WILLSON, Alfred

Born 1824, Birmingham, England. Died 27.12.1883, Pietermaritzburg, Natal

Jeweller, hotelkeeper, trader, carrier, stock farmer.

1824.00.00 Born Birmingham, England. (GV). Has a brother George William. (MSC 55/1884)

1827*c*. Wife Eliza born. (VGR). Wife’s Christian name Elizabeth. (MSC 55/1884)

1831*c*. Wife Eliza Powis b. Birmingham, England. (GV)

1852.04.00 Dau. Emily b. (R. St J. G.)

1852.09.30 Dau. Mary Emily b. Birmingham, England. (GV)

1854.03.00 Dau. Harriet b. (R. St J. G.)

1855.10.15 Arrived with wife and two children on the *Lady of the Lake* from London, steerage. (*NM* 19.10.55)

1856.02.00 Son Albert b., wife’s name Eliza. (R. St A. Pmb.)

1856.07.18 Advertised that he was commencing business as a jeweller in Pmb. Had served his time in the business. (*NW* 18.07.56). [His premises were on Erf 9 Church St, Pmb. (SO’BS)].

1857.10.00 Dau. Alice b. (R. St J. G. )

1858.10.13 A. Wilson [*sic*] occupied Erf 46, Loop St, Pmb., owned by J[oseph]S[amuel] Colborne\*. (*NW* 13.10.58)

1858.12.00 A jeweller when dau. Alice bapt. (R. St P. Pmb.)

1860.02.23 Wilson [*sic*] has a hotel in Greytown. Show dinner held there. (*NCPA* 23.02.60)

1860.05.00 A fellow passenger with Alexander Maclean on the *Lady of the Lake*. By May 1860 he had taken the hotel in Greytown and he opened it for the Umvoti Agricultural Society Show [dinner]. He had been at the Umzinto as well. (JMD Part 4, p.317)

1860.09.04 Son Charles b. (R. St J. G.)

1862.03.08 Son Herbert b. (R. St J. G.)

1862.04.16 Hotelkeeper, Greytown. (*NCPA* 16.04.62)

1862.09.17 Raw & Wilkinson [James Raw\* & William John Wilkinson\*, auctioneers] to sell on 03.10.62 his valuable premises at Greytown where he has been a successful hotelkeeper. They comprise – Lot 1, (136ft x 64ft) fronting on to Pine St, containing the hotel building of 7 rooms and stabling for 12 horses; Lot 2, building plot with a 51ft frontage on to Main St and Lot 3, 44ft frontage on to side street, with 2 cottages. (*NCPA* 17.09.62)

1863.00.00 Was insolvent and estate yielded no dividend. (RSC I/8/83, no.7705)

1864.07.06 Thomas Burchmore\*, butcher Pmb., bought Remainder of Erfs 3 & 4 Greytown from insolvent estate of Alfred Willson of Greytown. Transferred 06.07.1864. (RSC I/8/13 no.1106)

1864.10.04 Dau. Eliza b. (R. St J. G.)

1866.07.12 Dau. Jane b. (R. St J. G.)

1868.09.15 Dau Anne b. (R. St J. G.)

1868.09.16 A farmer [in the vicinity] of the Mooi river when dau. Annie Maria b. (GGR)

1870.08.00 A trader when son Thomas William b., wife’s name given as Elizabeth Powis. (PGRB)

1872.03.00 Still a trader when dau. Ellen Bertha b. (PGRB). Born at PMB. (*NM* 20.04.72)

1872.03.17 A dau. b. to Mrs Alfred Wilson [*sic*] at Pmb. (*NW* 22.03.72)

1874.08.00 A carrier when dau. Louisa b., wife’s name spelt Powys [*sic*]. (PGRB)

1876.08.08 Of Sampora [*sic*], Umsinga Division, when dau. Alice Maud m. T.S. Watton. (*NM* 15.08.76)(NW 15.08.76). [The road from Greytown to Pomeroy crossed the Mooi river at Keat’s Drift and approx. 12 miles beyond crossed the Tugela. The Sompofu stream joins the Tugela upstream of this crossing on the Pomeroy side. (BMS)]

1877.03.13 Alfred Willson rents one acre of Native location land at £25p.a. He keeps a public roadside inn and shop with limited stock. He has wagons and cattle and horses.

(1/UMS vol.34, p.149. Note from RM Umsinga to Colonial Treasurer, Chairman of Bond Board)

1877.03.31 Of Sampson [*sic*]. Retail wine and spirit licence expired. Retail shop licence expired 31.12.76. (1/UMS vol.34, p.162)

1878.03.21 Application for transfer of one acre of Native location land from A. Willson to H.G. Knox. (1/UMS vol.34, p.380)

1878.08.23 Application for transfer forwarded. Mr Knox has been carrying on business for some time in the premises left by Mr Willson. (1/UMS vol.34, p.472)

1878.09.04 Surrendered his estate. Trader of Pmb. Insolvency due to misfortune. In an “approximate statement”, dated 01.09.75 there is an amount of £300 cash from the estate late Thomas Willson. Also a house, outbuildings and furniture at Sand Spruit, Umsinga. (RSC I/8/83, no.7705)

1879.11.26 The Revd James Dalzell in a letter says that [John David] Holliday\* has given intention to apply for rehabilitation of Alfred Willson and he [Dalzell] wishes to point out that no trustee has been appointed and no assets realized. Shortly before his bankruptcy Willson received £100 purchase money of the canteen sold to Knox of Umsinga. Also that he has heard that Willson has promised to pay one of his biggest creditors after [rehabilitation]. Dalzell is a creditor. (*Ibid*.)

1880.01.26 C.E. Tainton, trustee of Willson’s insolvent estate, attributed Willson’s misfortune to his having sold a large number of cattle to a Mr C.D. Hay who gave him a promissory note and then himself became insolvent before it fell due. There are no assets in Willson’s insolvent estate. (*Ibid*.)

1880.03.18 Applied for rehabilitation. Granted same day. (*Ibid*.)

1881.11.15 Of Pmb. when notice of death of eldest son Alfred [*sic*] appeared. (*NW* 15.11.81

1882.12.14 Of Pmb when dau. Eliza m. Alfred Andrews. (*NW* 18.12.82)

1883.12.26 Made will. Of Pmb. Married his wife Elizabeth in England. Has a brother George William. (MSC 55/1884)

1883.12.00 A jeweller, d. aged 57. (PGRD)

1883.12.27 d. at Pmb. aged 57. (*NW* 28.12.83). d. at Pmb. aged 57. Son Charles H. informed of death. (MSC 55/1884)

1918.12.28 Widow Eliza Willson, 91, d.Vryheid. (VGR)

CHILDREN

**Mary Emily** ( Born 30.09.1852, Birmingham, England. Died ------- ?Australia.)

1852.04.00 Emily b. (R. St J. G.)

1852.09.30 Mary Emily b. Birmingham, England. (GV)

1874.01.00 Licence obtained for marriage between Mary Emily Willson aged 21yrs 4mths, b. Birmingham, and Robert John Hutchinson, aged 22, b. Pmb. (CSO 2286)

1874.01.08 Emily Mary, eldest dau. of Alfred Willson, at Pmb. m. Robert John Hutchinson, eldesr surviving son of Wm Hutchinson\* (*NM* 24.01.74). He was a trader aged 23, she was 22. (R. Wes Pmb.)

1875.00.00 R.J. Hutchinson ferryman Mooi River. (LGR)

1876.09.25 Henry Rock appointed ferryman Mooi River in place of R.J.H. who had resigned. (GN 271/1876)

1877.04.00 R.J.H. living in Greytown, employed on the public roads under the Colonial Engineer’s dept as overseer of the Umsinga Division. (AGO 1/4/18 p. 427)

1880.06.00 R.J.H. hotelkeeper of the Masonic Hotel, Greytown. (RSC I/5/97 no. 1906)

1880.08.16 R.J.H. deserted wife. (*Ibid.*)

1881.02.01 Mary Emily Hutchinson (b. Willson) applied for leave to sue her husband Robert John Hutchinson for restitution of conjugal rights *in* *forma pauperis*. (RSC I/8/87 no.8174.)

1881.02.08 Leave granted for above. Her brother Albert Willson, a transport rider, appointed *curator ad litem*. (RSC I/8/87 no. 8179)

1881.02.22 E.H. Wiltshire appointed Mary Emily’s attorney. Had made a statement five days previously that he believed R.J.H. was at Zadeni Bush, Zululand. (RSC I/8/87 no. 8189)

1881.02.24 Mary Emily sued R.J.H. for divorce. He was living west of Isandhlwana with Intombi ga Infanwandhlela whom he called his wife. (RSC I/5/97 no. 1906)

1881.04.00 R.J.H. wrote from Rorke’s Drift saying he did not have the means to come to Pmb. for the case. (*Ibid.*)

1881.06.20 Mary Emily applied for evidence to be taken *de bene esse* from her brother C.H. Willson who was about to leave for up country and who was a material witness in her divorce action. (RSC I/8/89 no. 8353). C.H.W. testified that R.J.H. had told him years ago that he had had a child by his servant girl Anna, also, while in Greytown, he had contracted VD from a refugee girl who worked in the kitchen. (RSC I/5/97 no. 1906)

1881.07.02 Mary Emily granted a divorce. (CSO 2287). Granted a divorce and custody of their children – Ellen Rose b. 14.10.74, Herbert William b. 21.11.75 and Guy b. 03.06.77. (RSC I/5/97 no. 1906)

1881.07.12 Licence was obtained for the marriage between Emily Mary Wilson [*sic*] aged 28, b. Birmingham, divorced wife of Robert John Hutchinson, and Peter Vaubel, 30yrs 9mths, b. in Germany, carpenter. (CSO 2287).Witnesses to the marriage were Alfred and Eliza Willson of Pmb. (R. Cong. Pmb.). The Vaubels emigrated to Australia. (G.V.)

**Harriet** (Born 00.03.1854, England. Died-----------)

1854.03.00 Born England. (R. St J. G.)

1884.10.00 Harriet, 30, m. William Trotter Anstey, 27, carpenter. (Ind. Ang. Pmb.)

1905.12.00 Husband William Anstey d. aged 48. (R. St J. Pmb.)

1905.12.10 W.T. Anstey, a carpenter, d. He was of Pmb. (MSCE 24/247)

**Albert** (Born 00.02.1856, Pietermaritzburg. Died 12.11.1881, Kingwilliamstown)

1856.02.00 Born in Pmb., mother’s name Eliza. (R. St A. Pmb.)

1856.06.00 Bapt. Joseph Mandy was a sponsor. (R. St A. Pmb.)

1881.02.08 A transport rider. Appointed *curator ad litem* in his sister Mary Emily Hutchinson’s divorce case hearing. (RSC I/8/87 no. 8179)

1881.11.12 d. at Kingwilliamstown of typhoid fever. Stated that he was the eldest son of Alfred Willson of Pmb. Name given as Alfred [*sic*]. (*NW* 15.11.81)

**Alice Maud** (Born 00.10.1857, Pietermaritzburg. Died----------)

1857.10.00 Alice b. (R. St J. G.)

1858.12.00 Alice. Bapt. (R. St P. Pmb.)

1876.08.08 Alice Maud, 3rd dau. of Alfred Willson of *Sampora* [*sic*] Umsinga Division, m. T.S. Watton of Tugela Ferry. Married at Gordon Memorial [Mission], Umsinga. (*NM* 15.08.76)(*NW* 15.08.76)

**Charles Henry** (Born 04.09.1860, Greytown. Died-------------)

1860.09.04 Charles b. in Greytown. (R. St J. G.)

1881.02.08 C.H. Wilson [*sic*] gave evidence in his sister Mary Emily Hutchinson’s divorce suit. (RSC I/5/97 no. 1906))

1882.12.00 Charles Henry Willson a witness to the marriage of his sister Eliza to Alfred Andrews. (R. Cong. Pmb.)

1883.27.12 Informed of father’s death. (MSC 55/1884)

1888.05.30 A road overseer, m. Elizabeth Julia Newman. [dau. of Noah Newman\*], blacksmith, Umzinto. (SO’BS)]. (R. Umz. A.)

1923.05.00 Widow Elizabeth Julia d. (PGRD)

**Herbert** (Born 08.03.1862, Greytown. Died 02.07.1880)

1862.03.08 Born Greytown. (R. St J. G.)

1880.07.02 Herbert, youngest son of Alfred Willson, d. aged 17. (*NW* 03.07.80)

**Eliza** (Born 04.10.1864, Greytown. Died----------)

1864.10.04 Born Greytown. (R. St J. G.)

1882.12.00 Eliza, 19, m. Albert Alfred Andrews, 24, barman, Pmb. Charles Henry Willson and Jane Willson were witnesses. (R. Cong. Pmb.)

1882.12.14 Father of Pmb., 4th  dau. Eliza m. Alfred, eldest son of the late James Andrews of Bromley, London. (*NW* 18.12.82)

**Jane** (Born 12.07.1866, Greytown. Died----------)

1866.07.12 Born Greytown. (R. St J. G.)

1882.12.00 A witness to the marriage of her sister Eliza to Alfred Andrews. (R. Cong. Pmb.)

1883.07.00 Aged 18, b. Greytown, licence granted to m. Charles Summers, 26, b. Cornwall. (CSO 2286). He was a soldier. (R. Cong. Pmb.)

1911.05.16 Jane’s husband Charles Summers d. at Vryheid aged 53. (*NW* 20.05.1911)

1911.15.16 Jane’s husband Charles Summers d. aged 59 [*sic*]. (R. St P. V)

**Anne/Annie Maria** (Born 15.09.1868. Died-----------)

1868.09.15 Anne b. (R. St J. G.)

1868.09.16 Annie Maria b., father a farmer [in the vicinity] of the Mooi river. (GGR)

1883.11.00 Licence obtained for marriage of Annie Maria Willson, 16, b. Greytown and George Charles Hubble, 21yrs 7mths, b. Newcross, Kent, m. in Pmb. (CSO 2286)

1883.11.24 They were m. in the home of the Revd Berry, Pmb. George Hubble, 22, was a bricklayer of Pmb., Annie was 16.Witnesses to the marriage were Alfred and Eliza Willson and Peter and Mary Emily Vaubel.(RSC I/5/156 no. 1)

1898.01.00 Annie Maria sued husband George James [*sic*] Hubble for divorce. The case was not defended and the divorce was made final on 19.01.99. Annie Maria was given custody of the two children – Edith Elizabeth and Ethel Maud aged 10 and 9. She was living in Beira, Portuguese East Africa. (*Ibid*.)

**Thomas William** (Born 00.08.1870, Pietermaritzburg. Died----------)

1870.08.00 Born Pmb., father a trader, mother’s name Elizabeth Powis. (PGRB)

[It is possible that Thomas d. prior to 02.07.1880 as when his older brother Herbert d. on that date he was described as the youngest son of Alfred Willson. (BMS)]

**Ellen/Helen/Helena Bertha** (Born 17.03.1872, Pietermaritzburg. Died 14.04.1872, Pmb.)

1872.03.00 Ellen Bertha b. Pmb., father a trader. (PGRB)

1872.03.17 A dau. b. to Mrs Alfred Wilson [*sic*] at Pmb. (*NW* 22.03.72)

1872.04.00 Helen Bertha d. aged 27 days. (PGRD)

1872.04.14 Helena Bertha d. in Pmb. aged 27 days. (*NM* 00.04.72)

**Louisa** (Born 00.08.1874, Pietermaritzburg. Died 00.08.1874, Pietermaritzburg)

1874.08.00 Louisa b. Pmb., mother’s name spelt Powys [*sic*], father a carter. (PGRB)

1874.08.00 Louisa d. aged half an hour. (PGRD)

NOTE

\*After a surname indicates that person as the head of a family and therefore qualified for an

entry in Shelagh Spencer’s biographical register.

SOURCES

**Church Registers**

Ind, Ang, Pmb. – Independent Anglican Pmb.

R. Cong. Pmb. – Congregational Church Pmb.

R. St A. Pmb. – St Andrew’s Anglican Church Pmb.

R. St J. G. – St James’ Anglican Church Greytown

R. St J. Pmb. – St John’s Presbyterian Church Pmb.

R. St P. Pmb. – St Peter’s Anglican Church Pmb.

R. St P. Vry, – St Peter’s Anglican Church Vryheid

R. Umz. A. – Umzinto Anglican

**Manuscript Sources**

JMD – Maclean, Juliet. *Diary*. Part 4, p.317.

**Newspapers**

*NCPA* – *Natal Courier and Pietermaritzburg Advertiser*

*NM* – *Natal Mercury*

*NW* – *Natal Witness*

**Personal Communications**

BMS – Brian Mitchell Spencer

SO’BS – Shelagh O’Byrne Spencer

GV – Gail Vaubel

**Unpublished Official Papers**

AGO – Attorney General’s Office

CSO – Colonial Secretary’s Office

GGR – Greytown Government Register

GN – Government Notice

LGR – Ladysmith Government Register

MSC – Master of the Supreme Court. Wills

MSCE – Master of the Supreme Court. Estates

PGRB/D – Pietermaritzburg Government Register Births/Deaths

RSC – Registrar of the Supreme Court

UMS – Umsinga [Magistrate’s Records]

VGR – Vryheid Government Register

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