

The gravestone is unreadable being smashed to pieces.

A smashed and unreadable gravestone in Dunedin's northern cemetery looks like it is not worth a second glance. However the stone leads to two very interesting stories: the first story appeared last week, and this story is about one of Thomas Allen's children, Amelia.

Her obituary waxed eloquent about her, but a lot was not factual and has been deleted from this story.

"Many old identities as well as other colonists would feel it as inappropriate that the death of Mrs **Amelia** Muir on the 6th inst., should be merely formally chronicled. The deceased lady was so well and widely known both in and far beyond New Zealand, that a few particulars of her life would be read with interest.

She was born at Bushey Park, near Hampton Court, on December 16, 1814, where her father, Mr Thomas Allen, held the post of land steward to William, The Duke of Clarence, (or the FitzClarence family) rising to the position of 'Head Gardener'. Such was the close relationship with the royal family that many children were named after FitzClarence children who also became godparents to some including Amelia.

In 1836 the family left England on the *Tam O' Shanter* for the new settlement of South Australia, where Mr Allen had received the appointment as botanist to the embryo government. Arriving at Kangaroo Island by the second vessel of the expedition, before the new colony was even proclaimed, they experienced all the vicissitudes of the most primitive colonial type, such as could be fittingly matched by the after-experiences of our Otago pioneers in the year 1848.

Anecdotes in abundance could Mrs Muir tell of those times and of the people who have since become such important folk. Had she jotted down her reminiscences, what interesting and sometimes what "spicy" reading they would have been! She knew personally nearly everyone of note there.

Married in 1846, Mrs Muir extended her knowledge of the colonies by a year or two's residence in Tasmania. Adventures with bushrangers and blacks (for there were aboriginals in Van Diemen's Land in those days) were no uncommon occurrence.

Returning to Adelaide in 1856, she lived for some years at Mintaro, near where the celebrated Burra Burra copper mines were subsequently discovered.

On one occasion the house was broken into by blacks, and on another occasion by some half bred Chilians whom the Burra Copper Mine Company had imported to pack the copper ore on mules' backs from the mine to the port. The occasion of this latter outrage was that the leader of the Chilians had become enamoured of Mrs Muir's nursemaid, who, however, declined to listen to his suit, when the American resolved to try other means and carry the lassie off by force-happily without success.

The name Mintaro (beautiful) re-appears in New Zealand nomenclature, having been given to a newly-discovered lake on the Te Anau Milford Sound track by one of the grandsons of Mrs Muir.

Mrs Muir in 1861 came to New Zealand by the first trip of the s.s. Omeo, Captain J. McLean, and in New Zealand —with the exception of brief visits to the other colonies and one to England in 1886 - she remained until her death.

Her energy, vitality, and mental vigour were remarkable, and she even took a kindly interest in the various religious and philanthropic matters of the day, being life governor of the Benevolent Institution, one of the founders and treasurer for years of the late Servants' Home, and also the Female Refuge, a zealous supporter of the Girls' High School (her daughter having been its first dux) and its club, whose meetings she regularly attended, and a valued working member of St Pauls Guild, where she was actively engaged to within a fortnight of her death.

We have truly lost a connecting link not only with former times and manners but with gentle colonial history of a very far back epoch”.

Mathew Bailey Lockhart MUIR, was born 15 November 1799 in Linlithgow, West Lothian, Scotland. His parents were John MUIR and Margaret NIMMO. Mathew arrived in Hobart 24 October 1834 on the "Numa" with a wife Marion and two sons John and Charles, and he was a bootmaker in Hobart. Marion died 16 March 1843.

Mathew then married Amelia ALLEN 16 December 1845 in Hobart. They moved to Adelaide ca 1849 and in 1850 established the hotel in Mintaro near the Clare Valley. By ca 1856 they had moved to Melbourne where some of Amelia's family were living and where Amelia's mother died in 1856. By ca 1860 they had moved to Dunedin where Mathew died 19 September 1877

Dr Hocken recorded (F&J 11/27) ‘Mrs Amelia Muir came to Dunedin from S.A. in 1861 & kept a boarding house on Bell Hill known as ‘Bedford House’. Her father, Thomas Allen lived with her and her brother, Thomas Mintaro Bailey Allen, was a photographer in Dunedin . A son, Thomas Mintaro Bailey Muir, is of the firm Muir & Moodie, photographers.

Amelia Muir’s died 7 November 1893. Her grave with the smashed headstone in Dunedin’s Northern Cemetery is also the last resting place of Thomas Mintaro Bailey Muir (son and photographer, whose story will follow next week) who died 1945, his daughter Mona Mary Muir who died in 1962, and Mathew Bailey Lockhart Muir, Amelia’s husband, who had died in 1877.

OBITUARY NOTICE OF MRS MUIR,

TO THE EDITOR.

Sir, —Biography is so closely connected with history that it is not right to allow errors, even in an obituary notice, to pass uncorrected, and I therefore allow myself to point out many errors that have crept into this notice, probably owing to the writer having trusted to his own

and to Mrs Muir's memory, and not having referred to authorities. I notice the mistakes in the order they appear.

King William IV had **no** daughter who could be Princess Amelia. The Fitzclarence family had the rank and precedence of duke's younger children granted to them, while the eldest son **was** created Earl of Munster, but no one of them **was** or could be prince or princess. The only Princess Amelia' **was** a daughter of George 111, not of King William IV.

Mr Allen **was** not botanist to the embryo Government of South Australia, for **there was no such office**. The colony **was** intended to be self-supporting— that is to say, until money came in from taxes the government **was** to be provided for by loans and this necessitated great economy, and **no unnecessary office was** created.

The only favour shown Mr Allen **was** that he **was** allowed to squat on the place first chosen for a botanical garden, but which **was** not the site of the present garden, and **was** soon abandoned.

The article in the "Review of Reviews" stating that not one member of the South Australian Cabinet **was** alive when the first number of the Gazette **was** printed is a singular slip. Ministers are necessarily chosen from among young or middle-aged men, and so **there** is nothing in their not having been alive in 1836, when the first newspaper **was** published, but **there** are many now living who can remember that time, notably Mr A. F. Lindsay, several times M.P. for Encounter Bay. The statement that Mrs Muir **was** already a colonist two years before that date is quite impossible, for **there was** not one white person in the colony when the first number of the Gazette **was** published in London, which **was** shortly before the first emigrants left England.

It is stated that the first Governor had as A. D. C. Lieutenant Grey, R.E. Now, neither the first nor the second Governor had an A.D.C. Sir George Grey never **was** an A.D.C, and never **was** in the colony till 1841—and then only for a few days on his return to England after his explorations in Western Australia; and he **was** then a captain in the 83rd Regiment, and **was** not a surveyor or in the Engineers as stated and he most certainly never met the first Governor of South Australia in his whole life.

It is also stated that Mrs Muir knew many South Australians, and Colonel Wakefield is named with them; but that, is an error, as though South Australia **was** founded on the Wakefield principle, none of the Wakefield family went **there**: they all came to New Zealand.

The statement as to Mrs Muir having been in Tasmania during the administration of Sir J. Franklin is wrong as to date, as Sir J. Franklin had left Tasmania at the date stated.

I have corrected many errors, but I have done it in **no** spirit of detraction. I believe all the qualities ascribed to Mrs Muir were justified but it is given to few people to remember correctly for over half a century. If my corrections are impugned, all I have stated can be verified by reference to many authorities, and particularly to a file of the South Australian Gazette and Colonial Register, a copy of which I possess.—I am, &c,

Dr Hocken recorded (F&J 11/27) 'Mrs Amelia Muir came to Dunedin from S.A. in 1861 & kept a boarding house on Bell Hill known as Bedford House. Her father, Allen lived with her & came out to

S.A. as a gardener. Her brother was a photographer in Dunedin . A son [Thomas Mintaro Bailey Muir] is of the firm Muir & M. photographers. **Said that Mrs M. was a natural daughter of George the Fourth'** [probably not but who knows??]

My gg grandfather was Mathew Bailey Lockhart MUIR, born 15 November 1799 in Linlithgow, West Lothian, Scotland. His parents were John MUIR and Margaret NIMMO.

Mathew arrived in Hobart 24 October 1834 on the "Numa" with a wife Marion and two sons John and Charles, he was a bootmaker in Hobart. Marion died 16 March 1843. Mathew married Amelia ALLEN 16 December 1845 in Hobart. They moved to Adelaide ca 1849 and in 1850 established the hotel in Mintaro near the Clare Valley. By ca 1856 they had moved to Melbourne where some of Amelia's family were living and where Amelia's mother died in 1856. By ca 1860 they had moved to Dunedin where Mathew died 19 September 1877. Up to this point the information is reliable.

Now for the family legends

Mathew is reputed to have been the eldest in his family and to have had many siblings. He had a sister Margaret who migrated to Tasmania (or New Zealand) and married a Thomas DOWNIE. I have five children for this marriage, Maggie, Helen, John, Mary Watten, and Jemina Jane.

Mary Watten DOWNIE married her first cousin Thomas Mintaro Bailey MUIR the son of Mathew and Amelia, he was a photographer in Dunedin and Invercargill and died ca 1947. They had two children Philip (died Aug 1934) and Mona Mary (died Dunedin 1961). Philip married a TURNER, Mona never married. Mona is the source of the family legends which are taken from handwritten notes.

Thomas Mintaro Bailey Muir c1853 - 26 June 1945

Thomas Mintaro Bailey Muir was a well known senior partner in the Dunedin photographic firm Muir and Moodie and was previously a partner in the firm Burton Brothers. He was born in Dunedin and his parents Mathew Bailey Lockhart Muir and Amelia, nee Allen,

The Muirs ran the Bedford Boarding house on Bell Hill from the early 1860's until Mathew's death in 1877 when Amelia took it on. The Hocken Library have a great series of panoramic photographs of early Dunedin taken from "Mrs Muir's Boarding House on Bell Hill".

Muir had an interest in astronomy and became an assistant to John Turnbull Thompson, the future Surveyor General, in 1874. Before this he was working in the portrait studio of Peyman and Irwin, called the London Portrait Rooms in Princes St, near the Dowling Street steps.

In 1877, he formed a partnership with Alfred Burton, taking over the portraiture side of the business, which was not attractive to Burton whose passion lay in topographical photography. Muir had his studio directly opposite the main shop of the Burton Brothers in Princes St.

After Burton's retirement in 1898, Muir formed a partnership with George Moodie who had previously been a landscape photographer for the Burton Brothers for several years. Together they renamed the firm Muir and Moodie. Thanks to their early entry into the postcard era, the business was to become almost as famous as its predecessor with an enormous stock of view photographs, and many can still be found turning up in second-hand shops today.

It was Moodie who carried on Alfred Burton's old role as outdoor photographer, while Muir concentrated on the studio work. At the beginning of the new century, however, James Webster became the leading portrait photographer for the firm and Thomas Muir had relocated to a less well known studio in Invercargill where he was assisted by his daughter Mona.

George Moodie left the photography profession in 1916 and went fruit farming, but the name Muir and Moodie was carried on by Webster until 1919, when he started operating under his own name.

Thomas Muir died on 26 June 1945 at age 93 in Broad Bay, where he had bought land and where his brother also lived. He and his wife Mary Watten Downie had two children, Mona Mary and Philip Mintaro. His son Philip shared his father's interest in photography.

Amelia Muir's grave in Dunedin's Northern Cemetery is also the last resting place of Thomas Mintaro Bailey Muir (son and photographer), his daughter Mona Mary Muir who died in 1962, and Mathew Bailey Lockhart Muir, Amelia's husband, who had died in 1877.

Prepared by the Historic Cemeteries Conservation Trust of New Zealand (www.cemeteries.org.nz) from the following

<http://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz/cgi-bin/paperspast?a=d&cl=search&d=ODT18931128.2.65&srpos=17&e=-11-1893--12-1893--10--11--on--2amelia-ARTICLE->

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<http://archiver.rootsweb.ancestry.com/th/read/AUS-SAGEN/2004-12/1103221204> and

<http://boundforsouthaustralia.net.au/ships/passenger-lists/tam-oshanter-passenger-list.html>

Dr Hocken (F&J 11/27)

<http://www.geni.com/people/Amelia-Allen/6000000017045266713>

<http://archiver.rootsweb.ancestry.com/th/read/KIWIGEN/2005-05/1115493138>

<http://www.northerncemetery.org.nz/burial/16680/bio>

Jones, David and Ian Westergaard. 'Whither the First 'Botanical Garden' for Adelaide: The Role and Contribution of Thomas Allen' in *Past Matters: Heritage, History and the Built Environment* (Palmerston North: Massey University, 2006).