

# **FAMILY HISTORY**

**George Frederick Baker**

**and**

**Sarah Wilkinson Epsley**

**Deal, Kent to Australia 1854**

**May, 2020**

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# George Frederick Baker (1827 – 1900) and Sarah Wilkinson Epsley (1826 – 1885)

## The Baker, Epsley, Fitch and Boxer families

George Frederick Baker and Sarah Wilkinson Epsley were married in Deal, Kent, in 1848. He was an upholsterer and they lived at 7 Broad St in the seaside town between Sandwich and Dover. George, Sarah and their young family travelled to Australia on the ship “Ann” arriving in Sydney on 3rd April, 1854. They were the first ancestors of the Worthington clan to arrive in Australia.

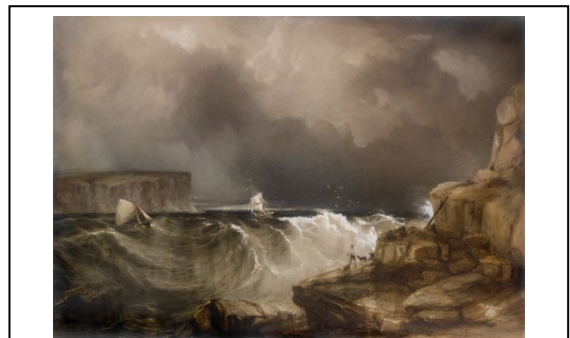
The Ann, under Captain Walker, was a barque – a relatively large ship for the times – built in Bombay in 1812, sheathed in yellow metal, and on this voyage carried 50 adult passengers and 40 crew. There were also 11 children on board including the Baker children Elizabeth (aged 4), Emma (3), William (2) and Charles (9 months). The Baker family appear on the ship’s arrival passenger list as “Mr & Mrs Baker, 3 children, 1 infant” and on another log as “Mr & Mrs Baker, 2 Boys, & 2 Girls”. They left London on December 13<sup>th</sup> 1853 for a journey of a little under 4 months.

Although we do not know much more about their journey, we do know a lot about their family background in England. Both of their families are known to have been in South East England since before Elizabethan times. We have been able to trace Sarah’s mother’s family back to St Laurence, Kent, in the reign of Bloody Mary, where William Epsley (or Apsley) and Joanne Harris were born in approximately 1550.

We have also been able to trace George’s mother’s family – the Fitches – back to William Fitch and Elizabeth Hall who were born around 1560 in Essex and Kent respectively.

By 1853 George’s parents had both died. His father, Andrew Wright Baker, died when George was 3 years old and his mother Elizabeth died in 1845. George had one older brother, Andrew William James Baker. Sarah’s father George Wilkinson died in March 1852. His death may have been the catalyst in their decision to migrate to Australia. Sarah’s parents were never married and Sarah lived with her father in Deal until she married. It appears that she had little or no contact with her mother.

George, Sarah and family settled on Sydney’s North Shore at Lavender Bay where Laura, their fifth child but the first born in Australia, arrived in December 1856. Initially continuing to work as an upholsterer, George set himself up as an auctioneer in 1855. They eventually had 10 children, all but 2 of who lived to adulthood, and 57 grandchildren. Among their family are a well known singing teacher and philanthropist, a connection to the inauguration ceremony of the Federation of Australia on January 1<sup>st</sup> 1901, connections also to the Antarctic whaling industry, a Distinguished Flying Medal, the Changi POW camp and the “rats” of Tobruk, a renowned economist who was a confidante of Sir Robert Menzies and Gough Whitlam, Australian racing’s most famous horse Phar Lap, and the tragic story of William Baker who had a long history of psychological illness, was found not guilty of murder by reason of insanity, and committed suicide in Darlinghurst Gaol aged 47.



“Sydney Heads, 1854”, Conrad Martens, State Library of NSW (above) and “Immigrants Arriving Sydney Harbour, 1853”, Thomas Picken (below)

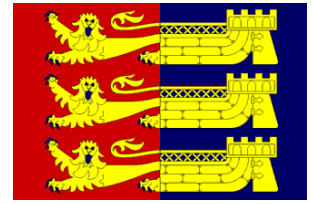


LIST of the Crew and Passengers, arrived in the Ship "Ann" of London Master *Walter* 1854  
 Tonnage *801* Tons, from the Port of *London* to *Sydney*, New South Wales, *3<sup>rd</sup> April* 1854

Seamen's Names.	Station.	Age.	Of what Nation.	Names of Passengers.	Description.	Remarks.
<i>Mr. Baynes</i>	<i>1<sup>st</sup> mate</i>	<i>56</i>		<i>Mr. Henry J. Cornish</i>		
<i>Mr. Barrow</i>	<i>2<sup>nd</sup></i>	<i>23</i>		<i>Mr. G. P. Jones</i>		
<i>Mr. Hunter</i>	<i>Surgeon</i>	<i>26</i>		<i>Mr. L. Beale</i>		
<i>Mr. Mori</i>	<i>Barber</i>	<i>50</i>		<i>Mr. &amp; Mrs. Baker 3 children &amp; infant</i>		<i>50</i>
<i>Mr. Bull</i>	<i>Steward</i>	<i>40</i>		<i>Mr. R. Simpson 3 daughters</i>		<i>40</i>
<i>Mr. &amp; Mrs. Butler</i>	<i>Cook</i>	<i>31</i>		<i>Mr. &amp; Mrs. Mudge</i>		<i>30</i>
<i>Mr. Barrow</i>	<i>Second</i>	<i>25</i>		<i>Mr. &amp; Mrs. George Fooks</i>		<i>11</i>
<i>Mr. Woodland</i>	<i>3<sup>rd</sup> mate</i>	<i>19</i>		<i>Mr. C. A. Marshall</i>		<i>11</i>
				<i>Mr. Lewis Hall</i>		
				<i>Mr. H. H. H.</i>		

## Deal, Kent, England

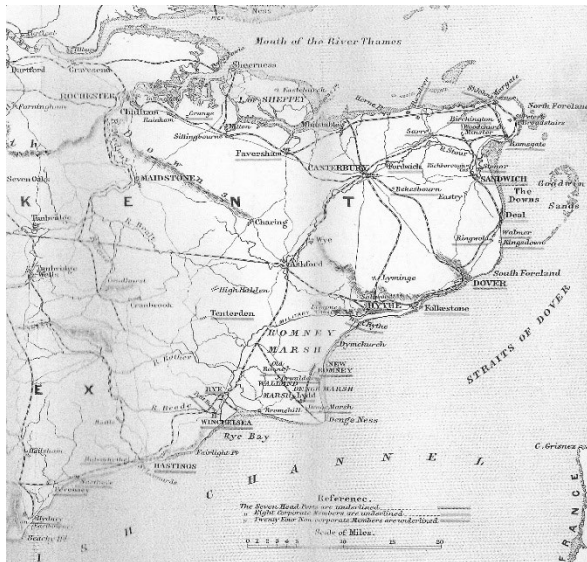
With connections to Julius Caesar, Perkin Walbeck, Anne of Cleves, Winston Churchill and Robert Menzies, the *Cinque Ports* of Kent (pronounced “sink”, not “sank”) have long been an important and strategic part of England’s maritime defence. Sitting strategically on the English Channel and the closest point to France they have been an important naval and diplomatic centre for centuries. The arms of the Cinque Ports combine the lion of Norman England with the stern of a medieval ship.



The stretch of beach between Deal and Walmer was the point where Julius Caesar landed to begin his invasion of Britain in 54 B.C. Perkin Walbeck (the pretender to the crown of Henry VII) and Ann of Cleves both landed and stayed in Deal en route from France. Deal was also the landing point for Captain Cook when he returned from Australia in 1771.

From virtually the time of Caesar’s landing onwards, the defence of the kingdom from the English Channel was the responsibility of the Cinque Ports – the small harbour towns which line the Kent and Sussex coasts south east of London. Both Winston Churchill and Robert Menzies were appointed to the position (once powerful, now purely ceremonial) of the Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century.

In Norman times, the five head towns of Hastings, New Romney, Hythe, Dover, and Sandwich were formally awarded substantial privileges including the right to import goods without payment of taxes in return for pledging to provide ships and men to the King for the defence of the realm. Hastings, of course, was the landing point of William the Conqueror and the scene of his famous battle with King Harold.



Originally one of the smaller towns, Deal became more important as the harbours of the original head towns became silted up. Only Dover of the original five still has a harbour, the rest are now up to three kilometres inland.

Officially it became one of the two “limb” towns of Sandwich in 1278 which provided it the same rights and benefits as the head towns.

Deal’s location was important as it is situated opposite The Downs, a stretch of water protected by the Goodwin Sands, which made it an attractive deep water anchorage but also extremely dangerous to navigate. Up to 500 ships at a time could be found at anchor here.

The Cinque Ports pilots based at Deal - of which Sarah’s father George Wilkinson was one – were the most skilled mariners in the country and the ‘Deal Boatmen’ who manned the lifeboats to rescue those whose craft were wrecked on the sands have become legend. The pilots each had their own flag which was flown after he boarded a vessel to show who was in command.

The landscape of the area changed in the times of Henry VIII with the building of a string of armed fortresses along the coast to provide artillery support to the fleet. Worried about the potential response of catholic France and Spain after his divorce of Catherine of Aragon and the commencement of the Reformation, Henry started building the distinctive Downs Castles at Sandown, Deal and Walmer in 1539.

The castles had little active role to play in the way they were intended, casting a watchful rather than violent eye over the shipping in the Downs and all the way to the French coast about 24 miles away. However they did become strategically important following the defeat of Charles I and were besieged several times during the Civil War.

In the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries the great naval conflicts with the Dutch and the French brought wealth and renewed royal patronage to the town with constant battles off-shore and the busy Naval Yard conducting repairs and building new ships which contributed to the English dominance of the seas. The Royal Marines Barracks were situated between Deal and Walmer. At that time the two towns were separate although barely a mile apart. Today Walmer is considered a suburb of Deal. Walmer Castle remains the ceremonial residence of the Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports.

By the 19<sup>th</sup> century Deal had become a quieter seaside town, shared between the remaining marine barracks, the commercial fleet, pilots, shipbuilding industry and the emerging Victorian tourist business. The Pigot’s Directory of 1824 says that while the town is clean, “owing to the establishment of peace, it presents in many parts, a scene of desertion”. When the locals weren’t supporting King and Country they tended to engage in a roaring smuggling trade. It was into this community that George Frederick Baker and Sarah Wilkinson Epsley were born in 1826 or 1827. Both families were long standing in the area, as we shall see later.



The town of Deal consisted at that time of three main streets which ran north to south along the shore – Beach Street, Middle Street and Lower Street (which has been renamed High St today). In 1841 the population of Deal was 6,648 with a further 2,170 in Walmer.

George Baker’s parents were Andrew Wright Baker, who was a brewer and landowner, and Elizabeth Weekes Fitch who ran a bookshop and library on Beach Street. Andrew Baker died in 1930, Elizabeth in 1845.

In the 1851 census, just two years before George and Sarah sailed for Australia, George is listed as an upholsterer employing 3 men. They live at 7 Broad St Deal – George and Sarah, their daughters Elizabeth and Emma and a 17 year old female servant Ann Buttress. William was born here in 1852, followed by Charles on 5<sup>th</sup> June 1853. Broad St runs perpendicular to the shoreline and their house was just a few steps from the beach - probably on the south-east corner of Broad and Middle Streets.

The building there today may or may not be the original – pretty well all of the buildings on Beach St remain as is but there has been a lot of modernisation on Broad St. This building could be original but could also be a later construction in a sympathetic style. Note: the house addresses in Deal were renumbered in 1913 so the addresses of the day have to be traced from key landmarks. Thankfully many identifiable buildings (mostly hotels!) still exist today.

In 1851 George’s grandmother, Winifred Weekes Fitch, is at the grocery store at 94 Beach St that belonged to her husband Thomas and before that to Thomas Fitch’s father and grandfather going back to the early 1700s. The business was started in the early 1700s but whether it was at the same premises before 1828 we cannot be sure.

After Winifred’s death it was run by her son James and then by her grandson Frederick Fitch. Frederick and his wife Jane moved to London between 1881 and 1891 and the grocer was converted to the Beachbrow Hotel from around 1905. The Beachbrow is still a bed and breakfast hotel today.

George’s brother Andrew Baker was running their mother’s bookshop at 111 Beach St with his wife Mary and daughter Ellen. He had 3 children altogether and then moved to London where he had a tobacconist & stationery shop at Shoreditch in the East End of London. He later moved back to Kent – to Ashford – and again had a bookshop and library.



**Left: Broad St Deal (Google Maps, 2010).** The white building on the left is Dunkerleys Hotel & Restaurant but up to 1987 was the Pier Hotel. Number 7 Broad St - where George Baker had his upholstery shop, workshop, and residence - was the second house back from the Pier Hotel which would put it as the red door in the middle building or the house on the corner at right of the frame. As this area of the town has been preserved it is probable, but not certain, that these buildings are as they were in the mid-nineteenth century. **Right: the Pier Hotel from Beach St – the picture is undated but the house on the corner opposite the Pier Hotel was demolished to widen Broad St early in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Next to it, with the sign saying “Toys and Fancy Goods” is the stationery shop of Mr Giraud.**



The Fitch Grocers was at 94 Beach St, Deal throughout the nineteenth century. In an 1882 photograph, above, it is the building with six windows to the left of the lamp post on the pier. Below left, magnified, we can just make out the words “Fitch, Grocer. Shipping Supplies. <...> Merchant” on the roof – the fifth word is unreadable. Below right, at about the same time, we can see the words “Fitch Grocer” on the side of the building. On the far left of these photos is the building at the corner of Beach St and Broad St seen on the previous page and next to it the Giraud stationery shop.



Today (below) the Beachbrow Hotel, fourth from the right viewed from the pier, is now painted white with floral window boxes. The building next door, now painted a pale blue, was listed as a residence of the Fitch family in the census of 1851 and 1861. Most of the buildings in the shot have not changed significantly in over 100 years with the exception of the demolished building on the Broad St corner which leaves the Giraud building on the corner today. The buildings directly across from the pier in the photo at top were destroyed by a bomb in WWII and the site today is a horrible 1960's era discotheque – which is thankfully about to be replaced by a more sympathetic apartment development.







To the right side of the pier, further along Beach St, was the bookshop and library owned by George's mother and later by George's older brother.

Known as the Victoria Library, by 1882 it had been out of the family for several decades but it was still operating as a stationer and reading library, owned by the Whaley family.

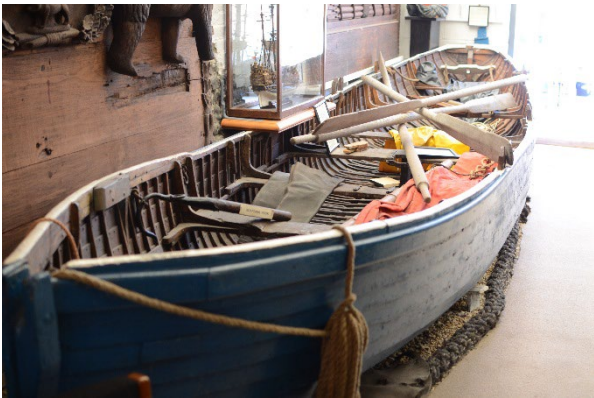
Today this building is the home of the Deal Beach Parlour ice cream shop.

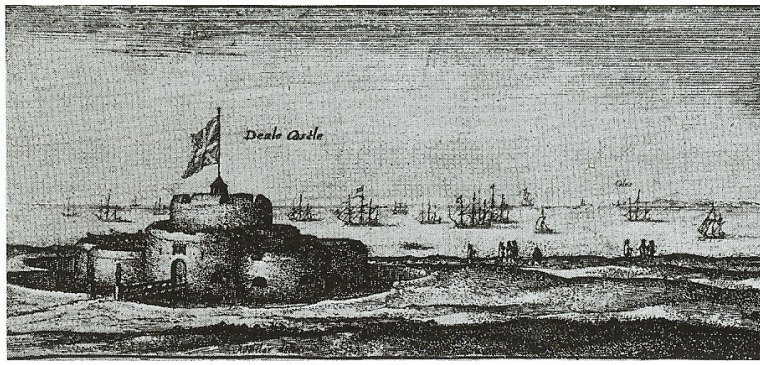




A selection of photos from my visit to Deal in 2013.

Clockwise from top left: the spire of St Leonards church; Deal pier; fishing boats on Deal beach; nineteenth century houses on Middle St; Walmer Castle; St Mary's Church at Walmer; an old Deal lifeboat at the maritime museum.





Deal Castle in an etching by Hollar, 1649 (above) and today (right).

Sarah Wilkinson Epsley Baker's parents had never married. Her father George Wilkinson was first married to Beckey Popkiss from 1812 until she died in 1824. They had no children. Sarah was born in 1826 to George and Sarah Ann Epsley – he was then 35 and she was 16. Unusually for the time, young Sarah lived with and was brought up by her father who was a Cinque Ports pilot and master mariner.

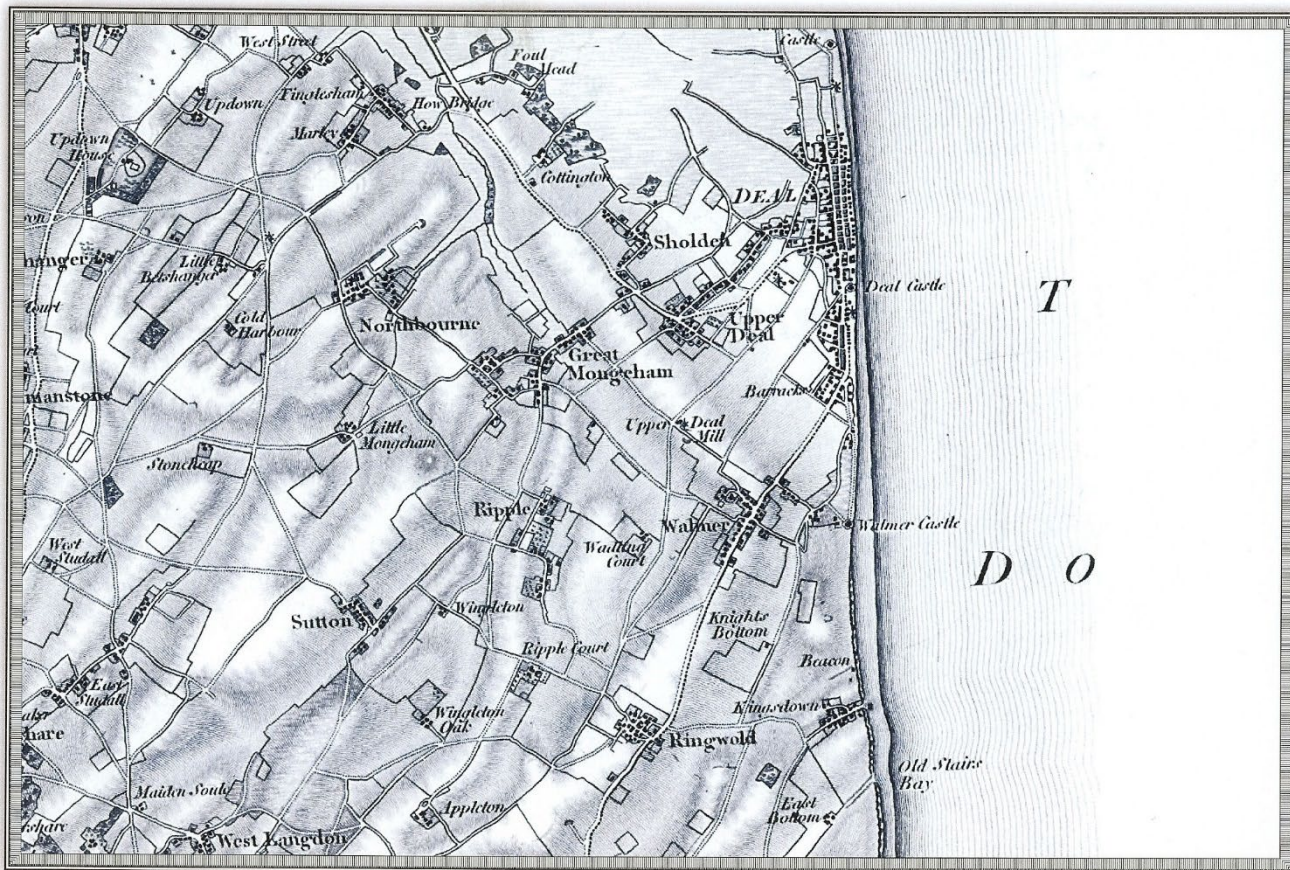
In 1831 George married Mary and they had three children (George, Rebecca and Mary Julia) before his second wife died in 1840 of consumption. I believe this was Mary Ann Dartwell although there is also a marriage record for George Wilkinson and Mary Canney in 1832.

For his third wife, George Wilkinson married Harriet Fitch in 1844. Harriet was George Frederick Baker's aunt by marriage - the widow of William Fitch the brother of Elizabeth Weekes Fitch. Perhaps this is how George and Sarah got to know each other. By 1851 George and Harriet Wilkinson are living at 48 Lower Street Deal with his daughter Julia and Elizabeth Lucie their house servant. In that same year Harriet commenced divorce proceedings, and George died in 1852 from an affliction of the stomach aged 61. Although Harriet was only ten years younger she outlived him by 31 years. They had no children and she did not marry again.

Sarah Baker's mother, Sarah Ann Epsley, was the daughter of mariner William Epsley and Martha Boxer. She had little involvement in Sarah's upbringing and in August 1840 she married Seth Snoswell and moved to Deptford near Greenwich. By 1851 they had two sons and a daughter. Seth was a storehouseman at the Deptford dockyards, and Sarah was a dressmaker. After Seth retired they moved back to Deal and, eventually, to live with their son Thomas in Gillingham, Kent, where Seth died in 1889. Sarah Snoswell died on January 14<sup>th</sup> 1898 which means she outlived her daughter Sarah by almost fourteen years.



The seafront of Beach Street, Deal in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, left, looking south from the pier. Many of the buildings remain today including the Deal Timeball Tower (centre in both pictures and in close up, right) which was erected in 1855. The timeball fell at precisely 1pm each day, triggered by a signal directly from the observatory at Greenwich. Before this the building was a telegraph and semaphore station which enabled messages to be relayed from the Admiralty to the fleet in the Deal Anchorage. It is now a museum.



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1819 - Old Series

Map of Deal from 1819 shows the three main streets parallel to the shore and Walmer just to the south.

*Parish of Deal*

PLACE	HOUSES Inhabited or Building	NAMES of each Person who abode therein the preceding Night.	AGE and SEX		PROFESSION, TRADE, EMPLOYMENT, or of INDEPENDENT MEANS.	Where Born	
			Males	Females		Whether Born in same County	Whether Born in Scotland, Ireland, or Foreign Parts.
do	1	George Wilkinson	50		Farmer	✓	
		George do	8			✓	
		Rebecca do	6			✓	
		Mary do	4			✓	
		Frank Epsley	13			✓	
		Sarah Wilkinson	20			✓	
		Ann Wilkinson	20			✓	

Sarah Wilkinson Epsley living with her father in Deal, 1841.

107	7 Broad St	George F Baker	Head	24	Married, employing 3 Men	100	100
		Sarah do	Wife	14		100	100
		Elizabeth do	Daughter	11		100	100
		Anna do	Daughter	10		100	100
		Ann Buttidge	Servant	11	House Servant	London	Bristol

George and Sarah at 7 Broad St, Deal, in the 1851 census 2 1/2 years before leaving for Australia.

## George Baker and Sarah Wilkinson Epsley in Sydney (1854 – 1882)

When the Baker family arrived in Sydney around 55,000 people, almost one tenth of Australia's population, were living in and around the city - particularly inside an arc on the south side of Port Jackson from Balmain and Glebe in the west, south to Newtown, and to Double Bay in the east. Beyond that arc were the estates of the landed gentry, farms and bushland. The north shore, where the Bakers settled, was a sparsely populated and isolated area. Then known as St Leonards, this is now the location of the business district of North Sydney. Lavender Street is at the top of Lavender Bay as shown on Sands & Kenny's 1858 "Map of Sydney and its Environs".



### 1854

- Australia's population is 695,000 of which 240,000 are in New South Wales where Sir Charles FitzRoy is Governor.
- Queen Victoria is in the 17<sup>th</sup> year of her reign
- Sir Henry Parkes is elected to the NSW Legislative Council
- An act to incorporate Sydney Grammar School is passed by the NSW parliament and construction of the Great Hall at the University of Sydney (founded 1850) commences
- The Sydney to Parramatta railway is nearing completion, terminating at the new Sydney Station at Redfern
- In Victoria, which separated from New South Wales three years earlier, the gold rush is at its height with political revolt against government controls culminating in the Eureka Stockade rebellion
- The Crimean War in which the French, English and others fought Russia for influence over the territories of the ailing Ottoman Empire begins

Source: Wikipedia

Conrad Martens' "View of Sydney from Lavender Bay", circa 1854 (below) shows the view from St Leonards above Lavender Bay with the houses and bushland of Blue's Point (now McMahon's Point) in the right foreground. The Bakers' home would have been directly below this viewpoint. Across the harbour are the wharves between Millers Point to the right and Dawes Point to the left where the end of George Street can be seen coming to the water's edge. This is where the South Tower of the Sydney Harbour Bridge now stands. Behind the wharves are the houses of The Rocks and the spire of St James Church can also be seen behind. Off to the left, in the middle distance, and just to the right of the large tree, you can clearly see Government House behind the "Semi Circular Quay".

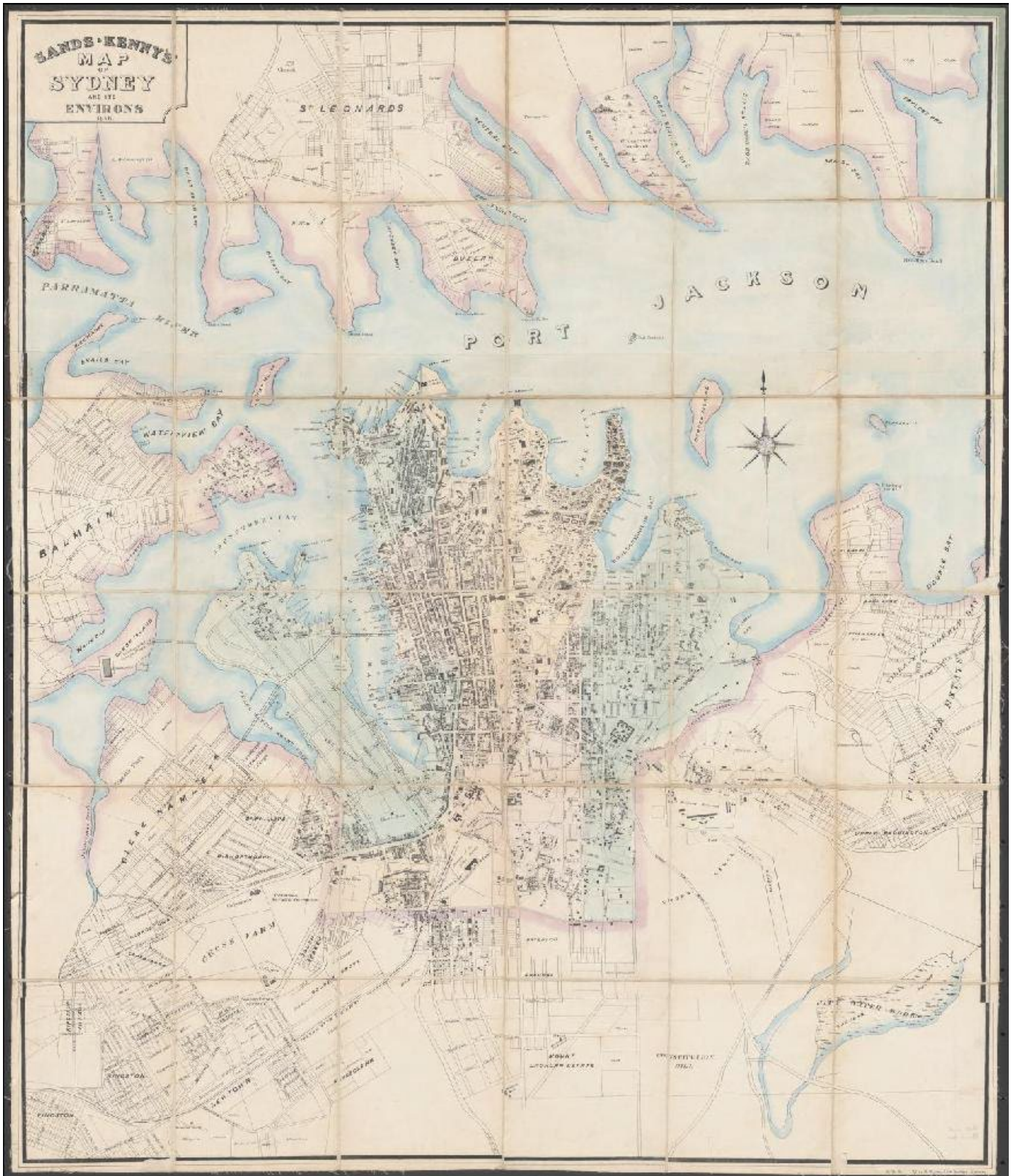


A little later, in 1875, iconic photographic images were taken by Charles Bayliss from a special tower at the Holtermann mansion 'The Towers' which was also on the hill above Lavender Bay. These were the largest photographic images taken at that time (approximately 160 x 96.5 cm) and are now in the collection of the State Library of New South Wales.



At the eastern end of Lavender Bay (above) there are a couple of larger houses, in front of Milsons Point and across the harbour we can clearly see Bennelong Point and Mrs Macquarie's Chair. To the west end (below) we can see Balls Point and Goat Island. The middle image has, unfortunately, not survived. George and Sarah had moved away from the area by this time but the houses along the North Shore are clearly visible and would not have changed a lot from their day.





Sands & Kenny's Map of Sydney and its Environs 1858.  
(National Library of Australia: <http://nla.gov.au/nla.map-rm1272>)

The last convicts had been brought to New South Wales in 1840 and after a bit of a lull the population was now rising quickly. The reason – gold. While Victoria’s gold rush in the Ballarat, Bendigo and Castlemaine areas which led to the events of the Eureka Stockade are more famous, it was in 1851 near Bathurst in central New South Wales where gold was first discovered in Australia. Free settlers were now streaming in and Sydney would grow steadily through the second half of the nineteenth century with the population growing to 96,000 in 1861, 200,000 in 1871 and 400,000 in 1891. The great Victorian era buildings of Sydney were yet to come – the Government offices along Bridge St, Customs House, St Andrews Cathedral, Town Hall, GPO, Queen Victoria Building and the start of the suburban sprawl all occurred later, between 1860 and 1900.

For now, in the 1850s, Sydney was poised between its convict period and metropolitan expansion. The buildings which dominated the city then were the colonial infrastructure of Governor Lachlan Macquarie’s time including Government House and Fort Macquarie, the Hyde Park Barracks, the Rum Hospital (later portions of this complex became the Royal Mint and the NSW Parliament House), the Sydney Public Library (now the State Library of NSW), the Conservatorium of Music, St James Church at Hyde Park and the warehouses of The Rocks.

The suburbs around the inner city – including Surry Hills, Glebe, Balmain and Newtown, where George and his children would later live – were mostly occupied by the holders of the land grants issued by the early governors and were still regarded as being villages out in the bush. The filling in of those areas with terrace houses and workers’ cottages to house Sydney’s increasing population was just beginning. The building of New South Wales first railway line from Sydney to Parramatta had also just commenced and the Redfern terminus serving Sydney, to the south of the later Central Station, was being constructed.

The centre of Sydney was divided – between George Street and Pitt St ran the Tank Stream. Its supply of fresh water was the original reason for the selection of the site of Sydney by Arthur Phillip but by 1854 the swamp which fed it between Park and Market Streets near present day Hyde Park had been drained and it was a polluted open sewer running through the city.

On the eastern side of the stream was the government sector – Government House, the government offices and public buildings. On the western side was the commercial sector and the inner city residential areas.

There had been a stone bridge at the northern end of the Tank Stream which is shown in the painting below and gave its name to Bridge St and from there it ran across tidal mudflats into the harbour. The timber Bon-Accord foot bridge was a half-penny toll bridge further north at the Quay. By 1854 the mudflats had been filled in, Circular Quay extended across the stream and the footbridge removed. The painting below shows the stream as it was in the 1840s. The full length of the Tank Stream was not covered over until around 1878. It is now fully enclosed in a storm drain which continues to run underneath the city.

This was the City of Sydney that greeted George Baker, his wife Sarah, and their eldest four children when the “Ann” sailed into the harbour on April 3<sup>rd</sup> 1854, the first of my New South Wales based ancestors to do so.



Old Tank Stream, Sydney, circa 1852. State Library of New South Wales



25, Forbes-street, Woolloomooloo.  
**G**EOERGE F. BAKER, Cabinetmaker, Upholsterer,  
 Paperhanger, and Decorator, Raised Wood Letter Cutter,  
 Painter and Gilder; House, Estate, and Commission Agent, &c.,  
 begs leave to call the attention of the public generally to the  
 above branches, and to solicit a share of their patronage in carry-  
 ing out the same.  
 G. F. B. having had many years' experience in business, as a  
 principal and working man, and being well acquainted with the  
 present English and Foreign markets, would be found of great  
 value to those who might honour him with their favours, either  
 in executing orders for furnishing, &c., or as agent in selecting  
 goods the most substantial, with due regard to taste and  
 economy.  
 Raised letters for shops made, painted, and gilt, to any size.  
 Samples kept on hand.  
 Old furniture repaired, stuffed, and polished, on reasonable  
 terms.  
 Contracts for papering, painting, decorating, and for furnishing  
 entered into and promptly executed.

After arriving in Sydney, George and his family settled on the North Shore in Lavender St, Lavender Bay. George worked firstly as an upholsterer at 25 Forbes St, Woolloomooloo.

He announced himself as a "cabinet maker, upholsterer, paperhanger and decorator, raised wood letter cutter, painter and gilder; house, estate and commission agent &c" in the Sydney Morning Herald of 24<sup>th</sup> August, 1854 (left).

In September of 1855 he moved his business to 29 Pitt St (opposite the well known Mort's buildings), now describing himself as an auctioneer, agent and contractor and from that point is a frequent advertiser in the Sydney Morning Herald offering houses, land and businesses for sale or rent.

In November George received an auctioneer's licence, one of 29 issued in the colony.

In the 1850s the area known as St Leonards (which included where the business district of North Sydney is located today) was sparsely populated - there were only 464 residents recorded in the North Shore area in the 1856 census. The houses were mostly substantial residences on large plots of land. The only way to reach the city of Sydney was to use the services of one of the independent ferry operators or watermen. There were irregular ferry services from both Blue's Point and Milson's Point carrying carts and passengers, and in 1861 Lavender Bay became the main northern ferry landing for passenger only services. The commercial ferries and timetabled services that Sydney became well known for did not commence until around 1861. George possibly also sailed himself across the harbour ... we know that in late 1860, when preparing to move out of Sydney, he sold a "fine large skiff" with sails and paddles.

In October 1856 his business moved again to 23 King St. This proved to be a pattern, with relocation to a succession of addresses in and around Pitt St in central Sydney over the next several years.

In 1856 there was also the curious case of Mrs Ray's piano. George purchased the piano from a Mrs Ray, along with a davenport, for £20 but entered into an arrangement by which she would keep the piano and pay rent for its use. He later found that Mrs Ray had subsequently sold the piano again to a Mr Peters and so he sued for its return. He then found that before selling it to him, and after, she had "sold" it to a Mr Poole and several other people - all on the basis that she would retain use of it. Mrs Ray then absconded. The issue came to the Supreme Court in November, but as the court was not able to resolve who the rightful owner was, George failed in his action.

In late 1857 he moved to the Commercial Chambers at 79 Pitt St near the corner with Bridge St. For the next few years his business appeared to be quite prosperous with a large number of properties advertised and sales recorded. In mid-1859 he moved again, to Hunter St just 3 doors down from George St.

For Unreserved sale.

A Cottage and Ground, Allotments of Land, Burwood Railway Station and Parramatta Road.

**G**EOERGE F. BAKER has been instructed to sell by auction, on **WEDNESDAY, December 4<sup>th</sup>**, at 11 o'clock, at his Rooms, 29, Pitt-street,

- A corner plot of land, 100 yards from Burwood Station, divided into three allotments—good situation for a public house—having a frontage to Burwood road 50 feet, and William-street 200 feet; also a desirable allotment of land, having a frontage to Parramatta-road 100 feet, by depth 150 feet to Burwood-road, adjoining the Parramatta-road School. Also a pleasantly situated 6-roomed cottage, detached kitchen, stable, and well of water, situate in Cleveland-street, close to Hume's Hotel, Surry Hills, with frontage to Cleveland-street 15 feet, and depth to lane of 117 feet; a delightful flower garden in front and vegetable garden at back.

Either of the above properties is well suited to the labouring or mercantile portion of the community, as an investment or delightful residence, at good rental of 15s per week.

Terms, part cash, part credit, at bank interest.

Plans of the above seen at the Auction Rooms, opposite Mort's-buildings.

An early advertisement by George F Baker. Sydney Morning Herald, 1<sup>st</sup> December, 1855.

He was also able to offer financing to purchasers, regularly advertising funds available from £10 to £10,000.

In 1860 there is the first evidence of a life-long interest in local politics with George F Baker noted as Honorary Secretary for the Municipality of St Leonards at a public meeting.

During this period Sarah and George added three children to the four who had been born in England ... Laura Wilkinson Baker was born on December 24<sup>th</sup> 1856; Arthur Wilkinson Baker on May 25<sup>th</sup> 1858; and Juliet Wilkinson Baker, later known as Julia, on August 12<sup>th</sup> 1860. All three were born in Lavender Bay and honoured Sarah's father George with their middle name.

In addition to sales of house and land, George regularly auctioned household effects, assets of deceased estates, business stock and excess merchandise. The diversity of goods sold is shown in the ads published in one edition of the Sydney Morning Herald on the following page.

**G. F. BAKER** has received instructions from Captain Warner, who is retiring from business, to sell by public auction, on the premises of the Prince of Wales Hotel, Lower George-street, on **TUESDAY, December 21st, at 11 o'clock.**

All the superior household furniture and effects, consisting of drawing-room, dining-room, parlor, club-room, billiardroom, and bedroom furniture, consisting of loo, dining, card, pembroke, and other tables; chimney glasses; chairs, sofas; carpets and rugs, silk cloth; iron and wood bedsteads, and bedding; washstands and furniture; dressing tables and glass; kitchen range and cooking apparatus, &c. Also,

Bar fittings, beer and spirit fountains, measures, kegs, counters, lamp. Also,

An excellent billiard table, by Webb, nearly new, with all the fittings, &c. connected.

Wines, spirits, porter, and ales.

Terms, cash.

For absolute sale, by order of the Mortgagee, the Public-house called the Fortune of War, situated at Cook's River Road, close to the Dam. Also, a Shop and Premises adjoining.

**G. F. BAKER** has received instructions from the Mortgagee to sell by public auction, at his Rooms, Pitt and Bridge streets, on **MONDAY, the 20th December, at 11 o'clock.**

This well-known public-house the Fortune of War, situated on Cook's River Road, close to the Dam, with large yard and stabling, offering every opportunity for a profitable investment.

Also, the shop and dwelling-house adjoining, consisting of three rooms and kitchen, adapted for a grocer or other general business.

The above premises, at present empty, might have been advantageously let, but the proprietor declined doing so, thinking it might prejudice the sale.

The whole of the above will be sold without reserve. Plans may be seen at the Auctioneer's Office, and every information given.

Terms at sale.

By order of the Mortgagee.

These Two Substantial 2-storied Brick Houses, Nos. 43 and 45, situate in Macleay-street or Darlinghurst Road, Woolloomooloo.

**G. F. BAKER** has received instructions to sell by public auction, at his Land Sale Rooms, Pitt and Bridge streets, on **MONDAY, December 20th, at 11 o'clock.**

All that allotment of land, situate in the city of Sydney, having a frontage of 35½ feet frontage to Macleay-street, more or less, by a depth of 70 feet, more or less, to a reserve lane at rear, on which are erected two substantial brick houses, each containing 4 rooms, with convenient enclosed yards, a good well of water, so placed to supply both houses.

The above property is a first-rate neighbourhood, and would prove a most paying investment.

Plan on view at the Rooms.

Full particulars as to title, apply to Messrs. Milford and Croft, solicitors, Pitt-street.

By order of the Mortgagee.

Three splendid Farms, at the junction of the Cattar Creek with Manning River, in all 171 acres, now under cultivation, together with House, Barn, and other Improvements.

Title—Grant from the Crown.

**G. F. BAKER** has received instructions to sell by public auction, at his Land Sale Rooms, Pitt and Bridge streets, on **MONDAY, 20th December, at 11 o'clock.**

All those several pieces or parcels of land, situated on the Manning River, county of Macquarie, colony of

New South Wales, comprised in three grants from the Crown, containing 171 acres, more or less

The improvements on the above property consist of 50 acres cleared, and now under cultivation, 25 acres of which is enclosed with close paling fence, and planted with fruit trees, vines, &c.; also, substantial slab-house of 4 rooms, together with large barn, &c., &c.

The auctioneer in offering this property to the public, would remind them that this land is of the first quality, and requires no eulogy—in fact, it is from this neighbourhood that Sydney is principally supplied with the finest wheat and corn, a sufficient recommendation in itself. Each farm has also a frontage to the river, and are adjoining each other, and consequently of infinitely more value than if separated, or without water frontage.

For further particulars apply to the auctioneer; or to Messrs. MILFORD and CROFT, solicitors, Pitt-street.

Terms at sale.

**THIS DAY, Thursday, at 11 o'clock, prompt.**  
To Coach Builders, Livery Stable Keepers, Furniture Dealers, and others.

IRVING v. WESS.

Under Distress for Rent.

**G. F. BAKER** has received instructions to sell by public auction, on the premises of Mr. Webb, corner of Hunter and Castlereagh streets, formerly known as Bowler's Livery Stables, **THIS DAY, Thursday, December, 16th, at 11 o'clock precisely.**

Two superior and quite new phaeton carriages, complete, and in good condition; one excellent, nearly new, break for four horses; sundry stable utensils in yard, together with the household furniture and effects, comprising tables, chairs, sofas, chests of drawers, secretary, bedsteads and bedding, washstands and furniture, kitchen utensils, and sunrises

Terms, cash.

By order of the Mortgagee.

The Friendship Inn, St. Ann's, Liverpool Road, with about 2 Acres of Land, having frontages, as per plan of the original estate, to the Liverpool Road, to Anselm-street, to Therry-street.

**MR. G. F. BAKER** has received instructions to sell by public auction, at his Land Sale Rooms, Pitt and Bridge streets, on **MONDAY, January 3rd, 1859, at 11 o'clock.**

The above well-known and long-established public house, situate on the Liverpool Road, parish of St. Ann. It consists of a substantial weatherboard and brick cottage, containing nine spacious rooms, detached kitchen, with verandah in front 50 feet long, erected on two allotments of land having frontage to the Liverpool Road 66 feet, by a depth of 600 feet to Therry-street, but divided by a street running through called Anselm-street; part of the land attached to the house is enclosed with a substantial fence, with yard, stabling, and kitchen garden at the rear.

For further particulars apply to the auctioneer; or M. CONSETT STEPHEN, solicitor, Elizabeth-street.

Terms at sale.

**TUESDAY, 21st December.**

At the Prince of Wales Hotel, Lower George-street.

To Billiard Markers, Hotel Keepers, Furniture Dealers, and others.

Billiard Table, by Webb, nearly new, with Cues, Balls, and Fittings; Bar Fittings and Fixtures, Beer and Spirit Fountains, Counters, Measures, &c.

Drawing-room, Dining-room, Parlor, and Bedroom Furniture; Bath-room Fittings; Kitchen Range and Apparatus, Kitchen Utensils

Stock-in-trade—Wines, Spirits, Ales, &c.

Numerous ads in the Sydney Morning Herald edition of December 16<sup>th</sup>, 1858.

In 1860, though, George's business began to suffer. He had moved from Hunter Street to 226 Pitt St in July and it appears that he had become over-extended. He invested in property at Woolloomooloo and also in Liverpool. In Woolloomooloo, George paid £100 and then a further £150 to make the property tenable. When a sale of the property fell through, George was unable to make the loan payments and the mortgagee foreclosed, leaving him with a loss of £160 – a very significant sum for the times. In Liverpool, he was unable to on-sell the property as there was a problem with the conveyance of sale process which meant he could not get a proper title. In September he advertised his new business premises to let, and later in the same month also advertised for let a 6 roomed stone cottage at Milson's Point which was probably their family residence.

By November 30<sup>th</sup> he advertised that he had disposed of the lease of his auction rooms and premises and would hold a clearing-out sale by auction of his stock-in-trade including household furniture, glasses, engraving and oil paintings, about 800 volumes of books, planks, boards, piping, guttering and sundries. At various times he had also advertised for sale personal possessions including a piano, a boat and a watch.



George moved his family in early 1861 to Braidwood (left), encouraged by three local businessmen. Braidwood is a small country town near Goulburn about half way between present-day Canberra (which of course did not exist at that time) and the NSW south coast. It was the centre of a gold mining district going through a minor boom in alluvial gold. It was also the home of Archer who won the first two Melbourne Cups in 1861 and 1862.

The move was to no avail, with the promised business assistance in Braidwood not forthcoming. Despite a great deal of activity, advertising in all of the Braidwood papers almost every issue, there was obviously little joy there for him.

In November 1861 George commenced insolvency proceedings.

In his deposition he says that he did not make at Braidwood “as much as would put salt into the mouths of my family” which by that time included seven children. His eldest daughter Elizabeth was twelve and the youngest at the time, Julia, just one.

He recorded assets of £476 against liabilities of £862 – a deficit of £386. His assets included the Liverpool block of land, unoccupied, on the Campbelltown Rd, worth £100; personal property, including stock in trade and a horse and saddle of £103; and debts due totalling £334.

He was in business difficulties in Sydney before he left for Braidwood. His debts included unpaid bills for newspaper advertising in both Braidwood and Sydney, board & rent at Braidwood and Sydney, and unpaid staff including tutors for the children and a servant's wages.

The family moved back to Sydney – first at Abbot's Cottages on Botany Rd, Chippendale and then in May of 1862 to Raper's Cottages at 83 Devonshire St in Strawberry Hills – now considered part of Surry Hills. Originally, Strawberry Hill was an enormous sandhill between where Devonshire St and Cleveland St are now, it would have been razed long before the Bakers moved to the area. George commenced work as an auctioneer and salesman for the firm of Alexander Moore and Co, and he would stay working for them for seven years. His insolvency was discharged on June 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1862.

On November 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1862 a son was born prematurely and, sadly, died on December 6<sup>th</sup> just two weeks later. He was named George Frederick after his father.

With George working as a salaried employee, rather than in business for himself, there is little evidence of his activities in the newspapers of the period. However, in 1865 further information seems to come to hand regarding the property at Woolloomooloo which contributed to George's insolvency. Along with Frederick Ernest Croft, George sued for ejection of a widow and recovery of land in Woolloomooloo. The court proceedings, reported in the Sydney Morning Herald of May 27<sup>th</sup> 1865, showed that the mortgage of the property had been assigned to Croft and Baker on the 21<sup>st</sup> September 1858. It was found that they now had the right to recover the property. Did this mean that the losses on the property, which had played a large part in George's financial difficulties five years earlier had been recovered? Or was this a different property which had been hidden from the insolvency trustees?

In late 1866, Sarah and George again added to their family with Ada Winifred Weekes Baker born on 11<sup>th</sup> December in Strawberry Hills, and in 1867 their address changed to 143 Devonshire Street – probably they had moved to larger premises but perhaps the properties in the street were renumbered. Ada's middle names were a tribute to George's grandmother.

Exactly two years after Ada's birth, on December 11<sup>th</sup> 1868, Sarah had another boy, George Alfred, her 10<sup>th</sup> and last child in 19 years. He was also ill-fated and died of peritonitis on February 13<sup>th</sup>, 1869. He and George Frederick were the only two of their ten children not to survive to adulthood.

In 1869 there is also evidence of George Baker's musical prowess. He sang three solos at a concert in Newtown. He would later perform in Wagga Wagga and his musical talent would also show up in his youngest daughter Ada who became a renowned music hall soprano and a professional singing teacher.

By mid-1869, George was ready to go back into business for himself. He left Alexander Moore & Co and set up a partnership with Mr G J Hartley in July at 141 Pitt St, opposite the Union Bank, trading under the name of G.F. Baker and Co. This arrangement was short-lived, as the partnership was dissolved by October. George then went into a new partnership with Mr John Short, opening Baker and Short, Auctioneer, Brokers, and Valuers &c at 299 Pitt St but this only lasted until the following April.

George's interest in politics was again evident, acting as Honorary Secretary for the candidature of Mr John Yard for election to Sydney City Council in Cook Ward, and standing himself for the position of Auditor of the City of Sydney. Mr Yard stood on a platform of improving the sewerage system and making better use of water rates – stating that the Crown St reservoir of the day held only half a day's supply for the City of Sydney. He was also in favour of establishment of a cattle market and a fish market, and of the introduction of an eight hour day (but that he would not be for lessening the pay of those whose working hours would be reduced to eight). Both campaigns were unsuccessful.

In July of 1870, George again takes the option of employment rather than being in business for himself, taking up a position as auctioneer of household furniture and general merchandise for Hardy Brothers of South Head Rd (which is now Oxford St). It is probable that this was an offshoot of the well-known jewellery and importing firm which had been established in Sydney in 1853.

After this, George's business activities appear to be sporadic – at least in the public eye as reflected by the advertising of the time. In May 1871 he once again established himself independently at King and Elizabeth Streets, but did not advertise in the Sydney Morning Herald to any great degree.

He and his family continue to live at 143 Devonshire Street, Strawberry Hills, and he appears in the Sands Directory at this address without a separate business address for the next several years.

In 1872, somewhat out of the blue, George is mentioned in the press twice in connection with the gold fields. We know that he (or his family at least) continue to live in Devonshire Street but "G F Baker" is listed on August 31<sup>st</sup> as a director of the Queen of Nations Gold Mining Company which was formed to work a lease at Pyramul – it is not certain whether this is our George.

On 10<sup>th</sup> October though there is a notice of "George Frederick Baker, of Hill End, Auctioneer" as a trustee of George Thomas. This is almost certainly our George. What is he doing in Hill End? Hill End was one of the biggest gold mining boom towns in New South Wales, located near Tambooroora, Pyramul and Gulgong. To get to Hill End from Sydney involved a train trip to Bathurst and a three day horse-drawn coach trip or ride. It was not an easy place to pass through! Perhaps given slow trade in Sydney, George is operating a country auction circuit. Or, as a commercial traveller (as he is described at various times), is he working a country sales route for his employer?

The intriguing question is whether this is the point at which George met Mary Angove, who was to become his second wife more than ten years later. Mary was living in Gulgong at that point but was very well known in the district and known to visit Hill End regularly. The family believe that George knew Mary for a long time before Sarah died, so it is possible that they met during this period. In 1875, G F Baker is again mentioned as an applicant, with others, of a gold mining lease in the Tambooroora area.

There is little else we can find of what George was up to in business between 1871 and 1882 other than that he managed to win the handicap race at the Commercial Travellers picnic!. On the family side, though, there was much activity. Marriages and grandchildren were plentiful but, as was common in those days, not all of the grandchildren survived.



George & Sarah's eldest, Elizabeth, married Henry William Swan at their residence in Devonshire St on 13<sup>th</sup> November 1873. Henry was a coachbuilder and they had the first five of their nine children in this period. Laura Eliza Swan was born in November 1874, Harriet Emma in 1876, George Henry in 1877 and Jennie Frazer in 1881. Elizabeth Julia Swan was born in August 1878 but died in February 1879.

Charles Baker married Frances Janet Franklin in January 1876 (this was probably an elopement). They had a son, Lancelot, in August 1878, but he died of atrophy in December of the same year. Frances had tuberculosis but got pregnant again. Their daughter, Frances Elizabeth, was born healthy on 30<sup>th</sup> October 1879 but only two weeks later her mother died. The following year Charles remarried, to Isabella Boyle. His story is told in more detail in a later section.

In July 1877, Emma married William Frederick Lowe, an ironworker. They had the first two of their children Jessie and Elizabeth in 1878 and 1881 respectively.

William completed the marriages of the eldest four children, those born in Kent, when he married Ellen Eliza Emily Payne in August 1878. They also had their first two children in this period – Frederick in 1880, and Arthur in 1882.

Arthur was the other son to marry – he wed Sarah Todd, the daughter of a seaman, in 1880. Arthur was a wood turner. Their first daughter Ada was born in 1882.

In late 1882 George and Sarah decided to leave Sydney for the country. At their residence, which is now described as Otter St or Otto St, off Devonshire St and nearly opposite Holt St, they sold their household effects by auction on December 29<sup>th</sup>.

**THIS DAY, at 11 o'clock.**

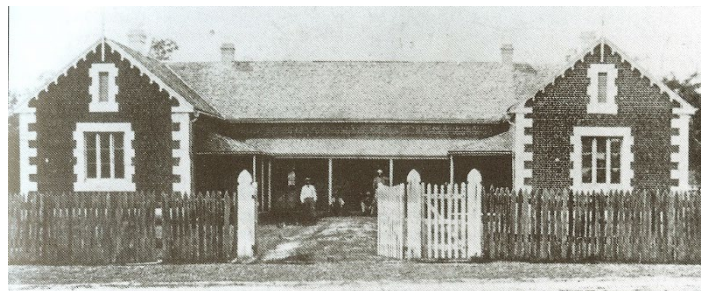
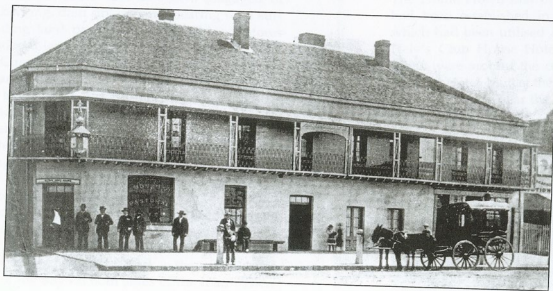
**At the residence of Mr. G. F. BAKER, Otto-street, off Devonshire-street, nearly opposite Holt-street.**  
**ATTRACTIVE SALE of Superior HOUSEHOLD FURNITURE and EFFECTS. Comprising—**  
Couch, Austrian Chairs  
Brilliant-toned COTTAGE PIANOFORTE, by Erard  
Drawing-room Table, Whatnot, Cheffonier  
Handsome PIER GLASS, Oleographs, ENGRAVINGS,  
Dining-room Furniture, Carpets, Floorcloth  
Double and Single Bedsteads, Bedding  
Toilet Tables and Glasses, Washstands and Sets  
Chests Drawers, Linen Press, Bedroom Chairs  
Kitchen Utensils, Plants, and a first-class Cooking Stove

**L**AVERACK and CO. are instructed by Mr. G. F. Baker, who is removing to the country, to sell by auction, at his residence, Otto-street, off Devonshire-street, The whole of his household furniture, &c.

## George and Sarah Baker in Wagga Wagga (1883 – 1886)

In January 1883 George and Sarah and their three unmarried children – Laura, 26, Julia, 22, and Ada, 16 – moved to Wagga Wagga where they took up the licence of the Pastoral Hotel. From just 627 in 1861, the population of Wagga was now around 4,000. The Pastoral Hotel was at 100 Fitzmaurice St, just north of Gurwood St. A “grand old rambling sort of a joint” it was demolished around 1975 to make way for the ABC Broadcasting offices. It was owned by the Monks family – Alfred and Ellen – who moved with their family to Sydney at the beginning of 1883. As they still owned it when their son William, a renowned Wagga architect, returned home in 1890 they must have leased it to George for the period. The hotel was established in 1865 to support the agricultural community, with saleyards at the rear.

In addition to running the hotel, George was a member of the board of the Wagga Wagga Hospital, a committee member and performer for the musical group Wagga Wagga *Liedertafel*, a nominator of a candidate for the government seat of Murrumbidgee and, in July 1885, recipient of a special prize of £5 5s for “best work done with a three-furrow plough” at the ploughing matches run by the Murrumbidgee Pastoral and Agricultural Association.



The Pastoral Hotel (left) was built in 1865 in Fitzmaurice St. George Baker was on the Board of the Wagga Wagga Hospital (right) in 1885.

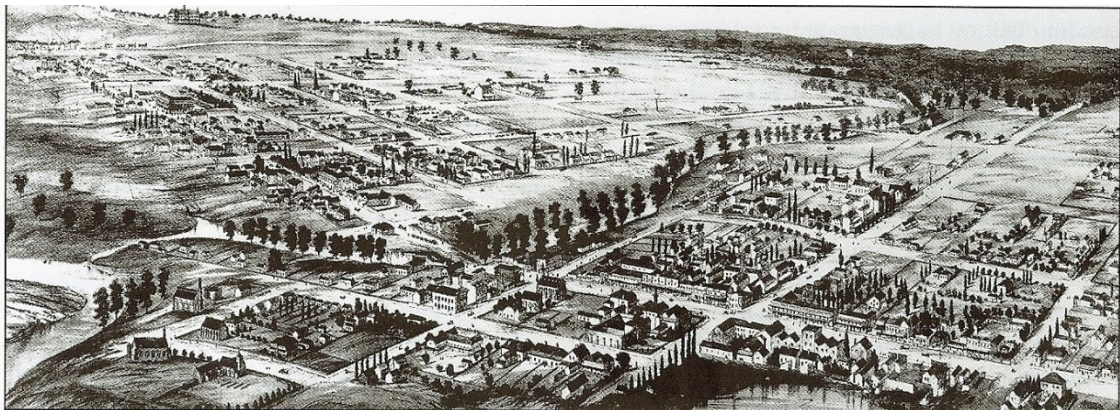
On April 14<sup>th</sup> 1884 Laura Wilkinson Baker married John Chapman at St John’s Church, Wagga Wagga. John was a miller and a widow with two young children. Their first child together, Ethel Sarah Chapman was born on February 4<sup>th</sup>, 1885.

George and Sarah welcomed another ten grandchildren between 1882 and 1886. Ada and Elizabeth Swan were born to Elizabeth and Henry in 1883 and 1884; William Lowe to Emma and Frederick in 1885; George and Hilda Baker to William and Emma in 1884 and 1886; Charles and Isabella had the first three of their children – Charles (1882), Eugene (1883) and Connell (1886); and Elizabeth and Sarah Baker were born to Arthur and Sarah in 1883 and 1885.

Sarah returned to Sydney suffering from chronic hepatitis in early 1885 and lived for some time with her daughter Elizabeth Swan. On March 18<sup>th</sup> 1885, she died at Charles and Isabella’s home on Glebe Rd, Glebe. She was 59 years old.

In 1886 George was again threatened with insolvency. In July he was sued by a storekeeper over a debt of £90/19/10. Mrs Constantine Dyring obtained a court order for that amount covering “goods ... delivered by your petitioner to the said George Frederick Baker and for money lent ... and for money paid by the petitioner for the said George Frederick Baker at his request.” The Wagga bailiff having served the warrant on George reported “No goods and chattels. On the 26<sup>th</sup> July instant Defendant in reply to my questions said ‘I cannot satisfy the warrant neither can I point out any sufficient disposable property to satisfy the writ’.” Dyring immediately sued for insolvency but the Chief Commissioner ruled that insufficient security had been lodged by the petitioner for the prosecution. Dyring did not appear in person, and the matter lapsed.

George relinquished the licence of the hotel and returned to Sydney in late 1886 or early 1887.



Panoramic view of Wagga Wagga in 1883 (Illustrated Sydney News, March 1883). The Pastoral Hotel is on the far side main street (Fitzmaurice St) in the second block to the right of the lagoon.

## George Baker and Mary Angove nee Merritt (1886-1900)

Mary Angove was the second wife of George Frederick Baker. They married in February 1886 when he was 58 and she 54 and they had no children. Although, therefore, she is not a blood relative to the Baker family she led a fascinating life in the middle of one of the greatest periods of Australian history – the Gold Rush. Mary was already twice widowed when she married into the Baker family and, as George pre-deceased her, she buried three husbands (and three sons) before dying herself in 1908 at the age of 76. Mary's story, before she married George, which follows the story of gold in Australia from Cornwall to Ballarat to Gulgong is covered in a separate chapter.

George Baker and Mary Angove married in St Philips Church, on York St in Sydney. He is still living at the Pastoral Hotel in Wagga Wagga at that stage and his occupation is listed as a brewer. At the time of the marriage Mary was living at "Brighton", 9 Mansfield St, Glebe. By virtue of her successful business activities on the New South Wales goldfields, Mary was a wealthy widow. It is uncertain where and how they met.

Possibly this was in Glebe as George's son Charles also lived there. The family, though, believes that they met well before Sarah Baker died in 1885. If so, they may have met in Wagga as Mary was a well-known publican in Cootamundra from 1877 until 1883 or 1884 while George was in Wagga. It is also possible that they met many years before that when George spent time around Hill End in the early 1870s, when Mary was at nearby Gulgong.

After leaving Wagga and the Pastoral Hotel George returned to Sydney and resumed work as a commercial traveller (a travelling salesman). In the Sands directory for Sydney in 1887 he is listed at Mansfield St, Glebe (Mary's house). In 1888 he and Mary were living in McArthur St, Ultimo; and in 1889 his address, probably a business one, is 444 Castlereagh St in the city.

George and Mary then moved to Concord which was a rural area on Sydney's western fringe. As late as 1921, well after the death of George and Mary, only 11,000 people lived in the municipality.

They lived at "Oberwinter" on Sydney St, Concord. From 1890 or 1891 until his death George was an Alderman of Concord Municipal Council which had been founded in 1883. He retired from business activities in around 1894 – his last advertisement in the Sydney Morning Herald for the sale of an orchard at Ryde was placed on December 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1893. Mary continued to be the absentee landlord of the Albion Hotel in Cootamundra until at least 1900 when her son John McCulloch was the licensee.

George's youngest daughters Julia and Ada married Frederic Grant and Charles Hall respectively in 1877.



*Concord Road, looking north towards Concord West, in 1918. Land has been cleared and roads made ready for subdivision but large-scale suburban development has not yet taken place. (Mitchell Library, Sydney)*

The Sydney Morning Herald of July 4, 1900 reported:

“The death of Alderman George Frederick Baker, of Concord, occurred suddenly at his residence, Sydney-street, Concord, yesterday. The deceased gentleman was 72 years of age, and had been a resident of the colony for 45 years. For the last nine years he was an alderman of the Concord municipality, and during his connection with the borough he took a keen interest in its progress. He was at one time engaged as an auctioneer and commercial traveller, but had relinquished active business for some years. He had enjoyed good health until a few months back, and his death was unexpected. On returning to his home on Monday evening he had complained of shortness of breath, and at an early hour yesterday he was taken ill. He passed away peacefully at 6 o’clock. Dr Mills, of Strathfield, was sent for, and pronounced the cause of death to be syncope. The deceased gentleman was held in high regard by his fellow aldermen and the residents. He was a native of Deal, Kent. He leaves a widow and a large family, all grown up.”

George left an estate valued at £110 /9s. The only significant asset was a property in Strawberry Hills (his old home in Otter or Devonshire St perhaps) valued at £100.

By the time George died he had 44 living grandchildren – twelve grandchildren had died in childhood, and one was yet to be born. He narrowly missed being a great grandfather as the first of that generation was born in 1901. Eventually there would be at least 111 great-grandchildren, and there may be some branches of the family that we have not fully identified.

Mary continued to live at Sydney St for a few years and then moved to the Haberfield / Summer Hill area a little closer to Sydney city where she lived with her daughter. She died in 1908.



Parramatta Rd, Concord in approximately 1920 and the Baker family grave at Rookwood Cemetery where George and Mary Baker are buried.



## ***Baker Family Honour Roll***

Many of George and Sarah's descendants served in the Armed Forces. I have included in this list not only direct descendants but also members of the extended family including spouses and step-children. The list is probably not complete – especially for conflicts after World War II where the records are not as readily accessible.

Four members of the family were killed in action, two were prisoners of war and many were wounded or suffered illness as a result of their service. One of them, Reginald Waterson, was honoured with the Distinguished Flying Medal for his contribution.

<p><b><u>The Great War (1914-1918)</u></b></p> <p>Baker, Arthur Richard            Baker, Connell Raymond            Baker, Eugene James            Baker, Leo Bernard            Baker, William George            Barber, George Foster            Burnaby, Ernest Arthur *            Chapman, Charles Cyril            Crawford, Arthur Bruce            Irving, Robert Norval            Richards, Hubert Eric            Worthington, Norman Alfred</p> <p><b><u>World War II (1939-1945)</u></b></p> <p>Ager, Arthur William            Ager, Wallace Hugh Joseph            Austin, Edward Robert Vincent            Baker, Charles Tasker            Baker, Connell Vincent            Baker, Eugene Carmen            Baker, Eugene James            Baker, Keith Noel            Baker, Leo Bernard            Baker, Rex Raymond            Baker, Thomas Rainford            Baker, William Fredrick            Batcheldor, George Ronald            Brown, Edward Charles            Carroll, Leonard Arthur            Chapman, John Graham (Jock)            Chapman, Sonia Georgina            Connelly, Raymond Reginald            Crawford, Arthur Bruce            Cordingley, Charles Alan            Edgerton, Ernest            Evans, Sydney            Garrard, Edward Hatsell            Grant, Eric George            Grant, Frederic Norman *</p>	<p>Griffiths, Thomas Martin            Harris, Ronald Sydney            Hawse, John Kevin            Houston, Henry MacIntyre            Houston, William Archibald Fraser *            Irving, Joan Grace            Irving, John Vincent            Keogh, John            Longman, Keith Cyril            Lowe, Robert George            Lowe, William Ernest            Madden, John Gabriel            Mahon, John Francis            Marshall, Joyce Eileen            Neave, Frederick John            Northwood, John Henry            Parmeter, George Arnold            Pickford, Claude #            Reynolds, Joseph Pearse            Richards, Douglas John *            Richards, Gordon Eric            Richards, Peter            Tyler, Gordon Winchester            Tyler, Kenneth Leicester            Tyler, Mervyn Grant            Waterson, Reginald Charles (Distinguished Flying Medal)            Watson, Alec Gordon            Welch, Max Augustus #            Wilkinson, Gordon Wilfred            Willson, Harry Frederick            Wombwell, Mavis Joyce            Worthington, Gregory Charles            Worthington, Leo Vincent            Worthington, Norman Alfred (Tony)            Worthington, Phillip</p> <p><b><u>Vietnam War</u></b></p> <p>Baker, Brian Connell</p> <p>* Killed in Action            # Prisoner of War</p>
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Further details of most of these stories are given throughout this chapter. Not all of the family members fought overseas, but most of them saw active service in Europe, Africa, New Guinea or in the Northern Territory. While it is not my intention to make this a record of either of the World Wars, the number of family members involved and the fact that for many their war service records contain the most detailed information that we know about them makes it impossible to ignore.

While George and Sarah Baker were not alive to experience it, they had 40 grandchildren living at the time of the Great War and six served. In addition four of their granddaughters' husbands also served.

Of their 111 great grandchildren, 53 served in World War II or were married to servicemen (or servicewomen). This is an amazing 48% of the family at this generation who were directly involved which means almost the entire family had a son, grandson or brother on active service.

These numbers do not include those members of the family who contributed in other ways.

- Arthur Wilkinson Baker worked as an instructor in the Red Cross Toy Workshops training returned World War I invalids for civilian work that they could accomplish despite serious injuries.
- In the Second World War, Charles McDonald was ruled medically unfit but worked for the American Army in Brisbane where General MacArthur had his headquarters.
- Harold Gibbens was an executive with Coote and Jorgensen an automotive engineering company that manufactured transmission systems for tanks and other military vehicles and munitions equipment.
- Trevor Swan was a senior government economist in the Department of War Organisation of Industry and afterwards for the Department of Post-War Organisation.
- Arthur Waterson worked at RAAF bases in Darwin and Newcastle, after World War II although he was not a serving member of the RAAF.

Due to the scarcity of documentation we will never know the full extent of this home front support.

## William Frederick Baker (1852 – 1899)



William Frederick Baker was born in Deal, Kent, in 1852. He was the third child and oldest son of George and Sarah.

Do you think you can sometimes see a person's character in a photo? If so, the picture of William as a child with his younger brother, left, appears to speak volumes. Compared to the angelic face of his brother Charles, William looks strange to say the least - stiff, distant and unengaged.

Or perhaps, knowing his subsequent story is influencing the way I look at him. For William's life was not a pleasant one.

Born in Kent, he arrived with his parents and three siblings in 1854 at just two years of age. He worked for the P.N. Russell & Co Foundry, famous as a difficult place to work, as a railway carriage builder and carpenter.

The first we hear of his troubles are when he was admitted to the Gladesville Hospital for the Insane at the age of 22 suffering from melancholia or, as we would call it today, depression.

He was admitted on November 19<sup>th</sup> 1874, the stated cause of his melancholia being overwork. He was said to be a teetotaler and did not smoke and, although "considered weak in intellect", was a hard worker having recently finished his apprenticeship and regularly putting in long hours. He had been low spirited for about three weeks, and had talked and written about committing suicide.

The comments made on admission state that "he is a mild looking young man whose appearance is that of slight mental deficiency and who looks older than his stated age – his face being sad and care-worn and his face beginning to turn grey. He is very quiet in demeanour tormented by all sorts of morbid thoughts which prevent him sleeping, and inclined to take a gloomy view of his past present and future. He says that he has never succeeded in anything he has undertaken, has always been different from other people, and for years has been very low-spirited at times but has never told anyone of it. He does not appear to have any fixed delusions but his sadness often impels him to thoughts of self-destruction."

For months he was a troublesome patient – climbing trees and threatening to throw himself out, attempting to strangle himself with a necktie, escaping from the attendants often, even swimming down the river. He was described as "a most suicidal patient and is very cunning in attempting to escape".

From April 1875 though, he started to improve. His suicidal thoughts disappeared, he gained weight and general health, and became increasingly "rational, cheerful and very useful", although still noted to be "slightly weak-minded".

He was discharged on December 24<sup>th</sup> 1875 after just over a year of treatment.

He continued to work as a railway carriage maker and, at the age of 26, married Ellen Eliza Emily Payne at St Thomas Church Balmain on August 17<sup>th</sup> 1878. Ellen was 19 years of age and the daughter of Frederick Payne, a storekeeper.

William and Ellen lived at 14 Moodie Street, on the corner of Cambridge Street, in Balmain (also considered to be in Rozelle). They had eight children. The first three were boys - Frederick George Gower Baker was born in 1880 and died of convulsions in June 1881 at 16 months of age. Arthur William Henry was born in 1882, George Leslie in 1884. Then came five girls- Hilda May (1886), Florence Emily (born September 1887, died January 1888), Eva Eliza (1889), Alice Winifred (1891) and Ellen Beatrice, known as Nellie, in September 1897.

In 1885 or 1886 William was again admitted to the Gladesville Asylum but we have not yet seen any records for this admission.



By April 1899 William was 47 years of age and working as an inspector of railway carriages based at Redfern railway station and apparently a valued employee.

Redfern Station at this time was the main railway terminus for Sydney. Note the line of horse drawn cabs along the far side of Devonshire Street which can be seen in the middle left of the photo (left – from the Powerhouse Museum Tyrell Collection). The horse bus is about to depart, and the tram lines head north towards Circular Quay.

This historic station was demolished shortly after the new Central Station was built a few hundred metres to the north of Devonshire St in 1906. The station further south known as Eveleigh was renamed Redfern and is the site of the current Redfern railway station.

William and his family were well liked in their Balmain neighbourhood – he and Ellen had lived in the same house for 21 years. Their eldest child Arthur was 16 and working, and George was at nearby Balmain College. Their youngest daughter Nellie was a year and a half old and a favourite of both parents.

One day at Redfern Station, William stepped out of a railway carriage which he had been examining and was nearly hit by a passing train. It was a great shock and appeared to greatly unsettle him. At first he kept working but a week later was confined to his bed suffering from nervous prostration. Shortly after this he said to his wife “I have nasty thoughts in my head. I have been thinking how I can murder the baby. I wish there was someone here.” Ellen said she called in her neighbour who found a razor in William’s pocket and removed it. After that she thought her husband quiet and melancholy.

On May 9<sup>th</sup> 1899 William was still at home. In the morning he appeared to be cheery and his physical health had improved. He was framing some pictures with his daughter playing at his feet when his wife left the house about 2.30pm to attend the nearby school where her son was to be presented with a medal. Just after 3 o’clock William informed their neighbour, Mrs Agnes Lorenzo, over the fence that he had killed his daughter. “For God’s sake come and see what I have done” he said, then when she appeared not to believe him, “I did it”. Mrs Lorenzo sent a message to Ellen asking her to come home urgently and, when she arrived they went into the front bedroom where they found the child suspended from the bedpost by a piece of window cord. They took the girl down and removed the cord but, although warm, she was quite dead. William told them “I don’t know why I did it. Don’t ask me.”

The police were called from nearby Rozelle station and Constable Rankin found William in one of the back rooms. He was agitated. When asked “Who killed the child?” William replied “I did.” “What did you do it with?” “I strangled it with a rope. I don’t know why I did it ... there was something came over me that I couldn’t resist.”

When the Coroner asked at the inquest whether he wanted to say anything, William separated his arms as far as the handcuffs would allow, and replied “I have nothing to say, only this, that I’ve been afflicted all my life”.

Charged with wilful murder, and held at the Darlinghurst Gaol, William Baker appeared before the Chief Justice on June 1<sup>st</sup> and pleaded guilty. The Chief Justice asked him “Had you not better withdraw that plea and take your trial by jury?”

“No; I feel that I have done enough in what I have done, in the crime that I have done. I cannot do any more.” Was William’s reply. The Chief Justice again advised him to withdraw the plea. There was a lengthy discussion, His Honour trying to get William to withdraw, and Baker refusing even after retiring for a discussion with his counsel.

Eventually the Chief Justice remanded the case until the following day, again urging William to allow the case to go before a jury. Baker said he felt very sorry for what he had done, thought it over very seriously, and wanted to plead guilty. “I cannot lie”, he said. His Honour refused to consider this a plea. The following morning, asked if he had reconsidered, William replied “I plead not guilty, on the advice of my solicitors”.

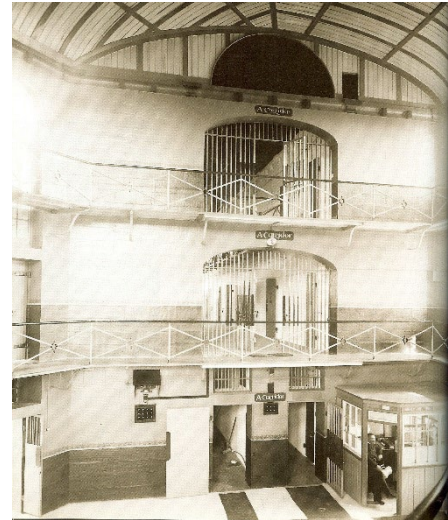
“Very proper advice”, His Honour replied.

The evidence was presented to the jury, along the same lines as the inquest had heard. The Government Pathologist then gave evidence saying that William’s behaviour at the inquest showed a state of mental collapse and told the court that while at Darlinghurst Gaol William had told him of the impulses to murder his children that he had experienced since the shock at Redfern Station, and that he had prayed nightly for the strength to resist the urges until the fateful afternoon when he could not resist. After a few minutes consultation, and without any defence evidence being presented, the jury returned a verdict of not guilty, on the grounds of insanity. William was returned to Darlinghurst Gaol, to be held at the Governor’s pleasure.

The final chapter for William Frederick Baker was played out six weeks later. William had shown suicidal tendencies and therefore been placed in a padded cell and watched continuously – usually by both a warder and another prisoner. On July 12<sup>th</sup>, about 1pm, the prisoner who was supposed to be watching him went to report to muster. On returning he found that William had thrown himself 25 feet off a balcony after climbing over a 4 foot railing. He had a fractured skull and died instantly. A verdict of suicide while of unsound mind was returned by the coroner.



The interior buildings of Darlinghurst Gaol, now part of the National Art College (top: in 1891 painted by Henry Louis Bertrand and today).



Entrance to the gaol in the late 1800s (below left) and a typical balcony in one of the Darlinghurst cell blocks.

Although William may have felt that he was afflicted his whole life, for his family the degeneration was sudden. From being a normal inner suburban family within three months in the year of 1899 they had lost a child, gone through a highly visible murder trial and then had their father and bread-winner incarcerated and commit suicide.



In addition to the baby, Nellie, two of Ellen and William's children had already died by this stage. Frederick had died of convulsions at 16 months of age in 1881. Florence died at 3 months of age of marasmus in 1888. Their daughter Eva was an invalid and suffered from tuberculosis of the hip. She died in 1915 at the Newington Asylum – a state facility on the Parramatta River which was originally the home of the explorer John Blaxland (left). She was 25 years old.

On 20<sup>th</sup> February 1902 Ellen remarried. Her second husband was John Donnelly, a wool roller, who was 3 years her junior. They lived at 21 Shepherd St Ryde until she died in 1942. John died in approximately 1943. They had no further children.

**Arthur William Henry Baker** was seventeen years of age when his father died. He became a tram driver and in 1909 he married Mabel Lavinia Jones. They had three children – William Fredrick was born in 1910, Nellie Lavinia named after Arthur's ill-fated sister in 1912, and George Arnold in 1913. Nellie died at 7 months of age of gastro-enteritis. Arthur and Lavinia divorced in 1918, and Arthur died in October that same year of malignant endocarditis. Lavinia then married Frederick Boyd and had two further children Harold and Elaine. The Baker and Boyd children were brought up together.

William married Rae Elsie Petersen known as Elsie, was a joiner, and served as a sapper (engineer) in WW2. With the 27<sup>th</sup> Field Company of Engineers he was sent to Merauke in the Netherlands East Antilles (now Papua) in June 1944 for a planned offensive along the southern New Guinea Coast. The operation was cancelled and he returned to Australia in September. In November though he went back to Merauke and stayed until May 1945. They had three children, Ross, Rae and Jill and lived in Hurstville and Bexley North. William died in 1996 and Elsie in 2000.

Arnold was a moulder in Hurstville, married Beryl Iliffe and had one daughter Annette. Later Arnold worked as a bus driver and they moved to Bexley. Arnold died in 1987, and Beryl in 2002.

**George Leslie Baker** became a Timber Clerk (or Tallyman) and married Amelia Goddard in 1910. They lived at 17 Campbells Ave, Lilyfield and then 12 Loch Marie Parade, Rhodes. They had three children – Rhoda, George and Keith. George died of diphtheria at 18 months of age in 1915. Amelia Baker died in 1947, George in 1967 in Manly.

Keith Baker served in the militia in World War II, training with the 4<sup>th</sup> Infantry Battalion and then transferring to the Sydney University Regiment. He married Doris Dawkins in 1943 and they had two sons. They divorced in 1949 and Keith married his former secretary Shirley Nicholson a few years later – they had a daughter Linda and moved to North Sydney. Keith was an accountant in the motor car industry, became Company Secretary at York Motors, and later a director of Capital Motors who imported the first Japanese cars into Australian from Datsun. The boys, Robert and Ross, remained with their mother and had very little contact with their father. Keith died in approximately 1990. Doris Baker died in 2002.

Robert married Robyn Stokes and had twins – Mark and Todd - who died within 2 days of birth in 1973, and then another son, Craig, and a daughter, Melissa. After Robert and Robyn divorced, he married Patricia Warren in approximately 1982.

Ross Baker married Carolyn Bevan and had a son, Scott, and two daughters Julie and Karen. Ross was an accountant in various NSW government departments, ending his career as General Manager of Sydney Water's Information Services Division in 1990 – the same year that his father Keith died. Ross also followed in George Frederick Baker's footsteps as a passionate political operator – a member of the Liberal Party and advisor to federal and state MPs as well as the Hills Shire Council. Ross died in 2010.

Rhoda married Joseph Pearse Reynolds in 1935 and they had one daughter Beverley (married Ken Milne). Joseph was a compositor but the army assigned him to a healthcare role. He served at the 112 Convalescent Depot in Tamworth as a clerk and later attended a chiropody course. While in Tamworth he managed to strain his thigh, tear his thigh and tear the medial meniscus in his knee. In 1944 the 112<sup>th</sup> ACD moved to Lae in New Guinea then with the 115<sup>th</sup> ACD he went to New Britain in 1945. He returned to Australia in 1946. Rhoda and Joseph separated shortly afterwards and divorced. He remarried Holly Curtis in 1958, Rhoda did not remarry. Holly died in 1973, Rhoda died in 1985 and Joseph in 1994.

**Hilda May Baker** married Alfred George Osborne in 1911 and had two children – George and Donald. They lived at 29 Tyrell St, Gladesville and Alfred died in 1931. Hilda died in 1956, still living in the same house.

George Osborne married Elvire Chegwidden in 1942. He was an ironworker and they lived at Gladesville. They had three children – June, Paul and George (who died in 1991). George and Elvire moved to a nursing home and died within four days of each other in August 1990.

Donald Osborne married Nellie Donald in 1949. He was a cutter, and they lived in Ryde. They had two children, Cheryl and Mark. Donald died in 2010 in Launceston, Tasmania.

**Alice Winifred Baker** married Arthur Willson in 1920. They lived at 17 Pearson St, Gladesville until the mid-1930s. They then moved to Manly. In 1936 they were at 26 Lauderdale Avenue and Arthur became a garage proprietor. By 1943 Arthur was a house repairer and they moved to 21 Alexander Street. Alice died in 1961 at their residence 14 Woorarra Ave, Narrabeen North. It is clear that even if she knew the background of her father she did not tell Arthur – for her death certificate he gave John Donnelly's name as her father, and "Helen Baker" as her mother's maiden name. Arthur died in 1964.

Alice and Arthur had one son Harry Frederick Willson who was born in 1922 and served in World War II. He was an assistant at a drug warehouse when he signed up in late 1940. He served as a gunner with the 233 and 551 Light Anti-Aircraft Batteries in Townsville and, from August 1943 to August 1944, in Port Moresby and Lae. After a year back in Australia, including a bout of Malaria, he shipped out again for Labuan Island off the coast of North Borneo in November 1945. By then he was with the Water Transport Group signals department and, given that this was after the Japanese surrender, he was probably helping with the transport of troops back to Australia. He, himself, returned to Australia in February 1946 and was discharged in May. He married Mavis Wombwell in 1950 and they lived first in Curl Curl. They had one son that we know of – David Arthur who died at the age of 4 of an infection and bronchitis in 1960; and a daughter Helen Violet. In 1966 they lived at 19 Glen St, Belrose and in 1980 in Springwood.

Mavis had also served in World War 2. She was a ledger keeper with Farmer & Co, a central Sydney department store, when she volunteered in January 1943. She had 6 years experience operating accounting machines and was assigned as a clerk to RAAF Headquarters at Victoria Barracks in Melbourne.

In October 1945 she transferred back to Sydney, serving at the Personnel Depot and then at the Eastern Area HQ at Point Piper. She was discharged as Acting Sergeant in October 1946.



Victoria Barracks in St Kilda Rd, Melbourne was RAAF Headquarters throughout World War 2. 'Kilmory', at 6 Wentworth St, Point Piper, was commandeered from Sir Alexander MacCormick to act as RAAF Eastern Area Headquarters in May 1942. It is now a Franciscan Retreat.

## Charles Baker (1853 – 1920)

George and Sarah's fourth child, Charles, was born in Deal, Kent on June 5<sup>th</sup> 1853 and was less than one year old when the family arrived in Sydney in April 1854. Not much is known of his childhood but he was apparently a very good sportsman. He was a regular competitor and "participated in many triumphs both in pedestrianism and cricket" at the Albert Street Ground in Redfern according to his very brief obituary in the Sydney Morning Herald. Charles participated in the longer distance races in the late 1860s and early 1870s and was a regular winner and place-getter. At the same time, a William Baker was the champion walker – was this his elder brother perhaps?



As a young adult he had a turbulent time. On January 24<sup>th</sup> 1876, aged 22, living at home with his parents in Devonshire Street and giving his occupation as an Ironmonger, he married Frances Janet Franklin (believed to be pictured at left) at the Presbyterian Church in Palmer Street, Woolloomooloo.

The witnesses were John J McGlade and Mary Ann Jackson (not family to our knowledge) and no details of either the bride or groom's parents are listed on the certificate. That this was an elopement and the marriage occurred without the knowledge of their families is seemingly confirmed two years later.

For on 5<sup>th</sup> January 1878, Charles and Frances married again. This time the ceremony was held at the bride's residence in Redfern, William Bradley of the Congregational (Methodist) Church officiating, and the witnesses were Sarah Helen Franklin and Laura Baker (sisters of Frances and Charles respectively).

It is understood from members of the family that neither the Franklin or Baker families approved of this match. Parental pressure must have been strong if it was easier for the couple to marry again than to convince their parents that they were already married. Perhaps one of the reasons for the families' disapproval was that Frances had been diagnosed sometime in 1876 with phthisis (tuberculosis) and in those days this was a disease with a poor prognosis and was very contagious. Her older sister Sarah also had the disease and died in 1884.

In August 1878 a son was born – Lancelot George – but sadly he died in December of that same year. The cause of death was given as atrophy (since birth). They were living in Napoleon Street, Balmain. The following year, now living in Campbell Street, Newtown, brought joy – birth of a daughter Frances Elizabeth on October 30<sup>th</sup> 1879 – followed by sadness as Charles' wife and Frances' mother succumbed to tuberculosis, exacerbated by the stress of delivery, just 14 days later at the age of 25.

As a young widower, Charles Baker decided to marry Isabella Boyle, an Irish girl of the same age, who had come with her family to Australia in 1863 from Falcarragh in County Donegal. However Charles still had two problems. Firstly, Isabella was Catholic and secondly, she was already married. Isabella's Catholicism was a problem not only for the Baker family - the Franklins were very strict Methodists. In order to marry Isabella, Charles had to give up his daughter. In September 1880 he entered a deed of agreement with the girl's grandmother Elizabeth Franklin, agreeing that his one year old daughter would "live with and be adopted brought up educated and clothed by the said Elizabeth Franklin as her own daughter". The deed further specified that Frances would be brought up and educated according to the tenets of the Congregational Church.

Frances became a schoolteacher, taught at the International Correspondence School which later became School of the Air, and was a Methodist lay preacher. She had no further contact with her father until visiting him on his death-bed. However she was well known to other members of his family – notably the family of Elizabeth and Henry Swan to whom she was known as Auntie Fan (pictured with the Memorandum of Agreement on the following page). She never married and lived to the ripe old age of 91.

Isabella Boyle had also had a troubled time since arriving in Australia, and it is tempting to see the two of them as fellow wounded birds when they got together and determined to marry. Charles had married against the wishes of his family and then lost his only son and his wife within 15 months, leaving him alone with a daughter.

In 1873, then aged 19, Isabella had married Edward Paul Thomas, the son of a convict, who was abusive, beat her regularly and apparently abandoned her after 2 and a half years to live with a prostitute. They had two children. Elizabeth was born only 3 months after the wedding and died at 5 weeks, and a younger daughter Sarah born in 1874 who was now 6 years of age.

The family had always understood that Isabella's first husband had died, and she described herself as a spinster when she wed Charles. However the truth is that she petitioned for divorce on 30<sup>th</sup> July 1880, and this was granted on the grounds of adultery and cruelty. This was a courageous thing to do in Australia in 1880, and it was only since 1873 that divorce had been legalised in the colony of New South Wales. Previously divorce could only be granted by a specific act of the English parliament – impossible in Australia. In order to obtain a divorce in 1880 it was necessary to prove either incestuous or bigamous adultery by the husband, adultery coupled with cruelty, or a desertion of over two years. Isabella's deposition alleged adultery, cruelty and desertion. Her description of Edward Thomas's behaviour in her divorce deposition is truly horrid, although exaggerations were often made. She describes numerous episodes of violence very specifically including being hit while pregnant and with her baby daughter in her arms. The decree nisi became absolute on 20<sup>th</sup> September 1881 and she married Charles Baker four days later in St Mary's Cathedral, Sydney.

Memorandum of Agreement entered  
 into this ~~10th~~ day of November in the year of our  
 Lord one thousand eight hundred and eighty between  
 Charles Baker of Dartmouth of the Colony of  
 New South Wales Ironmonger and <sup>Elizabeth</sup> ~~the~~ Franklin of  
 Sydney in the said Colony Widows Widow in con-  
 sideration of the <sup>Elizabeth</sup> ~~agreement~~ entered into herein on the  
 part of the said <sup>Elizabeth</sup> ~~Charles Baker~~ the said Charles Baker  
 has agreed and does hereby agree that his daughter Frances  
 Elizabeth Baker shall from the date of these presents live  
 with and be supported brought up educated and clothed in  
 by the said <sup>Elizabeth</sup> ~~the~~ Franklin as her own <sup>Elizabeth</sup> ~~father~~ the said  
 Charles Baker giving up to the said <sup>Elizabeth</sup> ~~the~~ Franklin all  
 authority and control over her the said Frances Elizabeth  
 Baker which he has her father has or may have and the  
 said <sup>Elizabeth</sup> ~~the~~ Franklin for herself her executors and admin-  
 istrators truly covenant with the said Charles Baker  
 that she will from the date of these presents keep the  
 said Frances Elizabeth Baker in good and respectable  
 order with necessary and competent meat drink washing  
 lodging and apparel suitable for the position of a daughter  
 of the said <sup>Elizabeth</sup> ~~the~~ Franklin and will also have the said  
 Frances Elizabeth Baker properly taught and educated  
 and will also supply and in case of necessity keep the  
 said Frances Elizabeth Baker properly supplied with  
 medical advice and medicines And also that the  
<sup>Elizabeth</sup> ~~said~~ Baker may with the consent of her <sup>Elizabeth</sup> ~~the~~ said  
<sup>Elizabeth</sup> ~~the~~ Franklin visit this said daughter Frances Elizabeth  
 Baker at reasonable times And further that the  
 said Frances Elizabeth Baker shall be brought up  
 and educated according to the tenets of the  
 Congregational Church And the said Charles  
 Baker doth hereby for himself his executors and admin-  
 istrators that he will not in any way interfere with





Isabella's daughter, Sarah Lillian Thomas, was known as Cissie or Sissie and was brought up as part of Charles and Isabella's family. Sarah married Robert James Madden, a forestry surveyor, on the 24<sup>th</sup> November 1900 at St Brendon's Catholic Church, Annandale. Ruby Baker, her half-sister, was a witness. Sarah lived to the age of 102 and died in 1976.

Charles and Isabella went on to have nine children of their own.

Charles Baker was an ironmonger. An ironmonger was a retailer of metal goods for domestic use – building materials, tools, Victorian fretwork, handles, locks, fencing material, stirrups and metal components of horse riding and carriage gear. These days we would call this a hardware shop. After their wedding they continued to live in Newtown (in Holt Street) but in 1883 moved to 137 Glebe Road (now Glebe Point Rd), Glebe. This was their residence but was possibly also a business address being in the main street of The Glebe, as it was then known, in inner west Sydney.

"Glebe" is an English word for land owned by the church and, indeed, the Glebe area of Sydney was a 160 hectare grant to the Church of England in the early days of the Colony which was subdivided and developed in the 1830s. These properties were further subdivided in the 1840s through the 1870s and a large number of the working class terrace houses from this period remain in the now gentrified inner city suburb.

In the next five years their first four children were born. Charles Eugene George Baker, was born on May 11<sup>th</sup> 1882, Eugene James on 3<sup>rd</sup> November 1883, Connell Raymond in 1886 and Mary Casimir Robina (known as Ruby) Baker on November 5<sup>th</sup> 1887. On Ruby's birth certificate Foss St, Glebe is given as their residential address. It was in 1885 that Charles' mother Sarah Wilkinson Baker died while staying at their Glebe St residence.

In 1889 and 1890 the family lived in Bathurst. They lived in Ranken Street (now Rankin St). Gregory William and Leo Barnard Baker were born here in 1889 and 1980 respectively. The move followed a failure of Charles' Glebe business and he was declared bankrupt in February 1888. We have not yet had the chance to examine the records of the case but an auction was held both for his stock in trade, and of two blocks of land on Proctor Parade in the Waldron Estate at Rookwood.

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>MONDAY, February 6th, at 11 a.m.</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>INSOLVENT ESTATE of CHARLES BAKER,</b> Ironmonger, &amp;c., Glebe.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Removed to Rooms for Convenience of Sale.</p> <p>The Whole of the <b>STOCK-IN-TRADE</b>, comprising</p> <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td>Irons</td> <td>Hammers</td> <td>Pliers</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Chisels</td> <td>Braces</td> <td>Links</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Saws</td> <td>Gimlets</td> <td>Rowlocks</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Tools</td> <td>Brushes</td> <td>Oldrums</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Turnscrews</td> <td>Bolts</td> <td>Levels</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Trowels</td> <td>Screws</td> <td>Washers</td> </tr> </table> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>GENERAL ASSORTMENT of IRONMONGERY, TINWABE,</b> &amp;c. &amp;c.</p> <p><b>B. R. HARRIS and CO.</b> have received instructions from Augustus Morris, Esq., Official Assignee, to sell the above at auction, at the Rooms, 143, Pitt-street, THIS DAY, at 11 a.m.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>WITHOUT RESERVE.</b></p>	Irons	Hammers	Pliers	Chisels	Braces	Links	Saws	Gimlets	Rowlocks	Tools	Brushes	Oldrums	Turnscrews	Bolts	Levels	Trowels	Screws	Washers	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>WALDRON ESTATE, ROOKWOOD.</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>ESTATE of CHARLES BAKER, Bankrupt.</b></p> <p><b>LOTS 10 and 11 of SECTION 8,</b> together having an area of <b>2 ACRES and 16 PERCHES,</b> and with 4 chains frontage to <b>PROCTOR-PARADE,</b> depth 5½ chains. It is near to Auburn Park-road, and not far from residences of Messrs. Delarue and Decent.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>TORRENS' TITLE. FOR POSITIVE SALE.</b></p> <p><b>RICHARDSON and WRENCH</b> will sell by public auction, at the Rooms, Pitt-street, Sydney, on <b>FRIDAY,</b> 24th February, at 11 o'clock.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">The above, at Waldron Estate, Auburn. (1888)</p>
Irons	Hammers	Pliers																	
Chisels	Braces	Links																	
Saws	Gimlets	Rowlocks																	
Tools	Brushes	Oldrums																	
Turnscrews	Bolts	Levels																	
Trowels	Screws	Washers																	

During their time in Bathurst, Charles pursued a mining claim at nearby Sunny Corner. While Sunny Corner's gold rush days were well and truly over by then, some alluvial gold and silver has remained to be found even today. Charles had a small jar of gold dust that he kept as a souvenir of these days. After 2 to 3 years, they returned to Sydney living first at Railway Terrace, Petersham and then at Parramatta Rd in the same suburb where Isabel Mary was born on 18<sup>th</sup> March 1892. By now Charles describes himself as a Furniture Dealer and Salesman.

Shortly after this time he joined the firm of John Keep & Sons, wholesale ironmongers and hardware merchants, with headquarters in Clarence St Sydney and outlets around the state. Charles would work for them for the rest of his career and became a senior officer of the company.

In 1893 they had moved back to Glebe at 123 St Johns Rd (opposite the Glebe town hall and also described at various times as being in Forest Lodge). Clement Bede Baker was born here on September 21<sup>st</sup> 1893 but died of pneumonia at 5 weeks of age – the only one of their 9 children to die as a child. In 1895 they moved to 123 Nelson St Annandale to live with Isabella's father Eugene Boyle. They were to stay here for ten years and their youngest child Grace Veronica was born here in July 1895. Eugene Boyle lived with them until his death in 1902 at Nelson Street.

By 1905 Charles and Isabella had moved to 9 Northumberland Avenue – first described as Petersham and then Stanmore, which was in a row of houses known as "Loftus". Then finally they moved to 13 High St Manly in 1915, which they also named "Loftus". Charles was known for his snowy hair and a long, curly moustache.

Gregory William Baker, their fifth child born while the family were living in Bathurst, was a clerk, aged 22, single and still living with his parents in Stanmore when he became ill with meningitis. He died 4 weeks later on November 30<sup>th</sup>, 1911.

## Charles Eugene George Baker

Known as Chilla to distinguish himself from his father, Charles Baker was the eldest of the siblings and a law clerk. He married Grace Tasker, the daughter of their Northumberland Avenue landlord and neighbour, in 1909. They had six children and lived at 183 Frederick St, Ashfield. He worked for a long time with the city law firm of Clayton Utz.

Chilla and Grace separated in 1936. As Grace's father had provided the finance for their Ashfield house she stayed there and, after a short stint with one of his sons, Chilla went to live with his brother Lee and Rosa. Charles died of a heart attack in 1937, aged 55.

Grace later moved in with her son Clem and died in 1947 while visiting Brisbane.

Charles and Grace had three sons who served in World War II – Tasker, Connell and Thomas.

**Charles Tasker Baker** married Vera May Blenner-Hassett in 1936 and they lived in Concord, and then at Parkes St Flemington near Homebush in Sydney's west. He was known as Tasker or Tas. They had a son John who was premature and died only 30 minutes after being born on April 15<sup>th</sup> 1938. Tasker volunteered for WW2 service and enlisted in June 1940. A bus driver before the war, he was assigned as a motor mechanic in the general transport area. Just a month later he was in hospital with appendicitis and then, unfortunately, his wife Vera died in August 1940 from toxic myocarditis at just 24 years of age. He served in North Africa and the Pacific, his story is covered in more detail below.

After the war, Tasker married Roma Moore. He was again working as a bus driver. They had two children Wendy, who married Buddy, and Toni who married first Danny and then Nigel. We don't know their surnames but Charles and Roma also had four grandchildren Shannon, Cristal, Dena and Danny, and by 1997 two great-grandchildren Jessica & Joshua. Tasker lived at Killarney Vale. He died in 1983, Roma in 1997.

**Connell Vincent (Con) Baker** was born in 1918, six years younger than Tasker, and was a truck driver when he volunteered in 1940. He had suffered an attack of rheumatic fever 4 months before and was rated as temporarily unfit, and not advisable to serve in an active role. He was called up in December 1941 as a technical storeman and served in Queensland at Charters Towers and Townsville and then in the Darwin Base Workshops. He married Vi Philips in 1940 and their eldest son Brian Connell Baker served in the Vietnam War as a Corporal in Army Ordnance. Their other children were Allan and Carol. Con died in 1969 of a heart attack and Vi died in 1998.



**Thomas Rainford Baker (Tom)** was the youngest son of Charles Eugene Baker and Grace Tasker, born in December 1920. At twenty, he was a storeman for a clothing firm when he enlisted to serve in World War 2. He embarked for Palestine, via Bombay, in August 1940 in the ASC (Supply Corps) and spent time at the 7<sup>th</sup> Division Ammunition Subpark before being assigned to the 107 General Transport Company. During this time he was also AWOL twice – in Bombay and Palestine – for less than a day in each case. By the middle of 1942 the unit was back in Australia and they were sent to Pine Creek in the Northern Territory for 18 months.

By July 1944 he was made a Cook Group II and moved to Queensland working in several different transport units and in January 1945 to the 2/21 transport platoon attached to the 21<sup>st</sup> Brigade and took part in the invasion of Balikpapan, Borneo, effectively the last action of the war. He returned to Australia in January 1946 for discharge.



In August 1946 Tom married Enid Josephine Sewell and they moved to Benaroon Rd, Belmore. In 1947 they had a child stillborn. After working as a bus and tractor driver in July 1952 Tom reenlisted. He was assigned as a Plant Operator with the Royal Australian Engineers, responsible for operating tractors, graders and other heavy machinery on building and construction projects with the 20<sup>th</sup> Field Park Squadron. By 1955 he had been promoted to Sergeant. They had two daughters in 1954 and 1955 and moved to Moorebank. By July 1958 his 6 year term was up and he was discharged but applied for reenlistment in October of the same year. Although he had to re-enter as a Private he was assigned to the 25<sup>th</sup> Construction Squadron and promoted again to Sergeant by September 1959.

In April 1960 Enid moved to Hobart. Tom began taking on instruction responsibility with acting rank of Warrant Officer, but he did not complete all the training needed for the rank to be made permanent. By 1963 there were signs of problems – he requested a discharge due to financial hardship. He lists a number of debts and court orders, mostly department store accounts, which total £347 as well as his debt to the Army Relief Trust Fund of £81. On discharge he would be paid out accumulated benefits which he could use to reduce his debt, and he notes that he had already taken that path in 1958. In an interview minute it is noted that “it is quite obvious, and admitted by Sergeant Baker, that he is as much to blame as his wife for incurring the many debts”. Although his request for discharge is approved, somehow it does not take effect as he continues to serve until 1967.

In 1964 Enid moved back to Moorebank. and in 1966 Tom's CO comments on a performance review that he is getting stale as an instructor and despite being extremely good at his job again notes he is an “administrative liability” to his unit due to a lack of ability to handle his personal finances. In May 1967 he was appointed to the Port Moresby construction squadron where he served until November when his discharge request was processed.

At some stage, perhaps because of the financial problems, Tom and Enid separated. They divorced in 1978 and, in 1980, Tom married Mavis Donnelly (nee Shaw) in Brisbane. Mavis was a widow with three grown children. Tom died in Buderim, on the Sunshine Coast, in 2003.

**Leonard Carroll** married **Jo (Grace Josephine) Baker**, the elder sister of Tasker and Con, in 1939. Grace was a nurse at the Prince Henry Hospital. Leonard's war service in Africa and the Pacific is detailed below. They lived in Urana in 1949 and then moved to Wagga Wagga in around 1950. Leonard was a fitter and died in Wagga in 1964. Jo continued to work as a nurse. She died in 1977 in Sydney. They had no children.

There were two other children of Charles and Grace about whom we know little. **John Connell "Jack" Baker** married Perth girl Leta Costello in 1940. He was a plumber and welder. Around 1949 they moved to Wagga Wagga and had two children – Loretta (married John Huthwaite) and Kerrie. Leta died in 1972.

**Clement Eugene Baker** was an engineer and planning officer who married Joan May Gibbs in 1943 and lived in Lidcombe. They had at least two sons.

## ***Isabel Mary Baker***

Isabella and Charles' daughter Isabel married a service man returned from the Great War, Robert Norval (Bob) Irving, in 1921. Before her marriage Isabel was a waitress at the Union Tea Rooms, an upmarket café in Pitt St.

Bob Irving was born in Wangaratta and joined up in Melbourne in March 1915. He left Australia with the 20<sup>th</sup> Battalion in June and, after a brief period of training arrived in Gallipoli in late August, towards the end of the campaign in the Dardanelles. As their training had been shorter than desirable, they remained in mostly quiet areas of the line and saw little action. They were evacuated in December 1915 and, after further training in Egypt were sent to the Western Front in France.

Bob was transferred to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Pioneers, still part of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Division in March 1916, which were initially based in Armentieres. In July the Pioneers were sent to Pozieres to support the Battle of the Somme and were thrown into the front line from July 27<sup>th</sup> due to the huge losses suffered by the AIF's 1<sup>st</sup> Division. They attacked on July 29<sup>th</sup>, their first real action, and again the Australian forces suffered huge losses. After 12 days on the front line the 2<sup>nd</sup> had sustained over 6800 casualties, one of which was Bob Irving. On August 1<sup>st</sup> he was reported suffering gunshot wounds to both arms, including a compound fracture of the right humerus.

The Australians were ultimately successful in taking Pozieres, but that was the end of Bob's part on the front line. He was evacuated to England and initially listed as dangerously ill. He recovered but was returned to Australia in March 1917, and given a medical discharge in June as a Lance Corporal.

Bob and Isabel had three children – Joan Grace (born 1922, married Edward Outred), Veronica Mary "Von" (1923) and John Vincent "Jack" (1924). They lived at 128 Griffiths St, Balgowlah. Bob died in 1944, Isabel in 1978.

Their son **Jack Irving** was a clerk, but during the Second World War served with the 55<sup>th</sup> Australian Dental unit. As a dental equipment mechanic he spent most of his time on Australian training bases but also was in New Guinea in 1944 and 1945. John married Pat Dykes in 1948 and they had two daughters – Monica (married Philip Usher) and Annette (married Bjorn Jenson).

**Joan Irving** also served with the Australian Women's Army Service (AWAS) in WWII. She was a stenographer and already working as a typist at the Paddington Barracks when she enlisted in March 1942. She was assigned to Army Headquarters in Sydney. Apart from a month seconded to Queensland Line of Command she stayed with that unit and was promoted to Staff Sergeant, until transferring to the No 1 Supply Reserve Depot in February 1944. This was the period when her father was ill and he died on February 23<sup>rd</sup> 1944. Over the next year her health also suffered with spells in hospital for appendicitis, fibrositis in her shoulder and otitis. In September she was accidentally injured, suffering from a strained back, bruising to her thigh and abrasions to her knees and hands. She was discharged in May 1945. Joan married carpenter Edward Outred in 1957. They had four sons – Brian, Vincent, James and Christopher – and a daughter Maureen.

**Von Irving** never married, worked as a clerk, and continued to live in the Griffiths St family home after her mother died. She died in 2011 at the age of 87.

## ***Grace Veronica Baker***

**Grace Veronica Baker** was the youngest child of Charles and Sarah. Grace and Isabel were close throughout their childhood and Grace worked as a cashier at David Jones. She and Isabel were childhood friends of Rosa Seidel when they were neighbours and schoolmates – and remained close after Rose married Leo and moved back to Australia after the Great War.

In 1930, Grace was living with the Irvings in Balgowlah but shortly afterwards moved to a flat of her own in Lavender Bay. She also lived for a time with Lee and Rosa.

She married Denis "Dinny" Mulheron in 1938 at the age of 43. They moved to Adelaide immediately after the wedding, and later to Western Australia. Dinny was actually a second cousin – a Gallagher relative of Isabella Boyle. Grace died in 1966, back in Adelaide, and Denis in 1969. They had no children.

Charles Baker died of rheumatic fibrositis, and heart failure, on 26<sup>th</sup> November, 1920 aged 66. He had a long standing heart problem, but his last year had been particularly difficult and he was mostly bed-ridden during this period. His daughter Frances from his first marriage visited him on his deathbed – he had not seen her since giving her up to his mother-in-law almost forty years before.



**BAKER**—The Relatives and Friends of Mrs. C. BAKER and FAMILY, of Loftus, High-street, Manly, are kindly invited to attend the Funeral of their beloved HUSBAND and FATHER, Charles Baker; to leave the Mortuary, Sydney, THIS DAY, at 2.50 p.m., for R.C. Cemetery, Rookwood.

**MR. CHARLES BAKER.**

Mr. Charles Baker, an old-time athlete and cricketer, died on Friday last at Manly. In the days of the old Albert Cricket Ground he was a very fine athlete, and participated on that ground in many triumphs both in pedestrianism and cricket. For a quarter of a century he was connected with the establishment of John Keep and Sons, Limited, where he was held in high esteem, not only by his fellow officers, but by the heads as well. Three of his sons enlisted and served for three years in the war.

Isabella continued to live in High St, Manly until 1923 and then with her daughter Ruby at Austin St, where she died in 1928 of diabetes. Her body was taken by train from Mortuary Station in central Sydney to the Rookwood Catholic Cemetery where she and Charles are buried together.



Charles and Isabella Baker, December 1909



Photo from a family reunion in the 1980s from Gayle Thomsett (nee McDonald). Most, but not all, are descendants of Charles and Isabella.

**Back: Pat Irving, Claude Pickford, Coralie Welch, Lorna Neave (nee Grant), Leo Worthington,  
Cathy Welch, Jack Irving, Phyll Worthington, Phil Worthington;  
Centre: Gordon Watson, Hazel Pickford (nee Swan), Clarice Rosenbloom (nee Swan), Joan Outred (nee Irving),  
Von Irving, Pat Watson (nee Worthington), Meg Worthington (nee Blocker);  
Front: Rosa Holtzberger (nee Welch), Keely Holtzberger, Luke Holtzberger, Sister Hazel Baker.**

## Mary Casimir Robina “Ruby” Baker (1887 – 1939)



Mary Casimir Robina Baker was born to Charles and Isabella Baker on November 5<sup>th</sup> 1887. She was their fourth child, and eldest daughter. Seen above with her eldest three children Greg, Tony and Leo in 1917, she was my great-grandmother. She was known as Ruby.

Her mother Isabella was a good Irish Catholic so we would presume that the unusual middle name Casimir is after Saint Casimir – a Prince of both Poland and Lithuania – who lived from 1458 to 1484. He was vice-regent and administrator of Poland and canonised in 1522 by Pope Adrian VI. He is the Patron Saint of Lithuania, but we do not know why he was a favourite of Isabella.

On the 30<sup>th</sup> November 1912 she married Norman Alfred Worthington, a clerk and civil servant at St Michael’s Catholic Church in Stanmore. The witnesses were her brother Connell and sister Isabel. They met through her brothers who played rugby with Norman for Holwood in the first grade social City & Suburban Union competition.



Their eldest child Gregory Charles, my grandfather, was born on 19<sup>th</sup> October, 1913. He was followed by Tony (christened Norman Alfred) in 1914, Leo in 1916, their only daughter Pat in 1918, and Philip in 1921. Tony and Pat are seen with their mother in the picture at left (with a friend at the far left of the photo).

Norman Worthington volunteered for service in the Great War and trained at Holdsworthy for 18 months before being rejected for “flat feet”. When he presented himself again in 1918 he was accepted and was taken on strength for the Naval & Military Expeditionary Forces as a private. He shipped out to Rabaul in Papua New Guinea in June and served at Kaewiang on the island of Neu Mecklenberg, now New Ireland, off the north east coast of PNG. These islands were part of the northern section of New Guinea which had been under the control of Germany from the latter part of the nineteenth century. Australia, already administering southern New Guinea on behalf of the British, had occupied the German territories at the outbreak of the war. He served in the Medical Corps and was promoted to Corporal.

He returned to Australia in June 1919. In his army service record he gives his address as Loftus, High St, Manly which was Charles & Isabella’s address – were they living with them at that stage or was this just where Ruby stayed while Norman was away?

After the war Norman and Ruby moved to their own house at 23 Austin St, Manly.

Ruby died at the age of 51 in 1939 after suffering for about a year from Addison’s Disease – a rare disease of the adrenal glands – which often, as in Ruby’s case also causes mood swings and melancholia.

Norman lived until 1984 when he died aged 97. The story of the Worthington family will be told in another chapter.

## ***Eugene, Connell and Leo Baker in the Great War***

Three of Charles and Isabella Baker's sons fought in the Great War. Eugene, Connell and Leo Baker all signed up on the same day, October 1<sup>st</sup> 1915. Gene was the eldest being 31 years old and the only one who was married, but also the shortest at 5'3½". Con was 18 months younger and was the stockiest of the three being 5'5" and 154 lbs, 23 lbs heavier than Lee who was the same height. Con's chest measurement was 40" compared to 35" for the other two. Lee was four years younger than Con. All had dark hair but it was Lee who had distinctive curly – even frizzy – hair. All had white collar backgrounds.

The three brothers were all assigned to the 24<sup>th</sup> Australian Services Company – in the divisional train for the newly formed 3<sup>rd</sup> Division under the command of Major-General John Monash. They left for Europe together on the Persic, on 30<sup>th</sup> May 1916 and arrived in Plymouth, UK on July 25<sup>th</sup>. The term Divisional Train referred to the collection of support staff – transport, planning, pay corps, quartermaster, post office etc - responsible for managing the supply depots to provide support to the divisional troops. Amongst the important supplies were building and trenching material, tents and fodder for the horses but of course the main requirement was to manage an ongoing supply of food and fresh drinking water. Con and Lee were Drivers which meant they were responsible for looking after the transport drawn by mules to keep the supplies moving. There were limited numbers of motor vehicles towards the rear, but overwhelmingly horses and mules provided the transport for the soldiers and supplies in the Great War.

Their final training was conducted in Salisbury as they got ready to head to France. During their leave periods they went to London where they caught up with the Seidel family who they had known from being neighbours in Sydney. The Seidels were originally from the Bohemia region of Austria, and had lived in Sydney from around 1902 to 1910. Before and after that they lived in London. When they arrived in the UK, Lee reconnected with Rose Seidel, who he had last known as a young teenager, and they quickly became sweethearts. They promised to marry during Lee's first leave. On arrival in France, Lee almost immediately had an attack of gastritis which needed a couple of weeks in hospital, but soon rejoined his unit.

The Third Division fought in many of the major battles of the Western Front in 1917. Their first was the Battle of Messines where, supported by the Australian and British tunnelers ability to explode huge bombs underneath the German lines (as dramatised in the film *Beneath Hill 60*), they took the important Messines Salient in less than 4 days. The Battle of Broodseinde was next in early October where all five of the Australian Divisions were critical to the most decisive of Allied successes on the western front. Unable to rest, the Third Division was moved straight into further action in the Third Battle of Ypres at Passchendaele where they were repulsed by the German Defences in one of the most telling defeats of the war.

At the end of 1917 Con was transferred to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Division Headquarters, still as a driver. At headquarters it is likely that he was able to drive motorised transport. By 1918 he had moved to the Pay Corps with the rank of Sergeant. Gene and Lee continued to serve side by side until the end of the war.

In 1918 Eugene was able to have 2 weeks leave in the UK in early March, and Lee had 2 weeks in Rome in August. He had not yet been able to get back to London to keep his promise to Rose. In March, the Third Division was rushed back to the Somme region to help stem the German Offensive, halting the enemy advance at Morlancourt and Villers Bretonneux, and fighting in the Battles of Hamel, Amiens, Mont Saint Quentin and the Hindenburg Line.



**Official portrait of the Paymaster of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Australian Division with his staff taken at Blagny on the Western Front, on 9<sup>th</sup> April 1919, before marching out to the London on May 8<sup>th</sup>. Captain R J Phillips, Divisional Paymaster, is centre front. Con Baker is in the front row at the far left. (Image: Australian War Memorial collection)**





A supply detail moves through the ruins of a village on the Western Front, an AASC line of horses, AASC drivers man a convoy of water tank wagons

As the brothers were in the back, I have not gone into details of these battles. The Baker boys would have been well behind the positions of the infantry at the front line and not directly involved in the fighting. This is not to downplay the value of their service – or assume that it was completely free from danger, however, especially when they were delivering food and water to soldiers in the trenches.

In early 1919 all three brothers had leave – Gene in UK, his brothers in Paris - and by late April or early May all three had left France for the UK. Gene was the first to return to Australia, sailing from London on 10<sup>th</sup> May and arriving early July in Sydney. Con continued to serve with the paymaster corps until July 12<sup>th</sup> when he sailed out on the Indarra, arriving home in September.

## Leo Bernard “Lee” Baker

Lee was also scheduled to return to Australia on the Indarra but he applied for leave to remain in the UK and was approved to take a 3 month course of advanced bookkeeping and accountancy at George Williams College on the Tottenham Court Road. He was paid a per diem allowance of 13 shillings and £6 for his fees, as well as being issued with a suit.

He married Rosa Seidel on August 30<sup>th</sup> 1919 at the Church of St Peter in Chains in Stroud Green, London. The date was important as it was the last day on which British war brides qualified for a free passage to Australia.

After completing the course, Lee returned to Australia on the Ypiringa leaving November 21<sup>st</sup> and arriving on January 9<sup>th</sup>, 1920.

Rose was born in Gablonz, Bohemia – then part of Austria, later Czechoslovakia and nowadays the Czech Republic. This is very close to the German border which caused problems for the residents during both world wars. She was the daughter of Gustav Seidler, a fancy goods warehouse manager involved in the imitation jewellery industry, and his wife Auguste (Guste). Gablonz was, and is, renowned for quality glassworks, including costume jewellery and Christmas ornaments.

Gustav and Guste’s two daughters Emy and Rosa were born in Gablonz, after which they moved to London where two further daughters were born but unfortunately died in a flu epidemic in 1896. Then followed three boys – Harry, Wilhelm (Will), and Rudolf (later Robert, and known as Dink). Gustav worked at Lloyd’s Warehouse - a firm which imported the fancy costume jewellery into the UK.

In 1902, facing a lack of employment and poor prospects, Gustav emigrated to Sydney, where the rest of the family joined him in early 1904. For about 8 years the Seidel family lived in Sydney. Gustav found work easily but it was unsatisfying manual labour. They lived first in Manly but then moved to Northumberland Ave, Petersham, in the same group of terrace houses as the Baker family. Rose and Emy quickly became school friends with Isabel and Grace Baker.

Their mother Guste did not take to the Australian climate or ways, and the family returned to London in approximately 1908-1909. The family lived at 7 Coningsby Road, Finsbury Park in London’s north. Rose found work as a clerical assistant with The Globe newspaper in Fleet Street but, when war broke out she volunteered to become a nurse. She worked at the South West Fever Hospital in Stockwell treating refugees from Europe and soldiers returned from the battlefields.

Rose knew Lee and his brother Gregory in Sydney but it was not until the Baker brothers visited the Seidels in wartime 1916 London that the flames of romance were kindled. Lee was based for training in Salisbury and was able to visit London on several occasions. By the time that he was deployed to France he and Rose were engaged and had decided to marry when Lee first had leave. Circumstances intervened – Lee was not able to get back to London until the war ended. At the time of their marriage Lee was 29 years old and Rose 26. Rose could not accompany Lee back to Australia on the Ypiringa but followed a few months later.

Her brother Harry had decamped to Melbourne and joined the AIF, serving at Gallipoli where he suffered a gun shot wound within 2 weeks of arriving. Evacuated to Cairo he then caught enteric fever and was sent back to Australia and discharged. He remained in Melbourne and visited with Rose and Lee regularly until he died in 1953 of Bright’s disease (kidney failure). Will also served with the British Army.

Lee and Rose had five children. Lee worked as an accountant with the United Nail Company, and they lived first at Rockdale and then moved in 1937 to 8 Hastings Road, Ramsgate (later Kogarah).

Beryl was born in 1922, followed by Coralie in 1923 and Hazel in 1925. Then followed two boys, Bernard and Edmund (Ted), in 1931 and 1933.

Like many World War I veterans Lee served in the Volunteer Defence Force (the Australian version of the British Home Guard) in World War II. He served in Sydney with the 10<sup>th</sup> VDC Battalion and as a Bombardier with the Sydney Fixed Defence Battalion until September 1945.

**Hazel Baker** was a nun, known as Sister Gabriel in the order of the Sisters of Mercy. She was a music teacher and, for a long time was based in Broken Hill where her travel was severely restricted. In fact when her father died many years later she was not allowed to come to Sydney for the funeral. Later, as the Catholic orders relaxed their rules, she was able to return to Sydney to the Sans Souci convent and become once again Sister Hazel Baker. After leaving the order she took on part time counselling.



Supplies being unloaded at Anzac Cove, a supply depot and distribution of rations on the beach at Gallipoli.

Although they did not meet until after the second world war, **Coralie Baker**'s husband **Max Welch** had served as a Gunner with the 3<sup>rd</sup> Anti-Tank Regiment (the 2/3 AT). He enlisted on his 20<sup>th</sup> Birthday, May 24 1940, and in November of that year they were shipped to Palestine and Julis Camp just outside Jerusalem for training. He was taken prisoner in Africa and saw out the war as a POW. His story is told in a later section below.



Max and Coralie met as he was being discharged, as Coralie performed volunteer work at the Anzac Buffet in Hyde Park. They went on to have 11 children. From 1947 they lived in or near Adaminaby in the Snowy Mountains. Max worked as a station hand on a variety of stations. He had drawn a Soldier Settlement Block of 1400 acres on the Murrumbidgee after returning from the war, however due to bureaucratic planning processes this took a long time to proceed to a formal offer.

They moved to Yagonie Station near Moree in northern New South Wales in the 1953 and then to nearby Kelly's Gully where Max gave up his work with the Shire and they bought and operated the Post Office store. They moved to Brisbane in 1975.

At left: Coralie Welch is at back right with Hazel Pickford in front of her and Clarice Rosenbloom in the blue top. At front is Coralie's daughter Rosa Holtzberger and grandchildren Keely and Luke.

Coralie is an author, her novels including 'The Time of My Life', an autobiography; 'Leg Irons and Lace', the story of one of Max's family ancestors who came to Australia as a convict; and 'The Bohemian Girl'. The last book is the story of Rose Seidel and her family from her early childhood in Bohemia until her death in Sydney in 1980. Coralie undertook most of the original research on the Baker family history and has shared it widely throughout the family. Max died in 1988.

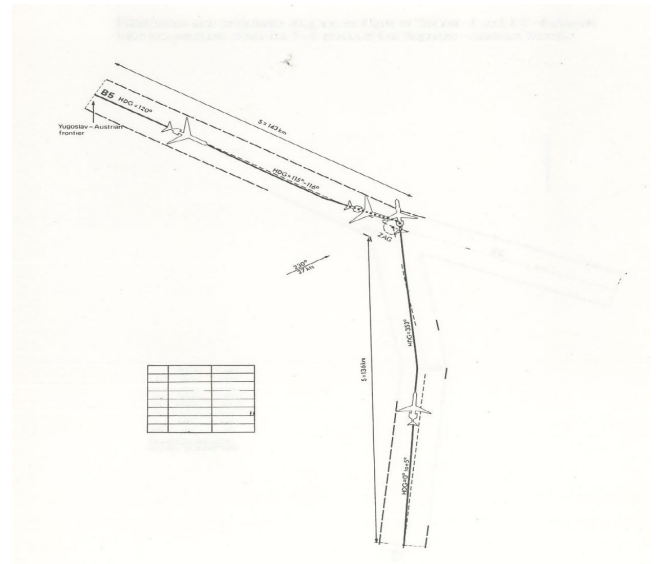
**Bernard Baker** married June Moreton in 1951. He was an engineer and they had three children – Glen, Janet and Mark. They lived in Armidale, then Maitland and Engadine, south of Sydney and backing onto the Royal National Park. June died in 2004 and Bernard in 2012.

Edmund "Ted" Baker is a fitter and turner, and a draughtsman, and married Betty Hatchwell. They live at Bradbury, near Cambelltown.

**Beryl Baker** and John Northwood married in 1943. He was known as Jack and was a clerk and businessman. They had six children – Vincent, Denis, Moira, Ray, Barbara and Carmel.

After their son Ray's wedding in 1976 they embarked on a holiday in Europe. Beryl had enjoyed her trip to Europe with her mother but been frustrated that it consisted mostly of visiting old relatives while she yearned for more sight-seeing. After visiting many countries in a most enjoyable trip they left London for home via Istanbul. Their flight, BA476 from London to Istanbul, was a British Airways Trident jet (pictured below) carrying 54 passengers and 9 crew.

Following a sequence of air traffic control errors it collided with a DC-9 aircraft operating flight JP550 for Inex Adria, a Yugoslav charter airline, carrying a group of West German tourists from Split, Yugoslavia, to Cologne. The DC-9 had been allowed to climb through the flight level already occupied by the BA flight and they collided above the Zagreb airport navigational beacon. The left wing of the DC9 sliced through the BA aircraft's cockpit killing the flight crew instantly. At the time this was the worst ever aviation accident with all 181 passengers and crew on the two aircraft killed.



Lee Baker's heart troubles started with an angina attack in 1958 which prompted his retirement. He recovered but was to have a series of further attacks over the years, finally succumbing in 1967. Rose was able to take a trip back to London to visit her sister and brothers, and old family friends, accompanied by Beryl. She sold the family home and lived with Coralie, Bernie and Ted for periods, but mostly with Beryl. When Beryl and John died in 1976 this was an unsurmountable shock, she started to lose her sight and moved to the convent infirmary at Sans Souci. She had an accident which fractured her hip, and died on 20<sup>th</sup> December, 1980.

## **Eugene James "Gene" Baker**

Eugene Baker and Emily (nee Francis) who were married in 1910 had one son Eugene Carmen Baker. They lived at 41 The Crescent, Fairlight – a harbourside house on North Harbour that Emily inherited from her father. Like Con, he also described himself as a Company Manager or Company Secretary and on return from the war was employed as a bookkeeper by Allied Industries. When Allied Industries failed shortly after, Lee arranged for Gene to join him at United Nail & Wire Netting and they worked together until retirement.

Father and son both served in World War II. Eugene senior volunteered in April 1942, aged 58, and like Leo was assigned to a Volunteer Defence Corps Battalion (the 7<sup>th</sup>). In early 1945 he also had 2 months in the Sydney Fixed Defence Battalion as a gunner. He served in Sydney throughout and was discharged in September 1945. After the war Gene and Emily moved to a smaller place a flat at 28 The Crescent, just over the road from their previous place.

Eugene and Emily's son **Eugene Carmen Baker** was 32 years old when he enlisted in January 1942. He lived in Maitland, in the Hunter Valley with his wife Mary (nee Monger) and worked as a department manager in retail. He was taken on strength in May to the Land Headquarters Cipher section for training and then in January 1944 to Papua New Guinea. He spent most time in the 4<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> Cipher sections but had numerous detachments to other sections. The cipher sections were obviously key to the operation of the signals division – coding and decoding the huge number of messages that were key to the logistical operations in a campaign that was fought in the jungle and in a country with no infrastructure of any kind. We know from the service records that Eugene spent significant amounts of time in Lae, Nadzab and Hollandia (now Jayapura the capital of Papua, a province of Indonesia, and which was then Dutch New Guinea). He finished the war as a Sergeant and returned to Australia in January of 1946. Mary died in 1972, aged 54, of a heart attack while visiting nearby Seal Rocks. He died in 1994 in Kempsey, by that time known apparently as George. They had no children.

## Connell Raymond “Con” Baker

In 1920, after returning from France, **Con Baker** married Alice Vine Laurence. They lived first in Manly and then moved in 1937 to 35 Upper Avenue Road, Mosman. Con was a company manager and electrical contractor.

They had two children, Rex and Rhondda. Rhondda performed with the Mosman Musical Society in the early 1950s and married Ken Walters, a real estate agent, in 1953. Ken died in 2011. They had two children – Richard and Sue.

**Rex Raymond Baker** was 18 and working as a junior engineer with the Australian arm of General Electric and attending Ultimo Technical College when he volunteered for service in October 1941. Although he served only in Australia he had a variety of roles – trained as a driver and mechanic he spent 1942 attached to the Queensland Line of Command transport company before being transferred in May 1943 to the Land HQ Electrical and Mechanical Engineering school to be trained as a radio mechanic. He then served with the Radio Maintenance section of the Newcastle area workshop and the Australian Telecommunications workshop before being discharged as a Lance Corporal in August 1946.

In 1949 he married Gwendoline Dennis in June. They had two children, Gordon and Philip, and lived in Ador Avenue, Rockdale - he was a purchasing officer. Gwen died tragically in 1958 aged 29. She was struck by lightning when walking across Rockdale Park at the end of their street. She was carrying her younger son Philip as she went to meet Gordon, then aged 6, at the school bus stop. Her clothes were wet and it was thought that the lightning struck the metal zipper on her jacket. Philip was thrown from her arms but not hurt.

Rex later married Estelle Margery Stone (formerly married to Cecil McIntosh) in 1961, they moved to Pymble and ran a newsagent / bookshop. They had one male child stillborn in 1967. Estelle died in 1990.

Rex died in 2007. He was buried with Gwendoline at Macquarie Park Cemetery.



The WW2 cipher rooms in the Pacific Theatre were physically secured and varied in size from the Port Moresby centre (left) to Kuching (centre) and Torokina (right) where we can see an operator on the TypeX encryption machine as well as some wall decoration typical of the time. While the allies famously cracked the German Enigma machines and were also able to decode much of the Japanese communications, neither the TypeX nor its successor the CCM was ever broken.

FORECASTS (for 24 hours from 6 a.m.):  
 CITY: Showers. Cooler SE winds. N.S.W.:  
 Sultry in NE quarter, with thunderstorms.  
 Showers central coast. Fine, warm else-  
 where. SE winds.

# The Sydney Morning Herald

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## WOMAN KILLED, RAIL SERVICES DELAYED BY STORM

FLOOD STREET WELL NAMED AS WATER SWEEPS OVER IN STORM

A woman was killed by lightning, power lines were struck and suburban trains delayed in violent thunderstorms in Sydney late yesterday afternoon.

The woman, Mrs Gwen Mary Baker, 28, of Ador Avenue, Rockdale, was killed while crossing Rockdale Park carrying her three-year-old son. The boy was uninjured.

Sydney County Council workmen were called to homes at Rockdale and Lakemba, where lightning caused minor blackouts.

On the East Hills railway line services were delayed for 25 minutes when lightning struck a signal at Revesby. Trains were back to normal running within a few hours.

In the city, two inches of rain fell in two hours, drenching peak-hour crowds of office workers and late shoppers and causing minor flooding.

### CITY STREETS FLOODED

Thunderstorm activity developed over parts of the metropolitan area early in the day, but the main storm did not strike Sydney until about 4 p.m. Torrential rain then flooded

Visibility was reduced to a few hundred feet. Motorists had to use lights and move at a crawl. The rain swept under bonnets of cars and the N.R.M.A. was busy answering calls from stranded motorists.

Water was three inches deep between sleepers at No. 4 platform at Wynyard station at the height of the storm. For an hour water lay in sheets across city streets.



## Lightning Strikes Woman Dead

A woman was killed by lightning while carrying her three-year-old son across Rockdale Park during a storm yesterday.

The boy fell crying but uninjured from his mother's arms, but was admitted to St. George Hospital later for observation.

The dead woman was Mrs Gwen Mary Baker, 28, of Ador Avenue, Rockdale.

She was killed about 3.45 p.m. while on the way to meet her elder son, Gordon, after school. She was carrying her younger son, Phillip, three.

Heavy rain, accompanied by vivid lightning and loud thunder, was falling.

Police believe the lightning

struck a metal zipper on Mrs Baker's raincoat.

She was in open parkland, less than 100 yards from her home.

Neighbours ran to her aid and called an ambulance, but she was dead on arrival at St. George Hospital.

### "A Terrific

### Flash"

Mrs C. Jones, also of Ador Avenue, was the first to go to Mrs Baker's help.

"I saw somebody lying down and thought it was a

child frightened by the storm," she said last night.

"There had just been a terrific flash of lightning.

"Mrs Baker was a very conscientious mother and always went over to meet her elder boy at the school bus in stormy weather."

Mrs Baker was the third person to be killed by lightning in N.S.W. in the last month.

On January 10, Jeanette Elizabeth Lincoln, 13, of Goonaroo Street, Villawood, was killed near her home.

On January 27, a dairy-farmer was killed at East Gresford, near Maitland.

**BAKER, Gwen Mary.**—February 6, 1958 (result of accident), beloved wife of Rex, loved mother of Gordon and Phillip, beloved daughter of Reg and Phyllis Dennis.

**BAKER, Gwen Mary.**—February 6, 1958 (result of accident), dear daughter-in-law of Mrs A. V. Baker, and the late Mr C. R. Baker, fond sister-in-law of Rhondda and Ken Walters, and loving aunt of Richard.

## Tasker Baker, Leonard Carroll and Max Welch – Tobruk and El Alamein



Tasker Baker, Leonard Carroll and Max Welch (shown from left to right) all enlisted in the AIF in Sydney in May of 1940. Just eight months after the declaration of war the news from Europe was particularly gloomy. France was on the verge of capitulation and the Dunkerke evacuations of British troops was about to take place.

Tasker was the son of Charles Eugene Baker and Leonard Carroll was married to Tasker's sister Jo. Max Welch would later marry Tasker's cousin Coralie Baker in 1947. They fought in different units but all spent time in Tobruk and El Alamein - the two most iconic names of the Australian contribution to World War 2. Tasker and Leonard were both also part of the liberation of Borneo in 1945, the last involvement of Australian troops in the war.

Tasker Baker was assigned to the 7<sup>th</sup> Division Ammunition Park – part of the supply chain – as a motor transport mechanic and in October 1940 they had arrived in Egypt. The rest of the division troops arrived in November. The division was split into a number of different activities with one battalion (the 2/17) on duty in the Suez Canal area, and another (2/27) in northern Palestine while Divisional HQ was based at Deir Suneid camp in Palestine, near Tel Aviv. It is difficult to track exactly where Tasker was deployed as there are no separate records for the ammunition subpark. In December 1940 he was at the 'Barbara' camp near Deir Suneid.

Leonard Carroll served in the 2/13th Battalion which was initially part of the 7<sup>th</sup> Division but later detached to the 9<sup>th</sup>. He was also initially a Driver / Mechanic and by November 1940 he had arrived, via Fremantle, Bombay and the Suez Canal at the Kilo 89 training camp near Gaza in Palestine where they remained until the end of February for further training. Thanks to the detailed war diary of the 2/13, Leonard's story is the one that we can cover in most detail.

Max Welch trained as a gunner in the 2/3 Anti-Tank regiment (the 2/3 AT). He left Sydney for the Middle East in November 1940. He had a couple of early brushes with Army discipline, being found to be insubordinate to an officer while at sea and then, in 'Julis' camp in early January, again being insubordinate and disobeying an order. He was given 21 days detention in the barracks at Jerusalem.

The 7<sup>th</sup> Division were part of the force that took control of Tobruk in January 1941 as they pushed the Italians back towards Tripoli in the hugely successful Operation Compass under General Wavell. It is likely that Tasker was involved in the advance. By February 9<sup>th</sup> they had reached El Agheila and the Italians had been routed. Rather than continue west, Churchill ordered the advance to be stopped and withdrew large numbers of troops to be sent to Greece where the Italians were also engaged and that is where Tasker headed, back to Alexandria where he embarked for Greece on April 4<sup>th</sup>.

Just 2 day after Churchill's decision in February, though, Rommel and the German DAK (Deutsches Afrikakorps) including Panzer divisions started to land in Tripoli to take over responsibility from the Italians.

After intensive desert training through December and January, Leonard had a brief stay at the Gaza Ridge Australian General Hospital with a deflected septum, probably the result of a broken nose, and his records also noted "foreign body left leg" as another symptom. On 27<sup>th</sup> February the 2/13 moved out of training camp for a long haul trip. From Gaza they entrained for Mersa Matruh in Egypt, then to Buq Buq and, eventually after 6 days across the desert, to Tobruk in Libya. It was not an uneventful trip – there were three casualties when soldiers kicked Italian hand grenades large quantities of which were lying around. They arrived in Tobruk on 5<sup>th</sup> March 1941.



Tobruk had the best natural harbour on the Mediterranean coast (pictured) and was virtually in the centre of the North African theatre between Tripoli and Alexandria. Whoever controlled the town had a huge advantage in keeping their troops supplied during the struggle for control of the North African territories that the Italians, wanting to enlarge their Libyan base to include Egypt, had long coveted. With the Vichy French holding Morocco and Algeria, the Axis forces intended to press eastwards all the way to the Suez Canal for complete control of North Africa. By March 1941 the Axis troops, under Rommel, were marching to the east, hoping for quick progress to Alexandria and the grand prize – Cairo and the Suez Canal.

The 2/13<sup>th</sup> moved closer to the front line at Beda Fomm south east of Benghazi. On the way they were air bombed and machine gunned in a German air attack with a Lieutenant and driver killed. Their task was to occupy defensive positions overlooking the route into Benghazi and Barce which they did until March 20<sup>th</sup> when they moved into a rearguard line of 11 km to delay the Germans and cover the withdrawal of the rest of the 9<sup>th</sup> Division. Leonard was taken back to Tobruk the next day with furunculosis, a severe case of carbuncles. The rest of the battalion held their line until April 4<sup>th</sup> when they were attacked by a 3000 strong German force including 13 tanks which meant that they were the first Australian troops to engage in combat with the Germans in the war. They withdrew to Fort Regima and then progressively over 6 days fell back to Tobruk.

On April 15<sup>th</sup> Leonard was evacuated to Alexandria and was in hospital for another two weeks. By then, though Tobruk had been attacked and surrounded by the German troops and even sea traffic into and out of the port was extremely difficult. Thus began the famous Siege of Tobruk.

Meanwhile Max Welch's 2/3 AT had moved from their Palestine Camp on March 27<sup>th</sup> to Mechili, west of Tobruk, for desert training but unexpectedly were engaged by Rommel's forces as they moved out of Benghazi in early April. Although many were lost or captured, Max's group successfully fought their way back to Tobruk and were merged into the Australian 9<sup>th</sup> Division.

From April through to August 1941 Max 's 2/3 AT were a critical part of the siege defence of the Libyan port town – the famous “Rats of Tobruk” so named because the Germans described them as trapped like “rats in a trap”. Initially asked to hold the harbour town for 8 weeks so that reinforcements could be organised, the Australians held fast for over 5 months playing a critical spoiling role and putting pressure on Rommel's supply line from the rear and denying him the only decent port in the region. Without taking Tobruk, the Axis could proceed no further to the east without exposing their flank to a counter attack.

The allies set up the defence of Tobruk in three bands – the inner Green Line, then the Blue Line, and an outer Red Line. Rommel initially moved 50 tanks onto an escarpment overlooking the town but they were pushed back by the red line defences. The Italians tried again a few days later but their entire battalion was captured by the Australians. Further skirmishes continued until May by which time Rommel's forces had been pushed further back and had to abandon their hope of reaching Egypt. The siege continued though, as the Allies were not able to advance to relieve Tobruk either. The Australian command was very keen to get some rest for their troops as the continual patrol load and occasional minor attacks meant they had to remain on their toes and they wanted to amalgamate the 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> divisions into a single Australian force. Shipping into and out of the harbour allowing for evacuations and reinforcements started again in August.



**From left: a British tank passes through the battered town of Tobruk in 1941; men of the 2/13 on the outskirts of Tobruk – note the flatness of the desert landscape; and Australians of the Ninth Division arrive in Alexandria after being relieved by the British.**

Appendix "L"

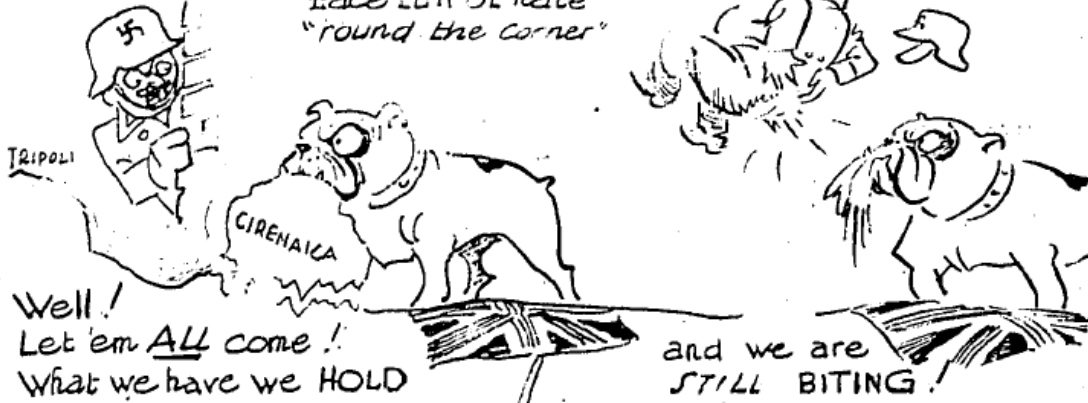
Cartoon based on orders issued by Col. T.P. Cook ED. Area Comdt. to ALL TROOPS for action in event of attempted enemy coup.

IF NEW FORCES TRY A SURPRISE CRACK AT US

FORGET YOUR JOBS ' WE ARE HERE TO FIGHT!

STAND FAST — DON'T "LET UP" LET GO OR LET IN!

There are rumours of a new  
face full of hate  
"round the corner"



Well!  
Let 'em ALL come!  
What we have we HOLD

and we are  
STILL BITING.

SENTRIES!  
IT'S UP TO YOU  
You are  
safeguarding  
an ARMY.



Keep your  
eyes skinned  
especially for  
parachutists  
& land mines

BUTCHERS!



Here is the only  
way to "bury  
the hatchet"  
against a  
ruthless enemy!

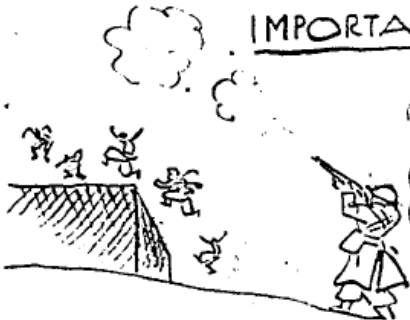
& don't forget to throw in a  
"NICE LOIN CHOP"

LORRY DRIVERS  
Keep your vehicles  
TUNED UP



IMPORTANT

- Stand & reason arise
- (i) "SHOOT" (or SHOOT!) EVERY PRISONER into a "CAGE"
  - (ii) EVERY MAN TO HIS FIGHTING POST
  - (iii) GIVE THE HELL THEY'VE GIVEN US 2 FOUR IN ENGLAND



GOOD TROOPS CAN HOLD THIS PLACE FOR A YEAR!

MAG  
41



Though Tasker had been part of the advance party to go to Greece in April, most of the 7<sup>th</sup> Division had not actually left Egypt before HQ changed their mind. Tasker arrived back in Alexandria as part of the Allied evacuation of Greece in early May 1941. At the end of May the 7<sup>th</sup> Division moved to the border between Syria and Northern Palestine as part of 'Operation Exporter' which included the invasion of Syria where the Vichy French government was collaborating with the Germans. Based near Haifa they were responsible for the taking of Beirut on July 12<sup>th</sup>. This is a very little known part of World War 2 as the fact that the Allies were fighting the French was politically sensitive. The 7<sup>th</sup> Division suffered the death of 36 officers and 338 other ranks, with a further 1229 wounded or missing.

Unable to rejoin his unit Leonard Carroll spent 4 months with the 20<sup>th</sup> Brigade Australian Infantry Training Battalion near Alexandria, including a further spell in hospital. It was not until 27<sup>th</sup> August that he was returned to his unit in Tobruk with reinforcements and other men who had recovered from illness or injury. Throughout the siege the Australians were outnumbered by the surrounding German and Italian forces, were subject to daily air bombardment, shelling and sniper attacks. They suffered continuous shortages of food, equipment and ammunition as efforts to ship in supplies was difficult and many allied ships were lost in the attempt.

The 2/3 AT were amongst the first wave of Australian troops evacuated from Tobruk when it was handed over to the British in August. The rest of the 9<sup>th</sup> Division were progressively relieved in September and October, replaced by British and Polish troops, but the 2/13<sup>th</sup> missed out again as the ship they were supposed to leave on was sunk. They stayed in Tobruk until December. The allied offensive to relieve the garrison commenced in November with the New Zealand forces crucial to the outcome. The siege was lifted on 7<sup>th</sup> December 1941 – certainly a day of mixed blessings for the Australians as it was the same day the Japan attacked Pearl Harbour and escalated the conflict in the Pacific to the point where mainland Australia was now threatened.

Auchinleck's forces drove the Germans back to the west on the way to capturing the whole of the Libyan state of Cyrenaica by the end of the year. The 2/13 were called out of Tobruk to meet up with the 8<sup>th</sup> Army in late November and were part of the final battle at El Duda which allowed them to break the siege and relive Tobruk. The 2/13 left Tobruk in December – the only Australian unit to depart the garrison by road rather than by sea - and went to Palestine, having Christmas in the Holy Land, and then to garrison duties at Latakia in northern Syria where they remained for six months.

By then the 7<sup>th</sup> Division and Tasker Baker were preparing to leave Syria as the Australian government had convinced Churchill that Australian troops had to return to Australia to help with the Pacific Theatre war against the Japanese who commenced their bombing of Darwin in February. The 7<sup>th</sup> Division would go on to be part of the Battle of Milne Bay (the first defeat of Japanese Forces) and the Kokoda campaign in Papua New Guinea. The 107 General Transport Company (which was the new name of Tasker Baker's unit) left on February 15 to return to Australia. Separated from the 7<sup>th</sup>, in August, Tasker was shipped up to the Adelaide River base just outside Darwin where he remained until February 1944.

By June 1942 all the ground in Northern Africa had again been lost. Rommel's Second Offensive commenced in January with a large number of reinforcements and they quickly took Benghazi and reached Gazala, just 50 miles from Tobruk, by early February. They were held up for a while by the severely depleted Eighth Army before they reached Tobruk in June. The main allied force was withdrawn back to the Egyptian border but Churchill ordered that Tobruk again be held at all costs. After a fierce attack by the Germans on June 20<sup>th</sup> the South African Commander surrendered the town. Churchill was furious as having held Tobruk through the efforts of the Australian, British and Polish troops for eight months the previous year against a far superior force and against all odds, the South African defence had lasted just two days. "Defeat is one thing, disgrace is another" he is said to have declared. Having taken Tobruk, Rommel rapidly moved east again.

The Allied forces regrouped at Mersa Matruh and were reinforced by 300 Sherman tanks from America and the Australian 9<sup>th</sup> Division, including the 2/13 and the 2/3 AT, were recalled to the Western Desert. Both sides were critically short of men and supplies. The allied defensive line was set up at El Alamein with troops from New Zealand, India and South Africa as well as Britain and Australia. In the meantime Leonard had moved from driver duties into more general battalion duties and become an NCO when he was appointed acting corporal in April and confirmed in the rank in June as they left for Libya.



Men of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Anti-Tank regiment with their 2 pounder anti-tank gun and their motorised "portee"; at firing practice in the Western Desert at El Alamein 1942; and mortar bombs explode behind a slit trench occupied by Australian troops of the 9<sup>th</sup> Division at the Ruin Ridge Sector in September 1942.

El Alamein was a non-descript railway siding close to the border of Libya and Egypt. Romell's offensive had gathered pace and the axis forces were driving east and optimistic about reaching Cairo. The Allies chose the line from El Alamein on the Mediterranean in the north to the uncrossable Qattara Depression in the south to make a stand – it was a narrow strip of territory which could not be outflanked. The Australians arrived on July 4<sup>th</sup> and immediately caused an uplift in morale. One correspondent wrote “The Australians swarmed everywhere and looked magnificent. None of us had seen such troops before. They had rested and were bored by their garrison duties and appeared glad to be back in the desert”.

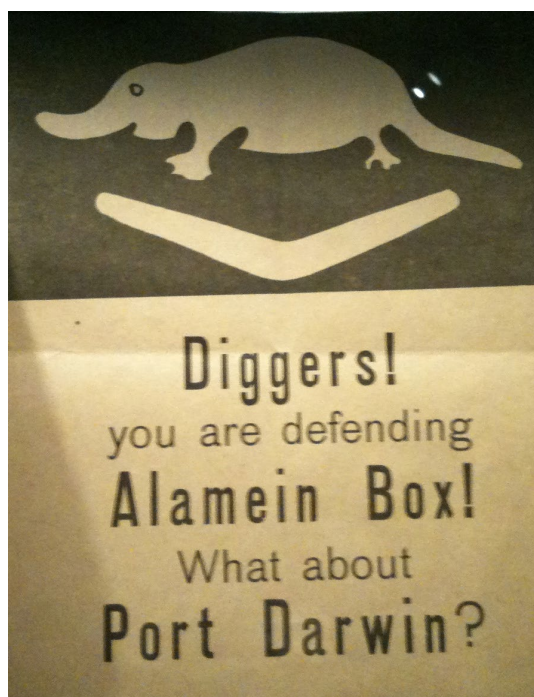
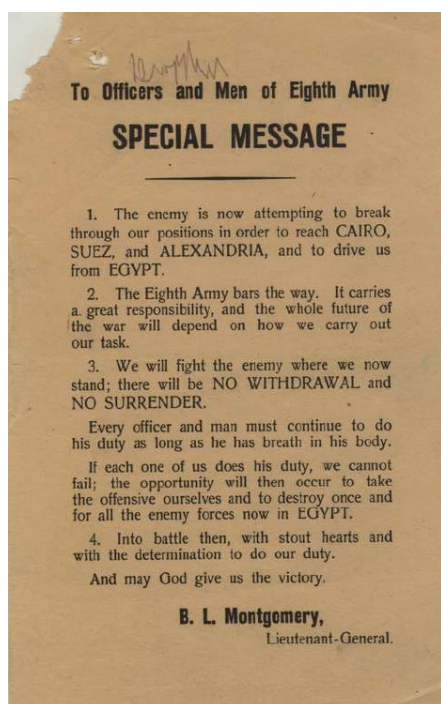
Throughout the month of July, the so called “First Battle of Alamein”, was a war of attrition which cost both sides heavily as each tried to gain the advantage of the very limited high ground in the area. The 2/13 took a position at El Daba west of El Alamein along the coastal road on the 11<sup>th</sup> July and then a week later moved back to El Hamman. Aircraft from both sides flew overhead regularly, many being shot down. Shelling from the artillery was also fairly continuous and minefields laid by both sides along the line.

On the night of 26<sup>th</sup> July 1942 the 2/28<sup>th</sup> Infantry Battalion, supported by the 2/3 Anti-Tank were assigned the job of taking the Miteiriya Ridge, known to the Australians as “Ruin Ridge”. In the event this was exactly what the Axis troops were expecting and they were well prepared.

As the Aussies advanced from 10pm, their lines of communication were cut off as the wireless truck was burned and the cable was also cut. They successfully reached their objective at the top of the ridge by about 3am, about 200 German prisoners were taken, and they dug in for the night. The expected artillery support to consolidate the position did not eventuate and in the morning they found that the Germans and Italians had filtered in behind them and they were surrounded by German tanks. Finally a wireless was made operational and a message sent back to command “We are in trouble. We need help now ... there are tanks all around us. You had better hurry”. Just after 10am, in Max's own words they were “surrounded by German tanks after reaching Ruin Ridge El Alamein, surrendered under orders of O.C. 2/28 Battalion”. The 2/13, who had been waiting in reserve to press home the advantage, were stood down and then were themselves bombed around noon.

Altogether 65 members of the 2/28, 2/3 AT and other supporting units were killed and 469, including Max Welch, were taken prisoner that day in what was the last action of the First Battle of El Alamein. Max Welch was listed as missing in action on July 27<sup>th</sup> 1942 and taken through the Axis lines to Benghazi, then to prisoner of war camp 57 in north-eastern Italy. He had a gunshot wound to his right shoulder which was treated by the Italians although he noted that he received “little anaesthetic” with his treatment. The staff at the camp were “aggravating – confinement at slightest provocation” and noted that two men were “shot in cold blood”. In September the Red Cross was able to advise his family that he was alive and a prisoner of war.

At El Alamein, both sides pulled back to regroup with the defensive line virtually unchanged. The Axis troops had been stopped in their tracks but had not been defeated. Auchinleck was replaced as Allied Commander by General Gott, but he was killed in a plane crash on his way to take up his new post. General Bernard Montgomery was then given the role.



Competing messages delivered to the Australians at El Alamein in September 1942. General Montgomery reminds his men that withdrawal will not be considered and that victory in Egypt is the only acceptable outcome, while German propaganda drops remind the Australian forces that perhaps their place is back home fighting the Japanese. A similar leaflet asked “Aussies! The Yankees are having a jolly good time in your country ... And you?”

Although plans had been put in place to retreat back to the Nile between Alexandria and Cairo, Montgomery immediately cancelled them and began reinforcing the troops and supply depots. Rommell was not so lucky as his planned reinforcements failed to arrive leaving him significantly short of men, tanks, ammunition, food and morale. By mid September it was estimated that the Allies had a two to one advantage with over 8000 tanks and 900 guns in the heavy artillery brigades.

Leonard Carroll was promoted to Lance Sergeant in September and then full Sergeant on October 20<sup>th</sup> 1942 as they prepared for Operation Lightfoot which was the commencement of the second, and ultimately decisive, Battle of El Alamein. The front line was protected by dense minefields on both sides and the first allied forays would be made by infantry troops travelling in light vehicles and on foot so as not to set off the anti-tank mines – hence the name “Lightfoot”.

The evening of October 23<sup>rd</sup> began at 9.40 pm when the entire battery of Allied guns firing more or less simultaneously targeting the enemy’s forward positions across the entire front. The Australia 9<sup>th</sup> Division was at the northern, coastal end of the front and the 2/13 were right in the thick of it.

The 2/13 was paired with the 40 RTR (the British 40<sup>th</sup> Royal Tank Regiment). They had the other Australian battalions on their right and the 51<sup>st</sup> Highland Division on their left, with the 2<sup>nd</sup> New Zealand Division and 1<sup>st</sup> South African Division further to the south. These divisions made up XXX, or 30, Corps and their advance was to cover the line between the Miteiriya Ridge and the Mediterranean coastline. They aimed to create two breaks in the enemy minefields for the 1<sup>st</sup> Armoured and 10<sup>th</sup> Armoured divisions to advance through along the coast. Diversionary attacks would be launched in the south so that Rommell could not redeploy forces from the southern end of the line.

The 2/13 were in the second wave of advancing units behind the 2/15 and 2/17 battalions. They reached their staging area just after midnight and readied themselves for a long and very difficult night. As an indication of what was ahead, the battalion’s war diary entries for October 24<sup>th</sup> 1942 run for twelve pages. Their first challenge was that the 40 RTR had not yet arrived as the clearing of the minefields was behind schedule. The 2/13 started forward on foot without support, immediately encountering an enemy minefield with a depth of 1500 yards. This was a problem as the depth of the field was such that clearing it and getting the stores vehicles up to the planned front line and back again before daylight was already looking impossible.

At 2am the tanks were still caught up at the start line and could not advance for another 45 minutes when the minefield was finally gapped by the engineers. The enemy, all German troops, were encountered from about 3am when they reached the wire defences on the far side of the minefield. They still had no tank support.

At 3.31 am word was sent back that the Phase I objective point had been secured. However the cost had been high. In the previous 15 minutes A Company reported that Captain Sanderson had been killed and Lieutenant Norrie seriously injured. Despite his injuries, Lt Norrie took control of the company but also died soon afterwards and was replaced by Lt O’Connor. Lt O’Connor was already wounded but personally led an assault on a German strong post which was successful but he received further serious head wounds. With their leadership decimated and only one officer left, A Company had no option but to cease their advance. In B Company Captain Wilson and Sgts Singleton and Kelly were wounded leaving Private Burgess in command of the forward platoons.

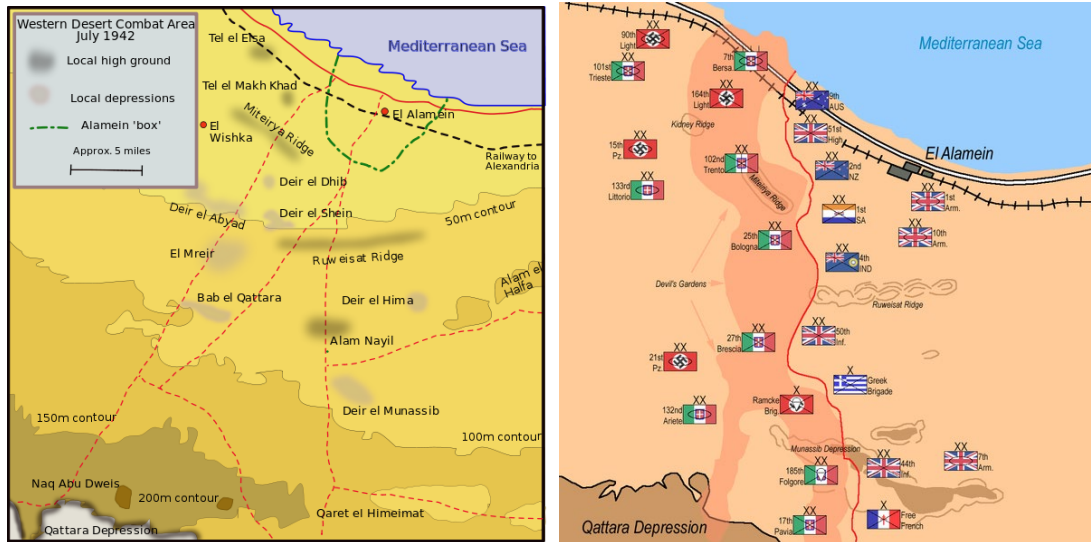
The four companies linked up and were able to dig in to a line just in front the German minefields shortly after dawn. They were still under machine gun, mortar and artillery fire with further losses. Two soldiers were killed and two others wounded when they were bombed by their own aircraft. The left flank was held down for most of the day. Plans were made to continue on to the original Phase II objective that night.

In the afternoon further casualties were received, Lt-Col Turner, the Battalion Commander, and his adjutant Captain Leach were both wounded and Major Colvin was called up from the rear to take command. Lt O’Connor and Lt-Col Turner both later died of their wounds. Captain Cribb was evacuated with jaundice and L/Cpl Needham was killed when the signals office was hit by a shell. All of this in a single battalion in just 24 hours. Their compatriots suffered similar losses.

All of the 2/13<sup>th</sup> reserve officers were called up to the forward line and the advance began again at 2am on October 25<sup>th</sup>. This time the 40 RTR tanks were with them, there was no opposition and the new positions were reached and consolidated. After daybreak the enemy shelling and sniper fire recommenced but otherwise the enemy was not sighted until later in the morning. Just after noon they spotted troop carriers and about 30 tanks advancing towards them and the Germans laid down a smoke screen about 900 yards ahead of the line. After heavy fighting at close quarters the attack was repulsed and 15 of the enemy tanks destroyed. Lieutenants Ryan, Madden and Roberts were wounded – the latter two dying of their wounds.

For the next couple of days the Australians were the main focus of the allies advance but the heavy work was done by the 2/24 and the 2/48 as they attacked a strategic hill called “Trig 29” which offered visibility of the entire northern sector of the line. At daybreak on the 27<sup>th</sup> the 2/13 were again attacked by enemy tanks and infantry but pushed them back quickly, and again in the afternoon German infantry were seen to be advancing towards the 2/13 and 2/17 and they took heavy shelling. They laid down artillery and anti-tank fire.

That night the 2/13 were relieved by the 5<sup>th</sup> Battalion of the Queens Own Cameron Highlanders so that they could immediately join an Australian reinforcement of the “Trig 29” position which had been held by their 2/48 colleagues but attacked twice by the Germans who had thrown as much of their firepower as they could muster against the Australians hitting the 2/24 and the 2/17 in addition to the 2/28. Before the 2/13 could even begin to move Lt Treweek was killed by a direct hit on his dugout.



The key locations of the Western Desert around El Alamein.

The Battle for Trig 29 later became known as the ‘Battle for the Western Desert’. The Australians pushed forward on the morning of the 28<sup>th</sup>. The 2/13 moved forward through ‘The Fig Orchard’ to take ‘Thompson’s Post’ where the 2/24 had withdrawn from the day before. When they reached their first objective they encountered machine gun fire and shelling, and Lt Bissaker was reported missing. They also came across many booby traps and suffered many casualties. On the 29<sup>th</sup> heavy shelling hit their command post wounding the new CO Lt-Col Colvin and killing his adjutant Lt Pinkney. His deputy, Maj Daintree had also been wounded, again leaving the 2/13 without their senior leadership until Major Kelly was able to reach the HQ which had been shelled again. Lt Bissaker’s body was found.

Unable to hold the Australians, Rommel pulled more and more of his troops to the north while on the 30<sup>th</sup> the 9<sup>th</sup> Division moved forward yet again. The 2/23 went through northwards to the left of the 2/13 who were down to a bare minimum of fit men and started to consolidate into the 2/23 on their right flank. They were still able to send a patrol to Thompson’s Post and report that it was unoccupied but that the Germans were on the north side of the railway line. The 2/24 and 2/48 pushed forward to cross the railway line and take control of the area between there and the coast. They suffered huge losses, but brought over 500 prisoners back with them.

On November 1<sup>st</sup> the 2/28 and 2/43 arrived to join the 9<sup>th</sup> Division and immediately faced a German counter-attack with Rommel again trying to take the Australian positions which held firm until 2.30 am that night when there was a lull in fighting. At that point Montgomery launched a massive British artillery barrage down the whole of the line. The Germans moved quickly to try to close the gaps caused by Rommel moving so many of his resources to the north against the Australians and the allies counter-punched at both ends of the line. New Zealand and British forces made the main advance advancing just south of the Australian bridgehead between the “Kidney Feature” and the Miteiriya Ridge. The following day they opened large gaps in the line to the south and poured through. At 5.30 pm on the 3<sup>rd</sup> November, Rommel ordered a general retreat and the Battle of El Alamein was over. From that time Montgomery was able to drive Rommel back to the west which led to their eventual surrender in Tunisia in May 1943.

Although other battalions were hit even harder, the 2/13 lost over one-third of their men and two thirds of their officers (either killed or wounded) between October 24<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup>. Of the 35 officers present at the commencement only 3 Captains and 8 Lieutenants remained with the unit after the battle. Eight officers were killed. Amongst the other ranks, the total number of forces decreased from 746 to 498 – and that was net of reinforcements so the number of troops killed or wounded was likely much higher than 250. Leonard Carroll was one of the lucky ones.

After a couple more days mopping up the remaining German troops along the coast the situation relaxed and on the 7<sup>th</sup> November the troops of the 2/13 were allowed to go bathing at the beach. They commenced training new reinforcements and welcomed the return of most of the injured men. In late November they returned to Julis camp in Palestine and had their third successive Christmas in the Middle East.

Leonard Carroll and the 2/13 sailed from Port Suez on January 26<sup>th</sup> 1943 to return to Australia. In less than three years since it had been formed, the 2/13 had forged one of the most famous reputations in the AIF. They were the first to fight the German land army, the last to withdraw into the Tobruk Garrison in the face of the advancing German Panzer divisions, the only Australian battalion to actively assist in the relief of the siege, the last Australian troops to leave Tobruk and the only ones to march out by road rather than being evacuated by sea, and one of the most courageous performers at El Alamein. They were awarded 2 Distinguished Service Orders, 7 Military Crosses, 4 Distinguished Conduct Medals, and 7 Military Medals.

02/13  
No Diary

RECEIVED  
11 NOV 1942  
REFERENCE

Bagg TRG 9  
BAGG 45/2/1948  
10 Nov 42

LIST 'C'

Hereunder is a copy of a letter received from Comd 30 Corps by  
Comd 9 Aust Div:

" Now that we have a pause in the fighting I would like to write a line to congratulate you on the magnificent fighting which your Division has carried out.

I would be very grateful if you would explain to the men the immense part they have played in the battle. It is perhaps difficult for them quite to realise the magnitude of their achievement as the main break-out of our armour was accomplished on another part of our front; thus could not be seen by them. But I am quite certain that this break-out was only made possible by the heroic fighting over your Divisional sector.

When it was no longer possible for the crumbling process to go on in the South you will remember that the Army Commander decided to continue with his crumbling policy in the North. This led to five days bitter fighting on your front. During this time your Division attacked four times and were counter-attacked incessantly by enemy infantry and tanks.

The main mass of heavy and medium artillery was concentrated on your Divisional front. It was obvious that the enemy meant to resist any advance along the coastal route, and as we now know, they concentrated the whole of the Panzer Corps against you in the Northern area.

Your fighting gave the opportunity for the conception of the final break-through in the centre, but this could never have been carried out if your front had been broken. The final break could not have been made unless the Army Comd was certain of the valiant resistance that would be put up by your Division. If the Germans could have broken your Division, the whole gun support of the attack would have been disorganised and its success vitally prejudiced.

It has been for me a very proud occasion to have an Australian Division serving in the Corps and I am very happy that this is to continue in the subsequent advance."

Please ensure that this is promulgated to all ranks.

*J. P. [Signature]*  
AA & QMG 9 Aust Div

A communication from General Montgomery documents the achievements of the Australian 9<sup>th</sup> Division and the 13<sup>th</sup> Battalion at the Battle of El Alamein – the turning point in the war in Northern Africa.

In May of 1943 Leonard Carroll transferred with a team of 8 other ranks from the 2/13 to the 9<sup>th</sup> Division Carrier Company. In August, with the Division HQ, he shipped out from Cairns to Milne Bay on the far south-east tip of New Guinea. Some of the division, including the 2/13, had already arrived. An attempted Japanese landing at Milne Bay had been defeated late in the previous year. It was a vital location as the Japanese planned to use it as an alternative route to Port Moresby after their path over the Kokoda track from the north had been blocked.

The first task of the division in New Guinea was the capture of Lae. They were shipped to Buna for briefing and then landed at ‘Yellow Beach’, east of the city on September 4<sup>th</sup>. Together with the 5<sup>th</sup> Division who were already deployed inland in the Markham Valley, and the 7<sup>th</sup> Division who were flown to Nadzab, they took control of Lae 12 days later. From there they continued to pursue the Japanese along the Huon Peninsula and engaged again on the 22<sup>nd</sup> at ‘Scarlet Beach’ near Finschhafen which was taken on October 2<sup>nd</sup> but fighting remained fierce around them. The Carrier Company remained at Buna for a while looking after the stores and then moving into Lae, Tami Island off the coast, and Finschhafen. Their role was sporadic as the jungle tracks did not allow the use of troop carriers in many areas. From mid November they were rotated back into their original units for two weeks at a time to ensure their battle readiness.

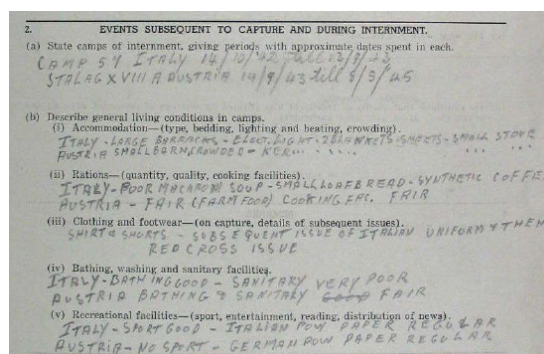


Infantry landing ships at Red Beach. Lae (left) and preparing to leave for Scarlet Beach, Finschhafen, on September 22<sup>nd</sup> 1943.

The advance to Sattelberg, originally planned as Phase 2 of the Scarlet Beach landings, continued well through November. Even after the establishment of the beachhead at Finschhafen, the jungle fighting continued fiercely with attack and counter attack until the main Japanese force finally retreated back to Northern New Guinea –around Wewak & Aitape - just before Christmas 1943. The Pacific War continued there and on the islands of New Britain and Bougainville but after completing the mopping up on the Huon Peninsula, the 9<sup>th</sup> Division was relieved and gradually shipped back to Australia in January and February.

Leonard Carroll could not go straight home to Australia – he was evacuated 14 January 1944 to the 2/9<sup>th</sup> Australian General Hospital at Morotai with malaria. After his convalescence he returned to Australia in late March and rejoined his unit in Townsville. In May he had a relapse and was eventually posted back to the 2/13 battalion at Ravenshoe Queensland in July. In November Leonard underwent training with the Pioneer Wing Training School, where he did very well partly due to experience as a sapper that he had in the militia prior to the war. He returned to Ravenshoe in December 1944.

In September 1943 Max Welch was moved to Stalag XVIII A not far away at Wolfsburg in Austria. Here the conditions were slightly better as they were in a more rural setting and were allowed to work on a farm and received fresh food. He survived the American bombing of the camp in late 1944 when 65 prisoners were killed and was liberated in May 1945 after almost three years in captivity. By June he was in England and arrived back in Sydney on August 8<sup>th</sup> 1945. He was discharged in September on compassionate grounds.



An excerpt from Max Welch’s debriefing notes taken in Eastbourne in June of 1945.

The 2/13<sup>th</sup> did not return to action until mid 1945 when they were assigned to the campaign in Borneo. Six operations under the codename OBOE were planned to drive the Japanese out of the former Dutch and English colonies on the island of Borneo (although only three of them were actually executed).

The first was the taking of Tarakan, a small island of Borneo's north east coast, in order to control the airstrip which would replace the distant Morotai airfield in supporting Allied operations in the rest of Borneo, on Java, and to an extent in the southern Philippines. A secondary objective was to take control of the island's oilfields. The operation was undertaken by the 9<sup>th</sup> Division's 26<sup>th</sup> Brigade. They successfully took control of the island but the cost was high, almost 900 killed or wounded, and it was found that both the oil infrastructure and the airport were too badly damaged to be repaired in time to make any contribution to the war effort.

Leonard, with the 2/13, embarked on the 26<sup>th</sup> April for Morotai. After two days they passed by Langemak Bay, the battalion diary notes "The troops lined the side of the ship to have a look at Finschafen and some of the older members of the Bn could be seen pointing out such familiar features at Heldsbach Plantation, Fortification Point, Blucher Point and many other places where they had fought". They spent several weeks in further training on Morotai and embarked on their ships on May 31<sup>st</sup>. Leonard was on board the USS Lloyd with the rest of the Battalion HQ group. Their operation instructions, codenamed OBOE 6, were to land at and capture the Brunei Bay area (the modern sultanate of Brunei) while the 24<sup>th</sup> Brigade simultaneously captured nearby Labuan island. They sailed from Morotai on June 5<sup>th</sup> – over 80 ships in the flotilla, screened by 8 US Navy destroyers – and sat off Brunei Bay on the morning of June 10<sup>th</sup>.

The 2/15<sup>th</sup> and 2/17<sup>th</sup> were first ashore at 9.15 am with the 2/13<sup>th</sup> landed in reserve 3 hours behind. They met no resistance and moved forward while the 2/17 advanced into Brunei town (now Bandar Seri Begawan). On June 20<sup>th</sup> the 2/13 were dispatched to occupy Lutong and Miri where they again found that most of the Japanese had fled to the south. They held both towns while patrolling the area to ensure that the Japanese did not return and that whatever enemy remained in the nearby hills could not counter-attack. They remained there into August.

On August 6<sup>th</sup> the US dropped the atomic bomb on Hiroshima, and three days later, on Nagasaki. On August 15<sup>th</sup> the Japanese announced their surrender. On August 19<sup>th</sup> Leonard was one of 79 members of the battalion to be advised that they would be returning home under the 5 year service plan and he left Lutong on the 23<sup>rd</sup> for Labuan where he boarded the "River Clarence" bound for Brisbane. His discharge took effect from November 9<sup>th</sup> 1945 after five years five months of service.



The 2/13<sup>th</sup> Battalion come ashore at Lutong on June 24<sup>th</sup> 1945, the Lutong oil refinery which was burnt out by the Japanese as they fled and captured by the 2/13, and the Regimental Sgt Major raises the battalion colours.

	Aug 14.		Showery.
		0900	Col COLVIN discussed with Ede Comd adm problems dealing with JAP PWs in event of early surrender. CAPE LORANG area suggested as suitable P W Compound area.
		1200	LCMs re supply left LUTONG—as LCMs sailed without MDS patients as ordered, message was sent on to div to this effect.
		1600	Message received from 20 Bde that leaflets were dropped KUOHING, LINTANG BARRACKS area. 10 white PWs observed waving to airmen.
		1800	Visitors during day included Col GRACE and IO of 2/15 Bn, who inspected CANADA HILL and MIRI area.
			No patrols.
	Aug 15		Fine day.
		1000	AMN instruction sent all units under comd, giving policy dealing with all enemy in area, and action to be taken on surrender.
		1800	News of JAPAN's surrender received.
			Visitors during day included IO 2/17 Bn.
			No patrols.

Entries in War Diary of 2/13 from Borneo in August 1945 document the surrender of Japan – one of the PoWs at Kuching referred to was Claude Pickford whose story is told below

Meanwhile, Tasker was also on Morotai preparing to participate in OBOE 2, the third and final operation of the Borneo Campaign. He was now with the 2/3 Australian Amphibious Vehicle group, supporting the Australian 7<sup>th</sup> Division as they planned an amphibious landing at Balikpapan on the south-eastern coast of Borneo. They arrived on July 1, electing to land directly at the heart of the enemy defences which had been bombarded by US Navy ships from offshore for over 15 days. Three Japanese battalions were deployed in and around the town but were dealt with in fierce fighting over the next three weeks. Almost 800 Australians were killed or wounded in the process.

The Battle of Balikpapan was the last major action of the war and controversial given the heavy casualties, limited strategic value, and that the Japanese surrendered just six weeks later. These landings went ahead on the orders of General Macarthur although it later emerged that he had personally misled both the Australian and American command – the theory is that he wished to keep the Australians and British locked up in the south so that the Americans would be the only ones to liberate the Philippines and occupy Japan at war's end.

Tasker was in Balikpapan until November when he returned to Australia for discharge on December 15<sup>th</sup> 1945.



June 1945: The troops of the 7<sup>th</sup> Division on their way from Morotai (top left) leading up to the amphibious landing at Balikpapan on the morning of July 1<sup>st</sup>.



## Arthur Wilkinson Baker (1858 – 1918)

Arthur Wilkinson Baker was the third son of George Baker and Sarah Wilkinson Epsley. Born in 1858 in Lavender Bay, he married Sarah Ann Todd in 1880. They lived at 19 Kirk Lane, Ultimo. Later Arthur lived at 105 Foster St, Leichhardt. He was a carpenter and wood turner and they had eight children born between 1882 and 1897. Sarah died in 1900 of heart failure at 42 years of age. She was the daughter of John Todd, a seaman, and Bridget Goodwin.

Arthur died on September 5<sup>th</sup> 1918 at 60 years of age of Paroxysmal Tachycardia. We don't know exactly what sort of work he did, or who he worked for as a wood turner for most of his working life, but at the time of his death Arthur's occupation was "Red Cross Toy Instructor".



The Red Cross in Australia was founded in August 1914 a few days after the outbreak of World War I. Their initial aim was to provide 'comfort supplies' to the troops serving overseas. These included blankets, food, socks, cigarettes and toys.

When disabled soldiers began to return home the Red Cross Toy Industry was one of the rehabilitation workshops formed to teach them low impact occupational skills that they could use to re-enter the workforce.

Soldiers were trained in the making of wooden toys which were donated to soldiers' children and sold commercially to raise money for the Red Cross. Arthur was one of the instructors who taught these soldiers in the Toy Factory. The photo at left, from the Australian War Memorial archives shows the Toy Industry Factory in around 1918.

There is also a video at the National Film and Sound Archive which shows some of the soldiers at work (<http://aso.gov.au/titles/historical/red-cross-first-world-war/clip2/>). As the clippings on the following page show, this developed into a significant not-for-profit enterprise and was responsible for a dramatic decline in the importation of toys into Australia. It was kept running until around 1923.

Arthur and Sarah's children were Ada Jane, Elizabeth Winifred (married Oswald Trevillion), Sarah Wilkinson (married Cuthbert Parmeter), Arthur Richard (married Kate McCarthy), Mildred Rose (married Charles Waterson), Charles (died of enteritis at the age of 3), William George (married Clara Amelia Draper nee Strahan), and Ruby Irene.

Both Arthur's sons served in France in the Great War. Both returned to Australia but neither made it home while their father was still alive. Their stories follow.

**Ruby Irene Baker** died of Pulmonary Tuberculosis in 1919 at the age of 21. She did not marry.

**Mildred Rose Waterson** died in 1947. She and her husband Charles, a postal linesman, had lived in Casino, Goulburn and moved to Lismore in 1944. They had five children. The eldest was Reginald Charles Waterson who flew as a Flight Sergeant with the RAAF 99 Squadron (and the 101 RAF Squadron) in World War II and awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross (see below for more details). The others were Arthur (married Iris Hudswell) w, John (died at age 3 in 1928), Olive (married Wesley "Slim" Robbins), and Jack Henry (died 1951 at age 22). Arthur worked at the RAAF base in Darwin in 1951 and then at Charlestown near Newcastle from the late 1950s, and they had at least one daughter Lynda (her twin Marcia died at birth). Olive and Wesley stayed in Casino and had three children – Gary, Ray and Peter.

Jack Henry Waterson was the youngest son and after completing his schooling worked at the Commonwealth Health Laboratory in Lismore. This centre provided diagnostic pathology services in support of the northern rivers region and for investigation of public health issues. As a child he had been run over by car which had caused head injuries and left him with continuous sinus problems. On September 5 1951, after spending a fortnight in hospital suffering from 'nerves' (depression), and a short holiday in Sydney, he was found slumped over the wheel of his car in North Lismore with a .22 calibre rifle between his legs and a gun shot wound to his forehead, having committed suicide at the age of 22.

**Sarah Wilkinson Baker** married Cuthbert Parmeter in Queensland in 1911 and they had 4 children – George, Mildred, Grace and Ruby. They lived in Brisbane - in Royal Street, Paddington, and Thomas Street, Ithica. He worked as a railway porter. Sarah died in 1928 of heart disease and, the following year, Cuthbert married Sarah's older sister **Ada Jane**. Ada died in 1930 of influenza and heart failure – they had no children. In 1951, aged 66, Cuthbert married a third time to widow Annie Grace Blake. He lived until 1957, Annie died in 1977.

Sarah and Cuthbert's son George served as a clerk with the RAAF in World War II, he did not serve overseas. He married Morva Beatrice Brickwood in 1934 and they had three daughters – Morva, Gail and Georgine. He worked as an insurance agent with T&G and they lived in Innisfail, and later as a fireman in Townsville. In the 1970s they moved to Brisbane and were storekeepers. George died in 1979, and Morva in 1999.

Their daughter Morva married veterinarian Lloyd Donaldson, they have two sons and a daughter, and live in Indooroopilly. Gail married John O'Brien has three sons – Bennett, Daniel and Casey - and now lives in Dallas, TX.



Mildred Parmeter did not marry. She died of a melanotic sarcoma (skin cancer) in 1944. Ada Grace married Mistislav Petrovic Tchuchlanceff, who later changed his name to Lance. They had two daughters Janett and Veronica.

Ruby, the youngest daughter of Sarah and Cuthbert, married Donald Tudball in 1947 and they moved to Melbourne. They had a son – Bruce, who is a teacher and minister of religion and married to Pauline – and a daughter Coral Fay who is a radiologist and married Anthony Endrey.

**RED CROSS TOY INDUSTRY**  
OF NEW SOUTH WALES

**A Christmas Appeal**

As you pursue your daily occupations busily, peacefully, does the thought ever flash upon you? "But for the men who risked life and limb in the Great War this might have been every day?" Do you ever ponder what their going has meant to you?

Since Christmas Time is Children's Time, is also a Season of Toys, and does not with a very rare fall in supply in peaceful times, how doubly anxious should be those made by our returned men! Could they but speak, what tales they could tell of those brought back to life and hope! Christmas Time every despite all privation of their rights and title to your houses! and yet 'tis open show, common sense, not Charity, that this appeal for support to the Red Cross Toy Industry is based.

Every home throughout the land blessed with the joys of life that should see that Red Cross Toys are prominent amongst their children's gifts and amusements on Christmas Morning, 1920.

THE MANAGEMENT'S THANKS.

To those names, which throughout the year, have extended generous support to the Red Cross Toy Industry, in every measure due to the inspiration, to the general public who have brought liberally of the cheerfulness of the soldiers, the thanks of the management are extended.

RED CROSS TOYS MAY BE PURCHASED AT:-

FARMER & COMPANY, LIMITED, FITZ STREET.  
ANTHONY BODENBERG & SONS, GEORGE ST.  
HORNBY BROTHERS, FITZ STREET.  
C.F.L. BROTHERS & SONS, SOCIETY, LTD., FITZ STREET.  
MCGATHS, LIMITED, FITZ STREET.  
HOCK & SIBBEY, LIMITED, GEORGE STREET.  
DAVID MONTGOMERY & SONS, LIMITED, EASTLAWSON ST.  
WILSON, LIMITED, COFFIELD STREET.  
MURRAY & COMPANY, LIMITED, BAYWOOD.  
NEW YORK ROBERTS COMPANY, GEORGE ST.  
THE HILL, LIMITED, FITZ STREET.  
SMITH & SMITH, FITZ STREET.

The Red Cross Toy Industry trusts that every true Australian will enjoy the happiest and most peaceful Christmas, 1920.

**PATRIOTIC FUNDS.**

**RED CROSS.**

The Toy Work Shop was opened early in June, 1918. The proceeds of sales of the voluntary helpers have amounted to over £27, which has more than covered the initial working expenses. As regards the handicraft teaching at the military hospitals and Red Cross Convalescent Homes, over £100 worth of goods have been sold for the benefit of the men. More than half the handicraft work done in the hospitals and homes has been retained by the men for their own use, and is not included in this amount. At least 114 men have been taught in the hospitals and Red Cross homes, and many have been working under the voluntary instructors for months. The Chalmers House window will contain a display of the Red Cross Society's industries from December 4 to 15.

Above and below, Sydney Morning Herald, December 1916

**RED CROSS TOY SHOP.**

The Red Cross Society is to have a toy and basket shop. Owing to the generosity of Mr. Miles, manager of the London Bank of Australia, the premises 98 Pitt-street, have been placed at the disposal of the society, and on Tuesday the shop will be open for the sale of toys and baskets made by the wounded soldiers. The display will prove how adaptable the disabled and sick men have shown themselves. Every penny spent in soldier work ensures the man the full value of his labour. The Darlinghurst division of the Voluntary Aids will be in charge.

**WANTED, an INSTRUCTOR for Red Cross Toy Industry, man who has had training in pattern-making preferred. Apply Miss BARCLAY, Red Cross Toy Industry, 52 Reservoir-street, city.**

Sydney Morning Herald. Above: July 1918. Below: January 1920

**CUTTING INTO FOREIGN TOY TRADE.**

Matters are progressing favourably for the Red Cross exhibition, to be held at the Town Hall on May 27 and 28.

The organising committee has decided to offer a prize of £10 for the best poster (conditions of which are set out in our advertising columns). The promoters desire to make it clear that a good suggestion will receive the same consideration as a finished drawing.

The Red Cross activities will occupy the whole of the vestibule of the Town Hall. The weaving industry will exhibit the different processes right up to the finished article, with the men working the looms in the basement. The public will thus be able to gain some idea of the strides this important manufacture is making in New South Wales.

Toys will be an important feature. The models are designed by some of our leading painters and sculptors, and the finished article is becoming increasingly popular. A number of toys have been patented. People hardly realise that this section of Red Cross activity has cut deeply into the foreign toy trade, which had a complete monopoly here before the war. It is gratifying to know that the Christmas trade ran to £1400, and that this, and the weaving industry are flourishing business concerns.





**Elizabeth Winifred Baker** married Oswald Trevillion, a ganger, who died of tuberculosis in 1915 when their third child – also Oswald Trevillion – was just 9 days old. Their daughter Alice was 4 years old and another daughter, Doris, had died in 1913. Elizabeth lived with her son Oswald, a carpenter, at Dulwich Hill until he married. She then lived with her daughter Alice and son-in-law Ted Brown (left) at 354 Unwin's Bridge Rd, Tempe and died in 1951.

Ted Brown was an insurance agent and served as a clerk with the 2/1 Field Company of Engineers in the Middle East. He had several periods of hospitalisation in late 1941 and was then transferred for duty at the hospital rather than returning to the field. He returned to Australia in early 1943 and joined the field censorship section in Sydney, the General Field Company in Queensland and the Ordnance Depot back in Sydney before being discharged in late 1945.

Alice and Ted had three children – Faye born 1934 who married George Sprague, Edward born 1938 and married Denise Curley, and Robert who died just a day old in 1954.

Oswald Trevillion Jnr, known as Bob, was a carpenter and married Frances Bamford in 1940. Between the wars he served in the militia. They had one daughter Jennifer, who married Nigel Marshall, and they have two children Jeffrey and Clare.

Elizabeth and Oswald also had a daughter Doris, who died as an infant in 1913.

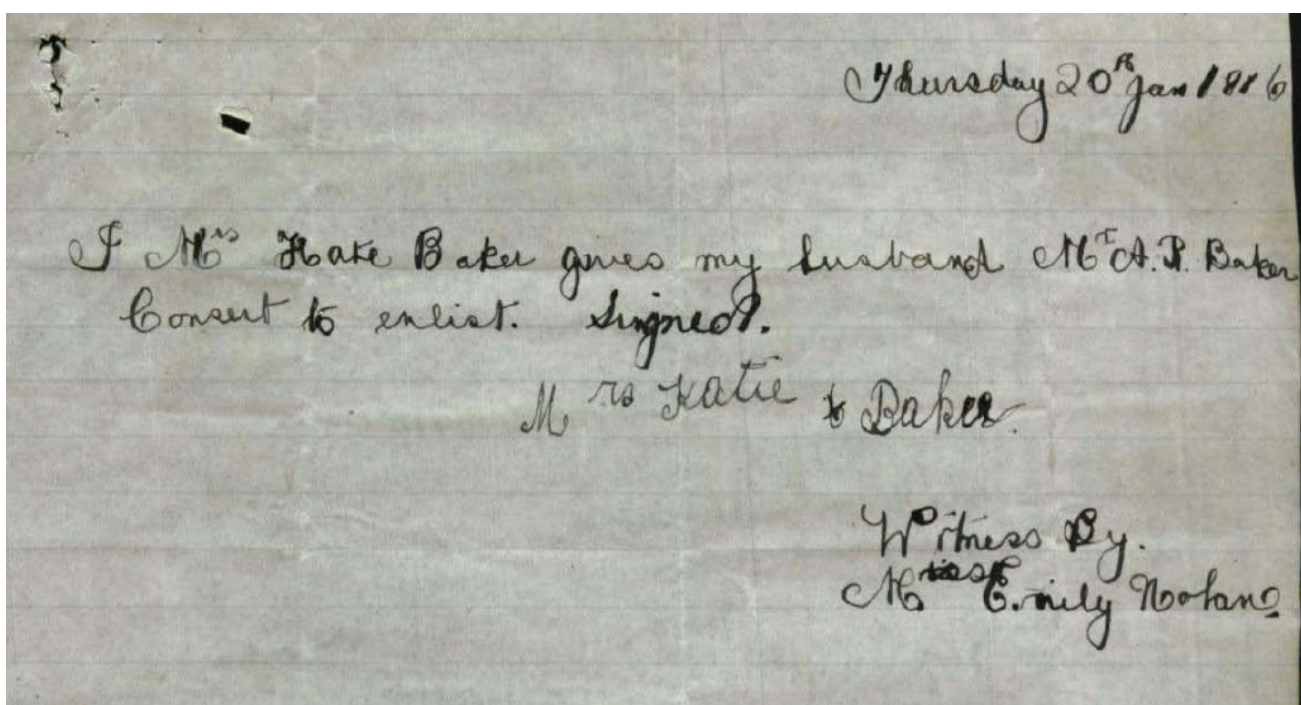
## Arthur Richard Baker

Arthur was the oldest son of Arthur Wilkinson Baker and Sarah Todd, born in Ultimo in 1887. He was a milk carter and married Kate (Catherine McCarthy) in 1908. Kate was 18 years old and an orphan when they married. They lived at 8 Phillip St, Glebe.

In August 1915 he joined the army and was assigned to B Company of the 4<sup>th</sup> Battalion at Holdsworthy on Sydney's outskirts for training. His wife was obviously not impressed. Just 2 days after he reported for duty, his wife petitioned for his discharge. She stated that "I have three children eldest 6 years & the youngest 4 months one of them is of unsound mind & I am not in a position to keep myself & children on what my husband can give me out of his Military Pay". She also enclosed a doctor's certificate saying that she was suffering from microcephaly (a condition where the head is significantly smaller than usual) and in a delicate state of health. After 2 weeks service Arthur was discharged and returned home on September 10th.

Their children were Ruby Thelma (known as Thelma) born in 1909, Ada (born 1913) and Arthur, who was born in 1915 and died at the age of 20 at the Rabbit Island Mental Hospital - a hospital for boys and young men with developmental disabilities.

Military service was obviously important to Arthur. He must have worked hard at convincing Kate that it was the right thing to do, or he had other reasons for wanting to get away from home, and meanwhile his brother William had signed up and shipped out to Egypt. On January 20<sup>th</sup> 1916, armed with a letter from his wife giving him consent, he again enlisted. This time he was assigned to reinforcements for the 30<sup>th</sup> Battalion and D Company.<sup>1</sup>



Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> Jan 1916

I Mrs Kate Baker gives my husband Mr A.P. Baker  
Consent to enlist. Signed.  
Mrs Katie to Baker.

Witness By.  
Mrs Emily Noonan

He embarked for France in early April via Egypt, arriving in Marseilles on 29<sup>th</sup> June 1916. He spent 4 weeks at Divisional Base before joining the 30<sup>th</sup> Battalion on the Western Front in early August. The 30<sup>th</sup> was in dire need of reinforcements at this time as they had been part of the Battle of Fromelles in July – the first major engagement of the AIF in France - and losses of over 350 men.

They saw little significant action for the remainder of the year, but were frequently rotated into the front line with raids towards and into the German trenches around Fleurbaix and Houplines mostly proving futile. In September Arthur was briefly hospitalised with a sprained ankle, and in November was evacuated to England with muscle pain and a bronchial infection. He was in hospital in Exeter for 2 months, then given a variety of temporary assignments in England.

<sup>1</sup> Detail on the service of the 30<sup>th</sup> Battalion taken from Sloan, H. The Purple and Gold, A History of the 30<sup>th</sup> Battalion. Sydney, 1938.



The muddy swamp of Passchendaele (Wikipedia). Carrying out a wounded soldier, Australian soldiers in Chateau Wood on October 29<sup>th</sup> 1917, and the Canadian Machine Gun Company's defensive positions.

Meanwhile, in 1917, the 30<sup>th</sup> had moved from Flanders to the Somme where they occupied Bapaume and was heavily involved in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battle of Bullecourt and the Battle of Polygon Wood. On October 14<sup>th</sup>, Arthur left England to rejoin his unit.

He arrived back at the front on October 26<sup>th</sup> just in time for the commencement that day of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Battle of Ypres, also known as the Battle of Passchendaele, which was fought in three stages beginning October 26<sup>th</sup>, October 30<sup>th</sup> and November 2<sup>nd</sup>. The battle was fought mostly by the Canadian Divisions and the British with the Australians providing support on the south flank. Luckily the 30<sup>th</sup> had just rotated off the line and were at "Winnipeg Camp" for an overhaul. Although claimed as a tactical Allied victory, the reality was that an overall gain of 5 miles was achieved at a cost of 140,000 lives lost (2 inches per dead soldier). The town of Passchendaele was taken on November 7<sup>th</sup> by the Canadians but was retaken by the Germans without resistance 5 months later.

Although the 30<sup>th</sup> Battalion was not involved in the major thrust, Arthur was wounded on October 30<sup>th</sup> and transferred back to England suffering from scalded feet and severe burns to his right leg. He remained in England for several months, not rejoining his unit in France until May 14<sup>th</sup> 1918. In June and July they saw action at Morlancourt before again moving to the rear to prepare for their next assignment.

The 30<sup>th</sup> Battalion played a large role during the Battle of Amiens on the 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> August 1918 – described later as the blackest day for the German Army in the entire war. Beginning at 4am in thick fog, the British, Australians and Canadians attacked on both sides of the Somme, the 30<sup>th</sup> Battalion led the advance down the Morcourt Valley in the second wave. They took over 100 prisoners and a complete German regimental canteen with all its stores. By the end of the first day the allies had advanced over 7 miles back to the original French front line before the first Battle of the Somme in 1916, punched a 15 mile wide hole in the German defences and moved themselves out of the mud and onto higher ground where mobile warfare techniques could be used decisively. They would never look back - this was the beginning of the "great advance" which led to the end of the war 3 months later.

The 30<sup>th</sup> Battalion's last major action of the war was the Battle of the St Quentin Canal in late September. The Australian Corps led the attack on September 29<sup>th</sup>, supported by 2 US divisions and 150 tanks. The 30<sup>th</sup> was initially deployed as the reserve battalion behind the 29<sup>th</sup>, 32<sup>nd</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> and contributed platoons to fill the gaps and work with the other units as they became separated. Under the command of Sir John Monash, this offensive created the first full breach of the Hindenburg line – the main German defensive line across the top of northern France. This breach ultimately convinced the Germans that they had no hope of victory. Within a week the line had been permanently breached and in another week the breach was made permanent with new allied positions on the Beurevoir Heights established.

Once the initial move across the canal (which was actually a 3 mile underground tunnel constructed by Napoleon to link the river systems of north-west and north-east France) had been completed, Arthur and D Company were assigned to join the 32<sup>nd</sup> Battalion in the capture of Mill Ridge and Joncourt to the east.

On October 3<sup>rd</sup> the 30<sup>th</sup> left the front line for Roisel for five days rest and reorganisation, the men feeling that they had seen the end of the war in the resignation of the enemy troops they had encountered. While not yet agreed by the higher authorities, they were right. They left for the Oisemont area some 80 miles away and were not required to return to the front before the Armistice was signed on November 11<sup>th</sup>, 1918. They marched towards Belgium, stopping in Beugnies, just short of the border where they spent Christmas and remaining for three months, dispelling any hope they had of following the retreating forces all the way to Berlin.

In January 1919 Arthur had 4 weeks leave in England and in March they joined the large number of Australian troops assembled at Charleroi, Belgium, just south of Brussels, to celebrate their victory and prepare for return to Australia. Arthur marched out from Charleroi on April 17<sup>th</sup> but there was one further wrinkle which delayed his return. On the 19<sup>th</sup> he found out that he had contracted gonorrhoea in Charleroi and was admitted to hospital in Le Havre. A week later he embarked for England but spent two months in the Australian hospital in Bulford, Wiltshire.

He finally embarked for Australia on the 9<sup>th</sup> July, arriving in Sydney on the 8<sup>th</sup> September. Private Arthur Baker was formally discharged on November 7<sup>th</sup>.

On his return, he found that some things had changed at home as well. In his absence, perhaps partly as a result of the dispute over whether he should enlist, Kate had taken up with a man named William Myers and was living with him in Glebe. In February 1920 Arthur sued for divorce alleging that Kate had committed adultery with William between the 9<sup>th</sup> April 1916 (the day the Arthur left Australia for France) and 2<sup>nd</sup> February 1920 (the date of the petition) “at 8 Phillip St Glebe and 77 Cowper St Glebe and other places all in the State of New South Wales”. Kate did not contest the petition and the divorce was granted, becoming absolute in late 1921. Arthur was also granted sole custody of the children Thelma, Ada and Arthur. Catherine married William Myers in 1924 and they had five children together. She died in 1935 of broncho-pneumonia and subacute hepatitis, aged 45.

Arthur did not remarry, lived in Randwick for the rest of his life, worked as a milk carter, and died in 1940.

Arthur’s daughter Ada married Sydney Evans in 1930 who gave his occupation as “mixer”, which could be someone who hand mixed concrete on building sites. They lived in Camdenville and then moved to Newtown (69 Holmwood St). He was a driver when he enrolled in the RAAF in January 1944, aged 32. He was assigned as a cook’s assistant and then moved to the No 1 Embarkation Depot (more commonly known as the Melbourne Cricket Ground). After a week in hospital, Sydney was supposed to return to the MCG (by then known as RAAF Ransford) on 4<sup>th</sup> May, however he did not. He remained absent without leave until caught on August 28<sup>th</sup>, 109 days later. He was given 16 days detention and docked 109 days pay.

In November he joined the 24<sup>th</sup> Squadron at Fenton Air Base near Hayes Creek in the Northern Territory. From there the squadron conducted long range bombing raids in B-24 Liberator aircraft against Japanese forces in the Dutch East Indies including Java, Borneo and other Indonesian islands. With the rest of the ground staff, Sydney left Darwin on 17 June 1945 on the *Luis Arguello* for the island of Morotai and then on to Balikpapan from where the squadron assisted in the liberation of the Philippines.

Following the surrender of the Japanese on August 15<sup>th</sup>, Sydney applied for a compassionate discharge as two of his children had required operations and Ada was not coping alone. He was transferred back to Australia by late October and discharged on January 2<sup>nd</sup> 1946 – the bulk of the squadron remained to fly troops and former POWs back to Australia until June of that year. Their first child Kathy had died as an infant in 1932, the others were Bryan born in 1933 (married Gwendoline Byrne, later divorced and remarried), Sydney jnr (1937, married Sylvia Delaney), Carol (1943) and Wayne (1954). Interestingly Sydney jnr and Carol shared the same birthday – March 28<sup>th</sup>, 6 years apart. Ada Evans died in 1978.

Thelma married Kenneth Ratcliffe, a painter, in 1929 and they lived in Annandale, and then Abbotsford – she died in 1983. They had four children – Paddy, Tony (Anthony William), Kenneth Roy, and Pam. Kenneth Roy Ratcliffe died tragically in 1937 at the age of 4, from burns received when he climbed onto a copper and slipped into the boiling water.

Tony married Shirley Vera Collins in 1952, and they had a daughter Susan Gai. Tony and Shirley separated very early in the marriage and later divorced. Susan married John Leland King in 1971. They have one son Jason John King (born 1972) and he has a daughter Ava Edith with his partner Sara Jane Japp. Tony later remarried – first to Lorraine, and then to Sussan Marshall with whom he has a daughter Wendy.



## **William George Baker**

William was six years younger than his brother Arthur, born in 1894. He was 21 when he enlisted in August 1915 just a couple of weeks after his brother (the first time).

He gave his trade or calling as “Driver” and was assigned to driving duties with the newly formed 7<sup>th</sup> Field Company of Engineers<sup>2</sup>. Their initial training was done at Liverpool, appropriately in the Pony Stallions’ Pavillion. If you thought ‘driving’ would have something to do with motor vehicles you would be mistaken. The vehicles were drays and the initial driver training was all about care of the horses, and learning the harnessing system. Meanwhile the Engineers, or Sappers, practiced their fieldwork.

The company left Australia on November 30<sup>th</sup> and arrived in Egypt on January 2<sup>nd</sup>. They immediately started practising excavating trenches in the desert sand which turned out to be fairly useless as the sand refused to stay out of the trenches once dug – and the sandy soil bore no resemblance at all to the mud and slush that they would soon experience. After a while the company was moved up the canal to Ferry Post opposite Ismailia to do some more useful work reconditioning and maintaining the pontoon bridge across the Suez canal as well as other engineering tasks. On the 13<sup>th</sup> of March they trained up to Alexandria for transport to France. However, by then William was separated from the company and was admitted to hospital with rheumatism.

He was in and out of hospital in Ismailia, and again in Ferry Post. When the 7<sup>th</sup> left for France he was transferred to the 6<sup>th</sup> Company but was in the convalescent depot through April and May. He was assigned to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Light Horse Training Regiment in Tel el Kabir in early June.

He was finally reunited with the 7<sup>th</sup> Field Company of Engineers in February 1917 in France. After the Battle of the Somme which lasted from July until November 1916, the Germans were moving back to the Hindenburg line, and the 7<sup>th</sup> were supporting the infantry units who were pursuing them. They alternated in and out of the front line, constructed artillery bridges around the town of Bapaume and dug trenches and erected wiring at the front line for the Battle of Bullecourt in April.

The job of the driver was to deliver the supplies and equipment to the engineers at the front lines. The wagons were loaded with wire, planking, duck boards, and other heavy equipment. It often needed to be delivered under cover of darkness in advance of the engineers arriving. The drivers were often under shelling, and the muddy terrain was no easier for the horses to traverse than for the foot soldiers. Often the mud was up to knee level and roads were virtually non-existent. Under the mud were shell holes which could easily damage a horse’s leg if they stepped into them. It was dangerous but essential work. Without the supplies, trenches could not be dug or repaired, wiring could not protect them and lines of communication could not be extended as the line moved forwards or back.

Rarely could one the Field Companies last more than two months at the front and they were regularly rotated for recovery, restocking and retraining. From May to August the unit was mostly in the back area although when they moved to Beaulencourt in July their first task was to erect the Nissen huts and prepare the camp. They performed training in Renescure in August in preparation for their next major offensive.

In early September the 7<sup>th</sup> was based in the “Pioneer” area behind Ypres constructing forward shelters, clearing roads, setting up planking and laying the tapes for new communications lines (which messengers would follow as they moved backwards and forwards between command and the company commanders at the front line). This was laying the ground for the first Battle of Ypres which commenced on September 20<sup>th</sup>. On the 20<sup>th</sup>, the 7<sup>th</sup> were relieved. When the second Battle of Ypres was launched on October 4<sup>th</sup>, the 7<sup>th</sup> were back at the front again, marking new communications lines, digging trenches and moving 200m of duckwalks into place across the mud – all under heavy enemy fire. The new duckwalk was well clear of the main battle features and created a safe pathway for stretched bearers evacuating wounded as well as carrying infantry supplies forward. Another section was responsible for constructing a new forward strong point. 4 died and 13 of the company were wounded in this action, while the Australians made great advances through No Mans Land.

The other important task carried out by the Sappers was ensuring that water was available to the troops. Wells had to be located, checked cleared and accurate maps produced for sharing with the infantry battalions. From the middle of October the 7<sup>th</sup> Field Company moved back to the middle area where they continued to support the battery positions and ensuring that defensive positions were maintained in the area around Polygon Wood. Then on the night of November 1<sup>st</sup> there was a special effort to move a large quantity of wiring stores forward and the convoy was badly strafed – two drivers were hit by shells, one killed, and all of the drivers were gassed. For the rest of November the company was billeted at a farm in the rear after a solid 2 months on the line, and this gave them the opportunity to put on a grand “Concert & Smoko” to celebrate on November 30 the second anniversary of their departure from Sydney. This pattern of roughly two months at the front and one month at the rear continued.

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<sup>2</sup> Information in this section on William George Baker’s wartime experience from his Service Records and from Chatto R.H., *The Seventh Company (Field Engineers) A.I.F 1915 – 1918*, Smiths Newspapers Ltd, Sydney, 1936.

In late April 1918, probably when based near Hennencourt Wood, William became sick with pleurisy and evacuated to hospital and then convalescence at the AIF base in Le Havre. He rejoined his unit on June 22<sup>nd</sup> by which time the unit was at Villers-Brettoneaux responsible for a large sector of front line and preparing for the now famous assault in August.



They were also part of the breach of the Hindenburg Line at Mont St Quentin and saw their last action of the war in September 1918 at Tincourt and Bellicourt (at left, Engineers repairing the corduroy track to Bellicourt). They were on reserve at St Ouen when the Armistice was announced on November 11<sup>th</sup>. At that time the officers commenced giving educational classes to the enlisted men, starting to prepare them for employment after the war, and many sporting and recreational activities were organised. On 22<sup>nd</sup> November they started the long trek which took them eventually to Thy-le-Chateau and Charleroi near Brussels. The first draft left for Australia on January 24<sup>th</sup> 1919, but most were still in camp on April 4<sup>th</sup> when “a monster Smoko was held ... and the balance of the regimental funds were spent”.

William was on the last section of the 7<sup>th</sup> Field Company when they left on the Yparinga on May 15<sup>th</sup>, arriving June 7<sup>th</sup> 1919. Thus William Baker was with the 7<sup>th</sup> Field Company of Engineers on both the first ship out from Sydney and the last ship home – serving overseas for just over three and a half years.

He married Clara Amelia Draper (nee Strahan) in Queensland in 1925. They had no children, but Clara had three from a previous marriage to William Draper who she had divorced two years previously. He worked as a Motor Driver in Brisbane and, by 1933, they had moved back to Sydney and were living together at Newington.

After that it would appear that William and Clara separated. By 1943 William, a labourer, is living at 56 The Boulevard in Lewisham. Clara by 1949 is at Campbell Ave in Lane Cove where she lived until she died in 1975.

William George Baker died in 1951 at the Repatriation General Hospital in Concord, NSW. On his death certificate he was described as a Maritime Services Labourer.



## Reginald Charles Waterson



Reginald Waterson was the eldest son of Mildred Rose Waterson (nee Baker) and her husband Charles Samuel Waterson. He was born in 1921.

Before the war Reginald was a junior cleaner at the Railway Station and Locomotive Depot in Casino, New South Wales, and was twenty years old when he enlisted in the air force in 1941.

After initial training in Australia he went to Canada as a Leading Aircraftsman for Air Observer training at Chatham, New Brunswick. This involved 140 hours of flying in Anson trainer aircraft. He was awarded his Air Navigator's badge and promoted to Sergeant in October 1942.



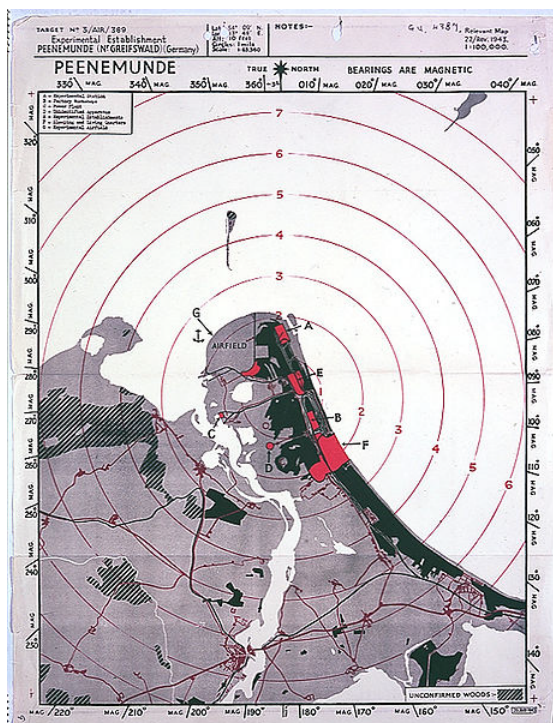
He arrived in the UK on November 5<sup>th</sup> 1942 and assigned to the Operational Training Unit at RAF Lichfield, followed by the Heavy Conversion Unit at Lindholme, Lincolnshire. Here he learnt to fly in the larger Wellington bomber aircraft, followed by the even larger Halifax and Lancasters at nearby Binbrook.

Finally, in May 1943 he was ready for his first operational tour with the RAF 101 Squadron at Ludford Magna, still in Lincolnshire. The squadron was responsible for bombing missions as far away as Italy, but mostly against targets in the industrial areas of Germany.

On the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> of August 1943 the 101<sup>st</sup> bombed the German Army Research Centre in Peenemunde in North East Germany where research and construction of the V-2 rocket (the first long range ballistic missile) was based. Although not a complete success, Operation Hydra as it was called, delayed the availability of the rockets by up to two months.

The largest of the World War II heavy bombers, the four-engined Lancaster carried a crew of 7 or 8 on mostly night-time raids. It was the aircraft used in the famous "Dambuster" raids against Germany's Ruhr Valley water storages. The navigator in a bomber sat behind the pilot and flight engineer and his job was to find the way to and from the target. He had the main aircraft instruments on a panel above his desk including compass, sextant, altimeter and airspeed indicator to assist him in calculating the position of the aircraft and the desired route.

From May to December 1943 Reginald flew 30 sorties for a total of 193 flying hours in the Lancaster bombers. He was awarded the Distinguished Flying Medal in 1945. The citation read "Flight Sergeant Waterson has completed many successful operations against the enemy in which he has displayed high skill, fortitude and devotion to duty".



The Lancaster bomber, an Air Navigator at his desk, the RAF 101 Squadron and the British bombing plan for Operation Hydra against Peenemunde in North East Germany in August 1943.



In January 1944 Reginald transferred back to the 1656 HCU at Lindholme and became an Instructor. While there, in May, he was commissioned with the rank of Pilot Officer.

He continued as an instructor until the end of the year when, in November, he was promoted again to Flying Officer and prepared to return to Australia.

As part of his final RAF performance report his assessment was rated very positively, although in the comments section he was described as “an average junior officer, rather lacking in personality”.

He arrived back in Australia in February 1945 and sent to Melbourne for an Operations Room Course. A new heavy bomber squadron, the 99<sup>th</sup>, was being formed to be based in Darwin. In May, having passed his course, Reginald went north with the squadron for active duty. The operations room was the site for pre-operational strategy meetings and, after the return, the debriefings. Before the squadron had fully relocated the war ended so it never saw active duty. It operated for another year in a transport role, ferrying personnel and supplies from Darwin back to Southern Australia. Reginald Waterson’s role was completed by the end of 1945 and he was discharged on 30<sup>th</sup> January 1946.

After the war in 1947 he married Laurel Jean Hanson in Dubbo, and they lived in Fairfield. He worked as a teacher. They had at least two children – Graham and Karen.



**The Casino Railway Station, left, and their refreshment rooms photographed in 1947.**

***The Baker Sisters- Elizabeth, Emma, Laura, Julia and Ada***



**Left to Right: Emma and Ada (back row), Laura, Elizabeth, and Julia Baker in approximately 1910.**

## Ada Winifred Weekes Baker (1866 – 1949)



Ada Winifred Weekes Baker was born on December 11<sup>th</sup>, 1866 in Strawberry Hills, Sydney. She was the youngest surviving child of Frederick and Sarah. Only George Alfred was younger - born on the same day in 1868, he died of peritonitis at barely 2 months of age.

At the age of 16 she moved with her parents to Wagga Wagga when they took over the lease of the Pastoral Hotel in 1863. She started to teach singing in order to save money so that she could return to Sydney for formal training.

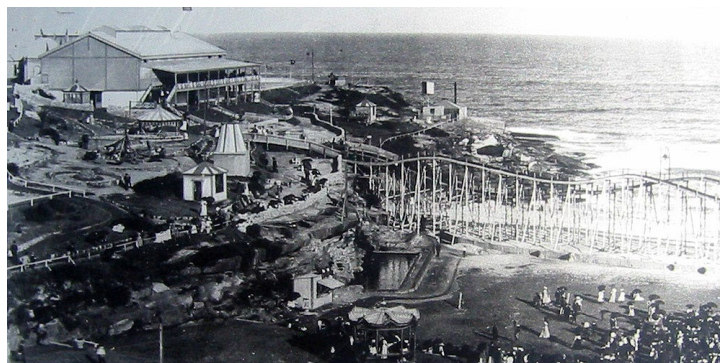
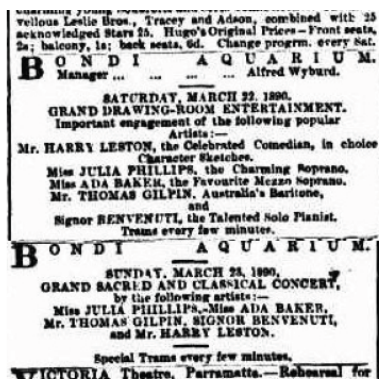
She also raised £50 for the Wagga hospital, of which her father was a director, and showed that even at an early age she would combine her singing talent with a passion for those less fortunate. When the inter-coastal steamer Ly-ee-Moon was wrecked in May 1886 with the loss of 71 lives, a disaster relief fund was formed. Ada organised a benefit concert in Wagga and sent £24 15s 6d to the Lord Mayor of Sydney.

This was the start of a career as a popular comic opera soprano, known for singing light opera and ballads, and an even longer career as a singing teacher which lasted until she retired at 82 years of age merely a month or two before her death.

By late 1886 she had moved back to Sydney and was a pupil of Mr Albert Fisher. She started to make solo concert performances including three Promenade Concerts at the Exhibition Building at Christmas time that year. The Sydney Morning Herald's reviewer on January 10<sup>th</sup> 1887 said "the young lady has an agreeable voice, which gives promise, under judicious management, of considerable value in the future". In early 1887 she featured in three concerts at the Manly Aquarium. She also appeared at the Coogee Palace Aquarium Sunday concert series in early 1888 but we have only the published advertisements to go by and, at that stage of her development, it is likely that most of her work would not be featured in public records.

In April 1887 Ada married Charles Henry L'Estrange Hall, an accountant and law clerk born in Grays, Essex. They had 2 daughters - Beatrice Mabel in 1887 and Vera Eveline in 1889. Motherhood would also account for a lack of engagements during these few years, however she later stated that she never ceased performing or teaching.

It was from 1890 that her performing career took off. Continuing to use Miss Ada Baker as her professional name she was a featured performer at the Bondi Aquarium from February through July of that year. The 'Bondi Aquarium and Pleasure Grounds', actually at Tamarara Beach just south of Bondi, opened in 1887. It featured a roller coaster, roller skating rinks, fireworks displays, a dance hall and a weekend concert series



The Bondi Aquarium at Tamarara Beach (c1890), an ad from the Sydney Morning Herald of March 21<sup>st</sup> 1890.

The 'aquarium' tag came from displays of a variety of marine life in tanks throughout the complex. Along with similar pavilions at Manly and Coogee, it was modelled on the English seaside resorts like Brighton. The concert series featured a combination of circus-style acts such as Alexander the "Australian Blondin", comedians, music hall numbers and classical ballads.

In the second half of 1890 Ada performed in a variety of concerts in Sydney including Kowalski's Grand Concert at the Centennial Town Hall on October 25<sup>th</sup>, and in a benefit for the local hospital at the North Sydney School of the Arts in February 1891.



Harry Rickards, founder of the Tivoli vaudeville circuit, with at left the Tivoli Theatre as it was when Ada Baker performed in the 1890s (it was The Garrick Theatre as shown here from 1890 to 1893). At right as it was after the fire and refurbishment of 1899.

From mid 1891 Ada joined a touring Gilbert & Sullivan opera company and performed in China, India and Burma. She was out of Australia for about three years. Later, at the time of her 70<sup>th</sup> birthday, she reminisced about performing in Calcutta and a concert given in private to the Maharajah of Mysore for which she was rewarded with a ride on a white elephant. The company played in an almost empty theatre to the Maharajah and his eight guests while hearing the “twittering whispers” of his wives and children who were watching concealed behind latticed screens in the balcony. It was in India, she said, that she heard her first gramophone.

In August 1894 she joined the famous vaudeville circuit of Harry Rickards at the Tivoli Theatre in Sydney with the baritone Harry Fitzmaurice and performed alongside many of the music hall stars of the day. This was more or less a full time engagement for the next four years. Based in Sydney she also toured to Melbourne, Brisbane, Hobart and Perth (probably also Adelaide but we have not tracked down newspaper records from South Australia). She was described as a ‘vivacious’ soprano with ‘a rich voice’ and attracted a stream of appreciative reviews. As in the aquarium circuit, the vaudeville of the 1890s was a diverse mixture of serious, popular, comic and circus-style acts. This was the popular entertainment of the time and the Tivoli name remained at the forefront of the Australian entertainment industry right up until the 1950s.

Harry Rickards himself was a comic singer whose impersonations were based on the two typical music hall characterisations of the day – the “coster”, or tinker, and the “toff”. He brought renowned stars from England and America and engaged local artists as well. Ada’s role was as a singer of ballads – serious or light comedy numbers. Just a week later she was described in a Sydney Morning Herald review as “already ... a favourite, especially with the more critical portion of the Tivoli audience”. Sharing the bill for her first show was Harry Fitzmaurice (also in his first performance) as a baritone singer, Miss Tasma Sherwin, also a serious operatic soprano, Mr Slade Murray performing character songs; Mr Clarence Lynden whose specialties were singing, dancing and especially skipping; a ballet presentation; a quintet of ‘high kickers’; the ‘Les Tines’ acrobats, tumblers and somersault throwers; and the American comedian Mr Gus Bruno. Ada sang “The Milkmaid”, “The Pipe” and, as an encore “I Wouldn’t, Would You?”

MR. HARRY RICKARDS' PAY SHEET.

Melbourne Opera House Theatre 19<sup>th</sup> Week

Principal Ladies	Partners	Opentones	Extra Gals	Advertizing
Rent of Theatre and Electric light			20 0 0	
Ada Baker	Murphy Mack	Leticia Boas		
Priscilla Tompa	Pope & Taylor			
Mrs Carr Glyn	Les Smith Martini		17 0 0	
Rose Abbott	Leticia Boas			
	Horace Whalley		8 3 13 11	
	H. Rickards			
	J. W. Denton			
	H. Fitzmaurice			

MR. HARRY RICKARDS' COMPANY.

Monday June 21<sup>st</sup> 1895

SIGNATURE SHEET

I, the undersigned hereby acknowledge having received my Salary in full up to and including Friday, the 21<sup>st</sup> day of June 1895

John C. Lee

Harry V. Ingham

Ada B. Baker

Pay records and accompanying signature sheet acknowledging payment of wages for the week ending 21st June 1895 at the Melbourne Opera House. Part of the Tivoli Theatre Records collection at the State Library of Victoria.

Between April and October 1895 the company was in Melbourne at the Opera House Theatre (which was later renamed the Tivoli after being purchased by Rickards) and featured the first comic performances by “Little Trixie the Fairy Frolique” who was Ada’s daughter Beatrice. She was called Trixie by the family for her entire life.

From the Harry Rickards Company pay sheet for the week ending June 21<sup>st</sup> we can see that Ada was paid £5 per week for the Melbourne season. On the reverse of the pay sheet, the receipts for the seven shows in the week showed £336 which generated a profit of £51. The signature underneath Ada’s is of John C Leete, the brother of Harry Rickards, who was the company General Manager.

Ada Baker was the highest paid Principal Lady in the show. The gentlemen were paid significantly more – especially Horace Wheatley, an English star comedian and dancer who was bought in for a 1 week star appearance only. Also featured were Fred Dark, “End Man, Comedian and Character Impersonator”, a “world renowned whistling ventriloquist” Mr J.W. Wilton with “his wonderful automaton McGinty”, “marvellous feats” by Les Tines and Martini on the horizontal bars, and the first appearance in Melbourne of “a new and original Vocal Ballet, entitled The Dandy Colored Coons”.

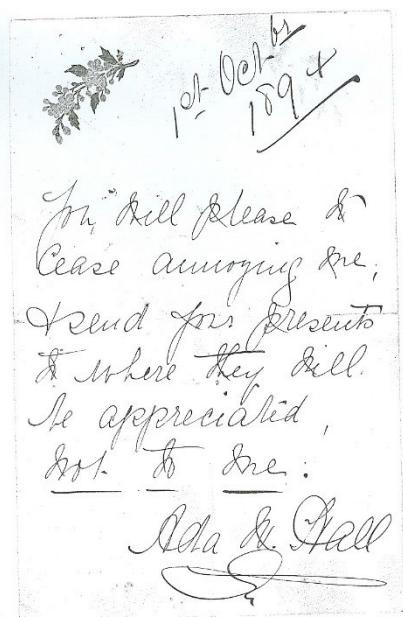
In 1896 Ada also featured with the Godfrey, Westmacott and J.C. Williamson companies, most notably in the Christmas Pantomime production of ‘Sinbad the Sailor’ at the end of the year.

In the second half of 1897, after the Sydney season, Ada took a 3 month break and it was during this time that she sued for divorce. She and Charles Hall had not been living together since before Ada had left for India and Charles had just left for Fremantle, Western Australia. Ada seemed to seize her chance and sued on the basis of desertion. In her petition she states that she had always worked for her own living throughout the marriage and also that her husband “would not have married her had he not been forced to do so by her brother”. Presumably this was due to her pregnancy – Trixie was born five months after their wedding.

However Charles dissented. He said that he had just left his job, had relocated to Fremantle by working his passage, and arrived with less than a pound to his name. He could not afford to return to Sydney to defend the suit, but said that he “never wilfully and without just cause or excuse deserted” Ada. Indeed he says that he had “made numerous appeals to her for a reconciliation which she has consistently and emphatically refused”.

When the suit came to court, things did not go Ada’s way. As evidence of Ada’s refusal to entertain a reconciliation, Charles presented a note dated 1<sup>st</sup> October 1894. “You will please to cease annoying me, and send your presents to where they will be appreciated, not to me. Ada W. Hall”.

Charles’ lawyers then produced evidence in the form of letters written to Harry Fitzmaurice and signed “Kinchen” – German for “little one”. She was asked to write the phrase “Well sweetheart, you must have a man who properly knows the country. Your own, Kinchen”. The manager of the King Street branch of the Commonwealth Bank, who obviously passed for a handwriting expert in those days, testified that her hand matched that of the original letter.



1<sup>st</sup> Oct 1894

You will please to  
Cease annoying me,  
& send your presents  
to where they will  
be appreciated,  
not to me.

Ada W. Hall

Hall v. Hall  
MARKED FOR IDENTIFICATION:  
23-9-97

Well sweetheart you must have  
a man who properly knows the  
country your own Kinchen

It was also alleged that her name had been mentioned in connection with a divorce suit in India, of which she denied any knowledge and also denied the insinuation that she had committed adultery with “any of the men whose names had been mentioned”. She agreed that in India and elsewhere she had stayed at the same place as Fitzmaurice, but “only in the way that members of a company travelling together stayed at the same hotel or boarding house”.

The Judge concluded that while he could not prove that she had committed adultery, the letters had “created the impression in his mind that she had been unfaithful to her marriage vows” and that Ada was not entitled “on moral grounds at any rate” to bring any charges against her husband. He found that there was no evidence of desertion, and thus the divorce was refused.

In November 1897 Ada returned to the Tivoli stage and in 1898 made commercial cylinder-recordings for the new Gramophone at Allens Music in Melbourne (as shown in the advertisement on the following page).

In July and August of 1898 the Tivoli company performed in Perth. Rather than return to Sydney, however, Ada Baker decided to remain in Perth.

While she continued to perform in Perth, with the Fremantle Orchestral Society, the Perth Musical Union and the Lyric Club and for various charitable causes with mostly amateur companies, this marked the transition point from her performing career to a concentration on teaching.

She had been teaching singing since around 1889 although at what level and to what degree we cannot tell.

Although Ada was no longer with the company, the Tivoli Theatre was destroyed by fire in 1899. The façade was saved but the whole of the theatre behind had to be rebuilt. The contractor who provided all of the plasterwork – the dome, boxes, circle front and proscenium arch – was Grant and Cocks, owned by Ada’s brother-in-law Frederic Winchester Grant.

TIVOLI THEATRE.

"You see that he is here"—the "he" relating to Mr. Charles Fanning—was the jubilant announcement that the management of the Tivoli had to make on Saturday evening, followed by an intimation that Mr. Fanning would "play at the Tivoli only and at no other place for the full term of three months."

TIVOLI THEATRE. Sole Lessee and Manager Mr. Harry Rickards. CONTINUED BRILLIANT SUCCESS OF MR. HARRY RICKARDS'S NEW TIVOLI MINSTRELS AND SPECIALTY COMPANY.

HER MAJESTY'S THEATRE.

HER MAJESTY'S THEATRE. Sole Lessee, Messrs. Williamson and Musgrove. Under the Management of Mr. C. E. Westmacott. Treasurer, Mr. J. B. Moutrie.

GRAND CHRISTMAS ANNUAL. commencing TO-NIGHT, TO-NIGHT, CHRISTMAS EVE, and continuing Every Evening till further notice.

SINBAD THE SAILOR, or TINBAD THE TAILOR, and the Wicked Ogre, the Good Fairy, and the Little Old Man of the Sea. Music Selected, Composed, and Arranged by Mr. GEO. F. PACK.

OPERA-HOUSE.

OPERA-HOUSE. Sole Lessee and Director, Mr. Harry Rickards. Mr. HARRY RICKARDS'S NEW TIVOLI MINSTRELS AND SPECIALTY COMPANY.

THE WONDERFUL GRAPHO-PHONE. THE MACHINE THAT TALKS, SINGS, RECITES, PLAYS HARP SOLOS, PLAYS GUITAR SOLOS, AND IS A COMPLETE ORCHESTRA OF BRASS BAND.

Sydney Morning Herald, September 3, 1894 (top) and February 15, 1895 (below)

Sydney Morning Herald, December 24, 1896

The Argus, November 20, 1897 (top) and June 25, 1898 (below)



addressed to the School.  
 New Quarter begins 23rd June.

**A**      **C**      **A**      **R**      **D.**

**MISS ADA BAKER,**  
 Having decided to settle in Perth and follow  
 the Profession of a  
**TEACHER OF SINGING,**  
 Is Prepared to Receive Pupils.  
 Terms and particulars at Nicholson's.

**MADAME BELLE BUCK,** Pupil of

ST  
 SI  
 JT  
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 JT  
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The West Australian, September 5, 1898 (above) and  
 November 25 1898 (below).

**ENTERTAINMENTS.**

**CONTINENTAL GARDENS.**

There was a fair attendance at the above open-air variety entertainment resort last night, when the new programme of the previous evening was repeated in its entirety, with the exception that Mr. Tom Bergin substituted the ballad, "Alone on the raft," for "Sons of the sea," and was very favourably received, being encored. Mr. Fred. Duncan was also highly successful in his rendering of "Sally Horner" and "In Old Madrid." Miss Ada Baker's new scene, "There'll come a time," to the effect of which the presence and singing of little Trixie contributes much, was accorded another highly favourable reception. The comedians of the company—Mr. Willie Freear, the star, whose repertoires of sketches and comicalities is most extensive; Mr. Will. Williams, the localisms in whose "Gutter musician" turn, were the means of his securing an undeniable encore; and Mr. George Williamson—were very successful. The Tylers, the Barlow Sisters in a new song and dance, the Downards, and Miss Gollmick also contributed appreciated items to the bill. Strong in balladists and comedians, the company is weak only in serio artists. To-night the new programme will be again submitted.

Did she reconcile with her husband in Perth? There is an entry on the electoral roll in 1906 that shows Ada Winifred Hall, Charles Henry Hall (accountant) and Florence Julia Hall all residing at 250 Aberdeen St, West Perth. If this is not Ada then the match in name is a huge coincidence! But if it is, we don't know who Florence Julia Hall is, and on balance a reconciliation seems unlikely given what had happened in the divorce court.

In January 1908, after ten years in the west, Ada returned to Sydney where she set up as a teacher of singing.

Her husband Charles remained in Western Australia where he died on November 30<sup>th</sup> 1937 in Perth Hospital. Their marriage was never formally dissolved.

Ada created choirs for both young singers and for adults and staged concerts which raised funds for her favourite charities. She taught initially from studios in George St in the City and at 'Nyrambia', Hastings St, Marrickville. The latter is likely her residence at the time.

By 1916 she had restyled herself "Madame Ada Baker" and moved to Lane Cove Road, Pymble shortly after that. Her city studios remained in George St, eventually based in the Paling's Buildings. Her pupils included her daughters, nieces and grand-nieces who, apparently, received no favours and admired their teacher. In a 50 year teaching career she estimated that many hundreds of pupils passed through her studio. In her later years she taught singing in schools.

Her charitable causes were many. She staged regular concerts and over forty light operas and musical comedies for charity. Ada revived St Cecilia Choir in Pymble which contributed towards the raising of £1000 for the local branch of the Red Cross during WWI.

The Australian Music Teachers Alliance was formed in 1930 to provide a professional support group for those with music diplomas. Ada was a Vice-President of the organisation from 1933, gave a lecture on the Training of Children's Voices in 1934, and another on English music of the sixteenth to the eighteenth century in 1936.

**MISS ADA BAKER'S JUVENILE CHOIR.**  
Miss Ada Baker, the soprano who reappeared with success at the Highland Society's recent concert, after an absence of ten years in Perth, is now forming a choir for boys and girls, under 16, who will give choral concerts, half the proceeds of which will be devoted to charity. As noted in Saturday's issue, Miss Baker is arranging preliminaries at Nicholson's.

ADDRESS: 11 PALING'S BUILDINGS  
**MISS ADA BAKER,**  
**THE POPULAR VOCALIST**  
**AND TEACHER.**  
Terms: The STUDIO, Hastings-street, Marrickville; NICHOLSON'S. Phone, 153 Peterham.

**MISS ADA BAKER'S JUVENILE CHOIR.**—Future Rehearsals, Winston Hall, Pitt-street, next Anthony Hordern's, beginning TO-DAY, at 8 o'clock p.m. Class (Ladies), Voices, age from 12 to 18, 10/6 quar. Studio, Hastings-street, Marrickville. Nicholson's.

**MISS ADA BAKER,** Singing, Resumes Tuition Monday Next. Ladies' Class, Monday, 8 p.m., M'ville; Male Class, Tuesday, 8 p.m., M'ville; Ladies' Class, Wednesday, 8 p.m., city; Girls' Class, Friday, 4 p.m., M'ville. Studios, 335A George-st (opp. Nicholson's); and Nyrambla, Hastings-st, Marrickville. T., 153 Pet.

Ada Baker's return to Sydney resulted in formation of her Juvenile and Senior choirs which raised money for charity as well as giving her students valuable experience.

Other funds were raised for a variety of local charities and for the war efforts in the Boer War and the two World Wars. Her Patriotic Concert in October 1914 for the Chamber of Commerce War Food Fund featured the Cecilia Choir and both of her daughters Trixie and Vera in 'The Hours' a cantata by Roeckel. A concert in 1947 that raised funds for the Food for Britain Appeal was also noteworthy. Ada sponsored the creation of the "Grandmothers for Victory" War Bond League to support the Third Victory Loan in 1945 after Douglas Richards, one of her five grandsons, was killed in the R.A.F. 59<sup>th</sup> Squadron in 1942. Membership of the group was open to all grandmothers who had purchased a war bond for a grandchild.

Her most well known cause, though, was the Rachel Forster Hospital for Women and Children. Two cots in the hospital were endowed by her studio and she was made a Life Governor in 1927.

In 1922 a group of six women doctors, frustrated by being unable to complete their medical training as women could not obtain residency places in Australia as it was considered improper for them to treat patients in a public hospital, commenced a "little hospital" in a terrace house in Surry Hills. Modelled after Melbourne's Queen Victoria Hospital they employed only women doctors and staff, acted as a training hospital for female medical graduates, and concentrated on women's health issues such as venereal disease, family counselling, childhood rheumatism and juvenile diabetes. They moved the hospital to larger premises in Redfern in 1925 and named it after Rachel, Lady Forster, the wife of the then Governor General. She had commenced a medical course in England but not finished it, and was a tireless fundraiser for under-privileged women in London and Australia. Larger was still a relative term – the new hospital in George Street could house four women and two children as in-patients.

Madame Ada Baker was a foundation fundraiser and between 1925 and 1932 raised £500 to endow a cot in the in-patients facility through a large number of concerts and operas. Despite receiving no government funds, and charging its patients only a token fee of sixpence, the Rachel Forster Hospital was able to maintain a balance sheet in credit throughout its early years due to the generosity of the women of Sydney. Extensions funded by the annual surpluses were opened in 1926 and 1933. A major new building was opened in the 1940s. The hospital remained open until 2003 and the site was redeveloped in 2008.

Ada celebrated her seventieth birthday in 1936 and 50 years of teaching in 1939. She celebrated the latter by staging the 3-act operetta "Les Cloches de Corneville" (also known as "The Bells of Normandy") by Robert Placquette and raising £140 for the Rachel Forster Hospital.

Ada continued to teach a full load until early 1949. At the age of 82, she restricted her teaching to her home which continued until two weeks before her death. In July she suffered injuries due to a car accident and announced her retirement. A testimonial concert was arranged by her pupils at a packed Sydney Town Hall for July 14<sup>th</sup>. Unfortunately Ada was too ill to attend. A range of well known artists and former students performed. In addition to the artistic success the concert raised £470 for charity according to Musical Digest. She died at her Pymble home 10 days later on July 24<sup>th</sup> 1949.

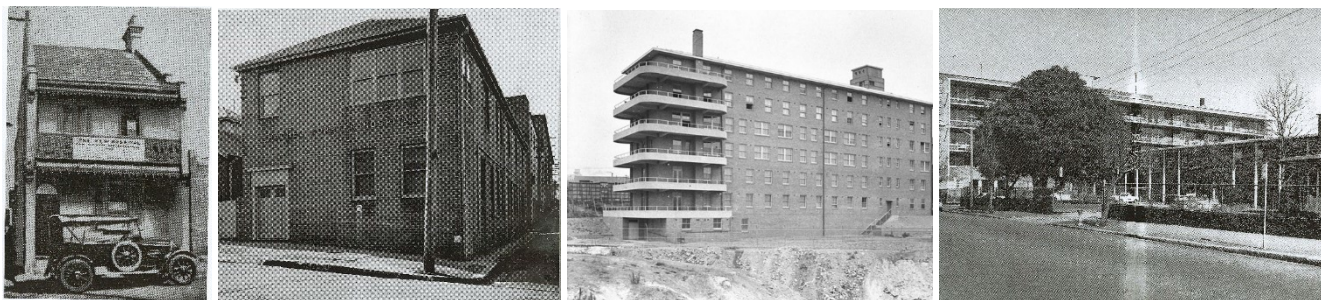
In 2006 the government of the ACT named Ada Baker Street, in a new subdivision in the outlying north-eastern suburb of Forde after Ada.

Ada's two daughters were both musical performers, although not as well known as their mother. They were taught by Ada and performed both with her and independently.

Trixie married Charles Richard Porter in 1928. He was an orchardist. They had two sons – Brian Charles and John Michael Porter. They lived in Lane Cove Road Pymble, and after Ada's death moved into her house at 1142 Pacific Highway, Pymble. Trixie was a cleaner by that stage and the sole beneficiary of Ada's will. Trixie died in 1965 in Findlay Hall Private Hospital, Chatswood. They had two sons.

Brian Charles Porter married first Helen Austen Daniel – they moved to Canberra where he was an accountant and Helen a public servant. They divorced. Brian then married Sylvia.

John Michael Porter was an engineer and married Joan Valena Southwick in 1954. They moved to Victoria – first Traralgon, and then Balwyn. They have at least one son – Brian David.



The Rachel Forster Hospital in 1922, late 1920s, 1940s, 1960s.

## WOMEN DOCTORS.

### CONDUCTING A HOSPITAL.

The problem of accommodation at the Rachel Forster Hospital is becoming acute.

The aim of the women doctors in establishing the hospital was to specialise in preventive methods. They hoped that, by establishing an institution in the heart of one of the poorest districts in the city, they would encourage poor women to come for free advice and treatment, and to bring their children with them. The hopes of the doctors have been fully justified; the attendance at the hospital, which is open daily and on two nights each week, has increased steadily during the five years of its existence.

Last year 2007 women and children were treated; and the hospital dealt with 18,210 attendances. At present the major portion of the patients are out-patients, because there is no accommodation for in-patients; more beds are essential to the development of the hospital.

Last year a small medical ward was opened, but this is totally inadequate to the needs of the hospital; every day patients are being sent for admission to the already overcrowded public hospitals.

Twenty-one women doctors give voluntary service at the Rachel Forster Hospital; they are anxious to establish departments for ante-natal and maternity work, but until more beds are available, adequate work in these departments is impossible.

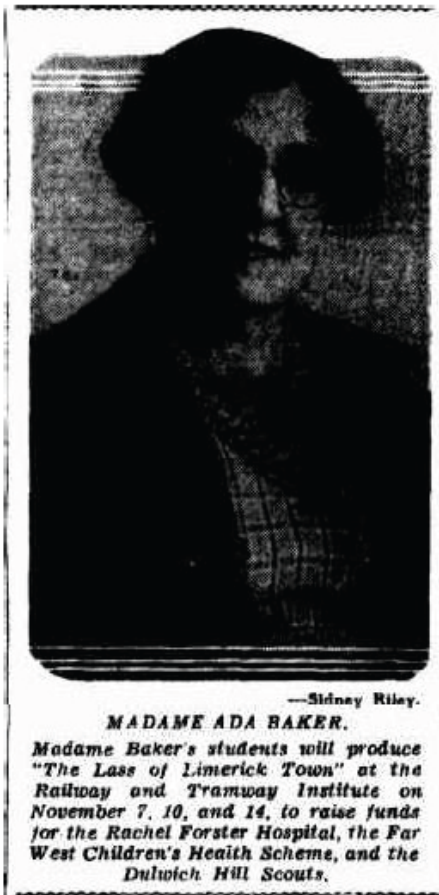
The hospital receives no Government subsidy, and relies on the public for support.

The committee is faced with the task of raising sufficient money to build a block for in-patients. In order to raise funds for this object, the auxiliary committee will hold a picnic ball on September 12, at the Wentworth Cafe.

### RACHEL FORSTER HOSPITAL.

The various committees organized to assist the Rachel Forster Hospital have been busy recently. The Pymble Centre, as a result of a bridge party and other efforts, has sent to headquarters a cheque for £152; Madame Ada Baker raised £40 as the result of a juvenile concert given by her pupils; the Moorman Centre held a picture show entertainment by which it raised £15; and the Sydney Bridge and Mah Jongg Club held an afternoon which resulted in £12/11/. The Younger Set of Randwick held several small dances, the total proceeds of which were £14. A jumble sale held at the hospital on Saturday realised £15. Mrs. Blackwood lent her home at Bellevue Hill to the Randwick Centre last week for a bridge afternoon, and the proceeds of this completed the centre's annual quota of £50. The Mayoress of Strathfield, Mrs. Watts, held a garden party, which resulted in a cheque for £55, and the Chatswood Centre raised £10 by means of a bridge afternoon, which amount made up the quota of this centre for the year. A cheque for £10 from the Fort-street Old Girls' Union represented half the proceeds of their annual dance.

Mrs. Bassam, Longueville, will have a bridge party at her house next week, at which a local centre will be formed. On October 4 and 5 a younger set on the North Shore line will present a revue for the hospital at the Killara Hall. On October 17, Dams Mary Hughes, Mrs. Norman Blayns, and Mrs. Hope will hold a bridge party, and the Redlands School fete will be held for the hospital on October 24.



**MISS JILL CALLAGHAN,**  
who will be one of the performers in "A Desert Romance," by Mr. Thomas Carson, which will be enacted by Madame Ada Baker's pupils at the Railway Institute on November 10 and December 2, in aid of the Rachel Forster Hospital. The Governor and Lady Oame will be present at the first night's performance.

The Rachel Forster Hospital is conducted by women for women and children. Other speakers were Mesdames Hubert, Fairfax, H. L. Will, and J. E. Walker, the Director of Maternal and Infant Welfare, Dr. Grace Outbert, who said that in Holland the State encouraged and assisted social welfare and charitable organisations to a high degree, and Miss Kate Oatley.

During afternoon tea Mrs. Ada Baker handed in for the hospital a cheque for £140—proceeds of the celebration of her 50 years' career as a singing teacher with three performances of the opera "Les Cloches de Corneville."

A small selection of clippings from The Sydney Morning Herald from 1925 to 1939 showing some of Madame Ada Baker's contributions to the Rachel Forster Hospital for Women in Redfern.

Madame Ada Baker's students arranged a gala concert and dance on Saturday night at Palling's concert hall, to celebrate the fact that they had completed the sum of £500 for their cot in the Rachel Forster Hospital. Twenty-nine pounds was presented to Mrs. W. H. Read by Miss May Craft (president of the cot fund), and Miss Dot Rowland (treasurer) gave Mrs. Read a bouquet of flowers. Miss Clare Pesthling (secretary) announced that the students had decided to continue their support of the Rachel Forster Hospital. Madame Ada Baker also spoke, outlining the students' successful efforts in raising funds for various charities.

**S. JAMES HALL, PHILLIP STREET.**  
**OPERA, "LA MASCOTTE," 3 Acts.**  
(Arrangements, Hooley and Co., Ltd., London.)  
**WEDNESDAY, October 2nd, 8 p.m.; TUESDAY, October 9th, 8 p.m.; WEDNESDAY, October 9th, 8 p.m.**  
Three Performances.  
Students Madame Ada Baker.  
Leading Artists Assisting.  
Proceeds, Cot, Rachel Forster Hospital.  
Sydney Night Refuge.  
**Plans Palling's. Tickets, 3/, Reserved, and 2/.**

**CHARITY PERFORMANCES.**

Madame Ada Baker's students are making an effort to raise £100 to refurbish a cot in the new Rachel Forster Hospital, and to further this project will give a tonic entertainment at St. James's Hall on Saturday. They will assist two other charities by repeating the programme on October 28 and 29, to help the bands of the Sydney Night Refuge and the Carrington Convalescent Hospital at Camden. A new American play, "The Ladies' Aid," will be given. Plans are at Palling's.

**"LA MASCOTTE"**

"LA MASCOTTE"  
To assist the Rachel Forster Hospital cot fund and the Sydney Night Refuge, Madame Ada Baker's and the Sydney Night Refuge, Madame Ada Baker's students will perform Audran's opera "La Mascotte" on Wednesday next, and on October 8 and 9, at St. James's Hall. Mr. J. A. Arcus will be musical director, and Mr. E. Howell producer. The opera will be repeated at the Mosman Anzac Memorial Hall on October 12.

## Vera Hall

Ada's younger daughter Vera Hall married Hubert Eric Richards in Essex, England on August 7<sup>th</sup> 1915. The wedding took place in Thurrock Parva, a village on the edge of the town of Grays, Essex, which was the birthplace of her father Charles Hall. Presumably she was visiting her father's family in England and may have got caught there by the outbreak of war.

Eric was born in Petersham, Sydney, in 1889. In 1915 he was a gunner with the HAC (Honourable Artillery Company) depot at Finsbury. The Artillery Training School was at Shoeburyness in Essex. By 1916 Eric was a Lieutenant in the 4<sup>th</sup> Kings Own Yorkshire Light Infantry (the K.O.Y.L.I.) but we have been unable to find his detailed war records (not unusual as over 60% of the English army's World War I records were destroyed by bombing in World War II).

There were two sections of the 4<sup>th</sup> K.O.Y.L.I. Battalion. His entry in Who's Who in Australia 1962 states that he was "Company Commander and Adjutant Kings Own Yorkshire Light Infantry 1915-19 with service in France". His name only appears once in the voluminous history of the regiment (by Lt-Col. Reginald C. Bond, DSO). Therefore we do know that in July 1917 he suffered from being gassed in the trenches in the coastal defences at Nieuport, Belgium, when with the First 4<sup>th</sup> Battalion. I believe that Eric was initially with the 2 / 4<sup>th</sup> Btn as they were located at Larkhill Base on the Salisbury Plain throughout much of 1916, not far from Newbury where Gordon was born in October. The 1 / 4<sup>th</sup> Btn went straight from Yorkshire to France in April 1915, while Eric was still in the Artillery. The 2 / 4<sup>th</sup> remained in England until January 1917. Both units saw action in the Somme – the 1 / 4<sup>th</sup> from early 1916 around Neuve Chappelle then at Ypres, Polygon Wood, Paschendaele; and the 2 / 4<sup>th</sup> from January 1917 near Bullecourt, Cambrai, Arras, Albert.

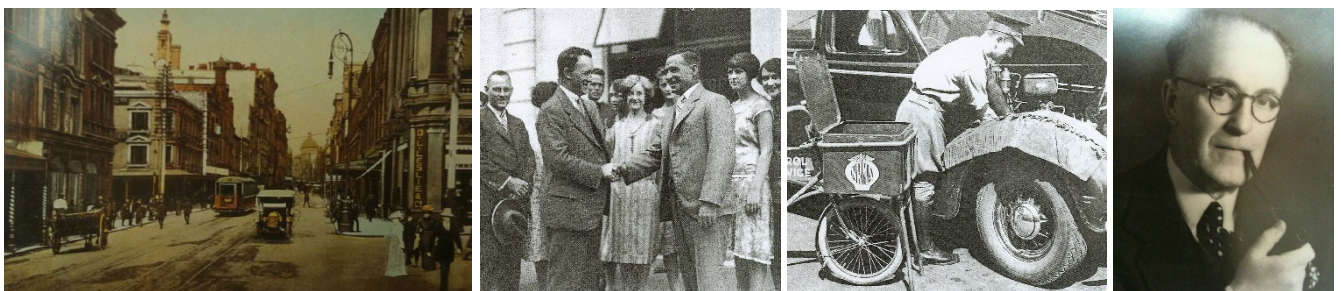
Eric and Vera had three sons – Gordon Eric Richards was born in Newbury, England in 1916; Douglas John in Rugeley, Staffordshire, England in 1918 and Peter in Penang, Malaya in 1920. This shows us where Vera was located, and that Eric must have been able to visit, but we don't know where Eric was serving at these times. We know that the K.O.Y.L.I. home base was at Rugeley Camp from October 1917 before going on to Bromeswell and Southend.

After the end of the war Eric worked for the Straits Trading Company Ltd in the "Singapore Straits Settlement" as Singapore was then known (we know this from the forwarding address on his British War Medals Index card). The Straits Trading Company is a tin mining enterprise – still in business today – and their main smelter was at Butterworth which is on the Malaysian mainland across from the island of Penang where Peter Richards was born in January 1920. The family was back in Australia by the early 1920s. They lived in Glenview St, Greenwich; then later at 16a Darling Point Rd, Darling Point; and 129 Victoria Rd, Bellevue Hill.

H. Eric Richards had a long career with the NRMA (National Roads and Motorists Association) which was formed in 1920 in Sydney. He joined in 1925 as chief clerk and was promoted to assistant secretary the following year when he was also acting Secretary (General Manager) when H I Johnson was overseas on a study tour. The number of vehicles registered in New South Wales in 1921 was 29,000 and the NRMA led the way in pressuring the government for the widening and sealing of roads. Infrastructure in the early years was a challenge and the first traffic lights were not installed until 1933. Eric became the Chief Executive in 1948 and remained in charge until he retired in 1963. In his 37 years of service he had seen the organisation grow from eleven staff to well over five hundred, not counting those who worked for the insurance arm. During his fourteen years as chief executive the membership grew from 100,000 to over 500,000. Vera died in 1965 at their residence "Hazelhurst", 2 Reed Street, Cremorne, in Sydney and Eric in 1969.

All three of Eric and Vera's sons enrolled for military service in World War II. **Gordon Richards** enlisted in the Militia Forces in August 1938, prior to the outbreak of war. He volunteered for 3 years service and was assigned to the 5<sup>th</sup> Heavy Artillery Brigade. He appears to have served his term as a reserve and did not transfer to the regular army or serve overseas.

Gordon married Nancy Lipscomb of Edgecliff on November 12<sup>th</sup> 1941. Nancy left school in 1934, studied French and Italian at Sydney University and returned from a trip to Europe just before the outbreak of war. During WWII she worked in the Mail Censoring Unit, focused on reviewing and extracting intelligence information from overseas mail - particularly from French-speaking places such as Tahiti and New Caledonia. Gordon and Nancy had four daughters and a son – Helen, Margaret, Pamela, Gerard (died as an infant) and Rosemary (died 2006 aged 55). They lived first at Bondi Junction and then at 15 Salisbury Rd, Rose Bay. Gordon died in 1976, Nancy was still alive in 2009.



From left: In 1914 the Sydney business district still showed three modes of transport – horse and buggy, trams, and motor cars. By 1926 the NRMA was an important lobby group and H Eric Richards (left) farewelled the General Secretary H I Johnson on a trip to study overseas experiences. In the 1940s the patrolmen used bicycles to cope with the congested CBD traffic. Eric Richards as General Secretary of the NRMA from 1948 to 1963.

## Douglas John Richards



Douglas joined the Royal Australian Air Force on 3rd February 1941 at the age of 22. Prior to this he was an articled law clerk working for F.C. Emanuel & Co in Pitt St Sydney. He spoke French and German, and was 5 feet 10 inches with brown hair and blue eyes. He spent his first 8 weeks completing his aircrew training and then was shipped to Canada on April 22nd 1941. He underwent further training in Edmonton, Alberta; Mossbank, Saskatchewan; Debert and Halifax, Nova Scotia. During this time he earned his Air Observer Badge and was promoted to Sergeant. On December 20th he embarked for England. On January 29th 1942 he was assigned to the RAF 59th Squadron as a Pilot Officer.

The job of the air observer was navigation, bomb aiming and providing targeting information to the gunners. He lay horizontal, on his stomach, in the nose of the plane underneath the cockpit.

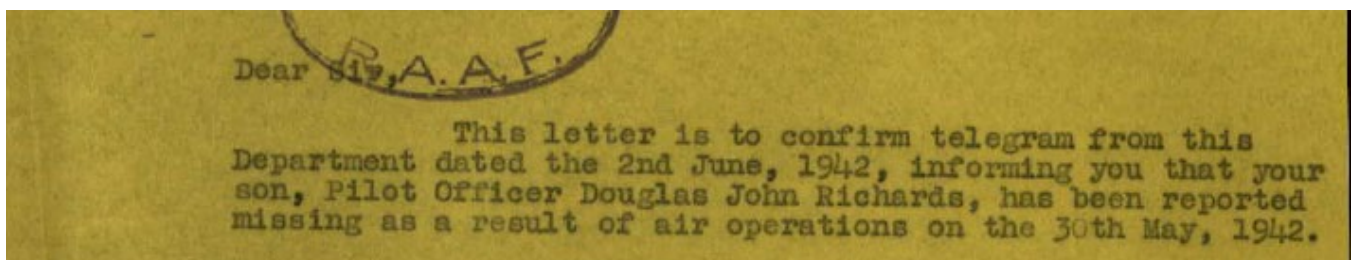
The 59<sup>th</sup> were part of the Coastal Command and based at North Coates in Lincolnshire. Its primary role was to protect British shipping in the North Sea from U-boats and German air attack.

In addition to being qualified on Avro Anson and Fairey Battle aircraft, he flew Lockheed Hudson aircraft which were used by the 59<sup>th</sup> for reconnaissance and anti-shipping bombing raids off the Dutch Coast. The Hudson was a converted civilian aircraft renowned for being roomy, comfortable and reliable but its lack of manoeuvrability led to vulnerability against enemy aircraft, and it had to fly very low over water to avoid radar detection. The rear gun turret was added as extra protection.

On the night of May 29<sup>th</sup> 1942 Douglas and his crew was flying on a mission to attack a German shipping convoy near the Fresian Islands off the north west of the Netherlands as a diversionary attack for the first bombing raid on Cologne. Douglas' role was as air observer, flying with his squadron leader Wing Commander Robert Niven. They took off at 11pm and nothing further was heard from the aircraft. Their Lockheed Hudson V bomber was shot down and all on board killed. W/C Niven was awarded the DFC. On 26<sup>th</sup> June his body was recovered from the sea by the Germans and buried at Borkum Lutheran Cemetery. After the war his remains were re-interred at the Oldenburg (Sage) British Military Cemetery near Bremen in North West Germany.



Above: The insignia of the 59<sup>th</sup> Squadron RAF; a Hudson Lockheed V; and a typical 4 man crew (Air Observer / Navigator, Pilot, Wireless Operator; Air Gunner) and note the basket of carrier pigeons which were used to send messages home in case of radio failure! Following page: excerpts from the RAAF casualty report for Pilot Officer D. J. Richards.



Dear Sir,

I refer to previous communications regarding your son, Pilot Officer Douglas John Richards, and have to inform you that further information has been received in this Department from your son's unit concerning the operations following which he was reported to be missing.

The report states that the aircraft of which your son was a member of the crew, was detailed to carry out a strike against an enemy convoy off the Friesian Islands. The aircraft in company with others of the Squadron took off from North Coates at 11 p.m. on the 29th May, 1942. No message was received from the aircraft after the take off and no information concerning the circumstances in which it was lost has been received.

POW. List No. FC.130

CABLE RECEIVED FROM THE INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS COMMITTEE, GENEVA,  
BY THE PRISONERS OF WAR INFORMATION BUREAU.

Received: 0835 hrs. 19/1.  
Submitted: 1130 hrs. 19/10.

Rome cables following Ps.O.W. Camp unstated:

Pilot Officer 406604 Thompson, Stanley.

Berlin communicates dead airmen date of death after names.

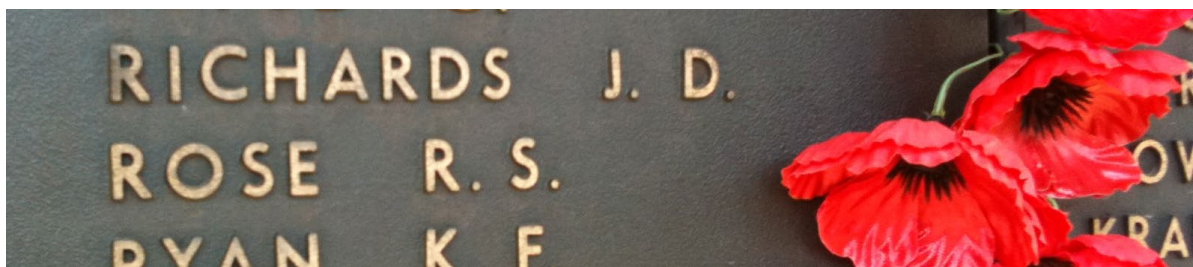
Fl. Off.	403717	Buttel, A.F.)	Both bodies washed ashore 20/6/42. Buried 24/6 Lutheran Cemetery Borkum respectively Graves 524 and 523A.
		Unknown.)	
Fl. Sgt.	405441	Gaffney, T.S.)	All four killed 26/6/42 Buried 30/6 Lutheran Cemetery Borkum respectively Graves 526 527, 528, 529.
Fl. Sgt.		Holbrox	
Fl. Lt.		Salazar, J.	
Pl. Off	Aus. 403624	Richards, D.J.)	

Flying Officer D. J. RICHARDS Aus. 403624

DECEASED

Further to this Headquarters letter - 103 - dated 6 Jan 44, it is advised that the remains of the above named member have now been concentrated to OLDENBERG (SAGE) B.M.C., Plot VII, Row F, Grave 2.

2. Two of the remaining members of this crew, viz., Wing Commander NIVEN and Pilot Officer REILLY are registered as having no known graves and the third member, Sergeant HOWARTH, is buried at SCHIERMONNIKOOG.



# Peter Richards



**Peter Richards** was a twenty year old salesman (left) when he joined the 1st Reserve Motor Transport Company as a driver & mechanic on February 24th 1941. He was sent to the Middle East in April where he served with the 2nd Echelon AIF forces, the 2nd 104 General Transport Company and the HQ Base Area Unit Records Section, probably based in Palestine.

In March 1942 Peter returned to Australia and became ill. He was detached to the Queensland Lines of Communication Records office in Brisbane.

In early 1943 his illness returned (noted at various times as nervous dyspepsia, diarrhoea and amoebiasis) and he was sent back to Sydney for convalescence.

In March he rejoined the records section in Brisbane and in April transferred to the 2/101 Australian General Transport Company. They shipped out from Brisbane to Port Moresby in July and were responsible for resupplying the Allied Forces which involved a combination of road and aerial transport due to the poor infrastructure in New Guinea. The Company returned to Brisbane at the end of May 1944. Peter spent the rest of that year in several army hospitals and convalescent depots.

In July 1944 his engagement was announced to Corporal Muriel Bennet, a member of the AWAS (Australian Womens Army Service) from Warwick, Queensland. They had met while Peter was deployed to Brisbane and married in early 1945.

In February 1945 he rejoined the 2/101 AGT and in May they were deployed to Morotai in the Netherlands East Indies (now Indonesia). The transport company likely played a supporting role from Morotai in the OBOE operations of the Borneo Campaign as discussed above.

He returned to Australia in December 1945 with a final rank of Lance Sergeant. After being discharged, Peter continued to undergo convalescent treatment in Sydney.

In 1949 he and Muriel were living with Gordon and Nancy in Rose Bay. By 1954 they had moved to 4 Miramont Avenue, Lane Cove. He worked as a salesman (traveller). Not long after that it appears that they separated.

Muriel moved back to Queensland – first in Warwick in 1958 and then in Mackay from the early 1970s. She was working as a lab technician. Peter's movements are harder to trace but it does appear that in 1977 he was also in Mackay – but at a separate address to Muriel.

PART A—Compiled by Unit.		PROCEEDINGS FOR DISCHARGE.		A.A.F. A. 102. (Introduced July, 1945)	
Discharge Authority	1982A-RE 63162 AMR & O 253A(1) (d)	Unit	2/88 Aust. Tpt. Coy	Army No.	NX68361
Reason for Discharge	AMR & O 253A(1) (d) GENERAL DEMOB.	Other Names		Rank	L/Sgt
State in which discharge desired— Normally State in which member's home is situated.	NSW	Surname	RICHARDS (Block Letters)		
PART B—Personal details—compiled by Unit:		PART D—Compiled by Ech. & Rec.:			
1. Home address		5. Details for Certificate of Discharge No.			
129 Victoria Rd., BELLEVUE, NSW		281252			
Date commenced F.T.D. 5/3/41 Date of Birth 20/1/20		Unit (for discharge purposes) 104 Gen. Tr. Coy			
State whether:—		Served on continuous Full Time War Service in the			
Married, single, divorced, widow		AIF from 3/7/41 to 18/12/45			
or widower Married		for a Total Effective Period* of 1604 days, which included			
No. of Dependants in respect of whom dependant's allowance is being paid:—		Active Service in Australia 462 days and			
Under 16 yrs. — 16 yrs. & over 1		Active Service O/S Australia 883 days			
2. Present Description of Soldier:—		Decorations and Awards† during that Service:			
Age 25 yrs. 8 months		War Badge 197126 Entered			
Height 5 ft. 10 ins. Eyes Blue		Class and No. 2197126 Badge Register 2			
Complexion Fair Hair Fair		Discharged from the AIF and discharge confirmed vide Schedule No. 11111340 to take effect on and from 18/12/45			
Marks/Scars Scars left breast and left leg.		Place DEC 18 1945 Signature			
Trade Group in which employed Nil		Date DEC 18 1945 Officer i/c Ech. and Rec.			
3. Operational Service:—		6. Details compiled by			
(a) Overseas area of service		A.A.F. A.101 written by checked by			
Embarked from Aust. in Aust. Disembarked in Aust.		Entered Discharge Certificate Register			
Middle East 7/4/41 24/3/42		A.A.F. A.131 obtained by Entered "Wills" Register			
New Guinea 16/7/43 30/5/44					
N.E.I. 10/5/45 7/12/45					
(b) N.T. (North of Par. 14½° Sth.) or Torres St. Is.:—					
At From To					



## Juliet Wilkinson Baker (1860-1944)

Juliet was born at George and Sarah's residence in Lavender Bay on August 12, 1860, but seemingly was always known as Julia. She married Frederic Winchester Grant in 1887. He was a widower, having been previously married to Clara Jane Morris and had two young daughters – Clara, 8, and Ida, 6. Clara had died in 1883 along with a third daughter Eva. His father, also Frederic, was an upholsterer in Sydney and his grandfather Henry lived in the English town of Winchester. Frederic gave his occupation as a modeller. A modeller made moulded plaster goods such as cornices, ceilings, mantelpieces and ornamental work. It involved laying plaster over canvas stretched into shape over steam moulded wood. He was in business with a James Malcolm in Marrickville and, in 1887 he commenced a partnership with William Edward Cocks at 131 Devonshire St. He and Julia also lived in Devonshire St at number 206 for the first couple of years after their marriage.

Grant and Cocks became a well known firm which, in addition to the normal stock in trade of ceilings, cornices, architraves and skirting became renowned for major decorative work which over the years included decorative ceiling treatments, balcony decorations and proscenium arches for town halls, banking chambers and the rebuilt Tivoli Theatre following the fire of 1899. The new Tivoli Theatre opened in 1900 – just seven months after a fire which completely gutted the building – was described as “remarkable for its comfort and for the brilliancy of its scintillating dome” in the Sydney Morning Herald. All of the elaborate plaster work on the dome, the boxes with ornamental pilasters and panels representing the Muses, the dress circle fronts of acanthus leaves, fruit and ribbons, and the proscenium opening supported by ornamental scrolls were the work of Grant and Cocks.

They started producing moulded products not only from fibrous plaster but also cement-based mixtures for more durable structures such as fountains. This produced an imitation marble finish at a fraction of the price. They created a memorial fountain in St Leonards Park for Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee in 1898 which has now been relocated to the North Sydney Civic Centre, and which they copied for the city of Goulburn in the following year.



Many ceremonial arches, popular at that time, were also decorated by Grant and Cocks.

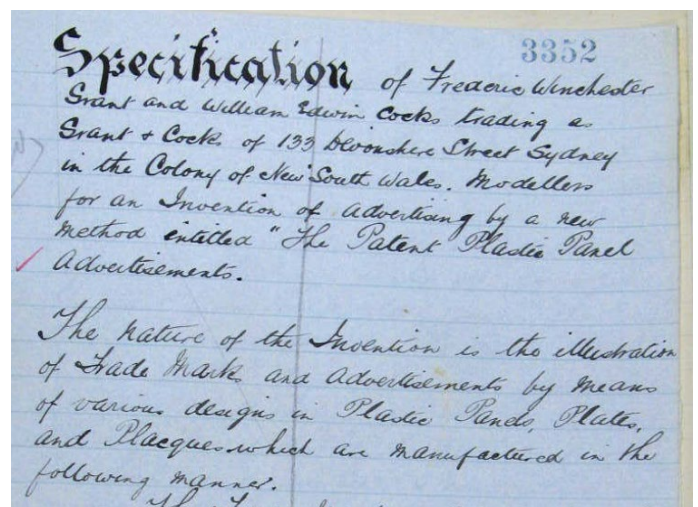
They also produced works in timber and metal – they cast the lions that grace the entrance to the Old New South Wales Treasury building, now the Intercontinental Hotel on Macquarie Street.

In late 1899 Grant and Cocks moved to larger premises at 6 to 8 Brumby Street, with an entrance from Elizabeth Street, just to the south of their previous location.

The firm also obtained three patents. The first, in 1892, was for “Improved plates, plaques and panels formed of plastic material for the purpose of advertising”. The “plastic” referred to was fibrous plaster, not the petroleum product that we know today. This was a process which involved creating the trade mark design for the advertising in plaster or clay – or carving it in wood – which was known as the model. A mould was made by pouring molten gelatine, glue or Plaster of Paris over the model and then the final plaque created in the mould out of fibrous plaster (Plaster of Paris into which pieces of canvas or other textured material are submerged to provide strength).

The other two patents, both filed in 1903, were for “an improved water lift automatically balanced and operated by aqueous displacement” and for “improvements in and relating to building blocks and the method of applying same in the construction of walls, partitions and the like”.

The firm's greatest success though was a construction that played host to one of the most iconic events in Australia's history. Australia's inaugural Commonwealth Government following federation was sworn in on January 1<sup>st</sup> 1901 bringing formally into existence the new federation of Australia. The city of Sydney was illuminated with blazing lights and the sign on the front of the Town Hall read “One People, One Destiny”.



Altogether it was estimated that between 350,000 and 500,000 people were spread over the whole of the five and a half mile processional route which saw the country's new Governor General Lord Hopetoun land at Circular Quay and make his way through the city to Centennial Park. They sat in stands, filled the paths, packed the verandahs and parapets, peered from every window to watch the pageant of statesmen, dignitaries and uniformed troops from all over Australia and the Commonwealth.<sup>3</sup>

Waiting in the natural amphitheatre of Centennial Park were assembled 7,000 invited guests, a choir of 10,000 schoolchildren and 1,000 adults. The guards of honour included the Household Cavalry, the Foot Guards and the Fusiliers, the Maori Guard of the Premier of New Zealand, Scottish Regiments, Indian Troops and Australian veterans from the Boer campaigns. Beyond the official barriers was space for tens of thousands more on the grassy slopes which had been packed since before dawn. And in the very centre of the park Australia's first Prime Minister, Edmund Barton, waited with his new cabinet, State Governors and Premiers, and the judges of the Supreme Court.

They were assembled inside a "fair and stately" white pavilion, ornately decorated, shining brightly in the sun and topped with a huge union flag (the new Australian flag would not be adopted for many years). Looking like marble, its "exquisite modellings [were] designed to symbolise the arts and crafts of the Commonwealth". Designed by the State Architect, made entirely of fibrous plaster over a timber frame, it was the work of Grant and Cocks.

Lord Hopetoun arrived on the dot of one o'clock, accompanied by a 19 gun salute. The dignitaries left the pavilion to form a guard of honour along the red carpet leading up to the pavilion, leaving Mr Barton alone to receive the Queen's representative. The National Anthem (God Save the Queen) and several hymns were sung by the choir. After welcoming prayers, Mr E.G. Blackmore of South Australia read the letters patent assenting to the Commonwealth Bill and the official commission from the Queen appointing the Governor General. Mr Blackmore had been selected as having the "most sonorous voice in official Australia". Lord Hopetoun took and signed the oath of office, followed by the swearing-in of the Prime Minister and the Ministry.

Thus the Australian Commonwealth had come into being inside the pavilion built by Frederic Winchester Grant.



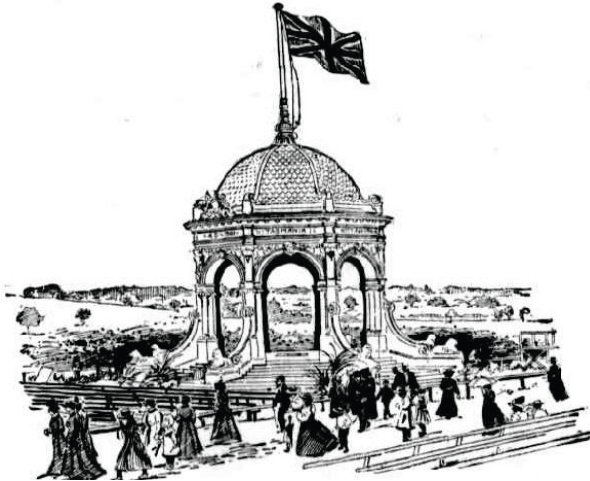
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<sup>3</sup> The account of the Commonwealth Inauguration Day assembled from various newspapers of the time, especially the Melbourne Argus and Sydney Morning Herald editions of January 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1901. Images on the following page from the State Library of NSW, The Argus, Waverley City Council and Sands Directory of Sydney 1903 edition.



# GRANT AND COCKS,

**Modellers and Fibrous Plaster Experts,  
6 and 8 Brumby st, off Elizabeth st  
south. Every description of Plaster  
and Cement Ornaments. Contractors  
to the N.S.W. Government for Com-  
monwealth and Royal Decorations.  
Tel. 2369**



Following their success Grant and Cocks were able to advertise themselves as contractors for “Commonwealth and Royal Decorations”.

Following inauguration day Frederic prepared a memento of the occasion. A fibrous plaster plaque, made by the patented method described above, showed a model of the pavilion surrounded by Australian flora. The frame contains medallions, at the four corners, of Edmund Barton with other prominent figures W.C. Wentworth, George Reid, and Henry Parkes. The smaller busts are the Premiers of the six Australian states. At the top is the first Governor General, Lord Hopetoun.

There were five plaques made. One was believed to be presented to Lord Hopetoun and another to The Duke of Cornwall and York (later George V) when he visited Australia to open the first federal parliament later in 1901. The others remained in the Grant family, one of which was displayed in pride of place in Frederic Grant’s house and was bought by the Powerhouse Museum from Grant’s grand-daughter Hazel Pickford in 2003. Ron Grant also has one which is believed to be in poor condition.

The pavilion itself did not fare so well. Always intended to be temporary, it began to crumble almost immediately and was dismantled in 1904. The frame was later reassembled in Cabarita and, in 1988 to mark the bicentenary of Australian settlement, a new stone pavilion was built in Centennial Park.



In 1907 they were awarded a gold medal for the decorative work of the New South Wales court at the New Zealand Exhibition. The firm became a public company in 1908, formed with a capital of £16,000, and Frederic Grant and William Cocks were the initial directors.

Frederic Grant also stood for parliament at Dulwich Hill for the Liberal Party in 1913, noting that as well as being well known in business circles in the city, he had been a member of the council of the Chamber of Manufacturers and president of the Builders' Exchange.

Grant and Cocks were taken over in 1919 by Wunderlich Ltd, which later became part of CSR.

Together with his son Norman, son-in-law Edgar Tyler and Edgar's brother Arthur, Grant then set up a new business called Norman Grant and Co Ltd. Operating in Sydney and Brisbane, this was not a success and it was liquidated in 1926.

Frederic and Julia lived in a variety of places in Surry Hills, Petersham and Marrickville until they moved to 5 Hastings St, Marrickville in 1903. They lived here until 1921 before moving to Illawarra Rd and then to 15 Warren Rd, Marrickville in 1930. Frederic Winchester Grant died on February 10<sup>th</sup> 1938. Julia continued living in Warren Rd until she died in 1944 of heart failure, aged 83.

Frederic's two daughters with Clara Morris were Clara and Ida. Clara married George Henry Swan who was a grandson of George Frederick Baker. We will cover her story in the section on George's mother Elizabeth Harriet Baker.

Ida in 1930 was a dressmaker and living on Lord Howe Island. She returned to Sydney by 1937 when she was living at 4 Alfred St, Marrickville – it was here that her father died in 1938. In 1943 and 1949 she was living in Casino and then moved back to Sydney by 1954. She never married and died in 1969 at the age of 87.

Frederic and Julia had four children together – Ethel (born 1889), Norman (1891), Eric (1892) and Ruby Juliet (1895). Ruby Juliet Grant died in 1896 of congenital rickets at 11 months of age.

## **Ethel May Grant**

Ethel was born in January 1889 and she married Edgar Oswald Tyler in 1912. At that stage Edgar was involved in the shoe business judging by an application made to the patents office for “registration of a design by Edgar Oswald Tyler and Thomas Frederick Wedmund Brooks for Boots - Class 10”. As mentioned earlier, Edgar became a partner in his father-in-law’s business along with his brother.

From at least 1930 Ethel and Edgar and their family lived with Frederic and Julia at 15 Warren Rd, Marrickville. Edgar was a commercial traveller. Their children were Mervyn Grant (born 1914), Gordon Winchester (1916), Kenneth Leicester (1919) and Shirley Elaine.

All three of their sons and their son-in-law served in World War II.

**Mervyn Tyler** married Sylvia Phyllis (Phyl) Weeks in 1937 in Marrickville. Before the war they both worked as clerks. They settled in Melbourne living in Ellison St Malvern East and then Mervyn was a traveller (salesman) for Abel Lemon & Co who were food importers. He signed up for service with the AMF 24<sup>th</sup> Infantry Battalion in April 1942. Phyl and their two young children moved back to Sydney (to Warren Rd with Mervyn’s parents) for the duration of the war.

After training at Watsonia and Bonegilla, Mervyn moved to Queensland in May and then embarked for Port Moresby in the first group of soldiers from the 24<sup>th</sup> on February 23 1943. They immediately saw action, joining the “Kanga Force” in the Markham Valley near Wau and Nadzab, supporting the Lae offensive which reached its climax in September. By November of that year Mervyn was promoted to acting Corporal, and then confirmed in that rank in April 1944 as they joined the advance on Medang.

On 3<sup>rd</sup> April 44 he returned to Australia for 30 days of recreation leave and 3 days of compassionate leave – it would be his first opportunity to see his third daughter Janice who was then six months of age. He did not return to New Guinea and was detached to the NSW Line of Command HQ for 10 weeks, and then rejoined his unit on their return to Queensland in August.

They did not have long at home. After Christmas 1944 the 24<sup>th</sup> shipped out for the island of Bougainville, embarking for Torakina to relieve the US Army who had established the first allied beachhead in November 1943. From April to June 1945 they had responsibility for the advance along the Buin Rd, supported by the tanks of the 2/4 Armoured Regiment, to the town of the same name in the south of the island which was the last Japanese stronghold. By the end of June they had reached the Mivo River but torrential rains which bogged their tanks and wiped out the supply lines forced them to halt and consolidate. To that point they reported that they had lost 39 troops killed and 148 wounded, and in turn killed 335 and wounded 74 of the enemy. Shortly after resuming patrols south of the river, the Japanese forces on the island surrendered on August 21<sup>st</sup> which was followed 2 weeks later by the full surrender of the Japanese Empire in Tokyo Bay.

They returned to Torokina in early September, and five days later Mervyn was evacuated to hospital suffering from a hernia and returned to Australia on January 11<sup>th</sup> 1946 for discharge.

After the war Mervyn, Phyl and their children returned to Melbourne, living in Essendon West. Of their three daughters – Lynette married Neil Goyen and lives with her family in Warnambool, Noeline married Bill Wallace, and they now live in Sydney and Janice married Les Francis and they live at The Basin in Melbourne’s east. Mervyn died in 1992; and Phyl in 2005 in Warnambool. They are both buried at Paynesville Cemetery.



**Bougainville Island, April – May 1945. The 24<sup>th</sup> Infantry Battalion with the tanks from the 2/4 Armoured Regiment led the advance along the Buin Road down the west coast of the island. The tanks and supply vehicles moved along the road while the infantry moved through the dense jungle on their flanks. The protection of the jeeps carrying ammunition and stores was a major priority as they crossed the Hongorai River, a major milestone on the advance (below right). Photos from the Australian War Memorial collection.**



**Gordon Tyler** married Gwen Rollings in April 1941. He was a boot maker (also described as a console operator) employed by J. W. Jolley in Chapel St, Marrickville, and they lived in Earlwood. He trained in the 14<sup>th</sup> Field Regiment as a gunner from October 1941 until January 1942. The reason for his discharge from the CMF (Citizens Military Force) was given as being a member of a reserved occupation. In early April 1942, though, he applied to join the airforce as a wireless operator. He was offered a place as a Trainee Group V and commenced service in June to train as a Fitter/DMT (having failed the Morse Code aptitude test).



The Fitter / DMT (Driver Motor Transport) was attached to radar stations and responsible for general maintenance of the motor vehicle pool and also miscellaneous equipment such as generators, refuellers etc. The radar division was just being formed to take over these responsibilities from the Americans. After training he was posted to Richmond RAAF base and then to the Radar School at Mascot where he was promoted to Leading Aircraftsman. He then moved to Horn Island in the Torres Strait, off the tip of far North Queensland, in February 1943. Even though even today it is mostly Crown Land with a population of 650, Horn Island suffered eight Japanese air raids during 1942. By the end of 1942 there were over 5,000 Australian troops on the island. It was the most northern Allied airbase in Australia and the point of origin for many bombing raids against Japanese territories – a WW2 museum and guided tour service still operates here. Gordon stayed only for two months before moving to the Radar Wing at Adelaide River, south of Darwin.



**World War II Radar Equipment, a typical Radar Station in North Queensland camouflaged to avoid identification and the typical layout of a Flight Sector Unit.**

The 44 Radar Wing controlled and coordinated all of the radar activity across the Northern Territory. When hostilities in New Guinea ceased in August 1944, and the threat of attack on mainland Australia eased, the wing was disbanded. Gordon moved to the 105 FCU (Fighter Control Unit) which was at Berrimah, near Darwin, and controlled flight strategy for all the operations in the north of Australia. During the time when the Japanese were bombing Darwin, they would plot and relay the positions of the enemy aircraft to put Allied fighter aircraft in an optimum position for interception and provide information to the anti-aircraft defences. By the time Gordon was there, the Operations Room provided information on reconnaissance sorties by the Japanese.

Gordon's twenty one months of tropical service, considered a hardship in the conditions of the day not to mention the threat of Japanese bombing raids on Darwin and surrounds, came to an end in October 1944. Now a full Corporal, he returned to Sydney and the Air Force Eastern Area Headquarters for a further 12 months before discharge in December 1945.

After the war they moved to Hurstville and later to Caringbah. Gordon was a console operator and then company director. In 1980 they had moved to the Gold Coast in Queensland. Gwen died in 2009, Gordon pre-deceased her. They had two daughters— Faye, born in 1942, and Caryl in 1943. Caryl married Geert Jan "John" Molanus.

**Ken Tyler** enlisted in 1940 and served with the 12<sup>th</sup> Supply Personnel Company in Marrickville so he was probably able to continue living at home at first. He married Esme Lewis in September 1941, but she died the day after giving birth to their daughter Lee in July 1942. She suffered a post-partum haemorrhage following the removal of a partially retained placenta. She was 19 years of age. Ken was stationed at Cootamundra and was given a week's special leave to return to Sydney. In 1943 Ken was commissioned and moved to the Supply Reserve Depot at Lilyfield, attending officer training and discharged in November 1945 as a staff sergeant.

Lee Tyler married Robert Butt and they had a son, also named Robert, before divorcing in the early 1970s. Lee moved to Melbourne and later married Jim.

After the war Ken married Beth Whitfield, in 1947, and they had two sons and two daughters. Ken worked as a comptometer operator (a comptometer was an electro-mechanical calculator used for financial calculations in businesses), and then as a salesman. They lived in Maroubra and then Winston Hills. Beth died in 1978, of complications of colon cancer, and Ken in 1987. Their eldest son Gary Kenneth Tyler died at the age of 17 months in 1949. Their other children are Sandra, Rose and Stephen.



The building in Marrickville used by the 12<sup>th</sup> Supply Personnel Company, internal and external, photographed on August 8<sup>th</sup> 1943 (Australian War Memorial).

**Shirley Tyler** worked as a receptionist / photographer until 1949 when she married John Hawse.

John had served in the Air Force during World War II as a plant operator – responsible for maintaining and operating construction vehicles. He was an apprentice electrical fitter, in his second year of technical college, when he enlisted at 19 years old in November 1944 towards the end of the war. On his first day at the Lara Works Training Unit he was caught stealing £2 from a fellow student and given 14 days field punishment. After training he joined the Transport Movements Office in October 1945. He was due for discharge the following February but this was delayed due to another disciplinary infringement – he “at the Transport Pool stepped into a vehicle ... set it in motion then stepped down from the vehicle, leaving it in gear and in motion with no one at the controls”. He eventually received his discharge in May 1946.



They had at least one daughter, Cheryl Vicki, in 1952 and lived in Manly. Later she moved to Mittagong and then to Empire Bay on the Central Coast.



**Shirley and Ken Tyler in 1983.**

Ethel May Tyler (nee Grant) died in 1975 at Cronulla Nursing Home of pneumonia and cardiac failure. Edgar moved to Victoria and lived in Berwick with Mervyn and Phyllis where he died in 1981.



## **Norman Frederic Grant**

Norm was the elder son of Frederic and Julia. He was born in Sydney in 1891 and followed his father into the family business becoming a modeller. On 6 March 1915 he married Maud West in Marrickville, and they had four children. The first two were born in Sydney – Frederic Norman in 1916 and Betty Wilkinson in 1917.

In around 1925 Norm and his family moved to Brisbane and set up the Queensland office of Norman Grant & Co of which he was a co-owner. They lived in East Brisbane and had two more children here – Douglas James born in 1928 and Ronald Francis in 1929. Norman Grant & Co was wound up in 1926 and Norm continued to work as a fibrous plasterer.

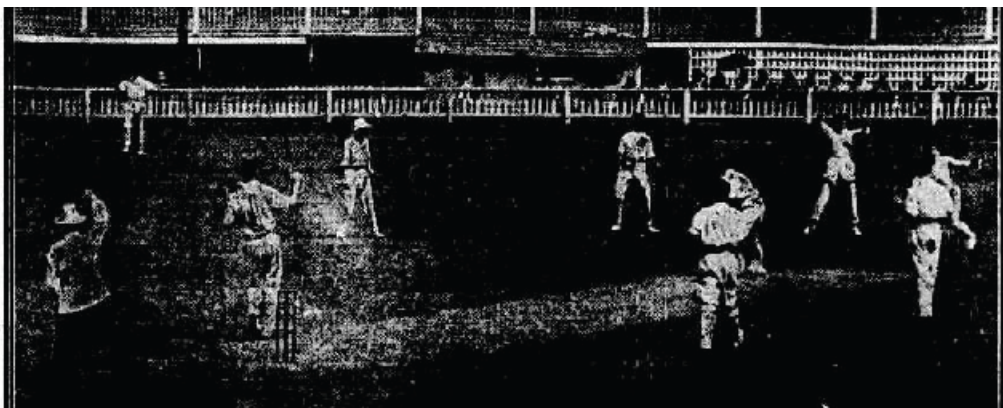
Norm was also a fine cricketer. He played first grade club cricket for many years and, in 1927 at the age of 36, he was selected to play for Queensland in the last match of the season against Victoria. This was Queensland's first season in the Sheffield Shield and they joined New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia in a four-way competition. At that stage Queensland had beaten only New South Wales from their four games, and Victoria were on top of the table with three wins and favoured to beat the newcomers and wrap up the title. In those days the games were timeless and played to a result, so there were no draws.

The game kicked off on Saturday February 5<sup>th</sup> at Brisbane's Exhibition Ground. With the chance to win the title, Victoria had brought a strong side including two Australian test players – their captain Hunter 'Stork' Hendry and Bill Ponsford. Ponsford was Australia's star batsman and so far that season had scored 1101 Shield runs in eight innings at an average of 137 including 352 against New South Wales.

Queensland batted first and had a good first day scoring 261 runs for the loss of only 4 wickets. On Monday (no play being permitted on Sundays), Queensland continued on their way. Norm Grant, primarily a spin bowler, came in late in the innings and scored 26 runs in a good partnership of 37 – "an auspicious entry into big cricket in Queensland" according to The Brisbane Courier. "Grant forced the game whenever possible in a manner that was very pleasing to the spectators ... playing some well-executed strokes, and while he was at the wicket the rate of scoring was considerably faster than it had been at any other stage of the innings" said The Argus. Queensland ended their first innings for 399. Victoria were expected to more than match the home side on an easy pitch but when Ponsford was dismissed early for just 12, followed quickly by Hendry for 8, the Queenslanders sensed an opportunity and pressed home their advantage. Only Keith Millar offered much resistance scoring 34 and, by the end of the day Victoria were all out for 86. All-rounder Ron Exenford, who would play test cricket a year later, took 4/18 to go with his 104 runs scored on Saturday. Queensland had just two overs to face before stumps so Grant and Les Gill, whose partnership had been so entertaining earlier in the day, were asked to open and survived to be no wicket for 10.

On day 3, Norm Grant resumed in good form and batted comfortably to reach 36 before he was foolishly run out. "It was a great pity that he should have lost his wicket in such an unsatisfactory manner after playing in a style which made us look for a very large score from his bat" said The Brisbane Courier. "He is to be congratulated upon his very fine showing on his first appearance for Queensland. Although it was unnecessary to use his bowling in the first innings, we expect that if it is needed in the second innings he will perform very ably in the bowling department as well. He appears to have the big match temperament and looks like becoming a regular member of Queensland elevens."

Norm's leg-spinners were needed in the second innings. Despite chasing the mammoth score of 753 for victory, Victoria started well and, by the end of day 4, had reached 223 without losing a wicket. Ponsford was 114 and Hendry 101 at the close, and the Vics might have believed that victory was still possible. Ponsford went early but the Victorians advanced slowly but steadily throughout the next day, reaching 7/491 and therefore play went into a sixth day before Queensland could mop up the tail and take victory by 234 runs. Norman took two wickets for 107 runs. Despite playing only the one game he finished the season averages in sixth place for both batting and bowling.



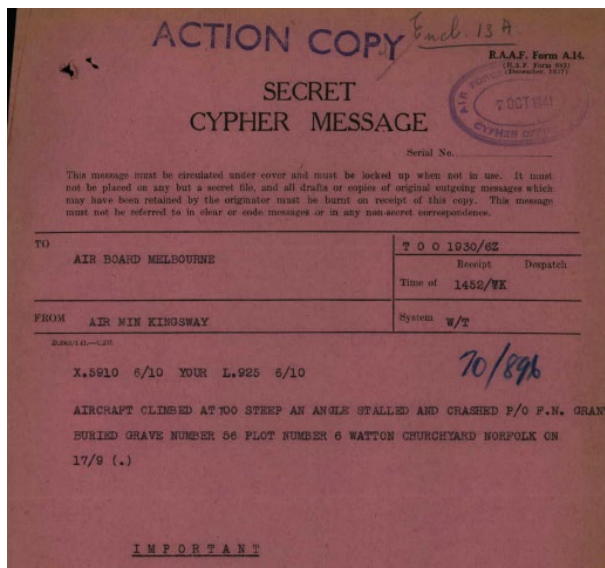
When Grant nicked one from Morton into the hands of Ellis, the umpire was so certain that the catch would be completed that he anticipated the appeal and help up his hand. The international stumper, however, instantly threw the ball in the air and failed to catch it when it came down. (The Brisbane Courier, 8<sup>th</sup> February 1927)

With the loss, South Australia was awarded the Sheffield Shield for the 1926/27 season as they had three wins from only five games (South Australia and Queensland played each other only once that year as the travel was considered too onerous for a return match), and therefore a better percentage. Queensland would famously take until 1974/75 before they won their first Shield but in their very first season had commenced their rivalry with the dreaded southerners by denying them the title.

I have given a reasonable amount of detail about the match as, despite the encouraging comments in the media, this was the only first class game that Norm Grant played. Despite a good match he was not picked for his state again. He did, however continue to play first grade cricket for Eastern Suburbs, where he was also a committeeman, and Western Suburbs into his forties. In 1933 he played in the first professional one-day match in Brisbane. By 1936 the family were living at Aniwa, Rokeby Terrace, Taringa.

Maud died in 1959. A few years later Norm married Francie Prince, the widow of Frederick Prince who was best man at Norm and Maud's wedding. Norm died in 1966. Francie remained in Brisbane and stayed close to the Grant family until she began to suffer from dementia and her family moved her back to Sydney – she died in 1979.

Their eldest son, Frederic (Fred), was a stenographer who worked as a court reporter at the Supreme Court in Brisbane, and lived at 491 Milton Rd, Auchenclocher. Fred volunteered for service with the RAAF and, like his second cousin Peter Richards, he was not lucky enough to survive the war. After gaining a commission as a pilot officer in May 1941 in Canada he was transferred to the UK in June, he was killed on 13<sup>th</sup> September 1941 in an aircraft accident at the Watton RAF Base in Norfolk. He took off to fly from Watton to a new station in North Scotland with four colleagues on board and climbed too steeply, according to a secret minute in his casualty record. The plane stalled and crashed onto the aerodrome killing all on board.



Fred Grant's grave is in the churchyard at Watton, Norfolk, and he is memorialised at the Australian War Memorial in Canberra.

Fred's sister Betty was a bookkeeper and in the 1940s married Charles Raymond Eric Reginald McDonald. At various times he was a builder and a transport driver but for most of his working life he was a clerk in the reservations department for the airline TAA (later renamed Australian Airlines and then merged with Qantas in 1996). He volunteered for service in World War II but was ruled medically unfit – he worked for the Americans in Brisbane, where General Macarthur had his headquarters, for the duration. After the war they built a house at 127 Buena Vista Ave Coorpooroo, not far from the block at number 84 that Fred had bought before he went to war. The family worked together on the building. Maud Grant's adopted brother Arthur West was a draughtsman, Betty's younger brother Ron was an electrician and, of course, Norm did the plaster work. Betty and Charles, and their family, moved into their new house in 1950 after which Norm and Maud's new place was built on the block they inherited from Fred.

Betty and Charles had three children – Gayle Elizabeth (born 1945, married Jeffrey Thomsett), Frederic Charles (born 1948, married Beverley Dows), and Bruce Stuart (born 1952). Gayle has also done much research on the Baker family and has helped with a lot of the information provided in this chapter.



The younger two of Norman and Maud's children are Douglas and Ronald. Doug married Gwen Gould and they had five children. He was a land ranger and became a Lands Commissioner. He died in June 2010. Ron was an electrician and had three children with his wife Beth Eales. He died in February 2012.

## Eric George Grant

Eric was born in 1892 and was a traveller (salesman) apart from a period in the 1930s when he was described as a shopkeeper with an address at 143 St Johns Rd, Glebe. He served part time in the Volunteer Defence Corps from 1942 to 1944 during World War II.

He married Pearl McCauley in 1914. They had three daughters and lived at 59 Earlwood Ave, Earlwood. Eric died on 17<sup>th</sup> August 1958, aged 65. Pearl died in 1982.

**Lorna Erica Grant**, born 1916, was a stenographer who married Frederick Neave, an engineer, in 1944. Frederick was born in Adelaide and served as a Flight Sergeant with 10 Squadron RAAF in World War II maintaining the Sutherland flying boat operating out of Pembroke Dock in Wales. He worked as an engineer after the war. They lived in Bellevue Hill and Northwood, and had three children David Anthony (born 1946, married Joyce Menan and had three children plus Yoane who was adopted), Rosemary Ann (born 1952) and Diana Margaret (1953, married Paul Sames and have 2 children).



Pembroke Dock, Wales. A Sunderland flying-boat of Coastal Command sets out on patrol flown by No. 10 Squadron, RAAF, operating with the coastal command. The squadron is on the 9,000 flying mark during its sixteen months operational duty in the United Kingdom. April 1941



**Nancy Olwyn Grant** and **Joan Estelle Grant** were twins, born in 1917. Nancy married Reginald “Jack” Eggins in 1940. He was an electrician and they lived in Bondi. Jack died in 1962 after suffering severe injuries in a car accident at Nowra. They had two children – Peter, who has been married three times, and Jacqueline who is married to Larry French. Nancy remarried Harry Tarrier, an architect’s draughtsman, in 1968 and they moved to Peshurst. Harry died in 1971 and Nancy in 2000.

Joan married **Gordon Wilkinson** in 1938. Gordon worked as a factory manager for a firm called Robertson Rose & Co, millinery manufacturers. Before that he had worked for his father’s millinery business (Adamson & Wilkinson) and then as a commercial traveller for several years.

Gordon signed up for the RAAF in World War II in 1942, at 30 for air crew, he trained as a Fitter / DMT (Driver Motor Transport).

He was assigned to the 10 Works Supply Unit which shipped up to February 1943. They were first at Milne Bay, the southernmost point reached during the war, where they helped to maintain the RAAF difficult to keep operational as it was built on the mud flats between the sea. They supported the 75<sup>th</sup> and 76<sup>th</sup> Squadrons who were based defence against continuing Japanese attempts to invade.

They were also at Lae and then finally at Tadjil Aerodrome. Built by strip, it had to be rebuilt after being destroyed by allied bombs in the from the Japanese in April 1944. The No 62 Works Wing was rebuilding the airstrip and was supported by the No 10 Works landed with the assault troops on the morning of Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> April within 48 hours and fully operational within 4 days, working the use of searchlights. There was still fighting going on in the area of attack from the air. Gordon and the works unit shipped back to arriving in Brisbane on July 2 1944.

Gordon then served at the Aircraft Park at Bankstown and the No 7 Tocumwal, and was discharged in December 1945.

### RISKED JAP SNIPERS TO REPAIR DROME RAAF's Speedy Job At Aitape

From AXEL OLSEN, “Argus” War Correspondent at Gen MacArthur’s Headquarters in New Guinea.

With the capture of Tadjil aerodrome at Aitape an RAAF works unit which landed with the American assault troops last Saturday set a new record for speed in repairing the bomb-shattered aerodrome.

Only 42 hours after they began work they had the runway ready for use—24 hours ahead of schedule. A few hours later three transports flew in with urgent supplies.

Using more than 1,000 tons of equipment they had brought ashore with them from landing craft, members of the unit worked without pause, starting as soon as the Japanese had been driven off and working all night, despite risk of snipers and reprisals from Wewak.

Allied bombers had plastered the runway into a field of great craters, but by dawn on Sunday all craters had been filled and most of the runway smoothed and graded. The only interruption was at 5am on Sunday when fighting broke out near the strip and the workmen had to take cover from whistling bullets for an hour and a half. From the time work began the area was patrolled by RAAF guards armed with tommyguns and grenades.

Among the first to work on the runway with bulldozers and graders were Cpl M. Somers, of Bendigo (V), and LAC R. G. Fry, of Ringwood (V).

years of age. Too old

New Guinea in that the Japanese airstrip which was the mountain range and there to support the

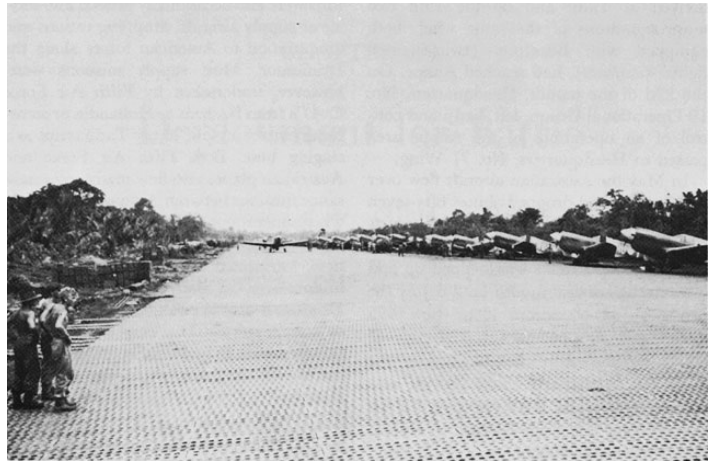
the Japanese as a jungle course of its recapture responsible for Supply Unit. They and had the strip open through the night with and an ongoing threat Australia in late June,

Aircraft Depot at

They had two children – Wendy Anne (married Hans Meyer) and John Grant (married Lindy) - and lived at 53a Earlwood Ave, Earlwood. Gordon died in 1953 aged 40 of pancreatic cancer, and Joan remarried hairdresser Gordon Potter in 1956 who died in 1970. Joan then married a third time to Brian Turner and they moved to Ingleburn. Joan died in 2005.



The airstrip at Milne Bay, left, as with all of the jungle strips in New Guinea was constructed of interlocking mesh. In the rainy season it tended to sink into the mud.



The landing at Tadj on April 22<sup>nd</sup> 1944, the works unit at work on the second day, the first planes landing after just two days and the fully reconstructed airstrip after April 28<sup>th</sup>.

## Elizabeth Harriett Baker (1849- 1931)

Elizabeth was the oldest child of George and Sarah Baker. Born in April 1849, she arrived with her family in Sydney just two weeks before her fifth birthday. Elizabeth married Henry William Swan, a coachbuilder, on 13<sup>th</sup> November 1873. Henry was born in Suffolk, England, and had arrived in New South Wales at around the same time as the Baker Family in 1853. Elizabeth and Henry lived initially in Campbell St, Newtown.

They had nine children and only two died young. Elizabeth Julia Swan was their fourth child, born in August 1878, she died on February 5<sup>th</sup> 1879 of convulsions. Their youngest child, Ethel May Swan, also died of convulsions died in September 1890 at just two weeks old.

**METROPOLITAN DISTRICT COURT.**  
**FRIDAY, APRIL 23.**  
*(Before Mr. District Court Judge JOSEPHSON.)*  
**BAKER V. SWAN (JURY CASE).**  
 This was action in which Charles Baker sued Henry William Swan, for the recovery of £200 in regard to certain property at Newtown. The matter arose out of a dispute in respect to the settlement of accounts in connection with certain moneys advanced on mortgage on the property in question. The defendant pleaded not indebted. A verdict was awarded for the plaintiff for £31 10s.

In 1880 Henry filed for insolvency. Just previously, he had been sued by Charles Baker (presumably his brother-in-law, who was living just next door in Campbell St) over a mortgage. Although Charles wanted £200, the verdict for the plaintiff awarded him only £31 10s.

In June 1884 a meeting of the insolvency court reviewed his schedule and stated that no debts were proved.

In 1884 they moved to number Richards St, still in Newtown, and then in 1889 to 97 Kingston Rd in neighbouring Camperdown.

**BOROUGH OF NEWTOWN.**  
 NOTICE is hereby given that HENRY WILLIAM SWAN has been appointed Inspector of Nuisances for the above Borough.  
 This appointment to take effect from the 1st day of September next ensuing.  
 WILLIAM DOLMAN, Mayor.  
 Town Hall, Newtown,  
 27th August, 1891.

On the 1<sup>st</sup> September 1891 Henry was employed by the borough of Newtown as Inspector of Nuisances. He was one of a small number of council employees, responsible for enforcing the bylaws, particularly with respect to sanitary offences such as inspection of private cess-pits, public closets and urinals, industrial odours, refuse heaps, and overflowing gutters. Other nuisances also related to noise, general untidiness, sweeping dust and dirt off the streets.

**ALLOWING CATTLE TO STRAY.**  
 At the Newtown Police Court yesterday, before Mr. Edwards, S.M., Arthur Phillips, William Clark, J. Barlow, John Abbott, and Thomas Morford were each charged with having allowed cattle belonging to them to stray in the public streets. Phillips and Abbott were each fined 10s and costs, Clark, Barlow, and Morford 5s and costs each.  
**CHARGE OF LOITERING.**  
 At the Newtown Police Court yesterday, before Mr. Edwards, S.M., Henry Swan, inspector of nuisances at Newtown, proceeded against Elizabeth White and Kate Donahoe for having, on 26th March, obstructed the footpath, to the inconvenience of passers-by, in the Enmore-road, Enmore. They were each fined, with costs, 15s.  
**ILLEGAL BURIAL.**  
 At the Newtown Police Court yesterday, before Mr. Edwards, S.M., the inspector of nuisances of Petersham proceeded against Ellen Fox, of Ashfield, for having caused an illegal interment to take place in the Petersham Cemetery, for which a fine of £5 was inflicted.

“Nuisance” was generally a euphemism for anything which had a nasty smell, which was considered to be a health issue – the modern equivalent of this job would be a health or sanitation inspector. He had a staff of assistant inspectors and also supervised the contractors for night soil collection and the ‘scavengers’ (gutter sweepers and rubbish collectors).

As a result of the appointment he was required to reside in the borough of Newtown so they moved back to Holt St and then Ulster Terrace and Station St. In October 1892 his responsibilities were expanded to include inspector of dairies and was made a special constable of the police so that he personally conduct prosecutions on behalf of the borough.

At left, in April 1895, examples of the type of case that Henry dealt with in the Police Court.

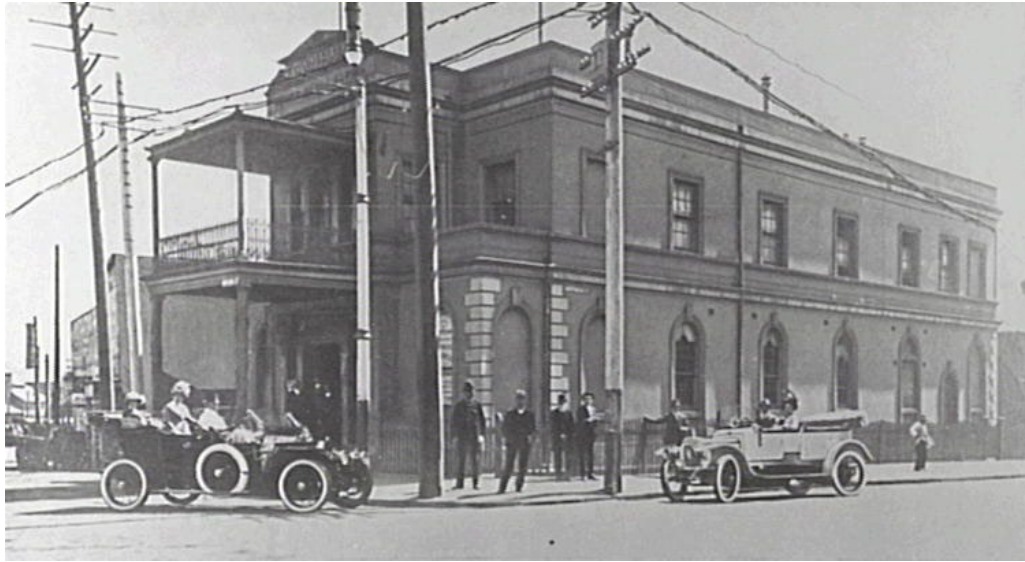
In March 1893, due to a severe shortage of funds in the council budgets, it was recommended that the Inspector of Nuisances reside at the Town Hall, act as Caretaker and look after the Reading Room in addition to his other duties. Ten other employees, including the caretaker, were to be retrenched. This was enacted in late 1894.

Henry Swan retired from the Council in 1902 and they moved to Fraser Street Dulwich Hill.

From Messrs Batt Rodd & Purves complaining of a nuisance occurring from a drain in Trafalgar Street. A report from the Inspector of Nuisances was also read in connection with this letter setting forth that the nuisance was caused by 21 houses in the neighbourhood not being connected with the sewer. Received and a communication be sent to the Water & Sewerage Board enquiring upon that body to enforce the connection of the said houses with the sewer and so abate the nuisance.

### Extracts from Minutes of Meeting of the Newtown Council on May 1<sup>st</sup> 1894 (above) and March 16<sup>th</sup> 1897 (below).

The Inspector of Nuisances reported the amount of work done in his department during the last two weeks and that the contractors under his supervision were doing their work satisfactorily he also called attention to the fact that the Police had been shooting dogs in the streets and that the scavengers protested against being called upon to remove them without extra pay which the police had refused to give. Received.



Newtown Town Hall as it was when Henry Swan was caretaker and Inspector of Nuisances (this picture taken circa 1912)

Henry William Swan died in 1905 – aged 56.

Returning from the city by tram on August 10<sup>th</sup>, Henry fell from the tram at the Dulwich Hill terminus. Witnesses said that he fell out of the tramcar onto his back when it started up, but otherwise their stories varied considerably. It was agreed that Henry boarded the tram which left Circular Quay at 5.55 that evening but it was unclear whether he had taken that all the way to Dulwich Hill or changed trams. One witness said he fell while getting off, another that he was getting back onto the tram to get his bag. The driver and conductor claimed to know nothing of the accident.

He was already unsteady on his feet as he was said to be suffering from Locomotor Ataxy. Locomotor Ataxy, also known as “paralysis of the insane”, is a wasting of the spine which leads to an unsteady gait with the sufferer unable to determine the position of their legs unless they look at them. It can also cause shooting pains in the legs, sometimes blindness, numbness and eventually mental degeneration. It is the tertiary stage of syphilis and cannot be cured once it gets to this point.

Immediately after the fall he seemed fine, telling a lady in Dulwich Hill that he was only shaken, but he was admitted to the Callan Park Asylum for the Insane on August 19<sup>th</sup> after behaving manically at home. He died on 5<sup>th</sup> September at the asylum.



The Dulwich Hill Tram Terminus circa 1900



**DEATH AT CALLAN PARK.**

**A PECULIAR CASE.**

An inquest was opened yesterday morning by the City Coroner in relation to the death of Henry William Swan, 57 years of age, which occurred at the Hospital for Insane, Callan Park, on the 5th inst. Deceased was admitted into the hospital from the reception-house on August 19 in a state of acute mania.

Evidence was given to the effect that deceased had fallen whilst alighting from a tram on August 10. According to one witness, deceased was in the act of getting out of the car, when the tram started and caused him to fall on to his back. Swan was unsteady on his legs through a rheumatic complaint. When he arrived at his house he developed symptoms of mania, which increased to such an extent that his removal to the Callan Park Hospital for Insane was deemed necessary. Swan died some days later from exhaustion, caused by an acutely excited mental condition. It was shown that deceased had been informed by a chemist some time previously that he was suffering from locomotor ataxy, and it was considered that the fall had contributed to his mental condition. A tramway official stated that, though he was enabled to locate the tram from which deceased fell by a ticket found on deceased, the employees on that tram and of the line denied all knowledge of the occurrence.

The Coroner decided to adjourn the inquest for a fortnight, pending further investigations.



The members of the Marrickville Red Cross believed to have been taken between 1914 and 1921. Mrs Elizabeth Swan is second from the right in the first seated row, dressed in black.

## MRS. E. H. SWAN.

Mrs. E. H. Swan died at Marrickville on Friday, aged 82 years. She was born in Deal, Kent, England, and arrived in Australia with her parents in 1855. She engaged in philanthropic work for more than 40 years.

The funeral took place at the Church of England Cemetery, Rookwood, on Saturday. The service at the graveside was conducted by the Rev. S. H. Denman, and a short service at the residence was conducted by the Rev. W. G. Coughlan.

The chief mourners were: Mrs. and Mr. G. F. Barber (daughter and son-in-law), Misses H. E. A. W. and N. E. Swan (daughters), Mr. and Mrs. G. Swan (son and daughter-in-law), Mrs. and Mr. A. J. Williams (daughter and son-in-law), Mrs. and Mr. W. Houston (daughter and son-in-law), Mrs. and Mr. F. W. Grant (sister and brother-in-law), Madame Ada Baker (sister).

Among those present were: Mr. W. J. Long, M.P., and Mrs. Long, Alderman E. A. McKinley (Mayor of Marrickville), Mrs. Kennedy (representing Dulwich Hill Boy Scouts).

The wreaths included floral tributes from Enmore Staff Practice School, St. John Ambulance Nursing Division, Marrickville, Dulwich Hill-Petersham District Band, State Headquarters, Dulwich Hill District Association, and 1st Dulwich Hill Group, Boy Scouts.

Elizabeth Swan supported a large number of charities over many years. She lived at 67 Beauchamp Street in Marrickville West with her daughter Hettie.

When she died 28 August 1931 at the age of 82, her funeral was attended by the local Member of Parliament, the Mayor of Marrickville and a representative of the Dulwich Hill Boy Scouts.

## Ellen "Nellie" Swan

Nellie was the youngest of the surviving children of Henry and Elizabeth. She was a dressmaker and lived with Hettie at Harnett Avenue until 1933 but, as they did not really get on, moved to Pymble. She never married, and died in 1966.

**Hettie Swan.** Harriet Emma "Hettie" Swan was born in 1876. She was a teacher at Newtown School. In 1936 she was mistress in charge of the infants. After the death of her mother she lived at 45 Harnett Avenue, Marrickville

until she died. Her sister Nellie Swan also lived at that address in the 1930s. Despite this, on the electoral roll she had several other addresses at times – perhaps using a professional address, she was registered at 23 Pymble Avenue, Pymble and also Cotswold Crt, Pacific Highway (which was also the address of Madame Ada Baker at times). She was a very strict and old fashioned lady, the model of an Edwardian teacher, who apparently always wore lots of layers of clothing which possibly contributed to her death on 31<sup>st</sup> January 1960 of heat exhaustion. She never married.

**Jennie Fraser Swan.** Jennie married Albert John (Jack) Williams in 1915. He was a plumber, later a water board inspector, and a councillor of the NSW Royal Sanitary Institute. Jack was also a District Officer of the St John's Ambulance Brigade and a member of the Boy Scouts movement. They lived their whole married life at "Beulah", 22 Hampstead Rd which at various times was considered to be in Petersham, Dulwich Hill or Summer Hill. They had no children. Jack died in 1952 and Jennie in 1957.

**Ada Wilkinson Swan.** Ada was a dressmaker. She lived at 111 The Boulevard, Lewisham until she died in 1951 aged 67. From 1936 to 1949 she lived with a companion – Ella Izetta Swannell, the widow of a veterinary surgeon. Ada was also a Superintendent with the St John's Ambulance Service. She received a medal and bar and certificate from the King for her long service and was invested with the Order of St. John as a Serving Sister in 1939.

## DEATH OF MR. A. J. WILLIAMS

The funeral will take place to-day of Mr. Albert John Williams, one of the best-known members of the New South Wales Boy Scout movement and St. John Ambulance Brigade, who died on Tuesday. Scouts and St. John Ambulance men and women will attend the funeral service at Dulwich Hill Congregational Church at 1 p.m.



## **Laura Eliza Swan**

Laura was the eldest child of Henry and Elizabeth, born at Devonshire St Surry Hills in 1873, and married George Foster Barber in 1900. They initially lived at "Lauriston" in May Street, Marrickville. He was then a painter and later a building contractor. They had four children – Leslie George, Ruby Laura, Winifred Loris (Win) and Raymond Foster.

George served as a Lieutenant in the Great War. He was 42 years of age when he signed up in March 1915. He had already served part-time with the New South Wales military forces (8 years), the first Commonwealth military forces (8 years) and the 34<sup>th</sup> Infantry Citizen Militia Forces (2 years) where he was a 2<sup>nd</sup> lieutenant.

He was assigned to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion and served at Gallipoli, arriving on May 7<sup>th</sup> just 2 weeks after the initial landing. He was sick with influenza in May and then evacuated to Egypt (with "debility") on July 29<sup>th</sup>. This was probably fortunate as on August 6<sup>th</sup> the Battalion took part in the Battle of Lone Pine with significant losses. Of the 23 officers and 736 other ranks sent into battle on that day only 7 officers and 295 other ranks avoided death or wounding. The battalion diary on 13<sup>th</sup> August reports "Of the officers who originally landed with the 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion only 2 are left." George rejoined the unit on 26<sup>th</sup> August and was promoted to Lieutenant. On November 10<sup>th</sup> he was again evacuated to hospital in Cairo, being diagnosed with aortic valve disease. He was declared permanently unfit for duty and left for Australia on December 13<sup>th</sup> 1915. The rest of the Battalion was evacuated with the entire Anzac Corps later that month and would go on to serve out the rest of the war in the Somme and Flanders, participating in most of the major battles on the Western Front.

On January 4, before even reaching Australia, a recommendation for George to return to active duty was approved. He had six months back home and then embarked again for Europe. He landed in Plymouth and was seconded to the 1<sup>st</sup> Australian Training Depot at Perham and Weymouth. He returned again to Australia in March for discharge in June 1917.

After the war George and Laura moved to 44 Ruby Street, Marrickville. Laura died in 1945 at the Mental Hospital in Parramatta – she suffered from arterio-sclerosis and senility. She was 70 years of age. After Laura's death, George moved to live with his son Raymond and daughter-in-law Agnes at Padstow. They then moved to Sans Souci where George died in 1958 of aortic stenosis at 86 years of age.

**Leslie George Barber** was their oldest son. He died in 1919, aged 18, of head injuries in an industrial accident. His head was crushed in a slotting machine at the Steel Engineering Works in Marrickville where he was an apprentice.

**Ruby Barber** married Charles MacNamara, a commercial traveller, in 1938. They lived with Laura and George at Mary St and continued to live there after Laura died and George moved out. They had a daughter Merle and two sons Les and Ross. Charles died in 1959. Laura died 1978. Ross died in 1997, Les on Christmas Day 1999.

**Win Barber** married Tasman Roy Bower who was a spray painter. In the late 1930s they moved to Hobart. They had two children Roy (married Marie) and Barbara (married Raymond Walker). In 1954 they separated and Win moved back to Sydney while Tas stayed in Hobart. Win lived in Cremorne and then Wyee, and died in 1988.

**Raymond Foster Barber** served in the army engineering company (the militia forces) for three years from late 1930 and married Agnes Munro, who was born in Scotland, in 1938. He was an engineer and worked for the Sydney Machine Company in Waterloo, at least for a time. They had two children – Donald and Trish. They lived in Bondi and then Padstow. By 1958 they lived in Sans Souci and by 1980 in Charmhaven, near Newcastle. Agnes died in 1983 in Charmhaven, and Ray in Brisbane in 1997. Donald Barber was known as "Blue" and married Robyn Waugh in 1963. They have two children Deanne and Anthony.

## Elizabeth Agnes “Bessie” Swan

Born in 1884, Elizabeth married Will Houston a Clerk of Works Supervisor in 1908. Bill was the son of Eugene McIntyre Houston, a Scottish born boatbuilder who had been living in New Zealand, and Margaret Houston from Glebe, daughter of Gavin Houston who was also Scottish. They had four children – Archie, Harry, Ernie and Robert - and from 1920 they lived at the Houston family home “Bonnie Doon”, 13 Robertson St, Campsie. Bessie died there in 1935 after a 4 year struggle with osteoarthritis.

Bill married school teacher Christina Petterssen in 1949. They moved to Hobart for a time before coming back to Earlwood in Sydney. Bill died in 1965, aged 79.

REPORT		Record of all casualties regarding promotions (acting, temporary, local or relatively), appointments, transfers, postings, attachments, etc., forfeitures of pay, wounds, disabilities, admission to and discharge from Hospital, Casualty Clearing Stations, etc. Date of disembarkation and embarkation from a theatre of war (including Intouch, &c.).	Date of Casualty (if any)
Date	From whom received		
14.10.42	30 Bn	<p><b>DEATHS - COURT OF INQUIRY.</b></p> <p>Ref. 2/336 Court in Inquiry held 2 Sept. '42 reported that:-</p> <p>1. That No. N.18554 Lieut. William Archibald Fraser Houston, 30 Aust. Inf. Bn., died on 31 Aug. '42 as a result of a wound inflicted by a bullet from a Thompson Sub-machine gun accidentally fired by N.18526 Sgt. Ronald Walter Smith, 30 Aust. Inf. Bn. on 30 Aug. '42</p> <p>2. That Lieut. W.A.F. Houston was on duty at the time of the accident which resulted in his death.</p> <p>3. That Lieut. W.A.F. Houston was aware of the order or instruction of the C.O. 30 Aust. Inf. Bn. that ball ammunition was not to be fired in the vicinity of the Camp but that though the accident took place in the vicinity of the camp there is no evidence that the proximity of the camp was in any way a contributory cause of the accident.</p> <p>4. That there is no evidence of neglect or misconduct on the part of any person.</p> <p>5. That though there is no evidence on the point, an inference arises that there was some carelessness on the part of Sgt. Smith - such carelessness cannot be deemed culpable as - it appears from the evidence that Sgt. Smith was being instructed in the use of a Thompson sub-machine gun and that Lieut. Houston was a competent instructor.</p>	

**William Archibald Fraser Houston**, known as Archie, was a carpenter and married Eva Newson in 1935. The name Archibald was a tribute to his uncle Private Archibald White Houston who died of bronchial pneumonia while serving in France in 1917.

Archie served three years compulsory national service with the 56<sup>th</sup> Battalion in peacetime (1929 to 31). He volunteered for further 3 years in 1936, and was assigned to 30<sup>th</sup> Infantry Battalion at Wallgrove training centre – initially in the pipe band!

They lived first in Earlwood and then moved to Herne Bay. In January 1937 their first child, Bruce William Houston, was born and died aged just 3 days. Their second son Ian was born in 1939. Ian married Pauline and they have two children – Linda and Julie.

After further training Archie was promoted to Sergeant 1938 and Lieutenant in February 1942. He was shipped to Western Australia in July 1942.

He was killed in a training accident in Fremantle on 31<sup>st</sup> August 1942 after being shot in the chest. He was instructing a sergeant in the use of a Thompson machine gun when accidentally mortally wounded.

Eva worked as a clerk after Archie's death and lived in Frederick St, Campsie. She died in Springwood in 1980.

**Henry McIntyre Houston** was known as Harry and nicknamed “Snow”. He married Gladys Gubbins in 1932.

Harry also served in WW2. He commenced service in late 1941 and served in the Transport Division as a fitter and served in Bathurst to the end of 1942 when they shipped out to Milne Bay on the South East tip of New Guinea. He was assigned to the 31<sup>st</sup> Water Transport Maintenance Company, part of the Royal Australian Engineers. He was promoted to Corporal and Acting Sergeant and transferred to the Australian Watercraft Workshop from November 1943 to July 1944. In July 1944 he returned to Australia with the 11<sup>th</sup> Small Ships Company where he was based in Brisbane, and promoted to Sergeant and Warrant Officer II. He served on the “Rulla” and the “Reninna”.

The 11<sup>th</sup> SS were then deployed in September 1945 to Labuan on the island of Borneo. He returned to Australia and was discharged in February 1946.

He worked as an Electrical Engineer. He and Gladys had two sons – Michael and Brian. They lived in Harcourt until about 1950 and then in Canterbury and Seven Hills. Snow died in 1983 and Gladys in 1996.

Michael Allen Houston (right with his cat Stevie) married Jan Askin and had two children. Later in life he lived with his partner Christine. He died in 2006.

Michael's brother Brian married Marilyn.



**Ernest George Houston**, a carpenter and builder's foreman, married Ethel Gudgion in 1935. They lived at 1 Barnes Ave, Canterbury. Ethel died in 1991.

**Robert Allan Houston** married Jessie Hedger in 1939. He was a fitter and turner, and they lived at 34 Fuller Ave, Earlwood. Their children were Allan, Annette and Jean. Robert died in 1993.

## George Henry Swan



Elizabeth Baker and Henry Swan had only one son, George Henry, born in Newtown in 1877. He was a fitter and married Clara Ellison Grant who was a daughter of Frederic Winchester Grant and therefore his first cousin, but only by marriage. Frederic was married to Elizabeth's sister Julia Baker but Clara was the daughter of his first wife Clara Jane Morris.

They lived in Marrickville West at 4 Alfred St, and had four children – Clarice, Hazel, Trevor and Lawrie. George died in 1941. Clara moved to Lane Cove and lived until 1956.

**Clarice Ellison Swan** married Eric Rosenbloom, an optometrist, in February 1937. They initially lived in Bondi, then Earlwood, and by 1954 to the family home in Alfred St, Marrickville which they bought from Hazel and Claude Pickford. Eric died in 1954 from a cerebral haemorrhage. They had one daughter Lesley Jennifer who married Max Booth and had four children – Glenn, Jennifer, Andrew and Kathryn. Lesley is one of the key researchers who have helped compile the family history and contributed greatly to this chapter. Clarice died on 15<sup>th</sup> July, 1997 of cardiomyopathy and congestive heart failure. Max Booth died in 2011.

Lawrie, **Lawrence George Swan**, married Jeannie Wright in 1940. They lived in Lakemba and he was a manufacturer – he invented machines for making buttons and other small items. They adopted two children Marilyn and David. David was killed in a car accident in 1984. In 1980 Marilyn lived in Caves Beach near Swansea, NSW. Lawrie died in 2008 and Jeannie the following year.

## Trevor Winchester Swan

“Probably the greatest economist ever to have lived, worked and died in Australia, Trevor Swan was also one of the most enigmatic” wrote J.E. King in *A Biographical Dictionary of Australian and New Zealand Economists* in 2007.<sup>4</sup>

Trevor was born in 1918 and, after schooling at Canterbury High School, joined the Rural Bank of New South Wales and studied economics part time at Sydney University where he not only passed with first class honours but won the University Medal in Economics in 1940 – only the fifth time in 30 years that the medal was awarded, and the first time to a part-time student. As a young man he performed in radio plays with the ABC and had a continuing participation in amateur theatre for much of his life. Also in his economics class, graduating in the top five, was Phyllis Mary Grill known as Pat. Trevor and Pat married in May 1941. Since graduation, Trevor had been lecturing at the university and also presented a segment on national ABC Radio “Behind the Markets”.

At the outbreak of war the University Economics staff departed en masse to the public service, and in 1941 Trevor moved to Melbourne to take a position of economic advisor in the Department of War Organisation of Industry. He quickly became personal economics advisor to the Minister for War Organisation of Industry, John Dedman.

While in Melbourne, Pat and Trevor lived in Toorak. Their first two children were born in Melbourne - Peter in 1944 and Barbara in 1945.

He then moved to Canberra in mid 1946 to work with H.C. ‘Nugget’ Coombs in the Department of Post-War Reconstruction becoming Chief Economist. In 1947-48 he was seconded to work for the Economic Section of the UK Cabinet Office and returned to Australia via the United States working for several months with the Council of Economic Advisors in Washington, DC.



<sup>4</sup> In keeping with Trevor Swan's academic approach it is only right to record the source material for this section more formally:

Butlin, N.G. and Gregory, R.G. (1989). 'Trevor Winchester Swan 1918-1989', *Economic Record*, December 1989, pp 369-377.

Groenewegen, P.D. and MacFarlane, B. (1990). 'A History of Australian Economic Thought', Routledge, London.

King, J.E. (2007). 'A Biographical Dictionary of Australian and New Zealand Economists', Edward Elgar, Cheltenham.

Swan, Peter L (2006). 'Trevor Winchester Swan, AO' ANU Inaugural Trevor Swan Distinguished Lecture, Canberra: Australian National University. [http://www.crawford.anu.edu.au/pdf/seminars/trevor\\_swan.pdf](http://www.crawford.anu.edu.au/pdf/seminars/trevor_swan.pdf) (Consulted 3rd November 2010).

'Swan, Trevor Winchester – ASIO File', National Archives of Australia, NAA:A6119, 2316 (Consulted 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2010)

# World Bank In Talks On Loan

**WASHINGTON, August 4 (A.A.P.).—**  
**The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development is discussing "possible investment in the Australian economic development programme."**

A bank spokesman, who revealed this yesterday, said that negotiations on a loan of "rather substantial proportions" were in progress.

He added that it probably would be a long-term investment.

On all past occasions the bank has sent a mission to countries seeking loans to investigate economic conditions but, the spokesman said, it seemed that this would not be necessary in Australia's case.

"It is quite possible that the loan negotiations will be finalised within a few weeks, perhaps by the end of August.

"The Australian Prime Minister, Mr. Menzies, has given an assurance that a staff of experts he is leaving behind will furnish

Assistant Treasury Secretary, Fred Meers, Assistant Controller-General of the Customs Department, and possibly Commander Robert Jackson, secretary of the Ministry for National Development.

Mr. Menzies yesterday was reluctant to go into details of what he called "highly successful" economic talks.

He said that there had been a cordial co-operation on all levels, and added "I expect nothing final on these negotiations until after I return to Australia.

"I have completed my conversations on matters of principle affecting finance."

A spokesman for Mr. Menzies said that the Prime Minister would probably decide within two days on whether to visit Japan on his way back to Australia.

the bank with all the information required, both on Australian economy and details of national development projects."

Various unofficial estimates have been made about the amount Australia is seeking. These range from 100 million dollars (£A44,642,857) to 300 million dollars (£A134 million).

Feeling here is that Australian negotiations are not necessarily confined to one agency, and observers have still not ruled out the possibility of a loan application also going to the Export-Import Bank if the World Bank cannot fully meet Australia's dollar requirements.

## FOUR EXPERTS

Mr. Menzies said yesterday that his staff of experts remaining in Washington would be Messrs. Trevor Swan, chief economic adviser to the Prime Minister's Department, Fred Wheeler,

He then became Chief Economist to Robert Menzies in the Prime Minister's Department after the elections of December 1949 had returned Menzies to power. In July of 1950 he left Australia in the Prime Minister's party travelling to London, Washington, Ottawa, Vancouver and New Zealand for a month in total. He remained in Washington to cement US loans to assist in Australia's economic development program (see the article from Sydney Morning Herald, 5<sup>th</sup> August 1950, at left).

Upon his return, Trevor left the public service to become Foundation Chair of Economics at the Australian National University, Canberra, despite the fact that his Bachelor of Economics was his only academic qualification.

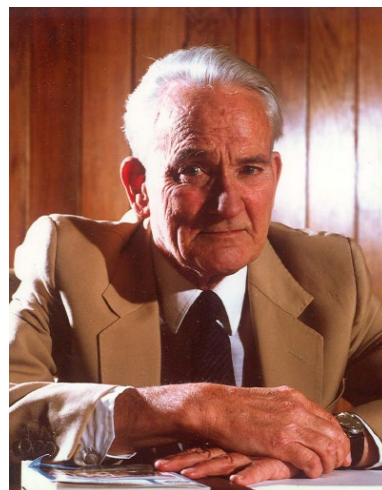
He continued to consult not only to the Australian government but internationally. He was part of a United Nations expert working group on minimising the impact of global recessions in 1951, and also provided advice on tax reform and economic development in India, Papua New Guinea, Malaya and Singapore. In 1953-4 he spent a year on study leave at Oxford and London Universities and three months in Malaya with the World Bank.

He continued to advise the Australian Government, dining regularly with Menzies and his Ministers, until his relationship with the Prime Minister was severed in 1956 when they disagreed over the Suez Crisis, Menzies being a strong supporter of the British attempt with France and the USA to seize control of the Suez Canal from Egypt.

In 1958 he was invited to assist in the development of the India Five Year Plan. During his time in India Trevor contracted amoebic dysentery and suffered poor health for the remainder of his life.

Trevor and Pat's third child Richard had been born in Canberra in 1950, and was now followed by Andrew, born in 1959.

Trevor returned to public life in 1972 as an economic policy advisor to Treasurer Bill Hayden and the Whitlam Government and was a Governor of the Reserve Bank of Australia for ten years from 1975 to 1985. Trevor retired from the ANU in 1983 and was made an Officer in the General Division of the Order of Australia in 1988.



UNITED NATIONS  NATIONS UNIES  
NEW YORK

IN REPLY REFER TO

ECA 148/04(1)

28 June 1951

16 JUN 1951

Dear Mr. Swan,

Mr. Owen wishes to thank you for your cables of 3 and 8 June. He is pleased to know that you accept the invitation to join the expert group which will analyse practical ways of dealing with the problem of reducing the international impact of recessions. It is planned that the work will be completed by the end of September; accordingly, you will be able to return to Australia early in October.

In order to meet requests made by certain of the experts, the meeting will begin on 16 August and not 13 August as indicated previously. You will be informed shortly of the arrangements for your journey by air which are now being made. Professor James Angell of Columbia University of New York, Mr. G. D. A. MacDougall of Oxford and Dr. H. Myint of Burma, now at Oxford, will also join the group. I hope I shall soon be able to inform you who will be the fifth member.

Since Mr. Owen and Mr. Weintraub will be absent from New York, I have been asked to handle correspondence concerning the meeting. Though we do not have much staff available for carrying out preparatory work, I should be glad if you would inform me of any special study you may wish us to make. I shall also let you know in good time of certain studies that I plan to have done in order to facilitate the experts' work.

Very sincerely yours,

*Folke Hilgerdt*

Folke Hilgerdt, Assistant Director  
Division of Economic Stability and Development  
Department of Economic Affairs

T. W. Swan, Esq.  
The Australian National University  
P. O. Box 4, G. P. O.  
Canberra, A. C. T.  
Australia

At various times in the 1950s and 1960s Trevor also attracted the attention of ASIO as they diligently (?) tracked alleged Communist sympathisers. As the Cold War deepened the Menzies government tried to ban the Communist Party in 1951 but the High Court had ruled this unconstitutional and a subsequent referendum to provide the government with the required powers failed narrowly. Menzies did manage to use the communist control of several unions and the defection of Vladimir Petrov in 1954 to discredit the Labour Party and hold onto power.

While in Melbourne in 1943 Trevor had two staff members, Jean Blackburn and Helen McCulloch, who were members of the Communist Party. This period between 1941 and 1945 was the high point of the party's influence in Australian politics and, although still a marginal force, it was able to have candidates openly stand for office at all levels and have a member elected to the Queensland parliament. Helen McCulloch married Horace Plessay Brown, another well known economist, and also believed to be a Communist Party member. Horace, after working with Prime Minister Chifley on the committee which introduced the pay-as-you-earn taxation system, moved to ANU's department of economics.

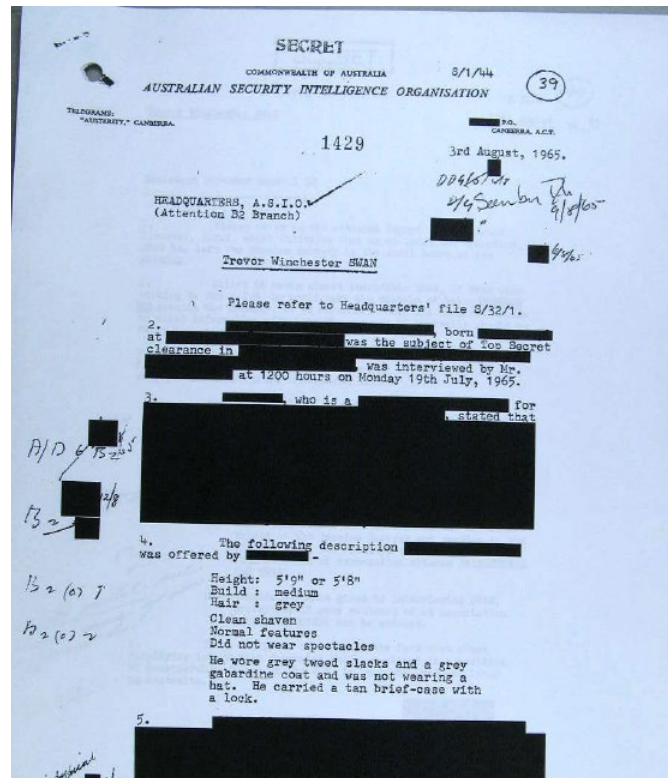
In 1954 ASIO became aware that a document which Trevor had shared with Jean Blackburn in Melbourne ten years previously had been leaked to the communists and that Trevor's car had been seen parked outside the Browns' house in Canberra on December 25, 1949. After investigation they decided that the Melbourne document had been shared legitimately and that the visit to the Browns may be accounted for by "a mutual interest in economics" and "believed to have been of a social (Christmas) nature".

The nature of these investigations appears completely inept and comical – although perhaps this is partly as a result of looking back from today's very different world. In 1954 Trevor was a regular confidante of Prime Minister Menzies but not only do ASIO fail to detect this, they appear to take some time to conclude that he is Professor at ANU using excerpts from the ANU campus news. The ASIO file notes in 1956 that "there may be some sort of liaison with the Department of the Treasury and the Economic Section of the Australian National University". If they had looked more carefully they would have found that the liaison in fact was deeper than they could imagine as Trevor was a familiar of not only Sir Roland Wilson, then Secretary of the Treasury, but Dr H. C. 'Nugget' Coombs, then Governor of the Commonwealth Bank and later Governor of the Reserve Bank, Sir Frederick Wheeler, Secretary of the Treasury during the Whitlam Government era, Sir John Crawford, Dr John Wear Burton, Sir Arthur Tange – a virtual Who's Who of the most senior levels of the public service in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

In January 1956 Trevor was suggested to be a communist when recommended for a Defence Department lecture by Sir Roland Wilson, and also seen outside the Soviet Embassy late at night on two occasions in 1965. Trevor later told his family that he regularly played chess with a staffer at the Soviet Embassy. Several notes in the file also made it clear that the phones of Horrie Brown were being tapped giving the priceless intelligence that the Browns were unable to come to the Swans' house for dinner because they did not have a babysitter available!

Nothing further came of any of these events.

There was a diversion to the story in September 1962 when ASIO was asked to check an application by Peter Swan, then an 18 year old high school student, for a Public Service position. ASIO's response was "Traces against the father in no way reflect against the son who is not recorded". But a handwritten note on the file copy of the response says "is this file of any interest to you re A.N.U.?" – the initials of both the sender and recipient of the note are blacked out. Apparently this was a test of a new process for vetting applications initiated by Sir Frederick Wheeler, then Head of the Public Service who asked Trevor to have Peter, who was not at all interested in the post, make an application.



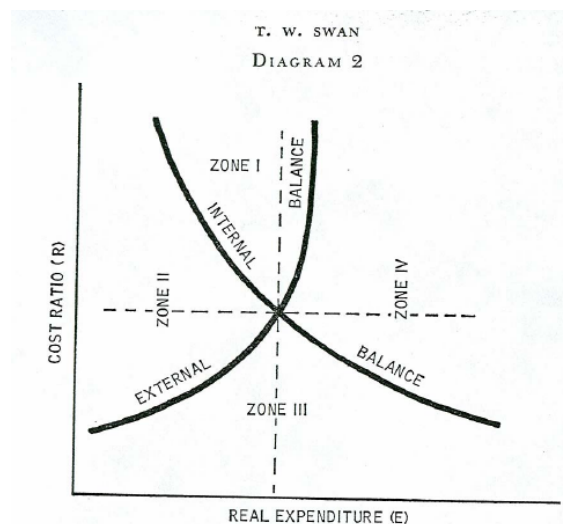
## Academic Research

Trevor's first economic paper was published in 1940 – just before his 22<sup>nd</sup> birthday. “Australian War Finance and Banking Policy” set out the principles of war finance and the challenge of preventing inflation by ensuring that increased military expenditure was offset by a reduction in non-government expenditure. The reduction in non-government expenditure could be ensured by government fiscal policy, but Trevor also pointed out that these savings should be made in areas where the resources could be redirected into appropriate activity in support of the war effort. It was published, like almost all of his work, in the *Economic Record*, Australia's most prominent economics journal.

He first came to international attention the following year when he published a contribution to a controversy on interest rate policy involving a conflict between “loanable funds” and “liquidity preference”.

The first of Trevor's three major works was developed in 1943 through 1945 for the government. “A Working Model of the Australian Trade Cycle” was only the second econometric model of a national economy produced in the world, and reduced the Australian economy to a set of 10 equations which accurately tracked the actual performance of the economy from 1928-29 through 1938-39 and enabled the evaluation of the effects of potential policy instruments. It was published as “The Principle of Effective Demand – A ‘Real-Life’ Model” after Trevor's death in 1989.

In the early 1950s Trevor developed significant models for managing the economy of a small country like Australia, demonstrating that control of domestic demand (via government fiscal policy), wages (by the Arbitration Court) and the exchange rate (by the Reserve Bank) could produce full employment, price stability and balance of payments equilibrium. Presented to seminars in 1953 and 1955, and published in 1960 and 1963, it led to the “Swan Diagram” of internal and external balance which was a staple of macroeconomic teaching for decades, until the floating of the dollar in 1983 and the demise of the centralised wage fixing system removed its relevance to the Australian economy.



His third major contribution was the development of the world's first “growth” model which showed how technological advancement was more important than management of economic resources (capital and labour) in producing economic growth and improved living standards. It was developed at the same time, but independently, as similar work by Robert Solow in the USA. The model, published in 1956 and known as the Solow-Swan Growth Model, has become a mainstay of economic theory and practice and put Australian economics on the world stage. Robert Solow published his work approximately 10 months before Swan and was awarded the Nobel Prize for Economics in 1987 for this work. Trevor had developed much of his work in verbal form as early as 1950 but, as usual, was slow to publish. In some circles, Trevor was considered unlucky not to share in this honour.

In 1962-63 he became just the second Australian to be invited to give the Marshall Lectures in Economics at the University of Cambridge, speaking on “Capital and the Crisis of Progress”. He was followed in 1963-4 by Robert M Solow on “Effective Demand and Capital Theory”.

If there is an enigma in the professional life of Trevor Swan, as J.E. King suggests, perhaps it centres on the relative lack of published contributions to the academic literature despite the importance and brilliance of his work. Peter Swan, in his tribute to his father, lists over 60 unpublished papers both practical and theoretical while even amongst the 22 published works many were published well after the original research was completed, and almost all were published in Australia or otherwise in an understated way. His tendency to publish his work after a long delay, or not at all, has been attributed to a combination of modesty and perfectionism. Butlin & Gregory suggest that Trevor's skills were better suited to the cut and thrust of government policy problem solving rather than to the ivory tower life of an academic and that the separation from day to day economic policy concerns may have reduced his motivation. And yet Trevor's most telling contribution to economic thought came in the first 10 years of his tenure at ANU, and his renown amongst his international peers was of the highest order.

That he had a healthy awareness of the tension between theoretical and practical considerations of macroeconomic policy was shown in the introduction to his last published theoretical paper “Of Golden Ages and Production Functions” (1960) where he writes:

“I intend to ask more questions than I can answer, and mainly to urge that economists need to consider very closely what it is that theories of economic growth are about, what questions they are trying to answer, if economic theory is not merely jejune mathematics. We all know that in models of economic growth we can produce stagnation crises, Malthusian Traps, inflation barriers, take-off instability situations, even trade cycles, at the drop of a symbolic cliché. The trouble is that any one of quite a lot of clichés will do. We also know that if we were asked to think about a five year plan for India we would not look to economic theory for ready answers: we would need to learn a great deal about India, about people, about practical techniques and we would not hope for more than that economic theory might help us with some basic insights as to how to set about the tasks.”

## **Family**

Trevor and Pat’s first two children both also became economists.

**Peter Lawrence Swan** graduated from ANU in 1966, completed his Ph.D. at Monash University in 1972, and has held faculty positions at ANU, AGSM, and the University of Sydney. He is currently Professor in the Australian School of Business at the University of New South Wales. His research interests centre on industrial organisation, regulation of industry and corporate governance. He has contributed to subjects as diverse as executive remuneration, regulation of the electricity industry, the ‘Very Fast Train’ project, the economics of sole-parent social welfare and the NSW Rugby League draft and has made many appearances in the mainstream press and on TV. He was appointed a Member of the Order of Australia in 2003. Peter is married to Vipha and has a son Anthony (also an economist), a daughter Penny, and four grandchildren.

**Barbara Judith Spencer** also graduated from ANU, in 1967, and completed a M.Ec. at Monash University. Advised by her father that employment in the economics field would be more difficult for a woman, she hedged her bets by majoring in statistics and genetics as well as economics. Most economists worked in the public service where it was still a legal obligation for women to resign when they married. In 2002 in a luncheon lecture on her experiences<sup>5</sup> she recounted turning to the CSIRO to explore the possibility of a research position in genetics.

“I felt that an academic job, possibly associated with the CSIRO would be O.K. because the universities were exempted from laws against women working. It was at this interview that I encountered the bathroom problem. The administrator first asked me if I wanted to eventually do field work. I replied enthusiastically, that I expected I would enjoy it. At the time I was an avid bushwalker and had spent many nights camped in wild places. He then explained that departmental regulations concerning the need for adequate bathroom facilities meant that women were not allowed on field trips. I argued with him, saying how silly I felt this regulation was, but agreed that if these were the regulations, I could do without field trips. He then looked at me sternly and explained that field trips were a requirement to work at the CSIRO. But, I stammered, this seems to imply that no female researchers can be hired by the CSIRO. Yes, he said. That is indeed the case. There are no jobs for women here.”

In 1970 Barbara and her first husband moved to Winnipeg, Canada, and a part-time lecturing position with the University of Manitoba. She did her Ph. D. at Carnegie-Mellon. Barbara moved to Vancouver in 1985 and since 1988 she has been Asia-Pacific Professor in Trade Policy at the University of British Columbia. Together with her second husband, Jim Brander, she is a recognised expert in Strategic Trade policy with published research on international competitiveness, protectionism and free trade. Jim and Barbara have one daughter, Cathy.

Pat and Trevor’s third child, **Richard James Swan**, also took an academic path but in the sciences. He studied at the University of Essex, in the UK, and completed his Ph.D. at Carnegie-Mellon.

His field of expertise is Computer Science and, in particular, RFID (Radio Frequency Identification Devices). RFID are very small electronic tags which are typically used to track high value goods from manufacture to sale as they move through a supply chain. Unlike bar code scanning, RFID devices can be scanned easily from a moderate distance and without line of sight, and can contain a great deal more information. Richard worked for DEC and the global software vendor SAP AG before co-founding startup T3C Inc in California in 2003. Now known as Retail Solutions they provide software solutions for retail organisations to analyse inventory information, including RFID data, and produce operational performance. Richard is married to Claudia Mazzetti-Swan and they live with their daughter Alex, born 1988, in Portola Valley, California.

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<sup>5</sup> “Trying to Follow the Yellow Brick Road: My Early Experiences as a Woman Economist”, Presentation at CWEN lunch, Canadian Economics Association Meetings, May 2002. <http://strategy.sauder.ubc.ca/spencer/CWENtlk.pdf> (Consulted 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2010)



Youngest son **Andrew Neville Swan** lives in the Blue Mountains outside Sydney with his wife Catriona and two daughters Eliza and Annabel.

Trevor Winchester Swan died of throat cancer on 15<sup>th</sup> January 1989.

Pat continued to live in Canberra and died on 25<sup>th</sup> May 2005 of heart disease.



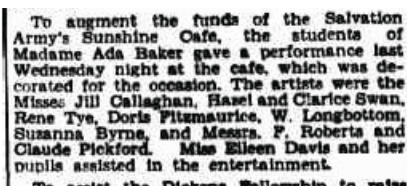
Pat Swan's death notice from the Canberra Times, March 2005; Peter Swan, Barbara Spencer, and Richard Swan.

## Hazel May Swan and Claude Pickford

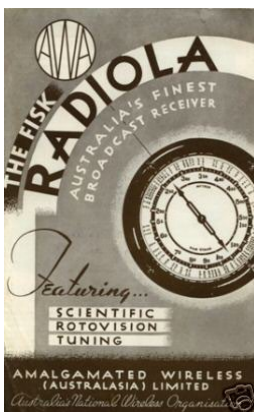


Above from left to right: Clarice Rosenbloom, Claude Pickford, Win Bower (seated, front) and Hazel Pickford.

Below: Sydney Morning Herald 16<sup>th</sup> December 1931.



were already actively fighting in North Africa. A few days out from Fremantle, though, the Queen Mary peeled off from the rest of the fleet and headed due north towards Singapore. By early 1941 the rhetoric of the Japanese Government, already occupying the Chinese province of Manchuria and the Indo-China peninsula, convinced the allies that Japan had territorial ambitions in greater Asia. Thailand, Burma, Malaya, Borneo, Taiwan, Hong Kong, the Philippines, Papua New Guinea and perhaps even Australia were all now at risk.



On February 18<sup>th</sup> 1941 the Queen Mary docked in Singapore and the 22<sup>nd</sup> Brigade prepared to assist in the defence of Malaya against an expected Japanese invasion. British controlled Singapore, as is widely known, was considered to be a regional fortress – the “Gibraltar of Asia”. Part of the Federated Malay States, its defences were manned by in excess of 70,000 British and Indian troops, a naval base, two airfields, and five of the biggest infantry guns in the world. The big guns could fire 15” shells over a range of around 50km. “Fortress Singapore” was designed to be able to hold firm for at least two months while additional naval reinforcements were dispatched by the British fleet to assist. The problem was that with their attention captured by the European war with Germany, Britain was in no position to deliver this support.

Contrary to popular belief, the Japanese were not expected to invade Singapore by sea. While shore defence was obviously a key requirement – Singapore is an island after all – the 22<sup>nd</sup> Brigade’s senior staff and the British Malaya Command performed a detailed reconnaissance of the entire peninsula in early 1941.

They concluded that the Japanese would invade southern Thailand, move across the border to take the aerodromes at Kota Bahru, Kuantan and Alor Setar in Malaya and then move south overland towards Kuala Lumpur. They were also expected to land troops further south at Mersing on the East Coast to connect with the north-south road from there to Singapore.

Hazel was the second daughter of Henry and Clara Swan, born in 1908. With Clarice and her brothers she learned to sing with Madame Ada Baker and performed in her concerts in the 1920s and 30s (Trevor and Lawrie were boy sopranos). Here Hazel met Claude Pickford, also a talented singer, and they married in 1933.

Claude was born in 1909 and was adopted at birth by George and Elizabeth Pickford. Claude did not find out that he was adopted until he was in his 50s – well after his parents had died. His birth mother was Lilian Smith, no details of the father were recorded. He had four siblings – Myra, Eileen, Victor and John, and was step-brother to three children from Elizabeth’s first marriage to Matthew McAteer.

He went to Sydney High School and joined the advertising department of AWA (Amalgamated Wireless Australasia) in 1924. AWA introduced radio technology to Australia between 1913 and 1930 for shipping, business and eventually home use, and was one of Australia’s most high tech companies in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century.

In 1926 Claude joined the Supply Corps of the Citizen’s Military Force Second Division. The CMF was Australia’s peace time army between the wars – essentially a reservist force. Claude served for 13 years, commissioned as a Lieutenant in 1935 and appointed a Temporary Captain in 1939.<sup>6</sup>

In July 1940 he transferred to the AIF as CMF Forces were not allowed to serve outside Australia and its territories. He had delayed his formal transfer so that he could stay in Australia until after their second son Geoff was born in September 1940. He therefore missed the 6<sup>th</sup> Division and was appointed as a Supply Captain to the 22<sup>nd</sup> Brigade Headquarters as part of the 8<sup>th</sup> Division under Brigadier Harold Taylor who he knew from the CMF. After training at Bathurst for 7 months they boarded the Queen Mary for overseas service.

At that stage the troops were expecting to be heading for Palestine and the training grounds for the European theatre where the 7<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> Divisions

<sup>6</sup> The information about Claude Pickford’s war service is taken from several sources including his AIF service records; the War Diaries of the 22<sup>nd</sup> Brigade (Australian War Memorial); notes taken by Claude while in the Kuching POW camp (now in the Lane Cove Library); ‘Borneo Burlesque’ by Don Johnston, George Forbes et al, self-published, 1947; ‘Caesar’s Ghost’ by Robyn Arvier, Riverside, 2001; ‘Defying the Odds – Surviving Sandakan and Kuching’ by Michele Cunningham, Lothian Books, 2006; and an interview conducted by Michele Cunningham with Claude Pickford in September 1999 (now in the J.D. Somerville Oral History collection of the Mortlock Library, South Australia). Photos from Australian War Memorial collection.



**Left: Capt Claude Pickford (front row, far right) with the officers of the 22<sup>nd</sup> Brigade at Mersing in October 1941.  
Right: with Brig Harold Taylor, centre, and an unidentified officer in Malaya.**

Most of the 22<sup>nd</sup> Brigade headed for Kajang, Port Dickson and Seremban in the west of peninsular Malaya, just south of Kuala Lumpur. They carried out exercises, learning how to use the winding unpaved roads for transport convoys, the jungle for concealment, and the rubber plantations to cover troops and artillery for ambush scenarios. The brigade commanders did an extensive recce of the areas around Mersing, checking not only the roads but also the Endau River which provided alternate transport for a long way south. From there they followed the road down to Johore Bahru and into Singapore

In Claude's own words "very heavy rain put the rubber estates in a treacherous condition, thereby giving us plenty of experience in getting out of bogs and at the same time giving a very practical demonstration of the difficulties likely to be encountered under active service conditions. We found, too, that rubber provided first class cover for concealment of troops, vehicles and artillery. Lessons were also learnt in the art of large convoy work which did much to minimise accidents in future stunts. Two days were spent at Kluang, but it took 12 hours to make the trip each way."

In early May there was an opportunity for leave to Kuala Lumpur, Malacca and Seremban. In KL, Claude was invited with other officers of the 22<sup>nd</sup> Brigade to the house of a Singhalese barrister – Ben Telala – whose sons were serving in the British Air Force. He was hosted for the night by a young girl who somehow seemed to know that he worked for AWA and that he had been part of the Coastal & Island Radio Services section which managed the communication with Papua New Guinea, smaller islands and even ships at sea. He was concerned at how this breach of intelligence had happened until she told him that she had been secretary to the Malayan Director-General of Posts and Telecommunications and had seen all his correspondence to the department. In 1954 Claude was on a business trip and arranged to meet Ben's sons for dinner. He discovered that one son had been killed in a raid over Germany, that Ben himself had been charged as a collaborator and die during the war in solitary confinement, and that the daughters had been badly abused by the occupying Japanese. He stayed in touch with the sons and later helped arrange the education of their children in Sydney.

After returning from leave all of the exercises were repeated with the addition of signals and HQ cipher communications to simulate real battle conditions.

In July the Brigade Command attended briefings in Singapore where they were given orders to take over the defences at Mersing and Endau from the Indian Army. Most of mainland Malaya was defended by the Indian Army's 3<sup>rd</sup> Corps commanded by Lt-Gen Sir Lewis Heath. The British troops remained at the Singapore barracks. The 22<sup>nd</sup> Australian Brigade arrived in Mersing in early August and officially took command of the sector on August 28<sup>th</sup> covering a front of approximately 30 miles. Through September, October and November they undertook further reconnaissance of the area from Endau in the north to Jemaluang in the south, repaired defensive wiring on the Mersing beaches and laid anti-tank and anti-personnel mines. They monitored suspected 5<sup>th</sup> column activity by civilians in the area –there was a Japanese-managed iron mine located down river – and prepared plans for evacuation of the 20,000 or so civilians from the area if needed. Boats from the iron mine were taken up to the township so they could not be used by Japanese troops.

By observing troop movements, allied intelligence now believed that the Japanese were preparing for imminent invasion of Malaya, Singapore and/or the Philippines. On December 6<sup>th</sup> first reports of Japanese troop movements were received in Singapore and the codeword "Raffles" for "first degree of readiness" was received in Mersing. By now all leave had been cancelled, all vulnerable points manned, all troops were under arms, beach defences were activated and the 22<sup>nd</sup> Brigade's Battle HQ established.

On December 7<sup>th</sup> 1941 (8<sup>th</sup> December in Asia), the Japanese launched simultaneous invasions of Malaya, Siam (Thailand) and the Philippines while also bombing Singapore and, most famously, Pearl Harbour in Hawaii. Only Pearl Harbour was unexpected. The war in the Pacific was on.

At Kota Bahru in the far North East of Malaya, the Indian troops resisted and inflicted significant casualties on the Japanese for a few days but elsewhere the landings were unopposed. The Japanese quickly landed tanks and secured the three airfields in the north. They also pushed into northern Burma, securing important beachheads.

The British sent their two largest warships – the Repulse and Prince of Wales – north from Singapore to intercept Japanese troop reinforcements up the east coast. They failed to find the enemy fleet but were spotted by a Japanese submarine which guided bombers in and they sank the two British ships on December 10<sup>th</sup>.

The 22<sup>nd</sup> Brigade commenced evacuation of the civilian population in their area as soon as they heard of the bombing of Singapore. They evacuated 28,000 civilians and then razed the small town of Mersing to the ground to ensure that they had full visibility of the waterfront and to deny the enemy any cover in the event of a landing.

By December 15<sup>th</sup> the British were forced to evacuate Penang and by New Year the Japanese control almost half of Malaya. The Japanese positions in Indo-China, Thailand and Burma give them a launching pad for shipping troops into both east and west Malayan coasts – continually threatening to land behind the British lines. By January 8<sup>th</sup> the British decide that they will retreat a further 150 miles to the southern State of Johore and attempt to defend a line right across the country from Mersing, where the 22<sup>nd</sup> Brigade is dug in, to Batu Pahat where their 27<sup>th</sup> Brigade colleagues have been moved. The Australians are given the task of holding the entire line while the rest of the Indian army retreat into Singapore.

On January 13<sup>th</sup> the 22<sup>nd</sup> Brigade receives reports of a convoy of Japanese ships north of their position and they await their first contact with the enemy. The following day one of their patrols encounters 50 Japanese soldiers near Endau at the far northern edge of their area and on the 15<sup>th</sup> they commenced harassing operations by venturing over the Endau River.

			Active patrolling of ENDAU-MERSING-JEMALUANG areas carried out.
"	14	1100	Contact made with enemy force 50 strong by patrol of "D" Coy 2/19 Bn, ENDAU FORCE, at PONTIAN. JAPANESE troops were wearing steel helmets, rubber coats and Maki shorts.
		-	Rain still continued in the area. Coolies refused to continue work on the 14th night at ENDAU in the rain.
"	15	-	At ENDAU 16 B1 fought delaying action along the Coast to the North bank of the ENDAU. B1 was forced to withdraw across the River at dusk. Casualties resulting from engagement were enemy 30 - own troops 1 KOC 2 CHs. Enemy tanks working in pairs constantly bombed and machine-gunned ENDAU area.
			ENDAU Beach was demolished by 1 sea 2/10 B1 Coy, being useless due to flood damage.

The enemy started daily bombing runs over Endau and Mersing. On Friday 16<sup>th</sup> Claude had his closest shave of the war – the day he “came closest to copping the lot”, he later said. With Staff Captain J. D. Fairley he was on his way from Mersing to Endau in a staff car when Japanese planes came over to chase them down. They could not quickly get off the road as it was elevated above the surrounding fields and jungle. They dumped the car and ran into the bush off the road and laid down on the ground. The planes ignored the car and came at them. Claude said that he felt the hot blast of a bomb go right across his back and thought “God, I hope the next one’s no closer”. The pilot must have thought he had got Claude and left the area without coming back for a second run. When Claude got up and looked around he saw that the bomb crater was only three feet away from where his legs had been.

	"	16	-	At dawn, one pl "D" Coy 2/19 Bn under Lieut VARLEY, ENDAU FORCE landed at junction of ENDAU and S. BANK ENDAU, harassed the enemy during the day and withdrew on the night 16/17 Jan 42. Casualties - enemy considerable. own troops 2, missing 5.
				Low dive bombing and machine gunning by enemy aircraft continued at ENDAU throughout the day. The Staff Capt and the KOC Coy while moving to and from ENDAU were chased by planes and bombed.
				ENDAU FORCE HQ moved from Police Station.

The 22<sup>nd</sup> Brigade, now known as EASTFORCE was given the task of holding the Japanese north of Jemaluang for as long as possible so that they could not take the east-west road and join up with their forces on the west coast. They had some success with ambush raids and felt that they could succeed in their mission for some time yet.

FOOT BRIDGE RD 62 Mile.	JAN 26	1000	Comd conference held at 2/20 on HQ. Plans for ambush completed. 2/20 Bn to recon and strengthen new position at JEMALUANG area. Method of withdrawal down the FOOT BRIDGE RD was discussed - Comp to be spaced at five miles apart.
			Food and amn dumps established on FOOT BRIDGE RD.
			All stores and equipment and fixed defences removed from JEMALUANG - JEMALUANG except one amn and one machine light left to operate as usual on last night. This was the only equipment left to the enemy, both of which were destroyed.
			The removal of these stores was an excellent piece of work by Staff Captain, Capt J.D. Fairley, the KOC Coy, Capt C. Pickford and the 20 Coy J.N. Hornum and is deserving of the greatest praise.
			Stores amounted to a approximately 500 tons.

# A.I.F.'s AMBUSH AT MERSING

## Japanese Battalion Wiped Out

OFFICIAL CORRESPONDENT.

SINGAPORE, Feb. 4.—A Japanese battalion was ambushed and wiped out by two New South Wales battalions, which had remained at Mersing in the eastern sector of Johore, away from the main A.I.F. actions.

The two battalions hit the Japanese so hard before they fell back that all Imperial troops on the east coast were able to withdraw to Singapore without further contact with the enemy for four days.

It was at Mersing and Jemaluang that the main Australian forces had been concentrated in recent months and they had built defences that were regarded as virtually impregnable. The Japanese never attempted a landing there in what has long been regarded as "the gateway to Singapore."

When the desperate position in the west necessitated the main body of the A.I.F. going there, the two battalions left at Mersing were confident they could hold the Japanese. They had, however, to withdraw when the enemy looked like cutting them off from the west.

It was on January 26 that it was realised that these battalions would have to fall back, but their commanders estimated that the Japanese had only two regiments in contact with the A.I.F. on the Mersing River, although big forces had been landed about 30 miles farther north.

It was decided to try to trap the Japanese on the road south of Jemaluang. One battalion fell back through the other to the south of the Jemaluang-Kluang crossroads. Companies were then dispersed so that one covered the road, while others were placed on the flanks as far as 1,000 yards into the jungle. Artillery and mortars were hidden ready for action and by dusk all was ready with a seemingly unprotected road open to the Japanese.

Late in the afternoon a forward platoon encountered small parties of Japanese boating through the rubber trees and firing tommy guns and shouting. They did not, however, draw our fire, and the platoon silently withdrew.

### FIERCE BATTLE

At 1.15 a.m. on January 27, Japanese troops opened fire from the road on our company covering it, but again no fire was drawn. Although it was their first time under fire, the A.I.F. men maintained perfect discipline and soon the reassured Japanese started to file past them.

At 2.20 a.m., the enemy made contact with the company holding the flank east of the road, and our troops went into action. Fighting was severe, but the Japanese were pushed into more compact groups to make better targets for the waiting gunners. At 3.30, a field regiment opened fire, backed by mortars. They got the range from the first shot, and their opening barrage lasted seven minutes. Then they laid down a creeping barrage, jumping 100 yards every two minutes, to enable our infantry to keep contact with the Japanese. This went on from 3.30 a.m. to 8 a.m., with the terrified Japanese meeting slaughter from every point.

Our infantry advanced 1,000 yards through rubber trees and jungle, of which they knew every inch. The enemy had got six mortars and numerous heavy and light automatic weapons into action, but these were silenced by our gunners, and by 8 a.m. a complete Japanese battalion had been destroyed. The last troops to leave the area reported that even Japanese reinforcements were retreating to Mersing. The past few months' hard toil of the A.I.F. in that area had been justified, as Mersing must be regarded as one of the most successful actions of the Malayan campaign.

SMH February 5, 1942, left, and the mouth of the river at Mersing, below.



The 22nd were able to hold Mersing for over a week until January 26th, however by then it was all too late. The west coast defence had collapsed, the Japanese were at Batu Pahat and threatening to land more troops further south, the WESTFORCE HQ was only 35km from the causeway and large numbers of Japanese reinforcements were spotted approaching Endau on the east coast. Full evacuation back to Singapore was now inevitable.



The EASTFORCE task was now clear – make sure that the Japanese could not reach southern Johore before the WESTFORCE evacuation could be completed and also make sure they could themselves reach Singapore by 8am January 31<sup>st</sup> the completion date for the evacuation when it was planned to blow up the causeway. The policy was now to conserve as much firepower as possible for the defence of the “island fortress” where the British had just landed their 18<sup>th</sup> Division - new but untrained and unacclimatised reinforcements.

Captain Claude Pickford, as the Supply Corps officer had a major piece of work to do – to co-ordinate the shipment of all of their stores out of the Mersing – Jemaluang area and keep them out of Japanese hands. Over 500 tons of supplies were involved and the brigade diary of January 26<sup>th</sup> notes that he, along with Captains Fairley and Hordern (pictured at left with Claude Pickford in August 1941) were deserving of the highest praise.

As the newly reinforced Japanese troops moved south an ambush was prepared by the 2/18<sup>th</sup> Battalion at the Nithsdale Estate rubber plantation. It was estimated that enemy casualties of approximately 600 were inflicted with less than 100 casualties on the Australian side. Morale was raised but, despite requests to repeat the ambush further south, orders for withdrawal to a strict timetable were received.

A taskforce was taken from the 22<sup>nd</sup> Brigade and given the task of managing the Kota Tinggi / Johore Baru area immediately north of the causeway to cover the withdrawal of all the allied troops into Singapore. This “Outer Bridgehead Force” was commanded by Brigadier Taylor and Claude Pickford was part of the detail for this crucial task. They held Kota Tinggi until the 29<sup>th</sup> January as WESTFORCE made their way south.

The rest of the EASTFORCE troops, 192 vehicles in total, were in Singapore by 11pm on the 30<sup>th</sup> January. Although delayed by a broken down truck blocking the road, WESTFORCE reached the causeway at 0430 am on the 31<sup>st</sup> and at 0800, exactly as planned and after the Gordon Highlanders had crossed to the sound of bagpipes, Claude Pickford and the Outer Bridgehead Force were the last Allied troops to cross the causeway. They watched from the Singapore side as the engineers blew up a 50m section of the bridge.

In just two weeks of fighting the 22<sup>nd</sup> Brigade had suffered greatly. From a total strength of approximately 3000 men, at least 93 were killed or missing presumed killed and 390 wounded. Worse was to come.

The island of Singapore was divided into 3 defensive sections. Along the island’s south, the local Malay Infantry Regiments and Straits Settlement Volunteer forces cover the city, the docks and the southern approaches in case the Japanese send further sea-borne forces, which was not expected.

The Northern sector, where the Japanese were expected to attack the Naval Base and two of the island’s four airfields, was to be defended by Lt-Gen Heath with the Indian 11<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> Divisions and the newly arrived inexperienced British 18<sup>th</sup> Division.

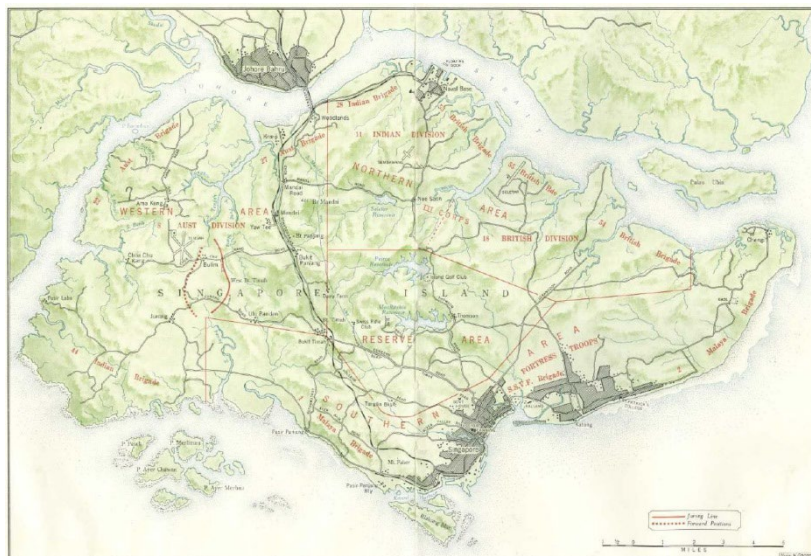
## The Sydney Morning Herald.

MONDAY FEB. 2, 1942

### SINGAPORE'S FINAL STAND

The withdrawal of the Empire forces across Johore Strait into the island of Singapore brings to an end a campaign which, despite the heroism of the forces engaged, will always be a depressing chapter in British military history because of inadequacies of preparation and, in some respects, of performance. News of the withdrawal came as no surprise, for once the vital road across the peninsula from Batu Pahat to Mersing was lost, there was little likelihood that a stand could be made anywhere short of the Strait of Johore itself. The report that all the Imperial troops have been withdrawn is a matter for congratulation, for the action must have called for great skill and coolness in view of the numerical superiority of the Japanese and their supremacy in the air. Indeed, the whole campaign has been, with few exceptions, a series of withdrawals, but wherever the Imperial troops have been able to bring the Japanese to straight-out battle, they have proved themselves the better fighters. The tragedy of Malaya is that such fine fighting material never had the chance to crown its valour and determination with success.

Unit		Date and Time		To	
CATER BRIDGEHEAD HQ		From 26 JAN 42		To 31 JAN 42	
Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information		Remarks and references to Appendices, Diaries, etc.
AT BRIGIUM 754294	JAN 31	0630	Rearmost elements of 2/19 on crossing CAUSEWAY.		
		0700	Main body of tps crossing CAUSEWAY. Two of our fighter aircraft overhead.		
			One to AA crossed CAUSEWAY.		
			One to A Ik crossed CAUSEWAY.		
			CAUSEWAY closed and less Comd moved to 1st CRU KIAMO Rd 671222.		
			Last elements of 2/19 and 2/20 on entered CAUSEWAY.		
		0740	AFM Car Det crossed CAUSEWAY.		H. J. [Signature]
		0800	BRIDGEHEAD FORCE 2 LBR crossed CAUSEWAY, reported to HQC 3 Ind Corps, task completed and from 3 Ind Corps ordered CAUSEWAY being blown up.		



The Australians – the 22<sup>nd</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> Brigades along with the Indian 44<sup>th</sup> Brigade – are given the Western sector under the command of Major-General Gordon Bennett. This sector covered the entire coastline between the causeway in the north and the town of Jurong on the island’s southwest. The 22<sup>nd</sup> Brigade were given the area on the north-western tip of the island, facing the Johore Strait, with the 27<sup>th</sup> Brigade on their right and the Indian brigade on their left. They spent the first couple of days planning their defences.

What they found did not impress them. There were no defences built in the area, no wiring or lighting on the beach, no minefields, no pill-boxes or artillery platforms; civilian residents had not been evacuated, there was evidence of fifth column activity in the area, and the mangrove swamps along the coast had not been cleared. In fact Malaya Command’s Chief Engineer had recommended many weeks before that the north and west coastline should have been prepared before it was too late but he was refused permission by General Percival on the basis that constructing defences would be bad for the morale of the local citizens.

	22	0900	Lecture and Conference on "Security" was held at 34e HQ and attended by large number of 34e, attached and Divisional Officers.	
			34e Comd gave 34e AIF and raised the following points -	
			1. Frontage 34e area - practically an impossible task to hold this extensive area with one 34e, also that there was no reserve to that 34e in that area - the 34e being laid as laid down in DIVISIONAL PLAN.	34e Comd informed 34e Comd that there were no reserves. He intended to form a reserve of 34e supply personnel and that under certain circumstances the 34e could be available. He stated that the co-ordination of the artillery on the island was in hand. He proposed was made in relation to the line Krarke-Jurong.
			2. Requested that a co-ordinated plan be formulated for all 34e on the island, which could fire on the mainland.	
			3. That a force be carried out for the defence of the line joining the SUNDI BEACH, and the SUNDI JUNCTION, as this neck of land offered an excellent position for defence, and would shorten the lines held by the 22 Aust Inf Bde and 24 Ind Inf Bde to approximately 8000 Yds.	
			Dining in proceeding. Native labour allotted to units but they sat down at noon owing to an absence of proper food.	

On February 2<sup>nd</sup> they brought to the attention of the General Commander of the AIF, Maj-Gen Bennett, that the frontage area was too great for one Brigade to cover – “practically an impossible task to hold this extensive area”- that there was no co-ordinated artillery plan through which they could direct fire to the mainland, that the native workers assigned to assist with preparations had refused to work due to lack of food, and that the lack of a reserve Battalion for the area was a great concern. The reply was that there were no reserves available, that they intended to form a general reserve later on from surplus personnel and that the artillery plan was in hand. It was confirmed that there were sufficient supplies of rations and ammunition for 6 to 9 months on the island. Brigade also noted that they wished to evacuate civilians from their area but there was nowhere to take them.

On February 4<sup>th</sup> the Japanese started shelling the Tengah airport in the middle of their sector and some of the shells fell very close to the 22<sup>nd</sup> Brigade HQ. The British immediately withdrew all their planes from Singapore Island leaving no air defences which disappointed the troops on the ground. They were not to return. The area of the 2/20 Bn was also bombed and machine gunned, which was expanded to also cover the 2/19 Bn area the following day. The targeting of the Japanese shells was very precise and accurate leading to further suspicions of spies or 5<sup>th</sup> columnists in their area.

On February 6<sup>th</sup> the brigade sent patrols across the Strait onto the mainland to travel as far inland as possible and report back on the enemy positions. It turned out that the Japanese had done the same thing and built up a very detailed knowledge of the Australian positions which, along with their aircraft and observation balloons, enabled the Japanese harassing fire to become even more accurate.

The Australian patrols returned late on December 7<sup>th</sup> advising that at least 3 Brigades of Japanese troops were stationed immediately opposite the Australian positions and there was a large amount of preparation activity in the rubber plantations with a number of gun emplacements, field kitchens and a Brigade HQ. They report to Malaya Command at 0800 that they believe that an attack against the Australian line could take place at any moment. Malaya Command, however, place little importance on the reports. They remain convinced that the attack will come from the North East against the British lines where enemy activity has been observed on the island of Pulau Ubin just 200 metres off Changi Beach. While this was the first move of the Japanese into Singapore territory, it turned out that the enemy forces on Pulau Ubin were less than 400 men – a deliberate Japanese feint to throw the British off balance. Malaya Command is successfully fooled as they immediately concentrate on mobilising the British Brigades in the east, ignoring the reports from the Australians of activity in the north-west.

On Sunday February 8<sup>th</sup> the Japanese again direct a heavy bombardment by air and long range artillery from 0900, lasting all day. They target the Australian HQ, Brigade and Battalion command locations with uncanny accuracy, causing substantial damage to the communications lines. Throughout the day the Australians request return fire from the British heavy artillery but nothing is done. By 2000 hours all of the Australian command HQs had been heavily and accurately shelled. Co-ordination of the troops by battalion and brigade command is now almost impossible leaving the Australian companies without direction.

At around the same time – 2000 hours - the first wave of Japanese troops left the mainland and were detected approaching the end of Lim Chu Kang Rd by the 2/20 Battalion who opened fire. Most of the barges were sunk and the area was held but the Japanese redirected their troops further west where they found many gaps in the defences and were able to move into the creeks, hidden by the mangroves. By 2300 hours the 22<sup>nd</sup> Brigade War Diary notes two successful landings in the 2/20 Bn area, two in the 2/19 Bn area and two in the 2/18 Bn area. The Japanese were moving forward rapidly. The Brigade HQ estimated that about 3 Japanese battalions had landed in the north and 6 to 8 battalions further west. They later learned that two whole Divisions (36 battalions in all) had actually landed in their sector against just three battalions of Australian troops. Despite the fact that the allies had nearly 100,000 troops on the island in total and far outnumbered the 30,000 Japanese, the pin-point nature of the attack meant the Australian 22<sup>nd</sup> Brigade in the north-west sector never had a chance. The 44<sup>th</sup> Indian Brigade on their left and the 27<sup>th</sup> Australian Brigade on their right suffered barely any fighting, but were not moved to consolidate the north west area, and over 50,000 British and Indian troops in the north east were relaxing in the barracks or gazing across the Johore Strait to Pulau Ubin wondering when the action would start. The South Coast remained quiet as expected.

It has been often stated that the reason for the fall of Singapore was that the Japanese were expected to attack by sea from the south and that the British guns could only fire out to sea. Neither of these widely held beliefs are true. Firstly, as I have discussed, the Japanese attack had been assumed to come from the mainland across the Johore Strait from the north for over twelve months and known for certain since mid-December <sup>7</sup>.

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<sup>7</sup> Turnbull (ref needed, p171) notes that the route of the Japanese troops through mainland Malaya had been accurately predicted in 1937 by then Col. Arthur Percival who by 1941 was a General and appointed GOC Malaya Command. Havers (ref needed, p14) says that the allied retreat down the peninsula was strategically planned to preserve the maximum number of troops available for the defence of Singapore.



Secondly, the five 15” guns which were the largest in the world at that time were able to rotate 360° on their turrets and (other than one gun which was being repaired and could only fire in a limited range) they all did so, firing over to the mainland. The actual reason for their ineffectiveness was twofold – firstly without air reconnaissance and having fallen for the Japanese feint the British did not know where to fire with any accuracy and secondly they did not have the right type of shells. The shells available were armour piercing shells which explode on a delay –most effective against ships but fairly useless against infantry troops where they tend to land in the muddy ground and give the enemy troops plenty of time to get away before they explode. The high explosive (HE) shells which would have been appropriate and were used very effectively in the African desert were not brought to Singapore. The smaller guns spread throughout the island were sparingly used – mostly due to limited supplies of shells and a convoluted command structure which required permission from the Royal Artillery Commander before any shots could be fired.

By 0600 the next morning (February 9<sup>th</sup>) all of the 22<sup>nd</sup> Brigade’s Battalion HQs had been surrounded and had to fight their way back to a new defensive line surrounding the Tengah airfield. A planned dawn counter attack had to be cancelled. The Japanese were just 200 metres north at Amakeng village where heavy street fighting was in progress. The 2/29 Battalion were called into action – the only reserves made available to the Australians. Despite it being obvious that the entire Japanese force had come into the north west of the island, the British and Indian Divisions amounting to over 50,000 men were not deployed and most of them never fired a shot in the battle for Singapore until the last couple of days when the Japanese advanced on the city of Singapore itself and the position was hopeless.

At 0930 orders were received from GOC Malaya that a counter attack was to be launched by the 2/29 Bn to retake Amakeng village. The 22<sup>nd</sup> Brigade command moved up to the 2/29 command position and found that the 2/29, joined by the Brigade HQ defence platoon, were already engaged with the Japanese on the outskirts of the airfield, small groups of Japanese were in contact with the battalion from almost all sides and a substantial force of Japanese were moving around the airport to the east. The counter attack order was dismissed as nonsensical.



SMH February 10, 1942

Later on that day Brigadier Paris, an English officer in charge of the 12<sup>th</sup> Indian Brigade, arrived at 22<sup>nd</sup> Brigade HQ accompanied by his “fine Irish Setter on a leash”. To the Australians, who had experienced shells falling around their ears for five days and were now down to a strength of only 500 men, he must have looked completely ridiculous.

Communications on the island remained shambolic. That night it was reported by HQ AIF to the Brigade HQ that 2000 troops from the brigade were in Singapore town at the ANZAC Buffet, but when the Staff Captain arrived to collect them found that the report was false and there were no troops there at all. The following day the 2/20 was asked to move to an area at Reformatory Rd known as The Fort only to find when they arrived that a company of Indian troops were already holding that position. Numerous times orders were received from AIF HQ only to be cancelled immediately due to HQ having no idea where the Australian or Japanese troops were located at the time.

On February 10<sup>th</sup> this became critical. The previous night General Percival had briefed his Generals Bennett, Heath and Simmons on the location of his planned last line of defence around Singapore city. Fearing that when required he may not be able to get these orders through effectively he provided a secret briefing. The Australians at this stage were holding a line between Kranji and Jurong to the west and the area south of the causeway which, despite being blown up on January 31<sup>st</sup>, had now been fully repaired by the Japanese. Bennett briefed Brigadier Taylor on the contingency plans but these two are rivals from way back and somehow the message gets confused. Taylor put the orders into effect at 1000 the next day and pulled his forces back allowing the Japanese to advance from the north and west. This was a critical mistake.

In the west the Japanese engage the 44<sup>th</sup> Indian Brigade sending them into chaotic full retreat. In the north the British forces defending the naval base are now exposed on their western flank and have no option but to withdraw. All the allied forces now move to the last-line defence positions around the city and the Battle for Singapore reaches its end-game.



Bill Young. In a Drain at Bukit Timah – The Jap Army All Around Us.

10 Feb			By 0700 hrs the withdrawal from the BUKIT TIMAH line was complete, and as things were quiet I moved back to the new Bde H.Q. at RAGGUMBER VILLAGE, for a clean up. Owing to an all night storm, the area was lit black with rain. It was while here that I received a long typewritten order from Division (Capt HARRISON, D.O.) in regard to holding a position north of KEP CEMPAK RD with the 22 Bde on the left of the Bde. I immediately called a conference of unit commanders, gave them orders and sent them off on a recon of their areas. At this time no unit of the 22 Bde was in the front line. I had the 2nd unit of the 22 Bde in the rear, and on the way called in at Division H.Q. I saw the G.O.C., who asked me why I had not reported to him before. I pointed out that under the circumstances I considered my place was with my Bde and not at Divisional H.Q. He then made some disparaging remarks in relation to my handling of the situation and about the Bde. He stated it was not his intention that the order I had received should be put into operation for a while, but only under certain circumstances. I continued on my recon, and at 1630 hrs received orders for the repositioning of the north-west portion of the island, which was to take place in three phases. After issuing my orders I reported to Division, saw the G.O.C. The previous orders were cancelled, no reason or information was given. The G.O.C. then drew a map towards him, looked at it for a minute, drew a line joining two features, and said "Good, that and that". I attempted to point out that my Bde, with the exception of X B N, were approximately 200 strong, that the position would be occupied in darkness, owing to the distance they had to travel, and in short, it looked like murder.
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756129	Feb 11	0720	2/18 Bn attacked by enemy from right flank - moved left to connect with Bde H.Q. tanks, arm cars and carriers entered the side Bn perimeter just before dawn.
		0600	Maj Merritt fought to connect with 2/18 Bn but this Bn had moved prior to dawn. Maj Merritt crossed REFORMATORY RD and moved SW to connect with Bde H.Q.
			Enemy crossing Bde H.Q. head. An attack was launched on Hill 756131 - Bde Staff Officer, attached Officers and men took part. Enemy pushed back from ridge.
			The BN, Maj R.F.S. Beale and Bdr P. Cond, Lieut Barnes were wounded leading bayonet charges. Lieut R.W. Hutton, miss line believed killed, gallantly led a few men in the attack, and went on alone to destroy an enemy machine gun crew with grenades.
			Two platoons of 2/4 Bde Bn held ridge overlooking rd at 756131. Coy 2/18 Bn then moved up Hill on South side and forward to Hill 756131.
			One Indian Bn stood firm and protected flank.
			One Bde casualties total 19. Cars and trucks were used in evacuation of wounded men to Lab Post.

Both sides, unbeknownst to the other, are now in a massive game of bluff. Both sides suffered serious losses but despite the Japanese having had the best of the fighting so far, overall the British still outnumber the Japanese by over three to one. The Japanese are also running critically short of food, weapons, ammunition and fuel with their long supply line up through mainland Malaya stretched to its limits. They need to ensure a British surrender within days or they will be forced to withdraw and consolidate, and they fear that British reinforcements may arrive at any time and engage them in a drawn out fight on the streets of Singapore which they could not win. They are actually on the verge of withdrawal and on the 13<sup>th</sup> February decide on a final plan of attack along the coast from the west, and also from the north.

The British have plenty of troop numbers, most of whom have not even fired a shot so far, but have their own major problems. Firstly the island is about to run out of water. As is still the case today, Singapore depended on mainland Malaya for its water supply and this had been cut when the British blew the causeway. The reservoirs on the island were now emptying fast and, due to the withdrawal from the north, were now in Japanese hands along with the food dumps also in the north of the island. The taps could be turned off at any time which would lead to a dramatic increase in disease in both the military and civilian populations.

The state of the city was now becoming quite dire – the constant bombing raids had left large numbers of dead bodies in the streets, and a growing number of homeless civilians sheltering in the city office buildings, which was embarrassing to the Governor. Finally the morale of the troops was plummeting. The Australians and Indians, already devastated in the mainland and having suffered further losses on the island were struggling to keep their troops organised. The British were frustrated at the series of retreats despite having barely had direct contact with the enemy and wondering what they had to do to have some influence on proceedings.

Percival also gathered his Generals together on February 13<sup>th</sup> recommending a counter attack against the Japanese positions. The Generals advise that their units are too exhausted and demoralised to hold their current positions let alone counter attack. Heath and Bennett urge Percival to surrender. Percival refuses and orders the fighting to continue.

On February 15<sup>th</sup>, with water failure now imminent, Japanese troops broke through in the north and forced the Indian brigades to retreat along the coast. Food stocks are down to 2 days worth, the only fuel available is that in the vehicles' tanks and large gun ammunition is all but exhausted. Percival once more recommends a counter attack to recapture the reservoirs and food depots. His Generals rule out the possibility and it is agreed they will surrender. Fighting continues throughout the day with the 22<sup>nd</sup> Brigade continuing to receive artillery fire and enemy attack, which had been continuous throughout the week since the invasion. In those 7 days the 22<sup>nd</sup> Brigade had at least 16 Officers and 115 other ranks killed and over 1150 wounded.

SUMMARY ORG.					
	Bde HQ	2/18 Bn	2/19 Bn	2/20 Bn	TOTAL.
Killed in action	-	28	6	2	36
Missing believed killed in action	2	20	13	36	71
Missing believed wounded	1	7	17	24	49
Died of wounds	1	3		4	8
Missing	9	112	272	270	663
Wounded	3	107	84	148	342
Bomb blast or shell shock			19		19
Injured, battle areas			16		16
<b>TOTAL ORG.</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>277</b>	<b>427</b>	<b>484</b>	<b>1204</b>
<b>TOTAL WOUND.</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>61</b>
<b>MMOs Attached</b>			<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>291</b>	<b>448</b>	<b>509</b>	<b>1267</b>

1150	Bde Comd left for conference Div HQ TANGLIN BARRACKS. GOC made the following statement - "Owing to the destruction of SINGAPORE, dislocation of the water, sewerage and medical services, the latter being over-taxed and unable to cope with the dead and wounded, that humanity demands a cessation of hostilities. A senior Officer from MALAYA COMD had left at 1100 hrs to discuss with the JAPANESE an Armistice! He instructed that no man would leave his post or attempt to escape. Australia had been informed of the gallant fighting by the AIF in MALAYA and were proud of them. If we become prisoners of War our heads could be held high with no discredit of having laid down our arms for humanitarian reasons. An Armistice was anticipated during this afternoon.
1950	Div informed Bde that an Armistice had been arranged - probably surrender of our arms at 2030 hrs 15 Feb 42. At this time all firing will cease - no man will leave his post.
1955	This information passed to all unit GOCs.
2030	ALL FIRING CEASED.
2100	Div instructed all arms will be unloaded - bayonets only will be used if enemy showed signs of definite attack.

Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> February, 8.30 pm, marked the unconditional surrender of Singapore to the Japanese, a loss that Winston Churchill described as the greatest military loss in British history. The great Japanese bluff had succeeded and the "impregnable fortress" had fallen in a week. Orders were given to unload arms, to use bayonets only in the case that there was a definite enemy attack, and to remain at their posts.

Claude, and the rest of the 22<sup>nd</sup> Brigade, could not understand what had happened. As far as they were concerned they were "still out in the field and had not been beaten at all". They were later told that it was fear of the water supply being completely turned off that had led to surrender.

All firing ceased right on time and Claude Pickford, along with approximately 15,000 other Australian troops and 80,000 altogether, became a prisoner of war.

Hazel did not know for a long time after the fall of Singapore whether Claude was alive or dead. He was officially listed as missing in September 1942 and it was not until March 1943 that the AIF were able to confirm that he was being held as a POW.

**A.I.F. FATE IN SINGAPORE**  
**Few Likely to Have Escaped**

CANBERRA. Friday.—The Minister for the Army, Mr. Forde, said to-night that at the end of January there were 18,331 members of the A.I.F. in Malaya. It was understood that the Australians had fought up to the time of the surrender, so that the chance that any escaped from the island without being taken prisoner was slender.

The Minister for Air, Mr. Drakeford, said to-night that since before the fall of Singapore no news had been received of the movements of R.A.A.F. personnel serving in the Malayan theatre of war. There were reports of aircraft being flown out of Singapore to safer areas, but no official advice that there were Australians concerned.

AUSTRALIAN MILITARY FORCES.

District Records Office,  
 R.A.S. Showground, SYDNEY.

7 MAY 1942 1942

Dear Madam,

I have been directed by the Minister for the Army to advise you that no definite information is at present available in regard to the whereabouts or circumstances of your  
 Husband Captain Claude PICKFORD  
 (Number NX.34653) Head Quarters 22nd Infantry Brigade A.I.F.  
 and to convey to you the sincere sympathy of the Minister and the Military Board in your natural anxiety in the absence of news concerning him.

Y.S. 42. COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA — POSTMASTER-GENERAL'S DEPARTMENT. Office 500, Stamb.

Paid by the Receiver. Paid by the Receiver. Paid by the Receiver.  
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**TELEGRAM**

Office of Origin. No. of Words. Time of Lodgment. No.

VICTORIA BARRACKS VIA SYDNEY 43/1 4-40P

POSTAL ACKNOWLEDGMENT DELIVERY -- PERSONAL  
 MRS HAZEL M PICKFORD  
 4 ALFRED ST MARRICKVILLE

CAPTAIN PICKFORD NX34653 PRISONER OF WAR I HAVE TO INFORM YOU THAT CAPT CLAUDE PICKFORD PREVIOUSLY REPORTED MISSING IS NOW REPORTED PRISONER OF WAR INTERNED BORNEO CAMP  
 --- MINISTER FOR THE ARMY

5-40P VP

The troops were ordered to march, under their own steam and unaccompanied by any Japanese forces, to the Selarang Barracks at Changi on the north east tip of the island and close to where the Singapore airport is located today. The Japanese had no plans on how they would look after the POWs and were staggered to discover their size as they had estimated the British forces at only 40,000 – less than half the true number. Luckily for them the British and Australian officers, once surrender had been confirmed, were sticklers at following the Japanese orders and compliantly ordered their troops to make their way to the designated area with only two days of rations – which were promptly taken from them upon arrival. Thus the Australians started their period of captivity in the way it would continue – hungry!

Claude had very little anxiety at that point about what would happen next. What he did know was that to survive as conditions got worse he had to stay mentally and physically fit. Much later he agreed that it had paid off.



Left, 'Early Days at Changi' a painting by the AIG official war artist Murray Griffin, who was himself interned in the camp and right, Selarang Barracks photographed by Pte. George Aspinall in 1942.

As early as March 2<sup>nd</sup>, according to the brief brigade diary maintained in Changi, an educational scheme was commenced concentrating initially on business training and physical education which “it is felt will be of extreme value to the troops in life after the War”. Language and art lessons were also added, as well as training for the cooks on new methods of cooking rice – which was known to most Australians only in the form of rice pudding in those days. Claude was not involved in the education scheme at that time.

In mid March the Japanese started organising working parties to go into Singapore and assist with repair works. On April 3<sup>rd</sup>, Captain Pickford left with a 600 man Supply Corps working party into Singapore. They were sent to Bukit Timah, a hill in the centre of the island, to build a Shinto shrine Syonan Jinja as well as memorials to those killed on both sides. They were billeted in a bungalow in nearby Adam Park but it turned out that the Japanese did not want the officers on the working party so they were left in the bungalow with little or no supervision for almost three months. Claude and an engineer from Western Australia started going around the nearby battlefields and collected as much of the discarded small arms and ammunition as they could find. They reconditioned it and by the time they finished they had had about 1500 grenades, and rifles with about 2000 rounds of ammunition stored in the attic of the bungalow “in case they needed it”. On a later business trip Claude said he tried to find that bungalow but could not.

Meanwhile, an order for a “Special Overseas Working Party” of 3,000 Australian troops was received from the Japanese in May 10<sup>th</sup> and was placed under the command of Brig Varley, who had replaced Brig Taylor as head of 22<sup>nd</sup> Brigade, and his senior officers. Over half of the Brigade – including Capt. Hordern and 52 others from the Brigade HQ - were assigned to what became known as ‘A’ Force. They were the first party sent to work on the Burma-Thailand Railway. This was the last entry in the 22<sup>nd</sup> Brigade’s War Diary.

10 May 42 Bde strength in camp: 59 Offrs 564 ORs  
 Normal Bde duties.  
 Order received from Imperial Japanese Army for Special Overseas Working Party of 3000 to be ready to move May 18. Brig. A. L. Varley M.C., in comd, "a" branch, Lt-Col C.G.W. Anderson, V.C., RM, Maj. J. M. Stringer, SO Capt R.S. Griffin, SO, Maj. P.J. Campbell, TO, Capt J. M. Hordern, Interpreter, Capt Groves.

10 May 42 (Contd) No. 1 Bn - Lt-Col G. Hensley  
 No. 2 Bn - Maj D. Kerr  
 No. 3 Bn - Maj. G. E. Green

Quote

22 Bde HQ	55
Records	6
Offrs (as detailed above)	7
AIF Pay	5
AIF Postal	11
K and L Area	60
RAA	500
RAF	380
8 Dir Sigs	160
22 Bde	310
27 Bde	450
2/4 MG Bn	300
AMSO	450
AMOC	300
Provost	40
AMOC (att to AMOC)	30
Chaplains	5
AMOC	142
Red Cross rep	2
Total	3000

In July 1942, still cooling his heels in the Adam Park bungalow, Claude received a message from Brigadier Taylor to come back to Changi and accompany him as Staff Captain on the next working party bound for Borneo. However he missed the follow-up message telling him to “lie low for a while” as Taylor had now been removed from the group. When he arrived back at Changi, Claude was told that he would have to go in any case. Claude Pickford was assigned to ‘B’ Force and sent to the Sandakan camp in East Borneo. This force contained a higher than usual number of officers, and they were the lucky ones. The 1500 men, including 140 officers, were taken out of Changi to ease overcrowding and promised that their new home would provide plenty of food and they would be well looked after.

They spent ten days packed into a coastal schooner with barely room to lie down and then marched to a former agricultural research station 8 miles from Sandakan town. Although the location itself was at first very pleasant compared to Changi, they soon realised that the rations would be no better, and they were put to work building an airfield. Over time the rations became smaller and smaller and the conditions deteriorated rapidly. There were three groups of prisoners at Sandakan – “B’ Force, a group of about 500 British officers, and a later group of Australian enlisted men known as ‘E’ Force.

It was common for the men to sing while they were marching to and from the airfield site. Claude, with some other similarly talented men, organised a choir penning some original songs as well as covering the classics of the time. Some informal Sunday evening performances were arranged. Claude also was involved in creating plays called 'Radio Rubbish' and 'Let's Boong It On' which Claude produced using a small stage which the Japanese had approved. A full choral concert was arranged for December 1942 and after the choir's performance the whole camp joined in the finale of "Auld Lang Syne", "There'll Always be an England" and "God Save the King". It was the concert, though, that sealed Claude's early exit from Sandakan – when he got up to conduct the first number in front of the Camp Commandant and the Military Governor of North Borneo, everyone could see that he had hair.

In order to keep the three groups of prisoners from mingling and swapping working parties, orders had been made that 'B' Force had to have their hair cut off. 'E' Force were allowed to keep their hair on, and the British group had to have half of their hair cut off. Claude refused to have his hair cut. He said that to him this was associated with the convict days. Claude was classified as an undesirable influence on the morale of the Australian troops (which he said was more citation than condemnation) and soon after was sent to 'Batu Lintang' internment camp at Kuching 1000 miles away on the north western part of Borneo. His fellow 'B' and 'E' force officers were moved to Kuching at various stages with the last and largest group arriving in October 1943.

Meanwhile, conditions became worse and worse at Sandakan, with death from disease reaching 100 per month by the end of 1944. In the last few months of the war most of the remaining men, which included 750 British troops and 500 Australian enlisted men from the later 'E' Force, would be marched 260 miles into the interior of Borneo in what became known as the "Sandakan Death Marches". In poor health to begin with, and with little food provided, the death rate was tragic. Stragglers were bayoneted, shot and left for dead. Those who made it to Ranau had no hope of survival and the few that remained at Sandakan were all murdered in the last days of the war. Of the 2500 men at Sandakan after the last of the officers were removed, only six soldiers escaped and survived.



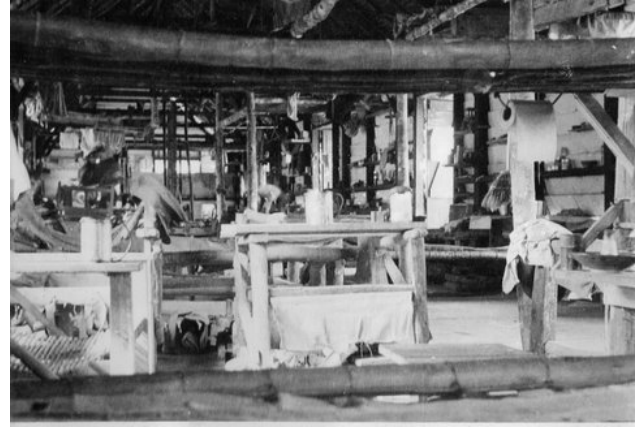
As these stories emerged in August and September 1945, Hazel must have been on the verge of giving up hope of Claude's return. However, along with most of the officers of 'B' Force, Claude escaped this fate.

Claude's journey to Kuching from Sandakan was in a large launch with a group of 12 to 14. They could easily have taken over the launch and discussed it several times over the course of the journey but they did not really know where they were or where they could go that was safe, not knowing where the Japanese had occupied or how much they could trust the local population.

When they arrived at Kuching they found several camps had been established for British, Australian, Dutch and Indonesian officers and soldiers, as well as civilian detainees. By the time the main body of men arrived, they had an area of just less than an acre to house 170 men and were not required to work but again found that it was necessary to grow as much food as they could to supplement the rice ration supplied.

On arrival they found three 'atap' huts without beds and had to sleep on the floor. They had four and a half floorboards (or about two feet) per man. Within a few months they had built bunk beds and other furniture for themselves from local rubber wood, wire from the surrounding fence and garden lathes. They made their own chisels from small pieces of steel rod and nails by twisting the barbs off the barbed wire. The Japanese must have known this was happening and willingly provided wire to replace the gaps in the fence. They established a small but fertile vegetable garden made more so by collecting their own 'night soil' to fertilise the beds.

The most immediate difference between Sandakan and Kuching was that at the latter the officers did not have to take part in the working parties and, in fact, their opportunities for excursions outside the camp were severely limited.



One of the Australian Huts at Kuching – exterior and interior.

Unlike many others, the Australians in Kuching found a unique way of surviving. Even as the food ration provided by the Japanese became smaller and smaller, they suffered relatively few deaths. The British and Dutch, by comparison had similar rates of death to other POW camps. Once the initial camp improvements were complete and without any work to do, it was the men's mental health that was most in need of sustenance. Cards and other games were initially popular, with a variety of sporting events also held until malnourishment made strenuous activity ill-advised. Soon entertainment productions began to re-appear having been discontinued at Sandakan. In December 1943 a musical comedy called 'P.C. Swing' was written and produced with a vocal sextet led by Lt Johnny Pool who had been a band-leader in Adelaide before the war.



In January 1944 Claude Pickford and Toddy Walker launched the 'Are You a Playwright?' competition that called for 10 minute radio sketches and this led to a constant stream of material for production. Posters and play-bills were produced by Don Johnston who had a small painting kit, and Capt. Jock Britz, with the limited amount of paper available to them and these were collated and self-published in the book Borneo Burlesque in 1947. There were 338 copies printed – one given to each of the surviving men.

The Japanese were reasonably lax in their approach to these entertainments. Scripts had to be submitted for censorship but permission was almost always given for a show every Sunday night. The choir also continued to contribute to the entertainments which occasionally were allowed to be presented to the entire camp including some joint shows with the English internees. In late 1944 they even allowed a stage to be constructed in the open area between the huts.

For Christmas Eve Claude produced A.A. Milne's 'Dover Road', the first time that a professional playwright's work had been produced in full. The

result was said to have justified Claude's drive for perfection, which resulted in a somewhat rebellious cast, but also that the work of the camp's amateur authors did not suffer hugely in comparison.

Claude's choir was also reformed at Kuching and became known as 'Pickford's Plums'. Their theme song, written by Tod Walker, went as follows:

*What's use of feeling gloomy and glum  
 What's the use of saying "There is worse to come"  
 Don't get low in spirits, call the Blues a liar  
 And shortly we'll be singing this outside of the wire –  
 Pickford's Plums, come and hear us sing a ditty  
 Pickford's Plums, happiest of crews  
 Pickford's Plums, entertainers bright and witty  
 Listen to our carols and get rid of the Blues.*

Claude kept records on the voice ranges of all of the 26 members of the choir. From April 1943 onwards it became harder and harder for both the choir and the other entertainments as new rules on fraternisation were introduced by the Japanese. Essentially no more than three people could congregate together. Claude's solution was that he would work out the parts with Jock Britz and Johnny Pool. They would each go and teach 3 other people and so on. A couple of final rehearsals were allowed by the Japanese to pull everything together. Claude always felt fortunate that he had a group with commo interests and talent which provided shared stimulation during his time in the camps.

The last full-length show was ‘Sinbad the Sailor’ on New Years Eve 1944. Shortly afterwards the Japanese cut off all lighting in the camp and refused to allow holding any entertainments during the day. Occasionally abbreviated performances would be held at dusk but by this time the deterioration in health of the officers made the effort to perform near impossible in any case. The choir was one of the few activities that continued right to the end.

As Claude had identified, staying mentally fit was important to their survival, and the musical entertainments made a large contribution. For many, though, there was a more important program which contributed to the men’s well-being during and after the war – the Kuching Education Committee’s extensive program of courses. Although education programs were held in many POW locations – the ‘Changi University’ being the most well known – the Kuching program was unique in its scale.

Although the formal education program was not known to everyone, as details could only be spread by word of mouth, it became the most important contributor to the maintenance of mental fitness in the camp. Ian Pryce was the main originator and Claude was not on the committee but he did participate as both a lecturer and a student. He gave talks on commerce – and the processes of the Sydney Chamber of Commerce in particular, and attended sessions on topics as diverse as Biology, Company Law, Psychology, and Advertising. Subjects were diverse including languages, literature, and a particularly intense program on agriculture as it was felt that many men would need these skills for their well being after the war.

In 1944 came the library. Books were pooled across the whole camp allowing the POWs to read a wide variety of material. Some books were kept out of the library system. Claude had a copy of the Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam which he had purchased in KL. He got Ted Esler, who had a rudimentary knowledge of Japanese, to write in the book that it was a “Persian Philosophy” text which meant that he was able to keep it and bring it home after the war. He was happy to lend this book to others with the condition being that everyone had to autograph their favourite verse. The Japanese collected the rest of the books, along with a large number from local libraries, and these provided a wonderful resource for the prisoners. It was at this stage that the lectures started to be replaced by more informal sessions using the books available from the library.

In August 1945, some days after the atomic bombs were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki and the Japanese surrender, an American plane flew over Kuching and dropped pamphlets over the camp advising them that the war was over. They knew for several days before the Japanese commanders at the camp told them. It was a full month after the Japanese surrender that they were able to leave Kuching,

When the war finally ended one final musical program was put together to celebrate and a young lass from the lady internee’s camp with a beautiful soprano voice provided the highlight with a rendition of “One Fine Day” from Madame Butterfly.

Another highlight of the last few weeks was a visit from the Australian Broadcasting Commission to record messages from the men to their loved ones at home. Claude’s message was “I’m still in good health Hazel”. Much later he used his recording industry connections to have the messages transferred from the original wire to tape and was going to play them at one of their reunions. He had to abandon the plan when told by one of the men that “my wife is not the one I sent the message to”.



**Left, POWs wave at an American aircraft as it flies over the Kuching camp following the Japanese surrender. Right, at Kuching camp September 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1945 Claude Pickford enjoying a cup of tea with Major W.E. Fraser immediately after being liberated.**



In reflection after the war, Claude never had thoughts of revenge. He saw the Japanese in the camps as being led totally by their command from Tokyo and did not blame them for their actions. They were meticulous in following their orders, he said. In fact when following orders they would concentrate on exactly what they had been told to do. “If they were told to collect all the photos”, he said, “then they would get the photos. It wouldn’t matter if there was a revolver alongside them, they had only been told to get the photos.”

Claude did not fare too badly compared to others. The fact that he was a short man meant that the Japanese did not single him out – they were often aggressive towards the taller men to establish their superiority over them. Claude did have problems with a burst eardrum from one beating to go with overall malnutrition.



Claude Pickford arrived back in Australia on October 13<sup>th</sup> 1945. He weighed about 5 stone (approximately 30 kg) and was deaf in one ear where a blow from a Japanese guard had burst his eardrum. Relatively speaking, compared to his colleagues, he was in good health. He spent about two months in the military hospital at Concord and was discharged in time for Christmas. He was reunited with his younger son Geoff, now aged 5, who he had not seen since he was 5 months old.

Sadly, Claude’s mother Elizabeth died in 1944 without being able to welcome her son back from the war – and having heard nothing of Claude’s fate in the last year of her life.

After the war Claude and Hazel purchased ‘Clarellis’ at 4 Alfred St which was Hazel’s family home. Later they sold it to Clarice and Eric Rosenbloom and moved to Taleeban Rd, Lane Cove.

Claude returned to AWA and worked in the Broadcasting and Recording department. His managers were very understanding and put little pressure on him after his return. In 1946 they organised for him to take a long trip with Hazel to America and he always felt this was a favour to him, as well as a chance to take a break as he settled back in to working life. In 1956 he was appointed manager of AWA’s record division which became RCA Australia. In 1969 he became the inaugural General Manager of the Phonographic Performance Company of Australia – a non-profit company which represents record labels and recording artists in licensing the public performance of recorded music.

Although he doesn’t remember any specific courses on the subject, it was in the Kuching camp that Claude became interested in the topic of copyright, which led to his successful post-war career.

He was one of the founders of the Association of Australian Record Manufacturers (AARM) which later became the Australian Record Industry Association (ARIA). He had a long and distinguished career in the recording industry making numerous representations to government to improve copyright law to protect composers and performers. He worked with worldwide bodies on copyright legislation, presented to numerous international seminars, and retired in 1976 having worked with international stars such as Marilyn Monroe, Eartha Kit, Nelson Eddy, Harry Belafonte, Frank Sinatra, Arthur Rubenstein, Doris Day and many more.

Claude was also involved with Legacy and the Masonic movement. He remained an active member of the various Battalion and ex-POW organisations after the war and attended numerous reunions as well as marching each Anzac Day with his 8<sup>th</sup> Division colleagues including Brig Taylor and Maj-Gen Gordon Bennett.



In 1963 he was instrumental in recovering the remains of a Private Phillips from the 2/29 Battalion. He had heard in 1945 that this body had been discovered as part of a mass grave and moved to Singapore's Kranji cemetery however this did not ring true with him as he had actually supervised Pte Phillips' burial in a shallow grave on February 14<sup>th</sup> 1942. In 1963 he was on a business trip to Singapore and took the time to revisit the bungalows where the Brigade HQ had been located and where Pte Phillips was buried in a rose garden. Finding that the buildings were now part of a nunnery he explored the site with the Mother Superior and located the correct burial place. The HQ of the Australian Army in Singapore were informed and they did find Pte Phillips' remains still in the original grave. They moved these to Kranji Cemetery and Pte Phillips' family were able to know the details of his death almost 20 years after it occurred.

Hazel and Claude had two children – Neville and Geoffrey. In 1958 Neville died in a car accident at age 22 when the car he was driving overturned in Tambourine Bay Rd, just around the corner from the Pickford residence in Lane Cove. He had not married.

Geoff married Pamela Jackson and they had three children – Scott, Michelle and Bradley. After divorcing, Geoff married Sue Partridge. He is an occupational hygiene consultant. Pamela died in 2010.

Hazel was honoured by the Jean Arnot Memorial Lunch for outstanding contributions by women aged over 90, in 2001. She died in May 2002, aged 93. Claude survived her by a year and a half.



**Hazel and Claude Pickford, 2002**

## ***Emma Baker (1850 – 1930)***

Emma Baker, the second oldest of George Frederick Baker and Sarah Wilkinson Epsley, married William Frederick Lowe at St David's Church in Surry Hills in 1877, thirteen years after arriving in Sydney. The Church Hall still stands in Arthur St, but the church itself was demolished in the 1960s.

William was a galvanised iron worker, and also described later as a plumber. In the mid 1800s they lived in Balmain (163 Foucart St) and then at 16 Steel St, Surry Hills, before moving to Victor St, Rockwood where they resided until 1898.

Their eldest and youngest children both died. Jessie Ada Mary Lowe was their eldest. Born in 1878 she died of pulmonary tuberculosis in 1902. She never married and was living with her sister Clara at 113 Gowrie St, Newtown at the time of her death. Herbert Henry Lowe was born in 1891 and died at the age of 4. He contracted diphtheria of the larynx and died after 7 days at the Parramatta Hospital.

We then lose track of them for a while but when William died in 1917 they were living at 43 Young St, Annandale. He was 67 years of age. Emma lived until 1930 when she died in Leichhardt of heart degeneration and suffering from senility.

## Elizabeth Laura Lowe

Elizabeth married Martin John Gibbens in 1900. They were married by the Reverend Seraphim Phocas who was the leader of the first Greek Orthodox Church in Australia – the Holy Trinity in Bourke St, Surry Hills. Neither Elizabeth nor Martin were of that faith and they were married at 471 Pitt St rather than at the church. The Australian Dictionary of Biography says that Rev Phocas arrived in Sydney in 1899 and “occasionally officiated at marriages arranged by a matrimonial agency of doubtful repute”. This was more, though, a classic case of a shotgun wedding as their first son George was born (premature, but not that premature!) in September. George died at just 15 days old of a congenital intestinal occlusion.

At that stage Martin was a mechanical driller and worked for the railways. He was the son of Abel Gibbens who was station master at Stanmore railway station. His grandfather, also Martin Gibbens, was another railway man and a city councillor on Newtown Council from 1867 to 1869. Gibbens Street in Camperdown was named after the family.

Gibbens Industries, a 4 generation manufacturer of springs, was founded by Martin’s brother Matthew George Gibbens before being passed to his son George. They not only made springs, originally by hand, but went into the manufacture of spring-making machines which they perfected and expanded dramatically after World War II. They became one of the world leaders in the automated manufacture on mattress springs for Australia’s major mattress manufacturers and then branched out into chain link fencing. George’s 3 sons Anthony, Gregory and Craig joined the company in the late 60s. The fencing business was spun off as Protective Fencing Pty Ltd in the late 90s, as the fourth generation entered the businesses. In 2007 the family celebrated their 100<sup>th</sup> year in business.



Elizabeth and Martin had a further 5 children – Martin, Clara, Harold, Gladys and Eric. Clara also died young – just 2 years of age, in July of 1906 she suffered a cerebral haemorrhage and died at home the following day. The Gibbens family lived in Australia St, Newtown. At this time they were at number 86, from 1911 they are at number 125 and then at number 116 in 1930. This could be a combination of moving and renumbering of houses in the street which was quite common.



From left, yesterday: Messrs. W. A. Woolston, the grandmaster (M. J. Gibbens), J. C. Blamey, and C. H. Turtle.

Martin was also a member of the Manchester Unity IOOF Friendly Society. He was elected Grand Master in 1930 and held the position for three years. At left the Sydney Morning Herald of 19 July 1932 shows him as host of the annual conference. The Manchester Unity Independent Order of Odd Fellows was a fraternal organisation, originally one of many formed in England, which allowed members to contribute and receive health benefits and were the forerunner of the health insurance companies. The curious name is believed to have originated as, unlike trade unions and guilds, they comprised members of many different backgrounds, employment or trades – therefore “odd” fellows. Like other fraternal societies they also had their lodges, oaths, regalia and rituals and represented their communities in charitable works.

Elizabeth Laura Gibbens died suddenly on May 19<sup>th</sup> 1941 of a heart attack at the home of her son Martin in Kingsgrove. She was 60 years old.

The following year Martin married a widow Ethel Devlin (nee Hyde). She had one daughter Edna who married George Batchelder in 1941. George served as a signalman in the 5<sup>th</sup> Division in World War 2. Martin died just a couple of years later in 1944, Ethel continued to live at 116 Australia Street until she died in 1952.

Elizabeth and Martin’s oldest surviving son was **Martin David Gibbens**, born in Newtown in 1901. He had a variety of occupations including Carrier, Fibrous worker, Service Traveller and Surveyor. He married Ada Alice Hume in 1930 and they had two daughters Patricia (married Patrick Greene, children Kevin and Jacqueline) and Marie. After living in Narrabeen for a while they settled in Kingsgrove. He died suddenly in 1970 at the age of 68 suffering a heart attack while away from home “near Wanna Wanna Station, via Queanbeyan”. He was, presumably, a Freemason as his death notice ends with the typically Masonic phrase “So mote it be” meaning as I wish (or as God wishes) it shall be done. Alice lived to the age of 87, dying in 1990.

Martin and Elizabeth’s only surviving daughter was **Gladys Elizabeth Gibbens**. Born in 1914, she married Robert Riddle Johnstone, a plaster moulder in 1941. They lived in Rosebery and then Eastlakes. He died in 1969 in Wyong and she in Summer Hill, Sydney, in 1976. She suffered from Multiple Sclerosis. They had no children.

**Eric Lewis Gibbens**, the youngest child by 10 years, was born in 1923. He was an engineer living at Erskineville in 1949 and West Kogarah in 1954. Later he was a motor engineer and taxi driver. In 1977 he was living at 226 Glebe Rd, Glebe as he was the witness on Gladys’ death certificate. He was married to Dorothy later in life and died in Wyee in 2011.

The second eldest surviving child was **Harold Stephen Gibbens**, born in 1907. He was a fitter and turner and then an engineer. He was a member of the cadet forces from 1921 to 1925. Harold married Florence Edna Warner in 1931 and they lived in Earlwood and then Hurstville. They had two children –Kerry, who is a journalist who emigrated to Canada, and Jeniffer.



Harold worked for James N Kirby, a pioneer industrialist, and then for the firm of Coote & Jorgensen Ltd. Originally founded in 1928 as iron founders and machinery manufacturers they were listed on the Stock Exchange in 1938 and became one of the country's leading firms of automotive engineers. They started in the manufacture of spare parts including specialised parts for transmissions. During the war they were given the job of manufacturing transmission equipment for tanks and other defence equipment. In 1949, as a senior executive, Harold was appointed a director of the company.

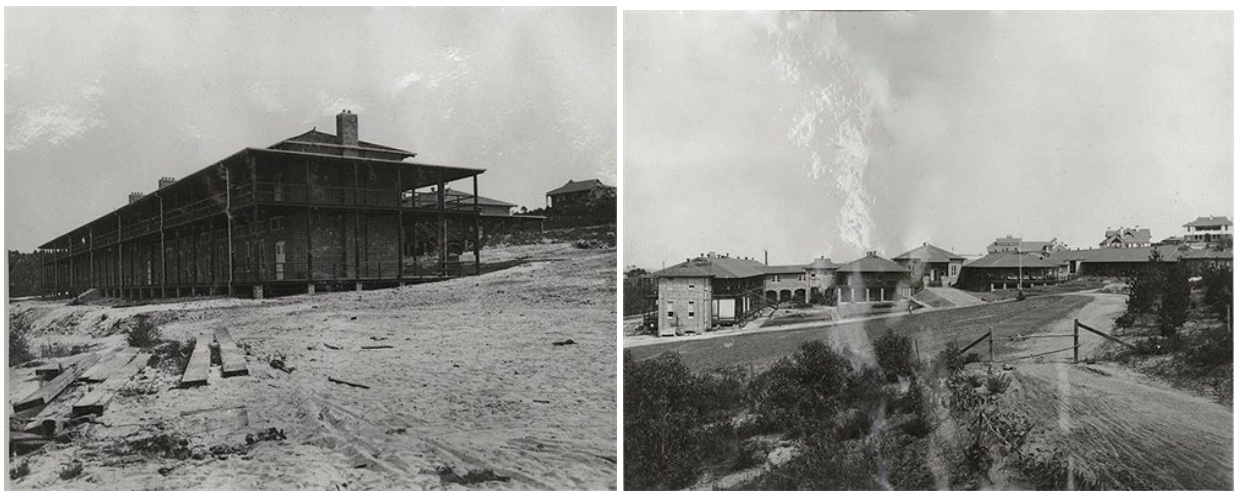
After expanding to produce complete transmissions including differentials and axles for new cars manufactured in Australia by Ford and others, they experienced financial difficulties and in 1957 were taken over by the American engineering giant Borg-Warner. Harold retired from the company soon after and spent a year travelling around Australia in a combi van which he converted into a small mobile home. Afterwards he worked part-time including a stint working with his cousin George's firm Gibbens Industries.

He was also a member of the MUIOOF lodge and his daughter Jeniffer remembers him often going out at night with a strange ornately embroidered apron. Harold, known as Hec, died in 1971. By then he was retired and living at the Oakland Caravan Park in Windang, just outside Port Kembla. Edna died in 1982.

## **Clara Louisa Lowe**

Clara, born in 1883, married timber tallyman Arthur Henry Ager in 1903. A timber tallyman was a clerk in a timber merchant's business. Arthur was born in North Fitzroy, Melbourne, in 1882 but his father relocated his family to Sydney during the depression of the 1880s. After their marriage he and Clara lived in Newtown at various addresses. They had three children Muriel, Alice and Arthur William. While her children were still young Clara contracted pulmonary tuberculosis and after about a year she died on July 2<sup>nd</sup> 1913 at the Waterfall Sanatorium. Muriel was 9, Alice 8, and Arthur 6.

The Waterfall State Sanatorium was designed especially for the treatment of consumptives and commenced operations in 1909 in the midst of what is now the Heathcote National Park near Helensburgh, southwest of Sydney. At 1,000 feet above sea level, its isolation and fresh air was thought to benefit the patients as it was believed at that time that the best treatment for TB was fresh air, sunshine and rest, as well as light exercise for those that were not restricted to their bed. The Sanatorium had over 1000 hectares of land set aside for the hospital and auxiliary housing for the staff as well as a farm where some of the patients worked to grow produce for the hospital. It was the primary institution in New South Wales for tuberculosis patients. Although the bacterial source of the disease was identified in 1882 it was not until 1946 with the development of the antibiotic streptomycin that effective treatment and cure became possible. In 1958 the sanatorium was converted to an aged care facility and renamed Garrawarra Centre for Aged Care. Some of the original buildings remain on the site. Unfortunately today tuberculosis continues to affect millions of people around the world, mostly in developing nations, and drug-resistant forms of the disease are responsible for increasing occurrence even in developed countries.



**The original Women's Ward, left, of the Waterfall Sanatorium, right. These photos probably date from the 1950s.**

After Clara's death Arthur Ager married Hannah (Johanna) McCann in 1916 and they had two further children Dorothy May and Wallace born in 1916 and 1919 respectively. They lived in Crows Nest, North Sydney. Johanna died in 1932 and in 1939 Arthur married for the third time – to Nellie Gibbs (nee Henley). They had no children. Arthur Ager died in 1948 and Nellie, though only seven years younger than Arthur, lived until 1985.

**Muriel Clara Ager** was Clara and Arthur's eldest. Born in 1904, she married farm labourer Cecil William Channell in 1929. They lived at Manangle near Camden and had four children - Faith (married Don Shennan), Joyce (married Keith Harris), David (married Janice Hyde) and Lynette (married Keith Martin). In 1943 they moved to Richmond and then later to Blacktown where Cecil worked as a plasterer's labourer. After retirement they moved into Willandra Village in Eastwood. Cecil died in 1970 of pancreatic cancer. Muriel lived until 1984.

**Alice May Ager** was a year younger than Muriel but was the first to marry - in October 1924 at the age of 19, at the Wesley Chapel within the Central Methodist Mission. Her husband was Thomas Martin Griffiths, a British-born station hand and builders labourer who was living at 16 Rosalind St, North Sydney. Alice gives her address as The People's Palace which was a Salvation Army Hostel at the southern end of Pitt St near Central Station which provided cheap accommodation for up to 900 people in both private rooms and dormitories. This was definitely the seedy end of town. She also states that her parents are both deceased, which was true with respect to her mother, but not her father. William Henry Young, a guardian of minors, gives consent to the marriage as Alice was under 21 years of age. They continued to live in Rosalind St and in July of the following year a son Robert Glen was born and died after just 20 days of congenital syphilis and prematurity. This was not a happy marriage. Thomas Griffiths was a violent man. We know from newspaper mentions that he had been convicted of breaking and entering in 1918 and to assault occasioning actual bodily harm in 1921. This was probably not the full history. They separated not long after the death of their son.

By 1934 they were living together again at Trangie, a very small town about 500 km north west of Sydney near Narromine. Alice had petitioned for divorce but Thomas convinced her that he had obtained a good position and, Alice alleged later, threatened to kill her unless she went back to him. In January 1934 Thomas attacked his wife with a pocket knife inflicting 17 separate wounds which required 23 stitches. He was jailed for 23 months. By August 1934 Alice had obtained a grant of divorce.

In April 1935 Alice married Thomas Sullivan in North Sydney and this time her father and brother were witnesses. Thomas Sullivan was also a station hand, 13 years her senior, and they initially lived at Berridale in the Snowy mountains. After a few years they moved back to Trangie and then Mudgee. By the 1970s they were living in Coogee. They had no children. Thomas died at the Sacred Heart Hospice in Darlinghurst in 1974, aged 71. Alice died in 1989.

Thomas Martin Griffiths subsequently married Annie Burton, a 25 year old waitress, in 1941. Thomas served with the army in World War 2. In 1951 Annie was charged with unlawfully possessing methadone. She was suffering an incurable brain tumour and had become a drug addict. She died in 1956. Thomas died in 1976.



**HUSBAND CHARGED.**  
**TRANGIE, Tuesday.**  
 At the Trangie police court to-day, Thomas Martin Griffith was charged with maliciously wounding his wife, Alice May Griffith, with a pocket knife. Evidence was given that 17 wounds were inflicted, necessitating 23 stitches. Griffith was committed for trial.

Left: The People's Palace, Lower Pitt St, Sydney near Central Railway Station c1900 (State Library of Victoria). Right: from the Sydney Morning Herald of 10 January 1934

**Arthur William Ager** was Clara and Arthur's only son. He was a timber sawyer and motor mechanic, and lived with his father until at least 1937 when he was 30 years old. By 1941 he had moved to Trangie, staying with Alice and James Sullivan, where he was a station mechanic. He maintained the 13 windmills and 3 diesel engines at Bundemar Station – now corporately owned but still one of the largest properties in the district. He enlisted in the army in February 1942 and was assigned as a motor mechanic to the NSW Line of Command Ordnance Workshops and then was moved to Newcastle. Due to the steelworks and shipyards, the whole Newcastle area was considered a strategic target and was strongly protected by sea batteries at Fort Wallace and Fort Scratchley. On 8<sup>th</sup> June 1942, the latter became the only Australian coastal battery to fire at an enemy vessel when 4 shots were fired at a Japanese submarine which was shelling the city from 5000 yards off the coast. In April 1945, now a corporal, Arthur transferred to the 54<sup>th</sup> Australian Anti-Aircraft Regiment Workshop in the Northern Territory where he remained until demobilisation in March 1946. Arthur never married. He lived at Five Dock after the war, continuing to work as a motor mechanic, and later moved to Annandale. He died in 1989.



For three years Arthur was based at the Newcastle Area Workshops near Fort Scratchley which is now maintained as a Historic Site

Arthur Henry Ager also had two children with his second wife Hannah McCann. They were much younger but the families were obviously close – Alice Sullivan’s death notice included them in the list of her brothers and sisters.

**Dorothy May Ager** was born in 1916 and known as May. She married Edward Robert Vincent Austin (below, left), a tram conductor from Cowes on the Isle of Wight, in 1935. Edward served in World War 2 as a nursing orderly with the 2/3 Casualty Clearing Station (CCS). Part of the 7<sup>th</sup> Division, he was in the Middle East and Africa in 1941 and then in Greece in March 1941 (see the section on Tasker Baker for details of the seventh division’s campaigns). He returned to Australia in 1943 and transferred to the 2nd Australian Motor Ambulance Convoy (MAC). He had two tours in New Guinea in 1943 and 1944, including the Battle of Finschhafen, and was promoted to Corporal. In 1945 he injured his foot and was rated unfit to return to service in a tropical climate. He spent the rest of the war in NSW Command, including a spell in hospital with malaria which affected a great many of the soldiers who had served in New Guinea.

Dorothy and Edward had two children, Kevin and Coral. Coral married Bryan Kennedy and she died in Wagga in 2006.

After the war May and Edward divorced and in 1956 May married John Mahon (far right). John, from Toowoomba in Queensland and also divorced, had served in the war as a driver mechanic with the 104<sup>th</sup> Brigade Workshop, including 16 months service in Milne Bay and Lae, New Guinea. May died in 1976, aged 60, of leukemia. John Mahon died in 2007 in Wagga, and Edward Austin in 2009.



**Wallace Hugh Joseph Ager** was known as Wal. He was born in 1919 and married Amy Ryan in 1941. They lived at 112 Christie St, St Leonards and, at this stage he was a timber worker. He enlisted in the army, was allocated to the 2/2 Australian Ordnance Stores Company (AOSC) as a clerk and embarked for the Middle East in June the same year. He was briefly with the 2/5 AOSC and then the 2/4 Australian Stores Company before returning to Australia in March 1942. After some time in Charters Towers he was sent to New Guinea with the 18<sup>th</sup> AOSC.

Soon after arriving he had a recurrence of a hernia problem which he had first experienced in Queensland and assessed as able to carry out restricted duties. This was consistent with his duties at Ordnance Stores and he was assigned to the 15<sup>th</sup> and then 14<sup>th</sup> AOSC. He returned to Australia in January 1945 and discharged in July.



He and Amy had their first child, Lorraine Joy, in October 1945 and then a son Lawrence in 1948. Their third child was Julie. After the war Wal worked in the shoe manufacturing trade. He died in West Ryde in 1989 and Amy died in 2002.



## **William John Lowe**

William Lowe's family is the Lowe branch that we know least about. William John Lowe was born in 1885, the elder of the two surviving Lowe brothers. William was a pastry cook and married Gladys Irene Mason in February 1917. They lived initially in Leichhardt where their two children were born before moving to "Minalo" at 6 Tideswell St, Summer Hill in 1928.

William died in 1937 of heart disease at the age of 52.

Gladys married Byron Cornish (who was also known as Byron Russell), a munitions worker and labourer, in 1938. They moved to Bankstown East, Enfield and Ettalong and on the electoral rolls used the surname of Russell. Byron died in 1982.

**Mina Irene Lowe** was born in 1917. She worked for a hosiery firm until she married motor body builder George Edward "Ted" Moore in 1938. They lived at 14 William St, Enfield. They had three children – Colin (married Patricia), Cheryl (married John Jennings) and Gary. In 1982 George died suddenly, they were living in Umina at this time. Mina died in 2003 at Woy Woy. Her son Gary predeceased her.

**William Ernest Lowe** was known as 'Mate' and was four years younger than Mina. He enlisted with the army in World War 2 and served as a driver & mechanic for the 128<sup>th</sup> Brigade Ordnance Field Park. In August 1943 he embarked for Port Moresby, supporting the action in the north of New Guinea. He flew back from Lae to Brisbane in May 1945 and was discharged in July. In 1943, residing in Tideswell St, he married Annie Rose Bateman. After the war they lived at 20 Dutton St, Bankstown North and then later at Sussex Inlet and Toukley. He continued to work as a mechanic. Annie died in 1991 and William in 2004. They had one son Graham, an engineer, who married Patricia and has 3 children Glenn, Kylie and Natalie.

## James Frederick Lowe

James Lowe was born in 1887, the youngest surviving child of William and Emma and known as Jim. He was a wood machinist and married Elsie Havers in 1913 in Annandale. In around 1925 they moved to Queanbeyan, just outside the new national capital of Canberra which was still under construction at that time.

They had seven children – probably all born in Sydney – and all but one lived to adulthood. The exception was Marjorie who was born in 1916 and died in February 1919 at two years of age. She was burned when she accidentally upset a saucepan of boiling water on herself and died in the Royal Alexandra Hospital for Children at Camperdown. By 1939 they had moved into Canberra, living in the suburb of Ainslie. Jim died in 1950 and Elsie in 1966.

The eldest child was **Jimmie Lowe (James William)** born in 1915. He was an electrician's labourer in Queanbeyan when he died in a motor cycle collision on 23<sup>rd</sup> May 1936 at the age of 21.

This was not his first brush with trouble on the roads – in July 1934 the car he was driving broke an axle and somersaulted three times off the road between Queanbeyan and Canberra. His younger brothers Robert and Jack were also in the car and all were thrown out. Jimmie was a keen motor cycle rider and a co-founder of the Canberra Motor Cycle Club.

At about 7 pm on Saturday May 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1936, Jimmie was riding from Canberra towards Queanbeyan, on the same road where he had crashed two years before, with Jack as a pillion passenger. On a flat stretch of road he was riding in the dirt close to the left hand side of the bitumen (which in those days would have been very narrow) when a truck approached from the opposite direction. His speed was about 30 mph. Jimmie's bike had a temporary bicycle headlamp as the main headlight was not working but both Jack and the driver of the truck said that they had seen each other from some distance away.

As each braked it appears from the evidence given to the inquest that both vehicles headed towards the centre of the road. The motor cycle left tyre marks from the left side of the bitumen for 21 feet to the middle of the road where it collided with the truck which had also swerved to the right. Jack testified that the truck had been the first to swerve and that the accident had happened on their side of the road, the police concluded that the impact was in the centre of the road but as the impact had been with the front left side of the truck it was clearly by then on the wrong side of the road. Alcohol was not a factor.

Jimmie suffered severe head injuries and was dead on arrival at the Queanbeyan Hospital. Jack was also badly injured with both legs broken and spent several months in hospital recuperating.

**Robert George "Bob" Lowe** was the second oldest son. At 22 years of age he enlisted for service and was assigned to the 9<sup>th</sup> Division Supply Column as a Private. In December 1940 he embarked for the Middle East and shortly after arrival was attached to the Division HQ. The nature of Division HQ staff is that they are spread across a number of locations and therefore it is difficult to be certain exactly where Bob was stationed. Most likely from April that year he was in Tobruk, the details of which have already been covered above, and returned to Palestine in around September. We know that with the rest of the Division he embarked for Australia on January 31<sup>st</sup> 1943.



In August 1943 he embarked for Milne Bay and then with the Division HQ would have proceeded to Lae and then Finschhafen. In October and November 1943 he was detached for a month to the 2/156 General Transport Company. In March 1944 he returned to Queensland, had treatment for Malaria in May and another period in hospital in Sydney in November.

In April 1945 he embarked for Morotai and then, after the success of the OBOE 6 operations the Division HQ set up in Labuan on the island of Borneo. In August he was detached to serve with the 2/1 Casualty Clearing Station for three months before leaving Labuan to return to Australia for discharge in November 1945.

### CAR OVERTURNS

#### YOUTH INJURED ON URIARRA ROAD

A youth was injured when a car somersaulted three times near the Deep Creek bridge on the Uriarra Road between Canberra and Queanbeyan yesterday evening.

At about 6.15 last night, while coming up the hill from the Deep Creek bridge, a motor car, driven by James Lowe, turned over three times, owing to the back axle breaking.

The driver and his brothers, Jack and Robert Lowe, were thrown out.

Robert Lowe, aged 15, was taken to hospital in a serious condition, while the other two occupants escaped injury, but are suffering from shock.

Canberra Times. Above: July 12<sup>th</sup>, 1934;  
Below: May 25<sup>th</sup> 1936

### FATAL SMASH

#### MOTOR CYCLIST KILLED

#### Head On Collision With Truck

James William Lowe, 21, an electrician, of Patterson Street, Ainslie, died from injuries received when the motor cycle he was riding collided head on with a truck six miles from Canberra on the Uriarra Road shortly before 7 p.m. on Saturday.

His brother, John Frederick Lowe, 10, who was riding pillion behind him, is in Queanbeyan Hospital with fractured legs and head abrasions.

Both youths were conveyed to the hospital immediately after the accident by Herbert Arthur Jodkin Freeman, Duntroon, who was the driver of the truck.

James Lowe received such shocking injuries to the head that his features were unrecognisable. He was rendered unconscious, and succumbed to his injuries shortly after admission to hospital.

Freeman had his wife, three children, and Nurse Monk, of Tuggranong, as passengers in the truck, but none was hurt. He was returning to Duntroon from Queanbeyan when the accident occurred on the straight stretch on the Canberra side of Black Creek bridge.

The motor cycle, was not damaged apart from a wrecked front wheel.

#### SEQUEL TO FATALITY.

Attempting to pull in behind the police car, which was parked by the side of the road while an officer from Canberra was taking particulars of the accident, a motorist misjudged the distance and struck the back of the police car.

After being interrogated, he was charged with driving while under the influence of liquor.

After the war, Bob was engaged to Jean Lilian McGowan in 1944 but it appears this was broken as he married Vera Edna Burton before 1949 and worked as a linesman in Canberra. They lived in the inner suburb of Turner and had one daughter Marilyn Gwenda Lowe born in 1951. As the ACT does not make births, deaths and marriages indexes publically available it is much harder to trace the Lowe family than some of the other Baker descendents. We know that Vera died in 2005, and that Bob pre-deceased her. From Vera's death notice in 2005 they may also have a son Ian – or this may be the name of Marilyn's husband. We can't find definite evidence for either at this stage.

Jim and Elsie's third son was **John Frederick Lowe**, known as Jack, and born in approximately 1920. Apart from his injuries in the accident that killed his elder brother we know very little about him. He married Constance Marie (surname unknown) and they lived in Ainslie, in Hoddle Gardens. He worked as a labourer. They had at least 2 children – John James, a carpetlayer, and Helena Anne.

After the three sons came three daughters about whom we know only basic information to date.

**Elsie Pearl Lowe**, known as "Topsy", married Harry Carveth, a carpenter and later a police officer. They lived in Griffith, ACT. Harry died in 2006 in Queensland having retired to Palm Beach on the Gold Coast. They had three children Sandra, Philip and Robert. Philip moved to Jindalee in Brisbane where he worked as a buyer and married Treasea - he died 2004 in Caloundra. Robert remained in Canberra where he is a public servant.

**Joyce May Lowe** married Rosario "Ross" Catanzariti, a farmer from Griffith. In 1954 they lived at "Farm 873" Griffith and later moved into Griffith town and became shopkeepers running the local supermarket even now called "Rossies Foodworks".

**Gwen Havens Lowe** was a hairdresser and married John Turner McKenzie, a plumber. They lived for quite some time in Ainslie with Gwen's parents – right up until 1980 at least when they had three adult children still living with them. Their children are Andrew, Heather and Malcolm.

## **Laura Wilkinson Baker (1856 – 1925)**

Laura moved from Sydney to Wagga Wagga in 1883, when George and Sarah Baker took over the licence to the Pastoral Hotel, and married widower John Chapman there on April 14<sup>th</sup> 1884. She was 27 years of age and he 35. Three of the Baker children married a spouse who had been widowed or divorced – Charles, Julia and Laura.

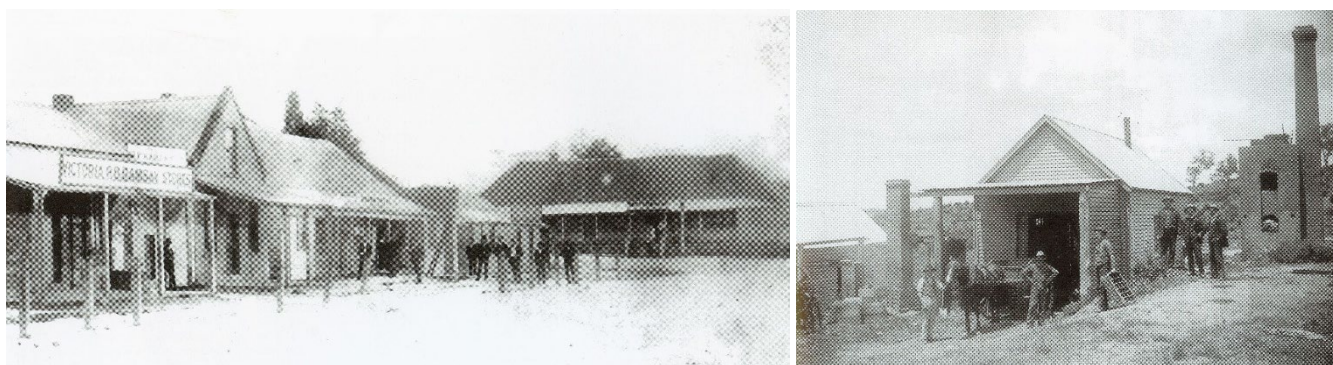
John Chapman was born in Clerkenwell, in London's East End, in 1848 and emigrated to Australia in approximately 1855 with his father John Whitmee Chapman and sister Mary. His mother Ann Taylor probably died in the UK before this. Many of his grandmother's family – the Whitmees – also emigrated to Australia and settled in Bathurst and in Milthorpe near Orange in NSW. John's grandmother Mary Chapman (nee Whitmee) also came to Australia in approximately 1857.

John first married Frances Smythe in 1872, in Wagga, and they had four children although both boys died as infants. Frances died in 1883, leaving John with two girls - Marion who was 10 years old and Jessie 9 when he married Laura a year later. By that stage John had worked as a baker in Wagga (1872 to 1876), farmer at Rose Farm on the Urana Rd (1878), fireman (1879), which was obviously of the railway variety, as next he was a locomotive driver (1885) at Junee, and then a publican (1888) in Coolamon. A jack of all trades, indeed.

John and Laura's first child Ethel Sarah Chapman was born in Junee, then Laura May and Nellie Rita at Coolamon – a town about 30km northwest of Wagga and about the same distance from Junee.

The family then moved to Tumbarumba where the first son Jack (John Henry) was born in 1889. Tumbarumba is a small town about 100km south east of Wagga, nestled in the inland foothills of the Snowy Mountains. Originally a mining town, it was first surveyed in 1859 with 29 miner's dwellings and was developed by subdivision the following year. By the time that the Chapman family arrived it was starting to throw off its mining focus – although mining would continue in the district well into the twentieth century.

In Tumbarumba, John owned the Alpine Brewery and Cordial Factory in Bogong Street and their family house – Alpine Cottage, apparently the first brick house in the town – was opposite. Five further children were born in Tumbarumba – George Whitmee (1891), Eva Ann Taylor (1892), Charles Cyril (1894), Rita Marie (1899) and Frank Gordon (1901). Laura and John's third child Nellie died at the age of 8 in April 1896 of diphtheria and is buried in the Tumbarumba cemetery.



**Tumbarumba in the snow, 1897 (left) and the Alpine Cordial Factory shortly after it was rebuilt in 1902. (Tumbarumba Historical Society)**

Of Laura's stepdaughters, **Marion Frances Chapman** married Frank Bloodsmyth in nearby Adelong in 1893 and Jessie married Joseph Burnaby in Tumbarumba in January 1896.

Frank Bloodsmyth was born at Castlefergus house in County Clare, Ireland. His father was Colonel John Blood-Smyth of the County Clare Militia, and his mother Amelia Spaight. The original family name was Blood. Frank's great-grandfather Matthew Blood married Dorothea Ingram, whose great uncle was Dr Smyth, Archbishop of Dublin, who left an inheritance to Dorothea on the condition that she maintain the name "Smyth". Matthew then changed the family name by royal warrant: "The King has been graciously pleased to grant unto Matthew Blood of Castle Fergus etc. his Royal license and authority that he and his issue may take and use the surname and bear the arms of Smyth instead of those of Blood in compliance with the Will of William Smyth, late of the City of Dublin." Frank's uncle, Matthew Smyth-Blood (the order of the double barrelled name seems to change and sometimes the hyphen is included or omitted) also came to Australia with his family and settled in Kapunda, South Australia.

Frank (Francis Matthew, to give him his full name) was the one and only police constable in Jugiong and, with Marion, had lived in the area around Gundagai. They had two daughters Dorothea (Frances Dorothea) and Helen. In 1903 he suffered horrendous injuries in a hunting accident. Shooting ducks on the river, his friend's shotgun "unexpectedly exploded" when they were climbing through a fence and, according to the Sydney Morning Herald, he bore the full charge in the face from about 10 yards away. Initially expected to die, he survived, but had terrible facial injuries and lost his sight. Frank and Marion separated at some later time, although they did not divorce, and therefore the split may have just been a result of the permanent care that he needed. He lived in Hornsby until he died in 1946. Marion was the informant on the death certificate. She lived at Newington, Petersham and Bondi and moved after Frank's death to West Pennant Hills before she died in 1964.

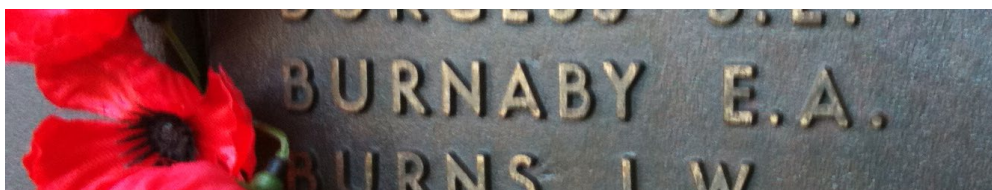
Their older daughter Dorothea, known as Dorry, married Arthur Crawford, station manager at Cairo Station, Gilliat, near Cloncurry in outback Queensland in 1929. He had served with the 5<sup>th</sup> Light Horse in the Great War – enlisting as a Private in December 1914 and leaving as a commissioned officer, a Lieutenant in 1919. He was at Gallipoli from 29 July 1915 until the end of that year and then served in defence of the Suez Canal and around Gaza, then in Turkish-controlled Palestine, and Amman, Jordan. By the end of 1916 he had been hospitalised for fever, measles and mumps; malaria followed in 1917; and he sustained a gunshot wound to his arm in 1918 which was slight enough to allow him to remain with his unit. After helping to control the Egyptian revolt of 1919, and a one month period spent learning motor mechanics with Ratcliffe Bros of London, he left for Australia in December 1919. He also served in the Volunteer Defence Force in World War 2. They lived in Gilliat until around 1950 when they moved to Brisbane. Arthur died in 1954. They had no children.

Frank and Marion's younger daughter, Helen Clare Bloodsmyth, did not marry. She was a civil servant, known as Helen Smyth since the 1940s and lived in Kirribilli Avenue, Milsons Point before moving to West Pennant Hills to live with her mother. She died in 1980.

Laura's other step-daughter **Jessie Mabel Chapman** and Joseph William Burnaby, a draper known as Will, married in Tumbarumba in January 1896 and they remained in the district for some time. They had two children – Gladys Ivy Burnaby in Tumbarumba in November 1896 and Ernest Arthur Burnaby in Cootamundra in December 1897. They then moved to Parramatta. In 1912 Will sued for divorce on grounds of desertion, which was granted in 1914. Will says in his deposition that "about the 18<sup>th</sup> day of February 1904 on returning home I found the house locked up and [Jessie] had left the children with a neighbour". The children would then have been 7 and 6 years of age. Initially Jessie was with her sister Marion Smyth at Cootamundra. By December 1911 she was in Sydney and sent a postcard to John and Laura saying that she was leaving for Brisbane – by the time of the divorce they said that they did not have a contact address. She had gone to Queensland with a man named John Keogh and, although there is no evidence that they married, in June 1912 had a son John (known as Jack) who was born in Toowoomba.

Will Burnaby was remarried to Amy Watson in 1914 and the two children lived with him in Sydney.

**Ernest Arthur Burnaby** worked for Clyde Engineering who built steam locomotives for the NSW Railways. He served in World War I with the 55<sup>th</sup> Battalion and, for a period, with the 5<sup>th</sup> Australian Salvage Company. He had three months in hospital in England with pleurisy, and suffered a gun shot wound to the head in September 1917. When he rejoined his unit in November he was assigned for a time to the brigade pigeon school (carrier pigeons were an important part of battlefield communications in the Great War). He was killed in action on July 6<sup>th</sup> 1918 near Villers-Bretonneux and buried at Franvillers Cemetery near Corbie.



In December 1920 Will's second wife Amy died at the age of 42, of encephalitis lethargica which was then in epidemic proportions. This is the "sleeping sickness" which can turn patients into rigid statue-like poses and was featured in "Awakenings" the 1973 book by Dr Oliver Sacks and the 1990 film. Amy suffered for only 22 days before dying. Less than six months later Gladys, who had not married, died of pulmonary tuberculosis at the age of 24 leaving Will alone. On December 17<sup>th</sup> 1923 Will's body was discovered in a paddock on the grounds of the Hurlstone Agricultural School near his home in Canterbury Rd, Lewisham. A post-mortem determined that suicide by strychnine poisoning was the cause of death.

Jessie and John Keogh, with son Jack, moved from Queensland to Victoria – from 1920 or earlier John was the paymaster at a mill at Powelltown, near Warburton. Jessie was known as Mrs Keogh for the rest of her life. John (senior) probably died in Victoria between 1925 and 1935 but we don't know enough about him to determine exactly when or where. In 1936, Jessie and her son Jack had moved to Sydney - he was a clerk at the NSW Flour Millers Produce Company and they lived together in Darlinghurst.

Jack Keogh served in World War II, starting in 1941 in the AASC (Army Service Corps) based in Ingleburn. He then went to the Corps Troops Transport Column, transferred to the Queensland Line of Command Area and the Junior Officers and NCO's course at Goodna in October 1942. After a stint at the Queensland Army Records Office he was promoted to Corporal and embarked for Milne Bay in New Guinea in August 1943 as part of the 129<sup>th</sup> Group Transport Company. Milne Bay was at the south eastern tip of New Guinea, the furthest south that the Japanese reached, and had been liberated in 1942 but experienced continued sporadic attacks by the Japanese. After a year they were moved to Torokina on Bougainville in support of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Australian AMF Division. At the end of the war in 1945 he was evacuated back to Australia and discharged in September.

Jack married Edith Woollett in 1946. Jack and Edith lived first in Rose Bay and then moved to Mooree where he was manager of the flour mill and had two children – Peter and Suzanne. Jack died in 1972 and Edith in 1998.

Jessie died in Parramatta in 1955 at the age of 80. On her death certificate her name is given as Jessie Mabel Burnaby “known as Jessie Mabel Keogh” and her husband is stated as “Joseph William Burnaby also known as John Keogh”. The informant was the manager of the mental hospital in Parramatta where she died, so probably this is his confusion.



**Tumbarumba Parade from across the Albury Street Bridge in approximately 1908 (Tumbarumba Historical Society)**

Meanwhile, back in Tumbarumba<sup>8</sup>, John and Laura's Alpine Brewery and Cordial Factory burned down in 1902. On Thursday April 10<sup>th</sup>, Laura Chapman was returning from a holiday in Sydney for Easter. Her return had been delayed as she had lost all of her money, including her return railway ticket to Wagga, when her pocket was picked by a street thief. When she arrived in Wagga it was too late for the coach and the Chapmans' carrier had also left so John had to travel to Wagga in the afternoon to pick her up. Therefore he was not in Tumbarumba when the blaze broke out and by the time it was noticed at around 3am the brewery was well and truly enveloped. The buildings with all stock and machinery were reduced to ashes. While the buildings were insured for £1000, there was no coverage on the stock leaving the Chapmans' loss at another £1000.

The site was sold to Messrs Hogan and Mahan who had a similar business in Wagga and they rebuilt the business as the Alpine Cordial Factory. The word “cordial” in this context refers to alcoholic liqueurs, not soft drinks. Today the site has been converted to a residence but the Chapman family house over the road is, apparently, still standing.

In 1902, as a result of the fire, John and Laura and their children moved back to Sydney. Their eldest son Jack, who was 12, was first sent to stay with the Bloodsmyths in Jugiong. He spent most of his time there trapping rabbits and was able to earn 10 shillings selling their skins. He was there for about three months before he joined the family in Sydney. They lived in Hopewell St, Paddington, where they ran a steam laundry. Apparently this was not much of a success and soon John obtained a job with the Victorian Railways in Melbourne. He probably went to Melbourne in early 1903 and the family followed shortly after by ship with all of their furniture and other possessions.

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<sup>8</sup> Thank you to Ron Frew of the Tumbarumba Historical Society for information on the Chapman family's time in Tumbarumba

We know from Laura May Chapman's death certificate that they were in Melbourne in 1903. Laura, who was 19 and nicknamed Loy by the family, died in April 1906 of complications during or following an operation at Williamstown Hospital. She was being treated for hydatid disease of the liver. Laura worked as a saleswoman in a bookshop and her residence, presumably with her parents, was 17 Smith St, Yarraville.

John continued to work with the railways – both as a steam train driver and in the Newport workshops – until he retired. In “retirement”, sometime around 1909, John went into business as a cab proprietor in Mount Alexander Rd, Moonee Ponds, trading as J Chapman and Sons. He started off operating a horse drawn cab and much of his business was in taking people to and from the Moonee Ponds station. His sons, at first, probably played little part other than caring for the horses and their stables. Jack, the eldest son, was himself working as an apprentice in the Newport railway workshops at this time.

Ethel Sarah Chapman, the eldest daughter, moved to Hobart and married Charles Longman who was a grocer at Battery Point in 1912. From this time, a change came to J Chapman & Sons as they moved from horse-drawn transport to the motor car. In late 1912 the family faced another large challenge when George Whitmee Chapman, who was 21 years old and had his licence for just 6 months hit and killed George Davis who had just got off a tram in Mt Alexander Rd. George was charged with manslaughter but was acquitted. Davis' widow sued the company for £2000 and, even though the case was settled for only £104, John says in a letter that “we may have to make another fresh start after that, for the expenses will be pretty stiff whether we win or lose”.

By 1914 we know that the business was growing. We don't know for sure whether all of John and Laura's sons were now formally part of the business or working for others. The eldest son Jack, now 25, had joined in 1912 when the first car was purchased and, as a moulder, would have been involved in shaping material for the maintenance of the cabs – either in wood or in iron – as well as driving. The family was now living in Norwood Crescent right opposite the Moonee Ponds train station.

Charles, the third son, enlisted in the army in late 1916 and gave his occupation as “motor driver”. When he returned to the business in 1919 he was a motor mechanic.



The Argus, 2 December 1925

**M**INERVA, 20-h.p., 7-seater, E.L., 4-cyl., excel. lent order; sacrifice, £200. J. Chapman and Sons, 381 Mt. Alexander rd., Moonee Ponds.

The Argus 4 June 1925

Left – the Moonee Ponds junction in the 1920s just north of the location of the Chapman's garage.

This period also saw the marriages of the rest of the children. George married Mabel Squire in 1915 and they

had one daughter, Elva May, born in 1917. Jack married Agnes Highest Eaglesham, known as Nancy, in 1918 and they had their first three children Jock (John Graham), Ronald, and Audrey. Eva married Hugo Keller in 1919 and Charles married Ivy Dolan in 1920. Rita married Ernest Edgerton in 1922 and they had a daughter Evon in 1923. Frank married Clarice Roberts in 1924. In 1920 George's wife Mabel died. He married again – to Stella McCaughey in October 1921. They had a daughter Sonia.

By 1924 all of the children (other than Ethel in Hobart) and many of the in-laws were involved in the family business. Jack and George were drivers, Charles Chapman and Hugo Keller mechanics, and Frank gave his occupation as “motor proprietor”. Ernest Edgerton was a turner and may or may not have worked for the family – we know by 1936 he had also become a driver.

John Chapman snr, by now 75, had more or less retired – although nobody ever completely retires as the founder of a family business. The family home in Norwood Crescent was sold and he and Laura moved into 12 Maribyrnong Rd with Charles and Ivy. John and Nancy moved into 1 Ormond Rd, also in Moonee Ponds; and George and Stella were in Madura St, Newmarket. Then in 1925 John and Laura moved in with Eva and Hugo Keller at 10 Thomas St, Moonee Ponds.

John died of a cerebral haemorrhage in St Aiden's Hospital, Ascot Vale, on 22<sup>nd</sup> August 1925 at the age of 76. Their son Jack later commented that Laura, devoted to her husband and family, said after John's death “my life's work is done”. Even though she was eight years younger than her husband, she died just two months later on 26<sup>th</sup> October of heart failure.

The second generation were now in charge of J Chapman & Sons which was located at 391 Mt Alexander Rd, Moonee Ponds. In addition to private bookings they ran excursions such as tours of country areas. Only the very well off would have owned a car at that time and the Chapman business continued to be successful. The business also included a petrol station and garage on the premises. Jack, Charles and Frank Chapman all spent their entire career in the business, as did Hugo Keller and Ernest Edgerton as far as we can tell.

In 1936, Ethel Sarah Longman separated from her husband and returned to Melbourne with her three children. The eldest, Loy Ruth, married Eric Dick in 1940 and he joined the family business as a driver. Her son, Keith Cyril Longman, also joined as a mechanic before and after World War II (where he served with the 58<sup>th</sup> Infantry Battalion - see below).

Other members of the third generation also joined the business after the war. Charles' daughter Joy and her husband Ron Harris were both drivers, Rita Edgerton's son in law Frederick Carton was a metal polisher, and Jack's children Jock and Gordon both played leading roles (and perhaps Donald who was a fitter).

We don't know much more about the Keller family. Eva and Hugo continued to live at 10 Thomas St, Moonee Ponds, until they died in 1961 and 1962 respectively. He worked as mechanic and they did not have any children.



## John Henry “Jack” Chapman

Jack Chapman, the fourth child and eldest son of John and Laura, was involved in the family business J Chapman & Sons for most of his life. Born in Tumarumba in 1889 he was 13 or 14 years of age when the family moved to Melbourne. His family remember him speaking often of Tumarumba.

In 1918 he married Agnes Hight Eaglesham who was known as Nancy. They lived at 1 Ormond Rd, Moonee Ponds, which was virtually next door to the garage, and had five children. Their second son Ronald died of diphtheria at the Yarra Bend Infectious Diseases Hospital, aged 7, in 1928.

Jack lost his right leg at the age of 20. His femoral artery damaged in an operation and ongoing infection meant that the leg could not be saved. He made himself his first artificial leg from spare parts in the garage workshop.

Under Jack’s leadership, the family firm now branched out in another direction. Racehorses had mostly been transported to the Melbourne racetracks by train but the rules changed with the increase in passenger traffic and this was no longer allowed. With the Chapman business located close to both Moonee Valley and Flemington racetracks they were one of the first commercial horse float businesses in Melbourne. Their trucks were set up specifically to carry horses around the city and to the surrounding training facilities and spelling paddocks.

The firm had a longstanding relationship with the connections of the Australian depression-era “wonder horse” Phar Lap whenever he was in Melbourne. Notwithstanding recent champions like Black Caviar, Phar Lap remains the most iconic Australian horse. Foaled in New Zealand, he was unsuccessful in his early races in Sydney, but in his last 35 races he was virtually unbeatable – failing to win only three times. His wins included 28 weight for age races, the AJC Derby and VRC Derby as a 3 year old, the Cox Plate twice, The Agua Caliente Handicap then the world’s richest race in Tijuana Mexico, and, most famously of all, the 1930 Melbourne Cup.

Phar Lap carried the hopes of the nation in his four year old year and was the subject of a controversial betting plunge by large Sydney punters who were close to the owner. Beaten only once in his previous 15 races, he was a hot early favourite in pre-post doubles betting on the 1930 Caulfield and Melbourne Cups. His owner, Dave Davis, and the syndicate placed large wagers coupling Amounis to win the Caulfield Cup and Phar Lap to win the Melbourne Cup, and then prevailed on his trainer Harry Telford to scratch Phar Lap from the Caulfield Cup just six days before the race was run. Once Amounis did his part by winning the Caulfield Cup, it was considered that the bookmakers (legal and illegal) would lose a fortune and many would go out of business if Phar Lap won the Melbourne Cup. When he saluted in the W.S Cox Plate this looked a certainty.

On the morning of Derby Day, his strapper Tommy Woodcock was bringing Phar Lap back from an early morning gallop at Caulfield racecourse to their nearby stables when a car driven by a masked man suddenly roared past and a shotgun blast rang out from the back seat. Despite being only 10 metres away from the horse at the time, the shot missed everything and the horse was unharmed however this had to be considered to be a legitimate attempt by or for the bookmakers to kill or injure the famous horse<sup>9</sup>.

After being delivered to Flemington with a police escort in the afternoon where he duly won the Melbourne Stakes (now known as the LKS McKinnon Stakes), it was decided that security would have to be intense between then and the Melbourne Cup on the following Tuesday to make sure that the horse would be able to run.



Left to right: restored or reproduction 1930s era float takes part in the Melbourne Cup parade of 2011 (this is probably the float used in the making of the film “Phar Lap” in 1983), Phar Lap arrives under police escort to Flemington for the 1930 Melbourne Cup, and gallops at Flemington on race day.

<sup>9</sup> It was later believed that this was probably not a serious attempt to kill the horse and may even have been a publicity stunt orchestrated by an element of the press. For an investigative account of the events surrounding the Melbourne Cup of 1930 see *Armstrong G. & Thompson P.: They Shot Phar Lap, Didn't They?; Pier 9, Melbourne; 2010*. Note also that the 1983 film “Phar Lap” is quite inaccurate in this regard.

It was decided to send the horse to the St Albans Horse Stud near Geelong and only Stan Boyden, float driver from J Chapman & Sons, would be trusted to take him there. They left Caulfield at close to midnight and Boyden was to collect the horse on the morning of the Cup to be taken direct from Geelong to Flemington. Only Harry Telford, Tommy Woodcock, two other stable hands, and the police who were looking after the horse knew where they were going. Boyden did not know where they were going until they were on the road, and neither the owner nor the jockey, Jim Pike, knew where the horse was during this time.

On Cup Day morning J Chapman & Sons nearly had their most embarrassing moment yet. Arriving at the stud to pick up Phar Lap they found the truck very difficult to start and were considerably delayed in leaving. The previous night Melbourne and South East Victoria had suffered through an immense dust storm followed by heavy rain all night, and the Brockway horse truck was having difficulty in the wet and damp conditions. Several times they had to stop on the Geelong Road and dry the engine with a towel to keep it running, and they were getting later and later. For a while it looked like the champion horse would miss the Melbourne Cup after all – not because of the action of bookmakers or gangsters, but because of a broken down old truck with the Chapman name on the side!

With the course abuzz with rumours about the horse's whereabouts, Phar Lap arrived at Flemington barely an hour before the start of the race and was rushed to the birdcage to be saddled up (not straight to the parade ring as shown in the 1983 film). Despite three days of drama and the dash back from Geelong, Phar Lap seemed calm, cantered to the start and took up a position of about fifth on the rails in the early part of the race which was being run slowly on the wet track. With 6 furlongs (1200m) to go, Muratti (owned by the formerly infamous but now respectable businessman John Wren) dashed to the front and Phar Lap was boxed in, but by the turn into the straight Pike got Phar Lap into the clear and set his horse out after the leaders. Like a champion, Phar Lap reeled them in quickly and swept up the main straight to win easily by 3 lengths from Second King and Shadow King<sup>10</sup>.

For good measure Phar Lap came back to Flemington on the following Saturday to win the Linlithgow Stakes over a mile (now known as the Patinack Farm Classic and run over the sprint distance of 1200m), making it three wins for the carnival. His 1931 campaign was also superb with 5 wins out of 6 in the Autumn, and 8 wins in the spring including the W.S Cox Plate and Melbourne Stakes for the second straight year. All of these races were at weight for age, but for the Melbourne Cup of 1931 he was allocated the unheard of weight of 10 stone 10 pounds (60kg) which was almost 2 stone more than he had carried to victory in the Melbourne Stakes on the previous Saturday and 5 pounds more than the then-record Cup weight carried by Carbine to victory in 1890. He started favourite at the generous odds of 3-1 (he had been 8-11 the previous year) and struggling under the big weight he was eased down by Pike, who had promised not to push him if he could not win. He finished 8<sup>th</sup> and this was his last race in Australia.

Tired of being allocated huge weight in handicaps, and with all other trainers of the good horses unwilling to race him at weight for age, it was decided to take Phar Lap to California and race against America's best in the richest race in the world – the Agua Caliente Handicap run just over the border in Tijuana, Mexico. Knowing that there was a plan amongst the US owners to box him in Phar Lap trailed off last early in the race, and then took off four or five wide to come around the large field which is not usually considered a winning tactic. Unknown to many he had a hoof injury which had required treatment just a week before the race and had hardly galloped at all in the lead up to the race which was also contrary to his usual pattern. Nevertheless he reeled in the field, beating America's best stayer Reveille Boy by 2 lengths. Given the quality of the opposition, this is considered his finest victory.

Sixteen days later Phar Lap was dead. Despite decades of speculation on the cause of death with theories including deliberate or accidental arsenic poisoning, he died from a viral infection that was then unknown but now well recognised in horses.



Above: Phar Lap wins the 1930 Melbourne Cup..

<sup>10</sup> There is a video of the last part of the race which can be found on YouTube at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CkppKT4-yI8>

The horse floats co-existed with the taxi business for some time and later this became their mainstay. The J Chapman and Sons horse trucks were a common sight around the roads and racetracks and were used by all the leading trainers for the next 50 years. The firm was sold by the family in the early 1980s after Jack and then his son Jock retired.

Sometime around 1939 John and Nancy separated and they divorced in 1943. Nancy stayed at Ormond Rd and remarried Sydney Godwyn. Sydney died in 1951, Nancy in 1971 by now living in Geelong.

In 1937, Jack was the victim of a rather sensational robbery with underworld tones and in which the Chapman brothers seemed to hold their own. After dropping a fare at St Kilda, and due to collect a Miss Smith from the Melbourne Town Hall later that night, Jack was parked in his car at 8.50 pm on March 26 near the St Kilda Football Ground (the Junction Oval) at Albert Park Lake when approached by two young men armed with pistols. They ordered him to get out of the car and drove off toward the city.

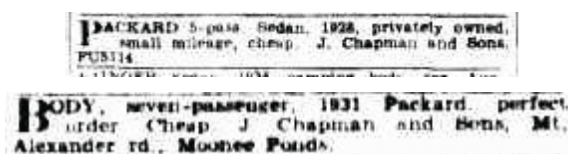
The Chapman brothers then swung into action. Jack got a lift to the St Kilda police station and called the garage to arrange for Charles to take another car to the city to collect Miss Smith. On his way to the city, Charles Chapman spotted the car on Flemington Rd going the other way and followed them into Royal Park and around the back of the zoo. In those days there were few cars on the road and the Chapmans' Buick taxi cars were very distinctive. When the villains parked the stolen car, Charles went into the nearby boy's home and telephoned the garage before continuing on to the city.

Frank Chapman and two others (one was the float driver Stan Boyden – who had been Phar Lap's regular driver, and the other was the local butcher Gordon Clegg) took the third Buick, a shotgun and an old rusty and unloaded revolver and went to Oak St, Royal Park. When the stolen car made to drive away Clegg took the shotgun and Boyden the revolver and they accosted the two men who were still in the car. Luckily the police arrived a few minutes later.

The two men – James Dugan and McGregor Kean – were charged with armed robbery of a car and carrying unregistered pistols. At the trial, in April 1937, the defence claimed that Dugan had been followed by armed members of the underworld and "driven almost to distraction" since he had appeared as a crown witness at the recent Scriven murder trial. They told the police they were on their way to Easey St, Collingwood, where one of the accused Scriven murderers lived, to "shoot them up". The jury agreed with the Defence that the taking of the car was "done on the spur of the moment" and as there was no intention to keep the car they were acquitted of the charge. They were, however, found guilty of theft of a quantity of petrol and sentenced to eight and twelve months imprisonment respectively.

Jack always believed that it was the famous Sydney armed robber and escape artist Darcy Dugan who had held him up that night. Perhaps it was the shared and unusual middle name of Ezekiel that led to this confusion, but it was not correct. Darcy Dugan was a couple of years younger than his Melbourne namesake, and spent almost all of 1937 to 1939 in the Mount Penang Training School for Boys in Gosford, NSW, after being convicted of robbing his uncle's hotel where he had been working. He did not come to Melbourne.

After serving his time, James Ezekiel Dugan later joined the airforce in 1940 and was killed in an accident at Townsville airfield in 1941. James Edward Scriven was manager of the Titles Office who was killed in Little Lonsdale Street in January 1936 when escorting a money messenger carrying over £1,750 in cash to the bank. Three men were charged and Dugan gave evidence at the committal in November of that year that he had repaired the pistol used in the shooting a week prior for one of the men. Three days after giving evidence he was shot in the thigh near the Shrine of Remembrance - he told police he had been wounded accidentally but the police naturally disagreed. In the first trial in December 1936, Dugan again gave evidence and identified one of the accused, William Cody. The identification was challenged and the jury could not agree which of two men committed the murder – William Cody and Rupert Davies. They acquitted the third man, Davies' brother. A second trial was held in February 1937 when the two men were found guilty and sentenced to death but then appealed – one of the grounds being that Dugan's evidence should not have been admitted as the police had shown him a picture of the suspect before the identification was made – and were granted a retrial in June. The third trial and a fourth in July both resulted in a hung jury (it was the first time ever in Victoria that anyone had been tried four times on a charge of murder). Rather than proceed with a fifth trial, charges were abandoned in August 1937. Instead Cody was charged with having shot at Senior Constable Alfred Guider to avoid apprehension, and Davies charged with perjury. Both were found guilty and sentenced to six years imprisonment and two years imprisonment with hard labour respectively.



The Argus 12 April 1938



ALDERMAN A. H. Southwell, of Manly, tells me the Mitchell Library has a record of the family of Thomas Southwell, a pioneer, which lists 1,278 descendants.

\* \* \*

A MELBOURNE colleague has noticed an odd coincidence about the arrival of the racehorse Carioca in Melbourne.

The driver of the float which took Carioca from the plane to his stables was Jock Chapman.

Last year Chapman drove Dalray, and the year before Delta.

Both these horses won the Melbourne Cup with No. 1 saddlecloth—which Carioca will carry this year.

Jack and Nancy's eldest child was **John Graham Chapman**, known as Jock. He was part of the third generation who worked at J Chapman & Sons. At left, he was cited in an omen bet for the 1953 Melbourne Cup in the famous Sydney Morning Herald "Column 8" – the hot tip Carioca was favourite for the big race but was scratched after running only 5<sup>th</sup> in the W.S. Cox Plate the week before. Wotan was the winner of the cup.

Jock served in World War II with the 17<sup>th</sup> Field Ambulance. In March 1942 they were sent to Adelaide River, just outside Darwin. After further training he was promoted to Corporal in 1943 and had leave back in Victoria. He had treatment for an infected thumb and then rejoined his unit in Queensland until May 1944 when they were sent to Lae in New Guinea.

In October 1944 they left Lae for the Treasury Islands, part of the Solomons Group off the coast of Bouganville. Stirling Island had been recaptured in late 1943 and the airstrip there was a strategic asset against the Japanese forces in northern New Guinea.

In May 1945 Jock left the Treasury Islands to come home for leave. On the way, in Torokina on Bouganville, he suffered a broken nose – we can only guess how this occurred! He left Torokina on 3<sup>rd</sup> June and the chief piece of business while back in Melbourne was to get married – to Joyce Marshall on June 19<sup>th</sup>. By August he was back with his unit in Torokina and continued to serve until November 1945 when he returned to Australia for discharge.

Joyce Marshall (right) worked as a dispatch clerk for Ormiston Rubber Co, a sporting goods company based at 531 Mt Alexander Rd, Moonee Ponds – just a few doors down from the Chapman premises. In early 1942 she was living at 12 Maribyrnong Rd with the Chapmans and moved to

work as a junior examiner for the Army's Inspector-General of Munitions. After 3 months she enlisted in the Australian Women's Army Service (AWAS) and was admitted as a clerk. She was assigned to the regular army Line of Command HQ in Melbourne and promoted to Corporal and then Sergeant. She was discharged in December 1945.



Later, Jock and Joyce lived in Ascot Vale, at 22 River Avenue, and had one son Malcolm born in 1947. Joyce died in 2008 and Jock was still living at that time. Malcolm is married to Janine and they have three children – Victoria, Taylor and Warwick.



Stirling Island Camp in the Treasury Islands, March 1945

**Audrey Nance Chapman** was Jack Chapman's eldest daughter. She married Charles Alan Cordingley (known as Alan) in 1943. Alan served in World War II with the 18<sup>th</sup> Volunteer Defence Corps and also in the stores depot and worked in construction as an engineer. They had two children Ronald and Janis. Ronald married Cherie Wiffen and their children are Wesley and Lori. Janis married Stanley Keating and their children are Peter and Dean.

**Gordon Grange Chapman** was the third surviving child. He married Dawn Mealy and they lived in Kew. He also worked for the family firm as a driver. Gordon died in 1970. They had no children.

Jack and Nancy's youngest is **Donald Charles Chapman**. He was a fitter, later an aircraft inspector, and married Mavis Gay in 1951. They have three children – Christine, who married Roger Dallimore, Raymond, and Leonie who married Manfred Blach. Ray died while a student at 18 years of age in 1972 in a car accident in Geelong.

**CHAPMAN.** — On Feb. 19, (result of accident), Raymond Craig, dearly beloved only son of Don and Mavis Chapman, of 25 Cuthbertson Drive, Ocean Grove, loved brother of Christine and Leonie. Aged 18 years. We will miss you, Ray.

**CHAPMAN.** — Ray, dearly loved grandson of Emma Gay (Ascot Vale), beloved nephew of Alby and Marge Gay (West Essendon), loving cousin of Stephen, Craig and Sandra.

**CHAPMAN.** — Ray, loved nephew of Alan and Audrey Cordinley, cousin of Ron and Jan. Aged 18 years. A great mate.

**CHAPMAN.** — Raymond (result of accident). Fondest memories, Jock, Joyce and Malcolm.

**CHURCH.** — On Feb. 19, George Robert, of 230 Boronia Rd. Parents, beloved

## Three die on State roads

Three people were killed on Victorian roads during the weekend.

**Ian James King, 22**, of Tooronga Road, East Malvern, was killed early yesterday while crossing the road in front of his home. He had just got out from a car that had pulled up outside his home and ran into another car travelling in the opposite direction.

On Saturday night there was a hit-and-run fatality in Mont Albert. A 70-year-old woman pedestrian was struck by a car when crossing Mont Albert Road, near the railway crossing at High Street. Late last night her name was not available.

Police said the car was travelling at high speed.

They are looking for an early model Falcon sedan colored light blue or green which they say is probably damaged in the front.

The third death occurred when a car ran out of control and overturned in Ocean Grove Road, Wellington, near Geelong. A passenger in the car **Raymond Craig Chapman, 18**, of Cuthbertson Drive, Ocean Grove, was killed.

**THINK AND LIVE**

Drinking suits a driver's dread of danger. —[Advt.]

The Age, 21<sup>st</sup> February 1972.

In 1972 Victoria's Road Toll was 915 deaths, down from a peak of 1061 in 1970 when the wearing of seat belts was made compulsory. In 2009 only 290 people died on the state's roads.

After the divorce from Nancy, Jack married Harriet Helen Kinghorn, known as Ret, in 1945. They moved to Mont Albert and had two children.

**Laurette Jean Chapman**, named for a combination of her two grandmothers' names Laura and Harriet, married and then divorced William Robertson. Laura worked as a music teacher and married Peter Hunt, an IT Manager. They lived for some time in Lusaka, Zambia. Peter died suddenly while visiting England in early 1987. Laura then married Michael Lindsay in 1998, he died aged 71 in 2010. Laura still lives in the UK.

Jack and Ret also have a son **Fraser Henry Chapman** who married Glenda Causon and have two children Tanya and Kris.

Jack Chapman died in 1980, at home in Mont Albert, of heart disease. Ret, who was 22 years younger, died in 2005.

## George Whitmee Chapman

As mentioned before, the first challenge for George was when he hit and killed a man who had alighted from an electric tram in Mt Alexander Rd in October 1912. The tram slowed, as did George in the taxicab, and George Alexander Davis got down to the road while the tram was still moving. George braked and the man almost made it to the pavement however, seeing the motorcar, the man stopped and headed back towards the tram. Even though the cab was going less than 10 miles per hour Davis was killed almost instantly. The coroner found that George's driving was negligent and he was charged with manslaughter. The basis was that, at the time, the road rules were that a car could not pass a tram on its left hand side and could only overtake on the right hand side. Luckily the judge considered this to be "a ridiculous rule" and George was found not guilty.

Nevertheless the matter was not concluded until the following May as Davis's widow, left with 10 children to support, sued J Chapman & Sons for £2000. The family firm settled for a payment of £1 a week for 2 years.

George Chapman married Mabel Squire in 1915 and they had a daughter, Elva May, in 1917. In 1920 Mabel was pregnant again when she contracted encephalitis and died in June. The death notices for Mabel shows where the rest of the Chapman family were living in 1920.

CHAPMAN.—On the 24th June, passed peacefully away at her residence, 26 Raleigh street, Essendon, Mabel, dearly beloved wife of George W. Chapman, and mother of Elva, also beloved daughter of Mary Squire and the late William Squire, late of Footscray, aged 30 years. "The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away."  
 CHAPMAN.—On the 24th June, at her late residence, 26 Raleigh street, Essendon, Mabel, dearly loved daughter-in-law of John and Laura Chapman, of Moonee Ponds, and sister-in-law of Marion (Mrs. Smythe, Sydney), Jess (Mrs. Keogh, Warburton), Ethel (Mrs. Longman, Hobart), Jack, Eva (Mrs. Keller), Charlie, Rita, and Frank, aged 30 years. Sydney papers please copy.  
 Beloved by all who knew her.  
 CHAPMAN.—On the 24th June, 1920, at her late residence, 26 Raleigh street, Essendon, Mabel, dearly loved sister-in-law of Jack and Nancy Chapman, and loving aunt of little Jack. Ever remembered.

George married Stella McCaughey in October 1921. They had three had three children Sonia (1922), Robert (1925) and Mavia (1931). Robert died at the age of eleven months of bronchopneumonia. They lived at Steele St, Moonee Ponds.

In the mid 1930s George left the family business, moved to the Bendigo area and was licensee at the Victoria Hotel, Eaglehawk for 3 years or so until 1938. It appears they returned to Steele St and then in 1941 he and Stella took over the Hibernia Hotel at 246 Bridge St, Bendigo and they remained there until 1952.

In 1938 **Elva May Chapman**, George's daughter from his first wife, married Edward Hatsell Garrard.



On the marriage certificate it is stated that Elva had been adopted by her aunt and uncle Hugo and Eva Keller and was living with them at 10 Thomas St Moonee Ponds. While not surprising that she had remained living in Melbourne when George and Stella had moved to Bendigo in the mid 1930s, it is curious that she had been adopted as by 1938 she was 22 years of age. I wonder whether Elva had been adopted as early as 1920 at three years of age when her mother died, and never lived with her father after he remarried.

Edward Garrard served in World War II. In 1942 they were living in Sydney and Edward was assigned to the 1<sup>st</sup> Armoured Brigade Ammunition Sub Park at Singleton, NSW. At the end of 1942 he transferred to the 271 Light Armoured Division in Western Australia and was promoted to Corporal. In 1944 he returned to Sydney for leave and stayed in NSW with the Area Workshops. In October 1944 he was declared medically unfit with foot problems.

Edward and Elva had one child, Gavin Edward, in 1940. They had a scare when 6 years later Gavin briefly went missing long enough for them to advertise in The Argus that a reward would be offered for his return. We don't know what happened but he did return to the family.

Edward died in 1983, by then described as a Pastor. They were living in Moonee Ponds.

ANYONE knowing whereabouts Boy, aged 6, answers to name Gavin Edward Garrard. Phone FU5924. Urgent. Reward.

George and Stella's daughter **Sonia Georgina Chapman** trained as a hairdresser, then worked as a storekeeper at the Beehive Drapery Store. She volunteered in 1942 for service with the RAAF. She applied to enlist

as a storekeeper and, in a sign of the times, the recruiting officer in Bendigo commented "She is a stylish type of girl and attractive in appearance." She served as a storekeeper at the Depot in Laverton and was then promoted to Corporal and became an Equipment Assistant and worked in Lake Boga (the Flying Boat Repair Depot) and the Flying School in Deniliquin as well as in Melbourne. She was discharged April 1945 as a Sergeant.

In 1947, approximately, Sonia married Royden Hayes, a bookmaker in Bendigo. The occupational hazards were obvious when in their first year of marriage their house was burgled while they slept and £856 in cash was stolen. They divorced in the 1960s and Sonia later married Vernon McDonald. Sonia died in 1978, Vernon in 1981, Royden in 1985. She had no children from either marriage.



Their other daughter **Mavia Estelle Chapman**, pictured right, was a finalist in Bendigo's Centennial Girl competition in April 1951. She was engaged to Raymond Connelly who she married later that year. Raymond had served in the 19<sup>th</sup> Australian Infantry Training Battalion in World War 2.



In the 1970s they moved to operate the Carnavon Caravan Park in Western Australia. They have one daughter Mandy.

George and Stella Chapman took over the historic Cecil Inn Hotel in Gould, on the Tyers River near Moe in Gippsland. Stella was born near Bairnsdale so perhaps this was the connection that led them to this part of Victoria.

The Cecil Inn, established by W.S. Gould in approximately 1874, was a coach inn where the horses were changed on the route between Moe and Walhalla. Gould came from England in 1856 and was a gold miner for almost 20 years before settling back in Gippsland. His hotel was renowned as a very 'English' establishment serving a roast sirloin of beef for lunch every day to the coach travellers. Gould died in 1909 at the age of 77.

The small town which grew up around it was renamed from Strath Tyers to Gould and became a support town for first the mining interests and then timber logging in the surrounding area in the early year of the 20<sup>th</sup> century when the Moe to Walhalla railway line was constructed. The town slowly declined but the hotel remained until 1956 when the Moondarra Reservoir was created to provide drinking water to the Latrobe Valley and the town of Gould was abandoned and flooded. The main building of the hotel was preserved and moved to the shores of the lake near the weir.



**The Cecil Inn**  
 Mr. A. S. Kenyon writes, with reference to the hotel on the Moe-Walhalla road, inquired after by Mr. C. A. Perrin:—"The Cecil Inn is still a licensed house." Gould, who held the licence until about 10 years ago, was an old retainer of the Cecil (Salisbury) family. He was visited about 15 years ago by a travelling member of that illustrious house. Gould would not allow a roast of beef to be cooked until it had hung at least two weeks in his underground cellar and had many other old-world tricks and a most courtly manner—even when aroused for a "long un" at midnight."  
 Mr. Gould's name has been given to a railway station near the inn.

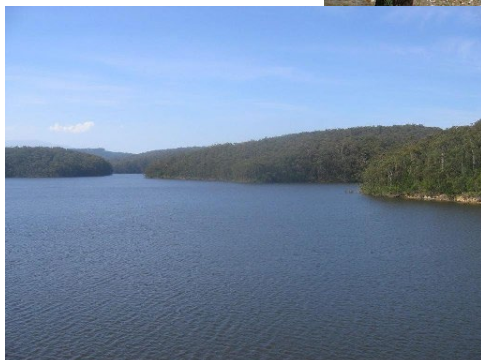


Above: The Cecil Inn, Gould, at the turn of the century and in

1960 shortly after being relocated (Monash University Gippsland Collection) as well as an item from The Argus of December 30, 1939. Below: Today the old township is under the waters of the Moondarra Reservoir and the hotel building can be hired for functions.

### Hotel licence transfers

Hotel licence transfers approved by the Licensing Court include:  
 Metropolitan: Railway, Warragul.  
 Elise, Georgina, Mary, Huxtable to F. G. Gifford.  
 Standard, Fitzroy: Eunice, Letitia, Noe to Barbara, Isabel, Coleman.  
 Country: Cecil Inn, Gould; J. E. Finn to Elizabeth, Stella, May Chapman, Farmers, Claretown; G. C. Hainy to A. G. Storer, on behalf of himself and Jessie, Eileen Storer, trading as A. G. and J. E. Storer.  
 Traralgon, Trentham: H. M. O'Halloran to R. S. White, Kilmore East, Kilmore East; Raw, Olive Carey and E. C. Tinsener - Rae Olive Carey agent, pending grant of letters of administration of E. C. Tinsener, deceased.  
 Cumberland, Castlemaine: N. J. Anderson to Gertrude, Ida, Evelyn Ferguson, Town Hall, Sale; H. G. Smith to J. Purcell, on behalf of himself and Rita Purcell, trading as J. and R. Purcell, Undara, Undara; J. A. Devlin, agent, from October 30 to December 2.



The Chapmans moved back to Bendigo where Stella died in 1958. Her address was 52 Neale Street – probably they were living with daughter Sonia

Chapman remained in Bendigo until he died in 1973

George Whitmee aged 82.

George Frederick Baker and Sarah Wilkinson Epsley

## Charles Cyril Chapman



Charles was born in Tumarumba and was nine years old when they moved to Melbourne. In October 1916 as a twenty-two year old he enlisted to serve in The Great War, the only one of the Chapman family to do so. He described himself as a motor driver.

He was assigned to the 3<sup>rd</sup> reinforcements for the 8<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery Brigade and trained as a Gunner at Royal Park and Maribyrnong for 12 months.

They embarked for overseas service on November 9<sup>th</sup> 1917, arriving in Suez in December and then on to the Heytesbury artillery base near Southampton, UK, where they had a further six months.

On 4<sup>th</sup> June they left for France, arriving at the unit on June 29<sup>th</sup>. The 8<sup>th</sup> FAB supported the 3<sup>rd</sup> Division under General Monash and the reinforcements arrived in time to participate in the last six months of the war as the tide turned in the Allies' favour and the Australians pushed the Germans back over the Hindenburg line into Belgium. We know that the 8<sup>th</sup> Artillery were at or near Villers-Bretonneux in July when the reinforcements arrived and were at Peronne in September and Aisne on the Hindenburg line in October, These were all pivotal episodes in the advance to victory but we do not know exactly the role they played. The unit consisted of three batteries of 4 x 18 pounder guns and one battery of 4.5 inch howitzers.

They remained in France and Belgium until May 1919 when they shipped back to Southampton, and departed for Australia on July 1<sup>st</sup>. Charles arrived back in Melbourne on August 20<sup>th</sup> and was discharged on September 12<sup>th</sup>.

Charles married Ivy Dolan in 1920 in Essendon.

They had one daughter Joy who married Ronald Harris, a driver and mechanic, who went on to be a taxi proprietor in his own right. Ron served in World War II as a Sergeant with the Australian Signals division, in the Motor Transport section. He was initially based in Ringwood and then posted to Brisbane in 1943 and Darwin during 1944 and 1945. Joy and Ron both worked as drivers, presumably for J Chapman & Sons, and had one daughter Joan. They lived in Niddrie before moving to Indented Head on the Bellarine Peninsula. Ron died in January 2012.

The only time that we can find any mention of Charles in the press was in 1941 when he was a witness to the death of William Morris, a 19 year old cyclist who was hit by a car on the corner of Mount Alexander and Ormond Roads just near the Chapman's garage. The driver of the car was James Dillon, the local member of parliament for Essendon. He hit the bicycle from behind as they were both travelling north along Mount Alexander Rd, saying that he did not see anything until he felt a bump. He said that he had 2 whiskeys before leaving parliament house at around 6.30 pm. Despite police and other witnesses saying that he smelt strongly of liquor, was unsteady on his feet and could write his name only with great difficulty the coroner found that he was not prepared to rule him incapable of handling a car saying "two whiskeys would not put me into a state of semi-intoxication". Death by misadventure was recorded and Dillon was not charged. Dillon lost his seat at the next election in early 1943, The Argus saying his defeat "was not unexpected" although this had more to do with a redistribution of the seat's boundaries than any reflection on the fatal accident.

Charles and Ivy Chapman lived at 12 Maribyrnong Rd, Moonee Ponds from 1924 until at least 1959. He described himself on the electoral roll as a "motorist" throughout that time, and when he died on 13<sup>th</sup> April 1959 he was 64 years of age.

Ivy did remarry – in 1970 – to Ernest Malcolm. He died in 1976 and Ivy lived until 1985 by which time she had moved in with her daughter Joy at Indented Head on the Bellarine Peninsula.



## **Ethel Sarah Chapman**

As noted before, Ethel married Charles Cyril Longman, known as Cyril, in Hobart in 1912. They ran a grocery store in the Battery Point area.

Cyril's father was William Charles Longman, who had come to Sydney in 1877 and then to Hobart in 1880. In 1889 he joined the Hobart City Police Force and then continued after it became a colonial (statewide) force. He served all over the state, returning to Hobart and retiring as a first-class inspector in 1927. He had separated from Cyril's mother, Sarah Jane, in 1903. In 1906 she discovered him in Barrack Square with "a woman of bad character" and attacked the woman with an umbrella. She complained to his superiors and William was banished to the town of Deloraine. Previous to that there had been numerous episodes of domestic violence including an incident where William pushed his wife down some steps and a couple of days later she gave birth to a baby who died shortly afterwards. William and Sarah were said to live in separate rooms in the house with she and the children getting no affection from him.

In 1927, having returned to Hobart and retired from the force, William sued for divorce on the grounds that Sarah had deserted him in 1906 when she refused to join him at Deloraine and had poisoned the opinions of his children against him (despite the fact that all were grown up by this time). He produced copies of letters that he had sent to the children on birthdays and other occasions but the judge decided that the fact that he had made and kept copies of them made it likely that they were self-serving rather than genuine. Sarah countered that William's claims of having affection for her and his children was insincere and related, along with other witnesses, the incidents of cruelty and violence against herself and the children. Cyril gave evidence of numerous beatings from his father and Sarah that the maintenance payments provided sporadically had forced them to live in poverty. She also claimed that William's motive for requesting a divorce was that he was now keeping company with a young woman and wanted to cease financial support of his wife. The jury ruled that Sarah had not deserted her husband or, if she had, that there were good and sufficient reasons for having done so. The divorce was refused.

Ethel and Cyril married on 13<sup>th</sup> March 1912. On September 6<sup>th</sup> Ethel gave birth to twins – a boy and a girl – who died, unnamed, just two days later. In 1913 Cyril and Ethel's address was Nevada St, Hobart South, but we don't know whether that was the store's address and/or their residence. Loy Ruth was born on December 18<sup>th</sup> 1913 and Keith Cyril on 13<sup>th</sup> October 1918. In 1916 they moved their shop to 61 Hampden Rd and their youngest child Vida Ethel was born on 28<sup>th</sup> January 1921. From 1922 until 1936 they lived at 11 Waterloo Crescent, Battery Point.

In addition to the grocery business Cyril was a partner in a timber mill which held leasehold rights to 2,000 acres of timber and a timber mill on Poverty-Gully Rd, Margate, south of Hobart. He had a hut at Cascades which was burned down in 1924.

In 1929 Cyril volunteered to join the crew of the Norwegian whaler the N.T. Nielsen Alonso. The whale oil factory vessel, accompanied by five smaller whale-chasers called the "Pols", used Hobart as its last stop for provisioning before heading for the deep south of the Ross Sea and advertised for 35 local men to join the crew for the season. Starting in 1923, many whaling companies had been operating in the areas south of Tasmania for whale oil which was used in soap making. Even then, there was some controversy around the whaling expeditions although in this case the concern was that the Norwegian whaling industry was trying to claim Antarctic territory and form a monopoly on the whaling trade. Indeed the Hobart Mercury, happy to support any industry which brought business to the state, deplored not only any restrictions on taking whales but that "scientists had crippled the penguin oil industry, which would have been of great value"!

The fleet sailed from Hobart on October 16<sup>th</sup> 1929 and within a week word was received that fifteen thousand barrels of oil had been taken already. By the time they returned to Hobart on the following March 21<sup>st</sup> they had a load of 55,000 barrels of oil harvested from 745 whales and worth £230,000. They had reached a latitude of 76° South, inside the Ross Sea, but caught most of their haul further north at the outskirts of the pack ice. The main complaint of the Tasmanians was the food provided which contained many Norwegian dishes such as "gruet" (a savoury pudding) and "stockfish" (dried and fermented fish) and the fact that there was no alcohol on board (although it was reported that one or two men became "extremely elevated" on methylated spirits). The men received wages of between £50 and £80.

The following year Cyril again was signed on for the whaling season when in addition to the Nielsen Alonso over 30 oil factory ships were expected to be in Antarctic waters. Leaving Hobart on October 7<sup>th</sup>, only six Tasmanians were on board, as major upgrades to the ship had been made to convert its engines from coal fired to oil which meant less labour was required. With the price of whale oil steadily decreasing this change made good business sense. As the fuel oil was consumed the same tanks were used to store the whale oil and a newly commissioned tanker boat was able to rendezvous halfway through the season to offload the harvest as well as refuelling. This lengthened the time that they were able to stay in the fishing grounds as well as doubling the size of the potential catch. 1,351 whales were taken for the season yielding 112,500 barrels of oil.



**Top left:** the N. T. Nielsen Alonso, a former passenger liner converted to be the largest and most modern whale oil processing ship of its time; **top right:** the whale chaser boats, the Pols, which harpooned the whales and towed them to the mother ship for processing. **Bottom from left to right:** the whales were winched to the deck of the factory ship, the blubber cut off for rendering and then the carcass was boiled down to capture the remainder of the oil, and the crew taking an opportunity to explore the pack ice which often reached one third of the way up the hull.

Despite not attempting to go through the icepack into the Ross Sea, the voyage was more troubled with poor weather than the previous year, several accidents and four Norwegian crewmen being evacuated back to Norway by the tanker. At the end of the season there was a further wrinkle for the Tasmanian crew as it was decided to bypass Hobart and return to Norway via Capetown. The major reason for this was the lack of oil refuelling capacity in the Tasmanian capital. After failing to find any passages from Capetown back to Australia, they had no option but to sail all the way to Norway and return home via Sweden, Denmark, London, Sydney and Melbourne. They did not make Hobart until early July, an absence of nine months. Three of Cyril Longman's photographs were published in the Hobart Mercury in July 1931 although the quality of the archived images mean that it is not worthwhile to reproduce them here.

That was the last visit of the Nielsen Alonso to Hobart as the falling demand for whale oil made it uneconomic for the Norwegians to continue to fish in the southern hemisphere.

By around 1934 Cyril and Ethel were back at Nevada Street. In 1935 they separated and Ethel returned to Melbourne with the three children. Cyril remained in Hobart at 3 Nevada Street until at least 1954 and later moved back to 11 Waterloo Crescent, Battery Point. He died in 1974.

**Loy Ruth Longman** married Eric Dick in 1940 who then worked as a driver for J Chapman and Sons. They lived at 50 Howitt St, Prahran until the 1950s and had one son Geoffrey John. On the electoral rolls they were then known as Eric Stanley and Joy Ruth Dick. They then separated – Eric staying in South Yarra and Loy / Joy moving back to Moonee Ponds.

**Vida Ethel Longman** married Frank Arthur. They lived at 21 Wilson Street, Moonee Ponds, with Ethel also living there in her final years. Frank worked for the railways as a locomotive fireman, and they had two children – Brian and Cheryl.

Cyril and Ethel's only son **Keith Cyril Longman** also worked for J Chapman & Sons as first a mechanic and then a driver.



In 1940 Keith volunteered for service in World War II and after several reserve training camps was assigned to the 58<sup>th</sup> Australian Infantry Battalion in late 1941. In 1942 he was transferred to the Line of Command Provost Company – the Military Police. He was based in Windsor and experienced several short detachments including one to the Australian Army Provost Gaol in February 1943. In July 1943 he was severely reprimanded when he drank two bottles of wine which had been confiscated and “which it was his duty to preserve”.

Later that year the 10<sup>th</sup> Provost Company was shipped up to Port Moresby, and in the following July to Buna which was the beach town at the northern end of the Kokoda track. In November they relocated to Torokina on Bouganville.

On December 29<sup>th</sup> 1944 the unit returned to Australia. On January 24<sup>th</sup> 1945 Keith married Winifred Mathieson in Sydney. He continued to serve in Melbourne until December 1945 when he was discharged.

Keith and Winifred had one son, Keith Adrian, in 1947 and lived in Bradshaw St, Essendon West, Melbourne.

In 1951 Keith was involved in a motor accident which, for a time, put him in a position of legal history. On the morning of May 28<sup>th</sup> Keith's car collided with that of Clarence Wheeler, a 20 year old newsboy, who was standing in front of his stationery car trying to crank start it. Clarence was crushed and lost both of his legs as a result. He sued Keith for £25,000 in damages and, in September 1952, was awarded £19,500 which was then an Australian record for an accident claim. On appeal the State Full Court found the damages to be excessive and ordered a retrial. They stated that Wheeler would be able to attain a sedentary job for which he would not earn less than he would have as a newsboy. Wheeler then appealed to the High Court of Australia but we have not been able to ascertain the final outcome of the case.

Sometime after 1954 Winifred moved back to Sydney and they divorced – she died in 1998. Keith was remarried to Elizabeth Joan Jardine (nee McDonald) in 1967. Keith died of heart failure in 1972 still living in Bradshaw St. Elizabeth died in 1983.

Ethel Sarah Longman (nee Chapman) died on June 21<sup>st</sup>, 1960 at the Royal Melbourne Hospital of injuries received after falling to a footpath. She was 75 years old.

## ***Rita Marie Chapman***

Rita married Ernest Edgerton in 1922. Ernest was born in Melbourne, and lived in Moonee Ponds. He worked as a turner.

In March 1916 Ernest volunteered for service in the Great War, saying that he was a twenty-one year old ironmonger. By the time for him to report to camp, however, the army had discovered that he was in fact only 16 and a half years of age and therefore his enlistment was cancelled.

In 1923 Rita had a daughter named Evon. By 1936 Ernest was working as a driver, presumably with the Chapman family, although by 1942 he was working for the Shell Oil Company.

In January 1942 Ernest made up for his earlier disappointment by volunteering for service in World War II. Now 42 years of age, he was assigned to the Bulk Issue Petrol and Oil Depot. There were a couple of these in Australia but we won't know which location(s) Ernest served in. He was discharged in October 1943.

Also in 1943, they had a second child Peter, twenty years younger than his sister.

In 1942 Evon was working as a typist and had married Frederick Carton, a metal polisher. This marriage did not last long as there is record of a Carton v Carton divorce case in 1943, although we can't be completely sure of this.

In any case, sometime before 1949, Evon married Roderick Douglas. They had two children – Peter and Rodney. Roderick Douglas died in 2007.

Ernest Edgerton died in 1972, and Rita in 1976.

## ***Frank Gordon Chapman***

Frank Chapman married Clarice Jane Rogers in 1924 in Fitzroy. He was involved in J Chapman & Sons for a long time describing himself as a “motor proprietor” or “garage proprietor” like his brothers.

They lived in Stuart St, Moonee Ponds in 1931 and at 37 Maribyrnong Rd, Ascot Vale from 1942 to 1949. In the interim they were on the electoral roll at 911 Glenhuntly Rd, Glenhuntly in 1936 and 37. Perhaps he went out on his own and had a garage there, or perhaps a residence.

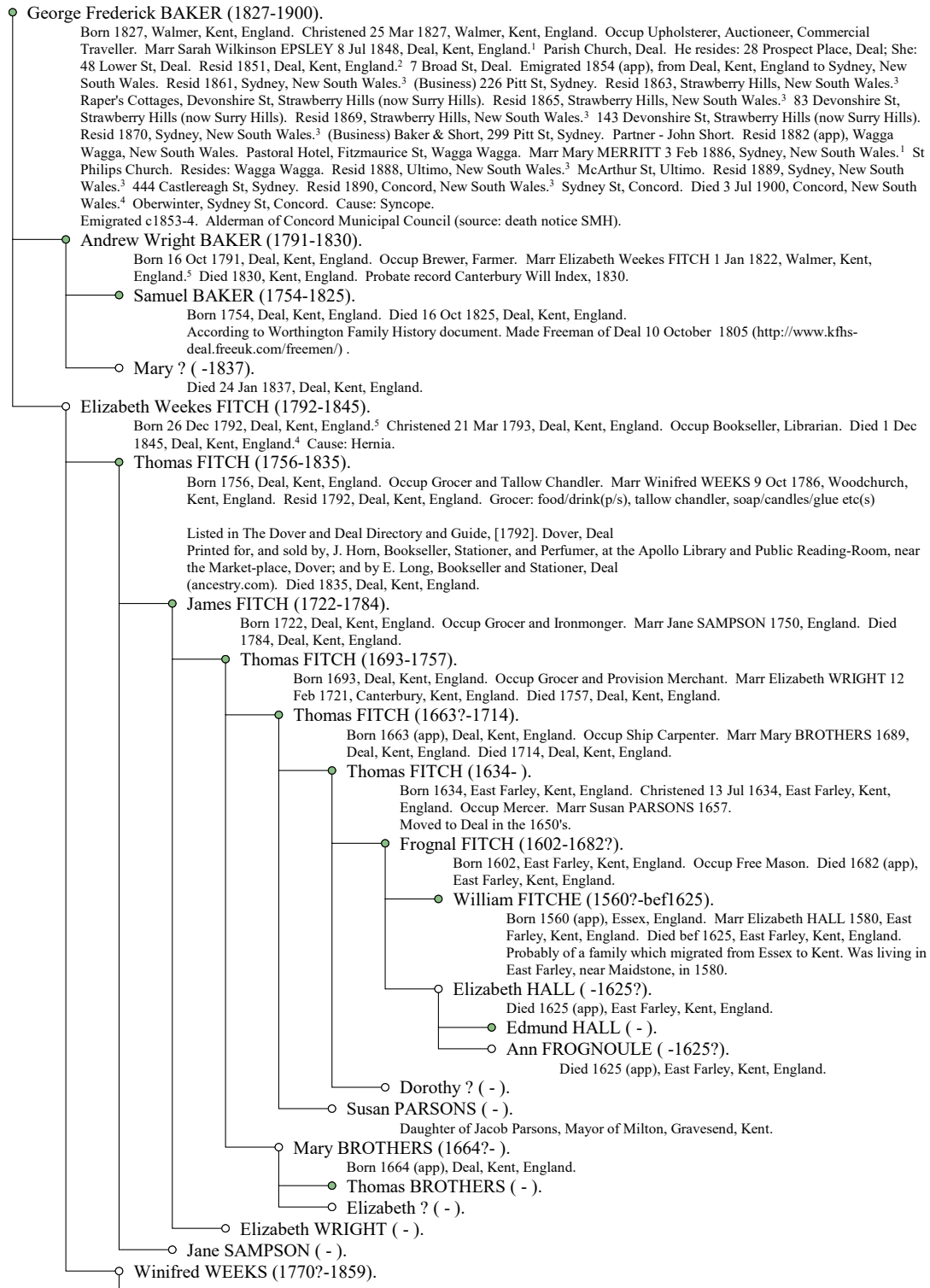
In 1949 they moved to McRae on the Mornington Peninsula – they operated a garage at Silver Sands on the Nepean Hwy. After retiring in the early 1970s they gave their address at 23 Browne St which was probably their residence.

Frank and Clarice had no children.

Frank was the last of John Chapman and Laura Baker's surviving children when he died in 1985. Clarice died in 1987.

# The Baker Family Ancestors – Deal, Kent

## George BAKER (1827-1900)



Born 1770 (app), Woodchurch, Kent, England. Died 18 Sep 1859, Deal, Kent, England.<sup>4</sup> 94 Beach St, Deal. Cause: Old Age.

Note: Sarah Wickes is informant.

*Note on Marriage to Thomas FITCH*: Kent, Surrey, London: - Canterbury Marriage Licences, 1781-1809; Volume 32; fol 123 1786 (Ancestry.com).

● Wilmshurst WEEKS ( - ).

Occup Grazier. Marr Elizabeth GARDENER 1764 (app), Woodchurch, Kent, England.

○ Elizabeth GARDENER ( - ).

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### Sources

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- 1 "Marriage Certificate".
- 2 "Census 1851".
- 3 "Sands Directories".
- 4 "Death Certificate".
- 5 "IGI".

### The Ancestors of George Frederick Baker

## The Baker Family

George Frederick Baker with his wife Sarah and their four children left their home in Deal, on England's Kent coast, in early 1854. While both of his parents had died by then, he left behind a large extended family of relatives.

George had one brother, although another brother, also named George Frederick, is believed to have been born in 1824 and died as an infant. **Andrew James William Baker** was born in 1822 and was four years older than George. He married Mary Mummery in 1845 and he took over the running of his mother's library & bookselling business at 111 Beach St, on the Deal seafront, when she died in 1845. Andrew and Mary had three children – Emily (born 1846), Helen (1850, also known as Ellen) and Arthur (1853).



Operating from the bookshop, he published at least two guide books to Deal and its environs, but it appears that financial problems brought him down in around 1858. He was bankrupted in 1859 and his estate was assigned in September 1859 at which time he was in Maidstone gaol (London Gazette, 20 September 1859). He was released in October 1859.

**The following PRISONERS, whose Estate and Effects have been vested in the Provisional Assignee by Order of the Court for Relief of Insolvent Debtors, and whose Petitions and Schedules, duly filed, have been referred and transmitted to the County Court hereinafter mentioned, pursuant to the Statute in that behalf, is ordered to be brought up, to be dealt with according to Law :**

**Before the Judge of the County Court of Kent, holden at the Sessions House, Maidstone, on Wednesday the 19th day of October, 1859, at Eleven o'Clock in the Forenoon precisely.**

**Andrew William James Baker, of No. 111, Beach-street, Deal, in the county of Kent, Fancy Stationer, Librarian, Bookseller, and House Agent, occasionally letting lodgings, and lately holding the appointment of Collector of Property and Income Tax for the District of Sandwich, in the said county of Kent.**

The London Gazette, 4 October 1859

Andrew and his family were living at Shoreditch in the East End of London by the time of the census of 1861. He was a tobacconist and stationer. By 1871 they had moved to Ashford where they established a shop in New St which was described as a grocer, general dealer and library over the years. By 1881, Andrew is calling himself William Baker.

Mary Mummery Baker died in 1892. In 1901, Andrew is still living in Ashford and now describes himself as a solicitor's law clerk. He died at home in Ashford on 12<sup>th</sup> January 1908, of cancer.

Neither of their daughters married. Emily was a domestic cook. Helen worked with her parents in their shops most of the time and was living with her father in Ashford when he died. She was still living in Ashford in 1911, working as a charwoman.

Their son Arthur Baker married Kezia King in Lambeth, London, in 1880. They had one daughter, Agnes Mary, in 1887. Arthur was a labourer and railway porter. He died in Lambeth in March 1897 of enteric (typhoid) fever. Just three months later, Kezia also died of heart failure. They were aged 44 and 41 respectively and their daughter was just 9 years old.

In 1901 Agnes, aged 13, was an inmate at the Lambeth workhouse "New School" at Elder Rd, West Norwood. This charity school housed the children of the poor, and taught them skills aimed to help them gain employment. In 1911 there is an Agnes Mary Baker working as a domestic servant in an apartment house in Eastbourne, Surrey, which may be her.



Images of Lambeth New School c1902

## Andrew Wright Baker

George and Andrew Baker's parents were Andrew Wright Baker and Elizabeth Weekes Fitch.

Andrew Wright Baker was born in 1794 in Deal, one of the two sons of Samuel Baker and Mary Newton who made it to adulthood. Mary Newton was Samuel's second wife, married when he was 31 and she was 32. They had six children but only Andrew and his older brother James Isaac Baker (born 1790) survived. The other children were James (1787-1789), Andrew Wright (1791-1794), William (1792-1795), and Mary (1796-1796). Samuel already had five children from his first marriage to Sarah Lilly, of whom more later.

On the death of his father Samuel in 1825, Andrew Wright Baker inherited £50 "of lawful money of Great Britain", a brewery in Walmer and 2 ½ acres of arable farming land in Deal, both of which he was already occupying. So we know that Andrew was keeping livestock in Deal while he was also living in and operating the brewery which was also on a block of about 2 acres. His brother James did even better as he was left the dwelling and apartment building where he was running his pipe making business and £500 which, in those days, was an enormous sum.

Meanwhile, Andrew had married Elizabeth Weekes Fitch, daughter of Thomas Fitch who was the proprietor of the grocer's business which was more or less opposite the pier on the Deal shorefront. Elizabeth ran a bookshop and library further down at 111 Beach Rd.

Unfortunately Andrew Wright Baker did not survive his father by more than five years as he died in 1830 at the age of 35, with his two children aged eight and three. In his will, Andrew lists the dwelling house, wagon lodge, brewhouse and stables at the Walmer property; the 2 ½ acres of farming land in Deal; and his "live and dead" farming stock. His estate was left to his widow Elizabeth for her use during her lifetime and, when she died in 1845 at 52 years of age, these assets were to be equally split between their two sons.

When Elizabeth died Andrew was 23 years of age, but George was just 18 and, therefore, under age. In her will, which was made on the day before she died, she allowed for him to be "under the guidance" of her mother Winifred Fitch, and for her brother James Fitch to legally act for him until he was of age. James Fitch died in 1851.

George started his upholstery business, perhaps with the advice and guidance of his father's friend and executor Comfort Kingsmill, who was Deal's pre-eminent upholsterer, as well as nine times mayor of the city, and the father of Elizabeth who was married to George's financial guardian James Fitch.

Eight years later George Frederick Baker and his family were on the open seas heading for their new life in Australia.

## Samuel Baker



Samuel Baker was born in 1754, the son of Samuel Baker, senior, and Martha (whose maiden name may have been Curtis, although we cannot be certain).

Samuel Baker was a wealthy man, a well-known citizen who was made a Freeman of the City of Deal in 1805. This entitled him to vote in the parliamentary elections – an exclusive right until voting was extended to all householders in 1835. After that date the title of Freeman became largely honorary.

We do not know for certain the source of Samuel Baker's wealth. By the time of his death in 1825 he is described merely as a Gentleman and he notes only that he has rental income from the apartments in Middle St, and that the property is "in the several occupations of myself and my son James Isaac Baker".

We know that **James Isaac Baker** was a master pipe maker, of the tobacco variety, and he continued to run that business from 27a Middle St until his death in 1857 whereupon the pipe making business, and the property, passed to his second son Henry Newton Baker.

Henry Newton Baker never married, nor did the third son William Newton Baker, also a pipe maker, who died of a fever at the age of 19 in 1838. James' oldest son was James Neville Baker, a painter, plasterer and glazier who married Ann Osborn. None of the children of James Isaac Baker had children.

Samuel's will left not only the property in Middle St and £500 to James, the two properties and £50 to Andrew, but also allowed for £50 each to his three living children from his first marriage and a further £50 to be shared among the children of his son Samuel Lilly Baker who had pre-deceased him. The remainder of his estate, after the death of his widow Mary, was also split in equal proportions to those same three children and six grandchildren.



Samuel first married Sarah (or Ann) Lilly in 1775. Most sources use the first name Sarah, although in the parish records for the marriage she is known as Ann Lilly, on the birth record for the first son Samuel Lilly Baker the mother's name is Sarah, and for the other four children it is Ann. There were two sisters Ann and Sarah Lilly but there is no evidence that Samuel married both of them. Sarah is generally accepted, as the burial of Sarah Baker in Deal on 21<sup>st</sup> July 1786 is recorded one year after the birth of their fifth child Martha Baker. There is no record of a death of an Ann Baker. However, this is still not completely satisfactory as the second marriage of Samuel Baker, to Mary Newton, is recorded to have taken place on 4<sup>th</sup> July 1786.

The eldest child of Samuel and Sarah was **Samuel Lilly Baker**, born 1775 (christened 3 September). He married Susannah Abigail Harrod in London in 1794 and they had eleven children – six of who lived to adulthood. Samuel died sometime after 1815, when their last child was born, and before his father made his will in 1824. This branch of the family remained in Kent – mostly in Deal and Margate.

The second child, **Lucy Ann Esther Baker**, was born in 1778 and married Richard Baker, a carpenter. They had seven children. After Richard died in 1826, Lucy married Thomas Lawrance of Walmer – they had no children. Lucy died in 1855. Lucy's family also remained in and around Deal until many of the family moved to London late in the 1800s.

**Maria Baker**, born 1780, married John Smith, and **Martha Baker**, the youngest born in 1785, had also died by 1824.

## **Ann Martha Baker and James Malpass Aggar**

Ann was the fourth child of Samuel Baker and Sarah Lilly, and is more interesting to us as two of her children (Ann and John) both took their families to Australia at about the same time as their cousin George Frederick Baker.

Ann Martha Baker was born in 1781, in Deal, and married James Malpass Aggar in 1804. Apart from Ann and John, they had two children who died young (Mary and James), and three who survived to adulthood (William, another James and Samuel). Ann Malpass Aggar was born in 1811, the third child and oldest surviving daughter. John Stakarrt Aggar was the sixth child, born in 1819.

Ann Aggar married Alexander Hunter, a master boot maker, in Margate in 1831. They emigrated to Australia in 1859-60 on the FitzJames with their three youngest children John (then aged 17), William (14) and Sarah (11). Three older sons Alexander, Charles and James were already in Australia having arrived around two years previously. They were all also bootmakers. Another daughter Charlotte married Thomas Carter in 1857 and remained in England.

They both settled initially in the Newcastle area of New South Wales.

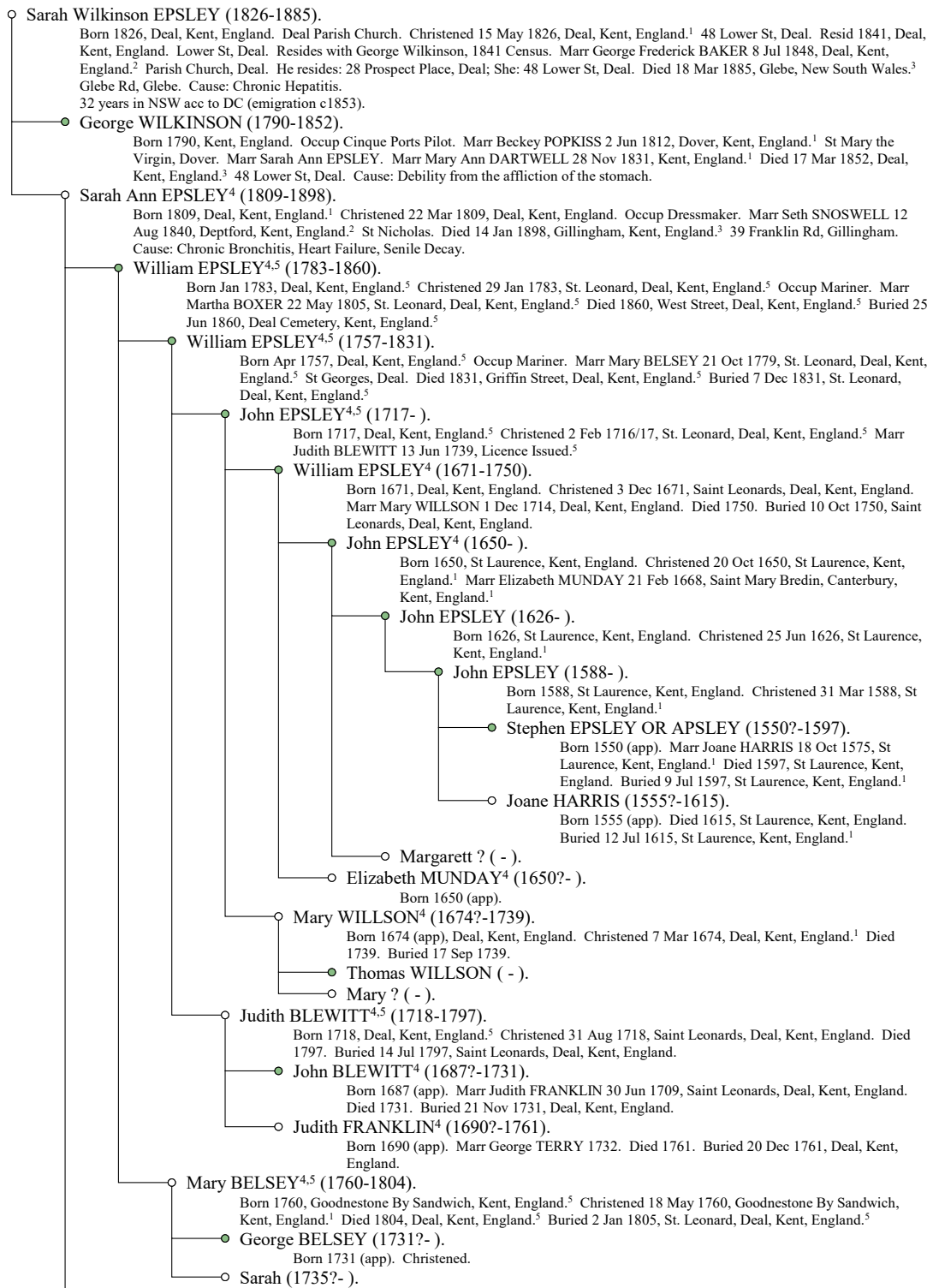
[This section is still a work in progress]

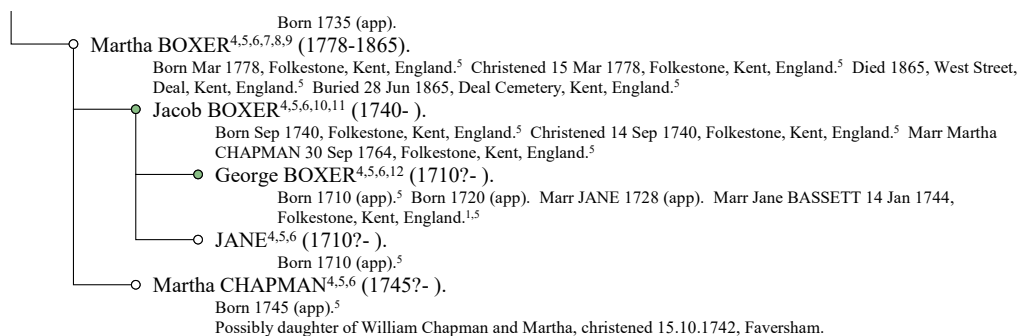
## ***The Fitch Family***

***Thomas Fitch and Elizabeth Weekes***

# The Epsley Family Ancestors – Deal, Kent

## Sarah EPSLEY (1826-1885)






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#### Sources

- 1 "IGI".
- 2 "Marriage Certificate".
- 3 "Death Certificate".
- 4 "<http://geneweb.geneanet.org/rnelson>". Record originated in...
- 5 "Boxer.FTW". Text From Source: Date of Import: Dec 15, 2000
- 6 The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, "International Genealogical Index (R)" (Copyright (c) 1980, 1997, data as of February 1997).
- 7 "#15". Batch #: P020721, Sheet #:, Source Call #: 0908172 IT 1, 3.
- 8 "#62". Batch #: P020721, Sheet #:, Source Call #: 0908172 IT 1, 3.
- 9 "#70". Batch #: P020721, Sheet #:, Source Call #: 0908172 IT 1, 3.
- 10 "#5". Batch #: P020721, Sheet #:, Source Call #: 0908172 IT 1, 3.
- 11 "#7". Batch #: M020721, Sheet #:, Source Call #: 0908172 IT 2.
- 12 "#51". Batch #: M020721, Sheet #:, Source Call #: 0908172 IT 2.

#### The Ancestors of Sarah Wilkinson Epsley



***George Wilkinson and Sarah Ann Epsley***



***William Epsley and Martha Boxer***

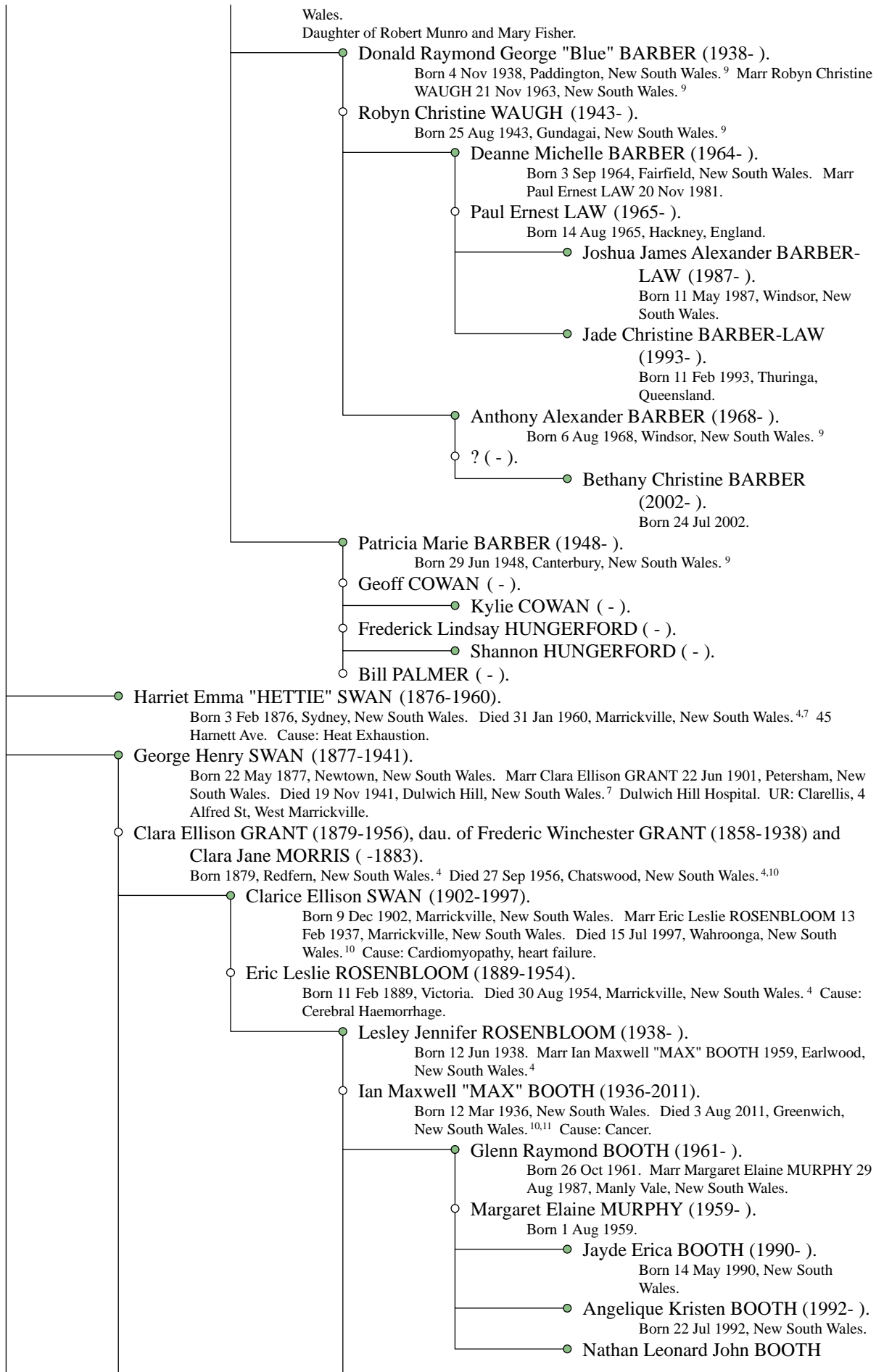
## ***The Epsley Family***

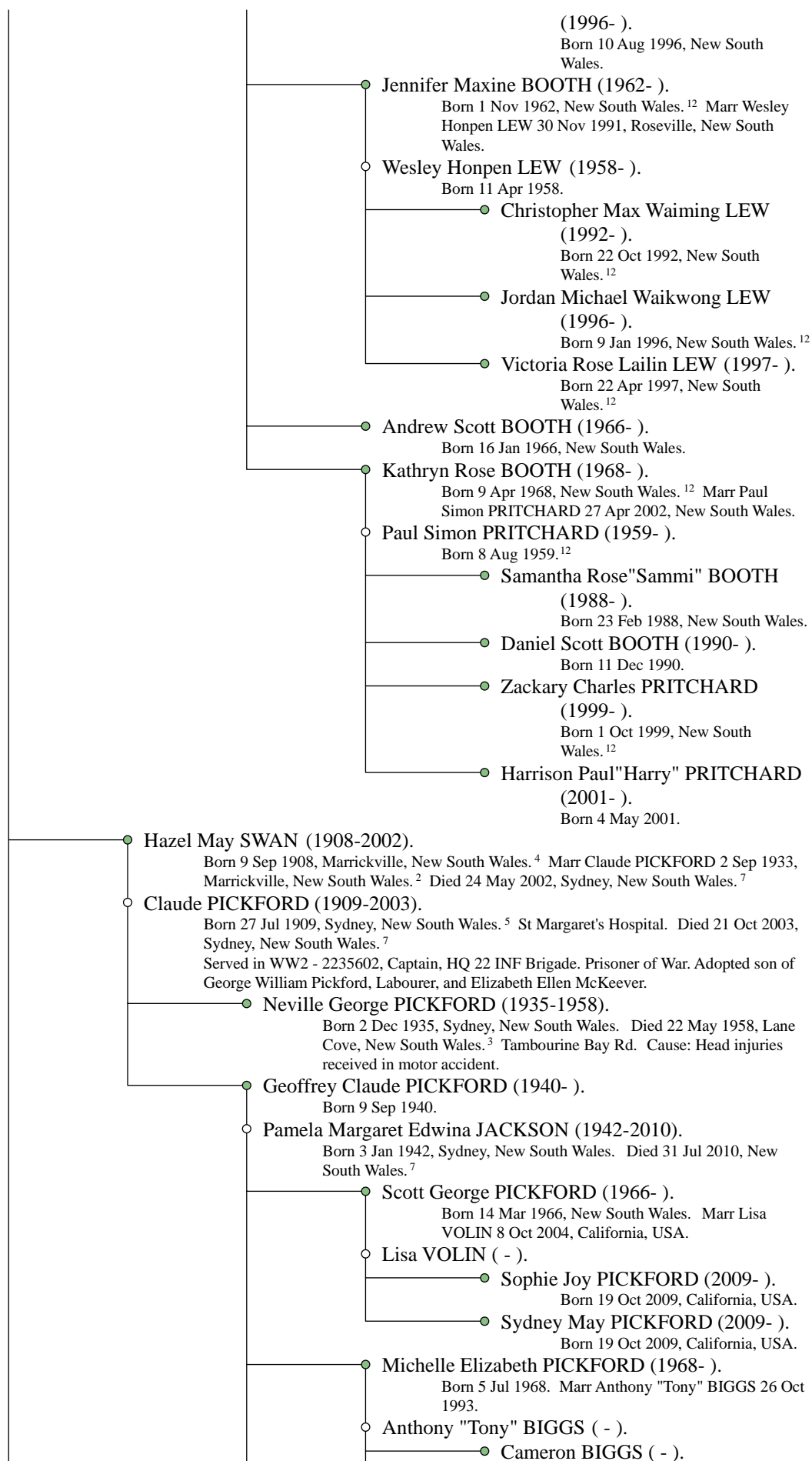
## ***The Boxer Family***

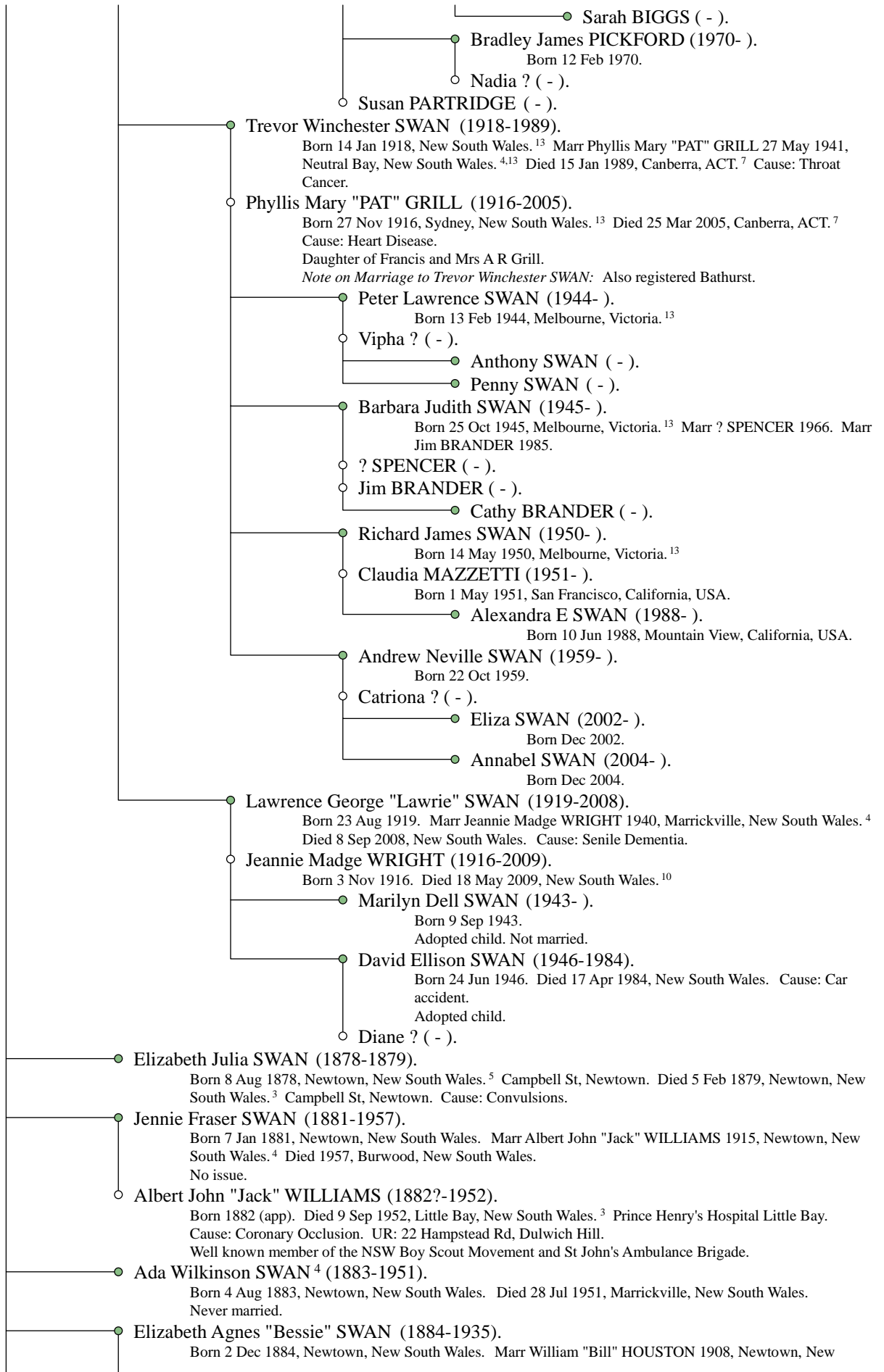
# Family Tree - The Descendants of George Frederick Baker and Sarah Wilkinson Epsley

## George BAKER (1827-1900)

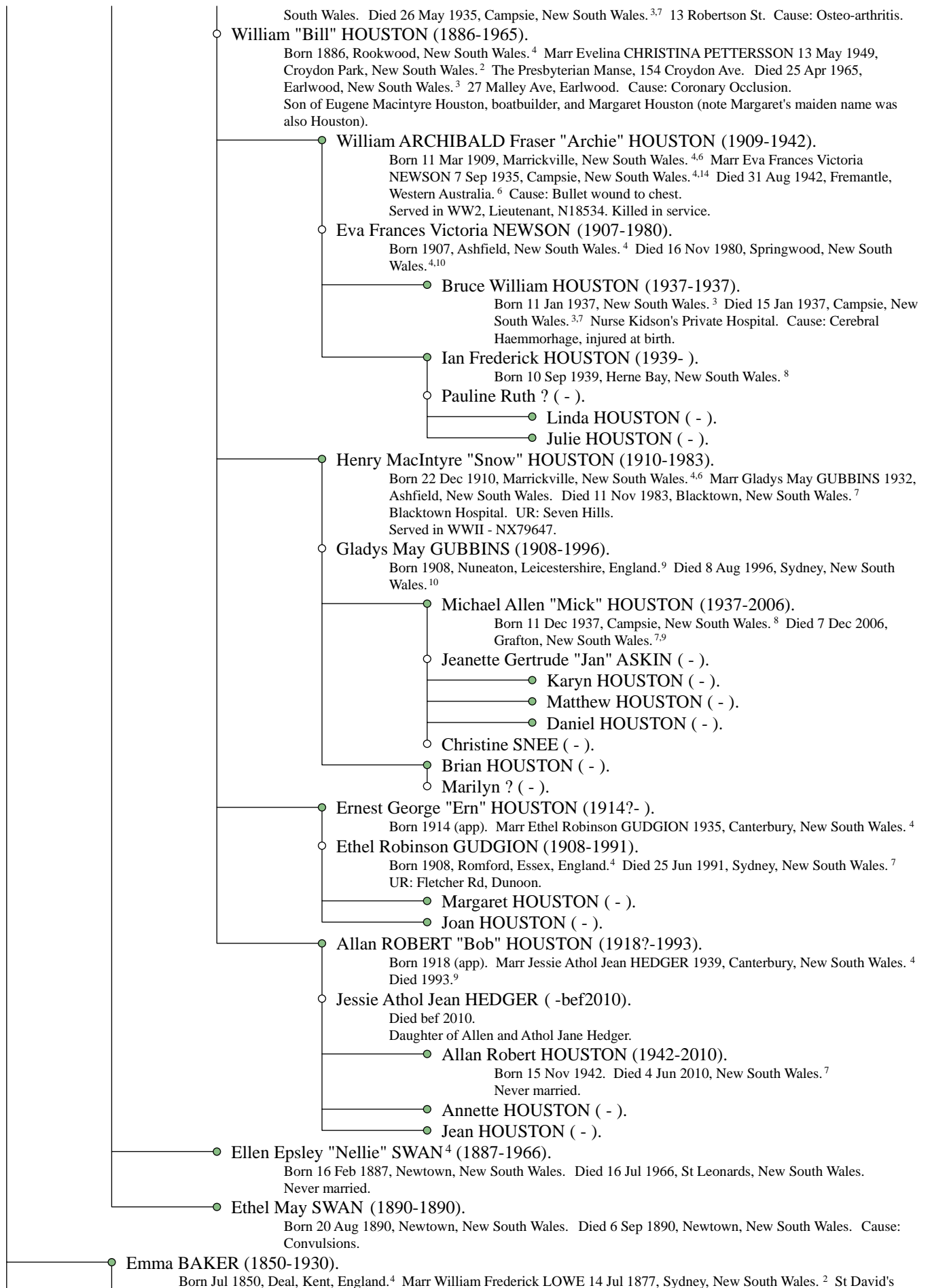
- George Frederick BAKER (1827-1900), son of Andrew Wright BAKER (1791-1830) and Elizabeth Weekes FITCH (1792-1845).  
Born 1827, Walmer, Kent, England. Christened 25 Mar 1827, Walmer, Kent, England. <sup>1</sup> Marr Sarah Wilkinson EPSLEY 8 Jul 1848, Deal, Kent, England. <sup>2</sup> St Leonard's Parish Church, Deal. He resides: 28 Prospect Place, Deal; She: 48 Lower St, Deal. Marr Mary MERRITT 3 Feb 1886, Sydney, New South Wales. <sup>2</sup> St Philips Church. Resides: Wagga Wagga. Died 3 Jul 1900, Concord, New South Wales. <sup>3</sup> Oberwinter, Sydney St, Concord. Cause: Syncope.  
Alderman of Concord Municipal Council. There is also a christening record for George Frederick Baker, of same parentage, for 21st May, 1824 in Deal, Kent (IGI) - perhaps a brother who died as an infant?
- Sarah Wilkinson EPSLEY (1826-1885), dau. of George WILKINSON (1790?-1852) and Sarah Ann EPSLEY (1809-1898).  
Born 1826, Deal, Kent, England. Deal Parish Church. Christened 15 May 1826, Deal, Kent, England. <sup>1</sup> 48 Lower St, Deal. Died 18 Mar 1885, Glebe, New South Wales. <sup>3</sup> Glebe Rd, Glebe. Cause: Chronic Hepatitis.  
32 years in NSW acc to DC (emigration c1853).  
*Note on Marriage to George Frederick BAKER:* St Leonards, Deal, Kent.
- Elizabeth Harriet BAKER<sup>2</sup> (1849-1931).  
Born 25 Apr 1849, Deal, Kent, England. <sup>4</sup> 7 Broad St, Deal. Marr Henry William SWAN 13 Nov 1873, Strawberry Hills, New South Wales. <sup>2</sup> Devonshire St, Strawberry Hills (Surry Hills). Died 28 Aug 1931, Marrickville, New South Wales. <sup>3</sup> 45 Harnett Ave, Marrickville. Cause: Cerebral Haemorrhage.
- Henry William SWAN (1848-1905).  
Born 14 Dec 1848, Ipswich, Suffolk, England. Died 8 Sep 1905, Rozelle, New South Wales. <sup>3</sup> Callan Park Asylum for the Insane. Cause: Paralysis of the Brain accelerated by an accidental fall from a tram car.  
Son of John Fraser Swan (Engineer) and Elizabeth Jane Danes (or Daynes).
- Laura Eliza SWAN (1874-1945).  
Born 17 Nov 1874, Strawberry Hills, New South Wales. <sup>5</sup> 143 Devonshire St (usual residence Campbell St, Newtown). Marr George Foster BARBER 17 Jan 1900, Newtown, New South Wales. <sup>2</sup> Town Hall, Newtown. Died 21 Sep 1945, Parramatta, New South Wales. <sup>3</sup> Mental Hospital Parramatta. Cause: Arterio sclerosis, senility.
- George Foster BARBER (1872-1958).  
Born 23 May 1872, Bendigo, Victoria. <sup>6</sup> Died 12 Sep 1958, Concord, New South Wales. <sup>3</sup> Repatriation General Hospital. Cause: Aortic Stenosis. UR: 12 Merriel Street, Sans Souci.  
Served in WWI. Son of Alfred Barber, Painter, and Phillis Foster.
- Leslie George BARBER (1901-1919).  
Born 1901, Newtown, New South Wales. <sup>4</sup> Died 27 Sep 1919, Marrickville, New South Wales. <sup>3</sup> Steel Engineering Works, 299 Victoria Rd, Marrickville. Cause: Accidental Injuries - Head crushed in slotting machine.
- Ruby Laura BARBER (1904-1978).  
Born 1904, Petersham, New South Wales. <sup>4</sup> Marr Charles Richard MACNAMARA 1938, Petersham, New South Wales. Died 12 Nov 1978, North Sydney, New South Wales. <sup>7</sup>
- Charles Richard MACNAMARA (-1959).  
Died 1959, Marrickville, New South Wales. <sup>4</sup>
- Merle Lucy MACNAMARA (1940- ).  
Born 10 Jan 1940.
- ? LYNCH (- ).
- Leslie Charles MACNAMARA (1941-1999).  
Born 22 Sep 1941. Died 25 Dec 1999, Sydney, New South Wales. <sup>7</sup>  
Never married.
- Ross Keith MACNAMARA (1945-1997).  
Born 18 May 1945. Died 28 Dec 1997, New South Wales. <sup>7</sup>  
Never married.
- Winifred Loris "Win" BARBER (1906-1988).  
Born 1906, Marrickville, New South Wales. Marr Tasman Roy BOWER 1928, Marrickville, New South Wales. Died 7 Jul 1988, Wyee, New South Wales. <sup>7</sup>
- Tasman Roy BOWER (- ).  
● Roy Leslie BOWER (1929- ).  
Born 23 Dec 1929, Ashfield, New South Wales. <sup>8</sup>
- Marie (- ).
- Barbara Joy BOWER (1935- ).  
Born 8 Jul 1935, Hobart, Tasmania. Marr Raymond George WALKER 1959, Sydney, New South Wales. <sup>4</sup>
- Raymond George WALKER (- ).  
● Catherine Joy WALKER (- ).
- Raymond Foster BARBER (1912-1997).  
Born 21 Sep 1912, Marrickville, New South Wales. <sup>6</sup> Marr Agnes Morrison MUNRO 31 Jan 1938, Sydney, New South Wales. Died 4 Jan 1997, Brisbane, Queensland.  
Served in Militia, pre WW2.
- Agnes Morrison MUNRO (1912-1983).  
Born 31 May 1912, Edinburgh, Scotland. Died 13 Apr 1983, Charmhaven, New South

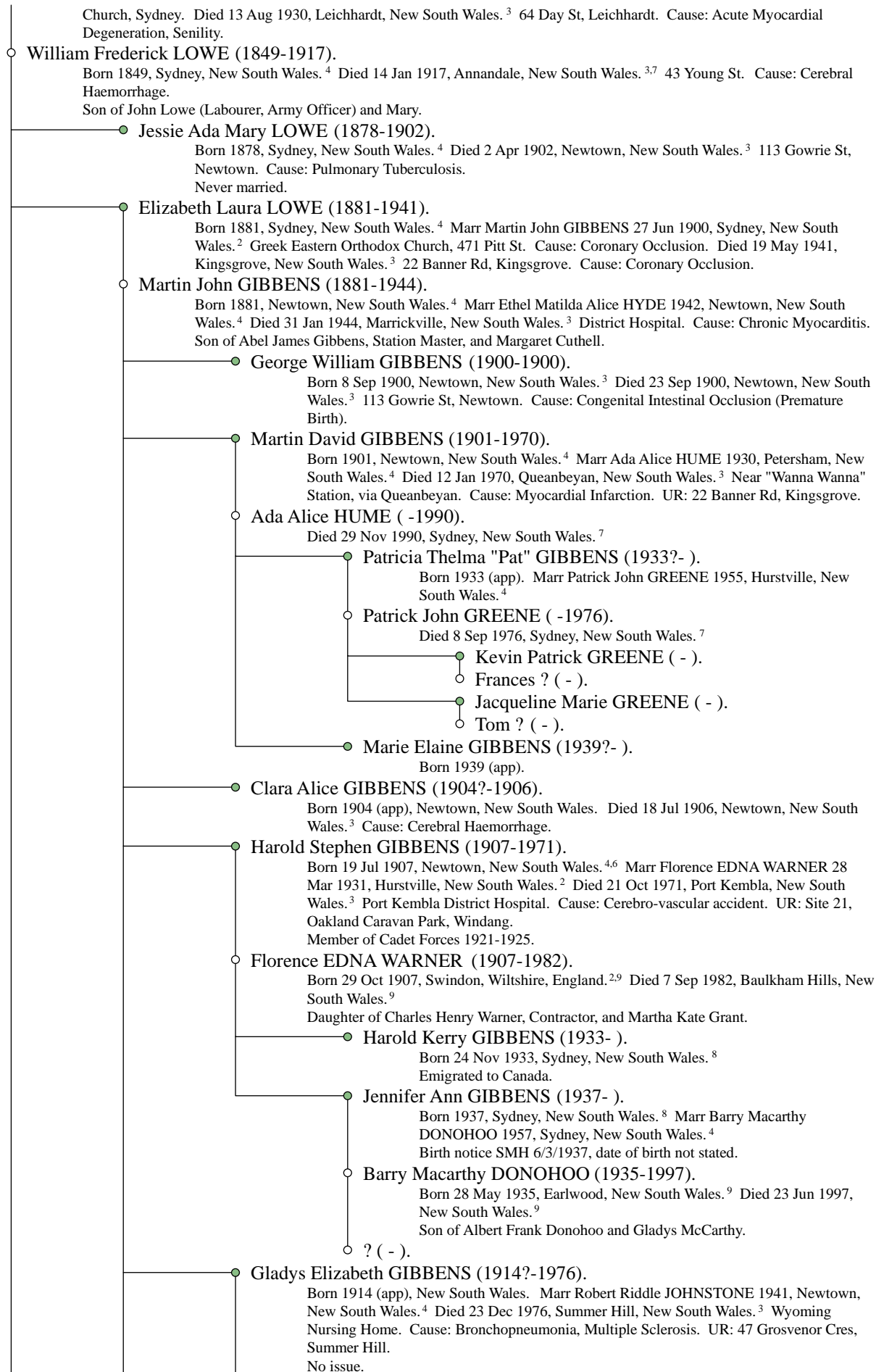


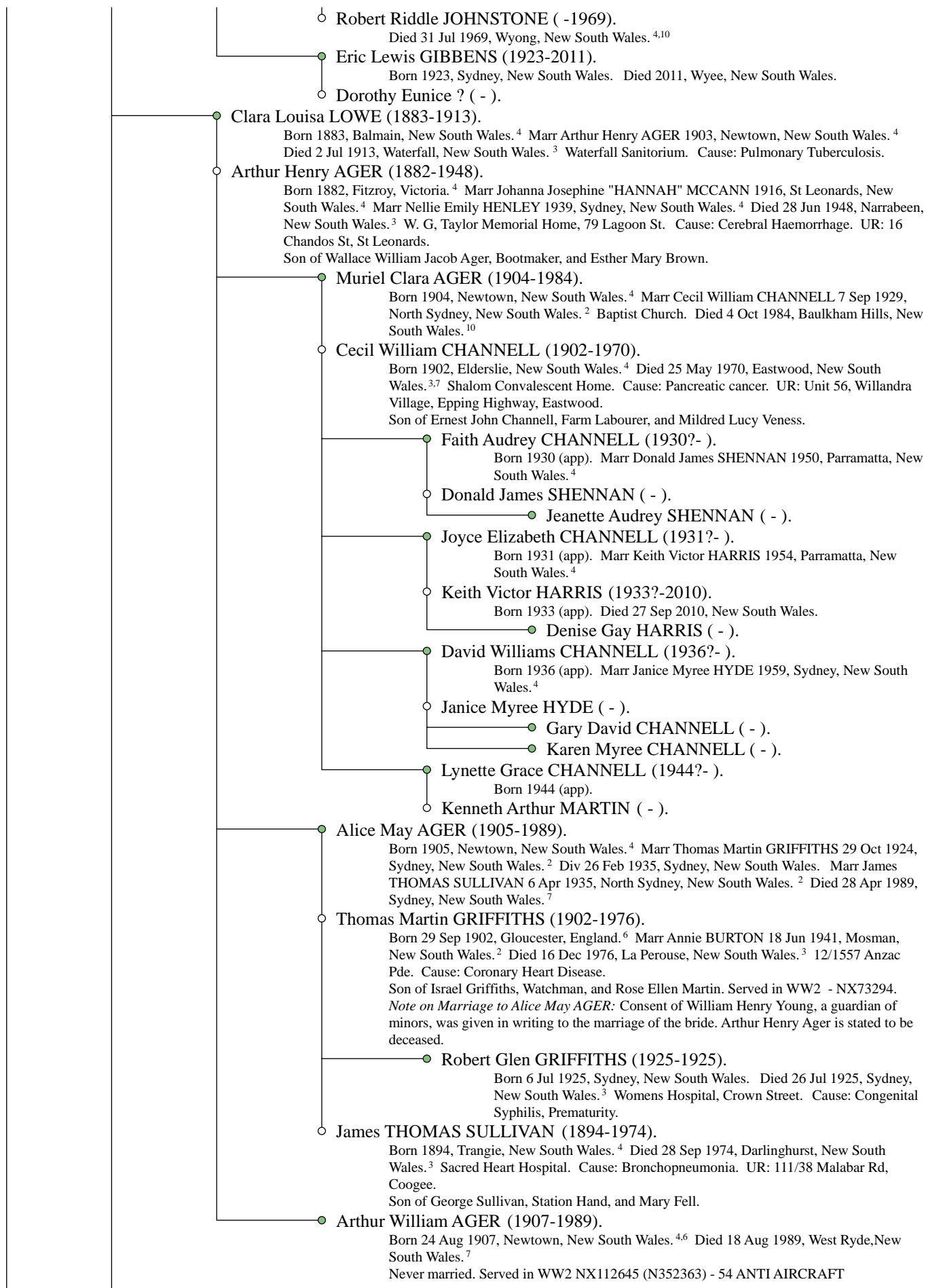


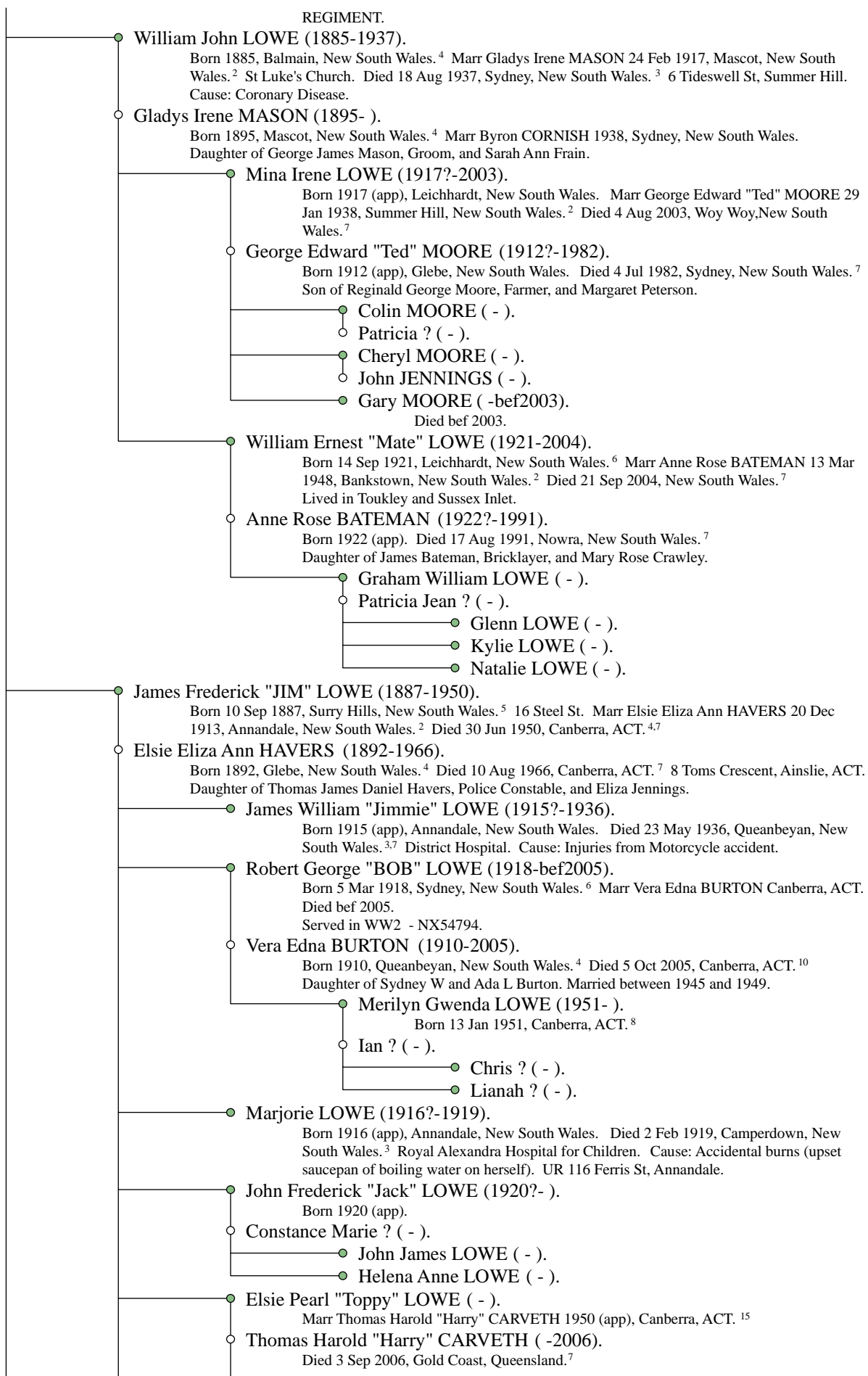


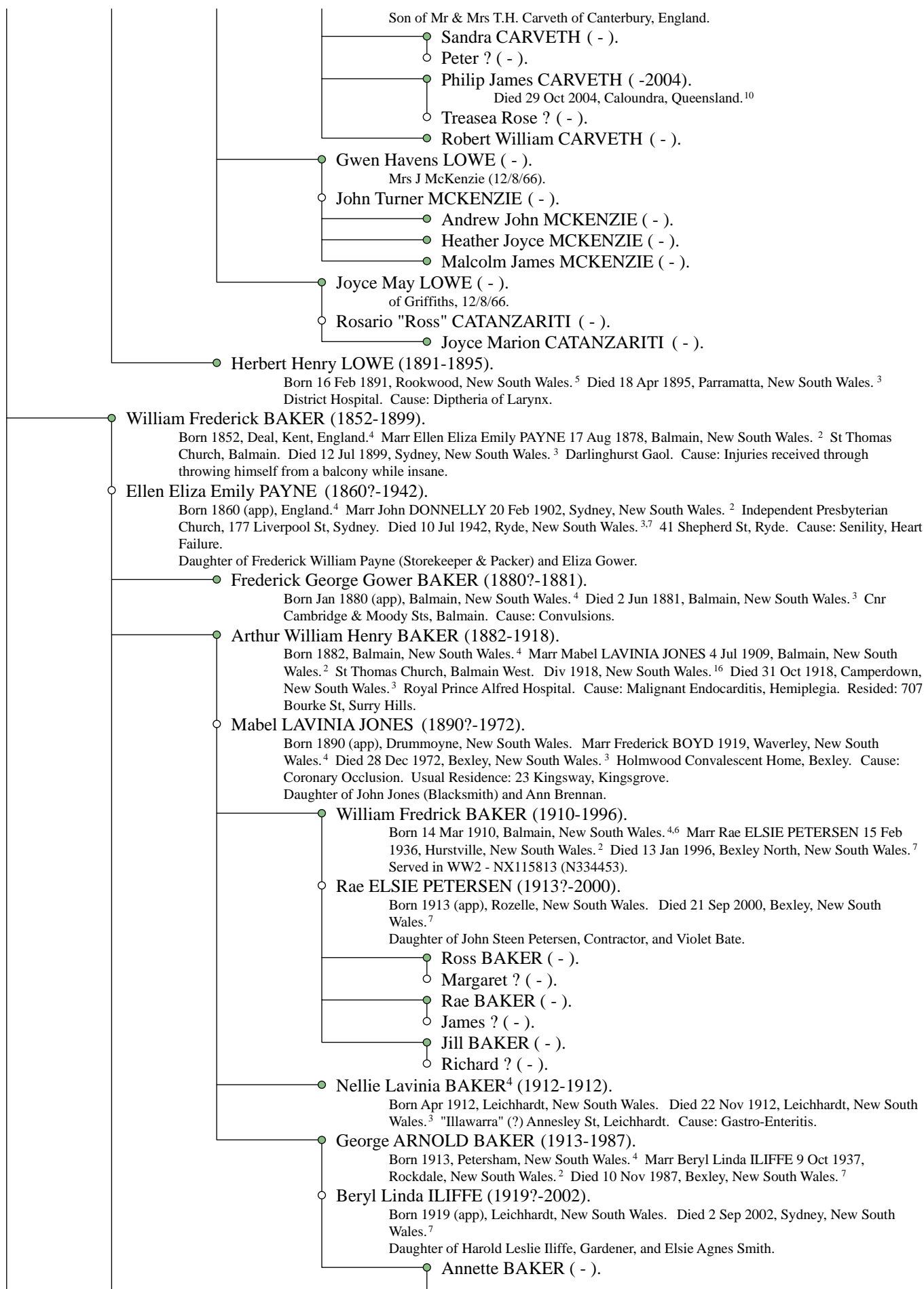


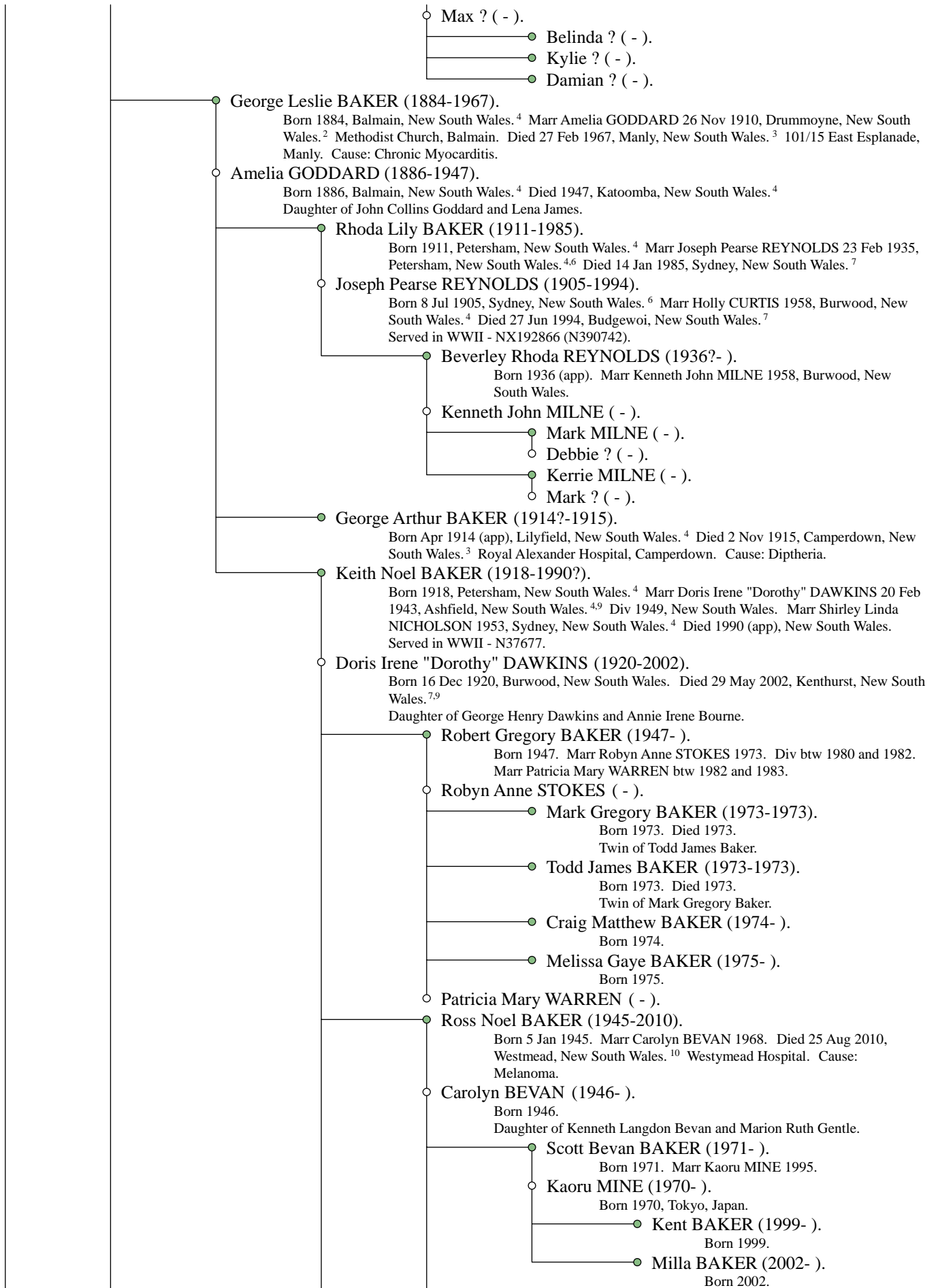


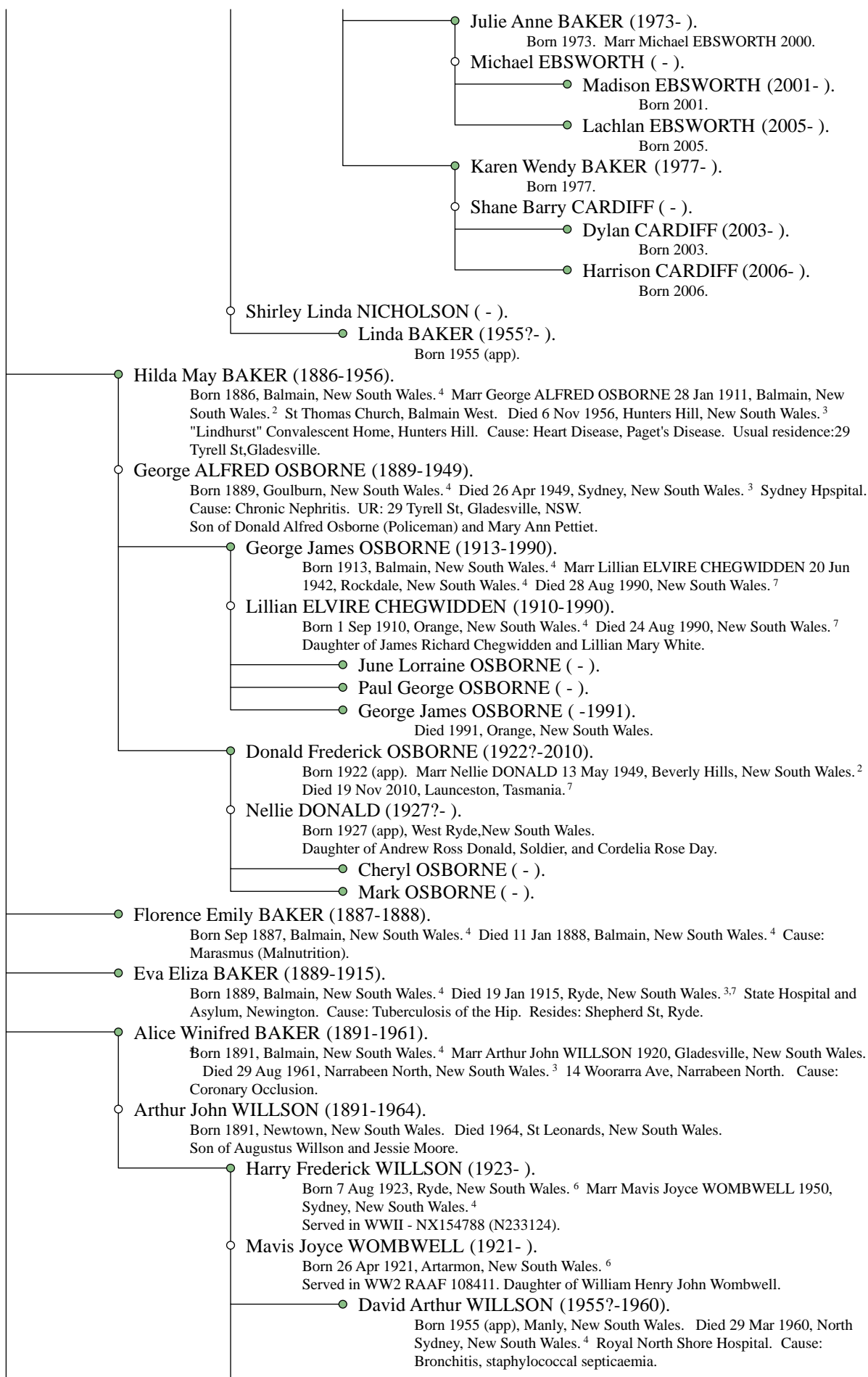


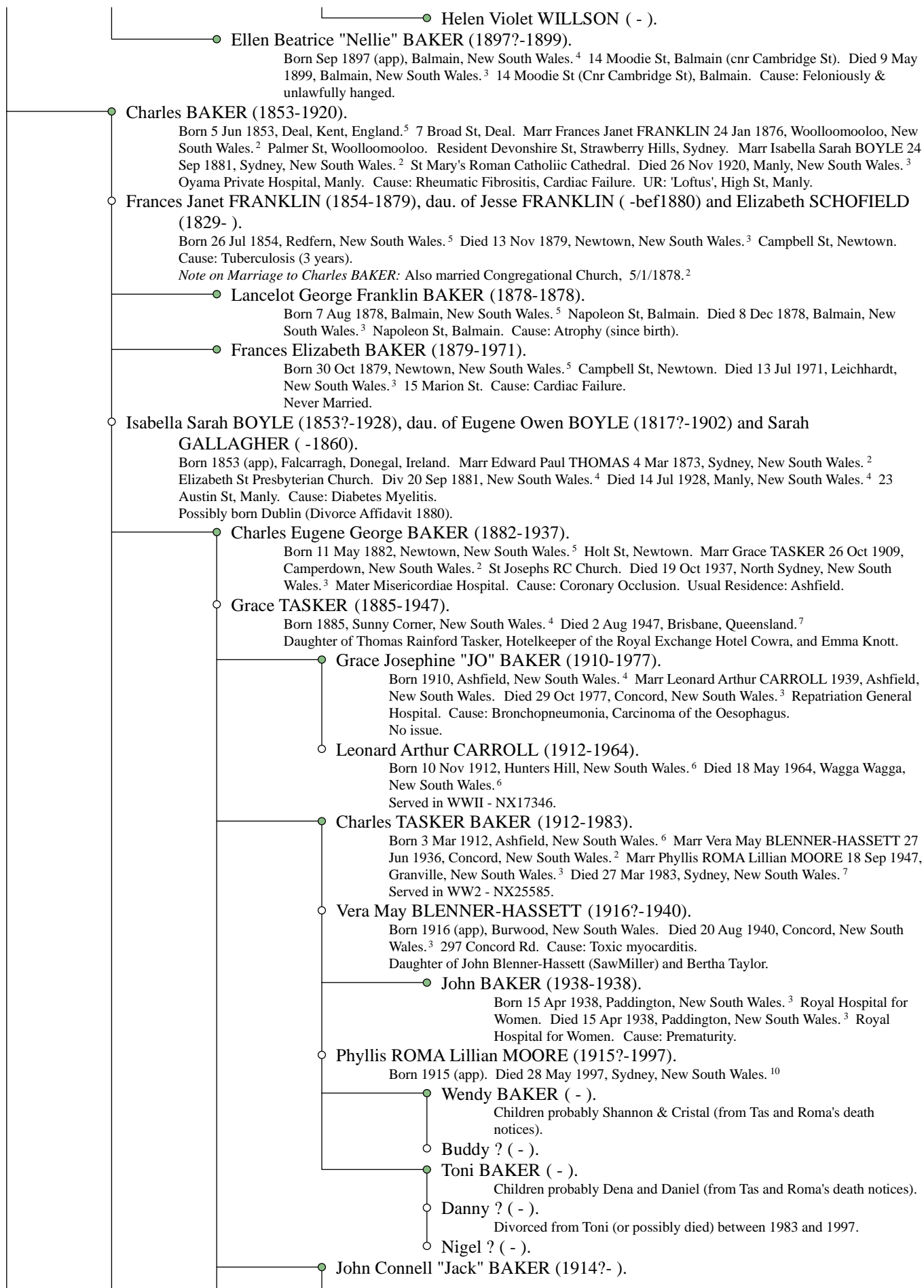




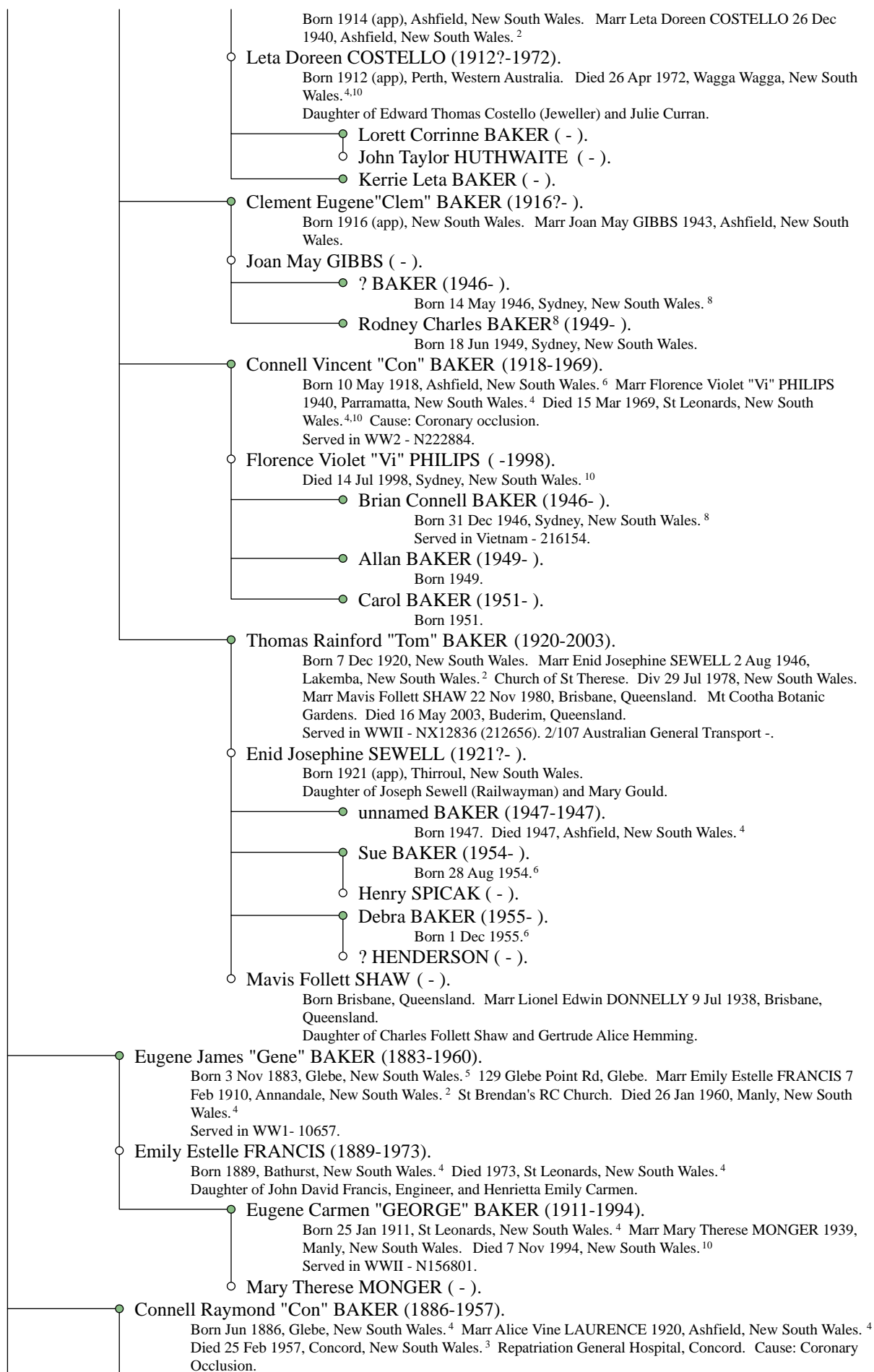


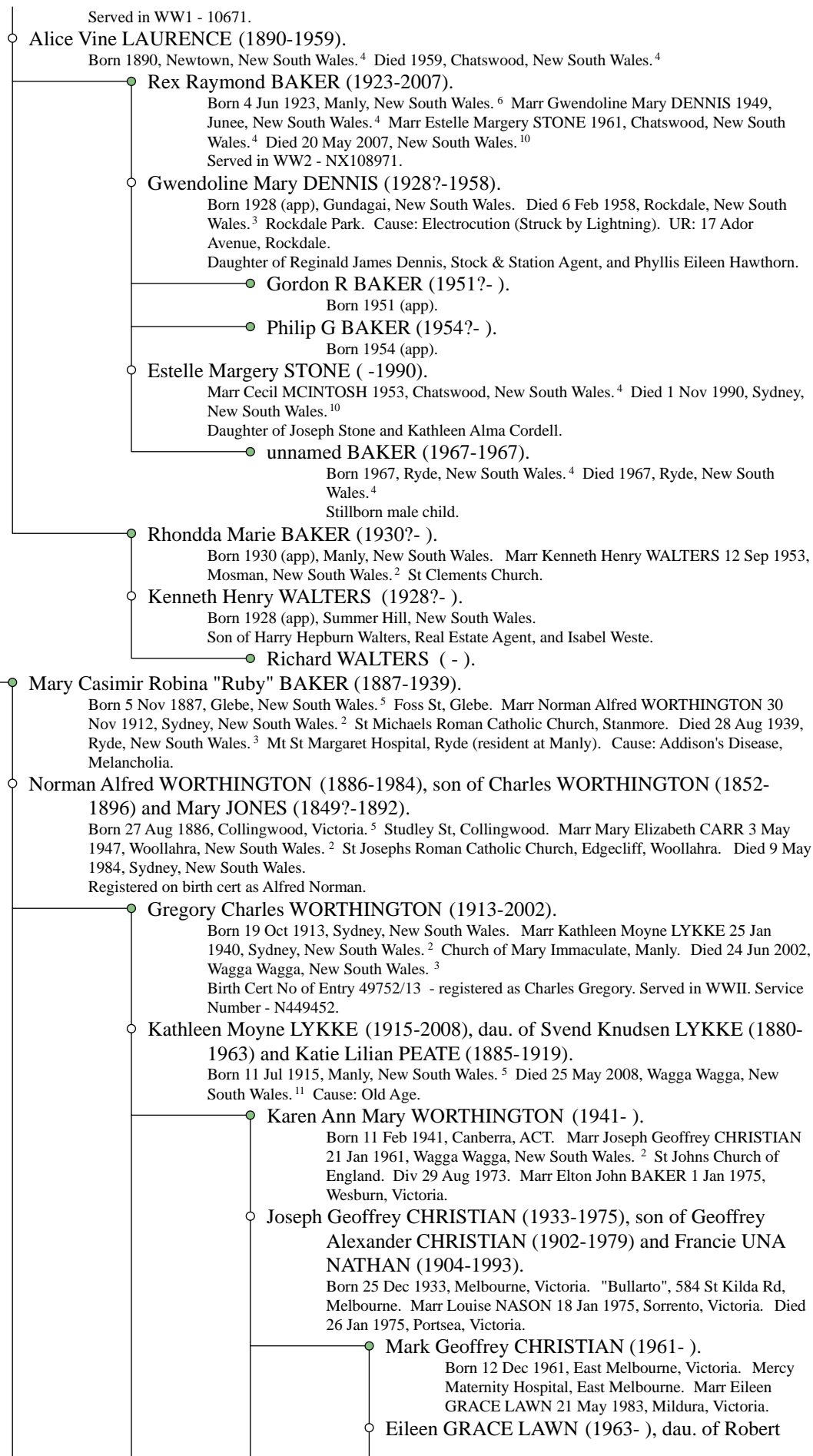


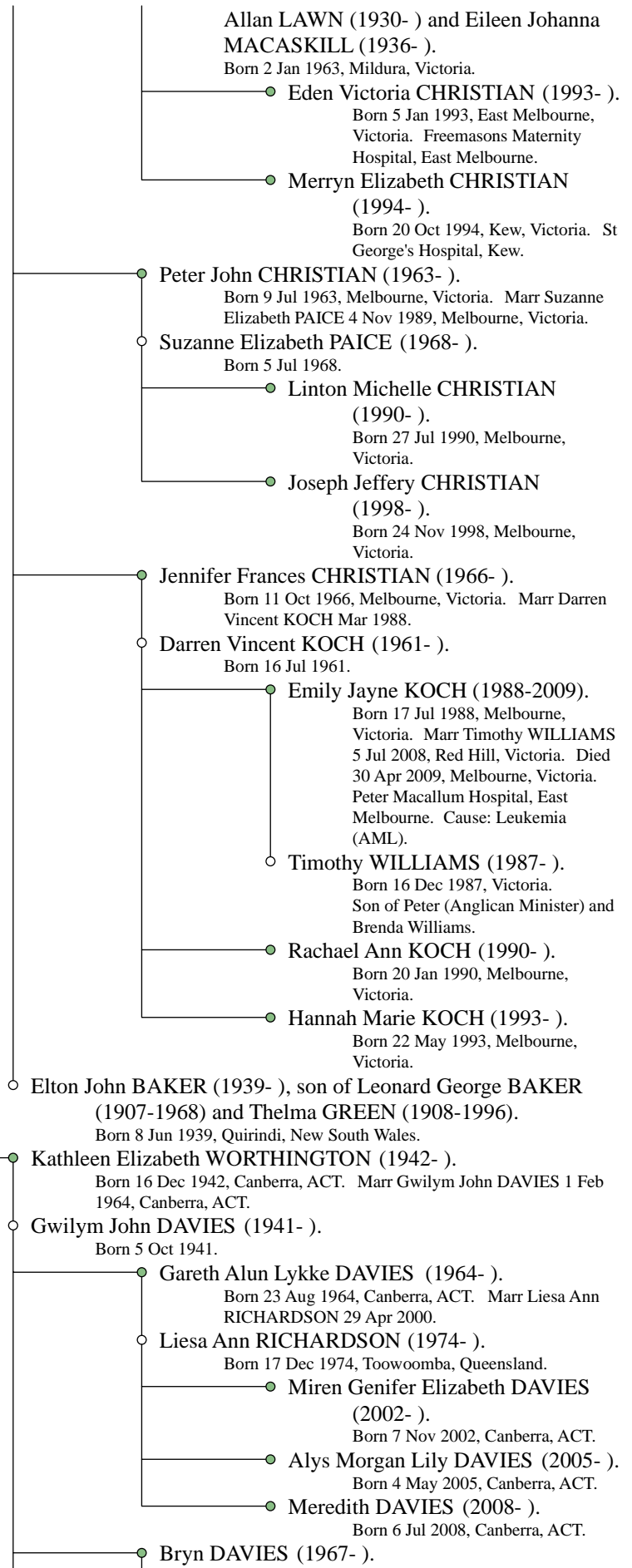


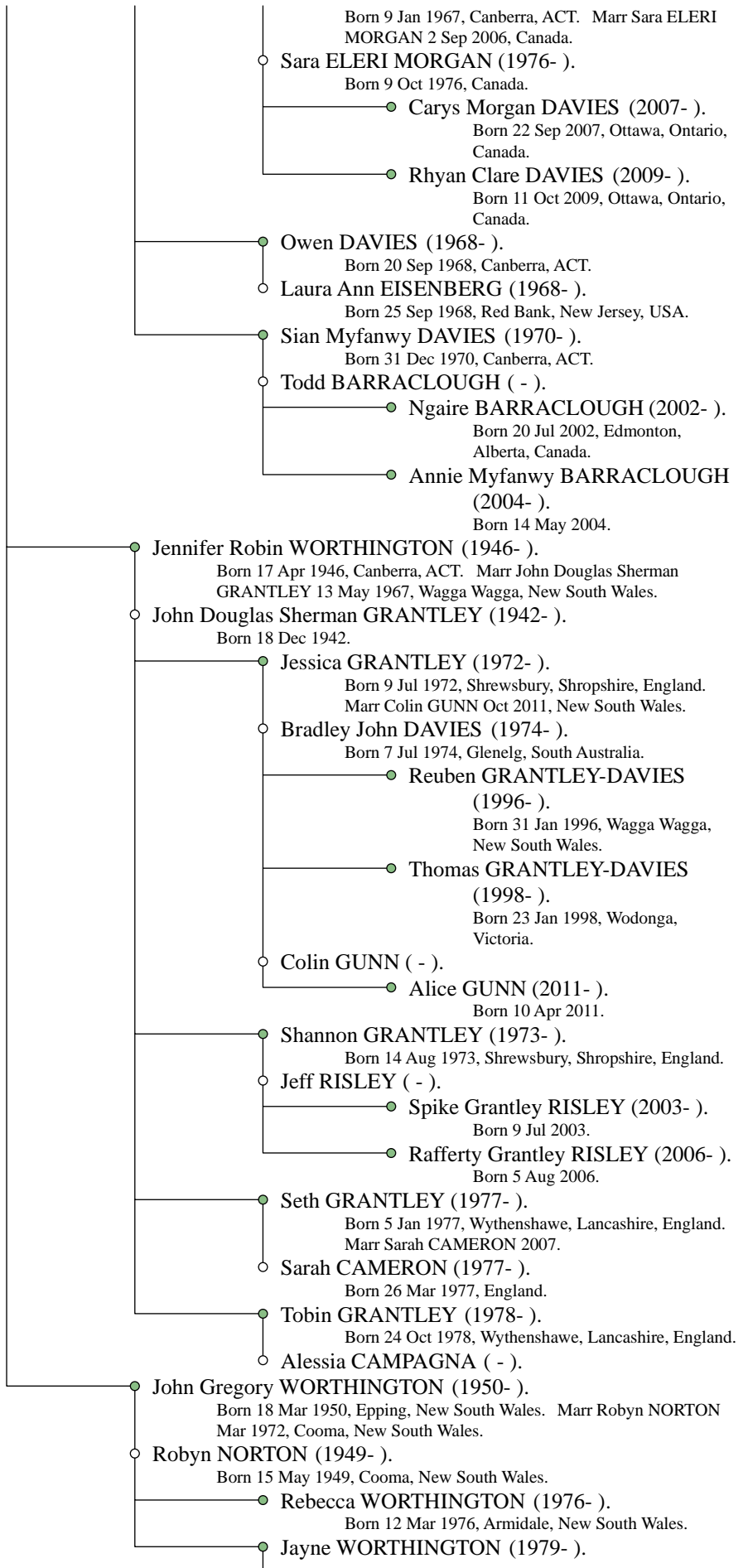


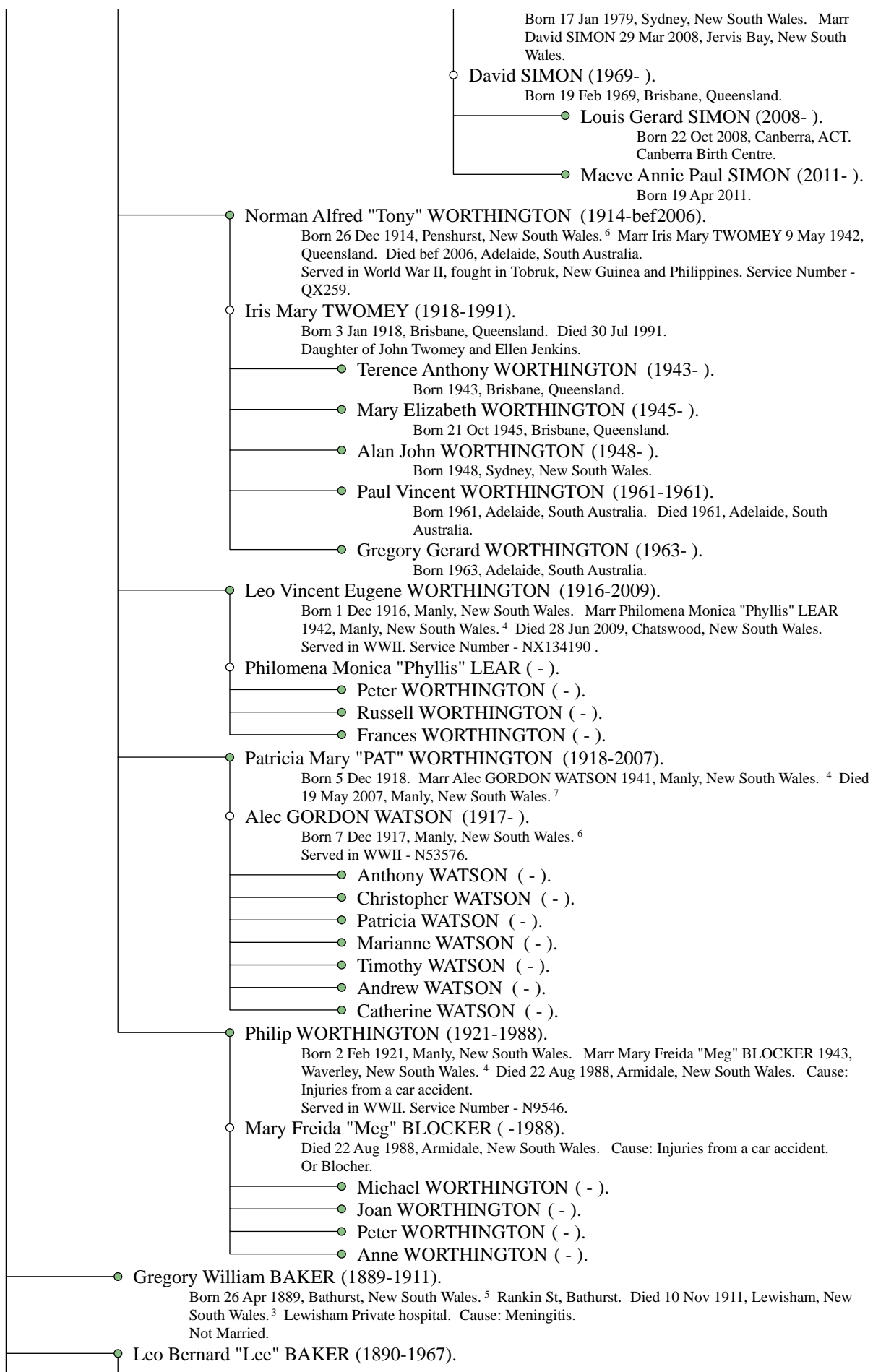












Born 19 Jun 1890, Bathurst, New South Wales.<sup>5</sup> Rankin St, Bathurst. or Ranken St, Eglinton (nr Bathurst).  
 Marr Rosa "Rose" SEIDEL 30 Aug 1919, Edmonton, Essex, England.<sup>4</sup> Church of St Peter-In-Chains (RC).  
 Died 3 Mar 1967, Concord, New South Wales.<sup>3</sup> Repatriation General Hospital, Concord. Cause: Cardiac  
 Arrest. Residence: 8 Hastings Rd, Kogarah.  
 Served in WW1 - 10672.

○ Rosa "Rose" SEIDEL (1892-1980).

Born 5 Dec 1892, Gablonz, Bohemia, Austria.<sup>9</sup> Died 20 Dec 1980, Kogarah, New South Wales.<sup>3,7</sup> Calvary  
 Hospital. Cause: Fractured Femur, Hypostatic bronchopneumonia. UR: 114 The Promenade, Sans Souci.  
 Daughter of Gustave Joseph Seidel (Fancy Goods Warehouse Manager, Clerk to importer of imitation  
 jewellery) and Auguste Marie Wanke of Gablonz, Austria (later in Czechoslovakia).

● Beryl BAKER (1922-1976).

Born 24 Jan 1922, Manly, New South Wales.<sup>9</sup> Marr John Henry "Jack" NORTHWOOD 16  
 Jan 1943, Kogarah, New South Wales.<sup>4,9</sup> Cause: Injuries suffered in a plane crash. Died 10  
 Sep 1976, Zagreb, Croatia, Yugoslavia. Cause: Injuries suffered in a plane crash.  
 Died in the crash of British Airways flight 476 en route from London to Istanbul.

○ John Henry "Jack" NORTHWOOD (1919-1976).

Born 18 Nov 1919, Young, New South Wales.<sup>9</sup> Died 10 Sep 1976, Zagreb, Croatia,  
 Yugoslavia. Cause: Injuries suffered in a plane crash.  
 Son of Sam Northwood and Liline Murphy.

● Vincent John NORTHWOOD (1944- ).

Born 1944.

○ Andrea PAVIAKIS ( - ).

● Denis Anthony NORTHWOOD (1946- ).

Born 1946.

○ Patricia ANN CAMPBELL ( - ).

● Moira Helen NORTHWOOD (1947- ).

Born 1947.

○ Michael John CASTLE ( - ).

● Raymond James NORTHWOOD (1949- ).

Born 1949. Marr Kathleen MUZEL 1976, Sydney, New South Wales.

○ Kathleen MUZEL ( - ).

● Barbara Maree NORTHWOOD (1950- ).

Born 1950.

● Carmel Gabrielle NORTHWOOD (1959- ).

Born 1959.

● Coralie BAKER (1923- ).

Born 1923. Marr Max Augustus WELCH 27 Sep 1947, Kogarah, New South Wales.<sup>4</sup>  
 Coralie Welch lived in Sydney as a child, and worked in the Tourist Bureau and Railway  
 Department. After the Second World War she married the son of a fourth generation  
 Monaro family and went to live in north-western New South Wales. In 1975 she moved to  
 Brisbane..... (from Austlit database). She was the author of four published works from 1998  
 to 2002.

○ Max Augustus WELCH (1920-1988).

Born 24 May 1920, Adaminaby, New South Wales. Died 29 May 1988, Bray Park,  
 Queensland. Buried Lawnton Cemetery, Qld.  
 Son of Reginald Victor Valdimar Welch, baker, and Teresa Jane Kershaw - part of one of  
 the pioneering families of the Monaro region of NSW. Served in the military as a Gunner,  
 number NX17026, 3 Anti Tank Regiment, Australian Army from May 24, 1940 to  
 September 29, 1945 in WW2.

● Alan Gerard WELCH (1949- ).

Born 1949.

○ Ineke VENEMEN ( - ).

● Clement James WELCH (1950- ).

Born 1950.

○ Kathryn DEAN ( - ).

● Philip Augustine WELCH (1952- ).

Born 1952. Marr Janna VENEMEN 1971, Sydney, New South Wales.

○ Janna VENEMEN ( - ).

● Justin Nathaniel WELCH (1973-1973).

Born 1973, Sydney, New South Wales.<sup>9</sup> Died 1973,  
 Sydney, New South Wales.<sup>4,9</sup>

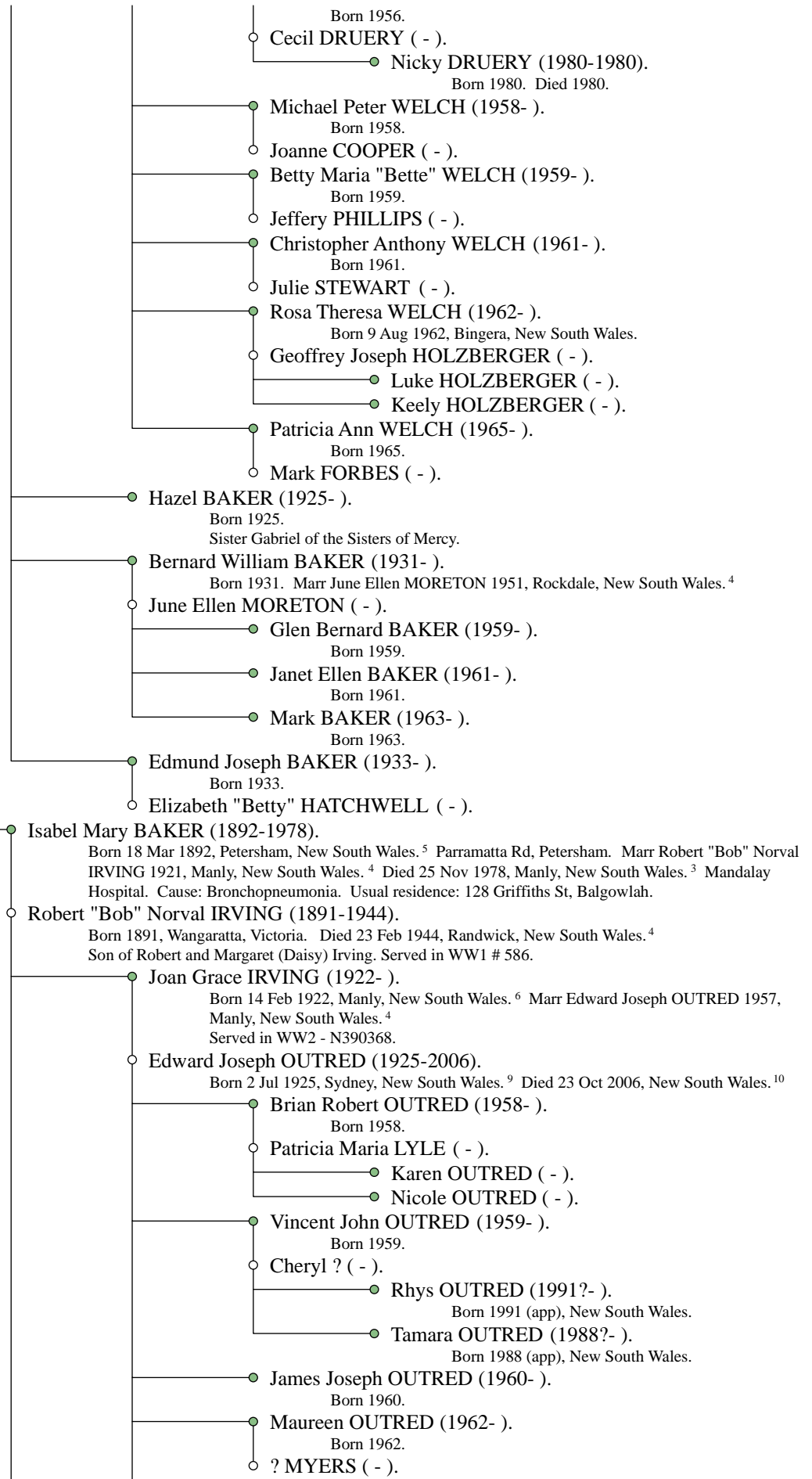
● Mary WELCH (1954-1954).

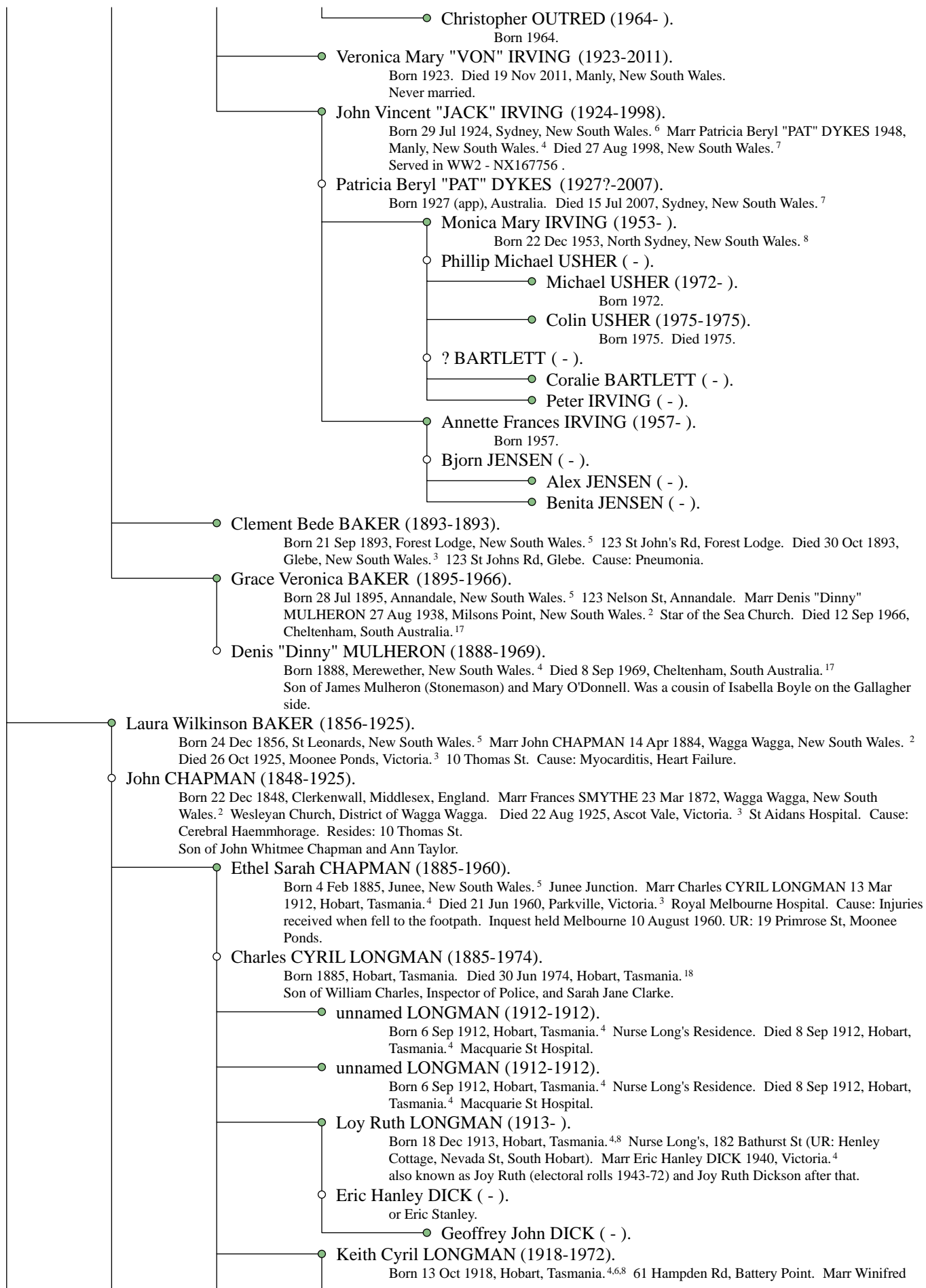
Born 14 Jan 1954, Warialda, New south Wales. Died 14 Jan 1954,  
 Warialda, New south Wales.

● Bernard Joseph WELCH (1955-2010).

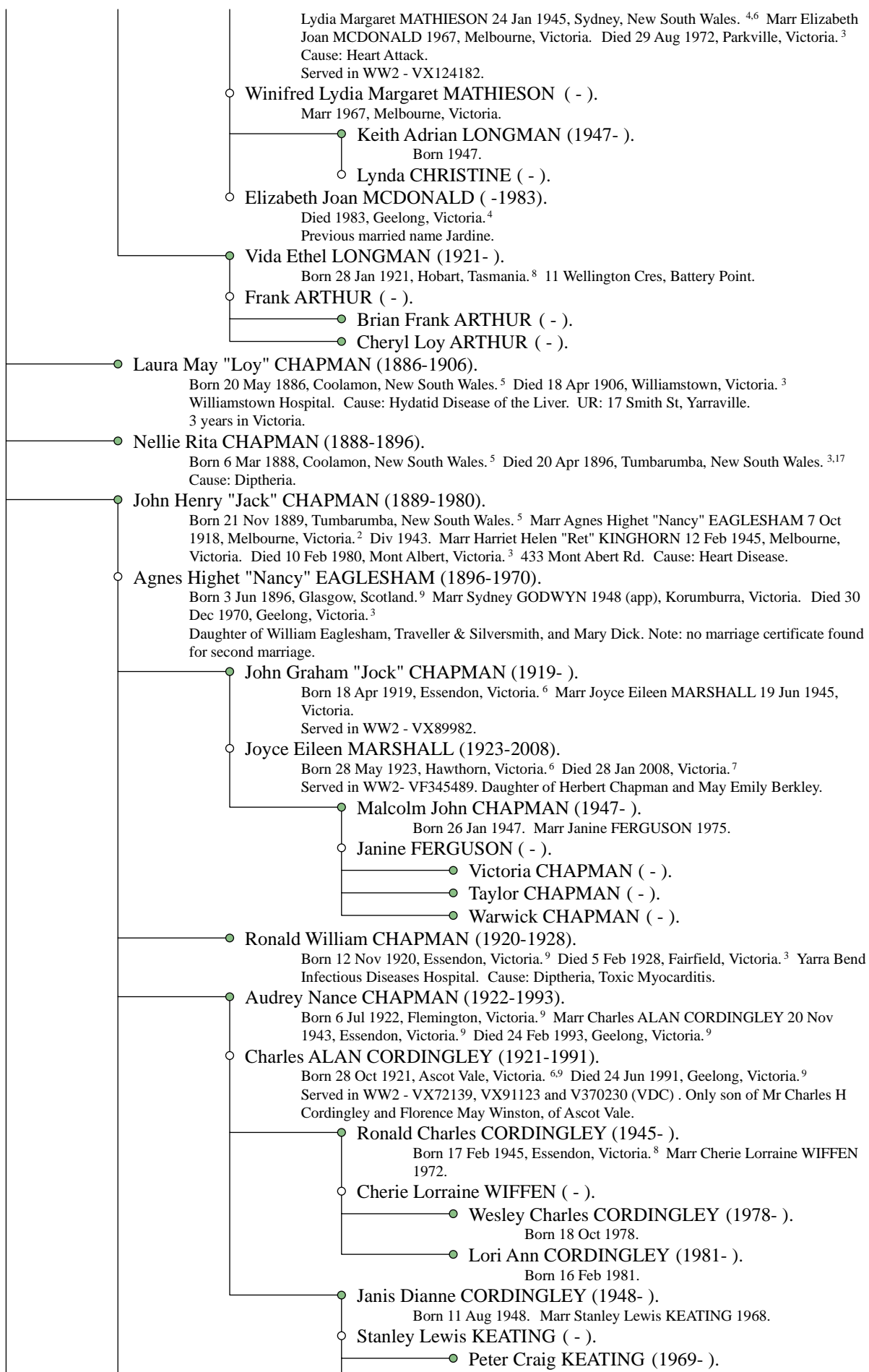
Born 9 Jan 1955, Warialda, New South Wales.<sup>9</sup> Died 26 Jun 2010,  
 Beerwah, Queensland.<sup>7</sup>  
 Never married.

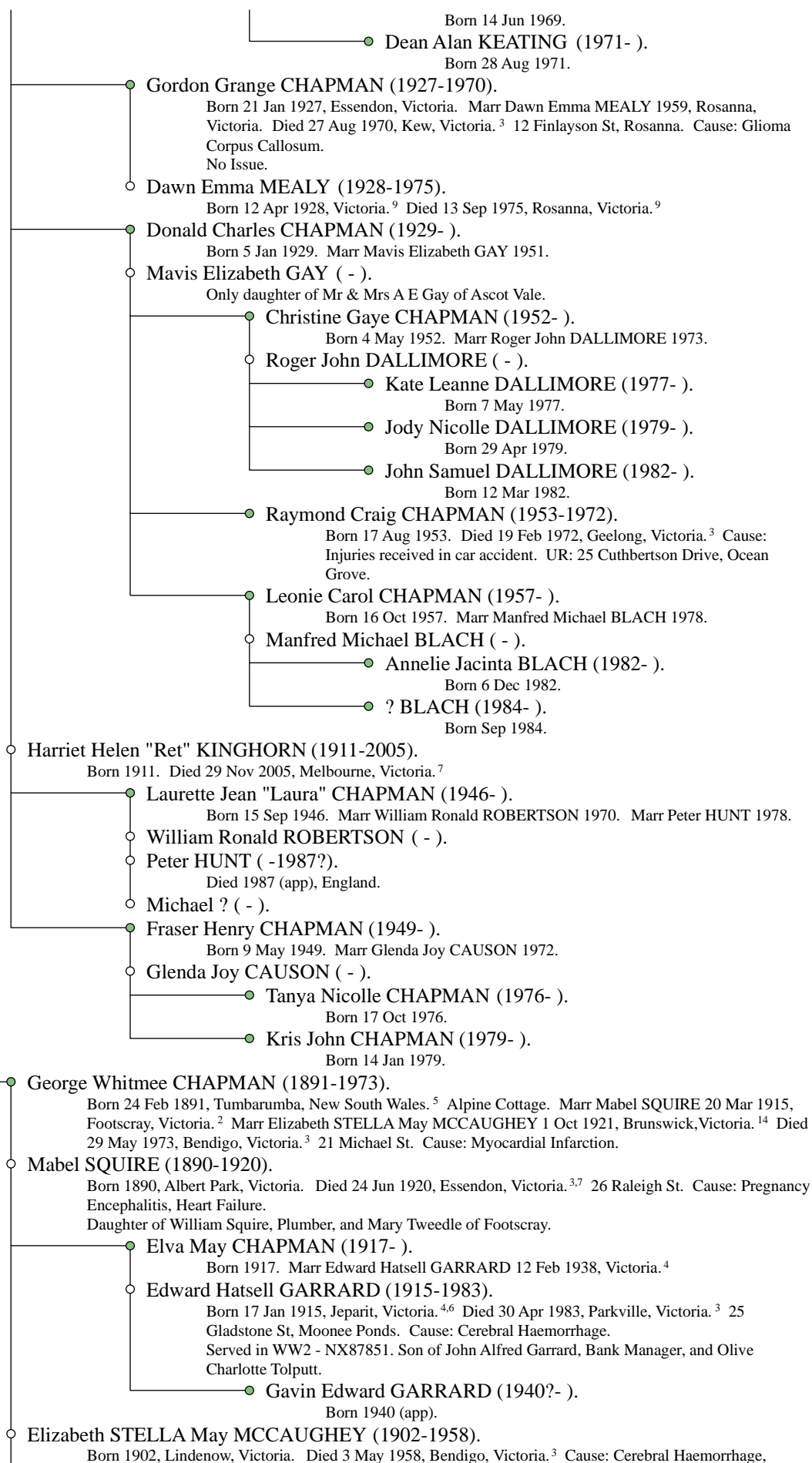
● Catherine Elizabeth WELCH (1956- ).

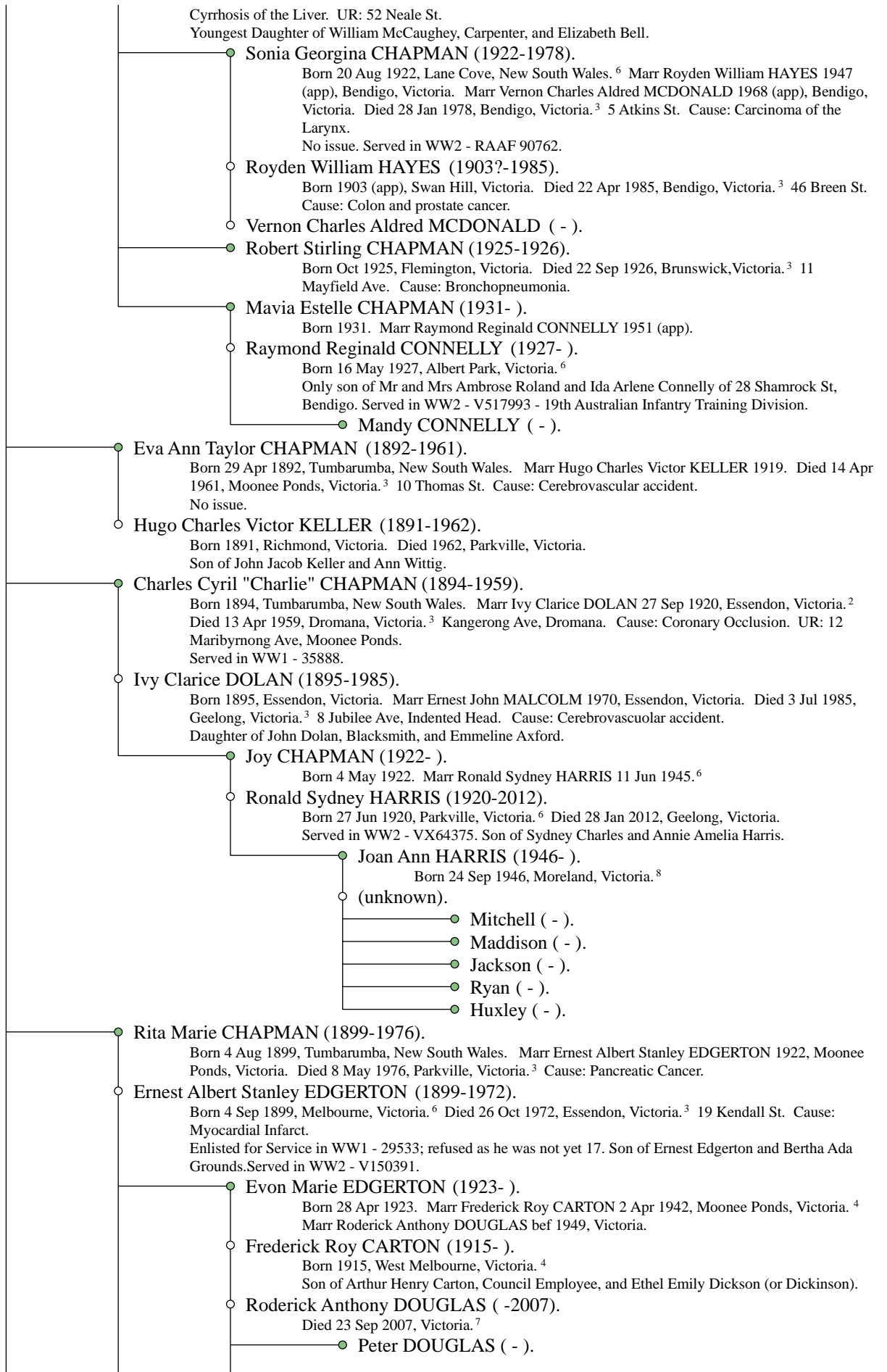


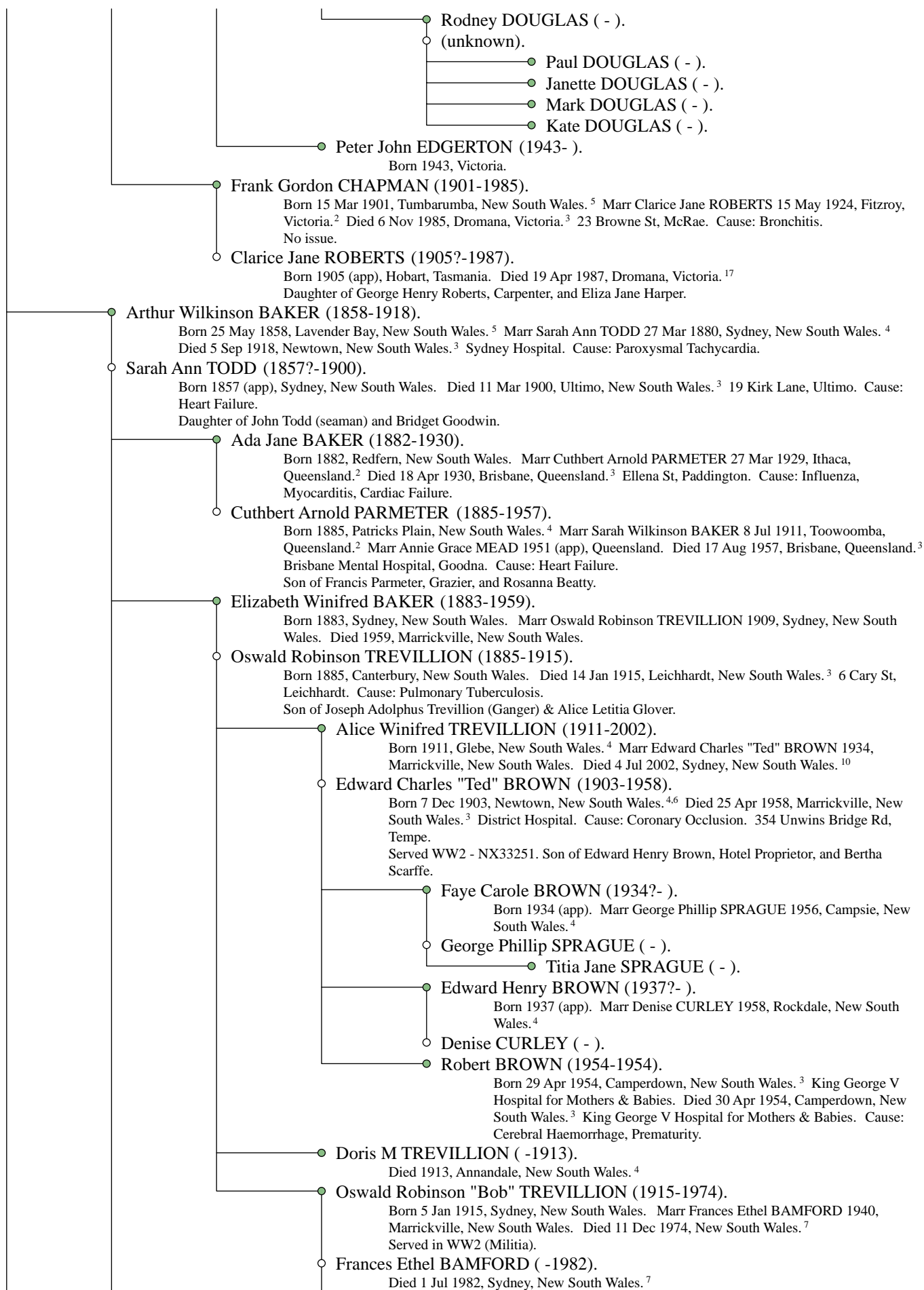


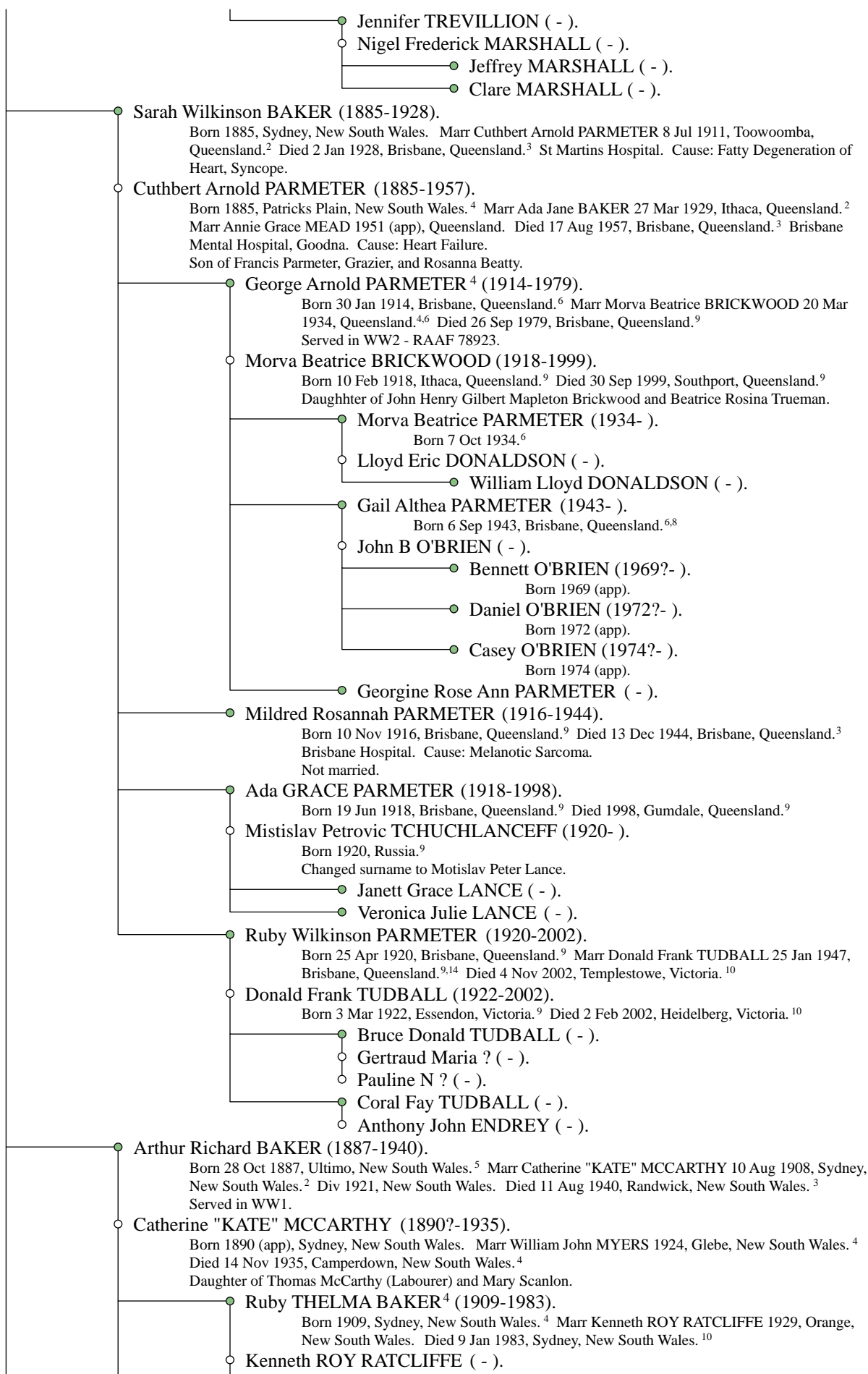


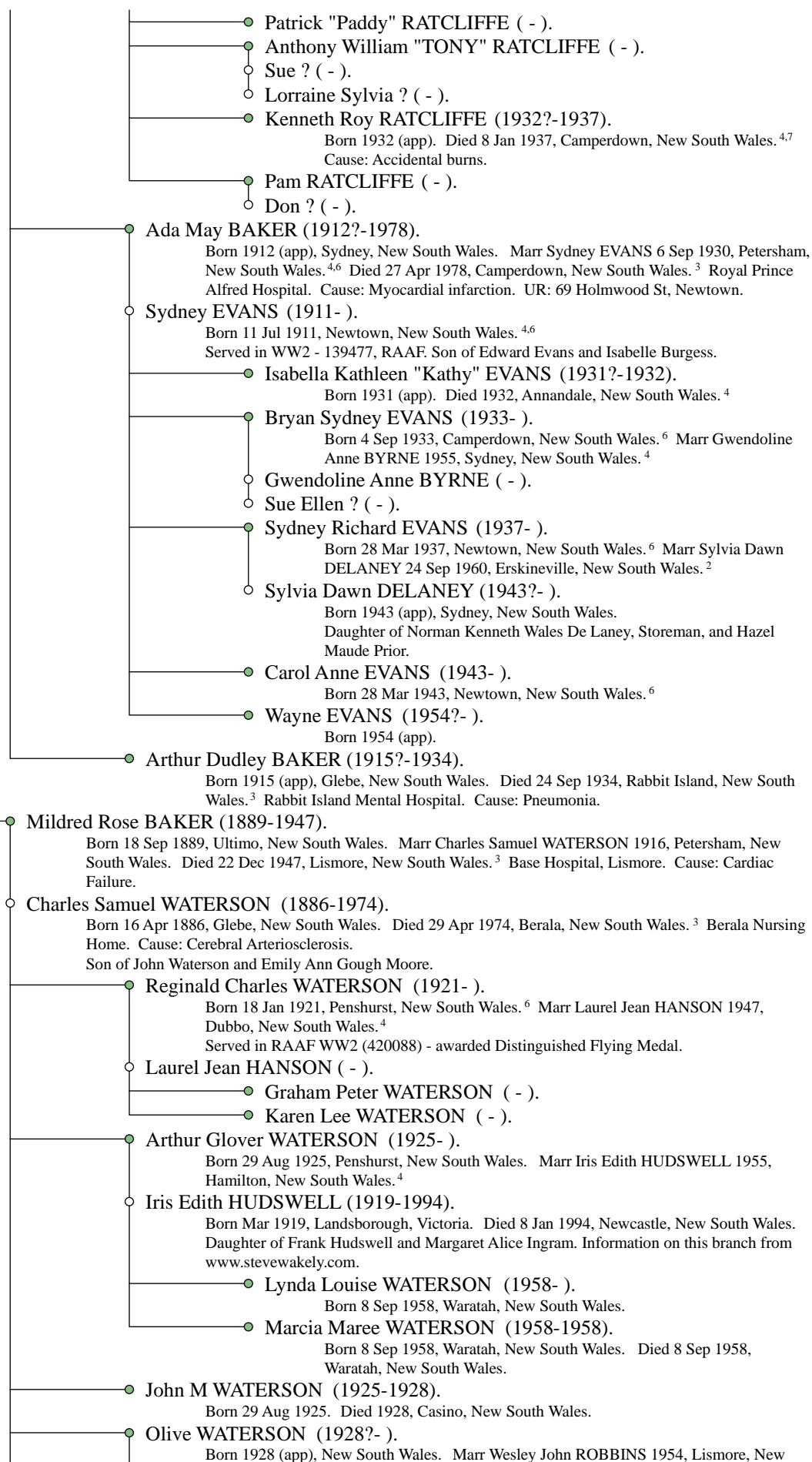


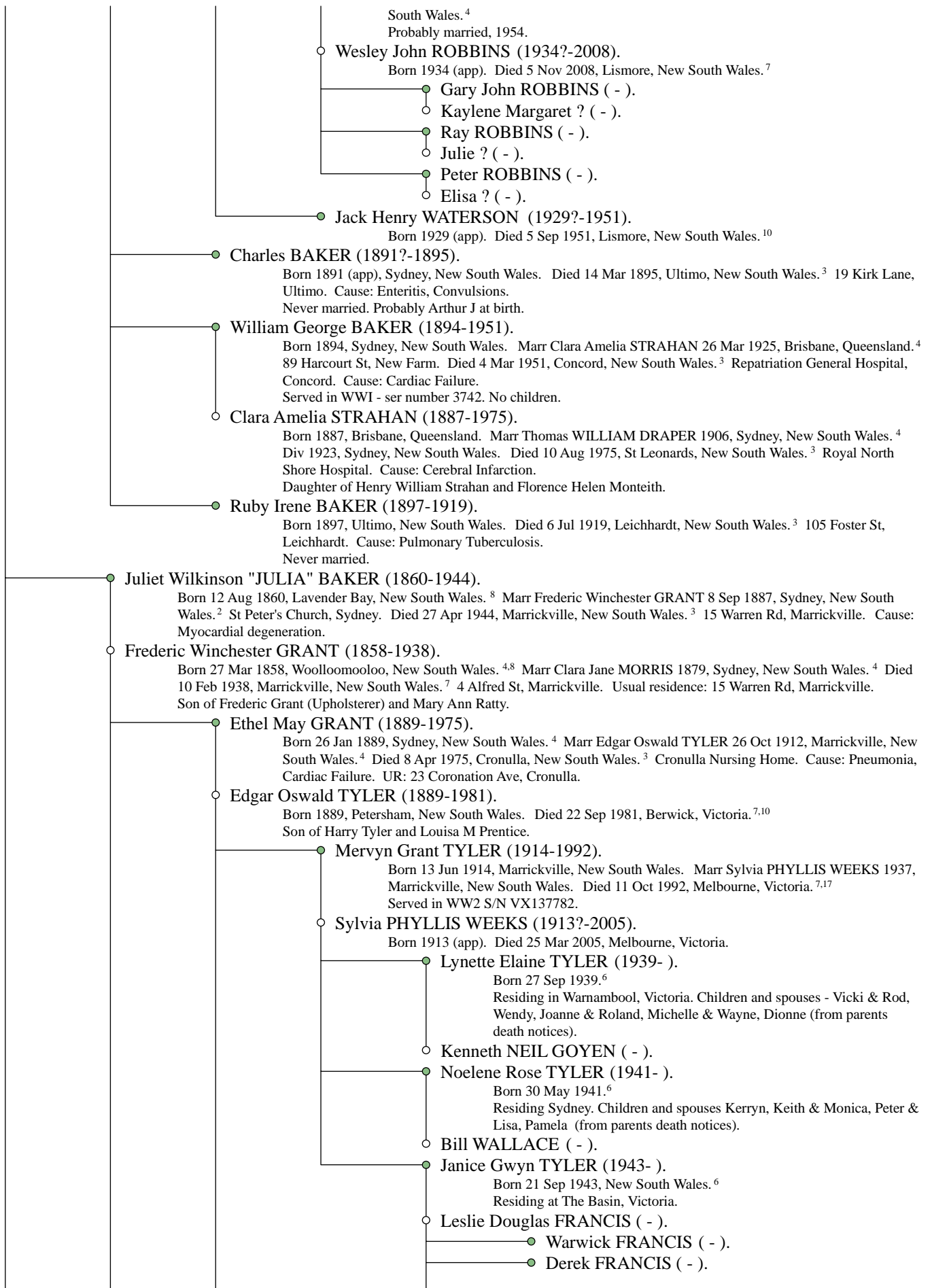


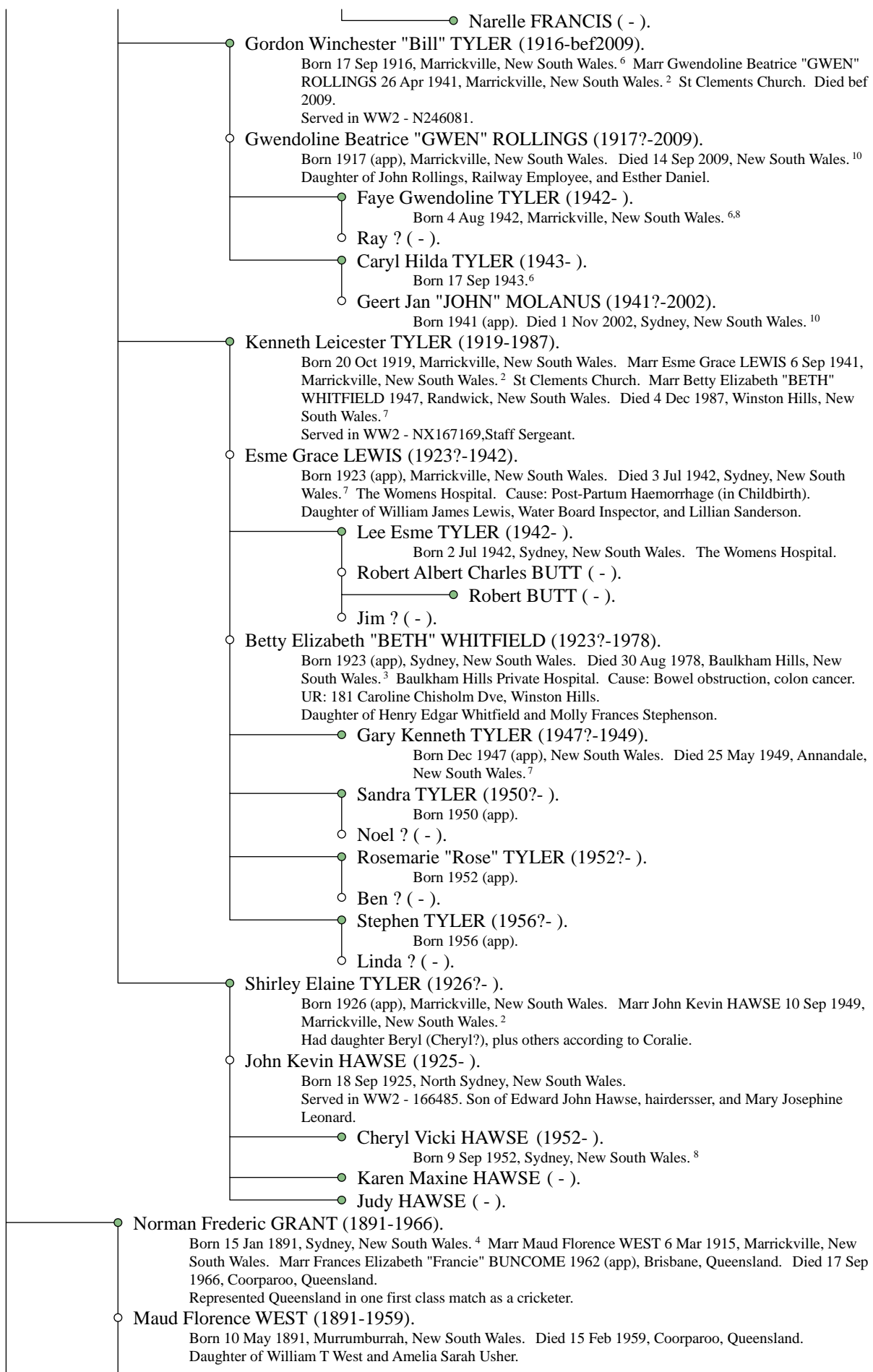




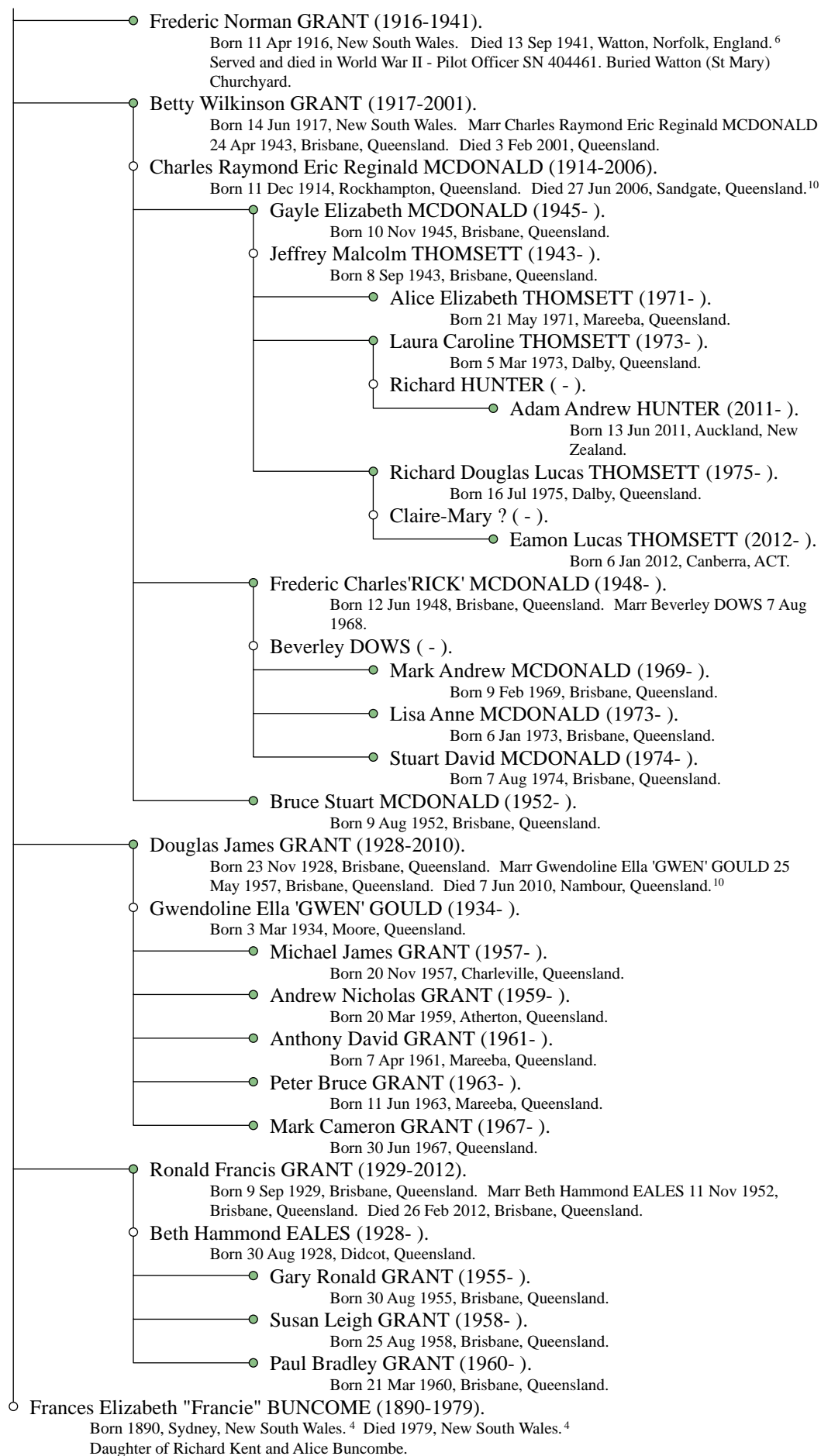


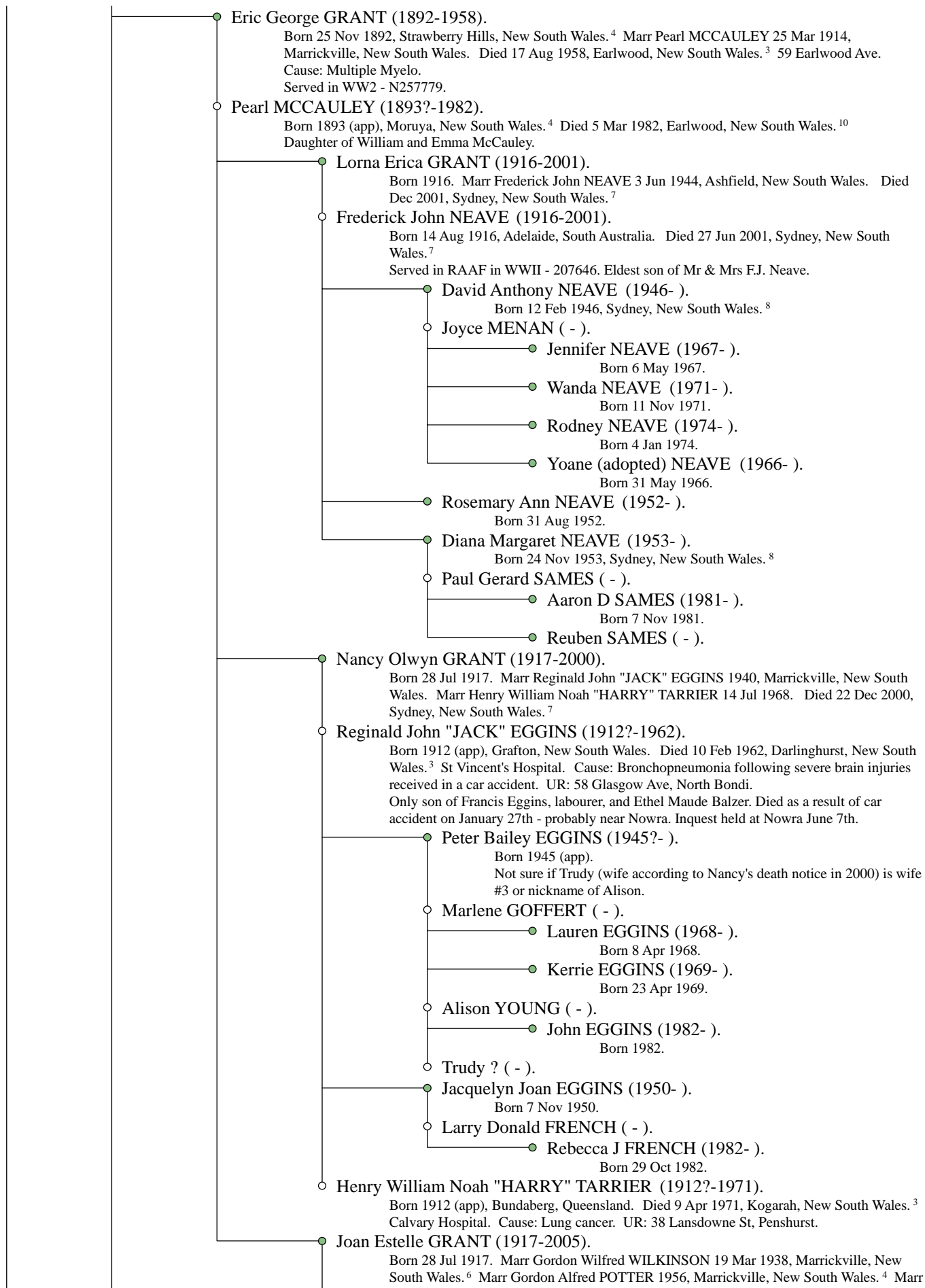


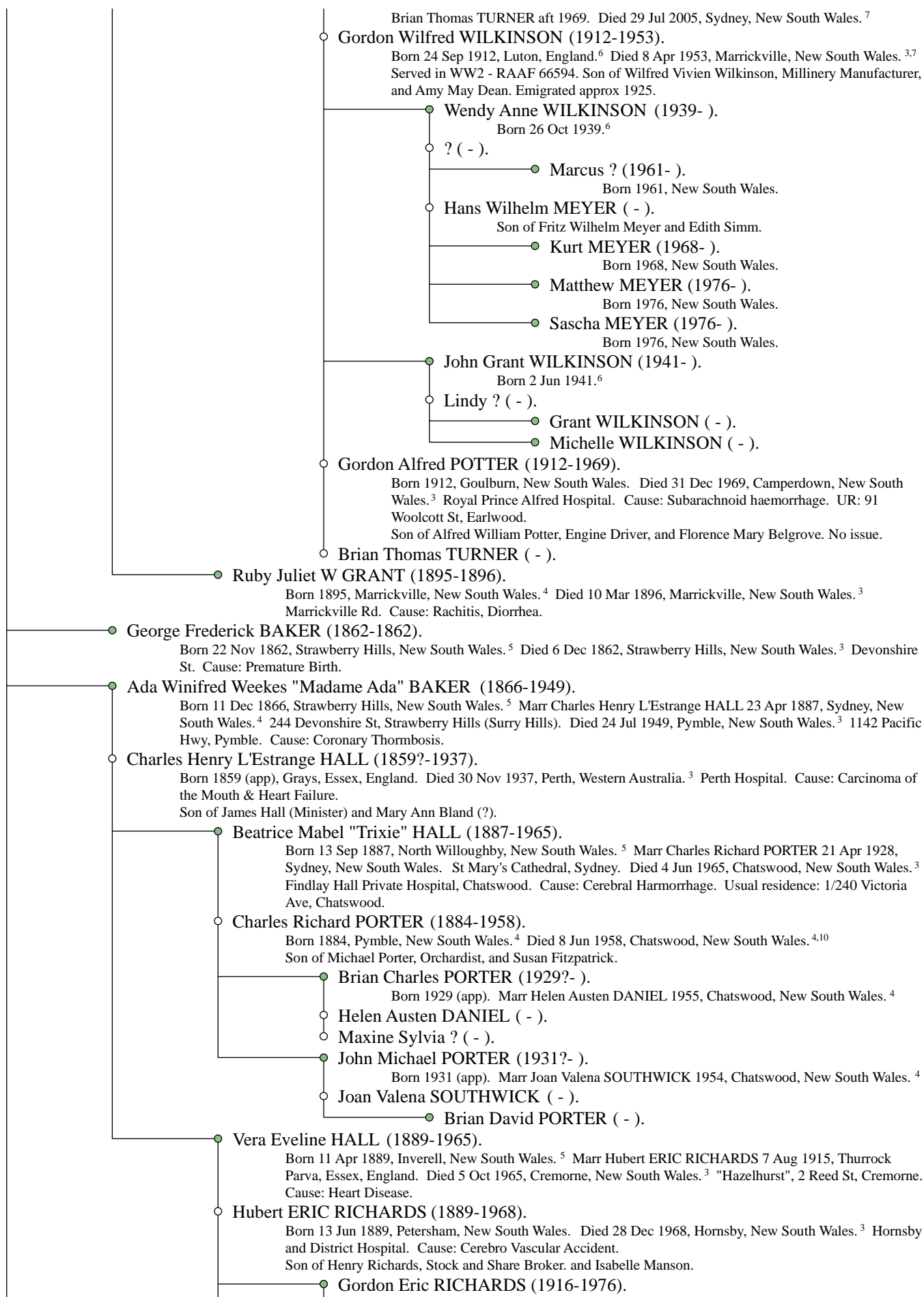


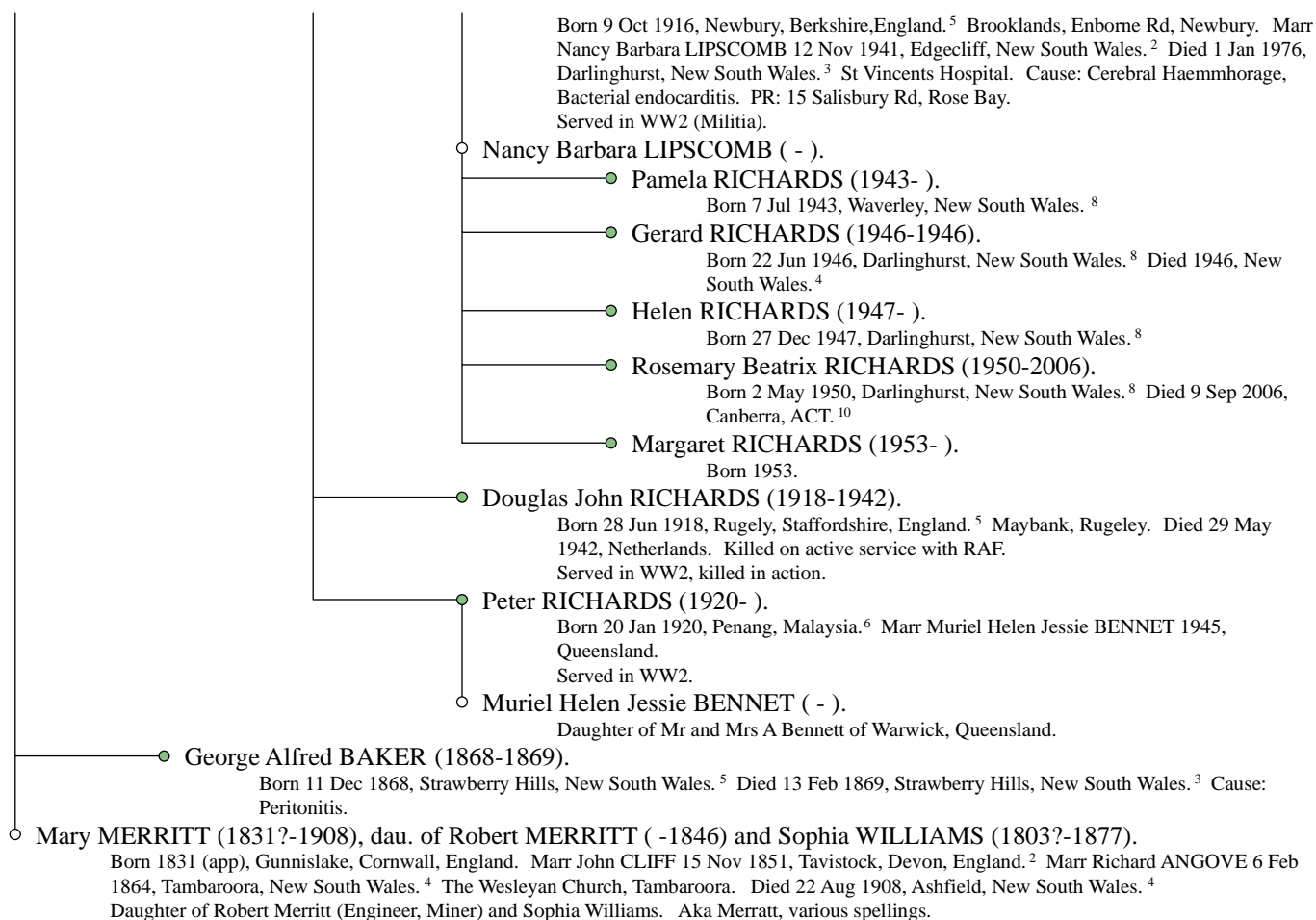












Sources

1. "IGI".
2. "Marriage Certificate".
3. "Death Certificate".
4. "BMD Index".
5. "Birth Certificate".
6. "Military Records".
7. "Newspaper Death Notice".
8. "Newspaper Birth Notice".
9. "Ancestry Public Tree".
10. "Ryerson Index to Death Notices".
11. "Personal Knowledge".
12. "Facebook".
13. "Government Records".
14. "Newspaper Marriage Notice".
15. "Newspaper Engagement Notice".
16. "NSW State Archives".
17. "Cemetery Records".
18. "Will".