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UNEARTHING ANGLO-INDIAN ROOTS: A PERSONAL JOURNEY

Sean Kelly

History comprises countless individual stories which, taken together, allow the historian to make generalisations and paint an overall picture of particular aspects of periods in history. Through the pursuit of their family histories, genealogists can contribute to validating or questioning those generalisations. At the same time, those generalisations can help genealogists appreciate and further develop their understanding of the story of individual ancestors, suggesting avenues of research that otherwise might have never been pursued.

So it was for me. A chance discovery that one branch of my family tree included an Indian forebear led me not just on a quest to identify who they were, but also to understand the society in which they and their descendants lived, the particular challenges they faced, and the ways in which they navigated these obstacles. For other people of Anglo-Indian descent seeking to understand their heritage, my pathway to unearthing my Anglo-Indian roots could suggest options to explore in their own search. In addition, the features of early 19th century British Indian society that my search exposed, and how these impacted on people with Indian forebears, may resonate with their own ancestors' experience.

EXPLORING MY BRITISH INDIA HERITAGE

From an early age, I was aware that my family had strong connections with British India. My father would regale us with tales of his experiences as a young British artillery officer with the 17th Indian Parachute Field Regiment, Royal Indian Army, from the latter days of the Second World War up to India's Independence in 1947. Later in life, I became aware that our links to India were much deeper.

My paternal grandfather, Patrick Kelly, was born in Coimbatore, in the west of what was then the Madras Presidency (now the state of Tamil Nadu), and his father, John Fitzpatrick Kelly – something of a celebrity in our family annals - had come to India barely a teenager in about 1865, joined the Madras Public Works Department, prospered, and lived the rest of his life in India. It was the story of this family patriarch John Fitzpatrick Kelly, and his descendants in India, that first excited my interest.

Photo 1: John and Clara Kelly, with children Eileen, Millie, Philip, Cyril and Lily, Bangalore, circa 1902.

In 2013, I was appointed as Australia's Consul-General for Southern India, based in Chennai, with responsibility for the southern Indian states of Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh and Telangana[1] – spanning all of the former Madras Presidency and the breadth of places I had discovered my great-grandfather had lived and worked. This spurred on my interest in unearthing more about my family's links to India, and provided opportunities for on-the-ground research.

I subsequently uncovered far more about my connections to India than I ever would have dreamed, information I now imagine my great-grandfather, John Fitzpatrick Kelly, may have preferred to keep hidden. In particular, I unearthed an Anglo-Indian heritage lost to later generations, and insights into the lives of my relatives in the British Raj of the 19th and early 20th centuries – stories not just of soldiers and railwaymen but of the precarious existence of their Indian and Anglo-Indian wives, the treatment of their children, and how they dealt with the pervasive impact of racism and class discrimination.

DISCOVERING MY INDIAN ANCESTRY

John Kelly had been born in Glasgow to Irish immigrant factory workers, but among the surviving Kelly family members, almost nothing was known about the origins of the wife he married in India, Clara – not even her family name. No record of their marriage has been found to this day. Without this, or any other records revealing anything about her background, it seemed that she would remain a mystery. This was the classic genealogist's 'brick wall', and I became determined to break through it.

During a visit to Coimbatore, I paid a visit to St Michael's Church (now known as Kovai Cathedral), where I found a record of the 1880 baptism of my grandfather's eldest siblings - twin sisters, Lilian and Mildred.[2] In the column used for recording '*Father's Caste or Profession'*, I found an unexpected entry – '*Eurasian'*. John Kelly was 100% Irish, so this must have been a reference to Clara. This was the first inkling I had that my great-grandmother's background was Anglo-Indian. It's worth noting that every other entry on that page is of clearly Indian names - suggesting that St Michael's was, at that time, a church that primarily serviced the Indian and Anglo-Indian community rather than European families. This reinforced my belief that she was Anglo-Indian.

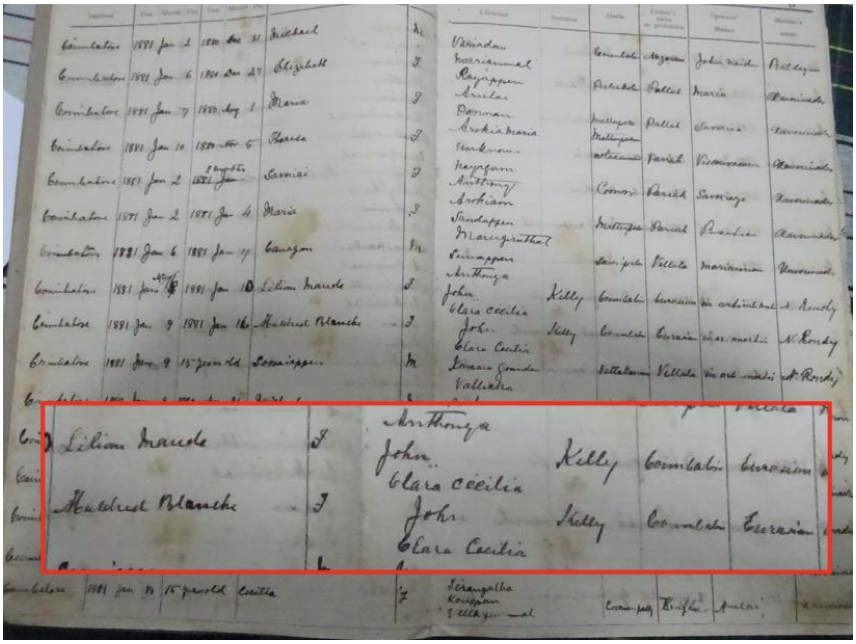


Photo 2: Baptism Register entries for Lilian and Mildred Kelly

Help from DNA Ethnicity Profiles

With this intriguing possibility in mind, I undertook an AncestryDNA test. The results included an ethnicity profile (see Figure 1) that confirmed that I did, indeed, have traces of South Indian DNA (classified as 'The Deccan and Bay of Mannar') from my father's side – around 1%, suggesting that my Indian ancestor was further back in the family tree than Clara.

Figure 1: Ancestry DNA Ethnicity Profile of Sean Kelly

DNA Ethnicity Profiles are a rather imprecise tool. In each generation, DNA does not necessarily break evenly between parents, and each generation only receives a random selection of their parent's DNA, not a share of all elements. This means that I could register a certain amount of Indian DNA, but my cousin with the same lineage could register more – or none at all. But as a rough guide, a 1 or 2% DNA result would suggest the original Indian ancestor might be a 4-x great-grandparent. One of my

father's first cousins registered 7% Indian DNA, so it could be closer. While this confirmed my belief that Clara had Anglo-Indian roots, it took me no further without Clara's family name.

Soon after, I unexpectedly found a reference to a family name for Clara in a Dutch record of the death of my grandfather's brother in Holland, which read 'Bayles'. I found no matching records for a Clara Bayles in India, but I did find a Clara Baylis, who I eventually was able to establish was our Clara. Key evidence that led to that conclusion was details provided by AncestryDNA of a series of descendants of the Baylis family with whom I shared DNA matches and who also had Indian ancestry, including in some cases the same unusual mix of South Indian and Philippine DNA that I recorded. A more detailed account of how I established my great-grandmother's identity can be found in my article, "*Finding Clara: Solving a British India Family Mystery*", published in the Spring 2022 issue of the FIBIS Journal (Kelly, 2022, pp. 24-27). Armed with Clara's identity, I then set about tracing back her forbears, with the particular objective of working out where in the family tree I would find our Indian ancestor.

Identifying Indian Forebears

I traced Clara's maternal family line back to her mother Amelia's maternal grandmother, Mary, who married Richard Plackett, a British soldier with the 69th Regiment of Foot, at St Mary's Church in Fort St George on 3 September 1806. The record of their marriage clearly describes Mary as '*native*'.[3] Richard died in 1812,[4] and soon after Mary re-married. The record of Mary's second marriage was equally illuminating, referring to the marriage of "… Francis Holmes, private of HM 69th Regiment and Mary Plackett, native widow of Richard Plackett, Sergeant of the 69th Regiment …".[5]

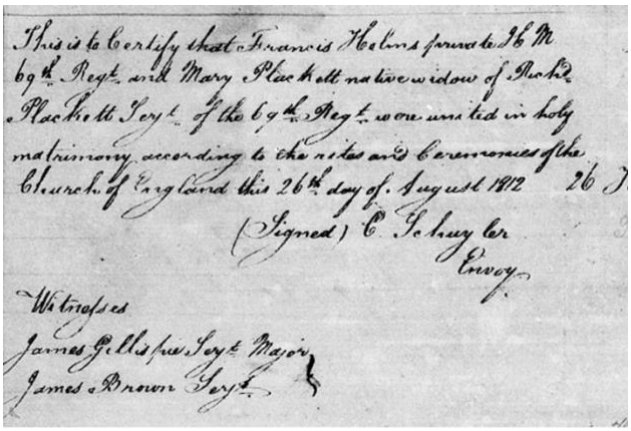

This is to Certify that Francis Holmes private to H M 69th Regt and Mary Plackett native widow of Richd Plackett Sergt of the 69th Regt were united in holy matrimony according to the rites and Ceremonies of the Church of England this 26th day of August 1812 26 J
(Signed) C Schuyler
Envoy
We witnesses
James Gillespie Sergt Major
James Brown Sergt

Photo 3: Marriage Register entries for Mary Plackett and Francis Holmes

These two records unequivocally prove that one of my ancestors, my 4-x great-grandmother Mary, was, indeed, Indian.

As I turned to look into Clara's father's forebears, I came to suspect that there might actually be a second Indian forebear in our family tree. Clara's paternal grandparents were Thomas Baylis, a soldier who arrived in Madras with the 46th Regiment of Foot in 1817, and Mary Cashier, a widow.[6] Their marriage record and subsequent records gave no indication of it, but I came to believe that Mary Cashier, too, was Anglo-Indian, or more likely Indian. Cashier is a very rare surname, and no record of Mary's previous spouse has been found. However, it is quite likely that he was also a soldier who, like many at the time, took an Indian bride.

My main reason for believing Mary Cashier was Indian relates to their sons, my 2-x great-grandfather Thomas William Baylis (Thomas Jr.) and his younger brother William Baylis. Both joined the Madras Native Infantry – not as officers, as would be the case had they been of entirely European origins, but as drummers. Both advanced fairly quickly to the post of Drum Major (Thomas Jr. in the 4th MNI,[7] and William in the 2nd MNI[8]), posts certainly filled by Anglo-Indians. Since 1791, Anglo-Indians had been banned from serving in the Presidency armies or civil service (Moore, 1996, p. 52), with the only military billet open to a person of Anglo-Indian background being that of drummer, fifer or farrier (Muthiah and Maclure, 2013, p. 25). Consequently, virtually all drummers in the Presidency armies were Anglo-Indian. Additionally, both retired from the army to take up positions as an Inspector of Police, another role often filled by Anglo-Indians.

Further evidence of Anglo-Indian background can be found in the spouse of Mary Cashier's only daughter, Margaret Baylis, and Margaret's children. Margaret married Moses Hill, then a Sergeant in the 57thRegiment of Foot, in 1845.[9] Given the dearth of European women in India at that time, it is unlikely that an English girl, even the daughter of a soldier, would marry an enlisted man twice her age, even a Sergeant, as she would have had better prospects. Even more telling, Margaret's two daughters both married Anglo-Indian pastors,[10] unheard of for English women, and one of her two sons also married an Anglo-Indian woman.[11] In the second half of the 19th century, it was most common for Anglo-Indians to marry other Anglo-Indians.

Based on this, I have concluded that my 3-x great-grandmother Mary (Cashier) Baylis, was also Indian, or possibly Anglo-Indian.

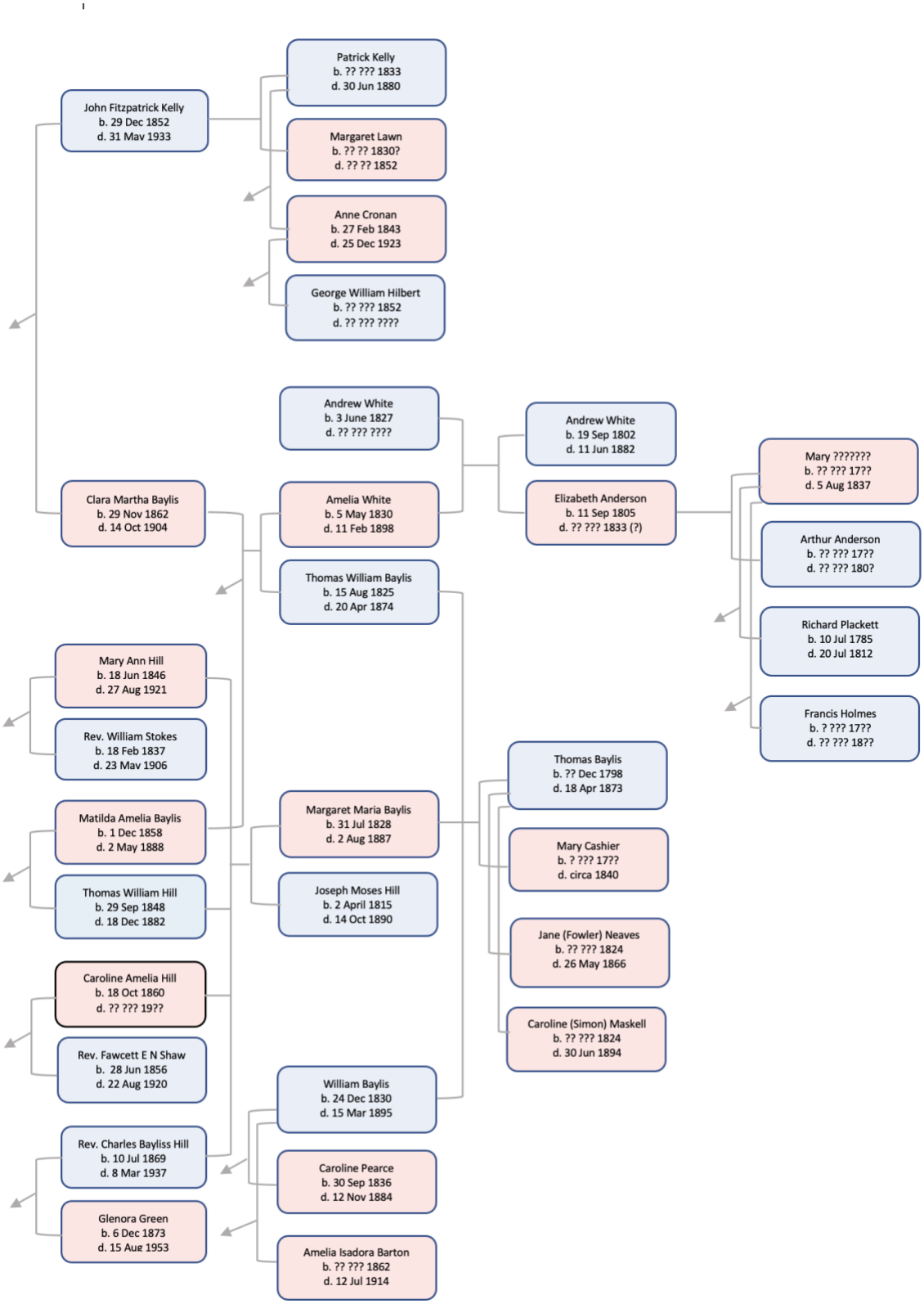
Encouraged by the success I had in identifying the Baylis family using my DNA matches with traces of Indian DNA, I sought to flesh out my family tree by identifying further, as yet unlinked matches, who also shared Indian DNA. I found two such people, both assessed as being likely fourth cousins.[12] I used the associated messaging facility to write to each seeking to identify where, on the Baylis family tree, we were related. I was surprised to hear back that neither knew of any link to the Baylis line – but even more surprised to learn that they were both descended from a Patrick Kelly, who lived in India in the second half of the 19th century.

Patrick Kelly was the name of the father of John Fitzpatrick Kelly (Fitzpatrick, a middle name John adopted later in life, meaning 'son of Patrick'), and their Patrick Kelly's age and details of his story matched those of my great, great-grandfather's.[13] But no-one amongst my remaining Kelly family members had any idea he had gone to India. We believed he had disappeared soon after John's birth and his wife's death, leaving John in the care of an aunt until, at the age of perhaps 13 years, John had travelled alone to Madras, where he settled. Further investigation confirmed that John's father, Patrick, had actually left John behind in Glasgow and come out to Madras, re-marrying and having a large second family in India.

In 1859, Patrick, a carpenter who had found work in Madras as an overseer on the railways, married not-quite 16-year-old Anne Cronan,[14] the daughter of a Gunner with the Horse Artillery, whose mother, Mary Anne Smith, was Anglo-Indian – the source of that family's Indian DNA.[15] All of Patrick and Anne's sons worked on the railways – three as locomotive drivers, one as a railway guard, and one as a Permanent Way Inspector.[16] This is a sector widely recognised as the primary source of employment for Anglo-Indians (Muthiah and Maclure, 2013, pp. 77-78; Anderson, 2020, pp. 198-200). At least four of their grandchildren either worked for, or married men who worked for, the railways, and a further three grandchildren worked with the Post and Telegraph Department, also an occupation dominated by Anglo-Indians.[17] After Patrick died in

1880,[18] Anne re-married to a railway fireman who worked in the same location as two of her sons.[19]

Figure 2: Relationship between Early Ancestors and Relatives Referenced



Patrick died before John married, and Patrick's second family mostly moved northwest to the Bombay Presidency, so any contact would have been infrequent. This likely contributed to the fact that none of the remaining descendants of John had any awareness that his father had even been in India, let alone that he had established a large second family there. If not for my efforts to trace shared Indian roots - and even though the Indian DNA I identified was not actually DNA that I shared with Patrick's second family - I would never have found this entire branch of the Kelly family.

INSIGHTS INTO THE LIVES OF MY ANGLO-INDIAN RELATIVES

Having established the origin of my Indian lineage, I set about tracing their descendants and relatives to build a more comprehensive family tree of those people related by blood to John and Clara Kelly, all of whom were descendants of at least one of these Indian forebears. There were a lot. In John and Clara's generation alone, I found eight half-brothers and half-sisters of John; eight brothers and sisters of Clara; and 24 first cousins of Clara. My awareness of that generation alone had grown from two to 42 blood relatives! As I traced each of their families down, I found several hundred blood relatives who lived in British India and share some degree of Anglo-Indian heritage, providing a rich and somewhat diverse cross-section of ordinary Anglo-Indians in British India in the 19th and early 20th century. And as I dug deeper into the individual stories of many of these relatives, their experiences, while neither unique nor remarkable in themselves, highlighted many aspects of the lot of Anglo-Indians in British India, and provide an insight into their lives.

Soldiers' Wives

One striking feature of the history of the Baylis side of the family in the first half of the 19th century was the extent to which our family's soldiers consistently married women from within the army community. As noted above, my Indian 4-x great-grandmother Mary married soldier Richard Plackett in 1806, and after he died in 1812, she married another soldier, Francis Holmes. In fact, prior to marrying Richard, Mary had a further relationship (perhaps an unregistered or informal marriage) with Arthur Anderson, the father of her illegitimate daughter, Elizabeth.[20] Although I am yet to find evidence to confirm it, I believe that Arthur may have also been a soldier, most likely serving in the same regiment as Richard. Elizabeth Anderson (using Elizabeth Plackett, her

stepfather's surname), married Andrew White, a private from the 69th Regiment of Foot,[21] where her second stepfather, Francis Holmes, was also serving. Elizabeth's daughter, Amelia, married Thomas Baylis' eldest son, Thomas William Baylis (my great, great-grandfather), who was a drummer with the 4th MNI.[22]

As discussed earlier, I suspect that the first husband of my 3-x great-grandmother, Mary (Cashier) Baylis, was likely a soldier, as was her second husband (my 3-x great-grandfather), Thomas Baylis. After Mary died, Thomas re-married again, twice, in both cases to the daughters of soldiers and who had themselves been married to soldiers before marrying him.[23] As noted earlier, Thomas' daughter, Margaret, also married a British soldier.

My family clearly illustrated a consistent pattern in the early to mid-19th century of British or Anglo-Indian soldiers marrying the Indian or Anglo-Indian widows or daughters of other soldiers, an almost self-contained eco-system (Hawes, 1996, p. 5). This was in part a product of circumstances and in part deliberate design.

By the end of the 18th century, the number of British soldiers in India either with British Army regiments or the Company's army had grown from a few hundred mid-century to around 18,000 by 1790, while marriageable European women numbered in the hundreds (Williamson, p.454). Finding it difficult and too expensive to entice suitable British women to risk the long and dangerous voyage to India, the Company initially took a relaxed approach to its soldiers taking Indian wives or mistresses (an EIC guide actually recommended concubinage - see Williamson, 1810, pp. 415-416, pp. 457-458), recognising the vast majority had no alternative and seeing a stabilising influence on the soldiery (Hawes, 1996, p. 4). For many soldiers, marriage to Indians also reflected a decision to settle permanently in India (taking an Indian spouse back to Britain not being a socially-viable option), contributing to the stability of the British presence.

As a consequence, in the 18th century the Company actively encouraged such marriage, instructing its administration to "*induce by all means you can invent, our soldiers to marry with Native women, because it will be impossible to get ordinary young women*" (Hawes, 1996, p. 3). In Madras, the Company also encouraged

formalization of marriages to Indians by payments of one pagoda (a gold coin in Madras equivalent to 3.5 rupees[24]) for their children to be baptized as Anglicans, a practice that continued through to 1835 (Anderson, 2020, pp. 116, 267, 268). As the regiments spent most of their time stationed in military cantonments in remote areas far from the more Anglicised environment of the Presidency capitals, it would have been natural for soldiers to look to the large community of camp-followers, including the families of other soldiers, when seeking a wife (Hawes, 1996, p. 9). Restrictions on soldiers' movements into native settlements and town bazaars would have compounded this effect (Anderson, 2020, p. 87).

A confluence of events during the tenure of Lord Cornwallis as Governor-General and Commander of the Army between 1786 and 1793 led to a change of approach and a series of policy decisions that had the effect of encouraging soldiers to marry the Anglo-Indian widows or daughters of fellow soldiers. Cornwallis' administrative reforms led to

> … the replacement of the free-wheeling British trader/administrator of earlier years by a new breed of salaried officials imbued with the concept of a civilizing British mission … best to be achieved by the exaltation of British 'character', the public display of Christian virtue, and social distancing of ruling caste from those whom they ruled. (Hawes, 1996, p. ix)

Anglo-Indians blurred this divide, so policies aimed to contain and assimilate the Anglo-Indian community and discourage further inter-marriage. The Company's financial support for families of soldiers was made conditional on Christian marriage, which effectively directed soldiers to focus on the convert Indian widows or Christian Anglo-Indian daughters of fellow soldiers who constituted almost all of the non-European Christian women they could marry (Hawes, 1996, pp. 3-4). Until the Company opened India to missionaries in the 1830s, there were relatively few other Indian converts, apart from Catholics converted mainly by the Portuguese, who didn't qualify as an acceptable spouse for an Anglican soldier – British law did not recognize inter-denominational marriages.

At the same time, the Company's approach to Anglo-Indians took on a more strategic dimension. As the Company's focus moved from commerce to conquest, its leadership became increasingly worried about the loyalty to the Crown of the Anglo-Indian

progeny from these relationships (Charlton-Stevens, 2022, p. 49). This concern was amplified by the 1791 slave uprising in San Domingo and Haiti, in which mixed-race "mulatos" played an important role, and was reflected in the Company's decision around that time to ban Anglo-Indians from both the civil service and the military (Muthiah and Maclure, 2013, pp. 24-25). In addition, rampant anti-Catholicism in Britain and enmity with Catholic France, later intensified by bitter wars with Napoleon, created a strong imperative to ensure a loyal, Protestant, Anglo-Indian population. Entrenching the Anglo-Indian community predominantly with the army was a key strategy for achieving that.

Company financial incentives were used to help achieve these objectives. At the end of the 18th century, the Company introduced an Orphan School Allowance of three rupees per month for each legitimate child of a soldier, to meet the costs of maintenance and education of their child (Lushington, 1824, p. 258; Anderson, 2020, p. 117).[25] Since applicable law only recognized Christian marriages between persons of the same denomination (Anderson, 2020, pp. 98-99), the need for legitimacy created a strong incentive for soldiers to marry Indian or Anglo-Indian Protestants. In parallel, orphan asylums were established from the 1790s that provided a convenient and extensively-accessed source of Anglo-Indian brides (discussed further below). In Bengal, soldiers who married young women from the asylums (most of whom were Anglo-Indian) were given an allowance of four rupees per month (Lushington, 1824, pp. 263-264). It is likely that similar incentives were offered in the other Presidencies. These incentives effectively channeled soldiers to the Anglo-Indian daughters of fellow soldiers.

The extent to which our family from the Baylis side during the first half of the 19th century married within the military community is then fully explicable and consistent with the policies of the time.

I was also struck was the speed with which Mary Plackett had re-married. Richard Plackett died (at the age of 27 years) in Goa, where his regiment was stationed, on 20 July 1812.[26] Mary then married Francis Holmes, a fellow soldier from the 69th Regiment, in Poonamallee (just outside Madras) on 26 August, 1812, only six weeks

after Richard's death.[27] This was actually not unusual – the average period during which army wives re-married in India was around six weeks.

This in part reflected the extreme competition among enlisted soldiers for suitable brides at the time (available, willing to marry a European soldier, and most importantly Protestant). A trope that illustrates this is the supposed story of a young Anglo-Indian widow, who after burying her husband, went back to the barracks for a commemorative service, where she was asked by a sergeant if she would marry him. She burst into tears, and he apologized, thinking that he had asked her too soon, on the day of her husband's burial. But no; she explained that she was crying because she had already accepted an offer of marriage from a corporal at the graveside, missing the chance of marrying a higher rank! This story particularly resonates with me, because the sequence of events suggests that Francis Holmes, probably stationed at the 69th regimental depot in Poonamallee, on receiving advice from Goa that Richard had died, beat a quick path to Mary's door to inform her and be the first to propose marriage. Ironically, Richard had been away for about a year, and while away was promoted from private to sergeant[28] – perhaps Private Holmes did not inform her that her standing had increased?

As mentioned earlier, I suspect that Arthur Anderson, Mary's first partner, was also a soldier in her subsequent husband Richard Plackett's regiment, among the more than 100 soldiers from elements of the 69th killed in the Vellore Mutiny of 10 July 1806 (Wilson, 1883, p. 187). The Mutiny was eight weeks before Richard married Mary at Fort St George on 2 September 1806, and the companies of the 69th stationed in Vellore (including Richard) had only re-located to Madras in July (Butler, 1870, p. 47), not much more than a month before the wedding. It is not hard to imagine that, on return to Madras, Richard moved quickly to snap up the former partner (albeit not legal widow) of a fallen comrade.

There were also practical and financial reasons for an Indian army widow to marry again quickly. Soldiers' European widows were supported by their regiment for six months after their death, in which time the widow was expected to either return to Europe or to re-marry (Stanley, 1998, p. 58; Anderson, 2020, p. 85). However, Muster Roll records indicate that Mary was 'paid' out rather than being supported for a period

of time,[29] perhaps an indication of the army's approach to Indian or Anglo-Indian widows. She would have had no other alternative than re-marrying – going 'home' to Britain was not an option, nor would be returning to her Indian family (Charlton-Stevens, 2022, pp. 38-39). To guarantee the financial wellbeing of her and her family, Mary needed to re-marry, and fellow-soldiers of her husband's regiment would have provided an easy option.

'Orphan' Asylums

A detail on the 1847 marriage record for Clara's mother, Amelia (White) Baylis, caught my eye - "from the Madras F.M.O. Asylum", which I discovered referred to the Madras Female Military Orphan Asylum (MFMOA).[30] Records of the Asylum revealed Amelia entered the Asylum in January 1834, at the age of 3½ years,[31] where she remained until she married at the age of 17 years. Initially I took this as evidence that she was, effectively, an orphan, that is, both her parents were deceased. Her father, Andrew White, was a soldier who had been court martialed for mutiny (striking a superior officer) in 1832, and who was transported to Australia as a convict for seven years, never to return.[32] There was no further record of her mother, Elizabeth (Anderson/Plackett) White, so I concluded her mother must have died, resulting in Amelia being admitted to an orphanage. However, further research into the MFMOA and similar military orphan asylums revealed a very different possible explanation.

The military orphan asylums were not run solely to accommodate orphans, but rather became part of a system established to remove the children - predominantly Anglo-Indian - of enlisted soldiers from their families, giving them a 'European' and 'good Christian' upbringing. This practice paralleled racist and paternalistic policies implemented in other colonies to remove mixed-race indigenous children from their families in order to raise them as Europeans (known in Australia as the 'Stolen Generations') (Anderson, 2020, p.118).

The MFMOA was first proposed by then Governor of Madras, Sir Archibald Campbell, in 1786 in response to "the wretched condition of the many orphan children of the soldiers who perished during the late war on the coast", but like similar initiatives in the other Presidencies, it was absorbed into a broader program directed at the mostly Eurasian children of soldiers and other Europeans in India. Once established, the

MFMOA admitted five ‘classes’ of girls: (1) orphans of officers and soldiers; (2) girls who had lost one parent; (3) legitimate daughters of soldiers and their European wives; (4) legitimate daughters of soldiers and their native wives; and (5) legitimate daughters of European civilians of Madras (Penny, 1904, pp. 510-511). Each orphan asylum had different admission conditions, but the overall objective was similar. In each case, the fathers were European, although an exception was made for the daughters of drummers and fifers of the Company’s Army, who were almost entirely Anglo-Indian (Lushington, 1824, pp. 258-259). The vast bulk of those admitted to these asylums were the Anglo-Indian children of soldiers who had died (their Indian mothers being judged unsuitable to raise them) or of living soldiers with native or Anglo-Indian wives.

While surrendering children to the asylums was notionally voluntary, in practice soldiers, in particular, had little choice. As mentioned earlier, the East India Company introduced an Orphan School Allowance of 3 rupees per month, which was paid from birth for the children of European NCOs and enlisted soldiers, on the condition that they gave up their child to the care of an orphan asylum from the age of three years (Anderson, 2020, p. 117).[33] Soldiers who refused to do so were required to re-pay all of the allowance that had been paid to them, an impossible burden, and regiments were empowered to dock soldiers’ pay until the amount was re-paid (Anderson, 2020, p. 117).[34] While for some, sending children to a residential school may have been convenient or even welcomed, for many it was heart-wrenching and traumatic (Williamson, 1810, p. 464).

A variety of explanations were advanced to justify this draconian measure. Some disingenuously tried to suggest it was the equivalent of the practice of wealthier officials and senior army officers of sending their children home to the UK for schooling. The official aim was to:

> … relieve [the soldier] from the heavy burden of rearing a large offspring with very scanty means” and “rescue the children themselves from the vice and intemperance of the barrack, at a tender age in which they have not yet imbibed evil habits. (quoted in Evers, 2022, p. 2)

There was a pragmatic benefit for the regiments, who were relieved of the complication of children among many camp followers when regiments were deployed in action or to far-flung parts of the Presidency (Anderson, 2020, p. 119). It also reflected the racial,

class and religious bigotry of the time. A Report of Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge in 1784 concluded:

> … the fathers of these children being usually soldiers, sailors and the lower order of people, too often neglect their offspring and suffer them to follow the caste of their mothers [such] that the children are not only lost to Christianity, but to the society of which they are born members. (quoted in Penny, 1904, p. 505)

The objective, then, was "to rescue the children of the soldiers from the degradation and depravity of that class to which the mothers mostly belonged." (Penny, 1904, p. 527)

The women remained in the Orphan Asylum until they either married or were placed by the Asylum as domestics. According to one account,

> The girls receive a plain, useful education. They are taught every description of household work, washing and needlework and the care of the sick; and the most promising are trained as teachers to supply the classes in the Institution, and to provide for the wants of the army and other schools. The girls are expected to take such situations as are selected for them. (Bailey, 2001, p. 6)

During their stay, those that had parents had little or no contact with them, and in many cases, records kept were not sufficient to trace the parents, effectively making them orphans (Anderson, 2020, p. 118).Most married soldiers. One account explained that, in the orphan asylums, "the female wards, when arrived at a suitable age, are chiefly disposed of in marriage to Non-Commissioned Officers, and Privates, Drummers, etc. in the King's and Company's Regiments" (Lushington, 1824, p. 263). Enlisted men with a good character reference from their commander were able to visit the Asylum in search of a wife, or attend dances organised by the Asylum that were unashamedly 'marriage markets' (Anderson, 2020, p. 154). Women were frequently 16, 15 or even 14 years of age when they married. Every woman had "the option of either rejecting a proposal of marriage, or of quitting the Asylum as a servant" (Bailey, 2001, p. 5). Most chose marriage.

This new understanding of the military orphan asylum system raised questions in my mind about which other members of the family might have also been given over to an asylum. Amelia's older brother, Andrew, for example, may have already been in the system, at the corresponding Madras Male Military Orphan Asylum, by the time of his

father's court martial (although no record has been found to confirm this). Was Amelia's mother, Elizabeth, also a graduate from a military orphan asylum? Her birth father, Arthur Anderson, was either dead of had abandoned her before her first birthday, and her stepfather, Richard Plackett, was absent fighting in an almost continuous series of military campaigns over the years that she reached qualifying age. While Elizabeth was illegitimate, this status may have been overcome by Richard 'adopting' her and her taking on his family name. If so, it seems likely that at least some of Elizabeth's step-siblings from her mother's two subsequent marriages to British Army soldiers may have also been sent to one of the military orphan asylums (again, no records have been found).

The three children of Thomas Baylis, also a British Army private, and his Indian wife, Mary Cashier, were probably also sent to a military orphan asylum. Thomas' regiment was moved repeatedly between various far-flung outposts of the Presidency, though not into combat. The name of their daughter, Margaret Baylis, who married British soldier Moses Hill at the age of seventeen, appears in the list of residents of the MFMOA.[35] It also seems likely that his sons were sent to a military orphan asylum - a General Order, dated 14 June 1798, required all fifers and drummers for sepoy regiments to be recruited from military orphan asylums, normally joining at the age of thirteen or fourteen years (Greene, 1810, p. 210). As noted above, both Thomas (Jr) and William Baylis were drummers in the Madras Native Infantry, and the dates of their retirement suggest they may have joined at the age of thirteen or fourteen.

The Baylis men also also found wives at the MFMOA. The second wife Thomas Baylis (Snr), Jane Fowler, was also a former resident of MFMOA, and is identified as '*Indo-Briton*' in the record of her first marriage.[36] In addition to Thomas (Jnr) marrying Amelia from the MFMOA, asylum records revealed that Caroline Pearce, the 15-year-old bride of Amelia's brother-in-law, William Baylis, had also been admitted to the MFMOA, in 1838 at the age of 1½ years.[37] There are also signs that at least some of the next generation of the Baylis family also attended the MFMOA. A report on the wedding in 1904 of one of William Baylis' later daughters, Gladys Chloe Rita Baylis, indicated not only that she was from the Asylum, but also that her two sisters, also of the Asylum, were bridesmaids.[38] Gladys' husband was also a soldier.

It is not clear how universal the removal of soldiers' children to orphan asylums was in practice. Accounts from the period suggest that strict application of the policy must have been patchy, and administrative records show that there was a constant gap between demand and supply of places at asylums (Penny, 1904, p. 511; Bailey, 2001, pp. 4-5). While there were a variety of different residential 'orphan' schools run by a range of religious and charitable organisations in addition to those directly supported by the Company, their combined capacity could have not kept up with the large and growing population of Anglo-Indian children of European enlisted soldiers of the British Army and Company armies, even if limited to 'legitimate' children. However, it is clear from documents at the time that it was intended to be a general practice, and that children being sent to asylums from a young age (including those with living parents) was widespread. In my own family's case, all of the Baylis line born in India to British Army enlisted soldiers in the 1820s and 1830s appear to have been sent to a military orphan asylum, and it is possible that many from the next generation were as well, even though almost all had two parents still living in India.

Hiding Indian Background

It is no surprise that racism, religious intolerance, and the upper-class society opprobrium regarding inter-racial relationships discussed above drove members of my family to seek to escape their Indian heritage. It is noteworthy that, of the many hundreds of records of family members that I have found, with the exception of the marriage records of my 4-x great-grandmother Mary and the baptism records for Lilian and Mildred mentioned above, almost no record made any reference to an Indian or Anglo-Indian background. The baptism records found for the three subsequent siblings of Lilian and Mildred, in the same register at St Michael's Church and recorded by the same priest, make no mention of Anglo-Indian background, instead recording the father's caste or profession as 'overseer'. Two later siblings, born in the 1890s, were recorded as 'European'.[39] This suggests that John Kelly took steps to ensure that any further reference to Anglo-Indian background, which could have significant ramifications for his children's position and prospects in British Indian society, was not recorded or common knowledge. Indeed, no one I know from recent generations of either the Kelly or Baylis families were aware of an Indian ancestor in their family tree. Hiding Anglo-Indian background was a common practice, and my family were successful at 'passing'.

A further approach to hiding Anglo-Indian background found amongst our family stories was distancing from or even ostracizing Anglo-Indian family members. The fact that no one in recent generations of the Kelly family knew anything about Clara's family background suggests that John Kelly may have also tried to distance his family from the Anglo-Indian Baylis family. He certainly hid the fact of his father's presence in India with an elaborate and well-known 'origin story' of how he came to be in India, alone – perhaps a reflection of his widowed stepmother being of Anglo-Indian background?

A more extreme example relates to the Rev. William Stokes, who married Mary Ann Hill, one of Clara's cousins, in 1862.[40] Stokes was the illegitimate son of Hudleston Stokes Esq. (1806-1888),[41] an East India Company official from a pious, upper-class family, and an unknown Indian woman – a 'sin' for which the father felt the need to atone for the rest of his life.[42] William's father (no relative of ours!) abandoned William with the Swiss Basel Mission, and while paying for his education in Europe,[43]

Photo 4: Family of the Reverend William Stokes (with beard) and Mary Ann (Hill) Stokes (holding the baby), circa 1895. Their children (from back row L-R) Hudleston Stokes, Harry Stokes, Dr. William Stokes, Bertie Stokes, and son-in-law Hermann Bretschneider; then (seated) Mary (Stokes) Heinecken, Winifred Stokes, baby grandson William Bretschneider and the baby's mother Ellen Hill (Stokes) Bretschneider; then (on the ground) George Edward Hill Stokes and Charlie Fawcett Stokes.

neither acknowledged him nor maintained contact. The Rev. William Stokes became a well-respected Protestant missionary, but there is no indication that he had contact with, let alone received any support from, relatives of Hudleston who held prominent positions in the Madras Civil Service. These included Sir Henry Edward Stokes, K.C.S.I., who by 1887 was Chief Secretary to the Madras Government, and Sir Gabriel

Stokes, K.C.S.I., who by 1906 rose to be Acting Governor of Madras.[44] He didn't exist for them.

Family records show that, for some branches of the family, migration to the United States was seen as a way to escape the constraints of a racially-determined class and social structure. The majority of the Rev. William Stokes' children – Ellen, Mary, Bertie, Winnie, and Charlie – migrated to the United States in the first two decades of the 20th century.[45] Not that the United States was any better when it came to attitudes about race. But migration afforded the opportunity for Anglo-Indians, even those whose appearance was unmistakably Indian (see Photo 4), to leave their racial background behind, declaring themselves on arrival to be 'white' or English.

The same was true of other relatives, for example, some of the children of another Anglo-Indian minister, the Rev. Fawcett Eber Neville Shaw, who married Caroline Amelia Hill, another of Clara's cousins, in 1880.[46] His eldest son, William Fawcett Shaw, also went to the United States, in 1907, where he became a successful doctor.[47] And his second daughter, Alice, studied in the United States and became a missionary.[48] Both had identified their race as 'white' or English (Alice actually claimed her race as 'Scotch' (sic), despite there being no Scots in the family). [49] Fawcett was desperate to also send is youngest children to pursue tertiary studies in the United States, and wrote to the Methodist Mission Board, seeking a special grant, pleading:

> To you who know India so well, and the peculiar conditions that face Anglo-Indians as to prospects, it is hardly necessary for me to say that we want to give these children a fair chance to make good in a country like America where everybody stands on his own merits.[50]

For many Anglo-Indians, migrating to countries like the United States, Australia and Canada, where they were able to pass for Europeans, was their best option, irrespective of the intrenched racism that pervaded those societies at that time (Uther Charlton-Stevens, 2022, p. 147).

These examples from my family's history evidence a number of approaches taken to escape the racially-defined class constraints of colonial British society by hiding their Anglo-Indian background. Strategies adopted ranged from manipulating official records to reinvention through migration, and in some cases keeping obviously mixed-

race family members at arm's length. My forebears were so successful in escaping their heritage that present generations descended from the 200 or so family members born in British India appear to have had no idea of our shared Indian roots. I suspect this is a common experience.

FINAL REFLECTIONS

My journey to unearth my Anglo-Indian roots not only revealed hidden aspects of my family's history, but also cast light on features of British Indian society that would have had a profound impact on the lives of many Anglo-Indians in the 19th century. The centrality of the military in both the growth and management of the Anglo-Indian population came into sharp relief, in particular factors that drove soldiers to marry widows or children of other soldiers, keeping the largest part of the Anglo-Indian community 'in the family'. This study also highlights the phenomenon of 'serial marriage' within the army community, and the factors that motivated many soldiers and soldiers' widows to marry two or more partners from within the army community. It also raises questions about the extent to which rank and file military families may have been compelled to surrender their overwhelmingly Anglo-Indian children at a young age to the military orphan asylums, irrespective of whether their father was still alive, and with no regard to the wishes of their Indian or Anglo-Indian mother, who was dismissed as unsuitable to raise them. Further, it demonstrates how the 'orphans' thus created were subsequently re-cycled into the military in the form of wives or non-combatants. Finally, my research illustrates some of the strategies employed by or on behalf of Anglo-Indians to 'whitewash' their Indian heritage to escape the pervasive impact of racism on their future prospects, efforts that successfully hid my Anglo-Indian heritage from me and other members of my family.

Sean Kelly *is Sean Kelly is a retired Australian diplomat whose last overseas assignment was as Australian Consul-General for Southern India. He holds a first-class Honours degree in Modern Asian Studies, a Graduate Diploma in Strategic Studies, and a Masters of International Law. Sean has been engaged in genealogical research for around 25 years. In addition to being an active member of Family History ACT's India Special Interest Group, Sean is a member of the London-based Families in British India Society and published an article, "Finding Clara: Solving a British India Family Mystery" in the Spring 2022 issue of the FIBIS Journal.*

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NOTES

[1] Appointment of Consul-General in Chennai, Media Release of the Minister for Foreign Affairs, The Hon. Julie Bishop MP, 10 January 2014, https://www.foreignminister.gov.au/minister/julie-bishop/media-release/appointment-consul-general-chennai.

[2] Baptism record of twin sisters Lilian Maude and Mildred Gertrude Kelly, viewed in the original *St Michael's Church Parish Register*, Coimbatore in 2014.

[3] Marriage of Richard Plackett and Elizabeth Anderson, 3 September 1806, in *Marriage Records at Fort St George, Madras, 1680-1815*, Transcribed and Annotated by F.E.P., Re-printed from *The Genealogist*, Vol. xix-xxiii, 1907, p. 63, https://archive.org/details/marriages-madras-fep/page/63/mode/2up?q=Anderson.

[4] Burial of Richard Plackett, in *British India Office Deaths & Burials* (FindMyPast.com), Archive Ref: N-2-5, Page 204; death noted in entry for July 1812, Goa, *Muster Roll of the 69th (South Lincolnshire) Regiment of Foot*, The National Archives (UK) Series WO 12.

[5] Marriage of Francis Holmes and Mary Plackett, Fort St George, 26 August 1812, in *Madras Diocese Protestant Church Records, 1743-1990* (FamilySearch.org), https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:6XXK-LNX9.

[6] Marriage of Thomas Baylis and Mary Cashier (widow), Poonamallee, 30 August 1824, in *India, Select Marriages, 1792-1948* (Ancestry.com), FHL Film No: 521838.

[7] His rank is listed in the record of marriage of Amelia White and Thomas Baylis, in *British India Office Marriages* (FindMyPast.com), Archive Ref: N-2-26, Folio 396.

[8] The baptism record of William's eldest child, Margaret Louisa Baylis, 23 March 1853, Poonamallee, describes him as Drum Major, 2nd MNI, in *British India Office Births & Baptisms* (FindMyPast.com), Archive Ref: N-2-12, Folio 23.

[9] Marriage record of Margaret Baylis and Moses Hill, in *British India Office Marriages* (FindMyPast.com), Archive Ref: N-2-24, Folio 153.

[10] Marriage of Rev. William Stokes and Mary Ann Hill, Coonoor, 26 February 1862, in *British India Office Marriages* (FindMyPast.com), Archive Ref: Z-N-2, Vol. REG2, LDS Film 521852; and marriage of Rev. Fawcett Eber Neville Shaw and Caroline Amelia Baylis, Coonoor, 22 September 1880, in *British India Office Marriages*, (FindMyPast.com), Archive Ref: N-2-61, Folio 261.

[11] Marriage of Thomas William Hill and Matilda Amelia Baylis, Agra, 27 January 1875, in *British India Office Marriages* (FIBIS), Archive Ref: Z/N-11-4, Folio 365, https://fibis.ourarchives.online/bin/aps_detail.php?id=225773.

[12] Identity withheld for privacy reasons.

[13] Amongst other matching details, descendants from Patrick Kelly's second family were aware he was widowed and had a son left behind in the UK, but knew nothing of John settling in India.

[14] Marriage of Patrick Kelly and Anne Cronan, Madras, 9 February 1859, in *British India Office Marriages* (FindMyPast.com), Archive Ref: N-2-40, Folio 122.

[15] The record is unclear, but refers to "European parent and native of Vizagapatnam", ie, Anglo-Indian – see Marriage of Thomas Cronan and Mary Ann Smith, Georgetown, Madras, 23 December 1838, in *India, Catholic Church Records, 1751-2014*, (FamilySearch.org), https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:6RSK-V9LN.

[16] Occupations listed in the birth records of their children.

[17] Occupations listed in the birth or marriage records of their children.

[18] Death of Patrick Kelly, Chingleput, Madras, 30 June 1880, in *British India Office Deaths & Burials* (FindMyPast.com), Ref: N-2-61, Folio 316.

[19] Marriage of Annie Kelly to William Hilbert, Neemuch, 28 April 1882, in *British India Office Marriages* (FindMyPast.com), Ref N-3-56, Folio No. 173.

[20] Christening of Elizabeth Anderson, 'natural' (ie illegitimate) daughter of Arthur Anderson, born 11 September 1805, christened 31 August 1806, in *British India Office Births & Baptisms* (FindMyPast.com), Ref N-2-3, Folio No. 3.

[21] Marriage of Andrew White and Elizabeth Placket, Poonamallee, 1 September 1823, in *British India Office Marriages* (FindMyPast.com), Archive Ref: N-2-9, Folio 107.

[22] Marriage of Amelia White and Thomas Baylis, Poonamallee, 22 July 1847, in *British India Office Marriages* (FindMyPast.com), Archive Ref: N-2-26, Folio 396.

[23] Marriage of Thomas Baylis and Jane (Fowler) Neaves, Poonamallee, 14 October 1846, in *British India Office Marriages* (FindMyPast.com), Archive Ref: N-2-26, Folio 83, and marriage of Thomas Baylis and Caroline (Simon) Maskell, Poonamallee, 24 July 1867, in *British India Office Marriages* (FindMyPast.com), Archive Ref: N-2-48, Folio 367.

[24] The gold 'star pagoda', 100 of which were worth 350 rupees, was issued by the East India Company in Madras. See Pagoda (coin) in Wikipedia - https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pagoda_(coin)#:~:text=The%20pagoda%2C%20also%20called%20the,was%20subdivided%20into%2042%20fanams.

[25] Citing General Order of the Governor-General (G.O.G.G.), 27 January 1821, Orphan School Allowance for Children, How to be Drawn, in *The Calcutta Annual Register, 1821*, Part III, Public Documents, Military Regulations, p. 32.

[26] Burial of Richard Plaskett in *British India Office Deaths & Burials* (FindMyPast.com) Archive Ref: N-2-5, Page 204; death also noted in entry for July 1812, Goa, *Muster Roll of the 69th (South Lincolnshire) Regiment of Foot*, The National Archives (UK) Series WO 12.

[27] Marriage of Francis Holmes and Mary Plackett, Madras, 26 August 1812, in *Madras Diocese Protestant Church Records, 1743-1990* (FamilySearch.org), https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:6XXK-LNX9.

[28] Promotion to Corporal noted in entry for October 1811, and promotion to Sergeant noted in entry for November 1811, both 'On Ship Asia' (en route from Java to Goa), 1st 'Vacant' Company, in *Muster Roll of the 69th (South Lincolnshire) Regiment of Foot*, The National Archives (UK) Series WO 12.

[29] Noted in entry for July 1812, Goa, *Muster Roll of the 69th (South Lincolnshire) Regiment of Foot*, The National Archives (UK) Series WO 12.

[30] Marriage of Amelia White and Thomas Baylis, Poonamallee, 22 July 1847, in *British India Office Marriages* (FindMyPast.com), Archive Ref: N-2-26, Folio 396.

[31] Record of Emilia (sic) White in List of Poonamallee Girls' Attending the Asylum in 1839, *India Office Records Collection* (FIBIS) F/4/1855 Coll. 78480, admitted 6 January 1824, https://fibis.ourarchives.online/bin/aps_detail.php?id=619323.

[32] Andrew White in List of Male Convicts by the Ship Norfolk, arrived from Madras via Mauritius, 30 December 1832, Office Copies of Printed Indents 1831-1842, in *Australia Convict Ships 1786-1849 (Nrs 12189)*, (FindMyPast.com), Reel 907.

[33] Citing General Order of the Governor-General (G.O.G.G.), 27 January 1821, Orphan School allowance for Children, how to be drawn" *The Calcutta Annual Register, 1821*, Part III, Public Documents, Military Regulations, p. 32.

[34] This long-standing practice was formalized in a General Order of the Governor-General (G.O.G.G.), 27 January 1821, Orphan School allowance for Children, how to be drawn, in *The Calcutta Annual Register*, 1821, Part III, Public Documents, Military Regulations, p. 32.

[35] Record of Margaret Baylis in List of Poonamallee Girls' Attending the Asylum in 1839, *India Office Records Collection* (FIBIS) F/4/1855 Coll. 78480, https://fibis.ourarchives.online/bin/aps_detail.php?id=618772.

[36] Record of Jane Fowler in List of Poonamallee Girls' Attending the Asylum in 1839, *India Office Records Collection* (FIBIS) F/4/1855 Coll. 78480, admitted 28 February 1826, https://fibis.ourarchives.online/bin/aps_detail.php?id=619225 ; marriage of Jane Fouler (sic) and Thomas Neaves, Fort St. George, 15 July 1840, in *India, Madras Diocese Protestant Church Records, 1743-1990* (FamilySearch.org), https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:6XF6-YMZJ.

[37] Record of Caroline Pearce (at Nurse) in List of Poonamallee Girls' Attending the Asylum in 1839, *India Office Records Collection* (FIBIS) F/4/1855 Coll. 78480, admitted 7 April 1828, https://search.fibis.org/bin/aps_detail.php?id=619339.

[38] News report 'A Wedding in Madras' on the marriage of Gladys Chloe Rita Baylis and Sergeant-Instructor John William Gargery, Vepery, Madras, 10 February, 1904, in *Madras Weekly Mail*, (FindMyPast.com), 11 February 1904.

[39] Records of the baptisms of Nora Gertrude Kelly, 26 July 1882, Florence Catherine Kelly, 10 October 1883, Patrick Hugo Kelly, 5 May 1885, Eileen Marjorie Kelly, 26 April 1894, all viewed in the original *St Michael's Church Parish Register*, Coimbatore in 2014, and the record of baptism of Philip

Desmond Lorne Kelly, 8 January 1898, viewed in the original *Sacred Heart Cathedral Parish Register*, Ootacamund in 2015.

[40] Marriage of William Stokes and Mary Ann Hill, Coonoor, 26 February 1862, in *India, Select Births and Baptisms, 1786-1947* (FamilySearch.org), Ref v.12, p. 84, FHL Film No. 521843.

[41] Christening of William Stokes, Bangalore, 14 October 1840, in *India, Select Births and Baptisms, 1786-1947* (Ancestry.com) Ref: v20 p84, FHL No. 521843.

[42] Annotation by Stokes family biographer to A Very Old Indian (Obituary for Huddleston Stokes), *The Harvest Field* (an India missionary magazine), February 1889, attached to family tree *Gabriel Stokes of Dublin (1682-1768) Descendants* (Ancestry.com), posted by Teresa Stokes.

[43] Vera Stokes, quoted in *Stokes Prattent Family Tree* (Ancestry.com); Dr William Stokes, Medical Register for 1889, in *UK Medical Registers, 1859-1959*, p. 1521, attached to *Stokes Prattent Family Tree*.

[44] Biographic Notes for Sir Henry Edward Stokes, K.C.S.I., and Sir Gabriel Stokes, K.C.S.I., source unknown, attached to family tree *Gabriel Stokes of Dublin (1682-1768) Descendants* (Ancestry.com), posted by Teresa Stokes; this family tree demonstrates that Sir Henry and Sir Gabriel were both sons of Hudleston Stokes' second cousin, Henry Stokes.

[45] Bertie Stokes (August 1910), Winifred Stokes (April 1923), Ellen Stokes (June 1935) answered 'English' for 'Race' in *New York, U.S., Arriving Passenger and Crew Lists* (Ancestry.com); Mary (Stokes) Heinecken declared herself 'white' in the 1910 US Census (Ancestry.com), and Charles Stokes declared himself 'white' on draft cards for both the 1st and 2nd World Wars.

[46] Marriage of Rev. Fawcett Eber Neville Shaw and Caroline Amelia Baylis, Coonoor, 22 September 1880, in *British India Office Marriages* (FindMyPast.com), Archive Ref: N-2-61, Folio 261.

[47] William Fawcett Shaw, in *United States Deceased Physician File (AMA), 1864-1968*, died 30 March 1969, Card ME035-09-12-006-3-M-336.

[48] Notes on Alice Mary Fawcett-Shaw in *Mission Biographical Reference Files*, Mission Bio Reel #62: 2064, File 1467-6-1:08 Shaw, Alice Mary Fawcett- (undated), (United Methodist Archives), created 7 August, 2013.

[49] Alice Faucette (sic) Shaw arrived in New York on 11 June 1907, in *New York, U.S., Arriving Passenger and Crew Lists (including Castle Garden and Ellis Island), 1820-1957*, (Ancestry.com).

[50] "Letter from Rev. Shaw to Bishop Oldham, Board of Foreign Missions, Methodist Episcopal Church, New York, 6 February 1914, in *Mission Biographical Reference Files*, Sub-series: Pakistan/ Indus River Ref; mf Call # 435: Shaw, Fawcett (Rev.) (1914-1920), (United Methodist Archives), created 7 August, 2013.