

Stories about my Knox Ancestors

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1 Introduction

While researching the details of my mother's lineage, I became interested in the the fascinating stories associated with a number of her ancestors. I have chosen several of them to look at in rather greater detail, and their stories are presented in here.

2 Knoxes in London

William Knox was one of my great-great-great-grandfathers. He was born about 1782 or 1793, perhaps in Scotland, perhaps in a foundling hospital in London. In any case, he was in London in 1820 when he married Dorothy (Dorothea) Fleming. Dorothy was born in Scotland, in about 1795. They wasted no time in starting a family, their first child, William, being born in August 1820 and a second, Margaret Janet, in February 1822.

At about the same time, the congregation of the struggling Caledonian Chapel at Cross Street, Hatton Garden in London were in need of a new minister. A Mr Laurie, one of the Elders of the Chapel, while on business in Glasgow 'talent spotted' Edward Irving, who was at that time an assistant to the pre-eminent Dr Thomas Chalmers at the Tron Church. He asked Edward to undertake a four-week trial as minister at the Chapel in London. The trial was a success, and Irving was offered the job. Indeed, so keen were the Elders to have him that the obligatory need for the pastor to preach in Gaelic was removed, the Elders getting a Bill passed to annul this requirement. On the 16th October, 1822 he was inducted into the Caledonian Chapel.

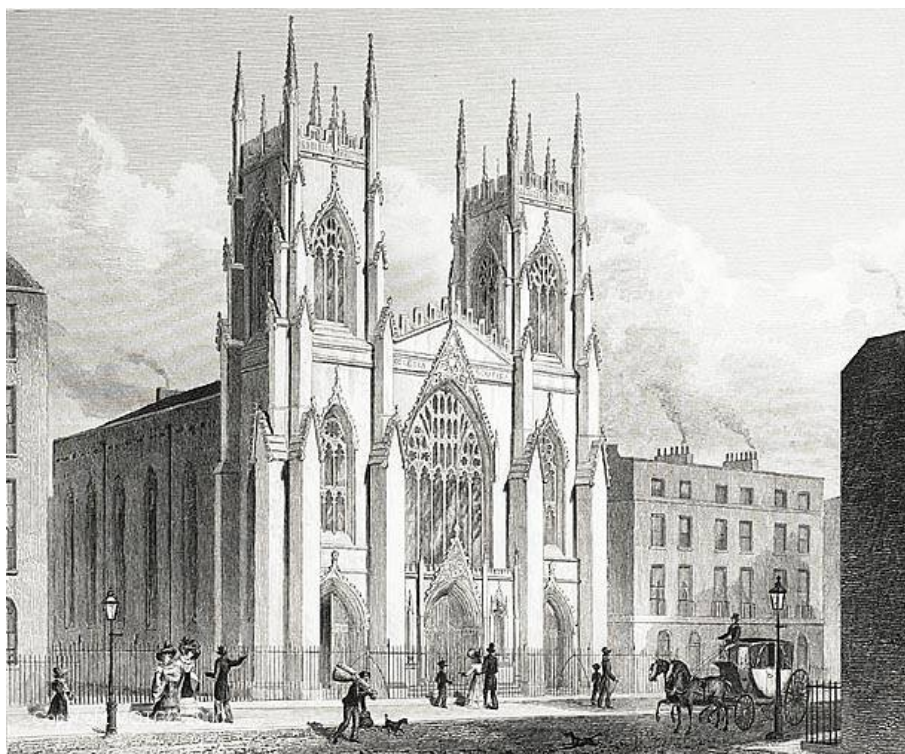


Edward Irving (1792–1834)

One Sunday in 1823, George Canning, then Foreign Secretary and Leader of the House of Commons, was taken by Sir James Mackintosh to hear Irving preach. Later in the House, while discussing the connection between high talent and high pay for ministers, Canning said that the most eloquent sermon he had ever listened to was that by Irving. This resulted in people flocking to Hatton Garden, to the extent that admission was only obtained by ticket, and others waited outside in the hope of obtaining a seat. Irving's sermons were indeed good value. As William Jones observed in a biographical sketch, he began to deal out his fulminations against both princes and people, with an unsparing hand. Great fun, providing you were not the target of his castigations.

Irving's popularity led to the creation of a fund-raising effort for a purpose-built church to house the burgeoning congregation. By December 1823 the chapel had raised £3000 towards the building

of a new church to accommodate 2000 people. The new National Scotch Church, designed on the model of York Minster by William Tite, was opened in Regent Square on 11 May 1827, with a crowd of over 1700 attending.



The New National Scotch Church in 1829

Shortly thereafter, on 13 September 1828, William and Dorothy's children, now numbering four with the addition of John (born on 17 April 1825) and Frances Jane (born 21 May 1827), were all baptised at the Scotch National Church by Edward Irving. Their fifth child, Thomas William (born on 9 January 1829) was baptised by Edward Irving on 4 February 1829. Here we encounter one of those conundrums frequently encountered in genealogical research. The record of Thomas's baptism states that he was "the son of the deceased William Knox/rq/rq. We also have a record of the burial of William Knox in the Parish of St. Pancras on 8 August 1828. His age and address (Perry Street, Somers Town) tally with other information. But

if this date is correct, then the baptism of his four children on 13 September of that year should also have recorded him as deceased. It does not. Were there two William Knoxes living in Parry Street at that time? More likely the earlier baptismal record is simply in error in not recording that William was deceased.

Edward Irving's increasingly charismatic preaching began to get him into trouble with the Scottish Presbyterian church and with its London branch, particularly when he published sermons and pamphlets preaching the sinful nature of Christ. This, together with his encouragement of an outbreak of "speaking in tongues" among his congregation, led to his dismissal from his ministry and expulsion from Regent Square in May 1832. He took a large proportion of his congregation with him. They moved around the corner to Gray's Inn Road, where they shared the Royal London Bazaar, originally built as a horse market, with several other organisations.

John Elder, another of my great-great-great-grandfathers, was born in Lanarkshire, Scotland (probably in Glasgow) in about 1787. On 15 Mar 1813 he married Isabel Baxter (born in Glasgow in 1799) at the Gaelic Chapel in Glasgow. His occupation was listed as stoneware merchant. Isabel bore three children over the next six years, but died on 6 June 1819, possibly in childbirth.

John wasted little time in finding a new wife. On 11 May 1823, he married Margaret Crawford in the Parish Church of St. Cuthbert's in Edinburgh. John's occupation was now listed as umbrella maker. Some time after they were married, John and Margaret moved to St. Pancras in London where John continued to work as an umbrella maker. It is unclear whether their first two children were born in Edinburgh or London, but their third child, Mary Zipporah, was certainly born in London in 1828 or 1829. Their next child, Isabella, was born in 1830 and baptised in the Parish Church of St. George, Bloomsbury. Then followed Alice (about 1832), James Nisbet (1834) Jane (1836) and John (1838). The last three, and possibly Alice, were baptised in the National Scotch Church in Regents Square. Of course, by this time, Edward Irving had been banished and the church was using a number of visiting ministers to replace him.

In the documentation of these baptisms, John Elder was noted as being a beadle to the National Scotch Church, a role he filled until at least 1842. In the seventeenth century:

As the bellman was also the beadle he was responsible for overseeing the graveyard and had many other duties in the kirk. During the Sabbath "preachings" he patrolled the church to wake up sleepers, stop people taking snuff and control unruly children. He held a set of kirk keys and acted as the kirk officer, summoning miscreants to be disciplined by the Kirk Session,

In the 1830s the title was used for someone who attended the minister during divine service as an assistant, and acted as a general caretaker for the church, opening and closing the building and cleaning and maintaining its contents. More recently, the role has become similar to that of a sexton in the Church of England. Whatever his role was as beadle, the extra remuneration would have been very useful in supporting his growing family.

It appears that The Knox family did not join Edward Irving in his departure from the church in Regent Square. Isabella Elder and Thomas Knox obviously became acquainted through their common interest in the church. By the early 1850s, their acquaintanceship had grown to the extent that they had become engaged. These plans were thwarted however by the decision by Isabella's family to emigrate to Melbourne. This they did in 1854 or 1855 (although I cannot find them in any passenger lists of the period). By that time both of Thomas's parents were dead, and he decided to also emigrate, but on a different ship (but once again, I cannot find him in any passenger list). The two met up again in Melbourne and were duly married on 31 December 1857 in the house of the Minister of the Independent Denomination in Collingwood.

What became of Edward Irving? His friend, Thomas Carlyle, was horrified when he attended one of his services, writing in a letter to his mother:

that suddenly, during regular service and with Irving's encouragement, "hysterical women, and crackbrained enthusiasts", were uttering confused Stuff, mostly "Ohs" and "Ahs" and absurd interjections about "the Body of Jesus"; they also pretend to "work miracles", and have raised more than one weak bedrid woman, and cured people of "Nerves", or as they themselves say, "cast Devils out of them".

In 1832 those followers that remained from his former congregation created the Holy Catholic Apostolic, or "Irvingite", Church in Newman Street, and the following year the Church of Scotland excommunicated him. He died on 7 December 1834 and is buried in the crypt of Glasgow Cathedral near the tomb of St. Mungo. He is seen by some as one of the major influences behind the creation of the modern "Pentecostal" Church.

Thomas and Isabella Knox were my great-great-grandparents.

3 A Rich Uncle?

One of my great-great-great-great-grandfathers, Robert Kerr, was born in Forres, Morayshire, Scotland in about 1792. In about 1815 he married Jean Watson, born in Duffus, Morayshire, Scotland in about 1791. They set up a family home in Duffus where Robert had a shoemaking business. Robert moved the family and the business back to his home town, Forres, in about 1822. Forres and Duffus are small (Duffus, very small) towns on the East coast of Scotland, about 50 km from Inverness. They are about 20 km apart.

The shoemaking business prospered, and Robert and Jean had a total of eleven children, all but one of whom appear to have survived into adulthood. Among them was one of my great-great-great-grandfathers, Alexander (1816–1884), and William (1831–1890), my great-great-great-great uncle. William is the subject of this section.

We know little of William's early life in Scotland. One of his uncles ran a very successful drapery business in Forres and it is possible that William was apprenticed in this trade as a young man. However he learned it, drapery was the trade that he took up upon his arrival in Australia in 1853 (once again, I cannot find him in any passenger list). Shortly after arriving in Melbourne, he set up a drapery business in Collingwood. On 18 January 1865, he married Agnes McNaught Stevenson. Agnes, who was born in Greenock, Scotland, in 1840, had emigrated aboard the *SS Giants Causeway* in 1860. Her mother and father followed two years later. The marriage took place at Agnes' father's house in Sandridge now part of Port Melbourne).

In 1866, William and Agnes moved to Kilmore where William had purchased the drapery business run by Messrs. W. Harris and Company at the Dublin and Manchester Warehouse, Sydney Road, Kilmore. This proved to be an extremely profitable investment as Kilmore had an important role in servicing the gold fields in the surrounding area. William was also astute enough to invest directly in gold mines in the Reedy Creek area, and these also provided him with a very significant return on his investment.

Meanwhile, in the late 1840s, Charles Ball and his nephew W. H. Welch arrived in Melbourne. They were attracted to the alluvial gold fields at Vaughan, near Castlemaine. They were fairly successful, finding enough gold to allow Ball to send his wife "home" to England for a holiday. When news of Mrs. Ball's trip spread

through Vaughan, the town's housewives inundated her with orders for fabrics and fashions unprocurable in the Australian bush. She returned to the colony in 1855 laden with the ordered goods as well as some extras for sale. From this sprang the idea of setting up a drapery shop in Vaughan, which they did in 1855. So Ball and Welch switched from digging to retailing.

The drapery shop grew quickly and they moved to larger premises in Castlemaine in 1862 and established a branch in Carlton in 1874. The Carlton branch was a large three-storied premises with frontages to Faraday, Drummond and University streets, the site now occupied by the La Mama theatre.

On 12 November 1879, William Kerr's wife Agnes died. William sold his drapery store and took himself and his family (now expanded to include five living daughters and two sons) to Melbourne. In Melbourne, he bought a share of the Ball and Welch business, and when it became a public company in the early 1880s, William became its Chairman and Managing Director. He also became the owner of several thousand shares in Ball & Welch Ltd., valued at around £13 each.

William was in need of a wife to help him look after his young family. On 17 March 1881 he married Margaret Logan at the home of his good friends Mr. and Mrs. John Binnie in Asling Street, Brighton. Margaret was considerably younger than William, being born in Mossend, Lanarkshire, Scotland in 1844. The family set up house in Brighton.

As well as his investment in Ball & Welch Ltd. and his gold mining investments, William invested in a broad range of companies including the Metropolitan Bank and the Melbourne Tram and Omnibus Company. He also lent money via mortgages at quite attractive interest rates. These investments all paid off, and in the mid-1880s, William was able to move the family to much more salubrious accommodation at St. James Park in Coppin Grove, Hawthorn, overlooking the Yarra River and the city.

Unfortunately, Williams's health deteriorated through the 1880s, and despite what was supposed to be a restorative trip "home" to Scotland, he died on 16 January 1890 and was buried at the Boroondara Cemetery, Kew. He left his wife and, by now, twelve children extremely well off. His will provided an annuity for his wife of £400, and £50 per year for each child. When his wife died, or re-married, the remaining funds in the estate were to be divided

equally between his surviving children. His estate was assessed for probate at £38,546, an amount that today would be worth between 15 and 30 million dollars!

What happened to Ball and Welch? They opened their landmark store in Flinders Street in 1899. This store was one of the first in Melbourne to erect outdoor neon advertising, reportedly visible from the Dandenong Ranges. A Sydney branch operated between 1913 and 1924. The Castlemaine store was finally closed in 1941. With suburban retail expansion in the 1960s, branches were opened in Frankston, Camberwell, and at Eastland and Southland shopping centres. In its heyday, the Ball & Welch department store was Melbourne's leading family draper. At one time 26 assistants were devoted to the sale of lace alone.

The upmarket department store company Georges bought Ball and Welch in 1970, but closed it down in 1976 in response to declining profits.

The Flinders Street building still exists.



The Ball and Welch Building in Flinders Street.

But it's only a façade!

4 A Knox versus Sir Johanne Bjelke-Petersen?

William Edward Knox was my second cousin once removed. He was born in Kew on 14 December 1927 to Edward (1899–1966) and Bessie Alice (1900–1978) Knox.

We know little of William's early life. His father, Edward, a Civil Engineer, moved the family from Melbourne to Manly and then Pymble in NSW before 1937, but William's biography states that he was educated at Melbourne High School. As Melbourne High has never provided boarding facilities, where did he live? There were a number of his relatives living in and around Melbourne, and it is possible that lived with one of them.

We next find William (now aged 22) in the 1949 Electoral Roll for the electorate of Nundah, Queensland. He was living in Northgate, a suburb about 10 km north-east of Brisbane, and listed his occupation as student. At this time he was credited, together with Jim (later Sir James) Killen with the establishment of the Young Liberal movement in Queensland. William served as the State President of that organisation from 1953 to 1956. He subsequently moved up to become a member of the Executive of the Queensland Liberal Party, holding the office of Vice-President from 1956 until 1957.

In 1956, William married Doris Alexia Ross (~1929–2014). They established homes at a number of locations in the Nundah area and produced four children. William worked as a company secretary and company director, becoming a Fellow of both the Chartered Institute of Secretaries (FCIS) and the Australian Institute of Management (FAIM).

On 24 April 1957 the incumbent Premier of Queensland, Vince Gair, was expelled from the ALP on the basis of his support for "left-wing, communist trade unions", and he and his supporters formed the Queensland Labor Party (QLP). On 12 June 1957, the Lieutenant Governor ordered Parliament to reassemble. Shortly after 10:30 pm that night, Treasurer Ted Walsh moved that supply be granted to the Gair QLP government. The remnants of the ALP, now led by Jack Duggan, crossed the floor and voted against the Government. Sensing his long-denied chance had come, the leader of the Country Party, Frank Nicklin, instructed the Coalition to block supply as well, bringing the Gair government down.

William was nominated by the Liberal Party to stand for the Queensland Legislative Assembly in the seat of Nundah. He re-

placed the sitting member, James Hadley, who had defected to the Labor Party after holding the seat for the Liberals for two years. In the election held on 3 August 1957, William defeated Hadley and began what was to become a long and illustrious career in Queensland politics.

In December 1965, William was appointed Minister for Transport, a position he filled until December 1971.

In 1968, Frank Nicklin retired and was succeeded Jack Pizzey. When Pizzey died just six months later, Johannes Bjelke-Petersen was elected as the leader of the Country Party and hence became the Premier of Queensland. Thus began one of the most interesting periods ever in Queensland politics.

In 1971, William Knox became Deputy Leader of the Parliamentary Liberal Party, a role he was to fill until 1976. Throughout this time, Gordon Chalk led a Liberal Party in Coalition with the Country Party. But given the numerical dominance of the Country Party, gained to a large extent by a blatant gerrymander of the electoral boundaries, the Liberals were very much the junior partners.

As deputy leader, William was promoted in the Cabinet from Minister for Transport to Minister for Justice and Attorney-General, leading this portfolio until August 1976.

The State election held in 1974 had been as much a contest between the coalition partners as it was a fight against Labor. Chalk had hopes that he would become premier. Although the Liberals won thirty seats with a primary vote of 31.09%, the Nationals claimed thirty-nine seats with just 27.88%. From this point, Chalk's enthusiasm waned. Relations with Bjelke-Petersen deteriorated, especially over the premier's breach of convention in 1975, when he filled a Labor Senate vacancy with his own appointment rather than the Labor Party's nominee (a gentleman by the name of Mal Colston, but that's another story). Chalk's decision to vote against Bjelke-Petersen's strategy in the parliament separated him from many of his party colleagues and eroded his authority. In 1976 Bjelke-Petersen announced the abolition of death duties, against Chalk's specific opposition. Chalk retired on 12 August 1976. He was succeeded as Liberal leader, and hence Treasurer and Deputy Premier of Queensland, by William Knox.

William continued in these roles until 9 October 1978 when he was defeated in an election for Liberal Party leader by the then Minister for Health, Llew Edwards. Edwards was to hold the position

for the next five years.

William was appointed Knight Bachelor by the Queen on 26 July 1979 in recognition of his service to Queensland.

During the next five years, Sir William was a Minister in the coalition government, holding the portfolios of Health from December 1978 until December 1980 and Employment and Labour Relations from December 1980 until August 1983.

In 1983, Edwards lost the Liberal leadership to Terry White, largely as a result of disagreements about the way Bjelke-Petersen and his Country Party were running the state. The Premier was violently opposed to White and informed him that he would no longer be appointed Deputy Premier and Treasurer. White responded by leading the Liberals out of the coalition and onto the cross benches. White never got the opportunity to lead the party, as Bjelke-Petersen suspended parliament for the nine weeks until the next election in order to avoid a no-confidence motion.

At the subsequent election, the Liberals were routed, losing 14 seats to leave them with just eight members in the Assembly. The inevitable spill of the leadership of the Liberal Party saw White lose his position to Sir William Knox.

Discontent with the Premier's decisions and style had been gathering for some time within both public and party forums. The first bombshells coming from the wide-ranging Commission of Inquiry into police corruption chaired by Tony Fitzgerald were the final straw. By the middle of 1987, his position was rapidly becoming untenable; ministers were openly opposing him in Cabinet meetings—something which had been almost unthinkable for most of his tenure. Despite staging a hell-bent rear-guard action, Bjelke-Petersen lost the party leadership to Mike Ahern at a meeting of the party that Bjelke-Petersen did not attend. Ahern informed the Governor that 47 of his Country Party colleagues (a majority in the 81 seat house) supported him. Sir William Knox also visited the Governor to tell him that the Premier did not have the support of the Liberal party. After a stalemate lasting a few days, Bjelke-Petersen finally resigned on Tuesday 1 December 1987.

In January 1988, under pressure from the party to introduce a younger leadership that might win back the conservative vote, Sir William Knox tendered his resignation as Liberal Leader. Fittingly, the announcement was made at a conference of the Young Liberals on the Gold Coast.

Under Ahern (1987–89) and Russell Cooper (1989), the Nationals were unable to overcome the damage from the revelations from the Fitzgerald Enquiry about the massive corruption in the Bjelke-Petersen government. In the election held on 2 December 1989, Labor finally overcame the Bjelkemandar and handed the Nationals the worst defeat of a sitting government since responsible government was introduced in Queensland. Sir William Knox lost his seat to the Labor Party candidate Phil Heath

Thus ended one of the longest periods in government by a single party. Sir William Knox had held his seat in parliament for a remarkable 32 years. He had served as a minister for almost 18 consecutive years, a record of unbroken ministerial service exceeded by only four members. He was the only member of parliament to have served for the entire non-Labor period from 1957 to 1989.

In his retirement, Sir William, now 62, pursued some of the life-long interests that his parliamentary duties had curtailed. These included reading, golf and bowls. He continued his interests in the Boy Scouts Association, Outward Bound, and the local cricket, rugby league and bowling clubs.

Sir William had been in State and national leadership roles in the St. John Ambulance organisation for 17 years and was Chairman of the State Council of St. John Ambulance from 1983 to 1995. He had been a Member of the Order of St. John of Jerusalem since 1986 and in 1995 was created a Knight of St. John (KSJI).

A state funeral was held for Sir William Knox in Brisbane on 28 Sep 2001.

An insight into Sir William's straightforward approach came in 2005 when Jeff Wall, a senior advisor to Ministers in the Federal and Queensland Governments, published an article on "*Why Sir John Kerr was always a tricky proposition for governor general*". In that article he recalls that:

I remember as if it occurred yesterday being told by my then boss, the Queensland Attorney-General, William Edward Knox, that Kerr was a bad choice because he was, as the Attorney-General bluntly put it, a "pisspot".

Well said, that man!

5 Burton and Knox, Coachbuilders

When we left Thomas and Isabella Knox, they had just been married following their emigration. As expected, they wasted no time in starting a family, and by 1874 Isabella had borne seven children, all but one of whom survived to at least middle age.

Thomas always stated that his occupation was “joiner”, but in 1883, he joined with a gentleman by the name of Burton to form the firm of Burton and Knox, Coach Builders. A coach building firm of Burton and Sons had been operating from Elizabeth Street in the City for some years, but whether there was any connection between the two is not known. The new firm set up business in Burwood Road, Hawthorn and was the first to begin a significant coach building business on that side of the Yarra River. The business proved extremely profitable and grew rapidly, requiring movement to new and larger premises, also in Burwood Road within their first year of operation.

Burton and Knox produced conveyances of the very highest standard and they exhibited their work at every opportunity. One of their earliest reported successes was at the 1884 Victorian Agricultural Show, held in Heidelberg, where they were awarded an extra prize for a “Double Seated Buggy”. This was the beginning of a progression of awards from agricultural shows all around Victoria, including many of “best in show” from The Royal Show in Melbourne. In 1888 they exhibited several of their products at the Melbourne Centennial International Exhibition (the exhibition for which the Exhibition Buildings in Melbourne were specially built), winning a number of awards.

The quality of their workmanship can be judged from an article published in *The Australasian Coachbuilder and Saddler* on September 10, 1890, titled *Australasian Industries: Messrs. Burton and Knox's Carriageworks, Burwood Road, Hawthorn* that states

The firm under notice have never pandered to the rage for cheapness, a mistake so many manufacturers are apt to fall into, and which invariably brings about results detrimental to their business, but, on the contrary, have obtained an enviable reputation for sound materials and thorough workmanship. It is apparent to anyone looking over this establishment that no shoddy (sic) is used, but

on the other hand, all the material seen is of the highest quality indispensable to the construction of such vehicles as we see in the showroom, and which it would be difficult matter indeed to surpass in any workshop.

Upon entering the showroom, one sees conveyances of all descriptions, kept in spick-and-span condition, ready for immediate delivery upon a sale being effected. . . .

. . . The successes which have invariably attended Messrs. Burton and Knox at the Melbourne Centennial and other Exhibitions where they have exhibited speaks volumes for the high standard of their workmanship, and no better proof could be wanted as to the high esteem in which they are regarded by the public than the fact that even during this present time of depression the firm are well supplied with orders.



Thomas Knox (1858–1946)

Thomas's eldest son, Thomas (my great-grandfather), was also a coach builder, and we know that he worked for Burton and Knox in those early years. However, in late 1885 Thomas moved to Bunbury, Western Australia, where he purchased an existing coach building firm in Stirling Street from a William George Floyd on that gentleman's death.

Thomas's wife Alice (née Adkins (1862–1943)), whom he married in 1885, joined him in Bunbury in 1886 following the birth of their first child, Charles William (1886–1945). Their next child was still born in 1897, and Edward Thomas (1899–1955) my grandfather, was born in Bunbury on 4 November 1899.

I have speculated on the reasons why Thomas took his young family to Bunbury, leaving behind what appeared to be a flourishing business in Hawthorn. Perhaps the reduced demand for buggies and wagons as a result of the introduction of the motor car might have reduced business to the level where it could no longer support Thomas the son as well as his father. However, the motor car did not make its first appearance on the streets of Melbourne until 1900 (when there were a total of 20 motor cars

registered in Australia), by which time Thomas was long gone. It seems more likely that the reduction in trade was the result of the great depression that hit Melbourne in the early to mid-1890s. Victoria, and Melbourne in particular, was hit harder than any other area of Australia, so it made sense for Thomas to try his luck in far-off Western Australia.

Thomas appears to have made a success of his undertaking in Bunbury. In late 1900, he put the business up for lease and returned to Victoria. But rather than return to Hawthorn, he set up another coach building enterprise in Tatura, near Shepparton. He stayed there until 1903. (There is an entry for a Thomas William Knox, coachsmith, living in Warracknabeal in the Electoral Rolls of 1905, but as there is no accompanying entry for Alice, it seems unlikely to be our Thomas.)

Meanwhile, Burton and Knox had survived the depressions and were going from strength to strength. On 14 July 1900 they announced the opening of a new showroom and repair shop at the premises previously occupied by C. W. Reeves and Co. at 106 Blinders Lane, Melbourne.

BURTON & KNOX,
COACHBUILDERS.

ESTABLISHED 20 YEARS.

Factory,
 155 to 161
BURWOOD ROAD,
HAWTHORN.

Show Rooms and Repair Shop,
 106
FLINDERS LANE
MELBOURNE
 (Near Russell Street).

ESTIMATES GIVEN FOR REPAIRS.

Specialty, ABBOTT BUGGY.

TELEPHONE 831 (MELBOURNE).

Large Stock of NEW and SECONDHAND VEHICLES at Remarkably LOW PRICES.

Advertisement in the Melbourne Times, 17 December 1903

In June 1905, they moved to a larger, more salubrious showroom at 130 Exhibition Street, Melbourne. They remained there until around April 1908, when they moved their showrooms back to Burwood Road.

This last move was probably the result of the growing influence of the motor car—by 1910 there were more than 5,000 registered in Australia—on the carriage trade. This would have had a consider-

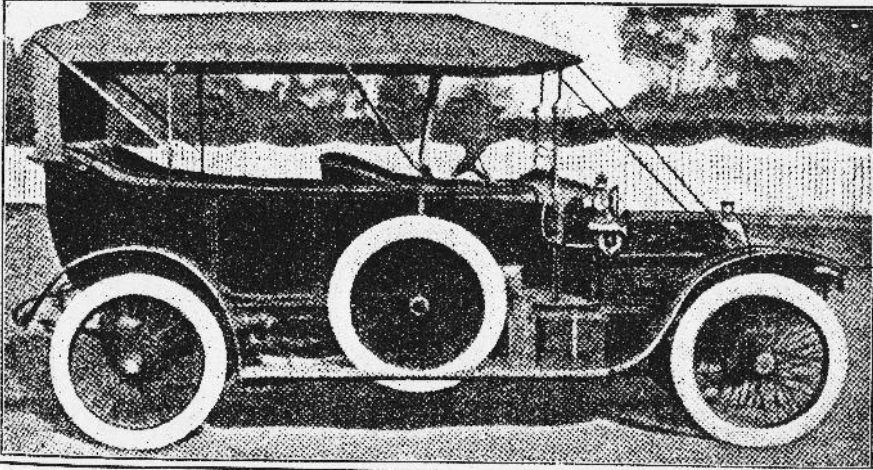
able effect on firms like Burton and Knox who catered for the luxury end of the market.

By the end of 1908, Thomas Jr. was back in Melbourne and living in Mary Street, Kew. We can safely assume that Thomas Jr. rejoined Burton and Knox. His father, Thomas, was now approaching 80 and suffering from heart problems. He died from cardiac failure in November 1910. His wife Isabella died in September 1912.

Burton and Knox continued operating in Burwood Road until at least 1927. Over the final 15 years however, the volume of their advertising had steadily reduced and they no longer participated in the agricultural show circuit. They attempted to take advantage of the growing presence of the motor car by offering repairs and trimming services as well as building bodies for the bare-bones chassis that was normally delivered by the car makers of that time.

BURTON & KNOX Tel. Haw. 795 Estab. 35 Years
- CARRIAGE & MOTOR BUILDERS -
189-95 BURWOOD RD., HAWTHORN

Highest Awards: Melbourne Centennial and Adelaide Exhibitions. Four First
Awards: Dunedin and Launceston Exhibitions, 1890-92. Repairs and
Renovating at lowest rates. Awarded 42 Prizes at the Royal Agricultural
Shows. Motors Repainted and Trimmed. Repairs of all descriptions.



Advertisement in the Melbourne Directory for 1920

While I have no direct evidence, it seems probable that Burton and Knox ceased to exist soon after their last advertisement appeared in September 1927. More and more motor car manufacturers were building bodies for their cars, removing that business from

the coach builders. Thomas was nearly 70, and suffering from high blood pressure, so it was probably a good time to retire.

Thomas died of kidney failure in September 1946 having outlived his wife Alice by three years.