



# Captain George McKAY [1801-1883] & Mary WILLIAMS

Married 5 September 1834  
in Liverpool, Lancashire

Departed 21 January 1838  
Arrived 2 May 1838 at Port Misery on the

## Canton

### Children of George & Mary:

William (1836-1862)

George (1837-1897) m Elizabeth YEO

Charles (1838-1838)

Elizabeth (1839-?) m Charles MERRET

Hugh (1842-1848)

Griffith (1844-1846)

Griffith (1847-1918) m Agnes FERGUSSON

Mary (1850-1917) m Marshall BRADDOCK

## *Master mariner finds his family a new home port*

In 2003, a group from the Flinders University under the guidance of Susan Briggs was undertaking an archaeological dig at Lots 22 and 23 in Jane Street, Port Adelaide, in the hope of finding significant evidence of the lives of the two families known to have occupied houses there in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. One of these families was George McKay and his wife Mary and children.

They arrived on 2 May 1838 at Port Misery, which was primitive and not ready for the settlers who had to wait for surveying before land could be purchased. An elderly descendant believes the McKays initially lived in caves (more likely in the sand dunes). Land was sold initially at £1 per acre and George purchased Lot 23B in Jane Street in 1849 from Robert MacGeorge and owned it possibly until 1877. George had been regularly listed as a sail maker in *Port Adelaide Directories*, from 1844 until 1876 when his occupation was listed as Master Mariner. By 1850 George, Mary and five surviving children lived in Jane Street. The family was Anglican and worshiped at St. Paul's Church in Port Adelaide.

George over the years developed several partnerships with other early settlers purchasing boats that were used for transporting goods around the coast. The sea became a family affair and some of George's children were also involved in the shipping trade, owning and captaining various vessels.

George died on the 19 May 1883 after a short illness at his son's residence in Birkenhead. George's obituary in the *Adelaide Observer* stated:

*'We have to notice the death of Captain G. McKay, at the advanced age of 82 years. This gentleman was one of the oldest Portonians living, and a colonist of 45 years. For many years he was engaged in developing the coastal trade of the colony, and was succeeded by his son, Captain Griffiths McKay. He was a respected member of the society in which he lived, and will be mourned by a great many in Port Adelaide.'*



Archaeological dig in Jane Street, Pt Adelaide

From information provided by Wendy Takos,  
Captain George McKay's great-great granddaughter  
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