

The Stories (So Far) of Five Women, Each of Whom is Part of the *LAURIE Family Ancestry.*

Two of these are our grandfather's side. Three are on our grandmother's side. There is a tree on the last page that shows the relationships. These stories and histories will be updated from time to time as more information comes to light.

1. Henrietta **JONES**
2. Harriet **WITHAM**
3. Margaret Ellen **ECCLES**
4. Ann Martha **GREGORY**
5. Henrietta Pearce **McPHERSON**

The information in these stories comes from a multitude of sources, and most of it has been checked from records by me or by others. Some however is anecdotal and is perhaps less accurate! I owe a big vote of thanks to all those who have contributed to the knowledge in one way or another over the years.

This is intended to be a "live" document, so comments and corrections please to:

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1. Henrietta JONES – lived in Malta and UK.

Henrietta JONES was born 1829 in Bolton, Lancashire as one of six children of Paul JONES b1790 in Birmingham, Warwickshire and Sarah COOPER b1797 in Birmingham, Warwickshire. Her father was a brush maker and died in 1848 in Bolton. Her siblings were William Cooper b1825, Alfred b1827, Sarah b1831, John b1834 and Catherine I (HOWARTH) b1837.

She married William LAURIE in Bolton, Lancashire on 7 Sept 1954. He was of Scottish descent and was a mechanical engineer. He was also born in Bolton, Lancashire. They had at least three children - James b1855, William Jones (or Cooper) b1858, Anne Melita b1862 and Henrietta b1867. I can find no record of William Jones LAURIE other than his birth registration in Bolton (see next para re William Cooper LAURIE).

Interestingly, the family is not shown at all in the 1861 UK Census. It appears that they were overseas at this time, as Anne Melita LAURIE was born to them in Valetta, Malta on 18 October 1862. At present, I can find no records of Anne Melita other than that her birth is recorded in Malta and that she was living with her mother at the 1871 census in UK. William Cooper LAURIE – who is shown in Maltese records as born in England on 9 October 1858 - died in Malta on 14 Oct 1861 aged three. He may however have been named William Jones LAURIE when his birth was registered in UK. Each of the middle names reflects a family name from his mother's side. This is a minor mystery that is yet to be solved.

I can't find the family in the 1881 census either, so they may traveled elsewhere overseas too.

Henrietta's son James LAURIE was an engineer and moved around with his profession. He worked in Queensland for the government on railways and bridges, and moved to St Neots, Buckinghamshire, England before working and dying in Sierra Leone. Her daughter (also Henrietta) went to school in St Neots in Buckinghamshire, and is shown there as a pupil at the 1881 census. Henrietta Junior is in the 1911 UK Census, and she died on the Isle of Wight in December 1949.

Henrietta Senior moved to St Neots when her husband died overseas c1900. She was living there with her daughter Henrietta at the 1891 Census, and died in there on 9 August 1900. Her death was reported by her brother-in-law Reuben Heaton HOWARTH. He was married to her youngest sister, Catherine I JONES.

How is she connected to us?

Henrietta JONES married William LAURIE

- son James LAURIE married Margaret Ellen ECCLES

- son William Joseph Bundock LAURIE married Frances Louisa WITHAM

What more would I like to know about her and her family?

- Why did they go to Malta and then return to England after the 1861 UK Census?
- Why is her second son shown as having two different middle names – William Cooper LAURIE and William Jones LAURIE?
- Where was the family at the 1881 UK Census?
- How did Henrietta Junior end up on the Isle of Wight?
- A photo or two of any of these people would be nice as well!

2. Margaret Ellen ECCLES – two husbands, and a divorce story to be uncovered?

Margaret Ellen ECCLES was born on 10 Nov 1856 in Blackburn, Lancashire to Joseph ECCLES and Elizabeth KIRKHAM. She seems to have been the youngest of eight children all born in Blackburn – Hannah b1836, Betsy b1837, Thomas Kirkham b1839, John b1841, Sarah b1842, Elizabeth (MOSSOP) b1852 and Susannah (YATES) b1854.

At age 19 on 30 Dec 1875, she married Charles Thomas STACEY in Blackburn. They had two children who were also both born in Blackburn - Frederick b1877 and Amy b1880.

By 1888 however, she was in Townsville, Queensland with one of her sisters and working as a nurse. Apparently, Margaret Ellen had divorced (or otherwise left) her husband in Blackburn and left the two young children (Frederick and Amy) with their father when she and the sister emigrated to Australia. Margaret Ellen's Queensland marriage certificate describes her as a "widow"; but her first husband is shown as still alive in the 1901 UK census, as were her two children there! This is the story that is yet to be uncovered.

As yet, I can find no record of the name of the sibling who emigrated with her, but I suspect that it might have been Susannah. If it was, then she also must also have left a husband and child behind in Lancashire.

On 17 Sep 1888 in Townsville, Margaret Ellen married the second time. This time it was to James LAURIE from Bolton in Lancashire. He was a mechanical engineer in the employ of the Queensland State Government. James had worked in England before eventually arriving in Australia where he built bridges and railways for the Queensland Government. He is specifically noted as being the Clerk of Works on the construction of the old South Townsville swing bridge. This bridge is still extant. There are various reports and letters from him in the Townsville City Council archives.

James and Margaret had two children - William Joseph Bundock LAURIE born 1890 in Brisbane, and Marguerite LAURIE born 1892 in Townsville. Her son (WJBL) knew about his English half-siblings apparently, and he certainly kept in touch via letter with his cousin John MOSSOP (son of Elizabeth), and there are various photos of John MOSSOP with Frederick STACEY, the half-brother. The Bundock name comes from a friendship that James had with the then mayor of Townsville - Arthur BUNDOCK.



**Marguerite LAURIE &
her mother Margaret
Ellen LAURIE (nee
ECCLES)**



**William Joseph
Bundock LAURIE**

By 1899 or so, the family had moved to England for the husband's employment on a water tower construction to St Neots in Buckinghamshire. By 1900 however, her husband James had "died of yellow fever in Sierra Leone". As a result, she again took up working as a cloth weaver back in Chorley in Lancashire where she still had relatives on the ECCLES side. This appears to have been a bit of a family scandal for some reason – perhaps something to do with her first marriage?

WJBL had trained as a photographer with James DERBYSHIRE in Chorley, Lancashire, and then emigrated back to Australia. He live firstly in Ipswich as a photographer with WHITEHEADs, and then returning to Townsville where he bought an operating photographic studio business (Clinton Studios). This became LAURIE Studios, and was situated in the main street, Flinders Street. He may have owned another studio as well.

He (WJBL) sponsored his mother and sister to emigrate to Townsville in 1908. Margaret Ellen LAURIE (nee ECCLES) died in Townsville on 4 June 1929 and is buried in the Townsville General Cemetery. Her daughter Marguerite died on 31 December 1941, and is buried in the same cemetery. Neither grave has a headstone.

Margaret Ellen's age is given differently in many of the records. My guess is that the age given at her first marriage (19) is likely to be the most accurate.

How is she related to us?

Margaret Ellen ECCLES married James LAURIE

- William Joseph Bundock LAURIE married Frances Louisa WITHAM

So, there are a few mysteries around this lady.

- Why did she leave her first husband and their two small children when she emigrated to Australia?
- Who was the sibling who emigrated with her?
- When and where did her second husband die in west Africa?
- What happened to the two children from her first marriage?

3. Harriet WITHAM - three husbands and 10 children.

Harriet WITHAM was born 1835 in Sheering, Harlow, Essex as the second youngest of six children born to a farmer, George WITHAM and his wife Mary Ann PEARCE. Harriet's siblings were Mary Ann (TIPLER) b1819, Thomas b1827, Catherine b1829, Rebecca (MURRELL) b1832, and Ann b c1837.

Harriet emigrated to Australia and on 14 mar 1853, married Charles Alfred CRISP in Melbourne, Victoria. He died three months later, and so she moved north childless! He was the first of her three husbands.

She then married William Hugh MCPHERSON in Sydney, NSW on 21 March 1855. They had three children - William Hugh b1855, Henrietta Pearce (WITHAM) b1857, Katherine Ann (WILSON) b1860. This second husband died in 1860 (or perhaps divorced as I can't find a death certificate for him yet), and then she moved north again. Presumably her children moved with her.

On 4 Jan 1860, she married a third time. This time it was to William SAPSFORD in Brisbane. She then had another seven children to this third and final husband. They are Ellen Jane b1861, Amelia Alexandra (CHADWICK) b1863, Eliza (HUMPHRIES) b1866, George James b1870, George b1872, Charles b1873 and Louisa Mary b1876. Only Amelia and Eliza survived to adulthood. The descendants of these two are still living in the Brisbane area and around Queensland.

Harriet died aged 47 in Brisbane and is buried in the Brisbane General Cemetery at Toowong. There is a photo of the original grave site, but the site has now been covered in due to age and decay.

Two of her siblings emigrated to Queensland. Her sister Mary Ann married into a family that is associated with Tippler's Passage on Stradbroke Island, but I have little knowledge of any family that may have eventuated. Her sister Rebecca married into an extensive MURRELL family that was associated with the Newmarket railway station and where there is a street named after them. Again, these MURRELLs are still living in the Brisbane area and throughout Queensland.

A daughter from her second marriage, Henrietta Pearce McPHERSON, married Thomas Francis WITHAM in Townsville in 1881. He is supposedly a second cousin to her. The most logical connection to achieve this is through her grandfather George WITHAM, and through her husband's grandfather Thomas WITHAM. Both grandfathers came from the same general area (one from Bishops Stortford in Hertfordshire, and the other from nearby Harlow in Essex). It seems likely that they were both sons of Edward WITHAM and Susanna QUILTER who were married in Great Canfield, Essex on 17 December 1781.

I have very few photos from this branch - just a couple of Henrietta Pearce in her later years.

There are many descendants from William Hugh McPHERSON (three children) and from his sister Katherine Ann McPHERSON in particular (maybe 10 children). They seem to be all around Queensland and possibly western NSW.

How is she related to us?

Harriet WITHAM married William Hugh McPHERSON

- Henrietta Pearce McPHERSON married Thomas Francis WITHAM
 - o Frances Louisa WITHAM married William Joseph Bundock LAURIE

Well, what would I like to know about Harriet and her family?

- What was the connection between the WITHAMs? Were they indeed second cousins?
- Well a few other photos would be nice to have. Perhaps one of the other Brisbane families has one. I have some to swap.

4. **Ann Martha GREGORY** – *eloped to the Antipodes?*

Ann Martha GREGORY was supposedly born in 1833 in London. I cannot find any sign of her birth in the records, although there are some likely candidates including one who was a servant in London according to the 1851 Census. Even the date is in doubt.

She arrived in Port Lyttleton (Christchurch) New Zealand in December 1851 on the *Cornwall*. There, on 22 March 1852, she married the second mate of the *Cornwall* – William WITHAM of Bishops Stortford, Hertfordshire. The story seems to be that they eloped with the intention of marriage.

After a time they sailed together to Melbourne where their first child was born on board ship in Hobson's bay on 12 Nov 1852. This daughter (Elizabeth Bain WITHAM) was named after the captain of the ship (*Pauline*) in which they had traveled to Australia.

They had five children of whom four survived to adulthood. All but the first child were born in Queensland. They are Elizabeth Bain (GINN) b1852, Thomas Francis b1855, Annie Lydia (FLAY) b1859 and Frances Martha (GIVEN) b1863. One son Thomas Francis married Henrietta Pearce McPHERSON who was the daughter of Harriet WITHAM. These two were supposedly second cousins – possibly through their common grandparents in Hertfordshire. (See Harriet WITHAM story above.)

Ann Martha and her husband William WITHAM moved to Queensland where they managed a hotel in Drayton (Bull's Head Inn) and then another hotel in Toowoomba. It seems that, for a period, William sailed regularly between Brisbane and Sydney and even discovered a new channel into the port of Brisbane. In March 1864, her husband drowned in the Brisbane River; however there is no death certificate or burial details around – just newspaper notices of the discovery of his body at Luggage Point.



Captain William WITHAM Ann Martha WITHAM (nee GREGORY)

Ann then moved to Brisbane where she managed the Dunmore Arms Hotel (later the Treasury Hotel) in George Street. She died in Brisbane on 4 Oct 1865, supposedly “of a broken heart”. This could be a euphemism for something else? She was buried in the original cemetery in Paddington Brisbane. There is no cemetery record of this burial, or of any removal of her remains with the others that were exhumed and re-interred at the

new Toowong Cemetery. The old Paddington Cemetery firstly became Lang Park, and then Suncorp Stadium was built on this site.

After her death the children were fostered out. Thomas (Tommie) was cared for by a Mr and Mrs WRIGHT. Their part in his upbringing is remembered via the middle name of one of his children – George Wright WITHAM.

Many of the GINNs still live in Brisbane and in other parts of Queensland, as do members of the FLAY and GIVEN families. I have some information on these.

How is she related to us?

Ann Martha GREGORY married William WITHAM

- Thomas Francis WITHAM married Henrietta Pearce McPherson
 - o Frances Louisa WITHAM married William Joseph Bundock LAURIE

What would I like to know about Ann Martha and her family?

- Well, firstly who were her parents? The forename Francis is very prominent in her descendents, and so perhaps was her father's name? It does not appear in earlier WITHAM families.
- Secondly, what is the cousin connection in Hertfordshire with her husband? Were their grandfathers siblings?
- Why did she emigrate to NZ? Was it an elopement, or did they meet on the ship?
- Where is she buried? Is she still buried at Lang Park?
- Where is her husband William buried? In 1864 it should have Lang Park as well.
- Who were the WRIGHTs and what happened to them?

5. Henrietta Pearce McPHERSON – baker and confectioner

Henrietta Pearce McPHERSON was born in Sydney on 25 August 1857 to William Hugh St Clair McPHERSON and his wife Harriet WITHAM. She died on 10 January 1923 in Townsville. She is buried in the old West End Cemetery with her husband and infant children.

Henrietta had two siblings – William Hugh b1855 and Katherine Ann (WILSON) b1860. She had seven half brothers and sisters through her mother's third marriage to William SAPSFORD – Ellen Jane b1861, Amelia Alexandra (CHADWICK and WRIGHT) b1863, Eliza (HUMPHRIES and HIGGS) b1866, George James b1870, George b1872, Charles b1873 and Louisa Mary b1876. All half siblings died young except for Amelia and Eliza who had large families themselves. Of her full siblings, Katherine had a large family.

In 1881 in Townsville she married a baker and confectioner – Thomas Francis WITHAM. They are supposedly second cousins. Together they operated bakeries and confectionery, and cafe businesses in Townsville. Relevant names are – Kelvin Grove factory and Mia Mia Cafe in Flinders Street.

They had seven children – Frances Louisa (LAURIE) b1882, Isabel (PUGH) b1884, William Thomas b1886, Thomas Francis b1888, George Wright b1891, George Robert b1893 and Gregory McPherson b1896. Both Georges died young.

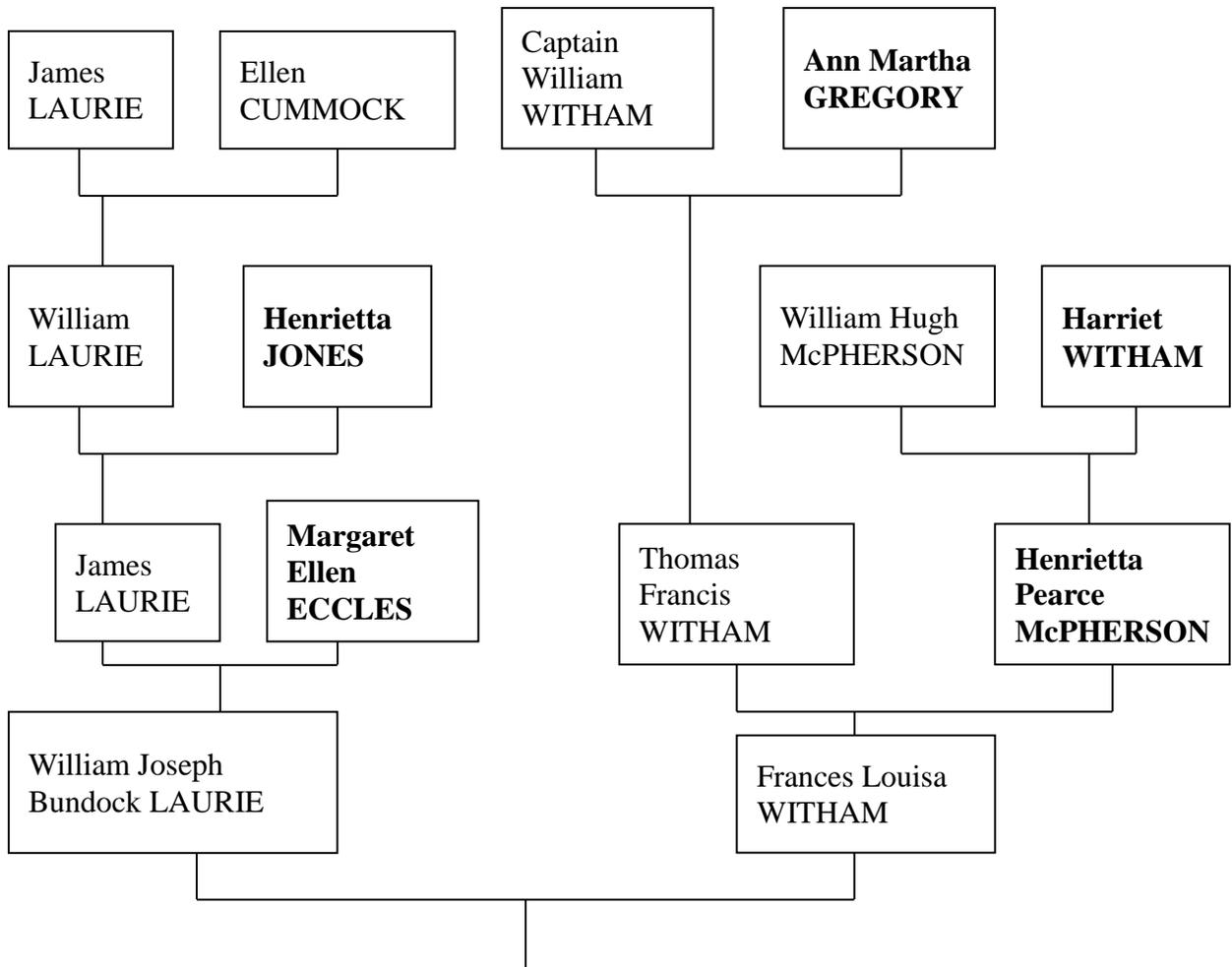
When her husband died in 1908, she took over the operation of the businesses and successfully developed them. There are records of government tenders that she won for the supply of bread to government institutions. The businesses were taken over after her death by a son-in-law (Alfred Ingram PUGH), but seem to have faded away.

How is she related to us?

Henrietta Pearce McPHERSON married Thomas Francis WITHAM
- Frances Louisa WITHAM married William Joseph Bundock LAURIE

What would I like to know about Henrietta Pearce and her family?

- What caused the demise of apparently successful businesses?



How the Five Ladies Fit into the Ancestry of WJB LAURIE and FL WITHAM (abridged)