

Royal Western Australian Historical Society's
Annual Pioneers Memorial Service
on Sunday 12th June 1994 At St Bartholomews Chapel, East Perth Cemeteries,

Commemorating William Nicholls and Samuel Game

Citation by Thelma Jones and Reg Withers

A common theme title for the papers this day being delivered by my cousin Thelma Jones and me would be "a tale of three sisters and their three soldier husbands"

The three sisters and their three soldier husbands and some of their descendants all form part of our two papers today.

The three sisters were Comfort, Esther and Ann Stanton who arrived with their father Joseph on the bark "Diadem" at Australind on 10 April 1842.

On 19 March 1843 at the place of public worship Bunbury Comfort aged 19 was married by John Ramsden Wolleston to James Blyth aged 30. On the marriage certificate he is described as a carpenter.

James had arrived in the Swan River Colony from Hobart Town in September 1833 as a Private in the 21st Regiment also known as the Royal Scots Fusiliers.

James signed the marriage certificate as did his witness George Wallace. As James had been born in Dundee and as Wallace was most likely also a scot one is not surprised that they were literate. Comfort and the other witness Mary Ann Walker both used a mark.

Of Comfort's twelve children reference will be made to four of them. Albert born 1844, Roland born 1848 and whom I remember quite well, Joseph born 1850 the ancestor of Thelma and Esther born 1856 my father's mother.

On 9 October 1844 at the sub registrar's office Perth Esther Stanton aged 19 was married by George Fred Stone to Thos. English aged 26 he being described as Private 57 St Ives and that is about all that is known of the second sister and her soldier.

Thos and the male witness J M Maguire signed. Esther and the other witness Eliza Laidley both made marks.

William Nicholls 1856-1894

On 9 June 1846 at the same sub registrar's office and by the same person Ann Stanton aged 20 married John Nicholls aged 27 a Private 57 S.I. John's male witness John Truslove, signed but the groom the bride and the female witness Eleanor Truslove all made marks.

John Nicholls had joined the 51st (St Ives) Regiment of Foot in Cambridge in 1837. He saw service in Van Diemens Land and the East Indies. He arrived in Perth with his regiment in 1840 on board the Runnymede to relieve the 21st Regiment.

John and Ann Nicholls left the colony with the regiment in 1847. In 1856 in England John received his honourable discharge. It was in that year that William Nicholls their second child was born in Manchester. The family later moved to Great Everden in Cambridge.

In either 1861 or 1862 the Nicholls family with three children arrived in Perth the father having been appointed as a Pensioner Guard. William would have been about 5 years old.

On 31 August 1876 at St Georges Cathedral Perth William then aged 20 married Elizabeth aged 22 the daughter of Samuel and Mary Ann Game. On his marriage certificate he is described as labourer but other occupations such as 'teamster', 'brewers carrier' were also followed.

Finally he became licensee of a hotel known as firstly the 'Eagle' then 'The Retreat' but which is better known today as 'The Melbourne' on the corner of Hay and Milligan streets.

William and Elizabeth had 9 children. The eldest, Rose May then about 16, was with her father when they went to Bunbury in 1894 to stay with William's first cousin, Albert Blythe.

Their visits to Albert's sister Esther wife of Edward Henry Withers are recorded in my grandfather's diary as follows:

Sunday 28 October 1894. At home. Will Nicholls here & Rose.

Sunday 4 November 1894 W Nicholls & Rose with Esther

Wednesday 7 November 1894 W Nicholls died 1/4 6 pm

Friday 9 November 1894 W Nicholls went by train

The death certificate shows cause of death as 'inflammation of the lungs' and occupation as keeper of wine and beer shop in Perth.

William Nicholls died aged 38. At the time of his death there were 8 children and one was born after he was buried in the Anglican cemetery East Perth.

William's parents John who died in 1892 and Ann who died in 1891 whilst no stone survives are presumed to be also buried here.

Samuel and Mary Game

Samuel and Mary Game (nee Hines) who were married in Cambridge England on 31 May 1846 arrived in the colony from Cambridge aboard Sabrina on 13 June 1853.

With them were 5 children. After their arrival Mary had another 9 children, the first being Elizabeth who was born in Fremantle in 1854 and who later married William Nicholls.

At first they appear to have lived at or near Fremantle as some of the younger children were baptised at St John's Fremantle.

Their eldest daughter, Emma, married a warder Charles McMullen and she was later matron of the roundhouse in 1886.

Samuel was once described as a 'brickmaker'. In 1854 on Elizabeth's birth certificate his occupation is shown as 'baker'. on Elizabeth's marriage certificate he is described as 'general dealer'. On his own death certificate he is shown as 'carter'.

After they moved to Perth, Samuel and Mary had a store on the corner of Hay and Pier streets where they sold homemade pies, pasties and cakes as well as confectionery. Mary Ann's father, William Hines had been a confectioner. They also sold goods imported from England including, according to family legend, life sized dolls.

At public gatherings on the Esplanade Samuel and Mary Ann conducted a food tent.

With their covered wagon they travelled to country fairs such as York where they set up refreshment tents.

It was hard work especially travelling in the 1860's and 1870's but with all the self made family labour available they were able when the Belmont racecourse first opened to erect the game refreshment tent.

Little is known of the death and funeral of Samuel who was buried here in 1884.

Mary Ann lived until 1910 and as the matriarch of such a large family was the subject of the following report in the 'West Australian' in January that year.

"A very old colonist in Mrs. Mary Ann Game died in Perth on the 1st instant. She was born in Cambridge England and arrived in the state 56 years ago. She was the mother of many children now residents of the state. The funeral took place on Monday and moved from her late residence 546 Murray street To the Church of England cemetery East Perth Where her husband Mr Samuel Game and several Members of her family who predeceased her are interred. Of the large gathering at the graveside The chief mourners were Mr. F Game (son) Mr E Hines (brother) Mesdames E Macmillan, E Moore, M Passmore, E Nicholls, W Pegler (daughters) Messrs J Moore, H Passmore, W Pegler (sons-in-law) and several grand and great grandchildren." The Pall Bearers were Messrs W. Moor, J. Holland, A. Lee, A. Pearce, J. Walker and B. Flores.
Many wreaths and tokens of sympathy were received.
Rev. Mr Bowen conducted the burial service at Church and graveside.

Children of Samuel and Mary Ann who are also buried here are Alfred Robert died 10 September 1866 aged 2 years, Thomas died 2 March 1877 aged 25 years and Frances Selina died 29 August 1886 aged 12.

However, only the names of Alfred and Selina appear on the tombstone.