

George Powling - Hashemy Convict #100

by Joanne Hyland

In January 1848, 20-year-old servant George Powling committed the crime of “feloniously kill(ing) one sheep, with intent to steal the carcass” (sic). The crime was committed at the height of winter and could stave off hunger for a poverty-stricken rural family. George lived with his parents Samuel and Hannah Powling in Wherstead, Suffolk. Found guilty he was sentenced to 12 years’ penal servitude and was transported to Western Australia as convict #100 aboard the second convict ship *Hashemy*, arriving on 25 October 1850. He was described as being stout, 5 foot 5 inches tall with dark brown hair, a dark complexion, having hazel eyes and a prominent face.

George received his ticket-of-leave on 13 March 1851 in the Fremantle District. While George went about earning his living, his future wife, Lydia Ann Rackham (Anna), daughter of *Scindian* convict #43, James Rackham and his convicted wife, also named Lydia, departed Plymouth, England aboard the emigrant ship *Travancore* headed for the Swan River Colony. Anna had been working as a domestic servant when both her parents were convicted for shoplifting and receiving of stolen goods in February 1848. When her mother was transported along with her five younger siblings to Van Diemen’s Land in November 1848 (the oldest and youngest of whom died during the voyage), and with her older brother Charles in the Merchant Navy, Anna found herself alone. The only way to join her family was to emigrate to Australia and with the demand for single female emigrants to travel to Western Australia, this was her chance. Anna and 114 other, mostly Irish, single, female emigrants arrived in Fremantle on 13 January 1853.

George and Anna were married just a year later on 30 January 1854 in the home of Mr William Roberts, in Fremantle, a note on their marriage certificate stating the reason for using that venue being that the Congregational Church was not completed. (They were likely members of the congregation of Reverend Joseph Johnston, a London-based missionary who had recently arrived in Perth.) A few days after their marriage George received his conditional pardon and the couple wasted no time in planning their voyage to Van Diemen’s Land, arriving by October the same year. One of the first things they did was to collect two of Anna’s younger siblings, Emmeline and William, from the Queen’s Orphanage, where they had lived since being placed there five days after their arrival in Hobart, 6 years earlier.

George and Anna Powling went on to have a large family of their own, nine children born between September 1855 and May 1874. Their first and last-born sons, George William and Francis and middle daughter Lydia died as infants and another son George born in 1867 died aged six years old. The sad fate of their sons continued with the death of 30-year-old Robert Charles in May 1887, who left behind a wife and young family. Their other daughters however, Hannah, Emma Eliza and Rebecca, each married and had families of their own. Hannah’s husband William Cripps, was also the child of a convict. George and Lydia’s youngest surviving son, James Samuel, appears never to have married or had children and died in 1944.

Anna died at their home, 22 Washington Street in Hobart in June 1909 aged 76 years. George died aged 91 years on 30 April, 1919 in a private hospital in Hobart. The couple have hundreds of descendants, many of whom still live in and around Hobart and some of whom are actively researching their family history.

Thanks to Mary Hurd and David Cripps for the use of the below photos of two of George and Anna's daughters, Hannah and Rebecca Powling.



Hannah Powling was born 7 August 1858 and died 14 December 1948 in Hobart. She married William Cripps on 8 February 1881 in Hobart. They had 11 children.

William Cripps – spouse of Hannah Powling was also the child of a convict – William Henry (Bill) Cripps was transported to Australia in 1835 aboard the *Augusta*. He received a life sentence and his trial was held in Buckinghamshire in 1833. Son William was one of 15 children born to Bill Cripps and Elizabeth Burchett (married 15 Dec 1856) between 1856 and 1881.

Photo courtesy of David Cripps



Rebecca Powling was born 15 March 1871 and died 11 February 1936. She married George Thomas Elwin Rumley on 24 August 1898 in Hobart. They had 4 sons.

Photos courtesy Mary Hurd



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