

Sea. Marked by marble crosses they bear the names of Sister Mary Elizabeth Butler and Sister Mary Winifred Spry. Heirs to this and many other episodes in a world-wide tradition of nursing are the Sisters of Mercy in Western Australia who choose to nurse rather than to teach. St. Anne's Hospital, Mount Lawley, which was established by them on April 10, 1937, continues to expand into one of the great hospitals of Western Australia. St. Anne's hospital has the distinction of being the first hospital in Australia where Religious Sisters actually worked as maternity nurses. The Sisters of Mercy and their assisting staff can carry out most classes of nursing at their hospital and do, but the full importance to the State of the maternity section alone is only grasped when we learn that till today 51,342 babies have been born there. This is equivalent to the combined populations of Bunbury, Albany, Geraldton and Northam!

Many successes have marked the progress of their students after leaving the many colleges and schools conducted by the Sisters of Mercy in Western Australia. Like all teachers they have faltered at times in method and application, but few have done better. We only have to quote two recent examples of success to put the training given by the Sisters on the high level it deserves. Recently the Education Department announced that the first two headmistresses in government schools in recent times would soon take up duty, Clare Casey at Eastern Hills High School and Nancy Fienberg at the Eastern Goldfields High School. Both of these teachers reaching the summit in the State Education System were taught by the Sisters of Mercy in Perth.

Today 335 Sisters of Mercy teach, nurse and participate in other good works in Western Australia. No one could deny that in their long history they may have made mistakes individually and collectively, but, in view of the good they have so undoubtedly done for so many, surely we can match a little of their great generosity by overlooking the few faults and praising their many fine contributions to Perth and the whole of our State since the first Sisters arrived here in 1846.

The Brooks Family of Israelite Bay and Balbinia Station

By
RAY OLDHAM

PART I

The writing of this research paper began by chance, through a piece of embroidery. About a year ago, when I'd arranged to have a minor operation to straighten my toes, I knew I'd be unable to walk for a while and decided it would be a good opportunity to do some embroidery. I'd recently begun doing large wall hangings, and thought I'd do one of the Brooks family of Israelite Bay and Mount Ragged.

My interest in the Brooks family went back several years earlier: to 1964, when John Rintoul's book "Esperance Yesterday and Today" was published. He has some intriguing references. An extract from "The Albany Herald" of 11th April 1874 reads:

"A somewhat extraordinary expedition left here lately with the intention of making the overland journey to Esperance Bay. The party consisted of a man named Brooks, with his mother and sister. Their purpose, should they succeed in accomplishing the journey, settling at or near Esperance Bay, though what their means are to enable them to do so does not appear.

"They started with one horse and a heavy cart; and among the few things they carried with them was a cockatoo in a cage — and an empty cage, presumably for the convenience of a second cockatoo should they have the good fortune to catch one on the journey — two pet dogs and two pigs, but I cannot say if they were pets also.

"They, the travellers — not the pigs — have no blankets or bedding of any kind; no tent and only a very small stock of provisions. They calculate upon reaching a station each night they are on the journey

but this is simply impossible and how they will fare under the circumstances, it is not difficult to guess. Should they be so fortunate as to reach Esperance Bay it will be at the cost of much suffering and privation, but it is quite within the bounds of possibility that they will perish.

"They were extremely independent and confident, and when warned of the difficulties of the road, the time it would take, and the means necessary to establish a settlement, they persisted in their determination.

"The women and the man intend walking the whole distance — about 300 miles — with an occasional lift in the cart.

"They hail from Victoria and appear to be accustomed to bush life, and in manner and intelligence above the average working man.

"Their clothes though of poor material, displayed in their make evidence of taste, and the white cotton parasols carried were lined most carefully with pink and green calico, elaborately vandyked round the edges.

"It is to be hoped they may succeed in accomplishing their undertaking but I should not be surprised to learn of a police party being sent to search for and succour them."

Mr. Rintoul adds: "The correspondent had no need to have any fears, for these three were made of courage, grit and determination which were common to our early day pioneers. They succeeded in their undertaking and, as Mr. Willie Dempster remarked, "they settled in about 25 miles north of where Mount Ragged towers 2,000 feet above the mallee plain and about 140 miles east of Esperance."

Mr. Rintoul gives extracts from other pioneers' comments on the Brooks: they were gentlefolk and well educated. The mother came from an aristocratic family and was very religious. The daughter was a charming young woman who played the piano, painted landscapes, spoke four or five languages and read her Bible in Greek. The son, who was also very religious, would never let the tails of his sheep be cut.¹

It was an intriguing picture. One could not forget it. I longed for some artist to put it on canvas. But although I told several prominent local artists the story, none was interested. At last, after ten years, I thought: "Why shouldn't I do it myself in embroidery?" And that's how it all started. (Since then, one of our younger artists, Craig Boulter, has done a painting, which you see here tonight.)

It was now necessary for me to learn a little more about the Brooks. And Mount Ragged — a lovely name — what did it look like? I asked many of my friends, but no one had been there. However at last I located a young man who had worked on the Geological Survey of the Eucla Region. He'd taken some private photographs and colour slides, which he lent me. Flowers must be on my embroidery. What flowers and trees grew round there. Mr. Bob Royce, Curator of the W.A. Herbarium, sent me a list of the most common flora of the region.

Then I remembered how, when Mr. Rintoul's book had been published in 1964, the late Miss Dorothy Henderson, then Keeper of the Records of

this Society, had told me of additional information which had been given to the Society. It all seemed rather hush-hush; but with the help of Miss Mollie Lukis, former State Archivist, I located the file. Here was exciting treasure indeed!

It was then I undertook to read a research paper — that was in January 1974. I thought my paper was ready at that time, for I intended telling you of an extraordinary expedition made by John Paul Brooks when in 1874 he walked across the Great Australian Bight accompanied by three white men and a native.

By this time, however, the story of the Brooks family had so fascinated me that I found myself neglecting other commitments in order to solve the many puzzles about the Brooks . . . stories were so conflicting. Some people said they came from England; others, from Scotland or Ireland. Had the father been a minister of religion as some averred, a master at Geelong Grammar School, or a Naval Officer? Nor had the mystery ended with their lives, for no one seemed to know exactly where each was buried. A published article stated that the two unnamed graves at Pine Hill some twelve miles north-west of Mount Ragged, were those of John Paul Brooks and his mother. And although Sarah Theresa Brooks had died at Norseman Hospital in 1928 and been buried at the Norseman Cemetery, the exact location of her grave has not been known for many years.

As my investigation proceeded, it became rather like solving a jigsaw puzzle. The pieces of the puzzle are not all here yet; but sufficient has been revealed to make me decide to tell you all that I have discovered so far.

In the course of my research I have corresponded with many people in the Eastern States and Western Australia, who have become pen-friends; met many who knew the Brooks long ago and several of them have become firm friends. Without their help, this research paper could never have been written, and I gratefully acknowledge the generous and courteous assistance of: Mr. David Lowrie, geologist now of WAPER, formerly of the State Geological Survey. Mr. David Hutchison, Acting Deputy Director of the Perth Museum; for botanical information, Mrs. Rica Erickson; Mr. Bob Royce, Curator of the Western Australian Herbarium; Mr. J. H. Willis, formerly of the Melbourne Herbarium, for information about Melbourne and Geelong; Mr. Collins Perse, Keeper of the Archives of Geelong Grammar School; Mr. Philip Brown, Immediate Past President of the Geelong Historical Society, and Mr. W. J. Morrow; Mr. Keith Quartermaine, Head of the Department of Mining and Engineering at the Kalgourlie School of Mines; Dr. Don Serventy and his wife Gertrude for translations from the German; members of the Esperance Historical Society, particularly Mr. and Mrs. Pat Daniell; the Norseman Historical and Geological Museum, including the President Mr. Mort Harslett, and Mrs. Val Strother; those who have patiently endured many tape-recorded interviews—Mr. Gordon Cavanagh, Mr. Dick McCarthy, Mrs. Sullivan, Mrs. Bessell-Brown and Messrs. Karl, Barney, Harry and Tom Dimer; relatives of the

Brooks family, Mrs. Joan La Touche, Miss Dorothy Edols and Mr. Tom Hood; and of course, the former State Archivist, Miss Mollie Lukis; and the present Archivist Miss Margaret Medcalf and her staff at the Battye Library; in the Lands and Surveys Department, Mr. Casey and Mr. Simpson for their patience in my investigations. Finally I must pay a special tribute to those people to whom my debt is greatest—the Dimer family. "The Brooks family would never have survived for so long, had it not been for the Dimer family," was said to me more than once.

Certain it is that the *records* of the Brooks family would never have survived, had it not been for the Dimer family. To the late Mr. Henry Dimer, founder of Nanambina Station, and his descendants, Mr. Fred Dimer, Mrs. Bertha Bennett (nee Dimer) and the present owner of the property, Mr. Karl Dimer, we who are concerned with this State's history, owe a great debt. Others who have given me assistance include Mr. and Mrs. Barney Dimer of Esperance, Mr. Harry Dimer of Rawlinna Station, Mr. Thomas Dimer of Kalgoorlie and Mrs. Annie Tucker (nee Dimer) of Esperance.

Now to our story.

Early in 1851 there arrived in Geelong, Victoria, a young couple, Mr. and Mrs. Henry Ferby Brooks with their two small children², John Paul then rising three years of age³, and Sarah Theresa, born on 19 September 1850⁴. Accompanying them was Mrs. Brooks' sister, Mary Jane Donovan, then twenty years of age and two years her senior⁵. They had come from Ireland, where Mr. Brooks' father was an Anglican minister. He had also been educated for the Church, having graduated at Trinity College, Dublin; but bent on becoming an Australian farmer, had migrated to Geelong. He had married Emily Henrietta Donovan at Newry Cathedral, the ceremony performed by the Dean, Dr. Bago³. His young wife, born 1832, came from Queenstown in Cork⁶.

Shortly after their arrival, when Henry Brooks had gone to Melbourne to present letters of introduction, he contracted malignant typhoid. He died on Good Friday, April 18 1851, aged 24, and is buried at Christ Church, Geelong⁷. His widow, then only eighteen years of age, was left with meagre income. Family tradition has it that one of the two sisters became governess to a wealthy pastoral family, the Guthries, whose town house "Morongo", was in Geelong⁸.

In 1854 Mary Jane Donovan married a wealthy pastoralist, Thomas Edols, at St. Paul's Church, Geelong. They went to live first at "Edolston" on Cowie's Creek (now the site of the Ford works) and from 1858 at Upper Regions Station on the Wimmera River⁵.

With the help of Mr. Philip Brown, an eminent Victorian historian, I was able to learn that Thomas Edols' father, George, had migrated to Tasmania in the early 1830s from Somerset near Bridgewater in England. By 1835 he owned the Woolpack Inn in the Macquarie Plains; and in 1936, won the prize for the best fat ox at the Southern Agricultural Association's

Show⁸. When he died about two years after coming to Tasmania, his wife Elizabeth moved with her family to Victoria, to a farm near Geelong.

By 1842 her son Thomas Edols, in partnership with his brother-in-law John Cullen (who had married Martha Edols) had taken over the local butchering firm of James Austin, and this became the local leading firm of its kind.

Perhaps this does not sound very like "a wealthy pastoralist"? But one knows of many instances of pioneer pastoralists having abattoirs and butchering businesses as sidelines to dispose of their cattle. Sir Richard Spencer's son in Albany is one example that springs to my mind; the Duracks in the Kimberleys, another.

Anyway, both Thomas Edols and John Cullen became squatters in due course, but not as pioneers on previously unoccupied land. About March 1854 Cullen succeeded J. H. Macmillan at Commercial Station, forty miles or so north-west of Geelong. About the same time, Thomas Edols succeeded Peter Inglis at Ingliston Station on the Werribee River, south-east of Ballan, almost due north of Geelong and about forty miles distant. Neither of these runs was on first-class country. From about 1858 Thomas Edols had interests in the Upper Regions Station on the Wimmera River⁸, until in 1874 he moved his family to another property, Burrawang Station near Forbes in N.S.W.⁹

The marriage of her sister left Mrs. Brooks to cope alone with the support of herself and her young family. So she did what many educated women of the better class did in similar circumstances — she opened a school. It was only a small school, but very correct and rather expensive. (Much of what follows has been deduced from entries in "Emily H. Brooks' Journal", a small book about 7½" x 5" bound in red leather with a brass lock and key and from the Ledger of John Paul Brooks 1873 to 1891 with additional Geelong information generously provided by Mr. Philip Brown.

But I must mention that this Journal, which in some respects is kept most meticulously — housekeeping accounts are entered each day down to halfpennies and even farthings — in other ways is most haphazard. Entries for the year 1855 may be at the front of the book, or on back pages; late records for 1863 or 1869 may appear at beginning, middle or end pages. There are blanks of several years with no entries at all . . . You see what I meant, when I said this research has been rather like a jigsaw puzzle?

The earliest entries are from 1855. "I first came to this house on Monday July 21st 1855," Mrs. Brooks wrote — on the back page. She irritatingly omits to record the address of the house to which she came⁹. It was probably No. 90 Pakington Street, for Tanner's Geelong Directory of 1858 notes that a Mrs. Brooks conducted a day school at that address¹⁰. Here Mrs. Brooks paid 6/6d per week rent⁹. She continued to conduct a school until at least the year 1863, but sometime prior to 1861, its location had changed to Skene Street and she was then in partnership with a Mrs. Esoar¹⁰.

In February 1855 Mrs. Brooks records that Mary Elizabeth White and the Misses Hughes came to school; on July 16th the Misses Board; on July 23rd, Jane Phillips; and on August 2nd, Mary Ellen Sayers. Another small pupil began classes that same year — her daughter. "Sarah's quarter began on the 10th August 1855 at £2.10 per quarter," Mrs. Brooks wrote at the end of the book. She also recorded that she gave Sarah 7/- for a bonnet, 5/- for a cloak and 10/- for boots. Sarah would have been almost five years old. What a strange little figure she must have been, in her bonnet, cloak and high laced boots — but this was the typical costume of a small girl of the upper class in Victorian times.

Other pupils' names are recorded but the year in which they are pupils is not always clear. They include Misses Parker, Sarah Robertson, Jane Budd, Kate and Mary Harrison, Andrews, Blinton, Wood, Small and the Masters Daniel. In 1863 Grace Carr paid £6.19.2 for the fourth quarter and books; and in that same year Miss Simmons came as music pupil on the 24th October. Remember that name, Simmons, for it will appear later in our story.

The curriculum included reading ("Noah's Sacrifice" and "Peep o' Day" were some of the books), writing (the tiny ones began on a slate), arithmetic of a fairly elementary kind, grammar, history, geography, general knowledge, English literature with special attention to poetry for the older pupils, music and — most important in Mrs. Brooks' opinion (for everyone who met her in later life say that she was very religious) — study of the Bible, the Old and New Testaments and the Gospel according to the tenets of the Church of England.

We can be sure that the pupils were also imbued with "the manners and rules of good society" for Mrs. Brooks took great pride in her aristocratic lineage, seeming to make rather a parade of this among her neighbours. It proved hard to trace, being entirely on the distaff side for several generations. Apparently the claim was based on a remote connection with the Hennessys, an ancient and honourable Cork family related to all the great families in the South of Ireland; two brothers Hennessy supported James II at the Battle of the Boyne in 1590. One brother accompanied James II to France where he held office at his Court at St. Germaine and founded a family there. The other brother — their ancestor — died in the Battle of the Boyne leaving a widow with four small children, one of whom was William, owning an estate "Mosestown", Amelia Hennessy (1755-1840) who married (i) Mr. Bush, Bushe or Bysse (ii) Thomas Alleyn of Baltimore, U.S.A., was Mrs. Brooks' grandmother. On the side of her English mother (whose maiden name we do not know) she said that her ancestors had held office at Court under every sovereign of England from Henry VII to James II; that they had been present at every Coronation of the sovereigns and had helped prepare the pageant and taken part in the ceremony. Few facts were passed down to the next generations; Grandmama Amelia Alleyn (Mrs. Brooks' grandmama) saying that of all their misfortunes — the flights in disguise, the confiscation of their estates under

Cromwell, the restoration under Charles II, and the final ruin under James II — she had heard more than enough.

By such remote female connections did Mrs. Brooks claim aristocratic lineage; although the male forebears seem to have had little distinction. Grandmama Alleyn's second husband was a self-made man, son of a farmer, who was taken into partnership in a business which imported wheat from Morocco, gold from the Gold Coast, West Africa, wines from Spain and brandy from France. Grandmama Alleyn had been foreign correspondent and home interpreter to the firm from the time of her marriage to Mr. Bushe; and was so after her second marriage till the business was wound up. She was fluent in the French, Spanish, Irish and English languages.

Her daughter Theresa (1792-) married in 1811 Henry Donovan of H.M. Customs. References by the Brooks to a "Naval Officer" may have been to this grandfather, not to their father; and it is possible that Mrs. Brooks may have elevated him posthumously to that rank?

To return to Mrs. Brooks' Journal: It's astonishing how much one can learn from a person's life, just from such simple housekeeping lists as appear in this tiny book. Although the amounts seem small to us today, they show that the Brooks family actually lived quite well. A £70 yearly total for housekeeping expenses may seem meagre now, but we must recollect that in the 1860s quite high officials often received a salary of £100 per annum.

So one notices that the Brooks had the best cuts of meat: leg of mutton, steak and chops figure at least once a week; only rarely do scrag mutton or shin of beef appear. They bought milk and bread, but kept their own poultry, as entries for bran and pollard indicate. Only in September did they buy eggs; probably their hens weren't laying then. Perhaps they grew their own vegetables, for these are rarely listed.

A constantly recurring item is "whitening" . . . I remember in my childhood at South Perth, one of the maid's daily chores was to brush whitewash over the bricks of the sitting-room fireplace, blackened by the previous night's wood fire. Even then, I dared to think this an unnecessary labour: nowadays one leaves the brickwork in its natural state.

The Brooks family went to church regularly, as sums ranging from 6d. to 1/1¼d. indicate. And once the Poor Box received a munificent contribution of 2/6d.

In November the price of meat rose alarmingly — 2 lbs. chops went from 1/- to 1/2d., a rise of over 16%. Lollies are listed rarely, and then for amounts of only a few pence. In December "cakes and cocoa" bring to mind an end-of-year social for pupils of the school; but for parents and friends, no doubt the refreshments offered as more appropriate would have been: 1 bottle ginger wine 1/6d., spice and oranges 6d., tea, 1 lb. biscuits 1/6d., and brandy 5/6. A mercer's bill was entered separately and they paid what seem exorbitant prices for boots.

It was from this Journal that I first began to trace the Brooks' relatives. Under "Presents Received" are listed: Present from Grandpapa £2 and again £2 the following year, 1869; Uncle Charlie sent a gift of £1 in 1868; Uncle Tom presents of £2 and £1 in 1869; and in that same year, Aunt Mary Jane gave a present of "A gold brooch".

Was this gold brooch the one which I am wearing tonight? This was worn by Sarah Theresa Brooks when a studio photograph was taken near the end of her life: it is now the possession of Mrs. Karl Dimer of Kalgourlie who kindly allowed it to be shown to you tonight. On the reverse side of the brooch some writing is engraved, very small and hard to decipher but from this wording, I have been able to obtain from the Government Statistician in Victoria, a Certificate which clarifies the date of death of Henry Ferby Brooks.

The Brooks were enthusiastic letter-writers, as were most of the gentry of the Victorian era. This is shown by regular entries for stamps. I have not yet been able to trace any of their correspondence surviving but am continuing enquiries among relatives in the Eastern States and Ireland.

John Paul Brooks attended Geelong Grammar School. This was told to me by Mr. Gordon Cavanagh, who has been the source of some of the most fascinating information about the Brooks family, for he knew them all. When he was a young boy of ten years of age, he went as a jackeroo for three years to their Station Balbinnia, near Mount Ragged; and Miss Brooks often used to talk to him about their life before they came to Western Australia. In historical research, one must take nothing for granted but must check everything before it is put on record as established fact; and so I have corresponded with Geelong Grammar School, whose Archivist confirms that Brooks was a pupil there in 1863¹¹. He may have been at another private school previously; for although Geelong Grammar School was founded in 1855, it closed down for financial reasons in 1860, and was revived in 1863. During, and largely as a result of the older school's temporary demise, Geelong College was founded; but their Admission Books are incomplete for the years prior to 1863¹¹.

As for the education of Sarah Theresa Brooks: it seemed to me extraordinary — almost incredible — that a young woman brought up entirely in an Australian country town in the mid-nineteenth century, could have there learned to be an accomplished painter, musician and linguist — for many people have said that Sarah Theresa spoke four or five foreign languages¹. Actually, it was seven languages; as I shall show you later to-night.¹² I expected to find that Sarah Theresa had been sent back to England or Europe for part of her education. But she did not leave Geelong; and that most excellent local historian, Mr. Phillip Brown, has shown me how it was possible for her to attain such accomplishments there.

Skene Street, where Mrs. Brooks conducted her school, at No. 39, in the 1860s, and where the Brooks family then lived, was the location of the wealthier residents of Geelong. Living in Skene Street at that time were also some of the masters of Geelong Grammar School: a Mr. Terson

who was the music master; and Edmund Sasse who was the art master. The Sasse family had an unusual history going back to Hungary or some such part of Eastern Europe, through France and England. A brother of Edmund Sasse was a school inspector¹⁰. With such a family background, it is probable that the Sasse family were fluent in several European languages. Sarah certainly took drawing lessons from a Mr. Sasse as early as 1863 when she was only thirteen years old, and continued with her art lessons from him until they left Geelong ten years later^{9/13}. She could well have also learned from some members of this family to speak French, German, Greek, Latin and Hebrew. Her mother also probably spoke French; and possibly also Gaelic, for a relation, Aunt Charlotte, married M. V. Moriarty who was a teacher of Celtic in Dublin, accredited by the University; and Mrs. Brooks' maternal grandmother, Amelia Alleyn, was an accomplished linguist in several languages including Gaelic³.

For her art lessons, Sarah paid £1/6/6d a term at first. This increased to £2.5.0 a quarter in later years — quite a considerable sum, you will understand. She was subscribing to quite expensive art journals in 1868: the "Quarterly Review" 14/6d, "Nature and Art" 13/6; bought a German reading book; and a Hebrew Bible cost the large sum of 15/-⁹.

So one can see that the Brooks family proximity to Geelong Grammar School and its teachers, combined with Sarah's intense love of learning, could enable her to benefit from the best masters of the time.

The Journal tells us that, in the year 1867, Mrs. Brooks lent her son £1,000 at 10 per cent interest per annum; and over the next two years, John Paul pays to her various sums amounting to something over £100 a year, which would be equivalent to this interest.

During these two years from 1867 to 1869, it is Sarah Theresa who is meticulously recording in the Journal their housekeeping and other expenses. (I think she began keeping the Journal in 1863, when the entries are in a very studied, neat, copperslate hand, much elaborated and showing a delight in the technique of writing. She would then have been about thirteen years of age, and old enough to take over her mother's accounts. They are better kept, too; being listed under headings of: milk, bread, meat, clothes, education and petty expenses.)

But in 1867-69 we know it is Sarah, for at the end of totals given for the week, month, quarter, six-monthly and yearly periods, she signs with her own name, as "Secretary", "Accountant" or "Book Keeper" to "Mrs. Brooks of Belmont". Rather grand, don't you think?

They were still living at Belmont in 1872. I have not been able to trace exactly the location where the Brooks family were living during these five years. Belmont, for long a suburb of Geelong, is part of the Shire of South Barwon¹⁴. It is possible that the suburb was named after a big house which was the first in this area; and where Mrs. Brooks and Sarah then lived. Or they may merely have been occupying a town house in the already-existing suburb. My inquiries are still proceeding.

But Mr. Cavanagh told me that, after John Paul Brooks left school, he went on one of his wealthy uncle's stations. Probably as a jackeroo, to

learn all about running a property — “anyway, as one of the nobbs.” There was some family agreement that his uncle would pay him, either by a gift of land, or stock — something like that. (Many of us know of such family arrangements, unwritten but considered binding.) “But the mother, who was very hot-headed, quarrelled with her brother-in-law over it. So John Paul Brooks tried dairy farming near Geelong.”¹⁵

When this quarrel took place I do not know exactly, and the Edols family descendants have no knowledge of it. But faint indications lead me to suppose that it may have been early in 1869. For in that year, the Journal has under “Presents Received”, a curious entry: “From Uncle Tom: 1 side of bacon too fat to use: I ham very hard: after boiling proved splendid.” It is not customary to comment so sourly on gifts received: the entry seems to indicate some bad feeling between the families. And in March 1869 comes a tantalising entry, written right across the page: “Unable to keep books from various reasons.”

Could this have been the date of a quarrel? Such an unhappy breach with the wealthy uncle, on whom the indigent family’s future prosperity largely depended, would be enough to give any Victorian female the vapours: and certainly enough to upset Sarah Theresa who was then eighteen years of age. (Another serious family disagreement took place at the end of 1872, but this is not relevant here.)

There are a few more housekeeping lists, but then the Journal ends.

We can carry on the Geelong story however, from the Ledger of John Paul Brooks which he kept between the years 1873 - 1891, and is preserved at Nanambinia Station. During my two visits there, I have been able to record the entries, through the courtesy of the present owner, Mr. Karl Dimer. With the assistance of Mr. Philip Brown of Geelong, the Victorian story is clearly revealed.

At the beginning of 1873, John Paul Brooks began dairy farming at a property called “Yarra Grange” which he rented from the Hon. George Harker at a quarterly rent of £42 (£168 per annum); and also bought from him a herd of 80 dairy cattle at an average price of £5 a head at a total cost of £368.15.0¹³. This property was near Lilydale, an attractive township about twenty miles east of Melbourne.

The Hon. George Harker was a farmer, philanthropist and business man. One suspects that it was in the last capacity that he rented “Yarra Grange” for the rent was very high and Brooks also paid rates of £11 which nowadays are paid by the owner. Harker had been elected to the first Victorian Parliament and had risen to become Treasurer. He retired to Lilydales, where he had various interests. In later years, John Paul attributed his failure to the prohibitive rent of 6/- an acre, and says that Mr. Harker “regretted our leaving and would have reduced the rent had he known at the time”¹⁶.

Did Sarah Theresa undertake to look after the poultry at the farm? Country women usually do; and their produce often provides the only cash

coming into a new property. Anyway, in March and April 1873 they bought from Joseph Lithgow of Lilydale 12 hens, 1 pair of turkeys, 1 pair of guinea fowl, 3 cocks, 2 ducks and a drake. They planted beans, French beans and peas.

They also had a canary¹⁸.

However, from 1873 Ledger entries, I deduce that the Brooks were living far above their income. The only money which came in for three months of 1873 was about £26 for the sale of butter¹³. And the family expenses were high. From David McEwan & Co. (still a flourishing firm of Melbourne hardware merchants) he had bought a great deal of dairying equipment, such as 3 doz. tin milk dishes at 42/-; No. 8 tinned saucepan and strainer 9/-; No. 2 ditto 2/6d. and 3/6d.; 1 wire milk sieve 2/-; milk strainer 1/3d.; candle mould 2/3d.; 1 camp oven 15/-; 1 American axe 8/6d.; 50 yards rope 11/3d., and so on, totalling well over £10 for two months. John Paul Brooks spent what seems to have been a great deal on “travelling expenses”, into Lilydale every fortnight, sometimes at only ten-day intervals. Possibly this was necessary to sell the produce of the farm. But he put up at the Lilydale Hotel which was then run by one David Lithgow¹³ where his horse was stabled and fed, and where he had lunch (1/-), dinner (2/-) often with a beer (1/-) and sometimes breakfast (1/6d.). There were also other travelling expenses of £5, £4.9.4 and £55; and hire of a carriage. Accounts paid to Melbourne firms — Buckley & Nunn of Bourke Street East and Post Office Place, who were one of the old-established drapers in the capital city, and a separate mercer’s account, show that the Brooks family did not stint themselves on fashionable attire. They liked going to social occasions such as the races¹⁵, and to balls — not only private balls given by their wealthy friends and neighbours, but public balls where tickets cost £2.12.6 and expenses 7/6d.¹³.

All this being spent — and so little money coming in from the dairy farm! Things could not long continue in this way. “The dairy farm did not prosper,” Mr. Cavanagh told me, and the Ledger bears this out.

They had sold a quantity of their furniture. One assumes that this was most of the contents of their Geelong town house. And this house, I deduce, was quite comfortable, if not elegant. There were carpets in all the main rooms, a couch, nine chairs, various tables, 3 bedsteads, 3 chests of drawers, 3 wash stands, fire irons, kitchen and garden equipment as well as two horses included in the total of £75 they received from Melbourne auctioneers.

One of the few surviving paintings done by Sarah Theresa Brooks depicts a group of little thatched huts¹⁹. We don’t know where it is, but the light is not that of Western Australia. Could it be the primitive cottages where they lived at “Yarra Grange” near Lilydale? If so, then obviously elegant furniture would have been most unsuitable there.

Some of the furniture used by the Brooks family in Western Australia which survives to this day, is quite elegant: a revolving book table with sloping shelf to hold a large book conveniently, and a detachable screw-on

candlestick to provide light²⁰; also a high bookcase and desk combined²¹. These may have been from the Geelong town house, stored until they could be shipped over to their new home. Some other furniture of a Colonial style is quite attractive but rougher¹⁹.

Their attempt at dairy farming lasted less than a year. As early as May 1873 John Paul is selling some of the dairy cattle and by the end of the year, sales total £350¹³. At this time too, he is beginning to pay up all accounts at Lilydale, Geelong and Melbourne, for by then the Brooks family had decided to migrate to Western Australia.

Some people find this hard to understand. I consider it to be quite natural. Apart from the fact that they did not have sufficient capital to purchase a property in Victoria, they must inevitably have found dairy farming distasteful. Most of us know that it is hard and unremitting toil, which one can't imagine people such as the Brooks family enduring for long. Sarah Theresa Brooks herself has told us the reason:

"Towards the close of the year 1873, a series of articles appeared in the "Argus" in Victoria, setting out particulars of very liberal Land Acts in Western Australia, then a Crown Colony. It was stated that settlers would receive a free lease of 100,000 acres for five years, with one year free of charges to travel to any blocks they may select. . . . We were warned that the country was poor, and patchy, but we thought no matter how poor, 100,000 acres would surely carry 5,000 sheep and that would give us a start"²².

This generous offer by the W.A. Government was to attract more settlers. Gold had not yet been discovered here and we were still the Cinderella State, short of money and men. But our explorers had brought reports of fine pastoral land in the isolated eastern regions. As far back as 1866 C. C. Hunt had reported "an extensive open plain of rich soil north-east of Lake Lefroy, the average width about 4½ to 5 miles wide, and 10 or 11 miles long. There are seasons when this extensive flat has been covered most luxuriantly with rich grass; the old stubble is apparently about four years old. Kangaroos are here very numerous. . . ." ²³. He named these The Hampton Plains and they lay waiting to be taken up by whoever could locate them again.

And only three years previously, in 1870, when John Forrest had led the first exploration to cross Australia from West to East, around the Great Australian Bight, he had reported that, though most of the country they traversed was arid and desolate, there were "patches of luxuriant grass, and East of Longitude 126° 24 East, as a grazing country surpasses any I have ever seen. There is nothing in the settled portions of Western Australia equal to it either in extent or quality"²⁴. (This is the country lying between Eyre and Eucla). In the following year, 1871, Alexander Forrest had reported patches of good grazing country East and South of the present-day Kalgoorlie, where he had penetrated in search of the elusive Hampton Plains²⁵.

Explorers' reports were front page news in those years, published in full by the newspapers and were as eagerly read as are best-sellers today.

Such reports, combined with the new Land Acts of the Western Australian Government, tempted many men from the Eastern States and overseas as well as from settled districts of this State, to search for the Promised Land. So the Brooks family decided to leave the unprofitable venture of the dairy farm to try their fortunes here in the West.

Mr. Cavanaugh told me that John Paul Brooks had already come to the West on a brief visit, travelling on a wheat boat in 1872, when he had been to the Lands Department in Perth and obtained copies of the maps of the Forrest expeditions²⁵. I have not yet found verification of this, although an amount of £55 shown in Brooks' Ledger in December 1873 may possibly have been in settlement of his fare.

Perhaps a contributing factor in their decision to migrate from Victoria at this time, was the fact that John Paul and Sarah both received about £200, apparently as a gift from an estate. Sarah made her money over to her brother for the move¹³.

On March 24th 1874 they had applied from Albany for a Free Stock Run of 100,000 acres at Esperance Bay, to be stocked with 500 sheep (purchased at Esperance), 5 cattle and calves and 3 horses, mares and foals²⁶; but by the time permission was granted on the 13th April, the Brooks family had already begun their long walk eastwards from Albany. And here we reach the stage in our story at which we began: with the extract from Mr. Rintoul's book.

REFERENCES AND BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. "Esperance Yesterday and Today" by John Rintoul. Service Printing Co., Perth, 1964, pp. 29, 30, 188, 189.
2. Letter Mr. J. H. Willis 23rd December 1973.
3. Letter Mrs. J. La Touche 31st July 1974 enclosing copy of the Brooks' family history as written by Miss Brooks to her aunt, Mrs. Frank Edols.
4. According to an entry in an old birthday book in possession of Mrs. A. W. Dempster, formerly of Argyll, W.A. Letter Mr. J. H. Willis 23rd December 1973.
5. Interview with Mrs. J. La Touche September 1974.
6. Headstone on the grave of Mrs. Thomas Edols at Burrawang Station near Forbes, N.S.W.
7. Certificate No. 74/31933 24272/ECR D. SB of 28th June 1974 from the Government Statistician, Melbourne.
8. Letter Mr. Philip Brown 28th May 1974.
9. Emily H. Brooks' Journal 1855 - 1869. Now in the possession of Mr. Karl Dimer of Nanambina Station via Norseman.
10. Letter Mr. Philip Brown 14th February 1974.
11. Letter Mr. M. D. de B. Collins Perse, Keeper of the Archives, Geelong C. of E. Grammar School 12th February 1974.
12. Oil painting by Sarah Theresa Brooks: A Prayer Scroll giving The Lord's Prayer in seven languages — English, French, German, Greek, Latin, Hebrew and Gaelic. Now in the possession of Mr. Karl Dimer at 117 Collins St., Kalgoorlie.
13. John Paul Brooks' Ledger 1873 - 1891 now in the possession of Mr. Karl Dimer of Nanambina Station.

14. Letter Mr. Philip Brown 30th September 1974.
15. Interview with Mr. Gordon Cavanagh 28th November 1973.
16. "The Sunday Times" Perth 27th November 1927.
17. "Victoria and its Metropolis" Vol. 2, McCarron, Bird & Co., Melbourne 1888 reference given in (8) above.
18. Letter Mr. Philip Brown 30th September 1974 with enclosures from the Letterbooks of John Bracebridge Willson, Headmaster of Geelong Grammar School 1863-95.
19. Now in the possession of Mr. Karl Dimer at Nanambina Station.
20. Now in the possession of Mr. Barney Dimer of Dempster St., Esperance.
21. Now in the possession of Mr. Karl Dimer at 117 Collins St., Kalgoorlie.
22. "The Sunday Times" Perth 29th April 1928.
23. Typescript in Batye Library of the unpublished explorations of Alex. Forrest 1871, C. C. Hunt, etc.
24. "Explorations in Australia: Three Expeditions by John Forrest, F.R.G.S." London 1875.
25. Interview with Mr. G. Cavanagh 15th March 1974.
26. Applications for Pastoral Leases B. 134.

Captain Graham Colonist and Coroner of Fremantle

by
E. J. P. JOSKE, M.A.

The experiences of Captain Graham, one of our earliest immigrants, are indicative of life in a small, remote and circumscribed community. His career in Fremantle demonstrates the effect of one disruptive personality in both official and private circles. His personal characteristics were not endearing: the Governor must have been irritated by Graham's endless and sometimes trivial complaints, and his fellow settlers were antagonised to a remarkable degree. As a partner and sometime friend of solicitor, William N. Clarke, Graham was intimately involved in the crosscurrents of Fremantle society, where lawsuits, controversies and scandals followed in his wake. Today he might be diagnosed as a pathological liar, suffering from delusions of grandeur.

William Temple Graham and his wife arrived at Fremantle on the "Warrior" on 12 March, 1830. The Captain, late of the Royal Africa Corps, apparently decided to make use of his military experiences, as he advised his fellow male passengers to practice drilling under his supervision, in preparation for the hazards to come¹. His army career was stated in a letter to the Governor². He had purchased a commission twenty-four years previously and entered the Duke of Kent's regiment. Special permission was granted for this enrolment, as his own father had been killed on active service. Graham professed to have been present at thirteen battles and to have been wounded seven times. A former commandant of the colony of Sierra Leone, Graham was forced to leave this through ill health. Following his recovery in England he insisted that the Lieutenant Governorship of Sierra Leone had been pressed upon him, which, he stated, he declined. Nevertheless, some writers erroneously refer to Graham as "one time Governor of Sierra Leone"³.