

# William Jones our man with Wellington

By Jeanette Lee

While looking at the Pensioners who arrived on the Runnymede I came across a William Jones from the 6<sup>th</sup> Regiment who had a rather strange pension jump from the original 9d per diem to 2/1 ½ per diem.

Looking further into the WO 22s and 23s there were two William Jones' with the same date of admittance to Out-Pension and to all intents and purposes it looked like the same man. However by looking at the WO97s it appeared that there were two men of the same name serving in the same regiment in India discharged to pension on the same day 13 May 1840, both returned to England on 13 April 1840 and there the confusion began.<sup>i</sup>

The younger of the two men, Private William Jones, was born in Marley near Leeds in Yorkshire in 1816 while the older man, Sergeant William Jones, was born at Hounslow Middlesex in 1794 and is the man who came to Western Australia as a convict guard on the Runnymede.

Enlisting in the 6<sup>th</sup> Regiment on 11 April 1808 aged fourteen he went on to serve for 35 years and 143 days seeing 3 years' service in France 4 years at the Cape of Good Hope and a further 14 years 7 months in India the remainder 'at home'.

Not surprisingly he was discharged as being worn out after repeated attacks of hepatitis and having difficulty breathing. He was awarded a pension of 2/1 ½ per diem. His physical description at discharge was: height 6 feet 2 inches, fair hair, blue eyes and a fresh complexion. He was awarded a gold medal and the General Service Medal with clasps for Vittoria, Pyrenees and Orthes.<sup>ii</sup>

William wasted no time after his return to England in marrying Mary Ann Solden on 18<sup>th</sup> April 1841 at St. Pancras London before moving to Stamford in Leicestershire where we find the family in the 1851 Census living at Soar Lane in Leicester with his wife Mary and three children. William was born 1842 in London, Rose Hannah (Rosehanna) born Stamford Leicestershire in 1846 and baby Mary Ann born Leicestershire 1851.<sup>iii</sup> From later events we can only surmise another two children were born before they left England.

William volunteered for duty as a Convict guard and arrived in Western Australia on the Runnymede on 7<sup>th</sup> September 1856. Nothing is known about his sojourn in WA no children appear to have been born and none died. William and his family left for South Australia, ship unknown, not long afterwards as his pension was paid in South Australia from January 1858.

On 19<sup>th</sup> November 1860 William Jones took his own life by cutting his throat with a razor, an event recorded great detail by the Adelaide newspapers.<sup>iv</sup>

Statements were given by neighbours Mrs Tubbs and Mrs Jane Roach. Mrs Tubbs said she had known William Jones for about six years and he was a heavy drinker until about

eighteen months ago when he had given it up but had lately resumed drinking and was worse than ever.

His wife had left him and taken four of the five children to Victoria leaving one child of about nine years of age with him who was asleep in the house when the attempted suicide took place. Fortunately neighbours took the child from the house without her witnessing the event.

Mrs Roach was the first on the scene after William had attempted to cut his throat and called for assistance. He was taken to hospital where the wound was stitched but he died shortly after of a haemorrhage. The Inquest found he had taken his own life in a fit of temporary insanity caused by drink.

I do not know what happened to Mary Jones and her children whether they remained in Victoria, returned to South Australia to be re-united with the nine year old child or returned to England.

## WATERLOO MEDAL



- The medal was made of silver and 36 MMs in diameter.
- The Obverse is inscribed with "Victoria Regina 1848" and left facing young Queen Victoria
- The Reverse is inscribed with "To The British Army 1793-1814" and has the Duke of Wellington, kneeling, being crowned with a laurel wreath by a grateful Queen Victoria standing on a small dias.
- The recipient's name and regiment was on the rim
- The crimson ribbon was 32 mm wide with dark blue edges.
- The medal, designed by William Wyon is of silver

*From Wikipedia*

<sup>i</sup> WO97/282/22 FMP

WO97/282/23 FMP

<sup>ii</sup> Great Britain, Campaign, Gallantry and long Service Awards and Ancestry

<sup>iii</sup> 1851 Census Great Britain HO 107/2090/149/4

<sup>iv</sup> The South Australian Advertiser Tuesday 20 November 1860 page 3