



AROUND THE GRAVES

ISSN 1835-5641
ISSN 1835-565X

NEWSLETTER OF THE FRIENDS OF CHELTENHAM AND REGIONAL CEMETERIES INC.

William Walter Tyrell Stanford Letter to the Editor

William Walter Tyrell Stanford (1839-80) was known as the 'criminal who never committed a crime', not exactly true though, for he once confessed to stealing £17 10s while out of prison on a ticket-of-leave. But twice he found himself in the wrong place at the wrong time and being fatalist and not a fighter, home from 1853 to 1871 was Pentridge prison, much of it in solitary confinement under the harsh, severe discipline of John Giles Price (1808-57). Stanford was described as a "difficult, intransigent prisoner"; his defiance of prison regulations was always due to his passionate longing to carve something in stone;. But breaking stone was industry, carving it was an offence. Fate eventually set things straight and the exquisite fountain near Parliament House on Spring Street, Melbourne is Stanford's work which earned him the freedom he longed for in late 1871 when he was released.

William Stanford went on to become a monumental mason with a yard in Windsor but he never lost his distrust for the



above:
Gravesite of the Beggs family
designed by William Stanford -
CofE "E" 102-103

law. He died on 2 June 1880 aged 40 and was buried in the Melbourne General Cemetery. It was while photographing the graves at the Cheltenham Pioneer Cemetery (Charman Road) that we came across one of Stanford's distinctive works (CofE "E" 102-103) with its elaborate iron railing.

One of the aims of the project of photographing the graves is to identify the many monumental masons and their various designs. As a side note, it was interesting to see the name "Rose Bros. of Cheltenham". Future research will reveal if there is a link with the firm of undertakers founded by William Doble Rose that still operates today.

(Source: *The Argus* 25 Aug 1928 p10)

In the last issue of *Around the Graves*, we published a letter from 'Mourner' who complained about the neglected state of the Pioneer Cemetery in February 1935. The day after, *The Argus* published the letter, Trust Chairman, George Brownfield wrote a letter in reply. It was Brownfield who presided over the establishment of Cheltenham Cemetery No. 2 on Wangara Road.

"Sir.—Perhaps 'Mourner' is not aware that last year considerably more than £1,000 was spent in forming nearly the whole of the paths in the old Cheltenham Cemetery with first quality bricks set in cement. The general air of neglect is due, not to the neglect of the trustees, but to the untidy state of a great number of graves over which they have no control. The secretary has already written to many owners of graves which are in a dilapidated condition, with the object of soliciting their assistance in attending to them. The trustees have built up a trust fund, the income from which will be barely sufficient to keep the cemetery in a decent condition when all the land is sold. The amount expended on the new cemetery is in the shape of a loan, which is to be repaid in the old cemetery trust fund, to be used in its upkeep. At the last annual meeting of the trustees the sum of £1,000 was placed on the estimates for cleaning and general improvements, outside ordinary expenditure.—

—Yours, &c

GEO. BROWNFIELD

Chairman of the Trustees

Cheltenham, Feb 6."

What George Brownfield's letter reveals is the date in which the brick paths were introduced. Readers will recall the photo of the Frencham family (*Around the Graves*, Sep-Oct 2009) taken in 1926 when the paths were unmade.

(Source: *The Argus* 7 Feb 1935 p11)

The Centenarians: Annie Roberts (1888-1989)

Centenarian Annie Jack Donald Blackwood Larrad (1888-1989) was the fourth of 13 children to Edward Henry Larrad (1862-1937) and Annie Cameron *née* Blackwood (1863-1934), born on 5 August 1888 at Horsham. The Blackwood family emigrated on the *Loch Katrine* arriving in Victoria in January 1873 when Annie was just nine years. It is not known if Annie is related to the well-known political-pastoralist family, the Blackwood-Officer clan.

Edward and Annie married at Stawell on 25 December 1883 and for nearly five decades, Henry worked for Broadbent Bros, carrying and shipping agents that saw the family move over the years—Stawell, Merton, Horsham and Natimuk before their retirement to 71 Waltham Street, Flemington. Henry's sister, Mary Eliza Larrad married George Michael Prendergast (1854-1937) who was Premier of Victoria from July-November 1924.

Before her marriage to William Thomas (Tom) Hughes Roberts (1887-1928) in 1926, Annie lived with her parents at Natimuk and during the Great War at 46 Mercer Street, Geelong. Her occupation was described as 'Home Duties', but she may have worked as a housekeeper. Tom, as he was known was the son of Griffiths Roberts and Mary Ann *née* Thomas (c1852/53-1934) who had nine children.

After their marriage, Tom and Annie Roberts farmed the land at Wychitella, a small town near Wedderburn in central Victoria where the Roberts family were from. A portrait photo taken in 1928, two years after their marriage show a middle aged couple, their determination and grit born from the spirit of the country.

But their hopes and happiness were dashed after Tom Roberts was met with an untimely death when he was accidentally shot on the farm by his brother-in-law, Walter Marriott (1897-1984) a member of the well-known local market gardening family. Walter, who married Annie's sister Florence Rothwell (1899-1971)

was also the brother-in-law of another centenarian, Edith (May) Marriott *née* Watt (1903-2005). Tom's tragic death on 23 August 1928 was followed three months later by the death of their only child, Teddy aged 17 months. Annie would go on to live to the grand age of 100, a widow for nearly 61 years until her death on 12 June 1989—arguably the longest of all the centenarians.

The intriguing question is how a long-time resident of the Wychitella area came to be interred at the Cheltenham Pioneer Cemetery. Sympathy and guilt on the part of the Marriott family is the only suggestion—four graves away commences the long line of Marriott family graves one being that of Walter Marriott.

***The Centenarians: Life's Quiet Sunset* is now available as a book (paperback) or on CD (PDF file). Members receive a 10% discount. Visit www.focrc.org/shop.htm where you can also download the index of the 800 names featured.**



above:
Gravesite to the Roberts-Larrad family—Meth "29" 57-58. Four graves to the left is another centenarian, Edith Marriott

The Tragic Case of Madge Jessop

In 1929, a young up-and-coming lawyer who would later become a household name was at his brilliant best at the inquest into the death of Marjorie (Madge) Jessop. Jessop was killed when the bus she was a passenger on was involved in an accident with a tram. The driver of the bus, Lewis Page tried to overtake a parked car but swerved inward and collided with the tram. All but three of the 24 passengers on the bus required medical treatment. In the days when road regulations were in their infancy and culpability just as ill

-defined, the tactics of the lawyer worked.

We'll reveal the name of the lawyer and what exactly happened in our forthcoming tour of the Cheltenham Pioneer Cemetery (Charman Road) at 11:00am on Sunday 7 March 2010. For all those 'tragic diehards' who enjoyed the "Tragic '20s" and "Tragic '30s: Decade of Adventure" tours, there will be three tragic events covered. Cost is \$10.00 (\$5.00 for members). Bookings are essential and can be made online www.focrc.org/tours.htm or by ringing Vivienne on 03 5420 7671.