## **NEWTH, Alfred Edward**

Alfred Edward Newth was born circa 1862, London, the son of Rev. Professor Samuel [and Elizabeth] Newth, M.A., D.D., London, England, principal of New College, London.1

He came to Australia while a youth. Taking up his abode in Sydney, he adopted architecture as his profession. He entered the service of Messrs. Vickery and Sons, of Pitt-street (then Ebenezer Vickery), and was in their employ as a clerk and architect for the past 10 or 11 years.

He was a very reserved man and was highly respected by all who knew him.2

Soon after arriving in Sydney he married Mary [details unknown].

In October 1889 he was living at 26 Booth-street, Annandale.3

Children of the marriage were:

Frederick William, born 1890, district of St. Peters [married 1921 Marjorie Warre]

There was also a daughter, Weenonah Emily [remained unmarried]

Ronald Francis, born 1895, district of Marrickville [died 1895]

Alfred, born 1895, district of Marrickville [died 1895]4

On 5th March 1895, at Grove-street, The Warren, Marrickville, Mary Newth gave birth to twin sons [Ronald & Alfred].

On 25th March 1895 Mary, wife of Alfred Newth died, aged 34 years.

On 15th April 1895, at “Goslar,” Edith-street, St. Peters, Alfred, son of Alfred & Mary Newth, died, aged 5 weeks.

On 27th June 1895, Ronald Francis, at “Goslar,” Edith-street, St. Peters, Ronald Francis, son of Alfred & Mary Newth, died, aged 16 weeks.5

On 12th April 1900, at St. Aidan's Church, Annandale, Alfred E. Newth, younger son of the late Rev. Principal Newth, M.A., D.D., of New College, London, England, was married to Edith Marion, only daughter of F. G. Nicholls, Esq., of “Chesney-Wold,” Johnston-street, Annandale.6

Children of the marriage were:

Naomi E., born 1903 [married 1939 Reginald W. J.Mackay, district of Sydney]7

On 5th July 1903, at “Wennonah,” The Avenue, Lady Robinson's Beach, a daughter Naomi E., Newth was born.8

In May 1906, at Beecroft, a shop and dwelling recently erected by Mr. Purcell was taken by Mr. Newth, who entered into occupation and commenced business as a storekeeper [no details are known of this enterprise].

Another account stated that he went to reside at Beecroft in early 1908, with his daughter [Wennonah] and son [Frederick W.]. He later separated from his wife and daughter Naomi, and on 20th June 1908 made a will which excluded them.9

On 25th January 1909, several days after the death, by suicide, of his nephew, Roland Leone Newth, bank clerk, aged 19 years, Alfred Newth committed suicide at St. Leonards railway station. His body was found about 4 p.m., on a Monday, in the station lavatory, with his throat cut from ear to ear.

When Alfred Newth's body was found, the inquest on his nephew had only been concluded an hour or two earlier.

Mr. and Mrs. Newth were not latterly living together. Some time ago he met with a painful accident, and sustained an internal injury, which ever since troubled him. The accident caused him to fall into poor health, and this considerably worried him for several months previously.

The nephew’s action preyed on his mind, and in his already depressed state caused him to commit the act which, though it differed in the manner of committal, brought about the same end.

On the day that Newth committed suicide his actions were very strange. He left home for the city as usual in the morning but returned home to Beecroft about lunch time. His daughter [Weenonah] thought this strange and questioned him as to whether he felt well. He did not complain of feeling any worse than ordinarily and did not express any Intention of leaving the house or of taking his life. He, however, told her he wanted her to go to a neighbour's, and ask if there was anything there for her.

The daughter was somewhat mystified, but went to the neighbour's, and asked if anything had been left there for her. She was handed a letter, which had been left, by her father. On reading the missive she gathered, though the letter did not actually state so — that it was her parent's intention to commit suicide. Miss Newth hastened back home but could find no trace of her father. Meanwhile the distressed man had left the house, proceeded to the station, and caught a train to St. Leonards.

[NOTE: There is another version of this story, reported in the Evening News (Sydney, NSW), Fri 29 Jan 1909 and Cumberland Argus and Fruitgrowers Advocate, Sat 30 Jan 1909]

The suicide note, addressed to his son, Frederick William [who, at the time, was away on a holiday trip at Cronulla], reads as follows:

“Mr. Dear Boy. – The time has come for me to beat a retreat. My mind is so far gone that I cannot concentrate it on my business, and it is no good my staying on this plane; a useless hulk, is it? I cannot be of any further use to you and dear Mona [Weenona], so don’t grieve for me. Just look at it in the light that I am at rest and begin again yourselves. Nobody is to blame for it, mind, it has all been my own diseased imagining that people were worrying me. Make all the friends you can. You will find they will rally round you at this time, and you have some real good ones. Take their sympathy, don’t be morbid, and try to help others who are in trouble. It will lighten your own burden. – Your loving father, Alfred E. Newth.”

On the evening previous to taking his life, the deceased visited his brother, Rev. James Aldridge Newth, of Annandale (the father of Roland Newth), and had a long interview with him, but what passed between them has not transpired. It is gathered, however, that the deceased's family relations had been very unhappy. A neighbour and an intimate friend, in whom the deceased confided, states that though he did not expect the rash act to be committed so soon, he was always afraid of it. Rev. James Newth, said that Alfred called on him at his house in Annandale on Monday night in company with his daughter. “We had a talk,” said the reverend gentleman, “but I do not care to disclose the nature of our conversation.”.

“Was the deceased in good spirits on that occasion, or was he depressed?” asked the reporter.

“I do not wish to say what state he was In. He came to see me, and after I had seen him, I saw both him and his daughter to the train. I do not know whether he was married again or living with his wife. He is my brother and an uncle of the lad whose death occurred on Tuesday last. That is all I have to say.”10

In August 1909, there was a Probate Court suit of Newth v. Newth, before Mr. Justice Street, where Wennonah Emily Newth was the plaintiff, and Edith Marion Newth was the defendant.

It appeared that Alfred Edward Newth, architect, late of Beecroft, made a will on 20th June 1908, appointing the plaintiff (his daughter) sole executrix, and on January 25, 1909, he died.

The plaintiff gave notice of her intentions to apply for probate, and on February 1, 1909, the defendant, who was the second wife of the testator, entered a caveat against probate being granted. The suit was one in which the plaintiff now asked that probate should be granted. The estate was worth £1200 and was bequeathed to the plaintiff. No provision was made for the defendant or her child in the will.

On behalf of the defendant It was set out that the last will of Alfred Edward Newth was not executed as required by law. It was also alleged that deceased was not of sound mind, memory, and understanding when the will was made, and that he did not know or approve of the contents. Mr. W. A. Windeyer, solicitor, who was called as a witness, said that testator was able to conduct his affairs when the will was drawn up und signed. At times Newth was excited, but there was nothing to show that the man was not in his right mind. He had known Newth about ten years. As far as he (witness) knew deceased made no provision for his wife (the defendant), or his child by her.

Mr. Wlndeyer and Mr. Barton (instructed by Mr. W. A. Windeyer) appeared for the plaintiff; and Mr. Armstrong (instructed by Mr. A. J. McDonald) for the defendant.

Evidence was entered upon.

His Honour, in giving judgment, said that the defendant had had not adduced evidence establishing the mental capacity of the testator at the time the will was made, and he would, therefore, grant probate of the will as prayed by the plaintiff.11

On 10th February 1954 Wennonah Newth, spinster, late of Mosman, died. Probate was granted by the Supreme Court of N.S.W. to Marjorie Ruth Newth (widowed sister-in-law) of 2 Alexander avenue, Mosman.12

**Rev. Professor Samuel Newth**

Rev. Samuel Newth, M.A., D.D., principal of New College, London, and member of the New Testament Revision Committee.13

[Father of Francis Henry, James Aldridge, and Alfred Edward Newth]

**Francis Henry Newth**

On 6th April 1880, at Sydney, Francis Henry, third son of Rev. Professor [Samuel] Newth, M.A., D.D., Principal of New College, London, was married to Catherine, daughter of the late George Dowman, Esq., of Southampton.

That year Francis H. Newth, pharmaceutical chemist (by examination in Britain), advertised "Newth's Balsam of Horehound and Aniseed" which was stated as being the medicine most generally and successfully used for croup and coughs.14

In February 1897 Francis Henry Newth, a chemist, late of Burwood, Sydney, the husband of Catherine Newth, died at Hobart, Tasmania, aged 40 years.

His body was discovered floating in the water at Bellerine, Tasmania. The deceased had been treated for insanity by Drs. Norwood, of Sydney, and Naylor, of Hobart. The jury returned a verdict of found drowned.15

**Rev. James Aldridge Newth**

Rev. James Aldridge Newth was born circa 1846 in England, the son of Rev. Professor Samuel [and Elizabeth] Newth, M.A., D.D., London, England, principal of New College, London.

He was appointed in 1874 to St. Paul's, West Maitland, N.S.W. and subsequently proceeded to New Zealand. In October 1880 Mr. James Newth and Mrs. [Jessie] Newth and child returned to Sydney aboard the ship *Te Anua*, from Port Wellington, New Zealand, and officiated at Mount Victoria.

He was incumbent of St. Philip's, Bungendore, from 1883 to 1885, incumbent of Tarago from 1885 to 1892, and incumbent of Kameruka from 1892 to 1904. He was appointed a minor canon of St. Saviour's Cathedral, in the diocese of Goulburn, in 1904.16

In January 1909, his son, Roland Leone Newth, bank clerk, aged 19 years, committed suicide. He was found at Watson's Bay with a self-inflicted bullet wound in the chest.17

On 19th August 1923, at a private hospital, North Sydney, the Rev. James Aldridge Newth, M.A., of Druitt-street, Lane Cove, eldest son of the late Rev. Samuel Newth, M.A., D.D., principal of New College, London, and member of the New Testament Revision Committee, etc, etc, died in his 77th year.18

**Bibliography**

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8 Daily Telegraph (Sydney, NSW), Tue 7 July 1903

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11 Daily Telegraph (Sydney, NSW), Tue 10 Aug 1909; Daily Telegraph (Sydney, NSW), Wed 11 Aug 1909

12 Argus (Melbourne, Vic.), Wed 21 Jul 1954; Government Gazette of the State of NSW, Fri 10 Sep 1954

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17 Evening News (Sydney, NSW), Tue 26 Jan 1909

18 Sydney Morning Herald, Mon 20 Aug 1923; Maitland Daily Mercury (NSW), Mon 20 Aug 1923