

16 Enfield Road
WAINUIOMATA

Monday 28 April 1986

Mrs C Tunnington
53 Winara Avenue
WAIKANAE

Dear Chris and John

I hope you are keeping well. I haven't written for a time but have been really busy, not all the time with writing unfortunately. I am still working on the Sinclair Chapter and think I have updated it fairly comprehensively. However, Mrs John Peek of Hamilton, whose husband is a grandson of John and Louise Sinclair, has been doing some fairly extensive probing re Hugh Sinclair's origins, and I gather she has been in touch with you too. Isn't her news great?

I have written out the important things here so that I can go over them with you (by letter) without you having to locate her letter first. Her Australian researcher has come up with lots of information and I will have to incorporate this into my chapter of course. Anyway, I'm sure you have found Joyce Peek's notes of interest; but how annoying when you have spent so much writing time and money looking for the same information to have Joyce come up with so much of it just like that. Beginner's luck?

Anyway, to recap:

Reel 2654 (I think this reel refers to records of 'Immigration Entitlement Certificates' and must be circa 1838)

NAME: Hugh Sinclair
NATIVE PLACE: Perthshire
OCCUPATION: Farm Overseer
AGE: 28
MARITAL STATUS: Wife aged 27 and one boy
READ AND WRITE: Both
RELIGION: Presbyterian
REMARKS: Engaged by Sir J Jamison of Regent Vilea for £80 per year with rations

Sighting of Joseph Sinclair's burial

Joseph Sinclair buried 13th March 1842 aged 5 of Sydney

Bounty Immigrant Index (again, circa 1838)

NAME: Hugh Sinclair
OCCUPATION: Hotel Keeper
RELIGION: Presbyterian
AGE: 28 years last 5th March
READ & WRITE: Yes
NATIVE PLACE: Parish of Logierait, Perthshire, Scotland
FATHER: Duncan Henderson*, Farmer of same place

MOTHER: Isabel McLerne
WIFE: Agnes Sinclair
OCCUPATION: Cook
RELIGION: Presbyterian
AGE: 27yrs - August 1838
READ & WRITE: Yes
NATIVE PLACE: Ballantre, Ayrshire, Scotland
FATHER: James Spene, innkeeper, same place
MOTHER: Margaret Rodgers
CHILDREN: Joseph Dickson Sinclair, 2 yrs on 24 January 1839
REMARKS: Engaged by Sir J Jamison, Regent Vilea
SHIP: "Lady Kennaway" 12/8/1838 Volume 7

#Hugh's father's name may well have been Duncan Henderson Sinclair

Comments on Sinclair Family Research made by Mrs Peek's researcher:

Results of research were quite rewarding! Re Hugh's supposed failed business. It seems likely that he would have attempted to continue his occupation of hotelkeeper. When next I am at the Archives office, I will examine the Publicans' Index for you and let you know of any further information.

It seems there was only one child who died. This child was Joseph Dickson Sinclair who accompanied his parents on the "Lady Kennaway".

Hugh was employed at Regent Vilea. I have not heard of this name but will hazard a guess that it is the original name of a suburb in the west of Sydney called Regentville. This may be substantiated by the fact that a neighbouring suburb has the name, Jamisontown. If you would like to know more information about Sir J Jamison Nepean District Historical Society, PO Box 441, Penrith NSW 2750.

I will, of course, be writing to the Nepean District Historical Society for more details. The copy of the 'Married Male Immigrant' form filled out for Hugh shows that he is a 'Hotel Keeper in Dundee, Scotland, can manage stock'. Age at Embarkation = 28 - 5th of last March (1838)

Agnes' Embarkation Form shows that she is a Cook, in very good health who turned 27 in August 1838, ie born August 1811. One would like to think that this information is correct but if so then the plaque we have laid at the Sinclair Cemetery is now wrong. On that we have said that Agnes died in 1878 aged 70 years - based on my sighting her Death Certificate. The information for the Cert. was supplied by her son Duncan. Hugh is presumably more likely to have been right about Agnes' age at that time than her children after her death - unless she lowered it to be more in keeping with Hugh's age? That will take a bit of clarifying. Their son Joseph Dickson Sinclair would turn 2 on 24 January 1839 so he was born in the beginning of 1837.

On the Immigrant Index Hugh's father Duncan is also described as a farmer at Logierait, Perthshire while Agnes' father is described as

an InnKeeper on her Entitlement Certificate.

Apparently the embarkation date of the "Lady Kennaway" (on which the Sinclairs travelled to New South Wales) was August 1838, so they must have arrived in Sydney early 1839. Hugh could not have had long in the employment of Sir J Jamison. Nor could his business in Perry Buildings, Pitt Street have lasted long, though I have made written enquiries to a Library in Sydney re this angle.

It is interesting that various Sinclairs believe there to have been two children who died in Sydney though there is nothing to say that there wasn't another child born in Sydney but perhaps one who died very young and is not well-documented. Strange too that the little boy's Christian names do not seem to be repeated elsewhere. Agnes would seem to have left for New Zealand to join Hugh after Joseph's death (March 1842) anytime between that date and September 1843, as their next son John was born June 1844. Eventually we will pin down the boat on which she travelled to New Zealand. We are definitely getting closer.

Interesting that Agnes' father's name was James SPENE - we have always understood it to be SPIERS and I think this is fairly well documented amongst family records (to wit - Jeanne Spiers Sinclair, John Sinclair's daughter by his second marriage. Interesting how spellings are affected by pronunciation, or how different people interpret somebody else's writing, isn't it?

Notice also that Hugh's mother's name was Isabel McLENE. You have quite definitely found it to have been McLAREN or MACLAREN. Another pronunciation discrepancy perhaps?

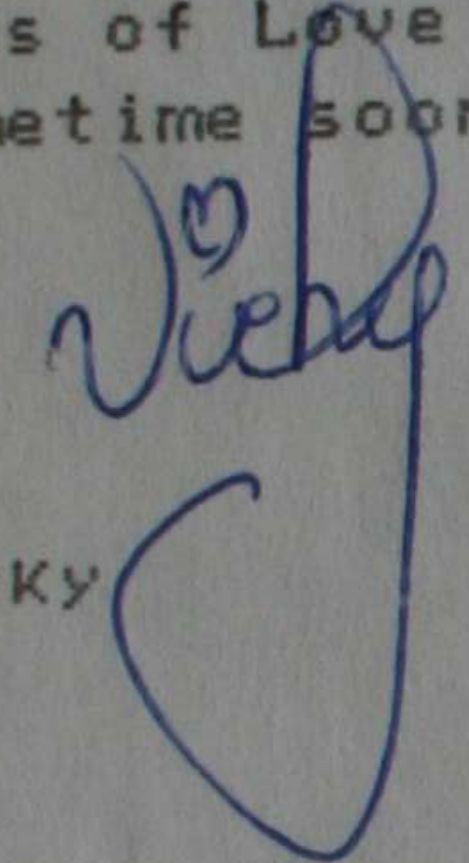
Brett started school on 17 April and those two weeks were hectic, coupled with which Ken was away for his job for two consecutive weeks, including Brett's birthday week. As well as which I have been painting the house and gardening. Not a lot to show for my efforts but at least two of the four house walls are nearly complete. Ken is really busy at work at the moment, and when he comes home for the weekends, it generally rains or he certainly doesn't feel like settling down to work. In-between all that I took a notion to attack my pantry wall. Despite setting the dimensions when we built, I have never really been happy with it so decided one day to improve matters. Knocking the wall out was the easy part believe me. However, Ken is playing ball and we are now awaiting receipt of the track for the bifold doors - all 2.5 metres of it (approx 8 feet wide). I have decided that if you can't have a genuine walk-in pantry like they had in the old days - and who can afford that sort of space in a modern home these days? then at least if you are going to have a pantry make it a decent-sized cupboard and not just an over-sized hot-watercupboard type structure. Mine is now very wide, but no more than 19" deep and on one side will be the baking unit where the mixer can sit permanently with sugar and flour bins under, and baking ingredients all around; while the other half will be the food storage shelves, spud and onion baskets etc etc with shelves all at pre-set distances apart. I am sure builders never design kitchens - my old pantry shelves were all far apart - hopeless for stacking small items and tins but not sturdy enough to take large items which would fit in the spaces provided. Stoves are another aspect of kitchens which I would like to get stuck into, but not this week. I'm quite busy enough at present thank you.

Well Christabel, if this weather keeps up then I'm going to get a bit of writing done at last. The last few weeks have been very frustrating with no writing done but wet weather does have its compensations in that respect. Unfortunately it also does great things for the weeds in the garden!

I have, at last, received back my copy of 'White Wings' with the details of the 'Zuleika' in. Enclosed is your copy of the notes accordingly - no doubt you will find it interesting.

That might have to be it Chris, if I want to get this away today. Its 10 minutes to 2pm, and Brett finishes at 2.30 so I need to be down to the Post Office and back before then. He insisted on the second day of school that he could walk both ways on his own and was very upset when I met him after school that day so I certainly mustn't be spotted out on the street in his vicinity around 2.30 - and I have to go past the school gates to the PO! Dreadful to be ruled by your Kid you know, but we wouldn't be without him.

Lots of Love to you both and looking forward to seeing you again sometime soon.


Vicky