

The STEWART history

The following is a short history of the STEWART family originating in Australia with Alexander Stewart who according to official records arrived in South Australia in 1838 by the "PRINCE GEORGE".

Strangely more is known about Alexander and his experiences than is known about his son William A. Stewart because one of Alexander's children left a written account of the events in Alexander's life.

Alexander worked for the Govt. Survey Dept. in the south east of the state, until on one occasion the working party were attacked by aboriginals with waddies. Leaving the Govt. service he went contracting, supplying timber for the construction of bridges. He bought a small farm on the Para River and as a side-line carted goods from Adelaide to Burra during the copper boom.

On the 25th December 1840 Alexander was married to Ann Green at Holy Trinity Church and it was apparently among the first marriage ceremonies celebrated in that Church.

Our grandfather William A. Stewart was the first child born to Alexander and Ann on 20/8/1841. Subsequently there were 10 other children born to them, but three of those died as very young children. The record of these children is as follows:-

SARAH ANN	D.O.B.	22/ 7/1843	at	OLD TIERS	
SUSAN	"	13/ 9/1845	"	"	
CHRISTINA	"	25/ 7/1847	"	"	
HARRIET	"	18/ 1/1850	at	BAROSSA	
MARY ANN	"	2/ 7/1852	"	"	DIED 11/ 4/1856
GEORGE	"	19/12/1854	"	MUNJIBBIE	DIED 24/12/1854
JOHN	"	20/ 5/1856	"	"	DIED 23/ 1/1857
ALFRED	"	28/ 2/1859	"	BURRA	
DAVID RICHARD	"	15/ 5/1861	"	MEREDAY	
CHARLOTT LOUISA	"	25/11/1862	"	KOORINGA	

In 1851 with his eldest son William, Alexander decided to try his luck at Bendigo gold diggings with reasonable success.

On his return he began sheep farming with Hiles, Chewings and Dare. On the dissolution of the partnership, Alexander acquired TUILKILKEY RUN north east of MUNJIBBIE. His squatting place, STEWARTS OLD STATION, located in the hundred of KETCHOWLA near TUILKILKEY WELL is plainly marked on old pastoral maps. The NORTH EASTERN coach service, traversing the pastoral country of that area, camped at STEWARTS OLD STATION, where the remains of the stable house can still be seen. It has been reported that when Alexander lost everything in this venture, the run was taken over by ELDER & WAITE.

Some years later he took up the lease of 122 square miles near BLACK ROCK, known as MEREDAY, where he grazed 9000 sheep. All went well until the drought of the 1860's, when like many other pastoralists, he was forced to apply to the Govt. for postponement of rent.

Continued harsh seasons drove Alexander out of the pastoral industry and he turned his hand to the Hotel industry. He leased the WHITE HART HOTEL at ABERDEEN (BURRA) and later built the BON ACCORD HOTEL at BURRA in 1876. A prominent Freemason, holding all offices in the BURRA lodge, he was instrumental in forming several lodges in adjoining towns. He laid the foundation stone of the BURRA Institute in 1874, which is still in evidence to-day.

Retiring to Adelaide, he lived with his daughter, who married James G. TERRY of coaching fame. It is believed that he died 25/12/1902 at Glen Osmond. S.A.

To continue with the history of our grandfather William A. STEWART - after his return with his father from the gold diggings at Bendigo, it is assumed that he was involved in his fathers activities, mainly sheep grazing at MEREDAY near BLACK ROCK.

The STEWART family (cont.)

The drought of the 1860's ruined that enterprise. His father Alexander then went into the business of leasing hotels, the first being the WHITE HART HOTEL at BURRA. When his father built the BON ACCORD hotel in BURRA in 1876, William took over the lease of the WHITE HART.

It was during this period at the BURRA that WILLIAM married HARRIET PREECE on 15/4/1872. As far as can be ascertained he later leased other hotels, one at VICTOR HARBOR about 1879, and then the DAWSON HOTEL in the 1880's. After the DAWSON HOTEL project he operated a butcher's shop at Peterborough for a number of years with the assistance of his sons. William and Harriet had six children, three daughters JEAN, THERESE AND GRETA and three sons, WILLIAM, DOUGLAS and GORDON.

In the early 1900's William went with his youngest son Gordon to the WIRRIMINA station in the north of the state. This station was owned or leased by James TERRY, his brother-in-law.

After several years at this station and reaching retiring age, William returned to Peterborough, where he lived with his daughter and son-in-law Jean and John Philp at their farm "PINE GROVE" a few miles north east of Peterborough. William's wife HARRIET died on 28/4/1906 and she was buried at BURRA cemetery where a tombstone marks her grave.

Subsequently William left the farm at Peterborough and went to Adelaide to live with his son Douglas and daughter-in-law Eveline in the suburb of Hyde Park and it is believed that he died there in 1913.

There are no doubt many gaps in this attempt to record the history of Alexander STEWART and his son William STEWART, but hopefully it will assist anyone who is interested in our STEWART history in South Australia.

I have also prepared records of a family tree concerning the descendants of William and Harriet STEWART, namely the six children of that marriage and their many descendants. This too may not be a perfect record, but as complete as could be made from the information made available to me.

Bruce Stewart
