

Marriages and little white lies

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Surname variations: Cosford, Costford

George Cosford was baptised 27 May 1827 at Moreton Pinkney, Northamptonshire, son of Luke and Hannah Cosford. Luke was a labourer.

On 17 May 1848, George Costford married Mary Hannah Griffin at Shutford, Oxfordshire. Their son was born in 1849.

George was sentenced to seven years' transportation on 3 January 1849 for stealing a tame rabbit, valued at one shilling. The family petitioned the Home Secretary for a mitigation of sentence, all to no avail. George had a previous conviction for larceny in 1844 and was gaoled for two months.

He arrived on the *Minden* at Fremantle in July 1851, convict number 689.

Three years later, in 1854, George married Jane Ann Chedron. George said he was a bachelor and Jane said she was a widow.

Little white lies: George's wife had died in the September quarter of 1853, aged 26. If George knew of her death, perhaps he can be forgiven for his error in saying he was a bachelor. Jane, on the other hand, was making a habit of lying.

Jane Ann Matthews married William Patrick Carr at St Anne's, Westminster in 1845. They had two children, Ann and Harry. William Carr probably died in the September quarter of 1850.

The first lies Jane told were in August 1851 at her second marriage. Jane Ann Matthews, spinster, married Poyer William Chedron, bachelor, at St Martin in the Fields, London. Jane also said her father was William Matthews, whereas his name is Henry on all other records

The Chedron family, Poyer (22), Jane (25), and her children Ann (4) and Harry (2) arrived in Western Australia on the *Mary* in March 1852. Two children were born to Poyer and Jane Chedron – Robert Charles during the sea voyage and Elizabeth Dessimere in May 1853. Both children died within a few months of their birth.

The next lie told by Jane was when she married George on 21 December 1854 at the Congregational Church, Fremantle.

George Cosford, 26, bachelor, a sawyer, from Fremantle, married Jane Ann Chedron, 26, widow, a domestic servant of Fremantle. Both signed the register. Witnesses were George Matthews* and Mary Coll.

Jane was not a widow; Poyer Chedron had deserted her. George must have known Jane was not free to marry him.

At some stage, Poyer Chedron** returned to England where he married again in 1868. He said he was a widower. This wife was abandoned when Poyer Chedron went to Canada in 1870 and claimed he was single on the shipping list. His wife remained in England.

Leaving WA: The *Lochinvar* left Fremantle in February 1857 for Adelaide, and on board were George, Jane, Hannah [Ann] and Harry Cosford.

No record of Jane and her children have been found after this date.

Married again: By 1868, George was living at Chewton in Victoria. He married for the third time in October 1868, and another lie was told. George Costford, 35, bachelor, waggoner, born Moreton Pinkney, married Rose Hannah Campton, 19, spinster, at the Registry Office in Castlemaine. Both were from Chewton. Their daughter Ann was born in 1871; however, she lived for only one day.

Back to England: George returned to his home town of Moreton Pinkney in Northamptonshire where he married for the fourth time in 1890.

George Costford, 62, widower, shopkeeper, married Elizabeth Bayliss, widow, publican. As no trace has been found of Rose Hannah after 1871, we can only take his word he was a widower. On the 1891 census, George Costford was 'living on his own means'. In 1901 he was still 'living on his own means', and his occupation was a grazier! By the 1911 census, George was a widower with no children. He died in 1912, aged 84.

Notes:

George Cosford names his father as Luke Cosford, on all his marriages.

* George Matthews, convict 923 from the *Minden*, went to South Australia in 1856.

Jane Ann Matthews born 16 Nov 1826; father Henry Matthews, woodcarver

Poyer William Chedron born 07 Apr 1829; father Felix C Chedron, gentleman

** Unclaimed letter for P.W Chedron on 11 April 1857 and 5 April 1865. (WA Government Gazettes)

Rose Hannah Campton had a daughter born in 1867 named Mary Jane Smith Campton. No father named on the birth index. Smith was the maiden name of Rose's mother.