

THE WORTHY WIDOW & DUNMORE HOUSE

ANNE FULLER

Back in 1988 when I extracted from the *Register of Immigrants Arriving in New South Wales on Government Vessels* those persons engaged to work in Illawarra (1) I was unaware that the Anne Fuller described as a shopkeeper and widow who disembarked from the *North Briton/Britain* in January 1840 with three boys and three girls was the progenitor of a number of worthy Australians including Sir George Warburton Fuller, member of the first Federal Parliament and Minister for Home Affairs from 1909 - 1913 and later, from 1922 to 1925, Premier of N.S.W. and Lt. Col. Colin Dunmore Fuller, D.S.O. who served in the first World War. Other descendants were Brian Cecil Fuller, QC and his son Hon. John Brian Munro Fuller, MLC. On the death of George Laurence Fuller in 1917 *Dunmore* was inherited by Colin Dunmore Fuller who sold it in 1949.

In 1839 Anne Fuller, born Woodford, Ireland, her husband William (described on his daughter Elizabeth's shipping record as a shoemaker but on the list of deaths on board as a ploughman, while on Thomas John's second marriage certificate he is listed as a clerk) and seven children left their home *Dunmore* (2), Co. Galway and made their way to Dublin to board the *North Briton* for Australia.

The records (3) show us that Anne was brought out by the Government and that she was the daughter of Thomas Murphy an officer in the Army and Sarah Connolly his wife. She was 33 and could read and write.

What a heart breaker the ensuing four month trip was to be. Anne must have been thoroughly glad when it was all over. Firstly she suffered a miscarriage shortly after sailing, this was followed on 27 November 1839 by the death of William from typhus and, finally, when in quarantine in Sydney, by the death of the two year old

Charlotte from atrophy [emaciation].

Someone, presumably Anne, had to come to a quick decision as to how she was going to cope. Reluctantly she decided that she would have to dispose of the younger children to orphanages so Thomas John (13), William (10) and George Laurance (7) were despatched to the Male Orphan School at Liverpool while the younger girls, went to Parramatta. The eldest girl, Elizabeth aged 15, a child's maid is shown on the records as an Unmarried Female [i.e. as an individual not as a member of a family]. She could read and write and is shown as from Woodfort, Roscommon???. She was engaged by Mr. Thos Bell of Windsor for the magnificent sum of £8 per annum.

Anne herself came to Wollongong setting up a bakery here. Return No: 103 of the 1841 Census (Illawarra) taken in March shows Anne living in Corrimal Street in a house owned by Davidson. Possibly this was Robert Davison also of Corrimal Street. The two youngest boys and the three girls appear to be back with her by this time. Thomas had probably found himself employment.

In *Old Pioneer's Reminiscences of Illawarra* (4) Albert Organ tells the story of the hungry convicts who rushed Mrs. Fuller's bread cart as it made it's way up Flagstaff Hill to the Stockade.

Anne's shop in Wollongong became a stepping stone to others in Kiama and Gerringong (5).

You might ask "What has this all got to do with *Dunmore House?*" Well, *Dunmore House*, that lovely old home on the hill on the Western side of the Princes Highway between what we used to know as the Shellharbour Railway Station and Minnamurra River was built by Anne's son George Laurance Fuller in 1865 as a home for himself and his wife Sarah Cunningham Miller, daughter of Robert Miller and Elizabeth Muir of *Renfrew Park*, Gerringong (6).

Anne Fuller is shown on the NSW Index to Births, Deaths and Marriages as having died at Kiama in 1868. A headstone exists for her in the C/E Section of the Kiama General Cemetery. Please note that the year shown for her death in our transcription(7) of that cemetery should read 1868. Many Fullers are buried in the Kiama Cemetery including Sir George and his wife Ada Louisa nee King. In the same book, note also the Fullers buried in Kendall's Private Cemetery, Mary Cecelia wife of T.J. Fuller and Edwin Surfleet Fuller their son.

Thomas John Fuller marries first Elizabeth Somerset Orde Waldron in 1859 and secondly Mary Cecilia Kendall on 3 September 1874. Young Annie Fuller beat her brother to the punch by marrying George King Waldron on 22 October 1856 while Sarah Jane Fuller marries George Warburton.

I can't help feeling that Anne Fuller and the children she brought up were extremely well thought of by the established families of Illawarra.

(1) See *Illawarra Branches No. 14, March 1988*

(2) The Marks Papers. MSS 3. Wollongong City LLibrary Reference Section.

(3) A.O. Reel 1304. Assisted (Bounty) Immigrants 1839

(4) Illawarra Historical Publications *Old Pioneer's Reminiscences of Illawarra*, Wollongong, 1989 ISBN 0 9588028 2 3

(5) *Marks' Papers*

(6) See MILLER, *Illawarra Pioneers Pre-1900*, Illawarra Family History Group Inc., Wollongong 1988. ISBN 0 9589400 7 X

(7) Illawarra Family History Group *Early Cemeteries of Kiama* Wollongong 1987