

VOL. 4 NO 5 NOVEMBER—DECEMBER 2015

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Notes from President Angela Syme:

Several activities have expanded our public awareness in September and October.

We held an open day during the school holidays which attracted several items in the "Gazette" and "Standard" which encouraged visitors and recorded the day with several photographs.

The Southern Zone meeting of the Western Victoria Association of Historical Societies was held on Grand Final Day in the Court House. Visitors were impressed by our exhibitions, and were surprised that our curators regularly develop new, often temporary exhibitions as well as refreshing permanent displays.

We had a stall at Ex Libris weekend and raised over \$340.

A meeting will not be held in December. Instead members are invited to a Christmas lunch at the Victoria Hotel on Tuesday 8 December. Pay your own way. Please let the Society know if you are coming.

One of the new exhibitions had been prepared for a visit by the MUIOOF (Manchester Unity Independent Order of Oddfellows) who arrived at the wharf in period costume. The Court House was packed. If you have not seen this small exhibition or our large World War One display you should visit soon.

This is a photograph of part of the MUIOOF display



MEETING DATES

Tuesday November 10

General Meeting at 7.30 PM after a Committee Meeting at 7.00 PM.
Guest Speaker: Damien Gleeson - Gallipoli Visit 2015.

Tuesday December 8

Christmas lunch at the Victoria Hotel from 12.30. Please register.

Tuesday 12 January

General Meeting at 7.30 PM after a Committee Meeting at 7.00 PM.

PIONEER SERIES

With our editor needing some articles for the newsletter I selected a man from the Pioneer Board that I knew nothing about - William Cain. When I looked at our files, a Rory James William Cain had submitted a thesis 'The Irish at Belfast (Port Fairy), 1849-1870' in the 1980's and the Cain Family were a prominent part of it. The majority of the article is from the thesis with additional information from the Belfast and Port Fairy Gazettes, and local history books. If you have further information we are only too happy to add it to our files.

WILLIAM CAIN 1827 – 1888

The Cain family were originally from lands just north west of Bushmills in County Antrim, Northern Ireland. Around 1820, Thomas Cain and his wife Maria, (Connor) settled in London where their four children were born: John, 1823; a daughter, 1825; William, 1827; and Thomas, 1829. The family were converts to Protestantism.

There is no record of the arrival of the Cain family in Australia but Rory Cain felt that the three brothers may have arrived in Belfast (Port Fairy) in 1849. I have not been able to find their names on any shipping list to verify this.

John Cain, the eldest brother, married Mary Ann Spratt, an Irish "orphan girl" in May 1850. They had four children. In 1851 he was listed in the Victorian Directory as a constable living in Bank Street. In 1859 it was reported that the licence of the Stag Hotel was transferred from William Watts to John Cain. By April 1860 Abijah John Brown, a former owner, was back in occupation of the Stag although it is believed that John Cain was involved in its management right up to the early 1870's. He lived in Melbourne from then on, dying at the age of 69 in 1892.

According to the Belfast Rate Book, Thomas Cain, the youngest brother, was living in Cox Street in 1856. He is thought to have gone to the Ararat gold rush and then in the 1860's made his way to the west coast of New Zealand, where gold had also been found. After serving in the New Zealand Armed Constabulary he returned to Australia and eventually made his way to his brother's house in Tyrendarra. He died in Portland in 1877, age 47.

The Cains are believed to have lived near the River Thames in London, where they worked as lightermen and storemen. John Cain had been employed as a lighterman in Belfast and William Cain was a storeman for the majority of his time in Belfast. An experienced storeman with a good writing hand would have been a prize for his employer, William Rutledge.

William Cain married Jane Elizabeth Forwood West at Belfast on November 1854, a month after the foundation stone of St John's Church of England had been laid. Jane was the daughter of Charles West and Mary (Baker) and they were from Ramsgate, Kent and living in Bank Street in the early 1850's. She worked for her uncle, Edward William Baker, at the Horse and Jockey Hotel at Orford until a few months before her marriage.

William Cain remained in the Belfast district for the rest of his life. At the time of his marriage his occupation was "Mailman". He was, in fact, a mounted mailman in the employ of William Rutledge and Company, who held the mail contracts for the area. He may have seen an advertisement similar to this.

"Mailman wanted. Wanted a light weight to ride about 80 miles twice a week. Good wages will be given. Apply immediately to Wm. Rutledge & Co."

The same newspaper carried an item about the former mailman reported drowned between Portland and Glenelg.

William was still a mailman when his first child, Isabella Frances, was born in 1855. His duties were to carry the mail overland to Portland and other places. On the Portland run he rode along beaches and crossed the rivers at their mouths, usually where a sandbar had built up. When later a selector at Tyrendarra, William Cain's residence was the horse changing station and unofficial post office for the Cobb & Co. Coaches.

By 1856, William Cain had exchanged his mailman position for that of storeman with William Rutledge & Co. According to the Belfast Rate Book, the family were living in a 4 room cottage on the eastern side of Sackville Street, between Bank and Regent

Streets. After the collapse of William Rutledge & Co. it is thought that William Cain worked for Cowtan & Co., before going on to work for William Bateman & Co. in 1864.

William Cain was a member of the Belfast Volunteer Rifle Corps and served until 1867, although by that time it was known under another name. He appears to have belonged to that middle rank of citizens who played an energetic part in public life, without making too much fuss about it. He donated £5 to the Belfast Hospital and Benevolent Asylum. By comparison, his rates at the time were £1 so his donation was extremely generous.



William Cain (1827-1888), Private, Belfast Volunteer Rifles. I did see in a later document that he was a Gunner.

The Belfast Gazette, 14 October 1864

"FIREWORKS: On Friday night, a display of fireworks took place at the Star of the West Hotel, at the Bank Hotel, and at Mr. W. Cain's, Sackville Street. At the first two mentioned places the fireworks were supplied by Mr. Gibb, the pyrotechnist, who lately provided the display on the east side of the Moyne. At Mr Cain's some very fine rockets, made by Mr. J. Hatton, of James Street, were discharged."

William Cain resigned as a storeman for William Bateman & Co. in 1870. He had selected land west of the Shire of Belfast and the Land Board at Portland approved the selection in November 1872. The ever increasing family – eight of the eleven children had been born by this time, lived in a tent until a wattle and daub house could be built. About 1884 they built the large stone house which later served as the Tyrendarra East Post Office. William would provide fishing tackle and bait, and take parties fishing at the mouth of the Fitzroy River. In the 1886 / 87 Belfast and District Directory he was listed as a farmer.

William Cain died on 24 November 1888, age 61, leaving a wife and eleven children, the majority living well into their old age. His wife Jane Elizabeth remarried in 1896 to Henry Down. She died in June 1916 and was buried at Yambuk cemetery with her first husband, William.

OBITUARY – Port Fairy Gazette 27 November 1888

Intelligence was brought to hand on Sunday morning that Mr William Cain, of Tyrendarra, had died the previous night. For some time past the late Mr Cain had been in a delicate state of health, and had recently consulted Dr Scott. During the past week he gradually became weaker and finally passed away on Saturday night last. The deceased was well known throughout this district having for many years been in the employ of Messrs Rutledge and Co., when that firm conducted a large business in Port Fairy. Mr Cain selected land at Tyrendarra in the neighbourhood of the Fitzroy River, where he has resided for a good many years. His neat looking residence on the main road, built with the marble like Tyrendarra stone, is a well known resting place for travellers between this town and Portland, where hospitality and kindness is always obtainable. During the fishing season numerous anglers visit the Fitzroy and on such occasions the late Mr Cain rendered them valuable assistance by providing all requisites in the way of bait, boat, &c., and endeavoured to make the piscatorial trip a pleasant one.

LYN BROWN - Archivist

PROPOSED HIGH SCHOOL

At its meeting on Wednesday night last, the Borough Council had before it a communication it received from the Education Department, acknowledging receipt of council's letter of October 29, as follows:

The question of a high school at Port Fairy has been discussed by the administration of the Education Department on previous occasions and the matter is kept under review. The main obstacle to the establishment of such a school is the existence of excellent and comprehensive facilities at Warrnambool, where provision exists for boys and girls to follow either secondary or technical courses. As a high school at Port Fairy would have a limited enrolment, the range of courses and subjects it could offer would have to be restricted, with the result that pupils could well be in a worse position educationally than they are at present. Even if a high school were established at Port Fairy, it seems certain that many parents would still prefer to send their children to Warrnambool.

2 December 1965

Parking of Cars in Holiday Time

An appeal to employers and employees in business houses to park their cars in the back streets and keep the main business section free for the parking of holiday shoppers cars during the Christmas and holiday season was made at a meeting of traders last Monday night.

It was pointed out that if this were not done, visitors were likely to leave Port Fairy and do their business in some other centre. There was plenty of parking space close to the main streets of the town and employers and employees could use this with little inconvenience to themselves.

Port Fairy Historical Society Plans Display

The Port Fairy Historical Society held its last meeting for the year last Wednesday, December 1.

A sum of £50 has been received from the Hamilton National Trust as Port Fairy's Share of the proceeds of an open day held earlier in the year.

Some of this money is to be put towards a filing cabinet in which catalogued material belonging to the Historical Society will be stored.

Mr John Ryan recently attended the first Victorian Historical Societies' Conference as Port Fairy's official delegate.

Mr Ryan reported very fully on the lectures he attended and presented some ideas and suggestions that could be used in the local field.

DISPLAY

It has been decided to again hold a display of historic photographs and relics during the Moyneyana Festival.

25 November 1965

CYCLE CLUB PROPOSED

Efforts are being made to form a cycling club in Port Fairy, and with this objective in view, a cycling race is being organised to take place next Saturday, November 27.

Anyone interested is asked to be present at the Golden Fleece Service Station at 1.30 p.m. on Saturday

Entry is free and good trophies are offered. Mr T. Paton is the hon. Organizer.

Some years ago there was a very flourishing cycle club in Port Fairy and it is pleasing to see that efforts are being made to revive the sport in the district

There are many young lads in the town with cycles, and promotion of the sport should be given every encouragement by the citizens of Port Fairy.

From the Port Fairy Gazette
November and December

1965

6 December 1965

EXTENDED TRADING HOURS WILL HELP VISITORS

The decision by Port Fairy traders last week to seek extended hours of trading provided under the Labour and Industry Act, should be a great help to holiday makers over the vacation period.

It would be safe to say that Port Fairy's population from late December until the end of January is increased by at least 3,000 visitors and it is essential that the business houses of the town should be in a position to cater for their requirements.

Many holiday-makers are out all day, when weather conditions permit, enjoying themselves on the beaches, fishing and sight seeing, and arrive back at their camps and caravans late in the day when normal business hours have ended. The extended hours will enable them to visit business houses and shop at their leisure

Shark Gun is Now Legal

Shark guns armed with 12-gauge shotgun cartridges will be allowed in Victorian waters for the first time this summer.

The Chief Secretary, Mr Rylah, said today that the guns would have to be registered with the chief Commissioner of Police.

Other conditions for using it would be announced soon by proclamation.

The move to allow shark guns in Victoria followed a shark attack on skindiver Henri Bource, 26, of East Hawthorne, near Lady Julia Percy Island on November 29, last year. Mr Bource lost the lower part of his left leg in the attack.

29 November 1965

Glaxo starts bulk milk pick-up

New tanker

The first collection of milk from bulk tanks by Glaxo-Allenburys took place on Thursday last, November 25, when a new 2,200 gallon all stainless steel tanker was used.

The first milk into the tanker was collected from the dairy of Messrs D. J. Lane and Sons of Tower Hill.

On this first run milk was also collected from the dairies of Messrs Neagle Bros., R. L. Red, W. J. and P. M. Bourke and Miss Anne Coffey in Toolong.

Further bulk milk tanks are being installed as they arrive and it is expected that about sixteen dairies will be on bulk milk collection by Christmas.

The collection system is based on taking milk from the cooler and putting it into the farm vat. A small unit then chills this milk down to 40 degrees Fahrenheit. The milk is collected from the tank every three milkings, or less frequently as the milk output falls.

Special equipment has been installed at Glaxo-Allenburys factory at Port Fairy to pump the milk out of the bulk milk collection tanker and also to clean the tankers automatically.

There is no doubt that the introduction of this system will prove a great boon to the farmer and will enable him to produce a better quality product with less physical effort. His time spent in milking and then taking his cans to the depot is also very much reduced.

The collection of milk is only being carried out in the area north-west of the factory at present and will later be extended to cover all dairies supplying Glaxo-Allenburys.

This is no Daytona Beach

Daytona beach in the U.S.A. is a famous racing car track and it seems that some motorists have an idea of putting the east beach to similar use.

However the Borough Council have different thoughts on this matter.

At last Wednesday night's meeting of the Borough Council, Cr J. Brophy, said he had seen a motorist speed along the foreshore at the east beach. He went nearly to Killarney and then returned.

Cr Brophy said at the time, fortunately, there were no children on the beach. However, it was a very dangerous practice and the council should act to stop it.

If steps were not taken immediately to prevent this practice, someone might be fatally injured. — Councillors agreed with Cr Brophy's views and it was decided that a gate or similar structure be erected to prevent access to the beach and that keys be given to persons who had need or authority to get to the beach in the vicinity of Battery Hill

AUTOMATIC TELEPHONE EXCHANGE NOW IN OPERATION AT PORTLAND

Yesterday morning, the new automatic telephone exchange at Portland came into operation. It is the first cross-bar type to function in Western Victoria.

Mr Malcolm Fraser, M.H.R. will officially open the new exchange on Monday, December 13, at 2.30 p.m.

Pony Club Request

At Wednesday night's meeting of the Borough Council a letter was read from The Port Fairy Pony Club, requesting the approval of council to use a section of Southcombe Park in the proximity of the old Golf House for their weekly activities. Advising that the formation of a club in Port Fairy has aroused the interest of quite a number of citizens of Port Fairy and district and is a means of endeavouring to keep my young persons off the streets. Stating that the club would like to be able to make up the necessary jumps for show purposes and leave them in position where the children can go and practice after school.

The request was granted subject to certain formalities being complied with.

SUNDAY SPORT FOR DISCUSSION

Included in the correspondence at last Wednesday night's meeting of the Borough Council was a letter from the South Western Grounds Management association giving notice of the annual meeting to be held on Tuesday, November 30, at 8 p.m. at the Terang Hotel. Advising that a special meeting will be held after the annual meeting to discuss and make amendments if found necessary to the constitution of the said association and stating that proposals of amendments by delegates should be lodged with the secretary by November 26, so that they can be compiled for the meeting. Enclosing a copy of the constitution.

Referred to the delegates (Crs J. H. Reardon and A. Hill).

Cr Hill said he noted that the body controlling the ground used by the Colac Club was not a member of the association. He added that included amongst the business to be discussed was the matter of the use of grounds on Sunday and the use of grounds for sport on Sundays when admission fees were charged at gates, etc.

It was agreed that the delegates should hear the views expressed on the matter of Sunday sport, etc., and report back to council

PORT FAIRY GAZETTE DECEMBER 1915

PRESSURE

WHEN ?

The Belgians have shown us their
courage and grit,
The Frenchmen have fought with a
will,
Our own British soldiers have
stepped to the front
To help with their weapons and skill.
But fighting means victims-and many
are gone,
For few can death's summons resist
There is somebody wanted to fill up
the gap.
So are you off to enlist ?

The voice of your country is calling
today,
And urgent indeed her demand;
Now, men of Victoria your characters
scan,
And show us the strength of your
hand.
Do not for one moment think num-
bers so great,
That your service will never be
missed;
Remember, there is always a gap to
be filled,
So when are you off to enlist ?

Perhaps Homeland calls you--your
sweet heart or wife,
Perhaps your old mother's arms
cling.
But just for the moment they'll have
to stand back, You are needed for
Country and King.
And proudly they'll know that you've
chosen the best,
And though smiles may come
through a mist;
They'll bless you for going to fill up a
gap,
So when are you off to enlist ?

Be British, and help Britain's honour
to day.
The strife is just at its birth.
And many are needed to swiftly re-
store
The glory of peace to our earth.
Oh, let not the hand of the coward be
yours,
And when you your dear ones have
kissed,
Go, prove you are willing to fill up a
gap;
Now, when are you off to enlist ?

Port Fairy Gazette 2 December 1915

AND RESPONSE

This Roll of Honour was published
in every issue in December 1915

Roll of Honor.

Port Fairy Heroes
Who have died for their
King and Native Land.
Alexander V. Manuell.
Frederick J. Hastings.
Laurence Gerald Finn.
Russell Hindhaugh.
Nevill L. Brett
John W. J. Hindhaugh.
Time cannot dim the
lustre of their names
or noble deeds.

The following is a complete list of
those who volunteered from Port Fairy
and district to go to the war with the
A.I. Forces:

PORT FAIRY BOROUGH.

I. G. Finn'	J. F. Mathewrs
I. F. Pettingill	J. Artis
I.W. Owens	J. Finn
C. Thompson	J. J. Malady
J. L. Dyson	T. A. Perry
M. Malady	R. Fox
A. N. Moore	H. P. Singleton
W. J. Donaldson	M. McKelvy
S. H. Young	K. O. McCallum
F. Loughnan	J. Wright
J. W. Dobson	J. W. Arnold
N. Walsh	J. Walsh
B. J. Evans	J. Gentles
M. Wallace	P. Spearing
D. Londrigan	J. Barnes
Geo. Byrnes : .	C. L. Treganowan
J. Henderson	R. Dunbar
J. J. Costello	W. Caddy
P. Artis, jun.,	H. H. Hitchins
A. Watson	C. Lee
F. G. Mardling	E. J. Jago
C. H. Steele	M. McAllen
A. F. McDowell	W. J. Symons
S. B. Holden	R. Bortchaell
W. Moore	P. Mathieson
A. E. McLellan	F. J. Hastings
C. E. McLellan	W. Powell
R. Chapman	R. Brett
T. Stewart	A. A. Wilkinson
J. W. Smith	T. Sullivan
J. Hicks	I. Richards
P. Dodd	L. D. Freckleton
I. R. Smith	W. T. Chaffey
H. Speed	P. D. Macgregor
W. Watson	L. C. Trigger

J. P. Barker	B. Arnel
R. Barker	S. D. J. Hogarth
N. L. Brett	A. Evans
Ernest Artis	Wm. Saunders
John Artis	J. J. Malady
Jas Cranmer	Andrew Masterson
M. McAllen	Jas. Kemp
F. Powell	L. Grant
W. Fabian	N. C. Perry
A. H. Humphries	F. Presnell
A. S. Robinson	W. Mardling
Wm. Carter	W. Wray
D. J. Dempsey	F. Powell

NAVAL RESERVE, PORT FAIRY.

Francis Hanley	Frank Larkins
R. W. Goldie	H. H. Parfrey
J. Harris	W. Perry
D. J. Lane ,	D. H. Osmond
N. F. Guyett	E. P. Guyett
K. J. Riddell	W. M. Perry
J. I. Moore	J. H. Evans
S. G. Evans	O. A. Evans
A. T. Parfrey	E. Williams
F. C. Finn	C. Radoslovich
T. Parfrev	

BELFAST SHIRE.

YAMBUK.

R. G. Hindhaugh	A. W. Robertson
W.C. Hollingsworth	A. E. Thomas
M. Leddin	V. W. Hindhaugh
P. J. Quinane	L. M. Robertson
J. W. J. Hindhaugh	C. G. Watts
Con. Carroll	D. McDermot
Halliwell Hockley	C.E. Tilley

BESSIEBELLE.

S. B. Sharrock	J. P. O'Keefe
Jas. B. Sharrock	Reginald Dyson

KIRKSTALL.

R. L. Reed,	W. H. Game
T. Candy	J. Doolan
R. Bunge	C. Williams
J. A. Baulch	W. Garvey
S. Rellick	M. Kelson
G. Hally	

ORFORD.

Peter McGregor	James Barry
James Abraham	George Swarbrick,
Joseph Pope jun.	L. Trigger
W. Watson.	
T. J. Devlin (Killarney)	
J. Wilton (Crossley)	
W. J. C. Kirkwood (Hamilton)	
S. Chamberlain (Macarthur)	
F. G. Eldridge (Rosebrook).	

It is possible there may be an omission
of persons who belong to this district
but who enlisted elsewhere.
If the names are supplied, they will be
published.

The Belfast Gazette November 1865

Some Medical Advertisements

Kaye's Woradell's Pills

The Pills are a purely vegetable preparation and may be taken at any time by either sex without fear of danger. They act upon the bowels mildly yet effectually, and by their fine tonic, aromatic and aperient properties, they remove all oppressive accumulations, regulate the secretions of the liver and bowels, strengthen the stomach, and purify the blood. Unlike many remedies they do not induce liability to take cold or establish a necessity for the habitual use of purgatives, and are thus strongly recommended as the

BEST FAMILY MEDICINE.

To emigrants and persons residing in the colonies, these pills are invaluable, as the numerous testimonials which reach the Proprietor as the spontaneous expressions of gratitude on the part of heads of families, and others, prove that, except in rare instances, where Kaye's Woradell's Pills are used, no other medicine is ever required

Prepared solely by John Kaye, Esq. of Prospect Hall, Woodford, Essex. Sold by all Chemists and other dealers in patent medicines at 1s.11/2d. 2s. 9d. and 4s.6d. Wholesale depot 23 Broad-street, London.

Dinneford's Pure Fluid Magnesia

Has been during 25 years, emphatically sanctioned by the Medical profession, and universally accepted as the best remedy for

***Acidity of the Stomach, Heartburn, Headache,
Gout and Indigestion,***

and as a mild aperient for delicate constitution more especially for ladies and children.

Combined with

Acidulated Lemon Syrup,

it forms an agreeable Effervescent Drink, in which its aperients qualities are much increased. During hot seasons, and above all in hot climates, the regular use of this simple and elegant remedy has been found highly beneficial. Manufactured (with the utmost attention to strength and purity) by DINNIFORD and CO., 217 New Bond street, London; and sold by all respectable Chemists throughout the empire.

Dr. THOMAS

**Licentiate of the Royal College of Physicians
of England,**

Member of the Royal College of Surgeons, Licentiate in Midwifery, Member of the council of Medical Education, London, and Member of the Medical Board of Victoria.

May be privately and confidentially consulted, either personally or by letter, at his surgery, 212 Great Lonsdale-street East Melbourne.

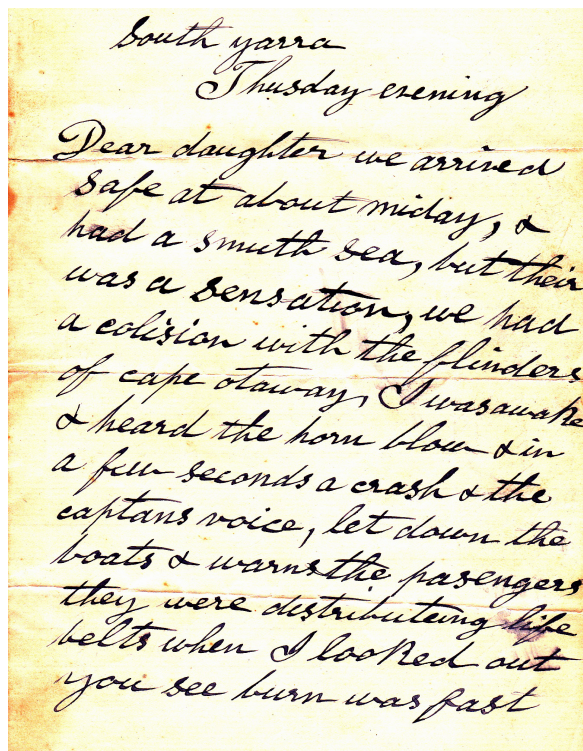
In those distressing diseases arising from early abuse, namely - loss of procreative power; impairment of the generative system; nervous and physical debility; languor; flushing; wasting of spermatorrhea; palpitation of the heart; giddiness; avoidance of society; skin eruption; and contagious maladies.

- - - Dr. Thomas is the only legally qualified physician and surgeon in the Australian colonies who advertises to treat these especial diseases.- - -

Let those to whom this advertisement may apply pause and reflect before placing their lives in the hands of charlatans and empirics. Of these there are many grades - some speak against the true physician because they feel that their chance of success is gone when such an eminent opponent appears; others endeavour to entrap the patient by the publication of certain symptoms which apply to nervous diseases generally. Be warned by Dr. Thomas to avoid these, and such as these, for they speak with the smooth tongue of serpents, and naught but misery and despair will be the result.

Dr. Thomas may be consulted by letter on the enclosure of a bank note for £1, and patients may rely upon receiving every attention and confidence that should always exist on the part of a medical adviser. Private personal consultation, fee 10s.6d. Consultations by appointment at the doctors private residence

Preparations and medicines forwarded, under cover, to any of the up-country districts, or adjacent colonies.



FROM AN OLD LETTER

CORRECTED VERSION

South Yarra
Thursday evening

Dear Daughter,

We arrived safe at about midday, and had a smooth sea, but there was a sensation; we had a collision with the *Flinders* off Cape Otway. I was awake and heard the horn blow and in a few seconds a crash and the captain's voice, 'let down the boats' and warns the passengers they were distributing life jackets when I looked out you see Burn was fast but somehow I was not the least put out and it took Burn a long [time] to put his shoes on. When we came out William was coming out of his bunk throwing himself into his coat and trembling like a leaf. He said, 'Mr Goldie this is trying on the nerves'. I said I felt alright. Burn stuck to me like a leach and behaved well. There were a lot of ladies and babies and young children and they behaved admirably. We were told to be ready for any emergency. The captain is a fine fellow and we got up an address for him with all the passengers signatures. No doubt you will be seeing something about the collision in the papers. My word when they collided the boat did shiver but I had my boots and clothes on and was out like a dart and Burn was ready when I got back, all but his shoes. Then I saw the captain and he said as far as he could see there was no danger. Well there is no time for brushing trousers or ladies fixing themselves when a collision occurs. Well I will tell you all about it when I get home.

I had a dream that I was very brave and I was wearing my best sleeved waistcoat that I used to cart away the produce at home with and thought I was quite young and smart. So if you get my likeness from New Zealand do not be showing off too much until I come home.
Love to all, your affectionate father John Goldie

EXACT TRANSCRIPT

South yarra
Thusday evening

Dear daughter

we arrived safe at about miday, & had a smuth sea, but there was a sensation, we had a collision with the flinders of cape otaway. I was awake & heard the horn blow & in a few seconds a crash & the captans voice, let down the boats & warns the passengers they were distributing life belts when I looked out you see the burn was fast but somehow I was not the least put out & it took burn a long time to put his shoes on, when we come out William was coming out of his bunk throwing himself into his coat & trembling like a leaf he said Mr goldie this is trying on the nerves I said I felt all right, burn stuck to me like a leach & behaved well their was a lot of ladies & babies & young children & they behaved admireable, we were told to be ready for any emergence. the captain is a fine fellow, & we got up an address for him with all his passengers signatures no doubt you will be seeing something about the collision in the papers. my word when they collided the boat did shiver, but I had my boots & cloths on & I was out like a dart & burn was ready when I got back all but his shoes, then I saw the captain & he said as far as he could see there was no danger well there is no time for brushing trousers or ladies fixing themselves when a collision occurs well I will tell you all about it when I get home

I had a dream that I was very brave & I was wearing my best sleved waitcoat that I used to cart away the produce at home with & thout I was quite young at the time & smart so if you get my likeness from New Zealand do not be showing of to much until I come home, Love to all
your affectionate
father John Goldie

A Sensation at Sea

by Marjorie Morkham

There is nothing like an old letter, creased and faded, to stir up curiosity. When my elderly cousin Margaret gave me a handwritten letter which she did not have sufficient experience or energy to decipher, I was excited to discover that the letter was written by my great grandfather.

Although I was new to family history, at least I knew how to conduct research as I'd been a librarian in my working days – that should give me a head-start. I read the letter carefully looking for clues but there were not many. It was written on Thursday evening and sent from South Yarra. It was addressed 'Dear daughter' and signed 'your affectionate father John Goldie.'

The letter described a 'sensation' at sea, the collision of the ship that John Goldie was travelling on with the *Flinders* off Cape Otway. John told a very good story:

My word when they collided the boat did shiver but I had my boots and clothes on and was out like a dart ... Well there is no time for brushing trousers or ladies fixing themselves when a collision occurs.

Fortunately there was a happy ending as John Goldie survived to write the letter.

Before going any further I decided to transcribe the letter into type form, one copy exactly as written, the other corrected, using capital letters, punctuation and correct spelling - a good exercise in careful reading and comprehension.

The first clue was the signature. I had previously collected information from the records of St Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Port Fairy on Goldie family involvement in church life.^[1] One of the minute books was signed John Goldie – it matched the handwriting on the letter, so the letter was definitely written by my great grandfather. The daughter referred to in the letter was John Goldie's daughter Elizabeth, who lived on the family farm in Port Fairy.

John Goldie, his wife Elizabeth and three young children emigrated from Ayrshire in Scotland on the *Greyhound* in 1862.^[2] They settled in Port Fairy where John worked as a ploughman. He was a diligent farmer who made his way in life, bought land, won prizes for champion Ayrshire cattle and became noted for his innovative agricultural pursuits. John Goldie died in 1901. So the 'sensation at sea' must have happened between 1862 and 1901.

The most obvious and useful clue in the letter was the ship name, *Flinders*. I went to the National Library of Australia's Trove to search the digitised Australian newspaper collection.

Unfortunately I could find nothing which suited the information – maybe my searching ability was a little rusty or perhaps the newspapers for that time had not been digitised. I put the letter aside hoping for inspiration.

Recently I was helping the local historical society catalogue their books and spotted a typed manuscript labelled *Sail and steam – lifeline for Port Fairy: Port Fairy shipping 1828 to 1939* written by Stan Evans.^[3] Apart from family interest in Port Fairy, the letter which I had set aside came to mind. I took the manuscript home and found details of several ship collisions off Cape Otway in a spot known as 'collision corner'. One of them was between the *Flinders*, heading to Warrnambool (from Melbourne) and the *Casino* heading to Melbourne (from Port Fairy) on Tuesday 1 March 1898. What a find!

Of course I returned to Trove armed with more facts and found the collision had been reported in newspapers all over Australia, including more than 80 news items, comments and letters to the editor, the most comprehensive one in *The Argus* the next day, Wednesday 2 March 1898.^[4] There was no doubt that I had found the report of the incident described so colourfully in the letter. I owned a first-hand account of the event.

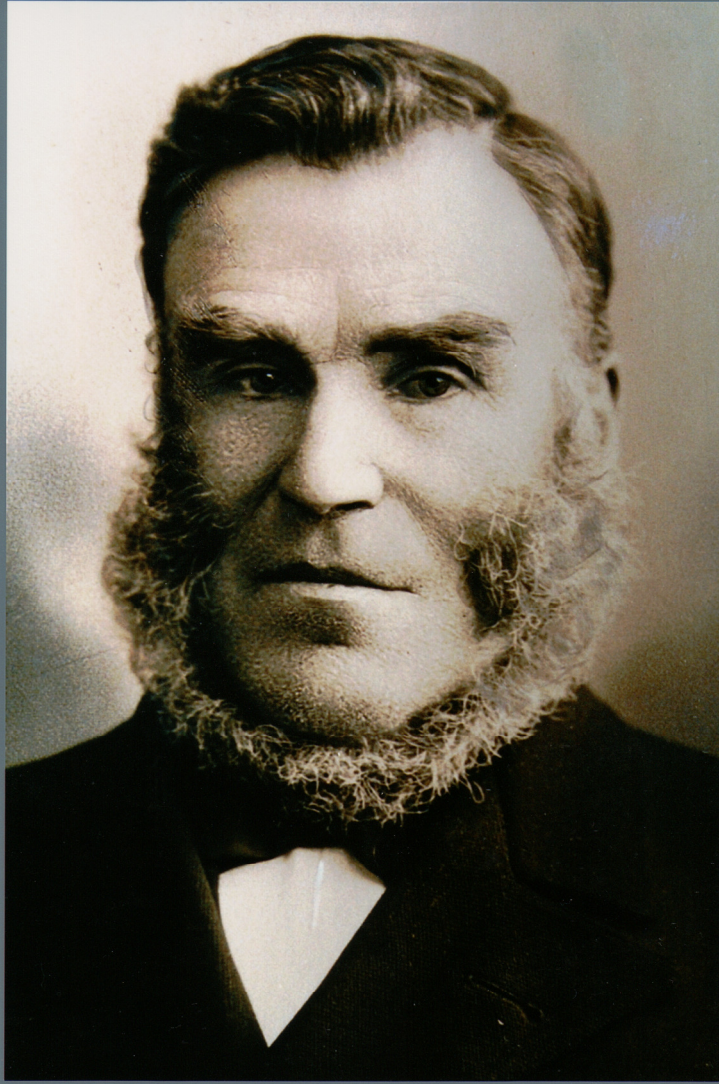
The dramatic Argus headline read:

COLLISION AT SEA STEAMERS FLINDERS AND CASINO MIRACULOUS ESCAPE

The Horsham Times of 4 March 1898 reported:

An alarming collision occurred on Tuesday morning between Cape Otway and Apollo Bay between the steamers Casino and Flinders. The former was bound for Melbourne and the latter for Warrnambool. The night was dark but fine. The vessels struck in a slanting position. The passengers were greatly alarmed; but there was nothing approaching a panic. The Casino had a hole knocked in her port side near the bow, and the Flinders had her lower plates damaged. The steering gear was carried away, and one or two plates were slightly indented and ripped about a couple of feet above the water line.^[5]

The collision occurred at 2.30am and both Captain Boyd of the *Casino* and Captain Holland of the *Flinders* had to be called to the bridge by the officers on watch. Each gave the order to prepare to lower the life boats but this proved unnecessary. Both vessels were examined and the damage was found to be trifling, enabling each to proceed without delay. The *Casino* carried about 30 passengers, mostly women and children, and there were 40 passengers on the *Flinders*, mostly tourists going to the seaside for a holiday.



Thank you to Marjorie Morkham for this article "Sensation at Sea".

Marjorie lives at Apollo Bay, but has been a long time member of the Port Fairy Historical Society, and regularly contributes items for the Port Fairy newsletter and the archives.

This piece was shortlisted in the Genealogical Society of Victoria Writing Prize in 2014, and published in the GSV June 2015 issue.

John Goldie

Original copy Marjorie Morkham

Casino at sea

SS Casino, Allan C. Green, courtesy of the State Library of Victoria, Accession number H91.325/1112

[Not in copyright]



John Goldie wrote, 'I was awake and heard the horn blow and in a few seconds a crash and the captain's voice "let down the boats" and warns the passengers they were distributing life jackets...'

It was asserted by Captain Holland that the *Casino* changed course when close to the *Flinders*. The *Casino's* Captain Boyd was at a loss to account for the accident, except to say that 'someone blundered', a remark widely reported in the newspapers.[6]

Within days it was announced there would be a Court of Marine Inquiry conducted by the Marine Board of Victoria. The investigation concluded on Friday 12 March 1898, ten days after the collision, an efficient and prompt response.[7]

James Cooper, the second mate of the *Casino*, was exonerated as he had complied with the regulations for preventing collisions at sea, but he had made a mistake; the chief officer of the *Flinders*, Andrew Moore, was fined for gross misconduct and his master's certificate was suspended for six months. The Court admitted that the evidence was most conflicting but that this was not unusual in nautical cases.[8]

My attempts to locate the original Court of Marine Inquiry findings were fruitless. The Public Records Office Victoria VPRS 6873 file contains only one document relating to another case; this requires further investigation.[9]

My delight in co-incidence was rewarded when I wrote to Grant McPherson, a fellow family history researcher related to our family by marriage. Grant was interested in Port Fairy shipping for another reason – his great-great grandfather Robert Burn McPherson was one of the immigrants aboard the *Chance* in 1857, one of the few immigrant ships which landed at Port Fairy.[10] The Evans manuscript (which turned out to be written by Grant's best friend's father) describes these ships. As a matter of interest I also sent him a copy of John Goldie's letter. Grant read it and was able to identify the boy named Burn in the letter and he knew that the McPherson family lived in South Yarra. Burn was Clement Burn McPherson, the grandson of Robert Burn McPherson. He was born in 1887 and was eleven years old at the time of the 'sensation'.[11]

Robert Burn and Isabella McPherson and their fifteen month old daughter Isabella emigrated from Perthshire, Scotland to Port Fairy (then named Belfast), five years earlier than the Goldie family. In 1891 Isabella, the eldest daughter of Robert Burn and Isabella McPherson, married James, the eldest son of John and Elizabeth Goldie. The families remained close friends through the years and continued correspondence and visits long after the McPhersons moved to Melbourne. Clement Burn was probably staying on the Goldie farm at Port Fairy and returning home under the care of his aunt's father-in-law John Goldie.

There was a puzzling reference to William, 'When we came out William was coming out of his bunk throwing himself into his coat and trembling like a leaf. He said, "Mr Goldie this is trying on the nerves." I said I felt alright.' The only known William is my grandfather (John Goldie's second son) who would have been 31 years old in 1898. Would he have called his father Mr Goldie? I have read that in those days some fathers expected the more formal greeting in public.

Even stranger was the reference to New Zealand in the last paragraph, 'So if you see my likeness from New Zealand do not be showing off too much until I come home.' Elizabeth was at home in Port Fairy. I checked many passenger lists for Australia and New Zealand shipping but could find no evidence that John Goldie ever visited New Zealand. What did he mean?

John obviously discussed the collision with Captain Boyd and was impressed by his efforts as an address was signed by all the passengers as a vote of confidence in the captain.

The last paragraph of the letter shows the whimsical side of John with his dream – 'that I was very brave and I was wearing my best sleeved waistcoat that I used to cart away the produce at home with and that I was quite young and smart'.

Finding more about this letter presented a model exercise in research, with a lot of success, some exciting discoveries, a disappointment and a few curious puzzles. My research had established that it was written on Thursday evening 3 March 1898 from 376 Chapel Street, South Yarra (the home of Burn's grandparents). It is full of colour, character and interest. I loved having the sheet of paper written in ink by my great grandfather in my hands, knowing that it had been treasured and kept safe for the last 116 years. A great start to family history.

[1] Presbyterian Church of Victoria Archives, South Yarra. St Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Port Fairy. Committee meeting minutes 2 May 1889 Signed John Goldie Chairman 18 June 1889

[2] Public Record Office Index to Unassisted Inward Passenger Lists for British, Foreign and New Zealand Ports 1852-1923 Fiche 206 p.003

[3] *Sail and steam – lifeline for Port Fairy: Port Fairy shipping 1828 to 1939*. An unfinished manuscript copyright Stan Evans 2003 Pp 279-80

[4] www.trove.nla.gov.au *The Argus* Wednesday 2 March 1898 p.5

[5] www.trove.nla.gov.au *Horsham Times* Friday 4 March 1898 p. 2

[6] www.trove.nla.gov.au *The Argus* Thursday 3 March 1898 p. 4; *The Advertiser*, Adelaide Saturday 5 March 1898 page 7; *Bendigo Advertiser* Saturday 5 March 1898 p. 5; *Colac Herald* Tuesday 8 March 1898 page 2

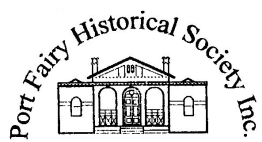
[7] www.trove.nla.gov.au *The Argus* Saturday 12 March 1898 p. 14

[8] www.trove.nla.gov.au *The Argus* Saturday 12 March 1898 p. 14

[9] Public Record Office Victoria Series VPRS 6873 Court of Marine Inquiry

[10] Public Record Office Victoria Index to Assisted British Immigration 1839-1871 Book 12 p. 411

[11] www.ancestry.com Australia Birth Index 1788-1922 Registration number 3148. Clement Burn McPherson was the nephew of John Goldie's daughter-in-



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