



HISTORY ROOM

NEWS



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by Dawn Juers

ELFENBEIN HOUSE, 9 Hutchinson St, GOOLWA

This is the house at 9 Hutchinson Street, Goolwa, which once belonged to my Gt. Gt. Grandfather- Charles Elfenbein and is at present for sale. Charles purchased the land, Allotment 110 on 15th October 1857 for £20.



I am not sure when the house was built but Charles took out a mortgage in 1869 so perhaps this money was to build the house. By then they had six children so where did they all sleep - the house has only two bedrooms?

There was an open inspection recently and Bruce and I and four of my cousins took the opportunity to see inside this lovely little house. The agent could not believe that she had three Gt. Gt. Grandchildren there - all descendants of the original owner. Charles and Anne Elfenbein had ten children, eight were to reach adulthood.

The present owners have kept the property in beautiful condition in the era of its time without depriving them of modern convenience. They are to be commended. It is currently run as a bed-and-breakfast.

Charles and Anne had arrived in Goolwa by July 1856 as Charles is listed as bargemaster on the 'Goolwa' on that date, working for the River Murray Navigation Company @ £7 per month. They had married in Adelaide on 3rd June 1856 so obviously made their way to Goolwa soon after that.

Charles had worked on boats and ships possibly all his life. He had been part of the crew of the 1099 ton ship "Europa" which arrived in Adelaide from Liverpool, England 12th May 1855. There had been a problem with some of the crew as the ship neared Cape Town, where the troublesome crew were put ashore. The 'Europa' continued on its voyage arriving at Port Adelaide on the above date.

The ship had 342 passengers, 160 of which were single women. Anne McNicol was one of these women who had left England to join her brother, James McNicol of Kensington, Adelaide.

I have been unable to find a copy of Charles' will but I was able to purchase a copy of the Probate papers-at great expense I might add!

I presume that Charles made provision for Anne in his will to stay in the home after his death – which was not to be sold until her death. Anne Elfenbein died 22nd June 1898 – fourteen years after Charles.

(A pencil note on the back of a probate folder reads-"All real and personal estate to wife Anne Elfenbein for life and then equally between 7 children." -

Abraham Graham was the executor, but unfortunately he was in England on a visit so the estate was in limbo for some time. (You can read more about his visit in "History Room News" No 125).

On 13th October 1899, Abraham Graham's son wrote to the Registrar of Probates explaining his father, the sole executor, was overseas. A few months later on 14th December 1899, under the Administration and Probate Act the estate was wound up. The house and land sold for £90. Sale of the furniture amounted to £13.5.3. after costs. Each of the following children received £7.4.3.

The children listed were –

Caroline Minna Godfrey; Frederick Henry Elfenbein; James Elfenbein; Albert Julius Elfenbein; Emma Ausgusta Jackes; and Wm Heinrich Bismark Elfenbein.

The eldest two children-Charles John Elfenbein and Lucy Perry were not on the list. Not having access to a copy of the will I have no idea of the reason as they were still alive. (Mind you the sum due was not worth fighting over!)

Further to the confusion there is a note in the Probate papers from E.J. Tucker, solicitor, Strathalbyn to the Registrar of Probates (dated 11th June 1904). "*Dear Sir – re Elfenbein Estate. I send transfer for your Certificate that no duty is payable. The estate was only a very small one and no duty was payable. The property after being kept for many years has only realized £50. Wm Heggaton the transferer is the executor of the deceased executor A. Graham.*"

A. Graham had died 12th Feb 1903.

THIS MEANT THAT THE EXECUTOR OF THE ELFENBEIN ESTATE A. GRAHAM HAS DIED! HIS EXECUTOR – Wm. HEGGARTON NOW HAD THE JOB OF SORTING IT OUT.

What a mess this must have been!



Just think how many feet walked across this door step.

HAPPY RESEARCHING

Dawn

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