



THE ANCESTRAL SEARCHER

In Memory of

THE EATHER FAMILY

16 FAMILY MEMBERS WASHED FROM THIS SITE IN THE 1867 RECORD FLOOD 12 LIVES LOST.

**BROTHERS THOMAS AND WILLIAM EATHER
WIFE WIFE**

*EMMA MARY (NEE STAPLES) BORN 1828
DIED 21-6-1867 (WINDSOR)*

CHILDREN DROWNED WERE

*ANNIE 14 YRS JAMES 11 YRS ELIZBETH 11 YRS
ANGELINA 5 YRS EMMA 2 YRS*

*ONLY 4 FAMILY MEMBERS SURVIVED
BROTHERS THOMAS, WILLIAM & GEORGE
& THOMAS'S SON, CHARLES 16*

*CATHERINE (NEE McMAHON) BORN 1831
DIED 21-6-1867 (WINDSOR)*

CHILDREN DROWNED WERE

*MARY ANN 11 YRS CHARLES 9 YRS
CATHERINE 6 YRS CLARA 3 YRS WILLIAM 1 YR*

*BOTH WIVES EMMA 38
& CATHERINE 36 DIED*

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FAMILY HISTORY ACT

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Front Cover: *Eather memorial at Cornwallis, NSW. (see story p. 146.)*

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*Family History ACT is a business name of The Heraldry & Genealogy Society of Canberra Inc.

From the President

Rosemary McKenzie

Twelve months ago I introduced 2021 as 'the new normal'. But now, having come to the end of the year the only 'normal' seems to be the constant adaptation to our ever-changing landscape. For some of our more structured members this was a challenge, but we learned more and more to 'go with the flow'. Some of these changes were imposed upon us by factors outside of our control (primarily that wretched Covid bug) and others were projects which the Society introduced and completed.



I would like to thank my fellow council members and volunteers who worked hard to keep the communication channels open to our members despite the restricted circumstances. We have actively pursued new ideas and suggestions to provide interesting and better services for our members and we hope you have been able to take advantage of these.

We were saddened to hear in November of the passing of two of our long-term members, Marie McDonogh (nee Bevan) and Harrie Quince. Their membership and assistance at a number of our SIGs will be missed. Our thoughts are with their family and friends at this sad time.

As a result of our FindmyPast seminars held in November we have added British Newspapers to our FindmyPast subscription. This is a paid add-on to our current subscription, and we will be asking members to note, when they visit the library, if they have used this additional service.

Our education and events program for 2022 is already providing wonderful opportunities to extend our genealogy knowledge. Summer school with DNA courses, Beginning Family History course in March and a Writing Family History course in June for starters. The E&E team are also working with our group convenors to find guest speakers for other events and our monthly members meetings. Watch our website and newsletters for more information.



As our new website and membership management system approaches its 6-month birthday we will be scheduling a review of the platform. Our newly formed Information Management and Technology Committee will be overseeing this process and we will be contacting our membership for feedback on how it is working for you.

This quarter's journal features the winning and shortlisted entries for the 2021 Writing Competition we hope you enjoy reading them, and maybe some will give you ideas on what you may like to write about, either for next year's competition or for a short article in TAS.

Just a reminder that our Library will be closed from 12:30 pm on Wednesday 15th December 2021 and will reopen on Tuesday 11th January 2022. During this closure period fumigation and a number of other maintenance tasks will be undertaken.

On behalf of our Council members I would like to wish you all the best over the holidays and, if travelling, a safe return for another new year of discovery and research!



2021 E.M. Fletcher Writing Award

Gina Tooke

The winner of the Family History ACT 2021 E.M. Fletcher Writing Award was announced at a special online event on Saturday 9th October. Eighty-eight participants were online to hear the announcement including special guests Anne, John and Robin Fletcher, children of Eunice Fletcher, for whom the competition is named. John spoke about Eunice's passion for family history and his memory of visits with his mum to the many aunts to record oral histories about the family, pestering all the vicars in the Hunter Valley to scour the church records and numerous visits to Kent Street in Sydney to trawl the archives.

Our Judges Dr Erica Cervini, Kathryn Coughran and Pennie Pemberton had a difficult decision in selecting a winner from the 124 entries received across a variety of topics and styles. During the assessment, the judges read over 235,000 words, many times over, and enjoyed over 80 images.



Some of our 88 attendees, winners and judges at the event..

As a previous winner of the E.M. Fletcher award, Kathryn Coughran spoke about the competition's uniqueness in the way it draws together two distinct disciplines, writing and family history, each with its own conventions. Former archivist, Pennie Pemberton spoke about the world of libraries, archives and records that help us piece together our family trees.

Twelve stories were short-listed for the 2021 E.M. Fletcher Award, but there could only be one winner.

AND THE WINNER IS

Congratulations to Denise Newton, the winner of the E.M. Fletcher Writing Award. Denise takes home the winner's prize of \$1,000 for her story *The Bitterness of their Woe*, a compelling story of a family lost in the Windsor Flood of 1867. In announcing the award, judge Kathryn Coughran said the story has universal appeal and is an excellent example of the fusion of facts and human experience.

Speaking on her blog about the award Denise said:

I am beyond thrilled to share the news that I have been awarded the 2021 E.M. Fletcher Writing Award for a short story based on a tragic event from my family tree.... My thanks to FHACT, the Fletcher family and the judges for organising this unique writing competition, which encourages people interested in family history to dig out and write about the stories they uncover. I am so excited and honoured that my story was chosen and I can't wait to read the other shortlisted entries.



Denise Newton reading her winning entry for the Awards.

Congratulations Denise!

The judges also presented two equal highly commended awards and three equal commended awards, a testament to the high standard of entries.

In addition, a *Family History ACT* member prize was awarded to Margaret Clough for her story *Tell me Again, Dad*, a poignant story about a daughter reconnecting with her ailing father. Congratulations Margaret.

Congratulations to our winner and placegetters.

2021 E.M. Fletcher Writing Competition

Winner

- Denise Newton, NSW *The Bitterness of their Woe*

Equal Highly Commended

- Georgia Morris, ACT *An Ordinary Life*
- Kathy Sharpe, SA *E for Eternity*

Equal Commended

- Jeannine Lee, ACT *Ellen*
- Narelle McCoy, NSW *Hillcrest*
- Julie Webb, Qld *The Canada Girls*

Short Listed

- Stephen Castley, Qld *My Mum - My Genealogist*
- Noeline Gentle, ACT *And I thought I was an only Child*
- Margaret Grover, WA *The Woman in the Photograph*
- Mersija Illic, NSW *The Shotgun*
- Marcia Moon, NSW *Ellen's Scheming*
- Colleen Russell, NSW *Yours Faithfully*

FHACT Member Prize

- Margaret Clough, ACT *Tell me Again, Dad*

THANK YOU

Our thanks to all the entrants for sharing their stories and supporting the E.M. Fletcher Writing Competition. To our judges Dr Erica Cervini, Kathryn Coughran and Pennie Pemberton – our heartfelt thanks – we couldn't have run the competition without you.

Thank you to the Family History ACT Writing Committee members Rosemary McKenzie, Judy Loy, Barbara Broad and Gina Tooke and to Cheryl Bollard for her assistance with the zoom presentation.

"Compelling and Powerful. The expert fusion of facts and drama gives this story both authenticity and immediacy. Vivid imagery creates a sense of place and movement that draws the reader into the scene, giving the sense of being right there with the family under siege. You can feel the teeming rain and sogginess, and taste the dread and terror."



The Bitterness of Their Woe

Denise Newton

*'The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away.
Blessed be the name of the Lord.'*

I stare at Emma's memorial stone. It wasn't the Lord who took my darling wife away from me. It was my own foolish, stubborn nature. I thought I could keep them safe—Emma, our children, and my brother's family. I'd reckoned myself smarter than the Lord himself, who'd sent the rains. But what did I know? Not enough.

I do, however, know how to mourn.

Cornwallis, near Windsor NSW, 1867

That cursed rain began mid-June. When the fields around our house became a seething sheet of water, my brother George rode over to see me.

"The water's reached the level of the '64 flood," he said. "You'd best bring Emma and the children to my house. I've told William the same."

I agreed. George's house was newer than mine and our brother Will's, and on a higher point of land. We could wait it out in safety there.

Emma carried little Maudie and gripped Angelina's hand as they sloshed across low ground, already sodden from days of rain. I could barely see our two boys, walking ahead with Annie and Eliza. We covered our heads with our coats but were soaked and chilled when we reached George's door.

George ushered us inside and passed around towels to dry ourselves as best we could. William and Catherine were already there, their five youngsters gathered in a tight knot. The smallest ones were grizzling from cold and Emma went to help them get dry. Always kind, my Emma.

George said, "I'm taking Dora and the children by boat to Windsor. Shall I take Emma and your youngsters too?"

I hesitated. "What about your workers?" George had two young lads who worked his farm alongside him and his eldest boy.

"I can come back for them, if the river keeps rising."

I shook my head. "Take them now, and send another boat back for us if it's still raining by nightfall," I said. "We got through the last flood; remember how we'd worried my place would go under? Turned out fine. We'll be safe enough here. Get the lads into Windsor and send help if you think it needed."

I turned to Emma and the children. Emma was pale.

"Don't you think we should send the three youngest, at least? And Catherine's?" she said in a low voice.

I gave her a reassuring smile.

"The river has never reached George's house, not once. I've lived through plenty of floods. We'll be safe here. Wouldn't you rather we stayed together? George can send another boat for us, but I don't believe we'll need it."

Emma went to answer, but I cut her off.

"Trust me, the children will be safe. Now, you and Catherine get something hot for them to drink."

Emma bit her lip and turned away.

I had a moment of doubt then. Should I allow them to go with George? But George's boat wasn't big enough to take them—eleven children and their mothers. I'd shepherded us through the last big flood and would do so again. I knew this river and its moods.

We watched as George rowed his boat upstream. It dragged in the water under its heavy load and I was glad I hadn't trusted our little ones to it. George had enough to manage with his family and the lads. His wife turned to wave and shouted something back to us, but her voice was lost in the turbulent river as it raced past.

When night fell, I wished I had that time over to decide differently. I'd thought the rain heavy before, but as the world darkened, water crashed from the sky in torrents, a powerful wind behind it buffeting the sturdy walls and roof of George's house. Emma gasped at each thud. Then Charles called out in a frightened voice I'd not heard since he was a tiny boy.

"The water's coming in!"

We hurried to staunch the flow with towels, sheeting, anything we could find, but nothing stopped the cold rush of water under the door. Young Eliza, in a panic, opened the door and was knocked to the ground by a wave two feet high. She screamed before Emma scooped her up to safety.

William shouted, "We need to get everyone up on the roof. We'll drown otherwise." With difficulty we got outside, Maudie in my arms, Angelina on my shoulders.

Emma, Catherine and Charles followed with the others. William struggled with the ladder, finally tying its base to the gum tree outside the front door,

and leaning it against the house. We helped Catherine, Emma and the children climb to sit astride the ridge top. The women's legs tangled in their sodden skirts and Catherine reached a hand to steady Emma as she teetered. By now all the children were crying, except Annie and Charles, who held on to their siblings and cousins with grim determination.

The wind was ferocious up there.

I tried to say "We won't be here for long. George will send a boat—" but I broke off as no one could hear me above the din. I heard a dismal wailing and thought it was one of the children, but it was a cow, swirling past in the rushing water below us.

And still the rain sheeted down.

We stayed on that roof all night. A long, inky, fierce night. The rain and wind never let up, even for a moment. William and I made sure that no one fell asleep, by poking or nudging each of our group at intervals. I shivered so hard from the chill; I feared I'd jolt myself off the roof. I could see nothing below, but heard the evil gurgling of the water as it continued to rise.

When at last dawn arrived, I choked back a horrified cry when I saw how far up the house it had come. Surely it could not reach us on the roof? But how much longer could we last, cold and wet as we were?

It beggars belief, but we endured another whole day on that roof. The children were silent now, which was horrifying, much more so than their earlier tears. Catherine clasped her baby in her arms with little Clara slumped between her knees. Emma's lips moved; I think she was praying. She shuddered from the cold, gripping on for dear life and holding Maudie's legs to keep her safe. My chest and stomach tightened. They were all here because of me. If only I had taken up George's offer and sent them to safety. Right then, if I could have saved them all by plunging into the roiling waters below, I would have done so.

We looked in vain for George's boat—any boat. Why hadn't he sent help? The light faded and we were once again in darkness. I had not thought things could be worse but there, too, I was wrong. The storm intensified, thrashing us harder with rain that stung like shotgun pellets. Spiteful gusts of wind whipped at us. I was growing weary, so tired...how could the little ones keep holding on? But how could they not?

Then it came, a groan and a crack, audible even above the noises of wind and swollen river. The walls of George's house began to crumble and fall. There was a shifting in the roof beneath me and before I could think, I was plunged into the icy water. A scream...Emma or Catherine? Or one of the girls? I will never know whose voice I heard.

The shock of the cold water stunned but I got my head above it. Hidden things knocked and bumped me as the river swept me along. I reached out blindly and my hands closed around something solid. It was a tree branch, half submerged

but steady. I wrapped my arms around it, calling: “Emma! Charles? Eliza! Can you hear me? Come to my voice if you can! I’ll pull you to safety!”

Charles called, close by, his voice ragged in the gusting wind. “I’m here, and Uncle Will.”

I swallowed a sob. “Thank God! Are your sisters and mother near?”

There was no answer. I screamed Emma’s name, crying out for my children, and for Will’s family. Above the noise of the wind and water I heard Will doing the same. My hands splashed about in futile attempts to find a leg, hand or arm. When I tried to call again, icy water filled my mouth. Choking, spitting, eyes squeezed shut; I bent my head and wept. How could this be happening? How could I have been so wrong about this flood, the danger of it? I wanted nothing more at that moment than to let go and sink beneath that hateful water.

Then I roused myself. Charles was here, and Will. I had to help my boy and my brother; if I could save no one else I had to save them. I took one hand from the branch long enough to undo and remove my belt.

“Charles!” I called, “take my belt and tie yourself to the tree with it.”

His hand fumbled under the sloshing water towards mine and found the leather strap. Will shouted that he and Charles had made themselves fast. I could see nothing; could only pray that they would stay safe.

I clung to the branch, holding my head above the water that slapped and pulled at me. My limbs grew heavy with the intense cold and fatigue. I called words of encouragement to Charles and Will; they gave answering shouts to let me know they were still there. At times I had to fight the urge to let myself be washed away. Somewhere in the river’s turmoil were my Emma, our children, and my brother’s entire family. Why should I live?

But there was Charles, whose answering cries grew fainter as that hellish time wore on. I had to live, for Charles’ sake.

At last I heard a voice, not Charles or Will. Someone was calling out to whoever might be lost in the river or on its banks. There was the wavering light of a lantern held high.

“Here; over here!” My voice cracked, but the fellow in the boat heard and pulled towards us. I heaved myself over the edge of the boat, turned to help Charles and Will. We collapsed in a huddled heap on the floor of the vessel.

Will gasped out, “Our wives, children...” and the oarsman turned the boat in slow circles, calling into the darkness, but there was no sign of them. Eventually he gave up the search and turned the boat back towards safety.

We shivered and groaned in our misery, huddled in that boat. Two wives and ten children—vanished. Gone from us, forever.

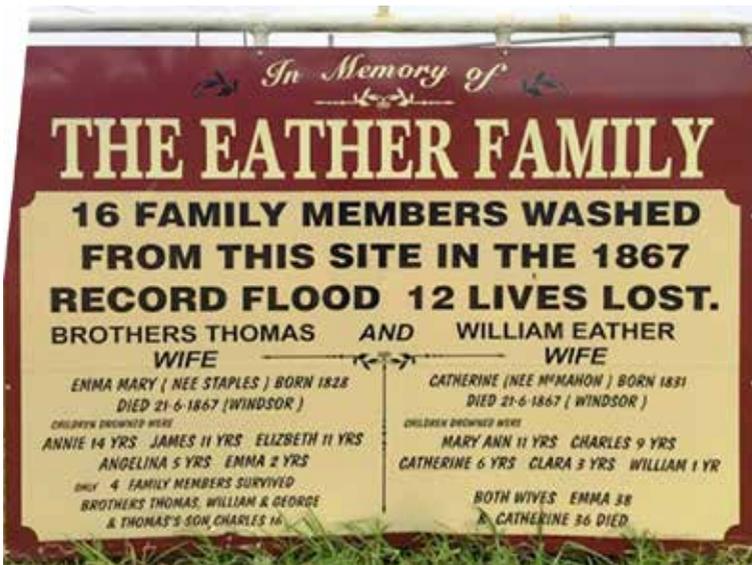
The waters receded after three days. Charles and I lay in bed, weakened from our ordeal. Searchers found Will's Catherine and their children—all drowned. A neighbour spotted my boy James, washed up downstream from George's house. We buried him the next day. Eliza's body was discovered two months later, on a sandbank a mile away. But my Emma, and Maudie, Angelina and Annie ... they were never found.

I thought it would fella me, the pain of it. I didn't care about the farm—the stock and crops and our house, all gone. Charles, Will and I stayed with George and Dora for a time. We rose each morning and went to bed each evening. The hours in between were lost to me for weeks. I registered nothing, except the loss of Emma and our children.

A newspaper report about the floods described the awful losses—of people, homes, farms, livestock. It said:

'The inhabitants of our district have not yet begun to taste the bitterness of their woe.'

Truer words were never written.



Eather memorial at Cornwallis, NSW. Photo by author.

Inspiration

The EATHERs who suffered such horrific loss in the 1867 Hawkesbury flood are members of my family tree.

"This cleverly constructed story uses a friend's passing comment to pose a question about a quiet man. The reader travels with him through his far-from-quiet war experiences as a lad. Fear and courage seep from the page. Years later, an unexpected twist casts a different light on his beginnings."



An Ordinary Life

Georgia Morris (Tarjan)

My father, George, was a quiet man. He lived most of his adult life in suburban Canberra. He had a career in the public service. He married and had three children.

When George died in his 80s, there was only a handful of people at his funeral. This is normal when you have outlived most of your contemporaries. Elderly people generally only attract a crowd at their funeral when they have led exceptional lives.

My father's life was unexceptional. Or was it?

In fact, George's early life was full of danger, sadness, thrill and adventure. Like Albert FACEY's humble biography, *A Fortunate Life*, the ordinariness of his adult life masked the frightening reality of his early years.

Only George's children and close friends knew anything about his pre-Australian life. It was something he rarely spoke about. The details I know are sparse and full of holes, gleaned from very few conversations.

Recently, several years after his death, we discovered another part of his story - a family secret that shed light on his family's activities during World War II.

His story is unique and yet so ordinary. It's fascinating to me because, after all, it's about my Dad! Yet his story is not uncommon among post-war European migrants to Australia. How many have similar stories to tell? Thousands I'm sure; in Europe, many hundreds of thousands.

Let me begin with this anecdote.

My good friend, Mike, always asked after my father when we met up. When my father retired, Mike asked what he was doing.

"Doing? What do you mean?" I said.

"Well, he must be *doing* something. Does he have a hobby, play golf, volunteer ...?"

I thought for a moment. "He likes to read. He's working his way through Marcel Proust." I thought more. "He has a new puppy."

Mike was aghast. "Is that *all*? Isn't he bored? Doesn't he want some excitement in his life?"

I told Mike my father liked his quiet life. He had had plenty of 'excitement' in his early years and was happy never to have any 'excitement' ever again. Of course, Mike asked me why. It was a perfect segue to tell him about my father's experiences in Europe. I thought these would be meaningful to Mike, as his Jewish parents had come to Australia escaping Nazi persecution.

I heard my father's story for the first time as a teenager. Our family was holidaying in Rome where my father, surprisingly, was an expert guide. He knew all the back streets and shortcuts, quirky churches left out of the tourist guides, and the most beautiful, hidden squares.

"How come you know Rome so well?" I asked, curious. "Er ... it's a long story," he replied.

One evening, a few days later, my father unexpectedly took my brother and me to the local trattoria, leaving my mother and younger brother behind at our Pensione.

"You're old enough for me to tell you" he began. That caught our attention, and we were riveted to every word he said for the next hour.

My father told us, sparingly and with little emotion, how he had ended up in Rome after escaping Budapest at the age of 16 with the help of a Zionist organisation. He started with some context so we could better understand how it happened.

George and his family were in Budapest during World War II, due to sheer bad luck. The family had lived in France for twenty years, where my grandfather, Geza, was a businessman.

However while visiting relatives in Budapest, war was declared, the borders slammed shut, and the family was trapped.

For the next six years they lived under the Nazi-controlled Hungarian government, witnessing the persecution and murder of their Jewish friends and neighbours.

At great personal risk, my father's family helped their Jewish friends. Geza was offered a position in the government as a trade commissioner to Vichy France which involved travel between the two countries. Under this guise, he procured and disseminated false identity papers enabling Jewish people to pass as Catholic. A French friend of Geza's, who George visited soon after the war, said 'Your father ... he was with the Resistance'. She did not elaborate, and young George didn't ask any questions; it was not something anyone talked about then.

My father told us about another incident. One night, Jewish friends arrived at their home with their young son, asking Geza to take the boy while they hid elsewhere. The boy, my father's age, stayed with them for several weeks, passed off as a 'cousin from the country'.

After the war, when Hungary was absorbed into the Soviet Union, former fascists and anticommunists were jailed and sometimes 'disappeared'. Geza was also jailed, accused of being a Nazi sympathiser because of his government position.

It was only after many people gave contrary evidence citing my grandfather's secret, anti-Nazi activities that he was eventually released.

Over the next few years, George continued his high school studies. He was an exceptional student. In his last year, the school principal selected him for a scholarship to Moscow University.

When George told his father the news, Geza didn't respond for a moment. Then he said, "Well ... you'll either rise to the top of the Politburo, or you'll be assassinated before you're 40".

George did not want to go to Moscow. But there was no possibility of refusing such an 'honour'.

Then something else happened. The Jewish boy, who for a few weeks had been passed off as George's cousin, told him a secret.

This boy - let's call him Endre - had survived the Holocaust and was still friends with my father. I don't know what happened to Endre's parents. My father told me that Endre's father was a fencing champion who represented Hungary at the Olympic Games. I assume they didn't survive, otherwise Endre may not have had this secret to tell.



Geza and George - last photo taken together 1949

Endre told George that he would be escaping Hungary. An underground Zionist organisation was planning to smuggle out a group of orphaned Jewish boys and help them reach Palestine.

George wanted to leave with Endre. But it was impossible: he wasn't Jewish. And the likelihood of successfully escaping Hungary was low, while the likelihood of death was high.

Nevertheless, after much thought, George went to Geza and told him Endre's secret, and that he, George, also wanted to leave Hungary.

Geza asked George if he was sure. George might never be able to return or see his family again. George said yes: 'If I went to Moscow, I'd probably never see you again anyway'.

"Leave it to me," said Geza. "I still have some contacts."

A few weeks later, Geza told his son he would be leaving in the same group as Endre. "The Zionists agreed to take you as a favour to me."

Word came soon via an anonymous message that George was to go to a certain bus stop at a certain time and then "follow the boy in the black cap".

Geza came with George as far as the street corner near their apartment to say goodbye. George never saw his father again.

After a few minutes, George saw a boy in a black cap and started following him. They crossed streets, turned corners, and after a while, George realised the boy he was following was following another boy, who was following another boy, and so on. Similarly, there was another boy following him.

Eventually they reached the main train station and the platform for the Vienna train. Just before the train was due to leave, a man pushed a ticket and papers into George's hand and told him to board.

The next few hours were some of the most frightening in his young life. At the Austrian border, the border guards ordered him out of the train. He was soon joined by all the other boys and taken to the guard post.

George was sure his journey was over. At best, he would spend the rest of his life imprisoned. At worst, he would be executed. But then something unexpected happened. They were allowed back on the train.

George doesn't know why they were let go. They had fake papers and the guards obviously knew it. He suspects the man who provided the papers, and who had boarded with them, had been 'asked' to pay an additional bribe, which fortunately he was ready to pay.

Eventually, after many more adventures, George arrived in Australia, entering the unremarkable phase of his life - one that he valued for its stability, safety, tolerance, and mediocrity.

I love the story of my father and his family. I'm proud they risked their lives to stand up for what they believed in. I get a kick out of telling people my father escaped from Hungary with a Zionist group, even though he wasn't Jewish.

However, when I told my friend Mike about it all those years ago, I got an unexpected reaction.

"Your family must have been Jewish," he pronounced. "Otherwise that just wouldn't have happened."

I huffed. "They were definitely Catholic. My father was baptised. My grandmother went to Mass every Sunday."

I remember feeling deflated - and annoyed. Why couldn't Mike believe there were good people in the world? My grandfather was by no means the only European non-Jew who had risked their life to protect Jewish people.

Years later, my aunt told another story about my grandfather's bravery. Geza had served during World War I as a cavalry officer in the Royal Hungarian Hussars. One day he put on his old uniform, marched to the ghetto where Budapest's Jews were forced to live, and announced to the guards that he had orders to take certain people away. He waved around the forged 'order', successfully bluffing his way out with several of his friends.

We also recently found out that my father's family hid at least two other Jewish boys in their cellar, in addition to 'hiding' young Endre in plain sight.

I've often thought about my grandfather's actions, and others like him, and wondered what I would do in that situation. Would I be brave enough? I'm not sure.

So now we come to the family secret. Earlier this year, my brother sent a DNA sample to *Ancestry*. The results shocked us.



Geza Tarjan - Royal Hungarian Hussars 1914-19

Half his DNA is exactly as expected. It reflects the Spanish, Italian and French heritage of my Argentine mother, confirming detailed family-tree research and her own DNA results.

The other half of my brother's DNA is Ashkenazi Jew.

Ashkenazi Jews have been a discrete genetic population for over a thousand years, so we are confident the results are accurate. It means both my father's parents were of Jewish heritage. Who knows how far back they converted to Catholicism, but my grandparents must have known; surely it would be too much of a coincidence that they married without knowing each other's families had been Jewish?

What does this mean for my father's story? Was my friend, Mike, right after all? Did the Zionists help my father escape because of his Jewish heritage? Was Geza motivated by his family ancestry? If he hadn't 'really been Jewish' as Mike claimed, would he have risked so much?

Of course we don't know. I never met my grandfather. He died in Hungary before I was born. But his bravery is undiminished by this revelation.

I'm sad that my father died before this discovery. I'm convinced he never knew. I'm sure he would have told us, especially in his later years in the safety of

Australia. I imagine his parents could not risk telling a child such a dangerous secret.

When I told Mike about the DNA result, he laughed and asked if I would start going to synagogue. I laughed too and told him that he had been right all along - my father's family was Jewish.

"What are you talking about?" Mike responded, puzzled. "I never said that."

Inspiration

My father's story reflects the enormous diversity of Canberra's population, describing just one complex past life. We think we know someone. But do we really?

"A man struggles to make sense of his son's mental illness. Skilful writing holds feelings under the surface, yet so close they are palpable. This arousing story is anchored in history by the building of Sydney Harbour Bridge and the 'midnight ghost' whose chalked Eternity on pavements resonates with the father's heartache that his son is lost... forever."



E for Eternity

Kathy Sharpe

From inside the deep casing of Sydney sandstone Patrick couldn't hear the rain outside, though he knew it would be falling steadily onto the grey sheen of the streets. City people would be hurrying under black umbrellas. There would be a few smart, polished shoes stepping over puddles, but more and more now, patched up, battered old shoes, shoes that would have to make do for another winter. As he sat there, cramped from crouching at Tommy's bedside, he shivered. He folded over a fresh page of The Sun, reading to Tommy about the progress of the new bridge, about the great iron arms that reached for each other, inching ever closer. Tommy's eyes flickered, as though with some pale memory. Was he thinking of the bridge at home, over the Macleay?

Patrick patted Tommy's arm. "You're alright son."

Patrick was stared at in wonder by the other men who lay in the line of long, iron beds on Tommy's ward. He was that rarest of things - a visitor. The day he brought Tommy in, the prim young woman at the front desk had looked Patrick up and down. You didn't have to pay if you didn't have the means, she explained. She handed him a piece of paper to sign, but then frowned at his old suit and country hat, saying, "you can write your name, can't you?"

Every other day The Sun had a story about the ghost who roamed the night streets of Sydney, writing the word "Eternity" in curls and flourishes on the pavement. The word would appear on George Street or Liverpool Street, or even out in the suburbs, in Ashfield, in Camperdown, in Balmain. The word was an overnight phantom, to be washed away with the next rain. Eternity. Patrick thought of the old man, thumping the bible down on the cedar table, making the china clatter, the children falling silent at the sound of the hard words. Eternity. Damnation. Repent.

"That's the funny thing, Tommy," he said. "There isn't anything eternal about it at all. It's just chalk. It's always gone by morning."

Down at The Bayview Hotel, where Patrick sometimes stopped on his way home from the hospital, a friend of a friend always seemed to have seen the Eternity man, disappearing down a lane at dawn. Patrick enjoyed the quiet boasting of the men as he downed a few fast schooners to steel himself for Bridget's questions.

"Where are you from, mate?" the men would ask him.

"Kempsey," he would tell them, hearing the light come back into his own voice. He would order another beer then, and let his mind wander back there, to the dew thick on the grass and the sparkling splash the kids made when they swung off the trees into the creek. He would wake with a start in his city bed, his dreams salty with the reeds that grew along the banks of the Macleay. He would lie awake then, thinking of the nights when he and Bridget were woken by the Kempsey police sergeant knocking at the door, gently pushing Tommy inside.

"Wandering again," Sergeant MILLER would grumble, annoyed at being woken by whoever had found Tommy this time, on some road outside town or on a neighbour's property or patrolling the main street, talking away to himself.

They would lead Tommy back to his room then, the faces of the three smaller children peering around the door.

"Go back to bed," Patrick would tell them. Tommy would be shaking, speaking of all the strange things that only he could see. Patrick held his hands, trying to warm them while Bridget sat, white faced. He let Tommy talk, seeing how his son flinched with fright every now and then at his own thoughts. Their boy, with his tall, strong body, his eyes the colour of sunlight on river water, and his face, swallowed by fear.

"What's wrong with him?" the old man would grumble over breakfast. "Hard work will fix him. He just needs to toughen up." He would bellow prayers at them

all, before they were allowed to eat. The old man prayed against hunger and the old stories of Ireland, of failed harvests and empty cooking pots, and Patrick knew that the fear of it was where his anger came from.

Then Sergeant MILLER, back again one morning with Doctor NOLAN in tow, sitting in the front room drinking tea.

"It's called Gladesville," Sergeant MILLER said, cheerfully sipping his tea from one of Bridget's good cups. "It's for lunatics."

Doctor NOLAN frowned at him.

"It's not such a bad place, not these days. It was once full of convicts and whores but now they have good doctors there. He'd be well looked after."

They told the children they were all going on a holiday. Patrick watched the green dairy farms roll by as the train headed south. Bridget was happy to be going back to her own people in the city, to get away from the old man. The children stared out the window in wonder at the passing paddocks and towns, calling out when they saw a pony or a newborn calf. The littlest one sat beside Tommy and held his cold hand in hers.

Gladesville seemed at first to Patrick to be the grandest place he'd ever seen. But inside, after the forms had been filled out and he and Tommy walked with the nurse to the dormitory, he saw the lines of shadowy people, enveloped in a silence that was quieter than quiet. A doctor came in and slowly folded Tommy down to sit on his bed. The nurse took his suitcase. They would give him something to settle him, the doctor said. He handed the nurse some pills and she told Tommy sharply to stick out his tongue. She held a glass of water to his mouth. Tommy blinked as the big pills went down.

"Probably best if you go now and let him get settled," the doctor said.

Tommy looked from Patrick to the doctor, back and forth. Patrick leaned over and said, "I'll see you tomorrow, son," and walked away quickly, forcing himself not to turn around. The nurse walked with him, through a long corridor, passing doors from where he could hear people calling out.

Outside the hospital he sat for a while on a stone bench in the grim little garden, thinking how he would answer all Bridget's questions. He thought about the words he would choose to make Tommy's room warmer and brighter, the nurses kinder, the bed softer.

"It won't be forever," he would tell her. It won't be for eternity.

They were lucky they had Bridget's sister in Ryde to stay with. They were better off than the people Patrick saw outside the terraces when he walked through Surrey Hills and Redfern, the unwashed children, not a pair of shoes between them. Bridget's laugh was lighter here, taking the children to the park with her sister, or on a trip to the beach, or into the city where great buildings threw shadows into the street. Patrick dug up Bridget's sister's garden at the back,

planting the seeds he'd brought with him from the farm; cabbage, cauliflower, butternut pumpkins.

Tommy liked to hear the newspaper stories about Don Bradman, and Phar Lap, but his favourites were the stories about the bridge, and the shipping pages that told of the comings and goings in the great harbour. The men at the Bayview who had worked on the bridge said you could see the Blue Mountains from up the top. Patrick told Tommy he would take him there one day, to see the graceful ferries tracking back and forth and to watch the rusted cargo ships making their way to the finger wharves.

At the end of visiting time a nurse would come in and tap her watch. Sometimes Patrick would stop at the office downstairs, and interrupt the prim young woman to ask if he could speak to a doctor. The doctors were mostly busy, but a nurse would be summoned to pull up Tommy's case notes. The nurse would read how Tommy had told the doctors the kitchen curtains in Kempsey were on fire and how people were following him. The nurse seemed unsurprised by anything she read in those notes, and always closed the book with a snap that made Patrick feel that she knew he was one of the ones who didn't pay.

Sometimes he walked home the long way, around by the water, where the bowler hatted boys from rich families rowed on Bedlam Bay. Sorrow nipped at his heels like a mangy dog, returning again and again as much as he tried to kick it away. Even when he remembered how Tommy's eyes had shone as he read about Bradman's feats, he could only think of the local boys from the Macleay farms, gathering to play cricket on a Saturday, Tommy watching with Patrick, never having the confidence to go and join in.

One day a doctor he'd never seen before appeared at the end of Tommy's bed as Patrick sat there reading. Tommy looked up, wary. Patrick could tell this was a very important doctor, in his



Thomas Patrick O'Connell, died in 1933 at the age of 26 after refusing to eat. Tommy suffered from schizophrenia and was treated at Gladesville Mental Hospital. Our family still has a trunk full of books and magazines about boats that belonged to Tommy, a symbol of his unfulfilled dreams.

ink black suit with a shiny silver fob watch dangling at his pocket. The doctor studied his clipboard, and frowned.

“And where are you people from again?” he asked absentmindedly. “From Kempsey,” Patrick told him, and the doctor raised an eyebrow.

“On the Macleay,” Patrick added, but the doctor didn’t seem to be interested and was drumming on Tommy’s wrist with a little mallet.

“We’ll go back there, eventually,” Patrick said, as much to himself as to the doctor. “Once Tommy gets better.”

The doctor turned to him. He stopped writing on his clipboard, and bent down, speaking softly into Patrick’s ear.

“You do realise, don’t you, he’s not going to get better?”

Long after the doctor had moved on with his rounds, Patrick sat there. He took his son’s hand and tried to read his face, which was floating in a fog of sedation. The nurse came in and tapped her watch. Patrick realised he was squeezing Tommy’s hand too hard, as though the anger was coming out of him and onto his son, his poor son, with his dreams of bridges and boats, running after, but never quite keeping up with the other kids. He pulled his hand away and forced himself to stand, to turn, to walk out into the corridor, like so many times before.

He walked, then quickened his pace, then began to run, ignoring the nurse who called to him to slow down as he hurtled out into the ugly garden that led down to the little creek. The men at The Bayview had told him there were hundreds of people buried at the bottom of the garden. All the mad people that no one wanted, they said.

Patrick walked around the point, looking out to see where boats bobbed, where yachts were moored, where the rich boys called to each other as their oars cut through the water. The Bayview’s warm, smoky chatter lured him, but not as achingly as the bright, fresh skies of the farm. He put one step in front of the other, thinking all the time about what he would say to Bridget when he got home. Thinking about the right words to choose.

Under the plane trees something caught his eye on the grey of the pavement, a curling, snaking tail of chalk. He stopped. It was there, sheltered by the umbrella arms of the tree, the proud curves of the capital E. E for eternity, the rest of the word faded away in the rain.

Inspiration

Researching letters and hospital records about a family secret, my great uncle’s institutionalisation during the depression, revealed to me the steadfast love of his father.

“The writer skilfully employs her character’s reflections as a device to unfold what has come before. The reader is privy to her innermost thoughts and the decision-making process that changes her life, and her daughter’s, forever. The surprise ending will crash in on you...”



Ellen

Jeannine Lee

“We *have* to go,” urged Elizabeth. “There’s nothing here now, nothing left to stay for,” she said. “What, are we going to keep on here when everything’s gone and there’s only Dad’s bones in the graveyard tying us to Chatham?”

She glared at her mother, expecting a fight. She’d never known her father but her mother’s devotion to his memory had driven her, kept her and the family alive.

Ellen’s tired gaze drifted around the sad, bare room before coming to rest on her daughter. She hadn’t the energy to fight her any more. She was right, of course. Elizabeth was always right. Sturdy and practical, Lizzy had kept her sights on something better than mere survival. Now she was urging her mother to move to Birmingham where life was bound to be better. It had to be. Life on the docks was uncertain for the likes of her. But the big midland city was a hundred and fifty miles away and her family had lived here, in Chatham, for nearly thirty years. Hard and desperate years, most of them but she didn’t like the sound of Birmingham at all – too big, too much like London.

Ghosts and tired despair haunted the shadows and memories settled in the corners. Ellen closed her eyes, blocked out the past and tried to think of another solution, somewhere else she could go, something else she could do rather than make that daunting trip at her age.

She was fifty, for pity’s sake. Of course, she’d done it before, travelled that sort of distance but then she was younger, much younger, still just shy of twenty and as strong and sturdy as Lizzie was now. Strong enough to do seven days hard labour just for stealing a tot of brandy to keep her warm that cold winter’s day, she remembered with a grimace; but the good folk of Bridgwater turned their back on her after that. Not even domestic work for her, they were so afraid she’d raid the liquor cabinets.

Her young man, George, a journeyman shipwright, said “come on, let’s go to London”. She turned away from Somerset without a backward glance.

Damned if she’d go back there now, she thought. She’d brought up five kids more or less on her own after George died. She was still pregnant with Lizzie when that godawful bloody coughing disease took him off. He was just thirty-two and they hadn’t even been married for ten years.

Her eldest child and namesake – Nellie, to the family – was born in Poplar when George had good work at Canary Wharf in London's Isle of Dogs. But George had been told there was better work to be had at the Chatham dockyard in Kent and it was healthier, too, by the sea, a bit like Bridgwater and far away from those stinking Poplar slums. Nellie was just a toddler when we came to Chatham, remembered Ellen, and only eight when her father died. But she'd been a hard little worker, helping to look after the children and keep the house in order while Ellen worked her fingers to the bone as a mangle-woman and a grocer to keep a roof over all their heads and food in their bellies. The community had taken pity on her after George died and had a whip round, enough to buy her a mangle, so she could at least earn a few pennies doing other people's washing. With the barracks nearby as well, there was plenty of laundry work to be had and selling a few fruit and vegetables on the street bought in a bit more.

But Nellie had escaped the drudgery and uncertainty of domestic service when she married her soldier – a thoroughly suspicious character, in Ellen's opinion – who was supposedly an officer in the Oxford and Bucks Light Infantry before suddenly changing to the Military Prisons Staff and landing himself at the Brompton Barracks near the docks. Ellen didn't like him. Nellie had been in too much of hurry about it in Ellen's opinion but no doubt that bugger had charmed her, urged her to run away with him 'to a better life'. Her eldest son Richard – and Lizzie, who was all of sixteen at the time – witnessed the marriage but the certificate said he was a widower, Lizzie confided later. None of us knew that at the time, Ellen remembered. It was all a bit too fast; they'd barely been married five minutes before he whisked Nellie off to his posting in a prison somewhere in the West Indies. According to Nellie's last letter, they'd already had two kiddies and Nellie was pregnant with a third but Ellen doubted she'd ever see them. That drunken nasty bugger won't bring them home in my life time, she thought.

Richard had made a complete fool of himself in the meantime, getting tied up with that woman he was boarding with. Mary Louisa whatever-her-name-was, a widow fifteen years older than him, lured him into her bed when he was still a randy teenager. Silly gullible prat. Wanted to get out from under my apron, be self-sufficient, didn't he. Well, it gave me less work to do and fewer mouths to feed but I miss the extra coppers he put in my purse, thought Ellen. That woman saw him coming, I reckon. Got him all cosy in her boarding house – bawdy house, more like – then announced she was pregnant and Richard the father. Ellen curled her lip. He'd married the woman of course. Ellen thought the father could've been any of those boarders but that woman saw Richard coming and thought he was her ticket out. Ah well. He was stuck now, working all the hours he could get on the River Medway bridge, living in a crowded house with that woman, her various children by who knows which father, as well as her mother and a bunch of other lodgers, from what she'd heard. On a hiding to a bad end and an early grave, Ellen predicted.

She shifted in her seat, trying to get comfortable. Not that there was any comfort left in the ancient chair – the padding had worn through years ago and the legs were somehow uneven, giving the sitter an unexpected wobble every now and

then. William, her second son, had been good with his hands and had tried to fix it but somehow never quite managed to get the legs balanced. She liked the wobble, anyway – it made her think of him and wonder how he was getting on. Secretly, Will had been her favourite; she'd named him after her favourite uncle, the one who'd set himself up as a baker and confectioner. She was glad Will had got away to London. He'd trained up as a blacksmith and married that nice lass, Louisa – as different from his brother's Mary Louisa as you could get – and had a dear little girl. But smithing was a hard life and she hadn't heard from Will since the baby was born.

And then there was young George. Still single, still scraping a living as a labourer at the dockyard, still living in lodgings just up the road, still getting himself into trouble and spending far too much time in the Old Iron Ship on the corner. Probably drank most of his pay there, as well. Where and with whom he'd end up was anybody's guess.

Ellen sighed. Lizzie was right. There was nothing here anymore. She'd been given notice to quit – the demolition was due to start in a few weeks, there was nowhere else to live and not much in the way of work, either. Besides, she was getting too old to manhandle that damn machine. Thirty years as a mangling woman had taken its toll on her poor old body.

The letter from her cousin Sarah lay open in her lap, urging Ellen to come to Birmingham. She wrote that her father, Ellen's Uncle William, had retired but the family now had several bakers' shops and would sort something out for them, put a decent roof over their heads, find them work. Sarah's dad and Ellen's dad were brothers and their mothers were sisters – how's that for keeping it in the family, Ellen thought with a smile. The two families had even lived on the same street in Bridgwater. When her father had fallen on hard times, Ellen and her older sister had gone to live with Uncle William; her uncle was already a master baker then so there was fresh bread in the house every day and she could still smell it whenever she thought of him. She smiled, remembering. At the time, her dad and mum and the three youngest girls were obliged to live on charity in parish lodgings while the two youngest boys were sent to the union workhouse. The others were off being servants somewhere or other – she couldn't remember where – but her oldest brother John had somehow landed in Taunton jail, though she never knew why and she never saw him again, either.

There was just her and Lizzie now and George's bones in the nearby cemetery, in a pauper's grave. "All right," she said to Lizzie. "Let's go to Birmingham."

Elizabeth made sure the blackout blinds were all in place and the lights out before she closed the shop. It was December 1940 and the bakery – still with Uncle William's family name above the lintel – always did a good trade leading up to Christmas, with her famed pastries especially in demand. Thankfully, bread hadn't been rationed during this damnable war but the Luftwaffe had been bombing the hell out of the city for weeks and Elizabeth needed to visit St

Thomas's cemetery before the air raid sirens sounded again that night. It wasn't far away – on the way home, really – and Elizabeth reflected that her mother would have appreciated the short walk, after all the miles she'd travelled in her lifetime.

The grave marker was a simple one, tucked away in a corner in a cheap public grave but Elizabeth had eventually scraped enough together to mark it with a simple headstone: just her mother's name and birth and death dates. She'd died forty-two years ago, on Christmas Eve, when she was only fifty-eight and was buried on New Year's Eve, here in this sheltered corner. Elizabeth had never forgotten the helpless despair she felt, witnessing her mother's death. Exhaustion, it said on the death certificate. Well, that's no surprise. Exhaustion and gangrene, where her foot had started to turn bad from the old injury that had never really healed properly and the bitter winter cold. We'd only been here for a handful of years but it had all been too much for Ma; too much time had passed and yet not enough to recover her health and thrive into a healthy old age. God forbid I should ever be that poor and helpless again, thought Elizabeth.

She set the few flowers and the tiny loaf of bread, baked specially, on the ground beneath the headstone and stood for a while, remembering how her mother faithfully tended her father's grave in the Chatham cemetery. She placed her gnarled hand briefly on Ellen's headstone, seeing the decades of hard work imprinted on her skin and in her bones.

The wailing sirens sounded and Elizabeth automatically looked skywards. "Here they come again," she muttered to herself, the brief flicker of fear giving her pause. She hurried to gather herself and her belongings and scurried towards the gate. There was a shelter somewhere nearby, she was sure of it. Her old bones protested against the rush and she stumbled, falling heavily across the grave as the bombs began to fall around her.

The church crumpled under a direct hit. When the raid was over, only the tower and west portico remained and tons of rubble buried the graves.

Inspiration

Researching Ellen, my 2nd great-grandmother, the 1871 census intrigued me: 'age 30, widow, grocer, manglewoman'. She had five children. What was her story?

"The heart-breaking answer to a child's persistent questioning about her grandmother, raises more questions... about her, and attitudes towards women of her time. Topped and tailed with scrutiny of two photographs, this story is a perfect example of how details in images can enhance family history success."



Hillcrest

Narelle McCoy

"Hillcrest". The house still haunts my dreams, even decades after it was demolished. It was my father's family home, commanding a view of the suburb of Ashgrove. Though I went there as a child, it is the old sepia photograph I see when I close my eyes - the broad verandahs, the decorative portico, the wide front stairs, the sash windows, and the towering fence. To the far right of the frame, is my Grandfather Paddy, proud native of County Clare, standing to attention in his old-fashioned police uniform. He is slim and tall with a bristling moustache. Though he died before I was born, I carry this image of him, upright and protective of his family. To the far left stand my uncles, Jack and Jim, hair cropped short, wearing matching home-made shirts and shorts. They stare suspiciously at the camera. Alone, in the middle of the shot, stands Michael, my father, the youngest, a fading ghost in a white smock, his serious smile his only discernible feature. The boys are bare footed on the rough grass.

As a child, this photo made me anxious. Where was Granny Margaret? Why did the boys have no shoes? My mother sarcastically referred to them as urchins straight out of the Irish bog, but to me they looked like lost boys, bereft of a mother's touch; the touch that should have smoothed down the cow licks, wiped the dirty faces, laced up the shoes. I wanted to know where Granny was hiding, but there could be no questions asked of my father as he never discussed his mother. He talked about Grandfather Paddy, the Dada, with pride and love, but on the subject of his mother, he was silent, mouth snapped shut and downward turned. I assumed that she had died after the birth of my Aunt Mary. This was reinforced by my mother's comment that "giving birth to Mary would be enough to kill anyone". I was too young to recognise sarcasm, so I was satisfied with this explanation. There were no photos of Granny in any of our albums, no studio portraits hung on the walls; however, there was a framed picture of Grandfather Paddy, seated and holding a scroll. He reminded me of my favourite poet, W.B. Yeats, with his intelligent and quizzical air. But Granny Margaret remained elusive. Her absence was a dark hole in the family mythology, that chronicle of wild exploits, dangerous dares, and mad gambles.

As I grew older, this absence pressed on me. My mother's Irish family was a wonderful cacophony of great-aunts and great-great aunts who gossiped ceaselessly about their lives. This made me pity poor Granny Margaret all the more, wrapped in solitude and silent neglect. By the age of thirteen, I had plucked up the courage to ask my darling maternal grandmother for the truth.

Nana solemnly made me cross my heart and hope to die if I told anyone about our conversation. She made a cup of tea for us both and unravelled the sad tale.

Margaret had been a great beauty from a wealthy family, a Protestant who was educated at Brisbane Girls' Grammar. She had trained with a French milliner and made creations which were sold in an exclusive salon in Melbourne. Then she met Paddy. They fell in love, her family disowned her, but she was strong-willed and married in the Catholic Church. They bought Hillcrest, had three boys and a girl. Paddy was promoted and they re-located to the police house in North Ipswich, soon after the birth of Mary. That was when the trouble started. Margaret began to wander at night. She would float down the roads, dressed only in her nightgown, a ghostly figure looking for her home. Paddy was desperate. He locked the door to their room at night, but as soon as he fell asleep, she would escape, her feet whispering over the splintery verandah floorboards. He barricaded the doors, but she escaped through the windows, ceaselessly searching for a way back to Hillcrest. In desperation and half-mad with fatigue, he locked her in the small police cell, which was attached to the house, but her mournful howls caused the dogs to bark and the children to cry. Eventually, early one morning she was found on the bridge over the Bremer River, staring down at the brown water, sixty feet below. She was taken to the Ipswich Asylum at Sandy Gallop where she was diagnosed with "blood poisoning of the brain following childbirth". She was committed for treatment and never returned home.

Finding out the truth was worse than remaining ignorant. I was horrified that my Granny had been taken away and locked up in the fearsome Ipswich Asylum. Dying at a young age was far preferable to rotting away, imprisoned, and afraid. It would be decades before the condition post-partum psychosis was discovered. How many other young women were removed from their families, given invasive treatments, and deprived of the support of their loved ones? I later found out that Granny Margaret lived at Sandy Gallop from 1918 until she died in 1958, after a lifetime of hospitalisation. She must have had a great deal of courage to survive so long at a time when the treatment for mental illness was brutal. The medical armoury contained fearsome tools such as hysterectomy, cold water hydrotherapy, purges, and in latter days electroshock treatment. The stigma of mental illness kept my father's family silent about her condition. It was as though she had died when they were children.

True to my word, I never spoke of Granny Margaret to anyone but whenever I read a book or saw a movie about "mad" women, I thought of her. Whether it was poor Bertha MASON burning down the house in *Jane Eyre*, or the beautiful and doomed Susanna DRAKE dying in the swamps of *Raintree County*, I sympathised with those misunderstood and mistreated women.

As I grew into an adult, Nana told me that Paddy had tried to have Margaret released many times over the years, but he had been refused at each attempt. The head doctor thought that it would "disturb her mental balance" if she went back into the community. Paddy faithfully visited her, as did my father all down the long years of her hospitalisation. When Paddy died in 1953, my father

continued on alone. He never took my mother. She had a sharp tongue, and she would not have lost the opportunity to wound him if it suited her. My Nana was the opposite, a discreet woman who kept her own counsel. I was thrilled to learn that she had been an occasional visitor to Sandy Gallop. She described Granny Margaret as a beautiful and graceful woman who was “a real lady”, Nana’s highest accolade. She told me of her exquisite embroidery skills with stitches so fine they were like gossamer. Whenever Nana visited, Margaret would give her one her creations as a gift. I still cherish an embroidered lawn handkerchief that she made, tangible proof that my Granny really existed and was not a Gothic figment of my imagination.

While the other inmates were weaving baskets, Granny made stylish hats for the staff for race days, sewed their trousseaux for their weddings and smocked delicate baby clothes for their newborns. I wondered if anyone saw the tragic irony in this; a woman deprived of her own children, creating beautiful clothes for the families of her carers.

After my father died, I found a wedding photo of his parents among his possessions, the only photograph he had of his mother. I remember the visceral reaction as I picked up the sepia- tinted studio photograph with shaking hands, my tears blurring the figures. The bridesmaids and groomsman look resplendent in their formal attire. The women are seated, long dresses demurely tucked in concealing their ankles, while on their heads are balanced enormous hats covered in flowers. Their hands clutch large posies to their bosoms. There are jardinières filled with plants in the background, and pieces of polished furniture convey the feeling of easy luxury. The men wear three-piece suits, with fob-watch chains on display. High celluloid collars and small white bow ties give the final touch of gravitas. Paddy stands in the centre of the photo, towering protectively behind Margaret. His trademark handlebar moustache is waxed, his hair brushed back, a faint smile on his lips. In his right hand he holds his hat, giving the impression that he is ready to dash off with his beloved as soon as the photographer has captured the moment. Margaret wears a delicate, lace high-necked dress while on her hands she wears lace fingerless gloves. Her hair is swept up under her veil and she has mock orange blossoms arranged artfully in her ringlets. One curl has escaped and sits on her forehead, giving her a girlish air. She looks straight at the camera. Her lips are slightly compressed, as they often are in old photos, conveying a stern expression. But it is the eyes that hold the viewer. Under level brows, her gaze is fearless and confident, looking to the future, undaunted.

Inspiration

My inspiration came from two photographs - the only images of my paternal grandmother and of my father’s family home at Ashgrove.

"This well-researched narrative focusses on three sisters transported from Ireland to New South Wales. The writer draws you into one sister's reflections on her torn-apart family, and uses flashbacks to weave together fears of their current situation and apprehension for their uncertain future."



The Canada Girls

Julie Webb

The violent rocking motion of the ship had calmed; at times, it was almost peaceful. Sun glitter sparkled as it picked up reflection from the waves, glistening, almost blinding at times, like a thousand stars in the night. The menacing vertical sandstone cliffs framed the harbour entrance. Navigating this passage was no mean feat of seamanship. The crew were well-versed with the inconsistencies of a long sea voyage, having made this trip three times previously, ahead lay their objective, so close but still not without risk. Good weather conditions meant the Captain had given orders for the women's morning exercise. Climbing to the deck, every woman clamoured for the smell of the fresh salty air, whilst it took away the lingering stench of their clothing, what little remained, and instilled new hope into each one of them. Voiceless chatter drummed in their ears as they gazed with awe at the beautiful, although untamed landscape materialising before them.

The *Canada*, on her fourth voyage, again under Captain John GRIGG's command and with surgeon James ALLAN, brought 89 female convicts from Cork to Port Jackson. Her reputation for good management and an enviable health chronicle preceded her arrival. Built at Shields in 1800, she was a well-regarded ship with two decks of 403 tons. Although a merchant ship and in no need of armaments, the *Canada* carried two six-pounder guns and ten eighteen pounder carronades, no doubt requested for her charters under the British East India Company. She ran out to Rio de Janeiro in an excellent time of 46 days and completed the total journey in 138 days, whilst other ships could take up to 190 days. Surgeon ALLAN had expressed his pleasure at the reasonably good health of all on board; fortunately, they had experienced no deaths of any prisoners or others during the voyage.

The day had arrived, Tuesday, 5 August 1817. Nineteen-year-old Bridget KEATING stood with the other women on the *Canada* deck as she sailed into Port Jackson. Her older sister, Ann KELLY, was also on deck with her daughter Mary by her side, but they could not speak, as the women with children were separated. Her other sister, sixteen-year-old Sarah, was also on board but had spoken very little to Bridget for most of the voyage, no doubt still harbouring resentment over her conviction. A myriad of thoughts must have tumbled through Bridget's mind at that moment. Reality smacked like a wave crashing over the prow. To be sure, they had all been in it together, including their wayward brother. What lay ahead? Cascading tears ran down her cheeks, and it was too

late to undo the past. Regardless, she could not ignore it. The stern voices of the guards telling them to get below took her back to that fateful day in Kilkenny one year ago.

Their home, Kilkenny in Ireland, was built on the shorelines of the River Nore. It had been well maintained as a medieval village for hundreds of years, dominated by the Anglo-Norman castle and St Canice's Cathedral at either end of the town. In 1798, the year of the United Irishmen uprising, the rebellion in Kilkenny was unsuccessful, and subsequently, the townsfolk came under martial law. Life was difficult, especially for their da, James, who had taken part. Wanting a free Ireland for his family, the ensuing years proved a struggle, although he must have been so proud of his daughters and how far they had come.

The local woollen mills captured the largest workforce in the town, although by 1816, Ann, Bridget and Sarah were all employed as housekeepers. Opportunities for them to make a little extra money now existed, albeit not on the right side of the law, especially since their brother had suggested they all work together. Ann was quick-witted and thought the scheme was a good idea, but Sarah was frightened and did not want to participate. Possibly seeing the benefits of their enterprise, Bridget must have been persuasive, as all four became embroiled in a catastrophic, escalating series of events.

We may never know the finer details of their plan. However, as if preordained, all three girls and their brother were caught trying to steal clothes in August 1816. Sarah, so young, always protested her innocence; she was tried together with her sister Bridget and brother on the same day in Kilkenny. Older sister Ann had not escaped the wrath of justice, and she was brought before the court after her siblings. Perhaps the trial of four family members for the same crime on the same day may have been unusual. We only know of the terror and anger that young Sarah must have experienced when the sentence of seven years transportation was handed down to all three sisters. By coincidence, in a letter to the court from the inspector of Kilkenny Gaol, he writes that *'he believes Sarah was innocent and that it was her brother and sister who committed the theft.'* As to the fate of their brother? He was never seen again by any of his family.

Crystallising like water into ice, Bridget's memories of that day must have awakened the sharpness of the pain and anguish of leaving behind her family and the thought that she would never see home again. They were taken by road to Dublin, it was long and tiring; the details of their sentence at Kilkenny had already reached the government authorities. Although Bridget could not see her surroundings in the failing light, she knew they had gone by Leighlinbridge and Carlow. The high crosses of Castledermot were long past, and Ballitore, Kilcullen and Rathcoole disappeared into the settling mist. They had arrived. The sisters must have expected another gaol house. Little did they realise that the sloop *Dumfries* awaited them and would be their home for the next five months.

At first sight, perhaps Bridget thought the boat looked small, with only a single mast and no sails visible; now crammed on board, would this be how they would

travel to Australia? Their accommodation space was levelled with ballast and covered with straw; it was only half the size of their home in Kilkenny, yet many women were already confined here. The girls would have thought they could never survive this scene of squalor and persecution, buoyed by the knowledge that a new life awaited, their will to survive became paramount. More women and some with children came on board each day, and after months of waiting, the *Dumfries* finally set sail for Cork on 30 January 1817. It was a horrendous three days at sea, the straw was never changed since leaving Dublin, and many of the women were sick, a few with fever and several of the children seriously ill.

On arrival, even though they were told the *Canada* was ready to accept them, the women were kept in this condition for eight days. The girls confined in such close quarters, described by Captain John TAILOUR 'as 22 feet long by 16 broad', with 60 other women and ten children, would become the subject of an enquiry by Admiral HOLLOWAY when he instructed the Captain and Surgeon of the *Tonnant* to examine the state of the sloop. Later, Henry Grey BENNET, as outlined in his letter to Lord SIDMOUTH, would move a report in the House of Commons, alleging abuse within the convict department at Cork, describing the *Dumfries* scene as one of 'neglect, oppression, and pillage, disgraceful to all the parties concerned.' Finally, on 10 February, the women were taken on board the *Canada*.

We can only imagine the feelings of relief and reticence that Sarah, Bridget and Ann experienced as they stepped onto the ship. Concern was expressed by local hospital Governor Robert HARDING about the condition of the children, attempting to have the youngest removed to the hospital. As the older children would not be accepted, he asked 'for permission to send them with their mothers.' Ann would have been overjoyed to be able to keep Mary by her side. Chartered for 100, The *Canada* was provided with many necessities, so 89 female prisoners, eleven children and five paying passengers embarked from Cork on 21 March 1817.

Thankfully, the living quarters were larger, mused Bridget. Ann was in a different section of the ship, confined with the mothers and children. Perhaps Bridget thought it was up to her to take care of Sarah; however, all her attempts were refuted. Sarah, as Bridget knew, had not forgiven her over the happenings back in Kilkenny, retaining pent up anger as time progressed, resulting in Sarah's decision to be known as Margaret. Bridget may have speculated that it was Sarah's way of blotting out the past and creating a new life; even their KEATING surname became known as CATON or KEATON. Sitting wedged against the bulkhead, maybe crowded thoughts churned through Bridget's mind like the never-ending heave and sway of the ship forcing its way through the waves. She faced the future alone.

Life on board was not as bad as Bridget had imagined. There was a constant stream of women suffering from seasickness, a condition Bridget had experienced first-hand in rough weather. Some had bowel problems, others bouts of fever, and Bridget may have wondered how Surgeon ALLAN kept those on board in

good health, always ensuring their food was adequate and included fresh meat, vegetables and oatmeal.

Although the days and nights seemed endless, Bridget likely saw opportunities arise to gain extra benefits. Some of the women had suggested that the crew were not averse to a little female company. Perhaps Bridget was able to coerce Margaret into the possibilities of this endeavour, many of the crew engaged with the female convicts and offered various incentives. Both Bridget and Margaret probably participated in these activities. However, in a later statement to Governor MACQUARIE, Surgeon ALLAN said *'he had taken every precaution on the voyage to prevent prostitution. To the best of his knowledge no female had lived with an officer or seaman on the voyage either.'* Strangely, in February 1818, both Bridget and Margaret received payment in place of beef due on the voyage; we can only wonder why?

The voyage was over, and they had arrived in Port Jackson. Back on deck, tears had disappeared as Bridget's gaze took in the ever-expanding vista of the harbour. Pristine sandy beaches accentuated small inlets, and clusters of natural bushlands abounded; she could hear the strange laughing sound of the Kookaburra and the screeching of Cockatoos as they neared the shore. Never had she seen the like of these creatures at home. Unloading cargo, the crew worked tirelessly, and eventually, the women gathered to disembark. At least half of them would be going by boat to Parramatta; this included Ann, Bridget and Margaret.

The sandstone walls of the Parramatta Female Factory loomed large and menacing; Bridget, now with her sisters, perhaps remarked that the journey by small boat had not been unpleasant. Feelings of disbelief may have surfaced as they were separated again on arrival. Different classes were assigned to the women according to the degree of crime, and they were to reside in different areas. Almost immediately, Bridget would leave Parramatta. She had been assigned to local landowner William LAWSON as a housekeeper and taken to his residence called Veteran Hall. Working conditions were grand. Standing in the stone-floored kitchen, she perhaps reminisced how quickly twelve months had passed. A new employee, William JOHNSON, had arrived in late 1819; he was a shoemaker and tended to all manner of footwear for the master. We will never know if William and Bridget fell in love at first sight, but they married by banns on 28 February 1820. Bridget's thoughts may have wandered as she scurried up the stairs; she was happy and had settled into this new life, but what had happened to Margaret and Ann and the fate of poor little Mary? Would she ever see her sisters or homeland again?

Inspiration

My creative work endeavours to portray the plight of Irish female convicts, using a social biography; whilst representing four years in the life of my fourth great grandmother, her sisters, their trial and voyage to Australia.

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My Mum - My Genealogist

Stephen Castley

She sits in her recliner rocker, feet up, earphones on, watching, 'Mastermind.' Half a beat after the host completes the question, she mutters an answer. It's usually correct. From my armchair, I watch, assess, and admire her. She's great for ninety-five, her mind still brilliant, but her body's giving in to age. Hearing and sight are on the down-hill slide. Mobility's helped by a walker and a four-wheel scooter. She is my only connection with the past. Others who knew more are long gone.

I grew up believing we were a normal, average family. It was the fifties then sixties.

Mum was the home keeper, Dad the breadwinner and us four kids tried to keep our heads down and avoid getting a slap with the wooden spoon or worse still, dad's leather belt across our bums. Janet was the oldest, Diane, the baby, and Lynda and I were in between.

I was sixteen before a malicious aunt showed up and shattered our happy family illusion. She spilled the beans on birth mothers, adoptions, previous marriages, divorces and ex-spouses. Confused by the litany of lies making up our life, I tried to sort fact from fantasy. Who was my mother? Had Dad and Mum really been married before? Of us four kids, who's adopted? If Dad wasn't my dad, who was?

At the dinner table, Lynda and I played tag-team tossing questions, demanding answers. Dad hung his head, refusing to speak, but occasionally he gave a slight nod and Mum offered a brief explanation. Dad's fuse was short and finally he shouted, "Enough. I'm your bloody father. There's nothing else to tell."

But there was so much more to tell. He wasn't my bloody father. This crass man of limited intellect, who took delight in taunting me with words like cry-baby, sissy, pansy and mummy's boy, was not my real father. Knowing we didn't share a gene pool allowed me to soar free, unrestricted by his limited vision. But if I was no longer a composite of all the lies, who was I? Lynda and I pushed back against Dad's edict. Shouts, threats and tears achieved little, except an aside from Mum, "Leave it. Talk to me later."

Later took weeks, but eventually I found Mum alone at the washing machine, ready to talk. "So, you and Dad adopted me?" This might be a new piece to my life's jigsaw, I thought, but somehow, I doubted it would fit.

"No," she said. "Ida and your father adopted you and Lynda. You were two and a half and Lynda was five, when she walked out. That's when you all moved in with me and Janet."

Shadowy memories floated on this new piece of information. It looked like two kids in a play pen watching as their mother and the packers cleared out their home. When the house was empty, the kids raised their hands, eager to be picked up, but the woman left. She shut the door, and they cried. It was a memory of Lynda and me. Or was it? "Tell me about Ida leaving," I said. "I'm not sure if I remember it."

Mum raised an eyebrow before starting. "You were too young to remember."

Maybe or maybe not, I thought. But I listened, open-mouthed, fearful of the truth, as she shared all she knew. But she could not, or would not explain why Ida left. Was it my fault? Mum's memories became mine, even if they hadn't been there before. Was I so unlovable that not one, but two mothers had left me?

Time passed as I sorted ideas, and readied questions. Speculating replies, answers and fob-offs took months of speculation. "Tell me about my birth mother." My words were clear, soft and nearly whispers. "What do you know?"

"Not much. She was well before my time, but I've listened to your grandparents and June, your father's sister." Mum closed her eyes, paused, probably collecting and sorting snippets of information and then began painting the scene of Brisbane in the early fifties, the Queenslander houses with their wide verandas and galvanised iron roofs. Life was booming and the war memories

of the previous decade fading. Refugees still flowed in from Europe. “She was Polish. Sandra KOWALD, only fifteen or sixteen. Came with her family. I think they stayed at Wacol, the migrant centre. She got a job as a domestic in Dr WILDER’s household. He knocked her up, and the wife chucked her out when the pregnancy showed. Called her a slut, poor thing. They said he’d done it before.”

The storyteller recounting my birth-mother’s story entranced me. I cared little about how much of it was true, and ate down every beautiful word, every embellishment, every improbable piece of knowledge. She was crafting my back story, my genealogy, and I no longer was without roots, a plant living off air. I had a past and a history. I was someone and this beautiful woman, the only one of three I’ve ever called Mum, was creating it for me.

I loved this woman, still do. She’s never deserted me. Not like the others. I remembered sitting on the floor, my head resting against the toilet door while I talked to her. She was inside, on the loo, trying to get a minute’s peace, but I was there, outside waiting. I was about three, followed Mum around everywhere, like a puppy. As an adult, I realise I was probably recovering from the trauma of the second mother’s departure. I wouldn’t have known about the first, the birth-mother. Wouldn’t have had an inkling of that rejection, but the second one, that was different. It’s undisputed that she left us crying on the floor, while she departed with a miniature Pomeranian under each arm. She loved those dogs, obviously not us. I think I saw it, but if an active imagination has invented it, there’s no doubting I’ve replayed this dramatic event a hundred times, and own it with all its damaging consequences.

“I love you Mummy,” I said.

“I bet you don’t even know what I look like.” Her laughter echoed inside the confines of the toilet.

“Mummy, I do. You look just like me. You’ve got blue eyes like mine and brown hair the same as me.”

Coming out of the toilet, she picked me up, hugged me tight, and planted a kiss on my forehead. “Now look into my eyes,” she said. “What colour are they?”

They were brown, as was her hair. She laughed and so did I. Mum always laughed, and sang and whistled, and I knew where she was, could always find her. Gradually my fears of abandonment dissipated.

Finding out who I was became a slow process of question, answer and accumulation. It’s been a lifetime process. Eight years ago, I began a memoir titled, “Three Mums – Five Years,” and I needed to fact check my early life. Mum and my sisters were the only ones left to supply answers or to challenge my memories. They were generous in assisting, but our collective memories frequently varied.

I remembered Ida leaving, carrying the dogs. Lynda and I sat on the floor, hugging and crying. Lynda remembered us being left with the next-door neighbours until Dad returned from work. Mum arbitrated. We were both right. The neighbour

saw Ida leave with the removal van, heard us sobbing and screaming and used the spare key to enter the house and collect us. I wonder about the reliability of that information. Was she playing peace-maker or was that the way it really happened? My memories are fuzzy and I need certainty when it comes to my early life. Mum provides this. She is my genealogist and the memory of my life's events.

"Why don't you apply to get your adoption file? Organisations like Jigsaw will help. I can help too. I did it and got information about my birth family." Lynda was keen to assist. I knew she's done her research nearly fifteen years ago. She'd found her birth-mother had died of cancer a year earlier.

"No. Not interested." I lied. I was very interested. I'm inquisitive, but I'm also loyal. Mum; my third mother has always stuck by me, been my go-to-person for information and I wasn't prepared to betray her. Complete facts didn't matter that much. Maybe I'll search the archives after Mum dies. Maybe I won't.

I turned sixty-six in April and became eligible for the Australian age pension.

Coronavirus and its effects on the Bali tourism industry had decimated my finances, so I returned to Australia, moved in with Mum and began sparing with government bureaucracy. I knew I'd be around for a year or two and made plans to put the time to good use. I could complete my early-years memoir.

"What was the name of the orphanage June put the boys into?" I was eight years old when Dad's sister, June, put three of her sons into an orphanage. Dad was furious and wanted to adopt them, but Mum put her foot down and refused. There was an almighty row, but Mum stood her ground.

"I don't remember," she said. "Does it really matter? It was so long ago. All in the past. Best to let it go."

So that's exactly what I did. I'd drawn enough water from that well, and didn't need to take more.

Mum had other plans. "She expected them to call her Mamma June. After all she did." And the stories flowed, unsolicited, one after another, sometimes a day or weeks apart. And because she'd started the conversation, she was prepared to accept questions and offer answers. Later, in the privacy of my room, I recorded her recollections.

I've been back two months now and my genealogist cum historian sates my appetite with her recollections. I close my eyes and listen to her stories of our past and I'm transported back sixty years, my head resting against the toilet door, listening to every word spoken by my third mother, the one who never walked away.

Inspiration

I returned to Australia to live with my 95-year-old mother and resumed writing a memoir about my childhood. Mum was the holder of the knowledge.

And I Thought I Was an Only Child

Noeline Gentle

Now at ninety-nine years of age and the matriarch of a very large clan, my mother's life story is one of amazing resilience, courage, acceptance and great love. Her mentoring and life lessons lie in the beating hearts of all her descendants who carry those values forward. We have much to thank her for. During my childhood years my mother often told me about her lonely childhood and her fervent wish to be part of a family. She did not meet her father until she was a young adult, by which time her father was an elderly man with dementia who did not recognise her. During her mid childhood she only saw her mother intermittently and she was totally unaware of other family members. This belief about being an only child shaped her subsequent strong life values of survival, the importance of family and of helping those less fortunate in the community.

My maternal grandmother Esther had married a man eleven years her senior. The couple had a son born in 1919 and a daughter Mary, my mother, born in 1922. The family lived under the same roof as the husband's mother and unmarried brother. They were all strong personalities and it proved to be an explosive combination. When Mum was a toddler, her mother took matters into her own hands and left her marriage to partner with John, a surveyor who was passing through the town. This was a daring move in the 1920s when there was no social security. Nor did the law in New Zealand at that time allow divorce for a period of eight years following separation. My grandmother took my infant mother with her but left her young son to be raised by other relatives.

The couple travelled throughout the North Island following John's job of surveying roads for the government. They generally lived in public works camps which consisted of tents laid with wooden floor boards. From 1925 to 1927 two girls and a boy were born and during the depression years life was tough. My mother called these 'the hungry years'. In 1931 a divorce was obtained but before the couple could marry, tragedy struck. Mum's stepfather became ill with influenza and died suddenly, leaving my grandmother with four very young children and no financial or family support. She was forced to abandon her children and to take on live-in housekeeping jobs to support herself.

My almost nine-year-old mother was made a Ward of the State and raised by an elderly farming couple in the district who had been friends of her stepfather. She had to work for her living, helping on the farm with digging out fern roots and in the house cleaning the silver ware. She was required to milk the house cow and then deliver the milk each morning before school with the billycan and ladle hung from the handlebars of her bicycle. During the lunch period she had to bring the bread half a mile from the store to the house. This meant that she had few opportunities to play with other children. When she did hear other children talking about their families this only reinforced her feelings of being quite alone.

She remembered those children boasting about what their daddies were doing and she felt the lack of having her own daddy very keenly. On the rare occasions that she saw her mother, she begged to be able to live with her again. Whilst Mum's life was hard, her unfortunate step siblings were sent out of the district to two separate church orphanages in faraway Auckland. Orphanage policies dictated that the two girls and the boy could only see each other once a year. They also lost all contact with their mother Esther and step sister Mary.

After almost four years my maternal grandmother's financial circumstances improved and my then twelve-year-old mother was able to be reunited with her mother. She learned that she had a brother but she did not meet him until she was twenty-one years of age and he had returned from his army service in the Second World War. My mother completed secondary schooling and undertook nursing training. Meanwhile Esther had remarried and my mother acquired a second stepfather. No wonder she was confused about her family relationships! Life took a positive and stabilizing direction when she met and married my father. The young couple purchased a dairy farm and produced a family of six children. They instilled the values of self-sufficiency, honesty, the importance of gaining an education and of giving to the local community. Due to her early life experiences my mother had a strong affinity with those less fortunate and I remember her bringing orphanage children to our farm during the school holidays. She was also ever ready to physically support any neighbour who needed a helping hand. Our home was always full of music and hobby projects. My strong, pragmatic and generous mother found time between her household and farm help roles and growing her vegetable garden to volunteer in the local community. If she saw need she set about filling it. She started a Girl Guide Group and the first community newspaper which is still operating several decades later. She became involved in fund raising for many local charities and used her considerable skills in making crafts to benefit them. She devoted considerable effort over many years to local women's organisations.

During my fortunate childhood my mother concentrated on giving us the nurturing and sense of family that she had been denied in her youth. Moving on to the subsequent generations and over the following decades she became the adored Nana to a large extended family of grandchildren and great grandchildren. She taught herself woodwork, making toys for them all and enjoying the mutual shared pleasure of playing with those toys. She also took most of her grandchildren on camping holidays. Thus, in very practical and positive ways she debriefed herself from her lonely childhood whilst simultaneously mentoring her growing clan in many valuable life skills and strong values. She has anchored us all with a strong sense of family and this is the very special gift that she has given to us.

When my mother reached the age of seventy, she received a phone call from a man seeking to confirm her maiden name. Then it was suggested that she might like to sit down! The man identified himself and asked if she had lived with the three named orphanage children during her early childhood. He carefully explained how my mother was related to these orphanage children and the documented family tree research which had led to this discovery. All

was revealed. He identified himself as the son of one of her half-sisters. That half-sister then in her late sixties had sadly expressed to her son one day that she wished she knew who her mother was. Following that conversation, June, one of those orphanage girls and her brother Russell had embarked upon a nine-year search to locate their missing mother Esther, missing sister Virginia and half-sister Mary. All they knew, was that before final contact with Virginia was lost, she had said she was going to change her surname and also that she was dating an American sailor named 'Tiny' (because he was so tall). It is thought that she married and moved overseas. To date she has not been located and the search continues. Their mother Esther had long since died but they were able to locate her death certificate and move on to locating details about their father John and then to their half sister Mary. It did not help that Esther had changed my mother's original surname to the stepfather's John's surname and then back again when my mother turned twelve. The orphanage children's names were also changed from their father's surname to their mother's original married name when they entered the orphanages. Fortunately for the researchers the primary school records also confirmed the name changes as did the orphanage's records. These name changes were probably done for expediency and according to the norms of society at that time but they added greatly to the complexity of the search. The long and painstaking research was done in the days before computers were in widespread use but it eventually led them to discover the convoluted story of their family origins and the reasons for many of the mysteries which they had not been able to understand. In her case my mother had simply thought that her mother Esther was keeping house for John and his children, partially because she was too young to understand at the time and also because Esther kept that knowledge a secret until her death. Mum therefore never realised that she had half siblings. This misunderstanding was also quite believable given that Esther did support herself by housekeeping following John's death. In a sad twist to this tale, before Esther died, she had told my mother that she kept something for Mum in her purse. Unfortunately, the purse was thrown out and we never did find out whether this was a note of explanation.

My mother's reaction to this unexpected news was initial surprise and then absolute delight. She couldn't wait to make contact with her missing family. Many childhood puzzles were explained and the memories came flooding back. She reunited in person with her half- brother and remaining half-sister and they travelled to view the house where they had lived prior to the tragic death and subsequent family schism. A large family gathering was organised at our family home to enable Mary to meet with the descendants of the original blended family. It was a very exciting time for us all and from that reunion new stories and ongoing relationships emerged and have been sustained. My mother was determined that she would keep the lost family together and bring a sense of wholeness and identity for them all. She has achieved that aim very successfully. Our amazing matriarch now lives in a nursing home and members of the now united family continue to visit her on a regular basis. This is a testament to the great love and acceptance which she has bestowed upon all the members of

her large and blended family clan. She even has a grand stepson from another country and culture who, in circumstances similar to her early childhood, does not know his father but who has been raised under our family umbrella and who considers our family to be his. My mother's lessons flow on benevolently and continue their ripple effect ever wider. When the time comes for eulogies, there will be representatives from two families who were once divided and without a sense of roots but who are now reunited as a stronger whole and with a shared bonded sense of experiences and identity. From her childhood of hardship and emotional turmoil my mother learned some valuable lessons about resilience and the importance of sharing with those less fortunate. She has based her long and fruitful life of generosity and the importance of family on those early life lessons. Like the Australian author Albert FACEY who wrote the book 'A Fortunate Life', my mother considers that she has indeed had a fortunate life. And to think that she thought she was an only child!

Inspiration

My inspirational mother rose above childhood emotional deprivation to mentor strong family values and help others. Her lost family was reunited following tenacious genealogy research.

The Shotgun

Mersija Ilic

1941 ...

The three of us girls, Hana, Meira and I would get up at sunrise, just as the adults were about to begin their morning prayers. We would scurry, barefoot across the creaking floorboards in our simple linen night clothes, hand woven and sewn from the flax plant grown in our fields in the tiny secluded hamlet of Lore, high up in the Bosnian mountains. Unlatching the heavy wooden door of our traditional Bosnian *cardaklija* required the combined strength of an eight, seven and five-year old, extra strength when we thought we were doing it without making a sound.

Every morning we would playfully run into the yard with just that little bit of urgency. We hardly ever actually made it to the outhouse. Instead, we would find a patch of grass, squat and wee in unison. We would stay in that same position, squatting for who knows how long, forgetting we had finished our 'business'. We would contemplate the world around us, the cherry trees, the chooks, the

squirrels scurrying into the woods and we would stare directly across at the vast peaks of Ozren.

Meira would tell the story of how the world ended there on the horizon, at the Ozren mountains, and how the sky was actually pinned to the mountains with huge safety pins. There was nothing beyond that point. Her father knew a man who actually went all the way to the end of the earth and told him this very interesting fact.

What would it be like to actually go there? I wondered.

1953 ...

“Show them to me” he calmly demanded as the barrel of the shotgun slowly came to a sinister rest between my shoulder blades.

I carefully released the tight grip on the scrubbing brush. The timber veranda of my 1940's Bosnian home scrubbed meticulously one last time, my calloused red palms opening themselves in surrender. My slow shallow breathing matched the involuntary movement of my body, as I rose.

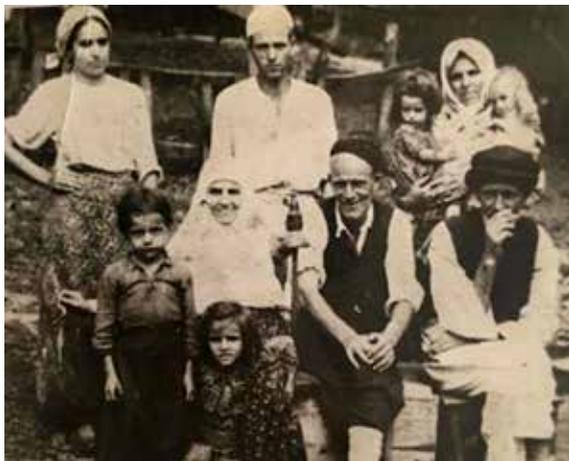
“Show you what, papa?” my faltering voice managed a barely audible whisper.

“Your new Eid clothes” he retorted, prodding me in the back forcefully, my chin grazing the damp timber floor.

He knew.

Our most guarded secret, our intention to elope was never verbally articulated. If we happened to be “kidnapped” by a young man of our own choosing and taken to his home, we were considered married and any marriage plans concocted by our parents would be abandoned. We knew that once they recovered from the anger and embarrassment, they had no choice but to accept the union. Eventually the groom's father, brother and uncles would come with peace offerings for the bride's family. They would be invited in to sit, eat and engage in some small talk. Once the apologies were accepted and the gifts given, the bride's family could rejoice together with the groom's.

I had no reason to think that my father would not do the same- I was his first born. He was generally a reasonable man, one of only two literate people in the village entrusted with running the village store.



Mid 1950's Umi is standing on the left

My secret betrothal had only taken place a few nights earlier. Hari had accepted my most exquisite green *dimije* (harem pants) with the pretty pink floral print and matching blouse as a promise that I would soon be his wife. Not a handkerchief, not a scarf but the clothes which would be waiting for me, there in his family home for me to change into later tonight. As soon as darkness fell upon our tiny hamlet, I would find an excuse to take something to my cousin Meira where Hari and a female chaperone would be waiting for me.

For the first ten years of my life, no-one else mattered to my father. He took me everywhere he went, packing some bread and cheese in a linen cloth in the morning and taking me to the fields. I would sit under a tree, playing with my scraps of cloth and corn cob dolls as he ploughed and sowed the fields, tended to the cattle and cut the grass. And before I could keep up with him, he would pop me into a large wicker basket and strap me to his back. My cousins looked up at me in awe so high above them as the cherry blossoms caressed my tiny fingers. From that height, I marvelled at the world around me, the insects, the trees, and those sky pinned mountains.

My father's devotion to a female child blinded him, his mother would often say. She never warmed to me because she had no say in my upbringing and as the matriarch of the family, this did not sit well with her. When my father said he wanted to send me to school, it sent my grandmother into a rage. Instead of being taught useful skills that I would need one day for marriage, I was taught to read and write.

My grandmother's disapproval was not the only factor that made school an impossibility. The two hour trek to the nearest township along a treacherous narrow mountain path, the wolves menacingly lurking in the woods and WW2 raging all around were some of the more serious obstacles. So my father decided to teach me himself, both alphabets, Cyrillic and Latin. He himself had been taught to read and write only a few years earlier.

Now with the gun pressing into my back, between my long brown braids, I knew that my father was gone and it was there that the clarity said to precede one's last moment on earth, played out before my eyes. The past, the present and the future became one.

I saw my Slavic ancestors settling in the Balkan lands, followed by the Ottoman invaders mounted on their horses, their swords drawn, dragging away our young boys into the jannisserie corps. Their distraught mothers tripping in their anguish, running after the convoys, pleading, screaming until their legs could carry them no further.

Then came the Austro-Hungarian army, marching into our lands, conscripting my grandfather into their ranks. My mother destined to enter the world fatherless as her father lay at the bottom of an unmarked grave.

I saw the event which would change the course of my family's future, my father picking up a pencil from the dirt path and asking our uncle Osman to teach him to read and write. I saw myself being grabbed around the waist as I ventured out

on my doorstep just to be whisked away into a secret clearing in the cornfields. My harmless kidnapers- giggling adolescent girls- begging me to read the letters they'd received from their beaus in the army. Sugar cubes, dried prunes and walnuts, melted in my mouth as I wrote their dictated responses.

The images of our family hiding from fascist armies in the caves behind the waterfall were familiar to me and then, in the aftermath of the war, I saw Tito and his partisans bring in an era of peace for our people and equality for our women.

And.... it was in that brief moment of truth that I saw my older self. I was working in a factory, using a sewing machine, marvelling at an ocean, a landscape so different from the mountainous regions of my home, a land far from that of my ancestors. Two young female children by my side - writing, reading, going to school.

And I knew, I had a choice.

I could turn and face my cowardly father as the bullet pierced through my breast. Or I could live to hold those two little girls.

An easy choice

"My new clothes..... the *dimije* and blouse I got for Eid? Why I I gave them to cousin Meira" A simple deviation from the truth.

My father forced me to my feet, grabbing me by my collar and shoving me in front of him.

"Lets go" he snapped.

I marched in front of him towards Meira's house, the shotgun still in my back.

Unlike me, Meira still possessed a childlike mischievous wit and her ability to bend the truth ever so easily, was something I could never hope to emulate.

As we neared Meira's house, I felt I could breathe again. She will know what to do.

Meira saw us through the small window walking across the yard and scrambled to open the door before I could knock.

"What is it Umi, what's happening"?

"Meira..... can you give me back the clothes you borrowed from me the other day? The Eid ones" I said, all in one breath, trying not to emphasise any of the words.

I knew the look in Meira's wide brown eyes. She understood. She was my chaperone the night I had given my clothes to Hari.

"Of course I can. I even washed them for you" she said smoothly. "I'll just go get them".

My father and I waited there on the doorstep of the house where my life had begun a mere 18 years ago. Meira quickly returned holding the green *dimije* and blouse trying to still her trembling hands.

“Here you are” she said, “thank you for letting me wear them”. He lowered the shotgun.

“Back to the house” he ordered as he turned to go back to the store. His customers were watching patiently as he dealt with his disobedient daughter.

Gripping the clothes, tightly to my chest, not daring to look around, I scuttled across the muddy yard to our house. Saved by a lie.

My father had no way of knowing that Meira had bought the same soft delicate floral fabric and had made a matching outfit.

My father was prepared to shoot me for falling in love with Hari. Hari’s uncle and his gang were outlaws who had attacked our home after WW2 and held my grandmother at gunpoint. I had tried to tell father that Hari had no contact with his uncle. But he was blinded, not only by his hatred toward Hari’s family but also by his mistress who he had moved into our home. Becoming in-laws with them was not an option.

As I lay waiting for night to fall and for Hari to throw a pebble at my window letting me know he was waiting, I briefly remembered the vision and longing I felt for the two little girls.



1967- The Veranda. Umi holding one of her little girls...

But I was unaware that Destiny too was playing a game of her own, cleverly hiding from me that a long arduous journey lay ahead. This journey would see me struggling to make a home

and bring me to the brink of death at the hand of husband number four. It was a journey that would ultimately take me to the other end of the world. There, I would raise my girls on my own, alone, hiding in a towering sixteen- storey housing commission block in the Sydney suburb of Redfern during the 1970’s, thousands of kilometres from home. The eucalyptus trees would replace the cherry trees back home, the urban hustle would replace my quiet little hamlet and the LAWSONs, the COOMBs and CHARLESWORTHs would become my family.

The tap of a pebble on my window brought me back.

I took one last look at my poor mother, staring blankly into the darkness, breastfeeding her sixth baby, my drunken father locked away in the basement with his mistress.

I stepped into the darkness.

A distant faint light beckoned me to move, to move in search of my two little girls ...

**cardaklija* (pronounced-chardakliya) Bosnian Ottoman style house

**dimije* (pronounced dimiye) Bosnian harem pants

Inspiration

I was inspired to write this story mostly because of my mother's and grandmother's bravery and their remarkable journeys.

The Woman in the Photograph

Margaret Grover

The woman in the photograph poses awkwardly on a chaise with a large straw hat resting on her lap, the crown decorated with fresh flowers. She looks pensive, a little unsure, but she is open to the experience of being photographed in her best dress, her long hair swept up into a bun.

Who is she?

I am not sure. The woman is nameless. I can only guess.

I know she is my ancestor, a relative on my grandmother's side, although her image has already begun to soften into faded sepia shadows on its tattered cardboard backing. Is this woman my great grandmother Catherine LEE around whom there is so much family secrecy and



heartache, or is it possible that she is Catherine's sister Margaret O'HARA, once referred to by a Supreme Court judge as the 'good fairy' for taking in and educating my grandmother Mollie and her three siblings when Catherine became unable to look after them? I hope that acknowledged family history and stories and will help me identify her.

In my childhood my grandmother Mollie's stories seemed quite unexceptional, almost commonplace. Now another generation away I wish I had paid more attention to them, for then I would know how and where to look for the identity of this mysterious woman who belongs to a world now largely forgotten - almost past recognition.

When I stayed with Mollie on the farm I used to come into her huge iron bed in the mornings and she would tell me her stories. They were always sad tales of abandonment, loss, and orphaned children forever searching for their mothers. They always made me cry. When I grew up I realised that this narrative was a metaphor for Mollie's young life so much of which was spent alone and away from the security of a mother. She used to tell me that being part of a family meant support, belonging and strength, but I always suspected that her family of origin was marred by absence, dysfunction and heartache.

The cause of Catherine's physical and emotional absence from her children was the unspoken and mysterious illness which pervaded her life and theirs with the result that Mollie and her three siblings were taken in and educated by their aunt Margaret O'HARA who was Catherine's sister. She was a generous woman with a strong sense of family loyalty although she had no children of her own. Mollie thought she was a very dominant and bossy woman, used to getting her own way!

O'HARA often chastised Mollie's father Alfred about his drinking. On one occasion Mollie remembers overhearing a conversation they had about his forthcoming bankruptcy. 'You have lost your money. Why don't you accept that your money is gone! I will educate your children – give them to me' she said. It was not unusual in those days for an aunt or even a friend to take care of children who were not their own, and to educate them and bring them up. There were no Government agencies to interfere in these arrangements or to check on their suitability. Life was simpler then, no one asked any questions, yet Alfred's decision to hand his children over to their aunt had far reaching consequences for all of them.

When Margaret O'HARA took over the education of Mollie and her siblings it was no surprise that she chose to send them thousands of miles away from Western Australia to a Catholic boarding school in Adelaide under the guidance of the Sisters of Mercy. She was keen that they should have the chance of a good education far away from the uncertainty and disruption they endured when Catherine became unwell and kept trying to take them away.

From the time she was eleven years old until she was seventeen Mollie lived at St Aloysius college without coming home to Western Australia once. She loved

the nuns who became her family and looked after her as if she was their own child. However there were times that she was very lonely being so far from her home and having to fend for herself. She lost the only photograph she ever had of her mother, so she used to lie in bed at night, close her eyes and try to remember Catherine's face and the soft sound of her voice, but as the years passed it became harder to remember.

At this time it is likely that Catherine was in the early stages of a severe mental illness. Alfred was increasingly concerned with handling her erratic behaviour and intent on keeping the children from knowing the truth, so he relied on O'HARA to back him up in this facade. As consequence O'HARA became a very influential presence in their lives. Whenever the children asked about their mother voices were lowered and eyes downcast and O'HARA would say 'your mother is a good person, but she is ill and can't look after you now, but she is getting better'. Mollie learned not ask any more questions as she felt that opening family secrets would only lead to further heartache, so she determined to get on with her life in the best way she could..

When she was seventeen years old Mollie returned to live with Margaret O'HARA and her husband Joseph who were licensees of the Shamrock Hotel in Northam, a thriving little town in the West Australian wheat belt. O'HARA was well known and respected in Northam as 'a character' who was generous to her rather large family, for as well as educating the LEEs, Margaret helped her brother look after his eleven children after the death of his wife. As she became older O'HARA became distrustful and suspicious of some of her relatives and those in the town who sought to identify themselves as beneficiaries of her very large estate. Ironically after her death the two families she had helped and supported during her lifetime became locked in a battle over her estate which they took to the Supreme Court. One of the most bizarre pieces of evidence put forward in the trial was O'HARA's petticoat, into the hem of which she had sewn a packet first thought to contain a secret will, but when opened contained only a few miserable banknotes and coins. The progress of the case was reported in newspapers all over the country and must have set the good folk of Northam abuzz with curiosity. The outcome of the case was settled out of Court, assuring us latter day voyeurs of never knowing who got what!

I look at the photograph again, this time in the manner of a forensic pathologist seeking a diagnosis. I notice that the woman has one arm behind her back resting on her very tiny waist. It makes her body look taut and unbending although her eyes still have a look of vulnerability about them. Is she Margaret O'HARA, benefactor, controller and 'good fairy' who hid the truth about her sister Catherine? Is this Catherine a sensitive and defenceless woman who was forever unavailable to her children? How far is it possible to know the truth about the woman in the photograph?

As a child I was puzzled by Mollie's reluctance to talk about Catherine. I often asked her to 'tell me about your Mother grandma', but she always changed the subject. I wonder if she ever knew the truth about her mother's illness?

In truth, Catherine's tragedy was revealed in very small print on her death certificate.

Place of Death - Claremont Hospital for the Insane'

She was suffering the effects of General Paralysis of the Insane (GPI) caused by tertiary syphilis which in those days could not be cured. The Hospital notes confirm that on admission she was found 'mentally unresponsive and unable to take care of herself'. She had a wound under her left breast where she had endeavoured to thrust a pin into her heart. Having been put in a locked ward she told the nurses she would 'do away with herself' if she got out. On 14th October, 1914 Mollie's wedding day, she was bedridden, and five months later she died.

If you know how and where to look, it is possible that photographs can capture emotions where words have failed, but they cannot evidence the truth. I have looked and now I know that although the woman in the photograph is my inheritance from an earlier time I can only look at her from the present. She remains a mysterious woman who has no name.

When I die my children may look again not knowing, and then throw this precious photograph away.

You return to that earlier time armed with the present, and no matter how dark that world was, you do not leave it unlit.

Michael Ondaatje, 'Warlight'.

Inspiration

I wanted to find out the name and the story of a mysterious woman whose photograph I found in my grandmother's glory box.

Ellen's Scheming

Marcia Moon

WHOOSH! The door crashed open, letting the rain and wind rush in with the force of an angry animal.

Wiping her red chapped swollen hands on her apron, Ellen moved quickly to take her husband's coat.

"Oh luv, wherever have you been? I've been expecting you for hours." Fussing and trying to wipe him with her apron, Ellen noticed the rain coming down almost horizontally.

Her day had been spent trying to keep their five children occupied inside. *Five children nine and under is about four too many in this cottage, I hope we see some sunshine tomorrow.*

Stoking the fire, Ellen rubbed her arms trying to bring some warmth to her aching limbs. Glancing towards the sleeping children in the corner she hoped

they would remain asleep. *At least curled up together in one bed they keep themselves warm.*

“Barney luv, I have a stew for your supper, you can tell me what has got you looking so blue devilled while you eat?”

Ellen had a fair idea what was troubling her husband. *I wish he would share his troubles with me. After all, I am mother to his five children, asleep over there!*

Turning from the fire with the steaming bowl of stew in her hands, Ellen was surprised to see her husband sitting hunched over, with his head in his hands.

“What is wrong Barney, you are scaring me.”

“Ah my acushla, you know what is happening in our beloved Ireland. I’m a Stonemason but you know how long it is since I have worked and a farmer I am not. How am I supposed to provide for my family?”

I know that our Catholic clergy need support with tithes but it isn’t fair that I must needs pay for the other churches as well.¹ Where is the justice in that? The talk around the village is that we will be told to pay more in the coming years. You mark my words Ireland will have workhouses soon for the poor, just like bloody England. I don’t want my family to be living in one of them. Oh lord what is a body to do?”

Pacing back and forth Ellen tried to gather her thoughts. *Surely there is a better life than this one room cottage. Courage Ellen! Now is your time! Just make it sound like his idea and you might have a chance.*

Wearily Ellen drew breath, “Bernard McCUSKER I understand your frustration, but getting riled up about what we can’t change won’t help us and waking the children won’t help either.”

Barney reluctantly put down the bowl. He knew his wife. This would turn into a tiring discussion, one he didn’t want to have. It was paramount to acknowledging his failure.

Seeing his exhaustion from the ragged lines and dark circles under his eyes, Ellen claimed her usual spot on his lap hoping to comfort him, while drawing some heat from his body.

“We need to find some other way of surviving, some other way of living. There must be a better life for us somewhere. But tonight is not the time with you being so tired, off to bed with you. I will join you shortly, as soon as I tend the fire and finish cleaning up.”

Kissing his cheek, while rising to clear the table she hoped the noise would hide her rumbling tummy proclaiming she had not eaten any supper in favour of feeding the children.

As she made her way to the door to put the slops bucket out, she noticed the one potato left in her basket.

Grand, one potato! So with the leftover oatmeal from this morning I should be able to set a meal on the table tomorrow morning. I hope we can dig some more up and that this one is not the last one to be found!

Ellen put peat on the fire as she made for her bed and snoring husband. Lying down quietly so as not to wake Barney she drifted into sleep with a prayer on her lips. *Please God, lead his steps to the bulletin on the noticeboard in the town square tomorrow.*

Waking with sunshine filtering through a crack in the wall, Ellen was filled with hope of a dry day. Barney had already left, leaving her and the children asleep. *Would he see the notice? What would he think? Well at least it had stopped raining and that would put him in a better mood.*

Hearing the baby stirring Ellen threw off the bedcovers determined to have a good day. Opening the door to let the sun stream in along with a sneaky breeze, she decided that it was time the children spent the day out of doors.

"Patrick, Owen, Ellen, could you three big children please get dressed, while I get the babes ready. We are going on a treasure hunt after breakfast. Maria and Cornelius come to Mammy." Observing the clean table she realised Barney had gone without breakfast again. *I hope he is home early for a decent meal. Her stomach growled loudly. I must eat a bit of porridge this morning. A treasure hunt Ellen? Well I suppose finding a potato might be a treasure, I just hope I can convince the children that it is!*

After breakfast they all hurried outside, with Patrick and Owen carrying a bucket and a basket.

"Now Patrick, you take the loy and dig in that spot.² If you find a potato before any treasure just put it in the bucket. Owen give me that basket while you hold the bucket for Patrick.

Ellen walked further down the field with the other three children, Ellen jnr. and Maria skipping ahead while she carried Cornelius.

"Mammy, look what I have found!" yelled a very excited Owen who had wandered away from where Patrick was digging, obviously having tired of bucket duties. Ellen and the other children converged on Owen to see what all the excitement was about.

"You told us not to pick these unless you was around, but are they the right ones Mammy? Are they?" Owen could barely contain his excitement at his find.

Bending over Ellen picked the mushroom, with a satisfied smile on her face.

"My word, yes it is a right one, young man, what a find, look there are more. Owen see if you can fill the basket there's a good lad. Patrick, we really need to dig up some potatoes to go with this mushroom treasure for tonight's dinner. Do you think you can find a potato treasure?"

Patrick headed back to where he had been digging with a determined look on his face. Within the hour he had indeed found four potatoes to accompany the special find of mushrooms.

In the distance Ellen noticed her husband returning home. *I hope he has found our treasure too.* Suddenly there came the call of “Patrick, Owen, Ellen, Maria and Neil, come help me pull off my boots before I go inside.”

Neil? I do wish he wouldn't call Cornelius that, why does he need to shorten it?

Ellen brought up the rear after her giggling children, hoping that today would see the beginning of their new lives.

At least I can cook up an early meal for Barney before we talk.

After dinner as Barney extracted himself from a wrestle on the floor with his two eldest sons, he was attacked from behind by his daughters giggling with delight.

“Alright you ragamuffins time for bed, say goodnight to your father.”

He was swamped with hugs from his five children. “Goodnight Da.” Barney wasn’t used to all this attention. The children were usually asleep by the time he got in of a night. Quietly tucking the children into the bed they shared, Ellen was besieged with questions and requests.

“What song will you sing tonight Mammy?”

“It’s my turn to choose, Mammy?”

“SingTell ‘me Ma, please Mammy.”

“Ssh, my little ones, ssh or Da might choose his favourite!”

Closing his eyes Barney listened to his wife’s lilting voice as she sang...

I'll tell me ma, when I get home

The boys won't leave the girls alone

Pulled me hair, and stole my comb

But that's alright, till I go home.³

... calming the children, watching as they each drifted off to sleep.

Ellen’s mind wandered as she hummed. *What a grand day, so much fun with the treasure hunt, then Barney coming home early enough that we were able to sit down together for a decent meal. I guess I will find out now why he is looking like the cat who got the cream.*

“Barney are you going to tell me what you have been doing today? Did you get work?”

“No acushla, better than that. What say you to starting the year of 1837 with a new adventure and life.”

Thank you God, it looks like you might have led him to the right place.

“Barney, stop being daft, whatever do you mean?”

“Well come sit here and I will tell you about my day.”

Snuggling into his lap Ellen prepared to sound excited and encouraging. She knew what he had found on the notice board and it suited her just fine.

“You will never guess what I found today on the noticeboard in town. The Governor of the new colonies in Australia is looking for men with families to go to the colony of New South Wales on a bounty system.”⁴

“So if we...

“Ssh lass let me finish. The government will pay for our passage and guarantee work when we arrive. They are looking for mechanics or farm labourers.⁵ Now seeing as I run this allotment and I am a Stonemason, it got me thinking.”

“Thinking what Barney?”

“We would need to secure our passage with a deposit but they will give us that back when we arrive. They have just about filled the boat, but if we are quick and put our name down.”⁶

“But...

“Now let me finish acushla, now where was I? Yes if we are quick getting our application in and ready to make our way to Londonderry by the 14th March, we can be celebrating St Patrick’s Day on the Ship the Adam Lodge.”

Ellen felt like her head was spinning. *Did Barney even draw breath through all that? This is what I wanted but I didn’t expect it to happen so soon. The 14th of March is only weeks away!*

Feeling flustered Ellen disengaged herself from Barney’s lap and arms. She needed distance from him as she gathered her thoughts. *Have I done the right thing? I prayed for it after all. Now that Barney is so enthusiastic about it, is the right thing to do after all?*

“Barney I think you need to start at the beginning. Please tell me exactly what has happened today. How can it be possible?”

“Well my acushla, the Governor of New South Wales has appointed Surgeon Superintendents from the colony to bring immigrants to Australia. Dr Alick OSBORNE has already sailed on the convict ships so with his experience he has been appointed to offer passages to men with families, as well as single men and single women even, as long as they are travelling with families.”⁷

“But when...”

“So tomorrow I plan to go back and sign us up. The ship is due to sail on 14th March, so my acushla, that is about the gist of it. “

“But how...”

“It is our new beginning in a land that will see our children prosper and we will get out of this hell hole of a life that we have now. So what do you think? Can we do it, can we be ready?”

“Barney, you know I will follow you to the end of the earth and it sounds like it might just be that!

But we will make it work! I know we can make it work.”

Inspiration

Ellen’s Immigration creative non-fiction story tells of one woman taking the decision making about her and her families future into her own hands.

- 1 About Tithe Applotment Books, <http://titheapplotmentbooks.nationalarchives.ie/search/tab/aboutmore.jsp>. Accessed 11 March 2020
- 2 The loy, <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spade>
- 3 https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/I%27II_Tell_Me_Ma accessed November 2020
- 4 McDonnell, Pat. “The Voyage of the Adam Lodge.” *Clogher Record* 13, no. 1 (1988): 132-37. Accessed March 16, 2020. doi:10.2307/27699282, p132
- 5 *Ibid.*
- 6 *Ibid.*
- 7 *Ibid.*

Yours Faithfully

Colleen Russell

George and Bill waited in line to enlist in this brave new adventure. It was called the Great War, the War to Last All Wars – and they wanted in. After the long train trip from Dubbo they were bushed, but on a high with anticipation.

Young and strong, they easily passed all the health requirements.

George had no parents, had lost touch with his brothers, so as next of kin on the enlistment papers he put the name of his aunt, Emma KING. They’d met for the first time only recently, and had hit it off.

Bidding farewell to Betty on the Dubbo station was heartrending. She had clung to him, sobbing, ‘Please come back to me, Georgie. I love you. Please come back to me.’

His throat was so choked he could barely speak. What was there to say? He loved Betty with all his heart, but he was young and there was adventure afoot.

Gobs of steam blasted into the morning air from the packed train and the whistle called. ‘Wait for me, darlin’.’

And he was gone.

George watched her frantically waving her white scarf, until she disappeared when the train took the bend headed for Sydney, and the battlefields of Europe.

George had come full circle – England to Australia, now back again to fight for Old Blighty.

* * *

George BODLEY spent his first eighteen years in the market town of Towcester in Northampton, England. His five older brothers were scattered around the country, seeking new horizons; George the youngest still at home.

When Mam and Pa caught the fever and died, George decided to seek his own horizons.

He joined the Navy as an able seaman on a ship bound for Australia. After an uneventful trip to Capetown, they tackled the winds and waves of the wild southern ocean – ‘whar thar be dragons!’ George was so seasick he thought he would die. He bought out of the Service in Melbourne; enough of life on the ocean waves.

He roamed across Victoria, captivated by this wide brown land, the friendly townships, the open-faced inhabitants. He lingered, but his feet were itching. He headed north, tarried in Albury on the Murray; crossed into New South Wales, chancing his way, romancing the ladies, until he reached the town of Dubbo. His kind of town. Here he found new friends, and he found Betty.

George wasn’t tall, but solid, and light on his feet, with a glint of humour in his dark eyes. People liked his cheerful disposition, his energetic approach to life. This was a new world – here he would find his fortune.

Aunt Emma stood on the crowded wharf to wave them *bon voyage*. It was October 1914 and the boys of the 3rd Battalion F Company jam-packed the rails, as the HMAT *Euripides* slipped down the busy harbour. Sunlight sparkled on the water and on the multi-coloured clothes of the women on the shoreline calling their goodbyes.

‘God bless you.’ ‘God speed.’

Someone was singing *Waltzing Matilda*. There was trepidation in the hearts of the soldiers; this was the last time they’d see Australia for months, perhaps years. George was back at sea; he hoped he could hold his own, and his stomach contents.

He wondered if he would run into his brothers on the European battlefields. Were they still alive? Would they recognise each other after all this time?

Was Betty thinking of him, her pretty nose wrinkled with worry? She’d make a good wife, used to country living. She was a kindergarten teacher and the kids loved her. They’d have lots of kids. There would be plenty of time for love and family when he came back.

George had been travelling around the outskirts of Dubbo earning money with his carpentry skills. Pa had taught him all he knew; how to make a kitchen table or a milking stool; how to repair a byre and the horses' stables. He could hone a fine edge to his tools and make a hardy besom for the womenfolk.

Bill ADAMS was his workmate and best friend, a good reliable worker, until a pretty girl passed by, when he completely lost his head. He was too fond of the booze, but he was an affable drunk.

Bill's Dad worked in the Dubbo Post Office, and kept his impudent son in line. His wife had died when Bill was 'knee high to a grasshopper'.

For several years now his Dad had been courting a widow lady, Ruth, who treated the two boys as if they were her own, always greeting them with warm hugs. They were growing lads with hollow legs, so she fed them with soups and stews, roasts and puddings – until they thought they'd burst.

Leisure days were spent on the banks of the Macquarie River, in the shade of a river gum, fishing line tied to a toe with a yabbie wriggling on the hook. An old Wiradjuri man told them there were cod and catfish sleeping amongst the snags, if they were lucky.

Near Gin Gin Weir there were deep pools and fast-running riffles. Out at Spicer's Creek it was said that the perch were just waiting to hop out of the river onto a hot griddle.

George was introduced to Betty at a parish church fair, where George paraded his skills at the shooting range and won her a cupie doll.

That night there was a dance and George filled Betty's dance card, to keep the other fellers away. He'd known straight away that Betty was the lassie for him. As they moved to the music, George was entranced with the feel of her soft body, her warm breath on his cheek.

Betty was pretty and popular. Her hair was a mass of apricot curls, her wide eyes blue as a summer sky and freckles danced across her cheeks. When they strolled down the street with her hand on George's arm, Betty proudly showed off her new beau.

Sometimes Bill and his girl borrowed some bicycles and they all went picnicking.

According to news reports, there was a bicycle craze 'taking over the world'. Sales for bicycles of all shapes and sizes were soaring. Lady cyclists shifted from long voluminous skirts to hip length tops with matching bloomers. They loosened their corsets. 'Shocking!' some declared, but the feminist coterie pushed ever forward. George and Bill were enchanted to see the soft curves unleashed.

They sang along with the bicycle song –

Daisy, Daisy, give me your answer do, I'm half crazy, all for the thought of you.

For the first time in his young life George had found true happiness, with his Betty.

* * *

The 3rd Battalion was sent to the Mena Camp in Cairo to train in preparation for fighting the Huns and Turks. The Kiwis were camped nearby, rowdy and unruly, as full of excited anticipation as their Aussie comrades.

Their camp under canvas was hot and steamy, with rolling sandhills as far as the eye could see. Soldiers were kept busy with lectures, marching drills and weaponry preparation ...

In December George awoke in a hospital bed, his face swaddled in bandages, the lower part of his right arm missing, body bruised and aching.

'Just rest, soldier. You're in the Citadel Military Hospital in Cairo, an accident with a grenade. Just you relax and we'll take care of you.'

George thankfully drifted back into unconsciousness.

Two months of the Grand Adventure – to Hell and back on the desert sand.

Written on George's papers, *Permanent Disability, Total Incapacity to Earn a Living*.

Total inability to marry his sweetheart, to build a home and family.

Total wretchedness.

Now George BODLEY stood by the rails of the *Kyarra* headed for Melbourne – back to Australia, not the triumphant return he'd envisaged.

On board ship were dozens like himself, with various injuries, some without arms, some without legs - all hopeless.

As well as the loss of his arm, half of George's face had been blown away.

'You're famous, mate, like old Lord Nelson,' one lark said, in an attempt to cheer him up, 'One eye, one arm and one arsehole!'

His nurses told George that doctors were doing remarkable work in repairing damaged faces and bodies from the war, the army would bear the costs.

'Just give yourself a couple of years and you'll be up to your old tricks again, luv.'

They said the same thing to every soldier, but George knew his life was over. He was 26. On the ship, deck chairs were set up for those gassed in the trenches, pitiable creatures, who spent their days coughing and spluttering, in a constant painful attempt to breathe.

Some poor buggers on board were returning home in disgrace and ignominy, because of syphilis contracted in the brothels of Cairo. There were few drugs to assist in a cure.

Three lads had already disappeared; there one day, walking the decks like the living dead, gone overnight. It was said that drowning was a peaceful death. George contemplated it, but he just couldn't do it.

No longer a man, and a coward to boot.

Another six months spent in a Melbourne hospital, and George was discharged, with good advice and a box of pain killers.

He was introduced by other sufferers to the best pain killer of all – whiskey. It eased the pain, but left his mind in a constant alcoholic fog, and he often stumbled as he dragged along the pavements. He noticed the pitying glances from passers-by, those who sympathised, who tried to understand the horrors of war.

They would never, never understand.

The steam train to Dubbo was packed with men on leave, on their way home to sweethearts and families. Few of them would stay for long. The war in Europe was gathering momentum and more young men were being encouraged to enlist, to re-enlist. There was political controversy about government conscription.

Newspapers published lists of those lost in Belgium, France, Gallipoli. On New Year's Day 1915 the battleship HMS *Formidable* was torpedoed in the English Channel by a German U-boat, with over 500 lives lost. Two months later its sister ship, the HMS *Irresistible* was lost in the Dardanelles.

George remembered his young naval mates – and mourned.

He was still in uniform, face swathed in bandages, slouch hat pulled well down. Dubbo station was packed with people to welcome home 'their brave boys'.

George's heart ached.

Ruth gave him her usual ebullient welcome, holding him for just that moment longer. Bill's Dad was really pleased to see him again, offering warmth and encouragement. He'd been officially informed that Bill was missing in action at Gallipoli, but they were still hopeful. What else could they do? Betty's name wasn't mentioned.

On his way back to the station – there she was on the sidewalk, closely examining the face of each soldier passing by. Their eyes met for a moment, but she quickly turned away, embarrassed by his bandaged head and his deformity. Gratefully there was no recognition.

He moved quickly on.

God, oh, God, why have you forsaken us?

* * *

To Senator Pearce, June 1915 – Dear Sir

I want to inquire about a soldier who returned from Egypt. He was in Melbourne Hospital, until about four weeks ago, and he came to Sydney,

and was discharged, so they informed me at the Barracks. I got his address when in Melbourne, but received no reply. I am certain he would answer it, if he received it. I heard since, he had sailed again, and I want to know his address. Would you find out for me, if he enlisted in Melbourne. His name is Private George BODLEY. He was in F Company, 3rd Battalion. He came to Dubbo in uniform, but I missed him.

*So please, do find out his address for me, and let me know as soon as possible. Yours faithfully,
Miss Betty HARRISON.'*

* * *

Inspiration

Emma King, my grandmother, had seven cousins who served in the 1914-1918 War. All returned home. Every Anzac Day, I wear George Bodley's service medal in his memory.

"A poignant story of a woman reconnecting with her aged and ailing father. The writer teases out the layers and nuances by having one character gently coax the memory of another. Later, the daughter questions the accuracy of her father's ancestral tales. Exploration of facts exonerates his folklore and brings the truth into focus."



Tell me again, Dad

Margaret Clough

The heat was intense on that January afternoon, the air thick with the relentless shrilling of cicadas. A nurse led me down a long passage and paused as she opened a door at the end. "He's conscious," she said. "He hasn't spoken since he arrived, but we think he can hear." The room was cool and silent, the shrill intensity of the outside world now a distant hum. My father, bent almost double, sat in a hospital chair in the centre of the room beside a white bed. Below his faded pyjamas two white stick-legs retreated into ridiculously large tartan slippers.

"Hello Dad," I said, crossing the room. "It's me, Margie. I've come down from Canberra to see how you're going." There was no response. "Hi Dad," I tried again. "How're you doing?" I took his large brown hand in mine. "It's good to see you. I'm glad you got over that surgery."

Still no flicker of recognition, the wrinkled hand cold and lifeless in mine. I rested his hand back on the armrest and tried gently to lift him up a little so I could see his face. But his frail body was rigid. It seemed that brittle shell would snap if

I tried to move it. I pushed the visitors' chair aside and sat on the floor beside him so I could see up now, a lock of snowy hair hanging down from his face. His eyes, faded to the palest of blue, were wide open and lifeless. "Come on, Dad. It's me, Margie. You know, the naughty one. I used to make you so cranky, didn't I?"

I looked around at the still, silent room. From outside, the muffled sound of a Melbourne tram rattling down the road, the cicadas still shrilling. Under a hastily closed window a long arm of ivy had become trapped, its green tendrils reaching out into the room, searching for life.

I had never been close to my father, always afraid of his remoteness. When he broke into one of his rages I would hide under the blankets in my bedroom, covering my ears. In the hospital a few weeks earlier nurses had drawn up high rails around his bed. "He keeps trying to climb out," they explained. "Thinks he's back in the trenches, poor old guy." Recalling his panic, maybe, as thick clouds of yellow mustard gas seeped towards him and his mates. His was the job of banging on a metal can to warn the others to grab their gas masks. Who knows what war-time terrors he was re-living? But I found it hard to forgive him for the way he treated my mother.

"Come on, Dad. Tell me that story again. You remember, you told me a long time ago. You know, with the babies. You were about fifteen and there was a girl you really liked. She was having a birthday party – a big party - and everyone in the town was invited. But you had an argument with her the day before and she said you couldn't come. Lily, was it? Or Ruby?"

I took my father's hand in mine again and continued.

"And the night of the party you crept out of the house and walked into town. You could hear the fiddlers playing, and the church hall was lit up with lanterns. You climbed a tree to look through the windows, remember? Everyone was dancing, and chatting and laughing. You belonged in there, with your new bagpipes! And then you saw the side door leading on to the stage. You scrambled down from the tree, opened the door and slipped silently inside. All the babies were in there, fast asleep in their baskets and prams behind the thick velvet curtain. And then - a wicked idea came into your mind. Gently you picked up one of the sleeping babies and popped it into the next basket, moving that baby back into the empty pram.

You patted them gently to make sure they were still asleep, then shaking with silent laughter you hurried outside and climbed back into your tree. But after a few minutes you realized that was an awful thing to do. So you sneaked in again to put the babies back, remember? But it was pitch black. And they all looked the same. Maybe they were closer to the curtain? Quickly you swapped two babies. One basket, one pram. No – that was wrong. You tried again. And then you panicked! You moved babies here and there, all over the place, tucking them in carefully as if to hide your mistakes. Then, heart thumping with excitement and guilt, you crept back to your watch in the tree.

Soon the party was over and everyone streamed out into the night. There were shouted goodbyes as baskets were loaded into buggies and prams trundled down the main street. Lanterns danced into the darkness, and horses clopped off to distant farmhouses. It was quiet for a few moments, and then, and then....”

Slowly my father’s hand tightened around mine. His gaunt frame began to shake with silent laughter. No sound, but wave after wave of convulsions rocking his body. A sparkle of life in those pale blue eyes.

“And the main street exploded into life! Women rushed up and down, screaming hysterically. Everyone came outside to see what was going on. People shouted and cried as babies were passed back and forth. One father scooped up a screaming bundle and galloped off to an outlying farm, his distraught wife weeping and wailing on the doorstep.”

My fathers grip was now vice like, his eyes alive, the laughter reduced to a twisted grin. “You went to Ruby the next day, didn’t you? To confess. But she refused to believe you. You would never do a thing like that, Robert,” she said.

We sat together for a long, long time. Slowly his grip softened, his eyes grew blank again, as he gradually withdrew. I gently placed his hand on the chair,

wrapping his fingers around the wooden armrest. The tears came then, slow and silent, as I thought of a life ebbing away, of what could have been. I kissed the back of his white, baby-soft hair. “Goodbye, Dad. I love you,” I said, and left the room quickly.

My father died, peacefully, four weeks later.

. . . Twenty five years later I still remember every detail of that time we spent together, Dad. I don’t know why I suddenly decided to write about it. They say we write to understand. Maybe that’s why. And writing about it made me want to discover more about our family history.



Robert Morton after World War One

As children, we were told that your side of the family came from Scotland. The three aunts, Daisy, Myrtle and Vera - they loved Scotland, didn’t they, with their

Morton Coat of Arms on the sideboard. They were upset when I told them I hated the Morton tartan. It was such a drab, dark green affair and I fancied myself twirling in a kilt rich with reds and blues. You told me of ancestors who arrived in Dalby, Queensland, and later made a dangerous, three-month journey through inland NSW with two bullock drays, crossing the border into Victoria and finally settling in Port Fairy. But tragedy struck on the way. Somewhere near The Rock, near Wagga, the youngest son was riding on the shaft of the dray carrying their belongings, when he fell off. The bullocks couldn't be stopped before the wheels of the dray shattered his young body. A few weeks later, the oldest son drowned in the Murray River, drawn under by a whirlpool. I wish you hadn't told me the grisly details about those huge Murray Cod.

But once I had started on actual research, I'm afraid my faith in the family legends crumbled. So much for our Scottish origins and my secret belief that the 'twirl of the pipes' stirred something deep in my soul! Both sides of the family had emigrated from County Antrim in Northern Ireland! You didn't know that, Dad? I was dismayed, to say the least. But the bad news continued. I simply couldn't find any records or reports, or evidence of those two childhood tragedies. I wasn't sure I could believe *any* of your stories.

I decided to stick to the facts. I joined several interest groups in HAGSOC and learned about the Plantations, of large waves of Scottish migration to Northern Ireland in the 17th century, the largest mainly due to a devastating famine in Scotland in the 1690's. Many of those Scots settled in County Antrim, in villages and towns like Ballymena where almost the entire population was Scottish. Some of the old traditions still continue to the present day. There were MORTONS listed in both waves. So I guess we can still claim Scottish origins, can't we? Maybe I'll be able to track them down, later on.

A friend who's done lots of family history helped with my first batch of data. I learnt that it was grandma's family, the OWENS, and *not* the MORTONS, who settled in



*Believed to be William Owens,
pioneer from County Antrim, N. Ireland*

Dalby. They came from Liverpool in 1859 on the bounty ship *Shackamaxon* to Moreton Bay in Queensland and then travelled to Dalby, with two children, James and John. So that bit was correct. William OWENS had to fulfil the requirements of his assisted passage, working as a shepherd on a huge property called Jimbour Station. He and his wife Anne had six more children between 1861 and 1868 - William, David, Anne - Jane, Isabella, Robert and Archibald. Then we get another tick for your story. Three more children, Jane, Robert and Margaret were born – would you believe it - in Mailors Flat near Port Fairy! You were right - there *had* been an epic journey from Dalby to Port Fairy! And then I thought I'd found evidence for the young son who was run over by the wheels of the dray. From death certificates I realised that Robert, born in Queensland, had died, and they'd had another baby in 1874, named Robert. Aha, I thought! That's my lad who fell off the shaft. But when I finally got a death certificate for the first Robert, he had died of croup at 10 months. So, no deaths on the journey.

In time I found explanations for those stories. I found an article in the *Bendigo Independent*, 1905, titled "Little Boy Run Over," about a son from the next generation, falling under the wheels of a wagon. And yes, the fourth son, Archibald, *had* drowned while swimming in the Murray, but it was years later, in 1890, on his way home from a job in NSW. He's buried in Tocumwal Cemetery. You would have heard those stories as a child, Dad, and linked them to the journey from Dalby to Port Fairy. Or maybe I made the connection? I've learnt so much about the tenuous nature of human memory.

So what about your *marvellous* tale of exchanging the babies? I know you couldn't have made it up. It was too real. But I was really afraid you had linked a story from elsewhere and woven it into our history. The *Warrnambool Standard* and the *Koroit Sentinel and Tower Hill Advocate* reported lots of parties to farewell or welcome home young WW1 recruits. Your two big parties were in there. But no tale of teenage wickedness.

I wanted evidence so badly, Dad! Authenticity. But then, when I thought about it again, I remembered the transformation that happened in front of me, the way you were drawn back into your world, the fresh spark in your eyes, the sudden strength in your grip and the silent laughter. And I knew without a doubt. I didn't need confirmation. That reaction could only happen because you were right there, watching from your secret post in the tree.

Inspiration

I wanted to share the way a story, within another story, drew a father and daughter together after a lifetime apart.

Book Review

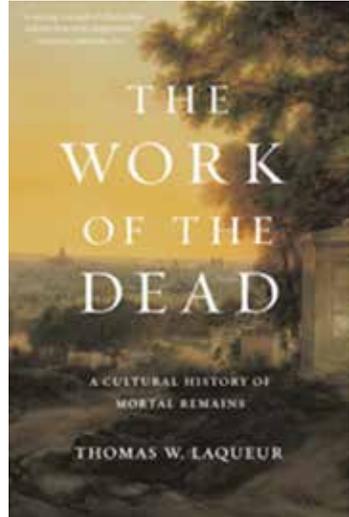
Nina Johnson

Laqueur, Thomas W. *The Work of the Dead: A Cultural History of Mortal Remains*. United States: Princeton University Press, 2015. (2018 third printing). 736 pages. Illustrations.

Can you spend happy hours in churchyards and cemeteries? Is your preoccupation with deceased ancestors regarded as weirdly morbid by your friends and family?

Thomas W. LACQUEUR is an American Professor of History who would understand your interest. His weighty 2015 tome, *The Work of the Dead: A Cultural History of Mortal Remains*, is an examination of how our society invests the dead with meaning. Lacqueur discusses how religious beliefs, atheist philosophies and superstitions have influenced the historic treatment of the deceased in western culture.

In exploring the history of the church graveyard, predominantly in England, Lacqueur addresses questions which may have occurred to you if you've trudged round these often muddy and overgrown sites.



What's with all the yew trees? (They were associated with death in pagan cultures such as Ancient Greece & the Celts, and this association carried over into Christian burial places.)

Why were the dead laid in graves with their feet to the east? (Christians believed that the second coming of Christ would occur in Jerusalem, to the east of Western Europe. The dead, who were believed to be resurrected at that time, would thus be facing towards Christ as they rose.)

How did these graveyards fit in thousands of the dead over hundreds of years? (Gravediggers cut through graves and pushed bones over as required. Occasionally the resulting lumpy landscape was levelled, and bones discarded, but generally the height of the churchyard rose over the years in relationship to its church. Most of the thousands buried in church graveyards had no right to either a permanent resting place or a memorial other than a temporary wooden marker.)

What was considered prime burial real estate? (Most churches were surrounded by consecrated land, but the southern side was most popular. Originally, this may have served to remind the living making their way to the main door of the

church to pray for deceased parishioners. Rights to burial within the church went to important clergy and prominent laity.)

Who could the clergy exclude from the graveyard? (Traditionally, burial in the church graveyard was a civil right for those who died in that parish, whether residents or visitors. However, that right was not extended to all. Suicides and the non-baptised were considered not deserving of churchyard burial.) Could one of your brickwalls be an unrecorded burial due to exclusion from the church graveyard? Non-Christian burial at the village crossroads, maybe even with a stake through their entrails to stop their disturbed spirits wandering?

Civil cemeteries are generally a much richer source for family history information than church graveyards due to their profusion of written memorials. But how did they come to virtually replace the churchyard as the preferred place for burial in western cultures?

The first modern cemetery, Cimetière du Père Lachaise, was established in Paris in 1804. Modelled on an ancient Greek burial site, Père Lachaise itself became a tourist attraction and inspired the design of cemeteries elsewhere in Europe, Great Britain, and North America. The varied architecture of monuments, designs of a surrounding park-like landscape, and even the presence of views were features of cemeteries not considered in a humble churchyard.

There were religious, political, cultural, and scientific factors at play in 19th century Britain promoting the development of civil cemeteries.

The growing popularity of nonconformist religions created a problem for the established church. It was losing parishioners, and income from providing baptism and marriage services. Burial in the churchyard had been regarded a traditional civic right, yet some clergy refused to bury children who had been baptised by nonconformist clergy. Political pressure grew for religious freedom in burials that had previously been allowed only to Quakers, Jews and a small number of Dissenters using their own burial grounds.

The growth of cities with the industrial revolution created land use pressures. A dubious theory that the buried dead were responsible for spreading diseases to the living promoted the separation of burial grounds from living communities.

The 19th century also saw cultural change, with memorialising the dead increasingly important, and affordable, for the middle class. Churchyards now sprouted more gravestones rather than just temporary wooden markers, though there were no long-term legal rights to a plot. Civil cemeteries, however, offered both ownership of a burial space with the choice of religiously consecrated or secular sites.

If you wish to explore Lacqueur's book beyond these personal highlights you will need to source it online, as it is not in local libraries.

From Our Contemporaries

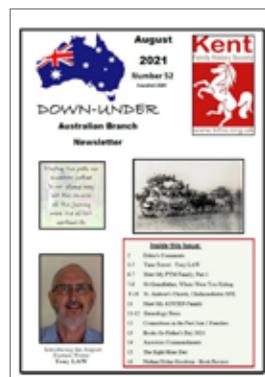
Pauline Bygraves

The items selected for this column are taken from some of the many overseas journals received by the Society - they usually mention Australia in some form or may be of general interest to Australian researchers. If you have an interest in a particular country or location, there will often be other relevant material - recently received journals are on display at the front of the Library.

E-journals are accessible on the computers in the main room. Open the FCER icon on the desktop and click on the link to "Electronic Journals" under "Electronic Resources". If you have any suggestions, please email the editor@familyhistoryact.org.au.

AUSTRALASIA

- Henry AUSTEN arrived in Tasmania in 1883 from St Peter's, Kent to work on an orchard property. Henry had two sons, Henry and George. George's son, Cliff Eric, born in 1917 served in the 2/8 Australian Field Regiment during WWII. He is pictured in 1942 in Cairo with Lance Herbert BARNARD who later became the Member for Bass from 1954 to 1975 and also Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Defence from 1972 to 1974. *Kent FHS (Australian Branch Newsletter) Aug 2021 n52 p11 (electronic journal).*



- Catherine (Kate) Wilson MALCOLM, daughter of Andrew Wilson MALCOLM and Jemima Crawford SOUTER, was born at Liverpool, England in 1848. She and her widowed mother and siblings migrated to New Zealand on the *Matoaka* in late 1868. Kate married Walter Allen SHEPPARD in 1871. Walter had worked in the Australian goldfields and as a timber merchant before moving to Christchurch. Kate SHEPPARD's Suffrage Petition of 1893 was significant in granting women the right to vote in New Zealand general elections. *New Zealand Family Tree Aug 2021 p1 (electronic journal).*

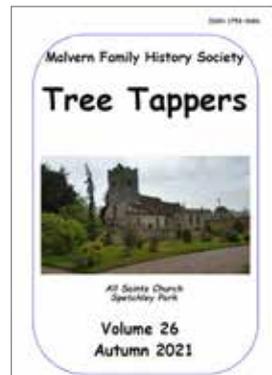


Zealand and Australia as professional entertainers. *NZ Family Tree Aug 2021 p7 (electronic journal)*.

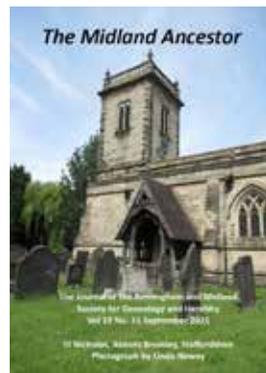
- Robert Daniel PYM, born at Whroo, Victoria, married Rebecca Eliza LOUDON in Western Australia in 1901. Robert (Bob) mysteriously disappeared from Bathurst in 1922. He died in Queensland in 1952. Nothing is known about where he was during the intervening years. *Kent FHS (Australian Branch Newsletter) Aug 2021 n52 p6 (electronic journal)*.

ENGLAND

- George French ANGAS arrived in South Australia in 1843, aged 20, and travelled extensively sketching and painting Australian and Maori artefacts and cultural subjects. He went back to England in 1847, married and returned to South Australia. He settled in Sydney in 1853 becoming secretary to the Australian Museum. He returned to England in 1861. *Lancashire FH & HS Aug 2021 v43 n3 p28 (electronic journal)*. See also issue for Feb 2021 v43 n1 p28.
- Buzi BENTLEY, son of Abraham and Jane (nee GREENWOOD), was born at Dalton in 1841. After his first wife Emma died, Buzi married Sarah Jane SYKES in 1870. In 1875 Buzi left for Melbourne on board *Loch Garry*, without Sarah and son Frederick. He worked as a travelling bookseller in Queensland before going into partnership to buy the Belfast Hotel at Brisbane. He was one of the founders of the Tattersall's Club, and died at Brisbane in 1888. In 1910 Frederick migrated to Australia, followed by his wife Edith and children. They lived initially near Tamworth before moving to Parramatta where Frederick and son Cyril ran a hardware business. *Huddersfield & District FHS Oct 2021 v35 n1 p30 (electronic journal)*.
- Henry CALLABY, his wife Phoebe and six children (Thomas, Charles, Henry, Isaac, Mary Jane and Frederick) left Norfolk for Australia on the *Duchess of Northumberland* in 1839. Eldest son Thomas married Janet FRAME on 9 Nov 1849 at Blakiston, South Australia. (Thomas is recorded in the Biographical Index of South Australians 1836-1883.) *Tree Tappers (Malvern FHS) Autumn 2021 v26 p80 (electronic journal)*.
- Offspring DEAR, son of Nathaniel, married Matilda TRIGG at Arlesey in 1850. They departed Liverpool on the *Admiral Boxer*, arriving at Geelong in 1857. Offspring died in Victoria in 1872, aged 50. The given name 'Offspring' seems distinctive to Arlesey, mainly in the WEBB and DEAR families but the name has spread through marriage. *Bedford FHS Sep 2021 v23 n3 p11 (electronic journal)*.



- Annie Esther FORD, daughter of Thomas Daniel FORD of Sydney, NSW, married Henry North Grant BUSHBY, of Wormley Bury, near Broxbourne, Hertfordshire, at Westminster in 1896. Henry was the eldest son of Henry Jeffreys BUSHBY and Lady Frances NORTH. After he died in 1926, Annie and Henry's son Geoffrey Henry sold off the mansion house of Wormley Bury but retained the Lordship of the Manor of Wormly as well as most of the estate. Annie died in 1949. *Hertfordshire People Sep 2021 n158 p40 (electronic journal)*.
- Lucy HARTLAND (Sydney) is researching HARTLAND, TURNER, FOWLER and SURMAN surnames in Worcestershire. *Tree Tappers (Malvern FHS), Autumn 2021 v26 p96 (electronic journal)*.
- William LAW, aged 80, who lived at Potter's Farm, Bethersden, Kent, was murdered by housebreakers in 1849. One housebreaker was hanged and the other, Henry SHEEPWASH, was transported from Plymouth to Fremantle on the *William Jardine* in 1852. Bertram George LAW, a baker, arrived at Fremantle on the SS *Australind* in 1911. He married Matilda at Mornington, Victoria in 1920 and they had five children. *Kent FHS (Australian Branch Newsletter) Aug 2021 n52 p3 (electronic journal)*.
- Sarah Ann LEIGHTON, third child of Thomas William LEIGHTON and Elizabeth NICHOLS, married Joseph John GREGORY at Handsworth in 1883. In 1913 Sarah Ann and her three sons, John Thomas, Joseph Earl and Russell Milton, left London on the SS *Marathon* for Sydney, followed by Mr J J GREGORY in 1915. Their daughter, Kate Elizabeth married Arthur MEEKINGS in 1910 and they migrated to Australia on the *Ballarat* in 1922. *The Midland Ancestor (Birmingham & Midland Society for Genealogy and Heraldry) Sep 2021 v19 n11 p623 (electronic journal)*.
- William MARKQUICK (1832-1927) deserted the Royal Navy and escaped to Australia in 1854. He purchased six sheep and over time established a vast estate at Bunningyoung at Ballarat. On his death, his estate passed to his housekeeper. *Hillingdon FHS Sep 2021 n135 p17 (electronic journal)*.
- John MOAKES was one of the Rufford Park poachers who, found guilty of entering enclosed land and murder, were sentenced to transportation in 1851. They served their time in Bermuda and were able to return to England. John was again caught poaching and in 1861 he was sent to the penal colony at Perth to serve a 14-year sentence. Percy GRAINGER, the Australian composer, collected folk songs during a visit to England, including



one about the Rufford poachers. *Nottingham FHS Jul 2021 v16 n11 p8 (electronic journal)*.

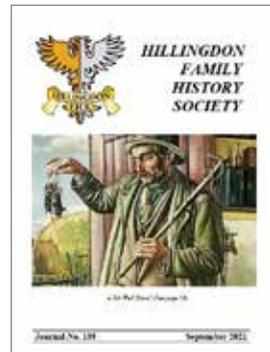
- Adam VALLANCE, his wife Mary (nee BLOWER) and four children, along with one of Adam's younger brothers, George, left London for Australia on board the *Sorata* in 1883. Two more children, Evelyn Mary and Alfred Sydney, were born after their arrival. Adam worked as a storekeeper and postmaster in Sydney. Later he was Registrar of Births, Deaths and Marriages for the district of Sherbrooke in Smithfield and an electoral registrar. Adam and Mary celebrated their 70th wedding anniversary in 1939. Both died in 1940 and are buried in Woronora Cemetery. *The Midland Ancestor (Birmingham & Midland Society for Genealogy and Heraldry) Sep 2021 v19 n11 p654 (electronic journal)*.
- Michael WALKER, his wife Sarah (nee GOSS) and two sons arrived at Launceston on the *Arab* in 1842. Another son had died during the voyage. The family initially settled at Perth where three children were born. In 1846 the family moved to Hagley where Michael rented a farm and six more children were born. The family prospered with Michael becoming a church leader and involved in municipal affairs. Following Sarah's death in 1890, Michael married Mary PATFIELD. Mary died in 1892 and Michael married Margaretta SHAW in 1893. Michael died in 1900 and is buried in Westbury Church of England Cemetery. *The Norfolk Ancestor Sep 2021 p17 (electronic journal)*.
- Sheila WISE: "Is Bigamy Genetic?" provides several examples of bigamy in the BEETSON/BEATSON family, including John BEATSON who left his wife in Manchester and arrived at Sydney in 1921. He then moved to New Zealand where he allegedly married again, not once but twice, to Ivy NICHOLSON in 1922 and Mary Evelyn STONE in 1930. *The Manchester Genealogist 2021 v57 n3 p239 (electronic journal)*.

GENERAL

- John SYMONS: "Army Abbreviations (Conclusion)". *Hillingdon FHS Sep 2021 n135 p8 (electronic journal)*.

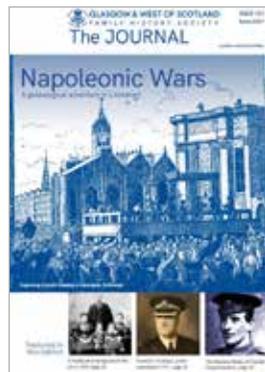
SCOTLAND

- Catherine GALLACHER, daughter of Frederick and Rose Ann (nee McMILLAN), was born at Calton, Glasgow in 1879. She married James ALLEN from Co Westmeath in 1908. James departed on the *Ballarat* for Melbourne in 1912, with Catherine and two sons following on the *Euripides* in 1915. Two children, Rose Marcella and John Cornelius, were born in 1917 and 1918 respectively. James started a cabinet-making and French polishing business at Melbourne which became known as JS Allen & Sons. James died in 1970 and Catherine in



1976. *Glasgow & West of Scotland FHS Jun 2021 n121 p38 (electronic journal)*. See also issue for Mar 2021 n120 p30.

- Rhonda FLOWERS is looking for birth details for Hannah GARDEN, daughter of John and Jean/Jane (nee YOUNG). Hannah was transported to Australia where she married Patrick HALL in 1836. After his death she married Andrew GLANNON in 1844. *Aberdeen & North East Scotland Aug 2021 n160 p25 (electronic journal)*.
- John GIBSON, son of James and Margaret (nee DICKSON) of Rousay, died at Sydney in 1896. His brother William also lived in Australia and he died in 1947 at Melbourne. William's sons Allan, Ronald and William all served in the RAF. *SIB Folk News (Orkney FHS) Autumn 2021 n99 p16 (electronic journal)*.
- Alfred John LAWRENCE, son of John and Sarah Annie (nee PUTTOCK), was born in London in 1878. He started his working life as a clerk but became a full-time musician and composer, performing with his entertainment troupe "Smart Sets Cadet" at seaside resorts in Ayrshire. Alf married Amy Kathleen FISHER at London in 1902. He also sang duets with Violet CARMEN (real name Violet Kate COOMBS) and in 1912 they left for Sydney on the *Ortranto*. Their son, John, was born at Melbourne in 1914. Alf spent several years working for the Australian Broadcasting Commission before returning to Britain where he died in 1955. *Troon@Ayrshire FHS Summer 2021 n93 p17 (electronic journal)*.
- Rev Donald Smith MACLEOD and his wife Kate ISLES had twelve children, nine of whom left Scotland to live overseas. Their son Donald Stanley joined the Merchant Navy and in 1924 he married Gertrude JORDON at Sydney. Murdo MACLEOD also settled in Australia. He fought at Gallipoli and in 1916 he married Elise HARRIS. Margaret MACLEOD married William LITTLE at Capetown. After William's death she moved to Brisbane to live with her eldest son. *Glasgow & West of Scotland FHS Jun 2021 n121 p32 (electronic journal)*.
- Robin PRICE: Brisbane Group Report - "Immigration Sources for Australia". *Aberdeen & North East Scotland FHS Aug 2021 n160 p10 (electronic journal)*.
- James, John Harris and Henry SHARP emigrated from Aberdeen to Canada between 1909 and 1912. The brothers are recorded as being in New Zealand



in the 1920s, with John Harris marrying Lily May CRYER, born in Adelaide, South Australia, at Auckland in 1930. *Aberdeen & North East Scotland FHS Aug 2021 n160 p41 (electronic journal)*.

Pauline's Parlour Hints

Pauline Ramage

Newspapers

Scrolling through our catalogue to see what newspapers we have in our library, I was amazed to see that we had 548 items, the locations and numbers of items are: book shelves 310, CD Section 66, Fiche drawers 160, manuscript section 3, microfilm cabinet 2, oversize shelves 5, special cabinet 2.

Many town newspapers publish details of Birth, Death, Marriages and Obituaries; extracts from Police Gazettes, Land entitlements, and many more surprises.

When searching the catalogue I chose: **Location all:** anywhere: **Search Terms:** Newspapers. But you can enter the name of the town for a result, but scrolling through the items you can be surprised as to what we hold in our library that you may not find anywhere else.

We all love finding out wonderful information and stories about our ancestors in the newspapers especially now that we have access to Trove. The newspapers on Trove go back to 1803, and this is as far as we can go, but I stumbled across a set of 5 books called "Sydney Cove" by John Cobley with dates 1788 to 1800, these books are just like a newspaper, we have birth death and marriage announcements, events, punishments, crimes, detailed news about the Settlement of NSW, letters to and from the Colony to England, and some treasures. There is an index at the back of each book, making it easy to check the names. These can be viewed in our Library:

- *Sydney Cove 1788* AN7/14/05
- *Sydney Cove 1789-1790* AN7/14/05b
- *Sydney Cove 1791-1792* AN7/14/05c
- *Sydney Cove 1793-1795* AN7/14/05d
- *Sydney Cove 1795-1800* AN7/14/05e

Thomas Mutch Indexes

Thomas Davies MUTCH (1885-1958), journalist, politician and historian, was born in London, and was also a professional genealogist. MUTCH was a council-member of the Society of Australian Genealogists in 1945-46 and was elected fellow in 1946. A trustee of the Public Library of New South Wales (1916-58) and a member of the Mitchell Library committee (1924-58) he successfully lobbied for establishment of the State Archives in 1942, and in 1945 persuaded the National Library of Australia to co-operate in a Joint Copying Project of

documents relating to Australia in the Public Records Office, London, which is now referred to as the AJCP (Australian Joint Copying Project).

He compiled a comprehensive index to the early settlers of New South Wales and Van Diemen's Land from parish registers, convict indents, musters and land records.

The period 1815-1957 of the Mutch Indexes covers all Church of England registers to 1828 which were indexed from the James Henry KERRISON index. KERRISON was an Anglican official, who arrived in the colony in 1829 and was appointed clerk to the Archdeacon in 1834 and then became secretary to Bishop William BROUGHTON. In 1836 the diocesan registrar refused to keep the records of births, marriages and deaths, and James offered to do it. In the next 20 years he compiled meticulous indexes to all existing registers from which he was able to satisfy inquirers. In December 1856 the diocesan registrar proposed that the new Registrar-Generals Dept take over all Church of England registers and indexes and pay James 3000 pounds compensation for his services

The full contents of the 'Mutch Index' consists of 14 reels of microfilm and can be found in the National Library, and many other libraries. The records include First fleet, Convict indents 1790-1800, Convict indents, Musters and censuses Parish registers, Indexes re Tasmania, Miscellaneous indexes, Land records, Norfolk Island, Pitcairn Island, Biographical index. I have found information that I did not find anywhere else. In our Library we have 5 microfilm reels of Thomas Davies MUTCH card index 1787-ca1957 (**Y3/mfm38/1-5**) comprising:

- First Fleet, Convict Indents 1790-1806
- Musters, Census, BDM's 1787-ca1957
- Misc., Land Records 1792-1825
- Tasmania 1803-1820, Norfolk Is. 1792-1814
- Pitcairn Is.

The HAGSOC Library will be closed
from **12:30 pm Wednesday 15 December 2021**
and reopens **Tuesday 11th January 2022.**

THE HERALDRY AND GENEALOGY SOCIETY OF CANBERRA

Council members would like to take this opportunity to wish you you and your families a safe and enjoyable holiday season, with many genealogical discoveries in 2022!



Society Education and Social Activities

January to March 2022

Meetings are held via Zoom, face-to-face in the Education Room, or "hybrid" via both methods. Please refer to the Harbinger or President's Newsletter to register for the meetings. Contact the convenor if you have any questions.

Education Sessions – Registration is required for all Education and Events, Courses, Workshops and Seminars. Information is listed in the newsletters or on the website www.familyhistoryact.org.au. Contact registration@familyhistoryact.org.au for any questions about education events.

JANUARY 2022

- 20 10am-12noon **Legacy SUG:** *Do you want source with that? In this session we discuss why we use sources and how to enter them in Legacy.* convenor Julie Hesse legacy.sug@familyhistoryact.org.au
- 20 7.30pm-9.30pm **English and Welsh SIG:** *Who is the Father? – Two Illegitimacy stories presented by David Wintrip.* convenors Floss Aitchison and Nina Johnson english.welsh.sig@familyhistoryact.org.au
- 21 10am-11am **Morning Coffee and Chat** This month's round table discussion *'Our research successes in 2021 and our goals for 2022'* contact coffee.chat@familyhistoryact.org.au
- 22 9am-11am **DNA Basics** with Diahna Southard. Two lectures: (1) *Five Tips To Make Sense of Your DNA Testing* and (2) *Three DNA Tests = Three Times the Fun.*
- 23 2pm-4pm **Australia SIG:** *Floods and Disasters in the Colony.* convenor Pauline Ramage australia.sig@familyhistoryact.org.au
- 24 10am-1pm **Practical Procedures:** *Making best use of the FFACT Library with Jeanette Hahn. These sessions are for anyone wishing to improve their knowledge and make the most of our own really fabulous resources. Four places per session are available so bookings are required.* convenor Jeanette Hahn library.practice@familyhistoryact.org.au
- 25 10am-12noon **Pauline's Parlour:** *Having a problem with your research, or not sure where to start? Come along to our round table chats, over a cup of tea, to discuss your problem.* convenor Pauline Ramage parlour@familyhistoryact.org.au

FEBRUARY 2022

- 1 7pm-9pm **Monthly Meeting Launch of AR Signs and Canberra Tracks**
- 3 7.30pm-9.30pm **Scottish SIG:** *Meeting topic suggestions for 2022. What would you like to achieve with your Scottish research this year?* convenor Robert Forrester scottish.sig@familyhistoryact.org.au

- 4 9.30am-11.30am **Reunion & Mac Support SUG**: convenor Danny O'Neill
ram.sug@familyhistoryact.org.au
- 5 9.30am-11.30am **Irish SIG**: *"Do you still need help with your Irish brick wall?"* convenor Barbara Moore irish.sig@familyhistoryact.org.au
- 5 1pm-3pm **DNA SIG**: *Question & Answer Session*. convenors Marilyn Woodward, Elizabeth Hannan, Sue Barrett dna.sig@familyhistoryact.org.au
- 9 7.30pm-9.30pm **Convict SIG**: *Finding Convicts at the NSW State Archives and Records*. convenor Michele Rainger convict.sig@familyhistoryact.org.au
- 10 10am-12noon **Family Tree Maker SUG**: *"Getting started with Family Tree Maker"*. ftm.sug@familyhistoryact.org.au
- 12 2pm-3.30pm **TMG Down Under SUG**: convenor Lindsay Graham
tmg.sug@familyhistoryact.org.au
- 13 11am-1pm **Pauline's Parlour**: *Having a problem with your research, or not sure where to start? Come along to our round table chats, over a cup of tea, to discuss your problem*. convenor Pauline Ramage
parlour@familyhistoryact.org.au
- 17 10am-12noon **Legacy SUG**: *Events. In this session we discuss how to use Events and build your own in Legacy*. convenor Julie Hesse
legacy.sug@familyhistoryact.org.au
- 17 8pm **Heraldry SIG**: convenor Niel Gunson
heraldry.sig@familyhistoryact.org.au
- 19 10am-12.30pm **Writers SIG**: convenor Clare McGuinness
writers.sig@familyhistoryact.org.au
- 22 10am-12noon **Pauline's Parlour**: *Having a problem with your research, or not sure where to start? Come along to our round table chats, over a cup of tea, to discuss your problem*. convenor Pauline Ramage
parlour@familyhistoryact.org.au
- 21 **More advanced DNA** with Michelle Leonard
- 22 1pm-3pm **DNA Drop In**: *Have you had a DNA Test and don't know what it means or how to use the results in family research? Join in this round table meeting to discuss your specific questions or problems on DNA*. convenors Elizabeth Hannan, Sue Barrett and Marilyn Woodward
dna.sig@familyhistoryact.org.au
- 26 **More advanced DNA** with Michelle Leonard
- 28 10am-1pm **Practical Procedures**: *Making best use of the FFACT Library with Jeanette Hahn. These sessions are for anyone wishing to improve their knowledge and make the most of our own really fabulous resources. Four places per session are available so bookings are required*. convenor Jeanette Hahn library.practice@familyhistoryact.org.au
- 28 **More advanced DNA** with Michelle Leonard

MARCH 2022

- 1 7pm-9pm **Monthly Meeting** Mary Ann Gourley from FIBIS - *The British in India*
- 4 9.30am-11.30am **Reunion & Mac Support SUG**: convenor Danny O'Neill ram.sug@familyhistoryact.org.au
- 6 **Begining Family History Course** over three consecutive weekends
- 9 7.30pm-9.30pm **TMG Down Under SUG**: convenor Lindsay Graham tmg.sug@familyhistoryact.org.au
- 10 2pm-4pm* **Family Tree Maker SUG**: "*Smart Stories and Books in FTM for the Beginner*" - Clare McGuinness. ftm.sug@familyhistoryact.org.au
* *note the time change for this month only*
- 12 9.30am-11.30am **Irish SIG**: "*Morris Ancestry – clues from an old date stone*" – Chris Lindesay. convenor Barbara Moore irish.sig@familyhistoryact.org.au
- 12 1pm-3pm **DNA SIG**: *Ethical Dilemmas with DNA*. convenors Marilyn Woodward, Elizabeth Hannan, Sue Barrett dna.sig@familyhistoryact.org.au
- 13 **Begining Family History Course** over three consecutive weekends
- 13 11am-1pm **Pauline's Parlour**: *Having a problem with your research, or not sure where to start? Come along to our round table chats, over a cup of tea, to discuss your problem.* convenor Pauline Ramage parlour@familyhistoryact.org.au
- 17 10am-12noon **Legacy SUG**: *Missing Media. In this session we discuss how Legacy stores your media and what to do when it goes missing, focusing on using the Media Relinker tool.* convenor Julie Hesse legacy.sug@familyhistoryact.org.au
- 17 7.30pm-9.30pm **English and Welsh SIG**: *Mining in England & Wales: some social history & useful sources (presented by Nina Johnson)* convenors Floss Aitchison and Nina Johnson english.welsh.sig@familyhistoryact.org.au
- 19 10am-12.30pm **Writers SIG**: convenor Clare McGuinness writers.sig@familyhistoryact.org.au
- 20 **Begining Family History Course** over three consecutive weekends
- 26 10am-12noon **Digital Asset Management SIG**: convenor Danny O'Neill dam.sig@familyhistoryact.org.au
- 27 2pm-4pm **Australia SIG**: *Early Free Settlers in the Colony.* convenor Pauline Ramage australia.sig@familyhistoryact.org.au
- 28 10am-1pm **Practical Procedures**: *Making best use of the FFACT Library with Jeanette Hahn. These sessions are for anyone wishing to improve their knowledge and make the most of our own really fabulous resources. Four places per session are available so bookings are required.* convenor

Jeanette Hahn library.practice@familyhistoryact.org.au

- 29 10am-12noon **Pauline's Parlour:** *Having a problem with your research, or not sure where to start? Come along to our round table chats, over a cup of tea, to discuss your problem.* convenor Pauline Ramage parlour@familyhistoryact.org.au
- 29 1pm-3pm **DNA Drop In:** *Have you had a DNA Test and don't know what it means or how to use the results in family research? Join in this round table meeting to discuss your specific questions or problems on DNA.* convenors Elizabeth Hannan, Sue Barrett and Marilyn Woodward dna.sig@familyhistoryact.org.au

Calendar for regular Groups

Australia SIG

2pm the fourth Sunday of odd-numbered months

Convict SIG

7.30pm the second Wednesday of even-numbered months

Digital Asset Management (DAM) SIG

10am the last Saturday of odd-numbered months except anuary

DNA Drop In

1pm the last Tuesday of each month except January and December

DNA SIG

1pm first Saturday of February, second Saturday of March, May, July, September, November

English and Welsh SIG

7.30pm the third Thursday of odd-numbered months

Family Tree Maker SUG

10am the second Thursday of each month except January

Heraldry SIG

8pm the third Thursday of even-numbered months except December

Irish SIG

9.30am the first Saturday of February, second Saturday of March, May, July, September, November

Legacy SUG

10am the third Thursday of each month except December

Morning Coffee and Chat

10am the third Friday of each month

Pauline's Parlour

10am the last Tuesday of each month except December
11am the second Sunday of each month except January

Practical Procedures

10am the fourth Monday of each month except December

Reunion & Mac Support SUG

9.30am the first Friday of each month, except January and December

Scottish SIG

7.30pm the first Thursday of each even-numbered month

TMG Down Under SUG

2pm the second Saturday of even-numbered months except December
7.30pm the second Wednesday of odd-numbered months except January

Writers SIG

10am the third Saturday of each month February to November (dates around Easter may change)

Services for Members

Photocopies

A4 25c

Microform Prints

A4 45c

GRO Certificate and PDF Service

Members \$24 certificate, \$16 PDF

Non-members \$27 certificate \$17 PDF

Translation Service

Translations available for the following languages:

English handwriting c. 1600, Estonian, French, German, Greek, Hungarian, Icelandic, Italian, Latin, Norwegian, Polish, Welsh, Yiddish.

Prices: A \$10 fee for assessment of the material is non-refundable. Prices vary according to language and are charged per 100 words or part thereof.

Further details in Library or from the secretary@familyhistoryact.org.au

LDS Film Viewing

The FFACT library is registered as a Library Affiliate with the LDS FamilySearch Organisation. This enables members using the FFACT library access to the approximately 25% of digital records held by LDS that have restricted access imposed by copyright holders.

Discounts

Financial members receive a 10% discount when purchasing FFACT publications. Further details in Library

Research Advice

The service providing free research to members, for those facing a “brick wall” in their research, is currently suspended.

Research Service

Contact Jenny Higgins 0429 704 339 .

Readers' queries

Members may submit queries for inclusion in *The Ancestral Searcher* free of charge. Please no more than 200 words per query. Non-members \$27.50. Contact: editor@familyhistoryact.org.au (all prices include GST)

Notice to Contributors

The copy deadline for contributions to *The Ancestral Searcher* is the 2nd Monday of the month prior to publication. The journal is published quarterly in March, June, September and December.

The Editor welcomes articles, letters, news and items of interest on any subject pertaining to family and local history.

Please send text files in either MS Word or plain text. Articles should be no more than 2000 words, with one or two quality images. Please limit footnotes to 3-4 per 500 words.

Digital images should be a high resolution and tiff or jpeg images.

The Editor reserves the right to edit all articles and include or omit images as appropriate.

Authors can assist by; formatting dates to '1 July 1899'; months to be spelled out; no ordinals on numbers (no st/nd/rd/th); ship names should be *italicised*; all quotes to be in “double quotes”; and all family names should be formatted as CAPITALS. (But not in captions or end notes.) Submissions and questions to: editor@familyhistoryact.org.au.

LIBRARY

Unit 7, 41 Templeton Street, Cook — 02 6251 7004

Opening hours:	Tuesday	11.00 am	—	2.00 pm
	Wednesday	10.00 am	—	3.30 pm
	Thursday	11.00 am	—	2.00 pm
	Saturday	2.00 pm	—	5.00 pm
	Sunday	2.00 pm	—	5.00 pm

The Library is CLOSED on all Public Holidays

Reader's Access Ticket for non-members: \$10 for one day, \$20 one week, \$30 one month.

SOCIETY MEETINGS

Monthly general meetings are held beginning at 7.00pm in the FFACT Education Room, Templeton Street, Cook, ACT on the first Tuesday of each month, except January. The Annual General Meeting is held on the first Tuesday of November. Notices of special meetings, and social gatherings are advertised in this journal as appropriate.

MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS

Membership begins from the date the member joins and will expire either one or two years later at the end of the month in which the member joined. New members, or members who have lapsed for more than 12 months, are required to pay a joining fee. Joint membership is available for additional members at the same address. The Pensioner concession are available to Australian residents please check with our Membership Secretary. Amounts are shown for one year.

Individual	\$ 81.00*	Joining Fee	\$ 20.00
Joint	\$ 122.00*	Journal Only – Australia	\$ 35.00
Individual – Pensioner	\$ 76.00*	Journal Only – Overseas	\$ 45.00*
Joint – Pensioner	\$ 112.00*		

* GST free other prices include GST

Membership forms are available on the website, at the FFACT Library or can be posted on request.

The Ancestral Searcher is the official journal of the Heraldry & Genealogy Society of Canberra Inc. The journal is published quarterly and available without charge to financial members of the Society and affiliated bodies. Kindred Societies can receive the journal on an exchange basis. Back copies are available for current year and previous two years at \$5.00 each. Earlier issues are \$3.00 each or \$5.00 for a yearly bundle of 4 issues (price includes postage within Australia).

Reproduction without permission is not permitted. The views expressed in the items in the journal are those of the authors' and not necessarily those of the Society, and the Society cannot vouch for the authenticity of advertisements appearing in the journal.

ADVERTISING AND CONTRIBUTIONS

Copy for advertising and contributions is required by the first day of the month preceding the month of publication. Advertising in the journal:

Full page for four consecutive issues \$330; half page for four consecutive issues \$175;

Full page for one issue \$110; half page for one issue \$60.

Advertising in non-consecutive issues is charged at the single issue rate. 10% discount is available to advertisers who are members of the Society.

Advertising in the form of flyers can be included with the journal posting. These are to be supplied by the advertiser folded to A5 or smaller in size, cost for A5 20c, A4 30c and A3 or larger 50c per insert.

Readers' Queries up to 60 words: members, no charge; non-members \$35.00.

Payment is required at the time of submission.

All prices include GST

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From Our Contemporaries

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*The objectives of the Society are:
To promote and encourage the study and preservation
of family history, genealogy, heraldry and allied
subjects, and to assist members and others
in research in these areas.*