

William Brind Hansen

William Brind Hansen was born in 1821, the fourth child of Thomas and Elizabeth Hansen. William's sponsor at his baptism was Captain William Brind, a good friend of Thomas Hansen.

In the 1840's, it would have been difficult for a young man to find work or an apprenticeship in the Bay of Islands, and William, like his older brother Thomas, left New Zealand to settle in Australia. He originally chose the newly opened Hunter Valley District, north of Sydney. He worked at different times as a farm labourer, a fisherman, a carrier, and as a horse trader.

On 18th April 1848, he married Jane Frances Cheers in St Matthew's Church. Jane signed the register and William made his mark. After their marriage, William and Jane continued to live in the Alnwick and Miller's Forest areas of the Hunter Valley. Here, their first two daughters were born; Isabella on 4th July 1850, and Esther on 3rd August 1852. It was in the Hunter Valley that William had contact with his brother Thomas, who shared his interest in horse breeding

In 1854, the family moved to Sydney before heading north to Brisbane, living at Kangaroo Point, close to the Brisbane River. A third child, Hannah, was born here in 1854. The family then moved further north to Central Queensland where eight more children would be born between 1857 and 1873. They eventually settled at Yaamba, a small town 36 kilometres north of Rockhampton. Yaamba was an overnight stop on the road north to Mackay. William took over the running of the hotel at Yaamba from Johann Schneider, who was also farming in the district. William also took up the carrying business again.

William and Jane's expanded family included William born in 1857, Philip in 1858, John in 1861, Harriet in 1863, Jane Frances in 1866, Elizabeth in 1869, an unnamed female baby in 1871, and Amy Emma in 1873. Sadly, Elizabeth and the unnamed baby both died as infants. Their eldest daughter Isabella died in 1866 aged 16, by way of an accident soon after marrying James Fitzgerald.

It is interesting to note that nearly all William's children were christened with the same first names as his brothers and sisters back in New Zealand. This indicated great affection for his distant family.

William and Jane lived and worked in the Yaamba District until they retired and went to live with their daughter Esther at Lion Creek, just outside of Rockhampton. Esther and her husband Benjamin Hill ran the hotel at Lion Creek.

William died on 23rd August 1889, in Rockhampton, as a result of chronic Brights Disease. He was 68 years old. Jane died on 2nd March 1895, three weeks after suffering a stroke. Both were buried in the family plot in the South Rockhampton Cemetery.

Researched by Kath Hansen. Written by Eric Hansen

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