



ENROLLED

PENSIONER

GUARDS

A special Interest Group of the

**WESTERN AUSTRALIAN
GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY INC.**

Unit 6/48 May Street
Bayswater 6053

[www.wags.org.au/groups/
sigepg.html](http://www.wags.org.au/groups/sigepg.html)

Quarterly Newsletter
ISSN 1443-945X

Editor: Beth Smith
Telephone 9450 5872
rhsmith@aapt.net.au

SERGEANT ROBERT RAMSAY

A recent article in EPG Gazette outlined some information about the opium wars in China during the 1840s and 1850s. There is a link to Western Australia's pensioner guards in this matter.

Sergeant Ramsay, ex Royal Artillery, was a veteran of war service in many parts of the world before coming to Fremantle as a pensioner guard in 1851. He arrived on the Minden with his family. Initially an overseer of convict activities in and around Fremantle he later was in charge of the new asylum building with his wife Mary, the matron. Both retired in 1872. Their youngest child, Lucy married James Bell Junior the son of James Bell, a farmer at East Rockingham.

The elder Bell had arrived in 1845 on board HMS Driver, the first steamship to arrive in WA. Tired of the hard life on Driver, Bell deserted. Thus he became the first migrant in our state to arrive by steamship. The ship had been based at Hong Kong, the China Station for the British Eastern fleet, as part of the Opium Wars squadron. Driver had been ordered to New Zealand for the Maori Wars. Curious colonists both at Fremantle

and Sydney flocked to see Driver when she arrived.

From the 1770s the East India Company claimed a monopoly over opium products in Bengal. They sold them throughout Asia and Europe as a medicine and recreational drug. Its use was illegal in China but company servants smuggled it to agents in exchange for silver that was used to buy tea for the British market. The opium trade paid for all of Britain's tea purchases meaning they did not have to export bullion for it. European ships smuggled the opium in chests each weighing about 60 kilograms giving a gross profit of 1000 silver dollars per chest. The Chinese government insisted on payment in silver for their tea which otherwise would have been a drain on the British Treasury.

The Chinese forcibly resisted the opium trade which led to gunboat diplomacy. The first opium war began in 1840 when Britain sent a fleet of ships to force China to buy opium and open her ports to British shipping. In January 1841 East India Company ships and British gunboats destroyed a fleet of Chinese

war junks in Anson Bay. The value of the paddle warships, like Driver, was that steam power gave manoeuvrability and allowed them to operate in shallow waters and up rivers. Small boat raiding parties could be landed more easily. The first opium war lasted until September 1842. China was forced to settle and agreed to pay Britain an indemnity and to cede the barren island of Hong Kong. The latter was then turned into a fleet base that quickly grew as a major Asian trading centre.

The Ramsays' link was further extended when another of their daughters, Mary Jane married Richard Vincent, son of the Rottneest Island prison Superintendent, Henry Vincent. The Vincents had various roles in convict supervision particularly with road works development. Another daughter, Phoebe married Captain Thomas Shaw to raise a large family at Fremantle. Many of the daughters' descendants today live state wide. However, sons of Robert Ramsay and his wife travelled to the Eastern states where they settled and raised large families. This meant that the Ramsay surname from this line died out in WA. Ramsay and Vincent graves are located at Karrakatta Cemetery and Bells at East Rockingham Cemetery. The Eastern Ramsays are well aware of their lineage, however, and have already held some reunions, in recent years. The Bell descendants through Robert Ramsay also have had gatherings in recent years. Some western relatives from Robert and Mary Ramsay's daughters have been in contact with their t'othersider cousins but more notable is the fact that a number of Australian Ramsays from Robert's lineage are still in contact with Ramsay descendants in both Scotland and Ireland. A book about the Ramsay history was written two years ago.

The Ramsays originally lived near Edinburgh and Robert's father William had gone to Ireland with troops to help put down the 1798 rebellion. Typically the British Government of the times did not want to pay their soldiers so gave them land grants in lieu of wages. The land granted to the Ramsays near Athlone is still occupied by the family. It was here that William Ramsay settled to raise a family but son Robert joined the army in

1825 to eventually come to Fremantle as a pensioner guard after he retired from the Royal Artillery in 1847.

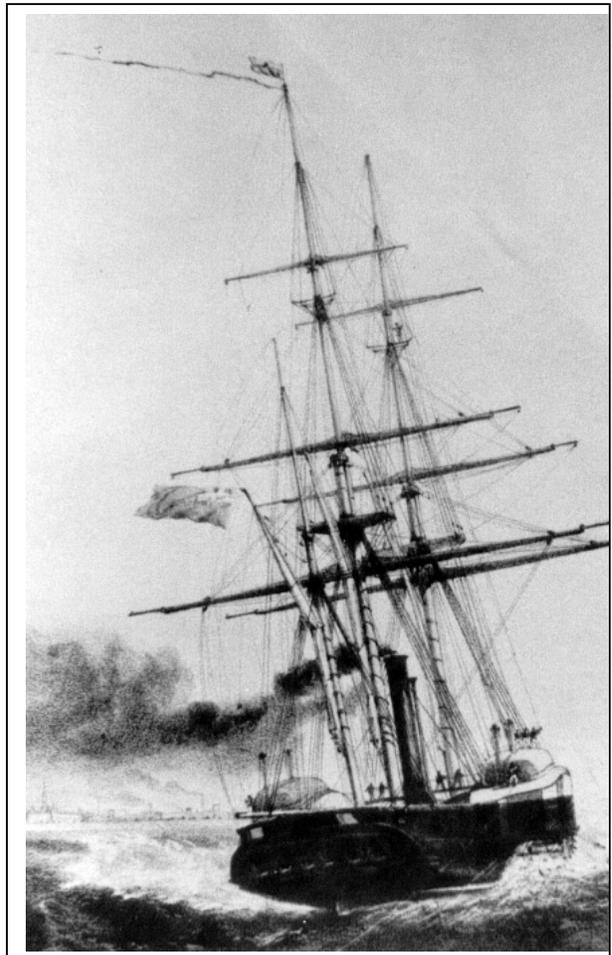
Should anyone be further interested regarding Ramsay particulars then contact can be made with me at email –

mervyn.reger@bigpond.com

Further information about the Ramsays can be found in Mr D. Barker's book about pensioner guards in Western Australia.

Mervyn Bell Regehr.

[Thank you Mervyn for this article which is a sequel from Ron Sutton's article on the Opium War in the July issue]



HMS Driver

THE WAR OF THE TWO BROTHERS

Ron Sutton

When one looks at the wars and campaigns of the British military, the major campaigns, such as the Napoleon Wars, the Indian Mutiny and the Crimean War, come readily to mind. However, England participated in many more skirmishes of varying magnitude and importance. This essay examines an unusual conflict in Portugal.

Background

With the defeat of Napoleon in 1814 Portugal entered into a brief period of political hiatus. The royal family was in exile in Brazil and British officers were carrying out many of the functions of everyday administration. This uneasy state of affairs came to a sudden end in 1820 when liberals launched an uprising to demand a proper constitution for the nation.

In October all the British officers were expelled and the *Cortes* assembled in Lisbon and prepared a constitution abolishing feudalism, ending the Inquisition and limiting the powers of the king in relation to an elected assembly.

John VI made a hurried return from Brazil arriving in Lisbon with his wife, Carlota Joaquina, and their second son, Dom Miguel. In 1822 the king swore allegiance to the new constitution but his wife and son refused to do so maintaining their preference for absolutist rule.

During April 1824 Dom Miguel led an insurrection and briefly toppled his father from the throne but with British assistance the King recovered

his Sovereignty. Dom Miguel escaped to Vienna.

The conflict reignited on the death of John VI in 1826.

John's eldest surviving son, now the Emperor Pedro 1 of Brazil inherited the Portuguese throne. However; Pedro 1 relinquished his throne in Portugal in favour of his seven year old daughter, Maria da Gloria, on the condition that his brother Dom Miguel (Maria's uncle) marry her and accept a liberal charter, which Pedro promulgated in place of the constitution.

Dom Miguel immediately accepted and arrived in Portugal as regent in 1828. However; he deceived his brother and with the support of the absolutist faction he was proclaimed king and began a vigorous persecution of his liberal opponents.

The War of the Two Brothers

By the end of 1828, Dom Miguel was undeniably the de-facto king of Portugal. The liberal leaders and the Royal child Maria had fled into exile in Britain. From this distant outpost, a campaign was launched and a Regency was set up on behalf of Maria. Her father, Pedro, after abdicating in Brazil arrived in the Azores in February 1832 with a fleet and an army, composed mainly of British and French troops.

Pedro's force reached Portugal in July 1832 and succeeded in capturing the northern port town of Oporto. Here they were besieged for a year until a fleet of British ships

with reinforcements arrived in the summer of 1833.

In a sea battle in July 1833, off Cape St Vincent, Dom Miguel's fleet was destroyed. Later in the month Lisbon was taken over by the liberal forces having marched north through the Alentejo region from Faro. Support for the absolutists from the aristocracy and rural areas ensured the resistance continued into 1834.

Family Connection

On the 27th March 1833, **HMS Donegal**, a 1901 ton sailing ship with 76 guns and under command Captain Arthur Fanshawe berthed at the Naval Station, Sheerness, Isle of Sheppey allowing a contingent of Royal Marines from 89 Company, Woolwich to embark for deployment to Portugal. Private Samuel **Sutton** (my great grand father) was on the RM manifest that boarded the ship. The Donegal then sailed to Portugal via Portsmouth.ⁱⁱ

Conclusion

After a series of battles during the winter of 1833-34, Dom Miguel's absolutist armies were finally defeated. Dom Miguel, the absolutist king, surrendered in May 1834 and was banished from Portugal never to return. Pedro 1, the ex-emperor of Brazil, died before the end of the year aged 36 years. The War between the brothers was finally over and Maria (now fifteen) was undeniably the queen of Portugal.

HMS Donegal sailed to Portsmouth and Private Samuel **Sutton** left the ship on the 20th June 1834 and returned to the barracks at Woolwich. He later served as a RM

on **HMS Rhadamanthus** (a steamer) and **HMS Inconstant**.ⁱⁱⁱ

There were no battle honours or campaign medals issued for this conflict

ⁱ General Assembly composed of Nobles, members of the middle class and representatives of all municipalities.

ⁱⁱ HMS Donegal Ships Log, 1833-1834, PRO, Kew, England ADM 53/448

ⁱⁱⁱ Divisional Board , PRO, Kew, England ADM 157/831

WHAT HAPPENED TO THE VETERANS OF THE CRIMEAN WAR?

Come and hear, our guest speaker Diane Oldman, an experienced genealogist and speaker at our EPG Meeting, Saturday, 18th October 2008 at 1:00 pm at WA Genealogy Society, May Street, Bayswater.

Find out the causes, combatants, battles and medals, casualties, outcomes and three outstanding women.

The talk will include a description of a database of Crimean Veterans in Western Australia and indicate what happened to them (handouts available for copying).

Thomas and William McCreery

Thomas McCreery, the son of a man of the same name, was born in 1829 at Enniskillen in County Fermanagh, Northern Ireland. By the time he was 17, young Thomas was working as a weaver at Dundee in Scotland. On May 21 of that year, he enlisted in the 6th Regiment of Foot. About three years later a medical board proposed his discharge because of a disability – he was suffering from impaired vision because of ophthalmia. Thomas left the army on the last day of 1849 and was eventually admitted as an Out-Pensioner of the Chelsea hospital on May 20, 1851 (1).

Thomas settled and married in Scotland and by 1856 he was in good enough shape to be accepted into the Enrolled Pensioner Force. He and his family arrived at Fremantle on the 'Runnymede', September 10, 1856. Pensioner McCreery did rather well in the colony of Western Australia, although sadly he was widowed twice and was married for the third and last time in 1882. His service with the Enrolled Pensioner Force probably ended when it was disbanded on November 10, 1880 (2). Thomas was active as an EPF man in Fremantle and acquired property at North Fremantle and in Perth. He survived to attend the 1897 Diamond Jubilee celebration dinner held in honour of Queen Victoria at St Georges Hall and died at Northam in the home of his son William John McCreery on June 21, 1908 (3).

Thomas McCreery left six children, but the aforementioned William McCreery of Northam is the person of interest for present purposes. He was born at

Dundee in 1851 and was apprenticed at the age of 13 to William Leach, a boot maker of Fremantle. Many years later William McCreery was a respected and prosperous boot maker at Northam and was interviewed by the local newspaper about his early life in colonial WA. William noted that the workers in the Leach firm were all ticket-of leave men, except for the apprentices. He had interesting memories of the visit of the Duke of Edinburgh to WA in February 1869: "he was rowed from his ship to the small jetty. On the jetty six military pensioners dressed as hussars were drawn up as an escort. The few volunteers acted as guard of honour...The Duke didn't even stay in Fremantle. He came straight through to Perth." (4)

It was not easy at the time to make a living in the trade so William McCreery joined the WA Police Force on August 9, 1871 on the recommendation of Captain Charles Finnerty, a senior Staff Officer of the Enrolled Pensioner Force (5). McCreery served at Perth, Northam, York, Youndegin, Beverley, Kojonup and Guildford in turn and was promoted to Lance Corporal on January 1, 1876. Newspaper readers would have been amazed by some of his reminiscences, which showed how tough, demanding and isolated the working lives of police officers were in the rural districts of the colony during Victorian times: "my lock-up [at Youndegin] was a gum tree with a bolt through it, a ring on one end of the bolt and a large nut on the other end...during five years and three months my wife saw only two white women pass the station." (6)

William McCreery resigned from the police on March 31, 1884 and worked at a boot factory in Swan Street, North Fremantle for some time before moving to Northam in October 1884 and establishing his own highly successful firm there. He had married Marion Hope Murray and the couple raised several children, some of whom continued to manage a family business after William the patriarch died on May 17, 1935 (7). Descendants have continued the tradition.

- (1) Cook, J.R., 'Thomas McCreery 1829-1908 – Soldier and Pensioner Guard' (unpublished paper, 1988), pp1-2
- (2) *Bicentennial Dictionary of Western Australians*, Vol. 3, K-Q, p1950; Broomhall, F.H. *The Veterans* (Hesperian Press, 1989), B182; Cook, pp5, 7-8
- (3) Cook, pp4-7; Broomhall, B182
- (4) *Northam Advertiser*, November 3, 1933
- (5) WA Police: Record of Service of William McCreery; Cook, p5
- (6) Record of Service of William McCreery; Police General Duties Book, January 1, 1876; *Northam Advertiser*, November 3, 1933
- (7) Cook, p8; Record of Service of William McCreery; *Bicentennial Dictionary of Western Australians*, Vol.3, K-Q, p1951.

My thanks to Jean McDonald for drawing my attention to the Cook paper, likewise to Mr Ken Ross for additional insights on the life of William McCreery.

Peter Conole
Police Historian

[Ed Note. My 101 year old mother (granddaughter of EPG Richard Henderson) still talks of having to go to Mr McCreery to have her boots made when she was a young girl in Northam.]

OUTSTANDING TRACKERS

By R. M. Tompkins

An article in the West Australian several decades ago was devoted to some of the outstanding native trackers in the service of the police during the convict period (1850-1868). Among those useful aborigines were Chum-Chom Harry, Geordie and Winnie all of whom could, with unerring exactness give the time of day or night that a track was made by a person for whom they were searching.

The force also had some daring officials in the ranks who knew how to place the skill of the trackers to the best advantage. Prominent among these was Sergeant (afterwards inspector) Finlay, whose arrest of the notorious bushranger Graham gave him well deserved promotion (it being one of the cleverest captures with which the police force was associated during those troubled times).

After making his escape, by scaling the walls of Fremantle prison, Graham was outlawed for attempting to shoot Mr Quartermaine of the Williams River. At that time Sergeant Finlay was in charge of Albany Station and by his demonstration of strategy and knowledge of bush lore, he managed to capture the escapee about 120 miles north-east of the southern township.

Sergeant Finlay left Albany in search of Graham, having with him two mounted constables and two native assistants. They laid in a three-weeks' stock of provisions and the whole party started for the farthest sheep station to the east-ward. On arrival there Finlay learned from the wife of a shepherd that a man answering to the description of Graham, with a double barrelled gun, was there on the

previous day and had lent his gun to a native to kill a kangaroo, afterwards engaging another native to guide him to Dempster's cart track, made by those pastoralists when they were en route to Esperance Bay.

The native returned while Finlay was there and he immediately engaged him to guide his party on the same track.

On the following day Graham's tracks were so fresh that Finlay halted and, making the two native assistants assume the dress and appearance of bush natives, sent them on with the guide, instructing him to get into Graham's company, if possible and to get his gun from him on pretence of shooting a kangaroo. If successful in doing so, they were to get within hearing of Finlay and his party, and discharge the gun as a signal; or if unsuccessful in that, they were to continue with Graham till an opportunity offered of seizing the gun and discharge it. The natives soon got up with the desperado, and with him, stopped in the bed of the Fitzgerald River, near Bremer Bay, to cook some food; and while doing so an emu made its appearance on a hill nearby, which was pointed out to Graham who was induced to lend his gun to one of the native police and the guide, leaving the other native with Graham.

The two succeeded in driving the emu in the direction in which Finlay was and then shot it, which gave the agreed signal, and the native with Graham, hearing the party close at hand, suddenly threw himself upon the outlaw, to prevent him using a revolver, and before he could shake his burden off, Finlay and his party got up and handcuffed the runaway.

For the smart capture of one of Western Australia's most daring criminals, Sergeant Finlay was highly complimented by Major Crampton who was at the head of the police in those days. He was shortly afterwards

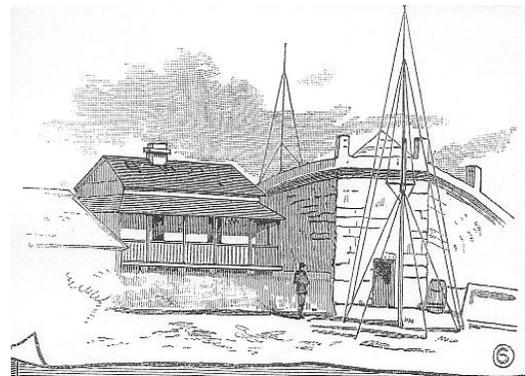
raised to the position of sub-inspector, and retired from the force with the rank of Chief inspector.

(Finlay was son of William Finlay EPG (Scindian 1850)

(No date and source)

Whaling Jetty Barracks and Court House.

When Captain Henderson requested a detachment of one sergeant and twelve rank and file Enrolled Pensioners be sent to Fremantle in 1850 there was no suitable accommodation available for the men, their weapons and accoutrements. In desperation they were lodged in the Court House near the Round House.



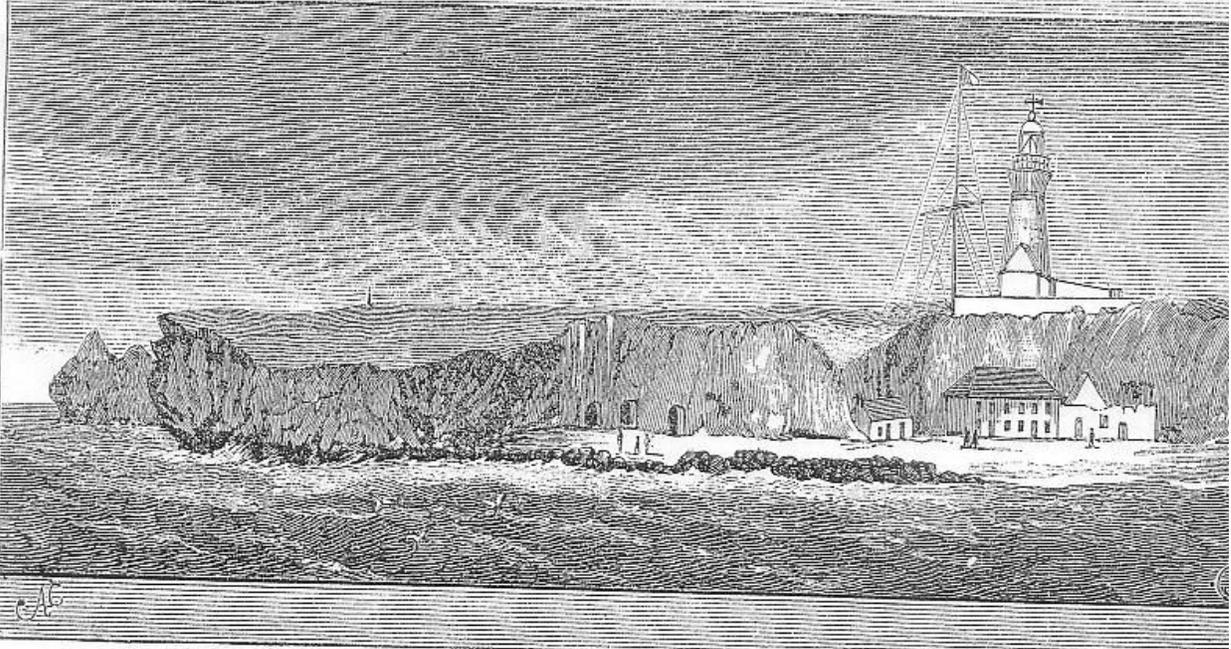
The Round Tower

The Illustrated Australian News Nov. 29, 1882 p 181

[Readers will, of course, recognise this as the Round House.]

Pensioner Barracks at the Whaling Jetty

Due to the inability to find any premises suitable for the accommodation of the Enrolled Pensioners in Fremantle, Captains Irwin, Henderson and Bruce decided the then disused premises of the whaling company at Fremantle would, with alterations, prove suitable until



Fremantle Lighthouse

The Illustrated Australian News Nov. 29, 1882 p 181

[This Woodcut shows the Pensioner Barracks at the foot of the cliff.]

Captain Henderson could erect purpose built barracks. Captain Stirling had originally awarded himself a parcel of land including Garden Island and Arthur's Head; he then presented the Whaling Company with a parcel of land at Bather's Bay on which they constructed various buildings used for their whaling enterprise. The whaling company had spent between 3-4,000 pounds on the buildings, however, the British Government had disallowed the grant and the land reverted to the Crown. The company was eventually paid £1200 for the buildings. The existing buildings were extended by adding a further accommodation building, a guardhouse, a small magazine, privies, and gates to the tunnel.

These dreadfully overcrowded and inadequate buildings were used by the Enrolled Pensioners until 1854 when the Barracks in South Terrace were built; they were later used by the Royal Engineers and the Commissariat.

Jeanette Lee

[Thanks to Dorothy Altmann of Victoria for the two pictures in this article.]

Historic Fremantle Walk

Sunday October 26th 9:45 am

Les Green, long time supporter of EPG Group and a guide at the Roundhouse Fremantle has developed a walk around the historic sites relevant to the EPG. To join this walk assemble at Bathers Bay before 9:45 am.

Sites include, Commissariat, arrival of *Scindian* and *Stag*, Lighthouse, Henderson St EPG cottages, *The Knowle* (Residence of Supt Henderson).

Lunch of Fish and Chips may be ordered at the start.

This should be a great informative day so come along - ring or email Jean McDonald 94504304 or jeanmc2@bigppond.com

ANOTHER DATABASE FOR ENROLLED PENSIONER FORCE MEN

Many members will probably have come across this URL link already, but it is still worth mentioning. The site is free and simple to operate and can be very useful for genealogical research, given that so many Enrolled Pensioner Force men served in India. We are referring to the following: India Family Research; the access point is <http://indiafamily.bl.uk/ui/sources.aspx>

The material online consists of transcriptions of records from British India, covering births, deaths, marriages, baptisms and the like for British Army and civil personnel, including even East India Company clerks. The records sometimes go back into the early 1700s. When we 'arrived' there in June this year it was partly to try and solve a long standing problem. Namely, where on earth was Matthew Skinner Smith (1836-1887) born and who were his parents? The gentleman was a former soldier who became Chief of Police in WA and Commandant of the Enrolled Guard, which replaced the EPF in 1880. The rank and file were all former EPF men. A lot of digging around several years ago, including work by researchers at a couple of Australian universities, got nowhere.

However, there were two good starting points: his date of birth was known; his father was known to be the future Lieutenant General Matthew Smith.

The answer came quickly, courtesy the India Family Research site. Using the advanced search option, after keying in his name, the date and the event (birth) and then clicking on his name for the 'history' we came up with an answer. Matthew Skinner Smith

was born at Cawnpore in August 1836 and baptised there in October of that year. His parents were Captain Matthew Smith of the 16th Regiment of Foot and Isabella Fraser Morris.

However, as we discovered after keying in 'Matthew Smith, 'marriage' and the date range '1830-1836', there is a hitch. The name of the captain's wife is incomplete. The extra record shows that Brevet Captain Matthew Smith married Isabella Fraser Morris Hook, the daughter of Colonel Hook, at Chinsurah in Bengal in 1832. A bit predictable, when one thinks about it. Unrelated evidence suggests the Matthew Smiths were members of a staunch family of English landed gentry with strong Indian kinks.

In fact we suspect these Smiths were ultimately of Anglo-Indian descent and that the older Matthew is identifiable as a man born in 1805, the son of an East India Company official, who in turn was acknowledged as the 'natural son' of another EIC clerk in the 1770s...and so on. That all requires clearer proof and could be wrong. The site is a very worthy work-in-progress and is highly commended for EPF research.

***Peter Conole, Police Historian
Graeme Sisson, Archivist, WA
Police Historical Society***

**HISTORIC FREMANTLE
WALK**

SUNDAY 26 OCTOBER 2008

COMMENCING AT BATHERS BAY

AT 9:45am.

**W A GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY
OPEN DAY**

Tuesday 21st OCTOBER

OCTOBER MEETING

Saturday 18 OCTOBER

1.00pm in Unit 4, 48 May St, Bayswater.

Come and listen to:

Diane Oldman

**What happened to them?
THE VETERANS OF THE
CRIMEAN WAR**

Enrolled Pensioner Guard SIG
WA Genealogical Society Inc
Print Post Approved
PP635823/00066

**Surface
Mail**

Postage
Australia

Unit 6/48 May Street
Bayswater WA 6053



Pensioner Barracks & Parade 1860 (W.A. Museum)