

Kate "Nurse" GRAHAM

Catherine GRAHAM was born in 1853, the sixth or seventh of 10 children born to John GRAHAM and Catherine née McKEE at Derrycreevy, Castleblayney, Co. Monaghan, Ireland.

Her brothers Samuel and William emigrated from Ireland in 1862 and made their home in New Zealand. 2 brothers, James and John remained in Ireland and another brother had died prior to 1883. Sisters Elizabeth and Mary Jane emigrated from Ireland in 1873. The Immigration record for Elizabeth shows that she was accompanied by her sister, Catherine. It would have been her younger sister Mary Jane who arrived with her. Mary Jane would have only been about 15 when she emigrated. Is this why the record is wrong?

Elizabeth married in 1875 in New Zealand and moved to Sydney with her husband and sister Mary Jane, arriving in Sydney from New Zealand between 1875-1877. Mary Jane married in January 1878 and died in October the same year from Gastroenteritis along with her newborn son.

Catherine, known as Kate, emigrated from Monaghan, Ireland to Auckland, New

Name of emigrant	Sex	Age				County	Occupation	NEW ZEALAND, by the Ship					REMARKS	
		Male	Female	Children	Infants			1	2	3	4	5		6
Families and Children														
John Graham	Male	64				Monaghan	Farmer							
Edith E	Female	58				"	"							
Mary Jane	Female	35				"	"							
Sarah E	Female	19				"	"							
David E	Male	18				"	"							
Total													7 39 139	
Thomas How	Male	26				Down	Farmer							
Susan C	Female	27				"	"							
Henry How	Male	28				Down	Farmer							
May J	Female	26				"	"							
John How	Male	4				"	"							
John How	Male	2				"	"							
Robert How	Male	23				Cornwall	Farmer							
Anna How	Female	23				"	"							
Lawson, Alex	Male	20				Armagh	"							
Mary Lawson	Female	20				"	"							
Maria Lawson	Female	8 1/2				"	"							
James McKinnis	Male	25				Armagh	"							
Blodwin McKinnis	Female	21				"	"							
Robert McKinnis	Male	1				"	"							
Total													6 9 2 1 1	

Zealand by the ship *Maraval* in 1879 with her parents, John, and Catherine and sisters Sarah Ellen and Maggie.

Kate, her parents, and sisters made their home with Elizabeth and Elizabeth's family in Crescent Street, Balmain in Sydney, Australia. Sarah Ellen died in 1881 and their mother of paralysis in 1883. Their father died in June 1885 in New

Zealand. His cause of death was accidental death by a tree falling on him.



Catherine started training as a nurse at Sydney Hospital on July 15th, 1881. In August 1882 she was sent to the Ophthalmia department which that year had moved to a separate site, Moorcliff House, in Millers Point. This was under the control of Dr. T Cecil Morgan. Catherine left in August 1885 to take up a position as matron at one of the Cottage Homes in Mittagong. ⁱⁱ

Sydney Hospital,
 Sept 15th 1885

Kate Graham
 Entered this
 Hospital as a probationer
 on the 15th of July 1881
 she received medical and
 surgical instruction
 Sept. 1882 was sent as
 second nurse to the
 Ophthalmic department -
 where she remained
 until the 1st of August
 1885. when she left -
 to accept the appointment


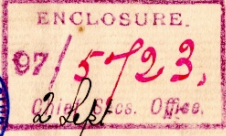
as Matron to a Cottage
 Home for the boarding
 out-of-state Children.
 R McKay
 Matron

This reference is from Rebecca McKay, Matron of Sydney Hospital and successor to Lucy Osborn, founder of Nightingale nursing in Australia and who left the hospital in 1884.

Nurse Graham has served for three years in the
 Ophthalmic Wards of the Sydney Hospital under
 my charge. I have always found her a most
 valuable nurse - very careful of her patients -
 perfectly trustworthy and reliable
 I very greatly regret losing her services. I have
 never had a fault to find with her during the
 whole time she was with me.

2. Sept. 1885. Cecil Morgan
 Hon. Ophth. Surgeon Sydney Hosp.

Nurse Graham
 I have much pleasure in
 sending you the testimonial you ask
 for. If you ever think I can assist
 you at any future time (if you should be
 seeking any appointment) I shall always
 be glad to do so for I have been extremely
 pleased with your care & attention in dis-
 charging your duties
 I hope you like your new appointment
 I am sorry to hear you were uncomfortable
 at Moorcliff
 Yrs faithfully
 Cecil Morgan

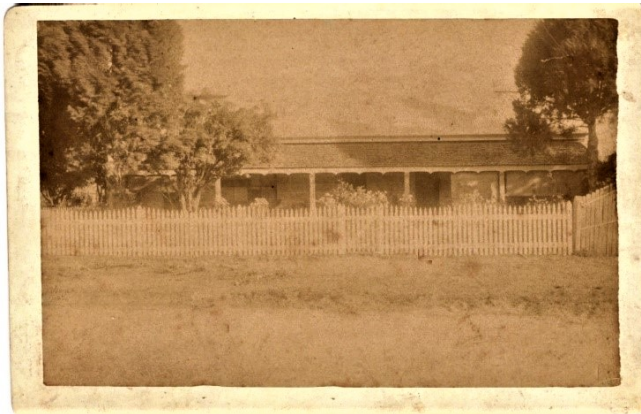
A letter and reference from Dr. T Cecil Morgan, Ophthalmia Surgeon at Sydney Hospital. Why was she uncomfortable at Moorcliff?

The Mittagong Cottage Homes were located around Mittagong. The first Cottage, in a rented house, was opened on March 21, 1885. They were established by the State Children's Relief Department. A short time later 6 more opened, including one for Ophthalmia (eye disease). Each cottage had around 20 children under the care of a matron.ⁱⁱⁱ

In 1886, a journalist visited the Cottage Homes.

Cottage Home No 3 is "situated some distance beyond the old iron works, and on the road, which leads from the town towards those works. It is far from Mittagong..... The "mother" in charge is unmarried but does not appear to be too young for the position she has been appointed to fill and there was sufficient about her and about the home to lead one to conclude that it was well conducted. She appears to have had considerable experience in the treatment of eye cases, and she has that pleasant countenance and tidy, plain, homely attire which are characteristic of a good nurse. The general aspect of the home was neat and clean, and the children-fifteen in number, there had been twenty the day previously-were in good condition. Most of them were suffering from ailments of various kinds-chiefly bad eyes-but they seemed to be progressing very favourably towards recovery and permanent health. All the children are waifs and strays of one kind or another but being, as far as could be seen, well looked after, they naturally have improved very much in appearance. Indeed, generally speaking, this home was much more like what its name implies, than an hospital, and yet the most severe of the cases which are treated in these cottage homes are sent to this one, and from it, the "mother" stated, drugs and other appliances for treating the ailments of children are sent to the other homes."^{iv} Apart from the defects which were noticed in the management of some of the cottage homes during the recent visits made to them they appear to have done a considerable amount of good, and with more supervision they should fully answer the purpose in view. The children are received by the State Children's Relief Board from the hospitals, the Benevolent Asylum, the Asylum at Randwick, and other sources, or they may be obtained, by the chief inspector, who periodically visits those institutions and selects such children as they pass in, and they are sent from Sydney to one or other of the cottage homes according to the ailments from which the children may be suffering and the treatment they require. In many instances the children are afflicted with chronic ophthalmia, spinal disease, running from the ears, or scrofula, or in one way or another are cripples. For instance, a letter was received from the resident medical officer of the Prince Alfred Hospital in the following terms: -" We have had here for over 130 days a poor lad named -, aged 10 years, suffering from curvature of the spine and deformity. He has been discharged several times by the committee, but I have persuaded them to let him remain longer. Now, however, he has to go. His father died in the hospital not long ago-an acrobat-and his only relation a brother in New Zealand, is utterly destitute. Could you kindly arrange to do something for the boy?.....Arrangements were then made for him to go to the principal home at Mittagong, where he will remain until he is convalescent, and then he will be removed to one of the other homes, and finally boarded out. The nurse in charge of this home has had three and a-half years' training in ophthalmic Cases at Moorcliff Eye Hospital, under the late Dr. Cecil Morgan, and under Dr. Evans. "Whenever bad eye cases occur in one or other of the cottage homes they are sent to this nurse, or, if operations are necessary, into hospital. She visits the other homes, when it is requisite, she should do so, to treat the eyes, and from her the other nurses are expected to obtain lotions. Three of the other nurses, it is said, have had charge of hospital divisions in institutions for the care of children, and were,

in consequence of this, selected for the work in connection with the cottage homes, but they have not had the special training to which the nurse first mentioned can point. So useful does she appear to have been that it is said ophthalmic cases which medical men were not treating successfully have been brought in from several districts, and she has cured them.” The Cottage “in the township of Mittagong is used for the least unhealthy of the children, as it was not thought desirable to place children suffering from a complaint such as ophthalmia in the midst of population. As necessity requires, the children are moved from one home to another, one nurse-she who superintends the home in the neighbourhood of the Fitzroy Ironworks-usually having the worst cases of ophthalmia under her charge, as she is the most experienced in dealing with them.”^v



Nattai, Mittagong.
Parkinson's Hotel and Premises.

By order of R. H. Semple, Esq., Official Assignee in the Insolvent Estate of George Parkinson.

MR. J. E. STAFF will sell by auction, on **TUESDAY, June 16th**, at the premises, All the right, title, and interest of the Official Assignee to the said property, consisting of a new and substantial hotel, having a stone front and flagging. There is a spacious ball-room, parlour, sitting-room, 6 bed-rooms, tap-room, large kitchen, servant's room, and workalop. The land is described as portion of Bradley's 100 acres, containing 1 rood and 6 perches, bounded on the north by the Great Southern Road, commencing at the north-west corner of lot 3, having a line bearing south 187 feet to Nattai-street, bearing east 66 feet, and north 180 feet, to the point of commencement.

The terms at sale, which takes place before the sale of the furniture, &c.

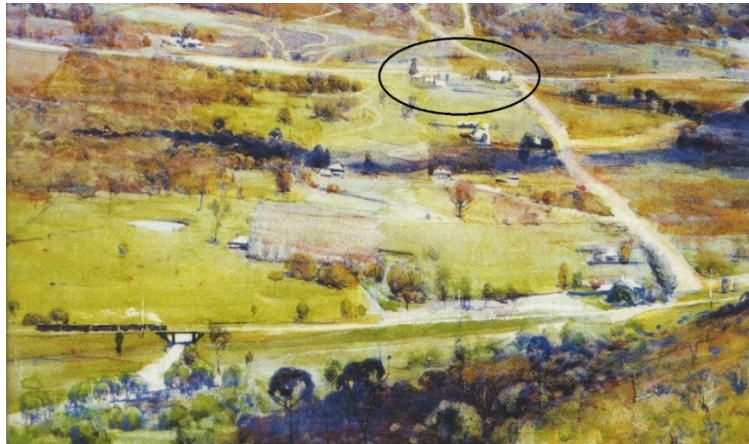
The Auctioneer would solicit the special attention of capitalists to this opportunity of a sure investment, being the rapid improvement and extension of the town of Nattai, in which are the iron works in full order.

Cottage Home No 3. My photo. Formerly the Lancashire Hotel and Miners' Cottage then renamed the Parkinson's Hotel.^{vi vii}

Alongside Cottage No 3 was what is now known as Minnikin Lodge formerly the Prince of Wales Hotel. It is situated at the corner of Lyell St and Hume Highway, Mittagong. It was built by William Bradley, Goulburn Brewer, in 1837.^{viii} By 1889 this building was Cottage No 5.^{ix}



On January 16, 1891 Kate married John William SMITH. in Blandville, now Henley, NSW where her sister Margaret, known as Maggie, and her husband Walter Tyrrell had made their home. They were possibly married in St Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Gladesville.^x John was born in about 1855 in Helsingborg, Sweden. At the time of their marriage, he was an Able Seaman working on the Scottish merchant vessel *Falls of Earn*.^{xi xii}



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From the "VALE OF MITTAGONG" Arthur Streeton 1892 showing Cottage Homes Nos 3 and 5 (circled). The original painting is in the National Gallery of Victoria.

In around 1892 Maggie, Kate's sister, and Walter, Margaret's husband, also made the move to Mittagong. Walter worked as an orchardist and dairyman and established a dairy farm located close to the Cottage Home No 3.

The first Cottage Homes were in the Mittagong township but in 1896 further cottages were added at the Southwood Estate on Bong Bong Road, which was purchased by the NSW Government for the State Children's Relief Department.^{xiv}



BEFORE FIRE: Children of No 3 Cottage Home with Nurse Graham (centre) and visitors, 1903. Photo supplied by BDH&FHS

The Late Fire at Mittagong.

An inquiry was held at No. 1 Cottage Home, Mittagong, on Monday touching the fire which took place on Tuesday morning the previous week at the No. 3 Cottage Home, in charge of Nurse Kate Graham. Mr. A. D. Badgery, District Coroner, presided.

The first witness called was Eva Elizabeth Penson, an inmate of the late Cottage Home. She was sleeping in a back room, on the morning of the 6th, and at about 2.30 a.m. was awakened by a crackling noise. She got out of bed and saw a fire in the ceiling of the kitchen. She told one of the girls, and then called the matron, Miss Graham, who came at once, and threw some water on the fire. Witness then went to another ward and carried out two little crippled children to a place of safety. She then went back and woke two little boys from a room in which she had been sleeping. By this time the fire had extended from the kitchen building to the main house. She did not know how the fire originated. All lights and fires were put out when they went to bed. There was no fire on the floor of the kitchen when she first went in. There had been no big fires made on Monday, and what fires there had been were out by 6 o'clock. She went to bed at half-past 7. When she got up she found all the outside doors locked as usual.

Kate Graham deposed that she was in charge of No. 3 Cottage Home, which position she had held for 21 years. She remembered Tuesday morning last, 6th inst. She was awakened at 2.30 p.m. by Eva Penson, who called out "Matron the house is on fire." She went out at once to the kitchen, and saw through a hole in the ceiling a fire in the loft. It was burning furiously then. She threw two buckets of water at the fire, but to no effect. She endeavored to get up the stairs to the fire but was prevented owing to the great heat. She then turned her attention to the children, and with the help of Eva Penson got them all out safely. She had not the least idea how the fire originated. There had only been one fire during the day, in a very small stove. This was put out at half-past 6. To her knowledge there were no matches or chemicals kept in the store-room above the kitchen. There was not a wax match in the house. All the doors were locked when she came out. The roof of the room in which the fire started was of galvanised iron. There had been no fires outside that day. She went to bed herself at about 10 p.m., but prior to this, as was her custom, she first went round and saw that all lights were out. The room over the kitchen was always kept locked, and no one could get to it from the outside. There had been a fire under the copper in the room adjoining the kitchen that day, but there was a good fireplace, and it had a chimney of its own. It would be impossible for this fire to

"The 1908 annual report of the State Children's Relief Board contained details about 8 cottages that existed at that time at Mittagong. In 1908, No 3 Cottage was the Ophthalmic Home for Children." ^{xvi}

The location is presumed to be at the Southwood Estate. Was Nurse Graham working there?

On February 6, 1906, No 3 Cottage Home was destroyed by fire

but there was a good fireplace, and it had a chimney of its own. It would be impossible for this fire to get to the store. The kitchen chimney above the flue had not been swept for about two years.

Walter Tyrell, a dairy farmer, who resided a short distance from the home, deposed that his wife woke him at about half-past 2 and said there was a big blaze out in front, and at the same time he heard some girls calling out fire. He came over, and found the back part of the building well alight. All the children were in front of the house on the flower beds. It was then useless to try and save the building, but they saved some articles of furniture from the front room.

At the conclusion of the evidence the coroner said that everything appeared to have been in order at the home, and the Matron appeared to have done her duty. The evidence had failed to disclose the origin of the fire, and he must therefore return an open verdict.

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In 1914, the State Children's Relief Board reported that the Ophthalmic Cottage had been relocated from Mittagong that year to a location closer to Sydney. Kate Graham would have been aged about 62. She had dedicated over thirty years of her life to nursing.

On January 8, 1915 in the Robertson Advocate it was reported by the building committee of the Mittagong Municipal Council that during 1914 fourteen new buildings had been erected, one by Nurse Graham for £420^{xvii}

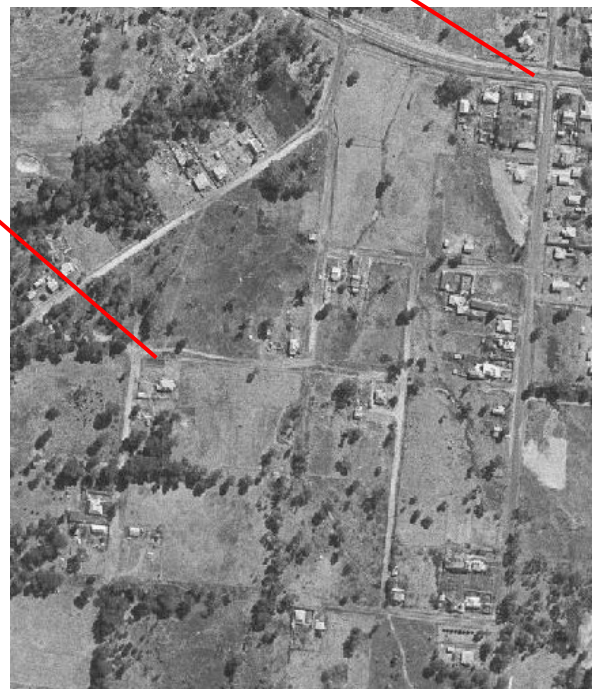
The land Kate owned was bordered by Hood (originally Berrima), Richard, Thomas, and Elizabeth Streets-Section 14 -Lots 1-16 on the map right. A house built on this land, on the corner of Richard and Hood Streets, was "Derrycreevy", the home of her sister Maggie and Maggie's husband Walter Tyrrell. It faced Mittagong with the back of the house in Richard Street. The house which Kate built and which she named "Grahamville" was built further down the block towards Mittagong. Maggie and Walter owned the land highlighted in orange and leased the land highlighted in yellow.^{xviii}



Derrycreevy. My photo.



Minnikin Lodge^{xix}



In 1917 Elizabeth, older sister of Kate and Maggie, moved to the Southern Highlands from Sydney with her 2 youngest sons, Sydney, and Blayne. She had been widowed in 1905. She purchased a property at Braemar.

On October 2, 1918 Kate's husband died from Chronic Nephritis at their home in Berrima Street. He was buried at Fitzroy Cemetery, now known as Welby General Cemetery.

On October 10, 1925, Kate gifted her land to her sister and brother-in-law, Margaret and Walter Tyrrell and her Great Nephew, John Boyd, who, at 9, was living with his Grandparents after the death of his father in 1922.

Kate died on 10 Sep 1931. She was buried on 12 Sep 1931 with her husband in Fitzroy (Welby) General Cemetery, Welby in the Presbyterian Section, row 7, plot 2.



NURSE GRAHAM.
The death took place on 10th September of Mrs. K. Smith at her residence, "Grahamville," Mittagong. The deceased lady was well known in Mittagong and the surrounding district as Nurse Graham. She arrived in Mittagong forty-six years ago to take up duty as ophthalmic nurse and senior matron at the Cottage Homes, which position she occupied for thirty-two years. Mrs. Walter Tyrrell, of Mittagong, is the sole surviving sister.

The funeral took place at Fitzroy cemetery on Saturday afternoon, Rev. G. Logan officiating at the graveside, Mr. G. Beavan had charge of the arrangements.

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In Memory of

JOHN WILLIAM SMITH

DIED 2ND OCTOBER 1918

AGED 63 YEARS

KATIE NURSE GRAHAM

BELoved WIFE OF THE ABOVE

DIED 9TH SEPT 1930

AGED 78 YEARS

I would like to thank Tim McCartney for his help in researching the story.

ⁱ Australian Journal of Ophthalmology 1984: 12: 5-14. RONALD F. LOWE MD, FRACO

ⁱⁱ The history of the Sydney Hospital from 1811 to 1911, J. Frederick Watson, University of New South Wales, 1964

ⁱⁱⁱ <https://www.findandconnect.gov.au/ref/nsw/biogs/NE01153b.htm>

^{iv} Sydney Morning Herald (NSW: 1842 - 1954), Wednesday 20 January 1886, page 9

^v Sydney Morning Herald (NSW: 1842 - 1954), Saturday 30 January 1886, page 16

^{vi} Life behind the bar: inns and hotels in the Southern Highlands 1824 to 1924 / Shylie Brown

^{vii} Sydney Morning Herald (NSW 1842 - 1954), Saturday 13 June 1868, page 9

^{viii} Southern Highlands story / John McColgan 1995

^{ix} Evening News (Sydney, NSW: 1869 - 1931), Saturday 29 May 1897, page 9

^x NSW Marriage Registration Ref No 1891/7047.

^{xi} England & Wales Merchant Navy Crew Lists 1861-1913

^{xii} nla.obj-143095849-1

^{xiii} Arthur Streeton/1892. National Gallery of Victoria

^{xiv} <https://www.findandconnect.gov.au/ref/nsw/biogs/NE01153b.htm>

^{xv} Bowral Free Press (NSW: 1901 - 1906), Wednesday 14 February 1906, page 2

<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article112417596>

^{xvi} <https://www.findandconnect.gov.au/ref/nsw/biogs/NE01153b.htm>

^{xvii} Robertson Advocate (NSW: 1894 - 1923), Friday 8 January 1915, page 2

^{xviii} Mittagong Rate Books- Berrima District Historical & Family History Society Inc

^{xix} Nattai from above-portal.spatial.nsw.gov.au

^{xx} Southern Mail (Bowral, NSW: 1889 - 1954), Friday 18 September 1931, page 5

^{xxi} Frances Cashman-Southern Highlands Cemetery Register Team

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