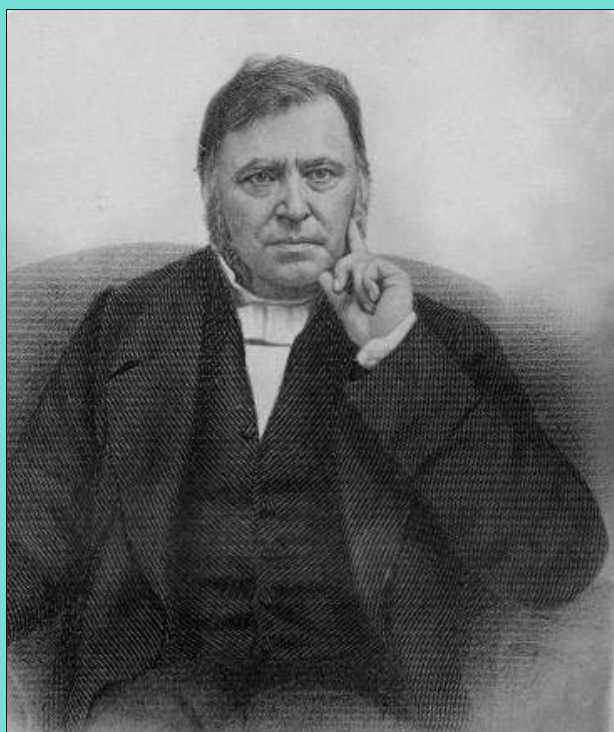


# Tasmanian Ancestry



**TASMANIAN FAMILY HISTORY  
SOCIETY INC.**

Volume 41 Number 4—March 2021

# TASMANIAN FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY INC.

PO Box 326 Rosny Park Tasmania 7018

Society Secretary: [secretary@tasfhs.org](mailto:secretary@tasfhs.org)

Journal Editor: [editors@tasfhs.org](mailto:editors@tasfhs.org)

Home Page: <http://www.tasfhs.org>

**Patron:** Dr Alison Alexander

**Fellows:** Dr Neil Chick and Mr David Harris

## **Executive:**

President	Maurice Appleyard	(03) 6248 4229
Vice President	Judith Cocker	(03) 6435 4103
Society Secretary	Eddy Steenberg	0418 129 154
Society Treasurer	Ross Warren	0487 330 009

## **Committee:**

Gary Bryant	Peter Cocker	Burnie (tba)
Ros Coss	Robyn Gibson	John Gillham
Libby Gillham	Louise Rainbow	Howard Reeves
	Helen Stuart	

By-laws Coordinator	Eddy Steenberg	0418 129 154
Web Manager	Robert Tanner	(03) 6231 0794
Journal Editor	Rosemary Davidson	0408 445 532
LWFHA Coordinator	Leonie Mickleborough	(03) 6223 7948
Members' Interests Compiler	John Gillham	(03) 6239 6823
Membership Registrar	Lyndal Ayers	(03) 6243 9190
Publications Convenor	Beverley Richardson	(03) 6225 3292
Public Officer	Colleen Read	(03) 6244 4527
Society Sales Officer	Maurice Appleyard	(03) 6245 9351

## Branches of the Society

Burnie: PO Box 748 Burnie Tasmania 7320

**[petjud@bigpond.com](mailto:petjud@bigpond.com)**

Hobart: PO Box 326 Rosny Park Tasmania 7018

**[secretary@hobart.tasfhs.org](mailto:secretary@hobart.tasfhs.org)**

Huon: PO Box 117 Huonville Tasmania 7109

**[vsbtas@bigpond.com](mailto:vsbtas@bigpond.com)**

Launceston: PO Box 1290 Launceston Tasmania 7250

**[ltntasfh@bigpond.com](mailto:ltntasfh@bigpond.com)**

Mersey: PO Box 267 Latrobe Tasmania 7307

**[secretary@tfhsdev.com](mailto:secretary@tfhsdev.com)**

# Tasmanian Ancestry

Volume 41 Number 4

March 2021

ISSN 0159 0677

---

## Contents

From the editor .....	194
President's Message .....	195
Branch Reports .....	196
<i>Sydney Browne, An Inexplicable Level Crossing Accident at Berridale in 1927</i> <i>Alerted Tasmanians Afresh to the Dangers of Private Level Crossings,</i> Don Bradmore .....	201
<i>Zeehan Schools, 1891–1930, Their Heyday</i> , Betty Jones .....	207
Help Wanted .....	218
New Members Interests .....	219
New Members .....	221
<i>Voices From the Orphan Schools, Remembering the Forgotten Children,</i> Dianne Snowden .....	223
<i>William 'Burly Bill' Lucas, 1852–1904</i> , John Fripp .....	227
<i>Sir John Eardley-Eardley Wilmot, A Worthy Appointment?</i> Leonie Mickleborough .....	229
<i>The Story of John West — or Not</i> , Alison Alexander .....	237
<i>Tragedy on the Derwent, 1850, The Drowning of Six Men and the 'Reckless</i> <i>and Inhuman' Conduct of those who might have been able to save them,</i> Don Bradmore .....	239
<i>What is that Publication About?</i> Maurice Appleyard .....	243
Library Acquisitions .....	246
Society Sales .....	248

**Deadline dates for contributions by 1 January, 1 April, 1 July and 1 October**

---

## From the Editor

The cupboard is bare and when I look back at some of the early journals we produced in the 1990s of eighty pages and more, it is regrettable we no longer receive a similar number of contributions. It is currently difficult to collate less, this being only sixty pages. Now we rely on our 'regulars'. The number of 'Queries' or 'Help Wanted' has halved—which is a sign of the times with the advancement and spread of electronic devices and software programs.

This may well be my final issue as editor after a total of eighteen plus years over two periods. The highlights were winning the 'Elizabeth Simpson Award' in 1997/8 and being able to produce the 21<sup>st</sup> and 40<sup>th</sup> editions. A big thank you to the original committee from 1996, although sadly, at least five are no longer with us.

And Leonie Mickleborough ... without her assistance and humour I would have given up years ago. I would also like to thank our Patron, Alison Alexander, for her support and generosity.

At the time of writing I have no idea who will be taking over as editor but I hope he/she/ they will get as much out of it as I did. It was a big learning curve.

Thank you to all the wonderful friends I have made. Good luck—wishing happy and successful researching to all our members.

Rosemary Davidson

## Journal address

PO Box 326, Rosny Park, TAS 7018  
email [editors@tasfhs.org](mailto:editors@tasfhs.org)

Articles are welcomed in any format—handwritten, word processed, on disk or by email. Please ensure images are of good quality.

### Deadline dates are:

**1 January, 1 April, 1 July and 1 October**

If you wish to contact the author of an article in *Tasmanian Ancestry* please email the editor, or write care of the editor, enclosing a stamped envelope and your correspondence will be forwarded.

The opinions expressed in this journal are not necessarily those of the journal committee, nor of the Tasmanian Family History Society Inc. Responsibility rests with the author of a submitted article, we do not intentionally print inaccurate information. The society cannot vouch for the accuracy of offers for services or goods that appear in the journal, or be responsible for the outcome of any contract entered into with an advertiser. The editor reserves the right to edit, abridge or reject material.

© The contents of *Tasmanian Ancestry* are subject to the provisions of the *Copyright Act* and may not be reproduced without written permission of the editor and author.

**Cover:** Portrait of respectable, kind John West, undated (Tasmanian Archives, LMSS754-1-102) see page 237 this issue—*The Story of John West – or Not*, Alison Alexander, 2021

# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

**T**HIS issue will be the last journal in the Volume 41 series.

Hopefully, it will be the last journal produced by our Editor, Rosie Davidson and that someone else will take on the voluntary position.

Normally, this would be an awful statement to make but I am sure you are all aware that in the previous journal Rosie indicated a wish to retire, and the end of a volume would appear to be an appropriate place.

After all, back in 2009 Rosemary only took on the role for a year (while we found someone else).

For many members, the journal has been the life and soul of our Society and the quality of production produced by Rosie has been greatly appreciated by us all.



Mid-January will see branch libraries re-opening, with few restrictions.

Hobart Branch have advised that they will be returning to their normal open days from the 19 January. Hopefully other branches will be able to operate in the same manner.

I can also report that the Society Executive (current office bearers and branch delegates) have successfully held a meeting using the computer program *Zoom*.

The *Zoom* meeting was held on Wednesday 25 November, between 7 p.m. and 9 p.m. Although there were some slight 'teething' problems, the essential work of the meeting was successfully conducted.

The Executive meeting confirmed and ratified the audited books of the Society and the continuation of the previous Office Bearers for the remainder of the current Society year.

It was determined that the AGM (scheduled to be held in June 2020) for the 2020/21 year, will not be held. The AGM scheduled to be hosted by the Mersey Branch for the 2021/22 year will now be hosted by the Society; probably at Ross. The current restrictions pertaining to 'live' meetings can be managed at a venue like the Ross Town Hall.

The 2022/23 AGM is now scheduled to be hosted by the Mersey Branch.

With any luck, by the time these events occur, we will be able to meet in a normal relaxed mode and enjoy a number of speakers in the style we have been used to in the past.

In the meantime, please consider standing for Office in our Society.

Whether it be at Branch or State level; additional volunteers will greatly enhance the quality of the services we provide. ◀

**Maurice Appleyard**

# BRANCH REPORTS

## Burnie

<http://www.clients.tas.webnet.com.au/geneal/burnbranch.htm>

President: Peter Cocker 0427 354 103

Secretary: Sue Hutton

Burnie Tasmania 7320

email: [petjud@bigpond.com](mailto:petjud@bigpond.com)



In the past we have arranged an end of year function for our volunteers and members, however due to COVID-19 we decided not to

hold one this time. We trust that everyone had an enjoyable Christmas and a happy New Year. 2020 is a year that we would like to forget and hope that 2021 brings for us all a more enjoyable time.

Before you start your research for the year I would like to remind everyone about backing up your files. It is recommended that you have a couple of backups stored locally and one stored in the clouds. To store locally the quickest and easiest is to use a USB drive and for cloud storage there are many choices, such as *DropBox*, *iCloud*, *One Drive* etc. Those of you who have *Family Tree Maker* should be aware that with FTM 2019 you get cloud storage available to you called *TreeVault*. This enables you to store your tree in the cloud and also enables you to view your information on practically any device via an app called *Family Tree Connect*. I can recommend this from personal experience. Early in the year I had a computer crash and lost my family tree file, fortunately I could download a copy from *TreeVault* and reinstall my tree.

We started the year by opening our Branch Library on Saturdays from 1 p.m.

to 4 p.m., as per normal. Hopefully soon, we will be able to return to our Tuesday hours of 11.00 a.m. to 3.00 p.m. as well as Saturday.

Peter Cocker President

## Hobart

<http://www.hobart.tasfhs.org>

President: Louise Rainbow

email: [president@hobart.tasfhs.org](mailto:president@hobart.tasfhs.org)

Secretary: Howard Reeves

PO Box 326 Rosny Park Tasmania 7018

email: [secretary@hobart.tasfhs.org](mailto:secretary@hobart.tasfhs.org)

All telephone enquiries to (03) 6245 9351



The beginning of a year usually offers new hope for the future, but that future still holds some uncertainty for us as a Branch with the current COVID-19 conditions

still in our midst. Our goals to promote the activities of our Branch and build on the resources while maintaining membership still stand and the Committee has worked hard throughout the past year in these directions.

During Seniors Week in October, hosted by the Council of the Aging (COTA), our Branch conducted two sessions, *Explore Your Family History* and *Interpreting Your DNA Results*. Both of these sessions were well attended.

The DNA Interest Group restarted its monthly meetings in St Marks Church Hall in January of this year. Interest in this topic has been phenomenal in the past few years and shows no sign of slowing down.

The Monday Group, despite a lack of activity for some months earlier in 2020

still managed to complete work on four new *Undertakers' Indexes* which have been published throughout the year. They finished the year with a luncheon in early December at a nearby venue.

Our Volunteers enjoyed a fantastic occasion on 1 December at two very interesting early colonial marine homes in New Town, *Poplarville House* and *Lauderdale Cottage*. The owners Brian and Gemma, and Ben and Vicki, generously treated us to a tour of their homes and gardens and a morning tea afterwards.

We have had a very pleasing response to our monthly *Zoom* meetings, and for some of us it has been very a convenient inconvenience. We have drawn up a very interesting programme which may be delivered either by *Zoom* or face-to-face and hope that whatever the outcome we will see you in 2021.

### General Meetings

COVID-19 prevented the last two meetings of 2020 being face-to-face meetings, but two *Zoom* meetings were 'well-attended'.

Guest speaker at the October meeting was Richie Woolley, presenting his talk entitled 'Alsations'. He promptly pointed out it was indeed not about dogs, rather his ancestors from Alsace, a border region situated on the western side of the Rhine River in what is now north-eastern France.

Most of the historic province of Alsace did not become French territory until 1648, with control subsequently switching between France and Germany on several occasions. This chequered history means that family history research in the area presents a number of challenges. Prior to 1793 church records were written in Latin, but thereafter civil records can be in either French or German, depending on who was governing the region. The local dialect was in fact a form of

German, but while under French control, given names were always recorded in official documents in their French form, even when the individuals concerned may have used a Germanic spelling!

A further complication is that from 1793 the French used a different calendar. Their year started in what we would call mid-September, and consisted of 12 months of 30 days, with five 'complementary' days added at the end of the year (six if it was a leap year). This 'Republican Calendar' was used for more than 12 years before being abolished by Napoleon.

There was a significant wave of emigration from Alsace in the first decade of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, with many families, including some of Richie's collateral relatives, settling in what is now Ukraine. His direct ancestors remained at home, however, and his great-great-grandparents Elisabeth Strauss (1837–1912) and Jacob Helm (1834–1887; registered at birth as Philippe Jacques Helm) were both born in the north-eastern corner of the province.

In June 1852 the Helms moved to the French colony in Algeria, with the Strauss family following in October of the same year. Both families lived at Hassi Ameur, near Oran, where a cholera epidemic took a heavy toll on the Strauss family in 1854.

Elisabeth and Jacob, who married in Algeria in 1858, eventually returned to Alsace in the late 1860s. They were soon on the move again, sailing from Hamburg in Germany aboard the *Eugenie* in late 1871 and arriving here with their two surviving children in March 1872.

The Helms settled at Judbury, where Jacob worked for George Sherwin, father of the internationally-known singer Amy Sherwin, 'The Tasmanian Nightingale'. Richie's great-grandfather Philip Jacob

Helm was born in 1876 at Judbury. He later became a successful axeman, with the highlight of his career occurring in Hobart in 1902, when he won £100 and the championship of southern Tasmania in front of a vocal crowd of some two thousand people.

November speaker, Eddy Steenbergen, spoke on *The Hobart Town Turkish Bath Company Limited 1867–1892*. His interest in Turkish Baths was triggered when he observed a sign ‘TURKISH BATHS UPSTAIRS’ exposed in the redevelopment of Hobart’s Bank Arcade. Bank Arcade historian John Short provided a little background. Searching *Trove* revealed nothing more. But *Trove* did reveal numerous references to another establishment at the corner of Collins and Harrington Streets in Hobart. The story of that establishment revealed links with similar public amenities in Sydney and Alfred Kennerley of Kennerley Boys’ Home and Premier of Tasmania fame.

*The Mercury* of 7 April 1865 advertised a public lecture by Sydney-sider Dr Le Gay Brereton on the health and social benefits of Turkish baths. Brereton had been running Turkish baths in Sydney since 1861 and was promoting such establishments throughout the colonies. January 1866 saw the arrival in Hobart Town of Dr Ebenezer Atherton and his wife. London-trained Dr Atherton, a qualified homeopath, and he advertised his services at 115 Macquarie Street within a week of arriving in Hobart Town.

Atherton and Kennerley became the driving forces behind the establishment of the Hobart Town Turkish Bath Company. Nine months after Atherton’s arrival a public meeting was held, chaired by Kennerley, to initiate the formation of a Turkish bath company. On 19 November 1866 two advertisements appeared in *The*

*Mercury*: a Prospectus for the Hobart Town Turkish Bath Company and a call for suitable premises or land in central Hobart Town. £1000 was sought in 200 shares of £5 each.

The corner of Collins and Harrington Streets (present site of the Commonwealth Centre) was chosen as the site but the share offer had been undersubscribed and not all shareholders had paid the full £5. The Company could not find the £400 to purchase the land. A shareholder meeting was held and a loan of £300 by Kennerley was approved. The building was designed by Henry Hunter and tenders were called for the construction. The job was awarded to Mr James Gregory, the lowest tenderer at £515 (the highest was £720). The Company had insufficient funds to make the final payment to Gregory until Kennerley loaned a further £200, bring his total stake to £500.

The Turkish Baths were finally opened to the public on 16 September 1868. A typical visit gave clients access to the caldarium (hot dry air furnace room) followed by a rough brush scrub down on a marble slab and the option of a cold water shower falling from a height of 20 feet. There was no mixed bathing, the amenity having different days/evenings for men and women.

The Company normally staffed the Turkish Bath with a married couple, the first being John Donnelly and wife. Subsequent operators were Mr and Mrs William Walker, and Mr and Mrs Walter Webster.

Architect Henry Hunter became a director of the Company when Atherton returned to Sydney. A property—owned by Moses Cohen—next door to the Harrington Street premises was offered for sale for £425. The shareholders approved the purchase and Kennerley provided a £500 loan bringing his interest in the business

to £1000. Kennerley had become the permanent chair of the Company but was forced to step down due to ill health, being replaced by Harold Roberts for the rest of the Company's existence. The premises were leased to William Garrett in 1879 for £100 per annum, but he fell behind with the rent and in 1881 George Duster, a German immigrant, took on the lease only to be declared bankrupt in 1885. He had previously operated Turkish Baths in Brisbane and Rockhampton.

Patronage had declined. William Chester leased the business for £10 per month through to 1890. In 1890 at the AGM the Company discussed winding up the business. The property was offered for sale and purchased by Chester for £1350, the sale being registered in 1892. On 20 December the assets were liquidated by Henry Roberts who distributed the proceeds to the remaining shareholders. The building was used for Turkish baths to the 1920s by other operators, and the building was demolished in 1933 to make way for a service station.

Minute books and records of The Hobart Town Turkish Bath Company are held by the Royal Society of Tasmania.

### **Future Meetings**

It is hoped that COVID-19 restrictions will be eased at least to the extent that we can exercise social distancing in face-to-face meetings in a hall. So, the proposed program of speakers detailed below is subject to change arising from speakers' preference of mode of delivery and other vagaries. Please visit/refer to the monthly Branch Newsletter and Branch website for updates of the speaker program.

### **20 April 2021 AGM**

Warwick RISBY, *'Some highlights from my book 'Risby Ancestors from Convict Beginnings'*.

### **18 May 2021**

Brian STACE, *'The Coromandel: A one-ship study of South Australia's first immigrants'*.

### **15 June 2021**

Danny CROTHERS *'Our family's Hobart'*.

## **Launceston**

<http://www.launceston.tasfhs.org>

**President: Helen Stuart 0427 847 000**

**Secretary: Marette Lawson**

**PO Box 1290 Launceston Tasmania 7250**

**Library: [ltntasfh@bigpond.com](mailto:ltntasfh@bigpond.com)**

**All telephone enquiries to 0438 465 121**



The Launceston Branch celebrated its 40th Anniversary on Saturday 21 November with an Afternoon Tea in the grounds of Franklin

House, Franklin Village.

Four Foundation members of the Branch from 1980 were present—Pat Harris, Pat Hinds, Bet Wood and John Dent.

In welcoming the members, past members and friends, President Helen Stuart outlined the history of the Society and the Launceston Branch, also the milestones and many activities members have participated in over the past 40 years.

We were pleased to have four of our Hobart colleagues join us in the celebrations—Maurice Appleyard (Society President), Louise Rainbow (Hobart Branch President), Colleen Read and Thelma McKay.

The anniversary cake, baked and decorated by Robyn Gibson, was cut by Bet Wood (Foundation Member) who spoke about her early memories of the Branch.

Photograph albums, scrapbooks and memorabilia from past years were on display—a source of much interest. Thank you to everyone involved in making this an enjoyable occasion.

Launceston Branch is planning to hold some workshops during the year and also to resume our *DNA Discussion Circle*. Check the website for details of these events and the list of publications available from Launceston Branch.

We look forward to seeing our members and visitors in the library again and participating in our branch activities in 2021.

## Mersey Branch

[www.tfhsdev.com](http://www.tfhsdev.com)

**President: Gary Bryant**

**Secretary: Sue-Ellen McCreghan**  
**(03) 6428 6328**

**Library (03) 6426 2257**

**PO Box 267 Latrobe Tasmania 7307**

**email: [secretary@tfhsdev.com](mailto:secretary@tfhsdev.com)**



It's a very quiet time at Mersey branch due to COVID-19 nevertheless we open on Fridays and are well supported.

A number of interstate enquiries have been received and research has been enjoyable. Members are still working on combining the *Advocate* BDM's in five yearly groups. We would like to get together for our summer bbq—time will tell. Any enquiries please contact our secretary, Sue Ellen McCreghan 6428 6328, or email [secretary@tfhsdev.com.au](mailto:secretary@tfhsdev.com.au)

## Huon

**President: Shirley Fletcher (03) 6264 1546**

**Secretary: Libby Gillham (03) 6239 6529**

**PO Box 117 Huonville Tasmania 7109**

**email: [vsbtas@bigpond.com](mailto:vsbtas@bigpond.com)** ◀

## Launceston Branch Committee Members 2020–2021

President: Helen Stuart 0427 847 000  
Secretary: Marette Lawson 0438 465 121

Branch addresses

email: [ltntasfh@bigpond.com](mailto:ltntasfh@bigpond.com)

PO Box 1290 Launceston Tasmania 7250

<http://www.launceston.tasfhs.org>

All telephone enquiries to 0438 465 121

### President

Helen Stuart 0427 847 000

### Vice President

Fran Keegan 0409 578 468

### Correspondence Secretary

Marette Lawson 0438 465 121

[marettelawson@bigpond.com](mailto:marettelawson@bigpond.com)

### Minute Secretary

Robyn Gibson 0417 982 250

### Treasurer

Barrie Robinson 0438 281 349

### Assistant Treasurer

John Reimers 0438 309 522

### Library Co-ordinator

Helen Stuart 0427 847 000

### Committee

John Dent OAM 0408 133 656

Dr Jai Paterson 0417 915 462

### Society Delegates

Robyn Gibson 0417 982 250

Helen Stuart 0427 847 000

### Alternate Delegate

Fran Keegan 0409 578 468

# SYDNEY BROWNE

## AN INEXPLICABLE LEVEL CROSSING ACCIDENT AT BERRIEDALE IN 1927 ALERTED TASMANIANS AFRESH TO THE DANGERS OF PRIVATE LEVEL CROSSINGS

Don Bradmore (Member 6756)

**S**YDNEY BROWNE, a forty-five-year old farm labourer and milk vendor, died when the lorry he was driving collided with a rail motor at the Lilylands level crossing near Berriedale, Tasmania, on 17 December 1927.<sup>1</sup>

The circumstances were unusual and the accident was difficult to explain! It was a gated crossing—one which Browne used frequently and with which he was very familiar. The weather was clear, there was no wind and the light was good.

An inquest by the Coroner, Mr W E TURNER, held in the following week and a subsequent Supreme Court hearing of a claim for damages brought against the Commissioner for Railways by Browne's widow taught Tasmanians a great deal about level crossings—especially those known as 'private' crossings—and alerted them afresh to the dangers they presented.

The inquest established the main facts. On the day of the accident, Browne, the father of seven children ranging in age

from sixteen to three, was carting hay on his property. One of his sons, thirteen-year-old Ernest Dudley Browne, was working with him. The boy told the Coroner that, by mid-morning on the day of the accident, he and his father had unloaded their lorry and were returning along the main road to the paddock for another load. As they approached the level crossing, the boy jumped down from the lorry in order to run ahead to open the gates so that his father could drive straight through. As soon as he had opened the first gate, his father drove slowly on to the crossing and the boy closed the gate. He was about to run forward to open the second gate so that the lorry could get completely off the railway tracks but, just as he turned after shutting the first gate, the collision occurred. In answer to the Coroner's questions, the boy said that he had not seen the rail motor until it struck the lorry and that he had not heard its bell or horn. He said he was certain that his father's lorry had not become stationary on the crossing but had been moving forward slowly at the time of impact.<sup>2</sup>

A number of other witnesses, including the driver of the rail motor, the telegraph linesman on board, passengers, a doctor, representatives of the Tasmanian Government Railways and the police, and others

---

<sup>1</sup> Death, Tas. Reg: 84/1927; *Daily Telegraph* (Launceston), 17 December 1927, p. 6; *Mercury*, 19 December 1927, p. 1. Note the level crossing at which the collision occurred is referred to as 'Riverlands' at the inquest in 1927; at the subsequent Supreme Court hearing of the damages claim it is referred to as 'Lilylands'; See *Mercury*, 6 August 1929, p. 11.

---

<sup>2</sup> *Mercury* (Hobart), 30 December 1927, p. 3

who had been in the vicinity of the crossing and saw or heard the vehicles that morning, were then called to give evidence. Their testimony covered issues such as the visibility of each vehicle to the other immediately prior to the collision, the speed at which each was travelling when they collided, the warning signals which the rail motor gave of its approach to the crossing, the degree of care owing by all users of level crossings of this particular kind, and the ultimate responsibility for the present tragedy.<sup>3</sup>

The inquest heard that the railways vehicle involved in the collision was a Drewry rail motor, similar in appearance to that pictured here.<sup>4</sup> When this type of vehicle was put into service in Tasmania

in 1923, it was described in these terms:

In appearance, it looks similar to an ordinary railway carriage, only glassed in on all sides. In three compartments it provides seating accommodation for about twenty-five passengers ... The woodwork is wholly Tasmanian blackwood, beautifully polished. The seats (a luxury in themselves) are upholstered in buffalo hide ... The driver sits in front very much the same as in an ordinary motor car ... It is driven by an internal combustion 50 h.p. engine using petrol, fitted with a transmission of a potent type ... The rail motor provides a delightful means of locomotion for the tourist, and wherever used is certain to prove a decided attraction.<sup>5</sup>

## INTERNAL COMBUSTION

RAILWAY MOTOR CARS, INSPECTION CARS AND LOCOMOTIVES



50 H.P. FOUR WHEEL COMPOSITE COACH FOR BRANCH LINE SERVICES.

The most economical units for branch line and intermittent services, particularly in cases where road motor competition has to be contended with. Coaches can be supplied mounted on four wheels or double bogies, and fitted with bodies to suit individual requirements.

**DREWRY WILL REDUCE YOUR OPERATING COSTS**

**THE DREWRY CAR COMPANY LTD.**  
13 SOUTH PLACE

LONDON, E.C.2

Telegrams: "Inneal, London."  
Telephone: London Wall 4254.

**WORKS:**  
BURTON  
ON-TRENT

<sup>3</sup> *Mercury*, 30 December 1927, p. 3

<sup>4</sup> Note that the spelling of 'Drewry' is shown incorrectly in some newspaper reports of the inquest as 'Drury'; see [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Drewry\\_Car\\_Co.](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Drewry_Car_Co.); *Mercury*, 30 December 1927, p. 3 and 6 August 1929, p. 11

The driver of the rail motor on the morning of the collision was Augustus Henry Glover MURRAY. In giving his evidence, he referred to two level crossings in the area—the Kingston cross-

<sup>5</sup> *Mercury*, 3 August 1923, p. 2

sing and the Lilylands crossing. These were in close proximity and between them was a deep and curved cutting.<sup>6</sup> He said that he had sounded the horn just before leaving the Kingston crossing and that he had sounded it again and rang the bell while in the cutting believing that it would be heard at the Lilylands crossing ahead. He estimated he was travelling at about twenty-two miles per hour as he approached the Lilylands crossing. He claimed he did not see the lorry come through the gates and that it was on the line about seventy yards ahead when he first saw it. It appeared to him that the driver of the lorry had tried to rush to get across the line. He said that he had put the rail motor out of gear immediately to prevent its wheels skidding on the rails. Although he had applied the brakes before the collision, the rail motor had travelled about 120 yards after it had struck the lorry before he was able to stop it. He said that the line here was on a down grade and that he could not have pulled up any sooner. He had then run back to the lorry to try to help its driver.<sup>7</sup>

Alfred MURRAY, a telegraph linesman attached to the Railways Department, told the Coroner that he had been in the back compartment of the rail motor on the day of the collision. He estimated that was it travelling at ten or twelve miles per hour as it approached the Lilylands crossing. He had heard the bell of the rail motor sound in the cutting and its horn sound after coming out of the cutting but was unable to say how far from the crossing it was when these signals were given. Like the driver, he had hurried back to the lorry to try to help Browne after the crash. He said that Browne was still

seated in the cabin with his hands on the steering wheel, alive but unconscious. There was very little blood but a small wound was visible on the back of his head. With the assistance of police who had been called to the scene, Browne was put into the car of a local clergyman and rushed to the Hobart Public Hospital.<sup>8</sup>

Dr Bruce Maitland CARRUTHERS, a surgeon, told the inquest that he saw Browne at the hospital at about eleven o'clock. He had suffered a fractured skull and a lacerated brain. He had never regained consciousness and died at about three o'clock that afternoon.<sup>9</sup>

Joyce BAXTER, a passenger on the rail motor that morning, said that she was sitting in a compartment close behind the driver and saw Browne's lorry on the line as the rail motor came out of the cutting. She testified that she heard the driver ring the bell immediately and that he continued to ring it until reaching the crossing and colliding with the lorry.<sup>10</sup>

John David JENKINS, a road construction worker, told the Coroner he had been working on the main road between the Kingston and Lilylands crossings on that morning. He had seen the rail motor pass at about half past ten but had heard no bell or horn.<sup>11</sup>

In summing up the evidence, the Coroner remarked he had always found it difficult to ascertain the true facts as to speed and distance in cases of this kind but he had come to the conclusion in this instance that the driver of the rail motor had given all the signals required by the regulations and he had done everything reasonable

---

<sup>6</sup> *Advocate* (Burnie), 6 March 1929, p. 2;  
*Mercury*, 19 December 1927, p. 9  
<sup>7</sup> *Mercury*, 30 December 1927, p. 3

---

<sup>8</sup> *Mercury*, 30 December 1927, p. 3

<sup>9</sup> *Mercury*, 30 December 1927, p. 3

<sup>10</sup> *Mercury*, 30 December 1927, p. 3

<sup>11</sup> *Mercury*, 30 December 1927, p. 3

for him to do. He returned a verdict of accidental death.<sup>12</sup>

However, fifteen months later, before the Chief Justice, Sir Herbert NICHOLLS, in the Supreme Court at Hobart, Ethel Florence May Browne, Browne's widow and executor of his estate, claimed damages of £2,000 against the Commissioner for Railways, alleging the rail motor was 'so negligently and unskillfully driven and controlled' that it ran into her late husband's lorry, causing his death.<sup>13</sup>

Mr Charles Service PAGE led the case for the plaintiff, while the Hon. Henry Seymour BAKER, the Attorney-General, led the case for the defendant. During the proceedings, both advocates called a number of expert witnesses to inform the court about technical matters, including the make and model of rail motors used by the Tasmanian Government Railways, the efficiency of their braking systems on various gradients, the number and types of railway crossings in the state and the obligations and responsibilities of drivers using them, and the practices adopted for the safety and protection of railway employees and the public.<sup>14</sup>

Ethel Browne told the court she and her children had been deprived of 'the means of subsistence and maintenance for which they were dependent upon [her husband's] income ... and of the protection and pecuniary benefits which they expected to derive during his lifetime.' She said that her husband was in good general health at the time of his death and that his sight and hearing were good.<sup>15</sup>

Browne's son, Ernest, then confirmed the evidence that he had given earlier at the inquest. He said he had been in the lorry with his father that morning and they had used the crossing at about the same time nearly every morning. In answer to questions from the Attorney-General, he said that both he and his father had looked up the line as they approached the crossing but admitted that he himself had not looked again after getting to the crossing. He had not heard the train coming and had no idea that it was approaching as he opened the first gate.<sup>16</sup>

In summing up the case for the plaintiff, Page insisted Browne had taken all reasonable care at the crossing and that the blame for the accident lay squarely with the driver of the rail motor. He argued that it was unreasonable to believe that either the bell or horn had been sounded or the lorry would never have been on the line. He said that the driver of the rail motor was aware this crossing was obscure and that it was on a down grade. He reminded the jury that the rail motor driver had said he was sixty to eighty yards away from the crossing when he saw the lorry. At the speed at which the driver estimated he was travelling, Page submitted, it should have been possible for him to stop the rail motor in forty-five yards. That the driver had put his motor into neutral and allowed his vehicle to coast down the hill had made it more difficult for him to stop. This action on the part of the rail motor driver was evidence of his negligence, Page contended. Thus, it was reasonable for a jury to infer that the rail motor was going too fast and that the driver had not used all the means he had at hand to stop it.<sup>17</sup>

---

<sup>12</sup> *Mercury*, 30 December 1927, p. 3

<sup>13</sup> *Examiner* (Launceston), 6 March 1927, p. 9;

*Mercury*, 6 March 1929, p. 11

<sup>14</sup> *Mercury*, 6 March 1929, p. 11; 23 March 1929, p. 13

<sup>15</sup> *Mercury*, 6 March 1929, p. 11; *Advocate* (Burnie), 7 March 1929, p. 2

---

<sup>16</sup> *Mercury*, 6 March 1929, p. 11

<sup>17</sup> *Mercury*, 6 March 1929, p. 11; 23 March 1929, p. 13

For the defence, the Attorney-General denied any negligence on the part of the rail motor driver. He argued that there were only two points on which the driver of the rail motor could possibly have been negligent—firstly, in travelling too fast and, secondly, in failing to sound a warning—but there was no evidence at all of either circumstance being the case. In fact, he asserted, the whole of the evidence showed that it was Browne who had been negligent. The accident occurred, he contended, because Browne and his son looked once and once only—the boy had said so himself—and people who looked once and then went on the line without looking again were as culpable as if they had not looked at all!<sup>18</sup>

After a summation of the evidence by the judge, the jury retired to consider its verdict. Ultimately, it decided for the plaintiff—but not without apportioning some responsibility for the accident to Browne himself. Ethel Browne was awarded £1,200—that is, only three-fifths of the £2,000 she had claimed.<sup>19</sup>

Even so, the decision was appealed immediately by the Commissioner for Railways on the grounds that there had been no negligence at all on the part of the rail motor driver and therefore no case to go to the jury.

However, on 26 April 1929, the Full Court at Hobart upheld the decision of the jury. The Acting Chief Justice, Mr. Justice CLARK, said it was certain that there had been some negligence on Browne's part; his son, Ernest, had testified that he had looked up the line a good many seconds before the collision but had not looked again. But the jury had accepted the plaintiff's argument that

after Browne's lorry had gone on to the tracks the driver of the rail motor still had time, by the use of reasonable care, to prevent the collision by quickly applying his brakes but had failed to do so.<sup>20</sup>

Of course, Ethel Browne would have hoped for the full £2,000 claimed as compensation for the loss of her husband but, undoubtedly, she welcomed the £1,200. It was a significant amount; in 1927 a comfortable double-fronted brick villa of five rooms in Sandy Bay could be bought for about £1,000.<sup>21</sup>

However, to the general public of Tasmania, the significance of the case lay in the information it brought forth about level crossings in general and the rights and responsibilities of users of them. While none of these facts were particularly new, their publication at this time would have served as a timely reminder to many.

For example, the courts heard there were various kinds of level crossings and that the obligations of users varied with the type. Some level crossings were 'active' and others were 'passive'; some were 'public', others were 'private'; and still others were 'occupational'. 'Active' crossings are those controlled by warning systems—such as flashing lights, automatic gates and/or audible devices such as bells or gongs—some of which may be activated by approaching trains. 'Passive' crossings have static warning signs ('Stop' or 'Give Way') that are visible on approach but this signage is unchanging with no mechanical aspects or light devices; it is up to the road user to observe and detect the presence of a train. 'Public' crossings are open to the general public for everyday use. 'Private' cross-

---

<sup>18</sup> *Mercury*, 23 March 1929, p. 13

<sup>19</sup> *Mercury*, 27 April 1929, p. 14

---

<sup>20</sup> *Mercury*, 27 April 1929, p. 14

<sup>21</sup> *Mercury*, 28 January 1927, p. 2

ings are provided for limited use by a land holder whose property adjoins both sides of the rail corridor or is accessed from a public road adjacent to the rail corridor; they are often called 'farm crossings'. 'Occupational crossings' are for use by accredited railway professionals only; they allow maintenance crews to access railway facilities.<sup>22</sup>

At the Supreme Court hearing of the damages claim on 6 March 1929, the Secretary for Railways, Charles John ROLLINS, told the jury that the level crossing at which Sydney Browne was killed was a private crossing. Stating there were more than three hundred similar private crossings between Hobart in the south and Western Junction in the north, he said the practice throughout the Commonwealth of Australia was that drivers should not be required to slow down at such crossings; they were looked upon merely as conveniences or concessions to the property owners. Train drivers, he continued, were expected to go through these crossings as if they did not exist. Nothing else was possible. At the same time, of course, train drivers were required at all times to exercise reasonable precautions in the public interest.<sup>23</sup>

This same point was made by the Attorney-General, Mr BAKER, at the Full Court hearing on 22 March 1929. Arguing that the verdict of the jury in awarding £1,200 to Ethel Browne should be set aside, he said that it was relevant to consider the general position of the Tasmanian Railway Department in conducting its services in relation to these

private crossings. If there was an obligation to sound warnings and slow down at all private crossings, he said, the railways could not possibly be conducted efficiently. It was the duty of the motorists crossing such lines, he continued, to look out for railway vehicles at all times.<sup>24</sup>

As tragic as it was, Browne's death helped raise public awareness of the dangers of level crossings and some useful ideas emerged from the discussion which followed. One of the most interesting ideas—if a somewhat curious one—was a proposal that gates be removed altogether from private level crossings. At the time of the hearing in the Supreme Court of Ethel Browne's damages claim, the *Examiner* (Launceston) suggested the risk was greater at a private crossing where two gates have to be opened and closed than at an open crossing where there are no gates because at open crossings, if no train is within sight or hearing, a motorist can slip across the tracks with little danger.<sup>25</sup>

Would that have saved Sydney Browne's life? ◀



Sydney Browne  
*Ancestry.com*

---

<sup>22</sup> *Mercury*, 4 February 1926, p. 2; *Mercury*, 8 March 1929, p. 8. and 23 March 1929, p. 13

<sup>23</sup> *Examiner*, 6 March 1929, p. 9; *Mercury*, 6 March 1929, p. 11

---

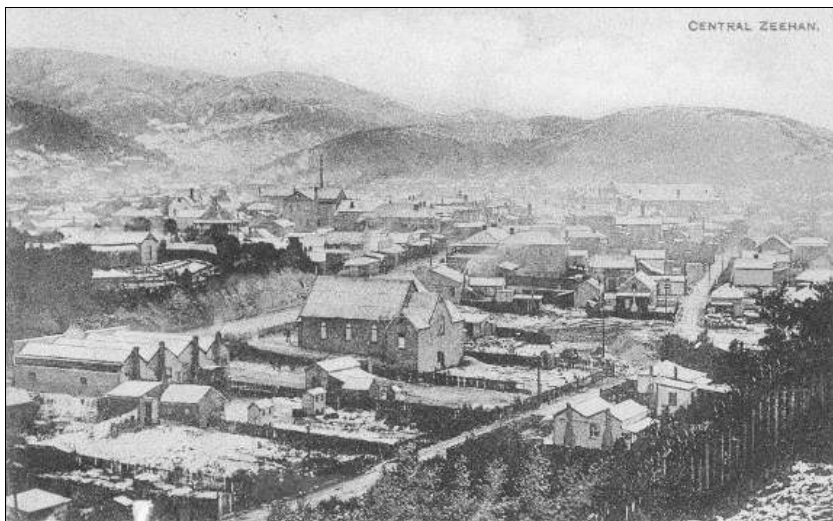
<sup>24</sup> *Mercury*, 6 March 1929, p. 11; 23 March 1929, p. 13

<sup>25</sup> *Examiner*, 8 March 1929 p. 8.

# ZEEHAN SCHOOLS, 1891–1930

## THEIR HEYDAY

Betty Jones (Member 6032)



1909, Central Zeehan, by then a thriving town  
Courtesy of Tasmanian Archives: NS869/1/335

### Early Zeehan

**A**CCORDING to Census figures, by 1901 Zeehan, on the West Coast, had a population of just over 5,000 men and women occupying 1,777 dwellings, making it the third largest settlement in Tasmania after Hobart and Launceston.<sup>1</sup> Silver-lead ore was discovered at Mount Zeehan in 1882 but transport issues initially hampered the development of the town. Trial Harbour was the settlement's first port with a road linking the two being completed in 1889. A railway line from Strahan to Zeehan the following year saw the port at Strahan then assuming greater importance. The

establishment in the town of stores, a police presence, churches, schools, a hospital, a proliferation of hotels (reportedly 20 at one time) and other amenities all followed.

### The first schools

Since early settlement, with a growing number of school-age scholars in the town and no government provision of education facilities, local inhabitants agitated for their children's entitlements in that area. In January 1891, Mrs Eda Louise LLOYD (1855–1938), who had moved to Zeehan the previous year, set up her own private school for nine months in the Church of England's Chapel of Ease, until a government one was ready for occupation at East Zeehan

---

<sup>1</sup> *Zeehan and Dundas Herald (ZDH)*,  
10 May 1901

later that year.<sup>2</sup> Mrs LLOYD, previously an experienced teacher with the Education Department, was congratulated by local parents for her determination to supply a very serious want in the district. Over twenty pupils presented for the first intake.<sup>3</sup>

Born in Ballarat East, Victoria Mrs Lloyd, (née MATTSON), married Peter Lorentz ANDERSON (also known as LLOYD) in 1886 at Launceston. In 1898, she was given three months' leave on full pay in recognition of her long service with the Department but was advised her services were no longer required.<sup>4</sup> Again Mrs Lloyd opened and operated her own private school until the end of 1908, attracting an average of about 20 girls to her classes.<sup>5</sup> Following the abolition of fees for children attending government schools from 1909, she resumed teaching with the Department at West Zeehan before taking up a position in charge of the school at Macquarie Heads from July 1910.

### **The government schools**

#### **East Zeehan State School, 1891–1925; 1926–1930**

In February 1891, the Education Department finally became more determined to obtain a suitable site for a school in the town and accepted one offered by Mr EVANS of the Silver King Mine. It was situated near GRUBBS's tramway, on the corner of Main and King Streets, opposite the Shelverton Hotel. The new building measured 42 by 20 feet with large porches at each end, and a three-roomed house attached as a residence for the teacher-in-charge. The structure was of corrugated iron, painted

on the outside and lined within with pine. The introduction of one of Gill's patent heating stoves was used to keep the classroom comfortable. The school was designed to accommodate 72 scholars, but should the numbers increase, there was a plan to convert the teachers' residence into classrooms and build a new house for the teacher.<sup>6</sup>

The first school master, Mr Louis Arthur PEERS (1845–1921), arrived in August 1891 to take up his position in the new school building, with Mrs Lloyd as his assistant.

Born in Everton, Lancashire, England, Mr Peers had arrived in Victoria in December 1852 with his parents and siblings. He became a collector for Museums for eight years up to 1874, as well as holding various occupations after that. He was a teacher in private schools in Deniliquin, Victoria prior to joining the Tasmanian Education Department at Black River in 1885.<sup>7</sup> He married twice, first to Mary Ayris YOUNG in 1873 in Horton District (widowed 1889), and next to Emily Amelia PEGG in 1890 at Stanley.

The East Zeehan School soon became too small for needs, and some pupils' enrolment had to be refused. In 1894, a new school apartment was built, designed to bring total potential capacity to 250. It was described as being of weatherboard, pine lined and with an iron roof. It measured 40 feet by 20 feet with plenty of space in height. A hall was built between the old and new buildings for cloaks, hats, etc., and there was a comfortable room for the children in which to eat their lunch, a much-appreciated bonus when the weather was

---

<sup>2</sup> Tasmanian Archives (TA): ED13/1/46

<sup>3</sup> *ZDH*, 21 January 1891

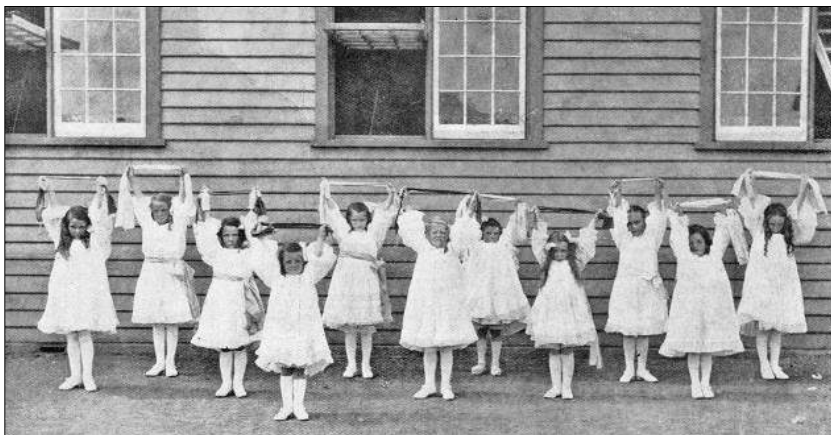
<sup>4</sup> TA: ED13/1/66

<sup>5</sup> *ZDH*, 18 December 1908

---

<sup>6</sup> *ZDH*, 2 March 1891

<sup>7</sup> TA: ED2/1/ file 956



1907, East Zeehan State School girls' scarf display

*Weekly Courier*, 9 March 1907; courtesy of Tasmanian Archives

wet and the streets so muddy. The new room was fitted with Tobin's patent ventilators, and two brick fireplaces.<sup>1</sup>

The enrolment in 1899 was 216 and attendance was on the increase.<sup>2</sup> By March 1903 however, there was a noticeable decrease to 171, caused by a lack of work in that part of the town. A recovery by 1906 revitalised the school for a number of years, but by 1916 when Australia was at war, the population of the whole town was declining.



In October 1916, Mr Peers, (pictured left)<sup>3</sup> wrote to the Department seeking a transfer, stating that Mrs Peers was very ill with rheumatism

and had spent three months in bed. She was currently on the North-West Coast and had been there since Easter as the weather was too cold and wet for her in Zeehan. Mr Peers asked if he could be advised of how things might progress with his transfer since he had a number of bulbs, plants, etc. which needed immediate attention. (He was recognised locally as an expert gardener in Zeehan's harsh conditions.) If he knew he was moving at the end of the year, he would need to dispose of them, but if he were to remain, they must be planted at once. He explained he also had a host of natural history specimens, all useful in the school, which would take much time and care in packing or they would be destroyed. Mr Peers understood that those matters had little to do with school affairs, but stated that they meant a great deal to him; some he could not replace. Two weeks later he wrote again to the Department asking for a progress report. His bulbs, worth £10, needed planting immediately or disposed of for whatever he could get for them. Mr Peers noted that the bulbs had been very useful to him over the years in providing funds for school expenses. He was offered a transfer to Perth and finished at East

<sup>1</sup> *ZDH*, 10 July 1894

<sup>2</sup> TA: ED31/1/6

<sup>3</sup> Mr Louis Peers, Head Teacher 1891–1917; courtesy of *Ancestry.com* member Colette Barnes

Zeehan in April 1917 after serving at the school for just over 25 years. ‘Thorough’ had been his motto.<sup>4</sup>

When Mr Peers left, most of the children were transferred to West Zeehan, supposedly until after the War when a male teacher could be supplied. A class was continued for children in Preparatory and Grade 1 as they were considered too young to walk the distance. By 1919, the school included Grade 2 students, as well as two of the four rooms being occupied by the new Junior Technical School for cookery and dressmaking classes.<sup>5</sup> The whole facility was closed in October 1925.

In October 1926, an infant class was reconvened, the teacher under the supervision of the Head Teacher at the West Zeehan School.<sup>6</sup> There were 30 children enrolled in February 1928.<sup>7</sup> The school finally closed at the end of October 1930 and the 22 children enrolled were transferred to the West Zeehan School.<sup>8</sup>

#### **Zeehan Junior Technical School, 1919–1921 (at East Zeehan)**

This was the government’s alternative to the provision of a high school in the town, and entrance requisites were the same. The school was established for girls and boys who had passed the Education Department’s Qualifying Certificate examination and intended to enter one of the industrial professions, or trades. The school did not pretend to teach the scholars a trade, but aimed to give them mental and practical training in the fundamental processes of art, trade, and science and so enable them to quickly

learn a skilled trade.<sup>9</sup> In February 1919, the school had an enrolment of 17 girls and 13 boys.<sup>10</sup> The facility was closed at the beginning of 1922 for want of enough pupils.

#### **West Zeehan (Zeehan) State School; 1892–Present**

This school started in a similar way to the one at East Zeehan, with a private school operating for a number of months until the Department took it over in July 1892 in the old Post Office building.<sup>11</sup> The private school attracted younger scholars who had not been old enough to walk the distance to the East End building. The teacher-in-charge, Miss Annie Magdalene FLEMING (1865–1951), was born at Table Cape, daughter of Lawrence Fleming and his wife Mary Ann (née MURRAY). She was a private music teacher living at Montagu in December 1891 when she applied to join the Department.<sup>12</sup> Miss Fleming married David NICHOLAS at the end of 1894 at Strahan and continued living at Zeehan.

Miss Margaret Catherine Fleming (1873–1941), also known as ‘Maggie’, was assistant to her older sister, Annie, at both their private and the government schools and continued teaching at the State school until 1902. Miss Fleming was then farewelled by the members of the congregation at St Fursaeus Catholic Church at Zeehan prior to her departure for Western Australia. For ten years she had been librarian and secretary to the Association of the Sacred Heart, also organist and leader of the children’s choir.<sup>13</sup> She married James Cadden

---

<sup>4</sup> TA: ED11/657/8/1917

<sup>5</sup> TA: ED11/657/8/1917

<sup>6</sup> *The Examiner*, 13 October 1926

<sup>7</sup> *The Examiner*, 10 February 1928

<sup>8</sup> *The Advocate*, 30 September 1930

---

<sup>9</sup> ZDH, 20 December 1918

<sup>10</sup> *The Advocate*, 15 February 1919

<sup>11</sup> TA: ED13/1/49

<sup>12</sup> TA: ED2/1/1292; file: 1506

<sup>13</sup> *The Examiner*, 27 August 1902

HEEREY at Freemantle that year and returned to live in Zeehan after 1903.

In November 1892, there were 72 children on the rolls but space at the old Post Office was very limited. The only solution to the problem seemed to be to restrict the school's intake to younger children until larger premises were provided.<sup>14</sup>

In March 1895, just prior to the arrival of Mr Charles Alfred WRIGHT (1868–1949) as Head Teacher, it was announced that a new school had been completed. Described as not a pretentious building, the facility had been built cheaply as a consequence of Treasury restrictions at that time. The new room was 42 feet in length and 20 feet wide. The walls were a 11½ feet high, and the roof formed the ceiling, the height in the centre being 21 feet. The walls were painted with a light, pleasing tint and the ceiling was whitewashed. There were two fireplaces equidistant from each end of the room. There were six windows comprising 168

small panes of glass, and that was considered good lighting. Sufficient ventilation was obtained by Tobin's vents in each corner. Running along one end was an open verandah and porch, and on the other was the same, but closed in. On the north side of the schoolroom were attached three spacious rooms to serve as teachers' quarters. A yard and garden had also been set aside for the teacher. The site was considered a favourable one on a small tableland several feet above the surrounding ground. The playground had been cleared of all stumps and was spacious enough for the school's enrolment. A substantial, neat paling fence enclosed the building. There was a new footpath right to the East End school so that children would not have to wade through mud if they preferred to still attend that school.<sup>15</sup>

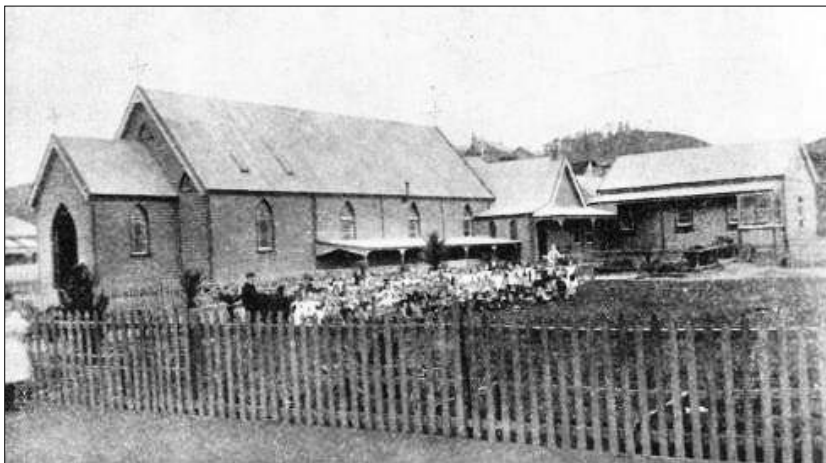
Mr Wright had charge of the school from April 1895 to December 1904. Born at Green Ponds, son of teachers, Thomas Wright and his wife Sarah Hayes (née



1909, West Zeehan State School, Lower Division  
*Weekly Courier* 10 June 1909, Courtesy of Tasmanian Archives

<sup>14</sup> *ZDH*, 7 November 1892

<sup>15</sup> *ZDH*, 2 March 1895



1899, St Fursaesus Church

*Tasmanian Mail* 1899; courtesy of Tasmanian Archives,  
with thanks to *Pioneers of the Tasmanian North West* Facebook page

HUTCHINSON), he commenced his career with the Education Department in 1888 as a Pupil Teacher at New Town. Mr Wright was replaced at West Zeehan in 1905 by Mr James GATTY and his wife, Lucy (née FITZJOHN-HALL).

By February 1900, with an enrolment of 271, the school was considered full, and the Head Teacher consequently had to refuse admission to children.<sup>16</sup> There were 350 children on the rolls in December 1918, but within another three years the number was back to the 1900 level.<sup>17</sup> The town had passed its peak by 1921, the Census for that year recording just over 2,000 people.

### **The church-based schools**

#### **St Fursaesus Convent School, 1895–1983**

The West Coast's first Roman Catholic Church, St Fursaesus, was built at Zeehan in 1891<sup>18</sup> and in January 1895, four Sisters of St Joseph—Sisters Mary

Ambrose DIRKIN (in charge), Mary Columba CAHILL, Mary Raphael McGUINNESS and Mary Evangelist OSBORNE—arrived in the town to inaugurate a school.<sup>19</sup> By March 1896, there were upwards of 250 children enrolled, classes initially being conducted within the church building until a proper school was constructed. The school's pupils always excelled in Music.

### **The Church of England**

The first Anglican clergyman on the West Coast, Canon Albert William ICELY (1858–1928), arrived in October 1889 and initially lived in a tent with his wife, Louisa Henrietta Sandford (née KEMP) (1863–1948). Early in 1890, the ground for a church was pegged out, it being the block on which the Church Institute, later known as the Chapel of Ease, was erected.<sup>20</sup> With a temporary church being built elsewhere after 1891, on and off up to 1906 the Chapel of Ease was used for

<sup>16</sup> TA: ED31/1/6

<sup>17</sup> *The Advocate*, 23 December 1922

<sup>18</sup> *ZDH*, 27 November 1891

<sup>19</sup> *ZDH*, 25 January 1895

<sup>20</sup> *ZDH*, 19 August 1909

school purposes. In 1899, rationalisation of church property in order to pay off debt, led to a resolution being passed that the building be retained but removed to the back of the block on which it was situated. Sixty feet of the frontage of the block was to be sold to halve the depth, leaving a 6 feet approach to the building.<sup>21</sup> In January 1908, the building was sold, the proceeds used towards the building of the new church, opened in 1909.<sup>22</sup>

### Zeehan High School, 1892–1893

Anglican minister, Rev. John OBERLIN HARRIS, MA, (1845–1922) represented the Zeehan congregation from 1892–1893. In early 1892, with teaching being part of his background, he advertised the opening of the first Zeehan High School for boys and girls.<sup>23</sup>

### Church of England (St Lukes) Day School, 1900–1906

Bishop Dr Henry H Montgomery, who had taken State-wide charge of the Church of England from 1889–1901, held the belief that religious education of the young was a paramount church duty, not only in the then few Anglican schools. He approved of the Education Department's non-denominational policy on the matter. Although his aim was to see a Church of England School in every settlement, for many years little was done in achieving that goal, particularly in country areas. In 1895, a motion was passed unanimously at the annual Synod that a teaching Sisterhood be formed of ladies licensed by the Bishop.<sup>24</sup>

Miss (Alexandra) Alice Hannah BUZ-ZARD (1873–1945) and Miss Rose Ellen



1904 St Lukes Day School,  
Mr Thomas W Bennetts stands on the left and principal, Rev. William S Stone, is on the right  
*Weekly Courier*, 7 January 1905; courtesy of Tasmanian Archives

<sup>21</sup> *Launceston Examiner*, 31 January 1899

<sup>22</sup> *ZDH*, 29 January 1908

<sup>23</sup> *ZDH*, 22 January 1892

YEATS (1874-unknown) were co-principals of the Church of England Day

<sup>24</sup> *The Mercury*, 24 April 1895

School from January 1900 to December 1903. They arrived in Australia in 1894 from London as certificated teachers destined to assist the Sisters of the Church in Hobart. Miss Buzzard was born at Lutterworth Union Work House, Leicestershire, England, daughter of Hannah Buzzard. Miss Yeats was born at Portsea Island, Hampshire, England, daughter of George and Emma Yeats. Both young women had been orphaned at early ages and were chosen from their respective orphanages by the Sisters of the Church, an Anglican religious order of women, to be trained as teachers at Kilburn in Paddington, Middlesex. They left London following their calling to Tasmania at the end of 1893.<sup>25</sup> Upon their arrival in Hobart in 1894, they taught at the Sisters of the Church's small branch school for poorer members of society, held in the Mission Room in Colville Street in the Holy Trinity Parish. They next were transferred to Zeehan on the recommendation of Bishop Montgomery.

An advertisement announcing the opening of the school in 1900 referred to it as the Church of England School and indicated that the syllabus included scripture, English history, geography, arithmetic, science, drawing, needlework, singing and drill.<sup>26</sup> In 1901 it was described as the Church of England school at the Chapel of Ease, near York's. It promised to give a first-class English education in higher grades as well as offering a Kindergarten system for juniors. Fees were 6 pence for under eight years and 1 shilling for those over that age. After school hours extras included

French, Latin, lace, fancy and embroidery work at 10 shillings per quarter.<sup>27</sup>

Miss Buzzard and Miss Yeats next transferred to Adelaide, South Australia where schools were also being developed by the Sisters of the Church. Miss Buzzard returned to Tasmania at the end of 1904 and in July 1905 married Hobart solicitor, Arnold BANKS-SMITH, who had previously worked at Zeehan in that occupation for about six years.

Rev. William Samuel STONE (1870–1949) was appointed Rector of Zeehan and Rural Dean of the West Coast from September 1902 having previously been curate of St Pauls Church, Launceston.<sup>28</sup> From February 1903, he taught book-keeping as an honorary instructor at the Zeehan School of Mines. In 1904, filling the void left by the departure of Misses Buzzard and Yeats, Rev. Stone instituted St Lukes School. From November that year until 1905, he was joined by Mr Thomas William BENNETTS (1886–unknown) as assistant master. Mr Bennetts, a young teacher from Beaconsfield, left the Education Department there in November 1904 to assist in parochial work with the Anglican Church at Zeehan. As well as his tasks at St Lukes School, Mr Bennetts entered upon a course of study for Holy Orders.<sup>29</sup> In 1905 at Zeehan, he married Henrietta Ruby PERKINS and at the end of that year re-joined the Department at Beaconsfield.

---

<sup>25</sup> Thanks to Louise Gibson for help with this information

<sup>26</sup> *ZDH*, 6 January 1900

---

<sup>27</sup> *ZDH*, 20 July 1901

<sup>28</sup> *ZDH*, 13 May 1902

<sup>29</sup> *ZDH*, 29 October 1904

Samuel H Steer;  
courtesy of  
*Ancestry.com*  
member  
Matt Rutkin



A new head teacher, Mr Samuel Herbert STEER (1858–1932), arrived in town in an independent capacity to take over St Lukes School from the beginning of 1906. Formerly Headmaster of Horton College at Ross (1892–94) and Longford Grammar (1895–97), he had been teaching for thirty years prior to his residence at Zeehan. When Mr Steer commenced at St Lukes, there were 68 scholars on the books. Within two months, the number had increased to 130.<sup>30</sup> All appeared to go well until a dispute over the non-payment of rent to the churchwardens by Mr Steer brought an end to his use of the school building.<sup>31</sup> Nevertheless, he and his family continued to live in the town another six years, with Mr Steer being employed as instructor of mathematics and commercial book-keeping at the Zeehan School of Mines up to July 1908. His wife, Wilmet Helena (née MOSELEY) (1858–1926), conducted a private school from 1907 to April 1909 in the Band Room. Three of their daughters, Elfreda (Effie) (1887–1919), Wilmet Helena (Poppy) (1889–1971) and Ethel Mary (1891–1910) also taught in Zeehan at different times up to 1912, Poppy and Ethel being employed by the Department.

### **The independent private schools, 1894–1912**

As well as those mentioned earlier in this article, a steady flow of small private schools came and went in the town from 1894, separate from the usual teachers of music. Enrolments were never large and premises were always temporary but those teachers offered an alternative for parents who were looking for something different from the mainstream for their children.

Mr Archibald Emilius GOSSETT TANNER, BA, who had previously been teaching at Mr G A GURNEY's private school at Ulverstone, offered evening classes on Mondays and Fridays in 1894 at his Zeehan High School, opposite Finn's, but the school did not survive beyond that year.

Mrs M HARRISON set up Zeehan Central Private School in the Salvation Army Barracks in 1897 before relocating to St Andrew's Presbyterian Church in July that year. French, drawing, Euclid and algebra were all taught without any extra charge.<sup>32</sup> The school had moved to Frederick Street by August 1898 and continued there until 1900.<sup>33</sup>

Miss M DAKIN was Principal of another Zeehan High School, this one conducted in Montagu Hall from January to July 1898. It offered usual English, calisthenics, latest fancy work, plain sewing and cutting as well as children being prepared for examinations.<sup>34</sup> Miss Dakin, assisted by Miss PINNINGTON, conducted a night school for boys (who were employed during the day) on Tuesdays and Thursdays. By the end of July that year, the latter teacher had taken over the

---

<sup>30</sup> *ZDH*, 23 December 1906)

<sup>31</sup> *The Examiner*, 29 May 1907

---

<sup>32</sup> *ZDH*, 4 September 1897

<sup>33</sup> *ZDH*, 13 August 1898

<sup>34</sup> *ZDH*, February 1898

conduct of the school and moved it to the Band Room. In July 1899, the good will of the High School was up for sale.<sup>35</sup> Miss Pinnington was given a farewell by her pupils and supporters in September that year before she moved to Launceston.

From July 1898–1899, Miss GOURLAY offered a school for girls in the vestry of St Andrews Presbyterian Church. Subjects taught included English, French, elementary drawing, plain and fancy embroidery, etc. Miss COLLIER took over in the Presbyterian vestry to conduct Zeehan Private School from 1899–1900.

Miss Jane (Jean) Haggie COUSTON (1886–1972) also opened a private school in the vestry at the Presbyterian Church in 1904.<sup>36</sup> She was born at Dunfermline, Fife, Scotland, daughter of William Couston and his wife Janet (née MITCHELL), and was living in Melbourne, Victoria with her family by 1900. She was educated at Presbyterian Ladies' College, Melbourne before arriving in Zeehan with her mother and brother about 1904. She joined the Education Department in 1907 and taught at Lynchford, Rosebery, West Zeehan and Macquarie Heads up to 1909. By 1911, Miss Couston was teaching in South Australia where, in 1913, she married Wilfred Bruce SAMPSON at Pinnaroo.

In April 1909, Mrs V RICHARDS took over Mrs Steer's private school at the Band Room.<sup>37</sup> Miss Effie Steer appears to have been the last small private school teacher to operate up to 1912.

### Catch up

The introduction of government State high schools in Tasmania after 1912 marked the final death knell for the town's small private schools. They had already received a blow to their ability to attract pupils when, in late 1908, the contentious issue of providing free education to children in State schools was finally passed in Parliament.<sup>38</sup> St Fursaeus Convent School continued, however, enticing both Catholic and non-Catholic pupils up to Grade 7. It operated under the Sisters of St Joseph up until 1976 and then maintained a small lay presence in the town up to 1983.<sup>39</sup> The two State schools managed the majority of pupils, with West Zeehan (now Zeehan Primary School) becoming the lone government provider after 1930. By 1931, the town's mining heyday over, the population had shrunk to 1,000. Today, 130 years later, Zeehan, with a population of about 750, still provides valuable education opportunities for its local children. The thousands of pupils who previously have passed through the town's many school gates have much to remember and be thankful for. ◀

---

<sup>35</sup> ZDH, 13 July 1899

<sup>36</sup> ZDH, 16 April 1904

<sup>37</sup> ZDH, 17 April 1909

---

<sup>38</sup> *The Mercury*, 12 November 1908

<sup>39</sup> <https://stjosephsr.tas.edu.au/our-history>

## MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL PAYMENT OPTIONS

Preferred method of payment is by direct transfer to

TFHS Inc. account as below.  
BSB: 037 012. Account No. 138 030.  
Account Name: Tasmanian Family  
History Society Inc.

Please ensure that you identify yourself clearly. Each year there are deposits to TFHS Inc. account which cannot be identified.

Your 8 digit CRN is unique to you. Use it as your reference before any other text.

If you cannot enter 8 digits, use your membership number (which is the last 4 digits of your CRN) before any other text.

If using Debit/Credit card please ensure that your card is current, your card number is entered fully and clearly and that your expiry (mm/yy) is entered fully and clearly.

Cheque payment in A\$ made out to TFHS Inc. is acceptable. Please endorse cheque with CRN.

Postal address Treasurer, TFHS Inc., PO Box 326, Rosny Park, Tas., 7018.

Payment by cash or cheque made out to your branch may be made at your branch library.

If your membership status changes (e.g. joint to single, ordinary to concession etc.) please notify TFHS promptly.

Thank you, Ross Warren,  
State Treasurer

## ORAL HISTORY WORKSHOP

**SATURDAY 29 MAY 2021**

10.00 am – 4.45 pm at  
Glenorchy Library

**conducted by Jill Cassidy**

President of Oral History Tasmania

Learn how to interview your relatives, and how to ensure your descendants can hear their voices.

The workshop will be Covid-safe and cover all aspects of oral history practice. Topics include: use of digital recorder, interview technique, pitfalls to avoid, ethics, transcription and alternatives, and publication.

Participants will be able to listen to interview excerpts and do practice interviews.

For Covid reasons participants will need to provide their own lunch, as well as morning and afternoon teas, although an urn will be available. The cost has therefore been reduced to \$25 for members of Oral History Tasmania and students, and \$35 for non-members.

Prior registration is essential.

Contact Jill Cassidy on  
0418 178 098 or  
[president@oralhistorytas.org.au](mailto:president@oralhistorytas.org.au)



# HELP WANTED



## TASMANIAN API CRICKET TEAM 1937

Photograph was taken and signed by photographer Joseph James Nathaniel BARNETT, 1882–1972.

I am keen to know the names of four of the Tasmanian API cricket team members who played in the Australian Postal Institute Carnival in Hobart in 1937.

The names I have are as follows:

**Back standing:** Colin MICKLEBOROUGH; (unknown 1); (unknown 2); Norm HARRIS; (unknown 3); Ray HOOPER; Gerry McDOUGALL;

**Front seated:** Jack PROSS; Charlie LANE; Stan GREEN; Merv GEARD; (unknown 4).

I would appreciate any help.  
Leonie Mickleborough 0421 332 471  
[lemick@internode.on.net](mailto:lemick@internode.on.net)

## HELP WANTED

Queries are published free for members of the Tasmanian Family History Society Inc. (provided their membership number is quoted) and at a cost of \$10.00 per query to non-members.

Special Interest Groups are subject to advertising rates.

Members are entitled to three free entries per year. All additional queries will be published at a cost of \$10.00. Only one query per member per issue will be published unless space permits.

Queries should be limited to 100 words and forwarded to  
**[editors@tasfhs.org](mailto:editors@tasfhs.org)**  
or post to  
The Editor

*Tasmanian Ancestry*,  
PO Box 326 ROSNY PARK  
Tasmania 7018

# NEW MEMBERS' INTERESTS

NAME	PLACE/AREA	TIME	M'SHIP NO.
BANFIELD	Tasmania AUS/ENG	1800s	8130
BEATTIE	England UK		8161
BOOTHROYD John M	Hobart TAS AUS	1820-28	8159
BRADLEY George Frederick	St Luke's MDX ENG	c.1823	8132
BROUGHTON Colin	Tasmania AUS	1900s	8152
BROWN Fanny Maria	Buckland TAS AUS	1857-1918	8136
BROWN John	Sunderland TWR ENG	c.1780	8128
BUCKLAND William	Australia	1800-1900	8157
BRYAN Patrick	Spreyton TAS AUS	c.1820s	8132
BULLOCK George	Andover HAM ENG	c.1823	8132
CAMERON John	Tas/Vic AUS	1848-1860	8154
CARTER	England UK		7201
CAVENAUGH Mary	Hobart TAS AUS	1800-1900	8127
CHAPPELL	England UK		8161
CORBETT James Stanton	QLD/NSW/VIC AUS	Any	8141
COWEN Reg	Tasmania AUS	1900s	8152
DANIELS William	HEF ENG/Hobart Prosser Plains TAS	1812-1887	8127
DANIELS George Henry	Oatlands TAS AUS	1892-1954	8127
DARVIN Mary	Galway IRL	c.1832	8132
DAWKINS David Daniel	Beulah TAS AUS		8144
DONNELLY	IRE/AUS		8139
EDWARDS Frances Jemima	Hobart TAS AUS	1841-1910	8158
FINDLAY	Scotland UK		7201
FINNISS Boyle Travers	82 <sup>nd</sup> Reg South Australia	1807-1893	8126
FREEMAN Olive	Tasmania AUS	1900s	8152
GORRINGE	Tasmania AUS		8159
GOULD Elizabeth	Tasmania AUS	1820-1885	8159
GRADY			8142
HAMMANY	Tasmania/ENG	1800s	8130
HAMMOND	Tasmania/ENG	1800s	8130
HARTNOLL William	Longford TAS AUS	1841-1892	8148
HAYES Minnie Maria	Burnie TAS AUS	1886	8137
HAYES William Philip	Penguin TAS AUS	1884	8137
HEAD Frances Jemima	Hobart TAS AUS	1841-1910	8158
HEAD Mary Ann	Hobart TAS AUS		8158
HOURIGAN Ann	County Clare IRE	c.1800	8162
HOURIGAN Julia/Judith	County Clare IRE	c.1800	8162
HUDSON Eric L	Launceston TAS AUS	1890-1969	8148
HUGHES Eliza	Australia	1800-1900	8157
HYDE George	Kilworth LEI ENG	c.1821	8132
JOHNSTONE	Tasmania/Victoria AUS	1800s	8130
JUDGE Christiana Samuels	Hobart TAS AUS	1836-1919	8135
JUDGE George	Hobart TAS AUS	1868-1949	8135
KAHLER Frederick	Queensland AUS	1881>	8143
KELLY Bernard Joseph	Newcastle NSW AUS	1910-1968	8142
KIMBERLEY Edward	Hobart TAS AUS	1800-1900	8127
KNIGHT Sarah	Middlesex ENG	c.1800	8162
KRAUSE Linda Eugenie	Rainbow VIC AUS	1910-1990	8126
LAMB Eliza	Dublin IRE	1827-1900	8127

# NEW MEMBERS' INTERESTS

<b>NAME</b>	<b>PLACE/AREA</b>	<b>TIME</b>	<b>M'SHIP NO.</b>
LANE Benjamin	Norfolk ENG	c.1766	8128
LANE Isabella Rose	Hobart TAS AUS	c.1940	8128
LANE James Christmas	Great Yarmouth NFK ENG	1797-1885	8128
LANE nee CULLINGHAM Mary	Norfolk ENG	c.1766	8128
LANE nee SPOONER Anne	Great Yarmouth NFK ENG	c.1760	8128
LESTER John Providence	Hobart TAS AUS	1799-1867	8135
LESTER Joseph	Hobart TAS AUS	c.1790-1875	8135
LIVESAY/LIVDSAY James	Manchester ENG	c.1800	8162
LOVEJOY Annie	Queensland AUS	1903	8143
LUCKMAN Reuben	Clarence Plains TAS AUS	1820-1879	8160
MANEY Leslie Charles	Tasmania AUS	1900s	8152
MAYFIELD Ann	Tas/Vic AUS	1848-1986	8154
MILES Hannah	Hobart TAS AUS	1790-1850	8158
MILES Mary Ann	Hobart TAS AUS		8158
MILES Peregrine	Hobart TAS AUS	1790-1850	8158
MYER Oscar William	Vladivostock Russia	1870-1980	8157
NICHOLS Melmer S	Hobart TAS AUS	d.1910	8126
O'GRADY Mary Veronica	Newcastle NSW AUS	1917-1975	8142
PILLING Susan Matilda	Tasmania AUS	1760-1840	8146
PRESSER Carl Friedrich	Germany/VIC AUS	1816-1899	8126
PRINCE Charles A	Tasmania AUS	1896-1953	8148
PRINCE Doris N	Tasmania AUS	1896-1970	8148
PRINCE Harold J A	Launceston TAS AUS	1920-1980	8148
PRINCE Kathleen J	Launceston TAS AUS	1920-1980	8148
RAIT Alexander	Hobart TAS AUS	c.1814-1883	8135
RAIT Christian Stevenson	Hobart TAS AUS	1840-1879	8135
ROCHESTER	VIC/NSW AUS/ENG	1800s	8130
SALTMARSH	Tasmania/ENG	1800s	8130
SHAW Lily May	Sheffield TAS AUS		8144
STANFIELD Daniel	Hobart TAS AUS	1800-1900	8127
WALKER Charles	Green Ponds TAS AUS		8159
WALKER Eliza	Green Ponds TAS AUS		8159
WATERSON Stephen James	Proserpine QLD AUS/USA	Any	8141
WELSH George	Port Sorell TAS AUS	1855-1898	8129
WELSH John / William	Lovely Banks TAS AUS	1822-1832	8129
WELSH Matilda	Port Sorell TAS AUS	1855-1898	8129
WELSH Theopolious	Port Sorell TAS AUS	1861-1881	8129
WELSH Yeddon	Port Sorell TAS AUS	1860-1881	8129
WHITE Emma	Mauritius	1700-1880	8157

All names remain the property of the Tasmanian Family History Society Inc. and will not be sold on in a database

If you find a name in which you are interested, please note the membership number and check the New Members' listing for the appropriate name and address.

Please enclose a stamped self-addressed envelope and don't forget to reply if you receive a SSAE.

# NEW MEMBERS

## A warm welcome is extended to the following new members

7201	MULDER Mrs Elaine	631 Shark Point Rd bees31@bigpond.com	PENNA	TAS	7171
<b>The above member has re-joined after a break and has been allocated her original number</b>					
8126	PRESSER Mr John	29 Radcliff Crescent johnpresser@bigpond.com	ROSETTA	TAS	7010
8127	DANIELS Mr Ross	1/57 Riley Street cruiseship720@aussiebb.com.au	McCRAE	VIC	3938
8128	LANE Mr James	PO Box 342 stictionet@westnet.com.au	MOONAH	TAS	7009
8129	WILSON Mrs Natalie	14 Southampton Avenue	BUTTABA	NSW	2283
8130	HAYS Mrs Gaylene	23 Mountainview Rise honey77bunch@yahoo.com.au	LATROBE	TAS	7307
8131	HOLLOWAY Mr John	17 Scarfe Terrace neryljohn@gmail.com	LINDISFARNE	TAS	7015
8132	GODDARD Miss Anne	74 Greenwood Drive	BUNDOORA	VIC	3083
8133	McCONNELL Dr Robin	615/80 Burwood Rd Longlands	MATAMATA	NZ	3400
8134	HENNESSEY Mrs Leanne	7 Amaro Road	CLAREMONT	TAS	7011
8135	ALLAN Mrs Roslyn	PO Box 300 r.allan@bigpond.com	ST LEONARDS	NSW	2065
8136	BARBER Mr Graeme	1/6 Venice Street enfield21@bigpond.com	HOWRAH	TAS	7018
8137	WALKER Mr Frank	83 Brickport Road	PARK GROVE	TAS	7320
8138	MCARTHUR Mr Malcolm	11 Ellie Court mcarthurfamilyhistory@iinet.net.au	OLD BEACH	TAS	7017
8139	BUTLER Mrs Janet	57 Old Beach Road obproteas@gmail.com	OLD BEACH	TAS	7017
8140	WALKER Mrs Patricia	57 Fairfield Road pmw39@hotmail.com	GEILSTON BAY	TAS	7015
8141	WATERSON Mr Lawrence	20/73 Main Road morrie62@hotmail.com	CLAREMONT	TAS	7011
8142	MIRTL Ms Elizabeth	20/73 Main Road morrie62@hotmail.com	CLAREMONT	TAS	7011
8143	GRANGER Mrs Beryl	U1 / 53 Fenton Street berylgranger34@gmail.com	LATROBE	TAS	7307
8144	GABY Mrs Pauleen	33 James Road paulsdream101@gmail.com	ACACIA HILLS	TAS	7306
8145	HAINES Mrs Gwenyth	125 Mt Hicks Road gandghaines@gmail.com	WYNYARD	TAS	7325
8146	SKINNER Mrs Stephanie	Unit 2 112 Parker Sreet	DEVONPORT	TAS	7310
8147	RODEN Mr Jamie	U1/11 Dalton Court jamieroden@hotmail.com	MOWBRAY	TAS	7248
8148	AVERY Mrs Sheridan (Sherry)	PO Box 1197 sheridanprince53@gmail.com	GRAVELLY BEACH	TAS	7276
8149	BARKER Mr Warren	138 Charles Street	SQUEAKING POINT	TAS	7307
8150	DUGGAN Mr James	17 Honeywood Drive ancestralressertas@iinet.net.au	SANDFORD	TAS	7020
8151	EDWARDS Ms Christine	Not for publication			
8152	BROUGHTON Mr Darin	PO Box 220 darin.broughton@gmail.com	NORTH HOBART	TAS	7002

## NEW MEMBERS

### A warm welcome is extended to the following new members

8153	FLETT Mrs Teresa	145 Allunga Road teresamflett@gmail.com	CHIGWELL	TAS	7011
8154	WILLIAMS Mrs Janet	10 Guntzler Court janw01@bigpond.com	TRARALGON	VIC	3844
8155	HILDER Mrs Jenny	138 Charles Street warrenbarker3@gmail.com	SQUEAKING POINT	TAS	7307
8156	McCARTHY Ms Judith	7 Freeland Crescent judihelen001@yahoo.com.au	RIVERSIDE	TAS	7250
8157	TAYLOR Ms Elizabeth	PO Box 34 elitzay1@bigpond.net.au	LAUNCESTON	TAS	7250
8158	ROBERTS Ms Claire	1/11 Northwood Street cmirandaroberts@icloud.com	RINGWOOD EAST	VIC	3135
8159	CHASTON Ms Susan	66 Lincoln Street sueandshayne@hotmail.com	LINDISFARNE	TAS	7015
8160	LUCKMAN Mr Gregory	97 Norma Street luckman@tassie.net.au	HOWRAH	TAS	7018
8161	CHAPPELL Mr Frank	119 Bradshaw Street elantra@mediatwo.com.au	LATROBE	TAS	7307
8162	JOHNSON Sandra	10 Hillcrest Lane sassjohnson@bigpond.com	AVONDALE HEIGHTS	VIC	3034

### Privacy Statement

Unless specifically denied by members when joining the Society, or upon renewing their membership, contact details and member's interests may be published in *Tasmanian Ancestry* and other publications of the Society.

A copy of the 'Privacy Policy' of the Society is available on request at Branch Libraries or from State or Branch Secretaries.

The 'Privacy Policy' document sets out the obligations of the Society in compliance with the Privacy Act of 1988 and the amendments to that Act.

# STONE SMITH

## MONUMENTAL & GENERAL STONEMASONRY

### WARREN SMITH

0421 767 655 | [pitchandpunch@gmail.com](mailto:pitchandpunch@gmail.com) | [www.stonesmith.com.au](http://www.stonesmith.com.au)

# VOICES FROM THE ORPHAN SCHOOLS

## REMEMBERING THE FORGOTTEN CHILDREN

Dianne Snowden (Member 910)

**N**EARLY 6000 children passed through the doors of the Orphan Schools in New Town. Of this number, approximately 2000 arrived in Van Diemens Land with a convict mother. Just over 45 Irish boys arrived with a convict father in the early 1840s. At least 44 Aboriginal children were removed from Flinders Island and Oyster Cove and placed in the Orphan Schools. Their story is yet to be told.

The Orphan School buildings at New Town sit at the end of the tree-lined St Johns Avenue, on either side of St Johns Church. Few people are aware of the history or significance of the site, although they may know of St Johns Park Hospital which closed in 1994.

The buildings form the nucleus of the area now known as St Johns Park Precinct, which is Crown Land largely under the control of the Department of Health. The precinct has considerable historical and heritage significance, not only for the nineteenth and twentieth-century architectural styles represented in its buildings but also for its continuous association with the provision of welfare services and health care for nearly 195 years. The Orphan Schools are one of Australia's oldest institutions for the care of children. The site is listed on the Tasmanian Heritage Register.

The Orphan Schools were one institution in two parts, the Female Orphan School and the Male Orphan School. Initially, the Orphan Schools were housed in temporary accommodation: the Female Orphan School was located in Davey Street and the Male Orphan School on

another New Town site. These temporary sites were quickly overcrowded, and the New Town site was selected as a replacement.

From 1828, the institution was referred to as the Kings Orphan Schools, after George IV, and then William IV. From 1837, when Queen Victoria came to the throne, it was known as the Queens Orphan Schools. From 1861, it was known as the Queen's Asylum for Destitute Children.

The term 'orphan' was applied loosely and did not mean a child who had lost both parents, as we would use the term today.

The Orphan School buildings at New Town, built in the early 1830s, are a central and integral part of St Johns Park Precinct. The Kings Orphan Schools, designed by John Lee ARCHER, were the first purpose-built orphan institutional buildings in Tasmania. An Infant Orphan School, constructed in 1862 on a rise behind the earlier building, was used from 1874 to house pauper women from the Cascades Depot in South Hobart, as the Female Division of the New Town Charitable Institution. Today this building forms part of the Southern Cross Care Rosary Gardens complex.

In 1879, the Orphan Schools closed, and the buildings were used for the Male Division of the New Town Charitable Institution (for invalids, the destitute and the aged poor). The institution was later known as St Johns Park Hospital.



The Rowan Gillespie sculptures

Many of the buildings, including the Orphan Schools, are extant. There is, however, no onsite mention of the original purpose of these buildings, no historical context. Nor are the thousands of children who lived behind the stone walls remembered in any way onsite. Only those children who died in care are recognised: the memorial garden established by the Friends of the Orphan Schools in 2012 and adjacent to the unmarked burial ground, records the name of each child who died in care. There are 409 names.

In May 2018, an undertaking to remember the Orphan School children was established as part of the community project, *From the Shadows*. This project follows on from the hugely successful *Footsteps towards Freedom* installation of female convict statues on the Hobart waterfront.

The high-quality bronze statues, created by internationally renowned Irish sculptor, Rowan GILLESPIE for *From the Shadows*, include two female convicts for the World Heritage Cascades Female Factory in South Hobart and two of children, a boy and a girl, for the state Heritage-listed Orphan Schools in New Town.

Recent re-evaluation of British monument culture has been a significant part of contemporary social and political history. Importantly, the *From the Shadows* statues are not a celebration of British colonialism but a poignant, and distressing, reminder of the invisibility of children in history.

Rowan's approach to the orphan statues has been one of storytelling, remembering and healing. The story of the removal of children from their convict mothers, some very young, has informed his work. Children have always been part

of the convict story, if not always a visible one. Rowan brings the history of the Orphan School children to the foreground. This is the rationale for the location of the statues at the end of St Johns Avenue and in front of the Church: the children are no longer 'out of sight, out of mind'. Historically, too, this is the way that children were brought to the Orphan School.

The statues serve not only as a reminder of the past but also of the importance of not repeating history's mistakes. Rowan's statues represent those innocent and forgotten children who, for the most part, were the victims of British colonialism. These children, voiceless and vulnerable, had done no wrong but were incarcerated in a prison-like institution, taken from their families, some never to be reunited.

Rowan argues that the statues of politicians, generals and bishops and other prominent historical figures (predominantly white and male) have been created larger than life on pedestals. Raising the children on a pedestal gives them a long-denied prominence. As already noted, there is nothing on the St John's site at New Town which tells the story of the Orphan School children. There is no public access to the buildings.

The placement of the children together but apart reflects the separation of siblings within the institution. The boy went into the Male Orphan School (North Wing) and the girl into the Female Orphan School (South Wing).

Historical accuracy informs Rowan's narrative and shapes his work. Rowan's models are descendants of orphan school children, the same age as their ancestors were when they were taken from their mother and incarcerated in the bleak institution. (His convict women statues are also modelled on the descendants of

convict women). Their story is a true one. The children arrived on a convict ship from Ireland with their mother and were taken from her; the girl was 3 and the boy was 10. Their mother was murdered in Hobart Town, beaten to death. The family was fragmented but the boy and girl were eventually reunited in another colony. The statues reflect both heartbreak and resilience. The boy is vulnerable, his tightly clenched fists suggest both defiance and determination. The girl displays sheer terror. The statues are evocative and challenging, and are designed to make those viewing them ask questions: who are these children? Why are they here?

The installation of the statues at the end of St Johns Avenue and their placement on pedestals represent an intrinsic part of Rowan's narrative and recognises all children incarcerated in the institution. The statues reflect the emergence of the stories of the orphan school children (and convict women) from the shadows of the past.

The statues were to be installed and unveiled in March 2020, but this event was postponed and will now take place in 2021. ◀

For more information about  
*From the Shadows Inc.*, see  
<https://fromtheshadows.org.au/>

For more information about the  
Orphan Schools, see  
<https://www.orphanschool.org.au/>  
and Dianne Snowden,

*Voices from the Orphan School: The  
Children's Voices*, Hobart, 2018.

## RECENT PUBLICATIONS

### Hobart Branch UNDERTAKERS OF HOBART

Vol. II



### Index to Alex Clark & Son Funeral Records

- Part 1 Sep 1885 – Nov 1907
- Part 2 Nov 1907 – Dec 1920
- Part 3 Jan 1921 – Dec 1930
- Part 4 Dec 1931 – Dec 1943
- Part 5 Dec 1943 – May 1961

Alex Clark Funeral Records often include name of spouse and/or parents, place of birth, cause of death and cemetery where buried or ashes interred.

**N.B.** All parts of Volume II are now available for \$25.00 each plus p. & p., including Part 1 (1885–1907) which is reduced from \$40.00, a saving of \$15.00.

All members are entitled to 10% discount.

For a quote on p. & p. write to  
TFHS Inc. Hobart Branch  
PO Box 326 ROSNY PARK  
TASMANIA 7018  
or  
email [library@hobart.tasfhs.org](mailto:library@hobart.tasfhs.org)  
or phone (03) 6245 9351

# WILLIAM 'BURLY BILL' LUCAS

(1852–1904)

John Fripp (Member 6854)

**W**ILLIAM LUCAS was the son of James Lucas and Isabella MATTHEWS. He was born on the 11 March 1852 in New Town, Tasmania, the second last of at least eleven children born to James and Isabella.

William's father died in 1862 when William was only ten. Like his elder siblings before him, he was soon fending for himself. The family home was a mere two-roomed cottage at the corner of Albert Road and Main Road, New Town, a near northern suburb of Hobart.

Despite a couple of newspaper reports recording a young lad of William's name and age getting into mischief, firstly in Hobart and not too much later in Launceston we lose track of him until age twenty-one. Having impregnated the fifteen-year-old daughter of the local Police Sergeant, William married Jane QUINN in Fingal, Tasmania in 1873. He recorded his occupation as miner.

In his retrospective record, *The Centenary of Portland (North-Eastern Tasmania) 1834 to 1934*, of his time in the north-east of Tasmania and specific-ally as a resident and councillor of St Helens, Councillor P W STEEL, who

in his early life was in close touch with the oldest residents, and from them glean-ed a wealth of information relating to the early history of the district ... Since 1880 he has been prominently engaged in almost every interest associated with the district's activities.

The following are quotes from this document. With regard to the township of Weldborough (formerly Thomas' Plains)

During the early period the place fairly boomed, and amongst the earliest arrivals were: ... J. Quinn (policeman), W. Gould, W. Lucas (the best built man that ever appeared in Portland, his proportions being perfect) ...<sup>1</sup>

Bill Lucas was the champion boxer of all time, also a good all round sport. A model of a man in physique, he was never known to start a quarrel, but upon the other hand was a noted peacemaker at all public gatherings.<sup>2</sup>

William and Jane's daughter, Isabella Jane Lucas, was born in Fingal, before the growing family moved to George Town near the mouth of the Tamar. After the arrival of two more children William suffered a case of wanderlust and ended up being apprehended for abandoning Jane and the children. He dutifully returned to the family, then living in St Helens and under the watchful eye of (later to be Sub-inspector of Police) John Quinn. Another two children were born. Unfortunately Jane's little sister, Catherine was also on the scene and in 1886 she and William, much to the consternation of the rest of the Quinn family, produced another little Lucas.

William and Catherine, with youngster in tow, sensed it might be a good idea to find a new home in a new state. They re-appear in the record living adjacent to Prospect Reservoir to the west of Sydney, and soon

---

<sup>1</sup> P W Steel, *The Centenary of Portland (North Eastern Tasmania) 1834 to 1934*, p. 26

<sup>2</sup> *ibid*, from the section on axemen and athletes, p. 32

thereafter continue the conception and delivery of more little Lucases. A total of six surviving (Catherine) Lucas offspring are produced.

William and Jane never formally divorced and it appears he took the marriage certificate to his new abode, as the births of their three male offspring were registered with NSW BDM, recording Jane Lucas as the mother. The first of William and Catherine's offspring was recorded in the official Tasmanian Register in a letter from Catherine while in Saltwater River, before heading north to NSW. The two NSW female births were never officially registered. William, in 1897 and for whatever reason, soon after his final contribution to the growing NSW population decided to follow the exodus to the Western Australian Goldfields. As soon as he was off the scene Catherine had all her children baptised into the Catholic Church in Granville, NSW, thereby creating a record of sorts. For the baptismal record Catherine stated her name as Catherine Quinn. The Lucases were Anglican and the Quinns were Irish Catholic. The catholic registration was more than likely one in the eye for William.

William settled in Nemesis Street, Kanoona, WA and provided blacksmithing services to the mining community there. On 12 April 1904, while a patient at the White Feather Hospital, William Lucas died a most unpleasant death, of valvular heart disease and stricture of the urethra causing uraemia, more than likely a prostate problem. For his forthcoming death certificate William had declined to provide details of his remarkable marital and paternal achievements.

His obituary reads:

Death of Mr Wm. Lucas.—After lingering for fully three years, Mr. William

Lucas died at the White Feather Hospital on Tuesday evening. Deceased, who was about 55 years of age, was one of the fields' pioneers. It was only his ultra-robust constitution that kept him alive so long, as his complaint, which was a form of diabetes, was exceedingly acute. The funeral, which took place yesterday afternoon, was largely attended, and the cortege included several Tasmanians, who were acquainted with "Burly Bill" (his sobriquet in Hobart) for many years.<sup>3</sup>

Catherine died in Sydney in 1919 and is buried in Rookwood Cemetery.

For seven or eight years Jane cohabited with William GOULD, one of William's friends from New Town, who had accompanied him to the tin-mining town of Weldborough. Jane and William (II) also continued procreating and in 1896, once the statutory seven years of William's desertion had elapsed, Jane and William Gould married and continued producing offspring into the late 1890s. Jane died in 1932 and is buried in the General Cemetery at Weldborough. ◀

John Fripp is the great grandson of William Lucas

---

<sup>3</sup> *Kalgoorlie Miner*, 14 April 1904

# SIR JOHN EARDLEY EARDLEY-WILMOT: A WORTHY APPOINTMENT?

Leonie Mickleborough (Member 20)

**I**N 1846 EARDLEY-WILMOT was recalled from his position of Lieutenant-Governor of Van Diemen's Land by Secretary of State William GLADSTONE after serving only three years of what should have been a six-year appointment. He was a justice-of-the-peace, a magistrate, Chairman of the Quarter Sessions at Warwickshire and a member of parliament. He had also been active in the establishment of a county asylum where youths who had been found guilty of criminal activities received education. On paper, with such experience, he looked to be the ideal appointment to administer a penal colony. The question has arisen, as to whether or not Sir John Eardley Eardley-Wilmot was worthy of being appointed Lieutenant-Governor of Van Diemen's Land in the first place.



Sir John Eardley Eardley-Wilmot

## BRIEF BACKGROUND

John Eardley-Eardley-Wilmot was born on 21 February 1783 in London, son of John Wilmot Eardley-Wilmot (1750-1815) and Francis (née SAINTHILL), a family where there had been an involvement in law and parliament for several generations. In keeping with his background, from the age of 11 he was sent to Harrow, finished school when he was 16 and started at Trinity Hall, a college at Cambridge University. He matriculated when he was 17, and two years later was admitted to Lincoln's Inn as an apprentice-at-law, and in 1806 at the age of 23 he was a barrister.<sup>1</sup>

In 1808 Eardley-Wilmot married Elizabeth Emma PARRY (died 1818), the daughter of a doctor, and they had eight children: Elizabeth Emma (1809-?); John Eardley (1810-92); Frederick Marow (1812-77); Edward Revell (1814-99); Arthur Parry (1815-86); Henry Robert (1816-52; Augustus Hillier (twin) (1818-92) and Selina Matilda Caroline (1818-1902). The navigator and Arctic explorer Admiral Sir William Parry was one of her brothers, so as well as born into a prominent family Eardley-Wilmot also married into one. After his marriage he resigned from the Bar and moved to reside at Berkswell Hall in Warwickshire and was appointed both a magistrate and a sheriff for Warwickshire. In 1821 he was created a Baronet by His Majesty King George IV as a reward for 'the pub-

<sup>1</sup> Venn, *Aumini Cantabrigensi*, p. 514; D M Walker, *The Oxford Companion to Law* (Oxford, 1990), p. 621

lic services of his paternal grandfather'. His father and grandfather had both 'refused to accept any mark of distinction', his grandfather wanting to join the church, but because of family pressure, he studied law instead.<sup>2</sup>

Eardley-Wilmot's wife Elizabeth died in 1818 after giving birth to twins, their seventh and eighth children, and just seventeen months later he married Eliza CHESTER, daughter of Sir Robert Chester MD who at the time was Master of Ceremonies to King George III. This second marriage produced five children: Robert (died as an infant); Eliza Harriott (died after 1846); Robert Charles Chester (1822–1910), Charles Octavius, (1824–65) and Dulcibella Cecilia (c.1827–38).<sup>3</sup>

### PATRONAGE

Patronage was an influential factor in his life, and it seems certain that his appointment to Van Diemen's Land was influenced by his patrons. Those who nominated him as a fellow of the Royal Society, Linnaean Society and the Society of Antiquaries were distinguished and titled men from the upper-class of British society. The most renowned was William HERSCHEL who discovered the planet Uranus, and that it rotates in a retrograde direction. Herschel also discovered two satellites of Venus, two of Saturn, infrared radiation, and was a court astronomer

to the Royal family. Eardley-Wilmot's other patrons included solicitors, members of parliament, barristers, cabinet secretaries and a future Prime Minister. Physicians were also prominent, including two physicians to George III, Samuel Foart SIMMONS and Henry Revell REYNOLDS and William George MATON who was a physician to the infant Queen Victoria.<sup>4</sup>

### MAGISTRATE

In 1815 Eardley-Wilmot's appointment as a justice-of-the-peace qualified him to chair the Warwickshire Quarter Sessions and was where he took every opportunity to express his opinion on matters which concerned him.<sup>5</sup> In the 1820s various approaches to deal with juvenile offenders were being tried, and Eardley-Wilmot entered the debate. As well as speaking in court, he published letters (up to 15 pages long), the first in 1820, addressed to the *Magistrates of Warwickshire* about the increase in crime in the county.<sup>6</sup> He followed this with a second letter which dealt with juvenile delinquency and he wrote further long letters in 1827 and 1828, which he addressed to magistrates in England suggesting solutions to decrease the number of juvenile criminals.<sup>7</sup>

---

<sup>2</sup> TA NS988/1 Leamington Courier 12 June 1847; The Annual Register, 1847 (London, 1848) p. 204

<sup>3</sup> *Burke's Peerage Baronetage and Knightage* Vol.1 (Delaware, 2003), pp. 1259–62; *The Times* 2 May 1829, 18 June 1819; *The Gentleman Magazine Library Compendium 1731–1868*, pp. 32–33; G. Tyack, *Warwickshire County Houses* (Sussex, 1994), pp.187, 227; Sir L. Stephen and Sir S. Lee (eds.) *Dictionary of National Biography: From the Earliest Times to 1900* (DNB) London, 1937–38 vol. XXI p. 342,

---

<sup>4</sup> RS Archives EC/1812/06

<sup>5</sup> Johnson, 'An analysis of the penal experiences and social outcomes of Salford Hundred convicts transported from Britain to Van Diemen's Land between 1828 and 1837', p. 54

<sup>6</sup> *British Museum General Catalogue of Printed Books to 1955 Volume 27*, p. 228

<sup>7</sup> John Eardley Eardley-Wilmot, *A second letter to the Magistrates of Warwickshire, on the increase of crimes in general, But more particularly of Juvenile Delinquency: With a few Observations on the Causes and Remedies of this Increasing Evil*, by John Eardley Eardley-Wilmot Esq. one of His Majesty's Justices of the

He saw the main causes of juvenile crime as ignorance and early imprisonment which led to bad company and bad example. Another was the 'great neglect' of parents who allowed their children to 'go about the town'. To Eardley-Wilmot the remedy was simple—proper parental control and an 'observance of the Sabbath'. He was determined to prevent youths appearing in criminal courts which often led to prison because once imprisoned they left prison 'fully instructed in all the mysteries of crime'.<sup>8</sup>

In 1827 he adopted a plan he found successful in dealing with juveniles who appeared before him several times and those who recommitted the same day they were discharged. He ordered boys aged between 9 and 14 years-old to be flogged and discharged, instead of being imprisoned, and told them if they appeared before him again they would probably be transported, but the magistrates were aware that transportation wasn't seen as a punishment because the boys had heard good reports of the climate and country in Australia. Despite his recommendation of whipping, boys aged between 8 and 12 were usually sent to an asylum where they received training.<sup>9</sup>

As chairman of the Quarter Sessions he tried offences for which the maximum sentence was seven years' transportation. The announcement of sentences did not always go smoothly for those involved.

---

*Peace for the County of Warwick; A Letter to the Magistrates of England on the Increase of crime; and an efficient Remedy suggested for their consideration; Second Edition (London); The Times 8 February 1828.*

<sup>8</sup> Eardley-Wilmot, *A second letter to the Magistrates of Warwickshire* (1820), p. 4–6, 9–10

<sup>9</sup> *BPP: Police of the Metropolis 1828*, pp. 39–40, 45

On one occasion when five juveniles were found guilty of robbery, Eardley-Wilmot sentenced one to transportation for life, while the other four were each ordered to be transported for fourteen years. As soon as the transportation sentence was announced, the prisoners were outraged. One prisoner boxed with his fists towards Eardley-Wilmot while another grabbed a hob-nailed boot, which had been evidence in the case, and hurled it at the Eardley-Wilmot's head. He bobbed down just in time as the boot went flying past.<sup>10</sup>

In 1831 three males aged between 13 and 18 were found guilty of stealing five tame rabbits. Two of the boys, 13-year-old Samuel JAMES and 18-year-old John BAKER had previous convictions and were sentenced to 14 years' transportation, while the third, Benjamin RYLAND who had no previous conviction, was sentenced to six months in the House of Correction. In another case, twenty-year-old William PERKS was convicted of stealing a pig's head from a butcher. According to Perks, a dog stole the head, but as the jury were unable to find any marks of a dog's teeth on the head, Perks was sentenced to one month with a private whipping on one of his last three prison days.<sup>11</sup>

Warwickshire was one of six counties responsible for the trial of 39 per cent of prisoners, and from where the magistrates ordered transportation to Australia of large numbers of convicts aged younger than 19. Between 1818 and 1828 Eardley-Wilmot tried about 2500 criminal cases at least half of whom were aged between 9

---

<sup>10</sup> *House of Commons Parliamentary Papers* Microfiche 30. 40 Vol. VI, p. 448–49

<sup>11</sup> *Leamington Spa Courier*, 8 January 1831

and 20, some having been tried four times.<sup>12</sup>

### WARWICK COUNTY ASYLUM

County magistrates, including Eardley-Wilmot, were so convinced they could prevent juvenile crime by sending the boys to an asylum where they would be taught trades and receive religious instruction that they donated money to have it built. The Warwick County Asylum which opened in 1818 in the village of Stretton-on-Dunsmore housed about 15 boys.<sup>13</sup> The local Vicar was secretary and the institution was run by a Master whose wife was Matron. Ongoing funding came from contributions and any profits from the boys' work on the small property. The aim was to reform the boys rather than subject them to prison. However, it wasn't always successful because of those discharged in the first ten years about 25 per cent re-appeared in court.<sup>14</sup>

### HOUSE OF COMMONS

In 1832 Eardley-Wilmot was elected to the House of Commons as a Tory member for Warwickshire North. In the House he presented many petitions and spoke about crime, juveniles, and the distress caused on families by the agricultural depression. He also spoke about pressures from taxation and how it was impossible for English manufacturers to compete with foreign rivals.<sup>15</sup>

The impact of slavery was also a concern. Despite Britain's earlier efforts to suppress the slave trade, it continued, and one of his achievements in parliament was in May 1838 when his resolution for the 'immediate termination of Negro apprenticeship' passed in the House of Commons. Although the British Parliament had given a promised £20,000,000 to the West Indian proprietors, he told the House that the proprietors had not performed their part of the contract and he called on the House to make the Negro slaves free.<sup>16</sup>

Meanwhile, while Eardley-Wilmot was actively pursuing his beliefs in England, in Van Diemen's Land Lieutenant-Governor Sir John FRANKLIN had served six years—the usual term for a colonial governor. In October 1842 Lord STANLEY, the Secretary of State described Van Diemen's Land as being in 'some confusion' owing to Franklin's mismanagement and Stanley wanted a 'strong & steady hand to put it in order again'.<sup>17</sup>

About two months later, undecided who to select as Franklin's replacement, he wrote to Prime Minister Sir Robert PEEL stating that he wanted a 'sensible man' for the position. Stanley said he knew of a 'plausible country gentleman', Sir Eardley-Wilmot, who would jump at it, but Stanley reminded Peel that they both knew

---

<sup>12</sup> *House of Commons Parliamentary Papers* Microfiche 30.40 Vol. VI, p. 445–47

<sup>13</sup> *House of Commons Parliamentary Papers* Microfiche 30.40 Vol. VI, p. 445

<sup>14</sup> Eardley-Wilmot, *A Letter to the Magistrates of England on the Increase of crime; and an efficient Remedy suggested for their consideration*, p. 12. *Hansard Third Series XLII* (1838) pp. 609–10.

<sup>15</sup> *Hansard's Parliamentary Debates; Third Series Volume XXIII* pp. 1273–74

---

<sup>16</sup> Temperley, *British Antislavery*, p. 40; *The Times*, 23 May 1838

<sup>17</sup> *The Papers of the Prime Ministers of Great Britain, Series Two. The Papers of Sir Robert Peel, Correspondence with Lord Stanley (Secretary for the Colonies); Lord Stanley 'Private' despatch, 12 October 1842 to PM Sir Robert Peel.*

that Eardley-Wilmot was ‘a muddle brained blockhead’.<sup>18</sup>

‘Muddle brained blockhead’ or not, about three months later, in February 1843, Stanley appointed the 60-year-old magistrate as the next Lieutenant-Governor of Van Diemen’s Land.<sup>19</sup>

Notice of his appointment which appeared in the newspapers, was met with mixed responses.

*The Times* thought his appointment was ‘strange’, ‘unexpected’ and ‘unaccountable’, and if Sir Charles METCALFE’s appointment as Governor-General of Canada was a ‘good one’ then Eardley-Wilmot’s was a ‘bad one; if the former is the best, the latter is the worst’. According to the paper, the only thing Eardley-Wilmot had done was to introduce a bill for the summary conviction of little boys and girls before two Justices of the Peace!<sup>20</sup>

To the *Morning Herald* it was surprising that Eardley-Wilmot ‘should have thought it worth his acceptance’. The article then described him as ‘amiable and excellent’ and a ‘conscientious gentleman’ whose experience had given him ‘great insight into the human character’.<sup>21</sup>

Despite condemnation from *The Times*, in 1830 when Eardley-Wilmot was elected Chairman of the Quarter Sessions the Warwickshire press had reported positively. To the *Leamington Spa Courier*, having presided in the second court as Deputy Chairman and then Chairman there was

no man better qualified to competently fulfill the position. As a county magistrate he had studied the laws of the county as well as having a long and practical contact with their administration.<sup>22</sup>

The salary attached to the position might have been as a factor in Eardley-Wilmot’s acceptance. In March 1846 three years into his administration, he explained that he had ‘separated’ himself from his wife and family to commence a ‘difficult and irksome office in another hemisphere’. At the time he calculated that six years of ‘sufficient income would remove’ his ‘difficulties’.<sup>23</sup> Whatever the situation, Lady Eardley-Wilmot did not travel with her husband. Two of their sons and one of Eardley-Wilmot’s from his first marriage joined him in Van Diemen’s Land and were appointed to official positions. All three sons married sisters, the daughters of the banker John DUNN. Robert Charles Chester married Jeanie Louisa Stewart, Charles Octavius married Grace Sophia and then Elizabeth Brooke, and Augustus Hiller married Matilda Jessie.

Eardley-Wilmot’s administration ended abruptly in 1846 when he was dismissed by Secretary of State William Ewart Gladstone, having received notice of this dismissal in two of Gladstone’s communications, both dated 30 April 1846, one official (public) dispatch, the other a ‘Secret’ letter, both giving only twenty days’ notice of the arrival of ‘an administrator’.<sup>24</sup>

---

<sup>18</sup> *The Papers of the Prime Ministers of Great Britain, Series Two. The Papers of Sir Robert Peel, Correspondence with Lord Stanley (Secretary for the Colonies);* pp. 315–16

<sup>19</sup> *The Times* 27 February 1843

<sup>20</sup> *The Times* 1 March 1843

<sup>21</sup> *Morning Herald* April 1843

---

<sup>22</sup> *Leamington Spa Courier* 16 January 1830

<sup>23</sup> *Hansard’s Parliamentary Debates; Third Series Volume XCII*, pp. 195–96

<sup>24</sup> CO280/196 (AJCP 545) Gladstone to Eardley-Wilmot No. 104 30 April 1846, pp. 554–65

## RECALL

It is difficult to know whether the Secretary of State W.G. Gladstone was justified in recalling Eardley-Wilmot in 1846. He had arrived at the River Derwent at a difficult period in the history of the colony where probation was the convict system in use, assignment having been replaced in 1842. On his arrival he found the colony in the grip of a depression which in the early 1840s affected all Australia. The Treasury empty, the revenue rapidly diminishing and the settlers either bankrupt or near to it. Agricultural produce was not paying the cost of production, and there was much un-employment.<sup>25</sup>

During the early stages of the probation system convicts remained in gangs, preferably employed to defray their upkeep; later they entered the labour market as wage-earners. The settled colonists had lost their cheap assigned labour and disliked the new system. In 1840 an Order in Council stopped the transportation of convicts to New South Wales while continuing to send them to Norfolk Island and Van Diemen's Land. Up to 5000 convicts were being sent to Van Diemen's Land each year, and these needed employing and housing.

The reprimands Eardley-Wilmot received from the Colonial Office suggest that his skills as an administrator were lacking. Despite this, it must be remembered there were constant demands attached to the position of being the personal represent-

ative of Britain in a colony 12,000 miles away from Britain. The time taken to receive an answer from the Colonial Office could have been up to 12 months after sending a despatch, which meant that colonial governors was often required to make decisions before receiving directions from Britain.

When considering Eardley-Wilmot's wide range of experience much of which required a conciliatory approach to handling people in varying situations, he appears to have been well-qualified for the position, despite which he had no knowledge of colonial affairs. Only by being appointed to such a position could he have gained the necessary qualifications.

If press reports are indicative of Eardley-Wilmot's well-being, it can be assumed he was healthy until June 1845 when he suffered a 'minor illness'. Though 'naturally hale and hearty', the *Colonial Times* admitted that, to a 'man of his years', the demands of governing the colony must be 'laborious'.<sup>26</sup>

According to the *Cornwall Chronicle* two years later, Eardley-Wilmot was 'in a very critical condition', and there were indications of infirmity, from which he was 'slowly, but certainly improving'.<sup>27</sup> Three days later, although suffering 'severely', he was 'progressively improving', but 'mental disease had too deeply affected the corporeal frame', and later that day 'an evident change took place'. The following day his medical attendants diagnosed a 'mortal attack' of

Peritonitis, or inflammation of the Peritonaeum, the membrane, by which all the viscera are surrounded, and with

---

<sup>25</sup> VDL duplicate despatches Eardley-Wilmot No. 164, 26 September 1846; Kathleen Fitzpatrick, Mr Gladstone and the Governor: The Recall of Sir John Eardley-Wilmot from Van Diemen's Land, 1846', *Historical Studies Australia and New Zealand*, Vol. 1, April 1940–October 1941, p. 40

---

<sup>26</sup> *Colonial Times* 21 June 1845

<sup>27</sup> *Cornwall Chronicle* 23 January 1847; *The Colonial Times*, 29 January 1847

which the whole cavity of the abdomen is lined.<sup>28</sup>

Previous ‘sufferings’ had ‘considerably reduced’ him—‘sensible to the last’, he ‘gradually declined and died without a struggle’ soon after eleven o’clock on 3 February 1847 at his private secretary’s residence in Macquarie Street. Death ‘relieved this sacrificed victim’ who was ‘liberated from the mental sufferings his assassins occasioned him by DEATH’.<sup>29</sup> To the *Colonial Times*, Eardley-Wilmot died ‘literally, as did Napoleon, from mental disease and starvation’, from ‘complete exhaustion of the frame—in customary phraseology, a decay of nature’.<sup>30</sup>

In his Will, dated 2 July 1846, Eardley-Wilmot requested to be ‘buried at such place and in such manner so that such my burial be as private as possible’.<sup>31</sup> This did not happen.

In respect, shops and offices closed on the day of the public funeral at St Davids Church. Among the mourners were Eardley-Wilmot’s sons Augustus (Henry); Robert (Chester) and Charles, the interim administrator Charles LaTROBE and the new Lieutenant-Governor, Captain (later Sir) William DENISON.

Eardley-Wilmot had given instructions from his deathbed that the heads of churches should march together at his funeral. Except for the ministering priest the clergy of all denominations would walk in their several classes, in one body, and the representatives of the three endowed churches, the Archdeacon, the

Moderator and the Vicar-General would walk abreast during the procession to St Davids Burial Ground. Reflecting the uneasy truce between the Catholics and the Church of England, this instruction was not upheld. The Catholic priests, by ‘rapid evolution, shot ahead of the procession, nearly ousting the Anglicans’.<sup>32</sup>

Eardley-Wilmot’s body was placed in a coffin ‘lined with white silk, and stuffed’ and then in a ‘heavy lead’ coffin which was placed in another coffin, covered with ‘crimson silk velvet and richly mounted’ with a centre plate inscribed the same as the plate on the lead coffin.

**SIR JOHN EARDLEY EARDLEY-  
WILMOT, BARONET,  
Born in 1783; died February 3, 1847,  
Aged 64 years**

These three caskets were put in a ‘heavy packing case’ which was lowered to the floor of the vault of the ‘ordinary depth of six feet’ and ‘floored and walled with brick-work’. At the conclusion of the graveside ceremony the lid of the packing case was lowered, and an undertaker’s assistant ‘went down and nailed it fast’.<sup>33</sup>

Eardley-Wilmot’s ‘mortal remains’ were to be removed from their ‘temporary resting place’ and conveyed to England in the packing case ‘by his son Major Wilmot’ in accordance with Eardley-Wilmot’s wish to be ‘reverently placed in the mausoleum of his ancestors’ (at St John the Baptist, Berkswell).<sup>34</sup> His wish

---

<sup>28</sup> *Colonial Times* 16 February 1847

<sup>29</sup> *Cornwall Chronicle* 6 February 1847; *Colonial Times*, 5 February 1847

<sup>30</sup> *Colonial Times* 16 February 1847, 6 February 1847

<sup>31</sup> TA AD960/2 Will No. 317, p. 333 (2 July 1846)

---

<sup>32</sup> West, *The History of Tasmania*, p. 198; *Britannia and Trades Advocate*, 11 February 1847; *Hobart Town Courier* 13 February 1847

<sup>33</sup> *Hobart Town Courier* 13 February 1847.

<sup>34</sup> *Hobart Town Courier* 6, 13 February 1847; *The Times* 3 June 1847; *Colonial Times*, 17 August 1847

was not granted, and three years later, ‘by public subscription’, a monument, and a memorial plaque was erected inside St John the Baptist Church, Warwickshire.

After the news of Eardley-Wilmot’s death reached England on 3 June 1847, his dismissal received further prominence. Sir Robert PEEL paid the ‘highest compliment’ to his friend’s parliamentary conduct and to his ‘peculiar qualifications’ to govern the convict colony. The ‘charges of immorality’ in his private life ‘were entirely without foundation’ and, ‘in every respect, false and slanderous’. Parliament completely exonerated him from what they called the ‘cowardly and malicious charges’ that had been levelled at him.<sup>35</sup> Perhaps this parliamentary exoneration meant that Eardley-Wilmot’s appointment to Van Diemen’s Land had, after all been seen to be worthy.

Therefore, ‘muddle brained blockhead’ or not, Eardley-Wilmot’s appointment was probably worthy, but given the situation in the colony at the time, any appointee would have found the same problems and may have ended up being condemned the same. ◀

Image Reference for Sir John Eardley Eardley-Wilmot p. 227

Manning Clark, *A History of Australia III. The Beginning of an Australian Civilization 1824–1851* (Carlton, 1991), between pp. 304–05  
Copy of portrait by an unknown artist, in ‘private possession’.



Eardley-Wilmot’s Memorial  
St Davids Park, Hobart  
Photograph Leonie Mickleborough

<sup>35</sup> *The Era* (London) 13 June 1847; *The Aberdeen Journal*, 16 June 1847; *Morning Chronicle*, 5 June 1847; *Hampshire Telegraph and Sussex Chronicle* 3 April 1847; *Hansard Third Series* Vol. XCIII, 7 June 1847 House of Commons.; *The Colonial Times* 19 October 1847.

# THE STORY OF JOHN WEST – OR NOT

Alison Alexander (Member 6611)

I'VE long been interested in Tasmania's battle for independence and the end of transportation in the 1840s, but when I tried to write it as a book, it was too involved, too hard to make into a narrative. Anyone involved in a campaign knows it comes and goes, with repetitions, mistakes, ups and downs—very hard to write about in an interesting way that the reader can follow. So I decided to write a biography of John WEST, one of the leaders, and humanise the campaign story.

Patricia RATCLIFF has already written *The usefulness of John West*, but her book is more about West's religious story than the anti-transportation struggle. Her widower Eric Ratcliff kindly gave me his blessing, and let me read Patricia's very full and well-organised notes about her research trip to England to see where John West came from and the churches he worked in (he was a Congregational minister).

I was able, by having access to more records than people did in the past, to prove that John West was not the son of a respectable Wesleyan minister as had been thought, but of a London shoemaker, far less acceptable socially at that time. When he came to Australia as a cultured gentleman, he barely mentioned his past—not the first or the last immigrant to reinvent himself.

However, once he arrived in Van Diemen's Land in 1838, and started a parish in Launceston, the information stopped. Certainly he preached sermons, gave talks and took part in other church activities, and he encouraged good works in Launceston, but there was little I could find about him as a man. No diaries, no letters. No men-

tion of him in other people's diaries and letters that I could find. Only a description by a devoted parishioner, Henry BUTTON, of how kind and genial he was, and how absent-minded. When giving a sermon he used to twist his handkerchief in and out, up and down.<sup>1</sup> This is not a great deal on which to build a biography. Obituaries are often useful here, but John West had been editor of the *Sydney Morning Herald* for decades before his death, and his obituaries mostly talked about this part of his life.

There is even less about his wife, Narcissa. Apart from her unusual name, there was nothing about her, or the children—seven, eventually. Anyone who has looked people up on the wonderful online newspapers in *Trove* knows that it's unusual to find someone who does not feature somewhere. In recent searches, I found that Patricia GILES and a friend had a stall to raise money for patriotic causes in the Second World War; that Max ANGUS won an art prize, aged twelve; that in 1882 his grandfather James fell from a cart, cut his forehead, and suffered from 'slight contusion of the brain'.<sup>2</sup> Those were the days when newspapers really gave news! Virtually everyone comes second in a sack race at the school sports, or gets married, or has some sort of accident. Yet all there was about the whole West family, in fifteen years, was that in 1844 West and his friends hired a boat for a pleasure cruise on the Tamar, and that at a

---

<sup>1</sup> Henry Button, *Flotsam and Jetsam*, Launceston, 1909, p. 59

<sup>2</sup> *Mercury*, 29 October 1926; *Mercury*, 8 February 1882

horticultural show, John won a prize for his marrow. His marrow! It would be hard to find a duller vegetable than a marrow. The marrow was the last straw.

I am sure I am not the only person to be disappointed at the lack of interesting gossip about someone we are researching, to bring that person to life. There are ways around the problem. You can look at someone closely connected with your subject, such as a sibling or parent, and see if there is more information about them. You can look at colleagues in the same way. You can write general background, such as, ... *The town in which John Smith landed as a convict in 1826 was still small and undeveloped. It ... with a description of Hobart Town.* You can suggest your subject's feelings—was he or she disappointed to see with a tiny, ramshackle place? Or pleased to see dry land after the long voyage? Sometimes it is easy to suggest someone's emotion, as when a woman gave birth to a baby a week after landing off the small, unstable ship. If anyone else wrote a diary at the same time, you can quote from that—the Archives have a long list of diaries. There are ways to look at your subject and see what this person was going through. However, while useful for a shortish article, this is not enough for a book.

Sometimes a portrait will tell you about your subject. There are several photographs of John West, who looks a thoughtful, kind man, bearing out Henry Button's description—but this is not the sort of portrait that tells you a huge amount about the sitter. No rose behind the ear, no flashing eyes, no dandy-like clothes. West looks like a respectable minister and editor, as one would expect.

My wonderful designer Julie HAWKINS has a saying, 'There is always a way'. I had always found this true—until I met

John West. In the end, regretfully, I gave up on the idea of a John West biography, and went back to my original idea, writing about the fight for independence and the end of transportation without pretending it was anything else. However, I included biographies of half-a-dozen or so prominent people in the campaign. They were far more colourful than John West. Richard DRY rode in horse races, with the inevitable falls, close wins and so on. Thomas GREGSON, who had property at Jericho, once made a bet that for £200, a huge sum, he could walk the forty miles (64 km) from Spring Hill to the *Ship Inn* in Hobart in eight and a quarter hours. He set off at 8.06 in the morning, took all the short cuts he knew and arrived at the *Ship* at 3.30 in the afternoon, 36 minutes early. William GOODWIN, editor of the *Cornwall Chronicle*, in opposition to West, had all sorts of marital adventures. His photograph is far more revealing—the long hair curling over one eyebrow, the heavy-lidded eyes, the clothes in artful disarray, the negligently placed arm. He looks like the sort of man who could tell a few stories. Were any about John West? As we all say, often: 'If only they had written it down'. ◀

See *Tasmanian Ancestry* cover of this issue for portrait of John West [Ed.]

# TRAGEDY ON THE DERWENT, 1850

## THE DROWNING OF SIX MEN AND THE 'RECKLESS AND INHUMAN' CONDUCT OF THOSE WHO MIGHT HAVE BEEN ABLE TO SAVE THEM

Don Bradmore (Member 6756)

ACCORDING to the *Colonial Times* of 6 December 1850, the Hobart Town Regatta held a few days earlier was the thirteenth staging of the event since its establishment at the Domain under the patronage of Sir John FRANKLIN in 1837. This year's occasion, in fact, had promised to be a particularly memorable one as, during the festivities, the 'New Dock' was to be re-named 'Constitution Dock' in the presence of Sir William and Lady DENISON, the Lieutenant-Governor and his wife. However, living up to the superstition long associated with the number thirteen, the event was to prove not only 'disagreeable' but downright 'disastrous'.<sup>1</sup>

The weather on 3 December was fine and, as in previous years, many hundreds had gathered to watch the boat races and to enjoy the food, liquor and general 'good cheer' that were to be had 'in sparkling abundance' in the many booths that lined the shore. By about mid-day, however, great clouds of dust accompanied by occasional showers of rain were sweeping across the regatta grounds, causing some of the finest ladies of the land to scurry to find shelter where they could and making it impossible for most spectators to see the boats. In the opinion of the *Colonial Times*, the weather had rendered the spectacle of the ceremonial opening of the

re-named dock 'altogether too contemptible to record'.<sup>2</sup>

Nevertheless, the intrepid sailors took to the waters of the Derwent for the boat races and all was going ahead as planned until tragedy struck.

This year, five boats had entered the sailing match for 'first class' yachts, a race to which keen followers of the sport were eagerly looking forward: *Victor* owned by Mr DOUGLAS, *Nautilus* owned by Mr DAWSON, *Terror* owned by Mr. LUTTERELL and *British Queen* and *Governor Wilmot*, both owned by Mr John PETCHY.<sup>3</sup>

Of these owners, Petchy was the most prominent.<sup>4</sup> Now a prosperous businessman and landowner, he had arrived in Hobart Town as a convict per *Indefatigable* in 1812 after being found guilty in England of receiving stolen goods and sentenced to transportation for fourteen years. After his emancipation, he had amassed a fortune through his dealings in the colony as a farmer, brewer, publican, whaler, ship and ferry owner and general merchant.

He was a most experienced seaman. In June 1824, he had sailed for England with

---

<sup>1</sup> *Colonial Times (CT)*, (Hobart), 6 December 1850, p. 2

---

<sup>2</sup> *CT*, 6 December 1850, p. 2

<sup>3</sup> *CT*, 13 December 1850, p. 2

<sup>4</sup> <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/petchy-john-2547>; Petchy was awarded a medal by the Society of Arts, Commerce and Manufactures for this discovery but seems to have been unable to establish a permanent trade

a cargo of mimosa bark extract in which he hoped to interest the English tanning trade. In March 1839, he sailed again for England in his barque, *Sir George Arthur*, a ship he had built for himself at Kangaroo Point. At 400 tons, it was then the largest ship ever built in the colony. With Captain TINDELL as master and Petchy and his wife as passengers, the vessel had made good time in reaching London with a cargo of oil and other produce and, by early March 1840, it was safely back at Hobart Town. On the return journey, Petchy had been accompanied by his uncle and aunt, William and Amy GENTRY, and perhaps also by a nephew, James GENTRY (although the exact date of his arrival in the colony is yet to be verified).<sup>5</sup>

On the day of the regatta, James Gentry was with his uncle on the *British Queen* as it took its place behind the line with the other four yachts for the start of the sailing match. On board also were five other men, all convicts, who were acting as crew.<sup>6</sup>

The race started off calmly enough. Despite the bad weather, all five boats turned at the first marker buoy without incident and it was a close-fought race as they headed for the second buoy. However, just as the boats were approaching it, with *Victor* in the lead closely followed by *Nautilus*, *British Queen*, *Terror* and *Governor Wilmot* in that order, a particularly heavy squall descended on the fleet. As *Victor* rounded the buoy followed by *Nautilus*, and both straightened to head back to the finishing line,

*British Queen* took in a little water over its low quarter and then tons of it began to pour in. Completely swamped, it went down stern first and within the space of three minutes, had sunk below the waves.

One man, a convict believed to be James HILL, was taken down with the yacht and not seen again. The other six, including 68-year-old John Petchy and his 32-year-old nephew James Gentry, were thrown into the water, where all were seen flailing at the surface and screaming out piteously for assistance. Ultimately, one man was saved but the other six—Petchy, Gentry and four convicts were drowned.<sup>7</sup>

After Petchy's body had been recovered, an inquest into his death was held. On 8 December 1850, Coroner, A B JONES, Esq., and a jury of seven heard grim details of the tragedy. A number of witnesses were scathing in their remarks about some of those in the other boats in the race who, despite being aware that men from the *British Queen* were in the water, failed—or refused—to go to their rescue.<sup>8</sup>

Perhaps the most damning testimony was that given by 25-year-old John THOMPSON, the only *British Queen* man saved. A ticket-of-leave convict, he was an employee of Petchy and, as an experienced sailor, he had been asked to join the crew. He told the coroner that he had been tending the jib sheet when the squall struck. Immediately, he had let go of the jib sheet and had called to Petchy, who was steering, to let go the fore sheet—but Petchy, who was in charge of the yacht,

---

<sup>5</sup> *Mercury* (Hobart), 15 October 1938, p. 14. The exact relationship of Petchy to James Gentry is yet to be established; it is believed that Petchy's uncle and aunt, William and Amy Gentry, did not have children.

<sup>6</sup> *CT*, 13 December 1850, p. 2

---

<sup>7</sup> *Britannia and Trades Advocate*, (*BTA*) (Hobart) 19 December 1850, p. 2; Petchy, death: RGD35/418/1850, Hobart; Gentry, death: RGD35/419/1850, Hobart

<sup>8</sup> Coroner's inquest: *CT*, 13 December 1850, p. 2; *BTA*, 19 December 1850, p. 2 and 26 December 1850, p. 2

had shouted back that all was well and had ignored him. Realising the danger, Thompson had then rushed towards the fore sheet to let it down himself but, by the time he had reached it, the yacht had filled with water and was going down.

Continuing, Thompson said that he had been drawn under the water with the vessel when it sank but had soon re-surfaced. He had then seen Petchy in the water being held afloat by his billowing shirt and struggling to support himself. Reaching him, Thompson had held him up for as long as he could but had eventually been obliged to let him go in order to save his own life.

Thompson told the coroner that when he was thrown into the water he saw that *Victor* was only seven or eight rods (about 40 metres) away. In his opinion, it could have turned to rescue the men from *British Queen* without risk to itself but he was unable to say with certainty that those on it had seen them. On the other hand, he was absolutely sure that those on *Nautilus* had seen the men in the water and could have come to their rescue without risk to themselves. Thompson swore, in fact, that someone aboard *Nautilus* had ignored the desperate cries of the *British Queen* men beyond shouting that it was ‘blowing too hard’ for them to do anything—and that they had then sailed off.

Further, Thompson asserted that those aboard *Terror* and *Governor Wilmot* had also been aware of the plight of the *British Queen* men. He said that, although *Terror* was a quarter of a mile (about four hundred metres) away, he had waved to it while in the water and had seen those on board wave back. Similarly, he was sure that the crew of *Governor Wilmot*—even though it was about a mile (about 1500 metres) away—had seen what was happening because it had ‘lain to’ (that is,

stopped sailing) for a time before continuing on. He maintained that there would have been no risk to either boat in attempting to save the men in the water.

About 20 minutes after the *British Queen* had gone down, Thompson had been picked up by Mr James VAUTIN, a clerk in the Audit Office, who had put out from the shore with a couple of other men and women in a small row-boat to try to help. Vautin told the coroner that, as Thompson was being hauled into the boat, he had said: ‘There are six poor fellows gone,’ and had added: ‘Those villains in the other boats!’<sup>9</sup> Vautin said that no-one else could be seen in the water at that time.

Corroborating evidence was given by a number of other witnesses. Thirteen year-old Peter BUCHANAN, the son of a Kangaroo Point farmer, told the coroner that he had been on Lutterell’s *Terror*. He had seen the *Nautilus* close to the men in the water and, as it was leaving, he had heard Lutterell call out: ‘Why don’t you pick up those men?’ He had then heard someone on *Nautilus* reply: ‘Why don’t you pick them up yourselves?’ He said that he had then asked Lutterell and his men in *Terror* to turn back and save the men but they had refused to do so.<sup>10</sup>

Another witness, William MAUM, a farmer of Clarence Plains, told the coroner that he was on *Nautilus* at the Regatta but had not seen the *British Queen* go down. However, after *Nautilus* had rounded the upper buoy, he had seen three men in the water, the nearest possibly less than 30 or 40 yards (10 to 12 metres) away. He had called to the man who had charge of the boat, a convict named Ambrose HARRINGTON who was a boatman in the

---

<sup>9</sup> CT, 13 December 1850, p. 2

<sup>10</sup> *Irish Exile and Freedom’s Advocate* (Hobart), 21 December 1850 p. 7

employ of Dawson, the owner of *Nautilus*, ‘Let us pick up those men,’ but Harrington had refused.<sup>11</sup>

Harrington himself was then called in. He confirmed the positions of the boats and their proximity to each other as stated by previous witnesses but accounted for the absence of any attempt on the part of the *Nautilus* to render assistance by asserting that it was half full of water at the time and, consequently, not safely manageable.<sup>12</sup>

Having heard also from doctors and the owners of the other boats in the race, the coroner then delivered the not-unexpected verdict that Petchy’s death was ‘accidentally by drowning’. However, the coroner added:

It is the opinion of the Jury, had proper exertions been used on the part of the crews of the *Terror* and *Nautilus*, that some of the men might have been saved. We think that there is less blame to the crew of the *Victor* than the others.<sup>13</sup>

In the days following the release of the verdict, newspapers were scathing in their remarks about the behaviour of many of the participants in the race. The *Hobart Guardian*, for instance, asserted that ‘everything connected to this melancholy event shows a brutal disregard of human life and a degree of cruelty of which we never recollect to have heard before’.<sup>14</sup> The *Britannia and Trades Advocate* agreed, claiming

That the conduct of those in charge of *Victor*, *Nautilus* and *Terror* was disgraceful to humanity ... and that those in charge of the boats, more positive cowardice and cold-blooded inhumanity

than has hitherto been made known in the history of Van Diemen’s Land.

Singled out for the most severe censure by the *Britannia and Trades Advocate* was convict Harrington who, in the opinion of that newspaper, had been ‘very improperly permitted’ to have charge of *Nautilus*. Insisting that ‘no such person should be entrusted with human life’, the editor urged the authorities

to act in the matter by immediately removing [Harrington] from his present employ as a ferryman.<sup>15</sup>

As it happened, Harrington was to be punished more severely than this. On 19 December 1850, the General Regatta Committee held its first meeting after the release of the coroner’s verdict. The chairman informed members that Harrington and two other convicts, LEWIS and COGLIN, both of whom had also been on *Nautilus*, had been sentenced to six months’ imprisonment with hard labour ‘for inhumanely sacrificing life’—adding that,

if, in any [situation], heavy flogging is necessary, it was well deserved in this instance.<sup>16</sup>

The chairman noted that, although seemingly guilty of the same offence, the free men in charge of the other boats had escaped ‘all public punishment, excepting that of reproachful exposure’.

Members also heard that the crew of the *Victor*—whom the coroner’s jury had found to be less blameworthy than those in the other boats—was not entirely innocent of misconduct. Sir Henry ATKINSON informed the meeting that he had been told by a naval lieutenant by the name of AUSTIN, who had been on *Victor* during the race, that he had seen the

---

<sup>11</sup> *CT*, 17 December 1850, p. 2

<sup>12</sup> *CT*, 17 December 1850, p. 2

<sup>13</sup> *BTA*, 19 December 1850, p. 2

<sup>14</sup> *Hobart Guardian* 18 December 1850, p. 2

---

<sup>15</sup> *BTA*, 19 December 1850, p. 2

<sup>16</sup> *BTA*, 26 December 1850, p. 2

*British Queen* go down and had requested the crew put back to render assistance but, to his great astonishment, no notice was taken of his request.

Three resolutions were carried at the meeting. First, that while the committee regretted the melancholy incident that had occurred, its best thanks were due to all spectators, officials, medical personnel and police who had rendered prompt assistance—on the shore as well as on the water. Second, that ticket-of-leave man Thompson (referred to here as ‘William’), the sole survivor of the *British Queen* crew, who had done all in his power to save Petchy, should be given a reward of £5 and also be recommended for a conditional pardon ‘as a useful example to others’. Third, that those in the boats who had abandoned the drowning men should be refused permission to enter, or sail in, any boat at future regattas.

In addition to the reward given to Thompson, the committee voted to award £10.10.0 to the widow of James Gentry, £5 to the people who went out in small boats to render assistance, and £2 to the men in a police boat who also lent aid. Before closing the meeting, the chairman stated that whilst members felt that it was their painful duty to censure others, they regretted having to acknowledge neglect on their own part for not having had boats ready in case of accidents and hoped that future committees would remember to make more efficient arrangements for their prevention. He added:

We now dismiss the regatta [of 1850] from all further comment but, alas, not from our recollection. In marking prominently the sense of the Committee on the melancholy incidents ... the members present have done their duty to themselves, and to the community at large.<sup>17</sup>

A plaque commemorating the loss of the men of the *British Queen* forms part of the ‘Tasmanian Seafarers’ Memorial’ at Triabunna on Tasmania’s East Coast.<sup>18</sup> ◀



Tasmanian Seafarers' Memorial Triabunna, on Tasmania's East Coast

<sup>17</sup> *BTA*, 26 December 1850, p. 2

<sup>18</sup> [http://seafarersmemorial.org.au/memorials/vessels/british\\_queen.php](http://seafarersmemorial.org.au/memorials/vessels/british_queen.php)

# WHAT IS THAT PUBLICATION ABOUT?

Maurice Appleyard (Member 4093)

**N**UMEROUS publications are named in the Acquisition Lists of the various Branches of our Society but on some occasions the title does not give a clear indication of the subject matter. The following details of a few in the Hobart Branch Library may help to describe some of the more obscure titles and deserve a look.

**Perhaps the publication may also be held in your local library?**

## CHERISHED FAMILY MEMORIES

This A4 book of some 114pp, by Vernon Victor Hickman, was collated and printed for distribution in August 2020 by his granddaughter Robyn Eastley (née Hickman).

The history of Richard and Phyllis Hickman and family—shared through the letters of Richard and Sarah Hickman and their son George Milford and Pauline Hickman and the memories and research of Vernon V. Hickman, c1973.

*In 1842 the family emigrated to Tasmania on board the 'Appoline' which sailed from London via Plymouth. ... arrived at Hobart Town on 1 October 1842. ...*

*On disembarking the Hickman family were received into the Belle Vue Immigration Quarters; situated where Macquarie House now stands.*

The family comprised of Richard and Phillis; Fanny (19), Leonard (17), Ellen (15), Owen (13), Eliza (10), Lois (9), Harriette (7), and Richard (3).

**KENT FHS. CD Rom 41—*Parish Registers Vol. 24; Monumental Inscriptions Vol. 4.***

Contains:

### **Non-Conformist registers:**

Bethersden, Baptist Register of Births 1799–1836; Egerton, Records of Burials at the Particular Baptist Church 1863–1984;

Smarden Particular Baptist Chapel marriages 1840–1984, burials 1837–1984

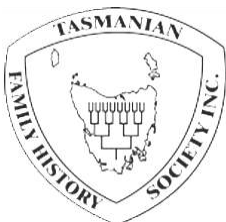
### **Parish Registers:**

Lydd. Index to burials 1540–1662.

### **Monumental Inscriptions:**

Boughton Monchelsea; Canterbury, St Gregory; Dunkirk; East Sutton; Eythorne Baptist Chapel; Fordwich; Goudhurst; Graveney; Hartlip; Hernhill; Lower Halstow; Molash; Patricxbourns; Plaxtol; Pluckley; Staplehurst; Broadstairs, St Peter; Tovil; Tunbridge Wells, Woodley Park Cemetery, Part 1; Wye. ◀

## Tasmanian Family History Society Inc.



### 2021 Lilian Watson Family History Award

for a Book

however produced or published  
on paper, dealing with family or  
biographical history and having  
a significant Tasmanian content.  
Historical fiction is not eligible.

**Entries close  
1 December 2021**

Further information and entry  
forms available from TFHS Inc.  
Branch Libraries or  
**[www.tasfhs.org](http://www.tasfhs.org)**

or contact  
The Secretary PO Box 326  
ROSNY PARK TAS 7018

email: **[secretary@tasfhs.org](mailto:secretary@tasfhs.org)**

## Descendants of Convicts' Group Inc.

Any person who has  
convict ancestors, or who  
has an interest in convict  
life during the early history  
of European settlement in  
Australia, is welcome to  
join the above group.

Those interested may find  
out more about the group  
and receive an application  
form by writing to:

The Secretary  
Descendants of  
Convicts' Group  
PO Box 229  
COLDSTREAM  
Victoria 3770

<http://home.vicnet.net.au/~dcginc/>

# LIBRARY ACQUISITIONS

## Hobart Branch

### ACCESSIONS—Books

- \*Cromer, William Craig; *A HISTORY OF THE CROMER FAMILY IN TASMANIA FROM 1855*. [Q929.2 CRO]
- Cassidy, Dianne J. E. *ON THE TOWN—Prostitutes and Brothels of 19<sup>th</sup> Century Launceston*. [306.740994611 CAS]
- \*Dooley, Lorraine; *THE GARDE FAMILY IN TASMANIA 1837–2017—A new life in a new land*. [Q929.2 GAR]
- \*Goold, John (Ed); *THE WEEDING FAMILY of Oatlands, Van Diemen's Land/- Tasmania—Letters Home 1832–1873*. [Q929.2 WEE]
- \*Harris, Roger E; *ISLANDERS DEPORTED; PART 1—A complete history of those British subjects who were deported from the Channel Islands during the German Occupation of 1940–1945 and imprisoned in Europe*. [Q929.2 HAR]
- \*Hickman, Vernon Victor; *CHERISHED FAMILY MEMORIES* [Q929.2 HIC]
- \*Knight, Judith; *PROFILES ON THE LIVES OF ANN DOYLE and her children; WILLIAM PARSONS and DAVID GIBSON*. [Q929.2 DOY]
- \*Maddock, M. J; *DAVID GIBSON—CONVICT TO CAPITALIST* [Q929.2 GIB]
- \*McDermott, L. F. *OF ANGELS AND EAGLES—Book One of the Garth Trilogy*. [F MACD]
- \*McDermott, L. F. *PERSEVERANCE—Book Two of the Garth Trilogy*. [F MACD]
- \*McDermott, L. F. *THE PROMISE OF TOMORROW—Book Three of the Garth Trilogy*. [F MACD]
- \*Otterman, David William; *JOHN CAMPBELL & CHARLOTTE DAWSON—Trials of Life and Law*. [Q929.2 CAM]
- \*Piesse, Felicity; *MARIA ISLAND TO MERRIDALE—A tribute to my grandmother CP; Christina Piesse (nee McRAE) 1886–1970*. [Q929.2 PIE]
- \*Schaffer, Irene; *LT. CHARLES JEFFREYS R.N.—Captain of the 'Kangaroo', 1782–1826, FROGMORE CASTLE, Sorell*. [Q929.2 JEF]
- \*Scott, Susan G. (Ed); *FROM THE PROTEUS TO PROSPERITY—In the steps of John Walduck (1809–1886)* [Q929.2 WAL]
- \*TFHS Hobart; *UNDERTAKERS OF HOBART, VOL. IV—Index to H.C. Millington Pty Ltd Funeral Records; PART 11, November 1975 – May 1979*. [Q 929. 3099561 UND]
- \*Wighton, Gregory; *ST. ANDREW'S IMMIGRATION SOCIETY—Assisting Migration to Van Diemen's Land 1854–1862*. [325.241109946 WIG]
- \*Wyatt, Douglas Morris; *WILLIAM WYATT—Devonshire Ploughman and Van Diemen's Land Convict*. [Q929.2 WAY]

### Computer Disks

- \*Kent FHS.; CD Rom 41: *Parish Registers Vol. 24; Monumental Inscriptions Vol. 4*.

## Microform

- \*Archives Office of Tasmania; *Convict Records—Permission to Marry.*
- \*Archives Office of Tasmania; *Convict Records—Certificates of Freedom.*
- \*Archives Office of Tasmania; *Convict Records—Conditional Pardons.*
- \*Archives Office of Tasmania; *Convict Records—Registers of Convicts Families sent from England.*
- \*Archives Office of Tasmania; *Convict Records—Indent Records.*
- \*Archives Office of Tasmania; *Convict Records—Description Lists.*
- \*Archives Office of Tasmania; *Convict Records—Female Convicts Arrival Registers.*
- \*Archives Office of Tasmania; *Convict Records—Female Conduct Registers.*
- \*Mitchell Library NSW; *Convict Records—Male &Female Convicts Assignment Lists.*
- \*Archives of NSW; *Assisted (Bounty) Immigrants Registers.*
- \*Archives of NSW; *Shipping Masters Office—Registers of Passengers Arriving.*
- \*Archive Office of Tasmania; *Hobart Town Directories: 1836, 1852, 1847, 1857.*
- \*Library of Australian History; Sydney Morning Herald, BDM Notices 1831–1853.
- \*Mitchell Library; Monaro District Manuscripts 1823–1948.

## Launceston Branch

### ACCESSIONS—Books

- \*Alexander, Alison; *The O’Connors of Connorville – A great Australian story*
- \*Australian Conservation Foundation; *The South West Book – A Tasmanian Wilderness*
- \*Barker, Gary; *PWD – Paid Wet and Dry – 101 Memories of Tasmania’s Public Works System*
- \*Cassidy, Dianne J E; *On the Town – Prostitutes and Brothels of 19th Century Launceston*
- \*Cox, G W; *Ships in Tasmanian Waters*
- \*Government Printing Office; *Venturing Westward*
- \*Government Printing Office; *The Log – 24th November 1986 – Tasmania Day – Circumnavigation of Van Diemen’s Land by Captain James Kelly and other accounts of early exploration of the west and north west coast of Tasmania from Parliamentary Papers*
- \*Smee, Dr C J; *Convict Families That Made Australia – Volume 1*
- \*Sunderland, Queenie; *Bride of an Anzac – My Life Story*
- \*TFHS Inc. Hobart Branch; *Undertakers of Hobart Vol.1V – Index to H C Millington Funeral Records – Part 11 November 1975–May 1979*

## Mersey Branch

### ACCESSIONS—Books

TFHS Inc Hobart Branch; *Undertakers of Hobart Vol IV Index to H C Millington Pty Ltd Funeral Records Part 11 November 1975 –May 1979*

- \* Denotes complimentary or donated item.

# SOCIETY SALES

Tasmanian Family History Society Inc. Publications  
 Payment by Visa or Master Card now available (mail order only)

Mail orders (including postage) should be forwarded to:  
 Society Sales Officer, TFHS Inc.,

**PO Box 326 Rosny Park Tasmania 7018**

## Books

<i>Van Diemens Land Heritage Index, Vol. 3</i> (p&p \$6.85) .....	\$10.00
<i>Van Diemens Land Heritage Index, Vol. 4</i> (p&p \$9.20) .....	\$10.00
<i>Van Diemens Land Heritage Index, Vol. 5</i> (p&p \$9.20) .....	\$10.00
<i>Tasmanian Ancestry Index Volumes 1–20</i> (p&p \$9.20)** .....	\$15.00
<i>Tasmanian Ancestry Index Volumes 21–25</i> (p&p \$6.85)** .....	\$15.00
<i>Tasmanian Ancestry Index Volumes 26–30</i> (p&p \$6.85)** .....	\$25.00
<i>Tasmanian Ancestry Index Volumes 31–35</i> (p&p \$6.85)** .....	\$25.00

(p&p \$15.70 for 3 books or more)

## CD-Rom

<i>Tasmanian Ancestry Vols 1–20, [Jun 1980–Mar 2000]</i> (p&p \$9.20)** .....	\$50.00
<i>TAMIOT</i> (p&p \$9.20) ** .....	\$50.00

\*\* members discount of 10% applies

Australia's largest online  
family history resource\*

Research and build your  
family tree online





\*comScore, 2011

# BRANCH LIBRARY ADDRESSES, TIMES AND MEETING DETAILS

## Please Check Branches for Opening Times

**BURNIE** Phone: Branch Librarian (03) 6435 4103  
Library 58 Bass Highway Cooee  
Tuesday 11.00 a.m.–3.00 p.m.  
Saturday 1.00 p.m.–4.00 p.m.  
Meeting Branch Library, 58 Bass Highway Cooee 10.30 a.m. on 1<sup>st</sup> Monday of each month, except January and December.  
Night Dinner Meetings are held in winter and end of year, check with Branch Librarian for details.

---

**HOBART** Phone: Enquiries (03) 6244 9351  
Library 19 Cambridge Road Bellerive  
Tuesday 12.30 p.m.–3.30 p.m.  
Wednesday 9.30 a.m.–12.30 p.m.  
Saturday 1.30 p.m.–4.30 p.m.  
Meeting Sunday School, St Johns Park, New Town, at 7.30 p.m. on 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of each month, except January and December.

---

**HUON** Phone: Branch Secretary (03) 6239 6823  
Library Soldiers Memorial Hall Marguerite Street Ranelagh  
Saturday 1.30 p.m.–4.00 p.m.  
Other times: Library visits by appointment with secretary,  
48 hours notice required  
Meeting Branch Library, Ranelagh, at 4.00 p.m. on 1<sup>st</sup> Saturday of each month, except January.  
email [vsbtas@bigpond.com](mailto:vsbtas@bigpond.com)

---

**LAUNCESTON** Phone: 0427 847 000 or 0438 465 121  
Library 45–55 Tamar Street Launceston (next door to Albert Hall)  
Tuesday 10.00 a.m.–3.00 p.m.  
Monday to Friday by appointment only  
Check the Branch News and the website  
<http://www.launceston.tasfh.org> for locations and times.

---

**MERSEY** Phone: Branch Secretary (03) 6428 6328 Library (03) 6426 2257  
Library 113 Gilbert Street Latrobe (behind State Library)  
Wednesday & Friday 10.00 a.m.–3.00 p.m.  
Saturday opening has ceased and is now by advance appointment only.  
Meetings Please check the website at [www.tfhsdev.com](http://www.tfhsdev.com) or contact the [secretary@tfhsdev.com](mailto:secretary@tfhsdev.com) for updates.

# MEMBERSHIP OF THE TASMANIAN FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY INC.

Membership of the TFHS Inc. is open to all individuals interested in genealogy and family history, whether or not resident in Tasmania. Assistance is given to help trace overseas ancestry as well as Tasmanian.

**Dues are payable annually by 1 April.** Membership Subscriptions for 2021–22:-

Individual member	\$45.00
Joint members (2 people at one address)	\$55.00
Australian Concession	\$35.00
Australian Joint Concession	\$45.00

**Overseas:** Individual member: A\$50.00; Joint members: A\$55.00 (inc. airmail postage)

**Organisations:** Journal subscription \$45.00—apply to the Society Treasurer.

## Membership Entitlements:

All members receive copies of the society's journal *Tasmanian Ancestry*, published quarterly in June, September, December and March. Members are entitled to free access to the society's libraries. Access to libraries of some other societies has been arranged on a reciprocal basis.

## Application for Membership:

Application forms may be downloaded from [www.tasfhs.org](http://www.tasfhs.org) or obtained from the TFHS Inc. Society Secretary or any branch and be returned with appropriate dues to a Branch Treasurer. **Interstate and overseas** applications should be mailed to the TFHS Inc. Society Treasurer, PO Box 326 Rosny Park Tasmania 7018. Dues are also accepted at libraries and at branch meetings.

## Donations:

Donations to the Library Fund (\$2.00 and over) are *tax deductible*. Gifts of family records, maps, photographs, etc. are most welcome.

## Research Queries:

Research is handled on a voluntary basis in each branch for members and non-members. Rates for research are available from each branch and a stamped, self addressed, business size envelope should accompany all queries. Members should quote their membership number.

## Reciprocal Rights:

TFHS Inc. policy is that our branches offer reciprocal rights to any interstate or overseas visitor who is a member of another Family History Society and produce their membership card.

## Advertising:

Advertising for *Tasmanian Ancestry* is accepted with pre-payment of \$30.00 per quarter page in one issue or \$90.00 for four issues. Further information can be obtained by writing to the journal editor at PO Box 326 Rosny Park Tasmania 7018.

ISSN—0159 0677

Printed by Monotone Art Printers