

## Swan River Pioneers' Association Breakfast

Presented by Tom Chapman, AM and Sally Grundy

4<sup>th</sup> June 2017

Revised & Updated Edition (30<sup>th</sup> June 2017)

My daughter, Sally, and I are delighted to be here to present to you today a synopsis of our forebear, John Randall Phillips (1789 – 1852). He is my G G Grandfather, and Sally's G G G Grandfather.



*Figure 1: John Randall Phillips Snr*

Our research has established the earliest references to the Phillips family shows that they came from the Bristol area of England, and settled in Barbados in the seventeenth century. We have established that a number of family members were born, married and had their children in Barbados. When I visited, I found plaques and gravestones to various members of the Phillips family in many parish churches and churchyards.

Thomas (1694 - 1748) and Margaret Phillips ( - 1757) were both born and died in Barbados. Their son, John Randall Phillips (1724 – 1773) is listed as a Merchant with the ship “*Britannia*” in Barbados. They were originally involved in the commercial shipping trade, as merchants and traded in tobacco and sugar.

John Randall Phillips was a very wealthy man and his Will demonstrates his bequeathal to a vast number of family members, and also assigns slaves of his to his mother-in-law. Having only one son, George Phillips, he also would have been a wealthy gentleman. This is assumed to be the means by which George's son John Randall Phillips (1789 - 1852) acquired the wealth to emigrate to the Swan River Colony.

One difficulty which arose frequently in our research was the recurrent name ‘John Randall Phillips’.

These families were very involved in the Barbados sugar industry, and one plantation, “Lamberts”, arises for which the Phillips family paid £28,000 in 1800. I have visited the plantation in the northern end of the island, and the original sugar mill still exists, however turned into an entertainment area. We believe the original homestead, which was timber, burnt down and has been replaced with a substantial plantation home. Adjacent to this is a stand of mahogany trees, which are now heritage listed and very slow growing. The original outbuildings, being stables, sheds and storage are there and in good condition. We know that the family also had interests in other plantations on Barbados including “Durants”.



*Figure 2: Remains of Sugar Mill & stand of Mahogany trees, Lamberts Plantation, Barbados*

Amongst the British settlers in Barbados, education was paramount. This entailed the children being sent back to Britain for schooling and university studies. We have tracked many of the family members who became successful doctors, lawyers and merchants, and of course entered the Holy Orders. The Randall Phillips Polyclinic is prominent in Barbados today and responsible for much of the formal education and training in health matters on the island. It is now run by the Government.

Slavery was of course the means of the plantation producing the crops. We have copies of the Wills of the Phillips and related families, which show provision for the plantation slaves in terms of their housing and their children’s education. They were left generous legacies by the Phillips families and other plantation owners at the abolition of slavery.

The aforementioned John Randall Phillips (1724 - 1773) married Isabella Taine at St Michael’s, Barbados, and they had one son, George (1752 – 1845). George married twice. Transcripts of Barbados marriages shows the first marriage of George Phillips to Sarah Lovell in 1781. Records also show the baptism of eight children of George. He had one daughter, Margaret, by first wife Sarah, who later married Rev John Parsons. There was a gap of five years until he had a series of children by Mary Lovell, his second wife whom he married in London.

The published alumni of Oxford University have an entry for George Phillips, son of John, of St Michael, Barbados, who graduated from Oriel College in 1772 aged 19. This suggests that George was born about 1752/3, so was some 18 or 19 years when his parents finally married. In his Will of 25<sup>th</sup> May 1772 his father mentioned that George was in England, so probably still at University. Philip Lovell, Mary’s father, in his Will of 1821 mentioned that George Phillips was then of Turnham Green. This was a hamlet in the parish of Chiswick, Middlesex, so some distance from Bristol.

Our John Randall Phillips was born at St Michael, Barbados on 17<sup>th</sup> December 1789, the son of George and Mary Phillips (nee Lovell). He was one of 7 children born to his parents and was educated in Bristol. George and Mary Phillips returned to Bristol where George ran Redland Hill House, a boarding school attended largely by members of the West Indian families. A copy of a Will of J R Phillips' Aunt by marriage, Elizabeth Lovell, for which probate was granted in June 1830 shows that she bequeathed £1,500 to Phillips. This would have been a great gift to assist him in his pursuits. He also received legacies from other members of his family.



*Figure 3: Redland Hill House*

We do not have details of Phillips' life prior to boarding the ship *Protector* in London, bound for The Swan River Colony in 1829. There were 68 passengers on board the ship with a crew of 20. The ship carried 2 guns and weighed 380 tons. She left St Katherine's Dock on the River Thames in October 1829 and sailed to Australia via the Cape of Good Hope, arriving on 25<sup>th</sup> February 1830.



*Figure 4: Swan River Colony by Mary Ann Friend, 1830. State Library of WA*

J R Phillips arrived in Western Australia having been described on the passenger list as an 'agriculturalist', and had £195 worth of plant and equipment and two letters of credit totaling a further £700. He was accompanied by Martha Jane Smith on the ship, and she was a 21 year old servant. They later married and had their children at the Canning River and Albany.

The Colonial Secretary's records of March 1830 list Phillips as owning stock, machinery, seed and provisions to the value of £430.

The grants on the Canning cost about £3 per acre. The Canning area was one of the first proposed agricultural settlements in the colony as it had fertile soil, an abundance of fresh water and good access for transport on the river. The allotments with river access were restricted due to land accessibility. The alluvial soil near the river was very fertile and the land further from the river was coastal sand plain covered with scrub.

Entitled to an assignment of 2,000 acres, Phillips made an application to the Governor for land and was offered a grant on the Canning River. He had to first work on other person's land and undertake location duties to qualify for the grant and he did this on adjoining grants. He was granted land at Location 14a and 13, totaling approximately 2,000 acres which included land on the river flat and some dry land country behind.

Phillips named his property on the Canning River "Maddington Park" and built a wattle and daub hut from the clay soils around the Canning.

He almost immediately suffered setbacks in his agricultural pursuits when in April 1830, soon after arriving, he lost all his seed and other supplies that he was taking from Fremantle to Canning River when they were burnt in consequence of an Aboriginal burn off. He had to wait until December that year to get replacement seed and stores brought in from overseas.

*The Hobart Town Courier*, 7<sup>th</sup> September, 1832 Pg 2:

The farms on the Swan & Canning, belonging to Messrs Phillips, Youl, Brackman, Ball, Turner, &c, are well conducted, the crops well got in, and the whole exhibiting a neat and farmer like appearance much more in the English style, than the generality of the farms in Van Diemen's land.

The Swan and Canning farmers were contracted on a three monthly basis to provide fresh meat for the troops. Phillips was a contractor from 1832 to 1836.

Phillips bought, sold and leased land in the Canning River area with several transactions over the time that he was there. This included selling Maddington Park in July 1833, to Major William Nairn, upon which he built a magnificent home, Maddington Park Homestead, after purchasing the land from Phillips.



*Figure 5: Maddington Park Homestead*

The original assignee of Maddington Park, absentee landlord, Augustus Hearn Gilbert, arranged for Phillips to do location duties on his property in early 1830. Phillips understood that upon completion of location duties he would be entitled to a half share of the river frontage of Gilbert's assignment. Phillips' original 2,000 acre land grant, December 1830, apparently did not include river frontage but did adjoin Gilbert's land. In October 1831 Gilbert transferred his land to Richard Wardell who in turn requested it be transferred to Major William Nairn. Nairn informed Phillips that he intended occupying Maddington Park. This caused Phillips to enquire about purchasing adjoining land with river frontage. This was not possible and so Phillips decided to sell and move further upstream. He sold his 2,000 acres to Nairn.

In 1833, Phillips moved further up the Canning River to Stoke Farm. It is reported that he established a horse driven flour mill on Stoke Farm. The land was all virgin scrub and was very difficult to clear with only 70 acres of his 2,000 acres under cultivation.

On 1<sup>st</sup> May, 1833 Phillips, three carts and four of his men travelled the five miles to Bull Creek to load provisions and supplies that Phillips had ordered from Fremantle that had been transported by Captain McDermott's boat to Bull Creek. On arrival at the creek about 30 natives approached and appeared to be friendly. The first cart had been loaded and dispatched and one of the natives, Migegaroo, was extremely inquisitive and repeatedly asked how many men were with the first cart. Upon being told there were two men, they instantly made off in the direction of the cart. Once the other carts were loaded they headed off in the direction of the first cart. When about 4 miles from the creek they heard a noise. Phillips immediately rode ahead and discovered Egan (or Yagan) in the act of plunging his spear into the body of one of Phillips' men and jagging it in his wounds.

*The Perth Gazette*, 4<sup>th</sup> May 1833 reports: "Such was the determined ferocity of the blood-thirsty savage, that the body had the appearance of having received upwards of one hundred spear wounds; - other natives Mr Phillips perceived plundering the cart. His firearms being out of order he considered it most prudent to return to the men he had left behind; they unyoked the cattle and rode to the adjoining farms on the Canning for assistance. When re-enforced they returned to the spot and found the body of one of the men in the state we have described, and after searching for a short time, discovered the body of the other man about 200 yards in the bush, where it is presumed he had crawled on hands and knees, he was dead."

As a result of the barbaric murders of Thomas Velvick and his brother John Velvick, the Lieutenant Governor, F C Irwin offered rewards for the capture of three aboriginals, Egan (or Yagan), Midgigooroo and Munday, "dead or alive". A £30 reward was offered for Egan and £20 each for Midgigooroo and Munday. This was the start of considerable problems for the settlers in the Canning River with relations between the Aboriginals and the settlers deteriorating. The local newspaper of the time reported "that Phillips between 1833 and 1839 suffered 15 attacks, mainly on his stock being sheep and goats, but also included 35 turkeys on one occasion and a pony on another". It was reported in *The Perth Gazette* 1838 that Phillips had suffered alone upwards of £4,000 losses at the hands of the Aboriginal raiders.

On 16<sup>th</sup> July 1839, a twelve year old shepherd named John Burtenshaw Cox, in Phillips' employ minding sheep and goats, was murdered by a Nyoongar Aborigine named Men-dik (alias Nic-cola) with a glass spear

near the banks of the Canning River. The shepherd was within 500 yards of the farm and after being speared the natives drove off 17 sheep. The following morning, his Excellency Governor Hutt dispatched a number of parties to intersect the country and discover the haunts of the Aborigines in search of the offenders. Phillips headed a party dispatched from Maddington Farm on the Canning. Other parties were dispatched from Upper Swan, Mahogany Creek, Kelmscott and Murray River. The offenders were not discovered. A five pound reward was offered for Men-dik's apprehension. Over a year later, on 6<sup>th</sup> September, 1841 Men-dik was captured and brought in from the Canning by Mr Edward Hester after parties were sent out in search of the murderer. For several days Men-dik's steps were tracked by Mr Hester and his party until they finally effected his capture and took him to the Perth gaol. Mr Hester was eligible to claim the £5 reward the Government offered for the capture of Men-dik. In his Deposition, Men-dik stated that he had speared the shepherd with a glass spear but had not taken off with any sheep. He did admit to having previously speared and eaten some of Phillips' sheep. Men-dick was tried, sentenced to death, and on 14<sup>th</sup> October, 1841 was executed on the scene of his crime on the Canning River in the presence of 30 interested settlers.

Phillips was speared by the Aborigines in October 1830 whilst clearing some of his land in the south-eastern section of Stoke Farm. A party of eight Nyoongar approached him and speared him because they apparently believed Phillips was destroying their livelihood. Phillips was speared by Aborigines again in 1838. He suffered serious wounds which he carried for the rest of his life.

Phillips was reported to have been very generous to the Aborigines. *The Sydney Herald*, 8<sup>th</sup> February 1838, states the following after two boys tending to Major Nairn's stock were savagely attacked and speared by Aborigines, "the atrocity of this inhuman outrage is greatly aggravated by these natives having for some time received the kindest treatment, and having been regularly fed at Mr Phillips' farm, a short distance from the scene of the violence."

Newspaper reports at the time, 1838, indicate that the settlers in the Canning district endured more losses as a result of the Aborigines than any other district and that "individuals have patiently endured losses which could not reasonably have been expected to have submitted to, is unquestionable" and that "the body of men whose general conduct towards the aborigines has been characterized by acts of great kindness, forbearance, and indulgence."

During these difficult years, Phillips' servant Martha Smith gave birth to their five children. Until 1841 there were no official births, deaths and marriage records, but the Church of England register shows that the five children were baptized by the Rev W Mitchell at Canning River on 14<sup>th</sup> April 1839. We understand that John Randall and Martha were married at the same time. These children were John Randall Jr, Georgiana, George Braithwaite, Mary Elizabeth and Henry Thomas. Two further children were born at Albany, Margaret Parsons and Charles.

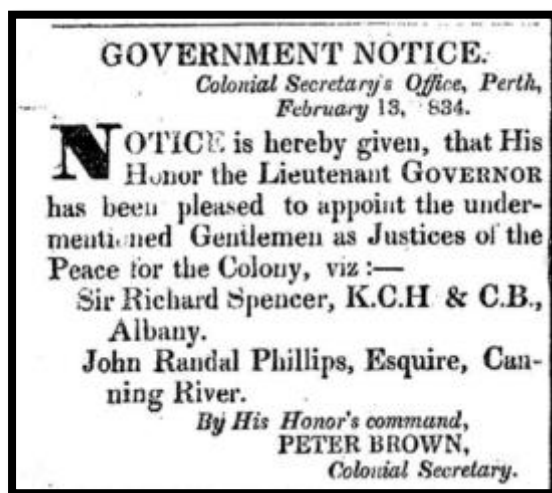
By 1833 Phillips was selling stock from Maddington Farm, including 2 geldings, one mare, three ponies, one colt, one cow, two Hereford bulls, one ox, one heifer, one heifer calf and some goats. He was obviously doing well with his animals.

*The Perth Gazette* 1<sup>st</sup> June, 1833: We have just heard that 15 goats, the property of J R Phillips, Esq, of Maddington Farm, were driven away by the natives on Wednesday last.

*The Perth Gazette* 21<sup>st</sup> June, 1834: Another attempt has been made by the Natives, on the Canning River, in the neighbourhood of the farm belonging to J R Phillips, Esq, to spear some sheep – and the shepherd, we hear, had a narrow escape.

It appears from various newspaper reports that obtaining suitable labour was particularly difficult at that time. In June 1834 *The Perth Gazette* reported the following: “ As proof that labour is required in the country, and will be employed at a moderate rate, we have seen a letter from J R Phillips, Esq on the Canning, in which he holds out a proposition to the Government to employ on his estate six extra men, provided the Government will supply the meal at the rate they are at present distributing it to the men, to be returned next harvest: (meat and other necessaries to be found by Mr Phillips) and to receive £1 per month, but it must be understood they are to forego the usual allowance of grog. This latter proviso, we suspect, will be a bar to the entertainment of the proposition on the part of the labourers, but it deserves the consideration of the Government, and we have no doubt will meet with the concurrence and assistance of most of the Gentlemen Settlers on the Swan and Canning.”

Phillips was appointed a Justice of the Peace for the Colony on 13<sup>th</sup> February 1834 by the Lieutenant Governor.



A public meeting was held at the temporary Court House, Perth, on Monday 16<sup>th</sup> February, 1835. This, the first Public Meeting held in the Colony since the establishment of the office of Sheriff, was very respectably and numerously attended, and it was observed that all the most influential settlers in the Colony were present. Discussions brought to the notice of the meeting as grievances of the Colonists included land regulations and increases needed in the Colonial Fund. "No taxation without Representation" was the outcry from the settlers. They wanted the appointed officials to be kept within the financial ability of the colony to survive. Phillips seconded a proposal: "That the contemplated expenditure of the Colony exceeds, to a large amount, its resources; and such expenditure can only be met by additional taxation, which we are not in a condition to bear."

Phillips headed an expedition of eighteen men to explore southward to the Hotham and Williams Rivers departing from Kelmscott at the head of the Canning River at daybreak on 4<sup>th</sup> October, 1835 and returning on 6<sup>th</sup> November, 1835. The expedition party were inspecting the land around the Hotham and Williams Rivers and all those entitled to take up land selected their grants in the district with general satisfaction towards the country. The Government party were furnished with rations for twenty days; the Settlers provided themselves with their own horses, and provisions for a longer period.

Following is a wonderful account of the expedition and demonstrates the trials and tribulations faced by these pioneering men and the fortitude, strength and tenacity required to achieve such a feat.

*The Perth Gazette*, 10<sup>th</sup> October, 1835: “[3<sup>rd</sup> October, 1835] Dinner was announced and we all sat down to a board hospitality provided by Mr Phillips. The repast ended; Mr Harris proposed the health of Mr Phillips and a successful issue to the expedition. In returning thanks, Mr Phillips alluded to the position in which he was placed, as their leader, and to the general objects of the expedition; which, in conclusion, he remarked, he felt every confidence, would be realised, from the cordiality and friendly unanimity with which it was undertaken. The health of His Excellency the Governor, proposed by one of the party, with some remarks alluding to the kind disposition he had evinced in forwarding this expedition was received with enthusiasm. At length the note of preparation for departure, sounded by the bugler, called us from this agreeable scene, and in a few minutes all were mounted, and proceeded to the ford, a short distance from Mr Phillips’ residence, over which the several carts had been passed during the morning. The cavalcade then, in order for the march, proceeded slowly along the road to Kelmscott, about a distance of four miles, in the following order: - Mr Phillips’ cart with a team of four bullocks; Mr Harris’, with a team of six bullocks; Mr Bull’s with three horses, and a light cart with three ponies. Six soldiers of the 21<sup>st</sup> Regt; - one in charge of the perambulator, - and Mr Hillman of the Survey Department, who noted the course they took, and employed the soldiers in marking the trees brought up the rear. It may well be here to observe, that one of the principal objects of this expedition, is, to establish a line of road between this and the Hotham district – a country already partially explored, and found to be tract of valuable grazing ground, more particularly for sheep pastures; the distance from this is computed at about 100 miles. The progress of this expedition will therefore settle the mooted point as to the practicability of forming a *direct* line of communication with this part of our territory, and will open the long-wished for road to the Settlement at King George’s Sound. To return to our party, after this slight digression, nothing occurred deserving of notice, until their arrival at the point fixed upon for the bivouac for the night. These arrangements, which are the customary preparations of lighting fires, and disposing of the party in the best manner for their own comfort, we were, through an untoward accident prevented from witnessing. We had preceded the party with some of our friends, who were mounted, in order to obtain assistance at the barracks, about ½ a mile from the contemplated bivouac, intending to have every thing in readiness for them on their arrival. The sequel will show how unhappily our endeavours were frustrated. We had tethered our horses on the banks of the river, and were proceeding over a bridge, to obtain the required assistance, when unluckily one of our party missed his footing and plumped into the stream. Migo, a native, who happened to be with us, and is now *attached* to the Police corps, plunged in instantly he heard the splash in the water, and soon extricated him from his perilous situation. The time occupied in the necessary attendance upon our friend frustrated, as we have observed, our design; but in the course of an hour we were prepared to march up to the bivouac, our friend having obtained, at the barracks, a dry suit of clothing — a regimental dress of one of the privates of the 21<sup>st</sup>, for which he was indebted to the kind attention of Mrs Kerr. On our reaching the bivouac, it may be conceived, we were hailed with expressions of congratulation, not unaccompanied with roars of laughter at the singular figure our friend exhibited in military attire; his good humour, for



which he is proverbial, contributed to the merriment, and afforded us a rich source of amusement throughout the evening. Several excellent songs were sung, and the tin-tot circulated freely, until at length the hour for retiring to rest arrived. To persons unacquainted with our climate, it would be a matter of astonishment to witness how heedlessly our travellers in the bush take their lodging on the cold ground. Rolled up in a blanket, with a saddle for a pillow, the bush-man esteems himself well provided. In a few minutes all was silent in the camp. A little before daybreak the mountain-bird chirped his note — the precursor of approaching dawn. Soon afterwards the bugle sounded, prepare for the start, and in a short time the cavalcade, as before described, wound its way slowly through a swampy country for about ½ a mile, and after passing over about a mile on a slight ascent, they came to rocky hills — the commencement of their difficulties. As far as we proceeded with the party, to their halting-place, at breakfast-time, nothing of a formidable character presented itself to obstruct the progress of the carts. Having reached a fine stream flowing through the mountains, the party bivouacked on its banks, and regaled themselves with a sumptuous repast. About 12 o'clock, preparations were again made to prosecute the journey, when we were reluctantly compelled to direct our course homeward. With sincere wishes for the success of the expedition, accompanied by the friends who had joined us on this excursion, we took our leave. Cheers were echoed and re-echoed from either party; the faint note of the bugle playing "over the hills and far away," was the last remembrance left us of our departed friends. The first adventurers on an expedition of this nature, are deserving every encouragement, and are entitled to the acknowledgements of their brother settlers. It must be borne in mind, that this object has been mainly urged and forwarded by individual enterprise, not unaccompanied with risk of property; which should entitle them to the favorable consideration of His Majesty's Government, in the abatement of the sum required for the performance of location duties. His Excellency the Governor, we believe, has considered it expedient to take this view of the case, and will, we are persuaded, award that meed of remuneration, which the first settlers on the spot are most unequivocally deserving of.

On Tuesday night last, about 12 o'clock, Mr Burges, one of the party, arrived at Perth, for the purpose of getting an iron axletree repaired. He had carried it on his shoulders, on horseback, a distance of upwards 30 miles, and had to return with it, in the same way, the next morning — a task but few could have accomplished. The party were all well - and it was supposed but little delay would be occasioned by this accident, as Mr Phillips, the leader of the party, would be engaged during his absence in examining the country, to discover the best pass."

*The Perth Gazette*, 14<sup>th</sup> February 1835: "(From the Journal of Mr Harris) A good road may be found through this Country by keeping up the hills, and thus avoiding the rocky and undulating ground near the banks of the stream; we did not, however, again leave the river, and at the distance of twelve miles from Kelmscott, once more crossed, and halted for the night, after securing our horses in a very indifferent feed. Several of the party (myself among the number) betook themselves to washing their shirts and stockings, after bathing, which, in summer, is so necessary to health and comfort on a march like this. We sat down to our evening's meal enlivened by the strains of Riley, the policeman's flute. A quantity of wood was collected for supplying the fire during the night, and we were all asleep at 9 o'clock. At midnight we were aroused by the most alarming cries — "the natives, the natives are among us!" I started up, and saw a dark shadow passing swiftly near me. All were now awake, and running against each other, scarcely comprehending the cause of alarm, or extent of danger; but adding their shouts to the general uproar. A voice now cried, "I have him: I have got him fast." "Where? where? blood an oons, where?" cried another close beside me, on his knees, with his gun pointed from his shoulder, — we had overturned each other. The intimation of a capture implying the certainty of an enemy in the camp, added to our confusion; figures were seen running to and fro — who could know in the dark where to retreat ? or whether the spear would strike in front or rear ? — 'twas dreadful!

Pinjarra, and blood-thirsty retaliation, was in our minds; the fire brightened a little, and showed the position of the party, some were on the ground dead, or dying, perhaps, — one was roaring dreadfully. Mr Hillman now called on us to assemble around him, and keep silent, that we might ascertain if strangers were among us. To our inexpressible delight, we got together unhurt, and no strangers were seen; "but where is the captured native," we all cried. It proved to be only a blackboy closely hugged by one of our party; and further inquiry elicited that a dream had caused the whole alarm. This was at first denied, and as all declared they had been cool and silent spectators of the scene, a short pause of apprehension again ensued — the terrible cries and yells then must have been the war cries of natives! No sounds of retreating foes could be heard however, and the seizure of the blackboy seemed to put the matter beyond a doubt; the sharp shrubs around accounted for the fancied pricking of the spears; loud fits of laughter succeeded; and tales were told of surprising leaps made in the moment of alarm. A sentry being placed, we once more got to rest. The next morning, renewed laughter, and good-humoured jokes, enlivened our breakfast, and occasionally cheered our march during the day."

An unfortunate incident occurred when they reached the Hotham River, about 25 miles from the Williams River, with eight of their ten bullocks dying. The cause was unknown but may have been due to some feed eaten along the route or over-eating upon arriving at camp.

Letter to the Editor of *The Perth Gazette*, 14<sup>th</sup> November, 1835

#### EXPEDITION TO THE SOUTHWARD

Sir, Observing you mention the loss of the cattle during our late expedition to the William's River, and having been a considerable sufferer, and carefully examined the carcasses, I beg to state my opinion, with the view of giving information, and preventing a similar loss on subsequent expeditions. The disease appears to have been gradually coming on, though unobserved by any of the party owing to the dry and hard food the cattle had in crossing the ridges of the hills; which food being void of the bitter nutriment that good food has, it became a hard mass in the second stomach, which stomach being much distended, pressed on the biliary ducts, and thereby prevented a proper secretion of bile into the first stomach, to enable the gastric juice to change the food. The animals continued to eat without ruminating, and the first stomach soon became over-loaded, and death apoplexy followed. No medicine we gave acted on the second stomach, and I am of opinion that none could have been given that would have acted, but that the disease might have been prevented by giving every night a handful of salt as a stimulent.

The remaining two cattle we took to the William's River had been starved for three days, to prevent, if possible, their loss; they were of course low in condition on their arrival, but soon recovered on the good keep of that district, and enabled us to return with one of the bullock carts, loaded with six hundred weight, in addition to the weight of the cart, which was a heavy one - and over the same road we had proceeded on to the district.

In crossing the range of hills in this direction, or to the York district, I think we have not been sufficiently attentive to the state of the stomachs of our stock, and by supplying them generally with salt as a stimulent both sheep and oxen would be saved.

For information of those who are likely to settle in this district, I am of opinion that the better line of road for moving sheep and horned cattle would be by way of York, and that many settlements will be speedily formed there, little doubt can be entertained. On the return of His Excellency the Governor, we shall learn what line of country the road to King George's Sound will pass through, which is likely ultimately to be the road for all imported stock.

I am, Sir,  
Your obedient Servant,  
J R PHILLIPS Stoke Farm, Nov 13  
Tom Chapman, AM & Sally Grundy

15<sup>th</sup> September 1835 His Excellency the Governor appointed Phillips Government Resident of the Hotham District.

In May 1836 Phillips and another pioneer settler, Joseph Harris Jnr, notified Governor James Stirling that they intended to settle in the Williams district. Both had been members of the exploring party that had visited the district previously.

In February 1837 Phillips was one of a number of men who requested the Sherriff to call a public meeting to discuss a new line of communication and also the propriety of petitioning Her Majesty's Government for the advance of £30,000 for the establishment of a Lombard Bank.

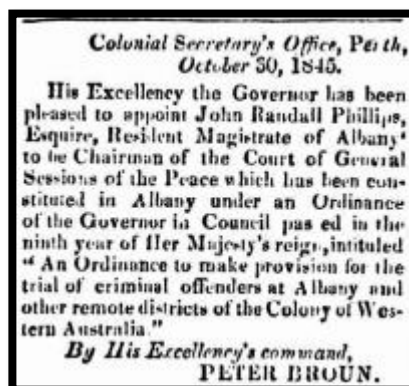
On 5<sup>th</sup> April 1837 Phillips joined the Governor, Messrs Harris, Spofforth, Hillman and Stirling, and Hunt and Dobbins and left Pinjarra on an excursion to the Southern Districts. The period selected for the journey was chosen with the view of ascertaining at the end of the driest season, the supply of water in the Country. The excursion was successfully completed on 28<sup>th</sup> April, 1837.

In 1838, Phillips was appointed Government Resident of the Canning District, was the Chairman of the Central Board Road Trust, Perth, and was a Director of the Agricultural Society.

*The Perth Gazette*, 17<sup>th</sup> February 1838: July 1837 – Some depredations were committed by the natives at Mr Phillips' farm, on Canning River. They had driven off a small flock of sheep and goats, but being actively pursued, the whole were recovered with the exception of 16 sheep.

*The Perth Gazette*, 22<sup>nd</sup> September, 1838: The Natives have renewed their destructive ravages on the Canning River. Within the past week, seven goats have been driven away by them from the farm of J R Phillips, Esq, and three sheep were carried off from Mr Stewart's farm; an attempt was also made to rob Messrs Davis.

In 1839 John Randall Phillips was appointed by the Governor as the Governor's Representative at Williams River, and within a year had been offered a similar position for the District of Plantaganet, centred on Albany. He was later appointed as the Resident Magistrate at Albany, and the Sub-Register of Births, Deaths and Marriages. He was the Chairman of the Court of General Sessions in Albany and the Sub-protector of Natives for the Plantaganet District. While at Albany, Margaret Parsons and Charles were born to Martha, sadly Charles died in infancy.



By mid 1840 Phillips had decided that being an agriculturalist on the Canning River was no longer for him. He had spent ten years establishing a life for himself and his family under trying conditions, suffered many stock losses due to theft by Aborigines and faced frightening life threatening situations including being speared by Aborigines on two occasions. Phillips was at this stage heavily entrenched in the daily activities in Albany and surrounding districts and was gainfully employed. Phillips first tried to lease his property Stoke Farm in May 1840 but was unsuccessful, he then offered it for sale in October 1841. All Phillips' stock including 500 ewes, 400 goats, 2 bulls, 2 milking cows, 3 yearlings and 3 calves were sold at auction on Stokes Farm on 23<sup>rd</sup> December, 1841.

**TO LET,**

**S**TOKE FARM, on the Canning River, consisting of 600 acres of land, 70 of which have been under cultivation; with house, outhouses, stock yards and sheds, a good barn, &c.

On the farm there is a large quantity of manure, rendering the Farm, at this season, available for immediate occupation.

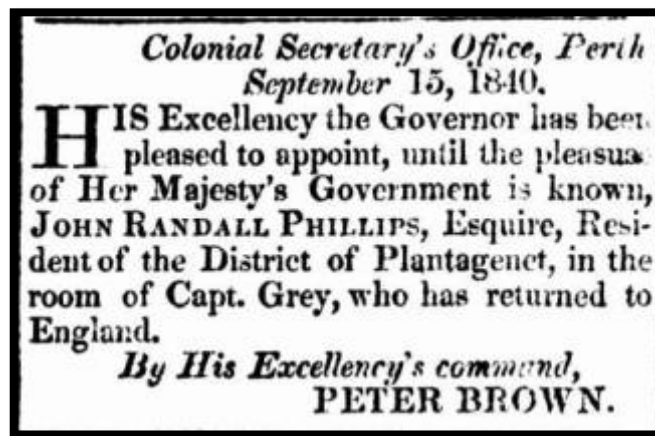
With the above, may be had, a horse flour mill, thrashing machine, ploughs, carts, &c., and stock, horned cattle, horses, and goats.

Apply to Mr. J. R. Phillips, on the Canning River.

Canning River, May 8, 1840.

The 260 ton American whaler *North America* sailed from Wilmington, Delaware for the South Atlantic in June 1838, and circumnavigated the globe under the command of Captain Simmons. On its next cruise, with a crew of twenty five men, under the command of Master Kempton, it was wrecked at Koombana Bay, Bunbury, along with the *Samuel Wright* on 8<sup>th</sup> July 1840. The *North America* had anchored in the bay on 16<sup>th</sup> May with 2,400 barrels of oil and had intended to remain there whaling for the winter, the first whale being taken on 21<sup>st</sup> May. The *North America* was blown ashore during a raging gale and left a complete wreck, almost high and dry. The wreck was sold on 20<sup>th</sup> July to John Randall Phillips for £400. The wreck of the *Samuel Wright*, which had not suffered much damage, was bought by Captain Coffin for £305. *The Perth Gazette* questioned that had the auction not been held so soon after the gale had taken place that a larger price might have been obtained for the wrecks. Due to the absence of a Government Auctioneer, Government Resident, Henry Bull, assumed the office. Another ship with the same name, *North America*, went ashore at the same location in 1843. The remains of the 1840 *North America* remained scattered on the beach.

Phillips was appointed the prestigious position of Government Resident in Albany on 15<sup>th</sup> September 1840 upon Captain Grey's return to England and held that esteemed position until his resignation in July 1848.



In 1840, Edward John Eyre set out from Adelaide to explore an overland route to the west. He arrived in Albany, King George's Sound, on 7<sup>th</sup> July, 1841 in company with Wylie, an Aboriginal native of Albany, and the journal of his expedition was presented to J R Phillips, Governor's Resident at Albany, in August 1841.

"I feel great pleasure in the opportunity now afforded me of recording the grateful feelings I entertain towards the residents at Albany for the kindness I experienced upon this occasion. Wet as the day was, I had hardly been two hours at Mr Sherrats before I was honoured by a visit from Lady Spencer, from the Government-resident, Mr Phillips, and from almost all the other residents and visitors at the settlement, - all vying with each other in their kind attentions and congratulations, and in every offer of assistance or accommodation which it was in their power to render.

Finding that a vessel would shortly sail for Adelaide, I at once engaged my passage, and proceeded to make arrangements for leaving King George's Sound.

To the Governor of the Colony, Mr Hutt, I wrote a brief report of my journey, which was forwarded, with a copy both of my own and Wylie's depositions, relative to the melancholy loss of my overseer on the 29th April. I then had my horses got up from the King's river, and left them in the care of Mr Phillips, who had in the most friendly manner offered to take charge of them until they recovered their condition and could be sold.

Wylie was to remain at the Sound with his friends, and to receive from the Government a weekly allowance of provisions, by order of Mr Phillips; who promised to recommend that it should be permanently continued, as a reward for the fidelity and good conduct he had displayed whilst accompanying me in the desert." Edward John Eyre – Journals of Expeditions of Discovery Overland from Adelaide to King George's Sound 1840 -1841

*The Inquirer*, 24<sup>th</sup> February, 1841: "We are sorry to announce that the house and several out-buildings situate on the Canning River, the property of J R Phillips, Esq, Government Resident at the Sound, have been entirely destroyed by native fire, and that considerable loss from the same cause has also been sustained by Mr Davis, who occupies the farm on the opposite side of the river."

*The Perth Gazette*, 13<sup>th</sup> March 1841: "Within the last month several accidents have occurred, arising from the inflammable nature of the bush at this season. On the Canning the greatest scene of destruction has been occasioned by a bush fire, in the destruction of the property of J R Phillips Esq, leased to Mr H Davis. All the buildings, a well-stocked garden, and several stacks of hay, have been destroyed by the devouring

element.” [Note: we are not sure that Mr Davis leased Stoke Farm or was just a neighbour across the river as J R Phillips sold later due to being unable to lease his farm]

In March 1841, Phillips, Government Resident at Albany, agreed to furnish William Nairne Clark with a fortnight’s rations for three men to explore Nornalup or the ‘Deep River’ of the sealers about 80 miles west of King George Sound, with large timber forests on its banks. A second expedition was planned by Nairn but Phillips expressed his regret that he could not comply with his request for assistance.

*The Inquirer*, 10<sup>th</sup> March, 1841: “His Excellency the Governor has been pleased to direct the publication of the following particulars of a recent excursion from the Toodyay country to Moore River, made by Captain Scully, Messrs Phillips, Drummond and J Drummond, with two natives. The party started from “Yerrindine” springs about sunrise on the 7<sup>th</sup> ult [7<sup>th</sup> February] ... The result of this brief exploration in search of fresh stock runs has proved highly satisfactory.”

On 12<sup>th</sup> April 1841 Phillips, as the Government Resident, called a public meeting to propose a subscription for a church to be constructed in Albany. Phillips chaired the meeting and read some extracts from the Colonial Act, and stated that a place of worship ought to be provided first, and then a Minister would be found afterwards. A neat plan of the church was exhibited to the attendees at the meeting. It was then proposed and unanimously carried, that the following gentlemen be appointed Trustees; John Randall Phillips, Peter Belches, Edward May Spencer, George Macartney Cheyne, and Thomas Brooker Sherratt, Esqrs. A subscription list was handed round and the amount subscribed was £230. Mr Phillips remarked that a gentleman from India (Mr Hagger) had visited King George’s Sound and was delighted with the climate but the want of a church and school were great draw-backs to this part of the settlement and stated that if such public institutions were built that families from India would resort there for residence.

With a population of only 140 in Albany at the time, the task of building the desired place of worship was mammoth and it was seven long years before the church was completed to a satisfactory stage that it could be consecrated by Bishop Augustus Short upon his visiting Western Australia. The impending visit of Bishop Short created a buzz and work was hastened in order to have their church ready in time.

*The Western Mail*, 21<sup>st</sup> October, 1948: “Wollaston (created archdeacon in 1849) arrived from Bunbury aboard the colonial schooner *Champion* to become Albany's first resident clergyman. The walls and tower of the church, constructed of granite quarried from the twin Mts Clarence and Melville, were almost complete and in course of roofing with local jarrah and sheoak. Pending completion of the building, the new rector began his ministry in the old Octagon Church. On learning early in September that Bishop Augustus Short would soon visit Western Australia to organise that portion of his immense diocese and consecrate its churches, Wollaston, like Nehemiah, inspired his small band of helpers to press on with the building so that it might be sufficiently advanced to permit of its consecration by the Bishop when the schooner *Champion* called with his Lordship aboard on his way from Adelaide to the Swan River. Mr Wollaston's own story, vibrating with enthusiasm and the music of hammer and saw, has fortunately, through the zeal of the late Canon Burton, been preserved in one of his letters to England: "The rafters," he wrote, "were finished at the end of July (1848) and the shingling of the roof at the end of September with sheoak. Inspired volunteers met in excellent spirit to get the church forward ... carts, horses, bullocks and men carrying sand to level the floor, two carpenters preparing the altar flooring, altar rails, materials for altar cushions and (in the absence of glass) calico to be oiled for the windows purchased from an American

whaler then in port. The curtains and cushions for the altar have all been worked by the deft fingers of the church's daughters. We laid the inside of the church with a lime floor after the West Indian method, well trodden and rammed and smoothed with sugar water."

Dr Short arrived at Albany on October 23, 1848, and was agreeably surprised to find the little granite church 50 feet long, 26 feet wide and 18 feet high to the roof plates - roofed (except the porch and tower in the east) and sufficiently completed to allow of its consecration. The nave was designed to accommodate 170 worshippers, the then total population of Albany.

Of the first church he was to consecrate in Western Australian the Bishop wrote: "it is a striking picture this new stone church standing in the centre of the town, incomplete as it is ... whenever the tower shall be finished it will give additional beauty to the scene .... But even as it is the House of God is as it always should be, the principal building which meets the eye as you cast anchor in the harbour." The consecration took place on St Crispin's Day, October 25, 1848, before a congregation of 100.



Figure 6: St John The Evangelist Church, Albany, WA

*The Inquirer* reported on 23<sup>rd</sup> May, 1842 that the formation of The Western Australian Society occurred at a Public Meeting of the Inhabitants of Western Australia held on the 21<sup>st</sup> May 1842 at the Club-house, Perth, the Hon Peter Brown, the Colonial Secretary, in the chair, the following resolutions were proposed and unanimously carried:-

... that the society be formed which shall have for its object the advancement of the Colony, and the general good of the Colonists, by such modes as shall from time to time seem best adapted to that end, His Excellency the Governor be requested to become Patron of the Society, that the committee men are named, and that a subscription be paid for membership.

J R Phillips moved the membership of the committee. Phillips paid a subscription of 10 shillings and made a donation of one pound.

20<sup>th</sup> October, 1841, Phillips was appointed to the office of Resident Magistrate of the District of Plantagenet.

In 1843 an Act for Improvement of Towns enabled a committee to be set up to advise the Government Resident. Phillips as the Government Resident was on the committee.

1843 The proposal in Perth to form a company to export ship timber (then called mahogany) prompted the Government Resident J R Phillips to stress the many advantages of the jarrah forests at Torbay.

**CORRESPONDENCE.**

*To the Editor of the Perth Gazette.*

DEAR SIR,—Observing in your valuable paper a proposal for forming a Company for the Exportation of Ship Timber, I beg to call your attention to where I conceive the most advantageous point, or place for procuring the timber. The timber has, within the last week, been inspected by the Harbor-Master of the place, P. Belches, Esq., R.N., who reports it of the very best he has seen in the Colony. At Torbay this timber is procurable in any quantity, and on an inclined plane to the beach. Now, in the neighborhood of Perth, the nearest point at which such timber can be procured is about Mahogany Creek, a distance of at least some 18 or 20 miles from water carriage; and then the timber has to be carried from 40 to 50 miles in barges, for it is well known that the best mahogany will not float. Now at Torbay all this land and water carriage is done away with.

I am, Sir,  
Your obedient servant,  
J. R. PHILLIPS,  
Government Resident.  
Albany, May 25, 1843.

Figure 7: *The Perth Gazette*, 1st July 1843

The West Australia Police Historical Society Inc, *Early Policing at Albany*: “In November 1844 the police rallied around Resident Phillips when the quarrelsome crew of a French whaling ship gathered to attack the town. [Lawrence] Mooney and his colleagues helped muster armed citizens and special constables and scare off the mob. No lives were lost.”

24<sup>th</sup> October 1845 Phillips, Resident Magistrate of Albany, appointed by the Governor to be Chairman of the Court of General Quarter Sessions of the Peace, newly constituted in Albany.

From 7<sup>th</sup> February 1846 Phillips had 3 months off work to travel to South Australia, sailing there on the ‘Alpha’.

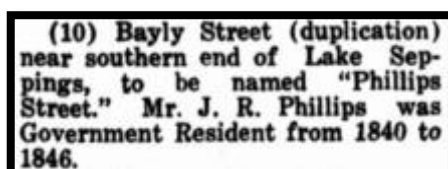


He left again in September 1846 on the 'Joseph Albino' bound for South Australia together with wife, Martha and children John Randell Jr, Georgiana and George Braithwaite.

7<sup>th</sup> July 1847 Phillips was appointed by His Excellency the Governor to be Chairman of the Court of General Sessions of the Peace in Albany, and Sub-Protector of Natives for the District of Plantagenet.

Just below the site of Albany Hospital was a large well fed by a spring known as Phillips' Well, named after the Government Resident. A stream ran from it into the harbour below the site of the old gasworks. It was unusual as it was the only permanent white water in the town - the water in the town's other wells were brown with an earthy taste.

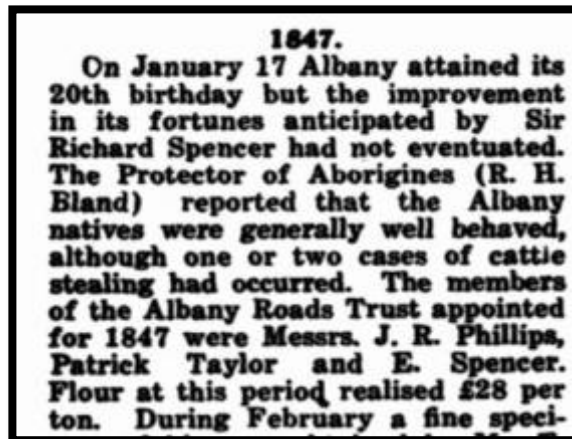
Phillips Street, Albany, near the southern end of Lake Seppings, was named after Mr J R Phillips, Government Resident from 1840 to 1846 [1847].



(10) Bayly Street (duplication) near southern end of Lake Seppings, to be named "Phillips Street." Mr. J. R. Phillips was Government Resident from 1840 to 1846.

Figure 8: Albany Advertiser 28 February 1946 Pg 8

In 1847, J R Phillips and Patrick Taylor were appointed members of the Albany Roads Trust.



1847.  
On January 17 Albany attained its 20th birthday but the improvement in its fortunes anticipated by Sir Richard Spencer had not eventuated. The Protector of Aborigines (R. H. Bland) reported that the Albany natives were generally well behaved, although one or two cases of cattle stealing had occurred. The members of the Albany Roads Trust appointed for 1847 were Messrs. J. R. Phillips, Patrick Taylor and E. Spencer. Flour at this period realised £28 per ton. During February a fine speci-

Figure 9: Albany Advertiser 16 Nov 1936 Pg 5

J R Phillips resigned his position of Government Resident in July 1847 and took up the role of Inspector of Natives.

In 1848 Phillips was occupying Patrick Taylor's cottage in Albany.



*Figure 10: Patrick Taylor's cottage, Albany, WA*

*The Perth Gazette*, 29<sup>th</sup> October, 1852: 12<sup>th</sup> October – *The Australian* has just arrived from Adelaide, where she left on the 5<sup>th</sup> inst, having had a head wind all the way. She has 80 passengers, 3 of whom are for Albany – Messrs Wollaston and Mr J Phillips [Jnr], sons of our worthy Archdeacon and J R Phillips Esq. The latter gentleman has been singularly fortunate, I am told he has brought £2,000 back with him, the Messrs Wollaston not so fortunate, but yet successful; they intend starting for gold here in a few days, having reason to believe it is to be found.

The Phillips children were well educated, as shown by their successful careers. They had some school education at the Albany public school and then they were educated by their father and a tutor. Two boys ended up managing and owning vast sheep runs in South Australia and New South Wales and another became the Western Australian Commissioner of Police. John Randall and Martha Phillips were a great example of our pioneers in the earliest days of Western Australia. Their children were obviously given a well-rounded education and individually contributed greatly to their pursuits in Australia.

JOHN RANDALL Junior (1832 - 1917) married Eliza Milne daughter of Sir William Milne and took up the lease of the Kanyaka Run (and others) in the Northern Flinders Ranges in South Australia. He was a magnificent mentor to many and a pioneer in outback station pastoral runs. They did not have any children.



*Figure 11: John Randall Phillips Jnr*

GEORGIANA (1833 - 1866) married William Lavington Marchant in South Australia with vast pastoral properties. They had two daughters and lived in the United Kingdom.

GEORGE BRAITHWAITE: (1836 -1900) Police Commissioner Western Australia. He was a greatly revered gentleman with the ability to undertake his duties under extreme pressures and resolve unprecedented issues. He was held in high esteem. Had three marriages, Ruth Rachel Perry, Annie Emma Hare, and Vittoria Ellen Burges. The marriage with Annie produced three daughters, Edith Georgina, Frances Annie and Julia Margurette.



*Figure 12: Lieutenant Colonel George Braithwaite Phillips, WA Commissioner of Police*

MARY ELIZABETH (1837 – 1902) married Joseph Vernon Bussell after whose family the town of Bussellton was named. They had three children, William John, Charlotte Georgina and Evangeline.

HENRY THOMAS (1839 – 1911) my Great Grandfather, married Fanny McArthur Phillips (nee Darke) in Adelaide and managed vast pastoral properties for Price and Hughes, both in South Australia and New South Wales. He became interested in the formation of BHP and later in Adelaide he was the Director of a number of small mining companies and a bank. There were four children from this marriage, Alice, Edith, Fanny and Samuel. Fanny McArthur Phillips is buried in the Memorial Park Cemetery, Albany, WA.



*Figure 13: Fanny McArthur Phillips' grave in the Memorial Park Cemetery, Albany, WA*

MARGARET PARSONS (1841- ) did not marry and died in London.

CHARLES (1844-1845) died in infancy.

Samuel Gallie Phillips: 1878 – 1970, my Grandfather, was born at Kinchega Station on the Darling River in New South Wales. His father, Henry Thomas Phillips was the Station Manager of this large pastoral run. Samuel (Sam) later took up pastoral properties in Western Australia, being Gunwarrie and Kybellup near Cranbrook.



*Figure 14: Kinchega Station Woolshed, NSW*



John Randall Phillips, Esquire died on 27<sup>th</sup> December, 1852 from influenza, following a two week illness. His wife, Martha Phillips, was also at the time lying in a very dangerous state but managed to regain her health. John Randall Phillips Snr is buried in the Albany Memorial Park Cemetery, (Lot 58 we believe) in an unmarked grave. His wife Martha Jane Phillips (nee Smith), died aged 46 at the home of their son, J R Phillips Junior at the Kanyaka Run in South Australia and is buried in the historic cemetery, with a slate headstone.



*Figure 15: Martha Phillips' grave in the historic cemetery on Kanyaka Station, South Australia*

*The Perth Gazette*, 7<sup>th</sup> January, 1853: “King George’s Sound. Dec 27 – I regret to have to communicate to you the death of Mr Phillips, Chairman of Sessions and Sub-Guardian of Aborigines in this district, which took place this morning at 6 o’clock, after a short illness brought on by influenza, which epidemic has attacked nearly every one here. Mr Phillips’ loss will be severely felt as a Magistrate.”

John Randall Phillips was a remarkable man who with unwavering determination and faultless strength of character was a pioneer of agriculture in the Swan River Colony. Through his expeditions, he opened up much country for agricultural pursuits by settlers. His personal farming pursuits were applauded and he enjoyed great success even with the many setbacks he endured at the hands of the Aborigines with the murder of three of his employees, regular theft of stock and belongings, receiving injuries from being speared on two occasions and fires destroying his property, dwellings, stock and equipment. He was a very well respected member of society and was held in high esteem, holding many government positions including Government Resident in a number of locations.

Phillips’ wife, Martha, must have been a determined and strong-willed lady as she spent much time on their isolated properties alone with their children and employees whilst Phillips was absent for weeks at a time exploring the surrounding districts. There were many threats to their lives, and regardless, they continued in their pioneering pursuits in the Swan River and Albany colonies.

They were true Western Australian pioneers in every sense of the word.

Ladies and Gentlemen that concludes our presentation on our family’s interesting pioneer forebears in Western Australia and we appreciate the opportunity to perpetuate the memory of them.

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