

Notes on Euphemia Hay née Shaw

(Great-great-grandmother of Daphne, Laurence, Glenys and Lynette Hay)

Born: 14 July 1814, Rothesay, Bute, Scotland.

Married: To William Hay, 25 July 1844, Greenock, Renfrew, Scotland.

Arrived in NZ: 26 October 1860, Port Chalmers, in 'Silistria'.

Children: *David, 2 Aug 1845, Greenock, Renfrew, Scotland.

Died: 1 Sept 1894, Oamaru, Otago, NZ.

*Great-grandfather of Daphne, Laurence, Glenys and Lynette

Euphemia Shaw's birth and forebears

Euphemia Shaw (christened Euphy), was born on 14 July 1814 in the village of Tighnabeine, Rothesay parish, on the island of Bute, Scotland, the last of the 12 children of Duncan Shaw and Margaret Galbreath (Rothesay OPR 558/2, Item 4, p.177).

Euphy's parents had been married on 5 June 1791 in the village of Kilmachalmaig (modern St Colmac). The register entry (OPR 558/2) for the marriage reads:

May 1791 Duncan M'Gilthighnich or Shaw, Distiller in Rothesay, son to Archibald M'Gilthighnich in the Island of Islay, and Margaret Galbreath daughter to Niel [*sic*] Galbreath in Kilmachalmaig. Booked 28th married the 5th June.

The children of the marriage were:

1. **Jean**, born 1 March 1792; Duncan Shaw the father is described as 'Workman, Cotton Mills, Rothesay';
2. **Neil**, born 4 Jan 1794; father -- 'labourer in Rothesay';
3. **Patrick**, born 1 April 1796; father -- 'labourer in Rothesay';
4. **Duncan**, born 6 Feb 1798; father -- 'Cottar [*a farm worker occupying a cottage in return for labour*] in Eadanmore';
5. **Sarah**, born 10 Aug 1799; father -- 'Cottar in Kilmachalmaig';
6. **Margaret**, born 24 Jan 1802; father -- 'Cottar in Kilmachalmaig';
7. **Mary**, born 15 June 1804; father -- 'labourer at Tighnabeine';
8. **Duncan** [*presumably the earlier Duncan had died*], born 25 April 1807; father -- 'Cottar in Tighnabeine';
- 9 & 10. **Donald** [*or Daniel*] and **Angus**, born 10 Nov 1809; father -- 'labourer, Tighnabeine';
11. **Catherine**, born 14 April 1812; father -- 'labourer in Tighnabeine';
12. **Euphy**, born 14 July 1814; father -- 'labourer, Tighnaband [*sic*]'.

I have found no further trace of the M'Gilthighnich family on Islay, but they would undoubtedly have been Gaelic speakers, as would also have been Margaret Galbreath. Her birth is likely to be that recorded in the Campbeltown OPR (507) as follows:

October 1769 Baptisms Neill Galbreath & Ann Campbell in Dalsmeran had a child born 9th & baptised 10 Margaret.

I can find no record of the marriage of Neill Galbreath and Ann Campbell or of the birth of Neill, but there are a number of records of daughters called Ann being born to Campbell fathers in the relevant area at that time. It is possible that of these an Ann born on 2 June 1741 to John Campbell and Elizabeth Hay (baptism recorded in the Campbeltown OPR 1682-1770) is 'our' Ann. The marriage of the parents of this girl is recorded in the same OPR:

Marriages 1723: John Campbell son to Barbreck & Elizabeth Hay were married April 13.

This Campbell/Hay couple produced 12 children, Ann being the tenth.

Neill Galbreath and Ann Campbell would have married by 1764 (their first child was born the next year), i.e. when the Campbell/Hay Ann was about 23 – a very marriageable age. Apart from this rather weak piece of circumstantial evidence, the only other reason (also weak!) why the Campbell/Hay Ann is more likely than any other to be 'our' Ann Campbell is that Neill Galbreath and Ann called their second son John, and the second son would customarily be called after the mother's father – the Campbell/Hay Ann's father was John.

Returning to the 19th century and the Shaw family, I have found no record of the death of Duncan Shaw, Euphemia's father, but when the decennial UK census was taken on 6 June 1841 Margaret Galbraith [*sic*], aged 72, was listed as living in Bridge Street, Rothesay, with Euphemia Shaw, 27, cotton power loom worker. An all-Scotland search through the 1851 census for Margaret Galbreath/Galbraith produced no hits, though there is no record of her death in the statutory registers (which began in 1855) or in relevant parish records.

Euphemia Shaw's marriage and family

Euphemia would have come to know William Hay and his children through William's marriage to Euphemia's older sister Mary, known as Marion. When Marion died sometime within the 11 months before July 1844 leaving William with as many as five children at home, 29-year-old Euphemia would have felt a strong obligation to fill her sister's place, and obviously agreed to do so. The OPR entry reads:

15 July 1844. William Hay & Elizabeth [*sic*] Shaw both of the Old Parish, Greenock, were married, having exhibited banns in St John's Episcopal Church, on 15 July 1844 by W.M. Wade, Clergyman of Paisley & Dean of Glasgow. Witnesses: Geo. Bradley; Robert Thompson

Strangely, they seem also to have been married in the Church of Scotland, possibly in deference to Euphemia's family, as there is an entry in an OPR of the Greenock West parish of the Church of Scotland which reads:

1844 William Hay, seaman and Euphemia Shaw both in Old Parish booked 12th married 25th July.

Euphemia's only child was born on 2 August 1845 and christened **David** on 21 September of that year in St John's Episcopal Church, the church in which William and Euphemia had been married and in which all of William's previous children had

been baptised. William's family was now a very mixed bunch: one child a full orphan, five semi-orphans with their father, William, living, and only the last with both parents, William and Euphy, alive.

Euphemia Hay's migration to New Zealand

The next record of Euphemia and her children is their mention in *The Otago Witness* of 3 November 1860 amongst the 306 or so passengers (the number varies according to source) carried by the ship 'Silistria' commanded by Captain J. Mackay, which arrived in Port Chalmers on 26 October of that year after a journey lasting 91 days. Under 'Passengers – Paying their own Passages; Steerage' are listed: 'Mrs. Hay, William, Joseph, James and David Hay'; William Snr is not mentioned; possibly he sailed as a member of the crew.

A day-by-day record of this 1860 voyage of the 'Silistria' is contained in a diary kept by James Flint, a steerage passenger, emigrating with his wife, and paying their own way as did the Hay family. (The whereabouts of the original diary appears to be in some doubt, but the Hocken Library holds a transcript of it.) James Flint describes the arrangements on board the 'Silistria' as follows:

Regarding passengers rations, berths etc., we have on board 270 statute adults (young children ... counts half). Water is served out daily; we get hot water for tea in the morning and leave some cold water with cook for our dinner, some days we get preserved soup for dinner, salt pork and salt beef with preserved potatoes alternately and tea and biscuit for morning and evening meals. There is three classes of passenger on board this ship, viz., steerage, enclosed steerage and cabin, the respective fares are £16, £18 and £30. The common steerage passengers are arranged in open berths or sleeping places in two lines on each side of the ship, one line above the other so that necessarily they must dress and undress in view of all. The young men being in the forward part of the ship divided by a partition from the married people, it is very disagreeable the open berths and I would recommend no decent person to take it especially if married. The enclosed steerage: small places with two beds over each other with room to keep a chest. They are made of different sizes to suit families It is much more agreeable than the common but there is an awful annoyance in the noise and uproar of children on each side of us. The next class is in the poop, they are much more comfortable, they have a steward to attend on them. Any person that had the means ought to come in this class as I question if one in six would come in the steerage if they knew what sort of place it is. We are divided into messes not exceeding ten there is nine in the mess that I am in; one of us is captain for a week whose duty is to get the water, tea, sugar and all the grub from the purser or quartermaster then take from and to the cook. We are not getting it cooked overly well or at regular hours owing to some of the passengers giving the cook drink which makes him unfit for his duty, but things will get better by and by I trust as some of the passengers are on the alert to catch those who are so liberal with their grog.

James Flint could at times wax quite rhapsodic about the joys of sailing:

August 8th A stiff roaring breeze this morning the ship going 12 miles per hour [19km/hr]. It was truly a grand sight this morning when I went on deck: the wind was free on the ship quarter, every sail rap full, her top gallant masts bending a little, great commotion on the water – large, surly, dark-green

waves tipped with white foam rising and chasing each other; the Silistria tearing and dashing over them while huge masses of surge and white foam was flying from her sides as she gallantly flew over the mountains of water that threatened every moment to wash her decks....

The voyage seems to have been largely uneventful apart from nine deaths (eight of infants), and a couple of potentially serious altercations between members of the crew and the ship's officers. James Flint gives a full account of these:

August 18th It came on to blow this afternoon, there was also a great row amongst the ships officers and crew to-night; it originated between the first mate and cabin cook, they quarrelled somehow or other, and matters ran so high that the passengers were ordered below. The Captain and the officers went forward to put the cook in irons, but he ran in to the fore castle amongst the seamen who all sided with him and for sometime we had the appearance of a mutiny on board. The Captain and the mate went in to secure the man but the sailors put out the lamps and commenced an attack on the officers in the dark. The first mate was soon roaring out murder, there was a bottle thrown at the Captain which nearly broke his skull. There is no saying how things might end but a furious squall of wind came on and one of the sails gave way which came down with a noise like thunder and startled us passengers as we thought the ship was a wreck, however it had the effect of stopping the row as all hands turned to shorten the sail....

October 4th We had one of those scenes transacted on board today which would shock the feelings of any right person on beholding it. A terrible quarrel between the Captain and the Cabin Cook which had the appearance ending fatally but fortunately not so. The row originated about an old beef barrel which the cook took possession of but which belonged to the Purser and as the latter wanted the Cook to give it up as he (the Purser) had promised it to one of the passengers for a tub, to which the Cook would not comply, whereupon the Purser went to the Captain and lodged a complaint. The latter called the Cook aft to the Poop and desired him give up the cask to the owner; instead of doing so he gave the Captain all the most abominable language imaginable. The Captain ordered him down off the Poop to his duty but instead of doing so he still provoked the Captain by calling him all the first class vagabonds etc. whereupon the Captain called for the mates to get the irons and secure him, upon which the Cook ran to his galley. The Captain armed himself with pistols and went along to the galley to secure him and as the Captain entered a terrible scuffle ensued; the cook had a knife given him by one of the sailors which he used freely and cut the Captain in the forehead so that the blood was streaming down his face in large quantities and as they were grappling with each other the Cook again got his hand loose and had it not been for the carpenter that seized him by the arm he would undoubtedly have driven his knife through the Captain; as it was he cut the latter's hands and face. At length they had hauled him in to the cabin where he is properly secured. The Captain showed great forbearance in not sending a ball through him as it was quite lawful in him to do so on account of the mutinous and murderous disposition displayed by the Cook towards him while executing his duty. But I believe the foolish fellow had thought on the help of the seamen and trusted to it, but as the Captain was armed with revolvers they did not think it wise to interfere with it this time. His former row, instead of teaching him, only emboldened [him]; the consequence is that he will lie in irons and be delivered up to the proper authorities, and as his crime is

amongst the blackest in Naval Jurisdiction it will very likely end in transportation.

.... You who may read this will no doubt be anxious to learn what sort of man the Captain is and as far as we have seen of the man he is most attentive to his duties both by day and night and does all in his power to make us all as comfortable as possible but he has a great aversion to those that wont keep their berths clean or properly made up of which there is a great many in this ship, but as he never had any occasion to say anything to Mary or I in regards of these matters we have found him a most kind and obliging man and so does all who desire it of him – and whatever may be the issue of our voyage we find the Captain always at his post and watchful and always on deck at night till 12 o'clock and if there is the least appearance of a gale, on deck all night; he makes it a point never to leave things to his subordinates, and nothing gives passengers more confidence than seeing themselves under a steady and vigilant commander. The Cook is now lying in irons in the Poop and no one gets access to him but the officers.

The ocean treated the immigrants relatively kindly on the journey, but James Flint describes a number of stormy incidents, including most notably the following:

October 10th Last night as I was up on deck about 8 o'clock and just on the point of turning below for prayers the ship was suddenly struck by a tremendous squall and lay over very much, her tall masts bending under the press of canvass while the wind howled and roared through the ropes and spars.... Above the storm the Captains voice was heard calling all hands stand by the haul yards; the deck was so steep that one could not walk without holding on with their hands. In a short time the Top Gallant sails were furled, the Topsails double reefed, the Mainsail hauled up and secured, and under her reduced canvass the Silistria once more flew before the gale at the tremendous rate. The night was pitch dark and nothing to be seen but masses of white foam flying from her sides, the scene was altogether such as one does not feel at ease in. The gale still increasing in fury, by midnight it was fearful and the sea rose to a frightful height while the deep lurches the ship gave now and again from side to side made us almost fancy she was going to be sucked up by the furious waters. There was an awful noise through the ships barrels, boxes and tin cans rumble and rattling, while on the deck they have a sort of house containing a pig, three dogs, some hens and peacock while around it are lashed some empty Hogsheads for containing water and sundry things of that description. However the house broke away from its fastenings and rumbled from side to side; you can fancy better than any pen can describe what a medley it was between the pig squealing, the dogs howling, hens and peacocks joining in the chorus, while we the inhabitants below in our beds sometimes our heads below us and our feet sticking up as if we were standing on our heads and feet alternately passed a very uncomfortable night within hearing of the uproar above us. But thank God there is no damage done worth telling. At half past 7 this morning the vessel shipped a sea which came down the main hatch and nearly drowned a woman that was at the foot of the hatchway, by this time it is much better and the sun is shining finely. I forgot to mention that there was great hail showers throughout the night and this morning.

James Flint's final diary entries describe graphically his first impressions of the New Zealand mainland – impressions no doubt shared by the Hay family:

October 23rd When I rose this morning the land was plainly visible stretching in a long blue line North and South, the day was calm and the wind right ahead of us. We gradually neared it as we were tacking; the country along the coast looked somewhat hilly with high rocks near the sea. We were all on deck viewing our future country; it had a lovely appearance without any town or house visible while the hilltops were covered with wood. At night we discerned a fire burning brightly.

October 24th Still beating along the coast -- two or three hours would take us to the Port if the wind was fair. We had a better chance of seeing the coast today; it resembled some parts of Scotland greatly and appeared to be beautifully watered. Today we were discerned at different points along the coast, the smoke rising but saw no trace of cultivation.

October 25th A dead calm today the ship making no progress. The coast looks beautiful and wants only the hand of man to cultivate the seeming wilderness to make really a splendid sight. There is a point projecting out low in the sea about 8 or 9 miles of us which we have to pass before we make the harbour. There is every sort of land to be seen from a level right to the rounded top of grassy hillocks all mixed and interspersed. While it is most pleasing to view the different landscapes before, in the interior we see lofty mountains covered with snow on the summit. The air is extraordinary mild and warm; though this is their Spring and corresponding to March at home it is just like a fine summer day at home....

October 26th We entered the Heads last night and the Pilot came on board accompanied by three Maories or natives; they were nice-looking fellows not much darker than a swarthy European. The wind being light, we only entered the Harbour this morning at 10 o'clock and came to anchor at Port Chalmers. It is a picturesque looking place, all the hills are covered with wood to the water edge and so thick you would think no one was able to walk through it. We won't get ashore till the officers come on board and inspect us. We are out of sight of Dunedin; it is 9 miles farther up the coast.

In fact, on her arrival the 'Silistria' was immediately put into quarantine. Lyndall Hancock in her 2008 book *Quarantine Island / Kamau Taurua* claims that the ship 'holds the record for the shortest time spent in official quarantine in the Port of Otago' – half a day. The action was taken as a precaution because of a case of smallpox on board during the voyage.

Life in Oamaru

By the end of 1860 the Hay family had arrived at their final destination – Oamaru. Euphemia's life in the raw colonial town that was Oamaru must have not been easy in a household of labouring males, and especially after 1865 when her rough-and-ready nephew Duncan Young appeared on the scene. No doubt Euphemia, her various daughters-in-law, and Duncan's long-suffering wife, supported and consoled each other as their spouses' fortunes ebbed and flowed. The misdemeanours, bankruptcies, and redundancies of husbands, and the deaths of children, along with Duncan's drowning must all have created emotional and financial hardship for the women of the family.

Deaths

William Snr suffered a serious accident in his late 70s, falling from the roof and breaking both his legs while working in the grain store of his son David, and this contributed to his death two or three years later on 16 September 1889. He is eulogised at length in the local newspapers as one of the pioneers and stalwarts of Oamaru.

Euphemia died on 1 September 1894 at the age of 80. The local newspaper saw fit to publish only the following death notice, insulting in its brevity: 'On the 1st instant, at her residence, Tees street, Euphemia, relict of the late William Hay, in her 81st year.' In her will, made the day before she died and signed in a very unsteady hand, Euphy left everything to her only child, David. She is buried in the Hay family grave in the Oamaru Cemetery: Block 6, plots 1 and 2.

[For further information re Euphemia, see Notes on William Hay.]