CHILDREN of LYDIA SMITH (nee MANTHORPE)

People

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My great grandfather Walter Thomas SMITH was one of the sons of Lydia MANTHORPE and James SMITH. Lydia and James were married in January 1838 in Gorleston Suffolk, Lydia being a daughter of William MANTHORPE & Hannah READ.
From census records I know that Lydia and James had the following children, all born in Great Yarmouth Norfolk: Maria (born circa 1838), James (c 1839), George (c1841), Frederic (c1844), Marston (c1846), Arthur (c1848), Walter (1851), Horatio (c1854), Edward (1858), Alfred (c1860), and Alberta (c1865). James' occupation was variously stated as being painter/plumber, painter/journeyman, plumber etc, plumber/glazier in these records.

The following marriage details have been found for the children in England: Maria married William STOREY; James married Maria Cutting BOYCE; George married Sarah ADAMS, then Ellen WEBSTER; Alfred married Alma SUTTON; and Alberta married Lewis CARTER.

In Australia, Walter Thomas SMITH married Lucy DEANE in December 1879 in Adelaide, South Australia, and his brother Edward William Torrence SMITH married Augusta Mary BARKER in Melbourne Victoria in 1889.

I am not sure of the date Walter arrived in Australia, but it is believed by his family that he came here as a sailor, and that Edward had also worked as a mariner. One of Edward's grandchildren wrote several years ago that she believed another brother had died of fever at sea, and had been buried at sea in the harbour of Rio de Janeiro. As yet I have not been able to find any evidence to confirm or deny these stories.

Edward and Augusta had a family of eight children in Melbourne: Ethel May, Bertha Louise, Edward Horatio, Florence Augusta Lydia, Ruby Lillian, Percy Frederick James, Albert Walter George Kitchener, and Leslie William Torrence. Edward and Augusta both died in 1945.

Five out of Walter and Lucy's six children were born in Adelaide: Elbertha, James, Edward, Lilian, and Lucy. Edward's birth certificate shows Walter's occupation was a tentmaker in 1884. The youngest child, Arthur, was born in country South Australia, at Yorketown on Yorke Peninsula, in 1894. Walter was probably working as a lighthouse keeper at this time.

In 1899 there was a shipwreck on the coast of the large South Australian island of Kangaroo Island, from which only three out of the 34 people on board survived. Walter was named several times in newspaper articles about the wreck of the Loch Sloy, as he was involved in the search for and rescue of two of the survivors of the disaster. At the time he was working as the second-keeper for the Cape Borda lighthouse, which is located on the north-western corner of the island. The ship had travelled out of range of the Cape Borda light, and was wrecked in a very isolated and inhospitable part of the island. The following excerpts are from The South Australian newspaper "The Advertiser" of May 11 1899: "The energetic and resourceful second

keeper of the Cape Borda lighthouse, Mr WT Smith... ...the head-keeper was unable to leave the light, but he had a most efficient and enthusiastic subordinate in Mr Smith, the second keeper, who cheerfully faced the rough-rocky tracks and the densely-growing scrub in order to push his way southwards... Ã‹ÂœWell equipped with stores likely to be of service to those he sought, but which greatly hampered him in his progress, Mr Smith pushed steadily on, and his reward was that it was granted to him to be the saviour of two at least of the shipwrecked men he sought. He tended them with great kindness and skill and without a murmur made his way back to the lighthouse...".

I have copied many of the articles from the newspaper about this shipwreck, which make interesting reading, and can report that another lighthouse was built on the south-west corner of Kangaroo Island as a result of the enquiry into the wrecking of the Loch Sloy.

In 1910 Walter purchased 635 acres of crown land at Kongorong in the South East of South Australia, and daughter Lilian (my grandmother) was married from the nearby town of Mt Gambier in 1912. He purchased a house back in South Australia's capital city of Adelaide in 1922, and died there in 1930. Walter's death certificate states his occupation as retired signal man. Lucy died in Adelaide in 1943. My mother was born in 1921 and she speaks of her grandparents Walter and Lucy with great fondness.

Walter and Lucy's son Edward remained living as a farmer near Kongorong, where he married and had eight children. Edward enlisted for military service during World War 1 at the age of 32 years and he served in France and spent more than a year as a Prisoner Of War in Germany. It is believed he visited his relatives in Norfolk while on leave in England before returning to Australia in 1919.

Of the other children it is known that Elbertha died aged 21 years, James married and went to live in Sydney, Lilian and her husband George raised six children in Adelaide, Lucy did not marry but lived and worked in Adelaide and was greatly loved by her nieces and nephews, and Arthur married and became a headmaster of a secondary school.
A quick glance on the internet shows that Lydia, at age 83, was still living in Great Yarmouth at the time of the 1901 census.

Jan Dempster