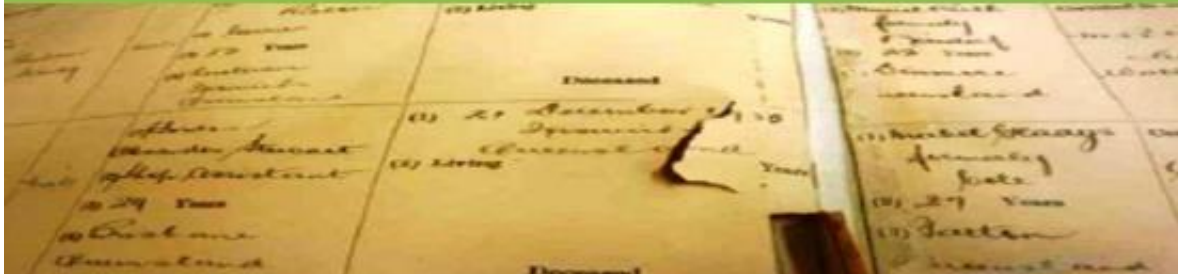


BDM Family History Journal

Edition 7



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Welcome to the seventh edition of the Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages (RBDM) Family History Journal. We are really happy that so many of you are willing to share your stories in the Journal. Your story contributions are welcomed by the editorial team so please keep them coming!

In this edition we feature a story from ABC journalist Ian Townsend about a mostly unknown Queensland tragedy – the deadliest cyclone in recorded Australian history, Cyclone Mahina which killed nearly 300 people at Bathurst Bay in 1899.

Carolyn Timms, a subscriber from the UK shares her search for information about her Great Grandfather, William Patchett Barker, and the Queensland State Archives tell us about their research into WWI soldier Corporal Hubert Ebenezer Sizer.

I encourage you to distribute the newsletter to your networks, family and friends and [subscribe](#) to receive future editions.

As the sole agency responsible for recording, storing and administering life event records in Queensland, RBDM is the custodian of Queensland's family history. Whether you're an amateur historian researching your family tree or a professional genealogist, we want to make it as easy as possible for you to access the information you need from our archives.

David John
Registrar General

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Queensland disaster uncovered - Cyclone Mahina



A Queensland natural disaster that caused more deaths on a single day than any other recorded in this country, Cyclone Mahina struck in 1899 and laid waste the area around Bathurst Bay, Far North Queensland. Nearly 300 died in this tragic event with a tidal surge that travelled more than "5 miles inland". Read about this terrible forgotten tragedy.

[Read More](#)



The mystery of William Patchett Barker

A reader from the UK tells about her research exploits to find out about her Great Grandfather, William Patchett Barker. Interesting to see the resources used and the information discovered.

[Read More](#)



Certificates or images?

Should you buy a certificate or an image? What's the difference? These questions and more answered in this article to help you decide which option is right for you.

[Read More](#)

One more soldier found



A story from Queensland State Archives about a mysterious name that kept cropping up. The staff at the Archives decided to put their research methods into practice and track this man down.

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Queensland
Government

A Queensland disaster uncovered - Cyclone Mahina

Story by Ian Townsend

On Saturday the 4th of March 1899, hundreds of men in more than 40 wooden pearling boats gathered in Bathurst Bay on the eastern side of Cape York Peninsula, looking forward to a day off at the end of their working week.



Left: Edwin 'Gongie' Munro seen here on the *Crest of the Wave*, was one of the few to make it out of Bathurst Bay alive.

Source: unknown

Around 100 vessels belonging to the Thursday Island pearling fleets were scattered around the reefs and islands of the greater Princess Charlotte Bay and Cape Melville area fishing for pearl shell. The crews of men were from 26 different countries and had an average age of 28. They'd spent the week diving for shell, and Saturday was the day the luggers, each with a crew of about eight, were required to return to the larger company schooners to offload their catch and take on provisions. To make this easier, three of the pearling fleets were gathered in Bathurst Bay, which was sheltered from the prevailing south-easterly wind by the black hills of Cape Melville.



Above: Pearling luggers at Thursday Island date unknown
Picture courtesy of the State Library of Queensland

The men were looking forward to a party that night, but as the day wore on, the weather turned dirty. In the evening, ships' barometers fell alarmingly. A storm was coming.

By midnight the wind had reached hurricane force and just before five in the morning the eye of a cyclone named Mahina passed over Bathurst Bay. The vessels that had survived to witness the eerie calm in the eye of the cyclone were smashed against a lee shore when the wind came from the opposite direction. Every vessel in Bathurst Bay but one, the schooner *Crest of the Wave*, sank or was wrecked on the beach. Nearly 300 people drowned.



Above: The *Crest Of The Wave* battles through Cyclone Mahina in a painting by an unknown artist.

It was Australia's deadliest cyclone, producing the highest death toll recorded in any single day in Queensland, but there has been little recognition of the many foreign, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men who died in this disaster. The two main memorials to the disaster name the white men who died, and then acknowledge "295 coloured men" (on the Thursday Island memorial) and "over 300 coloured men" drowned (on the memorial that still stands in Bathurst Bay). Remarkably, the Queensland Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages does record the names, ages and nationalities of most but not all, of those who died.



The memorial stone at Cape Melville

Picture courtesy of sytimeout

In 2006, as the John Oxley Library Fellow researching the 1899 pearling fleet disaster for what was to become my novel, *The Devil's Eye*, I was granted special permission to view the Registry's records in person. Combining the names I found with names from several other sources, and cross referencing them, I produced a list of 282 recorded deaths associated with Cyclone Mahina. That list was published in 2008 in the back of my book.

The Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages is now helping to check and update that list, as part of a research project into the cyclone being conducted through the University of Queensland's School of Historical and Philosophical Inquiry.

Since 1899, several lists have been published naming the members of the pearling fleets killed in the cyclone. In September 1899, the Queensland Marine Department published the first list with 247 names. The trouble with this list is that the names are spelt differently to the other lists of the dead. If you're a researcher of family history, you will probably have come across different records recording different spellings of names.

One of the reasons why names are misspelt, and why details can vary between documents that use the same source, is that handwriting is often hard to read. Even at the time, people had trouble reading each other's writing. The existing documents that record the death toll from the pearling fleet

disaster illustrate that problem. For instance, the Marine Department in 1899 records the death of a man named Charley Brain. The Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages records Charley Brown, a 30 year old man from Singapore who worked for the fleet of the schooner *Sagitta*. Other sources identify Charley Brown as a sailor on a lugger called *Zoe*, which was part of the *Sagitta*'s fleet. The *Zoe* was wrecked around midnight, and the crew saved themselves by jumping onto rocks before the *Zoe* broke up. Charley Brown couldn't swim, and was the only man from the *Zoe* to drown.



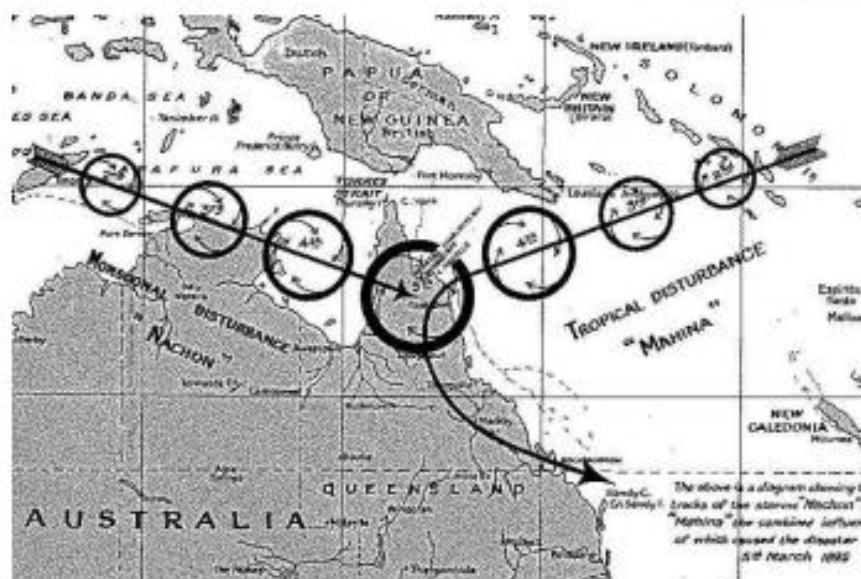
Left: Wreckage of the *Zanon* washed up on the beach at Cape Melville

Picture courtesy of the National Library of Australia

Somewhere along the line, an "a" was mistaken for the "o" in Brown, and an "l" for the "w". Charley Brain and Charley Brown are the same person, but was that really his name? We'll never know for sure, but the records of the Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriage provide the best evidence of what name he used when he was employed as a pearler. The Registry identifies who provided the information, and you can see the handwriting of the registrar who wrote the name down in June 1899. The Marine Department's report, on the other hand, was typed from a source we can't yet confirm.

Mistakes are made when people interpret what other people have said or have written. Reading the handwriting of that period can be a challenge. It's the reason why the Registry now provides researchers with the choice of certificates or images with images of the original handwriting. If you order a death image, you can make up your own mind.

It's important to also understand the process by which the original and unique records kept by the Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages were made. For instance, Charley Brown's death was reported by his employer, Percival Pitman Outridge, to the Cooktown Registrar, Arthur Dean. Mr Dean's job was to make two handwritten copies. He sent one to Brisbane and kept one in Cooktown.



Above: This map, taken from the book *"The PEARLING Disaster, 1899: a Memorial"* shows how Cyclone Mahina intensified into a category 5 cyclone as it headed toward the Queensland coast,

where it met Monsoonal Disturbance named Nachon.
Picture courtesy of the National Library of Australia.

Several years ago, the copies kept in Cooktown were all sent to the Queensland State Archives. Before that happened, a Cooktown historian copied the names of those killed in the cyclone and published them in a small booklet. 239 names were deciphered from Arthur Dean's handwriting. Comparing that published list with the original register from which it was taken, as well as the second copy of that register held by Births Deaths and Marriages, it's clear many names have been transcribed with small errors. Often, it's a "g" mistaken for a "q", or an "r" for an "s", or an "n" for an "m".

I have compared three lists of dead and many names have three different spellings. Theodora Tuason was a 32 year old Filipino diver from the lugger *Carrie* who drowned in the cyclone. His name appears in the transcribed and published version of the Cooktown register of deaths as Tulson. The Marine Department records the name as Thedor Tuxan. The 1899 Cooktown Registrar Arthur Dean, in the Cooktown and Brisbane death registers, records the name as Tuason. Tuason is a family name with a particular history associated with the Philippines, so it's likely that the original Births, Deaths and Marriages record is the more accurate. We may never know for certain, but what is important here is the best evidence and an acknowledgment of the source for that evidence.



WINDY ISLAND, TORRES STRAIT. All the boats in the picture were lost in the storm.

Above: Pearling Luggers anchored at Goode Island. All were destroyed during the cyclone. Picture from the book *The Pearling Disaster, 1889: A Memorial*.
Courtesy of the National Library of Australia.

Unfortunately, other people who died in the cyclone do not have death registrations. Many were Torres Strait Islanders and Aboriginal people, as well as people who were fishing illegally in the area at the time. It was estimated by one of the pearling fleet owners, Percival Pitman Outridge, that approximately 30 people who were not on ships articles were killed during the cyclone. No-one reported their deaths to the Registrar, and so they were not recorded. A study of the registered deaths, as well as many other documents, so far shows evidence for 283 deaths attributable to the cyclone, including the nearly 250 registered pearlers who drowned and eight aboriginal people who died ashore. (In 1971, Queensland writer Hector Holthouse wrote that 100 Aboriginal people died, and this figure has since been repeated, but no evidence has yet been found to support that figure. Dr Walter Roth, the Northern Protector of Aboriginals who went to the scene with interpreters after the cyclone, asked the local people at Cape Melville, Bathurst Bay and Flinders Island who had died. They reported eight dead.)

The research into this event continues, however, and a list of names and a reconstruction of the event, based on the best evidence, will be published when the research is complete.

Footnote - Ian Townsend is a Brisbane journalist and author and is researching the pearling fleet disaster of 1889 as part of a PhD at the University of Queensland. He has published two historical novels, *Affection*, based on the 1900 outbreak of plague in Queensland, and *The Devil's Eye*, based on Cyclone Mahina.

The story of William Patchett Barker

Story by Carolyn Timms

My name is Carolyn Timms and I live in the UK. This is a story about my Great Grandparents William Patchett Barker, his wife Mary, their children and Mary's brother, Walter Uttley Schofield. William owned or part-owned a mine called "Barker's Luck" in Australia in the 1870s but something mysterious and untoward happened at the mine and Great Grandpa died. As with most family stories we were left guessing as to what really happened but, now with the availability of online historical records I have been able to unravel some of the true story.

The Barker family was from Bramley, a suburb of Leeds, in West Yorkshire. William seems to have been a restless soul, at various times an inn keeper, a tea dealer and a grocer amongst other types of employment. Apparently other family members had already emigrated (I'm still looking for these records) and this was why the family journeyed to Australia.

A chance search on the internet revealed a broad range of information available from various Queensland Government, sites not to mention the superb photographs at the State Library of Queensland. Here was the start I needed to find more pieces of my jigsaw. Success! A search of some shipping manifests that matched with some family documents revealed the family sailed from London to migrate to Queensland on the 4th of November 1871 in a 2nd class cabin as passengers on the *Storm King*. After 3 months of sailing they arrived on the 9th of February 1872 in Moreton Bay.



Above: The *Storm King* 1900-ca. 1954 Picture by Allan C. Green 1878-1954 courtesy of the Victorian State Government.

From my research I knew that William and Mary's fourth child was born in Queensland in 1872. Her birth certificate shows them living in Milton, Brisbane where William's occupation was recorded as Mariner. By 1873 the family had moved to Paddock Swamp near Stanthorpe - which came into being after the discovery of tin at Quart Pot creek in 1872. The Barkers may have also been in the area at the time as one of the witnesses on William's death inquest certificate was Alexander Ross, another miner, who I understand was also instrumental in finding tin at Stanthorpe.



Left: Alexander "Sandy" Ross, witness at William's funeral and inquest. Mr Ross came to Australia at the age of 3 and became a miner at Paddock Swamp, in the Stanthorpe area. He later selected land in that area.

Picture courtesy of the State Library of Queensland.

The family appeared to have liked Australia. Mary's letter home says that daughter Kate (8 years old) "is very fond of this land she says she does not want to come back to England. She is very happy here and all the children are. It is a fine place for them. The land here is good and there is plenty of it". I have been told that Mary cultivated vegetables on the land and sent them to Stanthorpe. Mary said in her letters to her father "if you do not receive my letters it is not because I do not write, but we are far from a posting town and not always certain the letters are posted by the men we give them too". Also, "I should enjoy going to church with you all again. I have never been since we left Brisbane and we are now 7 miles from one and there is not much chance of it while we are here". Her brother Walter Schofield stayed with them, having come from Mt Perry, another mining town in Queensland about 500 kilometres away from Stanthorpe mainly notable for its copper production. Labour at Mt Perry was scarce with miners receiving the princely wage of £3 per week.



Left: Miners working at St Leonards Tin Mine, Sugarloaf Creek near Stanthorpe ca 1873.

Photograph by William Boag.
Courtesy of State Library of Queensland.

William's letters home mention floods preventing him working, and as the tin was alluvial and mined in the creeks around Stanthorpe this would make sense. He also wrote that he had "30 Chinamen on the ground at present". (Apparently, in 1873 a protest meeting was held in Stanthorpe at the arrival of 100 Chinese miners on the diggings). The Chinese were indentured for 5 years and worked 6 days a week, 9.5 hours a day and were paid the equivalent of \$7 a month. The European miners were not happy because the Chinese miners willingly worked on alluvial deposits where the locals had already lost money or given up hope of finding tin at that site.



Above: Tin miners with sluice boxes in the Stanthorpe district ca 1872. Picture by William Boag courtesy of the State Library of Queensland.



Above: A Chinese tin miner ca 1874. Picture courtesy of the Queensland State Library.

Back to Great Grandpa. I had previously obtained his death certificate plus the Coroner's report (both were available online) and when the package arrived the report was chunky. I felt sure that the mystery of what happened to Great Grandpa at the mine was about to be solved. The death certificate showed the family living at Paddock Swamp (now called Eukey). And the coroner's report? This revealed events over the last week of William's life.

1289	15 September 1873	William Patchett Barker	male	(1) Passion of blood in the brain (2) a few days (3) Joseph T. Boyd to 2 (4) 15 th September	Annand Patchett Barker and Marcella Patchett	Mary Betty Barker Widow Paddock Swamp Stanthorpe
	29 th Paddock Swamp Stanthorpe	Maria	34 years			
(1) Rev Peter	16 th September 1873	Rev J. Wickham	Bramley Lead England	(1) Leads Foyland	Living Kate 1 year	
(2) 26 th September 1873	Stanthorpe	Church of England		(2) 35 years	Henry Schofield Stanthorpe 2-	
(3) Stanthorpe	Denis Conroy Alexander Ross	Walter Schofield	3 years 6 months	(3) Mary Betty Schofield	Mary Maude 1-	

Above: The left and right pages of William Patchett Barkers record in RBDM's death register.

I was told that a dispute arose between William and others at the mine and William is reputed to have been hit on the head by a person or persons unknown and killed. The killer or killers subsequently fled and the mystery left unsolved. But another version of the story implicates William in a fracas at the mine with several others who were unidentified. William was just 34 years old when he died and the family had only been in Australia for 2 years and 6 months. Their eldest child was 8 years old, the youngest only 1, but of most concern was the fact that Mary was pregnant again. She would call this child William Patchett Barker after his father (father listed in the birth register as "Deceased" and occupation "Seaman"), but in a tragic twist of fate, William the son died young serving in the British army in India.

But what did the coroner's report say? On the first page, under the heading "Suspicious Circumstances", it said "none"! Under "Accused" it said "none"! The report contains witness statements from various people, each describing their part in William's last week. Mary can never have imagined that over 100 years later, we would be following in her anxiety and the drama of William's last days. Mary's statement says William "complained to me that he felt very weak, he complained of his head and his eyes aching, he seemed better on Tuesday morning and went to his work in the bush and returned home about 11am the same day. He then complained of being very sick, he said he could not explain it to me as his head and eyes were so bad. He remained at home the remainder of the day. On Wednesday morning he told me he was unable to sleep the whole night."

The doctor was sent for and the chemist, Mr Davidson, sent a "powder" for William. "My husband began to ramble and showed symptoms of being delirious. He then requested me to bring the baby (Mary) to him. He blessed the baby and then said take her away. He never spoke from the time I took the baby from him up to the time he died. From 12 o'clock noon (Saturday), a change came over his features and he appeared to be dying and died at 3 o'clock the same day."



Left: J. Davidson the Chemist posing in front of his premises, Stanthorpe Dispensary.

Photo by William Boag courtesy of the State Library of Queensland.

John Andres, a shepherd who visited William stated in the coroner's report "Mrs Barker told me to go for the doctor as fast as the horse would carry me. I went to meet the doctor on the road and returned with him. About a quarter of an hour afterwards, Mrs Barker came out and said my husband is dying." Also in the coroner's report John Davidson, the chemist in Stanthorpe describes the medicine he supplied as Hydrates of choral(1), Chlorite of Potash(2), Muriatic Acid(3) and Nitric Acid. Joseph Thomas Begge, the medical practitioner recorded William's death as caused by "pressure of blood on the brain, which might have been caused by a fall on his head, excessive drink, or great excitement".

Despite the report, it's still a mystery as to the exact circumstances surrounding Great Grandpas demise and whether anything untoward did happen at the mine.

A UK doctor provided me with some information about post mortem examinations in the late 1800's and said they were often quite good from an anatomical point of view and probably correctly identified the areas of the brain leading to pressure. He was not sure if they were sufficiently knowledgeable to deduce how long the bleeding and fluid compression might have been pressing on the brain before death. However, if William had had cerebral bleeding some time back, the doctor thought his general functions would have been severely impaired with difficulty with vision, giddiness etc and unlikely to have been capable of heavy mining type work.

William's death was sufficiently noteworthy to be reported in the local paper *The Border Post* (unfortunately not yet online). Oddly, the article also extolled the virtues of having life insurance! On 2nd October 1873 a letter from a W.H. Groom in the *Border Post* gives "an impassioned plea for money to help the "poor woman" penniless, and to make matters worse, the youngest child is only 16 months old, and she is again *enceinte*(4). Let me now appeal, sir, through the columns of your paper, to the benevolently disposed of Stanthorpe, to come forward and liberally help a distressed mother and her little ones. What is their fate to-day may be ours to-morrow". I don't know what the response to this letter was.



Above: Offices of the Border Post and Stannum Miner, near the corner of Maryland and Folkstone Street, Stanthorpe 1872.

Picture by William Boag courtesy of the State Library of Queensland.



Above: William Henry Groom (1833-1901)

Australian Politician, publicist, hotel proprietor, shop owner and newspaper editor and owner. He was convicted for stealing at the Plymouth Quarter Sessions in England in 1846 and sentenced to 7 years transportation.

Picture by Paul C Poulsen courtesy of the National Library of Australia.

Mary's last child, William Patchett Barker was born in Albert Street, Brisbane on 15 May 1874. What Mary did between the death of William in September 1873 and the birth of William Patchett in May 1874 is unknown but Mary returned to England before 1881. She was going to return to Australia, but the family bought her a confectioner's business, so she remained in England. William left no will, but the Letter of Administration in the UK says his effects were under £200. A notice of his death appeared in a Leeds newspaper.



Left: Albert Street, Brisbane ca.1883.

Picture courtesy of the State Library of Queensland.

What of Walter Uttley Schofield, Mary's brother? I found no trace of him in English death or marriage records nor as such, in Australia. However, the Queensland records list a Walter Atley Schofield aged about 40, who died of drowning in 1882 at Rocky Water Holes. Could this be Walter listed under the wrong name? The death certificate shows him as a surveyor and says he was from Leeds, having lived in Australia for about 11 years. I cannot positively prove this is Mary's brother, but these 2 men are very similar. If it is Walter, I wonder if the family ever knew what had happened to him, and am I the first family member to view his grave (online) at Toowong cemetery?

My search continues.....

Notes:

1. Hydrates of Choral - It has limited use as a sedative and hypnotic pharmaceutical drug (Wikipedia)
2. Chlorite of Potash (Potassium chlorate) - as an oxidizing agent, to prepare oxygen, as a disinfectant. (Wikipedia)
3. Muriatic Acid (Hydrochloric Acid)
4. Enceinte is also an archaic euphemism for "pregnant" (Wikipedia)

Do you have a rich past? Find out with just [one search](#)

Historical Certificates and Images - RBDM's point of view

Story by Mike Vitobello

In 2012 as a way of ensuring their preservation, RBDM embarked on the rather large task of digitising all of our historical birth, death and marriage records. A very welcome result of this project was the creation of digital images, which are an exact scan of the handwritten registration as recorded at the time.

At a cost of \$20 per image, these can only be purchased online through BDM's family history search facility. The benefit of buying an image is the entire transaction can be completed online – search, select, buy, download and save your image/s immediately. This feature represents a major benefit to family historians and genealogists both in Australia and overseas to enable them to get on with their research right away without having to wait for a certificate to be delivered.

We originally planned to release this service in its entirety at the conclusion of the digitisation project (mid-2015). Due to popular demand and the existence of the images being the worst kept secret, we decided to launch on Queensland Day, 6 June 2013. The service proved to be an enormous success and continues to receive great support. Granted, it had a couple of minor teething problems but these were quickly rectified and we are now receiving volumes of positive feedback, which I'll fill you in on later.

The project is soon to end and the objective to have a register image (where available) for each historical record has been achieved. There are currently more than 1.9 million images available to order with more becoming available at the beginning of each year. It should be noted that death records after 1979 will not have an image attached. That's because there is no legal requirement to retain original death documentation after 10 years has elapsed. Currently, researchers wanting a record of a death event after 1979 will need to buy a historical certificate. All the event information is contained in our database and will appear on the certificate. Births and marriages are a different story and images will be available for these events for some time to come.

I carried out some interesting research by calling some customers recently as I was intrigued why a customer would buy a certificate when an image was available for the same record. First of all let's look at the difference between a certificate and an image. Detailed below is the marriage record of Edward Griffiths and Annie Brooks in Townsville on 22 December 1890.

Seen below is the scanned register image of the event. If you ordered the image, this is what you would receive in PDF format.



Above: Marriage register image 1890/2208

If you order a certificate of this event, one of our registry officers will transcribe the information into a database that produces the certificate, which looks like this. Note that there is no additional information provided with the certificate, it is just displayed differently.

Queensland		MARRIAGE CERTIFICATE	
Date of marriage ... 22 October 1890 ... at ...			
Name of bride ...		Name of groom ...	
Residence ...		Residence ...	
Profession ...		Profession ...	
Age ...		Age ...	
Place of birth ...		Place of birth ...	
Parents ...		Parents ...	
Maiden name ...		Maiden name ...	
Signature of Registrar ...		Signature of Registrar ...	
Date of issue ...		Date of issue ...	
District registration number ...		District registration number ...	
Brisbane registry record number ...		Brisbane registry record number ...	

Above: Marriage certificate 1890/2208

What would be the advantage of ordering an image over a certificate?

Here's a few, maybe you can identify with some of them...maybe there are more:

- An image is cheaper. Images cost \$20 compared to \$28 for a certificate.
- You get access to an image as soon as it's been paid for. You will have to wait for up to a week or more to receive a certificate in the post.
- You can see the original handwriting of the registry entry on an image. For a lot of family historians this is one of the most important factors.
- You can enlarge an image to as big as you want to see the smallest of details. Sometimes important when deciphering handwriting.
- You can print out the image or save it on your device for later viewing or reference.

That being said, some customers do prefer a certificate for sentimental reasons like compiling a family album or scrapbook.

Let's have a look at some tricky images.

Mr Francis Robert Chester-Master presided as the Registrar in Rockhampton during the late 1890's. An article in the 18 October 1894 evening edition of *The Telegraph* reports of his appointment as the Registrar of the Rockhampton and Westwood districts registry. Research reveals he was born in Geneva, Switzerland on 18 May 1826, and he died in Rockhampton at the age of 86 years on 21 February 1913, occupation recorded as retired Public Servant. The interesting thing about this Registrar was his handwriting. His writing style has caused much head scratching and chewed pencil ends by RBDM document production staff trying to decipher his words.

Seen below is an image of an 1899 marriage record (in two halves), note the date in the right hand margin. This indicates that a certificate was created on this date. Also note the two registration numbers, one number in the left hand column recorded the district registration number. The red number in the left hand margin represented the Brisbane registry record number.



Above: A Marriage registered at the Rockhampton registry by F.R. Chester-Master in 1890

Let's look at an image of an 1899 birth record Mr C's writing hasn't become any more legible.



Above: A Birth registered at the Rockhampton registry by F.R. Chester-Master in 1899

Finally, let's look at an image of an 1899 death



Above: A death registered at the Rockhampton registry by F.R. Chester-Master in 1899.

In this death record we can see that Mr C has only contributed his name on the page header, the "Death" column details, and signed the entry. Why he only completed these sections is unknown.

So back to certificates versus images. If registry staff were to interpret some of the above handwriting there could well be the possibility of an inadvertent transcription error. Simply because the person has no idea of the specific information being sought. Most of the researchers I have spoken with seem to have a fairly sure idea of the information they are looking for and seeing an image of the handwritten entry will usually confirm their suspicions. Funnily enough, having an idea of the information you want and seeing the written information can sometimes trigger recognition, even though it may be undecipherable to another person.

A few quick snippets of information that may help in your decision about what record to buy.

There is plenty of information in the family history section of the [BDM website](#), so make sure you take a look.

Family history research

- Search records online
- Search historical images
- Search historical certificates
- Download your bought images
- Information and how to access records
- How to order historical records

Information and how to access records

Information we hold

all about what birth, death and marriage information we hold

Information you can access

information that is available on the family history records online

Archived records online

Read about how we are moving all the archive records online

Family history journal

Sign up to the family history newsletter and keep up-to-date with news, happening with indexes, births, deaths and marriage records in Queensland

Family history research codes

Index registration number prefixes and codes and what they mean

Searching our historical records - tips and tips

Tips and tips to help you find records with the Queensland Historical Index search facility

Help when ordering historical records online

Help with the process of ordering records online, refunds and downloading purchased images

You can see examples of the different products on the search results page after you have conducted your search.

 **Success! Your search has produced results**

You can now order a Certificate or a Historical Image (if available). Click on the examples below for more detail


Certificate


Poppies


Soldier


Historical Image

Order Historical Certificates for \$28 each and Historical Images for \$20 each.

There are product descriptions of certificates and images on the order page. Click on the link "Product description" next to the order quantity box.

Order

You can now order product(s) for the DEATH record of: 1910/B12120: John Smith

Product	Unit Price	Quantity	
Historical Death Certificate	28.00	<input type="text" value="0"/>	Product description
Commemorative ANZAC Death Certificate, Poppies	28.00	<input type="text" value="0"/>	Product description
Commemorative ANZAC Death Certificate, Soldier	28.00	<input type="text" value="0"/>	Product description
Historical Death Image	20.00	<input type="text" value="1"/>	Product description

If there is an image available for your record you will note that a quantity of "1" already appears in the order box for the Historical Image.

Remember that you can get access to your image immediately after payment. You can access your image anytime for 14 days after payment. A certificate may take a week or more to arrive in the post.

If still unsure, there is a detailed description to help you order online on our [website](#).

Above all, we wish you the best of endeavours with your [family history research](#).

One more soldier found - Corporal Hubert Ebenezer Sizer MLA

Story by Queensland State Archives

In the course of creating the workshop and seminar on how to find your First World War Soldier, Queensland State Archives staff regularly came across references to Corporal Hubert Ebenezer Sizer, as he was mentioned frequently in newspapers of the time. With our curiosity stirred, we wanted to find out who this Corporal Sizer was and whether there were any records about him in our collection.

A quick look through the State Archives catalogue came up with this rather nice photograph of Hubert. We then followed our own advice on how to research a First World War soldier and came up with some interesting facts on Hubert's life, as well as further records in our collection, records from the Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages, National Archives and the Australian War Memorial, to name a few.



Left: Portrait of Hubert Ebenezer Sizer

Picture courtesy of the Queensland State Archives

Hubert Ebenezer Sizer was born in Cambridge, England in 1893. In 1911 the family migrated to Melbourne where Sizer joined *The Age* newspaper. Later that year he transferred to the *Daily Mail* in Brisbane and was involved in the formation of the Queensland branch of the Australian Journalists' Association.



Left: Offices of the Daily Mail in Queen St, Brisbane ca 1930.

Founded by the Buzacott family and merged with *Brisbane Courier* in August 1933 to form the *Courier Mail*.

Picture courtesy of the State Library of Queensland.

At the time of his enlistment in 1914, Hubert lived with his parents Ebenezer and Harriet Sizer at Constitution Road, Wilston. He was 21 years old. He enlisted at the Enoggera Army camp on 24 September 1914 as a Private in the 3rd Infantry Brigade, 9th Battalion, D Company, and later embarked on the *Omrah* for Gallipoli. His attestation papers list his occupation at the time as 'contractor'.



Above: Soldiers at the Enoggera Army Barracks 1914.
Picture courtesy of the State Library of Queensland

Hubert was relatively lucky in that he was never physically injured during his time in Gallipoli; however he didn't come away from the campaign unscathed. In late August 1915 he was admitted to the No 1 Australian Station Hospital on Lemnos Island – like many soldiers – with dysentery.

After his involvement in the capture of some Turkish guns, Hubert was promoted to the rank of Corporal on 3 July 1915. He returned to Australia on the *Ascanasius* on 17 March 1916 and was given a medical discharge on 16 June 1916, as he was suffering from exophthalmic goitre (otherwise known as Grave's disease). His return was posted in List 89 'Returned Soldiers' in local newspapers.

Back in Australia, Hubert supported the conscription campaigns of W. M. Hughes and traversed Queensland addressing recruiting rallies. Presiding over the formation of the Returned Soldiers and Patriots' League, he opposed the anti-conscriptionist stance of the TJ Ryan Labour government.

In 1917 Hubert married Florence Jane Sturgiss (who died in 1920) then later Ruby Ann Hawkins in 1923. He entered politics in 1918 and served in the Queensland Legislative Assembly representing Nundah until 1923 and Sandgate until 1935. He was a member of the Nationalist Party, the United Party of Queensland, and then the Country and Progressive National Party. Hubert was instrumental in the initiation and establishment of the Queensland Bureau of Economics and Statistics, making the first public announcement of the establishment of the bureau at the Australian Federated Institute of Accountants on 4 July 1929.

Notes found in QSA archives state that Hubert was 'amongst [the] reinforce[ments] to land at [the] Dardanelles'.

Other records at QSA reveal that Hubert's military details were recorded in the Windsor Honour Roll, so his name could later be included on the Windsor War Memorial.

NAME	AGE	RESIDENCE	STATUS
Hubert Ebenezer Sizer	46	Windsor, Queensland	Returned Soldier
John Sizer	44	Windsor, Queensland	Returned Soldier
William Sizer	42	Windsor, Queensland	Returned Soldier
James Sizer	40	Windsor, Queensland	Returned Soldier
Robert Sizer	38	Windsor, Queensland	Returned Soldier
Thomas Sizer	36	Windsor, Queensland	Returned Soldier
Charles Sizer	34	Windsor, Queensland	Returned Soldier
Edmund Sizer	32	Windsor, Queensland	Returned Soldier
Frederick Sizer	30	Windsor, Queensland	Returned Soldier
George Sizer	28	Windsor, Queensland	Returned Soldier
Harold Sizer	26	Windsor, Queensland	Returned Soldier
Alfred Sizer	24	Windsor, Queensland	Returned Soldier
Arthur Sizer	22	Windsor, Queensland	Returned Soldier
Hubert Ebenezer Sizer	20	Windsor, Queensland	Returned Soldier
John Sizer	18	Windsor, Queensland	Returned Soldier
William Sizer	16	Windsor, Queensland	Returned Soldier
James Sizer	14	Windsor, Queensland	Returned Soldier
Robert Sizer	12	Windsor, Queensland	Returned Soldier
Thomas Sizer	10	Windsor, Queensland	Returned Soldier
Charles Sizer	8	Windsor, Queensland	Returned Soldier
Edmund Sizer	6	Windsor, Queensland	Returned Soldier
Frederick Sizer	4	Windsor, Queensland	Returned Soldier
George Sizer	2	Windsor, Queensland	Returned Soldier

Above: An excerpt from [Windsor Honour Roll](#), 1915-1919 showing Hubert's details for inclusion on the Windsor War Memorial. Picture courtesy of Queensland State Archives



Left: Windsor War Memorial park

Picture courtesy of Our Brisbane

Second World War military records indicate that the Sizer family was living in Victoria, as both Hubert's sons Jack (born 1920) and William (born 1926) enlisted in Victoria to serve in the Second AIF and RAAF respectively.

During the latter years of his life, due to business and family interests, Hubert had residences in Melbourne and Herston, Brisbane. It was in this period of his life that Hubert decided to write his memoirs, as is evidenced by his correspondence with the Department of Industrial Affairs included in [departmental correspondence](#) held at QSA. Hubert maintained his life-long interest in economics and industrial affairs, particularly in Queensland.

[Hubert's Intestacy file](#) tells us that on 4 May 1973 he died aged 79 from a heart attack. He was a retired company director residing at his son William's property *Romseyvale* in Murrindindi Victoria. His wife Ruby had died sometime before. Hubert was survived by his three sons, Jack, William and Peter and his daughter, Jill. Hubert's will shows that he provided for his children and Ruby's sister Enid Ort

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