

TURNBULL - EBENEZER PIONEERS OF THE HAWKESBURY

Journal by  [janilye](#)

THE TURNBULLS'

When John Turnbull and his wife, Ann Warr Turnbull, left their native village Of Annan in Dumfriesshire in Scotland (Annan, by the way, is just across the Border from the English town of Carlisle in Cumberland) - Annan is also famous as being the birth place of Lieut. Col. George Johnston, the crusher of the Rouse Hill rebellion of 1804, later on to become the tool of that unspeakable bully and land monopolist, John Macarthur, and when George Johnston received grants for his service to the military oligarchy (the Rum Corps officials), he used his native town's name as a prefix to his several estates, hence Annandale, Annan Lodge, Annangrove, etc.

But to come back to the Pioneer Turnbolls.

John Turnbull had established a business in London as a tailor's cutter, where he had pursued that calling since about the age of 22 years. When in the year 1802 the couple heard that free settlers were wanted in New South Wales to cultivate the soil, he was induced to come here along with nine other families, with the promise of 100 acres of land each on their arrival, and rations for a certain period afterwards, with the services, of two assigned Government men, assured also to them. (Settlers were usually allowed one assigned man for each 50 acres in their possession.)

The story of Australia can be told in the lives of such as this worthy couple and their descendants.

The Turnbolls' early struggles, as told in the lives of these pioneers, contain strange chapters of personal effort, fierce hardships, of defeat and victory, of disaster and triumph. The practical elements which made for success were predominant and to the fore. It was but the qualities of endurance and strength which tell in a new country. Of the Turnbolls, it may be said they were what faith and circumstance made them.

John Turnbull must have been of rugged, persevering stock, with the blood of the old Covenanters in him, and his life's story is well worth the telling.

John Turnbull, pioneer, the founder of the family of Hawkesbury Turnbolls, was born in the year 1750, learnt the trade of a tailor's cutter, and with his wife set up in business in London, where a number of children were born, those being

the names of the English-born children of John and Ann Warr Turnbull, and their respective ages were in the year 1802 (as per "Coromandel" list).—

Ralph (I.), aged 10 years; Mary, aged 5 years; James, aged 4 years; and Jessica, aged 19 months.

All the children of John TURNBULL 1751-1834 and Ann WAUGH/WARR 1768-1819 were:-

Ralph TURNBULL 1791–1840 m: Grace CAVANOUGH 1794-1828

Mary Ann Turnbull 1792–1792

John Turnbull 1794–1796

Mary Ann Turnbull 1795–1825 m1: James Hartley m2: James Wright

James Warr Turnbull 1798–1881

Jessica Turnbull 1800–1882 m: Denis Benjamin KIRWIN 1795–1851

John Turnbull 1803–1881

George Turnbull 1806–1885 m:Louise CHASELING 1809–1892

William Bligh TURNBULL 1809–1892 m: Sarah DAVIS 1822–1906

After this pioneer couple acquired the 100 acres land grant just below where Stands Ebenezer Church on the Hawkesbury, and where the pioneer built a stone residence on a high headland of the river (still there) — the place is worthy of preserving, in all conscience. There it was that great and good man, Dr. J. D. Lang, was "put up" on the various occasions of his visits to the Hawkesbury, and to the worthy minister Pioneer Turnbull told his experience at the hands of Governor King on his arrival y the "Coromandel" on the 13th June, 1802.

After personally interviewing each settler that arrived on that occasion, the Governor, coming to Turnbull, exclaimed, "One foot in the grave and the other out of it! What brought you here, old man?"

It is remarkable of the physical fitness and diligence that the pioneer lived to the age of 86 years; indeed, the Ebenezer "Burial Register Entry" of John Turnbull's death records his age at death as being 91 years!

On the 100 acres of land was grown wheat and other cereal crops. John Turnbull's name often appears in the lists of tenders for supplies to the

government in issues of "The Sydney Gazette" newspaper, of wheat, pork and beef.

On the Turnbull grant was also a fine orchard planted by the pioneer, where various kinds of stone and citrus fruits grew in abundance. On one occasion Pioneer Turnbull, in the late twenties of 19th. century, was taking a cart load of peaches for sale into the markets at Sydney and was "stuck up" by that notorious bushranger of the time, Russel Crawford, on the Parramatta-road, near what is now Grace Bros.' establishment. The old pioneer held his own and beat the ruffian off until assistance arrived.

I may here remark that Russel Crawford in the year 1832 was hanged in Sydney after his conviction for attempting to murder Mr. George Banks Suttor by stealing up on the back of the chaise in which Suttor was driving and delivering him violent blow on the head. That blow affected Mr. Suttor all the rest of his life, although he lived to the great age of 80 years, only dying on the 27th October, 1879 (after a fall from his buggy) at his ancestral home residence and farm 'Chelsea Park,' Baulkham Hills (the original George Suttor's grant).

The story of Mr. George Banks Suttor and his wife, Jane Johnston, an Australian-born daughter of Andrew Johnston the first, will be told later.

To come back to Pioneer Turnbull, I find that he was one of the settlers who in the year 1816 gave a donation of ten shillings to the "Waterloo Fund", to be sent to England to relieve widows and orphans whose soldier-husbands were killed in the Battle of Waterloo (1815). That list contained the names of 239 subscribers in all, and the amount in cash collected totalled £231/8/- (quite a respectable sum of money in those days). From time to time I intend to quote the amounts given by Hawkesbury pioneers that came by the "Coromandel" — not in any way for comparison, but to show their unswerving loyalty to the old land, and also for their good deeds of charity to those bereaved by war.

Ralph Turnbull (I.), eldest and English-born son of the pioneer, contributed £1 to this fund. But one of the proudest achievements, that can be spoken of with pride by the descendants of John Turnbull the first, is the fact of his being one of the main principals (it may be said that there were fifteen in all) who were the founders of Ebenezer Church. In a family bible of the pioneer there is inscribed in his handwriting: 'I have agreed this day to contribute £5 per year to a minister for Ebenezer Chapel' for a date in the year 1817 (for which exact date and month the writer has mislaid his note). There was also a note stating the date of his arrival in the 'Coromandel' in the year 1802. All these references are extremely valuable for the records of history, because when notes of events are made at the actual times one can judge them as being quite veracious and accurate.

After the pioneer occupied his holding at Ebenezer there were born to John and Ann Warr Turnbull three Australian-born children, respectively named: John (II.), born year 1804; George (I.), born year 1806; and William Bligh, born year 1809.

It is a great misfortune that no portraits of the Pioneers of Ebenezer exist, of any of those famous in after years that came by the 'Coromandel.' The reason is very simple — the earliest form of daguerreotype photo was not invented until the year 1839, and then in very imperfect form; and mostly all of the pioneers died before that year with a few exceptions, and in those exceptions no efforts had been made by the families to secure pictures of their ancestors; but the times were hard, and the pioneers did not appear to have been willing to leave the old places. In some cases the pioneers' children did not even visit the neighboring town of Windsor on any occasion but once. So that it is our misfortune that we cannot look upon their faces and see what manner of folk they looked in replica and in life.

To return to John Turnbull (I.). The pioneer himself appears to have been a rigid Presbyterian, although it has been stated that all of the men folk who were original founders and thus fathers of Ebenezer Church were Nonconformists, or dissenting Protestants to the forms of divers church forms of service. My own opinion is that Turnbull was a staunch believer in the Presbyterian form of service. However that may be, Mrs. Ann Warr Turnbull was an adherent of the Church of England form of worship, and when that good woman died her sentiments and wishes were respected. At her request, Mrs. Ann Turnbull at her death was buried in The beautiful burial ground of St. John's Church of England on the hill at Wilberforce.

Perhaps in all Australia there is no more beautiful a cemetery than it, over looking the delightful valley of the Hawkesbury. The inscription- there says:

Sacred To the Memory of
Mrs. ANN TURNBULL,
Wife of Mr. John Turnbull,
Who departed this life December 19th, 1819,
Aged 54 years.

With A.T. on footstone on grave. Long side is the grave of her English born daughter, Mary, who was married first to James Hartley and secondly to James Wright. On a smaller headstone is inscribed:—

Sacred to the Memory of
(Mrs.) MARY WRIGHT,
Who departed this life
February 11th, 1825.
Aged 28 years.

Actually this lady, was 30 years of age, according to my 'Coromandel' list, and I take that list of names and ages to be authentic.

There were four children left as orphans after Mrs. Wright's death, two boys and two girls.

Ralph Turnbull (I.), the English-born, son of the pioneer, married firstly Miss Grace Cavanough, daughter of Owen Cavanough (I.), a seaman, one time of the 'Sirius,' but long since a farmer-settler at Ebenezer, and later of the first branch of the Hawkesbury (Colo, as it was called afterwards). By Grace Cavanough

Ralph Turnbull (I.) had five children — Ralph Turnbull (II), who married firstly Miss Sarah Reynolds, and secondly Miss Sarah Cross. The second Ralph (or 'Rafe,' as Hawkesbury people sound it) was the father of Ralph (III.) and William Turnbull (twin sons), both of Wilberforce, and of Mrs. Lucinda Lockart, of Windsor, and others, the mother being, of course, the first wife (nee Sarah Reynolds). It is interesting to know that Mrs. Lockart still has in her keeping the white waistcoat which her father wore at the marriage ceremony with Miss Sarah Reynolds, which took place at Colo in the year 1840. The vest appears quite as good to-day as it then was.

The texture must have been good, of good material. Ralph Turnbull (II.) married the second time when he was 73 years of age, to Miss Sarah Cross. The second wife pre-deceased him, dying on the 8th of November 1898, aged 58 years.

Mrs. Sarah Reynolds-Turnbull died October 15th, 1886, aged 63 years.

Ralph Turnbull (II.) died at the age of 86 years and 8 months, on the 14th February, 1901, at Wilberforce. They are buried in a family grave along with other members of his family at St. John's cemetery, Wilberforce.

Other children of Ralph Turnbull (I) and his wife Grace Cavanough were respectively:— Mary, who became firstly Mrs. James Dunston, secondly Mrs. Gurney; Elizabeth, who became Mrs. John Dunston; Ann who became Mrs. Richard Cox; (this lady was the mother of Alderman Samuel Cox, of Pitt Town); John, who married firstly Miss Elizabeth Arnold, and also a second time (writer cannot just now locate the name).

Ralph Turnbull (I.) by his second wife Mrs. Mary Ann Riley Turnbull, had the following children:— Eliza, Jane, Sarah, Maria and Andrew. The second wife of Ralph Turnbull (I.) long out-lived him. She married also a second time, to Mr. James Ferris, to whom she bore a large family. That family removed to Grafton, N.S. Wales where Mrs. Mary Turnbull Ferris died. Ralph Turnbull (I.) is buried

alongside his first wife (nee Grace Cavanough) at St. Thomas' burying ground, Sackville, where the inscriptions read: —

Sacred to the Memory of
Mrs. GRACE TURNBULL,
Who departed this life Feby. 1st, 1828
Aged 33 years.
The other reads: —

Sacred to the Memory of
Mr. RALPH TURNBULL,
Who departed this life November 18th, 1840,
Aged 49 years.

Mr. Ralph Turnbull (I.) originally had a grant of land which had been promised to his father, dated 14th June, 1811, of 60 acres, adjoining the original 100 Acres Turnbull grant, the actual grant of which was not made until just a month before Ralph's death, the date being 21st October, 1840. However, Ralph Turnbull (I.) had a nice grant of good land at Colo, of 100 acres, which he lived on continuously and reared two families there. Although the date of promise is given as 1st December, 1821, the grant itself was only made on the 8th February, 1836.

Mr. Ralph Turnbull (I.) named the Colo property 'Andale,' situate on the Colo river, and adjoining Owen Cavanough's (I.) grant, as the records say. It is evident that Ralph (I.) named the place 'Anndale,' after his mother's Christian name, but due to lack of knowledge of spelling, the clerk in the Surveyor-General's Department, Sydney, of the time, misspelt it. I am of opinion that that farm at Colo is a very historical place for many reasons, of which more anon. I believe it to be the exact place whereon lived Mrs. Mary Hartley (nee Mary Turnbull, of the 'Coromandel'). Some time again I will refer to a Siletta orange tree that is still existing on 'Andale,' and bearing fruit each year, though it is over 90 years old. It was planted by Mrs. Gurney, Ralph's eldest daughter, Mary, when she was a mere girl.

I come now to Miss Jessica Turnbull the second English-born daughter of the pioneer, whose age was one year and seven months when Mr. and Mrs. Turnbull came aboard the 'Coromandel' 'at Deptford on the Thames in the year 1802. This very good woman when she arrived at the age of 19 years

married Mr. Denis Benjamin Kirwan, who had a grant of 40 acres of land at Sackville. Tizzana vineyard and the stone house used as a residence by Dr. Fiaschi is in the main the actual building erected by Mr. Kirwan. Of course there have been many additions made to the house by the doctor, who has also vastly increased the original property in area by purchase from other holders. Mr. D. B. Kirwan had a flour mill on his grant which was worked by a waterwheel. Grain was brought for gristing to it by settlers from up and down the river for many miles distant. The memory of the old mill wheel is still mentioned by old Hawkesburyites, but it long since is a thing of the past.

Mrs. Jessica Kirwan bore ten daughters and two sons to Mr. Kirwan. The eldest girl, who married a Mr. Everingham (Elizabeth Everingham) lived on her property facing the river Hawkesbury at the rear of Tizzana Cellars and residence, and a large tomb is still to be seen there wherein Mrs. Elizabeth Everingham was buried. The other daughters were: Diana (Mrs. Millington), Matilda Z. (Mrs. McFetridge), Ann (Mrs. Hopkins), Phoebe (Mrs. Sanday), Adelaide (Mrs. Thomas Cross), Victoria (Mrs. Weldon), and three daughters named respectively Henrietta, Harriet and Angelina, who died as young women unmarried). The two sons were Hiram John Kirwin, who married a Miss Charlotte Arnold; this latter couple had in all 11 children; and Colclough Kirwan, who perished in the bush near Blackall, Queensland; the latter was unmarried.

Amongst the many who knew Mrs. Jessica Kirwan in life is Mr. Hiram A. Turnbull, of Rose Bay, Sydney, who as a lad used to carry the mail post-bag between Windsor and Sackville. He refers to her as a dear old lady, who used to keep something nice for him when on the trips he arrived at her house. One of her grand-daughter's says of Mrs. Jessica Kirwan that for over the period of 60 years in which she lived in the same house, she never slept a night from under its roof.

For over 30 years Mrs. Kirwan was a widow, generally one or more of her daughters being with her until her death. At St. Thomas' burial ground at Sackville, in a family grave where the three unmarried daughters are laid, also is a headstone which is

Sacred to the Memory of

DENIS BENJAMIN KIRWAN,
Died Octr. 15th, 1851,
Aged 57 years.

Also, to the Memory of
JESSICA KIRWAN,
(nee Jessica Turnbull)
Died April 1st, 1882,
Aged 82 years. (84. — G. G. R.)
'Waken, O Lord, our drowsy sense,
To walk this dangerous road,
And if our souls are hurried hence,
May they be found with God.
With footstones: D.B.K., 1851, and J.K.,
1882.

James Turnbull, the second English-born son of John and Ann Turnbull, never married, but lived in the Hawkesbury district most of his life. He died about 1882 in the Windsor Hospital, and is buried in the churchyard of St. Matthew's at that town. He must have attained the age of 85 years, for his age was given as four years old in the year 1802 by his parents. In a further article I shall have more to say of James Turnbull.

The Australia-born children of John and Mary Turnbull were John (II.) who was the eldest of the three sons, being born in the year 1804 at Ebenezer. John Turnbull (II.), like his English-born brother, James, never married. The inscription in the churchyard at Ebenezer in the Turnbull enclosure reads: —

In Memory of
JOHN TURNBULL, Junr. (II.) '
Died July 2nd, 1881, ,
Aged 77 years.

That in memory of the pioneer, progenitor and founder of the family reads: -

In Memory of
JOHN TURNBULL (I.),
Died June 7th, 1834,
Aged 86 years.

A rather misleading tablet to the pioneer's wife has of late years been placed on the same gravestone. I think it should have fully stated that her remains were interred at St. John's, Wilberforce. From the wording as it is now (1923) future historians will think that Mrs. Ann Turnbull is buried in the same enclosure, whereas it is not so, for reasons which I have expressed elsewhere.

The second Australian-born son of John and Ann Turnbull was George Turnbull, who was born in the year 1806. He married Miss Louisa Chaseling at Sackville Reach chapel on October 9th, 1826, the officiating minister being the Rev. Matthew Devenish Meares. To this couple in course of time were born 12 children, 6 sons and 6 daughters, one of the sons being George Turnbull (II.), father of Hiram A. Turnbull, clothing manufacturer of Sydney (residing at Rose Bay). This gentleman's father was married to a Miss Maria Greentree. Mr. Thomas Turnbull, of Eastwood (still on deck) is another son of George and Louisa Chaseling Turnbull. This gentleman is married to Miss Elizabeth Manning, and the couple recently celebrated their golden wedding anniversary. Another son of George and Louisa Chaseling Turnbull is Mr. John Warr Turnbull, of 'Kelso,' Sackville, who was married to a Miss Ann Manning.

This Mrs. Turnbull died nearly 12 months ago, and is buried at Ebenezer, likewise also is Mr. George Turnbull (II.) and his wife, Mrs. Maria Turnbull. In passing it might be stated that some of the descendants of Pioneer Turnbull stuck to Presbyterianism, and others, notably the families of Ralph Turnbull I., II., and III., all embraced Church of Englandism. In any case it is worth remarking as a 'family psychology' of Faith originating in the pioneers and pioneeresses particular beliefs. It is greatly to the credit of all those notable people that they were so broad-minded in their Protestantism (which of itself is almost enough). The third Australian-born son of John and Ann Turnbull was named William Bligh

Turnbull. He was born at Ebenezer on the 8th of June, 1809. At the age of 28 years Mr. W. Bligh Turnbull was married at Ebenezer Church to Miss Elizabeth Wilson, aged 17 years. That was in the year 1838, the officiating minister being the Rev. John Cleland. About the month of December, 1868, Mr. William Bligh Turnbull, with his wife and family left the Hawkesbury and went to reside at Kempsey, on the Macleay River, where he had purchased a farming- property. This couple had in all a family of 11 children, 8 boys and 3 girls. W. B. Turnbull was very successful on his farm. He died on the 11th of June, 1892, at the age of 83 years, and is buried in Euroka cemetery, near Kempsey. The Pioneers of Ebenezer Church were: Thomas Arndell and Elizabeth, nee BURLEY

Paul Bushell (convict "Surprise" 1790) and Jane, nee SHARP (deceased) and Isabella, nee BROWN

Captain John Grono and Elizabeth, nee BRISTOW

Owen Cavanough and Margaret, nee DOWLING

William Jacklin and Mary, nee CARDELL (deceased) and Elizabeth, nee CONNELL.

John Suddis (murdered 12 July 1817, Wilberforce). and Isabella

Suddis Lewis Jones James Davison and Jane (Johnston) George Hall and Mary (Smith) John Howe and Frances (Ward) Andrew Johnston and Mary (Beard) John Johnstone and Elizabeth (Lewins) James Mein and Susannah (Skene)

William Stubbs and Sarah (Wingate) John Turnbull and Ann (Warr)

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Geo.G.Reeve

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Here's a very interesting list.

The Turnbull family was also noted for the length of life of its members.

William Bligh Turnbull died at the age of 82 years and 10 months. His wife, Mrs. Sarah Turnbull, nee DAVIS, 83 years and 10 months. Brothers, William John Turnbull 81 years, John Turnbull 76 years, George D. Turnbull 70 years, James Bligh Turnbull 83 years, Henry Waugh Turnbull 88 years, Ralph Turnbull 80 years, and Joseph James Turnbull 95 years. sisters-in-law were also long-lived, their ages at demise as follow: Jemima Turnbull 86 years, Eliza Turnbull 80 years, Amelia Turnbull 80 years, and Jane Turnbull 86.

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