

WesternAncestor

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- A vital service: travelling dentists in the Western Australia outback
- Researching the first of the 'Bride Ships'
- Documenting your family treasures

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Wednesday and Friday 9:30am - 2:30pm
Saturday 11:00am - 4:30pm
Closed on Tuesday, Thursday, and Sunday & Public Holidays

Christmas and New Year

Closing 4.30pm Sat 14th December 2024

Re-open 9.30am Mon 6th January 2025

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On the Move with the President

Garth Walter

As we leave Kambarang and enter the Nyoongar season of Birak where the rain eases and the weather warms-up our activities continue unabated, connecting our passionate members. From our face-to-face and online Specialist Interest Group meetings to our User Groups, we are sharing inspirational stories and getting ready to celebrate the approaching festive season.

Our schedule for 2025 is already filling up. The Ghost project is progressing at speed as we entered Phase 2 in October 2024. This followed the successful completion of the Pilot Phase, which has seen the addition of another 15 communities to the four being researched already. I'm sure some of them will be of interest, as the new community Ghooli is to me. My interest in Ghooli is not related to a family member being located there, rather my day-to-day work is within the water industry, and Ghooli was one of the communities that sprung up to service the Goldfields Water Pipeline from Mundaring to Kalgoorlie. My great grandfather worked carting water around Kalgoorlie until the pipeline was installed. That resulted in them moving to Perth where I grew up. I also especially love the community of 'Woop Woop' located in the southwest near Boyup Brook, definitely a place that will be on my must visit list. (Don't blink! Ed)

Over the last few weeks, I have been travelling a lot for work, including visits to Sydney and Auckland. For these, I've taken the opportunity to understand the areas that my ancestors visited. I find it really helps my research to understand the geography and history of an area. Correlating my research with the transportation modes and community sentiment of the time helps to understand how they were living and confirm any initial assumptions I have made regarding connections.

We continue to seek volunteers to support our association from Property Officers, Activity and Event Supporters and Group Coordinators. Many of these don't take too much time and can be done whilst you are progressing your research. For those of you who are looking for a space



to host your research, check out our website for website Hosting options.

Finally, your Management Committee and I wish you a safe and happy festive season and every success in your research for 2025.

Garth Walter

November 2024



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An Editorial

Peter Forrestal

I once introduced the editor of a book of mine by thanking her for ‘the invisible mending.’ I like the metaphor; partly because readers remain blissfully unaware of the work that the best editors do to transform or, at least, tidy up a manuscript. The *Western Ancestor* Proof-Reading Team is integral to my work as editor. It is an incredible group. As an aside, three of the current group have spent at least twelve months in the same classroom as me – either as a fellow student or as a student. Not sure what that says.

Anyway, I want to say a couple of things about how good they are. The cornerstone of the group are Liana Fitzpatrick and John Olley who are knowledgeable and insightful and have a view of grammar that might be described as ‘old-fashioned’. That means I’m wonderfully comfortable with their views.

One of the conventions of family history journals that is probably not widely known is putting the surname in bold the first time it is mentioned in a story. It’s done to make it easier for readers who are scanning a story to track a particular surname. Liana is dynamite on that. She can also notice the tiniest mistake, especially when it’s vital. John is the world authority on ellipsis, will suggest when a sentence should be reworked so that it reads better, is able to comment when someone else queries a word that he has checked and it’s correct. Both let little slip by. Karen Murdock is the youngster of the team and does her fair share of the heavy lifting but almost seems to be standing back, observing, and ready to pounce on something that needs attention – a ‘bought’ that should have been ‘brought’ or a suspect reference that suggested ploughing in February when seeding was at the end of January. She finds the kind of thing that I suspect no one else would.

The reality of proof-reading is that a group will do a much better job than one individual. And the journal benefits.

We do have a couple of proof-readers who are just about to join us. They’ll be welcome.

What is particularly brilliant about the team is that, we have two other members who specialise in getting the manuscript ready for publication. Julie Martin takes



responsibility for all of the captions and works with our designer on the look of the pages. These are not strengths on mine but they are becoming strengths of the journal.

The other major contributor is Fran Schilleri who works with me on references. It’s a tricky dilemma and a never-ending source of angst. We do need reference on most articles but if we allow too many it consume too much space with text which few will read. Frankly, it’s a work in progress so it’s certainly a comfort to me to share that burden with Fran.

Getting to FHWA

By Bus

The 950 from the Morley Bus Station and the Elizabeth Quay Bus Station goes along Beaufort St and the nearest stop to May St is Chisholm College [just before Coode Street]. Also, bus number 48 goes from the Esplanade Bus Port to Morley Bus Station, via Guildford Road, and the nearest stop is the corner of Coode St & Francis St in Bayswater. The buses are now more frequent, and both stops are a 15 minute walk to FHWA.

By Car

If you are driving, Google and Apple maps will help you get there. Street parking and on-site parking is available at FHWA. Please do not park your car in the bays reserved for units 1, 2, and 3 as these are used by other tenants. Thank you for your co-operation.



Nathaniel Howell: Barrister at Law

Jan Lord | Member #13758

When Nathaniel **Howell** qualified as a lawyer his mentor Archibald **Low** not only thanked him for his conscientious attention to his duties but predicted that he would become *an armament to the profession to which he belongs*, high praise indeed for the 23 year-old son of a pawnbroker who would become one of the first barristers to practice in Western Australia.

Nathaniel Howell was born in 1831 in Portsea the second of three sons of Thomas Howell and his wife Ann Maria.¹ After a stint in the Royal Navy, he completed his articled clerkship with Low and left the UK on the *Travancore*,² arriving in Perth in 1854. His impressive testimonials ensured he was admitted to practice in the Civil Court of Western Australia. He was also appointed managing clerk to the Crown Solicitor George Frederick Stone and the pair established the partnership Stone and Howell Solicitors.³

There was plenty of work for an ambitious young lawyer. The population of the fledgling colony was approaching 12,000 people and while most were free settlers, convicts had begun arriving in 1850 bringing with them a propensity for criminal offending, likely resulting in the building of a second and larger prison in 1853. In 1854 the Chairman of the Court of Quarter Sessions William **Mackie**,⁴ commented that the heavy workload of the superior court of the day was largely generated by the number of conditional pardon men appearing before him and the seriousness of their alleged transgressions. Local Aboriginal people also found themselves before the courts, sometimes necessitating the services of an interpreter.

One of Howell's first cases was exactly as Mackie had observed. Firm in his belief in the legal principle of the assumption of innocence until proven guilty and in spite of damning evidence against the accused, Howell represented William **Richards**. He had been granted conditional pardon in 1853 but within months found himself before Mackie in the Perth Court House.⁵ Jonathan Jones of Guildford had refused Richard's request to borrow a boat to cross the Swan River and shortly thereafter Jones' haystack had erupted in flames. Richards was apprehended nearby and his boot prints were found to exactly match those around the burnt out stack. Convicted of arson he was sentenced to



Nathaniel Howell

transportation to another penal settlement for life.⁶ Twenty years after arriving in Australia Richards was granted free pardon in New South Wales.

In 1855 Howell again appeared before Mackie and a bench of magistrates at what was regarded by some as *the most important session which had ever occurred in the criminal annals of the colony*.⁷ The unhappily married John **Hurford** had declared his intention to leave nothing of his estate of about £2000 to his young wife Bridget, but within weeks of his unexpected death she had produced a will in her favour, the signing having been witnessed by two ticket-of-leave holders William **Dodd** and Philip **Dixon**. Suspicious authorities ordered the exhumation of Hurford's body and an examination revealed that his neck had been dislocated, leading them to conclude that Hurford had been strangled. Dodd, Dixon and Mrs Hurford were charged with murder, forgery of a will and perjury and committed for trial.⁸

Howell's preparations for the trial drew harsh criticism from a correspondent writing to the Perth Gazette under the pseudonym *Vigilans*. He believed Howell had behaved unprofessionally by visiting the Hurford property to collect evidence for his case. Furthermore, Howell shared an office with the prosecutor George Stone, an arrangement *Vigilans*

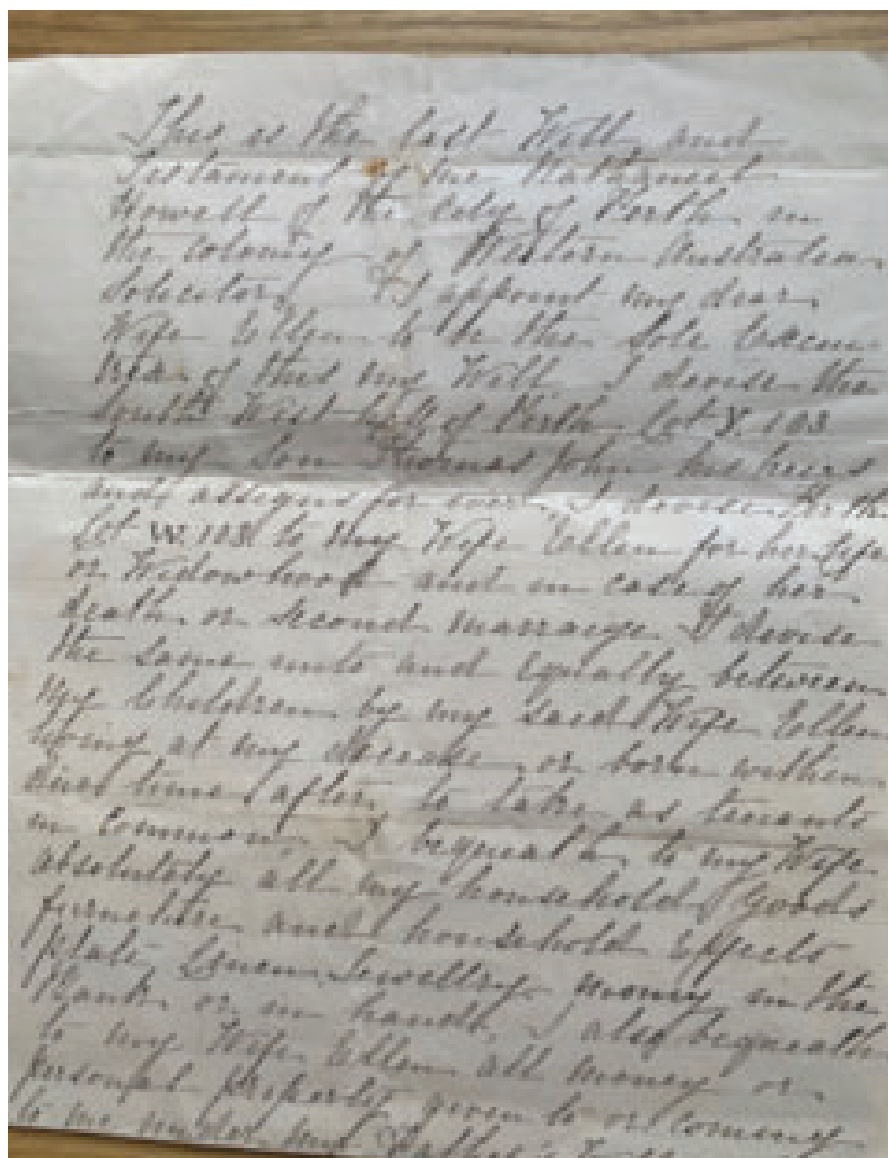
Nathaniel Howell (Cont.)

labelled as *improper* because of the possibility of accessing information which could prejudice the outcome and result in an acquittal.

Vigilan's contentions were publicly challenged by Howell's fellow barrister George **Leake** who had declined the case and recommended Howell. The hearing went ahead, revealing that Bridget Hurford had primed Dodd with alcohol and bribed him to strangle her husband. Aboriginal workers who had been in an adjacent room gave evidence that they'd overheard the struggle. Furthermore, the signature on the will was not John Hurford's. Dixon had been condemned to transportation for life on the forgery charge but his willingness to give evidence at the murder trial resulted in the remittance of his sentence.⁹

Howell was seen as making the most of a very bad case but the evidence was irrefutable. As the trial drew to a close and with convictions firmly in his sight, prosecutor George Stone drew on his knowledge of Shakespeare's *Henry VI, Part 2*, eloquently quoting the Earl of Warwick's remarks on his discovery of the corpse of the Duke of Gloucester and providing a graphic and grisly description of the facial distortion that occurs during strangulation. William Dodd and Bridget Hurford were found guilty and sentenced to death by hanging.¹⁰ Their public executions took place in the yard outside the new Perth Gaol, critics appalled that women and small children were among the spectators. Bridget Hurford was the first woman to be executed in Western Australia.

Stone was not the only practitioner to relish a dramatic performance in court. The articulate Howell was also



Nathaniel Howell – Last Will and Testament

impressing court watchers and juries, a piece in *The Perth Gazette* labelling the Quarter Sessions as *a kind of Saturnalia to Mr Howell . . . who takes delight in running rampant . . . raising all the questions that occur to him . . . and trying it on with the Bench*.¹¹ But in the longer term, perhaps it was the drive, application and dedication required for such performances that would take the ultimate toll on Nathaniel Howell.

In 1856 Mackie called Howell and Leake to the Bar and two years later Howell established his own practice.¹² Lawyers struggled with an inadequate official library and limited

access to the Imperial statutes and local acts. Perhaps in recognition of Howell's career advancement George Stone presented him with an edition of Hayes and Jarman's, *The Concise Form of Wills*. The inscription reads: *Nathaniel Howell Barrister at Law from G Stone, April 1858*. The following year Stone became Advocate General.¹³

In 1859, Nathaniel married Frances (Fanny) **Brown** in the Church of England church in Upper Swan. Fanny and her family had arrived in the colony on the *Simon Taylor* in August 1842. In 1849, the barely teenage Fanny had married Alexander

Nathaniel Howell (Cont.)

Brown.¹⁴ He had died in 1851, leaving her with two young daughters Elinor and Frances. In December 1860 Nathaniel and Fanny celebrated the arrival of their son Thomas John, naming him after Nathaniel's father.

Although Howell was reputed to be unsociable he devoted time and resources to the immediate and wider community of Perth. As a Freemason he became the Worshipful Master of Lodge 712 and a member of the colony's cultural centre for respectable members of society, the Swan River Mechanics' Institute. Rowing and sailing regattas on the Swan River were fashionable and Howell joined a boat club. Rowing was regarded as a *manly and healthy recreation* and four oared gigs were popular. According to his Obituary Howell coxed a gig which carried the Governor across the Swan River to a picnic at a weekender in South Perth owned by the Assistant Commissary General William **Mends**. In 1858 he was one of hundreds of subscribers who supported a Relief Fund for victims of the Indian Mutiny. In 1875 he was appointed a member of the Central Board of Education.¹⁵

In 1861 the Civil Court and the Court of Quarter Sessions amalgamated to become the Supreme Court of Western Australia and Archibald Paull **Burt** was appointed the first Chief Justice. At the first sitting the Attorney General George Stone, Nathaniel Howell, Edward **Landor** and George Leake were called to the Bar and enrolled as Barristers, Solicitors, Attorneys and Proctors.¹⁶

While Howell had frequently represented clients in the Supreme Court in Insolvency, in 1863 he found himself facing his own



Ellen Howell (nee Woodhead)

creditors. Months before, perhaps in a bid to avoid liquidation, Howell had advertised for a loan of £1000. But to no avail. Howell was declared Insolvent. Chief Justice Burt ordered the surrender of Nathaniel Howell's estate and the seizure of his property and a meeting of creditors was scheduled.¹⁷ The bailiff would auction Howell's furniture, pictures, ornaments, books, jewellery and cutlery to offset the money he owed. A creditor's meeting to give Howell permission to retain his clothes, bedding, furniture and tools of trade for his own use was scheduled for the following month.¹⁸

Not only did Howell suffer the indignity of insolvency but there were further consequences. In January

1863 the Very Reverend Dean, George **Pownall** had appointed Howell to be his *attorney and agent* during his absence from the colony.¹⁹ Within months Rev. Pownall had withdrawn from the arrangement and appointed Joseph **Fermaner** as Howell's replacement.

Insolvency created little hindrance to Howell's practice. After a short break, he was back in the Supreme Court representing two men who had been accused of violent robbery. He continued to appear regularly in court, sometimes alongside his colleague Edward Landor. The matter of insolvency lingered and it was not until 1875 that Howell received his certificate of discharge.

In 1867, 33-year-old Fanny died of

Nathaniel Howell (Cont.)

unknown causes, leaving Nathaniel and their 6-year-old son Thomas. She was buried in the East Perth Cemetery. A notice in *The Inquirer* acknowledged that she was Nathaniel's wife but no mention was made of her daughters. In 1868, Fanny's older daughter Elinor married Stephen **Stout**.

Although Nathaniel may have lost touch with his family back in Portsea for a time. However, around Christmas time in 1873, he sent some pictures of Perth to his brother, Alex, and sister-in-law Catherine. With her responding letter, Catherine sent a gift to Thomas, now a teenager – James Hamilton's book about Christianity and clean living titled *Life in Earnest*. The correspondence also reveals that Nathaniel had recognised his failing health and had decided to address his drinking problem by joining the temperance society, the Good Templars.

Months later, the family were delighted to hear of Nathaniel's marriage to twenty-one-year-old, Ellen Woodhead, in the Trinity Congregational Church. Initially Nathaniel revealed no more than her Christian name to his Portsea family and certainly not the fact that she was the daughter of a convict who had recently obtained his freedom. George Woodhead had arrived in the colony in 1861, having been sentenced in London to 10 years gaol and transportation for burglary.²⁰ His wife Phoebe, with Ellen and their other children had followed him two years later.

Catherine sent the couple a wedding gift and was forthcoming with her advice to Nathaniel and to Ellen about the effects of a second marriage on Nathaniel's son, Thomas, as well as

her views on being a dutiful spouse. To Nathaniel she wrote that the family was pleased *he had found someone he could love and hopes he will make her happy, once the novelty has worn off and life settles down to its old monotony*. To Ellen she wrote: *Take the same pains to make yourself agreeable to your husband after marriage as you did before and your success is certain. The same line of conduct which won will retain . . .*²¹

Nathaniel and Ellen were blessed with three children and continued to perpetuate the familial ties in their choice of names. Archibald Nathaniel was born in 1875. Known as Archie, his arrival brought great joy, not only to his parents but to Catherine and the family in Portsea. Catherine sent two gifts—a coral for Archie purchased from the respected goldsmiths A and B Savory, and a watch for his half-brother, Thomas.

Much to the delight of his sister in law, Nathaniel's first daughter, born in 1876, was named Catherine Ellen after her and the child's mother. She was known as Kate. Amy Maria arrived in 1882 and was named after Nathaniel's mother.

During the late 1870s, Howell's practice flourished. Widely regarded as a formidable defence barrister, observers described his performances in court in glowing terms. In a case known as The Three Georges because the accused men **Johnson, Cook and Barker** shared the same Christian name, Howell defended the entire group. The Three Georges had been charged with assaulting Police Constable Peter **Farmer**. Howell addressed the jury in a *carefully studied* way and *in forcible language* submitted that there was no evidence that any of them had assaulted Farmer. Johnson



Howell Family Letters

Nathaniel Howell (Cont.)

and Cook were acquitted while Barker was convicted of common assault.²² When George Bayliss was charged with the manslaughter of Ann McGrath, Howell mounted a *very able* defence, demonstrating that both the accused and the victim were drunk at the time of her death and in fact McGrath had fallen off the cart.²³ In a case which attracted intense community interest, Horton Bateman was charged with intending to kill George Thompson

In 1883, Howell took on two cases of alleged murder both of which entailed a heavy and stressful work load that completely prostrated him.

by administering 20g of strychnine. Defending Bateman Howell commented on several similar cases recorded in authoritative texts, denouncing circumstantial evidence in *a most eloquent, perspicuous and masterly address*. Bateman was found not guilty.

Perhaps recognising his ailing health, Nathaniel Howell wrote his will in August 1881, appointing Ellen his executor. recognising that she would benefit from the assistance of trustworthy colleague, he attached some guiding instructions: *In the event of my death, hand the will to some reputable solicitor – Stone, Burt or Leake for instance . . . Do not let it go out of your possession until you give it to the solicitor.*

In 1883 Howell took on two cases of alleged murder both of which entailed a heavy and stressful work load that *completely prostrated him*. In January he represented Charles Cole who had been charged with murdering Christina Burkenshaw with whom he'd been in an intimate relationship. After an argument, Cole had allegedly cut Burkenshaw's throat with a razor. While awaiting trial in the Perth Gaol, Cole had refused nourishment and his health deteriorated to the extent the authorities feared that he may collapse before his arraignment. However the trial went ahead and Cole was sentenced to death.²⁴ Within days of that verdict Howell returned to court to represent John Collins who had been brought to Perth from Albany to be tried for the murder of John aka Jock King. When Collins arrived at the Perth Railway Station, throngs of holiday makers were there to watch on as the heavily shackled prisoner was taken to the Perth Gaol. During the trial witnesses described the extraordinarily grisly details of Collin's attack and the dismemberment of the body with an axe. With little in the way of a credible defence, Collins

also received the death penalty.²⁵

After an extraordinarily demanding month in the Supreme Court, Howell appeared to be recovering at home. Neighbours observed him smoking on the balcony of his Adelaide Terrace home. He died suddenly on the evening of 18th February 1883 from haemorrhage and liver disease.²⁵ He was 52. Nathaniel left Ellen with their three small children, the youngest Amy being only 8 months old. The funeral was attended by most of the leading citizens of Perth and included several politicians and prominent members of the legal profession. Howell was buried at the East Perth Cemetery alongside his first wife Fanny. His death was not only reported locally but also in the Portsmouth newspaper, the *Hampshire Telegraph*.

After his death, an article published in the *Sydney Bulletin* and the *Victorian Express* acknowledged Howell's unsurpassed ability in court and noted *but for one weakness, drink, [Howell] may well have been appointed to the bench*. It cited the case of Queen verses Kenneth Brown in which Howell's argument resulted in the jury being unable to reach a unanimous decision. Eventually Howell yielded to his weakness and was unable to appear in Court. In the absence of his barrister's representation, Brown was sentenced to death.



Nathaniel Howell in Court attire

Nathaniel Howell (Cont.)

Howell was reputed to have had few friends but was devoted to his wife and children. According to his will he bequeathed property to his eldest son, Thomas and generously provided for Ellen and his three younger children. In 1876, Nathaniel had received an affectionate letter from his father, Thomas, outlining the provisions of his will, promising him an inheritance of £4000. Nathaniel directed that this money be invested and the dividends used to educate the children and maintain the family.²⁶

There seems little doubt that Nathaniel Howell became *an armament to the profession to which he belongs* as predicted by his mentor Archibald Low. Although his premature death was probably caused by excessive alcohol consumption, it is not uncommon amongst those working in a highly stressful environment to resort to a range of coping strategies. While his social life was reputedly limited, his personal copy of the King James Bible became well-worn and tatty. He recovered from insolvency, was a generous philanthropist and involved himself in community affairs befitting of a gentleman.

But it was Howell's performances in court that were exceptional. Observers described his defence strategies in glowing terms. Skilfully and eloquently, he defended his clients in their darkest hours – men and women charged with capital offences and likely to receive the death penalty. In some cases, the evidence against them was irrefutable. He was regularly confronted with the grisliest of details relating to the victim's death and the behaviour of fellow human beings driven by what the Christian faith regards as the seven deadly sins – or as what would be recognised today as serious mental disorder or illness. He was a controversial figure, whom some saw as going to extreme lengths to support his argument. He firmly believed in the legal principles that every accused person deserved legal representation and is presumed innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.

The professional standing of the attendees at Howell's funeral attest to the respect and regard of his professional associates and the community. His colleague Frank **Stone** went as far as describing Howell as *the best criminal lawyer who ever practised in Perth*, going on to say: *Nat was a wonder. He could build up a very good defence out of next to nothing, and with his fine flow of language was able to influence the jury in his client's favour . . . He frequently secured acquittals and he deserved them . . . he was so ingenious. He appealed to the jury's reason, rather than endeavouring to arouse emotion.*²⁷

Indeed, as predicted, Nathaniel Howell became an armament to the profession to which he belonged.

Nathaniel and Ellen Howell were my great grandparents, and their daughter, Amy, my maternal grandmother. Their son, Archie, followed his father into the legal profession but died in 1902, in his late twenties, of kidney disease. The following year Kate married George Roberts. Amy married Albert **Ohman** in 1916. Her daughter, Dorothy Ellen **Ransom** was named after her grandmother, Ellen Howell. Sometime after Nathaniel's death, Ellen moved in with the Ohman family in Havelock Street, West Perth and remained with them until her death in 1923.²⁸

Notes

- 1 Register of Baptisms, King's Street Chapel, Portsea.
- 2 *Perth Gazette & Independent Journal of Politics and News*, 12 May 1854, p.2.
- 3 *The Inquirer*, 2 November 1853, p.3.
- 4 JHM Honniball, Mackie, William Henry (1799 -1860), *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, Vol 2 MUP 1967
- 5 R Erickson, *Dictionary of Western Australians 1829-1914*, Vol. 2, Bond 1850-1868, UWA Press, Nedlands, p.451.
- 6 *The Inquirer*, 12 July 1854, p.3.
- 7 *Perth Gazette*, 5 October 1855, p.2.
- 8 *The Inquirer*, 22 August 1855, pp. 2,3.
- 9 *The Inquirer*, 10 October 1855, p.2.
- 10 *Perth Gazette*, 5 October 1855, p.2.
- 11 *Perth Gazette*, 11 January 1861, p.2.
- 12 'Obituary', *The Herald*, 24 February 1883.
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- 15 *The Inquirer*, 3 February 1875, p.1.
- 16 *The Inquirer*, 10 July 1861, p.2.
- 17 'Minutes of Insolvency Proceedings from 1859', p.125. Box 1 Cons. 3428 SROWA.
- 18 *The Inquirer*, 20 May 1863. P.2.
- 19 *The Inquirer*, 7 January 1863, p.2.
- 20 George Woodhead, Fremantle Prison Convict Database. Convict number 5644.
- 21 Catherine Howell to Ellen Howell, Letter, 28 July 1874.
- 22 *The Inquirer*, 10 January 1877, p.3.
- 23 *The Inquirer and Commercial News*, 10 January 1877, p.3.
- 24 *The Inquirer*, 17 January 1883. p.3.
- 25 Nathaniel Howell, Death Certificate, Registrar of Western Australia, 21 February 1883, No. 11750.
- 26 Will of Nathaniel Howell, 25 August 1881.
- 27 *The West Australian*, 4 February 1930, p.11.
- 28 *The West Australian*, 26 June 1923, p.1.

Convict Ancestry in Australia

Connecting with our Ancestral Strength

Nina Ishtar | Constellation Facilitator, Reflective Systems

Looking Systemically at Family Ancestry

The world of genealogy can be fascinating and engrossing as we unlock the past and discover our heritage. My work involves looking at history through a systemic lens. This means I soften and broaden my vision and look for the patterns that form in family systems and get passed through time and through generations. These patterns influence how we relate to each other and to the society we live in today. Looking systemically at family history can add value and accompany classical research with profound insights.

While classical genealogy records the various lines of marriage, birth and death as they extend out to create our family tree, I look for the more invisible lines that get passed via the unconscious mechanisms in our family systems. My systemic training was undertaken at the Bert Hellinger Institute in the Netherlands. This institute was founded upon the original work of German psychotherapist Bert Hellinger.

In this article I introduce system theory and how this can be applied to the society in which a family history exists, in this case Australia. I take you through the story of my convict ancestry and share my insights into how this history has influenced me, my family and the country I belong to. I invite you to look through this lens during your research and offer you my support. To begin framing this story, here are some key system principles I use.

Defining Systems

Systems are a number of elements in constant relationship with one another: families, an organization, a leadership team, a country or region are all human systems. Human systems are living so, unlike more technical systems, a change in one element affects the whole.

Patterns in Systems

Patterns form within systems to ensure stability and predictability. They represent the experiences in groups where people repeatedly take certain positions or seem to follow an unstated, invisible rule. Patterns in themselves are neutral. Some create energy and growth, some create blockages and stagnation, and all patterns have a survival

purpose to keep the system alive.

Nested Systems with Living Memory

Human systems have memory and the past can travel into the present via the unresolved traumas and excluded experiences of past times. We see this all the time as system practitioners and it makes up a big part of our work. Today, in Australia, we have up to ten or 11 generations of descendants from the first convict arrivals.

In this article, I explore the possibility that what landed with these convicted people may well have travelled through generations and still remain with us today, even many generations on. The convict system was formed in the UK and it arrived on the shores of an ancient land with its own established culture and systems, so these insights are not culturally exclusive.

Quintessential Ancestry: 'Australian Royalty'

What could be more quintessentially colonised Australian ancestry than a convict in our past lineage? It is sometimes known as 'Australian Royalty' although royal was not the status at the time and a long way from the experiences of the majority of convicts. 'Badge of Honour' is the other colloquial term but who will wear that badge and why do we use this language today when royalty and honour were so diametrically opposed to convict experiences at the time?

This terminology seems to be entangled in the shame and indignity of the past, which the convicts and their families no doubt experienced. Perhaps, it is somehow an attempt to regain lost pride. Delivered with the irony that often accompanies Australian humour, it may well be an 'Aussie' acknowledgment for what was historically denied.

The convicts were the perpetrators of crimes and, at the same time, the victims of a class system with harsh judgments of the poor. They were the forced labour of colonisation and essential for the building of a new settlement. Their labour and life energy formed the very beginning upon which modern Australia was built. Literally their blood, sweat and tears are in our foundations and quite possibly flowing through our nation's collective patterning today.

Convict ancestry in Australia (Cont.)

My Ancestors and their Grand Journeys

I am a sixth generation descendant of a convict on my mother's line. Five generations back from me are my great, great, great grandparents, Jeremiah and Margaret **Downing**. Through a combination of research on ancestry sites, my local history knowledge, family stories and photographs I have traced Jeremiah and his family, right through to my generation.

In 1827, when Jeremiah was 19 years of age, he sailed into Sydney Cove from Sheffield, after being sentenced to 7 years transportation (the term of the day) for stealing. It appears unlikely that he could return to Europe when his sentence was up. Some convicts did but most, like Jeremiah, did not. I found his grave in Australian soil.

Jeremiah was assigned to a free settler in Sydney Cove to work on his farm; a common experience for convicts at that time. Also common was the accompanying heartbreak of being taken away from family, friends, known life and environment. Consequently, many fractured families were left behind.

I sometimes wonder in the silence of those lonely Australian nights, if Jeremiah integrated the momentous events he was living through and was able to grieve. Where did this grief come to rest and what of the grief of his family left behind?

At the very beginning, in the energy that established Australia as a colonised nation, lie heartbreak, shame and dislocation. Being thrown into survival was not an unfamiliar state for convicts but being in foreign geography was. The landscape of survival changed.

The long ocean journey to Australia was harsh.¹ Conditions varied but overcrowding was common and convicts were typically kept below deck in dark, damp conditions. Diets were poor and hygiene lacking, scurvy and dysentery were common; the mental toll would have been severe. While the majority of convicts survived, deaths did occur. With little idea of what they would be arriving to, the journey must have been a feat of survival.

The *Bussorah Merchant* was the ship Jeremiah sailed on. He received his 'Certificate of Freedom' at 25 years of age, something the Government awarded to convicts who had served their time. By 16 August 1834, Jeremiah was a 'free' man and he was alone, in a foreign, harsh, resource-rich and ancient land. I am in awe as I imagine his first free footsteps and I am filled with life energy.

Somehow, thrown into the wilderness of early colonial Australia, Jeremiah forged a new life for himself. I often marvel at his resilience and indeed feel proud! At a time when transport was horse, ship or on foot, Jeremiah somehow moved to South Australia (approximately 1,400 kilometres from Sydney), got work as a timber cutter, married a free settler, Margaret, built a cottage in the forest and started a family. It is testimony to his strength of presence that Jeremiah had a region named after him and an article still exists about this today.²

In the 1850s, when the gold rush hit Australia and massive expansion began, Jeremiah was approximately 40 years of age. He again moved. This time with a wife and family, approximately 600 kms away to the goldfields of Victoria. Like many at the time, Jeremiah re-invented himself as a gold miner and began seeking new fortune.

I have traced the area where Jeremiah built his first family cottage on the early Victorian goldfields. I speculate about how he and Margaret first arrived and accommodated themselves and three children. It is very likely they were first under the stars, in a tent and as soon as possible under the roof of a family-built cottage utilising local resources.

Jeremiah's family grew and he seems to have established a stable life with Margaret. After 20 years of prospecting and mining in around the Victorian towns of Amherst and Talbot, Jeremiah died at 60 years of age from cancer. Kangaroo Flats is where he is registered as dying. Historians relate that many of the gold miners died where they dropped so Kangaroo Flats is quite likely where blessed Jeremiah dropped. He left behind Margaret, eleven children, an extraordinary life and he opened the pathway to today.

George, Jeremiah and Margaret's eldest son and my two times Great Grandfather, moved home base from the cottage in the goldfields to a cottage in the near-by town of Talbot. He continued the mining legacy in this region until 1886. Then George and his wife Kate continued seeking new fortune with lengthy journeys across Australia. Moved this time by the forces of initiative and not the forces of the law, they made the monumental shift from the, then diminishing, Goldfields of Victoria to the newly-emerging Goldfields of Western Australia, some 2750 kms away. Western Australia is where I reside today.

The Pioneer Women; Emerging Professions

Thirteen years after Jeremiah died, Margaret his wife is registered as dying at Nuggetty Gully in the

Convict ancestry in Australia (Cont.)

same region, aged 57 years. It's quite likely she continued prospecting after Jeremiah died and dropped herself at Nuggetty Gully. It is not well-known that early pioneer women, like Margaret, were also prospectors and miners on the Australian Goldfields.

Dulcie, my grandmother, and her siblings later trained as school teachers. Their father, Francis, (my great grandfather) was the first in this lineage to change his profession from the land to the store, as he became a storekeeper across the Goldfields. Dulcie was the first to move her work into the classroom. It should come as no surprise that my professional back ground is in education and training and I still love teaching and learning today.

Reconciliation: Coming Together Again

I wonder about Australia being able to lie to rest its collective grief and move with the same imperative as a Nation. Our nested systems are in dynamic relationship and the wisdom of this ancient land and its people are at our very origin as a species. This all gives me hope.

Jeremiah and Margaret have inspired this article and my broader thinking on the impact of this history on Australia at large. When I think of them, I am filled with love and energy. I sense the grief finally coming to rest in my family and the imperative for connection and pride to return.

I wonder about Australia being able to lay to rest its collective grief and move with the same imperative as a nation. Our nested systems are in dynamic relationship and the wisdom of this ancient land and its people are at our very origin as a species. This all gives me hope.

Survival Crime and Survival Punishment

Jeremiah was transported to Australia for stealing. He had several offences, commencing when he was 12 years of age. In the context of 19th century England, many convicts were punished for petty crimes of survival. In a hierarchical class system, the industrial revolution brought growth into cities, population increases and large-scale poverty. England was in a state of upheaval.

Workers laboured long hours but their wages may have barely kept their families alive. Orphans lived on the streets and child labour, homelessness, overcrowding and overflowing prisons were all a part of society's state at

that time.³ Poverty coupled with exile must have been a devastating trauma for the convicts, yet it also seems to have created enormous new potential, as Jeremiah set sail.

Systemic constellations; Insights and Integration

Through the process of connecting more deeply with my convict ancestry I have had a number of systemic constellations, giving me deeper insights into how this history has affected my life and my whole family in such profound ways. Constellation work is one of the professional practices I am trained in and I am passionate about helping others to develop their own insights.

Constellations create an external view of an experience. One has in a particular system by setting up the different elements that belong in that experience. In this case, it is my family system. Constellations help us to look with a soft, wide, vision at that system. Unseen dynamics and deep insights can thus be revealed. With the guidance of a facilitator, the system will reveal what is waiting to be seen.

Stolen Children: Generations of Longing and Pain

In one of my constellations, it was obvious that Jeremiah's parents, Anne and George, were severely impacted by the forced separation from, and traumatic removal, of their son. As I write these words, I know that I have heard them before. I think of the stolen generations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children of Australia and the devastating, heartbreaking consequences we all still live with because of that experience today.

How many patterns travelled through time, repeated in new generations and remain with us still? My family system carried deep sorrow and shame and our Nation is shrouded in colonised ignominy and grief. It was not laid to rest in the many marked and unmarked graves in this land and we are not yet at peace.

Resolution: Peace is Possible

Dislocation and estrangement have repeated through the generations of my mother's line, including right down to mine. Seven generations on, it seems we were all still grieving and struggling with connection. Resolution arrived in another constellation for my family with the re-introduction of Jeremiah. Acknowledging him facilitated a deep peace in the stressed dynamics experienced in the whole system, both in the past and present. Something felt tangibly complete.

Convict ancestry in Australia (Cont.)

'An Ocean of Tears' a Societal Constellation; Collective Peace

'An Ocean of Tears', a Societal Constellation which I brought to a peer systemic group, was so well-named and facilitated by my very skilful systemic colleague, Annelieke Verkerk. While constellation work began in family systems, it has expanded into organisational and societal realms.

The theme of an 'Ocean of Tears' was land ownership in Australia and its insights ran deep. Not only were the convicts separated from family and friends, they were also torn away from their homelands, most never to return. This separation from land is an often-missed element in the convict experience and indeed a key part of colonisation.

What arrived in me with a bolt of crystal-clear energy during this constellation was the realisation that the fierce drive to grab and own land in Australia during colonisation was fuelled by the grief of separation from our original homelands. It is the very wound we, again, transferred and inflicted upon our First Nations people by separating them from their land, which we the colonisers had experienced ourselves. In the ruthless drive to survive, it seems, collectively, we could never fully acknowledge this original wound.

What is excluded holds immense power in system theory so imagine how powerful this unresolved dislocation has been in Australia's development. Then consider the irony and implications of our arrival onto an ancient land with the oldest living culture we know of, with the most sacred connection to land.

Movement beyond the Trauma Cycle

How do we move beyond this cycle of revolving trauma? This may well be one of the largest questions of our time. I do not have the definitive answer but I do have some insights. By acknowledging both sides, acknowledging we have all experienced past trauma, as individuals and as cultures, and by being aware when we have identification with one side as the victims or the perpetrators.

Our attempts as a Nation to move beyond this trauma cycle may well be linked to fully acknowledging and coming to peace with our convict origins. While we have done a much better job of recording and teaching convict history, in comparison to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history, my question is this: have we fully seen the origins of the cycle of trauma we have created and still perpetuate today?

Working with Family Patterns: Experiencing our Ancestral Strength

Looking systemically at one's ancestry can facilitate deep insights into one's life and relationships today. It can be the catalyst for personal growth and development that assists the flow of love and energy in our families today. Although it is presumptuous to think that one person's growth can influence a whole society, it is quite possible that increased awareness happens through us and ripples out as we come to face the traumas and held memories of our past generations.

Family history is powerful. Both our personal and professional life can be affected by our history. Knowing where we come from has a profound effect on our sense of self and our capacity to live our best life from a

place of strength.

I invite you to join me in experiencing the core of your ancestral strength standing with you today. Meet the intergenerational patterns of your ancestors and discover how these patterns may be influencing you and your family today. Gather insights into what is needed for you to find your full expression and make peace with the past. You can read more about me and my services on my webpage. I welcome your enquiries.

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About Nina Ishtar

I am passionate about healing through family history; understanding how our past influences our future.

My first career was in Outdoor Recreation, this led to over 35 years' diverse experience in Education and Training in Australia. I later trained in the progressive field in the Netherlands, known as Systems Dynamics. I now have my own business, helping individuals and organisations with professional and personal development.

I live in the Great Southern Region of Western Australia, on the traditional land of the Menang and Bibbulman people, where I am surrounded by two of my greatest resources, nature and space.

www.reflectivesystems.com.au

Notes

- 1 History Skills, *Voyages of Despair: The harsh reality of life aboard of 18th Century convict ships to Australia* <https://www.historyskills.com/classroom/year-9/life-on-a-convict-ship/>
- 2 Word Press 1984 *Jerry's Flat: What is in a Name?* https://lfrplaces.files.wordpress.com/2016/05/placesofinterest_-_jerry's_flat_20141221.pdf
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Travelling Dentists

Louise Clarkson | Member #12644

My dentist is a hero cold,
A placid man. Whate'er the stress
Of those his dreadful pincers hold
He shows no trace of nervousness.
In hours of blood and agony,
The pangs of probes and ligatures
His victims suffer he endures
With splendid equanimity.

S.S.

Victoria (*The Bulletin*, 1918).¹

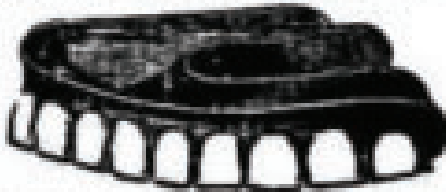
If ever there was a human experience which unites in shared understanding, if not sympathy, it is toothache. The people of Western Australia suffered until well into the 1920s with a lack of medical and dental services.

Successive Colonial Surgeons came and went, with two surgeons in the colony in 1830; the first trained pharmacist only arrived in 1833. It was not until after 1850 that civilian, rather than army or navy doctors began practising, however no fewer than twelve doctors out of a few hundred colonists either died or lost their reason in the early years of the colony, a disturbing trend for the new community.

Dentists arrived from interstate for short periods, one of these being Edward Augustus **Phillips** from Adelaide, and originally from London. Mr Phillips advertised before arriving and was forced to make a public appeal to rural Western Australia: 'MR PHILLIPS, Surgeon-Dentist, begs to inform settlers in the rural districts, who have requested him to visit them professionally, that his stay in the Colony will be so short, and his time is so fully occupied, that it will be quite out of his power to leave Perth. Perth, March 17, 1857'.²

One of the first to advertise as a dentist in Perth was Cholm **Reichberg**, one of the notorious 'Russian forgers' transported to the Swan River Colony in 1862. He was granted a ticket-of-leave in March 1865 and wasted no time advertising his services as a working jeweller and engraver in May of that year. By March of 1866, he had added 'Dentist' to his range of services, and, by August

C. REICHBERG,
WORKING DENTIST AND JEWELLER,
Hay-Street, Perth.
(Opposite St. George's Cathedral.)



ARTIFICIAL MINERAL TEETH
 Single and in whole sets, made and fitted
 with gold or platina plates, or with vul-
 canite, and guaranteed to wear well and
 masticate with quite comfortably.

ALSO,—
ARTIFICIAL GUMS
 With Teeth, in cases when the gums have
 been lost.

ALSO,—
JEWELLERY of every description
 set with precious stones in the best style
 of workmanship.

*The Perth Gazette and West Australian Times –
advertisement*

1866, Mr Reichberg's advertisement sported an engraving of a realistic upper set of dentures. His business grew, and he employed seven ticket-of-leave men including a dental apprentice who ran away with his gold watch and bay mare. Mr Reichberg travelled regularly to patients in Bunbury as well as diversifying into canning fish.³

Until about 1885, there was no legislation governing pharmacists apart from the Poisons Sale Act of 1879, and anyone could set up a practice as a chemist. Doctors and chemists overlapped roles with doctors dispensing medicine, and chemists treating patients, extracting teeth but not charging for advice given.⁴ Few practitioners travelled outside of Perth and Fremantle until the 1890's and only fifteen dentists outside of Perth or Fremantle advertised in *Wise's Western Australian Directory* for 1897.

People did what they could regarding the health of their teeth. They travelled to a chemist for advice, treatment or medication or to a general store for patent medicines, ordered preparations by mail, or asked around to find kindly and experienced blacksmiths or others to support

Travelling dentists (Cont.)

them with the removal of their disintegrating teeth.

One of those advertising, but not as a dentist, was Charles Patrick **Conway**.⁵ According to several sources, Conway had been apprenticed to Dr **Waylan**, Colonial Surgeon, to be trained as a pharmacist at the Colonial Hospital. Mr. Conway was appointed to the Victoria Hospital in Geraldton in 1884, and in 1890 opened his own pharmacy, the 'Charles Conway Drug Company's Medical Hall' on Marine Terrace. A suite of rooms included a compounding dispensary and rooms for visiting doctors. Mr Conway was renowned for his kindness and medical assistance, riding miles on his pony to deal with accidents, cauterise wounds and administer medicine. It is likely that he was also called upon

to administer pain relief frequently for toothache, and to remove teeth when necessary.

Larger-than-life identity
Robert William **Alderson**
known as Bob, was one of the owners of the rich Neta mine at Edjudina. He carried out a multitude of duties in his spare time, including being the local Justice of the Peace, and also the local dentist. As various recounts of his activities relate 'the dentist's chair was a sturdy mulga, in the fork of which victims rested their necks, a bolt being fixed across to prevent withdrawal while Bob went to work with instruments made on the anvil of the mine smithy.' The press reported that 'some very effective work has been done in that chair, the horrors of which no candidate for treatment ever forgot.' Later, Bob acquired a modern kit



Harcourt Whipple Ellis

and put many a job through with the finish of an expert – or so the legend goes.⁶ Bob Alderson married in 1904 to Isabel **Kelly**.

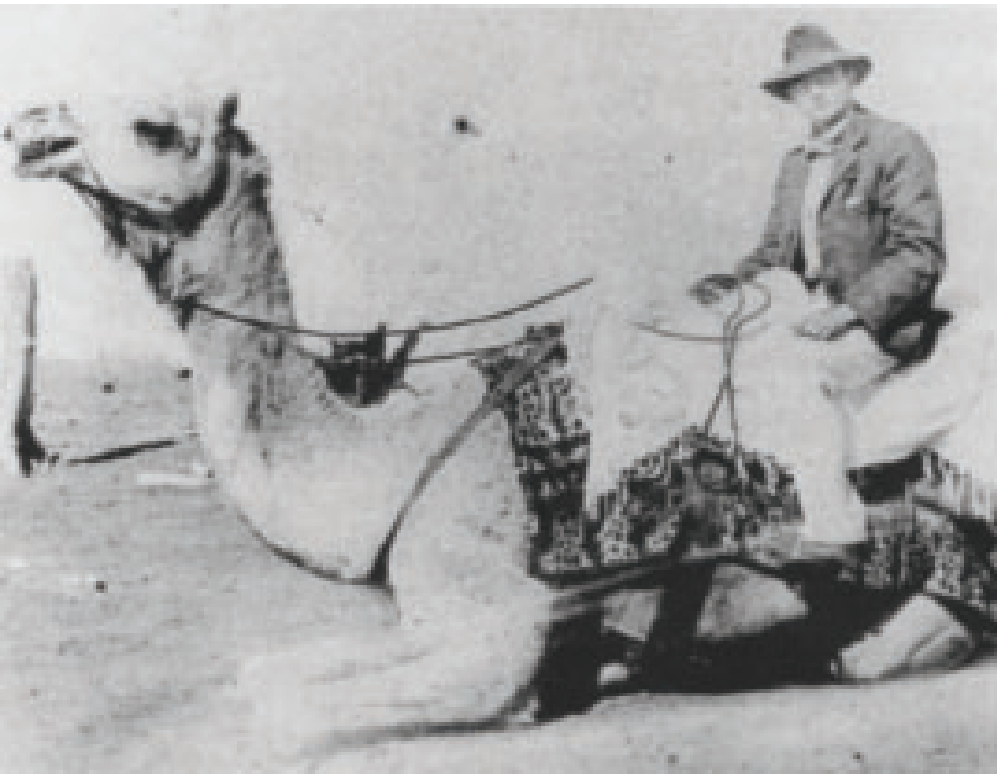
He enlisted in the Great War in 1914 and was older than he had claimed, having been born in 1867 and he died somewhere in France on the 25 July 1916. Isabel died in 1917.⁷ His medals and honour roll were never claimed, as no relatives were found – a tragic end to the story of a wonderful Western Australian bush character.

Charlatans preyed on those in need, and unqualified dentists practised with impunity, although newly-made regulations attempted to rein them in. Some dentists were outright rogues: Mr Harcourt Whipple **Ellis** is a case in point. His origins are obscure: he burst on the Western Australian scene in 1894 after being charged with unlawful wounding, but this case collapsed for want of a key witness.⁸

By 1896 he was advertising himself in Roebourne as a 'Consulting and Dispensing Chemist and Druggist, Surgeon Dentist. The only authorised



Dentist's Surgery, WA Goldfields c1900



A travelling dentist

Vendor of Poisons and Patent Medicines in the district under the new Pharmacy Act, 1894. Medicines forwarded by post on receipt of remittance.’⁹

Mr Ellis had a long and colourful career, and appeared to be unqualified in a formal sense, although he must have had knowledge of drugs and medical procedures. He advertised as a chemist and a dentist, but he also facilitated abortions. Mr Ellis seemed to lead a charmed life: being acquitted of murder after a patient died under anaesthetic in 1902; and discharged on a count of procuring a miscarriage in 1909 when another young woman died in his care. He was sanctioned with heavy fines for giving medical treatment and advice without qualifications, but none of this seemed to stop his activities.¹⁰

In the reminiscences of his father, *Dentist on a Camel*, K V Mattingley

writes that ‘The most popular anaesthetic was a hefty slug of whiskey, one for the so-called dentist and one for the patient.’¹¹ Toothache was often relieved by a dose of chlorodyne, a patent medicine containing laudanum (an alcoholic solution of opium), tincture of cannabis, and chloroform. It was highly addictive, a fact of which the general population was largely unaware. Deaths were reported frequently in the press, both accidental and intentional.¹²

Dentists who professed to be qualified, and those who actually were, offered anaesthesia such as chloroform and nitrous oxide (laughing gas) as it became available. A licensed doctor was required to administer these, but even then, practitioners had some difficulty managing the safety of their procedures. The case of Miss Edith Horsfield is a sad one, and also highlights how new

medical techniques and the action of drug combinations were not fully understood.¹³ At Bendigo, while having teeth extracted in 1898, Miss Horsfield collapsed under anaesthetic. As was customary at the time, the attending doctor also gave her repeated injections of strychnine, which was a known stimulant (and even used recreationally). An inquest exonerated the young dentist, George Dowling O’Neil, who had not long before completed a course of study in Philadelphia, and gained Doctor of Dental Surgery qualifications.¹⁴

The death was ruled misadventure and G. D. O’Neil moved to Western Australia but was obliged to weather several court cases due to poor financial management.¹⁵

He moved to Kalgoorlie, but a partnership with another dentist broke down (the wording of the dissolution of the partnership suggests more financial issues) and he appears to have spent the next ten years travelling by coach to Lawlers, Sandstone, Kookynie, Day Dawn, Cue, Black Range, and Nunngarra. A small news item regarding a dishonest cheque revealed he had returned to Perth in 1912 and he continued his dental practice in Fremantle, with occasional trips to Wagin and Dumbleyung during the 1920s.¹⁶

Mr Sidney S. **Bignell**, Mr A. O. **Holst**, and Mr C. H. **Garratt** were all dentists who travelled regularly to small towns and settlements. They took rooms at the local chemist, public house, or sometimes a private home and saw patients who came from miles away for consultations, repairs to dentures, fillings and extractions. On occasion, they had so many patients they stayed several days longer than expected. Travel in the Murchison and other districts often

Travelling dentists (Cont.)



The Charles Conway Drug Company's Medical Hall, Marine Tce, Geraldton

meant a horse and buggy, a coach, or in one dentist's case, a camel.

Harold Vernon Mattingley had a diploma from the first Australian Dental College course (Melbourne) and arrived in Coolgardie, Western Australia in 1898: he was 19 years of age. With the support of Afghan cameleers, he would ride out by camel to remote mining camps as far north as Menzies and Leonora. It is possible that he was contracted by mine owners to support their workers' dental needs.¹⁷

By the early 1900s, Coolgardie gold finds had begun to wane, but Ravensthorpe finds in gold and copper were at their peak. After he married Gladys Winfreda **Vaux** at Narrogin in 1907, Mr Mattingley settled in Ravensthorpe and travelled to Kundip offering services as both dentist and optician. As his family

grew, he moved back to Melbourne and gained a Doctor of Dental Science in 1914. Part of his thesis covered the dentition of Aboriginal people which he had researched as a young man while in Coolgardie. This study earned him world-wide acclaim. His papers were reprinted in *The Dental Surgeon*, a weekly London review. The Royal Australian Historical Society requested copies for permanent preservation.

Mattingley's career was circumspect, but some other travelling dentists of the time had their private lives exposed in the press. Maybe this damaged their professional standing, but Mr Sydney Smith Bignell appeared to ride out his personal storms of 1913 and 1929 to become famous in an unexpected way years later.

William Henry Sydney **Smith** (also

known as **Smith Bignell**) claimed dentistry qualifications from Victoria and noted he had studied under a fashionable dentist, Dr **French**, in Collins Street Melbourne. He arrived in Western Australia in 1902 and began working routinely in small towns and communities like Cue and Barrabup. He married and had children, but his home life became difficult, and the relationship between his wife and himself soured. *The Truth* newspaper had a field day reporting his divorce, with their standard alliterative headlines ('Tusk Tugger's Tearful Tale')¹⁸ and when he married again and his new wife divorced him, the *Truth* was there to tell all again.

This did not prevent Mr Bignell being asked in 1924 to take on the challenge of his professional life – dental surgery on 'Big Billy' a monstrous, and very valuable pig owned by Joe **Gardiner**, the champion Jujitsu wrestler of New Zealand (perhaps). In fact, Joe asserted that Billy had netted him £22,000 in two years and had grand plans for him to bring more money his way.¹⁹

What a coup for S.S. Bignell, and no risk to him, because this was actually a clever stunt! Joe arranged it so that every place where he was shown, Billy was said to have toothache and had one of his teeth crowned with a golden cap. Joe kept a supply of them, and when he arrived in a show town, he secured the services of a leading dentist to perform the simple feat of placing a gold crown on the pig's tusk. In Melbourne, Mr. G. D. **Brahm** had done the honours, while Mr. Sidney Bignell was the Perth dentist who had his photo taken with Billy.²⁰

Two dentists based in Geraldton during the 1890s and into the 1900s were particularly hard-working, advertising their travels to small

Travelling dentists (Cont.)

towns and communities, often on a monthly basis. Mr Arnold Owen **Holst** owned two chemist shops and worked as a dentist in Cue from 1895. He was also the proprietor of a private hospital where patients paid £5.5s per week for treatment. He frequently travelled to Day Dawn, Meekatharra, Cue, Nanine and Mt Magnet and was also assiduous in keeping the public up to date with his professional fees. 'Filling In - Gold Form, £1. 1s; Porcelain Inlays, £2.2s; Amalgam Inlays, 10s. 6d; Artificial Teeth, 10s. 6d. per 'Tooth.' Considering these costs, some patients would have taken the advice printed in the *Day Dawn Chronicle* of October 22, 1902 '... [the dentist] is in Day Dawn to-day (Wednesday) and tomorrow and may be consulted at Mr McCarthy's. All the teeth that have been aching during the past month will now be on their best behaviour, but take no notice of that, have 'em out'.²¹

Mr Holst seemed to be interested in keeping abreast of the advances in dentistry: he advertises 'new plant' and in 1898 two local anaesthetic products, eucain and coylr, making dental procedures less dangerous than narcosis. These were mentioned in *The British Medical Journal* under the heading 'An Epitome Of Current Medical Literature' in 1905, so far away Cue and Day Dawn were getting the newest dental treatment.²² He was still using laughing gas and cocaine though: maybe his patients preferred them.

Forward thinking may have been important to Mr Holt, as he was a member of the Australian Natives Association, a mutual benefit society founded in Melbourne in 1871. It was by and for the benefit

of 'white' native-born Australians, and membership was restricted to that group. The A.N.A. backed the Federation of Australian States, and social well-being. Mr Holst may have needed the A.N.A.'s support, as grave misfortune befell his family. A baby son, Harold, died a day after he was born in 1897 and a daughter, Lorna eight months old died in 1901. Then in 1902, his wife Edith Jane died of 'Cardiac Syncope induced by nervous shock after Childbirth' only hours after the birth of a son, Laurice.²³ Mr Holst kept practising as a dentist, moved to Geraldton, and married again after several years, having three children with his second wife, Phoebe. He died in 1949.²⁴

The second Geraldton dentist who travelled widely was Charles Herbert **Garratt**, who was born in 1870 in Cheshire, UK and immigrated to New Zealand with his family as a young child. His father, William Thomas Garratt, was a farmer-turned-chemist in Wellington. C. H. Garratt gained his Dentistry qualifications in 1891 at Otago University, spent two years in Sydney, and stayed briefly in Dubbo. By June 1894, he had arrived in Fremantle and settled in Geraldton where he established a practice on Marine Terrace.²⁵ From numerous newspaper reports C. H. Garratt was warmly welcomed, and quickly joined in with community social events. Described as 'natty, dandy, debonair', he sang in concerts (apparently possessed of a 'sweet, clear voice')²⁶ and also played the cornet. Mr Garratt was active in sports, and began rowing, winning the sculling race from Mr Howard Evan, an architect.

The Geraldton Lawn Tennis Club advertisements featured him not only playing tennis, but also acting



Arnold Owen Holst and his second wife Phoebe

in a 'comedy-farce' called *Checkmate* where he played a hotel waiter. Mr Garratt was a keen Freemason, a vestryman at the Anglican Church, and a 2nd Lieutenant in the 18th Australian Light Horse Regiment.

His round of social and sporting activities including his monthly travels to a lengthy list of towns such as Mt Magnet, Cue, Lennonville, Day Dawn, Peak Hill, Yalgoo, Tuckanurra, Nannine and Dongara must have been exhausting, even though some journeys would have been partly by train. On occasion, Mr Garratt was away for several weeks and arranged for other dentists to assist at his Geraldton practice.

In March 1899, Mr Garratt married Miss Lavinia **Simpson** and they had two children, George Herbert Ashton Garratt in December 1899, and Charles Cecil Wisley Garratt in 1903.

^{27 28} From her constant advertisements from 1899 for a general servant, it appears that Lavinia needed some support in running their home.

In November of 1904, Mr Garratt

Travelling dentists (Cont.)

was obliged to take some time off due to a severe cold. Then on Friday 2 June 1905, Mr Garratt rose early at his Elwes Street home (now Cathedral Avenue) and when their servant, Lillian **Fenn**, offered him a cup of tea he agreed; he seemed unwell. Ten minutes later she heard a rifle shot from the dining room and found him dead. His neighbours heard the report of the rifle and came running, and Charles Conway the chemist was sent for, but it was too late. The inquest revealed Mr Garratt had been afraid his mind was giving way, that he was unable to sleep, and anxious about his work. The inquest decided on 'temporary insanity.'

Charles Herbert Garratt's funeral - described as 'impressive' - was an elaborate military affair, the cortege including his horse, draped and with the top boots of the deceased reversed in the stirrups, a full turn-out of his Freemason brothers, a long procession of mourners and a band playing the Dead March.²⁹ A curiously revealing obituary by 'Nemo' came to light during research on C. H. Garratt which is included in the Notes.³⁰ There is a possibility Charles Garratt tried too hard to be popular and although he appeared fortunate and full of life and energy, he may have wrestled with inner demons about his capacity to cope. Mr Holst bought out Mr Garratt's Geraldton practice,³¹ and his widow remarried.

The story of the travelling dentists is set against a background of change to the medical profession as a whole, both in Australia and worldwide. Medical and scientific knowledge was increasing, and the practice of medicine and public welfare began to be regulated. A lively press kept remote Western Australian towns informed and no news item was too small to be included. This has resulted in a wealth of everyday information on those who were running businesses, from the services they provided to their personal lives. The people of Western Australia's ghost towns can claim the travelling dentists as their own: part of the optimistic, eccentric, roaring nineties and beyond.

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Mapping your family treasures

Julie Martin | Member # 5454

“Do you know what happened to Nanna’s typewriter?”

The question was posed by my Melbourne-based daughter during a Covid lockdown. And the typewriter? It was a Remington 12, a relic of the 1920s – sixteen kilos of black metal, trimmed with chrome plate, dulled by time and sporting patches of rust.

Her query got me thinking about other ‘family treasures’; the ones tucked away in drawers, cupboards, on shelves, behind doors – you know what I mean. Nothing of great value, but often with stories and memories attached. Over the years, I’d diligently organised my photos and documents but had done nothing about the three-dimensional items of significance to our family.

Mulling it over, I knew what was needed.

- First on the list was identifying the items to include in my treasure chest
- Then, assigning a unique identifier to each item
- Followed by labelling and appropriately housing each item
- And finally, creating and distributing a ‘treasure map’ (i.e. informing the family about these treasures - their significance and location).

And, this is how I did it

Identifying the items to include in my treasure chest

Setting small goals – a few hours each week/fortnight/month – I worked my way through all the rooms in the house (including the garage!), identifying items of family significance. What I ended up with was a mix of small, medium, and large items ranging from furniture, framed pictures, clocks, toys, twenty-first birthday keys, etc., to small items – linens, christening mugs, jewellery, medals, locks of hair, etc. (A bonus was ridding the house of stuff that was no longer required!)

Assigning a unique identifier to each item

I assigned a unique identifier to each item, which took the form of letters followed by a number. (RFH001, RFH002, RFH003, etc.)

A few words of caution before you start this process.

A letter or letters followed by a unique number is a standard

identification system (consider passports, car registrations, invoices, barcodes, etc.)

HOWEVER, choose the letters you use with care....

I used RFH (Realia Family History) and you may select letters that are meaningful to you, for instance, BT (Bill’s treasures), MH (Mary’s heirlooms), GFC (Gordon Family chattels). However, AVOID letters that can be confused with numbers, such as I, O, or S.

Also, consider the numerical sequence you use:

- To do this, make a rough calculation of how many items you have.
- In the unlikely event that you have less than ten items, use a single number sequence (1-9)
- If you have more than nine and less than a hundred items, use a two-number sequence (00-99)
- If you have more than ninety-nine items but less than a thousand, use a three-number sequence (000-999). I recommend erring on the side of caution.
- When creating your identifier, it’s best NOT to use a space between the letters and numbers.
- However, irrespective of what you do, be consistent.

Labelling and housing each item

Mark each item with its unique identifier, but FIRST, DO NO HARM; that is, don’t damage the item in the process. If possible, use labels tied to objects with white cotton tape or wrap small items in acid-free tissue (available at the RWAHS or online) and store them in labelled zip-lock plastic bags (no PVC). Items can also be marked with a 2B pencil. If the only option is an adhesive label, be creative and ensure it is placed where the glue can’t damage the item. It’s essential to give this task the consideration it deserves. Also, don’t discard original cartons, containers, etc. These may be important in establishing value and provenance, etc.

Creating and distributing your treasure map

Photos are an essential part of your ‘treasure map’. It’s helpful for your family to be able to visualise what they are looking for. I took photos of every item, often from different angles. I also took close-ups of significant sections such as name plates, engravings, markings, etc. and

Mapping family treasures (Cont.)

researched the object as best I could.

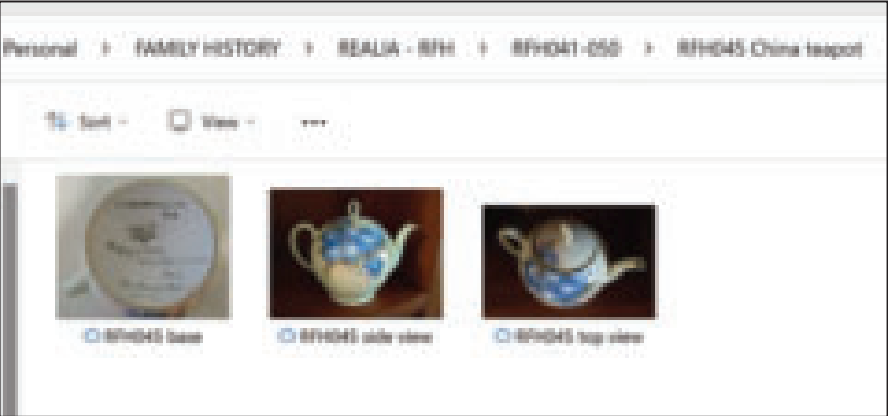
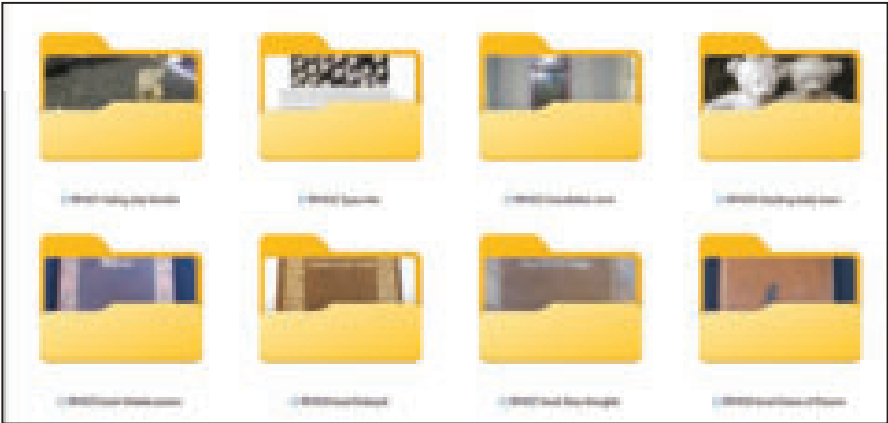
If using a computer to produce your treasure map, create a main folder and within that folder, create subfolders, one for each item, labelling each with the item's identifier.

Upload the photographs you've taken of each item to their respective folders. Name these images with the item's identifier. If you have more than one photo of an item, distinguish between them by adding an additional number with a separator to the filename, e.g., RFH031.2 or RFH031-2, and so on.

Include digital copies of documents, receipts, stories, or other relevant photographs, such as a person wearing an item of jewellery or being presented with a medal, etc., in their respective folders.

I used the computer program Excel to create my treasure map, but you can use whatever method you're comfortable with. If computers aren't your thing, why not use a ring binder with pages in plastic sleeves arranged numerically? Include any photos in the respective sleeves.

In my Excel spreadsheet, I created a row for each item and, within that row, included columns for:



Item ID	Item Image	Item Description	Year	Gifted To	Gifted From
RFH 031		Resurgence black metal [?] typewriter, 1930s	2004	Gifted to John Martin 2018	See: Wikipedia blog article: But I miss you quite terribly
RFH 032		This grandfather clock was my mother's pride and joy. It was given to her as a wedding gift by her employers, Middlewick's Jewellers. It stood in the hall way of my parents home at 41 Harrow St, Wembley and later moved with my mother to her gift at Villa Maria, Leamington.	2004	Gifted to John Martin 2018	
RFH 034		Home made teddy bears made by 'Barbara' from the fabric used in Julia Russell's wedding dress and the fabric used in Julia Russell's mother of the bride dress.	2011, 2004	White bear gifted to John Martin 2018, green bear gifted to John Martin 2018	See: Western Ancestor (2021) Wikipedia article - 12 photos calls, wedding dresses and teddy bears.
RFH 035		Poems from the Western Ancestor - 1988. Small book, hard cover, bound in brown with gold, brown and orange intricate border and gold lettering. Inscribed 'Western Ancestor' and owner name - Jeanne Walker, 20 Churchill Ave., Sydney	2004	Gifted to John Martin 2018	

Mapping family treasures (Cont.)

- The item's identifier
- A description of the item and all known information - who owned it, its significance to the family, any monetary or cultural value, the original cost, date of manufacture, provenance, **ABSOLUTELY EVERYTHING KNOWN ABOUT THE ITEM.....**
- Where the family can find it (i.e., where it is kept or who it's been given to)
- Who it's been promised to or who is to have it, if appropriate,
- A thumbnail of a photograph
- Details of any narratives or stories that may have been written about the item or mention it.

Save the index in the collection's main folder. If you create a paper treasure map, store the index in your ring binder.

On completion, let your executor know about the collection, the folder, and its contents. I store my important documents in the 'Cloud', which my executor can access.

It may also be helpful to file a paper copy of the index with your Will and circulate electronic or paper copies to family members.

Writing about the significant items in your treasure chest enhances what is already known and increases their sentimental value, but that's up to you.

However, should you want to know more about Nanna's typewriter, read on.....

The Remington

Julie Martin | Member # 5454

After twelve years on the floor of my wardrobe, collecting fluff and dust and often buried beneath an assortment of shoes, it recently stood on the kitchen table, all sixteen kilos, giving off an air of shabby majesty and casting a menacing shadow in the half-light of evening.

My mother, the lady who owned and treasured this typewriter, has long gone. Now, too, the Remington has left, shipped to my daughter's Federation home in Melbourne, where it will blend in seamlessly with the high ceilings and ornate cornices and be lovingly displayed and admired. What remains and will stay with me are the hazy, tender memories – the sights and sounds that were once so familiar.

Identified as a Remington 12, I discovered this model first appeared

in the mid-1920s, but I don't think my mother acquired it until the 1950s. Where it was before that time is anyone's guess.

It sat on the dining room table in my parent's home, positioned on a thick felt mat to protect the table's surface. When not in use, it was hidden beneath an ugly beige custom-made vinyl cover created by one of my father's workmates.

In my mind's eye, I can still see Mum seated in front of it, surrounded by minute books, handwritten notes and a slim box of carbon paper, a cigarette burning in the ashtray. If I concentrate hard, I hear the sounds it made.

They begin with the brisk winding of the rollers as she guided the paper into position; then the staccato *clack-clack-clack-clack* of the metal type as they flew towards the paper; the 'thunk' of the shift key followed by the '*bing – ziiiiiiiiiiiiiiip*' as the carriage reached the end and



The Remington (Cont.)

moved down. The ‘ssssbhhhhp’ as the completed document was pulled from the rollers. Those sounds had a comforting, efficient rhythm and reverberated around the house. We always knew where Mum was.

Mum used a dual colour ribbon – black and red – and, if it got out of alignment, the document she created had a technicolour look, the upper half of each letter printed in black and the lower half red. At the end of each session, she would gently sweep the tiny rubber flakes shed by the circular eraser into the palm of her hand and cover the machine.

Initially, I was fascinated by Mum’s Remington. I would prop myself up on a cushion and happily bang the keys, creating meaningless rows of letters and spaces. As time went on, I became faster and more adroit. Then, I removed all the loose handwritten recipes tucked into Mum’s bulging *Golden Wattle* cookbook and painstakingly typed them.

Not surprisingly, the Remington ceased to fascinate me as time went on. Modern machines, some electric, appeared on the market and became

entrenched in Perth homes and offices: smaller, quieter, and much easier to operate. We urged Mum to upgrade, but our efforts were strenuously resisted. The Remington symbolised solidarity and substance, two of her many qualities.

Mum used her machine to connect with family and friends and contribute to the community around her. She had great sympathy for the isolation felt by non-English speaking post-war migrants, especially the women, and created typed lists of simple words and phrases to help with their daily interactions.

A devout Catholic, she belonged to several lay societies and, in most cases, was their secretary or newsletter editor..... or both. The dining table

was often littered with pages she’d created from a stencil and, later, duplicated, and I was usually pressed into service assembling and stapling them.

Mum would also regularly visit the Para Quad Centre in Shenton Park. She had befriended several long-term patients who dictated their correspondence to her. Later, she would edit, type and post it for them. She also used her typewriter to correspond with her children and grandchildren, who may have been travelling or living away from home.

I often wonder what Mum would make of today’s computers and how they’ve revolutionised the way we communicate. I also wonder what her great-grandchildren would make of her Remington typewriter, this large, black, heavy mechanical object that required both physical and mental effort to operate, as well as the coping mechanisms to deal with snarled ribbons, spilt Tippex, smudgy carbon paper and worn typeface.

Mum’s typewriter mirrored to some degree who she was and the times she graced and is now starting a new chapter in its life, a hundred years on. No longer in the wardrobe, it has a new home in a new city.

I like to think she would approve.



Tracking the *Travancore*

Fiona Carroll | Member #6006

When the *Travancore* arrived in Western Australia in 1853, it was the first of the so-called Bride Ships to dock here.¹ I say 'so-called' because the name was somewhat misleading as her government passengers also included families, and even a couple of single men. However, I had two foremothers among the *Travancore's* 'brides' so such a reference was of interest to me.

Some years ago, I came across an article that said that, in July 1852, the **Limerick Union Workhouse** selected fifty girls aged between 17 and 25 for the Colonial Land and Emigration Office (CLEO) scheme for Western Australia. In fact, 30 were approved. Only one of these was identified - Mary **O'Brien** - who had been given permission to take another girl's place. The author hoped that the rest could be identified from Western Australian sources.

Could they?

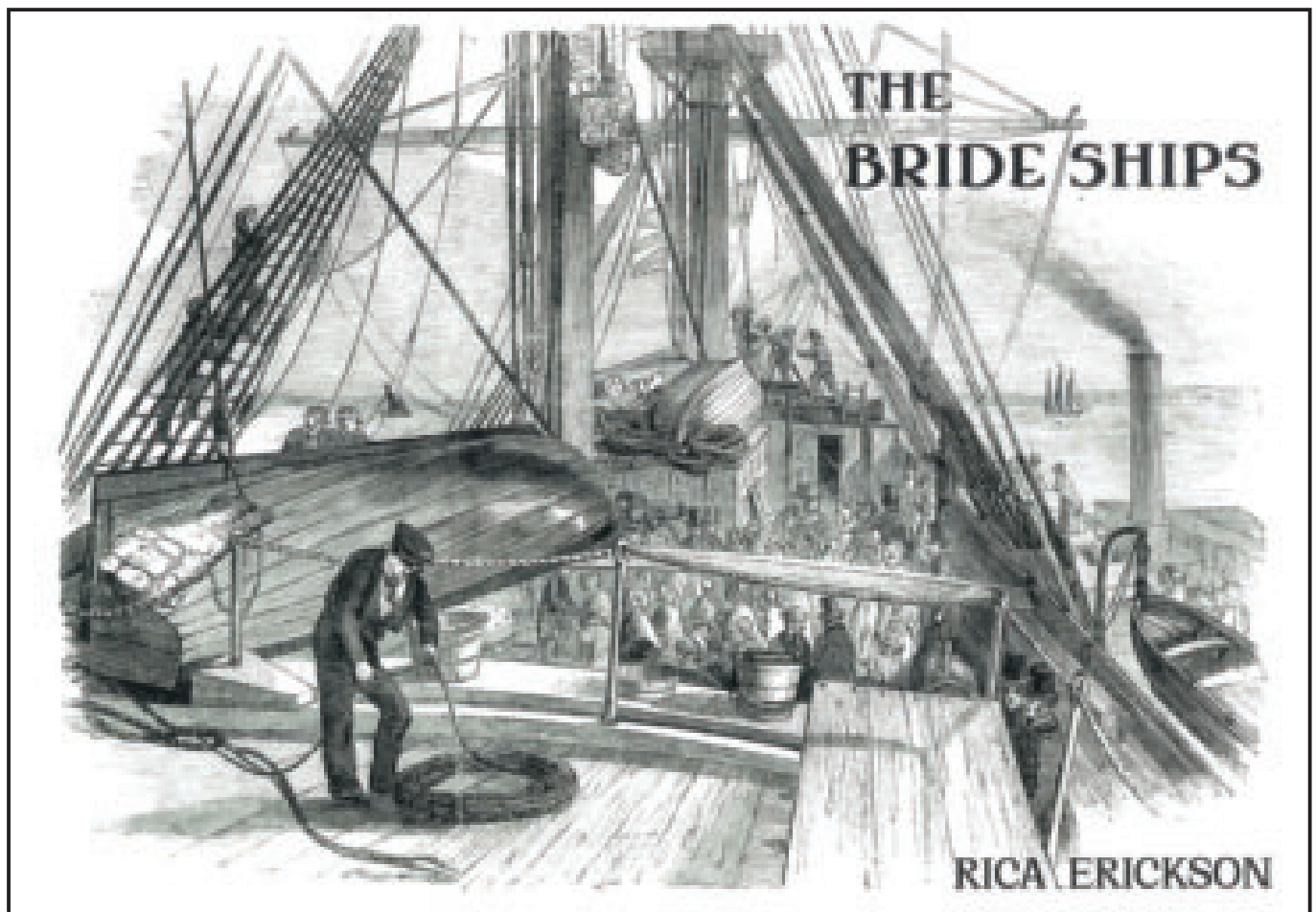
This was the first I'd heard of the Limerick Union workhouse. What I had previously read of the Bride Ships were that the girls were mostly from workhouses and orphanages in Cork and Dublin.

My first attempt at investigating was stymied by Mrs Charlotte **O'Sullivan**, the matron at the Limerick Union Workhouse. According to the article, she was given charge of the girls on the trip and a free passage to Australia. She was not, however, on the passenger list for the *Travancore*. I did, however, find another woman who could have been her arriving in another state, on another ship. While there were two Mary O'Briens on the *Travancore*, I also found a Mary O'Brien on the same ship as Mrs O'Sullivan.

I dismissed the article – yet never quite let it go.

The Investigation

Fast forward. Browsing the British newspapers for references to the *Travancore*, I found an article in the *Clonmel Chronicle* (Co. Tipperary) that said the **Nenagah Workhouse** in Tipperary and the Limerick Union Workhouse were each sending 30 girls to Plymouth to board the *Travancore*.²



The Bride Ships - Rica Erickson book cover

The *Limerick Chronicle* reported the following year that the *Travancore* arrived in Melbourne (sic) on January 15, with the thirty girls each from the Limerick Union and Nenagh workhouses - 'all being well and having been well-treated on the voyage'.³ They may have gotten their wires slightly crossed about the destination and the *Travancore* arrived on the 13 January, but otherwise there was a corroboration of the Clonmel article.

I then discovered that the Guardians' minutes from the Limerick Union Workhouse were online and I was able to read them for myself.⁴ At first, they referenced Van Dieman's Land as the destination, but the minutes of 1 September 1852 noted the receipt of a letter stating that the 30 females proceeding to Western Australia will make their way to Plymouth by the 24 September to board the *Travancore*.

And they really can't get much plainer, can they?

One assumes there was already a matron for the *Travancore*, and that Charlotte **O'Sullivan**, having accompanied the girls from Limerick to Plymouth, went on another ship to Australia. Considering the initial references to Van Diemen's Land, perhaps to a place more to her liking?

More recently, I confirmed that the Nenagh workhouse did send thirty girls - the trustee minutes are online at the Tipperary Studies site.⁵ Like Limerick, the first reference was to Van Diemen's Land. Unlike Limerick, their matron was not accepted for a free passage.

However, after confirming Limerick Union, my next task had been to finally (!) take a look at the original passenger



Limerick workhouse

list, since I had only been using the Society's database.⁶ The first thing I saw was that the departure list of the government passengers is broken into groups, indicating that in the compiler's mind there was something 'different' about these groups. I set out to track the passengers through any source I could find - the Bicentennial Dictionary (now online), obituaries, BDM indices, census data and online family trees. The first group is an alphabetical list of families, with a few single women and men. The small number that I've been able to track came from England and Scotland.

Then there is a gap to the second group comprised of four alphabetical families. I thought this group might be Irish - the difference being nationality. However, according to obituaries, the **Connibeeres** were from Somerset and the **Davis** family from Devonshire, although an online genealogical site indicates that Mrs **Coonan** was Irish.⁷ I suppose we have to question whether 'from' necessarily means 'born'.

The third group is an alphabetical list of seven single women; a list that includes Eleanor **Tully**, presumably my foremother, Ellen Tully. Ellen died in 1895, without leaving any biographical data. However, I have

tracked four of the other girls. One may have been born in County Tipperary, one in County Kerry and one simply Ireland. The obituary of the fourth, Biddy **Atkinson** (nee **Meagher**) says that the journey took six months (a bit of an overstatement), that she was born in County Tipperary and had never been out of Ireland until she came on the *Travancore*.⁸

Given the size and the alphabetical listing, this wouldn't seem to be a workhouse group under the CLEO scheme. Had they applied by themselves, as the other passengers did? Were they separated into their own group because they were Irish? The fact that two were from Tipperary and one from Kerry is interesting, however, in relation to the last three groups.

These last three are *not* alphabetical. The first two have thirty girls and the third has twenty-six, making a total of eighty-six girls. These, then, are the workhouse girls travelling under the CLEO scheme.

I believe that the first group of thirty are the girls from the Nenagh workhouse. The obituary of David **Hitchcock** tells us that his wife Honora, nee **Cane** (aka **Keane**), came on the *Travancore* and that

Tracking the *Travancore* (Cont.)

she was born in County Tipperary.⁹ The obituary of **Hanora White nee Toohey** says that she was born in Nenagh, Tipperary.¹⁰

The second group of thirty would seem to be the girls from Limerick Union Workhouse, given that it has both of the two Mary O'Briens listed on the *Travancore*, and we know it had at least one girl of that name from the Trustees' minutes. Mary O'Brien married **John Wood** and her obituary says she came on the *Travancore* and was born in Limerick.¹¹

Data for two girls in the last group, the group of twenty-six, suggest a workhouse in County Kerry.

they were allowed to 'break ranks' and the third workhouse is clearly short of its thirty.

A contact in County Kerry wasn't aware of any girls being sent to Australia under any except the Earl Grey scheme. However, not all records of the six workhouses survive. Of these six, Listowel in the north would seem to be the closest to the Kilmore town lands. There was also the Glin workhouse in County Limerick which took in the eastern part of Listowel.¹⁴

The journey

My foremother, Annorah **Warner nee Ryan**, is most likely the Honora Ryan from Limerick Union Workhouse. Her obituary places her on the

also inspected the Nenagh girls in August and the Nenagh trustees left the travel arrangements from Limerick to Plymouth in his hands. It seems likely, then, that the 60 girls from Limerick and Nenagh travelled to Plymouth together.

The *Travancore*, under Captain Brown, left Gravesend on the 22 September 1852, presumably with her cabin passengers, and sailed to Plymouth to pick up her government passengers. There had already been some discord while she was lying in dock preparing for her voyage, with the arrest of her ship's carpenter. Her steward had to testify at his trial.¹⁶

The ship most likely arrived in Plymouth on the 24 September so, perhaps, Annorah and her fellow travellers went directly on board. However, Plymouth was the main departure point for government emigrants and I believe that an accommodation facility of some kind was available.

In Plymouth, three sailors appeared in police court charged with refusing to work.¹⁷ Captain **Brown** testified that he believed one of them to be the instigator – the other two were among the best men he'd had working for him. They refused to go back to work and were imprisoned for 28 days hard labour.

While the *South Devon Gazette* of 1 October claims that the *Travancore* was going to leave that day, it appears more likely to have been on the following day.¹⁸

There would be six deaths by the time the ship reached her destination. One of these, the Crown Solicitor, Mr **Parnell**, seems to have been ill before he embarked.¹⁹ The rest were government emigrants: Elizabeth **Wilkins** (wife of Henry) and her

In Plymouth, three sailors appeared in police court charged with refusing to work.¹⁷ Captain Brown testified that he believed one of them to be the instigator – the other two were among the best men he'd had working for him. They refused to go back to work and were imprisoned for 28 days hard labour.

The obituary for Mary **Hoddy**, nee **Connor**, says she was born in County Kerry.¹² A 1914 article on Catherine **Robinson nee Staunton** (but **Stundon** when she married and **Shindon** on the passenger list) says that she was born in 1810 in Kilmore, County Kerry.¹³ Her age in this article doesn't coincide with her age on the passenger list and it says she emigrated with 27 other girls on the *Travancore*, arriving 1851 – so some of the information is a bit shaky but one would think she knew her birth place.

Twenty-seven girls? Is her memory inaccurate, or is this a reference to the one County Kerry girl in the little group of seven? It seems unlikely that

Travancore.¹⁵ She was a farmer's daughter born in County Clare – the county border of which is very close to Limerick City; and it seems that some of the workhouse's rateable districts were in County Clare. Previously, I had assumed that her family must have gone to Dublin or Cork for work. However, she needn't have left Clare at all until going into the workhouse. Or, if she did, only as far as Limerick. It places her in southern Clare as well.

The Limerick Union girls were not required to go to Cork or Dublin for the inspection of their clothes, but were inspected in Limerick by Captain Ellis RN so that they could go directly by steam to Plymouth. Captain Ellis

Tracking the *Travancore* (Cont.)

daughters, Dinah and Harriet, and two other children, Michael **Cook** and Caroline **Mills**. I assume that the four births and five deaths mentioned separately in the paper refers only to the government passengers.

Arrival

The *Travancore* arrived in Fremantle in the middle of summer, on the 13 January 1853. *The Inquirer* lamented the fact that there were not more than twenty-four adult males on the ship (again, this seems only to be a reference to the government immigrants). There were few agricultural labourers, but there were five carpenters, six blacksmiths and farriers, a bricklayer and a mason.

The Inquirer reported later that month that two craft had reached Perth, one with 45 girls and one with 40.²⁰ This total of 85 suggests that they were the workhouse girls because the number presumably does not include Biddy **Kennedy** (from the Nenagh group) who married her widowed fellow passenger, Henry Wilkins, on the 24 January.²¹

The girls were strong and healthy, according to the paper, well-fitted for farm house work, although few had previously been engaged in town. According to *The Bride Ships*, a large crowd gathered at the William Street jetty to meet the girls who were dubbed 'bog Irish'. Some of the girls were barefoot, with simple gowns and shawls to cover their heads.

In late January, 16 girls were sent to Bunbury on the *Typo* which is probably how Annorah Ryan got to Wonnerup.²²

Unrest among the crew had apparently continued on the journey and in port.²³ On the 22 January, 12

seamen were given 12 weeks each for refusing to work. Two sailors were charged with absconding while another brought a charge of ill treatment against the captain. It seemed he'd had the doctor brought to him too many times on the journey when he'd been too ill to do his work. He wanted a discharge and the captain agreed but the magistrate did not, since Captain Brown could not swear the sailor wouldn't become a charge on the colony. He was ordered back to the ship but absconded before being apprehended again.

Makes one wonder how eventful the journey actually was!

The mostly Catholic girls on the ship attracted good press. This included the dubious compliment in *The Perth Gazette* on the 4 March that they were a boon and 'likely to become very good servants eventually'.²⁴ In May, the same paper refers to the girls on the *Palestine*, holding out the *Travancore* girls as a good example.²⁵

Conclusion

I seem to have become fanatical about this self-inflicted little project. It is both frustrating and sad that we may never be able to identify the third workhouse and that the little group of seven continues to mystify me, but at least we know a little bit more about the other girls.

And who knows - perhaps there is more waiting to be discovered about some of the other 'Bride Ships'?

Notes

- 1 Erickson, Rica 1992, *The Bride Ships*, Hesperian Press, Carlisle.
- 2 11 September, 1852, *Clonmel Chronicle*, Clonmel, County Tipperary, Ireland.
- 3 7 May, 1853, *Limerick Chronicle*, Limerick, County Limerick, Ireland.
- 4 Limerick Union Board of Guardians Minute Books, 1842-1922, accessed 20 May 2023 at Limerick Archives <https://www.limerick.ie/archives>.

- 5 Nenagh Workhouse Trustee Minutes, accessed 3 May 2024 at Tipperary Studies. <https://www.tipperystudiesdigital.ie/items/browse?collection=42>
- 6 Accession 115/7-8
- 7 5 September, 1877, 'Deaths', *The Inquirer and Commercial News*, Perth and 7 Mar, 1908, 'Mrs Mary Davis', *Western Mail*, Perth, WA.
- 8 2 October, 1931, 'Almost a Centenarian', *The Weekly Gazette*, Goomalling, WA.
- 9 20 February, 1916, 'The Late David Hitchcock', *The Sunday Times*, Perth, WA.
- 10 22 February, 1908, 'Mrs H White', *Western Mail*, Perth, WA.
- 11 29 March, 1908, 'Obituary', *The Sunday Times*, Perth, WA
- 12 14 May, 1910, 'Death of Mrs Mary Hoddy', *The Northam Advertiser*, Northam, WA
- 13 25 January, 1914, 'A Centenarian', *The Sunday Times*, Perth, WA
- 14 <https://workhouses.org.uk>
- 15 17 February, 1905, 'District News', *Bunbury Herald*, Bunbury, WA
- 16 14 September, 1852, 'Serious Outrage in an Emigrant Ship', *Morning Post*, London, England.
- 17 6 October, 1852, 'Plymouth Police', *Shipping and Mercantile Gazette*, London, England.
- 18 1 October, 1852, *South Devon Gazette*, printed in 2 October, 1852, *Exeter and Plymouth Gazette*, Exeter, Devon and 7 October, 1852, *North Devon Journal*, Barnstaple, Devon.
- 19 19 January, 1853, *The Inquirer*, Perth, WA
- 20 26 January, 1853, *The Inquirer*, Perth, WA
- 21 Wikitree entry and Catholic marriage record on Family Search.
- 22 2 February, 1853, *The Inquirer*, Perth, WA
- 23 16 February, 1853, *The Inquirer*, Perth, WA
- 24 4 March, 1853, *The Perth Gazette and Independent Journal of Politics and News*, Perth, WA
- 25 6 May, 1853, *The Perth Gazette and Independent Journal of Politics and News*, Perth, WA

The Convict Project

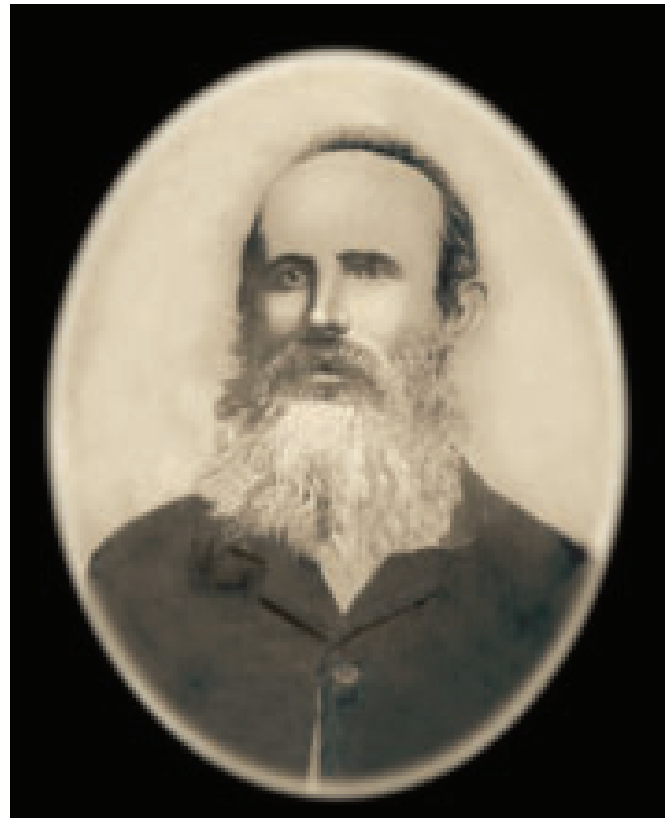
Joanne Hyland | Member #12328

Editor, *Convict Links*

This six-year project had its genesis in a meeting of the Convict Interest Group committee in February, 2018. A talk had been given to the Group a few months before by Hesperian Press publisher, Peter Bridge, seeking more convict-related stories and material to be offered for publication. The Convict Group had just completed a successful exhibition celebrating the 150th anniversary of the cessation of transportation to Western Australia. Bevan Carter was keen to find a home for thousands of British prison records that he had photographed. All three became instigators of the Project. Joanne Hyland offered a framework which would build on, not only the work done by Bevan, but also that of previous members of the Convict Interest Group. They had compiled indexes, transcribed information, documented convict-related buildings and sites, collected photographs and written stories about their convict ancestors. We wanted to create an online platform about Western Australian convicts with links to any relevant websites.

The members of the Convict Project sub-committee - Bevan Carter, Julie Arrowsmith, Joanne Hyland and Valerie White - worked assiduously gathering sources of information. Bevan undertook further research into the UK National Archives. Joanne began the *Scindian* Convict Project writing the stories of the 75 men who arrived on that ship on 1 June 1850, the first male convicts to come here. Julie and Valerie worked on sourcing records. Pauline Basso joined the committee contributing towards data collection and offering advice on presentation.

Previously digitised records were accessed. These included the Kew records on Find My Past, SRO WA Convict Records on Ancestry.com, British Library newspapers, the National Library of Australia's TROVE digitised newspapers, and Canberra AJCP reels containing convict registers before 1852, and Correspondence and Court records to 1868. As a result, the WA Convicts database had a wider range of primary sources than had been pulled together elsewhere. Other sites had tending to summarise



John Wellington (9021) John Wellington (1846 - 1904) Thief arrived Belgravia 1866. Settled in Northampton and was a well-respected, long-term station manager with a large family.

the available information.

As the work proceeded, however, we realised that we needed to address the ongoing dilemma of how to make the information freely accessible online without committing the group to the ongoing expense of hosting a website. Family History WA came to the rescue by offering to host the WA Convict Project. Once that was confirmed, we just needed to decide what form the platform would take. With none of the sub-committee being experts in database creation, it was to our immense relief that FHWA Treasurer, Neil Bradley, came to us with a workable solution.

Since then, Neil, Bevan and a band of committed researchers have worked on the project. Neil selected a database format with freely available software and then dedicated himself to developing and populating what came to be known as the WA Convicts database and website. The role has been time-consuming and demanding and, to the great good fortune of the Convict Group, Neil has generously provided his time, knowledge and expertise free of charge and with seemingly limitless energy.

Convict project (Cont.)

The Project

This project is being undertaken by the Convict Interest Group of FamilyHistoryWA and is documented on the FHWA website at waconvicts.fhwa.org.au. The team is currently working on loading information about convicts and adding links and stories for the convict ships which came to Western Australia. In total 9,710 convicts were transported to the colony; so we envisage that the project will be ongoing.

To make it manageable, the Project Team focus on key events in each convict's life during his or her time as a convict, and their life afterwards. We look at convict records, prison records, newspaper articles and as many primary source images as we can find. Some of the early convicts have two separate pdf files showing, near the top of the page, links to Australia and to the UK.

Where appropriate, we add links to the Citations section on each convict's page. The small camera icon draws attention to any pictorial information, while the full set of images can be viewed in the Photo Gallery.

Stories about the life of each convict which will be added progressively to the Bio section.

Have a look under 'Indexes' for some interesting groupings of convicts.

Keep your eye on the 'Page Updates' index to easily spot if your convict has had a recent update.

The following links are listed at the ship level. They require access to ancestry.com.au.

- The dates of Ticket of Leave and Conditional Pardons.
- Links to Character Books and General Registers.
- Links to the Convict Description List.

If you have stories about your Convict ancestor or additional information that you are happy to share online, please contact us and we will add them.

The initial phase of the project is now complete but work will continue with adding newspaper links, adding the Parkhurst Lads (pardoned transported juvenile prisoners/apprentices, whose arrival pre-dated the official Convict Period) and reviewing the early ships to ensure consistency. We hope to continue to receive feedback which will enable



Joseph Horrock (1803-1865) Forger arrived on Marion 1852. Pioneer of Northampton. Horrocks Beach named for him.

ongoing additions and corrections. A YouTube video is available to demonstrate how to navigate the site: [WA Convicts Website - An introduction \(youtube.com\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WAConvictsWebsite).

We see this as a fitting tribute to all the dedicated convict researchers who have preceded the present contributors to this project. Although the site has been 'live' for some time, and feedback positive and generous, the official launch marking the completion of the development phase of the project is anticipated to take place in the next few months.

Letters to the Editor



Dear Editor

As an avid reader of your magazine, I would like to draw your attention to a small but crucial inaccuracy in the feature article on the Gallop Brothers in the July 2024 issue of the *Western Ancestor*.

James and his brother Richard worked for James Sutherland at location 85 prior to Captain Adam Armstrong taking up the property. It comprised 320 acres of land near the Swan River. Armstrong built a five room limestone cottage and grew vegetables and fruit. He called it Crawley Park.

It is a well-established fact that Adam Armstrong was the original European settler of Swan Location 85, taking up the land in September 1831. He named Loc 85, Dalkeith Farm, after his birthplace in Scotland. He is recognised by the City of Nedlands as the founding father of the suburb of Dalkeith.

Adam developed the land into a productive farm and built a house on the property. Adam and his family worked the land until 1839 at which time he sold it to a Mr John Lewis.

After Mr Lewis's death, two years later, James Gallop leased the property before finally purchasing all of it from the Lewis family many years later, as late as 1864.

It would be appreciated if you could issue a correction to the article in the next edition of the journal that clarifies that Adam Armstong was the original settler of Swan Loc 85 and it was known as Dalkeith Farm.

Yours sincerely

Ewin Armstrong | Member No. 8202

(On behalf of Adam Armstrong's descendants)

Margaret Sermon who wrote the article about the Gallop Brothers apologises for her mistake. She indicated that James and his brother Richard worked for James Sutherland at Location 85 when she should have said Location 87. As Ewin Armstrong says, Location 85 was owned by Captain Armstrong.

It just goes to show how careful and discerning our readers are. Thanks to Ewin and Margaret for clarifying that. PF

Hi Peter,

I wish to express my appreciation for the *Western Ancestor* Journal and the work that goes into it.

I love every section of it... especially learning about Family history projects ...like the one documenting the ghost towns.

Congratulations on taking on the Editor's role, and great enjoyment of it.

Enjoy a lovely day

Jann McFarlane | Member 14683

Can you help?

Many thousands of West Australians have been publicly recognised for their service on war memorials, honour rolls, foundation stones or other ornamental tablets around the State.

The FHWA Projects Team is compiling an index to help researchers find their ancestors who have been acknowledged in this way.

If you can provide further information or photographs, please email Projects@fhwa.org.au



Ghost towns of the West

Ian Barnes | Member # 9003

THIS MONTH'S GHOST TOWN is not too far from Cue, was a thriving mining town in its all-too-brief heyday. All that remains are the ruins of some very impressive buildings, one of which is featured here.



Cue in the Murchison

We had our best response yet to our competition asking you to identify a ghost town. Heaps of readers were in the mix for the prize - three books from the West's own, Fremantle Press, valued at about \$100. The winner, drawn by ballot at our most recent (Zoom) Council Meeting, was Bradley Buckland #15059. In the mix were Carolyn Leach #15251, Anne Cullen #15246, Susan Salvair #5486, Derek Prosser #10610 who told the best story, Jeff Simper #13029, Teresa Handcock #12650, Rita #14696 and Ann Vanderwiel #11719.

The elegant rotunda in the main street pointed to Cue, once the centre of the Murchison Goldfields with a population of about 10,000. We, at Western Ancestor, had a bit of a barney over whether Cue was actually a ghost town with its current population of about 200. As

the Project looks at communities that have been dramatically reduced in size, rather than completely obliterated, we think that the ghost town moniker applies here.

New releases from Fremantle Press

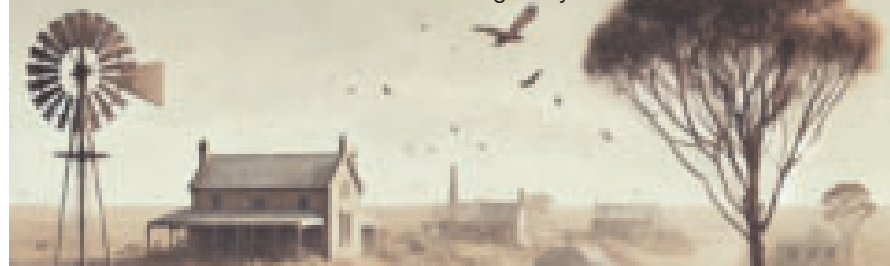
These include a new edition of Elaine Forrestal's *Goldfields Girl* and Robert Edeson's *Hungerford Award* winning,

The Worsener's Tale. The winner can choose from those featured on the following page, or the extensive Fremantle Press catalogue.

Western Ancestor, Editor, Peter Forrestal, will draw the winner from the first dozen correct entries emailed to westernancestor@fhwa.org.au by our members.

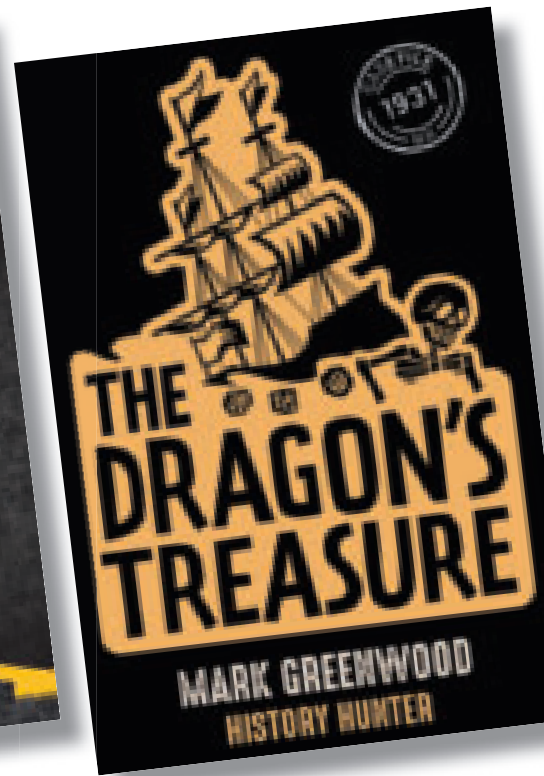
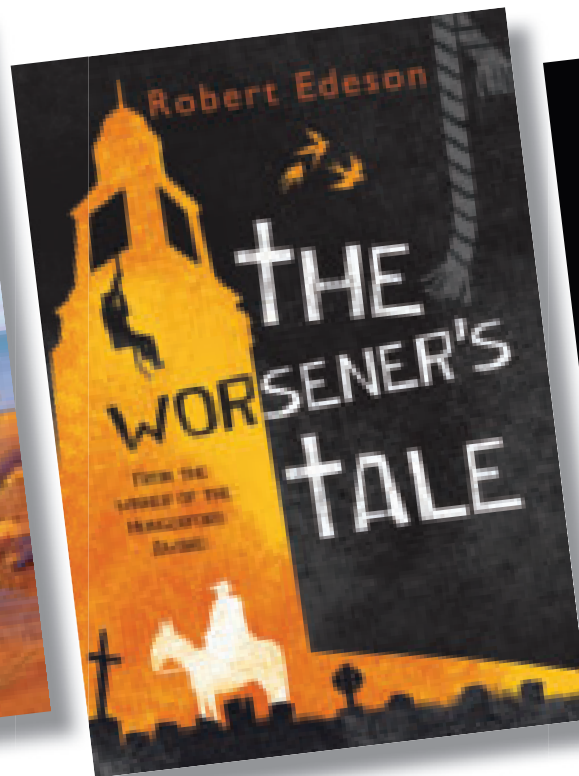
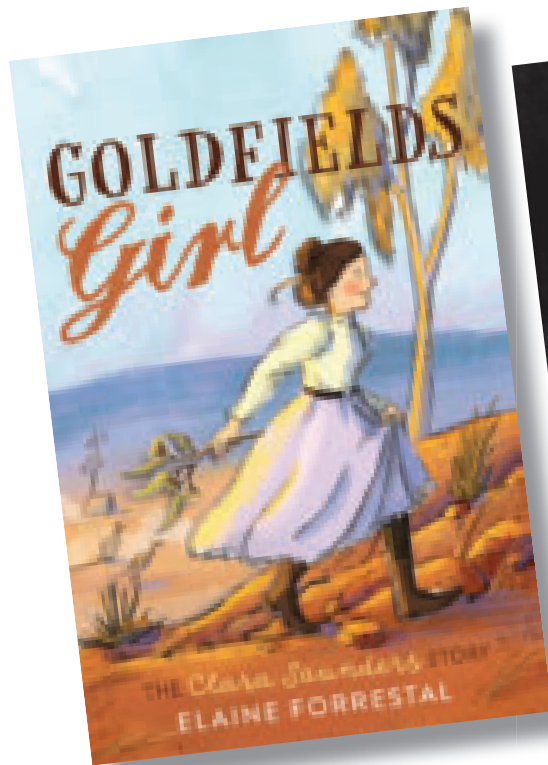
People of Western Australia's Ghost Towns has commenced Phase 2.

A complete list of the communities in this phase can be found on the project's website ghostswa.au. There are still plenty of opportunities to join in the fun and become a ghostly volunteer.



To register, please complete an online application at fhwa.org.au/ghostwa-vol or email us at ghostswa@fhwa.org.au.

New releases from Fremantle Press



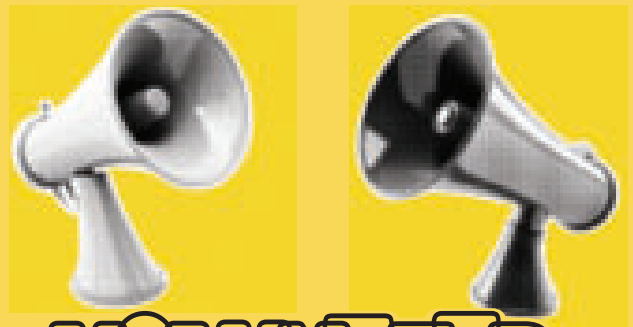
VicGUM is a not for profit organisation which provides technical support to its members with their use of family history software.

VicGUM members receive a monthly newsletter, connection to Gumnet (which is a members' only web based chat site) and ongoing technical support.

Our regular user group meetings for FTM and Reunion are held using Zoom. This allows any interested member to log in. Monthly events are also shared with members using Zoom. They will be recorded and will be viewable by members through the members' section of the website. For details of member benefits visit the website: www.vicgum.asn.au and join on-line

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* Two people at one address receiving one journal.

THE JOURNAL OF FHWA: WESTERN ANCESTOR

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A non-refundable deposit of \$20 must accompany all enquiries. Members living more than 500 km from Perth can access two hours free research per year.

Contact Ian Barnes at research@fhwa.org.au

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The Management Committee now meet, on-line, on the FOURTH Tuesday of each month at 4pm. Members are welcome to submit suggestions or questions, in writing, for the Committee's consideration. These need to be emailed to the Secretary (secretary@fhwa.org.au) at least ten days prior to the meeting.

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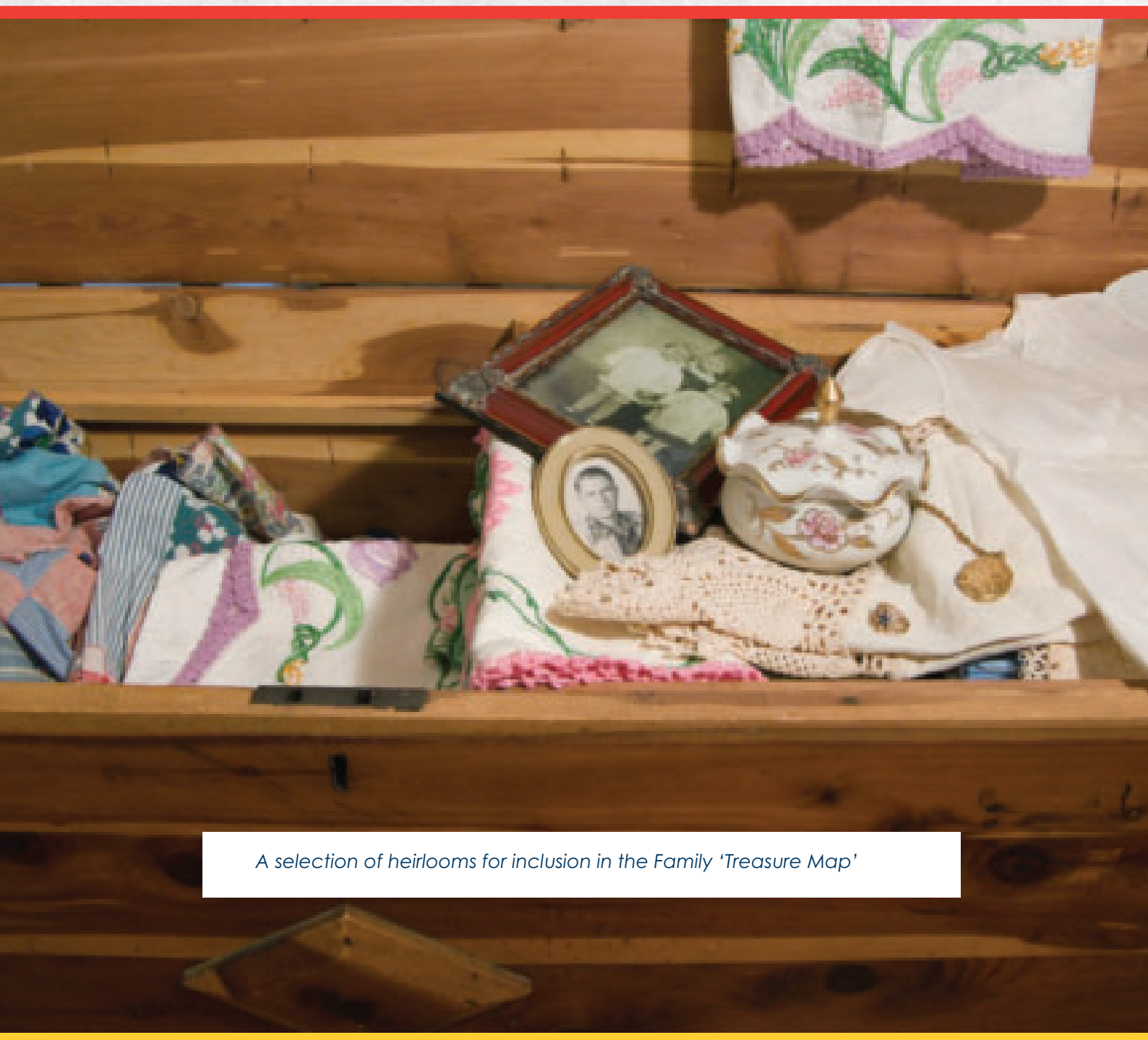
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