

The Milsoms

Joy's Don grandfather, James Gilbert Don married Ruby Elizabeth Isobel Milsom. The Milsom family lived in the same area as the Dons, but were established as a family about ten years earlier.

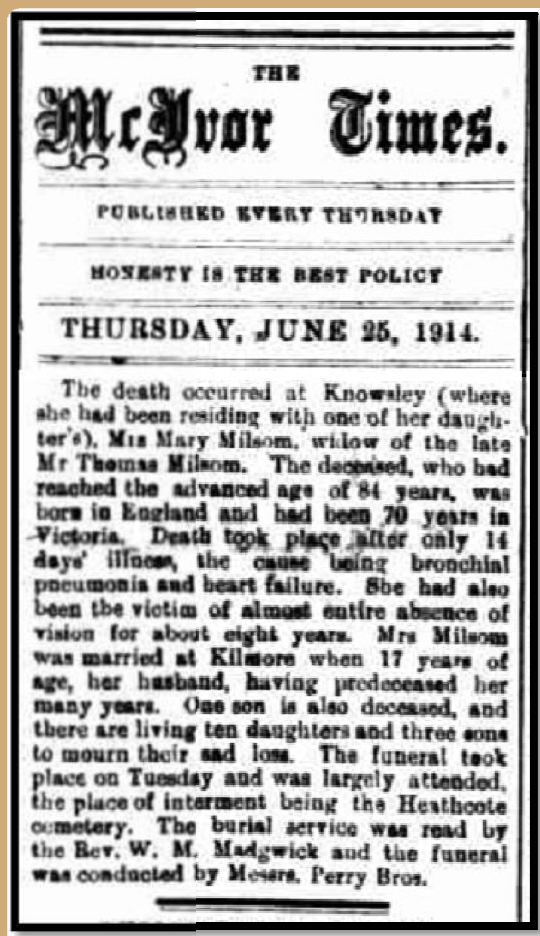
Thomas Milsom and Mary McCreedy

The patriarch of this family in Australia was Thomas Milsom (c1810-1877) but information on him was hard to find. He died at Heathcote, Victoria in 1877 and his death certificate gives his age as 67, so born about 1810, and his birthplace was Bristol, Gloucestershire, England.

His wife Mary's obituary in the local papers in 1914 gives us a little more information although some of it cannot be quite correct. Her age at death is given as 81 (born 1833) and she had been in Victoria for 70 years, so arriving in 1844. This doesn't seem correct; she would have been just 11 when she arrived. There is no record of a Mary McCreedy or McCreedy arriving then. The records do show a Mary McCreedy, aged 15, arriving in 1850 and a Mary McCreddie, aged 18, arriving in 1853. If we take it as correct that Mary married at 17, the passenger arriving in 1850 is our Mary. This means Mary married Thomas in Kilmore around 1852. Supporting this is the fact that the births of the couple's children commenced in 1853. The couple's marriage was before 1853 when births deaths and marriages had to be registered centrally. For events before 1853 we have to rely on individual church registers being available.

There was a big difference in ages of the two, Thomas born c1810, Mary born c1835. But when did Thomas arrive in Australia?

Once again arrivals of Milsoms before 1852 proved impossible to find in the Victorian Assisted Passengers records. However one Thomas Melsom, aged 21, did arrive in the colony in 1834 aboard the convict ship Moffatt. Thomas Melsom aka Thomas Milsom was from Gloucestershire England, was found guilty of horse stealing at the Monmouth Assizes in 1833 and sentenced to transportation for Life. Monmouth is in Wales but is adjacent to Gloucestershire. A lot of evidence that I have found points to this being our Thomas Milsom. There are some interesting records. This is a section of the convict muster of the ship Moffatt.



Names 295	Where convicted	When	Term
Thomas Melsom } William Davies }	Monmouth Assizes	7th August 1833	Life

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The Moffat, a three masted barque, arrived in Tasmania on 9th May 1834 carrying 392 convicts. It had sailed from Plymouth on 29 January 1834 with 398 convicts, six convicts died on the voyage. The *Moffatt* arrived in Hobart Town on 9 May after 100 days at sea.

Another Record gives us a full description of Thomas.

Other records show that Thomas obtained a Ticket of Leave in 1842 and was granted a Conditional Pardon in May 1846. Conditional pardons required that the ex-convict never return to the British Isles or his or her pardon would be void. The reference on Thomas' record mentions the term groom.

Thomas was mentioned in an Impounding Notice in the *The Cornwall Chronicle (Launceston, Tas.)* of Saturday 4 July 1846.

Chiswick was, and still is, a property near the town of Ross in the Tasmanian midlands. It is likely that as a former groom Thomas would get a position involving horses.

Despite having this position he came to Victoria at some time prior to 1852. In that year he married 17 year Mary McCreedy at Kilmore.

Thomas and Mary had sixteen children, eleven girls and five boys. Two passed away in early infancy but ten girls and four boys survived into adulthood.

The children's birth registrations indicate they may have moved around but there were registrations in Kilmore, Broadford and Pyalong. It seems that the family may have settled at Pyalong which is not far from Baynton East where the Dons lived. In the records Mary is most often referred to as Mary

NAME,	<i>Nelson Thomas.</i>	No: <i>1202</i>
Trade	<i>Groom</i>	
Height	<i>5'3" without shoes</i>	<i>Gloucestershire</i>
Age	<i>21.</i>	
Complexion	<i>Fresh.</i>	
Head	<i>Oval.</i>	
Hair	<i>Brown</i>	
Whiskers	<i>none</i>	
Visage	<i>Oval.</i>	
Forehead	<i>High wrinkled</i>	
Eyebrows	<i>Brown</i>	
Eyes	<i>Blue</i>	
Nose	<i>Long</i>	
Mouth	<i>Large</i>	
Chin	<i>in S.</i>	
Remarks	<i>none</i>	

Impounded on the 24th, by Thomas Nelson, servant to Benjamin Horns, Esq., of Chiswick :—

1 Black Filley, white streak down the face, both hind fetlocks white, long tail.

1 Black Filley, star in forehead, white on the nose, with a small white streak partly up the face, long tail.

No damages claimed.

Pound fee, food and water, 1s. 6d. per diem each.

If the above animals be not claimed and redeemed within the time allowed by law, they will be sold by me, at the above pound, on Wednesday, the 15th day of July next, according to the provisions of the Impounding Act.

WILLIAM BAYLIS ILES, Poundkeeper.

Ross, June 26th.

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Ann. Her surname can be McCreedy or McCreedy. Milsom is found as Milson, Millsom and even Mylsom.

While details of Thomas Milsom's early life are sketchy we do have some detail of his wife Mary.

Mary McCreedy left Plymouth, England on the 9th November 1849 on the barque Derwent. She was 15 years old. Other details from records show she was a Roman Catholic, and may not have been able to read or write, there is a discrepancy between different records on this point. Mary's home is listed as Newtonstuart, Galway but the village of Newtonstewart is actually in county Tyrone.

The Derwent sailed from Plymouth and took 112 days to reach Melbourne. There were 154 passengers, 139 of whom were classed as 'female orphans from Ireland'. They were aged between 14 and 20 from the northern counties of Ireland and few could either read or write



Once in Melbourne she was received into the Immigration Depot on 4th March 1850 and left there on 9th March. She was engaged as an Apprentice by William Ashby, a dealer, of Little Lonsdale Street for two years, wages £6 per annum. Her role would have been as a house servant.

Mary was one of 4,114 young women who came to Australia during the Irish Famine years of 1848 to 1850. The girls were orphans and came from workhouses from all 32 counties of Ireland. All were destitute and many had lost their parents and families, so were 'orphans' in the modern sense of the word. Others were simply unable to support themselves within the family. The term 'orphan', meaning loss of at least one parent, did apply to the vast majority of the 4114. These girls came to Australia under Earl Grey's Famine Orphan Scheme. Under this scheme workhouses were encouraged to find inmates between 14 and 18 willing to come to Australia. Part of the rationale was to try to correct the imbalance of women and men in Australia at the time. It was hoped these young marriageable women who would bring a stabilising influence to rough masculine colonial societies. The scheme ended in July 1850.

Pardoned convicts would have found it hard to find a partner and the Irish orphans would have been a possible source of wives for these men.

Some of the family's story can be gleaned from Newspaper notices. One in 1866 has a familiar ring to it. This appeared in *The Mclvor Times and Rodney Advertiser* Friday 6

McIVOR CREEK.—Impounded at McIvor Creek, 16th June, 1866, by Thom. Milsom, for Wm. Hamilton, Esq.—Trespassers ls.
 1160 Chestnut mare, long tail, blaze, off fore coronet white, and near hind foot white, like 1A near ribs, like 6 reversed near rump
 1161 Chestnut filly, long tail, blaze near fore and hind feet white progeny of 1160, no visible brand
 If not claimed and expenses paid, to be sold on 18th July, 1866
JOHN WILSON, Pound-keeper.

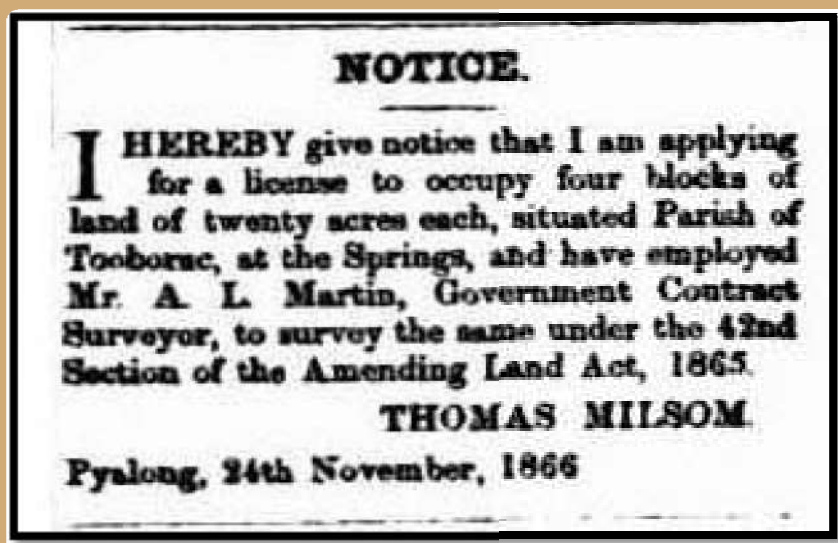
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July 1866. It suggests Thomas is again working with horses.

In November 1866 another notice shows that Thomas is wanting to take on and farm land in the Parish of Tooboorac, near Pyalong.

Another notice shows Thomas is behind in his lease payments on this land.

Thomas' probate papers, filed in 1889 sometime after his death in 1877, list him as a farmer at Pyalong. Wife Mary signed these probate papers with her mark, a cross. A note says the probate papers were explained to her suggesting she did not read or write.



The last two children's births were registered at Pyalong in 1875 and 1876. The Tooborac land is not mentioned, he may have defaulted on this land or it could have been taken over by one of his sons.

Thomas Milsom (1862-1927)

This Thomas was the first male born (the 9th child) in this family. Thomas and Mary named the first born of each sex after them; their first child was named Mary Ann.

It was Thomas (1862-1927) who was Nana Don's father. He married Harriet Elizabeth Warne (1868-1906) in 1891. The family legend is that this marriage did not meet with the approval of the Warne family. Was this because Thomas was a currency lad, meaning the son of an ex-convict? This was a sensitive issue in those days in fact the stigma remained for generations.

Nana Don, Ruby Elizabeth Isobel Milsom, always said she was born at Tooboorac on the 14th April 1897. Her birth was registered at Heathcote but the family actually lived at Knowsley, a small village just north of Heathcote on the main road to Bendigo. Harriet may have been at Tooborac for the birth of Ruby. Tooboorac is close to Baynton East, Pyalong and Heathcote all towns



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that feature in the family history of the Milsoms and the Dons.

Thomas and Harriet had two children, Daisy, born 1894, and Ruby, born 1897. Sadly just fifteen years after this wedding photo was taken, Harriet became ill and developed acute bronchitis and died after an illness of two and half weeks. Harriet was 37 years old and their two girls were 11 and 8. The family belief is that Harriet's sister Bella was the main support for Thomas and his girls. In 1906 she was 22 years old and remained single until 1944. Nana Don was always very close to her Aunty Bella.

Thomas owned a four roomed house in Knowsley on an acre block. Thomas worked as a Dray Contractor for the Mclvor Shire Council. A dray was a horse drawn cart, effectively the horse drawn equivalent of a truck. He owned the dray and the horses to pull it. He was to die on 21st July 1927 at his daughter Ruby's house in West Melbourne. He had been ill for twelve months and had not been working for that time. He was 62 years old.

Nan's sister Daisy married Frank Giri from Bendigo and lived most of her life in that area.

Obituary.

We are sorry to announce that the death occurred at her residence, Knowsley, on Tuesday last of Mrs Milsom, wife of Mr Thomas Milsom, after an illness of two and a half weeks, from acute bronchitis. Mrs Milsom, who was only 37 years of age, was born at Charles-street, Prabhara, Melbourne, and was a daughter of the late Mr Thomas Warne, Toorac. She was married to Mr Milsom 15 years ago at Bendigo, and they had been resident at Knowsley for about 12 years. She leaves her husband and two daughters, aged respectively 11 and 8 years, to mourn their sad loss. The funeral was arranged to take place to-day, the place of burial being the Heathcote Cemetery, the Rev. C. Hughesdon being the officiating clergyman, the funeral arrangements to be carried out by Mr Jas. M Donald. The funeral, it was anticipated, would be very numerously attended.

The Mclvor Times and Rodney Advertiser, Thursday 26 July 1906



Daisy Giri, Frank Giri, and Ruby Don
Daisy and Ruby, the daughters of Thomas Milsom

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Descendant chart of Thomas Milsom

Thomas Milsom, b. 1862 at Broadford, VIC, AUS, d. 25 Jul 1927 at Melbourne West, VIC, AUS
 +**Harriet Elizabeth Warne**, b. 1868 at Prahran, VIC, AUS, m. 1891 at VIC, AUS, d. 24 Jul 1906 at Knowsley, VIC, AUS

- **Daisy Ethel Florence Milsom**, b. 1894 at Heathcote, VIC, AUS, d. 16 Jul 1987 at Bendigo, VIC, AUS
- +**Francis (Frank) Giri**, m. 1918, d. 1975 at VIC, AUS
 - **Francis Leslie Giri**, b. 31 Jul 1920 at Bendigo, VIC, AUS
 - **Norman Thomas Giri**, b. 17 Mar 1922
 - **Thelma Irene Giri**, b. 23 Aug 1924 at Charlton, VIC, AUS
- **Ruby Elizabeth Isobel Milsom**, b. 14 Apr 1897 at Tooboorac, VIC, AUS, d. 14 May 1985 at Melbourne, VIC, AUS
 - +**James Gilbert Don**, b. 31 Dec 1894 at Heathcote, VIC, AUS, m. 21 Oct 1916 at Goulburn, N.S.W., AUS, d. 12 Aug 1965 at Canterbury, VIC, AUS
 - **George Thomas Don**, b. 6 May 1917 at Goulburn, N.S.W., AUS, d. 8 Dec 1984 at Bairnsdale, VIC, Australia
 - +**Nancy Cathcart**, m. circa 1941 at Hawthorn, VIC, AUS, d. 8 Aug 1994
 - **Brian Don**, b. 1943 at Surrey Hills, VIC, AUS
 - **Rowan Don**, b. 3 Sep 1945 at Surrey Hills, VIC, AUS
 - **Margaret Don**, b. 1950
 - +**Lyn ??Don**, b. circa 1930, m. circa 1970
 - **Lillian Isobel Don**, b. 21 Oct 1920 at Goulburn, N.S.W., AUS, d. 1 Dec 1989 at Ringwood, VIC, AUS
 - +**Edwin Robert Standfield**, b. 23 Dec 1917 at Kooweerup, VIC, AUS, m. 1 Nov 1941 at Hawthorn, VIC, AUS, d. 13 Jan 1981 at Rhyll, VIC, AUS
 - **Lillian Joy Standfield**, b. 15 Feb 1943 at Kew, VIC, AUS
 - **Edwin Don (Tim) Standfield**, b. 24 Dec 1946 at Kooweerup, VIC, AUS, d. 13 Sep 2012 at Melbourne, VIC, AUS
 - **Norma Meryl Don**, b. 26 Sep 1922 at Bendigo, VIC, AUS, d. 9 Dec 1995 at Melbourne, VIC, AUS
 - +**Reginald James Gard**, b. 25 Oct 1905 at Plymouth, DEV, ENG, m. circa 1968 at VIC, AUS, d. 13 May 1980 at Rosebud, VIC, AUS
 - **Marjorie Lorraine Don**, b. 29 May 1924 at Bendigo, VIC, AUS, d. 13 Nov 2010 at Pambula, N.S.W., AUS
 - +**Len Shaw**, b. 1927, m. 7 Dec 1948 at Hawthorn, VIC, AUS
 - **David John Shaw**, b. 4 May 1950
 - **Kay Shaw**, b. 1954
 - **Valma Harriet Don**, b. 9 Feb 1927, d. 26 Sep 1927 at Carlton, VIC, AUS
 - **Ruby Elizabeth Don**, b. 17 Oct 1928 at Melbourne, VIC, AUS, d. 28 Dec 2017 at Melbourne, VIC, AUS
 - +**Douglas Monteith**, b. 3 Sep 1927 at Wonthaggi, VIC, AUS, m. 18 Oct 1952 at Hawthorn, VIC, AUS, d. 30 Nov 1970 at Box Hill, VIC, AUS
 - **David James Monteith**, b. 13 Jun 1955
 - **Caroline Elizabeth Monteith**, b. 2 Oct 1957 at Box Hill, VIC, AUS
 - **Leanne Monteith**, b. 7 Mar 1961 at Box Hill, VIC, AUS
 - **James Alfred Don**, b. 11 Sep 1930 at Kooweerup, VIC, AUS, d. 27 Mar 2003
 - +**Ramona (Rae) Webb**, b. 6 Oct 1928, m. circa 1950, d. 23 Apr 1996
 - **James Peter Don**, b. 6 Aug 1951
 - **Cheryl Don**, b. 17 Aug 1952
 - **Gavin Dennis Don**, b. 28 May 1955, d. 14 Jan 1988 at Perth, W.A., Australia
 - +**unknown spouse**
 - **Michael Don**, b. 8 Oct 1974
 - **Leslie William Don**, b. 24 Jun 1935 at Warragul, VIC, AUS, d. 11 Mar 1992 at QLD, AUS
 - +**Claudette Alexis Ryan**, b. 7 Dec 1941 at Traralgon, VIC, AUS, m. 3 Aug 1963 at Hawthorn, VIC, AUS
 - **Anthony William Don**, b. 27 Jan 1970
 - **Steven Don**, b. 27 Jan 1979