



Wangaratta Threads

Quarterly newsletter of the
Wangaratta Family History Society Inc

Edition No. 112, November 2017

Open days:

Tuesday & Thursday each week
10.00am to 3.00pm.

3rd Saturday of each month
11.00am to 3.00pm.

Location:

1st Floor
100-104 Murphy Street
Wangaratta, Vic, Australia.
(above Visitor Information Centre).

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info@wfhs.org.au

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Facebook:

[Watch this space.....](#)

Registered No. A0022724T

ABN No. 72 673 863 599

DATES TO REMEMBER:

Friday 24th November, 2017 (at the latest)

Could all community raffle books please be returned to us sold (with the money) or unsold by this date? Thank You.

9th December, 2017

WFHS Christmas break up will be a visit to the Eldorado Cemetery commencing 10am onsite, followed by lunch at the McEvoy Tavern, "Victoria's Smallest Pub" at 12 noon. A brief members meeting will be held during our break up. Please **RSVP** numbers for catering purposes by **30th November, 2017** by e-mail info@wfhs.org.au or phone (0417) 135 485. Look forward to seeing you there!

11th December, 2017 at 10.30am

Project/Research Group meeting.

14th December, 2017 at 1pm

Committee meeting.

16th December, 2017 - 1st February, 2018

The WFHS Library will close over the Christmas-New Year period and reopen on Thursday, 1st February, 2018.



Birthday wishes for long time member Jean Rankin who celebrates a milestone 90 years in November. Well done Jean!

CONTENTS

Dates to Remember	1
90th Birthday Wishes	1
Contents	2
Membership	2
Committee Members	2
For Information	2
The Harrierville Dig	3
Charles Bland/Black	6
Contribution deadlines & publication dates.	17

MEMBERSHIP

Initial 1st year Admin Fee	\$10
Single full membership	\$30
Joint full membership	\$50

NEW MEMBERS

A warm welcome to our new members
Yvonne and Roy Ward.

COMMITTEE

President	Still looking for a president...
Vice President	Val Brennan 03 5727 6229
Treasurer	Dianne Cavedon 03 5722 2607
Secretary	Still looking for a secretary...
Editor	Christine Heard 03 5727 6370 (lurgissy58@bigpond.com)
Committee Members	Val McPherson, Peg Templeton, Faye Schusser

FOR INFORMATION

WFHS Website

In the past, members' interests were included on the website i.e. Surnames, places, periods etc. being researched. This has lapsed in more recent times, but it would be good to reinstate this on the new website. All members are invited to compile or update their research wish list on our new site. The standard information required is:

e.g. JONES, Harry 1850's UK and Vic, Aus

JONES, Harry & Ethel 1880's Goulburn NSWetc and you can have as many as you need. Your identity and link will be your WFHS membership number, so private details will remain just that, private. You will be advised if connections are made and will have a choice of following up or not.

The website is close to completion. I am waiting for additional content to be prepared, but we do expect to be online in December - for Christmas!

Seniors Festival 2017

WFHS held a very successful program for this year's Seniors Festival. It was almost fully booked, with very interesting research, and very happy Seniors and some new members. Thank you to all the volunteers who assisted with this program!

WFHS Library

Catalogue review and re-shelving is progressing with books, folders etc now re-labelled up to shelf 8. Box labels have been updated and may see further amendments as we progress through the entire catalogue. The Catalogue on the Library Computer is now in two parts, the old catalogue together with the new one covering shelves 1-8 to date and progressing. Check with the Duty Officer if you have any problems.

Also available on the Library Computer are -

The Name Index - compiled from names in our books and holdings and continues to grow

The Surname Index - A collection of local newspaper notices of BDM, funeral and other family events and

Newsletters from other Genealogy Groups (also e-mailed to members, but please advise if you don't wish to receive them).

The Harrietville Dig

The Archaeological Dig at Harrietville of a 19th Century Chinese mining village has now concluded, and during its twenty one day duration has yielded more than at first expected. Head archaeologist Gordon Grimwade from The Uncovered Past Institute told visitors to the site that it is now believed that there were up to thirty huts on terraces in the village with 150 – 200 people living there and that evidence of an ingenious water reticulation system from the water race has been uncovered.



Above - The water race, part of the water reticulation system at the site.



Above - Sieving the soil for artifacts on site.

Only two of the huts have been excavated to a depth of 100mm. Excavation is done by removing the top soil in thin layers, sorting through it, then putting it through a sieve. Pieces of glass, ceramic and rectangular nails dated prior to 1880 have been uncovered as well as the remains of two shovels from about 1860 – 1880.



Coins have also been found, one of which dates back to the 17th century. This does not mean that Chinese were here that long ago, but this coin would have been a good luck charm or a gambling token. Participants on the Dig in the second week were very excited to find two small gambling tokens, one black and one white.

Left - The gambling tokens found at the dig.

The clay lined water race which drew water from about 1km further up the valley, was pivotal to the village. From the excavation of the first hut, archaeologists believe that water

was diverted from the water race into a place lined with flat rocks to act as a cooling chamber for perishable foods. From here it was directed outside the hut and channelled to the vegetable gardens below.



In one place in the village stone steps lead upwards to a level above the settlement. It is thought that this may have been the location of a Joss House as it was the custom to build a Joss House on a high place and facing eastwards. Unfortunately, the suspected site is underneath an access road in the National Park and at this stage excavation is not possible.

Left - The stone steps leading upwards believed to be leading to the site of a Joss House.

On each day of the Dig, two conducted walking tours of the site were ably led by Bill Jones, a former miner, and currently the President of the Harrietville Historical Society. Gordon Grimwade met each walking party, explained what was happening on site and showed samples of the finds for that day. Money collected from participants on the walks will go

towards funding further digs on this or other sites in the area.

Each item found was carefully washed, bagged and labelled as to where on the grid it was found. From the Dig site these items went to the Community Centre for cataloguing. A conservator was available to treat any item which needed stabilising.



Above - Other items found at the dig, including pottery shards.



Above - Cataloguing the artifacts at the Community Centre.

Everything found at the Dig Site is the property of Heritage Victoria who will store the items (now artefacts). Harrietville Historical Society will be making submissions to have some of the artefacts returned to their Museum as an On Loan Display.

The excavated sites have now been covered with geo-fabric and back-filled with the original soil. Any future archaeological work on the site will be able to see just where the previous dig finished.

The Uncovered Past Institute receives no government funding. Digs such as this are financed by the participants who pay \$1,500 each per week for the pleasure of getting their hands dirty. Already there is talk of a second dig at the Harrietville site but this will be dependent on resources and funding coming available.

It is hoped that a community meeting will be held at Harrietville within the next few weeks to give an account of The Dig to anyone interested.

The website for The Uncovered Past Institute is: www.uncoveredpast.org.au



Above - A shovel dated between 1860 and 1880 found during the dig.

Below - View of another section of the excavation.



Above - Part of the excavation site.

Below - A different aspect of the excavation site.



Val McPherson
Wangaratta Family History Society



CHARLES BLAND/BLACK - SINNER OR SAINT?

It started simply enough. Greta Historical Group had a post on Facebook about A.M. Holway and the Goldseekers Inn at Greta which piqued my interest. "During the gold rush, there was the Goldseekers Inn, licensed to a man named A.M. Holloway (or HOLWAY), which catered to the overlanders on the Sydney Road, and to the diggers, the coach lines, and teamsters....."¹

It appears that the same man, Ambrose Maurice Holway, was the first Senior Constable stationed at the Ovens Crossing as noted in the book *A History of Greta* (S.E. Ellis). Further, Whittaker (1963) on 17 March 1851 states "...Ambrose Maurice HOLWAY was appointed chief constable, Bailiff of the Court of Requests, Inspector distilleries and slaughterhouses. Together with Constables FOLEY and POTTER, he established the police camp on the north side of the river (Parfitt Road on site of GALE's nursery)..."

GALLANT CAPTURE OF A BUSH-RANGER.—On the evening of the 9th ult., at about half-past seven o'clock, a man named Hamilton, a noted bushranger recently out of gaol, went deliberately into the stables of Mr. Holway, the landlord at the Goldseeker's Inn, at Greta, near Benalla, and, presenting a loaded pistol at the ostler in charge of the stables, forcibly carried away a black horse. Information of the fellow's person was instantly sent round to the detective offices of the colony, and, on Wednesday last, the 27th ult., Detective Black, of the City Detective Force, being on duty at Kilmore, having only received information at noon, at three p.m. came up to the prisoner riding the stolen horse a short distance outside the township of Kilmore. The officer quite unarmed walked up to Hamilton, and, seizing him by the collar pulled him down in a bending position. The fellow then made a violent blow at the officer with a heavy stick which he carried, which blow very nearly broke his arm. Finding this ineffectual to secure his release, Hamilton attempted to draw a pistol which he had in his belt, loaded to the muzzle, whereupon the officer seized him by the wrist and succeeded in dragging him off the horse. The fall appeared to have stunned Hamilton, and, taking advantage of this Black disarmed him. Al-

I hit Trove, and found an article about a robbery at the Inn. The Ovens and Murray Advertiser of 12th September 1856 tells us that on the 9th August, a noted bushranger named *Hamilton* who was recently out of gaol, stole a horse at gunpoint from the stables of the inn, riding away a black horse. The offender's details were disseminated throughout the force, and on the 27th August, the offender was found to be outside the township of Kilmore.

Detective Black, of the City Detective Force was on duty at Kilmore, and effected the arrest of the offender unarmed but with assistance and in spite of *Hamilton* resisting arrest.

The fact that there had been detectives in the Force so early on in its history meant that this man could be worth investigating.

The Police Regulation Act was assented to on 8 January 1853, with the first Chief Commissioner William Mitchell presiding over a force comprised of ".....26 officers, 106 non-commissioned officers, 471 foot constables and 49 cadets...."²

Prior to the gold rush, policing was a haphazard affair combining British ideals and Australian circumstances. Port Phillip District had paid Police Magistrates, where police acted as both judge and thief taker. The Goldfields Commission also had their own police carrying out duties with regard to particular laws and regulations. The Native Police Corps came to be the first police on the goldfields for a period of about two years. As the gold rush progressed, recruitment of more police was essential, but with wages of 5/- 5d a day in 1852, policing wasn't looked on as a full time professional career. A combination of poor pay, minimal qualifications and "incentive payments" or rewards did lead to some of the wrong type of people becoming police.

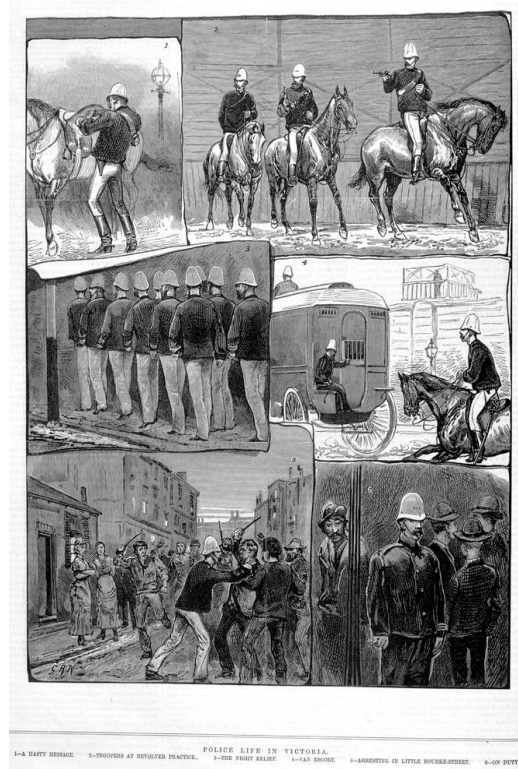
1. Graham Jones (1995) *Memories of Oxley*.

2. Robert Haldane (1995) *The People's Force - A History of the Victoria Police*.

In October, 1852, a 35 year old man who later came to call himself **Charles Black** but was in fact, as will be shown later, **Charles Bland**, may have travelled from London to Australia on the emigrant ship "Barrackpore". As yet, I have been unable to find a **Charles Black** or **Bland** on the passenger list for this vessel. His companion on the ship was said to be 20 year old **Isabella Watson**. I have so far been unable to find **Isabella** on the passenger list either. Both claimed to have been from Glasgow, Scotland. The Colonial Times Tuesday 28 Dec 1852 reported that ..."the "Barrackpore" 1350 tons sailed from London for Melbourne on October 5th, 1852..."

On 01/01/1856, a man calling himself **Charles Black** and giving his age as 32 years was appointed to Victoria Police. His registered number was 83, and he gave his place of birth as England. Details are scanty in his police record, but he gives his previous employment as "mining" and states that he is married. He is recorded as being 5'7½" tall, with blue eyes, brown hair and a fresh complexion. He was sworn in by Chief Commissioner Standish on 14th May, 1862, but had been appointed as a Constable in February, 1856.

Promotion came quickly, with his appointment as a 3rd Class Detective in early 1856, promotion to 2nd class from 06/03/1856, followed by promotion to 1st Class Detective in June, 1856.



The Defaulters' Sheet has some interesting entries. There is a parenthesised note that this man was formerly in Melbourne police - one of the earlier autonomous policing groups operating in the colony. The world's first Detective Branch was formed in Port Phillip in 1844, consisting of about four detectives. Is it possible that **Black** had been a member of this group from his arrival in 1852, which would account for the rapidity of his promotion upon joining Victoria Police?

Left - an early newspaper report on Policing in Victoria. (Courtesy State Library of Victoria).

Early in his career, **Black** seemed to have some trouble with doing his job to the satisfaction of his superiors. He also seemed to have issues with punctuality, and was cautioned in 1856 for being 40 minutes late for duty.

Other issues included neglect of duty for allowing a prisoner to escape, to not dispose of property, not attending to reports of highway robbery, and being under the influence of liquor. Add to this neglecting to make proper inquiries, giving undue publicity to a robbery of nuggets from the Bank of Victoria, not properly enquiring for a missing person, disobeying orders and the list goes on. He was either cautioned, reprimanded or severely reprimanded for his transgressions.

Further interrogation of newspapers of the day found this man to be an efficient and effective officer who investigated a range of offences, but who was not behind the door in taking a bribe (as he did in July, 1866) or for procuring stolen property for his own purposes (April 1867).

As a Detective he investigated offences ranging from murder, domestic assaults, infanticide, armed robberies, deceptions and most bizarrely (as will be shown later), cases of desertion, where a man could be arrested upon warrant for deserting his wife and children.

MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION.

RETURN of appointments, &c., in the police force, week ending 18th July, 1865 :—

APPOINTMENTS AS CONSTABLES.

Lonergan, Michael (2069).
Greany, Denis (2070).

DISMISSAL.

Constable O'Loughlin, James (1897).

REWARDS.

To detective 1st class Charles Black, at Melbourne, the sum of £4 has been awarded from the police reward fund, in acknowledgment of his dexterity shown in the arrest of Robert Ferris and Thomas Murphy, sentenced to 5 and 2 years respectively for burglary, and of Levy Walker for having housebreaking implements in his possession.

To constable James McGrath (1893), at Melbourne, the sum of £2 has been awarded from the same fund, in acknowledgment of his expertness in the arrest of Flora Warburton for highway robbery.

Above - Reward given to Charles Black from the police reward fund for the arrest of a group of burglars.

Below - Deserting of wife and children was considered to be a serious offence in the 1860's.

On 19 December 1865 Superintendent Nicolson stated..."In handing over charge of the Detective Police, temporarily, I have much pleasure in stating that *1st Class Detective Charles Black* is very steady and most efficient. During the past winter season he has been particularly energetic and successful....."

Detective 1st Class Black also collected regularly from the police reward fund, with amounts ranging from £2 to £5 depending on the arrest made. These rewards were published in the Victoria Police Gazette.

See *Police Gazette*, 22nd October, 1868, p. 382.

PATRICK DOYLE, charged with deserting his illegitimate child by Ann Hood, has been arrested by the Melbourne detective police.—27th October, 1868.

GEORGE T. RIECK is charged, on warrant, with deserting his wife at Melbourne. He is a native of Schleswig, a surveyor, aged 35, 6 feet high, stooping figure, large bones, black hair turning grey, clean shaved except lightish moustache; wore black clothing and small black deerstalker. He is supposed to be about Melbourne.—27th October, 1868.

See *Police Gazette*, 8th October, 1868, p. 367.

JAMES MUIR, charged with deserting his wife, has been arrested by the Hexham police, Warrnambool district.—27th October, 1868.

Unusually, *Black* had a long and successful career in Victoria Police until his death in 1876. The death was reported in the papers, as *Detective 1st Class Black* had often been reported in the newspapers due to his extraordinary skill in finding and arresting offenders.

The final entry on his Record of Conduct and Service states:

"The late Detective Black was a most efficient officer and during his service, a period of over twenty years, he has tendered most important service to this department - of (sic) the years his health has been failing..."

DEATH OF A DETECTIVE.—Detective Charles Black, an old and efficient member of the police force, died on Friday at his residence, St. James's park, Hawthorn. He had been in delicate health for some time back, and at his own request was sent to Adelaide to bring back the bank defaulter Sawell, as he thought that the change would prove beneficial to him. He went overland to Adelaide, and experienced a very fatiguing journey. He returned on the 7th ult., and found it necessary to apply for sick leave, which he obtained, and was not again able to resume duty. Black entered the force about 25 years ago, and at his death was about 55 years of age. He leaves a widow but no family.

The death certificate details his death on 28th July, 1876 at 6pm at his home in Hawthorn. His age is given as 57 years, and the cause of death was "collapse of the heart and exhaustion".

His birthplace is shown to be Glasgow, Scotland, and he claims to have married *Isabella Watson* in Glasgow at the age of 27, all salient details. It also states he spent 25 years in Victoria, which almost ties in with the known facts.

That is where any similarity between apparent facts and the actual facts becomes purely coincidental.

<p>July Twentyeighth 1876 6 p.m. 934 Yana St St James Park Borough of Hawthorn County of Bourke</p>	<p>Charles Black Detective Officer</p>	<p>Male 57 years</p>	<p>(1) Collapse of the heart and exhaustion (2) 1 month (3) Charles Duret (4) 28th July 1876</p>	<p>Not known Not known</p>	<p>Original issued 27/7/76</p>	
<p>9151</p>	<p>Alexander Lilly Carrington Informant St James Park Hawthorn</p>	<p>" No 290 Sorpell 30th July 1876 " 29th July 1876 Bourke Cemetery " Hawthorn John Daley</p>	<p>Reverend William Wood Church of England John St Loyce Witness</p>	<p>Glasgow Scotland 25 years in Victoria</p>	<p>Glasgow Scotland " 27. " Isabella Watson</p>	<p>No issue</p>

Above - Copy of the death certificate No. 9151 of Charles Black, Detective Officer on 28th July, 1876.

It appears that *Charles Black* had his will drawn up by William Wrixon, solicitor, on 31st January, 1870. He appointed William Patterson Muir, Bank Manager to be the trustee of his estate, which upon probate turned out to be quite extensive.

For a poorly paid 1st Class Detective, *Charles Black* had an estate of over £8,000, equivalent to \$882,000 in today's money. However, a closer look at the will throws up a number of anomalies which probably wouldn't have been an issue had the trustee, William Patterson Muir not predeceased *Charles Black*.

*In the Supreme Court
of the Colony of Victoria*

In its Probate Jurisdiction

In the Estate of Charles Bland otherwise known as Charles Black or Charles Black Bland late of Hawthorn in the Colony of Victoria Detective Officer deceased.

At her and just account of the administration of the estate of the abovesaid Charles Bland otherwise known as Charles Black or Charles Black Bland deceased which Frederick George Munkle has undertaken as to his receipts and disbursements and as to what portion is retained by him and what portion remains uncollected.

Receipts	£	s	d	Disbursements	£	s	d	Portion retained	£	s	d	Portion uncollected	£	s	d	
Cash received from the Curator of the Estates of deceased persons in the above named estate and being the balance found after paying all demands debts and probate duty in the Estate	450	2	18	1877 Aug 4 Commission to surties on Administration Bonds 100 0 0 6 Bank draft on London distributed between Mr Bland and Mr J. Bland 5000 0 0 Bank exchange on same 81 5 0 Miss Mabon on order of next of kin 250 0 0 Vaughan Merle's Stationer's bill of obtaining Administration Commission to Administrator of Estate in collecting estate on the order of next of kin 53 5 0 Oct 5 Bank draft on London distributed between Mr Bland and Mr J. Bland 1620 0 0 Nov 27 Bank draft on London 100 0 0					Nil				Nil			
Cash received from the Detective Police Savings Fund	80	11	6													
	£458	3	10													

*Frederick G. Munkle
Administrator*

Above - The probate document detailing the amount of the estate of **Charles Black** or **Charles Black Bland**.

The terms of the will were quite specific, with **Isabella Watson** of George Street Fitzroy set to inherit £500 on the condition that she continue unmarried and without having children"otherwise this bequest is to lapse and not be payable." Further to this bequest, **Isabella** stood to inherit a house and land in Little Elizabeth Street Richmond ..."her heirs and assigns forever in the event of her continuing sole and unmarried and without having children otherwise this devise is to be invalid and of no effect...."

Several interesting anomalies were noted in the will:

1. It is the last will and testament of **Charles Bland Black**.
2. **Isabella Watson** had lived as his wife and styled herself **Mrs. Isabella Black**, with the claim that they had married in Glasgow when he was 27 (around 1844).
3. In the will, **Black** states that **Isabella Watson** is a spinster, but should she alter that state she would not inherit anything from the will (which negates the information about a supposed marriage on the death certificate).
4. The signature of the testator on the will is **Chas. Black Bland**.



Copy



Office

D

This is the last Will and Testament of me Charles Black Bland of George Street Fitz Roy near Melbourne in the Colony of Victoria Gentleman I give and bequeath to Isabella Watson of George Street Fitz Roy in the Colony aforesaid Spinster the sum of Five hundred pounds to be paid to her if she continues unmarried and without having children otherwise this bequest is to lapse and not be payable And I give devise and bequeath my house and land situate in Little Elizabeth Street Richmond unto the said Isabella Watson her heirs and assigns for ever in the event of her continuing sole and unmarried and without having children otherwise this devise is to be invalid and of no effect I appoint William Patterson Muir of the City of Melbourne in the said Colony Bank Manager sole executor and Trustee of this my Will In Witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand this thirty first day of January one thousand eight hundred and seventy

Signed by the said Testator as his last Will in the presence of us who in his presence at his request and in the presence of each other have subscribed our names as Witnesses

Char: Black Bland

William H. Wixson
 Sol^r Melbourne
 Saml. Rippon

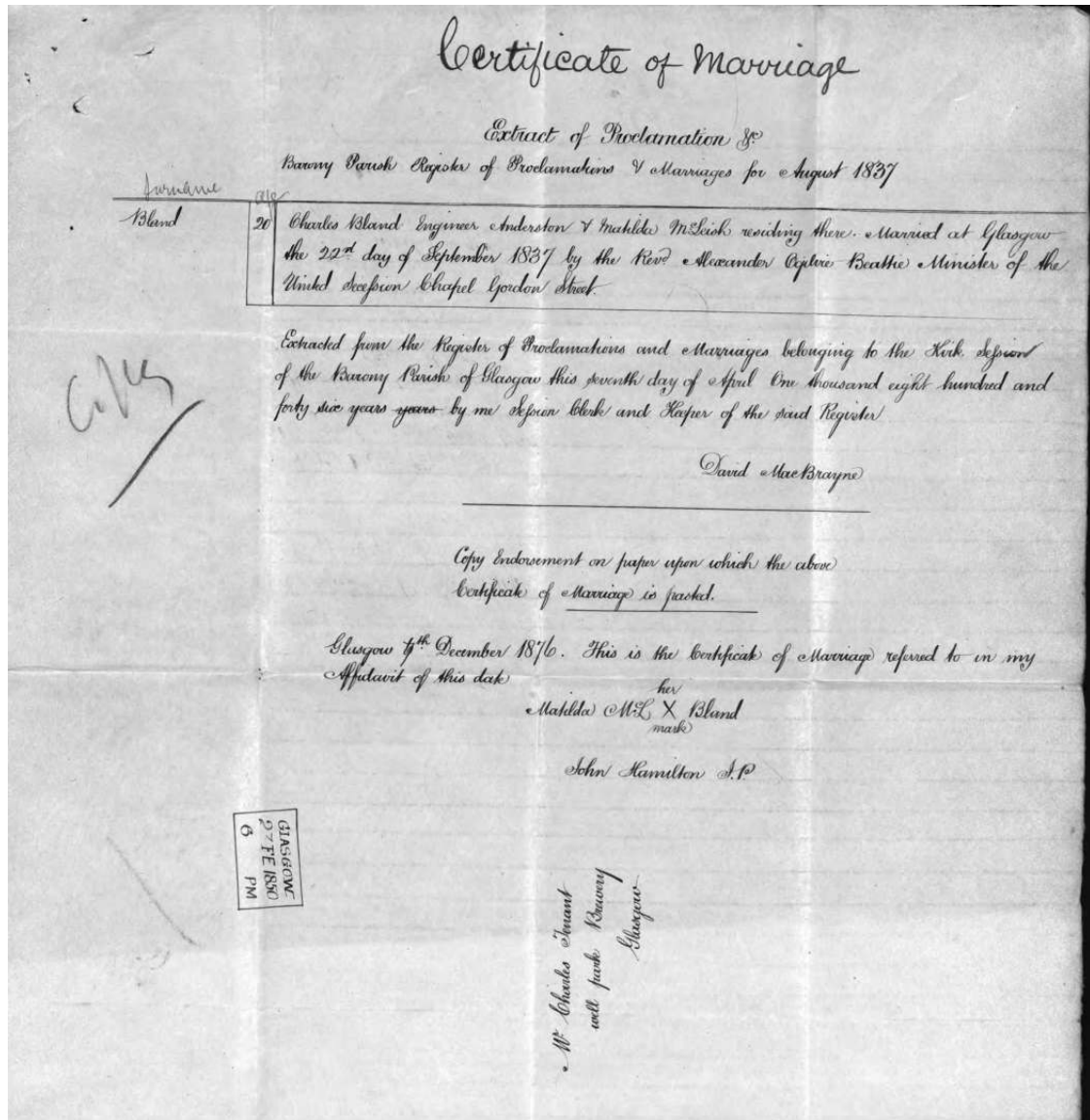
The death of the chosen executor William Paterson Muir, on 12th December, 1873, caused the will to go to the Curator of Estates of Deceased persons, who acted as administrators of the Estate.

Theyre Weigall, solicitors, appointed Frederick George Moule, proctor to act on their behalf, instructing him to contact their London agents and place an advertisement in the Times and Glasgow papers for the widow and children of **Charles Bland**.

The agents had received a letter from a firm of solicitors in Glasgow indicating that the widow of **Charles Bland** had been found.

BOMBSHELL!!!

The widow of **Charles Black (Bland)**, **Matilda Bland (nee McLeish)** of 148 Bellfield Street, Dennistown, Glasgow Scotland had married **Charles Bland** in Glasgow on 22nd September, 1837. She produced her marriage certificate attesting to the same.



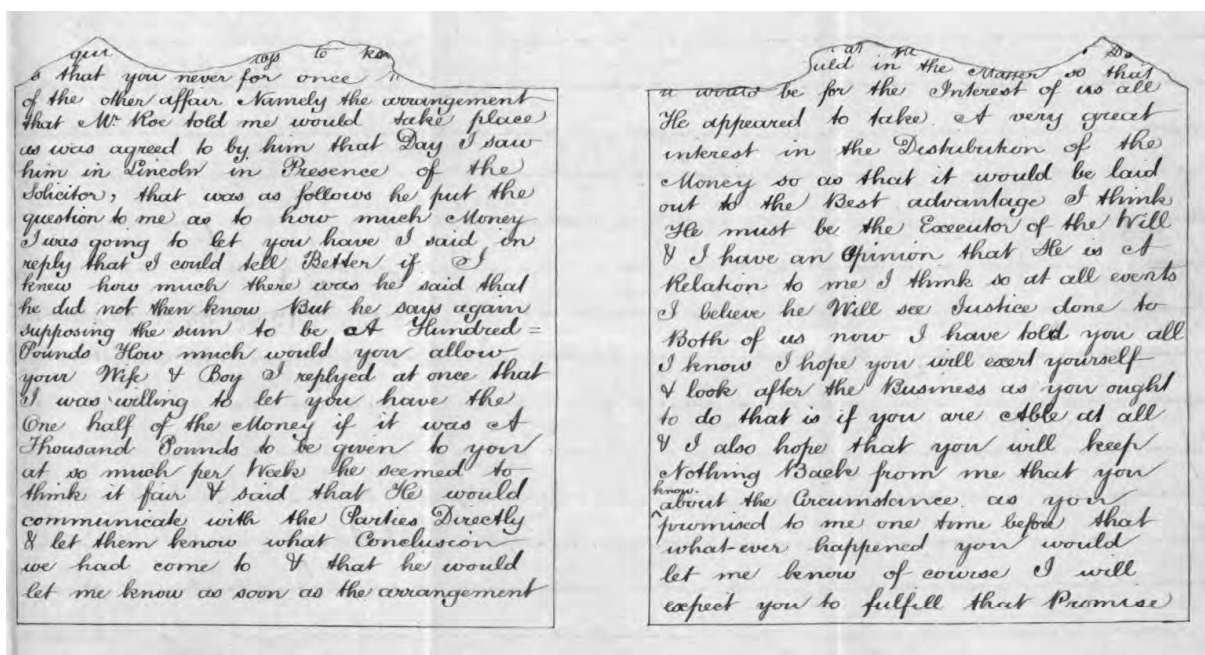
Above - The extract of Marriage proving the marriage of **Charles Bland** and **Matilda McLeish**.

The affidavit of **Matilda Bland** (nee *McLeish*) is a story of outright lies, false promises and eventually, of being abandoned with 5 children and no means of support.

Matilda married **Charles Bland**, engineer, in Glasgow, before moving to Greenock for his employment not long after. In 1838 they returned to Glasgow where her husband was employed at an engineering works and then a spinning mill. In 1839 they went to Belfast for about 3 years, before returning to Glasgow, where her husband found employment at Wellpark Brewery as engine keeper.

Bland left the brewery and could find no settled employment and left his wife and children to go to Liverpool where he remained for 9 months. He returned to Glasgow but shortly returned again to Liverpool. Matilda heard nothing from her husband for about 18 months, when she received a letter from him that he was working on the railway at Manchester. He asked her to join him but sent no money so she wasn't able to go.

In 1850, a woman came enquiring about him and a friend of his contacted him. He returned to Glasgow and stayed with his wife for a week, then returned south to Lincoln, apparently to see about a bequest. Matilda received a letter in relation to the bequest but her husband didn't return and she didn't see any of the money.



Above - Fragments of the letter sent to Matilda by her husband, talking about the inheritance or legacy he was expecting.

What her husband did leave her was another pregnancy, and the birth of her youngest daughter in January 1851. By that time, the family were desperate with no support, so **Matilda** was forced to apply to the Parish for relief. **Bland** was located in Bury and returned to Glasgow, where he was ordered to support the family to the tune of 7/- a week. He paid the amount for 2 months and the next time **Matilda** heard anything about her husband was that he had apparently received his inheritance and emigrated to Australia!!!

There were five children born of the marriage, four daughters and one son. All the daughters died young, but the son, **John Bland** who was born in 1841, had survived childhood and was married. Matilda resided with her son and his family.

The case, which went to the Supreme Court, caused a sensation, and was avidly followed by all the papers.

STRANGE WILL CASE.

Some romantic facts were mentioned in the Equity Court on Thursday, on an application for administration to the undivided estate of the late **Detective Charles Black**. **Black** died in July, 1876. By a will he made in 1870 and signed, **Charles Black Bland**, he left £500 and a house in Richmond, to one **Isabella Watson**—a woman with whom he had been living. The rest of his property amounted to £8,448. The executor appointed to the will having died, the curator, on August 29, 1876, obtained administration with the will annexed. Having reason to believe that **Black's** name was **Bland**, and that he formerly resided in Glasgow, he advertised in the *London Times* and the Glasgow papers for the widow and children of **Chas. Bland**, who sailed for Australia in 1852, in the *Barrackpore*. The result was an application by a **Mrs. Bland**, whose maiden name was **M'Leish**, and who produced evidence to show that she was married in 1837 to one **Charles Bland**, an engineer, at Glasgow, by whom she had four children, one of whom, a son, is alive, and is married. **Mrs. Bland's** husband used to leave her for long periods, and the last she heard of him was in 1850, when she received a letter from him, he being then in England. **Miss Watson** said that she had lived with **Bland** since 1845 as his wife; that they came out to Australia in 1851, and that he adopted permanently the name of **Black**. Fragments of the letter sent to **Mrs. Bland** in 1850 were sent out here, and were identified by **Miss Watson** as the writing of **Detective Black**. **Mrs. Bland** instructed **Mr. Moule** to apply for administration of the estate on her behalf. **Mr. Justice Molesworth** reserved his decision.

Some romantic facts were mentioned in the Equity Court on Thursday (according to the *Argus*) on an application for administration to the undivided estate of the late **Detective Charles Black**. **Black** died in July, 1876. By a will he made in 1870 and signed, **Charles Black Bland**, he left £500 and a house in Richmond to one **Isabella Watson**—a woman with whom he had been living. The rest of his property amounted to £8,448. The executor appointed to the will having died, the curator, on August 29th, 1876, obtained administration with the will annexed. Having reason to believe that **Black's** name was **Bland**, and that he formerly resided in Glasgow, he advertised in the *London Times* and the Glasgow papers for the widow and children of **Chas. Bland**, who sailed for Australia in 1852, in the *Barrackpore*. The result was an application by a **Mrs. Bland**, whose maiden name was **M'Leith**, and who produced evidence to show that she was married in 1837 to one **Charles Bland**, an engineer, in Glasgow, by whom she had four children, one of whom, a son, is alive, and is married. **Mrs. Bland's** husband used to leave her for long periods, and the last she heard of him was in 1850, when she received a letter from him, he being then in England. **Miss Watson** said that she had lived with **Bland** since 1845 as his wife; that they came out to Australia in 1851, and that he adopted permanently the name of **Black**. Fragments of the letter sent to **Mrs. Bland** in 1850 were sent out here, and were identified by **Miss Watson** as the writing of **Detective Black**. **Mrs. Bland** instructed **Mr. Moule** to apply for administration of the estate on her behalf. **Mr. Justice Molesworth** reserved his decision.

Above left - Newspaper report dated 16 June 1877.

Above - Another report dated 22 June 1877. Both reported very similar and salacious facts.

Charles Bland/Black was buried in Boroondara Cemetery on 30th July, 1876. His simple gravestone records very little about him. It reads "*Sacred to the Memory Of Charles BLACK, for upwards of 20y a first class Detective of the Police Force of this colony, died 28 Jul 1876 57 y.*"

Now you may ask, what happened to **Isabella**, his faithful companion of 31 years? **Isabella** was rewarded for her loyalty and willingness to travel with this man to the other side of the world. She was left a bequest of £500 in the will, and a property in Collingwood on the condition that she neither married nor had issue! She was in line to inherit the remainder of the property and estate, also on the condition that she neither married nor have issue. The bequest would be null and void should these conditions not be met. In 1876, **Isabella** (who was born in 1832) would have been 44 years old, so the likelihood of her having issue was fairly remote. The claim made that they had lived together as man and wife since 1845 meant that she would have been 13 years old at that time, while he was 27 years old!

It appears that **Isabella** received her bequest of £500 and the property, while the rest of the estate was claimed, and rightly too, by **Matilda Bland** and her son **John**. Unfortunately, this good fortune came far too late for the daughters of the marriage.

Once **Isabella** received the bequest, she was able to continue to live in style. She also set about finally arranging a marriage. On 1st July, 1882, **Isabella Watson**, at the age of 50, married **James Wilson Menzies**, the 55 year old widowed father of 6 children. **Isabella** describes herself as a widow, and her rank or profession is given as "Lady" on her marriage certificate.

SCHEDULE D.

1882 MARRIAGES solemnized in the District of *Fitzroy*

No. in Register.	Where and when Married.	Name and Surname of the Parties.	Condition of the Parties.			Birthplace.
			Bachelor or Spinster, If a Widower or Widow, Date of Decease of former Wife or Husband.	Children by each former Marriage.		
			Living.	Dead.		
1497	1 st July 1882 Moor Street Fitzroy	James Wilson Menzies Isabella Watson	Widower Decease of former Wife 11/881 Widow Decease of former Husband 1	6	2	London England Hastledon England

I, *Nathaniel Guinness*, being a Minister of Religion do hereby certify that I have, this day, at *Moor Street Fitzroy* duly celebrated Marriage between *James Wilson Menzies of Noddle Street Colchynwood Carpenter* and *Isabella Watson of Wimbeth Street Richmond Lady* after Notice and Declaration duly made and published, as by law required (and with the written consent of _____)

Dated this *1st* day of *July* 1882
Signature of Minister, Registrar-General, or other Officer *Nathaniel Guinness*

in the Colony of Victoria.

Rank or Profession.	Ages.	Residence.		Parents.	
		Present.	Usual.	Names. (Mother's Maiden Name)	Father's Rank or Profession.
<i>Carpenter</i>	<i>55</i>	<i>Noddle Street Colchynwood</i>	<i>Noddle Street Colchynwood</i>	<i>Robert Menzies Elizabeth Menzies</i>	<i>Engineer</i>
<i>Lady</i>	<i>50</i>	<i>Wimbeth Street Richmond</i>	<i>Wimbeth Street Richmond</i>	<i>George Watson Murray + Watson Simpson</i>	<i>Farmer</i>

Marrriage, according to the *Rites of the Free Church of England*, was solemnized between us *James Wilson Menzies* and *Isabella Watson*

Witnesses *Elizabeth Sarah Abel*
William Abel

Above - The Marriage of **Isabella Watson** and **James Menzies** in 1882.

In 1896, at the age of 64, *Isabella Menzies (nee Watson)* died in Collingwood. No mention is made on her death certificate of her previous "marriage" to *Charles Black/Bland*. Her birthplace is given as Ulverston, Lancashire, England and it states that she was 40 years in Victoria.

4 th September 1896	Isabella Menzies	Female 64 years	" Asthma Cordis (Rheumatic) " 7 weeks " J. H. Gourlay. " 6 th September 1896.	George Watson Farmer Mary Watson Somerville Simpson
9277	Hodder Street City of Collingwood County of Boroondara			

Above/Below - Death Certificate No. 9277 of Isabel Menzies nee Watson.

James Wilson Menzies Husband Hodder Street Collingwood	" William Davis " 4 th September 1896 " Collingwood	4 th September 1896. Boroondara County. J. Wilson	" Hearnay " Whittaker. 40 Years in Victoria	Ulverston Lancashire England " Fitzroy Victoria " 50 " James Wilson Menzies	No issue
9277					

Isabella predeceased her husband *James Wilson Menzies*, who inherited her estate of over £600.

Unusually, she was not buried with her husband J.W. Menzies. Instead, *Charles Black/Bland* and *Isabella Menzies (nee Watson)* were reunited in death, with *Isabella* being buried in the same plot at Boroondara Cemetery.

Her simple epitaph reads "*Isabel, beloved wife of J.W. MENZIES, d 7 Sep 1896, 64y, a patient sufferer at rest*"

Left - The grave of 1st Class Detective *Charles Black* and *Isabel Menzies (nee Watson)* at Boroondara Cemetery.



So, what happened to *Matilda* and *John*? Did they ever receive the money they were entitled to? If so, did it change their lives?

Perhaps that will be another story for another time. One can only wonder how a man can fail to acknowledge a family that depends on him for its survival, and leave them to their fate while he and his teenage paramour travel to the other side of the world. Then he can not only forget about them, but also arrest and prosecute other men who have been guilty of exactly the same crime as he himself is guilty of.

His actions were unconscionable, but it appears that fate finally stepped in to ensure that, in death, *Charles Bland or Black* made some recompense for the neglect his family suffered due to his actions. Some might say, too little, too late!

Christine Heard
Wangaratta Family History Society

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Wangaratta Threads

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