

Henry HOPKINS (1787-1870)

Cornwall Chronicle (Tasmania) 08 Oct 1842 Death

Mr Thomas Armytage, eldest son of Mr George Armytage of Bagdad, of Typhus Fever, a native youth aged 22yrs at Geelong on 12th September.

Tasmanian Ancestry Volume 26 June 2005 page 40

Article: S. A. Tegg Hobart Town Bookseller by Lou Daniels

... "James William Henry Walch had no experience of the bookselling trade when he bought the business from Samuel Tegg at the end of 1845. He had spent almost all of his life in the British Army. He emigrated to Tasmania in 1842, and was granted 320 acres which he sold when farming did not suit his previous training. He was superintendent of the Broadmarsh Convict Probation Station when this new turn in his life arrived. His wife wrote to her sister-in-law in explaining their sudden change: 'On the first of January we are to commence this business in earnest. James junior is already in the shop and we think he will be our great support in it. But I must give you a copy of Mr Hopkins letter which will explain our position. He has been a great mover in this business and Mr William Rout (brother of Mrs Hopkins) has also entered warmly into it.

[Henry Hopkins writes in late 1845] Dear Sir, Mr Rout and self have had several interviews with Mr Tegg and have at last concluded to take the concern. It will be a great undertaking and will require all the energy and attention that you, Mrs Walch and your son can give but with the blessing of God there is every prospect of your obtaining a livelihood for your family. The terms are one thousand pounds cash, one thousand pounds in two years, and one thousand pounds in three years. Your son to go immediately into the business and you are also to assist in taking stock. Immediate possession to be given when the stock is taken etc. You will understand, my dear Kate that it is three thousand pounds worth of stock-in-hand that is to be taken and paid for as above, besides which James is to take off shop fixtures at a valuation and to pay £250 per annum rent for the shop and house which I understand is a very good one. Mr Tegg's demands appear high and they alarmed us at first, but we are informed by those competent to judge that the business is good and will more than cover our expenses... You will not be surprised that at first I felt very reluctant for James to undertake this business being so contrary to all his previous life but I am now satisfied it is for the best and the help of our dear boy James is an immense advantage. He already looks au fait in the shop. I ought to mention that Mr Tegg is going to England in the hope of succeeding his Father in the business who is a great bookseller and publisher in Cheapside, London. [source: Books for Colonial Readers: the 19th Century Australian Experience, BSANZ Occasional Publication No.5, Melbourne (1995) pages 62-63]

Cornwall Chronicle (Tasmania) 21 Nov 1849 Death (notice is in the news column)

Mrs Henry Hopkins at Hobart Town (C. T.)

Cornwall Chronicle (Tasmania) 14 Aug 1850 Marriage

John Rout Hopkins, second son of Henry Hopkins Esquire, Hobart Town by Reverend A. Morrison to Eliza Ann Armytage, eldest daughter of George Armytage Esquire of Barwon Terrace, Geelong on 1st August.

Congregational Cemetery, Newtown, Tasmania by Geoffrey T. Stillwell, member

(The following transcription has been extracted from "Australian Genealogist" part 8, vol. VII, photocopied by Mrs J. Dickens, Auckland and typed for the Society of Genealogists, New Zealand, by Mrs J. Springer, Bulls.)

The land on which the cemetery and church stand was given to a group of prominent citizens who desired to worship as Congregationalists by Captain Charles Swanston, M.L.C., after whom the nearby Swanston Street and the Swanston Street in Melbourne were named. The foundation stone of the church was laid on October 20th, 1842, by the Rev. Frederick Miller, the first Independent minister, in Australia. It was not, however, until the middle of 1845 that the building was opened. It is a handsome freestone structure designed by the well-known architect, James Blackburn, in early renaissance style. Its high tower is a well-known landmark. The first minister was the Rev. William Jarrett, and when he tendered his resignation in 1846, it was feared that the church might be closed. In 1851, however, largely through the efforts of Mr Henry Hopkins, a prominent Hobart citizen, and the real founder of Congregationalism in Tasmania, the Rev. John M. Strongman was appointed, and during the latter part of his incumbency he combined this post with that of the Headmastership of the High School (now the University). In 1857 he removed to the goldfields at Ballarat. He was succeeded by the Rev. John Nisbet, whose first wife was the daughter of Mr Henry Hopkins, and his ministry lasted until his death in 1890. There is a tablet to his memory in the church. The present minister is the Rev. H. W. Burrage. The cemetery, where so many of the pioneers of this denomination are buried, was closed in 1910, and the gravestones in the front of the church were moved to the sides to make way for the garden. Those at the rear of the building are still intact but will unfortunately soon be removed, as the church members claim that the vaults along the side of the Sunday school are causing the walls to crack. The tombstones of Henry Hopkins and his brothers-in-law (and Cousins), William and Basil Rout, are particularly imposing, being about 20 feet high. Many others like those of Major Walch, Rev. John Nisbet and C. A. Grace-Calvert are of the common nineteenth century pattern of a large flat stone slightly raised from the ground. The tombstones in this cemetery are valuable from the historical and genealogical point of view. John and Arthur Hopkins, with their cousins the Routs, were amongst the first to move over to Victoria in 1836 in that great mass migration from Van Dieman's Land, and their family is written up in Henderson's Pastoral Families. The Rev. George Clarke, for nearly half a century minister of the Davey Street Congregational Church, Hobart, whose son was buried in the cemetery, was one of the early Chancellors of the University of Tasmania. The descendants of most of those buried here still continue to take an important part in the life of Tasmania.

Family vault of Henry Hopkins Esquire.

Sarah wife of Henry Hopkins died 17th November 1849 aged 56. Henry Hopkins died 27th September 1870 aged 84. Sarah E. Nisbet eldest daughter of Henry Hopkins and wife of Rev. J. Nisbet, died 23rd April 1847 aged 23. Henry, eldest son of Henry Hopkins, died 29th June 1875 aged 53. Mary Ann Oakes, second daughter of Henry Hopkins died at sea 16th November 1877 aged 51. Hubert Henry Hopkins born 11th April 1853 died 12th January 1854 son of John and Eliza Hopkins of Wormbite, Victoria. Arthur William Henry Hopkins, son of Arthur and Lucy Hopkins of Murdeduke, Victoria, born 21st July 1865 died 14th December 1865. Henry Hopkins Clarke, eldest son of George and Martha Clarke born 25th May 1858 died 12th September 1893.

Australian Dictionary of Biography written by Christine WALCH

HOPKINS, Henry (1787-1870), merchant and philanthropist, was born on 16 August 1787 at Deptford, England. His mother was Mary, nee A'Gutta, of Flemish descent. He was brought up in a pious Nonconformist middle class home and had a sound business training, spending 16 years in the wool trade in England. He married his cousin Sarah Rout, daughter of Margaret A'Gutta, and sailed with her from Deptford in the *Heroine*. Among the passengers were Robert Mather [q.v.] and his wife and family, and George and Martha Clarke. On 10 September 1822 they arrived at Hobart Town, where Mather and Hopkins became partners, and as retailers and buyers of produce opened a small shop in Elizabeth street. As Hobart's first wool buyer, Hopkins was credited with the entire export of the colony in 1822: twelve bales of wool bought at 4d a pound, and sold in London at 7d. The partnership with Mather was short-lived. Hopkins moved to his own shop and cottage, 'two rooms and a skilling' at the corner of Elizabeth and Bathurst Streets. His main stock was ironmongery, but he was keenly interested in developing the wool trade. On 28 December 1825 he applied for a land grant, offering as qualifications his long experience in the wool trade and a capital of £2000. The application failed because he would not accept the required residence conditions, but as a townsman and trader he rapidly prospered. In 1835 he built Westella, the great square stone house which still stands in Elizabeth Street, a landmark from which, in the absence of a Town Hall, were proclaimed the governor's orders on King William's death, Queen Victoria's accession, the birth of Edward Prince of Wales, and later the cessation of transportation. Hopkins also acquired other properties and in 1839 he put up for sale ten houses in Hobart, a farm and numerous town allotments. In 1837 he had visited the Port Phillip District to buy land and wool. He bought Wormbete, near Winchelsea, and stocked it with merinos from Van Diemen's Land. Later he made it over to his second son, John Rout, and acquired another Victorian property at Lake Murdeduke, for his third son, Arthur. The whole family went to England in 1839 and were away for three years, returning in the *Jane Frances* in December 1842. Although Hopkins was still buying wool in 1847, he appears to have given up active trading, for in 1845 Lieutenant Governor Wilmot noted that 'Mr Hopkins is a gentleman retired from all business, residing in Hobart Town and living on a large independent fortune'. About this time he was engaged in enlarging the house on his farming estate, Summerhome, formerly Robert Giblin's New Town Academy for boys. Here for his remaining years Hopkins spent his summer months, returning to Westella for the winter. In 1843 he became a magistrate and for many years was chairman of the Hobart Town General Sessions, presiding at all magistrates' meetings. In the political struggles of 1846 he accepted nomination to the Legislative Council on the resignation of the 'Patriotic Six', but could not agree with Wilmot's policy and resigned after three months. In 1849 he became a leading member of the Anti-Transportation League and its early Hobart meetings were held at his house. He was one of the trustees and later president of the Hobart Savings Bank, chairman of directors of the Hobart Gas Co. in 1857-70, president of the Chamber of Commerce, chairman of the Van Diemen's Land Bank, the Tasmanian Insurance Co. and the Mersey and Deloraine Tramway Co., an original subscriber and shareholder of the Hobart High Society, Ragged School, Benevolent Society, City Mission, and innumerable churches. The one thing this shrewd little man deemed more important than money, success or worldly goods was his religion. Brought up in an era of religious revival and missionary activity when the great missionary and philanthropic societies were being founded in England, Hopkins had a strong personal faith and that missionary spirit which impels the believer 'to go into all the world and preach the gospel', or in his case, to supply funds for spreading the Word. To all causes that appealed to him, he contributed with 'princely liberality'. The London Missionary Society and the building of Congregational churches called forth his most lavish gifts, but although firm in his own faith he was no bigot, and he gave generously to the building funds of Presbyterian and Wesleyan churches and of St David's Cathedral. When All Saints' Anglican Church was founded he was the first to come forward with his donation, while the neighbouring Davey Street Methodist Church bears his name on its foundation stone. According to his son-in-law George Clarke, 'Money he regarded as a trust and a stewardship, and all his life he acted on the principle of devoting a fixed proportion of his income to objects of Christian philanthropy. Much that he gave is known, much more is a secret that he never disclosed'. Hopkins has often been credited with founding Congregationalism in Australia. Soon after his arrival he began to teach in the Wesleyan Sunday school,

and for ten years he worshipped with the Presbyterians. But Hopkins wanted his accustomed form of worship, and in 1828 he wrote to the London Missionary Society asking for a pastor and offering him a home. This resulted two years later in the arrival of Rev. F. Miller [q.v.] and the building of the Brisbane Street Chapel. In 1835 Hopkins was again instrumental in bringing out a second Independent minister, Rev. John Nisbet. He also gave land for the Berea chapel in Liverpool Street and in 1837 built the Collins Street chapel, Hobart, at his sole expense. When this became too small and a meeting discussed the building of Davey Street Church, the minute book recorded that 'Mr Hopkins engages to pay a sum equal to that which may be collected within twelve months from 1st August 1853'. Many country churches also received his support, and in 1837 he asked the new Colonial Missionary Society for a minister to be sent to Melbourne, and gave money for his outfit and passage. In September 1839 Hopkins laid the foundation of the first Victorian Congregational Church, 'a neat and spacious brick building' at the corner of Collins and Russell Streets. Twenty-seven years later, when it was replaced by the present church, Hopkins again journeyed to Melbourne to lay that foundation stone. About this time, too, he gave a further £3000 to the London Missionary Society, and £1000 for a bursary to Camden College, Sydney, for the training of Congregationalist ministers. His last public act was to lay the foundation stone of the Memorial Church, Hobart, to which he donated £500. His wife Sarah died on 17 November 1849, aged 56. Hopkins died on 27 September 1870, after a peaceful and happy old age and a very short illness. They had three sons and three daughters, the youngest of whom, Martha, married Rev. George Clarke and had eight children. Memorials are in the Congregational Church at Davey Street and in the grounds of the Congregational Church, New Town.

HRA (3), 5: J. West *The History of Tasmania*, 1 (Launceston, 1852); J. Fenton, *A history of Tasmania* (Hob, 1884); A. C. Nelson, *History of the effective establishment of Congregationalism in the Australian colonies and New Zealand* (Hob, 1930); P. L. Brown (ed), *Clyde Company papers*, 2-4 (Lond, 1952-59).

Australian Dictionary of Biography written by J. Anne Hone

HOPKINS, John Rout (1828-1897), pastoralist, was born on 18 August 1828 at Hobart Town, the second son of Henry Hopkins [q.v.] and his wife Sarah, nee Rout. The family lived in England in 1840-1842 and after their return to Van Diemen's Land John received a thorough grounding in sheepbreeding, spending some time at David Gibson's [q.v.] famous stud. In 1845 he was sent to manage Murdeduke, one of his father's Western District runs, and then became owner of Wormbete, also near Winchelsea. In 1850-44 Hopkins acquired freehold of 20,000 acres and bought the adjoining St Stephen's and River stations. In 1854 and 1855 he occupied the Mount Hesse run. Hopkins greatly improved his land and developed a special Wormbete merino which he inbred successfully from then onwards, shearing up to 26,000 sheep a year. Hopkins was on the Barrabool Shire Council for thirteen years and its first president, and on the Winchelsea Shire Council for thirty-two years and president in 1870-1871, 1878-1882 and 1884-88. He was a justice of the peace and took a great interest in Geelong's growth, fostering both religious and sporting activities. In 1850 with John Gray and Rev. Ben Cuzens he secured land at the corner of Ryrrie and Gheringhap Streets for the use of the Independent Church. In later years Hopkins was a prominent Anglican layman and synod member. A keen oarsman who thought nothing of riding twenty-five miles to Geelong for training, Hopkins was president of the Corio Rowing Club. He was an enthusiastic sailor and for a time was commodore of the Royal Victorian Yacht Club. He was also president in 1884 of the Geelong Cricket and Football Clubs. In 1871 he became a provisional director of the newly formed Geelong Meat Preserving Co. which collapsed in 1874. Hopkins had a long and uneventful political career. In the Legislative Assembly he represented South Grant in 1864-1867 and 1871-77 and Geelong in 1892-94. In parliament he was concerned mainly with the issues of local government. In 1880 he was vice-chairman of the Geelong Group of the Municipal Association and was elected mayor of Geelong in 1892. Hopkins was married first, on 1 August 1850 to Eliza Ann (d. 1885), daughter of George Armytage [q.v.], by whom he had six sons and seven

daughters; and second, to Mrs Susan Emily Rucker (d. 1890). Hopkins died on 20 December 1897 survived by his third wife Alice Roberta Purkiss, whom he had married in 1892. His estate was valued at £74,700.

A. Sutherland et al, *Victoria and its metropolis*, 2 (Melb, 1888); Pastoral Review Pty Ltd, *The pastoral homes of Australia*, 1 (Melb, 1910); A. Henderson (ed), *Early pioneer families of Victoria and Riverina* (Melb, 1936); W. R. Brownhill, *The history of Geelong and Corio Bay* (Melb, 1955); Hobart Town Courier, 13 Dec 1839, 1 Aug 1850; Geelong Times, 21 Dec 1897; Pastoral Review, 15 Jul 1909.