

### Generation 3

#### John Walker Hoyle

John Walker Hoyle was born at Rotherham on Christmas Day 1843, the seventh child of William Fretwell Hoyle and his second wife Jane Grave Walker. John made his census debut in 1851 when he was listed as a 7 year old, being educated at home at Ferham House. I have found nothing further for him in the online census records or the English BMD Indexes. The reason for this is that a man by the name of John W Hoyle lodged an application for, and was issued with a passport, with the number 4857, on 9<sup>th</sup> August 1859. Assuming the applicant was 'our' John Walker Hoyle, and given the fact that he does not seem to feature in the English and Wales census returns after 1851, he probably left his home country some time shortly after having obtained his passport. I have not found any passenger list to indicate which vessel he would have sailed on, or his intended destination.<sup>1</sup>

However, he is referred to in a family pedigree as 'John Walker Hoyle of Wni Vene, Fijis'. Without expecting to really find anything, I ran a Google search on his name, and came up with a tantalising snippet. In 1875 Litton Forbes published an account of his travels entitled 'Two Years in Fiji'. Chapter X includes a description of a hurricane which hit, preventing Mr. Litton from returning to his hotel for several days. He records that during that time he was 'dependent on the hospitality of Mr. Hoyle, Tiu Cakou's secretary. His house [Tiu Cakou's], as has been stated, was a very large and strong one, and had already born the brunt of more than one hurricane'. Litton goes on to say that Mr Hoyle was<sup>2</sup>

...an American by birth, and, like so many other white settlers, had first visited Fiji on a whaling cruise. It was his first voyage to sea, and had been a fairly successful one. The vessel was homeward-bound from the summer whaling-station, that vast waste of waters that lie to the south of Cape Horn. In passing through the Fiji group, then but little known, the ship struck on a coral reef, and quickly went to pieces. H--- was one of the very few who escaped, and it was, as he used to be fond of saying, by the 'skin of his teeth'. After being wrecked he lived ashore among the natives, learned their language, and finally married a half-cast girl, whose father, a white man, had been killed in some native feud. After a while he acquired lands and other property, and eventually became secretary to the chief of the district. He was one of those men who could put his hand to almost anything, from coopering a cask or mending a musket to writing an official letter to the captain of a ship-of-war, which is considered the severest test of a man's diplomatic powers in Fiji. His duties were those of a secretary, interpreter, and collector of customs. In exchange for the work thus performed he was provided by the chief with a large house, with the work of so many men annually, and with a certain sum of money, which was, I believe, often in arrear. So much for a brief sketch of a man the course of whose whole life and fortunes were changed by one accident.

I am not at all sure that the Mr Hoyle of Litton's account was John Walker Hoyle, particularly given that he was described as an American, but we know that John was in Fiji in 1871 because it was from there, on 22<sup>nd</sup> April, that he wrote a letter to his mother. The contents and tone of the letter do not suggest a man who was well set up.<sup>3</sup>

My dearest Mother

Llewellyn has just arrived bringing me a bag from you all. Very many thanks to you for it. You should know how thankful I am...for it is not the value of the things but it shows me that you have not quite forgotten me. I am very sorry indeed to find you are suffering from lumbago but I hope and trust ere this you have recovered. I, for myself, am in splendid health, but in business I am dreadfully troubled. I am on my last legs as regards money matters. I am in an awful state. I have not a penny to call my own. I am losing plenty of opportunities by not having money. If I could only get £1000 my fortune would be made but I need not carry on again of all this. I have told you often enough before. Do help me if you can.

I hope either Frank or Arthur will come out to join me. I want one of them badly, but on no account must they come out with less than £500. For it requires that to stand in anything like a way. If either of them came I would stand him on some of my own and he would do well. You know well enough I started on nothing and have done well so far but if I get no money I fear I shall go to the wall, but I trust you will be able to help me be it ever so little.

There is a Gent come out here called "Jones" who lived at "Northfield House". I don't know what he is going to do. I am trying to sell him one of my places but I fear he will not give me what I am asking - £1200 - and I don't think he has the cash. I have made over to Mr Gordon my Spanish Bonds as security for the money...he (Mr Gordon) will write to you about them. If you send me any money, send me it through Mr Gordon. I shall then get it all the sooner. Now dearest Mother I must shut up. Do send me photographs of you all as I have not a single one, and I do so want to have something of you. I will write to Emma and Fretwell by this mail. Give my best love to all at home. I hope Father keeps well. Give my best love to him and accept the same from your affect[ionate] son.

J Walker Hoyle

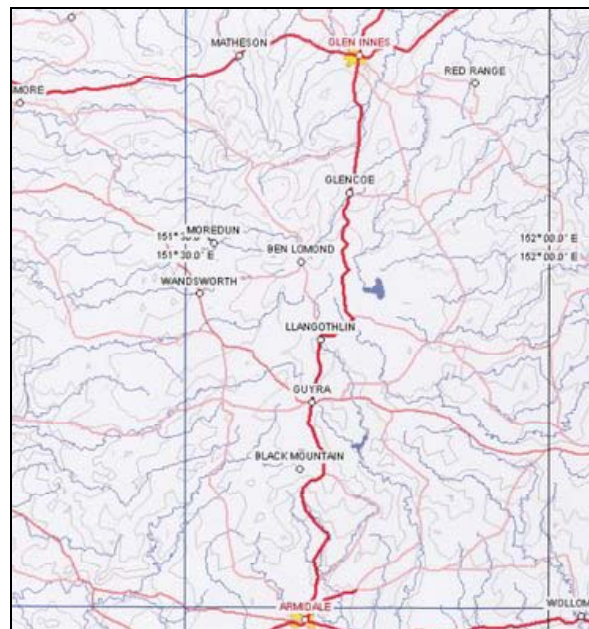
I believe that Llewellyn was one of the sons of Thomas Llewellyn, surgeon, and his wife A(l)lina. John's sister Emma was staying with the two Llewellyn daughters for the 1871 census (refer to section on Emma Mary Hoyle Hoyle). I am not sure of the identity of Mr Jones, but he must have been known to the family. Northfield House, Rotherham, had previously been the residence of Francis Parker, uncle of John Walker Hoyle and, at least in 1865, was the address of his son Thomas William Parker, John's cousin. The Frank and Arthur referred to in John's letter were his younger brothers Frank Edward Hoyle and Ferham Arthur Hoyle, who would have been, respectively, aged 24 and 18 in April 1871.<sup>4</sup>

John must have realised that, as the third son (his old brother Robert having died in 1852) he would be well down the pecking order for any bequests on the death of the father and therefore he would need to make his own way in life. From the letter we can assume he decided (or it was decided for him) that the only way he could 'make good' was to try his luck abroad, and he apparently left England with very little capital. He was clearly a homesick man and fearful of was losing touch with his family. And, despite his pleading, neither of his brothers went to join him.

We do not know how much longer John remained in Fiji. But we do know that by 1880 he was in New South Wales, and it was there, according to the NSW Registry of BDM, that he married Emmeline M Smith. The certificate shows that the marriage took place on 27<sup>th</sup> March 1880 between John Walker Hoyle, bachelor, and Emmeline Mary Smith, spinster, at Orchardfield, in accordance with the rites of the Presbyterian Church. The groom was a civil engineer living at Glen Innes and the bride a governess, resident at Orchardfield, near Armidale. John would have been 36 years of age, and Emmeline was a minor at the time of their wedding because at the bottom of the certificate is the notation 'after the consent of Mary Susannah Smith, Mother and Guardian of the bride'. So at least we know who Emmeline's mother was! (Refer to notes below on Emmeline's death certificate). No family members were present at the wedding, the two witnesses being Franklin Jackes and Annie S Bettington.<sup>5</sup>

I would hazard a guess that Emmeline Smith was employed as a governess by the Jackes family. Franklin Jackes, who was originally from Canada, had settled in the Armidale area where he was, by the mid 1860s, Alderman Jackes, an active member of the civic and commercial community, one of the founders of the Armidale Showground and, as one of the directors of the newly formed Armidale Building and Investment Society, a successful business man. Before his death in 1884, he had owned a number of stores and the Great Northern Hotel in Armidale, and his primary production interests included 'Orchardfield', the property some 6kms south of Armidale on the Saumarez Creek, where he had established stone, vine, and berry fruit orchards.<sup>6</sup>

I am also certain that John Walker Hoyle would have been one of the contractors or employees engaged on the construction of the Main North railway. The first section of the Main North Line was built from the port of Newcastle to Victoria Street, Maitland in 1857 and then gradually extended northwards through a number of towns to eventually reach Armidale in 1883.<sup>7</sup>



Armidale was first settled in the early 1830s, following the earlier exploration of the area by John Oxley. It was named after Armadale on the Isle of Skye in Scotland, but seemingly the city fathers were not good spellers. Oxley recommended the region for grazing, and soon early pioneers set up small farms in the locality. The town, which was surveyed in 1848 and gazetted in 1849, was established to provide a market and administration centre for the farms, but soon after gold was discovered at nearby Rocky River and Gara Gorges, and a gold rush ensued, enlarging the town rapidly in the 1850s.

With settlement continuing to occur further away from the major towns and cities communications became a critical priority, and for the New South Wales-Queensland areas the importance of the Main North Line or, as it was known, the Great Northern Railway cannot be underestimated. The construction of the railway meant a stimulus to local industry and the need for housing for construction workers and later railway employees. The Armidale Express, 15<sup>th</sup> September 1882, reported

During the past few years the town of Armidale has increased in size and importance at a very rapid rate, for confirmation of which statement it is only necessary to count the number of buildings that have been recently erected.

In 1881, one year before the arrival of the railway, the number of brick, stone and timber dwellings was 319 but this number had increased to 669 by 1891.

Similarly, for Glen Innes, 100 kms north of Armidale, which was gazetted as a town in 1852. By 1875 the population had swelled to about 1,500 and the town had a two-teacher school, three churches, five hotels, two weekly newspapers, five hotels, seven stores and a variety of societies and associations. On 19<sup>th</sup> August, 1884 the new Main North railway from Sydney opened. The arrival of the rail service and the subsequent expansion of mining contributed a new prosperity in the town, which is reflected in some of the beautiful buildings there.

I have found nothing as yet to indicate how long John and Emmeline may have lived in the Armidale area. By 1888 John was in Melbourne and on 4<sup>th</sup> of March of that year he wrote to his brother Charles in response to a letter he had unexpectedly received from him. The copy is a bit faint, but John seems to be telling Charley that he was in Melbourne either out of, or looking for work. John must have heard of their father's death in 1886 and in his letter he asked Charley if he had sold Hooton and also requested that, if by any chance, he was to receive some of the proceeds of the sale (and presumably also of his father's estate) Charley would immediately forward this to him at the Bank of Victoria. John also asked if his brother had seen about getting John accepted as a Member of the Institute of Engineers which John said would help him out (presumably in finding work). John then goes on to say that no-one in the family writes to him any more as if they had quite forgotten him. Even his sister Emma had not written to him for over twelve months.<sup>8</sup>

The only other records I have at the moment for John are his death certificate and a newspaper cutting. John Walker Hoyle, Railway Surveyor, died at the age of 53 on 14<sup>th</sup> May 1897 at 129 Devonshire Street, one of a row of terraced houses in the inner Sydney suburb of Surry Hills. The cause of his death was given as haemotomasis, dropsy (peritonitis). He had been unwell for at least three years and had in fact last been seen by a Dr. Norrie the day before his death. A brief notice appeared in the Sydney Morning Herald of 15<sup>th</sup> May, but the age at death was incorrect.

HOYLE – At 129 Devonshire-street, John Walker Hoyle, aged 47 years.

He was buried on 15<sup>th</sup> May 1897 in the Church of England section of the Rookwood Cemetery. The informant was John's widow Emmeline Hoyle and she was required to provide not only John's age (which she gave, also incorrectly, as 57) but also the name and occupation of John's father and the maiden name of John's mother. For the former she cited Fretwell William Hoyle, Judge, but did not know the maiden name of her late husband's mother. Indeed, she had also put the first names of the father the wrong way round (although John did have a step-brother named Fretwell William Hoyle). The death certificate confirms that John was born in Yorkshire England and states that he had married Emmeline Smith at Armidale when he was 41 years of age (wrong again!), and that according to his widow he had been in New South Wales for about 30 years when he died, which I think was more of a guess than fact. Finally, the death certificate records that John Walker Hoyle and Emmeline had no children.<sup>9</sup>

I find Emmeline's apparent ignorance of the details of John Walker Hoyle's immediate family somewhat puzzling. But if, as may have been the case considering the lack of any other information about John in the various family

records, he emigrated under a cloud, or following a family rift, or because he felt he had been 'abandoned' by this family, then he may have been very reluctant to talk about his various relatives in England and elsewhere in various colonial outposts.

The NSW BMD lists the death of an Emmeline M Hoyle, at Parramatta for 1931. The names of the parents are given as James and Mary S. The certificate is much more informative, and fills in most of the biographical gaps in the foregoing account for Emmeline. She was 71 when she died and probably 20 years old when she married John Walker Hoyle in Armidale in 1880. Her parents were James Smith, police magistrate and Mary Susannah (née) Sharpley who had married in 1845 in the Hunter district of New South Wales. She was an inmate of the Parramatta Mental Hospital when she died, the informant being one Charles Gilchrist, *per* the Manager, Emmeline having relocated there at some time from the Newington Asylum, Auburn which, like the Parramatta institution, cared for poor homeless women and women with chronic diseases. Even with the best care that could be provided by these two institutions, with no children and no other known living relatives to care for her, I imagine that the latter years of Emmeline's life would have been pretty miserable and lonely. The cause of death was two-fold – arteriosclerosis and myocarditis, and Emmeline was buried on 18<sup>th</sup> April in the Church of England section of Rookwood Cemetery.<sup>10</sup>

John Walker Hoyle Born: 25 Dec 1843 Died: 14 May 1897	Emmeline Mary Smith Born: Abt. 1860 Married: 27 Mar 1880 Died: 15 Apr 1931
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As a postscript, I found the following notice in the Maitland Mercury and Hunter River General Advertiser of 21<sup>st</sup> October 1854.

**Notice**

PERSONS desirous of Contracting for the  
Repair of the ROADS in the Police district  
of Scone, are invited to transmit their  
Tenders, addressed to the Bench of Magistrates,  
at Scone.  
Specifications of the work to be done, and  
further particulars, may be obtained upon application  
to the undersigned, or to W. R. Collett,  
Esq , Government Road Surveyor, Singleton.  
JAMES SMITH, C.P.S.  
Police Office, Scone,  
Oct. 7, 1854.



## Notes

<sup>1</sup> HO107/2344/171/p14; FMP Passport Application Registers – incidentally, a William F Hoyle is listed on the same page as having obtained a passport in December of the same year.

<sup>2</sup> FreeBMD Birth Index 1838-1915; copy of Pedigree of Hoyle of Hooten Levett Hall provided by Liz Cargill; Two Years in Fiji, Litton Forbes, Longman Press, 1875.

<sup>3</sup> Email from Suzanne Paget 4 October 2009; copies of letters provided by Suzanne Paget.

<sup>4</sup> Refer to Probate record for Francis Parker; Thomas William Parker was listed as a member of the Surtees Society as living at Northfield House in 1865 (<http://www.archive.org> - Publications of the Surtees Society).

<sup>5</sup>; NSW Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages Historical Index Search; certified copy of Marriage Certificate No 2467/1880.

<sup>6</sup> Life and Times of the People who created the Armidale Showground, Michael J Brennan, Teroma Pty Ltd, NSW Australia, 2001.

<sup>7</sup> Information on the Great Northern Railway, Armidale and Glen Innes – Wikipedia.

<sup>8</sup> Copy of extract of letter on file.

<sup>9</sup> NSW Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages Historical Index Search; certified copy of Death Certificate No 1897/3517; Rookwood Cemetery, one of the largest in the southern hemisphere, located to the west of Sydney was opened in 1897; interestingly there was also a cemetery in the inner Sydney district – the Devonshire Road cemetery – the graves of which were transferred to Rookwood to make way for the building of Sydney's Central Railway Station.

<sup>10</sup> NSW Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages Historical Index Search; certified copy of Death Certificate 1931/006478.