



Volume 10

Number 1

Spring 1996

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Continued Inside Back Cover



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## EDITORIAL

Welcome to our first magazine for 1996!

We are pleased to greet new members and readers, who as you will see are all from overseas.

We have to thank our Membership Secretary, John Witheridge, and our representative in Australia Dorothy Witheridge for their efforts to introduce new members to the Society, and for their hard work in researching and providing us with information about our Australian cousins. When I first began to investigate the family name as I wrote "Went to Australia" on a family tree, I felt as if that person had gone to the moon, and I never expected to hear of them again. Now our knowledge of families who emigrated has been increased and enriched by the efforts of our members here, in Australia, New Zealand, America and Canada.

We are also grateful for the efforts of staff in Archive offices and Libraries overseas, who seem to be particularly helpful.

This enlarged edition has an antipodean flavour with contributions from Australia and New Zealand, and the story of the Australian Witheridge picnic puts us to shame as we read of the number of people who attended.

This year we hope to have the company of Paul and Kathy Witheridge from Ontario on Witheridge Day. We always have a lovely time at Alderton, but we would like more people to come and share it with us. This year the re-union is on Monday, 6<sup>th</sup> May (May Day Bank Holiday, and an invitation is enclosed with this magazine.

Please give us the pleasure of your company!

I look forward to greeting old friends and to meeting new ones -

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Joyce", with a long horizontal flourish underneath.

**NOTICE OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE WITHERIDGE  
SOCIETY**

The Annual General Meeting of the Society will be held on Monday, 6<sup>th</sup> May, 1996, in the Village Hall, Alderton, Gloucestershire, at 10. 00 a.m.

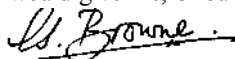
**AGENDA**

1. Apologies for absence
2. Minutes of the eighth Annual General Meeting held on the 7<sup>th</sup> May, 1995
3. Matters arising from the Minutes
4. Chairman's Report
5. Secretary's Report
6. Membership Secretary's Report
7. Treasurer's Report
8. Research Co-ordinator's Report
9. Election of Officers
10. Any other business

If you are not able to attend the Meeting, which is part of our Witheridge Day re-union, but would like to nominate a person to hold office in the Society, please complete the form attached to the invitation which accompanies this magazine. It is necessary to obtain the consent of any person so nominated.

Please return the form to me, the undersigned , or to Mrs. Mayda Witheridge, Secretary, addresses inside the front cover.

This promises to be an interesting Meeting, and we would like as many members as possible to attend. One matter which is likely to be discussed is the question of another venue, or another form of re-union for our tenth Witheridge Day, which falls next year, 1997. If there is any matter which you would like to be considered under 'Any Other Business' it would be helpful, but not essential, if you would give me, or our Secretary, Mrs. Mayda Witheridge, prior notice.



## FAMILY NEWS

**K**im Cook, our Life President, has been in poor health recently, but is now making a good recovery from a gall-bladder operation. We send her our 'get well' wishes and hope to see her and Roy at Alderton on May 6<sup>th</sup>. Later in May Kim and Roy hope to travel to America to see David Witheridge and his family.

**A**nnette Witheridge, our member who is living and working in New York, has written to tell us how much she is enjoying life in America. Contrary to what we imagine, she says that America is not all massive cities with a high crime rate, but a country of small towns, and many of the population never move from their home state. Nearly everyone in these small towns goes to church on Sunday, and they regard the family as all important.

From her apartment on the 28<sup>th</sup> floor of a building overlooking the Chrysler Building, Annette says that she can literally reach out and touch the Empire State Building!

We wish Annette well in her career, and we would like to see her at a Witheridge Day in the not too distant future.

**T**he Rev. John Witheridge, who was Chaplain to the previous Archbishop of Canterbury, has held the post of 'Conduct' or Chaplain at Eton College since 1987, but is about to take up another appointment. According to the 'Daily Telegraph' Lord Runcie, the previous Archbishop, is impressed with John's performance of his duties at Eton, where Prince William is now a boarder. The new appointment is that of Headmaster of Charterhouse, the prestigious public school. We wish the Reverend John every success in what could be a challenging new career.

## **BROTHERS FOR LIFE**

Now I've been told, so I'm sure it's true,  
There's a Witheridge tale I'll relate to you  
Of two young fellows both bright and keen  
The worst little scallywags you've ever seen,

Sitting up in bed with songs so loud,  
Serenading the family with lyrics so proud  
Their favourite song and favourite sound:  
"Dem bones Dem bones, gonna walk around"

This song sung so fair, this noise all night  
The crescendo of sound quite higher than height  
Thumps on the ceiling and thumps on the door  
Angry retorts - "Do you hear me? NO MORE"

The years roll by and maturity grows,  
Did life change? Nobody knows.  
The rivalry still there from the years long gone  
Between Tweedle Dum Phil and Tweedle Dee John.

The best of friends as they always have been  
On Witheridge Day they will always be seen,  
Laughing and joking, stirring the fun,  
Philip with wit and John with a pun.

Methinks that this year we should hear that edition  
We should get them to sing that dreadful rendition.  
No doubt we will flinch and head for the door  
With fearful retorts "Do you hear me? NO MORE!!

by Mayda Witheridge

## THE AUSTRALIAN WITHERIDGE PICNIC

by Dorothy Witheridge (Witheridge Society Representative for Australia)

No doubt you have been anxious to hear the news of our picnic day. The first choice, Sunday the 22<sup>nd</sup> October, 1995, has to be cancelled because of rain. After a week of good weather, down came the rain on the day before, Saturday. This, added to the day's forecast of continuous rain for four days, decided us to cancel.

We were all disappointed, so I phoned round to ask each one if they could come the following Sunday. Some could not make it this time, including Phyllis Cocking, which was a great shame. Thankfully, most could attend but right up to the last moment the weather seemed bent to spoil our plans once again. Even on the Saturday night there was a violent thunderstorm. On Sunday morning the sun was out. So were we!

The Water Board were very helpful, owing to the fact that we had booked the previous week, they arranged to open their gates early for us so that we were able to get in and occupy one of the Sheds, before the normal picknickers arrived.

About 47 adults and children had a wonderful day, talking, laughing and the showing of photographs never stopped. The oldest visitors were Len and Mavis Blissett, the youngest two beautiful and good babies, two and three months old. "Giverny" whose parents are Ian and Silvana Witheridge, and grandparents are Allen and Judith Witheridge, and "Kate", whose parents are Sheryl and Rick Perrior and grandparents Shirley and Bob Noad.. Shirley is a real card, bright as a button and was constantly talking to each and everyone who was present. I gave the Society a good 'plug' and handed out the name and address of John Witheridge to all who were interested.

There was one family who travelled from ACT and had a three hour journey to get to the picnic, They fitted in very well with every one and gave us a detailed copy of their family tree. Peter, Amelia, Clara, Helen, and Peter's son David all enjoyed the day, and I am sure you will be hearing from them.

My son, Brad, came with me and was a great help in organisation. I took an old family tree which Joan Payne sent me, and people were amazed at how much research had been done. Most of the people at the picnic were descendants of William and Rose Witheridge (twelfth child of Philemon Witheridge and Mary Carvarth.) Mavis Blissett and her husband Len, their son David and wife Wendy and another son Michael and wife Jodi, and another son, Stephen, were overjoyed in seeing family who they had not seen for a long time. Mavis remembered names and some stories of members of the family who we know nothing about - no dates I'm afraid, but no doubt John will find them! The picnic was such a success, everyone asked that it be repeated every year at about the same time and at the same place.



## DESTINATION - NEW ZEALAND

by Velma Metcalfe

On Christmas Day 1875, 310 emigrants aboard the ship Dallam Tower took a last look at their homeland as they sailed out of Plymouth bound for Wellington, New Zealand, 13,000 miles away.

The 1449 ton iron ship left Gravesend on December 22<sup>nd</sup>, after some delays while a number of people in addition to the original complement arrived. Once out in the Channel, strong gales were blowing; the pilot was landed at Plymouth and on December 25<sup>th</sup>, the voyage proper began.

It must have been a peculiar Christmas for the 257 adults and 53 children on board, with mixed feelings of sadness, grief even for many, knowing they might never see their homeland or loved ones again. There would be doubt and fear for the future, but for some it was surely the adventure of a life time.

On board were two Witheridge lads, 20 year old Thomas and 16 year old George. Carpenters by trade, the pair were from Warwickshire, according to records held at the National Archives in Wellington. I think these two were brothers, but have no proof of that. George was the son of William Witheridge, a joiner, and his wife Hannah.

From an article in The Witheridge Times by Philip Witheridge, (Summer 1991, Vol . 5, No. 2) I have taken the date of William and Hannah Lee's marriage - July 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1850. The article stated that there were possibly two daughters from this marriage, Emily Lee, born 1852, and Helen born 1853, both in the registration district of Newington. I know nothing of Thomas, but his date of birth would have been about 1855 and that fits.

Their grandfather was Thomas Witheridge, born in Tavistock about 1786. He was an Excise Officer who had three children, Betsy, Mary and William. He married twice and died in Birmingham.

But back to our story... After the gales in the Channel, the Dallam Tower met with light head winds and calms until after passing the Canary Islands. But even then fair winds and fine weather prevailed for much of the journey.

This was in contrast to the Dallam Tower's previous voyage to New Zealand in 1873, when she was on charter to Shaw, Savill, and was almost wrecked by hurricane-force winds. Under jury rig and in a shocking condition the Dallam Tower managed to sail on

to Melbourne, 2,000 miles away, without having lost a single passenger or crew member.

While sailing conditions were thankfully much different on this trip, it would still be a controversial voyage. Disputes over matters of discipline resulted in several court cases after the Dallam Tower berthed in Wellington in March.

Quite early in the voyage, passengers complained about the quality of bread issued to them. Testimony in court later showed that the bread, possibly baked from inferior flour, was either dough or else burnt hard as a brick; it could be kicked about the deck like a stone. On one occasion a passenger nailed it up as a warning to others!

Passenger's complaints weren't confined to the bread, but also to Robert Page, their baker, who was described as filthy in his habits, until he had been scrubbed down once or twice. Passengers even threatened to throw him overboard if he did not improve.

On January 12<sup>th</sup> events came to a head. Captain William Campbell, newly married and in command for the first time, ordered Page out of the galley. When he failed to leave, the Captain assaulted the lad and caused his arm to be burnt. He said he would disrate him and reduce his wages to 10s. a month (from £3.0d) and threatened to tie him up and rope-end him. He said Page shouldn't be discharged at Wellington.

There were other problems involving officers, ordinary seamen and the single women on board. Some women were given permission to walk the poop with officers at night, after a time when regulations stipulated they should be below deck, in the care of the Matron.

Ordinary seamen who approached the single women and were detected, found themselves clapped in irons. A score of such cases are said to have occurred and this punishment was very much resented. Not unnaturally, the men failed to see the enormity of speaking to a girl when the officers were able to mix with them so freely.

There weren't actually many single women on board. The Evening Post newspaper lists four general servants, one nursemaid, one cook, one housemaid, two dressmakers and one young girl. The 41 single men on the Dallam Tower, all tradesmen and labourers, obviously had none of the appeal of the ship's officers!

Microfilm copies of the Evening Post held at the National Library in Wellington, show that the Dallam Tower was signalled in sight shortly before noon on March 17<sup>th</sup>, 1875, and in what seemed a surprisingly brief time rounded Halswell Point under full sail and came up the bay with royals set and a light breeze abeam.

The ship came straight up to the wharf, an indication all was well on board and quarantine

wasn't necessary. Indeed the passenger's health was good during the voyage and only nine deaths occurred, all being children.

The Dallam Tower was known as a fast ship and made good time, completing the voyage from Gravesend in 85 days. This was one of the best runs of the season. The voyage would have been even quicker, but for contrary winds encountered near Otago Heads. It took six more days to finally reach Wellington.

For 138 adults and 26 children, their destination had been reached. The remaining 119 emigrants, including the two Witheridge lads and 27 children, were bound for Otago and Southland after a five day stay in the capital. On March 22<sup>nd</sup> they boarded the New Zealand Steam Ship Company's S.S. Taranika, which left Wellington at 4.30 pm., for the southern ports of Lyttelton and Port Chalmers, near Dunedin, with a fresh north west breeze and threatening weather.

The Otago Daily Times reported the arrival of the Taraniki at Port Chalmers at 5.45 pm., on March 24<sup>th</sup>. It was an exceptionally foul weather passage from first to last, having encountered the full force of the equinoctial gales. For several hours, when the gale was at its worst, the Taraniki gained scarcely ten miles.

There would be no relief for Thomas and George and the remaining emigrants from the Dallam Tower. Almost at once they boarded the steamer Wanganui, which was waiting for them. Conditions were still very rough outside the peninsular and they were forced to take shelter from 2 pm., on the 25<sup>th</sup> to 4 pm., on the 26<sup>th</sup>. When the storm abated they were able to push on south arriving at the port of Bluff, near Invercargill, at 5 am., on March 27<sup>th</sup> 1875.

By this time Wellington's Evening Post had been full of the events aboard the Dallam Tower and the court cases that followed. With regard to Captain Campbell's assault on Robert Page, the conclusion was that a common assault had been committed, but the justice of the case would be satisfied by dismissing the defendant with a caution on payment of costs.

The charge against Campbell was according to the Bench "of a very frivolous nature, and on considerable provocation, caused by the irritating conduct of the complainant and the constant complaints against the latter by the passengers, but this did not justify Campbell in committing the assault".

This was Campbell's second appearance in court in a matter of days. A case he brought against three seamen, charged with various acts of insubordination, was dismissed. Evidence showed that the defendants had just cause of complaint in the hardships that

they were subjected to , but one seaman, who carried his protests too far, was jailed for 48 hours.

On arrival in Bluff, I lose sight of our two adventurers. I assume they found work and were able to repay the £29. 0d. they owed the New Zealand Government for their passage. Officially there is no sign of them. National census taking commenced in 1858, but the returns were destroyed up until 1966.

Thomas and George would have been eligible to vote in the 1881 elections. They were over the age of 21, had lived in New Zealand for longer than a year and presumably in the electorate for at least six months, but their names do not appear on Invercargill rolls at this time. It is not until 1890 that George Witheridge, painter, is finally listed.

But for immigration information received from a researcher at the Hocken Library in Dunedin (while researching another matter) I would have been unaware of the existence of Thomas in this country. I never found his name on electoral rolls and he didn't marry or die here. I'm convinced he returned to England, possibly during the 1880's when the country was in depression.

George, on the other hand, did marry and his wife, Sarah Grace Witheridge's name appears on the electoral roll for Invercargill in 1893. It was that year, for the first time anywhere in the world, women over the age of 21 were permitted to vote in a parliamentary election.

Sarah and George were married on July 21<sup>st</sup>, 1891, at the home of Rev. Joseph Sharp, Forth Street, Invercargill. The marriage between 23 year old Sarah and 32 year old George was witnessed by Louis Thomas Butler, carter of South Invercargill and his wife Eliza Butler. There was a third witness, Frederick Gibson, a labourer.

Sarah was born in Nokomai, Otago on Jun 5<sup>th</sup>, 1868. Her parents were Harriet and William Turner, who married about 1855 in Yorkshire. Harriet, daughter of John and Mary Shepherd, was 33 years old and it appears that William was five years younger. They came to New Zealand about 1861, the year gold was discovered in huge quantities at Gabriel's Gully, Otago.

William was a gold miner and the Turners probably lived quite an itinerant life style. A son was born about 1863 and another, Frederick about 1865. Neither birth was registered. At the time of Frederick's birth the family were in the Hokonui Hills area in Southland. By June 1868, William was prospecting for gold in the Nokomai Valley area, and in December of that year the family were living at Lawrence, Central Otago, near Gabriel's Gully.

On December 11<sup>th</sup>, 1868, tragedy struck when William Turner died at Lawrence, after suffering from an abscess of the hip joint. He was 42 years old. Sarah was only six months old and the two other children were between three and five years.

Harriet Turner managed on her own for eight years, before marrying another miner, George Gibson, at the age of 54. The marriage took place at Harriett's home in Invercargill on December, 27<sup>th</sup>, 1876. The ceremony was witnessed by John Taylor, a settler of Seaward Bush, near Invercargill and Maria Wood.

Four years later, an electoral roll shows George Gibson working as a labourer and living at Earn Street, Invercargill. After their marriage, Sarah and George Witheridge set up home in the same street. In fact, information from a street directory suggests they were living next door to each other. There was probably a very good reason for this; Sarah suffered from epilepsy.

We can't know if this was a condition that Sarah was born with, how severe it was or how it affected her life. But it says something about George Witheridge, who cared enough to see the woman behind the affliction. Perhaps they hoped for children, but there were none.

On August 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1899, Frederick Turner, a painter, died aged 34 years. His death certificate states that he died of phthisis pulmonalis (tuberculosis) from which he had suffered for two years. The address given is Eru Street, Invercargill, but I believe this is a misprint and that Frederick died at the family home in Earn Street.. It would be logical, since he wasn't married, for his sister and mother to provide nursing care at home.

Frederick was buried at the East Road Cemetery, the first of the family to occupy the Gibson plot there. Two years later, on August 16<sup>th</sup> 1901, Harriet Gibson was laid to rest there as well, the chronic phthisis which she'd had for 59 years finally claiming her. She was 79 years old

A record book, preserved in the National Archives and covering a two year period, shows that George Witheridge joined the Invercargill City Guards, a volunteer militia group, on March 1<sup>st</sup> 1900. Private Witheridge, 41 years old and 5'5" tall regularly turned out for the twice monthly parades and annual camps. The following year his attendance became erratic and he missed 11 parades and camps in Christchurch and Dunedin.

With her mother gone, there was probably no one to watch over Sarah while the men folk were at work. Was this how she came to suffocate during one of her fits, from which she had apparently suffered 'for years'? Sarah was only 36 years old when she died on April 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1905. She was buried with her mother and brother in the family plot at Eastern Cemetery.

George Gibson lived until 1920, moving in the last year of his life from Earn Street to nearby Ettrick Street. Even after a district search, the Justice Department wasn't able to locate a death certificate for me, but from other sources I know he was buried on June 8<sup>th</sup>, Block 5, plot 76 with his family.

I don't think George Witheridge remained in New Zealand very many years after his wife's death. Stone's Otago and Southland Directory gives his occupation as an insurance agent, living at 25 Earn Street, Invercargill, in 1905. The last entry is in 1908.

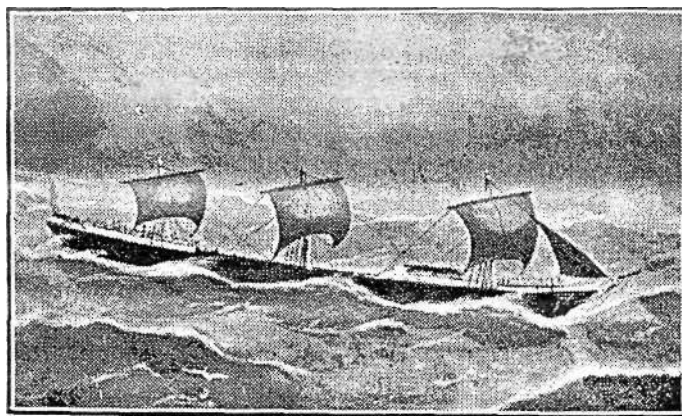
I think that George, with no ties to hold him, returned to the country of his birth. His parents were ageing and perhaps he was in time to see his father, William, before he died in 1907, aged 86 years. His mother Hannah died in 1911 at the age of 85. Both died in the registration district of Camberwell.

In the list of PPR Wills compiled by Witheridge Society members there are two entries that are significant: -

1925 Witheridge, Thomas William, of 47 Friern Road. East Dulwich, Surrey, died 16<sup>th</sup> June 1925 at 5 Brunswick Square, Camberwell, Surrey. Admon London 15<sup>th</sup> October to Helen Parker (wife of William Parker) Effects £483 17s.6d. (Age 70)

1929 Witheridge, George, of 34 Crawthrew Grove, E. Dulwich, Surrey, died 8<sup>th</sup> February, 1929 at 48 Constance Road, East Dulwich. Probate London 15<sup>th</sup> May to Barclays Bank Ltd., Effects £542 8s 6p.(Age 70)

And so ends a story that began over 50 years earlier when two young men set sail for the other side of the world to seek adventure and excitement. Did they find it? Who knows, but they came full circle, the story ending in the country where it all began so long ago.



2000 MILES UNDER JURY RIG.

NEW ZEALAND

**Certified Copy of Entry of Marriage N<sup>o</sup> 66933**

in the Registrar-General's Office

Number	....	....	....	225
When married	....	....	....	21 July 1891
Where married	....	....	....	In the house of the Rev. Joseph Sharp Forth Street Invercargill
				BRIDEGROOM
				BRIDE
Name and surname	....	....	....	George Witheridge
Age	....	....	....	32
Profession or occupation	....	....	....	Painter
				-
Conjugal status	....	....	....	Bachelor
				Spinster
Birthplace	....	....	....	London England
				Nokomia Southland
Usual residence (in full)	....	....	....	Invercargill
				Invercargill
Name and surname of father	....	....	....	William Witheridge
Profession or occupation of father	....	....	....	Joiner
				Miner
Name and surname of mother	....	....	....	Hannah Witheridge
Profession or occupation of mother	....	....	....	Harriet Turner
				-
				-
Maiden surname of mother	....	....	....	Lee
				Shepherd

Certified to be a true copy of the above particulars included in a marriage entry in the records of the Registrar-General's Office.

Given under the seal of the Registrar-General at Lower Hutt,

this 12 day of July 19 95

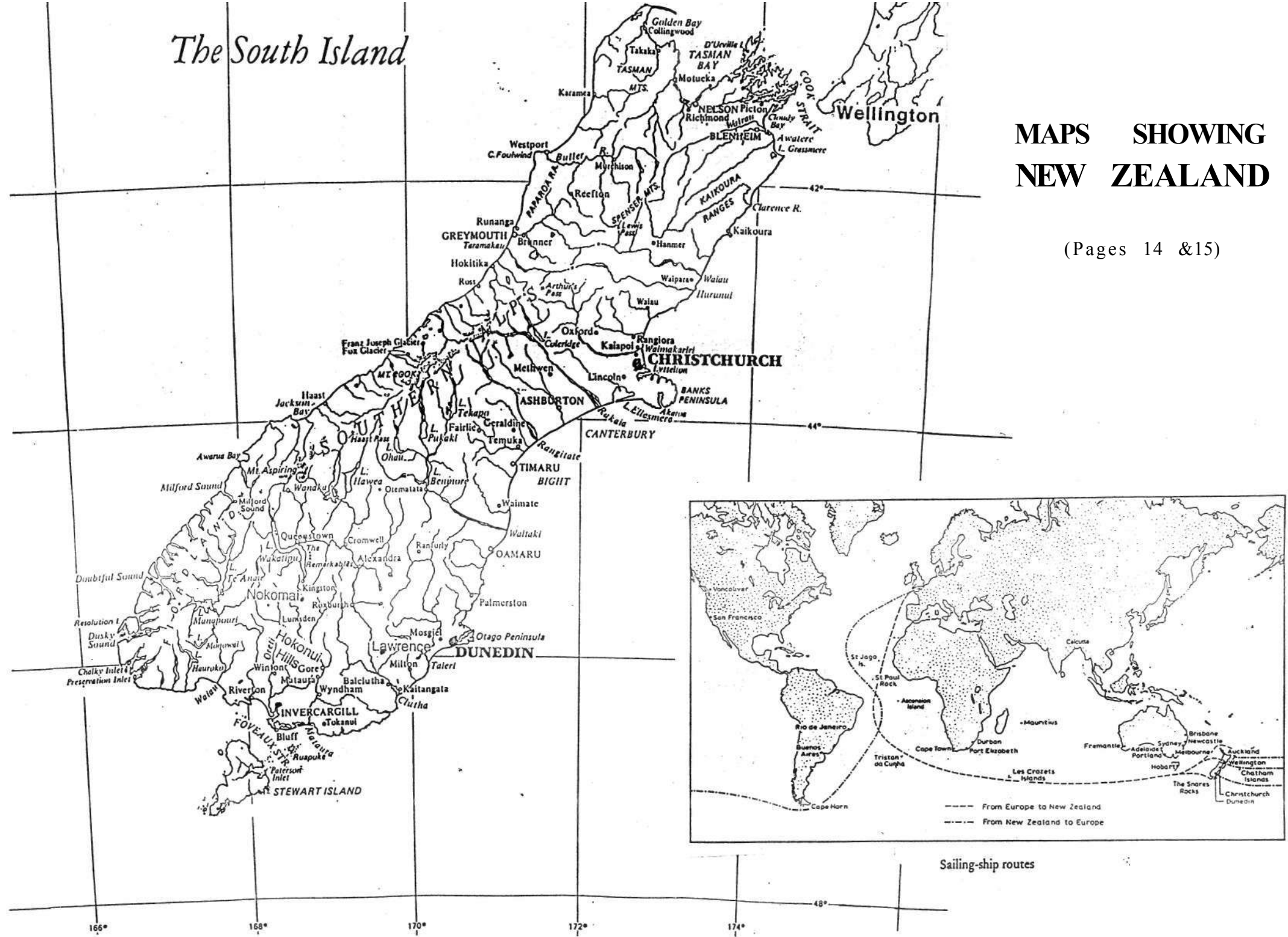
CAUTION—Any person who (1) falsifies any of the particulars on this certificate, or (2) uses it as true, knowing it to be false, is liable to prosecution under the Crimes Act 1961.



# The South Island

## MAPS SHOWING NEW ZEALAND

(Pages 14 & 15)





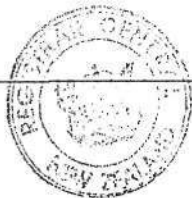
# Certified Copy of Entry of Death in the Registrar-General's Office

Place of Registration: .....INVERCARGILL.....

1. Name and Surname 2. Profession or Occupation 3. Usual place of residence	Sarah Grace Witheridge Domestic duties -
4. Sex. Age. Date of Birth	F    36    -
5. When died 6. Where died	23 April 1905 Earn Street Invercargill
7. Where born 8. How long in New Zealand	Nokomai Otago 36 years
9. Name and Surname of Father 10. Name and Surname of Mother 11. Maiden Surname of Mother 12. Profession or Occupation of Father	William Turner Harriet Turner Shepherd Steel worker
13. Where married 14. At what Age married 15. To whom married 16. Age of Widow/Widower if living 17. If Issue living, state Ages of each Sex	Invercargill 23 George Witheridge - M. -    F. -
18. When buried 19. Where buried	27 April 1905 Eastern Cemetery
20. Causes of Death and Intervals between Onset and Death	Epilepsy (fit) years Suffocation
21. Medical Attendant by whom certified	J B Ball
22. When he last saw Deceased (i.e., before death).	23 April 1905

Certified to be a true copy of the above particulars included in an entry of death in the records of the Registrar-General's office.

Given under the seal of the Registrar-General at Lower Hutt.



the .....5..... day of ....January..... 19..94..

CAUTION—Any person who (1) falsifies any of the particulars on this certificate, or (2) uses it as true, knowing it to be false, is liable to prosecution under the Crimes Act 1961.

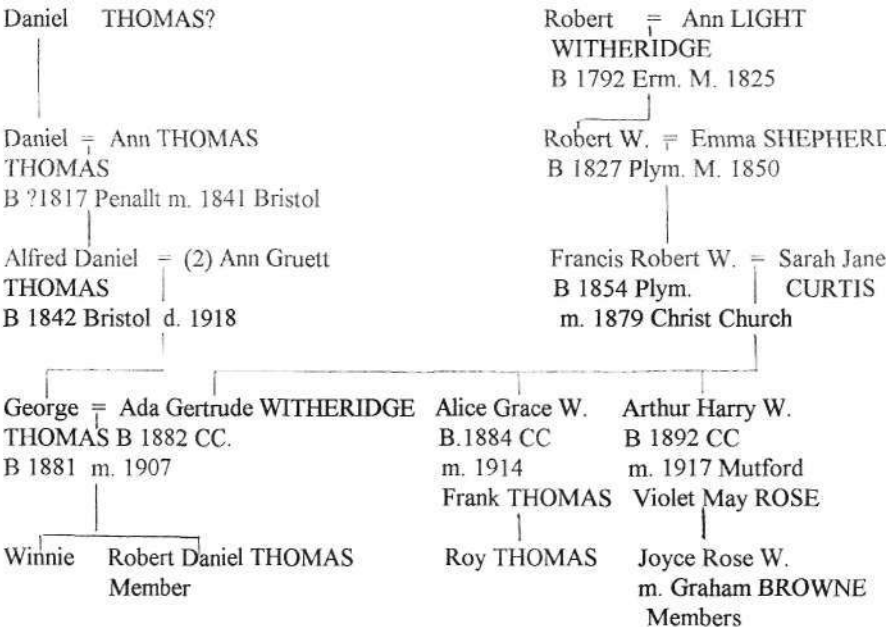
# THE FAMILY THOMAS

by John Witheridge

Going through all available Witheridge records I am amazed to find, time after time, the constant stream of marriages between our family and the Thomas family, but given the enormous size of the Thomas family group, perhaps our joint marriages are just a drip in the marital ocean.

Even though there are many Thomas families who have roots in the Welsh hill and valleys, there are many more whose origins are in parts of England and Scotland. A very large proportion live in the west country, Cornwall, Devon and Somerset, although it is argued that even these would have their roots in the southern counties of Wales. Indeed the Thomas family name comes into the league rating of the top twenty of high density names.

I would like to introduce some of these Thomas/Witheridge marriages. First of all I shall start with our very own Witheridge/Thomas member and his family - Member No. 54, Mr. Robert (Bob) D. Thomas of Milntown, Ramsey, Isle-of-Man. Bob and I have been writing about this subject for some time, and it was some chance remarks he made by letter that germinated this idea and indeed this article. This is his family tree which indicates one Thomas family and its Witheridge connection.

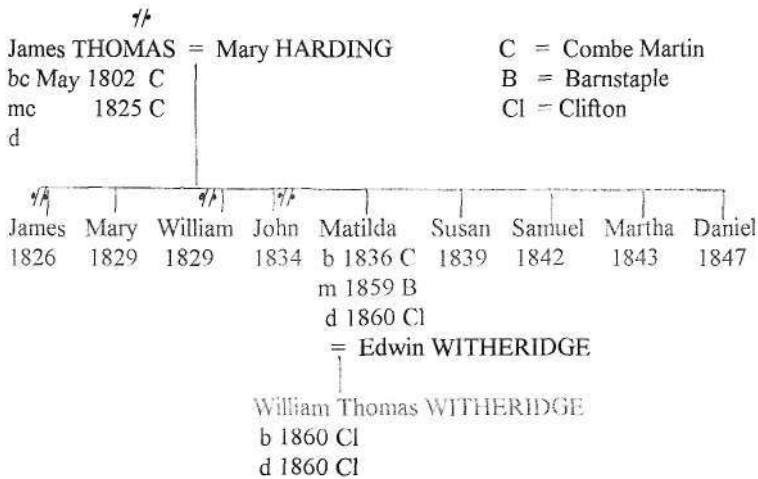


In this tree two unusual events are seen. Both parents of Alfred Daniel THOMAS bore the Thomas name. They were Daniel Thomas, shoemaker, and his wife Ann Thomas, nee Thomas. Perhaps they were distant cousins. Cousin marrying cousin seems to occur many times within the research I have carried out into the Thomas family.

The most interesting section of the tree to me is the marriage of the sisters Witheridge, Ada and Alice, each to a member of the Thomas family who were no relation to each other, unless you count them as brothers-in-law. I have included the parents of our editor, Joyce Browne, so that for those who are not familiar with this family, some focus can be given. The family line is that of the Ermington branch via Robert Witheridge and Ann Light from the village of Ermington through into Plymouth, Bournemouth, and the county of Dorset. (Plym. = Plymouth, CC = Christchurch, Hants. Mutford is the registration district for Lowestoft, Suffolk)

0000

Now to an interesting interlude that happened in the Combe Martin and Berrynarbor family, Bristol branch. This research has very many happy memories for me. This tree was my very first endeavour in the Witheridge Times, and concerned the marriage of Matilda Thomas to Edwin Witheridge in the year 1859 in the registration district of Barnstaple.



All the above events happened in Combe Martin except those of the marriage and burial of Matilda, and the birth and burial of William Thomas Witheridge, these being in Barnstaple, and Clifton in Bristol.

The symbol above the Christian names of father and some children of the Thomas family, denotes a reference to the fact that these were related to and recognised by one,

Heber Taylor, possibly noting an inheritance, or more to the point, the hope of one. It was this reference in the 1992 IGI indexes that enabled me to trace this full family even though on a few entries the parents' names were non-existent, and some dates were of no real value.

It is very interesting to note that the only child of the marriage of Matilda and Edwin was named William Thomas. Named, I'm sure, after her brother William. Perhaps Matilda's favourite brother? It is strange that in the 1881 census William Thomas, Matilda's brother, is the only son of the family I could locate. He was married to a 'Betsy' and had four children - Mary, John, Martha and William. These names helped to prove a connection - especially 'Martha'.

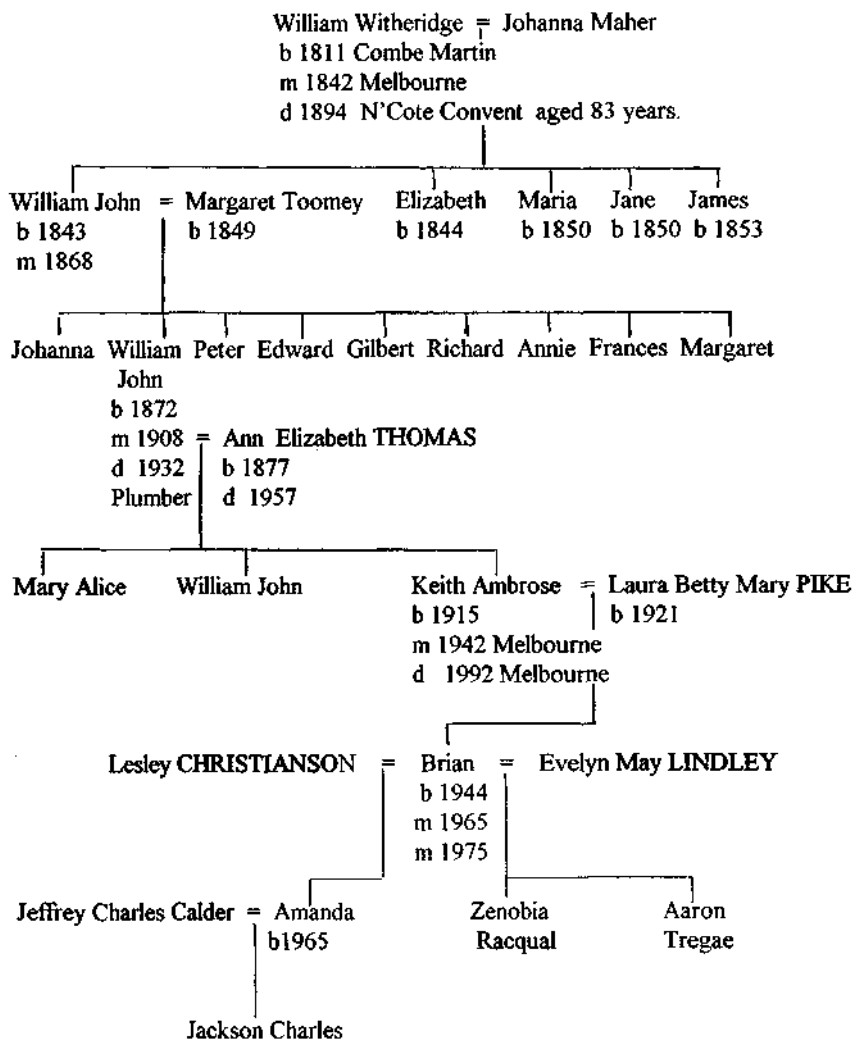
Matilda died in childbirth and her son, William Thomas, died within a year. This story leads on to one more interesting fact. (I know it will interest at least one of our members- Mrs. Albertina Rossiter.) Albertina Cumming, who eventually became the second Mrs. Edwin Witheridge, was taken on as a servant prior to the birth of William Thomas Witheridge in 1860, to assist Matilda in household duties and the upbringing of William. The tragedy which followed, first the death of her mistress and then the death of William Thomas, by this time in Albertina's sole charge, must have had a severe effect on the 14 year old girl and set a tragic precedent for her future life. (Another story) Albertina- born in lowly state - worked and married into a reasonably wealthy family, and through circumstances and very bad luck, or even bad judgment - died a pauper!

ooOoo

I must at this point make reference to another member of the Thomas family who married one of our Witheridge boys. I haven't a clue as to which section of the Thomas family she belongs, but I can tell you that I have enlisted seven associates to help me find her origins. It will be quite a task!

Her name - Ann Elizabeth Thomas, born 1877. The photograph shows her with her husband William John Witheridge, born 1872, a plumber, and great great grandson of Thomas Witheridge, born 1751, and his wife Mary Howe. Also in the picture are the two oldest children, Mary Alice and William John. William and Ann's third child, Keith Ambrose, had not yet been born. These members of the Witheridge family are second and third generation Australian, the family having lived in the Melbourne area since the settler William Witheridge arrived in the year circa 1841 and married Johanna Maher.

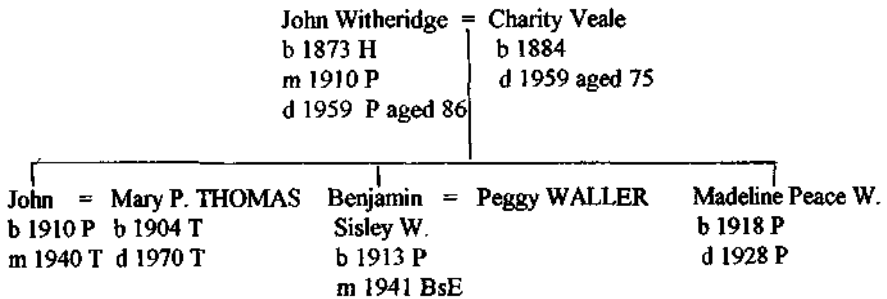
Our recent Australian member, Mrs. Amanda Calder, née Witheridge, is the granddaughter of Keith Ambrose and the 3 x great granddaughter of Thomas Witheridge and Mary How. She is also fifth generation Australian, and her son sixth generation, the family descending from our earliest Combe Martin families. Here is a tree showing seven generations of this great Australian family.



Now on to another Thomas/ Witheridge marriage, also from the Combe Martin family line. This marriage is in more recent times, in the year 1940 at Truro in Cornwall, it is the marriage of John Witheridge and Mary Priscilla Thomas.

From the marriage certificate we know that John and Mary were married on the 10 February, 1940. She was 35 years old and a hospital nurse, John was 30 years old and a

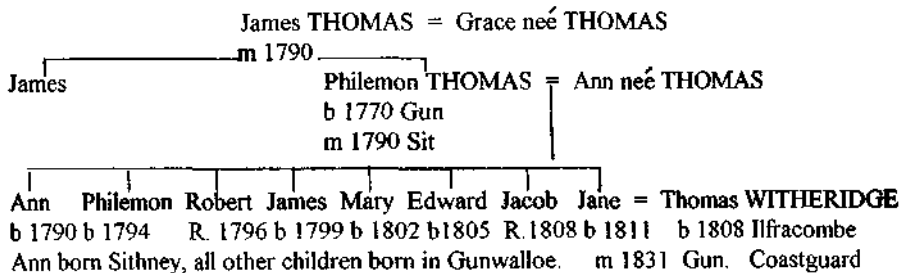
general labourer. The witnesses were Charles Thomas, a mason, and John Witheridge, a fisherman, the fathers of the happy couple. Mary Priscilla was born on the 25<sup>th</sup> July, 1904 and she died in 1970 at the age of 66 years in Cornwall in the city of Truro where she was born and was married. A year after their marriage John's brother Benjamin Sisley Witheridge married a Peggy Waller in Bury-St.-Edmunds, Suffolk. This lady is still living there and I write to her from time to time even though she is not particularly interested in our family society.



P = Penzance T = Truro H = Helston BsE = Bury-St.-Edmunds

ooOoo

Now to a story that I have been working on for some time. It covers a marriage that, in my opinion, has more than doubled the Witheridge name throughout the world. I seem to centre a great deal of my research time in covering this man Thomas Witheridge, b 1808, and his wife Jane Thomas b 1811. Here is Jane's family tree - see what you think of this.



Again I draw your attention to the remarks I made earlier in this article that the Thomas family seem to marry quite extensively within their own family circles. As you can see,

two of these wives were née Thomas, but again we must take into consideration that the Thomas family are numbered as one of the top high density families in this country.

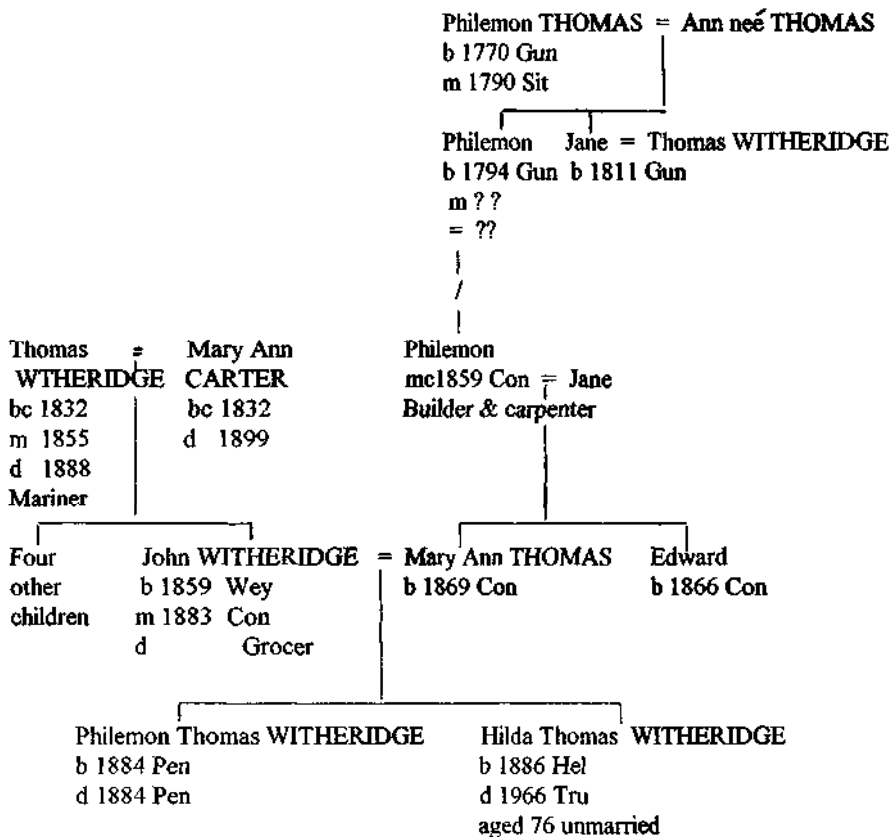
James Thomas, m. 1790 I can find no indication of the date of birth for him, and even on the IGI's there are no corresponding references which we could assume to link with him. My guess is that like the Witheridge family of this same period, The Thomas family may have had roots in north Devon and moved to Cornwall in the boom period of fishing off the Cornish coasts. Later this trade was to decline, causing a mass exodus to the new worlds that were opening up to the immigrant settlers. This point leads me to the main topic of my article and neatly jells with the name of James Thomas's son 'Philemon', (father of Jane Thomas). We have speculated in depth over the last few years as to the origins of this name - 'Philemon'- within our family.

You will remember that last year I listed all our Witheridges with this Christian name. Jane and Thomas Witheridge named two of their children in this manner, the second lived and was responsible for one of the largest of our families in Australia. This section of our group of families has provided us with more male children than all other branches of the family put together.

Our Philemon Witheridge gave up being a fisherman to become a sailor - perhaps a busman's holiday, but it was on one of his trips to foreign parts that he saw Australia for the first time - the year being 1873-4. The story has been passed down that he dived into the sea and swam ashore, there he paced out a parcel of land and staked his title to it. Returning to his ship, they proceeded to the nearest port where he registered his claim. Two years later he and his wife, Mary Carvarth, set out from England for their new life and to stake their claim in the history of the Witheridge family. They raised a very large family. Their first child died before they left England, and I am sure their second child was born in transit to Australia. This story again is one that will be told some time in the near future.

Now we know the origin of the name 'Philemon' and are deeply indebted to the Thomas family, but as you will have come to expect from my articles there is a last twist to the tale in this story, and even though the research into these events is not fully substantiated, I will include them here.

On the last tree you will notice that Jane Thomas had a brother named 'Philemon'. Please follow this short tree and see how this develops:-



Key: Con = Constantine                      Hel = Helston  
 Wey = Weymouth                            Tru = Truro  
 Fal = Falmouth                              Sit = Sithney  
 Pen = Penryn                                 Gun = Gunwalloe

This tree is not completely proved in that there is a generation break between the two Philemons in the Thomas family, although I have had the information confirmed by a member of the Thomas family who will forward the data concerned as soon as it is available. It is also possible that there are two further names in the St. Catherine's House birth and death indexes which we can add to the family of John Witheridge and Mary Ann Thomas, who were married in 1883.

Birth 1893 Dec. Qtr. Witheridge, Nora Kathleen (Falmouth) 5c 160



Birth 1895 Sep. Qtr. Witheridge, Bernard (Falmouth) 5c 159

Deaths 1960 Jun Qtr. Witheridge, Bernard E. 64 years (Redruth) 7a 128

1977 Mar Qtr. Witheridge, Nora Kathleen b.20.11.1893 (Bodmin) 21 0051

#### REFERENCES OF PROOF FOR EVENTS MENTIONED IN THIS ARTICLE

Marriages GUNWALLOE - Thomas Witheridge, Bachelor, Mariner of Landewednack married Jane Thomas, spinster, OTP., 9<sup>th</sup> March, 1891. Both made their marks. Witnesses: Samuel Hill and Thomas Ryder.

CONSTANTINE - John Witheridge, 23 years, Bachelor. Groom. Married Mary Ann Thomas, 24 years, spinster. 9<sup>th</sup> October, 1893 BOTP Banns. Fathers: Philemon Thomas, builder, and Thomas Witheridge, Mariner. Witnesses Philemon Thomas and Sarah Jane Thomas.

#### Baptisms GUNWALLOE

Ann Thomas	d of Philemon and Ann	17 Jun. 1790
Philemon Thomas	s of "	" 9 Feb. 1794
Robert Row Thomas	s of "	" 7 Aug. 1796
James Thomas	s of "	" 29 Sep. 1799
Mary Thomas	d of "	" 28 Mar. 1802
Edward Thomas	s of "	" 3 Mar. 1805
Jacob Rowe Thomas	s of "	" 28 Feb. 1808
Jane Thomas	d of "	" 27 Jan. 1811

#### Baptisms CONSTANTINE

Mary Ann Thomas	d of Philemon and Jane	30 Dec. 1860
Edward Thomas	s of "	" 28 Jan. 1866

#### Marriages BREAGE

James Thomas, (Mason), married Grace Thomas 13<sup>th</sup> January, 1761 BOTP Banns.

#### Baptisms BREAGE

James Thomas	s of James and Grace	1 Jul. 1764
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This article was written with the idea of its being a leader to future items on these same

subjects. The stories behind these characters are so deep and intense that I have only brushed upon the subjects to tempt your palates. The full stories are to follow.

Whilst searching for information for the above article I found one other name, and although it appears not to be connected to this article I include it in the hope that it will be noted by our families with Cornish ancestors.

Launceston John WITHERIDGE married Eleanor DINGLE 11<sup>th</sup> Dec. 1751 - Banns.

I cannot find any reference to this marriage in my personal records. I would be grateful to hear from any reader who can shed some light on this subject.



Circa 1903 William Witheridge with his wife Ann nee Thomas, and children William (junior) left and Mary Alice aged 3 right. Keith not yet born

**NEW MEMBERS** - News from John Witheridge

Overseas members sharing one magazine per quarter

132 Mr. Peter Witheridge	137 Katherine Witheridge
133 Clara Witheridge	138 Jennifer Witheridge
134 Amelia Witheridge	139 David Witheridge
135 Sonja Witheridge nee Sycenko	140 Helen McNeil Witheridge
136 Louise Witheridge	

Contact address:-15 Clode Crescent, Macgregor, ACT 2615, Australia

(1)Peter Witheridge...Spouse Louise Coe (2) Richard Kevin Witheridge 1930... (3) Sophia Sycenko. (4) Richard Henry Witheridge 1884-1954. (5) Clara Savell Cook (8) William John Witheridge 1842 - (9) Margaret Toomey 1849 -1920....(16) William Witheridge 1810/11-1894. (17) Johanna Maher.....(32) John Witheridge 1775-.... (33) Elizabeth Harris.....(64) Thomas Witheridge 1751- (65) Mary How....

Combe Martin and Berryarbor 1500-1835/40 Australia, Melbourne, Victoria ACT 1840- present day.

I am certainly pleased that we have more members of this particular Witheridge family joining our society and would like to welcome them all to our group of families. I started to research this family about three and a half years ago, and later, with the assistance of Velma Metcalfe, connected this Australian branch to her Combe Martin/Newcastle and New Zealand family - taking the line back to the 1530s.

As you will all know, last year we asked Dorothy Witheridge to be our first Australian representative. Dorothy's first official event was to hold an Australian Witheridge Picnic (reported in this magazine). On receiving their invitation Peter and family drove a three hour journey from ACT to Dorothy's area in New South Wales - some journey for a picnic. Since then we have corresponded several times resulting in membership of the second family from the Melbourne Witheridge branch. Their nearest relations within our society are Amanda Calder and her family, Velma Metcalfe, Carol Goins, and John Roberts Witheridge.

This family are second, third and fourth cousins to Amanda Calder - I will try to give members an insight into their family structure:-

Helen, Amelia, Clara and Peter are the issue of Richard Kevin and his wife Sophia Witheridge nee Sycenko.

Peter and his wife, Louise nee Coe, have three children - Katherine, Jennifer and David.

Helen McNeil, nee Witheridge, is married to Colin McNeil and they have two children, Jennifer and David.

I hope that I have not confused this issue (Pun!) too much!

In my research into this branch I have located another master mariner, William Witheridge. The interesting point about this master mariner is the fact that he may have been one of the very first of his trade to traverse the rivers of the Australian continent with a motor vessel (I think steam). At the time of writing this, I am awaiting confirmation of this information from Peter and the family.

Welcome to you all, and we hope that you will find all that you are seeking as members of the Witheridge Society.

#### New Membership continued

141 Mr. Stanley Robert Witheridge

Contact address:- 9 Palm Court, Domain Residential Country Club, 74 Wardoo Street, Asmore, Queensland, Australia 4214

(1) Stanley Robert Witheridge 1915 - Spouse the late Ethne Ruby Jones (2) George Henry Witheridge 1884-1966 (3) Sarah Amy Warren 1885-1950 (4) George Causey Witheridge 1858-1931. (5) Margaret Rumsey c 1862-1930. (8) George Causey Witheridge 1836-1901. (9) Mary Ann Bussell 1836-.....(16) William Witheridge 1791-1870? (17) Fanny Elizabeth Causey 1799-1879 (32) John Witheridge 1760.....(33) Ann Lee... (64) John Witheridge 1724-....(65) Ann Coldman.... (130) John Witheridge 1700....(131) Joane Lerry.....

Northam area 1700-1850, Pancras, Marylebone, Kentish Town 1850-1930s.

I would like to extend to Stan, a descendant of the Northam and Bideford family, our welcome into the fold of the Witheridge Society. Knowing as I do his great interest in his family background I am sure that he will make the most of his membership. I have been following a Stanley Witheridge all round the world, not knowing who he was, in New Zealand, Switzerland and Australia. It was not until I received a letter and phone call from Anthony Witheridge, member No. 36, that I was able to put two and two together. Sadly it was not the time to write and ask if he would care to join our society.

Let me explain - the point of Anthony's phone call was to inform me that Ethne, Stan's wife, had just passed away. I felt that I could not write and offer condolences when all I knew of the family was a few references, so I opted to wait a few months. Strangely, the

situation was eased somewhat when, two months later, I received a letter from Dorothy Witheridge in Australia, saying that Stan had written to her in answer to a previous letter she had posted. Breathing a sigh of relief I wrote to Stan immediately and the result is plain to see. We have gained another member, and hopefully another friend and relation into our families. I would like to offer our heartfelt condolences to Stan, and our prayers and best wishes for his future, and offer our help in any way we can.

Stan is the father of one of our past members - Christopher Witheridge, member No. 49, and he is uncle to Anthony Gilbert Witheridge, member No.49. Stan has also mentioned in his letters another brother, Henry, with a genealogical interest. I look forward to contacting him.

### CHANGE OF ADDRESS

102 Mrs. Albertina Rossiter:- Rock Cottage, Stawell, Bridgwater, Somerset TA7 9AA

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### FORTHCOMING ACTIVITIES

Council of Family Societies Meeting at Chelford, Cheshire, on 27<sup>th</sup> April, 1996

Guild of One Name Studies Conference at Plymouth, 25<sup>th</sup> May, 1996

Guild of One Name Studies Conference at Kelso borders region on Sunday, 15<sup>th</sup> September, 1996

Three further meetings in the more distant future:-

Dartford, Kent, January. 1997

York area May 1997

Needham Market, Suffolk, October 1997

Sometime in the future the Council of Family Societies is planning to hold a Gathering of the Clans. The details of this gathering have yet to be organised. It is anticipated that the venue will be a central area for the ease of access. If any member wishes to attend one or more of the above meetings please write to John Witheridge, who as organiser for most of the above will be happy to furnish more detail.

OFFICERS OF THE SOCIETY - continued from front cover

Representative  
Australia

Mrs. Dorothy Witheridge,  
95 Vimiera Road, Eastwood,  
NSW Australia 2122

Committee Members

Miss Annette Witheridge  
26A, 300 East 40th Street,  
New York NY10016  
USA

Mr. Mark Witheridge  
163, Wesley Avenue,  
Selly Oak,  
Birmingham, Warw.  
B29 6PV

Mrs. Joyce Stephens,  
95, Phelipps Road,  
Corfe Mullen,  
Wimborne, Dorset  
BH21 3NL

PLEASE NOTE THAT ALL SUBSCRIPTIONS TO THE SOCIETY SHOULD BE  
PAID TO THE MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY

USEFUL ADDRESSES

Devon Record Office, (Tel. No. 01392-53509)  
Castle Street,  
Exeter,  
Devon EX4 3PQ

West Devon Record Office, (Tel. No. 01752-26485)  
Clare Place,  
Coxside,  
Plymouth,  
Devon PL4 QJW

North Devon Record Office,  
Tuly Street,  
Barnstaple,  
Devon

Devon Family History Society,  
New Members Secretary,  
Miss Valerie Bluett,  
63 Old Laira Road,  
Laira,  
Plymouth  
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Society of Genealogists,  
14 Charterhouse Buildings,  
Goswell Road,  
London EC1M 7BA (Tel.No. 0171-251 8799)

