

## **CAVE FAMILY HISTORY:**

**Robert CAVE** was born on the 20th of December 1893 at Chatteris in the County of Cambridge to parents Herbert and Julia CAVE, possibly one of two children because there has been anecdotal mention of a sister.

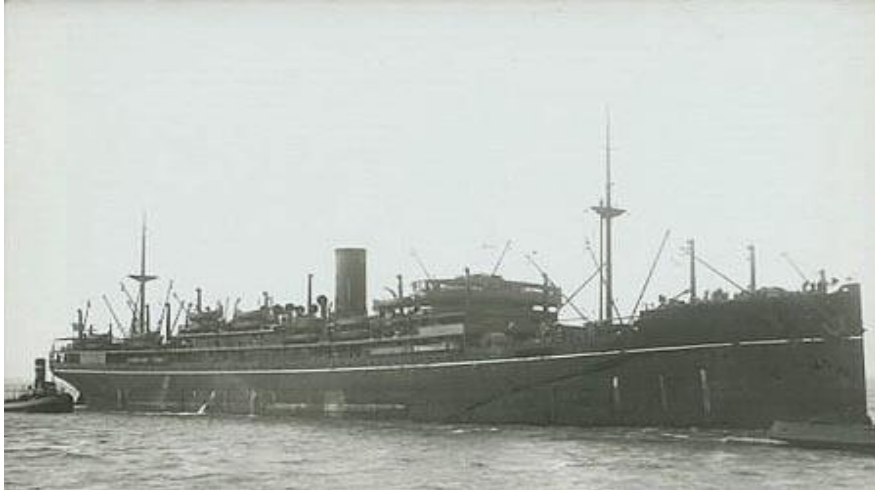
Sadly - not much is known of his early life. Robert married a war widow, Mary Hinds (born 1888), at the Church of England in the Parish of Chatteris on the 7th June 1919. At the time of the marriage Robert was 25 years and Mary was 30 years of age. Mary was formally married to a John William Davison who died in World War 1. It is unknown how long John and Mary were married before he died, but the marriage produced two daughters. We think Robert Cave was a cousin of John and that John charged Robert with taking care of Mary if he (John) died in the war.



Mary and Robert [Bob] Cave taken 30 October 1965

## **The Returned Soldiers Program:**

Robert served in World War 1 and was honoured with a military medal in 1915. He was offered settlement to Australia in a post-war Returned Soldiers Programme. Robert, with wife Mary and children (Gwen & Gertrude Davison, Florence and Frances Cave), sailed to Australia on the P&O vessel S.S. Baradine. They departed from Tilbury Docks on the 20th of December 1923, sailing via Cape Town. All the women and children were accommodated at one end of the vessel, whilst all the men were housed at the other end. All the families were allowed to come together at mealtimes. The journey took five weeks and after Immigration and quarantine checks at anchorage, the vessel berthed in Fremantle just before midday on the 28th of January 1924.



The 13,000 ton, 520 feet long SS Baradine. Built in 1921 for the London to Australia service.

### **Group Settlement:**

All the families that were registered for Group Settlement joined their Groups about a fortnight after arriving. They were starting a new life as one of the original Group Settlers. Robert and the family travelled south from Perth by train to the southwest town of Pemberton and then travelled further south by road on a rough bush track to the Group settlement at Northcliffe.

Robert was placed on Group 103 at Northcliffe, 360 kilometres south of Perth on the 15th of February 1924. The farm (which still exists) was situated less than 5 kilometres northeast of the town-site along Armstrong Road at Location 9923. But life on the Group Settlements was hard. The thick virgin bush, tall trees and scrub had to be cleared by hand because they had no modern machinery we take for granted today.

The group settlement scheme was a plan to resettle British service men who fought in WW1. 374 families took up lots of land of between 100 and 160 acres each. Under the direction of a foreman, men in groups of twenty cleared the land so pastures could be established for farming. Lord Northcliffe, a newspaper magnate, gave the Settlers Scheme a lot of publicity in English newspapers and the town was named after him in recognition of his support. With only axes, crosscut saws and horse drawn carts, the settlers had to confront the mighty Karri, Marri and Jarrah forests of the area. Most groupies fought hard to remain on their land but tough conditions, primitive equipment, the isolation, poor sandy coastal soil, and difficulty in obtaining supplies, proved to be insurmountable hurdles in trying to meet the repayments on their land. Robert suffered hardships too and he and the family moved about 1 kilometre, transferring to Group 100 along Smiths Road on the 7th September 1928. Life became more bearable for the family because of a freshwater creek running through the property. Robert found himself with 173 acres on 4 lots of which 90 acres were cleared or part cleared and 58 acres were sown. He also had 1 house, 1 small shed and dairy, one cow, three heifers and calves, one bull, two pigs and two horses.

Hubert Rex Cave was born on 3 June 1929 and married Maxine [Fay] DAVEY in September 1954 [my Mum and Dad] [children, Valerie Judith CAVE born 1955 [married Brian Thomas PAIN 1984], Gregory Allan CAVE born 1959, Jennifer Lorraine CAVE born 1962 [married Allan Keith GRIFFITHS 1990] and Rosslyn Patricia CAVE born 1964.

The depression of the mid 30's saw the collapse of butter fat prices and this, combined with the banks demanding loan repayments, saw most families leave the area. A few families from each group stayed on and their descendants still farm some of the original land to this day.



A 1930 photo showing the main street of Northcliffe

The Pemberton Ward Rate Book of 1937 -1938 showed:

Ward Area	Name	Address		Location
Pemberton 178a 3r. 20p	Cave. R	Group 100 Northcliffe	9913.	6867

The Western Australia Towns Directory of the year 1939 goes on to say:

GROUP 100, - Northcliffe

Cave, Robt, frmr

The above-mentioned directory of the year 1942 states

GROUP 100, - Northcliffe

Cave, Robt, frmr

Sadly, there are no Towns Directory records found for 1943. Robert is not shown and not listed on Group 100, - Northcliffe for the Towns Directory records of 1944.

### **A move to Pemberton:**

It appears to be 1943 or 1944 when the Cave family left the farm at Northcliffe and moved to the timber milling town of Pemberton about 30 kilometres away. Robert found employment in the Pemberton timber mill. At the time it was one of the biggest and most modern in the State and he was employed there until his retirement. He was also known to be associated with the official opening of the holding ponds at the Pemberton Trout Hatchery on the 6th of September 1952. He was active with the Warren Pemberton Trout Acclimatisation Society at that time. Trout were initially introduced from the northern hemisphere to Australia by 'Acclimatisation Societies'. Two species, the Rainbow and later, the Brown Trout were introduced in 1928 to streams and rivers within the Pemberton area.

Robert and Mary lived in a 3-bedroom house on the main thoroughfare of Pemberton (Brockman Street) not far from the church. Around this time six of their children were married and the seventh and youngest, William (adopted) lived at home. Robert enjoyed the vegetable garden, several fruit trees and tending the chicken pen in the large back yard. He and Mary also took great interest in the local Sunday football competition where they watched many local Australian rules football games.

On the 30th of September 1977, Mary died. Shortly after, Robert sold the house. He and William bought another house in Jamieson Street, not far from the Pemberton Police Station. Robert continued to lead an active life, taking an interest in soccer, continuing to tend the vegetable garden near the shed and staying very active with the Pemberton Lawn Bowls Club where he was the Team Captain for a while, sometimes travelling vast distances and competing in many inter-club lawn bowls tournaments. He was awarded a life membership,

It is a very sad loss indeed for the family when Granddad [Robert CAVE] died after a short illness on the 26th of November 1987, aged 94 years.