



# ST. GEORGE HISTORICAL SOCIETY BULLETIN

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24 Duff Street,  
ARNCLIFFE. 2205.

July 1983.

Dear Friend and Member,

The July Meeting will be held as follows:-

Date: Friday Evening, July 15th, 1983, at 8.00 p.m.

Place: Council Chamber, Town Hall, Princes Highway, Rockdale.

Business: ELECTION OF OFFICE BEARERS 1983 - 1984.

Syllabus Item: This being the Annual General Meeting & Election of Officers, time will be the deciding factor. Mrs. Ruth Foster, one of our members, who has been "tripping around" has kindly offered to share her experiences with us.

Supper Roster: Mrs. Samuelson, Captain, and Mesdames Longhurst and McLeod.

Ladies please bring a plate.

Mr. R. Lee,  
President.  
Phone 570 1244.

Mrs. B. Perkins,  
Publicity Officer.  
Phone 587 9164.

Mrs. E. Eardley,  
Sec. & Bulletin Ed.  
Phone 59 8078

Mrs. E. Wright,  
Treasurer,  
Phone 599 4884.

Miss D. Row,  
Social Secretary.  
Phone 50 9300.

Mr. A. Ellis,  
Research Officer.  
Phone 587 1159.

"Take what is; trust what may be; that's life's true lesson."

..... Robert Browning.

A cheerio for Members who are not so well - we hope to see you at the meetings soon.

SPECIAL NOTICE. The St. George Historical Society is pleased to announce that the following books, Nos. 1 - 7 written and illustrated by the late Gifford H. Eardley for the Society, have been reprinted and are now available. Books Nos. 8 and 9 have been compiled by Mrs. Bronwyn Perkins.

No. 1.	"The Wollli Creek Valley" - (presently out of print)	)	
No. 2.	"Kogarah to Sans Souci Tramway"	)	Price
No. 3.	"Saywells Tramway - Rockdale to Lady Robinson's Beach"	)	\$2.50
No. 4.	"Arncliffe to Bexley Tramway"	)	plus
No. 5.	"Our Heritage in Stone"	)	postage.
No. 6.	"All Stations to Como"	)	
No. 7.	"Tempe and the Black Creek Valley"	)	
No. 8.	"Early Churches of the St. George District"	)	
No. 9.	"Early Settlers of the St. George District" now available.	)	
Price \$4.00 plus postage.			

For your copy of the above books, please contact one of the following:-  
 Mrs. E. Wright - Phone 599 4884, Miss B. Otton - Phone 59 4259 (after 8 p.m.)  
 Mrs. E. Eardley - Sec., Phone 59 8078, Mr. A. Ellis - Phone 587 1159.

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MEMBERS PLEASE NOTE:- Annual Subscription due in July 1983.  
 Single Sub - \$5.00. Family Sub. - \$7.00

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2NBC-FM STEREO 90.1 - ST. GEORGE HISTORICAL SOCIETY SEGMENT.  
 Tuesday Evenings 6.30 p.m. - 6.45 p.m.

14th June & 21st June	- The Early Picture Theatres of Arncliffe (2 tapes)	- Arthur Ellis
28th June	- Copy of Thomas Birkby's letter written 31st May 1836.	- B. Perkins
5th July	- Possible Location of Hannah Laycock's farm house at Kingsgrove and Post Offices in Kingsgrove.	- Brian Madden
12th July	- The Terraces of Single-Faced Cottages of Gibbes St., Rockdale.	- Don Sinclair & Jean Faulkner
19th July	- John Murphy of "Leeholme", Bexley - The Horse 'Buses.	- Jean Faulkner
26th July	- Brighton le Sands - A suburb evolved from the Sandhills.	- Don Sinclair
2nd August	- The Rev. James Clark & John Lucas.	- Don Sinclair
9th August	- Christina Stead - Authoress.	- B. Perkins
16th August	- Primrose House.	- Arthur Ellis
23rd August	- The Man and the Collection (The Mitchell Library)	- B. Perkins
30th August	- A Brief History of the Carss Family & of Carss Bush Estate.	- Arthur Ellis
6th September	- The Sans Souci Tramway.	- Frank Moag.

VISITORS ARE ALWAYS WELCOME AT OUR MEETINGS.

## HISTORY OF THE PEARES IN AUSTRALIA.

- Warren Duff  
Granville - 1981.

In the latter half of March 1855, five people from the small town of Cricklade, Wiltshire, journeyed by coach to Southampton. On 31st March, the ship "Blenheim" transported them and 300 other passengers to Sydney, Australia to start a new life.

The names of the five assisted immigrants were:-

1. John Peare (blacksmith), aged 36 years, first son of Daniel and Ann Peare.
2. Elizabeth Peare, his wife, aged 26 years, first daughter of George and Sarah Eagles. Elizabeth married John in the parish of St. Sampson, Cricklade on 16th December 1852.
3. Agnes Maria Peare, daughter of John and Elizabeth, born Cricklade 2nd April 1853, baptised 29th May, 1853.
4. George Peare (blacksmith), aged 22 years, fifth son of Daniel and Ann Peare.
5. Maria Peare, wife of above, aged 23 years, second daughter of George and Sarah Eagles. Maria married George in the parish of St. Sampson, Cricklade, on 12th March 1855.

All were of the Church of England denomination. Elizabeth could not write, although her sister Maria, could. It is not certain about the men, whether they could read and write, although the shipping records say so.

On the sea journey, under deplorable, crowded conditions, little Agnes took sick. Someone suggested that she be thrown overboard, however, this did not occur. The trip was very rough at times, so the passengers had to be tied in their bunks on such occasions. Frequently on these voyages people were lost overboard, babies were born, stowaways were found. The Passenger Act of 1852, and subsequent amendments gradually removed the worst aspects of ship life.

On 5th July 1855, after 96 days at sea, they arrived safely in Sydney, in good health and having no complaints (according to the shipping records) about the voyage. There were no relatives or friends awaiting their arrival. They were not to see England again. They stayed in rented premises for the rest of their days. They were always to remain a close-knit family. Sydney had a population of about 60,000 at the time. They travelled by ship to the thriving community of Parramatta, probably soon after their arrival.

On 14th August, 1855, George and Maria had a daughter, Emily Anne, who was baptised on 7th October in St. John's Church of England, Parramatta. At the time they were living at Newington (near Silverwater) along the Parramatta River. George was working as a blacksmith probably with his brother, John.

On 26th July 1856, John Peare (blacksmith) died in Parramatta District Hospital of low nervous fever (typhoid). He was buried the same day at All Saints Church of England Cemetery, Marsfield (North Parramatta - off Fennell Street). His two gravestones (head and base) are in good condition, being of durable pale sandstone. His age, given as 36, should be 37 years. At this time, his widow Elizabeth, was about ten weeks pregnant, and had been married only three and a half years. Elizabeth was to remain a widow for the rest of her life. The little family group apparently left the sorry scene soon after, because on 10th February 1857, in Botany Road, Chippendale, Elizabeth gave birth to her second daughter - Sarah Emma (Sarah being the first name of Elizabeth's mother, sister and cousin). A baptism cannot be traced.

They then appear to have moved to Tempe, Cooks River. On 1st September 1857, Maria gave birth to a son, Tom George Eagles Peare, who was baptised on 8th November 1857 at St. Peter's Church of England, St. Peters. George, the father, was still working as a blacksmith.

On 6th October, 1860 Tom George Eagles Peare died, at the age of 3 years, of disease and ulceration of the bowels, after an illness of three weeks. The doctor had attended him the same day. The father who gave particulars for the death certificate on 7th October, was residing at Cook's River, St. George District (Tempe?) and still working as a blacksmith. The father acted as undertaker and the child was buried at St. Peter's Church of England Burial Ground, St. Peters (burial No.679) on 8th October 1860.

Two weeks later, on 20th October 1860, the daughter of George and Maria, Emily Anne Peare, died at the age of 5 years, of measles, after an illness of two weeks. The doctor had attended her the day before. The father gave the particulars for the death certificate on 21st October. This time he did not act as undertaker. The child was buried (burial No.681) on 22nd October, 1860 in the same cemetery as her brother, Tom. No exact positions of graves have been recorded and no headstones of Peares can be found.

On 28th August, 1861, George and Maria had a second son, George Daniel Peare, who was baptised at St. Peter's Church of England, on 22nd September 1861. They were still residing at Cook's River, St. George District. Elizabeth Peare, his Aunt, of Cooks River, gave the particulars for the birth certificate on 20th September 1861.

In 1862, George Peare is listed as a blacksmith, Cooks River Road, in the Sydney directory. The area around St. Peter's Church of England, was originally known as Cooks River. The Cooks River



Road, at this time, ended at Tempe.

On 2nd August 1868, George Peare, blacksmith and farrier, aged 35 years, of Cooks River, died as a result of drowning in Wolli Creek, Cooks River. A coroner's report was published in the Sydney Morning Herald on Wednesday, August 5th, 1868. On the 4th August, he was buried at St. Peter's Church of England Cemetery (burial No.937). At the time of his death, his wife Maria was three months pregnant. On 20th February 1869, at Tempe, Cooks River, a son John Alfred Peare, was born to Maria, and baptised on 11th April 1869, at St. Peter's Church of England. \* (see end of article).

Previously, on 21st May 1868, give or take a year, another child, Alice May Peare, was born. The birth was not registered and no baptism recorded at either St. Peter's or Newtown Church of England churches. Elizabeth was always referred to as the mother of Alice; also Alice was referred to as the sister of Agnes and Sarah Emma. At the time Elizabeth was about 40 years old and had been a widow for about 12 years. She had two daughters to care for, aged about 16 and 12 years. No reference is given as to who the father of the child may be. Therefore, in the absence of a birth certificate or baptism record, the parentage of Alice May Peare cannot be substantiated. However, Elizabeth brought the child up as her own. The children of Alice also had no idea it was a closely guarded secret.

After the death of George Peare, the family were in a somewhat difficult situation. Two widowed sisters and their five children (Agnes 16, Sarah Emma 12, George Daniel 7, John Alfred - infant, Alice May - infant). Elizabeth had most probably supported herself and her children previously by taking in sewing and dressmaking. She had been a dressmaker in Cricklade with her two younger sisters, Sarah and Susan, aged 14 and 10 years respectively, according to the 1851 census.

In 1869 and 1870, a Mrs Peare, dressmaker of Cooks River Road, Tempe was listed. Probably Elizabeth had a small dressmaking concern with the assistance of her sister Maria, and her two daughters Agnes and Sarah Emma. In 1872, Elizabeth and Maria were listed separately in the directories, but both were residing at Cooks River Road, St Peters. They may have been still together in the same house.

On 3rd September 1872, John Alfred Peare, son of Maria, died at the age of three years, of convulsions. The duration of the illness was one week. The doctor had attended the child the day before. Maria gave particulars for the death certificate on 4th September 1872, at Newtown (the only known example of her handwriting). The child was buried at St. Peter's Church of England Cemetery (burial No.1075) on 5th September 1872. The church register states Maria's profession as dressmaker.

Agnes Peare married Robert Sargent on 17th July 1874, (occupation: dealer) at Elizabeth Street, Sydney, according to the rites of the Presbyterian Church, but both remained Church of England.

Now, Elizabeth and Maria had only Sarah Emma, George Daniel and Alice May to look after. In 1874, Elizabeth was listed as a dressmaker, Cooks River Road, St. Peters. In 1876, Elizabeth was listed as a grocer, Cooks River Road, Newtown. IX 1878, 1879 and 1881, Elizabeth was listed as a grocer, King Street, Newtown.

Sarah Emma, aged 24 years, married Charles Haughton, portmanteau maker, aged about 24 years, on 2nd April 1881, at St. Peter's Church of England. Charles was of English birth. At the time Charles resided at Erskineville Road, Newtown and Sarah Emma resided at Camdenville, Newtown (perhaps at the back of the shop).

Elizabeth was listed as a grocer in 1882, as a general storekeeper in 1883 and 1884, all at King Street Newtown. In 1885 and 1886, Elizabeth was listed at 26 Munni Street, Newtown. Possibly she went back to dressmaking with Alice, after the marriage of her sister, Maria Peare.

Maria Peare, aged 53 years, married James Chisholm, widower, aged about 50 years, on 20th May 1885. James was born in Edinburgh, Scotland, an engineer by profession, and they were married at St. Philip's Church of England, Sydney, in the presence of Charles and Sarah Emma Haughton. At the time James was residing in Agar Street, Marrickville, and Maria in Macdonaldtown (adjoining Newtown). Probably the two sisters were still together, despite the slight difference in location mentioned.

Elizabeth is listed as a dressmaker, of 6 St. John Street, Newtown, in 1888 and 1889. She is not listed for 1890 or thereafter.

On 24th March, 1890, Alice May Peare, aged 21 (?) years, engaged in domestic duties, married William Langham, aged 24 years, mariner, London born, in the presence of James and Maria Chisholm, at St. Barnabas Church of England, Sydney. Seven weeks later, on 14th May 1890, Alice gave birth to a daughter, Elsie May Langham, at 7 Rosebury Place, West Balmain. Other children were -

Harold Wilfred	1892	Florence	1893	William	1897
Grace	1899	Frederick	1903	Dorothy	1907.

Also there was one deceased female, name unknown.

Elizabeth, now aged 61 years, apparently moved in with her sister and brother-in-law James, and bachelor nephew George Daniel Peare (who appears never to have left home), at 28 Raglan Street, Darlington (now demolished). It was a double-storey house.

Elizabeth appears to have spent her remaining years in a domestic way with her sister; a fairly comfortable and secure life, if uneventful. She was held in very high esteem by all members of the family. Her niece in England, Lucy Cocks, wrote on 30th August, 1912, "What a dear sweet old soul Aunt Bessie must be."

On 18th April, 1916, Elizabeth Peare, aged 87 years (not 89 as on gravestone) died at the home of her daughter, Sarah Emma Haughton, at the Promenade, Sans Souci. Her death was caused by carcinoma (cancer) of the liver, and she had been ill for six months. The doctor had last seen her on 30th March. She was buried on 20th April, 1916 at the Woronora Church of England Cemetery, Section 1, Grave 397. The headstone is still quite legible.

Maria, Elizabeth's sister, after her marriage to James Chisholm, took up residence at her husband's house, where he had lived since 1881, at 4 Agar Street, Marrickville, until 1890. In 1891, they were living at 28 Raglan Street, Darlington, where they stayed for the remaining years of their lives. Very little else is known.

On 17th May 1913, James Chisholm, husband of Maria, aged 75 years, then messenger at Water & Sewerage Board, died of thrombosis of the femoral vein and pneumonia, at Royal Prince Alfred Hospital, Camperdown. William Langha, husband of Alice May Peare, gave particulars for the death certificate. James was always known as Uncle Chisholm, a kind, thoughtful man, who loved children. He had no children from his first marriage. He was buried on 19th May, 1913, in Woronora Presbyterian Cemetery, Section G, Grave 57.

Maria Chisholm sister of Elizabeth died on 16th September 1917, of senility, aged 85 years, at the home of her niece, Agnes Sargent at "Reading", Bridge Street, Sydenham. The doctor attended her the day before. Her son George, gave personal particulars for the death certificate. The last impression of Maria is from the only photo of her about 1915. A friendly, warm outgoing type of person who would have been totally reliable and considerate in regard to the family. Marie was buried on 18th September, 1917 alongside her husband, James. The headstone is now quite worn and difficult to read.

Now only George Daniel Peare was left. He continued to live at 28 Raglan Street, at least until 1932 (end of Sydney directories), probably alone. Extremely little is known about him. George Daniel Peare died on 29th June 1939, aged 77 years, at Royal Prince Alfred Hospital, of cardiac failure, myocardial fibrosis and aortitis. His occupation was given as employee of the Water and Dewerage Board. He was buried in a pauper's grave at Rookwood on 1st July 1939, Church of England, Section NNNN,

Grave No.152. His death appears to have gone unnoticed by the family.

Emma went to Europe and England with Charlie in 1902 and met her relatives for the first time and kept in contact with them afterwards, particularly the family of her Aunt, Susan Cocks. She may have already communicated with members of the family for many years.

About 10th April 1912, Emma went for another trip to England, via Colombo and Suez, with her niece Ethel Sargent. Emma went to the English law courts regarding the will of her grandfather, Daniel Peare, who died 31st December 1863, which said in part "the two children of my deceased son (John) to take one sixth only equally between them." Apparently Emma and Agnes did not receive anything from his small estate. The trustees were now dead and their children were not legally obligated to make restitution. The court case therefore, came to nothing. At least the Will proves that correspondence took place between England and Sydney from the 1850's onwards.

Sarah Emma Haughton, died in hospital in English Street, Kogarah, aged 61 years, on 18th August 1918. Her death was caused by carcinoma of the uterus (4 years), exhaustion and acute intestinal obstruction (21 days). Emma was buried with her mother Elizabeth, on 20th August. Charlie remarried and died in 1941.

On 11th September 1933, William Langham, master mariner, aged 70 (?) years, late of 9 Eurimbla Avenue, Randwick, died of diverticulitis and septic broncho-pneumonia at Sydney Hospital. He is buried in the Woronora Church of England Cemetery, Section 2C, No.97.

On 28th July 1945, at Nepean District Hospital, Alice May aged 76 (?) years, died of arterior-sclerosis and encephalitis. She had been staying with her daughter, Dorothy, at 61 Castlereagh Street Penrith. Information on the death certificate regarding her parentage, is garbled and untrue. Alice is buried with her husband and was the last Peare in the family to die.

\* (copy of Coroner's Report - George Peare. )

" SYDNEY MORNING HERALD - Wednesday August 5th 1868"

Suicide at Cook's River. An inquiry respecting the death of a man named George Pier was held before the City Coroner yesterday, at the Sydney Hotel, Cook's River. Maria Pier widow of the deceased, stated that her husband was about 35 years old, and a native of England; he was a blacksmith and farrier; he was in the habit of drinking to excess, but had not drunk to excess within the last month; about a month ago he suffered from delirium tremens; on the night of the first of July last he said he was tired of his life, and that he could not work, and that he would cut his throat; he attempted to get the razor but she prevented him, and called in some neighbours; the last time she saw him alive was about half-past 6 o'clock last Sunday evening; he was then at home; he had been drinking, but was not drunk, and appeared more cheerful than usual, he had not worked much at his trade for the last twenty months; she supported her husband, her child and herself by sewing; her husband left home about half-past six on Sunday evening, and she saw no more of him alive; except when under the influence of drink, she observed nothing in his manner or conduct to lead her to believe that his mind was impaired; when under the influence of drink he was very irritable.

Joseph Porter, labourer, stated that on Monday evening he went to Wolloi Creek, having heard that a man had been drowned there; on arriving there he found the deceased about 2 feet 6 inches under water, and about 10 feet from the bank; he brought the body ashore; the body was quite dead; there were two wounds of the deceased's neck, and the fingers of both hands were clenched.

Dr Sedgwick stated that on making an examination of the body he found two superficial wounds on the right side of the neck, but they were not of sufficient depth to cause death from bleeding; the other parts of the body were free from bruises or wounds; the body appeared to have been in the water some little time; he was of the opinion that the wounds were inflicted before the deceased went into the water, and that they were self-inflicted; he was also of the opinion that death was the result of drowning. The jury returned a verdict to the effect that the deceased committed suicide by drowning whilst labouring under a fit of temporary insanity."

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*This detailed article on the Peare family, shows what detail can be ascertained of earlier days from certificates, newspaper reports etc., all available to researchers.*

ROBERT SARGENT & HIS WIFE AGNES MARIA PEARE.

- Warren Duff  
Granville - 1981.

Robert Sargent, is listed in 1873 and 1874, as a dealer at 60 Foster Street, Surry Hills. (His father, John, is listed as a dealer in 1864 and 1865 at 313 Sussex Street, Sydney.)

On 17th July 1874, Robert Sargent, aged 22 years, married Elizabeth Peare's first daughter, Agnes Maria Peare, at Elizabeth Street, Sydney (the residence of Dr. Fullerton), according to the rites of the Presbyterian Church. She was just 21 years old. His occupation is given as dealer. Witnesses were Axarias Cook, Robert's brother-in-law ("X" his mark) and Anne Sargent, his sister. Their first child, Amy Elizabeth, was born on 1st September 1874, at 60 Foster St.

For 1875-7 there is no mention of their whereabouts in the directories or electoral rolls. In 1878, Robert is listed as living in Cook's River Road, St. Peters.

John Robert was born at Hirst Street, Arncliffe, on 5th March, 1879. Robert's occupation is given as a gardener.

In 1881 he was a greengrocer at 118 Devonshire (and Holt) Streets. Caroline Edith Maud was born there on 1st March, 1881.

In 1882, Robert is listed as a dealer, Cook's River Road, St. Peter's. A Mrs Crittenden was fruiterer of 118 Devonshire Street. Robert is listed as a fruiterer of 118 Devonshire Street in 1883. Joseph Powell, fruiterer, was at 118 Devonshire Street in 1884. There is no evidence that Robert Sargent was declared bankrupt. He probably left the shop late in 1883.

Emma Agnes was born nearby at 31 Kippax Street, Surry Hills on 21st February 1884. Robert's occupation is still given as dealer.

In 1885, Robert was living at 59 Holt Street, Surry Hills. These premises, as were the others, are now destroyed, but not built upon. By the numbering of the buildings and the scars of adjoining buildings, the site would have contained a series of narrow but deep, connecting, double-storey terrace houses built for the working class. On 24th August, 1885, Ethel Alice was born there. Robert's occupation was now labourer.

Between 1889-1900 the family was living in Hirst Street, Arncliffe. On 11th July, 1890, Robert Leslie was born there and on 4th June, 1891 he died there. On 6th June, 1894, Sidney Cecil Peare Sargent was born there. Between 1901-5, the family moved to 34 Goodsell Street, Newtown/St. Peters.



Now for a more complete history of Robert Sargent.

His occupation was described:

1873, 1874, 1881, 1882, 1883, 1884 - dealer, greengrocer, fruiterer.  
1885, 1890, 1891, 1894, 1898, 1906, 1907, 1913, 1920 - labourer.  
1879 - gardener.

A photo taken about 1900 of a team of men in a lumber yard, include Robert Sargent and his son, Jack. Another photo taken a little later, in the bush, is of Robert and Jack, handling a wagon load of tarpaulined goods drawn by the three horses. They seem to have been good mates.

Robert was very fond of his beer and drank heavily and frequently. However, it is said that he was a good worker.

It has been said that he worked as the gardener for W.G.Judd, at Arncliffe. The hilly land around Arncliffe was generally used as market gardens and orchards, particularly by the Chinese in the early days. Mr Judd went to Arncliffe in the early 1880's. By the mid 1880's he had a large estate called "Atherstane". The west boundary on Hirst Street, was marked by a row of pines which served as a windbreak for the orchard. Scattered about the property were several immense gum trees, survivors of the age old forest, which formerly covered the area. A short distance away was the abrupt sandstone escarpment of Wilcox's Hill, covered with wild flowers and scrawny scrub, giving sparse sustenance to yet another large herd of wandering goats. Mr Judd was still there in the 1920's.

Also it is possible that Robert had a small orchard of his own on the other side of Hirst Street. Around 1908 he is remembered as living alone in a shed where he also stored fruit from his (?) orchard, before delivery to market. He seemed pleased to see visitors, was friendly, and generous with his fruit.

In 1905, Agnes separated from Robert and there was no reconciliation. In 1906-8, he is listed as living at 12 Munn St, Newtown. He moved back to Hirst Street, for a few years because he is listed there for 1911 and 1912. After then, about 1916, he was said to be boarding at Bexley. Possibly he spent his last years in boarding houses.

His drinking was said to have started in the early 1880's when he had the shop and began to socialize. However, it may have occurred much earlier.

The first child, Amy (born 1874) spent a number of her childhood years with her maternal grandmother, Elizabeth Peare. She left home and went into domestic service when aged about 13 to get away from her father.

The next child John (Jack), spent a lot of time with his father, but



eventually stuck by his mother.

The next child, Caroline, (also called Edie and eventually Tot) dreaded her father as a child, and would stay awake at night in expectation of her father's footsteps on the stairs. She spent most of her childhood with her Aunt Emma Haughton.

The next child, Emma, in later years, would not talk of her father. As a child she would sometimes have to go in the pub to ask her father for some money for food.

The next child, Ethel, also would not speak of her father.

The next child, Robert Leslie, died at the age of 10 months from dentition after an operation on his gums. The doctor had not seen him for 15 days, although he had been sick for 4 days. The problem seems to have been a shortage of money. The child died in his mother's arms on the night of June 4th, 1891. He was buried the next day at Rookwood Church of England Cemetery, Section RRR, grave No.221. The grave is unmarked and in a lonely, dilapidated part of the cemetery, and hard to find.

In the 1891 census, everyone was at Hirst Street, except for Amy. Robert Sargent was the informant of his son's death. Not a single example of his signature or any written word by him exists. The shipping records of his arrival in 1858, at the age of 7 years, say that he could read and write. However, they say the same of his 2 year old brother William, so the records cannot be taken seriously. His education in N.S.W. would have been minimal, but perhaps he could read and write.

On 9th April, 1920 Robert was admitted to Rookwood (Lidcombe) Hospital. He died there on 29th May 1920, aged 68 years, of influenza and senile decay, a condition which suggests intemperance and poor diet, prior to his admission. Very little information is on the death certificate, and most of it is wrong. He was buried on 1st June 1920, in a pauper's grave in Rookwood Church of England Cemetery, grave No.2355, Section NNNN, which is unmarked. Agnes had refused to see him in hospital.

So ended the life of a controversial character who seems to have lived hard and died hard. All information regarding him was systematically and almost completely destroyed.

Now for some information on Agnes.

Agnes had about 21 pregnancies, of whom only 7 survived. Miscarriages occurred often because of heavy work she had to perform, such as lifting heavy bags of potatoes and other things in the shop. It seems that she did not have any choice, particularly without labour-saving devices.

On several occasions, in the early years of her marriage, she left her husband. To survive she would take in washing and sewing if she could get the work. However, he would eventually find her and demand entry. Apparently, no laws protected the woman in such cases, and if they did, cost money to enforce. Also society frowned on separation and divorce. Her mother and sister no doubt helped Agnes if they could.

It is said that Robert and Agnes had land at Clontarf, Sydney, and that Agnes burnt the deeds because the rates could not be paid. Agnes had to pawn the family bible on several occasions to buy food for the children.

The earliest photo of Agnes is when she was about 30 years old, with Caroline sitting on her lap. Slim and gnetle featured, she was a little more attractive than her sister Emma. Later on she was said to be rather serious and formidable. Even without her husband, the better days were not so very good. She would save everything in case it was needed later on. She was a very touch and proud woman. Her greatest pride was in her children and she brought them up the best way she could under adverse conditions. The children thought the world of her.

In 1905 she moved to 12 Alice Street, Newtown, and in 1906 she was at 300 Unwin's Bridge Road, Sydenham. Between 1907-1924, she was living at "Reading" (2) Bridge Street, Sydenham, at one time paying about 5/- (shillings) a week rent.

Agnes was a fantastic clothes-maker and her output for her children and grandchildren could be said to be prolific. However, virtually nothing remains. Some superb examples can be seen in photos of her girls, particularly Ethel. She was quite strict with her children and would put up with little nonsense. However, she could not be regarded as being unfair. She was to have a strong influence on her children. Her disciplinary measures were direct and quick. On one occasion, Emmie was seen talking with boys once too often. Agnew flew down the street with her apron still on and gave her a slap in the face.

Agnes had very definite ideas about most things and would not water them down for anyone. She could be considered very strong-willed. She did not approve of singing or playing the piano on a Sunday, nor vulgarity. AU the time of her death she was apparently a member of the Loyal Orange Lodge 317, St. Peter's and St. Peter's Protestant Federation.

Some examples of her writing remain, in one letter and two postcards. It is not too bad considering she most probably left school at about 12 years of age to help her mother in domestic chores. Agnes was to take care of her Aunt, Maria Chisholm, in her old age and possibly helped out with her mother also.

However, the woman could not last forever. She took sick and was

cared for by her daughter, Ethel Madley in Cornelia Road, Toongabbie.

On 8th August 1924, at Parramatta District Hospital, Agnes Maria Sargent, an old age pensioner aged 71 years, died of acute myocarditis (1 day's duration) and diphtheria (3 days duration). The house at Toongabbie was fumigated by going from room to room with burning sulphur, because of the 5 children living there at the time. An old remedy which is now ignored. Agnes was buried on 11th August 1924 at Woronora Church of England Cemetery, Section 2A, grave No.228. The grave inscription is built in white marble of a superior design and is still in good order. She was certainly given royal treatment by everyone concerned.

One of the many notices reads:-

SARGENT - in sad and loving memory of our dear mother,  
Agnes, who passed away August 8, 1924.

"Thoughts return to scenes long past,  
Years roll on, but memories last,  
Her memory still is sweet and dear,  
And treasured with a love sincere."

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