

PART THREE

John and Harriett Baskerville returned to England during the late spring or early summer of 1843, to John's native county of Herefordshire, and there they lived among some of the most beautiful of the English countryside for the next six years.

John's family could have been found in many of the parishes of rural Herefordshire, and it would seem that he took his wife to Stoke Lacey, a small village of about 400 people some twelve kilometres to the north east of the City of Hereford, near the border with neighbouring Worcestershire⁽¹⁾. It was in this Parish that their first child was born - a son, who on the 20 July 1846 was baptized Albert in the local parish Church⁽²⁾. John's brother and sister-in-law, Thomas and Sarah Baskerville, were living in Stoke Lacey at this time. One of Thomas' sons was Edward, who was born at Stoke Lacey in 1838, and later became a storekeeper there before his early death at the age of only 39 in 1878⁽³⁾. Thomas and Sarah later moved to Collington, about 10 kilometres to the north, leaving Edward in the care of his maternal grandmother Mary Bond⁽⁴⁾. Soon after Albert's baptism, another child was born to John and Harriett, this time a daughter, and she was baptized Esther, on the 17 February 1846 in Stoke Lacey⁽⁵⁾.

During this time, John remained on a pension he received for his years of service in the East India Company Army, until the Autumn of 1847⁽⁶⁾ when he apparently forfeited his remuneration, as a now growing family made it necessary for him to return full-time to the work force. He

found employment in Allensmore, a few kilometres to the south-west of Hereford. On the 22 July 1848, another daughter was born to John and Harriett, named Louisa, at Allensmore (7). John's occupation was described as Turnpike Gate Keeper, in which situation he collected fees from people using the road to Hereford from districts to the south at a toll-gate, or turnpike, these fees being charged for the maintenance of that part of the road passing through the jurisdiction of the local Turnpike Trust. Under the Highways Act of 1555, the private companies, generally of local merchants, who, after getting consent by a special Act of Parliament would take over sections of main roads. A turnpike gate was erected at each end of the section, and the company collected fees from all users in return for maintenance and construction work on that section. The Trusts, of course, would only take over sections from which a profit could be expected, leaving many rural districts completely neglected. The effect, at best, was tolerable roads around main towns and cities, and something worse than tracks elsewhere. The main form of heavy transport was by canal, and these also suffered from a total lack of any nation wide co-ordination. Different companies used different widths and depths of canal, and different lock sizes, meaning continual transhipments at canal junctions, all complicated by a lack of co-operation between companies over rates and delivery dates. The coming of the Railways changed everything.

The "Great Western" line from London to Bristol was opened in 1841, to which were built connecting lines such as the "Hereford, Ross & Gloucester Railway" line. The fast,

efficient and cheap railway lines snaked across Britain. In 1843 there were 3 000 kilometres of line - by 1848, this had increased to nearly 8 000 kilometres, with most of the present British rail network either built or planned. This spelt the end of the practise of leaving the construction and maintenance of such important means of communication around the Kingdom as the main roads in the hands of apathetic local parishes and profit motivated companies. As the central Government in London extended it's control over the main roads of Britain, so the demise of the Turnpike Trusts inevitably followed. During the 1830's, many Trusts were compulsorily amalgamated by the Government on the advise of the first Surveyor-General, John Macadam, forcing them to be responsible for entire stretches of highway, and not just profitable sections. As a result, bankruptcies were common amongst the Trusts, and control reverted to the Parishes. Under the new Highways Act of 1835, a rate was levied on the Parishes for the maintenance of the highway within their boundary, which lead to many complaints from Parishes with busy sections of Highway, as they were compelled to finance the upkeep of roads used mainly by others passing between the larger centres. It was not until 1888 that the responsibility for road maintenance was finally transfered from the Parishes to the then newly created County Councils.

John, obviously aware of the limitations of his employment by 1849, turned his attention once again southward, to the other side of the world. The certainty of being made redudant by his job quite simply vanishing; the need to feed, clothe and educate his growing family, and probably

itchy feet were a strong combination to resist.

Perhaps memories of the hot tropical climate of India drifted through John's head as he warmed himself by his fire, while his Indian-born wife may have reflected disparagingly on the cold, snow bound landscape outside her window, a landscape that at times may have seemed as cold and forbidding as their chances of ever improving their lot, for themselves and their growing family.

The economic conditions of the approaching new decade would have seemingly held little promise for unskilled, illiterate men and women such as John and Harriett, especially when compared to the opportunities being offered to adventurous new settlers in the United States, and the North American, southern African and Australasian colonies of the Empire.

Or perhaps after the sultry excitement of India, England was just a little too staid and proper for the youngest son of old Edward and Mary Baskerville.

Whatever the reasons, John and Harriett decided to again shift their roots, and John accordingly applied at his former Pension Pay Office, to the Staff-Officer who, acting as a one-man selection board, had the job of recruiting from among the time-expired regulars of the British Armies (who had pensions for long service and good conduct, or for wounds, or for meretorious conduct) volunteers for the Enrolled Pensioner Force, or EPF.

The EPF members were used by the Imperial Government

Primarily to serve as guards on the convict ships, and then once the ships had arrived in the Colonies, to carry out some military duties that would otherwise have been attended to by units of the regular army. The EPF is known to have been in existence since since 1843⁽⁸⁾, and detachments were to be found in colonies as scattered as Gambia (in west Africa), Hudson's Bay (in northern Canada), Van Dieman's Land (now Tasmania), Malta, New Zealand, and the Falkland Islands⁽⁹⁾. The EPF attracted large numbers of these soldiers, and in 1858 had a strength of 15 272 enrolled Pensioners. For John and Harriett, the EPF also held out the opportunity of a new life in a new land, of regular meals, and of a milder and more temperate climate; and it also held out the opportunity for the realization of any number of intangible dreams.

Tangibly, the EPF offered

- "....i] Free passages to Australia for themselves, their wives and children; the Pensioners acting as convict guards during the voyage,
- ii] Employment on military pay for a period of six months from the date of enlistment (a later option was granted for re-enlistment if conduct was satisfactory). The rates of pay for the six months engagement were on the "Regular Duty" scale: (for a) Private 1s 3d per day, a Corporal 1s 6d per day, and a Sergeant 1s 10d per day.
- iii] Liability to attend exercises twelve days each year.
- iv] Liability to serve in defence of the Colony or when called out for the preservation of the public peace. Scale of pay on days of exercise and in defence

of the colony (were) Private 2s per day, Corporal 2s 6d per day, and a Sergeant 3s 6d per day.

v] Land Grants after seven years service in the EPF.

The possibility of obtaining land on terms they could never have hoped for at home and the fact that free passages were also granted for wives and families were powerful inducements to married men, consequently, it is not surprising that, of those Pensioners who disembarked at Fremantle from convict ships, the majority were men with families..." (10)

The Admiralty and the War Office had an arrangement between them whereby merchant ships were chartered, fitted out, and then directed to anchor of Gravesend, all ready to embark their human cargo of Prisoners and Pensioners. Once a sailing date had been arranged, small parties of newly enrolled Pensioners and their families converged on Tilbury, where they were accomodated at Tilbury Fort, and equiped for the voyage.

The first of the convict ships bound for Western Australia was the "Scindian", and the Secretary of War wrote to Captain E.Y.W. Henderson, the newly appointed Comptroller-General, on the "Scindian", in a letter dated 21 February 1850
"....I am directed to inform you that the Immigration

Commissioners have put on board mattress's and pillow's for each of the double and single berths, as also a pair of blankets and a counterpane for each one.

The Secretary for the Colonies has authorized that the

whole of this bedding, with the blankets and counterpanes shall on the termination of the voyage become the property of the Pensioners, provided that they have conducted themselves to your satisfaction..."(11)

The official circular sent to each applicant to the EPF informed the Pensioner-Emigrants what personal possessions they could take with them. Headed "Pensioners Selected for Enrollment in the Force in the Colonies", the circular proceeds:

"....will be allowed to bring with them working tools or the implements of their trades, but no household furniture, beds, bedsteads, or any articles of that description as the expense of carrying it brought from a distance exceeds their value.

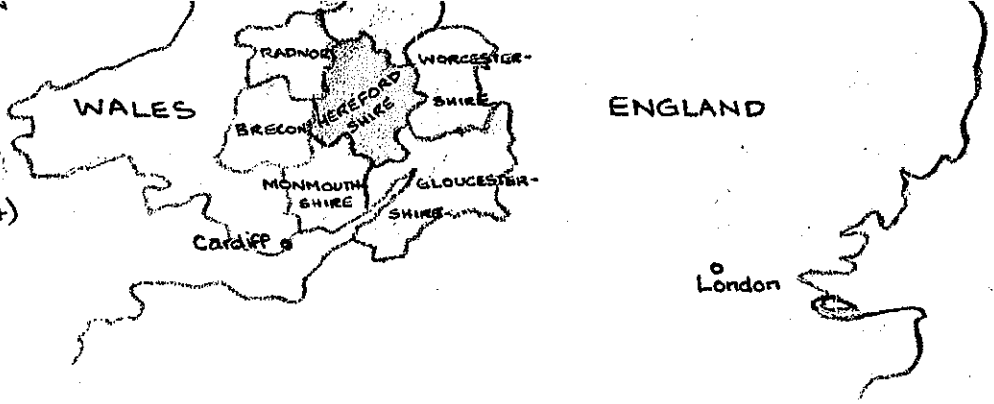
They are recommended to bring with them all kinds of clothing, particularly shirting, stockings and flannels; also blankets, counterpanes or sheets, if nearly new. No glass, crockery, or article liable to breakage can be admitted unless properly packed.

They are also recommended to bring any knives, forks and spoons, pewter or wooden dishes, and metal teapots and drinking jugs they may possess..."(12).

During the spring and early summer of 1850, John and Harriett dismantled their lives, packing away the things they would need for their new life in Australia, and dispossing of what they either didn't need or couldn't take with them; wishing friends and family fond and final farewells; and generally preparing themselves for another voyage into the unknown.

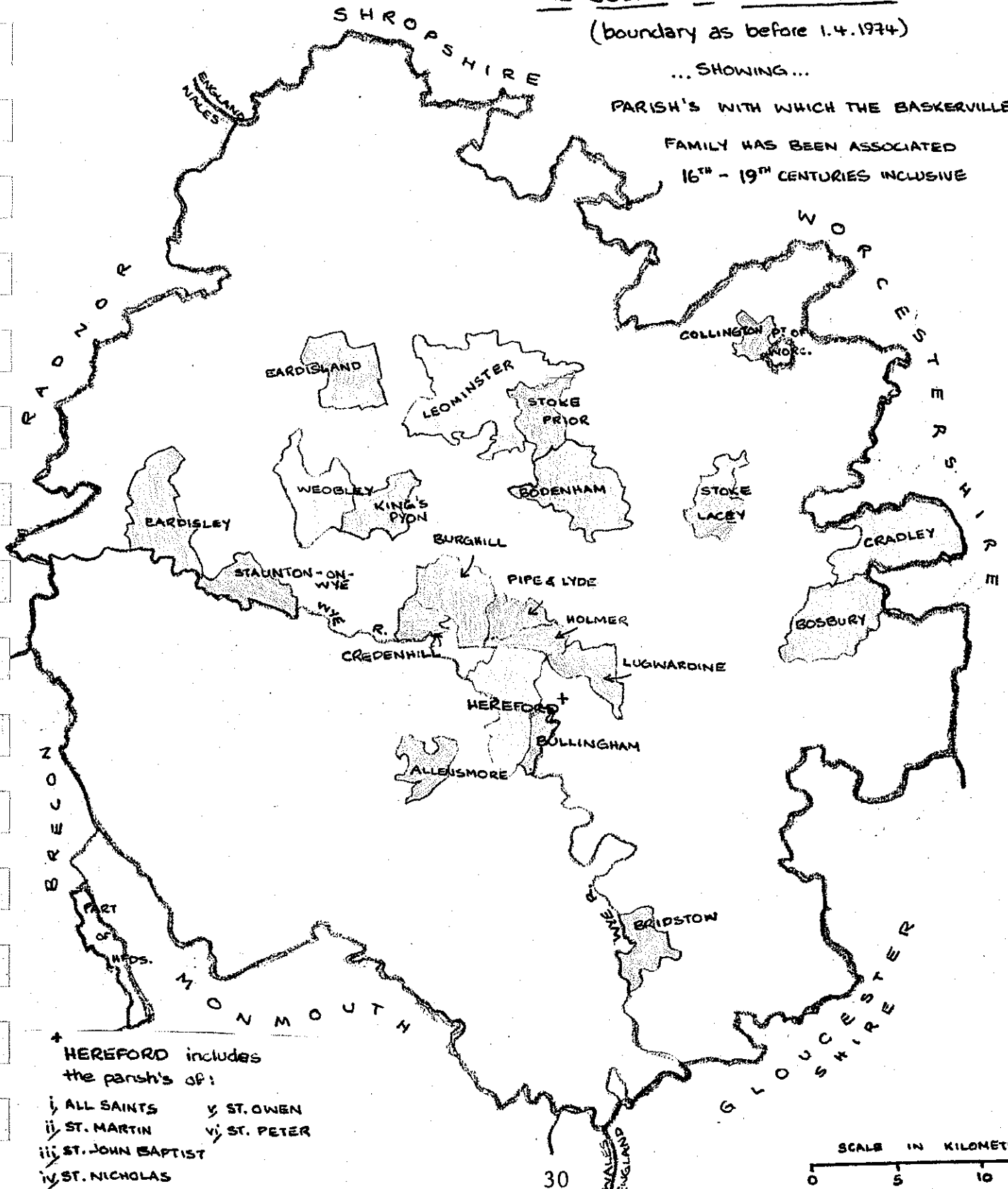
At last they were ready, and in the mid-summer of 1850, the Baskerville's left Herefordshire, and after a journey across England on the "Great Western Railway" to London, and then onto Gravesend, they had finally boarded the 521 tonne "Hashemy", which with the EPF under the control of Colonel Bruce, finally left England behind on the 22 July 1850, five years after little Albert's birth.

SHOWING
HEREFORDSHIRE AND THE
SURROUNDING COUNTIES
(boundaries as before 1.4.1974)



THE COUNTY OF HEREFORDSHIRE
(boundary as before 1.4.1974)

... SHOWING ...
PARISH'S WITH WHICH THE BASKERVILLE
FAMILY HAS BEEN ASSOCIATED
16TH - 19TH CENTURIES INCLUSIVE



- + HEREFORD includes the parsh's of:
- i. ALL SAINTS
 - ii. ST. MARTIN
 - iii. ST. JOHN BAPTIST
 - iv. ST. NICHOLAS
 - v. ST. OWEN
 - vi. ST. PETER

SCOURCES

- 1 the population of Stoke Lacey Parish at the 1831 Census was 381, from "Genealogical Gazetteer of England", compiled by Frank Smith, Baltimore 1977.
- 2 International, Genealogical Index, Card No. B0107 1982 Edition, WAGS Library, Perth.
- 3 Robert Brain, "Middle Huish", Instow, Bideford, Devon EX39 4LT, England, - a descendant of Thomas and Sarah (nee Bond) Baskerville.
- 4 1851 Census of the United Kingdom, return for 69 Barethorn Rd., Stoke Lacey - viewed by Robert Brain at Hereford County Record Office.
- 5 as for 2
- 6 EOIL - Lists of Bombay Pensioners
- 7 Birth Certificate No. C858668, copy issued 31.7.1974 in London.
- 8 "The Veterans" - Broomehall (see Bibliography)
- 9 ibid
- 10 ibid
- 11 ibid - W04/285
- 12 ibid - W04/287 p225

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- "The Veterans - A History of the Enrolled Pensioner Force in Western Australia 1850 - 1880", unpublished manuscript by F.H. Broomehall 1975, Xerox copy held by Battye Library, State Library of Western Australia, Perth.
- "An Outline of the Economic History of England to 1952" D.W. Roberts, B.Sc. (Econ.), London 1959.
- "Notes of British Economic History from 1700 to the Present Day", E.J. Radley, Oxford 1967.

ABBREVIATIONS

- WAGS - Western Australian Genealogical Society
EOIL - East India Office Library