

The gravestone is unreadable being smashed to pieces.

Another story has surfaced from the smashed stone of the Muir family in the Northern Cemetery.

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 c1853 and his parents were 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>