

NEWSLETTER

Volume 2014 Issue 17

March 2014.



Editor:

This CTFHS Newsletter has been edited and DTP'd by
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QUOTABLE QUOTES

"Home Is A Place You Grow
Up Wanting To Leave, And
Grow Old Wanting To Get
Back To."

Anon

"When you finally go back
to your old home, you find
it wasn't the old home you
missed but your
childhood."

-Sam Ewing

"Remember me in the
family tree; my name, my
days, my strife. Then I'll
ride upon the wings of
time and live an endless
life."

Linda Goetsch

Next Edition due:
Late June 2014

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

CAPE TOWN FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT MARCH 2014



CTFHS Chairperson, David Slingsby

Maybe it's an age thing that brings March around so quickly. It seems only yesterday I prepared the report for 2013. The society continues to grow every month; both membership and interest remain excellent. This would not happen but for the excellent dedication given by our committee to assist the society with routine administration and for manning key points at our meetings.

MEETINGS – Once again we have been able to find excellent speakers, both within the society and externally. A good speakers' combined with good advertising brings a host of visitors to our meetings. Cherie Wright and Kevin Turner have agreed to manage the

speakers. However I appeal to all our members to come forward to tell us your stories or skills to share with us all. If you have heard or know of good speakers on related topics please contact either Cherie or Kevin.

HERITAGE DAY- Once again we held our Heritage Day during September. We had good support from our members who displayed their research and family treasures. The event was well attended by the public with much interest being generated.

VENUE – We continue to use the present venue – occasionally we have a few clashes and complaints of a dirty kitchen and lack of storage space. Brenda the Church Secretary looks after of needs and normally resolves any problems which arise. Our thanks to Brenda and St John's Church for accommodating the society.

EQUIPMENT – We purchased a projector during the past year – this is used at practically every meeting and has proved a great asset. Once again we owe thanks to John Cross for using his expertise in coxing the sound system to perform.

WEBSITE – We lost our web site sponsor rather unexpectedly during the year. Undaunted Eric Settle sorted it out in his customarily quiet but efficient manner.

NEWSLETTER- Derek Pratt continues to produce a News Sheet of an extremely high standard. We entered our News Letter in the Federation of Family History Society's competition and we eagerly await the outcome. Please continue to send in articles to Derek.

LIBRARY – Once again Cynthia Winstanly has jealously guarded our literary assets. We have added a considerable number of books to the library this past year. We need to remember the books are for research and we continue to appeal to our members to return the books at the next meeting following the loan meeting. By selfishly hanging onto books puts our members at a disadvantage. A big thank you to all those members who generously donate books to the society – it is greatly appreciated.

ADMINISTRATION - No organization can survive without an efficient administration – an

Was my Grandfather a bigamist?

Bigamy in the UK in the 19th and early 20th Century was quite common—a lot more common than we think. This was because divorce was so complex and expensive (see next article) and thus many of our ancestor might be bigamists!

I thought I had my immediate family tree all sorted. Now I'm having doubts about which Charles PRATT is my grandfather. The PRATT's I've presumed to be my family were typically an industrial revolution working-class labouring family from Midlands towns such as Halesowen and Birmingham in the UK with Charles PRATT being a tin-stamper and descending from nail makers in Halesowen. In the 1891 Census I found my grandfather (if it is my Grandfather!) had been married to a woman with the first name of Isabella. I could not find their marriage anywhere and therefore didn't know her maiden surname. Over the next 24 years they had three children. In the 1911 Census it told me that they had been married 24 years and that together with his wife he was a general dealer in clothing.

I knew that a Charles PRATT married my grandmother in 1919. Sarah BOARDMAN (born PARISH) was a widow with 5 children. Her husband had died in 1916. My father, Thomas PRATT was born in September 1919 and Sarah and Charles got married on 21 June 1919. Sarah must have discovered she was pregnant with my father when she was 45 years old and Charles was 54 (although his marriage certificate says he is 49y) so they got married. I started looking for a Death Registration of Charles's first wife, Isabella. I found no death registration for an Isabella PRATT between 1911 (last Census record) and 1919, when Charles married my grandmother. When my son, living and working in the UK, asked me what I wanted for Christmas I suggested some Birth, Marriage and Death certificates. From these I found that a Charles Henry PRATT had married an Elizabeth Isabella CALLAGHAN in 1887. This matched up with the 24 years marriage given in the 1911 Census record. It also said they were married in the Catholic Church – which perhaps means that Elizabeth Isabella had an Irish connection.

There were a few problems that needed to be sorted out if this was the Charles PRATT who had married my grandmother in 1919. Firstly, in his second marriage he never used the second name of Henry as he had when he married Elizabeth. Secondly, I could trace this Charles birth to 1866 when a Charles H PRATT was registered in Aston, Birmingham but in the subsequent Census records – 1871-1911 he gave no second name or initial but I suppose this was not that unusual. Similarly, when he died, Sarah registered his death as simply Charles PRATT. Knowing that Charles's first wife Elizabeth Isabella had been born in Ireland, I presumed up to this point that she had returned to home to Ireland to die.

But as I was watching some early editions of *Who so you think you are* and saw Vic Reeves research his family and how he found that his grandfather had been married before and, like me, could find no record of grandfather's first wife's death before his second marriage. In other words Vic Reeves's

grandfather was a bigamist. The commentator on the programme said that as divorce in the UK at the beginning of the 20th Century was so expensive many men and women simply married again without legally being separated from their former spouses. Vic Reeves in the WDTYA programme said, "So my Grandfather was telling porky pies?!"

Was my grandfather is a similar boat? On his marriage certificate with my grandmother there are a few inconsistencies which could have been half-truths or blatant lies to avoid been identified as a bigamist. Or, of course, I might have the completely wrong Charles PRATT altogether!

Firstly, he fails to give his second name – Charles Henry PRATT, secondly Charles gives his father's name as Thomas PRATT whose occupation was a mechanical engineer while in my research it shows that his father was a William PRATT who was a cocoa maker or a sugar-boiler and later a railway porter. William died in 1871 when Charles was only 5 so perhaps these are understandable errors. However I have found a death registration for an Elizabeth I. PRATT in June Quarter 1939. I have also found in the Birmingham Election Rolls of 1912, records of Charles living at the same address as given in the 1911 Census. Then Charles disappears and right through to 1935 we find Isabella PRATT together with her son, Charles Henry PRATT and in the early years, her other son Arthur PRATT living at the same address in Birmingham.

My grandfather gives his address on his marriage certificate as Rowton House, Birmingham (see article below) and then for the next five years lived in Upfield Building in Sheepcote Street Birmingham. He died in 1924 but my Grandmother, Sarah continued to live there until she and her married daughter from her first marriage obtained a Birmingham Corporation house in Greenwood Place, Kingstanding. This is the address that appears on my father's Royal Navy Service Record as the address of his next-of-kin—changed in 1943 after his marriage to my mother's address in Cape Town.

So I'm still confused but maybe Charles adopted a quasi-false identity in order to marry his lady companion who was pregnant with his child, if so he committed bigamy.

Also follows an article on Bigamy in 19th and early 20th Century England from the BBC website.

Divorce and bigamy

Until the introduction of the civil Court for Divorce and Matrimonial Causes in 1858, church courts heard any disputes between husband and wife, and a legal separation was the best outcome.

Divorce as such could only be achieved through private bill in the House of Lords, a prohibitively expensive procedure, and although some couples came to a private agreement, the reality was that legal divorce was out of the reach of most people.

The new court from 1858 did at least offer a route for civil divorce, but the proceedings took place in London and still proved too costly for most people to use. Although the system underwent several changes, particularly in the 20th century, it was only the extension of legal aid and the spread of local divorce registries that opened the floodgates, particularly after World War Two.

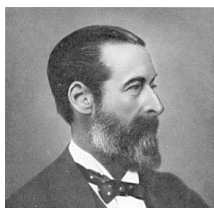
Consequently, many couples who separated but did not divorce underwent subsequent, bigamous second marriages. Tell-tale signs include stating on the marriage certificate that they were a bachelor or spinster when you know they had been married, or that they were widowed, when you can find no evidence of the death of their spouse. Alternatively, they may have moved quietly to another part of the country and reappeared on census returns with a new family.

Of course, bigamy was a felony and prosecutions did occur, and many cases are reported in local and national newspapers. If you suspect that your ancestor was involved in more than one marriage, you can first check for a divorce among surviving material at the National Archives, or by contacting the Principal Registry of the Family Division, Decree Absolute section, where a complete list of granted divorces is stored.

It is then a case of checking the facts through certificates, such as whether both parties are alive at the time of a second marriage.

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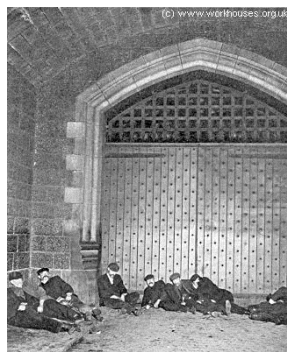
ROWTON HOUSES



Lord Rawton

From Wikipedia

Rowton Houses was a chain of hostels built in London, England by the Victorian philanthropist Lord Rowton to provide decent accommodation for working men in place of the squalid lodging houses of the time.



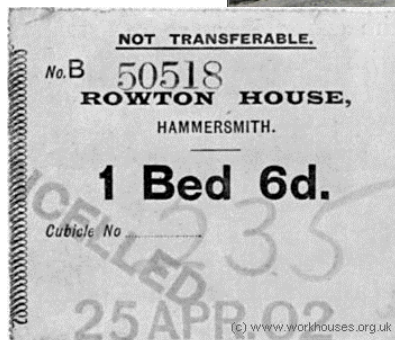
Men sleeping 'under the arches' in London

George Orwell, in *Down & Out In Paris and London*, wrote about lodging houses: "The best are the Rowton Houses, where the charge is a shilling, for which you get a cubicle to yourself, and the use of excellent bathrooms. You can also pay half a crown for a special, which is practically hotel accommodation. The Rowton Houses are splendid buildings, and the only objection to them is the strict discipline, with rules against cooking, card playing, etc."

The Rowton Houses throughout London were:

- Vauxhall, 1892
- Kings Cross, 1894 (the serial killer John Christie stayed here for four nights shortly before his arrest)
- Parkview House in Newington Butts, 1897. Demolished in 2007.
- Hammersmith, 1897, later demolished
- Tower House in Whitechapel, 1902. The building has since been developed into luxury housing. Joseph Stalin stayed there for a fortnight in 1907.
- Arlington House in Camden Town, 1905. The last and largest of the Houses, and the only one to remain in use as a hostel (as of 2011).

The architect for the bulk of the houses was Harry Bell Measures FRIBA, who also designed the tube stations for the Central London Railway in 1900 and



was well known as the designer of many army barracks.

There was also a Rowton House in Highgate, Birmingham,

(Continued on page 4)



Bedroom cubicles



Dining Room

which opened on 29 June 1903. It was built by the Birmingham Rowton Houses Ltd, from the designs and under the supervision of Measures. This building later became a hotel, the Paragon. [This was the one my grandfather stayed in before his marriage to my grandmother.]



The Birmingham Rowton house now the 5 star Paragon Hotel

THE INTERESTING SIDE STREETS IN FAMILY HISTORICAL RESEARCH

By Hazel Bowen

During the course of my research into my family history I have already taken short and sometimes longer "excursions". Luckily, I have not yet been too side-tracked!

Recently, I found myself down a "side street": I grew up in Pietermaritzburg, KZN, and the family attended St Saviours Cathedral.



St Peter's, Bp Colenso's Cathedral

While reminiscing about family matters with siblings, the topic of St Saviours Cathedral came up – and a question which sprang to my mind was, "why / how could it have been a Cathedral?" We were all very aware that St Peters Cathedral was also in Pietermaritzburg and had seemed to be the

"main" one.



St Saviour's Cathedral in 1870

So, naturally, I went off to "google" the situation – with a fascinating peep into some church history, (mainly recorded by Ian D Darby)!

I was, indeed, correct in thinking something was a little strange. Pietermaritzburg has had three Anglican cathedrals, St Saviour's Cathedral being one of them. The first was, indeed, St Peter's in Church Street (1857) completed by the Bishop of Natal, JW Colenso. However, there was tension between the Bishop and his Dean, and a controversy ensued over Colenso's commentary on "St Paul's Epistle to the Romans" and other teachings – he was charged with and found guilty of heresy in 1863. He, nevertheless, survived in office when the secular courts declared the trial "null and void" for technical reasons. Colenso returned to his diocese in November 1865 but Dean James Green locked the vestry as well as locking away the communion vessels etc! In January 1868,

(Continued from page 4)

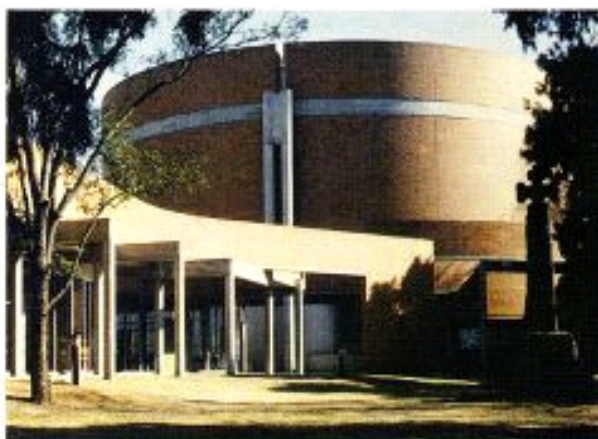
through the Natal Supreme Court, Green and his supporters were removed from the church properties. Green was then instrumental in having St Saviour's Church built (opened in 1868). At the height of this controversy and the division of the church in Pietermaritzburg, WK Macrorie was appointed Bishop of Maritzburg and in 1877 chose St Saviour's Church to be his Cathedral. In 1883 Colenso died but the friction did not end until after 1891 when Bishop Macrorie resigned. Both groups delegated the archbishop of Canterbury to appoint a bishop.

This schism still took over forty years to heal, legislation within Natal helped by clarifying the position of the church properties and, in 1938, Bishop Leonard Noel Fisher called for unity and for a new Cathedral to be built. This eventually was done on the premises of St Peter's – a very modern style which again has created more controversy – but of a different nature. This is the Cathedral of the Holy Nativity, built in 1978.

A further side-street is that Bishop Colenso was very active in the campaign for a just treatment of Chief Langalibalele. Colenso was buried at St Peter's, where the street name of the new Cathedral has now been changed to Langalibalele Street!

But what of St Saviour's, my starting point? My family were horrified that the Diocese decided that St Saviour's was redundant and demolished it in 1979. (It was in a very central, commercial position – and the land now hosts a large Game store). Again what we had not known is that material was salvaged from this former Cathedral and used in the construction of St Saviour's Church, Randjesfontein, Gauteng, dedicated in 1985. On the site of the church there are graves belonging to the pioneer Erasmus family.

It really is worth pursuing the little question marks which one encounters in the pursuit of family history – I feel more enriched for having gained this extra insight into a church which had planned a prominent part in the history of my immediate family.



The current Cathedral of the Holy Nativity

(Continued from page 1) **Chairman's Report (continued)**

immense vote of thanks to Sandra, Margaret and Ann for their support and management skills.

REFRESHMENTS – Lucille and Betty continue to supply refreshments for our meetings; the tea is an essential part of our meeting where genealogical problems are earnestly discussed. We do thank those members who assist Betty and Lucille with the tea and who bring cakes, sandwiches etc

CONCLUSION – Once again a special thanks to those who have served in various offices during the past year. Thank you, the members for showing confidence in the committee, for attending our meetings and participating in Heritage Day. As stated during January this year is the 100th year of the start of WW1 and it will make this the theme for our Heritage Day in September.

Good hunting for family during the forthcoming year, I thank you for your attention and will now call upon Derek Pratt to make a special presentation.

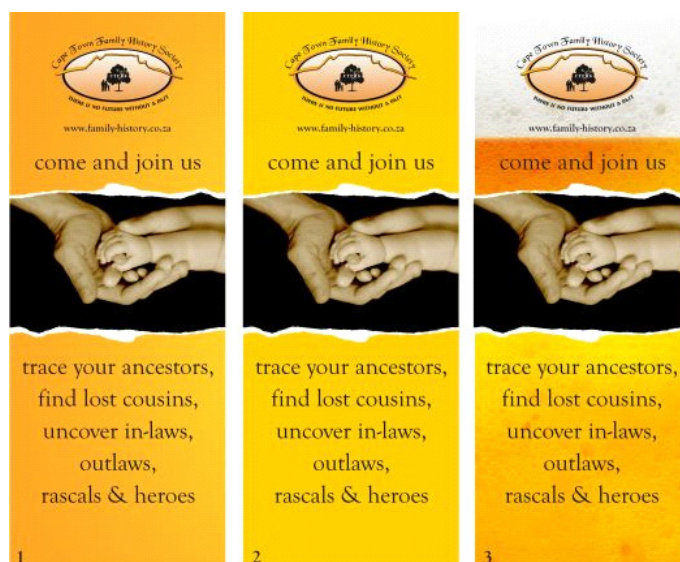
Thank you

D.J. SLINGSBY

CHAIR 2013

March 2014

At the time of "going to press" the committee was deciding on one of these three banners for use at Archive Week etc



MEETINGS LAST QUARTER

JANUARY 2014

At our January meeting Lois Harley presented her research on Anna Christina BOSMAN who lived 1763-1814. Descendent of sick-comforter Hermanus BOSMAN who arrived at the Cape in 1687 and Elizabeth de Villiers, her father was their eighth child, Jacobus BOSMAN. In 1791 Anna married Andreas TEUBES, his second wife in the Lutheran Church.

Her estate papers are at the Cape Archives MOOC 8/30 Ref 29 which show her to have been a landowner, a moneylender and slave owner. Lois mentioned how there were no banks at the Cape where money could be invested and thus Anna's career as a moneylender and landowner.

Landowner: She owned numerous pieces of land in the Table Mountain valley one which included tenanted cottages. **Moneylender:** At her death 45 000 Rix Dollars was out on loan at varying interest. **Slave owner:** Anna owned 12 male slaves, 4 female slaves and 5 children slaves born at the Cape. Lois gave some details of these slaves, which Anna hired out as builders. She also traded in paper, vinegar, and other goods. Anna's household items were also mentioned in detail and Lois had some good slides of typical Cape furniture which would have been similar to Anna's. Anna entire estate was divided among her four children.

Lois' talk was well prepared and presented and showed just how carefully and thoroughly our members research their families.



Don't worry David, Lois is not going to break forth into an aria!

FEBRUARY 2014



Dr Elizabeth van Heyningen

We were extremely lucky to have Dr Elizabeth van Heyningen as our speaker in February. Dr van Heyningen has done considerable research on the Anglo-Boer War Concentration Camps and established a database of names of those held in these camps (<http://www2.lib.uct.ac.za/mss/bccd/>). Her talk was entitled 'Naming the Boers: The Anglo-Boer War Concentration Camps and Family History'.

The camps were formed by the British army to house the residents of the two Boer republics of the South African Republic and the Orange Free State.

They were established towards the end of 1900, after Britain had invaded the Boer republics. Originally Dr Van Heyningen set up the database to investigate mortality and morbidity in the camps during the war and it just grew bigger and bigger!

The database is an ongoing project even though Dr van Heyningen has retired from UCT. The original funding for the research and database came from the Wellcome Trust.

Once again it is amazing how lucky we are to obtain speakers such as Dr van Heyningen to share her Saturday afternoon with us and any member with Afrikaans ancestors would soon be searching the database for any family members!

MARCH 2014

Besides being our AGM, which our chairman always dispatches as quickly (and legally) as possible, March also had Marie-Lou Roux speaking on "Saving the Lutheran Church and the surrounding buildings in Cape Town".

No one could doubt Marie-Lou Roux passion for saving the whole city block around the Lutheran Church and she had the photographs to prove it! Some of the other photographs showed just how appalling some of the proposed changes could be, so we had no problem in backing Marie-Lou in her protest struggle.

The picture on the next page shows the entire block with the warehouse which Marie-Lou Roux is trying to preserve in the foreground. It is an integral part of the block and changes to it must be in the same style.



Mary-Lou Roux outside the Lutheran Church block

ODDS AND SODS

I would like to obtain a good scan or jpeg file of the map of Warwickshire from the book- *The Kings England* by Arthur Mee.

Could anyone help me?

Many thanks,

Lucille LeRoux

BOOK REVIEW

I haven't had a chance to read member Celia Baylis's novel "Secrets in the Seal" but I plan to, because it deals with the history of Tupperware in this country but in a fictionalised story of five Tupperware dealers. "A man interested in Tupperware!?" you ask. Actually, yes, because over twenty years ago you would have seen me wearing a floral tie in the same material as my wife's blouse, with 20 other Tupperware managers and their spouses from a local Cape Town distributor 'living-it-up' at the Sun City Super Bowl for

the National Tupperware Jamboree! Karen, my wife, was a manager and had six to eight dealers who ran parties (as she did) every week. Being a manager, she was given a motor car by Tupperware which she could buy after two years when she got a new one. So I took over her old one and when I told the guys at work that I had a Tupperware car they wanted to know whether I had to burp the doors shut!

So, with the Tupperware burp we come back to the famous Tupperware patented seal from which I suspect Celia took her title. The book uses the lives of five imaginary Tupperware dealers in Johannesburg in 1964 to chronicle the actual events related to the birth of Tupperware and the new way of marketing in South Africa using the different sales levels of distributors, managers and dealers.

As we follow the lives of these five imaginary, the reader learns the facts about the beginning of the Tupperware legend, and the House Party System it created. The characters are Janet who is ordinary and shy, Millie the go-getter, Veronica a frustrated teacher whose progress in her profession has been stilted because she is married, Julianne who looks after her invalid husband, and Pamie who is after a good time. These women, from very different backgrounds, meld together as they are driven through common goals to interact and compete with each other.

Secrets in the Seal gives us an insight into what has made Tupperware's growth so phenomenal. When Karen became a dealer and later a manager, many people asked me, "Is Tupperware still going?" Well, not only is it still going they are celebrating 50 years of its existence in South Africa

One critic has said: "Every ex-Tupperware dealer and manager should have a copy of this intriguing book." I can see this book becoming my wife's birthday present!



MY INTERESTING UNCLE AND HIS JOURNEY

by Betty Nelson

Part Two of Betty Nelson's interesting Uncle Henry Kenney's story. In this part he journeys across the North of Queensland from Brisbane to Palmerville. The final part, his trip to Maytown in the rainy season as told in the Brisbane Telegraph.

After a week of hurry scurry, worry and ruffled temper from things going wrong, which seems to be the natural outcome of undue haste, accompanied by one of my old hands, I boarded the RMS *Bingora* at Brisbane on November 24th and left punctually at midnight for the port of Cooktown.

My travelling impedimenta on this eventual trip reached the respectable proportion of one and a half tons. Judging from the bulk represented by this weight, one could imagine me a prospective bride setting out on the voyage of life, surmise quickly dispelled by a little scrutiny, as lingerie is not usually made out of deal planks, iron bars or tarpaulins, neither are tents, harness, guns or acetylene lamps used on a honeymoon. These commodities, however, made up the greater portion, according to the bill of lading, of my freight.

Through a bit of blundering on the part of some of the people from whom some of the materials were bought, I was within an ace of having to leave more than half of the stuff behind, an event that would have bottled up the whole concern.

The passage from the Capital to the most northern port of the coast was exceptionally pleasant, by far more enjoyable than I have ever had. The skipper of the *Bingora* is an old friend and much of the time was spent with him in his cabin on the bridge, far and away the most comfortable quarters on the ship. This applies to all sea going vessels. Certainly those upon which I have travelled which now number more than twenty.

At Townsville we had to tranship to the RMS *Mourilyon* where I again fell on good times. The captain of the first named ship introduced me to the skipper of the latter with instructions to look after me, which he did, with the result that I had an even better time on the *Mourilyon* than on the *Bingora*.

We landed just after mid-day on Tuesday, the 29th and took up our quarters at the Great Northern Hotel where we had to pass a lingering existence for five days. Business at the warden's office necessitated my presence on the Wednesday, otherwise we could have gone through to Laura direct, providing the railway officials could have exerted sufficient energy to transfer our



The Great Northern Hotel, Townsville, today

baggage from the steamer to the railway truck in time, a question associated with grave and serious doubt.

Before starting, it was my intention to pay a visit to the tin fields about 25 miles from Cooktown, but the weather was extremely hot so the

journey was abandoned. I was quite game to go but wiser and saner heads prevailed. Later experiences have caused me to be thankful.

After arranging matters at the Bank and making a few necessary purchases at the store, the only thing left to kill time was my camera and my books. I took a few pictures but found it difficult to get water cool enough for development. I had a kind invitation to visit an old resident but the heat was too much for walking about so got out of it by promising to spend a day with him on my return.

The train by which we completed the last stage but one of our journey, left Cooktown on the 5th at 8 a.m. arriving at Laura at 1 p.m. on the same day.



Laura Railway Station

By this time our modest cargo had reached the dimensions of a small truck and my presence at the railway for the fourth time gave rise to various speculations and many inquisitorial remarks from the few aspiring legislators and

would-be governors of the North who drag out a weary existence in the wilds of the Peninsula.

Having secured two of the four available rooms at the Pub, designated 'The Laura Hotel', rooms which at home would be considered unfit for human habitation, made a duty call upon the representative of law and order and recharged nature's exhaustive magazine, the serious business of preparing for the North and final stage of the journey was commenced.

There were rations for four months to figure out as once at the point of destination the possibility of obtaining supplies whilst the rainy season lasts - from January to the end of March - is almost as remote as a trip to the moon on a flying machine.

(Continued from page 8)



A typical Australian pub

Not only was it necessary to provide for ourselves but essential to study the requirements of

the men who may be employed, as they, any more than members of Parliament, cannot work without tucker. With the assistance of one or two old campaigners and a little common sense, this part of our programme presented no serious difficulty. When, however, the question of transport came under consideration matters assumed a very different aspect. Ten months obscurity had not improved any of our travelling equipment. What had not been purloined by some invisible biped or made tracks on its own, was either ornamented with moth holes or suffering from other incurable malady. Fortunately most of the kit could be repaired or replaced on the spot, not so the means of locomotion.

From this point the little specks which crept above the horizon at Cooktown developed into leaden clouds of trouble, the atmosphere became extremely sultry with fork lightning lashing from every point of the compass and thunderstorms became the order of the day.

For ten months the four horses necessary for transport between Laura and Palmerville had been carefully shepherded and kept in at night. They were excellent campers and showed no signs of dissatisfaction with the good fare provided for them by the exceptionally heavy rainfall with which this, as well as other parts of the State, has been favoured during the year 1910. Unfortunately, the Government paddock in which they are allowed to roam is rather large and as soon as the celestial artillery, which heralds the wet season, commenced its thundering cannonade, they skedaddled. Horses, like the softer sex, are rather prone to contrariness under certain conditions. As soon as the heavy thunderstorms begin, either from excitement or nervousness, they become seized with an intense desire to travel and visit the place of their birth, and no matter in what direction or how great the distance, they make a beeline thither. Two of the aforementioned four were secured without much trouble but the other pair are still on the missing list.

The policeman and his black trackers were riding about for a week, hunting the bush in every direction for many miles without result, and where they are at the moment I have not the remotest idea. If they have cleared for the place in which they were born, it is 700 miles away. To everyone acquainted with the bush, the proclivity of horses for straying at this season of the year, is common

knowledge, but no less serious on that account. I know of horses which have been turned out at night and it has taken two or three weeks of hard riding to find them - other cases where they have not been seen for six months, and in one instance, two years.

Meteorological conditions now indicate, in no unmistakable way, the rapid approach of the wet season and every day, in fact every hour wasted, points in the direction of disaster. The heat is getting intense, with thunderstorms increasing in volume - a daily occurrence with monotonous regularity. Delay might mean being stuck up in a bog, half way, or it might mean not getting to the Laura at all. Under these circumstances the only course open was to procure two more horses in place of those which are lost.

Before leaving Brisbane, I secured, by wire, the only available team in the district to convey our supplies and impedimenta from the railway terminus on to the ground, arranging for it to leave Laura on Wednesday, December 7th, a contract, considering the price I paid for it - twenty pounds - I expected would be faithfully carried out. When I arrived, however, it transpired that the teamster, Jenkins by name, had taken a load of goods to Maytown and could not possibly be back again before Thursday, the 8th. One day was not so bad but Friday and Saturday came with no teamster in view. The weather was ominous, my patience, usually under control, got out of bounds and things began to buzz and hum. What with lost horses, an absent wagon, and once the rain starts, a well nigh impossible journey of 75 miles ahead, I felt somewhat desperate and seriously contemplated adopting desperate measures, because, get to Palmerville I intended, if in any way possible.



The Laura to Maytown coach 1895

In company with the man I brought with me, on Saturday morning I rode some miles in the direction of Maytown, hoping to obtain tidings, if vague, of the team, but we caught a thunderstorm instead, and both got wet skins. Our oilskins were, of course, hanging behind the door of the Pub.

Sunday came, but no team. The day, which in a Christian country is devoted to prayer and praise, I am afraid in this case, was employed in something like an opposite direction. However, just as the strain was reaching breaking point, somebody, I cannot remember who, shouted 'Bob' (Jenkins)

(Continued from page 9)

is crossing the river. I went straight to the water tank and cooled my sulphurous temperature with a long draught of warm liquid. Anything cold is unknown in this region during the first and last months of the year.

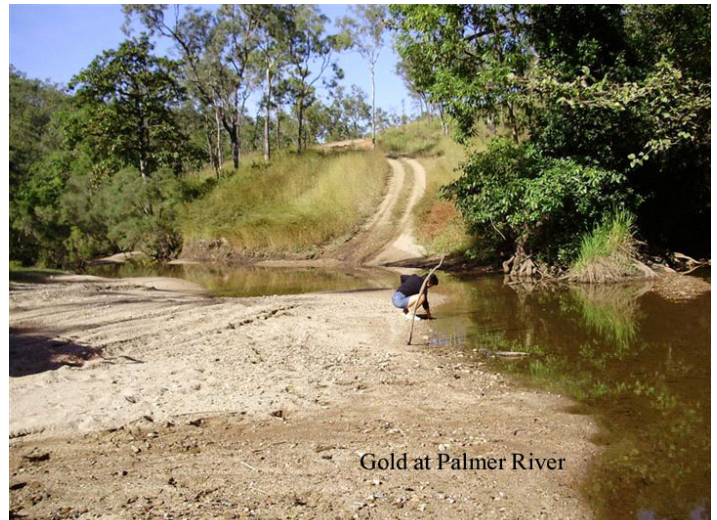
I was not long in making the acquaintance of Mr. Jenkins, a tall patriarchal looking gent, one of the early comers and who I don't suppose has been the length of a kangaroo's tail from the Peninsula since the seventies. He viewed the situation with that leisurely calm, far too prevalent in the North, and had the audacity to preface his remarks with 'the whole of next week is untouched yet'. If next week was not, I was, which he very soon found out.

This knight of the wagon, as can be seen from the photograph showing the team ready to start from Laura, strongly resembles General Booth, but needless to say, possesses none of the Salvation Army chief's good qualities. Every time he comes off a journey and gets within hail of a pub, he is seized with an unquenchable thirst and the rum bottle dances a hornpipe in consequence. He must, I think, have a Sandows Exerciser with him to keep his elbow joints in order otherwise they would never be able to perform the task imposed upon them.

First thing on Monday morning the horses were yoked up, the wagons loaded and all made ready for a start immediately after dinner, when, ye gods, news came along that the river Laura had risen to a swim, which made crossing impossible. This information I think the redoubtable Bob hailed with something in the nature of delight as it would keep the rum bottle in sight for a little longer.

After dinner I went down to see if there was any sign of water subsiding and was told that it was falling fast and would, in all probability, be crossable about 5 p.m. Bob thought we had better wait till morning but I thought differently, by that time it might be a swim again and heaven knows when we should be able to cross. No, we must get over that night, and by a little strategy and the promise of a bucket of rum at the other end, the load was landed on the opposite bank before sundown. This accomplished, I felt on better terms with everybody, myself in particular, than I had done for a good week.

Realizing the procrastinating nature of my man and the vital importance of making the most of every hour, I decided to the trail of the team and to pick it up every night at camp. We could travel with our packs, more than double the distance Jenkins could with the team. Consequently, in order to keep in touch, it would be necessary for us to spell every alternate day. Tedious as this arrangement promised to be, it was necessary on account of all our personal belongings and provisions, beyond what we carried with us, being on the wagon. Then again, in the event of storms or heavy rains, with a matter of twenty miles or more between ourselves and



Tourist still panning for gold in the Palmer river

supplies, matters would have become serious in a very short time.

Black boys and Chinamen reported that the team was under way soon after breakfast on Tuesday, the 13th. We started immediately after dinner and picked it up about 5 p.m. at the Fairview Telegraph Station, 13 miles out, where camp was pitched for the night. After seeing everything heading for Palmerville the following morning, we settled down for the day. The heat was intense, and how I managed to scrape up sufficient strength to shoot the duck we had for dinner, it is impossible to tell, but I did, and a very savoury meal it made.

The next morning - Thursday - we struck camp early and took the track as soon as possible afterwards, expecting to overtake the team 16 or 17 miles ahead. Towards noon the heat was more like that of a blast furnace than the sun's rays, and at the end of twelve miles we were compelled to halt, boil a billy of tea, and unsaddle our horses to cool the poor brutes' backs. Undoubtedly it sounds nice to flop down under the shade of a spreading tree and sip the refreshing juice of Congo or Souchong, but it must be borne in mind that all the shade one gets in this part of the bush, is no more than could reasonably be expected from a respectable scaffold pole. If you prop yourself up against the butt of a gum tree some mechanical arrangement is necessary to keep you on the move in order to dodge the sun which is hurling its blistering rays from directly overhead. It is quite a mistake to imagine there are shady nooks and cool arbours on the Palmer Gold Field.

After a spell of about two hours we saddled up and resumed our journey. No more than half a mile along the road we came upon Jenkins - wagon in the middle of the track, team outspanned, one horse dead and another dying, all more or less done up. The skipper himself looked as if he had just fallen into a water-hole, from perspiration.

With two horses short, heavy thunderstorms gathering all round, and four good days travel between us and our destination, matters again assumed a very serious aspect.

(Continued on page 11)

(Continued from page 10)

What was to be done? Sitting in a bog for a couple of months picking teeth would not be very intellectual amusement, neither would it provide much interesting material for reports, so I decided to push on as speedily as existing conditions would allow, and, if necessary, and possible, procure horses somewhere in the neighbourhood of Palmerville to render assistance in getting the wagon in.

The remainder of the journey I am not likely to forget in a hurry. To save both our horses and ourselves, it was absolutely necessary to rest for two hours each day - 12 till 2 p.m. - and when the goal was eventually reached, it was with panting horses, blistered lips and aching heads, much more dead than alive. Anywhere along the road, by dropping from our saddles into a water-hole, it was possible to have a hot bath.

Fortunately the rain held off until Monday, the 10th, and Jenkins who for once made the best use of his opportunity, arrived without further mishap, in the afternoon. Half an hour afterwards the storm burst, the rain descended in torrents and has continued to do so at intervals since. It is nothing short of a miracle that disaster was averted. Had there been another day's delay, there would have been a matter of 15 miles between us and our supplies for the next two months, with goodness knows what result.

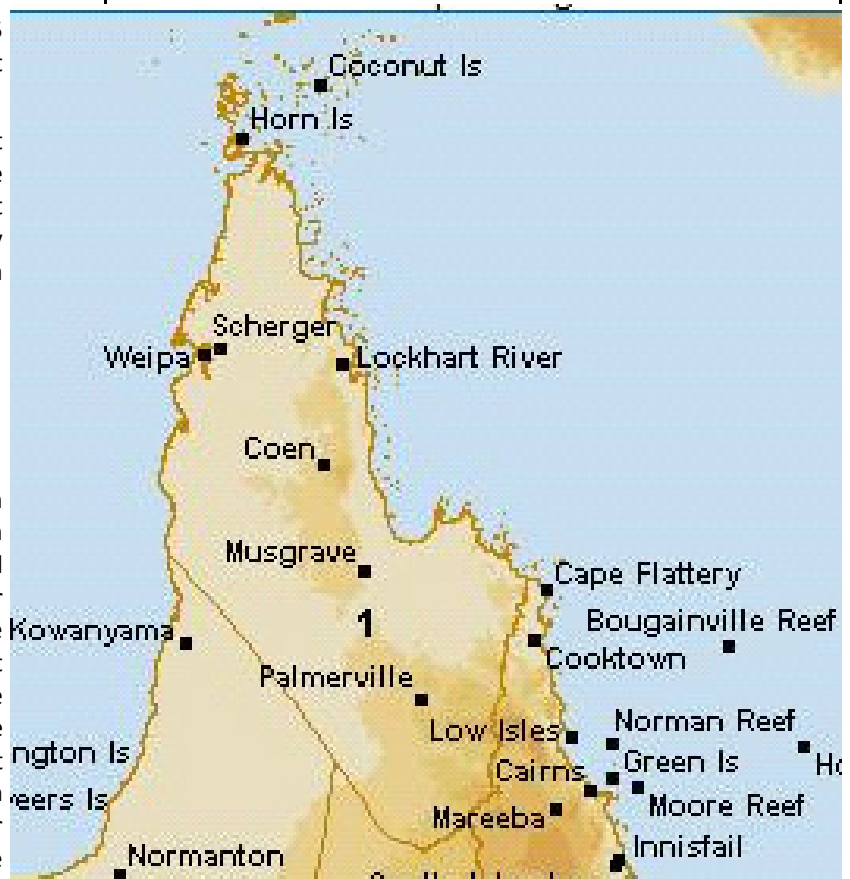
Last Thursday, the 22nd, one of the severest storms I have ever witnessed, burst over us. We were nearly drowned and our partially rigged tent almost carried away. In the space of thirty minutes, 310 points of rain fell - 3 inches and a tenth.

Excerpt from an interview between the *Brisbane Telegraph* and Nehemiah James Henry Kenney - November 4th, 1907

"Mr. Kenney speaks with considerable warmth about what he terms the injustice which has been perpetrated on the 'ill used', down-trodden and persecuted aborigines. He considers that their labour should be utilized for the benefit of the State, but instead of that, the object in the past appears to have been a desire to exterminate them, or make them more savage than by nature they really are. The fact that the men are not allowed to work, except under conditions which no settler would agree to, drives the poor unfortunates to practices which are questionable and degrading. If somebody with courage and earnestness written across his brow would undertake to deal with the problem of utilizing the labour of the aborigines in a fair and honourable way, the result to them would be elevating and to the State it would be beneficial."



Uncle Henry on the horse that he rode on his long journey from Brisbane to Northern Queensland. Read more his ride in the wet months next Quarter.



This map only shows a few Northern towns that Henry Kenney visited. He came up the coast as far as Cooktown and then inland to Laura (not on map but near Coen) and then travelled southwards to Palmerville

CAPE TOWN FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY

WEBSITE:

<http://www.family-history.co.za/>

Contains lots of interesting and useful information

MONTHLY MEETINGS

Third Saturday of each month at St John's Church Hall, Wynberg

COMMITTEE 2013-14

CHAIRPERSON:

David Slingsby

SECRETARY:

Ann Smythe

TREASURER:

Vacant

NEWSLETTER EDITOR:

Derek Pratt

MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY:

Sandra Cruywagen

GREETING SECRETARY:

Margaret Robinson

LIBRARIAN

Cynthia Winstanly

ORGANISING SPEAKERS FOR MEETINGS

Cheri Wright

Kevin Turner

WEBMASTER

Eric Settle

WORKSHOP PROGRAMME

Just a reminder that Lois Harley runs workshops on Family History at the University of the Third Age at the following venues:

Claremont U3A – First Thursday in each month from 2 pm to 4pm at the Claremont Library Hall. The meeting in February was "Historic Events that may have influenced our families."

Athlone U3A – Second Wednesday of each month from 10.30 am to 12.30pm at the Rylands Library Hall. The meeting in February covered the topic "Using your computer for family history research."

False Bay U3A – Fourth Saturday of each month from 10 am to 12 noon at the ARP&P Centre, Recreation Road Fish Hoek.

BACK PAGE HUMOUR



"Done! Everyone in the family tree has been found & everything is perfectly organized including the photos," said no genealogist... EVER.

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