



Founded 1926

HISTORY WEST

PUBLISHED BY THE ROYAL WESTERN AUSTRALIAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC.

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Temporary Shutdown

In this current health emergency the Society has shut down and Stirling House has closed its physical doors.

Staff and a very small number of volunteers continue the good work behind the doors and others in their homes.

If you wish to purchase a book or discuss any other matter, you are welcome to contact the Office on 9386 3841 or admin@histwest.org.au. Remember that you can also purchase books and archival products via <https://shop.histwest.org.au>

History West newsletter

Our monthly newsletter will continue to be produced and distributed through the shutdown period and we hope that you enjoy reading it.

How can you help History West?

Many members are working on historical research topics, so now is an opportunity for you to contribute an article to the newsletter and provide **readers with some interesting reading (relating in some way to WA's past)**. Or you might send us a **photograph and caption of a 'Treasure from Home'**, featuring an object that you value from the past.

How can you help create historical sources for the future?

When life has returned to normal there will be many official and public records relating to the COVID-19 crisis but we also need to record the experiences we are all currently living through and preserve them in an historical collection.

Would you be interested in:

1. keeping a weekly diary entry about the experiences of the past week and your feelings about your current life?
2. photographing changes in streetscape, shops and homes?
3. recording the technologies being used to keep in contact and what is being shared – images, humour, stories and such like?

Let us know if you would like to be part of this project.

Caves Road: the forgotten pathfinders

The general meeting on 18 March was the last before our current shutdown. Many members who regularly attend the monthly meetings were already in home isolation and therefore missed **Gillian Lilleyman's** much anticipated talk. To relieve this disappointment Gillian has provided History West with some highlights from her full paper to tide us over until we can read the complete article in next year's *Early Days*. Thank you Gillian.

My paper was to be a story about Caves Road. As this popular tourist drive runs between Cape Naturaliste and Cape Leeuwin for much of its length, I began by researching overland exploration in the Cape-to-Cape region.

After the arrival of Nicolas Baudin and Jacques Hamelin on the *Geographe* and *Naturaliste* in 1801, European exploration was first confined to the coastal area around Geographe Bay. Stirling noted a timbered plain backed by a range of low hills to the south of Cape Naturaliste when he anchored there in 1827, but the land between the capes remained unexplored by Europeans. It was only after the colonial settlement at Augusta that expeditions were made overland.

The most noteworthy of these was not undertaken by naval or military men or prominent settlers but by five men who arrived at Augusta as indentured servants — John Dewar, Andrew Smith, William Longmate, Henry Postans and Thomas Robinson — all indentured to James Turner. Dewar aged 46 and Smith aged 36 were married with families, 21 year old Longmate and teenagers Postans and Robinson were single.

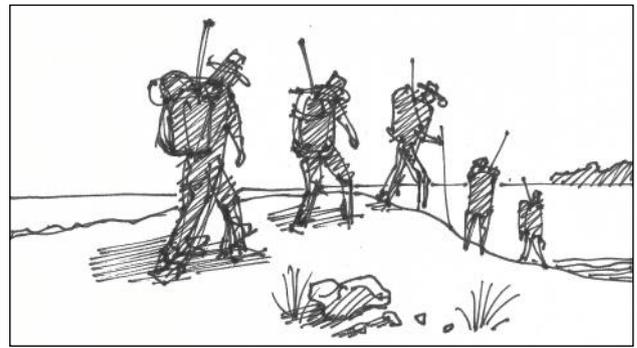
On 15 March 1831 the five men set out from Augusta to walk to Perth. They carried guns and ammunition, but were otherwise lightly provisioned. Starting before sunrise and sometimes travelling by moonlight the men, being without a compass, stayed within sight of the shore. On the evening of the third day they crossed a river

about thirty or forty feet wide at its mouth, but much wider about one hundred yards upwards; there was a naked sand-bank all across the mouth over which we passed; the bank or bar was forty yards from the sea.

Dewar and his companions were crossing the yet uncharted Margaret River.

Other southwest rivers that emptied into sheltered bays and estuaries had been explored but, concealed from the ocean by dunes and a sand bar, the Margaret River presented no reason for mariners to brave a treacherous coastline for a closer look. Until then only the local indigenous people, the Wardandi, knew the river. They named it Wooditchup, after Wooditch, the young medicine man who created the river, his story retold down the generations for thousands of years. Despite seeing evidence of Aboriginal occupation, such as recently burnt country and a beached whale with its blubber cut off, Dewar's party encountered only three Aborigines, one who led them to brackish water and two who showed them where to cross the Vasse River.

Lacking Wardandi survival skills, by the time the travellers reached the Murray River their provisions were exhausted. There, the acting government resident, Lieutenant Archibald Erskine, issued them soldiers' rations, reporting to the Colonial Secretary that 'the undermentioned individuals' were 'on route to Perth for the purpose of communicating with His Excellency'. Whether the men met Stirling and for what purpose were not recorded. Nor their arrival at Perth: unlike Captain Thomas Bannister's welcome after his overland walk to King George Sound, the feat of five indentured servants attracted no fanfare.



Caves Rd leg men by Nidas

At some stage someone, most likely John Dewar, reported their findings. An 'Account of the country intervening between Augusta and Swan River' was published in *Journals of several expeditions made in Western Australia during the years 1829, 1830, 1831 and 1832* by London publisher Joseph Cross, from information that Stirling despatched, or took with him, to the Colonial Office in 1832. As such material was generally compiled through the office of the Surveyor General, John Septimus Roe's transcripts of these journals provided a clue as to when Dewar and his companions' expedition was recorded.

Assuming that Roe copied journals as he received them, his transcripts indicate that Dewar submitted a report almost a year after their walk. The reason for this delay is not clear. The men may not have realised the significance of their achievement at the time as their feat was not publicised. Unlike Bannister, Preston, Collie and McLeod, whose names are perpetuated in the southwest, Turner's servants were not acknowledged, reflecting the class distinctions of the day.

Compounding this oversight, Roe's transcript reads 'John Dewar, Andrew Smith' with the sentence unfinished as if Roe anticipated naming others. When first published, the comma was changed to 'and' and a full stop inserted, reading as though only two were in the party. As well, because their journal falls between two from John Bussell that Roe transcribed, some histories cite Bussell as the diarist on all three expeditions. This misconception, the 'energetic Mr Bussell' leading one expedition after another, derived from official records as early as 1898; and was possibly why W B Kimberly, despite commending Dewar and Smith as 'pathfinders' in his *History of West Australia*, questioned the reliability of their report, a reservation J S Battye repeated.

John Bussell named the Margaret River. Although no government documents have come to light, local historians garnered conclusive evidence that Bussell named it after Margaret Wycher, a young lady whom he unsuccessfully courted while he was in England in 1838. The named river first appeared on an Arrowsmith map in 1839, by which time Bussell had traced its course from the early Augusta road to the coast.

And the five pathfinders who described the river first? They are owed recognition in history.

Gillian Lilleyman

Sources

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- Expedition journals, vol 1. SROWA Cons 5000 Item 328.
- Archibald Erskine's report to Colonial Secretary, 30 March 1831. SROWA CSO file 13/208,209.
- J Cross, *Journals of several expeditions made in Western Australia during the years 1829, 1830, 1831 & 1832*, 1833.
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- G Jennings, *Margaret River Stories*, Margaret River & Districts Historical Society, 2013.

Museum News

Stories from the Storerooms

A Lady's accomplishments



The Holy Family, c1850s, tent stitch in wool on canvas, 43 x 32.7 cm. by Lady Margaret Richardson-Bunbury (1795-1873). MA1900.372

This tapestry by Lady Richardson-Bunbury depicts the Holy family – Mary, Joseph and baby Jesus – with supporters, and was brought from Ireland with the family in the 1850s. Lady Richardson-Bunbury was a fine embroiderer and attractive pieces of her work survive in the Society's collection. A devout Anglican, she formed the first branch of the British and Foreign Bible Society in Western Australia and helped with other church activities. She was buried at the Picton Church with all the usual honours accorded to her rank, facing and at right angles to the graves of others. The embroidery was donated to the Society around 1929 by Mrs W Gale née Richardson-Bunbury, her granddaughter.

Accustomed to a sheltered life in Ireland with over thirty retainers on the estate at Castle Hill in Augher, County Tyrone, Lady Margaret, widow of Sir James Richardson-Bunbury, had to adapt to a very different set of surroundings when she arrived in Western Australia in 1855. Her eldest son, who had inherited the property, remained in Ireland but her three daughters and son Alfred accompanied her as did a prefabricated house, butler, housekeeper, silver and other easily portable accoutrements required for gracious living. The family had come to join son William who had emigrated earlier.

She soon purchased Charterhouse at Picton, which had been Archdeacon Wollaston's old property, and developed beautiful gardens and orchards. Daughter Diana, and reputedly her mother too, collected and pressed seaweeds for Professor Harvey, noted botanist of Trinity College, Dublin. Diana and daughter-in-law Amelia Molloy also collected wildflower specimens for botanist Baron Ferdinand Von Mueller in Melbourne.

The hospitable family tried to keep to the life they knew and were very friendly with the Clifton family at nearby Australind, who were also musical. One of the pleasures they enjoyed together was to speak and read French and sing French songs. A description of tea at Lady Richardson-Bunbury's home, with her butler, James Cahil, who doubled as gardener when not required indoors, gives an indication of their life.

The tea was poured with great ceremony. Coming from Ireland where the climate was colder, tea had to be poured very hot. There was a silver hot water kettle, a silver teapot, sugar basin, cream jug, milk jug, and a tea caddy from which only the mistress was allowed to serve the spoonfuls of tea for the pot. All this was placed on a silver tray and carried in by James. Maria (the housekeeper) placed the teacups and plates and provided the bread, butter and cakes. The teapot was heated, so were the cups; the water was poured off into a basin, and then Lady Bunbury poured the tea. The older ladies wore lace caps, with ringlets and very feminine dresses. (Theodora Sanders, *Bunbury*, Roebuck Society, Canberra, 1975, p. 52.)

Taking tea was a new entertainment in the eighteenth century and the first presided over by women. It even occasioned rooms to be laid out differently with small tables and moveable chairs. Taking tea was very much a ceremony overseen by the mistress of the house as the commodity was expensive. Afternoon tea was a custom started by the seventh Duchess of Bedford who needed a snack between luncheon and dinner that was usually served at eight o'clock. It was a useful time too for women in the country to meet as it could take place in daylight.

Two other fine pieces of Lady Richardson-Bunbury's work in the collection were embroidered in tent stitch on barrathea and destined to be upholstery on chairs. No doubt similar pieces were on the chairs that the ladies sat on to take tea.

Dorothy Erickson



MA1993.16a



MA1993.16b

Mystery Photos

If you have any information relating to these photographs, please contact the Society at library@histwest.org.au or phone 9386 3841.



Church of Christ



Overland to Ravensthorpe, May 1912: children, Allan, Tom and Marie their mother. Uncle Martin kneeling with the gun.



Family group 1930s



Women rowers



A member has contacted the Society about one of the mystery photographs featured in January-February's *History West*. It is reproduced here showing a couple riding a camel tended by two Afghans. Jenny Timms grew up near Williams/

Bannister and says that there were sandalwood cutters, often Afghans, around Williams and Boddington in the early 1900s, so perhaps that explains the men's presence in the district. Thank you to Jenny and her daughter Claire.

A century ago....

The influenza pandemic of 1918-19

Be confident but do not be rash... Blockade the germs. Cut their lines of communication from person to person as much as may be by avoiding crowds. Keep clean. Be abstemious. Watch the drains. Treat fresh air as a friend, not enemy, but take care against draughts. Endeavour to provide against sudden changes of bodily temperature. Do not brood, even should influenza scale all the ramparts that commonsense has erected. Do not think that every finger ache is a portent of immediate death.

Editorial, *West Australian*, 10 June 1919

Its beginnings

Unfairly labelled ‘the Spanish flu’, this pandemic was caused by an avian virus that, in the camps of World War I, spread quickly through the USA and western Europe, and was then carried around the world mostly by returning servicemen. While this was a particularly virulent and infectious virus, poor health conditions on both war and home fronts made the impact of the illness greater and increased mortality rates. Approximately 500 million people were infected and 20-50 million died worldwide. As is the case today with COVID-19, there was no vaccine to protect against infection and, unlike today, no antibiotics to treat secondary bacterial infections. Authorities turned to other public health strategies — chiefly national, regional and local quarantines, isolation, personal hygiene advice, disinfectants and restrictions on public gatherings. The parallels between 1918-19 and today are striking.

The first reports of the disease appeared in April-May 1918 in the USA and Europe. With fewer international travellers, Australia was better placed than it is today to hold the virus at bay with tight maritime quarantine. Thus no cases of infections within Australia were recorded until January 1919 although the troopship *HMAT Boonah* had returned to Fremantle with influenza cases on board in December 1918.

HMAT *Boonah* and Woodman Point Quarantine Station

Carrying the last shipload of reinforcements to the western front in 1918, the ship reached only as far as Durban when the armistice was signed. It therefore turned for home but not before men were infected with the virus which was already sweeping South African ports. On arrival in Fremantle 300 patients were transferred to the Quarantine Station at Woodman Point. Ian Darroch has told the sad story in *The Boonah Tragedy* (2004) — in all 27 soldiers and 4 nurses died of influenza at the Station.

Ships continued to bring new cases from overseas and patients were quarantined at the Commonwealth’s ring of quarantine stations around Australia. Nevertheless the cordon was breached and in January 1919 Victoria reported cases of the disease. Other states followed in subsequent months. The disease was named ‘pneumonic influenza’.

Quarantining WA’s land border

On 30 January, against instructions from the federal government which had taken control of internal as well as external quarantine, Western Australia closed its land border, blocking the Trans train at Parkeston and imposing a seven-day quarantine on all arrivals. *The Yellow Rag*, an impromptu newsheet organised by stranded passengers, editorialised with irony and good humour:

Unless one has been confined in Parkeston Quarantine Camp, he cannot appreciate the really beautiful location, the lovely soft green lawns, the tropical palms, the

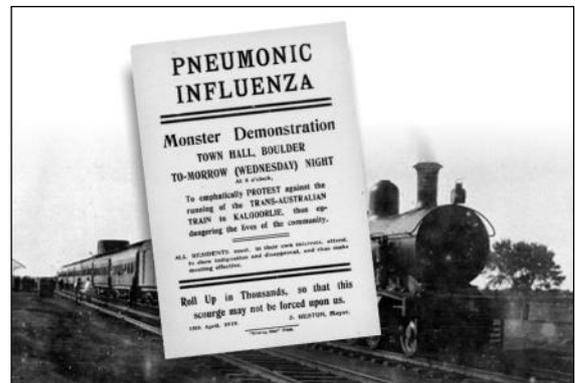
spreading oak and gum trees, and the beautiful hills in the background. The beautiful sun, and nature’s lovely daughters, hot days, cool nights, and an occasional dust storm all combined — with the aid of a plentiful supply of liquid nourishment from Kalgoorlie — to make our stay truly delightful.

Tune: ‘Pop goes the Weasel’ - excerpt from *The Yellow Rag*

We serenade each night at eight	We are a happy little band,
To the train across the w-a-a-a-y;	The flu we do not fear;
We bang the cans and make a row	We’re going to poison all the germs
To frighten germs away.	With whiskey, stout and beer.

They say they’re going to build a bath,
Just near the fumigator;
If you can manage to get a girl
Mixed bathing you can take her.

This was a time when most people did not own a motor vehicle and, for most, bicycles had limited range. So domestic travel was far less than it is today. There was community concern when the Trans train resumed service in April although health authorities insisted that the connection had been made safe.



WA remained infection free until June when three Italian miners who lived in Gwalia fell ill. Tight quarantine was imposed around Gwalia-Leonora on 5 June. Gwalia State Hotel was requisitioned as an isolation hospital and all public activities cancelled in the town.

June-October 1919 - the epidemic months in WA

The virus had arrived with cases also reported in Perth. On 8 June WA officially declared itself infected. Isolation hospitals admitted patients, strict home quarantine for seven days was imposed on all those who lived with the ill, and their rooms disinfected. Follow up and isolation of close contacts was attempted. In Kalgoorlie Palma Alfirevich’s father died of the disease in the town’s isolation hospital. She told of her family’s experience after her father’s diagnosis:

Mum had a struggle at that time because no-one was allowed out of the house for about two weeks; could have been three. Food was brought to the front gate and no-one was allowed in and no-one was allowed out. You can imagine putting up with all these kids. She would have had five at that stage [and another on the way] so it would have been a bit of struggle. She had friends, lady friends, but they weren’t allowed in. There was no telephone so there was no way — they’d all shout from outside the fence.

Health workers were required to wear masks and were recommended to hand wash, gargle and use nasal douches regularly as well as visit inhalation chambers. A grave shortage of nurses led to the recruitment of young girls with partial or no training to undertake community nursing. Hospitals overflowed and Blackboy Hill military camp was utilised. It was a frightening time, lasting nearly six months and causing 544 deaths in WA. Eventually as the virus lost its virulence and summer arrived postwar life could begin.

History West thanks Criena Fitzgerald and Sue Graham Taylor for sharing their research.

Affiliates & other news

- drawn from summer newsletters reporting activities prior to the current shutdown

The Littler Bottler from the **Colonial Bottle & Collector Club** adds to its series of articles on the many aerated water manufacturers in WA in the late 19th and early 20th centuries with an account of the Eureka Aerated Water & Cordial Works in Leonora, originally owned by an early Leonora identity, Christian Alfred Andresen.

Koorabup, **Denmark Historical Society's** journal, includes many photographs of the successful exhibition of Bert Saw's photographs held over the new year period. More than 900 people enjoyed the display.

How times change! **Fremantle History Society** runs a lively column named 'Treasures from Trove' and has featured an editorial in the *Fremantle Herald* in 1920 demanding 'Down with the stone walls' and insisting on the need to demolish the former Gaol and Lunatic Asylum: '...the Stone Walls of Fremantle are unpleasant links with an evil past'. Now these heritage buildings are greatly valued and help to give Fremantle its unique appeal.

Kalamunda & Districts Historical Society's *Bulletin* reports the end of a Kalamunda institution — Crabbs of Kalamunda, a popular local grocery shop for 85 years. It began as a small corner store in 1934, grew and shifted location, modernised and innovated, adding a butcher's shop and delicatessen, and finally becoming a supermarket, trading as Foodland, Foodmaster, Super-Valu and IGA. The family business closed its doors in February this year. Owners Jim and Ada Crabb always supported the local community and helped people who faced difficulties. Now the historical society has preserved a record of this important community business and the lives of this hard-working and generous couple.

Congratulations to the **Mandurah Historical Society** on its 50th birthday. The Society mounted a photographic display depicting 'The Past, Present and Future' of the Peel/Mandurah region and welcomed all interested. Our good wishes for the next 50!

Maritime Heritage Association Journal reports a further discovery by Barbara and Ross Shardlow of a forgotten painting — another watercolour of HMS *Diadem* by Albany maritime artist C J Batelier, painted in 1904.

Mundaring & Hills Historical Society was pleased with the success of opening the Mundaring Station Master's House for Rotary's Twilight Markets. Over 200 visitors looked through the house where items belonging to past stationmasters were displayed as well as various objects from the Society's collection. A quiz — 'guess the age of the wedding dress' — also proved popular.

Rockingham District Historical Society is working to support those who want to save Saw House in Parkin St from threatened demolition.

Walpole Nornalup & District Historical Society's newsletter *The Walpolian* remembers the tiny schools of the district — nos 1, 2 & 3 — all established in the early 1930s for group settlers' children. As well as educating the children, the schools provided the venues for concerts, dances and socials for the small communities. Children rode to school by bicycle or on horseback or walked, sometimes up to five miles. After the war the schools were consolidated in Walpole.

Family History WA's journal *Western Ancestor* contains an article that will interest readers; it is the first of a two-part series on the life of **Henry Couper Castilla**. The concluding part will follow in a subsequent issue. A civil engineer, Castilla migrated with his brother from Scotland in 1886. It was an excellent time for a trained engineer to arrive in WA and he quickly found employment with the Public Works Dept (PWD). He became Perth City Engineer & Surveyor in 1892 where he focused on road paving, building an infectious diseases hospital at Subiaco, developing Queen's Gardens, and building Mendis St jetty. His record was impressive but he did not have the support of all city councillors and a committee of investigation resulted in his position being re-advertised in 1896. He found other employment quickly and became an Assistant Engineer PWD where he remained from 1896 to his retirement in 1922. At PWD he was involved in essential public works around the state — rail and bridge construction, sewerage and drainage, water supply, and soldier settlement infrastructure. That provocative newspaper the *Sunday Times* labeled him 'A High-and-Mighty Official', indicating that he liked to have his own way. Nevertheless his contribution to essential public works in the early 20th century was significant and it is pleasing to see his career recorded.

Message from Federation of Australian Historical Societies to all historical societies

FAHS is a partner of Blue Shield Australia in an international network seeking to protect the world's cultural heritage threatened by armed conflict and natural disasters. Local historical societies are invited to join the Local History Backup where they choose five to ten significant or interesting 'hero' objects from their collection, and photograph or scan them. These copies then go into either a physical time capsule, or a digital time capsule (<https://ehive.com/communities/1141/australian-community-history-collections>). For further advice and to inform FAHS that you are participating in the campaign, please contact the Online Outreach Officer at outreachofficer@history.org.au — when Australia re-opens later this year.

Watch for the arrival online of **RetroMaps**, an addition to the **State Records Office WA** website funded by the Friends of Battye Library. *RetroMaps* will allow users to explore Perth's lost landscapes via a rich tapestry of sewerage maps. These show individual suburban blocks and enable viewers to see the shape of each allotment over time as well as the structures on each block. A picture of the changing face of the metropolitan area emerges sharply. As well, it is possible to examine closely particular blocks in which you have a special interest.

Can You Help?

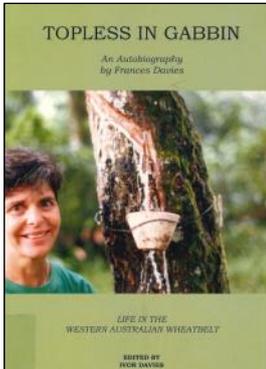
Member Dr Dorothy Erickson is currently assessing the significance of the **City of South Perth Collection**. You can help if the **May and Herbert Gibbs collection** means something to you. Send an email to Dorothy (dorothyerickson@ozemail.com.au) if you have something to say about the significance of the May and Hebert Gibbs collection to you.

Many thanks for your help.

Book Reviews

Francis Davies, *Topless in Gabbin: an autobiography: life in the wheatbelt*, Hesperian Press, 2018. In Library.

Reviewer: Sally Hincks



Connected with farming in any way? If so, you will thoroughly enjoy this book about farming in the wheatbelt. Entitled *Topless In Gabbin* it is situated where Fran and her older brother had fun on the farm at Round Hill (near Moora).

There were six to eight horses in their work teams for ploughing, seeding and

harvesting, and milk for cream came from a hand separator. Her mum made butter and kept it and other perishables cool in a Coolgardie safe and their shower was a bucket with holes in it out on the cement verandah. A hose from outside was turned on and water went into the bucket – for the shower. In those days it was a kerosene fridge, too.

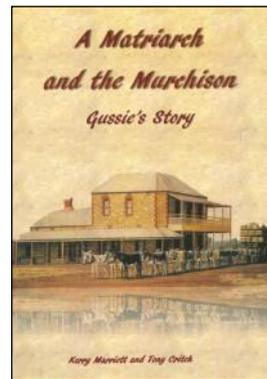
Saturdays were picture nights, open air in summer, the town hall in winter. Tarzan films were great favourites. Toast was done on forks in front of the fire. Footy was on Sunday arvos and at Christmas there was the Moora Christmas tree. Guy Fawkes was another favourite annual event but was later abolished because of firework injuries to children.

Fran attended Moora Primary School and then Geraldton High School. She became a teacher before her marriage in 1960 to Ivor Davies, another teacher. Changes followed — running a country store at Moonyoonooka before spending two years in England, then back to WA and running the Gabbin store (between Bencubbin and Koorda). Eventually the Gabbin store was sold and they moved to Koorda where they were also running a shop. They sold up again and moved back to England where they also toured the continent before returning to WA and buying their fourth store at Babakin (between Bruce Rock and Corrigin). Then it was back to Perth to attend learning institutions – University of WA and Claremont Teachers' College. Two years later it was back to the bush at Dandaragan where they ran the store. However Ivan had a heart attack and needed attention in Perth, so Frances continued to run the store for a time. They eventually sold and it was goodbye to Dandaragan. What a lifetime of travels!

Kerry Marriott, *A Matriarch and the Murchison: Gussie's Story*, self-published, 2019. In Library.

Reviewer: Ian Berryman

Kerry Marriott's book has two subjects. One is the life of 'Gussie', her great-grandmother Mary Augusta



McCoo (1870-1950); the other is Pindar, a township about 30 km east of Mullewa, where Gussie lived for many years.

By modern standards, Gussie had a life of ceaseless toil, with episodes of personal tragedy. She was married in 1888, aged 18, to a man she hardly knew and became a widow in 1897 by which time she had borne five children. In 1904 she remarried, only to be widowed again in 1918.

In 1896 Gussie and her first husband, Thomas Jones, began operating a hotel in Gullewa, a town which serviced a nearby goldmine. After her husband's death in the following year, Gussie continued to run the hotel, undoubtedly with the assistance of her numerous relatives. In 1904 she remarried to Emmet Thomas Gill and several years later they moved to Pindar where they established another hotel; Gussie is said to have put up £7000 in building it. They prospered, and 'Mick' Gill also ran a store, and traded in sandalwood from local cutters. After Mick's death, Gussie ran the hotel until 1939, when she retired and moved to Mullewa.

Pindar, where Gussie lived and worked, is situated on the railway line running from Geraldton to Cue. For many years it flourished: the pastoralists of the Murchison sent their wool to Pindar, to be taken by train to Geraldton, and in later years CBH built a depot for receiving grain grown on the local farms. The town had a small school, hall, and tennis club. Its decline began in the 1930s, when motor trucks began displacing the wagons drawn by horses, camels and donkey. Today it is a ghost town, the only building in use being Gussie's hotel, which operates during the wildflower season.

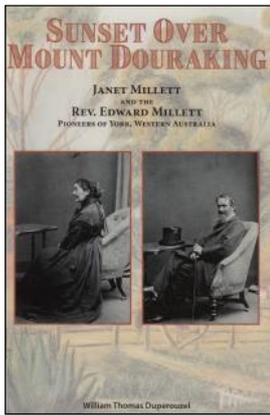
Much of the book is based on the memories and reminiscences of the author's relatives and friends. She has also made extensive use of the digitised newspapers available on Trove.

The book is illustrated with many original photographs. It is an interesting, useful addition to the literature on regional Western Australia, and the families which lived there.

William Duperouzel, *Sunset Over Mount Douraking - Janet Millett and the Rev. Edward Millett, Pioneers of York, Western Australia, The Author*, York, 2019. In Library & Bookshop \$35.

Reviewer: Lenore Layman

This book is William Duperouzel's tribute to Janet and Edward Millett as York 'pioneers' and to Janet Millett's important writings about Western Australia in the 1860s. He rightly recognises Mrs Millett's importance to an understanding of the colony in the convict period and uses extensive quotes from her pen to recount the history.



His readers are invited to follow his research journey exploring the Milletts' story. The book is rich in images and documentary excerpts; indeed it is very much a compilation of the sources which, like jigsaw pieces, re-create the Milletts' lives. William Duperouzel became interested in the couple while researching his own family history, which began in WA with the 1858 arrival of his great grandfather Aimable Ciril Duperouzel as a convict.

Like the Milletts, Aimable Duperouzel lived in York. He established a large family in WA and many of us are familiar with the contributions of the Duperouzels to the State's life.

Janet Millett was born Janet Webster in 1821, married the Revd Edward Millett in 1853 and travelled to Western Australia in 1863. The Revd Millett took up the chaplaincy of the York district and the couple lived in York until they left the colony in 1868. They returned to Britain where Edward served parishes in Wales, Dorset and Lincolnshire before dying in 1876.

Janet published *An Australian Parsonage* in 1872 to positive reviews, several of which are reproduced here. Her book was an emigrants' guide to the colony enlivened by a series of vivid observations of places (especially York, then named Barladong) and people (especially Aboriginal people like Khourabene).

Sunset over Douraking also includes scanned reproductions of two journal articles written by Mrs Millett, both published in the missionary journal *The Net cast in many waters* — 'West Australian Natives' in 1872 and 'School Life in Western Australia' in

1873. The latter told of Perth Mission School run for Aboriginal children with Miss Shepherd, matron in charge. It is pleasing to see these two articles telling of some Aboriginal experiences of colonisation reproduced in this book because they have been until now difficult to access.

It seems that royalties from her writings helped support Mrs Millett for the rest of her life. She died in 1904, aged 83. The final chapter of the book celebrates her artistic legacy — watercolours as well as writings. Also remembered is a play entitled 'Mrs Millett' written by Bill Dunstone and staged in Holy Trinity Church, York, in 1981. Now William Duperouzel's book adds another tribute.

Royals writers

After 18 months as convenor of the writers' group, John Hall has stepped aside to be replaced as convenor by Jan Matthews. They report that the group is flourishing and planning to link up electronically until this health crisis has passed and the group can resume its monthly meetings at Stirling House. More information will follow as it comes to hand.

News of postponed secondhand book sale

Thanks from all of us to Pamela and Nick Drew for efficiently and safely organising the process to price all the books ready for sale, and our gratitude also to the volunteers who assisted in this big task. The many boxes of books are safely stored in subject order, so there will be no delay when the postponed book sale is re-scheduled, hopefully later this year. The volunteers who priced books in their own homes have kindly agreed to store them. Electronic sales of Sets and Series and Book Bundles (advertised by flyer in April's *History West*) have been lively and, to date, exceed \$1,000 in value. It's pleasing to have some good news to convey!

Community Officer:	Lesley Burnett	If you're a member who receives this newsletter in hard copy by post, and you're happy to receive it by email, please contact 9386 3841 or admin@histwest.org.au with your email address, and save money and trees by receiving it online!
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