

# GENIE ALLERGY



**Journal of Coffs Harbour District Family History Society Inc.**



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## **PRESIDENT'S REPORT.....**



As we approach another annual meeting it is time for all members to consider what they want and need for the betterment of the society. There are some very important decisions that must be acted upon: namely,

**DO WE WANT OR NEED TO MOVE INTO THE NEW LIBRARY?**

What other options are there?

Do we look for new premises?

Can we negotiate with the new owners? etc. etc.

If these, and other matters, concern you, please consider standing for the committee.

I would like to thank every person who has assisted the society to function so successfully over the last thirty plus years and I just hope we can continue to provide for all to participate in this fascinating hobby called “FAMILY HISTORY RESEARCH”.

I will not be standing for election to the committee this year, but I would like to thank all for the support that the past and current committee members have given me over the last eight or so years. Successful researching.

Stan Gordon (President)

## **WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS**



A warm welcome to our new members. We hope you will make yourself at home and find us to be a friendly and helpful group. Don't be afraid to ask the Monitors on duty for help – they will do their best to steer you in the right direction with your research.

<b>David FAYLE</b>
<b>Peter DOWSE</b>
<b>Elizabeth DAL POZZO</b>
<b>Ruth DOWARD</b>

**A big congratulations to Maureen Joyce who recently graduated with a Diploma in Genealogy from the University of Tasmania. Maureen completed this in record time during lockdowns.**

## MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS, CONTACT DETAILS ETC.

**Memberships are due for renewal on 1<sup>st</sup> JULY each year**

Renewal forms were sent out with the June Newsletter and from now on you will be issued with a **membership badge** replacing the current membership cards. Badges will display your name and membership number and if required prior to the renewal of your membership, they will be available for \$6.50 with a pin or \$7.50 with a magnet. If you are interested, please let Bev Salter or Stan Gordon know. When renewing your Membership:

1. A completed membership form **MUST** be completed for all payments made. Be sure to complete Section 2 with your Membership type, how you would like to receive your quarterly journal, sign the form and show the method of payment. Note: The completed form is used to ensure our records are kept up to date and therefore it is vital we receive a form to cover all membership payments.
2. Membership will now be \$45 a single and \$60 a double + \$10 if you would like your “Genie Allergy” posted to you each Quarter. They will no longer be available for collection.
3. Payment methods:
  - (a) Cash is payable only in person at our Research Room.
  - (b) Cheque is payable in person at our Research Room or by mail to  
PO Box 2057, Coffs Harbour 2450.
  - (c) EFT/Direct Deposit: BSB, Account No., etc. as details on our membership form and **you must quote your member number and/or name at the time of payment.**
    - (i) Online through your financial institution; OR
    - (ii) In Person at a BCU branch (Bananacoast Credit Union).

Following payment by EFT/Direct Deposit, **IT IS ESSENTIAL** that a copy of the completed membership form be **emailed, mailed or delivered to our Research Room. Renewed membership badges will be placed in the Badge Box on the Admin Desk in our Research Room for your collection if you haven’t included a stamped addressed envelope with your renewal.**

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### DNA SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP



**from Diane Smith - DNA Special Interest Group Convenor**

The DNA Special Interest Group will be meeting again this year subject to COVID restrictions. It is open to all financial members of the Society. If you have recently had your DNA tested or received one as a Christmas present, coming along to our meetings is a great place to start finding out about your results. The group provides a friendly and informal forum to help you understand and interpret your results in a more comprehensive way. The group meets from 10am-12noon at the Curran Centre in Gordon St Coffs Harbour. There is a small charge to cover room hire and please remember to bring your own laptop. Wi-Fi access available. As the kitchen at the Centre is closed you will need also bring your own morning tea.

If you are interested in joining us, please contact Diane Smith at [dilin.smith@gmail.com](mailto:dilin.smith@gmail.com)

## ARE YOU INTERESTED IN A MEMBERS' INTEREST GROUP?



If you are interested in the formation of a Group relating to another area of research (other than DNA), the Committee will be pleased to hear from you - email [coffsgenie@gmail.com](mailto:coffsgenie@gmail.com). Possible Groups could be of a country (e.g. Irish), a particular family history software program (e.g. Legacy or Brother's Keeper), Convicts, FamilySearch, etc. When the Society forms an Interest Group, a convenor or joint convenors will be appointed to the Group and each Group formed by popular demand would be for members only, meeting on a regular basis, time and place (possibly once a month), with the aim to help participants in that specific area of interest.

- If you are interested in a **My Brother's Keeper** please contact Jim on [walledcity@live.com.au](mailto:walledcity@live.com.au)

**Please contact Stan if there is any other area that may be of interest to you.**

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## SCANNING SERVICE FOR MEMBERS

The Society is offering this service to members who would like their old photos, slides or negatives digitised. **Stan Gordon** has offered to assist members by doing the scanning. He would prefer that members go to his home at Toormina and take their photos, negatives and slides as well as a USB drive so the scanned images can be saved to the USB. The cost of this service is 50 cents per image which will be added to our Society's funds. If you would like to take up Stan's offer, please phone him on **02 6658 7955** or email him at [stngordon@gmail.com](mailto:stngordon@gmail.com) to arrange a suitable time. If you have large documents, such as foolscap BDM certificates or newspaper pages up to A3 size, etc., you are able to scan them using the A3 Book Edge Scanner we have in our room. This Scanner is now installed on the WIN7 computer and the scanner unit is on a trolley under the bench ready to wheel out and use. The scanned images will be saved to the computer and then can be copied to your USB drive or you will be able to print them. As our Society's printer is an A4 one, the scanned images are reduced in size to fit but if you would like to have them printed as A3, you will be able to do this at a print shop. Please ask the monitors on duty for assistance.



Do you have an interesting story or an article to share? Include photos if you have them as they always add interest. You may want to share humble origins, or a grand adventure, wars, marriages or even why you became interested in Family History in the first place, If you do, I would love to hear from you. Please contact me on [shaz@ingersole.com](mailto:shaz@ingersole.com)

Members are invited to submit stories of interest, enquiries regarding their research, or questions about research for inclusion in our Journal. Material needs to be received by the deadline to be included in the next available issue. The closing date for the December Issue is 1<sup>st</sup> November.

## Workshop Reports

for Saturday 26 June with Debbie Campbell



Debbie presented an excellent workshop (as usual) showing us the intricacies of the new Coffs Website – COFFS COLLECTIONS. [www.coffs.recollect.net.au](http://www.coffs.recollect.net.au) This collection houses art work, audio interviews, documents from Local Government, Undertakers, Botanic Gardens etc. films which were salvaged from 8mm and 16mm projection film. Here she explained the meaning of “The Digital Cliff” a belief that all film will have deteriorated by 2025! There are maps, floor plans, land sales, oyster leases, town maps; objects from the Museum’s artefacts from the first taxi, early fashion to Solitary Islands; lots of unidentified photographs; resources of relevance and history eg. Captain James Colvin who went down with his ship “Fingers of Gold”, history of the banana plantations and much more. Debbie explained how to search for and filter items, how to navigate the site and its in excess of 20,000 items. We could contact her if there was something special we wanted to know about but each collection has an accession number which would lead to the item.

She then went on to tell us about Trove and how the National Library couldn’t maintain it because of lack of money. However strong public backlash awarded the National Library (from the Govt) \$4 million to modernise the site. She explained that the changes made it much easier, more contact was added and the layout was changed making it much more user friendly for smaller iPads, smart phones etc.

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**Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> August with Enzo Arcadia from Coffs City Council told us about the new Civic Centre and where our Family History Society fits into it. He showed detailed plans and answered many questions from those present. Further discussion on the proposed move will be necessary before final agreement is made.**

**Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> August with Diane Smith on DNA – Cancelled due to Covid lock-down.**

**Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> September AGM followed by Questions and Answers.**

**Our AGM is on 25<sup>th</sup> September followed by Question and Answers. Please put your hand up to be on the Committee. Our Society is only as good as its members and as most of the current Committee have been on it for many years, new blood is needed. We only meet once a month and its not an arduous task being a Committee Member.**



**Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> October – Seminar with Jenny Joyce (see attached registration form)**

## Did you know that there was a Mono Rail at the Big Banana at Bunyip's Lagoon in the 1980s?



IF it had been full of passengers, it would have been disastrous. Thankfully, a tourist train was empty when it ploughed into a lake at Coffs Harbour's Big Banana yesterday afternoon. Only 15 minutes earlier, the train had been at the station with plenty of passengers who were told to disembark when it broke down. The train was disengaged from the system and was to be repaired overnight ready for work today. The situation went from bad to worse when the problem train was being pushed by another train to a maintenance shed. It appears a pin connecting both trains gave way, sending the diesel locomotive and four carriages careening down a steep slope, off the tracks and into the water. There were no injuries. Coffs Harbour Fire Station officers were called to the scene to contain up to 60 litres of diesel which spilled into the lagoon.

## Fathers' Day

As we approach Father's Day we ask, why do Australians celebrate Father's Day in September? Unlike in the UK, US and many other countries where Father's Day is celebrated on the third Sunday of June, Father's Day in Australia, NZ, Fiji and PNG is celebrated on the first Sunday in September. The date for Father's Day each year therefore, is never fixed; this year it's on the 5th September.

It is thought that Father's Day in Australia was first mentioned in Newcastle, NSW in 1936 when an article promoted a Father's Day meeting at the Baptist Tabernacle in the hope it would become as popular as celebrating Mother's Day (which had been introduced in 1924). There was also mention around that time in Perth, WA and an even earlier indication in Western Australia in 1935. The day was officially designated as the first Sunday in September through the Commonwealth in 1964. It seems that no official reason was given for that choice of date, although speculation has it that the month was chosen for commercial benefit with it being Spring season, so more sport and outdoor activities, or to spread out this special occasion between the other celebratory dates. Whatever the reason, each year it is celebrated for people to express their affection and gratitude to fathers and father figures for all their care and support.

**Father's Day** is a holiday of honoring fatherhood and paternal bonds, as well as the influence of fathers in society. In Catholic countries of Europe, it has been celebrated on 19 March as Saint Joseph's Day since the Middle Ages. In the United States, Father's Day was founded by Sonora Smart Dodd, and celebrated on the third Sunday of June for the first time in 1910. The day is held on various dates across the world and different regions maintain their own traditions of honoring fatherhood.

Father's Day is a recognized Public holiday in Lithuania and some parts of Spain, and was regarded as such in Italy until 1977. It is a national holiday in Estonia, Samoa, and equivalently in South Korea, where it is celebrated as Parents' Day. The holiday complements similar celebrations honoring family members, such as Mother's Day, Siblings Day, and Grandparents' Day.

**Story of ANNA MARIA WEH, her daughter ANNA MARTHA & Son-in-law JOHN HOFMEIER who arrived in WOOLGOOLGA 17 May 1882.**



Over many years of research on the Weh/Hofmeier connection to Woolgoolga, the following is only part of well over 100 pages on the life of the WEH(WEE) & HOFMEIER FAMILY and their Descendants.

From extensive research by the Small Family Descendants Assoc it has been established that SAMUEL SMALL was the first Leasee/owner of land at Woolgoolga in 1852 for the sum of 10 pounds, firstly known as Sommervale or Weelgoolga, Samuel was the 5th son of Thomas Small who had settled on the Clarence in 1836 (Thomas was also the 5<sup>th</sup> son of John SMALL and Mary PARKER, First Fleet convicts). Samuel sold the Lease to his father Thomas in 1874 after the run of 25000 acres of Crown Land was gazette for sale by public auction for 5 years. The rent was stated as 40 pounds per annum, commencing on 1<sup>st</sup> January 1875. Thomas engaged an employee to supervise the run for him. The run was described as "The Crown Lands...bounded on the north by the Redbank Run; on the east by a line parallel with the sea coast, and three miles distant there from; on the south by the Pine Range; and on the west by the Main or Coast Range, separating the waters of the Urara River from those which flow into the sea". Thomas SMALL interest in the lease of Weelgoolga Run finished in the 1880's when other families started to buy up and settle in the area.

One of the first white families to buy land was John HOFMEIER together with his mother-in-law Anna Maria WEH. The family had lived in Grafton from 1872 to 1882 when they sold up their property to buy in Woolgoolga. John & Anna's son Henry married the Grand niece of Thomas SMALL and cousin to Samuel.

The first two properties bought by the family as detailed; **Clarence & Richmond Examiner & New England Advertiser Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> June 1882 Page 4.** "John HOFMEIER, Woogoolga 40 acres county of Fitzroy parish of Woogoolga, starting from the N.W.corner with frontage to creek on T Small's run. Deposit paid £10".

**FREE SELECTIONS. Thursday 6 September.1882** "Anna Maria WEH, 60 acres, County of Fitzroy, Parish of Woolgoolga, commencing at a tree marked 3-12, bounded on the north by J A Taylor's c.p, of 80 acres No.3 to the water reserve, thence south along west line of reserve, thence west, thence north to the tree No 3-12 on T. Small's run. Deposit paid 15 pounds." This property became known as "Sanctuary Park"

Anna Maria passed away in her sleep at her residence after having worked in the morning striping corn returning for lunch only to state that she'd lay down for a while. The following is her obituary taken from **Clarence and Richmond Examiner and New England Advertiser, 16 Jan 1886** "A scene of unusual and melancholy interest was witnessed in this neighbourhood on Saturday, the 9<sup>th</sup> instant, being the funeral of Mrs Anna Maria WEH, mother-in-law of Mr. John HOFMEIER of this place. The deceased lady, who was a native of Germany, was born in Hesse Cassel in the year 1801, and was consequently at the time of her death, which took place on the evening of the 7<sup>th</sup> instant, over 81 years of age.

During her youth she was witness to many stirring scenes in her native country, consequent upon the wars of the great Napoleon, and the invasions of her country by the French soldiers and lived to see many changes prior to her emigration to this colony at the age of 53 years.

Mrs WEH, at the time of her death, had been resident in the colony upwards of 31 years. She passed 17 years of her life in the employ of Mr DANGAR, on the Yallaroi station, Gwydir district, on which run her second son (Mr August WEH) is still employed. She subsequently passed many years of her life with her son-in-law, Mr John HOFMEIER, on the Clarence, and finally removed with him to Woolgoolga, and took up land, on which she has found a final resting place. Mrs WEH's funeral was largely attended, all parties coming to pay their last tribute of respect. Mr W T PULLEN, JP, read the funeral service of the Church of England in an impressive manner; and Messrs. Zachary Houp, James R Taylor, and other friends of Mrs HOFMEIER, rendered most able and willing assistance in preparing the place of interment, making the coffin, and conducting the funeral obsequies. Besides Mrs HOFMEIER and Mr August WEH, previously alluded to, the deceased left two other children, who are now resident in these colonies. Mrs WEH, for some time prior to her death, had been showing slight signs of mental decay, but no reasons existed for supposing her end was so near. She passed away peacefully in her sleep".

When John & Anna HOFMEIER arrived, they already had 6 children with another 3 being born on the Woolgoolga property. The children first attended school in private residences prior to a school being established in Woolgoolga.

John Adam HOFMEIER brought grape cuttings with him and when he first came out to Woolgoolga he wanted to find out if this climate was suitable but it proved negative. He also bought with him a cutting of a very thorny bush, which had very pretty yellow flowers, it was stated that over in Germany they used this bush to act as fences which would be kept pruned. This bush still grows to this day (1982) along Woolgoolga Creek where they first settled. (Some of the locals called the bush 'barrister bush' cause if it got hold of you it didn't let go.)

The following are various newspaper stories published regarding the HOFMEIER Family farming enterprises.

**Taken from Clarence & Richmond Examiner Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> March 1892(actual spelling shown)**

"On Monday evening the daughter of Mr HOFFMIER aged 11 years, died from blood poisoning caused by treading upon the thorn of a lemon tree. It appears from information received that Mr and Mrs HOFFMIER were on a visit to Grafton and were detained in consequence of the heavy rains. On Friday their daughter had trod upon a thorn of a lemon tree which caused great pain, but her mother being away nothing was done, she suffered great pain until Monday when it was deemed advisable to send along for her parents who were staying at Ebling's on the road home. Mrs HOFFMIER at once went to her daughter but unfortunately lock-jaw had already supervened, and the poor girl died in great agony an hour after the arrival of her parents. HOFFMIER is well and very favourably known as an industrious and respectable man, having resided for many years in Grafton previous to selecting at Woolgoolga and his many friends will sympathise with him at his great loss".

**Published in Clarence & Richmond Examiner – Saturday 31 October 1891 Page 3.**

**Sugar Culture at Woolgoolga**

"Mr Editor. – In your Saturday's issue I find a reply to my letter on Sugar culture at Woolgoolga, signed "L" I am not in the habit of replying to letters in the Press where the writer's object is satire and ridicule, but as your correspondent thinks I want bringing out, and suggests the inhabitants doing this by presenting me with a memento, I beg to say that I will meet them at any place and time with facts that would be beneficial if they were made known to the public generally. Whether the sugar or saw mill is the property of the present proprietor or not I am not in a position to say, but I do know that after the mill was erected some seven years ago, the farmers were told not to put in cane as it was not wanted. Further, that Mr HOFFMIER is the only farmer who has any cane to crush worth speaking of, and no more cane is being planted. The writer "L" suggests that I should come to the rescue, by either leasing the Woolgoolga mill, or erecting a horse mill. To do so means capital to go on with, for most three years. Very little cane can be sown this year, and cane planted in 92 would not be fit to crush till '94. As for erecting a horse mill at the Double Crossing, I think it too late in the day to begin. I contend that if Mr Skinner can make a success of it with an inferior mill, the proprietor of the Woolgoolga mill should, with the late appliances, do still more.

I repeat that it is not the fault of the land or poor density of the cane; the cane grown here is known to be exceptionally rich in saccharine matter, and I have been told by sugar boilers that 11 tons of cane will make a ton of sugar where the density is 12 degrees, and for the information of "L" will give the last quotations of sugar in the Sydney market, which will bear me out in the price for sugars. Company's IC £25, IW Snowdrop £26, No.3 £22, Continental cube from £31, Queensland and other whites from £23 to £25, dark to yellow £16 to £22. It will thus be seen that my estimate to which it refers is under the average.

I want to meet the Coast people interested on the issue, for our call has been answered by the Government in erecting the Woolgoolga Jetty, which will be a "white elephant" unless we do something more to push the place ahead. I sincerely wish the people would act on "L's" suggestion and go heart and soul into the matter.

Woolgoolga - Z HOUP

**Published in Clarence & Richmond Examiner – Saturday 2 Sept 1893 Page 5.**

“LARGE YELLOW FLINT MAIZE, grown by J HOFMEIER Woogoolga; deep grain, bright color, pure, clean seed. Order early as it is likely to be bought as soon by growers wanting a first class maize. Price 6s6d per bushel. Samples sent at once, post free. H A Volckers, Grafton”

**Published Clarence & Richmond Examiner – Saturday 6 April 1895 Page 4.**

Woolgoolga Story re Public Meeting of Selectors.

“On Saturday last a public meeting of selectors, farmers, and others resident in the Parishes of Corinda, Woogoolga and Moonee was held, to petition the Minister for Lands to bring a measure before Parliament to reduce the payment on their balances with interest to 6d per acre in lieu of 1s as heretofore, Mr W T Pullen, who was asked to take the chair, explained the motive for calling the meeting, and read the draft of a petition, which had been drawn by Mr McDougal and Mr Fisher. The petition, which was unanimously adopted, and signed by all present, simply make the above request, and shows that in the present state of things a man cannot make 1s per acre from his land in this district, and only asks for an extension of time – not for remission – stating also that to deal with each case individually would entail great expense and loss of time to those concerned, besides occupying the Land Courts for an unnecessary period. The business was got through with very little talk. The Chairman, Messrs. McDougall, Skinner, C J Taylor and T McCallum being the only speakers, and they were very brief and to the point”.

**Published Clarence & Richmond Examiner – Tuesday 22 October 1895 Page 4.**

Woogoolga. Thursday. –“ During the last few days we had some nice showers. On Wednesday rain set in heavily lasting until evening. Grass is springing up everywhere. The hills around look beautiful and those who can afford a holiday could not do better than take a trip to the seaside: a more healthy place one could not wish for.

Our local sugar mill has just finished crushing. There was unusual activity during the two months the mill was at work. About 580 Tons of cane were put through, some drawn 10 miles. This caused a delay at the mill, or the crushing would have been done earlier. 318 tons were crushed from J HOFMEIER’s farm, Woogoolga; 116 tons J Spicer, Moonee; 46 tons, A Skinner, Moonee; about 50 tons sugar of good quality being the result. A few other small lots were put through from local farmers, merely as a trial, as it was frosted, and was thought would not go well. However, all hands seem perfectly satisfied. Next year ought to bring about double the quantity. Some farmers are beginning to find out there is something in cane growing after all. Mr Pullen has done his best to satisfy all parties. The sugar boiling was under the careful management of Mr A McDonald, Woodford Island, who is well up in his business. Mining is going along steadily. Before the end of the year I hope to hear of a few good returns. There is a number of miners out prospecting this last week in the vicinity of Corinda Creek and Bucca Creek, and would not be surprised to hear of something good shortly. The “Wollumbin” called on Wednesday, and landed a quantity of stores. On Saturday she will take a quantity of sugar and other cargo”.

Before leaving Grafton John Adam HOFMEIER worked on the building of Grafton Goal, where he was involved in an accident which was to nearly cost him his life, when a large rock fell and hit him on the head, where he was pronounced dead, until some person poured brandy into his mouth, and he regained consciousness. This accident left him unable to close his eyes properly. Alice Thompson recalls as a small child when he died in his asleep (Fawcett St Woolgoolga), and she was lifted up to kiss him goodbye, he had pennies on his eyes.

On 28th November 1982 the HOFMEIER descendants held a ‘Centenary Celebration’ marking the fact that the HOFMEIER family were reputedly the first white family settling in Woolgoolga. This was organised by Anna Maria WEH’s Great Granddaughter Alice THOMPSON nee YOUNGER, with well over 300 people attending the various functions arranged on the day. A plaque & a white cedar tree were planted on the old property in Park Lane to commemorate their grave site of both Anna Maria & her Granddaughter Hannah Elizabeth aged 11. In 2011 when the new highway went through the old property, we cleaned up the site and started to maintain the area with permission of the RTA. But the last year we have been unable to continue. In October 2013 another WEH/HOFMEIER family reunion was held in Woolgoolga with over 100 direct descendant’s attending.

John & Anna HOFMEIER had 9 children, Katrina married Patrick MARTIN, Henry married Ethel S.M. COLLINS, John Adam Jnr married Ellen MURPHY (No children to this marriage), Anna Martha married Denys YOUNGER, Sarah married Henry ROBINSON, Hannah Died young. Christina married James Patrick HANLON, Ernest married Minnie Eliza COLLINSs (sister to Ethel), Francis Walter 1887-1954 never married (This Francis is often confused with son of Ernest). There are many of the HOFMEIER descendants still living in Woolgoolga and surrounding districts, some of the family names are Davis, Younger, Harper, Woldseth, Speechley, Thompson, Tobin & Brown just to name a few.

**Pat Davis Member No.1682**

## The Good, the Bad and the “Ugly” – Richard Webb Halket

This is the third in a trilogy of biographies about a father and two of his sons. The “Good” was one of my great great uncles, Laurence John Halket, the “Bad” was David Halket, my paternal great great grandfather and the “Ugly” was Richard Webb Halket, my great grandfather.

### “Ugly”

RICHARD WEBB HALKET (1833 -1903)



Richard Webb Halket – circa 1870s –

Richard Webb HALKET was born on the 12th June 1833 at St Helens Place, Bishopsgate, London and baptised one month later at St. Andrews Church, Landford, Wiltshire – the church where his parents were married. Richard was born into an extremely wealthy family and would no doubt have had all the advantages that would bring. At the time his father David, who was 40 years of age, was a Ship Owner and Insurance Agent in London and his mother, Mary neé WEBB was 21years of age. Both of Richard’s parents were buried at St Andrews Cemetery, Newcastle upon Tyne.

*1841 England Census* - Unfortunately, Richard HALKET has yet to be found with his family in the census held on the 6th June 1841, although there is an entry for his address at 19 St Helen’s-place, Bishopsgate with two female servants listed as living there. It is fairly certain that he was living at that address in 1841 as it was reported in The Times, in July of that year, that his mother had given birth to a stillborn son – “*On the 12th inst., at St. Helen’s-place, Mrs. Halket, of a son, stillborn*”.

In February 1850 his father entered into a partnership adventure for the export of goods and in the following month on the ship “John Brewer”, commanded by Robert Brown, and fitted out by them in the port of London. The cargo was of general merchandise of great value for the west coast of America and California, on their joint account as co-partners, to be sold and disposed of upon certain conditions and in manner agreed on between them. Richard, who was just under 17 years of age, was to join the ship to gain greater knowledge of his father’s business. It seems that Richard didn’t return to England for some 3 or 4 years at which time his father was heading towards bankruptcy. The court case [HALKET v Brown](#) sheds more light on the matter.



It may just be a coincidence but in 1852 a company called Richard Webb & Co's Tasmanian Line of Packet Ships, shipping agents, of 32 and 115 Leadenhall Street, London, advertises repeatedly in The Times for passengers and freight for various ships and the company ceases trading under that name in 1862.

**RICHARD WEBB and Co.'s TASMANIAN LINE.**  
—For HOBART TOWN direct, the splendid clipper ship **FINELLA**, A1, 419 tons register, newly coppered, **W. MURRAY**, Commander. This ship is nearly new, and has always been in the colonial trade, has a large portion of her cargo engaged, and will have very quick despatch, and is the best opportunity for shippers. Loading in the London Docks. Her accommodation for first and second class passengers is first rate. For particulars apply to Richard Webb and Co., 115, Leadenhall-street, E.C.

**RICHARD WEBB and Co.'s TASMANIAN LINE.**—For LAUNCESTON direct with immediate despatch, the newly coppered and splendid British clipper-built ship **NORMAN**, A1, 234 tons register, **F. ORFEUR**, Commander; loading at the Jetty, London Docks. This ship is well known for her quick passages and the good order in which she delivers her cargo, and is a very first-rate opportunity for shippers. For freight or passage apply to Richard Webb and Co., 115, Leadenhall-street, E.C.

Leadenhall Street is just a few minutes walk from St Helens Place, Richard's home, and a company called Edmund Phillips & Co., at 8 London Street, close to his father's old business address, were also agents for the same ships. Was this Richard Webb HALKET who started up his own shipping agent company or his father establishing a new company for his son?

The 1861 census, held on Sunday, 7th April, shows he was living in 2 Gresham Place, Newcastle-upon-Tyne with his mother, siblings and two servants and gives his occupation then as a Professor of Languages. It's interesting to note that Richard gives his profession as Professor of Languages. I believe teachers of languages in the 19th century often used the title "professor" without holding any university chair – rather as instrumental teachers at the main conservatoires (such as the Royal College of Music) are still known as professors, as are fencing instructors. In his previous years of travel he would have undoubtedly been a reasonably proficient linguist. His father was living in a boarding house in Chelsea, London, presumably because of the pending court proceedings, bought by his wife, regarding the non-payment of the residue of his uncle's, Richard Webb, Will due to his mother.

Prior to relating from this point on the life and times of Richard Webb HALKET, I thought I should put in context some of his life attributes. Amongst other things he could be described as a : – Liar, cheat, thief, drunkard, adulterer, multiple wife deserter and child abandoner, multiple bankrupt and insolvent, embezzler, accountant, multiple convicted criminal, frequenter of houses of ill fame, multiple welcher, sailor, soldier, hotel licensee, secretary, etc. etc. – a chip off the old block!

We will never know the true reason that Richard decided to travel to China in the latter part of 1861 or early 1862. Maybe it was because of his father's bankruptcy in 1855 and there was no money to be had, or he saw greater opportunities in China or even the easy availability of opium there. Sailing from England to China in those days was over 14,000 miles and took about 100 days by 'Clipper' ship.

The Treaty of Tienstin was signed between Great Britain and China in 1858 and ratified in 1860. It was signed in the city of Tienstin (Tianjin), in China. This treaty brought an end to the Second Opium War (1856-1860) between Britain and China's Qing, or Manchu, imperial dynasty. This treaty was one of several "unequal treaties" signed between China and foreign powers. Among other things, these treaties opened Chinese ports to foreign trade. In addition, under the terms of the Tienstin Treaty, the Chinese also agreed to give religious freedom to Christians, to allow British citizens to travel freely within China, and not stop referring to British people as "barbarians" in official documents. The first of the unequal treaties was the Treaty of Nanking (1842) between Britain and China after Britain's victory in the First Opium War (1839-1842). Under the terms of that treaty, China ceded Hong Kong to Britain, and opened its ports to British trade. The Tientsin Treaty of 1858 reaffirmed the terms of the earlier Nanking Pact.

According to a reference in his divorce papers, on arrival in Hong Kong he first gained employment as a book-keeper for a firm of Merchants. On the 17th May 1862 Richard married 22 year old Rose Bloom NOVRA at St. John's Cathedral, Victoria, Hong Kong. Rose, the daughter of Jewish parents, arrived in Hong Kong after leaving Marylebone, London somewhere between 1852 and 1858 but most probably 1858.

She was listed in the 1859 Hong Kong Directory of Foreign Residents in China as a Milliner living in Queen's Road. One can imagine that Rose was swept off her feet by this world travelled young man who was obviously intelligent and probably offered good prospects for the future. In the following month Richard took up a position with the Chinese Imperial Maritime Customs as a Third Class Clerk. Richard and Rose had a total of 6 children, two sons and four daughters. Three of their children died when they were infants. Their first daughter, Mary Rose, was born in September 1863 in Hong Kong, and their second daughter, Caroline Henrietta, was born on the 13th January 1865 in Hankow, China. On the 13th January 1864 Richard's father, David, died of chronic bronchitis and pneumonia in Newcastle-upon-Tyne

In 1865 Richard is mentioned briefly by Rev. Elliot Thomson, on his visit to China, in the monthly journal which was published by the Board of Missions of the Episcopal Church.

ARRIVAL AT HAN-KOW.

We arrived at Han-Kow early on Sunday morning and went immediately ashore with a kind friend who took us to his house—a Mr. R. W. Halket acting Commissioner of Customs at this port.

At 11 A. M., we went to Church and had the English Church service by Mr. John, an independent minister, and an excellent sermon from Dr. Legge.

Han-Kow is by far the handsomest foreign settlement I have seen in the East. The Bund or water street is one long row of palatial residences, which are beautifully built after the improved Eastern style.

The Bund of the English Concession is about three quarters of a mile in length. I was told that none but British subjects are allowed to build on the Concession. The French have also a piece of land set apart for their use, but so far there have been no houses built on it except the French Consulate.

The Americans have no Concession, but have built along the edge of the Chinese city.

Richard also gets a mention in William T Lowe's book – Hankow: Commerce and Society in a Chinese City, 1796 – 1889. And again in 1866 Richard gets a mention in the House of Commons regarding British and Foreign Trade at the port of Hankow. As Assistant – in – Charge he submits his report of the Trade at the Port of Hankow for 1865 to Robert Hart, Inspector General of Customs.

Rose travelled back to England sometime after June 1865 with two year old Mary Rose and Caroline Henrietta who was under 12 months. This journey would not have been easy at any time but to make it worse Rose was also pregnant with twins. The twins, Kate and Richard Forbes, were born on the 25th March 1866 in Newcastle-upon-Tyne, England. The most probable reasons for this trip would have been for Rose to meet her mother-in-law, Mary, as well as to visit her parents, brother and sister in London. Tragically, Rose lost three of her children through disease. Richard Forbes died at the end of 1866, his twin sister, Kate, in February 1867 died of Whooping Cough and Mary Rose some three weeks later died of Scarlatina. Around this time epidemics were occurring all around Britain which included scarlatina and cholera.

On 10th September 1867 Richard was transferred from Hankow as a First Class Clerk to the Treaty Port of Kuikiang. Each year every Assistant Commissioner had to submit a Trade Report for their particular port. At this time Monsieur E. DE Champs, Commissioner Unattached, late Acting Commissioner of Customs at Kiukiang submitted his report to the Inspector General in French which was then translated into English by Richard.

Their second son, Richard James Alexander Hannen, (my grandfather who later changed his name to Robert James Hannen Harris) was born on the 23rd April, 1868 in KiuKiang, China. [KiuKiang](#) (now known as Juijiang) is on the Yangtze River over 500 miles north of Hong Kong.

I've wondered about the name Hannen and I think he may have received that name from a Charles Hannen, Commissioner of Customs in Kiukiang in 1867 who could have been friends with Richard.

The Bund in front of the British Concession at Kiukiang (Jiujiang) in the late 19th century. Great Britain was granted a concession at Kiukiang in 1861 and a concession administered by a British municipal council was in operation there until 1929, when it was dissolved (Chen-O'Malley Agreement of February 1929). Could this be the place where Richard James Alexander Hannen HALKET was born?

On the 4th August 1871 the North China Herald reported that Rose and family had sailed on the steamer "Nanxing" to [Chefoo](#). Their third daughter, Vera Christine, was born on 1st January 1872 in Shanghai. It was reported that Richard was sent to Foochow. On the 10th April 1873 there is a report in the North China Herald that Richard is charged with embezzlement and faces the Police Court. The trial takes place in the Supreme Court, Shanghai on the 27th May 1873 where Richard is tried for 18 counts of Embezzlement and Larceny and sent to jail for two years. Richard faces the Supreme Court of Bankruptcy.

On the 12th November 1873 Richard's mother, Mary, aged 61 years died in Lytham, Lancashire, England.

At the time of Richard's engagement with the Chinese Imperial Maritime Customs the Inspector General of Customs was Robert Hart. There is a book called "**The I.G. in Peking. Letters of Robert Hart**" The book consists of a collection of letters written by Hart, the Inspector General of Customs in Peking, to his London Commissioner, James Duncan Campbell.

The following extracts are from the collection of letters which directly relate to Richard Webb Halket. In a letter of 26 April 1873 he writes: *"My troubles! Did you hear about one of the last of them? I had given Halket his promotion and made him Dep. Comr. at F'chow. So he had to leave S'hai, and in handing over charge of the pay office, it came out that he had for a year and a half been appropriating Customs' money, and that he was then short of over 30,000 taels! We got 700 out of him. The remaining 23,000 are not forthcoming, and I am personally responsible. He is now in gaol on a charge of embezzlement, and, ten to one, at Shanghai -with a S'hai jury and a S'hai anti-Customs sympathy-he'll escape (at all events, severe) punishment."* There's an editors footnote to this letter saying: Richard Webb HALKET joined the Customs in 1862 and in 1873 was tried and sentenced for embezzlement.

In a letter of 17 May 1873 Hart writes: *"You'll have heard of HALKET's affair. He has been carrying it on for a couple of years, and Dick, on the spot, never saw to it whether or not the balances payable to my a/c's really reached the bank! I had promoted Halket and transferred him to F'chow, and then it all came out. Legal quibbles - a Shanghai jury - and the Customs as prosecutors - will I believe, get him off without any punishment. The money lost is some 20,000 taels at the least: and I am personally responsible."*

In a letter of 23 May 1873 Hart writes: *"The HALKET trial has not come off yet. When it's over I shall have to take the S'hai office in hand. A loss of 22,000 taels is enough to make one treat the matter as something else than a joke."*

In a letter of 20 June 1873 Hart writes: *"HALKET has made away with more than 26,000 Haikwan taels. He gets two years' imprisonment, Dick is resigning. I am responsible for the money, and shall have to pay up! It was Dick's fault that the embezzlement was possible: He now has lost his confidence in human nature, -so he'll clear out."*

In a letter of 12 July 1873 Hart writes: *"HALKET's affair will take 15,000 taels out of my own pocket and 10,000 out of Dick's. Pretty good that, eh? Everyone says that it's my own fault-that I ought to have an AUDITOR!"*

In a letter of 18 October 1873 Hart writes: *"At S'hai, HALKET had the management of account dispatches: when Dick signed them, HALKET quietly popped them into his desk and did not send them on to me"*

In June 1873 Richard is dismissed from the Chinese Imperial Maritime Customs and, according to Rose's divorce petition, he had various temporary jobs in Shanghai from April 1873 until October 1877.

For nearly four years there is no mention of Richard until he turns up in Sydney, Australia. He was sentenced to prison in Shanghai for two years but the question arises on whether or not he spent little or any time incarcerated there. A letter from Hart on the 17th May states that he questioned whether Richard would get off being put in prison and also Rose's divorce petition does not mention Richard being in jail.

Richard arrived in Sydney, Australia, sometime between the end of October or beginning of November 1877. You can only speculate but it is probable that he went to Sydney as his younger brother, Laurence, had moved there in 1871. **27th November 1877 – NSW Police Gazette:** It came as no surprise to find the first mention of Richard

in Australia when he was entered in the New South Wales Police Gazette on the 27th November, just after he arrived in Australia, reporting that he was robbed whilst drunk.

Then only after approximately one year after arriving in Australia, Richard is found in the Sydney Insolvency Court. It seems his sole assets were the clothes he was wearing and the debts were for boarding house rent, a pair of dress trousers, loans from his brother and his brother's fellow doctors and a few drinks from a hotel. During this time he was living at a number of addresses around Sydney including his brother's house in Wynyard Square.

On the 31st January 1879 it is reported in the Sydney Morning Herald that Richard was appointed as a Second Clerk to the International Exhibition in Sydney as a catalogue Clerk at a Commission of £300. On the 10th October 1879 The Sydney Morning Herald publishes the following article – **British Exhibitors thank Richard regarding the International Exhibition** The Sands Sydney Directory in 1879 shows Richard living at 228 Liverpool Street, Sydney, working as a clerk, and in February the following year he left the International Exhibition and was listed in the NSW Blue Book (NSW Public Service List) regarding his tenure there.

Then - Mrs. McCulloch and Mr. HALKET were booked on the steamship "Gunga" sailing for Fiji from Sydney on 5th August 1879. (was this Dora McCULLOCH who he later marries?)

On the 10th August 1880, Rose files for divorce in the Supreme Court in Sydney, New South Wales and on the 20th June the following year she receives the Divorce Absolute. In England before 1880, the number of divorces in a single year had only rarely risen above 300, after 1882 it only once fell below that number. So for Rose this application for a divorce would entail an enormous personal effort, cost and support. I think her future husband gave her all those things. The question arises as to whether Dora McCULLOCH – Richard's future wife – and Dora McGUFF, who was named in Rose's divorce petition, – are one and the same person?

On the 10th April 1882 Richard sails on the steamer "Derwent" to Maryborough, Queensland and 20 days later marries Dora Maria Rosa Cunningham McCULLOCH at the Wesleyan Parsonage, Maryborough, Queensland.

For some reason Richard always tells people he was born in Perth, Scotland when in fact he was a Londoner – a cockney even!! He is 27 years her senior! He applied for but missed out on the position of Auditor for the Maryborough, Permanent Building and Investment Society in Queensland. The 1883 and 1884 Queensland Electoral Roll shows Richard leasing a property in Richmond Street, Maryborough.

On the 13th February 1885, Richard's younger brother, Francis, died at the Hospital for Incurables, Heaton Norris, Mauldeth, Stockport, Cheshire aged 33 years.

The Maryborough Chronicle advertises Richard auctioning of all his household furniture and effects as he was moving back to Sydney and The Sydney Morning Herald shows Richard and Dora sailed on the "Egmont" from Maryborough to Sydney. In 1886 Richard is listed in the Sands Sydney Directory living at Ryan's Terrace, Alfred Street, St. Leonards east, Near Milson's Point. The Australian Town and Country Journal on the 3rd April 1886 lists Richard as joining Sydney Reserve Corps in the Scottish Volunteer Rifles on the 22nd March 1886 as a First Lieut. Then just 10 months later, on the 17th January 1887, he resigns his position. He surrenders to insolvency. On the 17th April 1887 Richard's younger brother, Laurence, dies at the age of 37 years whilst on board the ship "General Roberts" on his way back to England from Australia.

The Sydney Morning Herald reports on the election for the new **Town Clerk of Sydney**. Out of 56 candidates Richard was in the last 10 after the first ballot but failed to obtain the position on the final ballot.

On the 17th February 1888 Richard's sister, Selina, dies at St Thomas' Hospital, Southwark, London aged 50 years.

Some of his misdemeanors: It was reported in the New South Wales Police Gazette that a warrant had been issued against Richard for wife-desertion. He was said to be *about 45 years old, 5'8" high, medium build, fair complexion, brown hair whiskers and moustache turning grey, shaved on chin; dressed in black walking coat, white vest, dark tweed trousers and high black hat.* It was reported in the Sydney Evening News that Richard has been fined £2.00 and costs for delaying admission to the police at the University Hotel, George Street, Camperdown.

It was reported in the Sydney Evening News that Richard has been fined £5.00 and costs for selling liquor on a Sunday. He was charged by warrant for wife desertion and ordered to pay 30/- a week for 12 months and costs and to find sureties. The entry in the Darlinghurst Gaol Record 24 December 1888 shows Richard receiving 12 months for wife-desertion. As I have found nothing about Richard from December 1888 until May 1890 so it may be assumed that he did indeed serve his 12 month sentence.

In 1889 Richard's daughter, Caroline Henrietta, married Herbert Robinson in the USA.

The Sydney Morning Herald reported on the 14th May 1890 the case against Richard before the Central Police Court regarding his failure to comply with the previous court order.

On the 12th December 1890 Richard's son, Robert James, marries Virginia WILLS in the Holy Trinity Cathedral, Shanghai, China. Was stating his father was deceased just an error or wishful thinking!

The New South Wales Police Gazette reports on the 21st May 1890 that Richard was arrested. The New South Wales Police Gazette reports on the 11th June 1890 that a warrant for the arrest of Richard had been issued. On the 30th May 1893 Richard and W H Dawsen were witnesses to a patent by Donald Murray for a Printing Telegraph. An entry in the New South Wales Police Gazette on the 15th April 1896 reports that Richard had lost a lady's gold dress ring. An entry in the New South Wales Police Gazette on the 1st September 1897 reports that Richard had lost (another) lady's gold dress ring. I think Richard was a bit indolent when it came to looking after ladies' jewelry. Did he lose the same ring twice?

It was reported in the Sydney Morning Herald on the 15th July 1898 that Richard, as secretary to the Argentine Consul, attended the French National Fete which was celebrating the Revolution. Richard heartily praised Dr. Williams' Pink Pills. Obviously these amazing pills work wonders as Richard has grown 10 years younger! On the 28th April 1899 Richard is made temporary Acting Consul for the Argentine Republic.

### ***Rose and Wilmer Robert John Harris***

I think it would be fair at this point if I digress from the mainly depressing tales of my great grandfather (because of course there is more to come) and chronicle the lives of my great grandmother Rose and Wilmer HARRIS and their family from their time together in Shanghai. The first mention of Rose and Wilmer is when – can you guess? – Rose is being taken to court by a boarder because he says she was rude to him but as luck would have it a witness for her defence in this matter was none other than Wilmer HARRIS. The North China Herald reported on the appeal in the Supreme Court on the 28th November 1878. On the 25th June 1881, just 5 days after her divorce from Richard, Rose married Wilmer Robert John HARRIS in the Cathedral of the Holy Trinity, Shanghai.

In the 1881 England Census, Rose's son, Robert James, is shown as a boarder at a school in Loughborough, Leicestershire using his true name of Richard James Alexander Hannen HALKET. There were 20 other pupils listed and the Head was a teacher of languages.

On the 17th April 1882 Rose gives birth to twins, Guinevere Kennedy and Gwendolyn Melita and on the 15th July 1884 she has another girl, Cicely Rose Emilie, all born in Shanghai, China. Over the years all 3 girls become talented musicians including playing the violin, flute and piano. They performed at many venues in Shanghai and also Sydney.

At this time Robert James is working in his stepfather's General Merchants business in Shanghai for about 5 years and it would probably have been during this time that he would have adopted his new name of Robert James Hannen HARRIS. In 1897 Robert James leaves China to move to Sydney, Australia.

It seems Wilmer was suffering from ill health for some time and was advised to move from Shanghai due to the weather there which is hot, wet and humid in summer and very cold and dry in winter. One would have to assume that the move to Australia was not only due to a change in climate but to also catch up with Robert James who was living in Sydney at the time being in partnership for 3 years with A & E Jones & Coy. Mercantile Brokers. Rose and Wilmer sail on the steamship "Eastern" from Hong Kong to Sydney with their three daughters arriving in Sydney on the 27th July 1899.

The Sydney Morning Herald advertises that the Misses Harris perform at the Society of Artists in Pitt Street, Sydney just 4 weeks after arriving in Australia.

On the 30th December and the 3rd January 1900 the three girls perform at the Australian Church Concert in the I.O.O.F, Temple in Elizabeth Street, Sydney.

On the 19th January 1900 Wilmer Harris died at 26 Good Hope Street, Paddington, Sydney of kidney failure. R. J. HARRIS (HALKET) was the Informant living at the time with his Mother and step- father in Good Hope Street. Wilmer was buried on the 20th January, 1900, at Church Of England Cemetery Waverley, New South Wales.

It seems with the death of Wilmer there was now less reason to stay in Sydney so Rose and her daughters returned to China. On the 7th April 1900 Richard's first wife, Rose, dies of stomach cancer on the S.S. "Eastern" in Victoria Harbour, Hong Kong. This would have been an unbelievable loss to the three young girls losing both parents in less than 12 weeks of each other and although Rose and Wilmer both left Wills unfortunately Rose omitted to name an executor which caused problems due to all the girls being under 21 years of age at the time.

Extract from the application for guardianship, made 11 months after Rose's death, to the Supreme Court for China and Corea by Augustus White. *"Robert Halket has not been heard of for some time having being last heard of as being in Australia and is not a fit or proper person to be appointed guardian of the said minors"*

Extract from the Will of Rose HARRIS made on the 18th February 1900.... *"I give devise and bequeath unto my three daughters, Guinevere, Gwendolyn and Cicely all monies to be equally divided between them trusting to them the care of Bobbie, Carrie and Vera who are to have money from time to time as it may be wanted and as it may be spared for my sister Mary Frances NOVRA, 10 shillings per week if possible. Jewelry to be divided between my three daughters Guinevere, Gwendolyn and Cicely. Clothing also for them, any they do not want to be sent to my sister if she is living and to Carrie if she is not.*

*My dear husband's Gold Watch to be sold and the money used to beautify his grave if necessary, if not I would like a small memorial window in Trinity Cathedral S'hai – £500 due to me from Sam Walker's Will to be equally divided between Bobbie, Carrie and Vera and my sister. Keepsakes for old and dear friends"*.

Augustus White was most probably correct in saying Robert HALKET– *"is not a fit or proper person to be appointed guardian"* – and could have been due to Robert being unmarried and he stayed in Australia but saying – *"Robert HALKET has not been heard of for some time having being last heard of as being in Australia"* seems very strange as Robert was the Informant named on the death certificate of his step father Wilmer Harris.

- Guinevere Kennedy becomes a music teacher, moves to the USA then England. It wasn't until she was 67 years old she married William Thomas in DEVON
- Gwendolyn Melita married Charles Pasedag ALLEN on the 3rd August 1901 at the Trinity Cathedral, Shanghai. They had five children and moved to Canada about 1906.
- Cicely Rose Emilie married Colin Henry RUTHERFORD in 1916 at the British Consulate in Shanghai. They had one son, Colin Peter, and they moved to Canada.

On the 31st March 1901 – I think – Dora is found visiting her sister, Alice, at Itchingfield, near Horsham, West Sussex. This may not be our Dora as looks like the age difference is too much. Also the spelling of the surname McCulloch is spelt with a K. On the other hand, the census states that Dora is single and is the sister of Frederick DONKIN, therefore her surname should be DONKIN but Alice's maiden name was McCULLOCK. There is also the connection to Queensland so I leave this as a question until I can prove or disprove it.

On the 6th June 1901 Richard goes **Bankrupt** , for the fourth and final time!! On the 25th April 1903 Richard dies at Emelo Nursing Home Newtown with the Death Certificate Informant was Ellen J GOULD. Richard was buried at Rookwood Presbyterian Cemetery Necropolis, Rookwood, Sydney, and his funeral costs were paid for by Ellen Gould, Matron of “Ermelo” Nursing Home – she really didn’t have a choice! Sometime ago I visited Rookwood Cemetery and found the Presbyterian section where he was buried (5c No: 5136) but not unexpectedly there were no markings nor a headstone – just weeds. I thought an apt inscription could have been:- *“Words pay no Debts”* – Shakespeare

It is sad but it seems that prior to his death he failed to leave any documentation acknowledging his wife, Dora, and his remaining children. I wonder if Richard met his son, Robert James, as they were both in Sydney from 1897 until Richard’s death. Robert James would have been no older than 10 years when his father deserted the family in Shanghai and moved to Sydney and probably his memories would have been that of an often drunk and abusive father. There was no mention on the death certificate of Robert James or his other two children, Caroline and Vera.

Richard died without leaving a Will and as you will read in his Intestate papers he died as he lived – no assets – only liabilities.

On the 16th April 1925 Richard’s second wife, Dora, dies of heart disease at St. Pancras, London. Again there is a discrepancy in age – born about 1858 from her marriage certificate and born about 1863 from her death certificate. She also used the middle name of Myra and that she was the widow of Laurence HALKET.

A Notice is placed in the Argus Newspaper in Melbourne seeking “heirs” of Dora Myra HALKET, widow of Laurence HALKET. A notice is also placed in the Daily News in Perth seeking “heirs” of Dora HALKET t, widow of Laurence HALKET – £15,000. A Notice is placed in the Townsville Daily Bulletin in Queensland seeking “heirs” of Dora HALKET, widow of Laurence Halket. A Notice is placed in the Probate Index of Dora HALKET,- Effects £5.

Some questions arising from the above:-

- Why was Dora called the widow of Laurence and not Richard?
- Where did the money come from?
- Did someone claim the inheritance if indeed it was an inheritance?

All in all Richard had a egotistic and unscrupulous life to say the least – and not an ancestor I am particularly proud of.

An interesting phenomenon has shown up whilst writing these biographies in that David HALKET was a skilled Bookkeeper, his son Richard WEBB was also an accountant, as was Richard’s son, Richard James (Robert J HARRIS). My mother, Vivienne and her sister, Valerie, were also very good at bookkeeping and my son, Chris, works for K.P.M.G. – one of the four big international auditing companies – I guess it’s all in the genes??



Ken Mason - Member No. 1807



**Do you need help with your research? Do you need guidance on where to look other than the Internet? Have you a brick wall that you can’t knock down? Please ask one of our monitors when next you are in the rooms. All are very familiar with the contents of what we have in the rooms and are only too willing to share it with you.**

## How Many Female Convicts Do You Have In Your Family?

One of the difficulties we find when researching female convicts, is that we can't hear their story from them. Very few written accounts or letters were written by women and the records we do have more frequently than not, describe their misconduct and the verdict and punishment meted out by the authorities.

They didn't arrive with just the clothes on their back, but they also brought items of both practical and sentimental value, as well as goods and chattels to establish a household. And because the goods had to be accommodated within crowded dimensions of a convict ship for several months, they were stored in the hold of the ship. Records were created of the items enabling them to be returned to the owners on arrival. Women were compelled to wear clothing supplied by the Government and their private clothing was stowed away with their other belonging.

At times, not all new masters could spare a cart or wagon to fetch their assigned servant hence some women had to walk and carry their belongings whilst their boxes followed later when requested by her new master. Personal objects were said to enhance a woman's self-esteem and self identity in a society where status was demonstrated by appearances. That image was very important to the middle and upper classes and the theft of clothing may indicate that working class women were equally sensitive to outward trappings. It is said that 20% of the crimes of female convicts, can be attributed to clothing theft and although the resale may have answered the need for money, it also reflected the aspirations and ambitions of the poor. Dress obliterated the difference between free and convict. New arrivals could also barter their clothes and possessions for food and they often did.

**These are the females in mine..... I have a few men too!!**

### **Charlotte Chinnery**

Charlotte was convicted at Bury St Edmonds, Suffolk Assizes on 21 March 1836 and sentenced to life, even though a first offender, for man robbing and having stolen from the saddler of Bury on 23 September 1836, a purse containing 12 sovereigns, a half sovereign, a guinea, 25/- in silver, a five pound note and a gold ring. Charlotte was a silk weaver and needlewoman. She was 26 years old, 5'7", ruddy complexion with brown hair and light hazel eyes. She had a scar on the back of the top of the middle finger on the right hand, several scars inside left thumb, and three scars on the forefinger of the left hand.

She arrived in Australia with her two daughters, the youngest of whom was only 4 years old on the "*Elizabeth*" on 12 October 1836 and died in Hospital on 17 June 1837. She was said to be the wife of William WHITE, also a Convict and my GG Grandfather! Charlotte was convicted and therefore transported before William. It is said he could possibly have committed his crime to be with her (I doubt this) but by the time he arrived she had died. What happened to the children?

### **Mary O'Donnell**

Mary was born in Co. Clare, Ireland about 1818. In June 1836 she was tried in Clare, County Clare for housebreaking and sentenced to 7 years. She was a housemaid, uneducated, could neither read nor write and a Roman Catholic. (She was 5'2", ruddy complexion and freckled with brown hair and hazel eyes. She had 3 blue dots on the ball of her left thumb!). This was her second conviction and her departure was deferred because of ill health. She sailed from Dublin along with 148 female convicts, on 11 August 1837 on the "*Sir Charles Forbes*" (a 364 ton ship built in Aberdeen in 1824) and arrived in Sydney on 25 December 1837. The Master was James Leslie and the Surgeon W Clifford. According to the Surgeon's report, Mary saw him on 27 August and was released from his care on 7 September - complaint unknown. On 11 October she again reported to the Surgeon with a wound to the leg and was released from his care on 23 October.

As far as can be ascertained, Mary went straight to the Manning River area and was bonded to William Wynter, the owner of the Taree Estate. Mary was 21 when she married Thomas WOOTTON in St Thomas Anglican Church, County of Macquarie. Reverend John Cross performed the ceremony and because she was still bonded, the marriage required the consent of the then Governor Macquarie. Mary was my GGG Grandmother.

### **Harriett Davis**

Harriet was initially tried in 1829 for Larceny - she was only 16 and found not guilty. In the Gloucester Journal 12/9/1829...."On Saturday Harriet DAVIS by S Peach Esq. & MFT Stephens, Clerk, charged with stealing a gown, the property of E. Pring of Alveston." On 21st October 1829 in the County Assizes Harriet was sentenced to two months for stealing a gown at Alveston, the property of E. Pring.

Harriet was 20 when she was tried at Gloucester Assizes on 10 August 1833 for "receiving stolen goods" and was sentenced to 14 years. She was charged along with Charity Hogg (her Aunt) and the girl who initially stole the money from Sarah GOUGH was Hannah DAVIS. Was Sarah her Grandmother?

In the Gloucester Journal 4.7.1833 "Committed to the County Gaol, Hannah DAVIS, Harriet DAVIS and Charity HOGG by MTF Stephens Clerk, the said Hannah DAVIS being charged with stealing in the house of S Gough of Thornbury, ten sovereigns etc her property and the said Harriet DAVIS and Charity HOGG with receiving the said money knowing that it was stolen".

On 14th August 1833 Gloucester Assizes - Harriet DAVIS, transported for 14 years and Charity HOGG imprisoned. Acquitted Hannah DAVIS. Harriet was transported to Australia on the "*Numa*" on 13.6.1834. At that time she was described as single, a Protestant and with no education. Her complexion was fair, ruddy and freckled, she had brown hair and brown eye and 5'4 1/2" tall. She had a large scar on the back of her left wrist and a scar on the back of her left thumb. Her calling was "dairymaid - all work country".

The Sydney Morning Herald Monday 16th June 1834 reads - "From London, same day, having sailed from thence, the 29th of January, the Barque "*Numa*" Captain Baker with 138 female convicts and 24 children under the Superintendence of Dr. Bromley, RN Imports - June 14, "*Numa*" (ship) 323 tons, Baker - Master from London, Dawes - Gore and Co Agents. Female prisoners, 18 tons gun powder and other Govt. Stores".

Harriet married three times - firstly to Thomas TAYLOR, also a convict from Gloucestershire, in the Parish of Lower Hawkesbury "with consent of His Excellency the Governor" on 18 April 1835 by Thomas Sharpe, Chaplain. They both signed with their mark. Witnesses were Thomas Wm. Fenton & David Evans both of Lower Portland. They had one child before Thomas died.

Her second husband was Thomas D'ARCY also a convict from Dublin, Ireland who became a licensed victualler in Pitt Town. They were married at Windsor by Banns on 24.10.1837. George and Eliza Shirley were the witnesses and Henry T Stiles, the Minister. Harriet signed with her mark. Three sons were born to this marriage. After his death in 1846, Harriet continued to run the business with the aid of her sons, reflected in later years when Thomas became a victualler at Wambo.

Her third husband was Scottish born David BROWNE who came to Australia on the "Earl Cornwallis" as free settlers in 1801. They married in 1848 in Pitt Town and had 4 boys (including twins). David was reputed to remind people of his proud heritage by reciting his ancestry back to Robert the Bruce and Sir William Wallace. His awareness of his family connections is reflected in the names of his twin sons. Harriet was the sister of my GGGG Grandfather.

### **Susannah Elizabeth Davis**

Susanna was a dairymaid from Essex. She was convicted on 18.5.1831 at Essex Quarter Sessions to 7 years transportation, sailing on 8.10.1831 and arriving 1832 on the "*Pyramus*". She was continually in trouble for absconding prior to her marriage to John WHITE. She was granted her ticket of leave on 1.2.1853.

Her convict indent shows her as a married woman so presumably she married in the UK prior to her conviction. In 1840 she married James FARRELL but on her marriage certificate to John WHITE she is stated as a widow although her name is shown as FARRELL and not DAVIS as in the Convict marriages. She was a free woman and aged 33 when she and John married in 1845. They were able to return to the UK for in the 1881 Census they are in Norfolk. However, they returned to Australia where he died a year later. They had no children and Susannah died in 1890. Susanna was my GGG Aunt.

Sharon Ingersole #1548

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## **EXCHANGE JOURNALS**

As exchange journals are no longer being printed, they will now be available for viewing by members from the Admin desktop at our rooms. Monitors can access these journals and you can download them onto a USB. If anybody would like particular journals emailed to them, please contact Lyn via email at [lynette.brotherton@gmail.com](mailto:lynette.brotherton@gmail.com)



# COFFS HARBOUR DISTRICT FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY INC

Email: [coffsgenie@gmail.com](mailto:coffsgenie@gmail.com)

Website: <https://www.coffsharbourfamilyhistory.com/>

## FULL DAY SEMINAR

**DATE:** Saturday, 23 Oct 2021  
**VENUE:** Cavanbah Hall, 191 Harbour Drive, Coffs Harbour  
**TIME:** 10:00 am to 4:00 pm  
**SPEAKER:** JENNY JOYCE  
**COST:** Members ... \$25.00    Non-Members ... \$30.00  
Morning tea and light lunch included



## ABOUT THE SPEAKER

Jenny has been researching her own family history for the past 40 years, and for the past thirteen years has been a professional researcher, lecturer, teacher and writer. She has lectured at various societies, and at the Australasian Federation of Family History Societies Congresses in 2015 and 2018. She has also spoken at RootsTech in Salt Lake City and on the online RootsTech Connect conference. Jenny has also taught genealogy and history courses at local community colleges in Sydney. Together with core genealogy, Jenny has a deep interest in medieval English history and genealogy, palaeography, historical photography and DNA in relation to genealogy.

PLEASE REGISTER BY: Wednesday 20 Oct 2021 in person at our Research Rooms at rear of 169 Rose Avenue, Coffs Harbour; or post form to PO Box 2057, Coffs Harbour 2450; or by email to [coffsgenie@gmail.com](mailto:coffsgenie@gmail.com)

**IMPORTANT FOR EFT PAYMENTS:** When payment made, please scan and email this completed form to:  
- [coffsgenie@gmail.com](mailto:coffsgenie@gmail.com)

## REGISTRATION FORM

**NAME:** ..... **MEMBER NUMBER:**  
.....

**PAYMENT METHOD:**     CASH                       CHEQUE

EFT                      NAME: CHDFHS    BSB: 533 000    A/C: 32823957

(Reference: please quote member number or name)

**DATE PAID:** .....                      **RECEIPT NO:** .....

**Would you like to bring a small plate of food for morning tea:** YES / NO

Do you have any special dietary needs? .....

## MEMBER ENTITLEMENTS

- Use of Society's resources including books, microfilms, microfiche, computer system, etc
- Receive quarterly Journal Genie-Allergy
- Attend meetings and monthly workshops
- Guidance with research in our library
- Resource borrowing scheme
- Free entries in Member's Interests Directory
- 2 hours free research per year for members who are resident 50km or more from Coffs Harbour.

### JOURNAL DEADLINES

# 1 <sup>st</sup> February	1 <sup>st</sup> Quarter	March Issue
# 1 <sup>st</sup> May	2 <sup>nd</sup> Quarter	June Issue
# 1 <sup>st</sup> August	3 <sup>rd</sup> Quarter	September Issue
# 1 <sup>st</sup> November	4 <sup>th</sup> Quarter	December Issue

**Members are invited to submit stories of interest, enquiries regarding their research, or questions about research for inclusion in our Journal. Material needs to be received by the deadline as above to be included in the next available issue.**

**Please Email our Editor Sharon on [shaz@ingersole.com](mailto:shaz@ingersole.com) if you have a story to tell.**

### RESEARCH SHEETS, ETC. FOR SALE

Pedigree Charts	20c ea.
Family Group Sheets, etc.	20c ea.
Printouts from Computer (Greyscale)	20c ea.
Photocopies A4 (Greyscale)	20c ea.
Brothers Keeper Family Tree CD	\$3.00 ea.
Legacy Family Tree Standard CD	\$3.00 ea.
Convict Research Booklet	\$2.00 ea.
Beginning Your Family History Booklet	\$1.00 ea.
Seven Generation Charts A3	\$5.00 ea.

**If you would like to purchase and of this research material or any publications which may be for sale, please contact the Monitor on duty.**