

IGNATIUS SIGISMOND THE MOST ELUSIVE HARFORD¹

Many years of researching the Harford Family by a number of experienced researchers have proved both very rewarding and very frustrating. By far the single most instance of frustration has concerned **IGNATIUS SIGISMOND HARFORD**

Ignatius was the youngest and fourteenth child of Stephen and Margaret Harford. He was born on 24 May 1875 at Armagh, South Australia². Ignatius was also baptised on the same day, an indication that he may have been unwell and not expected to live. His Sponsors were James Butler and an elder sister Mary Harford. Mary known as "Molly" was later to marry Joseph Acres.

From this record on absolutely nothing further could be found regarding events in the life of Ignatius. Searches were made in the Marriage and Death records in each State without any trace being found. Given previous success in finding everyone else this became a major issue. The main conclusion was that he had probably died either as an infant or young child. If this were the case there was a possibility that a death record might not exist.

There was also the possibility that he had changed his name. Ignatius Sigismond was certainly an unusual name and some would say a "brand". Ignatius of Loyola was a Spanish priest and Saint who founded the Society of Jesus and of course it was Father Pallhuber S.J. the Jesuit priest from Sevenhill in South Australia who baptized Ignatius and all the other children in the Harford family. Ignatius' older brother John also had the second name of Aloysius who was also a Jesuit saint. Sigismond is an old German and Austrian name that is most uncommon and Father Pallhuber came from Austria.

However, the name Ignatius later appeared on the Death Certificate of his mother Margaret who died on 12 October 1895. Finds of this kind only increased the frustration of those researching the family. Ignatius was recorded as 'living' and being 19 years of age.

Twenty years later to the day his father Stephen died on 12 October 1915. Stephen's death certificate also showed Ignatius as being alive and aged 40 years as we would have expected. As information on certificates can be notoriously inaccurate, not a lot of notice was taken of this record. Again, after lengthy searching no further information could be found and Ignatius was put in the "too hard basket".

We have learnt from experience that we live in a fortunate age where genealogy has become a very popular pastime and this has been supported by many commercial research websites making available access to many databases of historical records. Added to this, technology has advanced to the point where National and State Libraries have seen the tremendous advantages of digitizing their records and using Optical Character Recognition to provide enhanced searching capability. This has dramatically increased access to historical material and at the same time provided protection of libraries' source records for posterity.

Enter the National Library of Australia's website "Trove", containing digitized Australian newspapers from 1803-1954, an absolute boon for family historians. Earlier this year our

¹ Written with aid of initial notes supplied by Jenny Carollo

² District of Clare, Book 156, Page 339

research colleague Jenny Carollo (wife of John and a great grandson of James Samuel) simply entered the words "Harford - Western Australia", and trawling through the newspaper articles, suddenly four items under 'Family Notices'³ appeared:

1. *HARFORD: On May 25, at the Merredin Hospital, George Harford, of Westonia, loving husband of Rachel (deceased); aged 79 years.*

This item certainly did not ring any bells, but with the next notice came the information that had long been sought:

2. *HARFORD: On May 25, at Merredin Hospital, George Harford, youngest son of the late Stephen and Margaret Harford, South Australia.*

3. *HARFORD: On May 25 at the Merriden Hospital, George Harford, loving brother of Jack (Broken Hill, South Australia), Mary (Mrs. Acres, Mt. Lawley), Gertie (deceased), Virginia (deceased), Margaret (deceased), Elizabeth (deceased), Matilda (deceased), Harriett (deceased), Rebecca (deceased), Dave (deceased, Tom (deceased); aged 79 years.*

4. *HARFORD: On May 25 at Merriden Hospital, George Harford, loving grandfather of Pansie and Cyril; aged 79 years.*

Someone had made George 5 years older than he needed to be as, in fact, he was only 74 years of age. We also believe that the mention of a sister named Gertie may be incorrect as we have not identified a sibling with that name. Two of George's sisters married Acres brothers and both families were in Western Australia and one family that of Joseph Acres and his wife Mary (Molly) Harford remained there. There was a Gertie Acres who went on to become Mrs. Waldo who was mentioned in Jack Harford's Will as a beneficiary. She also would have been George's niece.

Further follow up identified that the Births, Deaths and Marriages record of George Harford's death was registered in the District of Northam, No. 77 of 1949.

AFTER ALL THESE YEARS, GEORGE/IGNATIUS HARFORD WANTED TO BE FOUND!

So the question arises as to whether he had been 'George' all along and his Baptismal names of Ignatius Sigismund had been used to register his birth, or whether he did not wish to be burdened with such names and simply called himself 'George'? The first name of 'George' is liberally scattered throughout the Harford family and it would not surprise us if he simply took up the name.

An article in the Western Mail⁴ in 1897 records a "Harford" arriving at Albany, WA on 11 February aboard the steamer "SS Bothwell Castle". If this is George Harford, he would have been a young man of 22 years, travelling to W.A. to seek his fortune on the Eastern Goldfields.

At that time George's oldest brother David was in WA and had been there since 1886. However, there was a 23 year age difference between them and they would not really have known one another. 1897 is also the year Joseph and Mary (Harford) Acres moved from Broken Hill to

³ All four notices were in The West Australian, 27 May, 1949

⁴ Western Mail, 12 February 1897

WA. Mary was George's elder sister and godmother and it is possible George went with them to help with the children.

We know that George was in Kalgoorlie in 1905. On 30 May of that year he was one of more than 30 people found guilty and fined in the Kalgoorlie Police Court for "*not having a bell on his bicycle*."⁵ There had been a previous newspaper reference⁶ to a Harford playing football in 1902 for the Warriors football Club in the Boulder football Association. In that year George would have been 26 years old, an appropriate age for him to be playing and consequently we believe it was him.

There were no further newspaper references to George Harford until 1912 when there were a series of reports relating to his gold mining activities. The first of recorded his success of his application to the Southern Cross Warden's Court to take over the lease of the King of the Range Gold Mining Co.

George Harford v. The King of the Range G.M. Co., Ltd., application for forfeiture of G.M.L. 1425. Applicant said he was on the lease on March 16, 18, and 19, between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. There was nobody there, and no work was being done.—Recommended.

Kalgoorlie Western Argus 8 April 1912

As this is the first newspaper report we believe it appears to have been George's first serious attempt to gain a lease. Later reports indicate that he two partners J McDonald and J Quinlan although references were usually to "Harford and party". The reports also indicated that the lease showed the promise of delivering the syndicate good returns. Not content with this lease, there was a report shortly after that George was successful in obtaining a licence to another prospecting area.⁷

The first report on production at the King of the Range indicated that there were good returns. The following reports show a crushing of 28 tons of ore crushed yielding 92 ounces of gold. At a price of 3 Pounds 17 Shillings an ounce the value of the gold was a little over 350 Pounds.

two.
Marvel Loch, July 26.
The King of the Range (Harford and party) crushed at Spring Hill battery, Parker's range, 28 short tons for a yield of 3 oz. 6 dwt. 17 gr. to the ton.

Kalgoorlie Western Argus 30 July 1912

George Harford and party have cleaned up 28 tons from the King of the Range lease, at Parker's Range, for a yield of 92 oz. They are working a small but rich leader.

Kalgoorlie Western Argus 6 August 1912

⁵ Kalgoorlie Western Argus, 30 May 1905

⁶ Kalgoorlie Western Argus, 13 May 1902.

⁷ Kalgoorlie Western Argus 11 June 1912

In December there was a report on a further crushing said to be the fourth from the lease. It was for 51 tons of ore which yielded 120 ounces and 4 1/2 pennyweights of gold. At 3/17/6 an ounce the value was about 465 Pounds. While the newspaper report provides the yields of the four crushings we do not have the tonnage so we cannot calculate the full value. The two other crushings had lower yields so the returns would not have been as high. Nevertheless, if we assume the two crushings had delivered a total of 60 tons, a very conservative estimate, with a yield of 1.75 ounces per ton (again a conservative figure) the volume would have been 105 ounces with a value of a little over 400 Pounds. The total value for the year would have been 1215 Pounds.

MARVEL LOCH.
PROSPECTS GOOD.

Marvel Loch, Dec. 10.

G. Harford, J. McDonald and J. Quinlan cleaned up at Patterson's Springhill battery, Parker's Range, 51 tons for a yield of 120 oz. 4 1/2 dwt. over the plates, or an average of 2 oz. 8 dwt. per ton. This dirt was obtained at a depth of 100 ft., principally from development and stopping. This is the fourth crushing from this show, the first averaging 30 dwt., the second 2 oz., the third 3 oz. 6 dwt. 17 gr., and this one 2 oz. 8 dwt. The average value of the gold was £3 17/6. The recent crushing returns the lucky owners a handsome dividend.

Kalgoorlie Western Argus 17 December 1912

In 1913 there was only one production report but this showed continuing good returns with a very good yield of 3.5 ounces per ton on a crushing of 16 tons. This had a value of 62 Pounds.

KING OF THE RANGE.
3 1/2 OZ. PER TON.

Marvel Loch, May 1.

The King of the Range (Harford, Quinlan and Macdonald) has cleaned up at Howlett's mill 16 tons for a yield of 3 1/2 oz. per ton. The gold is worth £3 18' per oz. The stone was broken at a depth of 100 ft. The sands from the previous crushing averaged 13 dwt. per ton.

Kalgoorlie Western Argus 6 May 1913

In December the newspaper summarized the returns from the King of the Range lease ore crushings. The total to that time was 174 tons of ore crushed yielding 533 ounces and 11 pennyweights. The value of the gold had been quoted as 3 Pounds 18 shillings per ounce down

to 3 Pounds 16 shillings and sixpence. At the lower figure this yielded a total of close to 2050 Pounds. We believe it is for only 1913. In any event it was a good return and indicates the syndicate earned over 3250 Pounds in the two years. This was a very good return.

MARVEL LOCH.

Marvel Loch, Dec. 22.

The Kin- of the Range, owned by Messrs. J. McDonald, G. Harford, and J. Quinlan, of Parker's Range, cleaned up at Howlett's Mill, Donovan's Find, 55 tons for a return over the plates of 4 oz. 8 dwt., an average of 2 oz. 10 dwt. 16 gr. per ton. This crushing was obtained from a depth of 150 ft. underlay, and the reef averages 2 ft., the gold being worth £3 16/6. Previous crushings from this consistent gold producer are as follows:—28 tons, averaging 3 oz. 7 dwt. per ton, tailings 13 dwt; 51 tons, 2 oz. 7 dwt. per ton, tailings 13 dwt.; 15 tons, 3 oz. 12 dwt. per ton, tailings 12 dwt.; 25 tons, 38 dwt. per ton, tailings 12 dwt.; total to date, 174 tons for 533 oz. 11 dwt., the gold averaging £3 16/6 per oz.

The St. George's Syndicate (M...

Kalgoorlie Western Argus 30 December 1913

Despite the success of his mine George sold out of the syndicate in about April 1914. The purchaser of his share was a Mr. J Young who was reported as being "highly satisfied with his deal."⁸

Although very busy with his gold mining in 1912 George was able to find time to marry. On 29 August 1912 he married Rachel Johnston at Christ Church Southern Cross.⁹

YILGARN

WESTERN AUSTRALIA.

CERTIFICATE OF MARRIAGE.

No.	When and where Married.	Christian Name and Surname of the Parties.	Age.	Condition of the Parties (Single or Married, Widower or Widow).	Rank or Profession, or Occupation.	Residence.		Father's Christian Name and Surname.	Rank or Profession of Father.	M's Christian Name Maiden Name.
						Present.	Usual.			
11	10.12.12 August 29th Christ Church Southern Cross	George Harford Rachel Johnston	34 1/2 42	Bachelor Widow	Miner	Marvel Loch Marvel Loch	Marvel Loch Marvel Loch	Oliver Harford Joseph McCormick (Deceased)	Farmer Labourer	Mrs. O'Brien (Deceased) Elizabeth Boyd (Deceased)
Married in <u>Christ Church Southern Cross</u> according to <u>Article 10 of the Ordinance of the Council of England</u> by me, after <u>Ordo</u> duly made, as by law required. & By <u>Benno Potholter</u>		I certify that the consent of of _____ a witness (or of a Justice of the Peace), was given to the Marriage between the parties named in this Certificate.		I certify that the consent of of _____ a witness (or of a Justice of the Peace), was given to the Marriage between the parties named in this Certificate.		This Marriage was celebrated between us <u>George Harford</u> <u>Rachel Johnston</u> in the presence of us <u>Joseph Johnston</u> <u>Edwin Martin</u>				
Signature of Minister or District Registrar: <u>T. R. Pelham Thomas</u> Minister of <u>Christ Church</u>		Signature of Minister or District Registrar: _____		Signature of Minister or District Registrar: _____						

⁸ Kalgoorlie Western Argus 7 April 1914

⁹ No. 11 Registration District of Yilgarn

Rachel Johnston had married Robert Johnston in Queensland in 1889. They had four children William born 1890, Joseph born about 1892, Robert John born 1894 and a daughter Elizabeth Boyd born 1896. Her late husband, Robert was a Carrier who was killed when he was thrown or fell out of a spring cart on February 16, 1911.¹⁰ He broke three ribs one of which punctured his lung. In May, 1911, Rachel inherited sixty five Pounds, nineteen Shillings and two pence from her late husband's estate.¹¹

After leaving the King of the Range syndicate George continued with his mining and in 1914 was involved at "the old Undaunted lease"¹²

Harford and party have repegged the old Undaunted, and have been granted the ground as a prospecting area. It is reported that good stone is being broken and prospects are encouraging.

Kalgoorlie Western Argus 13 November 1914

However, the next report on 31 August 1915 only yielded 6 pennyweights of gold with a value of 32/17/6 from 28 tons of ore crushed. The gold content was far below that being achieved at the King of the Range lease.

George, in 1920, became involved in the Perth Mine with his stepson Joe Johnston¹³. Together they had a two thirds interest with the other third held by Mr W Gilmore the proprietor of the Edna May Hotel. The Perth was a one of a number of mines about 4 miles west of Westonia that had been neglected. It had previously yielded a return of over 1000 ounces gold but it was believed that granite had cut out the reef. The State Mining Engineer believed the reef still existed and the granite was an intrusion. The report continued:

body. A particularly good worker, Joe Johnston, who for three and a half years was away on the western war front with the W.A. Tunnelling Corps, eventually decided to give the Perth M. a further go below the depth that has stood for four years past as the deepest area of work. In company with George Harford, ex-soldier Johnston has put in some strenuous work. At a depth of 130 feet vertical from the surface these two part owners of the Perth M are on a really excellent body of ore. The winze is at pre-

¹⁰ Kalgoorlie Western Argus, 28 February 1911

¹¹ Western Mail, 20 May, 1911

¹³ Kalgoorlie Western Argus 26 October 1920

Joseph had enlisted in the AIF in 1915 at the age of 23 and was a member of the 3rd Tunnelling Company. He was discharged on 30 August 1919 on his return to Australia on the ship Somali. By this time he was 27 years old and a young and strong assistant for George who was now in his mid 40's. The initial work indicated quartz with a yield of 30 Pennyweights (1.5 ounces) to the ton and promised profitable returns.

The first crushing yielded 38 ounces and 6 Pennyweights of gold from 30 tons a yield of 1oz. 6dwts to the ton. George and Joe worked the mine until about March 1923. At that time water intruded into their operation at a depth of 166 feet. It was reported that they had been driven out just as the value and size of the ore body had improved considerably. Later that year¹⁴ it was reported that to resume operations would require a new pump hoist and a new shaft.

Over the period of their operation they had obtained more than one ounce to the ton and this had made it worthwhile. However, the thought of starting over again would have been heart breaking.

Rachel and George were married for 36 years, and they raised Rachel's children - William, Joseph, Elizabeth and Robert Johnston.

Robert married Annie Catherine Martin at Marvel Loch on 9 November 1915. They had a daughter Pansy born in 1916 and Annie died shortly after on 4 September 1916 at the age of 26 years. Annie is buried in Southern Cross Cemetery. Robert remarried Winifred and they had three children Robert, Phyllis and Joan. Robert died on 4 June 1958 at the age of 63. Winifred died 28 January 2001 aged 95 years. Both are buried in Merredin Cemetery.

Rachel predeceased George, passing away on 23 July 1948 at the age of 81 years. The following notices were reported in The West Australian 24 July, 1948,

1. HARFORD: On July 23, 1948, at Westonia, Rachael Harford, dearly beloved wife of George Harford, of Westonia, loving mother of William, Joseph, Elizabeth and Robert; aged 81 years.

2. HARFORD: On July 23, 1948 at Westonia, Rachael Harford, early beloved mother of Robert Johnston, loved mother-in-law of Winifred and loving grandmother of Robert and Joan.

3. HARFORD: Rachael Harford, loving grandmother of Pansy and Cyril.

George and Rachel Harford are both buried in the Westonia Cemetery, WA. (See below)

¹⁴ Kalgoorlie Western Argus 4 December 1923



George and Rachel's Grave at Westonia Cemetery WA