

Richard & Mary -Ann Clay



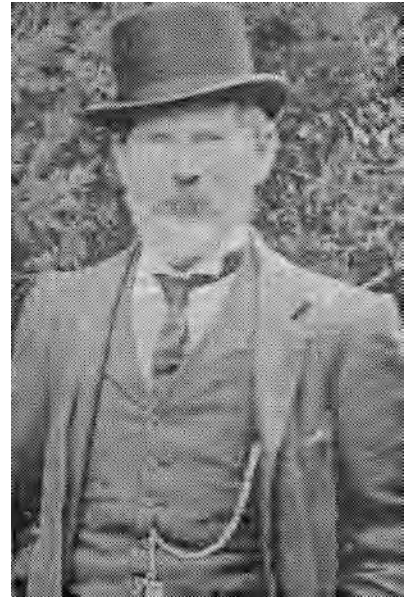
Richard John Clay, the 4th child of John & Agnes Clay
He was born 3rd March 1842 in Petrockstowe,
Devonshire, England.

Richard arrived in Australia with his family in 1851

On 4th December 1873 married **Mary-Ann
Carnegie** they had 11 Children.

Richard died on 22nd February 1923 at Doncaster,
Victoria, Australia.

He is buried in the Clay Family Grave at
Boroondara Cemetery, Kew



Richard John & Mary-Ann Clay (Carnegie) with family Feb.1915

Standing - Herbert, Elsie, Harold, Beatrice, Percy, Nellie

Sitting - Gladys, Mary-Ann, Richard, Alma, Maud

As a young man, Richard along with his brother William worked with their father John, to clear the land and establish a new orchard in Doncaster in 1854. An entry in the Post Office Directory of 1870, listed John & Richard CLAY, as farmers of Doncaster. (Ref: *La Trobe Library Records*) (John died in 1871)

Richard married Mary-Ann Carnegie on the 4th December 1873 in the Congregational Church, Victoria Parade, Collingwood. They settled on his parent's property and began creating a family of five sons and six daughters:

- **Leslie John** b.1874, (died at two weeks)
- **Beatrice Lillian Jessie** 1875–1950 [m 1904] Henry George Reynolds. (no issue)
- **Percy Carnegie** 1877–1948 [m 1911] Margaret Elizabeth Turnbull, (one daughter, two sons)
- **Maud Evelyn** 1880-1959 [m 1912] Roderick Sutherland. (one daughter and one son)
- **Herbert George** 1884-1946 [m.1909] Rose Tully. (one son, two daughters)
- **Elsie Mildred** 1885-1969 [m.1911] Reginald Austin Simmons. (two sons)
- **Nellie Mindora** 1886-1952 [m.1910] Alexander McFarlane Stewart. (no issue)
- **Gladys Hilda** 1888-1968 [m.1915] William Henry Finney. (one daughter)
- **Frederick Leonard** 1890-1890.
- **Alma Linda** 1892-1971 [m.1919] Everard Ambrose Thiele. (no issue)
- **Richard Harold** 1894-1917 (killed in WW1)



Richard made his orchard available to the Department of Agriculture for research into combating serious fruit pests and in doing so, made the Doncaster area into one of the most productive in the state. He was awarded a silver cup in 1887 by the Leader newspaper for the best orchard in Doncaster.



- Richard was a member of the Templestowe District Roads Board in the early 1870s.
- He was also one of a group of local residents and an original trustee who assisted in the establishment of the Athenaeum Hall in 1871. The hall in 1872 was the first Doncaster Library with 200 books.



"A land auction in progress during the land boom of the late 1880s. The land being sold was the subdivision known as the Heights of Doncaster Estate and situated at the north-west corner of Doncaster Road and Williamsons Road."

It was during the land boom of the late 1880s that Richard decided to retire. He set about to sell the family orchard that his father had established in the 1850s, after witnessing a land sale diagonally opposite in January 1888. The family land was subdivided, and an auction was held on 25th October 1888.



Doncaster Heights

THURSDAY OCT. 25th

CLAY'S ORCHARD 66 ALLOTMENTS

The Box Hill and Doncaster Tram Line will run through this Estate, thus connecting it with and bringing it within 15 minutes of the Box Hill Railway Station. This, together with the duplication of the Box Hill Line, will bring Doncaster within 40 minutes of the City.

Special attention is called to the liberal sub-division, almost every block containing at least a quarter of an acre.

On the Day of Sale, Special Trains will run to Box Hill, and Drags will convey Purchasers direct to the Estate.

REFRESHMENTS IN MARQUEE
FREE PASSES
from Auctioneers.

8 COLLINS STREET EAST, and
87 SWANSTON STREET.

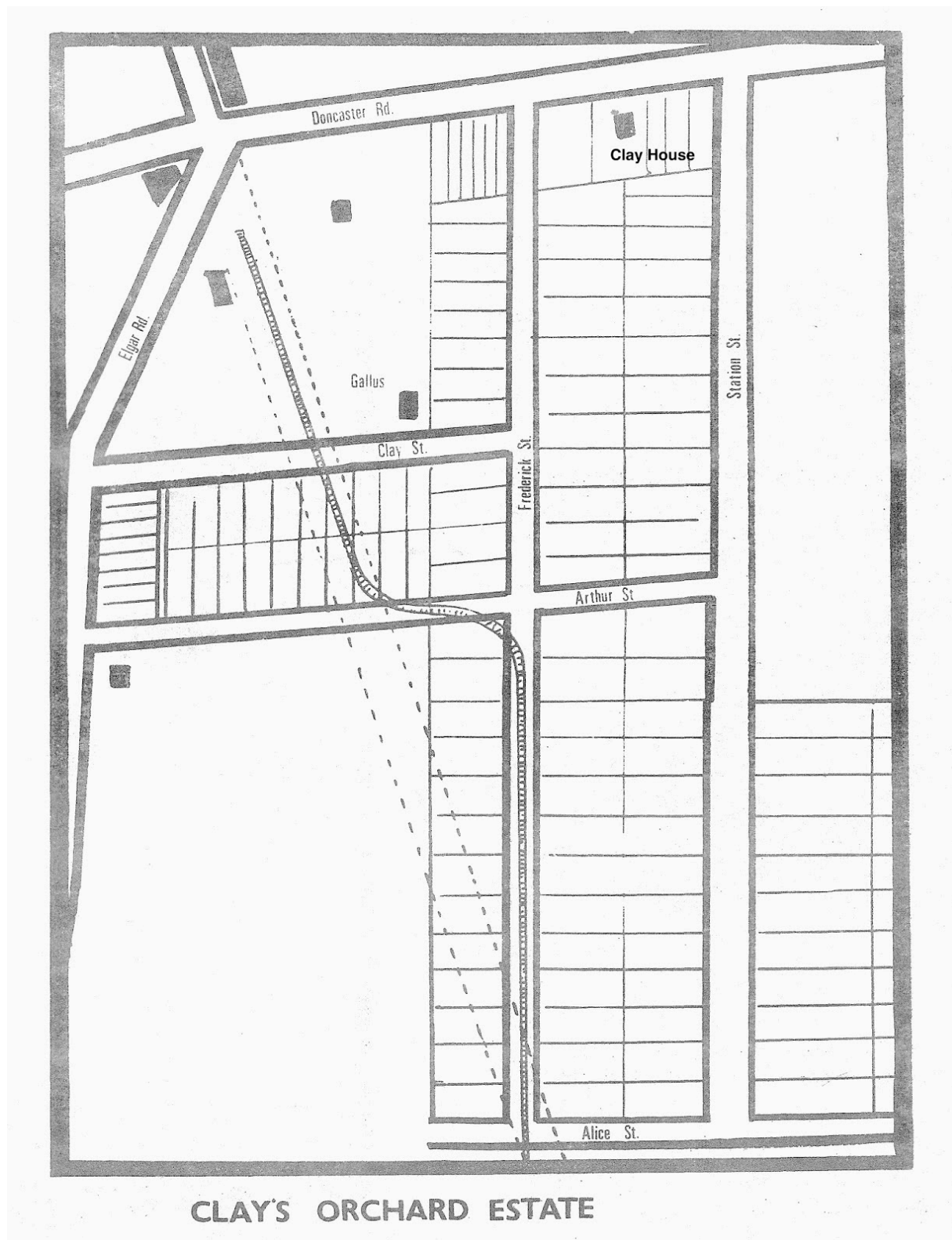
J. & H. TARRANT, SURVEYORS,
CITY BANK CHAMBERS.

F. L. FLINT AUCTIONEER
R. G. CAMERON AND CO.

8 COLLINS ST. EAST
87 SWANSTON ST.

NOTE THE DAY OF SALE

A tram track was also being constructed at this time between Box Hill and Doncaster. The gradient of the proposed tram track as it reached Doncaster Road was found to be excessive. After an agreement was reached between Richard and the members of the tramway syndicate, the subdivision was amended so that the route of the tram track would pass through the western portion of the subdivision before terminating near the intersection of Doncaster Road and Elgar Road. Consequently, one of the streets in the original subdivision, Clay Street, was eliminated.





The Tramway, being the first electric tram service in Australia, was officially opened on 14th October 1889; however, it had a rather brief and chequered history, closing down permanently in 1896.

After retiring and selling the family property in 1888, Richard and his family moved to a comfortable home at 37 Princess Street, Kew, where they resided until 1894. With a downturn in the economy, the family returned to Doncaster, settling in a house known as "Hinton" on 39 acres of orchard bounded by Doncaster and Blackburn Roads, Beverley Street, and Leeds Street.



Richard & Mary-Ann Clay with Nellie, Elsie and Maud Kew abt.1889

In 1913, an area of 3½ acres fronting Doncaster Road and immediately east of Devon Road was excised from the 39 acres for the construction of the Orchardist's Cool Store. Richard was involved in the establishment of the cool store, which was for many years, the largest cool store in the southern hemisphere. Approximately 25 acres of the balance of this land was planted with orchard. This land was eventually subdivided in 1945 into 142 lots, known as Greenacres Estate, by the beneficiaries of the estate of Richard Clay.

In his will, prepared in 1896, Richard's occupation was given as "Nurseryman". By the early 1900s, he had purchased about 20 acres of land at the northwest corner of Doncaster Road and Blackburn Road. The land was part of what was known as the "Stringybark Ranges". It was cleared and developed as an orchard. A spacious timber residence named "Carinya" was built on the property in 1911 and occupied by Richard and his family in that year. A disaster occurred when the home was destroyed by fire early in 1919, and a new house of similar design was erected on the same site later that year. Richard's son Percy, and his wife, Elizabeth (known as Maggie), moved into "Hinton" and continued working the orchard and raising their family - Doris Nellie born 1913, Richard Percy b.1915, and Harold John b.1918

Richard and Mary-Ann's youngest son, Harold, became engaged to Adrienne Thiele before he enlisted for service in World War I on 16th July 1915. After two years of active service at Gallipoli and in France, he was wounded on 31st July 1917 and died of his wounds on 4th August 1917.

What a tragic time this was for Richard and his family, who had just endured the death of Mary-Ann on 19th July at the age of 66 years. Harold and his mother, Mary-Ann, had been very close, and it was a blessing that neither knew of the other's death.



The stained glass window dedicated to Mary-Ann & Richard "Harold" in the Holy Trinity Church, Doncaster. The window is now Heritage listed with the Victorian state government.

A three-light window in Holy Trinity Anglican Church was installed in the east end of the original stone building. The window was unveiled and dedicated at a morning service in August 1918 by the Rev. Brookland of Camberwell, assisted by a returned Anzac, Albert Gedy. With extensive changes to the building that enlarged and changed the orientation of the space, the window was retained and reinstalled above the altar in the new east end, maintaining the sentiment expressed in a contemporary press report that the window was 'to stand as a lasting memorial for generations'.



The Argus 20 July 1917

CLAY. - Passed peacefully away on the 19th July, at her residence, Main road, Doncaster, Mary-Ann, the dearly loved wife Richard Clay, and mother of Lily, Percy, Maude, Herbert, Elsie, Nellie, Gladys, Alma, and Harold (on active service).

The Argus, Friday 17 August 1917

CLAY. - A loving tribute in the memory of my darling Harold. (Sergeant H. R. Clay). With the close of his promising young life ended our beautiful friendship. Fond memory, but fond memory lives forever in the hearts of those who knew his worth. *(Inserted by his sorrowing fiancée, Adrienne.)*



Acknowledgements to Trish Lovegrove (Clay) for her contribution to this story

DEVONSHIRE COUPLE SETTLED EARLY



One of the earliest settlers in the Shire was John Clay and his wife, Agnes, who arrived in Doncaster from Hull Farm, Petrockstow, Devonshire, in 1851, to establish a family home and orchard on the hill alongside the site at present occupied by the garage of D. & E. Cameron Pty. Ltd.

It is of interest to report that an article published in the "Argus", February, 1851, stated that great bush fires burning on Clay's Hill were clearly visible from as far away as Melbourne.

Clay's Hill had by this time become the commonly known name for this particular part of the district later re-named Doncaster.

Of John Clay's family, a son, Richard, became a member of the Templestowe District Roads Board when the only equipment available for the workers was a wheelbarrow, there being insufficient funds to purchase a horse and dray.

He was an original trustee of the Athenaeum Hall which was established in 1870 and first Doncaster Public Library, 1872, with 200 books.

He made his orchard available to the Department of Agriculture for research purposes. In their endeavors to combat serious fruit pests, in the process assisting to convert Doncaster from an unproductive area to one of the most prosperous in the State.

A proud possession in the family is a silver cup awarded by the Leader Newspaper for "the best orchard in the Doncaster district, 1887".

In the next generation, Henry John Crossman Clay again an orchardist, became a member of the Doncaster Shire Council from 1909 to 1924, including three terms as shire president.

To this day there are still 70 direct descendants of John and Agnes living in the district, and several sixth generation children.

● The photograph, left is of Richard Clay, son of the original settlers, John and Agnes Clay.

The Mirror 22 February 1967

The Mirror 05 March 1967

Richard Harold Clay



Richard John and Mary-Ann's youngest son, Richard Harold, was known as "Harold" to avoid confusion with his father, Richard, in the local community. He was engaged to Adrienne Thiele at the time and had turned 21 in February when he enlisted for service in World War 1 on 6th July 1915.

"Heading overseas with reinforcements, he served with several battalions in the Middle East, as gunner with 57th Battalion in March 1916, bombardier 25th Field Artillery Battery in France, July 1916, promoted to Corporal in 14th FAB in January 1917 and promoted to Sergeant two months later. On 31 July, he received abdominal wounds while in action and died on 4 August in 32nd Casualty Clearing Station, without knowing that his mother had died only a few weeks earlier. He is buried at Brandhoek New Military Cemetery, Belgium". - Victorian Heritage Database



*Sergeant Richard Harold Clay No. 2957
53rd Battery, 5th Division Australian Field
Artillery*

Born 18th February, 1894

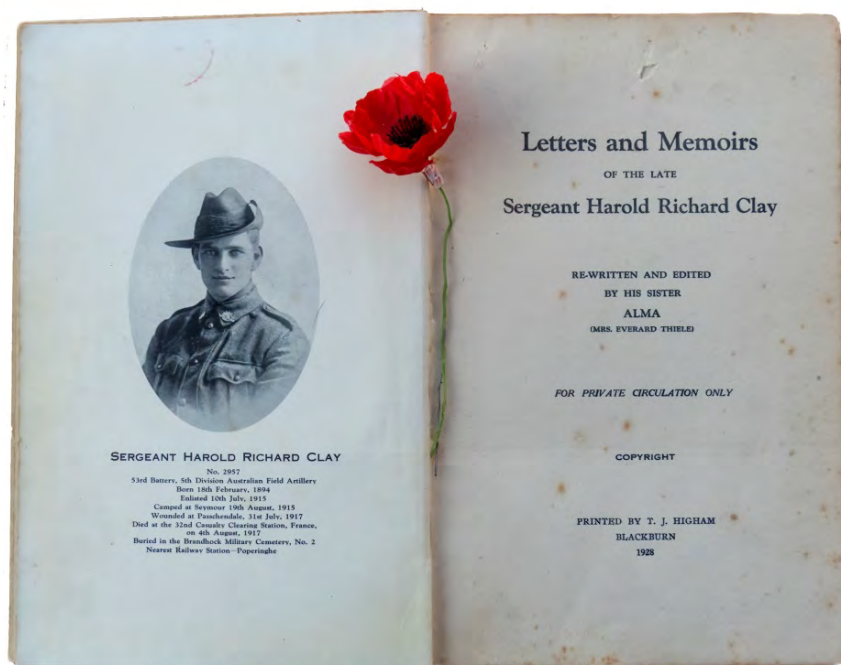
Enlisted 10th July, 1915

Camped at Seymour 19th August, 1915

Wounded at Passchendaele, 31st July, 1917

*Died at the 32nd Casualty Clearing Station,
France, on 4th August, 1917*

*Buried in Brandhoek Military Cemetery, No. 2
Nearest Railway Station Poperinghe*



200x150mm -105page booklet compiled by his sister Alma, comprising some of the letters "Harold" wrote to his mother and family.



In Memory Of

Sergeant

RICHARD HAROLD CLAY

Service Number: 2957

53rd Bty. 14th Field Artillery Bde., Australian Field Artillery who died on 04 August 1917 Age 23

Son of Richard and Mary Ann Clay, of Main Rd., Doncaster, Victoria, Australia. Native of Kew, Victoria.

A LIFE MADE BEAUTIFUL BY KINDLY DEEDS

Remembered with Honour **BRANDHOEK**

NEW MILITARY CEMETERY IV. B. 6.



COMMONWEALTH
WAR GRAVES



COMMEMORATED IN PERPETUITY BY THE
COMMONWEALTH WAR GRAVES COMMISSION



Richard Harold Clay's watch is now in possession of a Great Nephew

Mary-Ann Clay



*Mary Clay. Born Mary-Ann Carnegie in 1851 Married Richard Clay in 1873. She died in 1917.
Mary was the eldest daughter of James Clark Carnegie born 1824 at Arbroath, Scotland, and his wife Mary Ann Bland.
They were married in 1850 in London. The Carnegie family arrived in Melbourne in 1855. DP0668*

An excerpt from "Petticoats in the Orchard by Irvine Green 1987"

"Richard Clay ran an orchard on the west of Hummel's land where Mary-Ann Carnegie came to live after her wedding in 1873. She soon adapted to the new role of farmer's wife, learning all the skills of a country woman. Both Mary-Ann and Richard took great pride in their work making the effort to do everything correctly. Richard was a good fruit grower and in 1887 won the Leader Cup for the "Best Fruit Garden in the Melbourne District". Mary-Ann had the rounded face and pleasant smile of a good-natured woman. She was a hard worker and soon joined in with the Clay family's social activities, such as helping to provide for tea meetings at Holy Trinity Church.

"Tea Meetings" were a favourite way of raising money. At the tea meeting held to mark the opening of the Athenaeum Hall the wives of the committee members each provided all the food for a table of fifty people. Married people were charged two shillings and sixpence (25 cents) each and bachelors, who sat at a separate table, paid three shillings (30 cents) each. Typical of the quantities of food supplied are the following figures for a Tea Meeting held at Holy Trinity in 1880. Each of the ladies helping to run the meeting provided milk and sponge rolls.

The Church paid for other provisions and purchased the following items:

- 40 pounds of currant cake
- 10 pounds of seed cake
- 16 dozen jam and custard tarts
- 16 dozen seed buns
- 10 dozen sausage rolls
- 6 dozen pastry cakes
- 213 pounds of ham
- 3 pounds of tea
- 20 pounds of sugar
- 9 pounds of butter
- 17 large loaves. 14 would have done

Mary-Ann stayed up late the night before this meeting to cook a ham, keeping the fire going under the copper. At midnight, when the ham should have been cooked, the water was still clear; it didn't have the usual scum on the surface. She had forgotten to put in the ham. After that, whenever a tea meeting was being planned, someone would brightly say: "Don't forget to put the ham in the water!"

During the land boom of the 1880's, the Clay family subdivided their family orchard. After the estate was sold in 1889, Richard and Mary Ann moved to Kew, living a life of retirement in an expensive house on Princess Street.

Mary-Ann and Richard Clay came back to the district in 1894. They bought William Franklin's land on the southwest corner of Doncaster and Blackburn Roads. The large brick house they bought stood well back from the road and was surrounded by orchard and trees. Both Mary-Ann and Richard enjoyed living among trees. With their care and skill, the orchard soon became a showplace. Pine windbreaks surrounded the fruit trees, and an avenue of flowering gums led up to the home where a group of mulberry trees grew. On the veranda, Mary-Ann's pot plants bloomed, and in the house, her antique furniture and alabaster ornaments enriched the comfortable rooms. The front of the house was decorated with Flemish bond brickwork, but the other walls were of plain bricks. There was no air space between the hand-made bricks, which, being porous, allowed moisture to seep through the walls. The rooms were often damp, so Mary-Ann leaned galvanised iron sheets against the outside of the house when it rained.

It was in this house that Mary-Ann solved the firewood problem. Every housewife had the same problem: she needed a constant supply of firewood for the kitchen stove. First thing in the morning, the fire had to be lit for breakfast. The usual routine was: get up, light the fire, fill the kettle, go to the outhouse, wash, and dress, then put more wood on the stove and cook breakfast. The stove was kept gently burning all day, more wood being added each time a cup of tea was needed or when a meal had to be cooked and the problem of continually having to ask for firewood. The men were usually reluctant to cut wood and needed nagging. One time, when the wood had run out, Mary-Ann decided that she had had enough. She prepared a meal, set the table carefully, with a water jug, glasses, cruet, flowers, and serviettes, and then she put the food on the table. When the family came in to the dinner, there was the meal, a leg of lamb, potatoes, and vegetables, already in serving dishes, but all cold and completely uncooked. She never had to ask for firewood again!"

At the beginning of the new century, Mary-Ann's family began to leave home. The eldest girl Beatrice was 25 in 1900. Four years later she married Henry Reynolds and went to a home of her own on his orchard. Of Mary-Ann's other children, Percival was 23 in 1900, Maude 20, and Herbert 16. There were also four younger girls and Harold, the youngest boy then aged 6. When Percival was to be married Richard purchased twenty acres of bush land on the north side of Doncaster Road. The whole family went to work clearing this land for a new orchard. The family then moved into a timber house on the new property, leaving the old brick house for Percival and his new bride.

Mary-Ann raised a happy family that loved their family life. They enjoyed being together, even for simple things like melon nights. They would sit around the kitchen table together, cutting up the melons and picking out the seeds, ready for jam. Picnics with Aunt Eliza, Uncle Tom Petty, and their cousins were great occasions. Food was prepared, and the hamper was packed for a picnic lunch on the beach. They rode to Box Hill in their fruit wagons. (The covered wagon was used by orchardists to take fruit to market, filling a similar role to today's station wagon.) There was a wide front seat, and many children could crowd into the spacious interior. The family used their wagons for picnics, camping, or to go anywhere they needed to travel.



On these beach picnics, the Clays' and Pettys' left their wagons at Box Hill station, and then travelled by train through Richmond.

The family would go off to a picnic in their fruit wagon. The covered wagon used by orchardists to take fruit to market filled a role similar to today's station wagon to Brighton Beach. They would come home in the evening tired but happy. At lunch time, hungry after their morning swim, the families enjoyed a picnic lunch on the beach. Except for one occasion when the children ran out of the water, ready for lunch, only to find the hamper had been left in the wagon at Box Hill.

The Clays enjoyed their family life. They used to delight in being together, telling funny incidents and laughing with each other; it was this feeling of closeness that existed between Mary-Ann and her son, Harold. During the First World War, Harold Clay joined up and went overseas in 1915. He was one of the many local men who went to serve their country. In one of Harold's letters to his Mother in 1916, he told of Temple Crouch and Herman Zerbe taking a photograph of twelve Doncaster boys at Tel-el-Kebir.

"Last Monday night, we were told that we were to leave the next morning. Reveille was sounded at 5.30 a.m. We entrained and left Tel-el-Kebir at 11.50 a.m. in the big open trucks. There were about fifty of them. It took us three hours to reach the canal. When marching from the train, we passed the new brigade and Stan Crouch picked me out with just time to recognise him, and a little further on, Charlie Aspinall spotted me. Then we crossed the canal on a pontoon bridge."

On April 20th Mary-Ann received another letter:

"Another week has gone by. In the last letter, I told you about the sand storm we experienced; the next day, heavy showers fell. Tuesday morning, we were notified that Lieutenant General Sir John Murray would inspect the lines at 7.30 a.m. He came down our line of tents just as we were at breakfast, accompanied by a host of generals and staff. Right at the rear, we were surprised to see the Prince of Wales. The General told us to carry on with our breakfast. I lumped fat bacon in one hand, and my Dixie of tea in the other — I'm sure the Prince envied me. We had a yarn with Joe Beale and some other Templestowe boys, along with Ferdi Thiele, last night. They are all camped here."

Harold's letters gave glimpses of life at Doncaster.

August 24th: "Today I received more letters and a bonza hamper from Adrienne, plum puddings, tongues, chocolate, etc. The Doncaster growers seem to have developed "Cool Store Mania", but Perce tells me we were short of space again this year, so three more stores will be handy".

January 16th: "I am at the wagon lines, and still O.K. Had a nice letter from Mr. Goodson today, and a parcel from Lena Serpell — a fine cap comforter and a tin of home-canned pears (from Serpell's cannery) which were delicious. A few days ago, I rode a couple of miles to see Roy Cameron. He is A1. I suppose Dad is kept busy with the fruit now, but I hope it won't be long before I will be home to help him and the boys."

Mary-Ann loved Harold's letters, and she was proud of her son. She longed for the time when he would come home. But Harold did not return. On July 31st, Sgt. Harold Clay was wounded in action and a few days later, died. At the same time, his mother, Mary-Ann, died in Doncaster. It was a fortunate circumstance that mother and son, who had been so close, were both spared the anguish of bereavement. Beautiful stained glass windows were installed in Holy Trinity Church in memory of Mary-Ann Clay and her son, Harold.



Carnegie family

On the 4th December 1873, Mary-Ann Carnegie married Richard John Clay at the Congregational Church, Victoria Parade, Collingwood.

Mary-Ann, born in London on 15th February 1851, was the eldest child of James Clarke Carnegie and his wife Mary Ann Bland.

The Carnegie family consisted of parents James and Mary Ann, daughter Mary-Ann, and two young brothers, James and Geoffrey, who sailed from London on the "Medway" on 5th October 1854, arriving at Melbourne on 10th January 1855. Sadly, baby Geoffrey died soon after arrival.

However, some eight more children were born to the couple during the following twenty years. They lived in Richmond and Collingwood, where James undertook carpentry and cabinet-making work, later also making pianos with his brother Jabez. James founded the Carnegie Family Business in 1867, but within a few years, he left to establish his own business. The music store thrived over the years and celebrated its centenary in 1967. James Carnegie died in Melbourne in 1891; his wife, Mary Ann, lived until 1917, the same year their daughter Mary-Ann, known as "Polly," died.

James Clark Carnegie b.1824 d.1891 [m 23-10-1850] Mary Ann Bland b.1829 d.1917

- **Mary-Ann** b.18-2-1851 d.19-7-1917 [m 4-12-1873] Richard John CLAY b.3-3-1842 d.22-2-1923
- **George** b.1854 d.1855
- **James Bland** b.1854 d.1924
- **George Gourlay*** b.1856 d.1903 (Gold pocket watch**)
- **Jessie** b.1858 d.1888
- **Charles John** b.1860
- **Emma Bickmore** b.1861 d.1939
- **Charles William** b.1861 d.1927
- **Mindora** b.1864
- **Kate** b.1866 d.1866
- **Maud** b.1866 d.1866
- **Leonard David** b.1867 d.1868
- **Helen** b.1869 d.1945
- **Francis Mann**
- **Maude Eveline** b.1873



* Gourlay is his [maternal] grandmother's maiden name.

**The pocket watch originally belonged to George Gourlay Carnegie and was handed down to Herbert George Clay from his mother Mary-Ann Carnegie, It then passed to Herbert's daughter, Elsie Mildred "Mil" Smith (Clay), who has passed on to me. (Lynton Clay) - The watch has now been passed to my nephew, Tyron Clay

My relationships:

Mary-Ann Carnegie – G. Grandmother.

George Carnegie – G.G. Uncle

"Mil" Smith (Clay), - Aunt