.

They settled on this property known as Green Hills, near Moorebank, N.S.W.



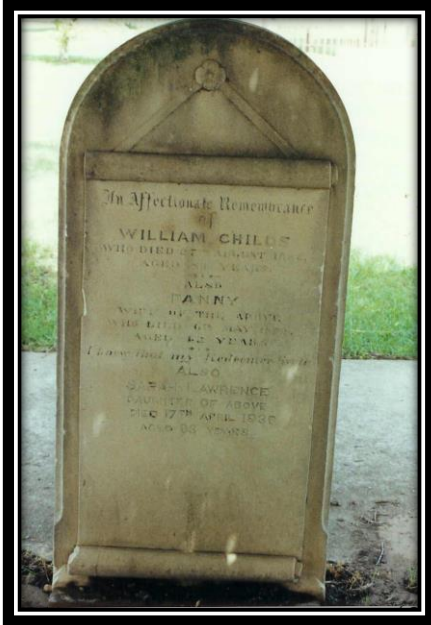
Childs farm Green Hills

Crossing the ford near Child's farm



After their marriage, **Frances** gave birth to 8 children, which included two sets of twins. First William in 1841, then John 1843, Archibald 1844, Henry 1847, Mary Ann and Frances 1849, Sarah and George 1852. Her Conditional Pardon was granted in 1845.

Frances, known as **Fanny**, died on 5th May 1854 at the age of 42. She is buried in the Pioneers Cemetery along with her husband William, at Liverpool, NSW.



Liverpool Pioneers Park Cemetery. NSW

Her children went on to achieve a solid future for themselves and their families.

One of Frances and Williams' five sons **Archibald Childs** (1845-1929) was born and lived all of his life in the area of Moorebank, as did his son **Albert James Childs** (1884-1970).

Albert was a noted identity of Chipping Norton/ Moorebank who managed the Moorebank Estate for the Church of England for over 40 years. The Church inherited the Estate from Thomas Moore.

Albert married **Eleanor Rouse**, daughter of Boer War Veteran **Capt. Rouse** in 1912 at Bondi, NSW.

Albert was also a Mayor of Liverpool and served as an Alderman on the Council for 27 years. Both Childs Road and Childs Park at Chipping Norton are named in his honour.

He was also a renowned sportsman competing in wood chopping events at Easter Shows and local shows, a champion axeman, cricketer and foot racer. He was also a breeder of Australian Cattle Dogs. He joined the Australian Army and worked at the Army Remount Depot at Holsworthy, breaking in and training horses for the Australian Lighthorse, that were shipped to battlefronts in World War 1.

It is interesting to note that the year shown as **Albert** being an Alderman on the Council in the Municipality of Liverpool was **100 years from the year his grandmother Frances Little was sentenced** in Northumberland, England for **14 years Transportation Beyond the Seas**. I wonder if he knew that?

Sadly, it is unlikely that the Little family reconnected in the Colony – none of them, except **Archibald the Elder** could Read or Write, there would have been no correspondence. They were assigned to districts that were geographically distant, particularly at that time and all lived reasonably short lives here in the colony.

Archibald the Elder was 67 years of age when transported and from records was “unfit for assignment”, in Liverpool. He died in Penrith in 1849.

Archibald the Younger was assigned to John Lambs at St. Vincent's. He married Margaret Dogherty aged 18, a female emigrant who arrived on the "Roslyn Castle" in Goulburn in 1842. He is listed in the Convict indents as having been assigned and worked in Bungonia, Goulburn, Shoalhaven and St. Vincent districts. As he had experience as a farm labourer and was of impressive stature- over 6 feet in height, he would have been in demand.

Archibald the Younger died in Goulburn Hospital in 1844, he was posthumously pardoned in 1847.

Elisabeth was assigned as a Government Servant in Port Macquarie, where she married. She was given a Conditional Pardon in 1842 and died soon after at the age of 24. She had very recently given birth to a son the same year.

Dinah Donathew was assigned to Mrs Waldron in the Illawarra region and no further records have been found, for her, nor about her 2 children.

Mary Little remained in England alone, very unwell and even though petitions were made on her behalf continued her very difficult existence without her family until her death.

References

British Newspapers-

[1] Carlisle Journal

[2] Newcastle Journal 8th Jan 1836

[3] Newcastle Journal 19th March 1836

[4] NSW Convict Indents 1788-1842

[5] England and Wales Crime, Prisons and Punishment 1770-1935

[6] State Archives NSW

Heather YATES. Member 675.

WASHING DAY IN THE OLD SLAB HUT.

Published as a Reader's story, Australian Women's Weekly 1977.

*Author **George James** The father of an early member.*

The alarm went and it was time to crawl out of bed and start the day's work. Before an early cup of tea in the kitchen Dad had fed the horses, brother Les had things ready for milking, and I had caught my pony and brought in the milking cows and the horse that pulled our slice. Then, while we were milking and separating the cream Mum would strip the beds, and collect all dirty clothes and soak them, and cook breakfast; a large steak for each, two eggs, and fried left over vegetables as well as a steaming plate of rolled oats.

Normally it them would have been time to go to school, but today was washing day.

We were share farmers on a mixed farm in Burragorang Valley, NSW. The year was 1923, there was a bad drought, and we had to carry water from the river in a cask on the slide. The river was used for everything that would save our tank water for drinking, including baths for Mother and my sister. My father, brother and myself bathed in the river. Anyway, I didn't mind when Dad said I had to stay home from school. Being 11 and a half I was supposed to be able to do a man's work.

But anything was better than sitting in school. I harnessed Old Doll, our quietest horse, for the slide and soon was on my way to the river.

Dad, an axe on his shoulder, went to cut river oak branches. These leaves were the only feed the cattle had. He told me where to look if he didn't turn up for dinner, for he had to climb the trees and could fall from a rotten limb. Mum wanted me to hurry and soon I was past the cricket pitch and the old church, so eaten by white ants you could push your finger in almost anywhere.

Once at the river I filled the cask two-thirds full- any more would have spilt on the way back. In the distance I could see the cattle eating the leaves as Dad cut down the trees.

When I got home Mum had already chopped enough firewood to start the wash-house fire. The clothes were soaking in the wooden tubs after a preliminary wash and scrub.

We put them in four kerosene tins that hung on a beam across the fireplace chimney in which, high up, two sides of cured pig were being smoked to make delicious bacon. The wash-house was a slab building with an iron roof and an earth floor kept hard by frequent sweeping. The heat of the fire and the sun beating on the roof turned it into an oven. I kept prodding the clothes in the tins so they would not boil over, then helped Mum lift and empty them into the tubs, Mum warning me to be careful and not scald myself. She scrubbed the clothes again on the old-fashioned corrugated board and I helped her wring them by hand. Mum always proved stronger than me, a blow to my self-esteem.

By the time I had helped her carry the washing out to the clothes line a second lot of four tins would be boiling on the fire. In all we did 16 tins, but this was a light morning's wash for those days.



When Mum finished washing she hurried away to cook Dad's dinner, saying the poor man would need a good meal "after working so hard all morning".

I thought of Mum, rubbing and scrubbing in that hellhole of a wash house, her face red as fire, perspiration pouring off her. What did she think was hard work?

Dad would find time to have a swim in the river and freshen up. She still had the ironing to do with the old fashioned iron, heated on the fuel stove.

Dad came home and she passed him his dinner "you look tired, dear," she said.

I looked at her tired face and at Dad's -bright, cheerful and refreshed from a swim. I could not understand women then, and now 54 years later they are still a mystery to me. Mum still had to bake the bread for the next couple of days, set the yeast with lemon for the following batch of bread, cook tea, the big meal of the day, and iron while waiting for it to cook.

I can still taste the home-cured bacon and fresh farm eggs Mum used to give us, and the home-made bread with home-made jam or honey; and as much butter, cream or milk as you wished.

After tea, we kids washed up but Mum continued with her ironing and when we went to bed she was still going strong. From four in the morning until ten at night was Mum's washing day.

George JAMES.



Brisbane Water District Deaths World War 1 – 1916

Name	Date of Death	Cause of Death
Banks-Arthur Thomas	1916-Jan 11	KIA
Murphy-Andrew Arthur	1916-Feb 02	D of Injury-Ceylon
McGrath-Thomas Francis	1916-Feb 20	D of Injury-Gosford Rail
O'Toole-Austin Stanley	1916-May 12	DOW
Murphine-Oscar Dinley	1916-May 22	KIA
McMillian-Vivian Ernest	1916-Jun 05	KIA
Grey-Herbert Edward	1916-Jun 21	DOW
Weaver-George William	1916-Jul 18	DOIL Melbourne Vic
Potter-Walter Ernest	1916-Jul 19	KIA
Weiss-Frederick Alfred	1916-Jul 19	KIA
Church-Chester	1916-Jul 20	KIA
Wright-Clarence William	1916-Jul 23	KIA
Hastings-William George	1916-Jul 24	KIA
Matheson-Frederick Hugh	1916-Jul 24	KIA
Richardson-Victor John	1916-Jul 24	DOW
Dickinson-John William (Jack)	1916-Jul 25	KIA
Searle-Victor	1916-Jul 26	KIA
Tynan-Leslie David (DMC)	1916-Jul 26	KIA
Walmsley-Cecil Carrington	1916-Jul 26	KIA
Weir-James Stuart Duncan	1916-Jul 26	KIA
Hodge-William Henry	1916-Jul 27	KIA
Whitpaine-Cleveland	1916-Jul 29	KIA
Peel-Harry	1916-Aug 04	DOW
Egan-Joseph John	1916-Aug 06	KIA
Burns-Ralph W	1916-Aug 07	KIA
Martin-Cyril Henry	1916-Aug 08	DOW
McKenna-Victor Herman	1916-Aug 08	KIA
Rose-Amos Thomas	1916-Aug 13	DOIL
Young-William Cecil	1916-Aug 15	DOW
Cunningham-James	1916-Aug 17	KIA
Hall-Andrew Robert	1916-Aug 29	KIA
Pemberton-Roy Torrens Michael	1916-Nov 14	KIA
Tonkin-Leslie George	1916-Nov 14	KIA
Hall-William	1916-Nov 15	KIA
Manefield-Arthur	1916-Nov 15	DOW
Le Gray-Richard Hubert	1916-Dec 16	DOIL
Fagan-Patrick Joseph	1916-Dec 21	KIA
Love-Clifford Vernon	1916-Dec 24	KIA
Atkins-Alfred Stanley	1916-Dec 27	DOIL
Draper-Charles McKenny	1916-Sep 5-6	KIA



Frederick Alfred WEISS

Frederick was born at Anna Bay, Port Stephens (NSW BDM registered at Raymond Terrace 1892/30457) the second child and first son of Walter Herbert and Amy Selina Weiss (nee Blanch), later of "The Retreat" Erina. Walter was teaching at the Public School Erina, via Gosford NSW, when Frederick enlisted. Walter moved his wife and family of nine children to the Coast as late as 1914. Probably at the end of the school year from Singleton

where they had been since 1894. Grace and Frederick's births were both registered in Raymond Terrace. Erle, Hector, Amy, Walter, Lorna, Harry and Howard all being registered in Singleton. Fred attended Glendon Brook Public School (Singleton) NSW. Following in his fathers' footsteps Fred was working as an assistant teacher at West Wyalong before enlisting on 25 Jul 1915 at Liverpool, aged 22.

An article in the Gosford Times dated 22 Oct 1915 details the send-off and gifts presented to Fred prior to his departure for the front.

He is described as being 5 feet 2 ½ inches tall, weighing 133lbs, Chest 33-35 inches, with a fair complexion, eyes hazel and with brown hair. No distinctive marks e.g. scars or tattoo. Religion Methodist, Marital Status, Single, Rank on Enlistment; Private.

Assigned to 4th Battalion, 13th Reinforcement, Fred then embarked Sydney on board HMAT "Ballarat", but disembarked at Melbourne and transferred to the Base Hospital suffering with Measles (8 Sept 1915) Re-embarked with to 11/4th Battalion regimental number 2932 reassigned 3578

16 Feb 1916, Zeitoun -Allotted to 53rd Battalion.

19 Feb 1916, Tel-el-Kebir- Taken on strength into the 53rd Battalion.

9 April 1916, Ismailia - Re-allotted Regimental Number 3578A

19 June 1916, Alexandria - Embarked the "Royal George"

28 June 1916, Disembarked Marseilles.

19 July 1916, Posted as Missing In Action, France

2 Sept 1916-Court of Enquiry- 3578 Pte F A Weiss KIA Battle of Fromelles France 19 Jul 1916

Red Cross reports from members of 53rd Battalion (No 4901 Pvt W E Board) stating "During the attack at Fleurbaix we saw Weiss at a distance of a few yards, shot in the stomach, dropping a few yards from parapet of our trench on outer edge of "our" wire. The enemy's high explosive shells were very heavy and probably buried or blew Weiss to atoms."

There is no Known Grave for Fred Weiss but he is acknowledged.

Commemoration details V.V. Corner (No 9), Australian Cemetery France

Australian War Memorial Panel No, 158 Roll of Honour

Fred's father Walter wrote to Victoria Barracks 8 Aug 1921-still trying to gather details as to where Fred might be buried, he had sort out other men from the 53rd for any possible information he could pass on the authorities which would assist in the finding of his son's body.

As Fred's body had not been recovered there were no personal effects to return to the family.

Walter H Weiss signed the receipt for Fred's' Victory Medal on 12th Feb 1923 and Memorial Plaque on 19th Sept 1923 (1914-15 Star-14426, British War Medal-21236, Victory Medal-21160. Memorial Plaque & Scroll-330179.

The Weiss family's heartache was not over Fred's brother, No. 11147 Acting Bombardier Erle Victor Weiss, 1st Field Artillery Brigade, was Killed In Action on 9 Aug 1918.

Fred and Earl's names were placed on the Honour Board at Erina Heights Public School and the Erina War Memorial (now in the grounds of the Salvation Army Complex Erina).

Amy Selina Weiss aged 52 yrs. died at Waverly Hospital 13 July 1925

Fred's younger brother Harry Blanch Weiss NX 36483 died of illness as a POW in Thailand on 30 Sept 1943

Walter Herbert Weiss aged 86 yrs. died Singleton Hospital 2 Nov 1955.

Australian War Memorial

National Library of Australia-Trove Newspaper SMH and Gosford Times

NSW Birth, Deaths, Marriages

National Archive of Australia-WW1 Service Records

Bennie CAMPBELL. Member 901.

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

My Middleton grandmother died when I was 11 years old. We didn't have living grandfathers or so we were told....both had been killed in the First World War ...but their pictures hung on the wall in the *best* room. Edward, my mother's father, was resplendent in his Royal Army Medical Corp uniform and Ernest, my father's father looked smart in his civilian clothes and sporting a fine moustache.

It was when my father died (I was 37) that Ernest's picture came off the wall-- never to be seen again. My Mother was reluctant to speak of my father's family, telling me "to leave well alone". This I did until she too passed away in 1995.

You can imagine the shock I had when I applied and received my father's birth certificate!! Although it had been considerably altered (legally), he had originally been registered with another father's name – it was Ernest but not Middleton. This was altered two years later to Hugh Middleton. However it was Ernest whose picture was on the wall all those years... for he was always referred to as such... no picture exists of Hugh but it is Hugh's name that I bore.

And so my search began (dare I say in Earnest!!). My Nan was always Mrs Middleton... and died in 1951. There is no trace of a divorce...but so many archives were lost in WW2....it is unlikely as she was Catholic. Hugh did not die young or remarry. They had married in 1902 and in 1903 Alfred Hugh was born – their only child.

The marriage did not last for long as by the time of the 1911 census Alice (my Nan) was living with the man who was my father's biological father, Ernest. They also had a daughter Kathleen born 1906 and eventually another daughter born in 1912. Ernest was killed at the Somme in 1915 and Hugh died in London in 1943.

There is no record that I can find of Hugh having served in the Military in WW. I can only presume that he was unfit or employed in essential war work. It's a strange quirk of fate that both he and my father would be employed at the outbreak of WW2 at the Woolwich Arsenal, which was the largest armour making factory in the south of England. I wonder if they met??

Hugh had a sister Edith Maud who married John Goddard Samuel Sewell, and Hugh lived with them prior to his own marriage to Alice Quinlan in 1902. Hugh's father had remarried after the death of their mother Emily in 1894. Edith would remain in the East End of London for the rest of her life and died in Stepney 1944.

For many years Edith, John and their family... John, Horace and Gladys Maud lived in Stepney London. Their home was almost opposite the London Hospital where her brother died. I do hope that they had remained in contact during those long years. It seems sad that both Hugh and Alice would spend the rest of their lives alone and only a few minutes away from each other. We as a family never heard his name spoken, or that he even existed. Happily, my father had a very close friendship with both his brother Alfred Hugh and sister Honora that lasted all their lives.



From the left, Kate's full blood uncle, Nan (Alice) and Daniel. (Kate's father)

All of Alice's children survived the war, married and provided grandchildren that bore the Middleton name; Alfred Hugh had 3 sons and 1 daughter – they are the true Middletons and of your ancestral family line.

We, the children of Daniel Malcolm perpetuate the name without being of the blood!! I have 3 brothers who have five sons between them.

My Mother was right "you never know – and may not like – what you find" but it is not for us to judge. It was their story, and their lives – and I am who I am.

Kate Middleton BARTLETT. August 2016

Editor's Note. Kate contacted me through Ancestry.com as Hugh Middleton is part of my Family History. She was keen that I know the true story.

Looking for family of Titian and Marguerite.

Titian and Marguerite came to work on the Davidsonⁱ poultry farm at Millfield in 1949 or 1950. They arrived with their sole possessions in a trunk. My father had organised their accommodation in a little nearby cottage.

As a primary school child memories include:-

- * Titian working slowly feeding hens and collecting eggs
- * Their surname remembered as sounding like Slavioski
- * Dad's little note book, a list of words, translation of English and Titian's language
- * Why does the word *kaput* linger in my mind?
- * Marguerite helping Mum with the ironing
- * A visit to their house and being shown the chest with treasures of needlework and a photo album
- * Marguerite giving Mum this photo before they left. What an amazing gift that was.



These few memories raise many questions. Did Marguerite and Titian come as refugees and from which country? Had they spent time at Greta migrant camp? Where did they settle after Millfield? Did they have a pre-school daughter? Did any other family come to Australia? Is this photo of their wedding?

Most importantly, sixty or so years later I am looking for their family to pass on this lost treasure that fits the blank space in the photo album.

i Gordon & Norma Davidson

mmdavidson8@bigpond.com

Marlene DAVIDSON. Member 327L.

A COLLECTION OF LAUNDRY ITEMS FROM YEARS GONE BY.

\$6.25 Standard Quality Complete LAUNDRY OUTFIT. | **\$9.25** Extra Quality Complete LAUNDRY OUTFIT.

BIG BARGAINS.

Outfit complete consists of

- 1 Standard Clothes Wringer.
- 1 Set Felt Pattern Saddle.
- 1 No. 8 Copper Bottom Tin Wash Boiler.
- 1 Zinc Surface Globe Crimp Washboard.
- 2 Galvanized Tube, medium and large.
- 1 Galvanized Pall, 12 quarts.
- 1 100-foot Manila Clothes Line.
- 1 Extra Quality Folding Ironing Board.
- 1 Gross Clothes Pins and Bag.

No. 9H22030 Outfit complete as above. Shipping wt. about 100 lbs. Price... **\$6.25**

No. 9H22031 Outfit as above, but without wringer. Shipping weight, about 75 pounds. Price... **\$4.60**

Outfit complete consists of

- 1 Enclosed gear, ball bearing, three-year warranted Wringer.
- 2 Galvanized Tube, medium and large.
- 1 Set Genuine Mrs. Felt Saddle.
- 1 100-foot Manila Clothes Line.
- 1 No. 8 Solid Copper Wash Boiler.
- 2 Extra Quality Folding Ironing Board.
- 1 Brass Surface Truss Back Washboard.
- 1 Gross Clothes Pins and Bag.
- 1 Galvanized Pall, 12 quarts.

No. 9H22034 Outfit complete as above. Shipping wt. about 82 lbs. Price... **\$9.25**

No. 9H22035 Outfit as above, but without wringer. Shipping weight, about 73 pounds. Price... **\$8.00**



Washing Day- a HUGE part of life for those in the past. Not like today where you just Flip a Switch and off you go.

THE WASHDAY OF YEARS GONE BY.

Monday, traditionally, was washday and in the eyes of many. "Blue Monday", because it was a day of hot, exhausting drudgery. Many believe that the term "Blue Monday" refers to the use of

blue dye in the washing..... or was it that the mood was "blue" due to the prospect of a day of hard, hot work ? What is meant by the term

"washboard"? The washboard was grooved and its rough surface assisted the rubbing action used to clean grimy clothes or articles. As a child of the

1940s, washday was a big day, as it had been for many decades before. We did not have a washing machine until I was about 6. I have very vivid memories of my landlady when I boarded in Cootamundra in 1962. This lady took great pride in busying herself for the big day ahead. She

would fill the copper with buckets of water from the tap over the nearby concrete tubs and then get a good wood fire burning

under it to bring the water to the boil. Once boiling, in would go the soap flakes and the dirty clothes to bubble away while occasionally being stirred with the washing stick, like a broom handle but thicker. When the clothes were deemed to have boiled long enough, the hot and steaming clothes would be carefully hauled out, with the laundry stick, and into the tubs nearby. It was here that they were rinsed in cold water after having been checked for any dirty marks. The washboard could be used before the boiling process or after discovering some grime despite the boiling. The old concrete tubs were two or three deep tubs with a tap.

Who remembers the starch used to stiffen table cloths, doilies, pillow cases and in the 1950s, those rope petticoats we wore when rock'n rollin? The starch could be mixed to varying

consistencies depending on the end use. Light starch was used for handkerchiefs, dresses and aprons.

Once all was rinsed, and wrung out by hand, the clothes were carried out in a cane basket to be pegged

out to dry. Alternatively some people had a wringer fitted between two tubs. This truly was a labour saving device and was a physical "workout" turning the wringer handle while pushing the wet items between the rollers. The clothes line could be very wide and often it needed to be lifted off the ground my means of a clothes prop. The prop

was usually a thin wooden sapling with a fork at the top to hold the line in position. My husband tells a story about the man who came around his street in Epping selling clothes props and calling out "clothes props ! clothes props ! clothes props !



The cheeky neighbourhood boys would race out to the street and mimic the caller, but their chant was “clothes prop, clothes props, what are your mother’s legs like ?? clothes props ! clothes props”!

Needless to say, after the clothes were on the line it was time for a cup of tea and a brief rest. At the end of the day, the clothes would be dry and were then taken off the line,

and folded neatly in preparation for ironing. Often Tuesday was ironing day, and the clothes would be sorted, some were dampened to assist the ironer in producing a smooth wrinkle free item. Starched items such as detachable collars were always dampened. The dampening process involved a bottle with a sprinkler top or else flicking water from a contained and onto the clothes achieved its purpose.



The dampened items were tightly rolled up in a towel for a couple of hours before the ironing began. Sometimes the dampening took place on Monday night so that an early start could be made on the ironing. In outback laundries and early times, the irons were heavy and had to be heated on the wood stove. Two irons were necessary because as they cooled they were less effective.....one was in action while one heated on the stove.

Do you have a regular wash day? Thanks to the ease of using a washing machine I know how easy we have it today. Almost all our clothes are washable and indeed the younger generation seldom consider hand washing an option. Even the drying process is simplified by the tumble drier which also reduces the need for ironingbut then it does use electricity which has become so expensive. The environmental aspects are a consideration too. All this happens so easily and so quickly. It does not take hours.

One family on my husband’s side ran a laundry in Kensall Green, London, in the 1860s. This was the laundry district of London. This family provided laundry services aimed at the middle-class of nearby Chelsea and Paddington. The upper classes continued to employ washerwomen or general servants but some of them chose the cheaper alternative of the “send-out” laundry. The hotel trade brought laundry and linen to the commercial laundries. One service was a simple “wet wash” and “bag wash” where the laundry was sent out for washing elsewhere. Drying and Ironing was done at home at the bottom end of the market. In some instances, a mangle woman with a box mangle would charge pennies for pressing household linen and everyday clothing.



Sue BRECKENRIDGE. Member 1561.

THE RENNO FAMILY....A Place in Australia's Theatrical History

The Renno family appeared in England in the early 1600s as one of the many Huguenots families forced to flee France. The name spelt in the above manner can be readily traced through the Westminster Rate books in the early 1700s, as well as baptisms and deaths recorded in St. Anne's Soho and St Botolphs registers. My Renno family remained Londoners for the next 150 years.

There was a strong family custom of the eldest son being named after the eldest son and so it was there were five generations of John Edward Renno men in London before "my" great-grandfather, John Edward Renno came to Australia in 1855. A recent guest speaker at CCFHS recently referred to George Seth Coppin who was an English born actor-manager and entrepreneur often referred to as "father of the Australian Theatre".

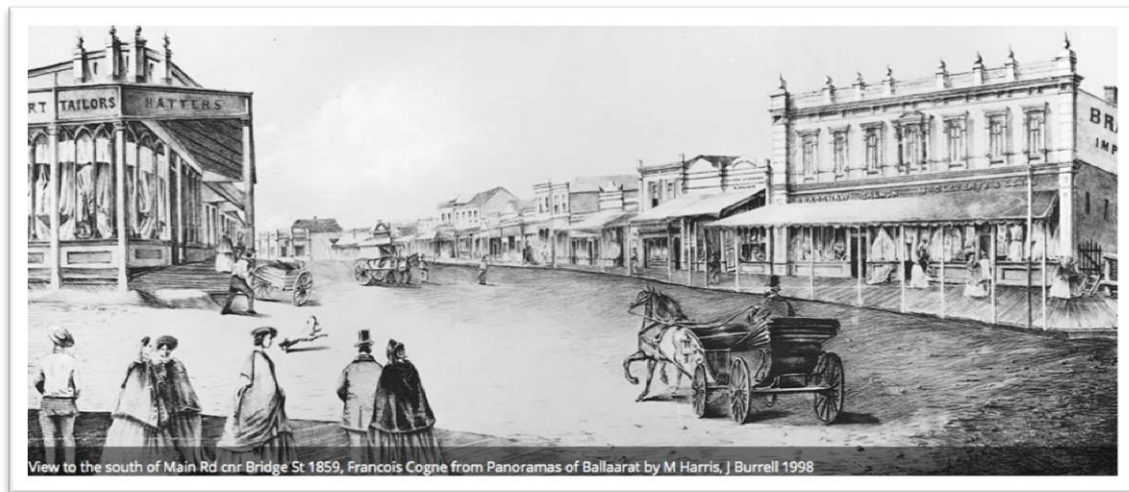
It was at the invitation of George Coppin, that John Renno came to Australia employed as the mechanist for the opening performance of "The school for Scandal" at the Theatre Royal, Melbourne. John Renno had served his apprenticeship as a carpenter in Drury Lane, London. He later proved to be a very competent carpenter with a good understanding of mechanics and went on to work in the many theatres of London as an applauded mechanist. It was in this capacity that George Coppin invited John Renno to make and maintain the scenery as well as develop suitable mechanisms for the storage and movement of scenery to be used in the new theatres of Australia. John Edward designed moving parts and patented a stage "trap". It was to be a huge area of expertise and responsibility. In due course a business was registered as John Renno and Sons Pty. Ltd.

John Edward Renno was the leading mechanist in the theatres of Melbourne and Sydney from the mid-1850s until the late 1880s. The name Renno was synonymous with dramatic mechanical effects in stage productions, be they musical theatre, comedies, pantomime, opera or drama.

In 1882 John Renno testified to the first Royal Commission into New South Wales theatres that he had been a theatre mechanist "*for fifty-five years; man and boy, all my life; twenty five years in the principal theatres of London; thirty years in the Colonies. I was at Drury Lane, Covent Garden, the Princess's and the Surrey Theatre. I left the Princess's to come out here in 1852*". The 1852 reference may have been to an earlier visit but shipping records confirm he did come to Australia with his family in 1855. If we interpret this statement literally, then John Edward Renno, my great-great grandfather was eleven years old when he began his experience as a theatre mechanist. He was to become a master mechanist applauded and described by so many superlatives in the many newspapers of the day as well as the theatre patrons of the time.

On arrival the family settled at Ballarat, a town and time when "gold fever" was at its' peak. From the shipping record John Edward Renno was 38, his wife, Mary was 36, son John junior was 13, daughter Frances was 9 and son, William was 6. A son, Bamfield Renno had been born to the couple in 1844 but he did not survive. Another son, Walter Irving, had been born in 1850 but it appears he died in 1852. In Australia, in 1856, the year following their arrival, Christopher Thomas was born but died in 1857.

The painting below, of Ballarat, is dated 1859 showing the view down the Main Road, from the corner of Bridge Street. This would have been a very familiar view for John Edward Renno and his family. It is likely that the children went to school in Ballarat. The picture shows the mode of transport, the shops with their hitching posts and the fashions of the day.



Very soon after the arrival of John Renno and his family in Victoria, Australia, we see evidence of John Edward on the program for the Grand Opening and Inauguration of the Theatre Royal, July 1855. John Renno is shown as the “*machinist.*” In stage productions the mechanist worked very closely with the Stage Manager whose first concern was the scenery. The mechanist advised the Stage Manager as to what is possible and how it will work. Carpenters work under the mechanist directors and I believe this is probably the role that suited the sons of John Edward Renno and why they established a company, John Renno and Sons Pty. Ltd.

In his first year in Australia, John Renno’s work was widely publicised from the Opening and Inaugural production at the Theatre Royal of the “*The School for Scandal*”, on 16 July 1855. The Program has *School for Scandal* advertisements for stage carpenters, scene-shifters and flymen with applications to be directed to Mr. Renno at the Theatre. On arrival in Australia, John Edward senior, quickly established himself in the world of the theatre. He appears to have moved between Melbourne and Sydney, demonstrating his mastery of stage mechanics and effects, gaining an enviable reputation. The advertisement for the opening night requested that carriages be parked with the “*horses heads towards Russell Street, please*”. The Argus in October, 1855 reported on the animation and statues in a “*magic saloon*” setting, “*For fine effect no drama ever matched it, and Mr. Renno has quite renovated it*”.

A newspaper advertisement dated 31st December, 1856, headed **COPPINS OLYMPIC GRAND HOLIDAY TREAT** read “*Messrs. Fry and Renno beg to inform their friends and the public that they have taken the above place of amusement and will open the 1st January, New Year’s Day and the following Friday and Monday. With an entirely new and novel entertainment*”

Obviously these men were putting themselves in the public eye and portraying themselves as good community citizens while at the same time promoting their talents.

As early as 1855 'THE ERA' commented the "*scenery is splendid*".

"THE ERA" continued to publish AMUSEMENTS IN AUSTRALIA as well as current information about the Prince of Wales Opera House. During the period, beginning in 1855, British newspapers were watching John Renno's progress.

"THE ERA" featured John Renno frequently under the heading of "AMUSEMENTS IN

AUSTRALIA" reported "*the scenery is splendid*". John Renno's work received so many accolades. The Era newspaper in London kept a column featuring music and drama around the world. There are many entries for plays and pantomimes showing John Renno or Renno and Sons as the mechanists.

In a Sands directory of 1859, John Edward is listed as a machinist (mechanist?), Davis Lane, Little Bourke Street, Melbourne. I believe that this was the address of his workshop. In Sydney he also had a workshop in Riley Street, Darlinghurst, Sydney.

Early in 1859, John's wife Mary Ann was to become ill with Pulmonary Consumption which was a highly infectious disease and was to be the cause of her death aged 42, leaving her children John 17, Frances 13 and William 11.

During these years John Renno was very involved with the thriving Melbourne theatre world and establishing himself as a skilled mechanist. We know very little about the life of this family following the death of Mary Ann.

T H E A T R E R O Y A L .—
Stage Carpenters, Scene Shifters, and
Flymen.—Wanted Several Stage Carpenters,
Scene Shifters, and Flymen. Apply to Mr.
Renno, at the Theatre, 317

T H E A T R E R O Y A L,
Bourke-street.

First Appearance of
MADAME LOLA MONTES
In the character of Lady Teazle, in Sheridan's
brilliant Comedy of the
SCHOOL FOR SCANDAL.

This Evening, Friday, 2nd November,
The Performances will commence with Sheri-
dan's brilliant Comedy, in Five Acts, of
THE SCHOOL FOR SCANDAL.

To be followed with the laughable Farce
of
NIPPED IN THE BUT.

To conclude with the Great National Charac-
teristic Spanish Dance, entitled
THE SPIDER DANCE.
By
Madame Lola Montes.

To-morrow, Saturday, will be repeated Doni-
zetti's celebrated Opera of
LUCIA DI LAMMERMOOR,
The eminent Prima Donna,
Miss Catherine Hayes, as Lucia.
Madame Sara Flower, as Edgardo.

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1855 Advertisement for Theatre Royal,
Bourke Street, Melbourne.

We do know that Frances had a wonderful operatic singing voice and believe that she was trained by some very talented teacher or teachers likely to have been known to her father. 1863 appears to be the year that firmly links John Edward Renno to Sydney.

John Edward was very active in the period from 1860-1890. There are hundreds of references to productions both in Melbourne and Sydney. At the same time as this was going on in Australia the British newspapers were also watching and published quite frequent commentary.

While John Renno came to Sydney frequently, there happened to be a hotel close to the Royal Victoria Theatre which he frequented. The location of the Wheatsheaf Inn, Castlereagh Street, provided accommodation and well as a welcome meeting place complete with refreshments. Actually, the hospitable licensee of the Wheatsheaf Inn was a widow, Mrs. Shearman. A large part of her business was theatrical trade. In 1855 a new theatre "The Prince of Wales" had opened on the current site of the Theatre Royal in Sydney. This theatre attempted to produce Opera and was to compete with the more profitable Royal Victoria. Disaster had struck when the Royal Victoria burnt to the ground in 1860. In 1863 the theatre was rebuilt and was christened the "Prince of Wales Opera House". Maybe this is where my great-great grandmother was introduced to operatic singing and lessons. Her father had many contacts within his theatre world.

The Argus in Melbourne was advertising for a position in September of 1860. Interested persons were advised to apply to J. Renno, Princess's Theatre, Melbourne. It is not clear what the position was for. I wonder if this was a position related to stage management or an advertisement to meet more personal needs in view of the death of Mary Ann. With business taking John Renno to Sydney frequently to complete works on the new building of the Prince of Wales Theatre, maybe the advertisement was an attempt to employ a housekeeper? Of course this is mere speculation on my part as there is no other evidence to clarify that advertisement.

John Edward Renno was to have considerable input into the new Prince of Wales Opera House "*The scenery is very fine, and elicited unqualified marks of approbation. The fair scene is admirable. In point of mechanism, the stage of the new theatre is perhaps unsurpassed by that of any theatre in the world. To convey an adequate idea of the completeness with which Mr. Renno has accomplished his part of the work would require a separate notice. The two floors underneath the stage are filled with mechanical appliances of apparent complexity, but which have been so well arranged that the whole works with the regularity of a clock. Mr. Renno has also invented a new kind of trap, on the principle of a telescope, with four slides, the whole rising and extending simultaneously*".

This was John Edward Renno's welcome to the colony of Australia....a very different scene to London Streets.

Sue BRECKENRIDGE. Member 1561.

A FLOWER FOR AJ CURVEY'S SISTER

They say a visit to the battlefields is a pilgrimage. And indeed - somewhat to my surprise - this is exactly how I felt upon my visit in 2005. I am no poet. But that experience demanded that I record the lifelong love of Pauline Curvey for her brother Archie who died at Bullecourt on 3rd May 1917. They were born to a poor family who had taken up a small selection at Sandy Flat near Tenterfield. The family lived in a bark roofed hut and Pauline and her mother would mind the sheep whilst doing their needlework. Archie became a police officer and would regularly write home to his mother and younger sister. When I was a boy my grandmother and I would sit by the kerosene lamp looking for little creatures in the coals of the log fire. One night she told me about Archie. This poem tells that story and of my visit- thirty plus years later -to the battlefields with my family.



*We sat peering into toasting coals
As we had often done
To swap yarns and spy the fire's glowing creatures
Before my grandmother paused, then begun*

*To share with me a story
And reveal to me her sadness
Of how she lost her brother, Archie
In World War One's trench warfare madness*

*To have him returned to her
T'was her eternal desire
And in her eyes I glimpsed memories
That glowed like that red dwarf fire*

*She loved him so very dearly
And it showed in her tears
That she shed for him that night
After sixty long and lonely years*

*It made a young boy think
And gave me cause to reflect
Of how love endures
Beyond the years you'd expect*

*I learnt something that night
Schools could never teach nor explain
T'was the legacy of war
Its human misery and pain*

*That night has always stayed with me
So this poem does so tell
Of my visit to the battlefields
Where her beloved brother fell*

*We know not how or where he died
We only have a date. And pride
Did he suffer? We cannot say
I hope he died easy that fateful day*

*It made me sad to think
That hitherto in four scores years and ten
The family had not ever chance
To visit Archie in far off northern France*

*To one of eleven thousand unknown graves
Does my grandmother's brother belong?
His grave 'Known only unto God'
Somewhere resting along the Somme*

*To Villiers-Bretonneux we came
It's where the Diggers are remembered
Australian flags fly proudly in the town
For on them the French depended*

*The Australian War Memorial stands not far from town
A windswept cathedral on the plains
And through countless honoured thousands
We read through the sea of names*

*Then high upon the wall we found our Archie
Amongst that generation lost in these surrounds
No ordinary people are honoured here
The sense of sacred ground abounds*

*This was indeed a pilgrimage for me
For I felt I was the custodian you see
Of my grandmother's cherished memories of him
Held bright her entire lifetime and never dimmed*

*I laid a flower for the brother who had died
But wondered, was it for his sister who had cried?
T'was now the grandson's turn to shed a tear
For the brother his Nannan loved so dear*

*And by my side watching on
A young girl comforts her wet eyed dad
She too says a prayer and lays a flower
Little said in half an hour*

*Two more generations reflect in silence
And share a moment to renounce war and violence
Because future generations must show not merely claim
That these brave soldiers truly did not die in vain.*

Daren McDonald , son of Audrey McDonald, Member 1050.

Breckenridge Marriage

1902.

Quite a few years ago, I discovered that my old trusty Epson scanner highlighted some wonderful details in a great-grandmother's photo. Even though some family members have attempted to tarnish this lady's character when she was old and sick and difficult to get on with, it is the beautiful photo that I was able to enhance, together with the knowledge that she had been a dressmaker that has elevated her in my perception. I can see no evidence of the "cold steely eyes" perceived by others.

I treasure the beautiful clothes evident in the photo. I choose to believe that she made them herself. I will never be able to prove that. Regardless, the difficult life she endured is not reflected in this photo, in my opinion.

More recently I took the decision to have a wedding photo of my husband's grandparents restored by a local business. This photo has always been admired by me, but it has been painful to watch the deterioration over the years. As a keen historical textile and costume observer, my eyes always search out details in the fashions and designs over the years.

With modern technology and digital enhancement it is possible to restore and enhance old photos. It makes it possible to present to descendants beautiful images of their forebears. While I love the improved new images, I certainly will not dispose of those treasured genuine old photos whose faults add the character of age and provenance. Sue BRECKENRIDGE Member 1561



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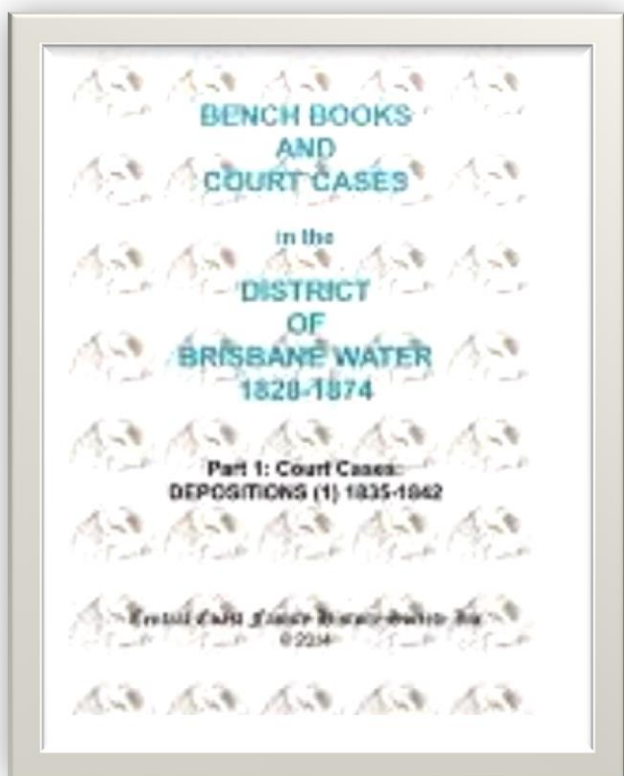
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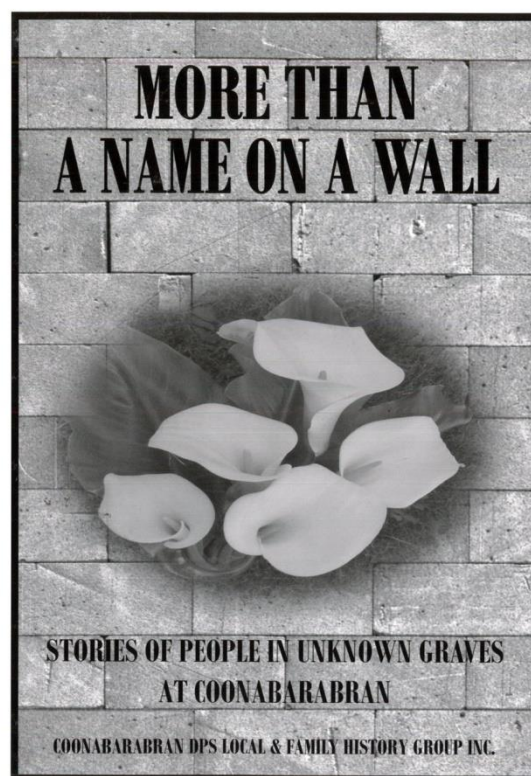
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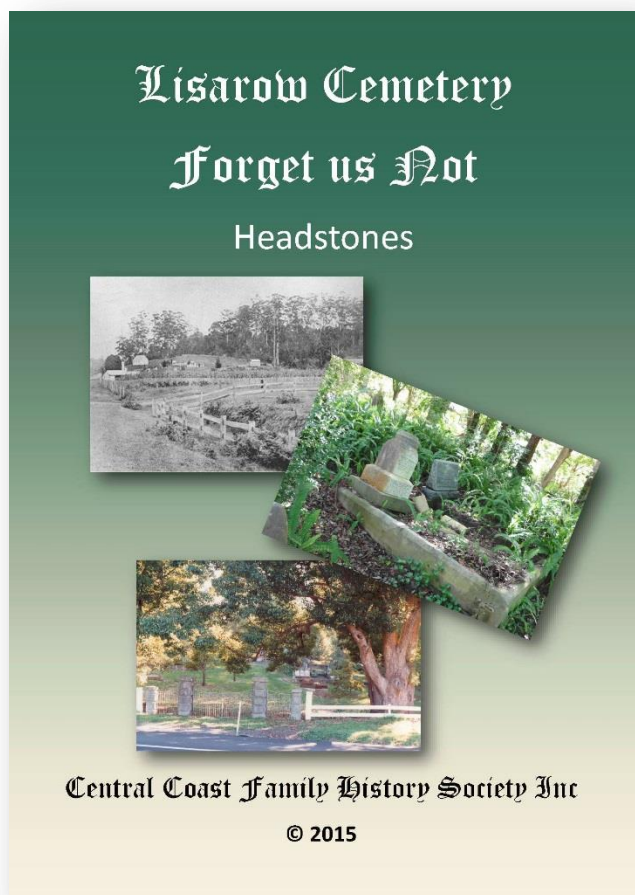
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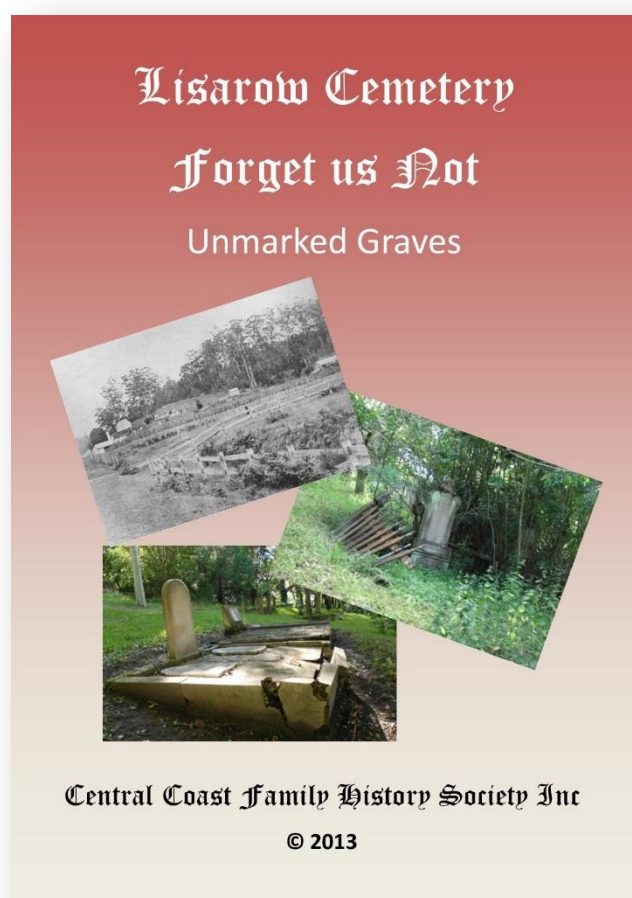
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