## **VERNON, John**

The Vernon family originated from Poole, Dorset, England.

**1851 Census**

**Parish of St. James, 14 High Street, Poole, Dorset, England**

James Vernon Mar, 40 Brush Manufacturer Master employing 12 men, born Scotland

Ellen Vernon Married, 34, born Poole, Dorset

Donald Unmarried, 11 born Southampton, Hants.

James Unmarried, 10 born Packstone, Dorset

Margaret E. Unmarried, 8 born Packstone, Dorset

John Unmarried, 6 born Packstone, Dorset

An elder child, Matilda, was not residing at this address.

The family moved to Australia in 1853.

On August 26, 1871, at Burwood, John Vernon, youngest son of Mr. James Vernon, late of Poole, Dorset, England, to Mary, fifth daughter of the late Mr. James Menzies, of Bristol, England.1

Children of the couple were:

1872 - James Menzies, district of Concord [James Menzies, died 1940, district of Campbelltown]

1874 - John Cecil M., district of Concord [John Vernon, died 1922, district of Gloucester]

1875 - Murray M., district of Concord [Murray Menzies, died 1950, district of Inverell]

1877 - Allan P. Vernon, district of Concord [Alan Percy, died 1966, district of Albury]

1879 - Harry Gordon [born 6 Nov 1879], district of Concord; died 17 Feb 1939, district of Hornsby (Beecroft)]2

On 7th December 1907, at *Shirley*, [Copeland-road], Beecroft, a son [John M. Vernon] was born to Murray & Constance Vernon.3

On 28th February 1909, at Beecroft, Mrs. James Vernon, snr., [Ellen], of Beecroft, died, aged 94 years. She is referred to as the relict of the late James Vernon, of Homebush, daughter of John and Eliza, and mother of John Vernon, Auditor-General. Her remains were interred in the Congregational Cemetery, Rookwood.4

Her husband, James Vernon, of Homebush, had died on 5th December 1894, at *Merley*, Albert Road, Strathfield, in his 86th year. His parents are recorded as John and Euphemia. He was said to be one of the oldest Congregationalists in the colony. Probate was granted to Ellen Vernon, wife and Executrix named in the Will.5

[NOTE: His son, Donald, Secretary for Railways 1878-1889, died in 1891, at *Clewer*, Albert Road, Homebush.]

In September 1910 Harry Vernon was having a handsome brick residence and dental surgery built in Malton-road, Beecroft. That year he was one of the principal movers in forming a rifle club at Pennant Hills, along with Messrs. Nixon, Forsyth and Fearnley.

The house, *Cranbrook*, 2 Malton Road, Beecroft, remained with the family into the 1930’s. It was designed by Charles Slayter and Nicholas Shiels.

It was also the home of Harry’s parents. In January 1911 a letter sent to the Hornsby Shire Council, from John Vernon, Beecroft, stated that it was a matter of urgent necessity that the footpath on the frontage to Sutherland street should be cleared of the undergrowth and stumps. By April 1911 Mr. and Mrs. John Vernon had moved from *Shirley*, Copeland-road, into *Cranbrook*. Mr. and Mrs. Butterfield moved into *Shirley*.

Harry Gordon Vernon, dentist, of *Cranbrook*, Beecroft, enlisted on 16th Mar 1915 and served with the AIF 2nd Battalion, 7th Reinforcements, in Egypt, Gallipoli, and the Western Front, achieving the rank of Major.

On 21st December 1921, at St. Phillip’s, Harry married Millie Kearney, eldest daughter of Mr. and Mrs. F. H. G. Rogers, of Cheltenham, N.S.W.

There were two daughter, Mary and Margaret.

Harry Gordon Vernon, of Beecroft, died on 17th February 1939.

In 1945 his widow and daughter Mary were still living in Beecroft.6

On 25th February 1923, Mary, wife of John Vernon, died at her residence, *Cranbrook*, Malton-road, Beecroft, in her 81st year. In 1915 she had been reported to be seriously ill.7

John Vernon died on 14th June 1924 at his home, *Cranbrook*, Malton Road, Beecroft, aged 79 years. He was buried in the Congregational section of the Rookwood Cemetery.

Principal mourners were Messrs. James Vernon (Campbelltown), A. P. Vernon (Crookwell), H. G. Vernon (Beecroft), and Dr. M. M. Vernon (Inverell), sons.8

The details of John Vernon’s life are as follows:

He was born at Poole, Dorset, England, and arrived In Australia in 1853, aged about 8 years of age, the son of James and Ellen Vernon.

He went on to the land [along with the rest of the family], gaining considerable knowledge of rural industries.

He entered the service as a clerk in the railway department on February 1st 1869, and was appointed to the office of Assistant-Accountant in the branch of the Accountant for Railways. He held that position until 1890, being transferred on a re-organisation to the Miscellaneous Service Branch. There he ranked as Estates Agent, which post he resigned on February 3, 1897, to take up the Chief Accountancy of the Treasury.

He succeeded Mr. Rennie as Auditor-General in November 1902, a position he held until 1914.

He was a trustee of the Australian Museum, and one of the founders of the Strathfield Congregational Church.

IN Beecroft he was considered quiet and unassuming, and was widely known for his kindly disposition.9



 **1902 sketch from photograph10**

**Bibliography 1**

1 The Sydney Morning Herald, Fri 6 Oct 1871

2 NSW Registry of Births Deaths and Marriages

3 The Sydney Mail and New South Wales Advertiser, Wed 8 Jan 1908; NSW Registry of Births Deaths and Marriages

4 The Sydney Morning Herald, Tue 2 Mar 1909; Cumberland Argus and Fruitgrowers Advocate, Sat 6 March 1909; NSW Registry of Births Deaths and Marriages

5 The Sydney Mail and NSW Advertiser, Sat 15 Dec 1894; The Daily Telegraph, Sat 15 Dec 1894; NSW Registry of Births Deaths and Marriages

6 Cumberland Argus and Fruitgrowers Advocate, Sat 25 Jun 1910; Cumberland Argus and Fruitgrowers Advocate, Sat 17 Sep 1910; Cumberland Argus and Fruitgrowers Advocate, Sat 8 Apr 1911; Australian War Memorial Records; The Sydney Morning Herald, Sat 11 Feb 1922; The Sydney Morning Herald, Sat 18 Feb 1939; Mudgee Guardian and North-Western Representative, Thu 13 Sep 1945

7 The Sydney Morning Herald, Tue 27 Feb 1923; The Cumberland Argus and Fruitgrowers Advocate, Sat 17 Jun 1915

8 Daily Telegraph, Mon 16 Jun 1924; The Sydney Morning Herald, Tue 17 Jun 1924

9 Evening News, Wed 12 Nov 1902; Australian Star, Tue 28 Apr 1908; The Cumberland Argus and Fruitgrowers Advocate, Sat 12 Jul 1924; Daily Telegraph, Mon 16 Jun 1924; The Sydney Morning Herald, Tue 17 Jun 1924

10 Evening News, Wed 12 Nov 1902

**MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION**

**THE FATHER OF JOHN VERNON**

James Vernon was born about 1811 in Scotland.

He emigrated with his family to Australia in 1853.

He purchased town lots at Maitland in 1855.11

In 1857 his eldest daughter Matilda was married. At the time he was leasing land at Bungay, Manning River.12

In 1860, at the Sale Yards, West Maitland, he was selling by auction several hundred cattle.13

In 1865 his son, Donald, was married. James was still residing at the Manning River.14

In 1866 he was advertising for sale his property at Larry’s Flat Station.15

In 1867 his son, James, was married.16

In 1868 his daughter, Margaret Euphemia, was married. James was still at Larry’s Flat Station.17

In 1870 he sold his property at Larry’s Flat Station.18 He then moved to Scone where he busied himself in various activities.

In 1871 his son, John, was married.19

**SIBLINGS of JOHN VERNON**

**MATILDA**

Marriage – March 1857.

On the 12th March, at Bungay Bungay, by the Rev. J. O'Reilly, John Hall, Esq., of *Kilwarra*, to **Matilda**, eldest daughter of James Vernon, Esq., Manning River.20

**DONALD**

Marriage – March 1865.

On the 14th instant, at the residence of the bride's parents, by the Rev. W. Slatyer, **Donald**, eldest son of James Vernon, Esq., of the Manning River, to Ellen, second daughter of Mr. R. N. Jenkins, of Pitt-street, Redfern, formerly of Windsor, Berks.21

On 14th October 1891 Donald Vernon died at his residence, *Clewer*, Albert-rd., Homebush, aged 52 years.

He had for many years occupied the position of Secretary for Railways.22

**JAMES**

He was appointed a licensed surveyor in 1864.23

Marriage – January 1867.

On the 16th instant, at the Congregational Church, Redfern, by the Rev. W. Slatyer, the father of the bride, EUSEBIA, his eldest daughter, to Mr. **JAMES VERNON**, Scone.24

He was appointed Chairman of the Land Board for the Maitland District in 1884 and was a well-known figure on the Manning.25

On 16th July 1916 James died at his residence, '*Telerah*,' Dudley-street, Roseville.

**MARGARET**

Marriage - January 1868.

BARLING - VERNON. - January 11th, by the Rev. W. Slatyer, Joseph, eldest son of J. Barling, Esq., J.P., Booral House, Port Stephens, to **Margaret Euphemia**, youngest daughter of James Vernon, Esq., Larry's Flat Station, Manning River.26

**Bibliography 2**

11 Maitland Mercury and Hunter River General Advertiser, Wed 22 August 1855

12 Sydney Morning Herald, Wed 25 Mar 1857; Maitland Daily Mercury, Fri 21 Jul 1916

13 Maitland Mercury and Hunter River General Advertiser, Thu 12 Jan 1860

14 Sydney Morning Herald, Fri 17 Mar 1865

15 Maitland Mercury and Hunter River General Advertiser, Sat 26 May 1866

16 Sydney Morning Herald, Wed 23 Jan 1867

17 Sydney Morning Herald, Sat 1 Feb 1868

18 Maitland Mercury and Hunter River General Advertiser, Sat 22 Jan 1870

19 The Sydney Morning Herald, Fri 6 Oct 1871

20 Sydney Morning Herald, Wed 25 Mar 1857

21 Sydney Morning Herald, Fri 17 Mar 1865

22 The Sydney Morning Herald, Thu 15 Oct 1891; Daily Telegraph, Thu 15 Oct 1891

23 Sydney Mail (NSW: 1860 - 1871), Saturday 23 Jan 1864

24 Sydney Morning Herald, Wed 23 Jan 1867

25 Maitland Daily Mercury, Mon 17 Jul 1916; Scone Advocate, Tue 18 Jul 1916; Maitland Daily Mercury, Fri 21 Jul 1916

26 Sydney Morning Herald, Sat 1 Feb 1868

**NOTE**: Additional information contained within Beecroft Cheltenham History Group website and book ‘Beecroft and Cheltenham, The Shaping of a Sydney Community to 1914’.