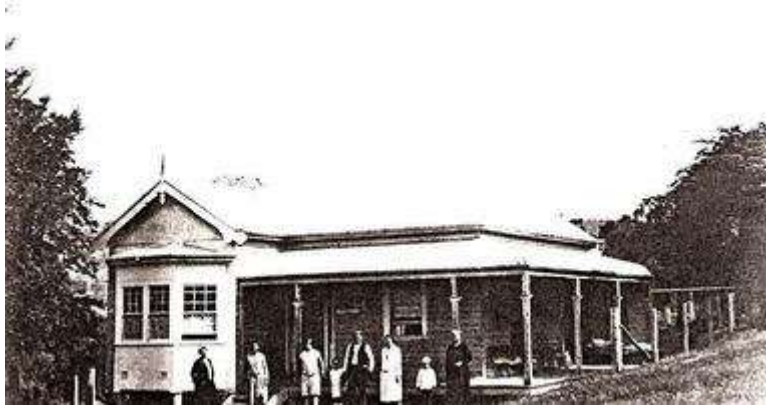


#52Ancestors 2020 Week 31 Large

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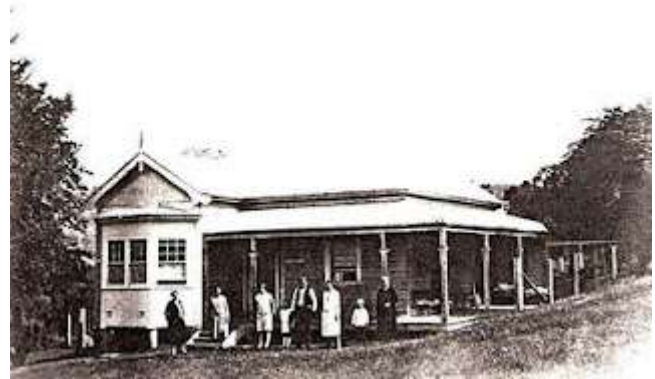
#52 Ancestors 2020

Week 31 - Large

Growing up, I was one of six children, which was regarded as a large family in the 50s and 60s. More typically of the early years of the 20th century, my father was also one of 6 and my mother one of 8. Going back another generation, families were much larger. Here are my maternal great grandparents, who had 13 children and 24 grandchildren.

Anthony and Charlotte (Mason) married in Muswellbrook in 1865, when he was 25, and she 22. Their “honeymoon” was spent riding their horses and several head of cattle over the Liverpool Range to the land Anthony had taken up at Gaspard, near Quirindi. Their property, called Lowestoft, became their lifelong home and the birthplace of all their children.

Robert Whitten was born on 17 January 1866. He was known as “Bob” or “Fernie”. He married Marion McGregor in 1896 and they had two daughters, Iris and Eileen. The family spent many years in New Zealand, but Bob returned to Quirindi on his retirement and died there on 3 September 1951.



Lowestoft in 1914 - the centre of family life

Jane “Jennie” was born on 3 Feb 1868. She married Samuel Betts in 1903, and they had two daughters called Winice and Mavis. She died on 11 April 1962.

Edward “Ted” born 12 July 1869. Ted did not marry and spent all his life on the land at Lowestoft. He developed a passion for astronomy and enjoyed educating his nephews about the night sky. He died on 24 July 1938 and is buried beside his parents at Wallabadah.

Frederick “Fred” was born 21 January 1871. He married his childhood sweetheart Annie Newcombe in 1902 but she died the following year shortly after the birth of their daughter. Nine years later he married Josephine Morgan, and they had 7 children together – Keith, Jackie, Ruth, Connie, Royce, Gwynne (my mother) and Joan.



Robert "Ferne" Whitten

Henry “Harry” was born on 23 October 1872. Like Ted, he never married and stayed on the farm all his life. My mother remembered him as a shy man, who always had a lolly in his pocket for the children. He died on 3 October 1943.

Anthony “Tony” was born 6 July 1874. He married Hilda Dawson in 1913 and they had 3 children, Victor, Doris and Beryl. Like his brothers, Tony was also a farmer.

Eliza, known as Lucie, was born on 6 November 1876. She never married. She died in Sydney on 13 April 1937. Little is known about her – it would be good to know why she lived away from home as a single woman. Perhaps she had a profession?



Jenny and Sam on their wedding day

Richard and **Joseph** were born on 18 May 1878. Richard died aged one month, on 6 Jun 1878. Joseph lived until 5 September 1880. They are buried in the orchard at Lowestoft.

Charlotte “Lottie” was born 21 August 1879. She fell in love with her cousin, Albert Moore, but her parents didn't approve and sent her away. She killed herself by hanging from her bedpost on 9 December 1906.



Ted with his telescope - his mother and nephew Lawrence Betts

Albert was born 25 April 1881 and he trained as a Methodist Minister. While he was studying in the United States he met and married Caroline Steere on 10 April 1918 in Maine. They had a daughter, Winice, who died at birth, and a son, Maurice. Albert died on 2 April 1949 and is buried in Limerick, Maine.



Alfred was born on 5 March 1883. He also trained as a Methodist Minister and went travelling with his brother Albert to Europe and the USA. In his case, it seems that his parents were also interfering in his love life, trying to keep him from Ethel Cock, whom he married on his return in 1914. They had five children, Phyllis, Lloyd, Wesley, Beth and Olwen. Alf died on 5 Aug 1958.

Fred and Josie with Keith, Ruth, Connie and baby Royce in 1921

Beatrice was born on 7 October 1885, twenty years after her parent's marriage. She married Charles Betts, known as Bill (brother to her sister Jennie's husband) on 7 November 1911. They had two children, Daphne and Lawrence.



Harry and his dog, Roger

This was a large and tight-knit family. Except for Albert and Alf, all the men were farmers on this land or nearby, and Lowestoft was the centre of family activity. The grandchildren who lived elsewhere came for holidays and they stayed close all of their long lives.



Tony and Hilda on their wedding day



Lucie Whitten



Charlotte "Lottie" Whitten



Albert and Caroline on their wedding day



Alf and Ethel on their wedding day



Beatrice Whitten