

JOSEPH WILLIAM GRENDON

PREAMBLE:

How to approach the subject, **Joseph William Grendon (JWG)**, without summarising that which is already well written, has been a matter of some cogitation.

Rather than waste a great deal of time, effort and money in creating something that already existed, I decided to transcribe or author a series of notes that will complement a couple of primary sources.

The primary sources which are commended to your attention are:

A history of Namibia : from the beginning to 1990

Author : Marion Wallace with John Kinahan.

Published : London : Hurst, 2011.

Here, the Chapters 2, 3 and 4 are pertinent background to the environment in which Joseph William Grendon earned a livelihood and had his being.

African Jerusalem: The Vision of Robert Grendon.

Author: Grant Christison.

Pietermaritzburg. December 2007.

Here, Chapter 2 “Damaraland and Ovamboland” is central to the family history and commercial activities of Joseph William Grendon

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Through the period of the **Great Irish (“Potato”) Famine (1845-1852), and the 1848 Irish Rebellion**, over one million people emigrated to Liverpool, Boston, New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore and Toronto^{1 2}. The private army of the Honourable East India Company (HEIC) was one of the beneficiaries of this diaspora.

The Indian Rebellion of 1857 resulted in widespread devastation in India; many condemned the East India Company for permitting the events to occur. One of the consequences of the Indian Mutiny was that the British Government nationalised the Company. The Company lost all its administrative powers; the Crown, pursuant to the provisions of the Government of India Act 1858, took over its Indian possessions, including its armed forces³.

¹ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Great_Famine_%28Ireland%29

² http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Young_Irelander_Rebellion_of_1848

³ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Indian_Rebellion_of_1857

The 3rd Madras Fusiliers (3rd Madras European Infantry) was established in 1854 under Col. George Cornish Whitlock, fought during the Indian Mutiny (1857-59), thereby winning the battle honour 'Central India'. In 1862, it was transferred to British Army becoming H.M. 108th Regiment of Foot (Madras Infantry). In 1881, it was amalgamated with the 27th (Inniskilling) Regiment of Foot to form The Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers.

Miscegenation in Africa was a common occurrence, often encouraged by local chiefs as a means of applying political control to foreigners and geographically increasing their personal influence. From the circa 1860, Joseph Grendon [Kadyve - nickname given by Ovambo] was in the employ of one, Charles John Andersson as a trader's assistant. It is thought that he may have hopped boat "to seek his fortune" when returning from India to Ireland at the end of the Indian Mutiny. In March 1865, Andersson sent J.J.L. Smuts to hunt elephants in Ovamboland and Grendon to establish a trading post in Ondonga. Grendon was trading in Ondonga for Andersson in 1866, and lent Palgrave and his party a house when they arrived there in May that year. After spending some time in Europe, during which time he married Sarah Jane Spedding, he returned to Otjimbingwe in late June 1872, and settled at Okahandja. Here he was married (probably by tribal rights) to an Ovaherero wife, Maria, with whom he had three children. One of these was Robert Grendon (1867-1949), later to become a pioneering mulatto South African poet and journalist. By repute Grendon was one of the very few European traders known genuinely to have cared for the offspring of this miscegenation, though his last estate papers appear to contradict this view ⁴ .

The Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers was created through the amalgamation of the Royal Bombay Fusiliers and the Royal Madras Fusiliers with homeland militias. It was constituted of two battalions, both of which fought in the Anglo-Boer War (1899-1902) ⁵. The 1st Battalion landed in Durban aboard the SS Catalonis on 3 November 1899 and fought at Colenso (1899) and took part in the Relief of Ladysmith (1900). The 2nd Battalion *inter alia* together with 300 men of the South African Constabulary arrived in South Africa aboard the Britannic in November 1901 and took part in the anti-guerrilla operations ⁶ .

⁴ Ref: Nos. 000152 and 000153 in Biographies of Namibian Personalities
Author: Klaus Dierks
2003-2004
http://www.klausdierks.com/Biographies/Biographies_G.htm

⁵ Ref: <http://www.nam.ac.uk/research/famous-units/royal-inniskilling-fusiliers>

⁶ <http://www.britishmedals.us/kevin/shipping.html>

FAMILY HISTORY

There is conflicting data relating to JWD, all of which is presented here:

1. Marriage Registry ⁷:

Name: Joseph William Grendon
Birth Date: 1836
Birthplace:
Age: 35
Spouse's Name: Sarah Jane Spedding
Spouse's Birth Date: 1850
Spouse's Birthplace:
Spouse's Age: 21
Event Date: 13 Oct 1871
Event Place: Southampton, Hampshire, England
Father's Name: Joshua (or John) Grendon
Mother's Name:
Spouse's Father's Name: George Spedding
Spouse's Mother's Name:
Race:
Marital Status: Single
Previous Wife's Name:
Spouse's Race:
Spouse's Marital Status: Single

2. Marriage Registry ⁸:

Grendon, Joseph William; district Southampton; Dec QRT 1871 Vol. 2c Page 32.
Spedding, Sarah Jane; district Southampton; Dec QRT 1871 Vol. 2c Page 32.

3. Death Certificate ⁹

Name: Joseph William Grendon
Born : Dublin
Father: unknown
Mother: unknown
Age at Death: 92 yrs 6 mnths (thus implied birth date March 1834)
Residence: "Helenville" Selbourne Road, Claremont
Wife: Sarah Jane Grendon died 15 July 1916 (no Death Certificate on record in South African, United Kingdom or Republic of Ireland)
Died: 9 September 1926
Offspring:
Alice Mary McConnell (née Grendon)
Maud Francis Grendon

⁷ "England Marriages, 1538–1973," FamilySearch <https://familysearch.org>

⁸ Ref: <http://freebmd.rootsweb.com/cgi/search.pl>

⁹ MOOC 6/9/3022.12486

Benjamin Edmund Grendon
John Edward Grendon
Gladys Muriel Spink (née Grendon)

4. Wills known to have existed:

- A. 26 December 1871, London. Not found
- B. 25 February 1882, Cape Town. Holographic, in which 3 older children “not of this marriage” are mentioned, namely Mary Ann, William and Robert Grendon¹⁰
- C. 19 February 1923, Cape Town, when resident at 26 Derry Terrace Buitenkant Street, Cape Town. Beneficiaries are those mentioned in the next document

5. Liquidation and Distribution Accounts, 1927¹¹

Executor: Syfrets Trust Company.
Value of Estate: £ 1603/13/-

Beneficiaries:

Sons:

John Edward Grendon¹²
Benjamin (Edmond) Grendon¹³

Daughters:

Gladys (Muriel) Spink¹⁴
Alice (Mary) McConnell
Maud (Francis) Grendon

Sons-in-Law:

John Spink
Arthur McConnell¹⁵

Daughters-in-Law:

Mrs H Grendon (Helen de Lacey)
Mrs E Grendon (Everdrica Wendtland)

¹⁰ This was found in the Cape Archives, loose and uncatalogued by this author, a situation which hopefully is now corrected.

¹¹ MOOC 13/1/5843.405

¹² Died 1937

¹³ Died 1947

¹⁴ Died 1954

¹⁵ Died 1951

Grandchildren:

Basil McConnell
Mary Grendon
George Grendon
Joseph Grendon
Florrie Grendon
Doreen Grendon
Lionel Grendon
William Grendon

INTERMENT ¹⁶:

Buried Maitland No. 1 on 10 September 1926 (Estate papers record it as 14 September 1926) , allotment Episcopalian; in plot 11269B of double plots 11269 and 11270, ownership in the name of Alice McConnell of “Glen***ough” Palmyra Rd, Claremont

Officiating minister Rev. Beechy. 6 bearers etc. supplied by J S Hoogendoorn Ltd. The headstone reads as follows (the font sizes represent approximations of those on the headstone):

In Loving Memory of

MY DEAR WIFE

SARAH JANE GRENDON

(BORN SPEDDING, ISLE OF WIGHT)
WHO DIED ON THE 15TH JULY 1916
AGED 63 YEARS

DEEPLY MOURNED BY HER HUSBAND
CHILDREN AND GRANDCHILDREN

ALSO OF MY DEAR SON

JOSEPH WILLIAM GRENDON

WHO DIED AT PARIRUA, NEW ZEALAND
ON THE 15TH FEBRUARY 1910
AGED 32 YEARS

ALSO OF

MY DEAR SON

GEORGE PATRICK

DIED AT MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA

NOV 13TH 1921.

IN HIS 44TH YEAR.

JOSEPH WILLIAM GRENDON.

BORN IN DUBLIN

DIED AT CLAREMONT CAPE

SEPT 9 1926,

IN HIS 93RD YEAR.

DEEPLY MOURNED.

“GOD IN HIS MERCY GIVE REST TO THEIR SOULS.”

¹⁶ Record of Burials : Booking Office, Milnerton Tel: 021 528 8108/9/10

MILITARY HISTORY

1. Indian Mutiny 1857



478 Private Grendon, Joseph 3rd Madras Fusiliers was awarded the Indian Mutiny Medal clasp Central India.

Kevin Asplin makes the following point:

(Regarding the) Honourable East India Company (HEIC) Men, I have a partial list of some of the HEIC men who fought in the Mutiny and they are listed below. This is not a confirmed or full list - which is why it has never been published!

Clasps:

D = Delhi

L = Lucknow

RL= Relief of Lucknow

DL= Defence of Lucknow

CI= Central India

- = No clasps

With specific reference to JWG, he notes the following: “478, Private, Grendon, Joseph, 3rd Madras Fusiliers, - , Claimed Discharge”, which could be taken to imply that no clasp was ever issued^{17 18 19}. To me, given the times, such fraud always seems improbable though not impossible²⁰.

¹⁷ Ref: <http://www.britishmedals.us/files/imaddenda.htm>

¹⁸ Ref: Kevin Asplin : The Indian Mutiny Medal Roll (British Forces) 1857-1859

¹⁹ Ref: <http://www.britishmedals.us/kevin/nominal.htm>

²⁰ Useful references for those interested are the following:

War Medals Issued For Services In India, 1852-1924, Also The First And Second Issue Of The Most Eminent Order Of The Indian Empire. Author: Charles Vvinter. Date : 1929

Publisher: http://www.britnumsoc.org/publications/Digital%20BNJ/pdfs/1929_BNJ_20_22.pdf

2. The Cape Of Good Hope General Service Medal

Grendon, J.W., Pte. Cape Pol. D-2 Bechuanaland (24 December 1896 to the 30 July 1897) ²¹

3. The Anglo-Boer War 1899-1902

JWG appears on three medal rolls; Tpr Grendon“C” Squadron off WO 100/266 and in a position of “Sub.service” as 578 Sergt Grendon J.W., Border Scouts off WO 100/236.

On 29.12.05 he was issued with the Queen’s South Africa Medal clasps Relief of Mafeking, Transvaal and Rhodesia after the recovery of the Cape Colony clasp.

On 29.3.06 578 Sergt Grendon J.W., Border Scouts was issued with the King’s South Africa Medal clasps South Africa 1901 and South Africa 1902 off 578 Border Scouts WO 100/258 (unit Rhodesia Regiment A.S.C.)

On 12 March 1902 578 Sergt JWG was wounded at Abeam (? sic) ²² .

There is a twenty-one page document detailing his military history in the Transvaal Archives ²³ .

PRINCE OF WALES VISIT to CAPE TOWN, 1925

In the column “Tavern of the Seas” in the Cape Argus of 5 May 1925 the following is reported that J(oseph) W(illiam) Grendon of Buitenkant Street, aged 90 years, was presented to Edward, Prince of Wales at the Cycle Track parade ²⁴ .

H.R.H the Prince of Wales (later King Edward VIII, later Duke of Windsor) toured South Africa from 30th April 1925 onwards. He disembarked from HMS Repulse at 10am. on 30th April 1925.

Inter alia, that day he met Girl Guides, Boy Scouts and Ex-Servicemen at a reception within the Oval of the Cycle Track at Greenpoint at 3:15 pm. that afternoon ²⁵ .

Military Archive Research Author: Stuart C Blank www.militaryarchiveresearch.com/HEIC.htm

²¹ Forsyth, D.D. *Medal Roll: Cape of Good Hope General Service Medal*. Medal Year Book 2010 states that 2482 medals with this bar were issued .

²² UK, Casualties of the Boer War, 1899-1902 www.ancestry.co.uk

²³ TAB SAC Volume 87. B2775 DESCRIPTION : Record Of Conduct And Service Of South African Constabulary. Joseph William Grendon. 1903-1904

²⁴ Ref: Reportage and photograph of old codger, Tavern of the Seas, Cape Argus, 5 May 1925 “Cycle track Parade”; The Perpetual Calendar 1925 (<http://www5a.biglobe.ne.jp/~accent/calendar/D.htm>)

CONCLUSION:

A worthwhile collection of digitally stored documents is available to complement hard copies of the two primary publications and the text above.

By Commission for Natalie Jaffe of City Coins, Cape Town

Friday, 14 March 2014

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²⁵ It is interesting to note the inaccuracies reflected in various sources relating to the activities of H.R.H the Prince of Wales during this tour. For those interested, the following files contain comprehensive archival records relating thereto:

KAB 3/CT 4/1/4/198 [D 339/4 complete programme];

KAB 3/CT 4/1/4/199 [D 361/4 Cycle Track Reception];

"The Prince of Wales' African book; a pictorial record of the journey to West Africa, South Africa and South America" Author: Arthur St. John Adcock (1864-1930) Publisher: Hodder & Stoughton, 1926 (COPAC). Oft quoted, this is a book of "broad brushstrokes" rather than a detailed worthwhile history.