

JOHN CUNNING

Was born in FALKIRK, STIRLING, SCOTLAND on 2 APR 1797, the son of WILLIAM and CHRISTIAN (nee DRUMMOND). On 15 AUG 1823 JOHN married HELEN NICHOL and they had two children, both born in FALKIRK:

JEAN	Born 3 JUL 1824	Christened 18 JUL 1824
WILLIAM	Born 15 NOV 1826	Christened 19 NOV 1826

Following the death of HELEN, JOHN married MARION ERSKINE on 22 OCT 1829. They had seven children in Scotland, born in FALKIRK, with the exception of ROBERT (born BANNOCKBURN) and JAMES, whose birthplace is unknown, but whose Tombstone shows "Native of MENSTRAY", (Shown as MENSTRIE on some maps) The births of ROBERT and JAMES were not recorded. Their youngest son JOHN was born in MELBOURNE. Children to the marriage were:

ELIZABETH TURNBULL	Born 31 DEC 1830	Christened 16 JAN 1831
WILLIAM ERSKINE	Born 29 OCT 1832	Christened 2 DEC 1832
CHRISTIAN	Born 2 AUG 1834	Christened 31 AUG 1834
MARION	Born 31 MAY 1836	Christened 26 JUN 1836
ANDREW ERSKINE	Born 25 APR 1838	Christened 13 MAY 1838
ROBERT ERSKINE	Born 15 MAY 1840	
JAMES ERSKINE	Born 1843	
JOHN	Deceased (No details)	
JOHN	Deceased (No details)	
JOHN	Born 19 AUG 1852	

JOHN was a weaver like his father (See "Father's Profession" on the Death Certificate of his son WILLIAM ERSKINE CUNNING), although the ship's papers show him as a farm labourer and after the weaving machine was introduced there was a great depression. At the age of 52 (the ship's papers show 48 and his wife as MARY), with JEAN from his first marriage and seven other children, he migrated to Victoria on the "ANN MILNE", which sailed from GRAVESEND on 9 FEB 1849 and arrived in PORT PHILLIP on 19 MAY 1849, a voyage of 100 days. The ship was a 564 ton Barquentine which was (according to the Oxford Dictionary) a "Three masted vessel, with foremast square rigged, main and mizzen fore and aft rigged."

The Disposal List of Immigrants shows JOHN as "Gone on own resources" which means that he did not have an employer and would seek his own livelihood. His son WILLIAM, from his first marriage. then aged 23, is thought to have gone to U.S.A.

The family lived in FLINDERS LANE and later at 152 BOURKE ST. (See rate notices) until 1853. The Melbourne City Council advised that the rates were paid by the owner, so it appears that JOHN owned the premises in both streets. The Annual Value of the FLINDERS LANE property was 16 Pounds in 1850, whilst BOURKE ST. was 30 Pounds in 1851/1852 and 130 Pounds in 1853. His daughter MARION'S marriage certificate shows his residence in JAN 1859 as TULLAMARINE.

The children attended school at St. JAMES OLD CATHEDRAL, although they were strict Presbyterians. It is said that there was a letter from Lady Abercrombie telling the parents to send the children to Sunday School and Church, Presbyterian if possible.

Later after the gold rush to BALLARAT, the family moved to SPRINGHILL in the NEWLYN district, where MARION died of cancer. After her death JAMES and family moved to JOHN'S farm to look after him. JOHN is reported to have been very demanding and difficult in his old age, dressed "just so" and placed on his verandah with a table and large Bible. Rate notices for the area show that JOHN owned 25 Acres at SPRING HILL in the KINGSTON district.

JOHN died on 14 APR 1880, aged 83 years, from diarrhoea and exhaustion. He was buried in CRESWICK Cemetery on 16 APR 1880, PRESBYTERIAN SECTION I...57 Rev. WILLIAM ROBINSON, Presbyterian minister officiating. The Tombstone has been vandalized and is now in four pieces, although the Epitaph is still quite legible. JAMES ERSKINE, the infant son of JAMES and ANNIE CUNNING and JOHN'S wife MARION are also buried in this grave.

JOHN'S will left a total of 3060 Pounds, 350 Pounds in Real estate and 2710 Pounds in Personal estate. Legacies amounting to 2000 Pounds were distributed to his children living at that time, JEAN and CHRISTIAN having predeceased him. JAMES inherited the residue of the estate. Regarding the legacies to his daughters, the Will states "And the last two legacies to be paid to my said daughters personally for their respective use and free from any control or engagement of any husband."

The distribution of the estate is as follows and a comparative value of money in 1993 is also shown. \$41.42 is the figure supplied by the IBIS group as being the purchasing power in 1993 of \$1 in 1880. The Reserve Bank gave a figure of \$41.09 in 1901 (When their records began).

<u>LEGACY</u>			<u>TODAY'S VALUE</u>
WILLIAM ERSKINE	400 Pounds	\$800	\$33136
ANDREW ERSKINE	400 Pounds	\$800	\$33136
JOHN	400 Pounds	\$800	\$33136
ROBERT ERSKINE	350 Pounds	\$700	\$28994
ELIZABETH TURNBULL	250 Pounds	\$500	\$20710
MARION	200 Pounds	\$400	\$16567
JAMES ERSKINE	<u>1060 Pounds</u>	<u>\$2120</u>	<u>\$87810</u>
TOTAL	<u>3060 Pounds</u>	<u>\$6120</u>	<u>\$253489</u>

MARION CUNNING (NEE ERSKINE)

ANDREW ERSKINE was born in 1775 and married ELIZABETH (JANET) TURNBULL in POLMONT STIRLINGSHIRE circa 1798. Children to the marriage were:

JAMES	Born	POLMONT	10 JUL 1800	
MARION	Born	POLMONT	5 MAY 1802	
WILLIAM	Born	POLMONT	22 MAR 1804	Died 29 NOV 1858
JANET	Born	LARBERT	20 APR 1806	Died 3 MAR 1894
MARION	Born	LARBERT	2 JAN 1809	Died 12 OCT 1879
JOHN	Born	LARBERT	29 DEC 1810	
ANDREW	Born	LARBERT	21 JAN 1812	
ROBERT	Chr.	LARBERT	15 DEC 1813	
ELIZABETH	Chr.	LARBERT	18 MAY 1816	
MARION	Chr.	LARBERT	27 MAY 1818	
ANDREW	Born	LARBERT	12 SEP 1820	Died 13 FEB 1869
JOHN	Born	LARBERT	29 SEP 1822	
THOMAS	Born	POLMONT	22 JUN 1825	
ALEXANDER	Born	POLMONT	12 FEB 1830	

It appears that MARION, born 1802 JOHN, born 1810, and ANDREW born 1812, died at birth, or in infancy.

ANDREW died in 1851 and the Census for that year showed him as living "At the end of the village of SHIELDHILL."

The SCOTS ANCESTRY RESEARCH SOCIETY established that MARION'S parents lived at "CROSSHALL" in POLMOT. ELIZABETH ERSKINE (TURNBULL) died at SHIELDHILL, POLMOT on 11 AUG 1867, aged 84. Her parents were JOHN TURNBULL, Coachman and MARION (nee GILLAN) according to the information given by her son ALEXANDER at the time of her death. However the Research Society could find no registration of her birth. The birth of an ELIZABETH TURNBULL on 10 OCT 1783 was found, father WILLIAM, mother MARION (nee LIVINGSTONE). This date is in keeping with her age and one possible explanation is that WILLIAM married twice and that ALEXANDER gave an incorrect name of his grandfather.

Mrs. H. Erskine (no relation) wrote that SHIELDHILL is in FALKIRK and that "CROSSHALL" was demolished and a new school built there. The copy of an old map which she sent shows the location of the farm.

MARION died from cancer of the stomach on 12 OCT 1879 and was buried in CRESWICK cemetery on 14 OCT 1879, Rev. MARTIN DYSON, Wesleyan Minister taking the service.

ABOUT THE CUNNING'S GOLD MINE.

On 11 AUG 1873, the Agreement, Rules and Regulations of the CUNNING'S FREEHOLD GOLD MINING CO. NO LIABILITY were drawn up. The agreement is similar to the Articles of Association of a Ltd. Company setting out procedures for the administration of the enterprise. "No Liability" means that the shareholders are under no liability to pay calls on their shares, but failure to do so results in share forfeiture. The Capital of the company was 2880 Pounds, in 2880 shares of 1 Pound each. The shareholders were:

<u>Names, Addresses Occupations</u>			<u>Shares</u>
CUNNING	James, Spring Hill, Farmer		160
WHALLEY	Robert, Creswick, Broker		160
LUTTIT	David, Creswick, Storekeeper	160	
MILNER	Abraham, Creswick, Milkman		160
MILNER	Edwin, Creswick, Miner		160
ALLAN	Richard, Scrub Hill, Farmer		160
TAIT	John, Creswick, Publican		160
DUNNE	James, Creswick, Storekeeper		160
ROWELL	Thomas, Creswick, Timber Merchant		160
SMITH	James, Creswick, Broker		160
MACEY	Robert, Creswick, Broker		160
MARTIN	F. N., Creswick, Newspaper Proprietor		160
MITCHELL	Mrs J. A., Widow		160
ZIELE	Conrad, Creswick, Painter		80
RYNHART	Henry, Creswick, Stationer		160
CUNNING	Mrs. John, Spring Hill		160
CROSSY	Julius, Creswick, Photographer		160
WATSON	Joseph, Creswick, Miner		160
SPUNNER	William, Creswick, Bootmaker		80

The Registered Office of the company was Albert St. Creswick

The company was under the management of a Board of 5 Directors, each of whom "Shall hold at least 30 shares."

The first Registered Manager of the company was ROBERT MACEY and the first Board of Directors was:

E. MILNER
JOSEPH WATSON
DAVID LUTTIT
ROBERT WHALLEY

JAMES CUNNING

The document was lodged with The Registrar General in Melbourne on 16 AUG 1873, with Stamp Duty of 1/4 i.e. 16 Pence (13 Cents).

The Agreement was altered in FEB 1875, amending the number of shares to be held by a Director to 50. ROBERT MACEY remained manager, but the Board changed with JOSEPH WATSON and JAMES CUNNING retiring and WILLIAM GRAHAM and LEONARD R. CARTER being elected.

The amended document was lodged with The Registrar General on 20 FEB 1875, with Stamp Duty of 6 Pence (5 Cents).

The mine is mentioned in "Buried Rivers of Gold" by J.H.W. George, which shows tables on pages 58 and 59. Dividends and Royalties are shown as 22980 Pounds (\$45960) and production as 9261 ounces of gold. In September 1993 an ounce of gold is valued at around \$350, so production in today's terms was \$3,241,350. In the years 1887-1890, broker's figures show the value of gold as 3.888 Pounds (\$7.776) per ounce. The value of production at that time would therefore be \$72013.

It is interesting to note that W. B. LEES J.P., who witnessed the documents was the Creswick Coroner (See JEAN'S Death Certificate).

The mine was painted (Water colour) in 1876 by T.G. Moyle, who called the work "A View of Cunning's Freehold Gold Mining Companies Claim Spring Hill near Creswick feb 1876." The water colour is currently displayed in the Ballarat Art Gallery.

CUNNING'S mine is shown on two maps. Firstly on the "Creswick Gold Field Lithograph of 1880" (reprinted by the Government Printer 1981) and also on the "Geological Survey of Victoria Bulletin No. 62, Map No. 5 Creswick". The first map shows the mine some 400 yards or 360 meters south of "Wallace's Hotel" and the second near the town of Allendale. The Liquor Licensing Commission stated that Wallace's Hotel, later re-named the Junction Hotel was in Allendale, but surrendered the licence on 31 July 1913. Since that time the building has been a private residence.

The present owners of the property showed us where the mine was located and also the RYRIE mine. At the time the mines were operating, they were situated in the township of WALLACETOWN, a small town with several houses and a church. All of the old building have long since been pulled down and only the old hotel building remains. Today it is classed as being in ALLENDALE, although that town is some kilometres away.