



CAPE WICKHAM LIGHTHOUSE AND [INSET ABOVE] YELLOW ROCK BEACH, NORTH WEST KING IS. WHERE WASHED-UP HARRY WAS WASHED UP.



Washed-up Harry

Julia Green explores her history

In October 2017 I visited King Island to meet Kevin Grave and his family. Kevin's grandfather and my grandfather were brothers — I think that makes us second cousins.

I knew a bit about my great uncle's adventure being shipwrecked on King Island, but after visiting the island I know way more. Kevin was a fabulous source of family history, and a particularly special gift from him was the piece reproduced (in edited form) below. It was written by my mother, Dorothy Green, who lived in Braidwood from 1975 to 1988, and is well remembered by many current residents.

To my knowledge Mum never met her Uncle Harry. It seems she wrote this piece for a talk she gave, probably around 1994. I wish I'd known about it when she was alive.

Dorothy Green's words

Good morning. My name is Harriet Sharman and the date is January, 1868. I am 44 years of age — old, tired and ill and not long for this world.

My story is perhaps similar to many

others — not remarkable or special in any way.

I was born in Norfolk in England on January 14th, 1824, one of a family of six, there being five girls and one boy. My parents were Edward (a porter) and Mary. When I was just 20, I married the man of my dreams, Richard Grave, a stonemason, who was 18 at the time.

Within the first ten years of our marriage, I had given birth to five children, three girls and two boys. The third born, Emma, died when she was one, God rest her soul, but the other four are strong and healthy.

Richard and I made a decision to take an unassisted passage to the land of promise, Australia. We left Liverpool on 4 May 1854 on the ship, "Miles Barton".

Life was certainly different in Geelong, Victoria in those early days of settlement. I continued to have children but sadly some did not live more than a few months. The first three children born in Australia died in infancy, then out of the next four, two more died. Our family, then, in 1868, consists of four boys and two girls, the oldest

CASTAWAYS

being 22 and the youngest being three. Six others died.

I am tired.

Harriet accurately predicted the end of her life and in fact died in February 1868.

G'day, my name is Harry. Actually my real name is Henry James Grave and I was the second youngest surviving child of Harriet and Richard Grave. I was born in Geelong on 4 November 1861.

My early life was pretty sad, as my mother died when I was just 6 years old. My father died three years later in 1871. I guess it was worse for my little brother, Frederick, who was only 2 when Mother died and 6 when Father died. Anyway, life went on and I was cared for mostly by my big brother Edward.

I wasn't really happy then, so at the age of 13, I decided to jump a ship and try my luck somewhere else. The ship I chose was the "Dart" which was a 74-ton schooner. Well, just a few days away from port, disaster struck and we were shipwrecked. I was asleep on my bunk at the time, so I was pretty lucky that another crew member hauled me from my bunk in a great hurry. I walked 15 miles along beaches until I came to Cape Wickham, where there was a lighthouse, and at that point my luck changed.

This was 1874, and the lighthouse keeper was a man called William Hickmott. He and his wife took me in and cared for me like a son. Maybe they were missing their daughter Caroline, who was away at boarding school in Tasmania.

From William I learned lots of skills, especially in the way of hunting.

When, I was 15, I decided I was man enough to set up house for myself, so I

DOROTHY GREEN IN 1990 AGED 79, TWO YEARS AFTER LEAVING BRAIDWOOD.



went along the coast to the wreck of another ship, the *Loch Leven*. From this wreck, I got enough timber to make a pretty good hut which I built at a place called 'The Springs'.

Well, lots of things happened in my life in the next few years but I suppose the most significant was that I married the Hickmott's daughter Caroline in 1881, when we were both 20.

We really loved the life on King Island in those early years. There was plenty of meat (mostly kangaroo, wallaby, porcupine and emu) and also lots of fish, eels and crayfish. There were no rabbits on K I as they had never been introduced.

The island had many wonderful trees, the main ones being blackwoods, sassafras, celery top pine and big gum forests. It was an isolated existence but we weren't lonely.

Every four months a boat skippered by the inspector of the Straits called and we sent the skins from our hunting expeditions to Hobart in exchange for supplies.

We also saw fishing boats from time to time.

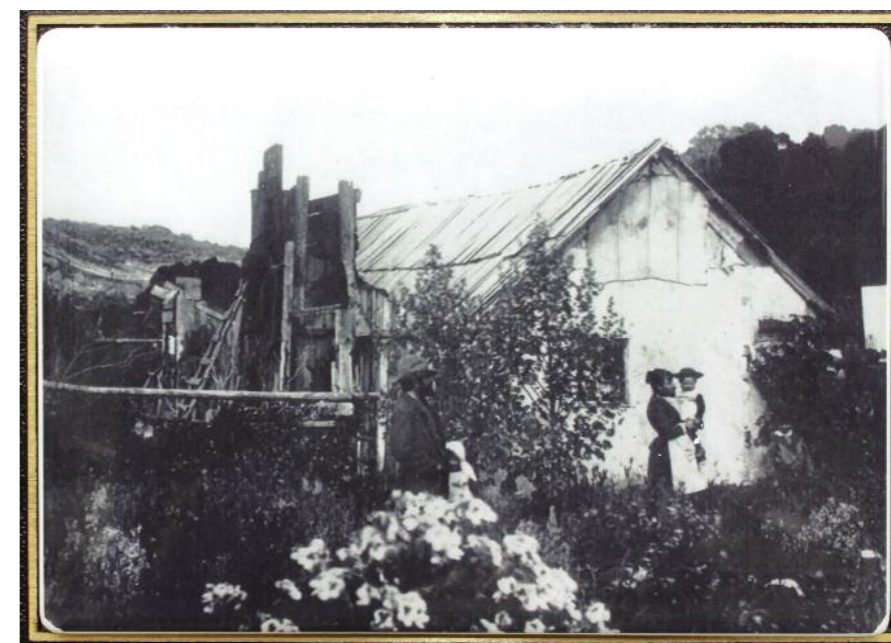
My most pleasurable pursuit is hunting. I have a pack of 'roo' dogs who of course play an important role in these outings and I spend much time splashing through the swamps with my dogs, my shoulders loaded with game and skins.

I had a stint at dairy farming in the early days of K I's beef and dairy production. For a time, I was employed by the Road Trust. Because of my extensive knowledge of especially the north of K I, I became a guide for the Victorian Field Naturalists expedition in 1887. This was written up in the *Victorian Naturalist* in January 1888 and my name and photo appear in that magazine.

Caroline and I had six children whose names are Hickmott, Louie, Arthur, Oliver, Roland and Nellie.

When Hickmott was 4 years old, his grandmother was seriously ill in Melbourne and we decided to visit her. First I took the dogs to Councillor Island, off the east coast of K I. Here there was plenty of game and I knew they would be safe. Then we signalled a fishing boat to call at Wickham. This was called 'smoking it in' as we lit a

A GRAVE AFFAIR



HENRY AND CAROLINE GRAVE'S HOME AT THE SPRINGS. THEIR FIVE CHILDREN WERE BORN HERE. IN THE PHOTO FROM LEFT, HENRY, LOUISE, CAROLINE HOLDING ARTHUR, AND HICKMOTT.

fire near the shore and the boat was guided in.

Caroline was midwife and nurse for many people on K I. She had learned these skills from her mother and it was not unusual for her to be called away to deliver a baby or some other medical attention. Of course K I was growing all the time. In 1890 there were 50 people and in 1910 there were 778.

A great sadness in our lives was when our beloved son Ollie died in 1909.

That's the end of my story.

Harry had a life filled with hard work and I guess also hardship. He was devastated by the death of his son Ollie and soon after this he developed dropsy. Harry died on 6 March 1910 at 'Three Rivers' on King Island at the age of 48. He was buried next to his son in the Currie cemetery.

Harry was known on K I as 'washed up Harry' and his obituary shows that he was well liked and respected. The opening paragraph read:

By the death of Harry Grave on Sunday last, King Island has lost an old identity and a most striking personality — a man of sturdy independence, of simple generous nature, of rugged honesty and straightforwardness. The death of such a man is a serious loss to any community — it was the death of a righteous man.

Harry's descendants still live on K I and though life there has obviously changed enormously, they still fiercely love the island. In a recent article in the *Herald-Sun*, Julie, a fourth genera-

tion of the Grave family, said, "It would take an awful lot for me to go and leave this island".

She obviously had the grit and determination to continue on from where her great great grandfather started 120 years ago.

Postscript from Julia

King Island was not opened for European settlement until 1888, so Harry was a very early pioneer there.

The island today has a population about the same as Braidwood, and is about 65 km top to bottom, and 25 km across. We were told that wallabies there outnumber humans by about 150 to 1. Some residents advised us to be careful driving, others encouraged us to hit as many as we could. ■

JULIA AT THE GRAVES' GRAVE, WHERE GREAT UNCLE HARRY AND HIS BELOVED SON OLLIE ARE BURIED. CURRIE CEMETERY, K I

