

## Naming Brunswick and Gertrude Streets

### Meg Lee

The name 'Brunswick' has been frequently used throughout Australia, in places such as Brunswick Heads in New South Wales, Brunswick in Victoria, and numerous streets and hotels. In Fitzroy there has been a general belief that an early settler, Captain George Brunswick Smyth, gave his own second name to the street. We can now confirm this in part of, for Robert Russell stated that Smyth gave the name 'Brunswick Street' to the new road in lot 49.<sup>1</sup> But whether it is named after Smyth himself, or from another source, or both, is still in question.

It is the purpose of this paper to provide some explanation of the use of 'Brunswick' in the embryonic settlement and in the early development of the Port Phillip District. The number of these Brunswicks, together with Smyth's own name, suggests that there must have been a common source. European settlement in the Port Phillip District began in 1837, and our founders undoubtedly looked to their British heritage to choose names with enduring and sentimental associations.

This paper gives an account of George Brunswick Smyth's life and his influences on early Melbourne. References on Smyth's background and time in Australia include the *Historical Records of Victoria, Foundation Series*, and research by Anne Marsden in her paper on 'George Brunswick Smyth, J.P.', prepared on behalf of the Athenaeum Archives on members of the first Melbourne Mechanics' Institution Committee<sup>2</sup>

### The Port Phillip District in the context of the late 1830s

The British king at the time of the settlement of Port Phillip was William IV, who died on 20 June 1837. He was the third son of George III and was the last king and penultimate monarch of Britain's House of Hanover. A new monarch, the eighteen year old Queen Victoria, was crowned on 28 June 1838. Reflecting this, the road on a significant east west surveyor's line in Melbourne was called 'Queen Victoria Parade'. We also have 'King William' and 'Hanover' Streets in the suburban subdivisions nearby.

King George III of Great Britain and Ireland was also the King of Hanover (in Lower Saxony, now Germany) as a result of the 'personal union' of the Duchy of Hanover with Great Britain, made in 1714. In the following years the connections were strengthened when George IV married Princess Caroline of Brunswick (her father was ruler of Brunswick-Wolfenbuttel) and she became the Queen Consort, in a difficult relationship with her husband.

The House of Brunswick was part of the Hanover line. George III was descended from the House of Brunswick (Haus Braunschweig in German, derived from the city of *Braunschweig*, now Lower Saxony). The Duchy of Brunswick-Lüneburg, was a historical ducal state within the north-western domains of the Holy Roman Empire from the late Middle Ages until the early modern era, in what is now northern Germany. The individual principalities making up the duchy existed until the end of the Holy Roman Empire in 1806. Following the Congress of Vienna in 1814-5, the territories became part of the Kingdom of Hanover and Duchy of Brunswick.

Queen Victoria, on accession to the throne could not inherit the title 'Queen of Hanover' from her predecessor. She was made Queen of Great Britain and Ireland but not of Hanover, because under Salic Law, which applied in Saxony, she was barred, as a female, from inheriting

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<sup>1</sup> Russell Collection; Letters to Robert Russell 1808-1900, Box 29/2, Royal Historical Society Victoria. These contain a photographic copy of a note with an inscription saying: 'Autographs of E.P.S Sturt and Geo B. Smyth preserved by Robert Russell', which includes the words 'known as Capt Smyth. He it was who named Brunswick Street, Collingwood'. The earliest appearance of the name found by Mike Moore is on the memorial of 15 May 1840 when Benjamin Baxter sold the one acre to Buckley

<sup>2</sup> Anne Marsden, 'George Brunswick Smyth, J.P.' (typescript ,2012, Athenaeum Library).

the crown and title. Consequently Ernest Augustus I, fifth son and eighth child of George III (1771–1851) became King of Hanover on 20 June 1837 and remained so until his death. Queen Victoria's accession meant that the 'personal union' between Britain and Hanover ended after 123 years. Was the name 'Brunswick', therefore used in the young colony to celebrate a connection which had now been lost to the Crown?

### Is there a correlation between George Brunswick Smyth and the Duchy of Brunswick?

George Brunswick Smyth was born in 1814 in New Brunswick, Canada. He was second child of George Stracey Smyth who became Lieutenant Governor of the new British province of New Brunswick in 1817. His father had a long military history, beginning on 20 May 1779, when he was twelve, George Stracey Smyth was appointed an ensign in the East Norfolk Regiment of Militia achieving the rank of Major General in 1812.

George Stracey Smyth had a very successful association with royalty, and coupled with patronage from a politically connected cousin, Lord Camden, the Lord Chancellor, it was easy for Smyth to rise quickly in his profession. In May 1791 he was a lieutenant and serving in Gibraltar under the command of Prince Edward Augustus, the fourth son of George III and father of Queen Victoria. When Edward, now Duke of Kent, became commander-in-chief of the forces in British North America in 1799, he made Smyth his senior aide-de-camp and acting quartermaster general. He also named Smyth's elder brother, the Reverend John Gee Smyth, as his domestic chaplain. Four years later, on the duke's retirement to England, George Stracey Smyth was one of the grooms of his household. Subsequently, he also served on the staff of the Duke of Cambridge, the youngest son of George III, who was in command of the Home District.<sup>3</sup>

It is worth noting that the Canadians are quite emphatic about the origin of the name of New Brunswick. It came from the 'House of Brunswick'.<sup>4</sup> Under regulations for the British colonies instituted in 1808, the commander of the forces was responsible for the civil administration of the province, the lieutenant-governor of the time being on permanent leave in England. Smyth served as interim president of the Civil Administrative Council in New Brunswick from 15 June 1812 to August 1813, and was called to Nova Scotia to act as commander-in-chief temporarily. He became Lieutenant-Governor of New Brunswick in February 1817. It is interesting that while he was Lieutenant-Governor he purchased a seventy ton sloop, the *Brunswicker*, on behalf of the colonial government, but received a reprimand and was told to rely upon the British navy.<sup>5</sup>

George Stracey Smyth was not a very successful administrator, and he preferred to occupy himself with musical activities, and to teach his own children. He gave strong support to the efforts of the National Society for Promoting the Education of the Poor, which was encouraging the establishment in the maritime provinces of schools using the monitorial system of teaching (called Madras schools). The young George was educated in New Brunswick at a Central School in Saint John, the first of those established in the province by his father, who often instructed the boys there in singing, and presided at the organ.

He died in office on 27 March 1823 in Fredericton, New Brunswick.<sup>6</sup> His wife, Amelia Anne had predeceased him in 1817. His will required that the children, George Brunswick and Amelia Georgina, be placed under the protection of the Court of Chancery, England, with their uncle John Gee Smyth and nephew Reverend Charles Smyth as guardians.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> D M Young, 'George Stracey Smyth (1767-1823)', in John English [ed], *Dictionary of Canadian Biography Online*, [www.dobCanada.com](http://www.dobCanada.com).

<sup>4</sup> <http://canadaonline.about.com/cs/provinces/g/newbrunswick.htm>

<sup>5</sup> His papers are in the National Archives, UK, Southampton Archive Service, D/BS (1759-1783) 8th series.

<sup>6</sup> Young, 'George Stracey Smyth'.

<sup>7</sup> Will of George Stracey Smyth, National Archives, UK.

### The young George Brunswick Smyth in England

It seems that the two young orphans returned to England following the death of their father. Amelia Georgina married the Rev Henry Sharpe Pocklington, of Stebbing, Essex, on 8 August 1827. The Pocklington family were established landed gentry with estates in Suffolk, Yorkshire and Lancashire.<sup>8</sup> The Smyth family came from a long line of squire parsons, and their estate was at Chelsworth and in the parish of Lindsey, in Suffolk.

Apart from his army records we know little about Smyth's activities in England before leaving for Australia, except that he became a member of the Geographical Society, London, in 1836.<sup>9</sup>

### Following his father's footsteps

Smyth joined the army and on 18 October 1831, at the age of seventeen, was appointed an ensign in the 98<sup>th</sup> (Prince of Wales) Regiment of Foot. He achieved the rank of Lieutenant in the 98<sup>th</sup> on 6 May 1836 and Lieutenant in the 80<sup>th</sup> on 6 May 1837.

The 80<sup>th</sup> Foot Regiment, based at Chatham, was deployed for convict escort duty to Australia. Their first embarkation, on the *Bengal Merchant*, occurred in August 1836 with twenty-nine men to 239 convicts. The colours of the 80<sup>th</sup> Regiment embarked in England on 6 March 1837 and arrived in Sydney on 1 November 1837 and the regimental headquarters was established at Windsor, NSW. A second contingent arrived on 18 December, 1838. G B Smyth served in the 80<sup>th</sup> Regiment from 1836 to 1839 initially as a lieutenant, becoming captain by purchase in June 1838.<sup>10</sup> A re-enactment society of the 80<sup>th</sup> Regiment or (Australia's Red Coats) still exists in Windsor, NSW.

Soldiers of the 80<sup>th</sup> Regiment were recruited in New South Wales in 1838 for a mounted police force in the Port Phillip district. Smyth enlisted on 26 August 1838, and arrived in Port Phillip in 1838, aged about twenty-four.

### Commander of the Mounted Police

Smyth was appointed officer-in-charge of the Port Phillip Mounted Police in 1839, and was responsible for the operations and administration of a growing mounted police force in the Port Phillip District. By April 1839 there were twenty-nine mounted police in the Port Phillip District.<sup>11</sup>

It is apparent from some of his letters to the Colonial Secretary that he showed great ability in planning for the extension of a viable police presence throughout the District, from Portland to Geelong and the Goulburn and Broken Rivers. He considered practical and cost-efficient measures by which police and their horses could be sustained, to the benefit of the service.<sup>12</sup>

One story about his exploits as a mounted policeman is as follows;

Bridge was there none in those days, it is hardly necessary to say; not even the humble one with wooden piers that spanned the stream later, and connected Melbourne people with the sandy forest of South Yarra, then much despised for its alleged agricultural inferiority: still there was a punt. You could get across, but not always when you wanted. And I recall the incident of Captain Brunswick Smyth, late of the 80<sup>th</sup> Regiment, and the first commandant of mounted police, riding down to the ferry, from which the

<sup>8</sup> Pocklington Family Papers, National Archives, UK (Ref HA 552/1/1) covering dates 1668-1929.

<sup>9</sup> Royal Historical Society Records of Victoria Box 37/10 MS 13939-49.

<sup>10</sup> *London Gazette*, 26 June 1838.

<sup>11</sup> 'The Mounted Police under Lieutenant G.B..Smyth was reinforced that year [as more convicts arrived and the military detachment increased].' Michael Cannon & Michael Cannon & Ian MacFarlane, *Historical Records of Victoria, 6, The Crown, the Land and the Squatter 1835-1840* (Melbourne 1991), p 202.

<sup>12</sup> Michael Cannon & Ian MacFarlane, *Historical Records of Victoria, 3, The Early Development of Melbourne* (Melbourne 1984), pp 248-251.

guardian was absent — ‘sick, or drunk, or suthin’ — and, with military impatience, dashing on board with a brace of troopers, who pulled the lumbering barge across, and fastened her to the farther shore.<sup>13</sup>

### Activities in the Port Phillip District 1839-1843

His career expanded as he accepted various new roles, and acquired new land. He was appointed magistrate on 25 January 1838, reaffirmed by Governor, Sir George Gipps on 1 December 1838.<sup>14</sup>

A map of buildings supposed to have existed in Melbourne in 1838, published in 1888, shows Lieutenant Smyth's quarters near the corner of Spencer and Little Collins Streets, and Robert Russell's 1838 survey of government buildings shows structures in the blocks from Spencer to King Streets. Smyth's building is at an angle to the grid. Temporary hospital and temporary prisoners' quarters are nearby at either end, and there are also the military barracks, soldiers' huts, police office and the guard room.<sup>15</sup>

Correspondence between Superintendent William Lonsdale and the Colonial Secretary includes a letter of 6 October 1838 in which Lonsdale writes ‘I have the honour to enclose a letter from Lieutenant Smyth, 80<sup>th</sup> Regiment, requesting to have a quarter built for him near the barracks of the Mounted Police as he has been appointed to that Corps. I beg to observe should he remain the only Military Officer here the present quarter will still do for him, but should another officer be sent to have the separate charge of the Detachment in Infantry, it will be requisite to have another one for Lieutenant Smyth, and if His Excellency approve of it, I can have a small house of two rooms built with the convict mechanics we have here, for him.’<sup>16</sup>

On 2 July 1839 the Colonial Secretary wrote to Lonsdale rejecting an application from Smyth for assigned servants, as no convicts were to be given for purchases of land obtained at Port Phillip subsequent to 31 December 1837. In December 1838 the Melbourne Court Register shows that Smyth appeared as a Justice of the Peace for the Colony.<sup>17</sup> H F Gisborne, W Lonsdale, J Simpson, T Wills, and W Yaldwyn, were also appointed JPs and would be fellow-members of the Mechanics' Institution the following November.

On 5 October 1838 the Rev William Waterfield, of the Independent (Congregational) Church in Melbourne, noted in his journal ‘This day I was wholly engaged in seeking an opportunity to wait on Lieutenant Smyth, and at last obtained his subscription of £5.’<sup>18</sup> These activities are evidence of a motivated young man energetically devoting himself to various military and civil duties, as well as social commitments.

### Marriage

Smyth married Constantia Mathews Alexander on 23 November 1839.<sup>19</sup> This was one week after his election to the Melbourne Mechanics' Institution's first Committee and the following month after his speedy trading of land in Brunswick Street. They were married by the Rev J C Grylls at St James Church, Melbourne, in the presence of three witnesses, H N Carrington, J B Were and F A Powlett, each a notable pioneer of Melbourne.<sup>20</sup> His friend Robert Russell, was also married at St James Church the following month.

Constantia was the daughter of Thomas Alexander, Governor of the Arsenal at Mauritius, and his wife, and had been born on 1 May 1816 at Ramsgate, England. Constantia's sister, Augusta

<sup>13</sup> ‘Rolf Boldrewood’, *Old Melbourne Memories*, Published MacMillan and Co, 1896

<sup>14</sup> *Sydney Gazette*, 25 January 1838

<sup>15</sup> Cannon & MacFarlane, *Historical Records of Victoria*, 6, p 48.

<sup>16</sup> Cannon & MacFarlane, *Historical Records of Victoria*, 3, p 302.

<sup>17</sup> Cannon & MacFarlane, *Historical Records of Victoria*, 3, p 62; see also the *Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser*, 11 December 1838, p 2.

<sup>18</sup> Cannon & MacFarlane, *Historical Records of Victoria*, 3, p 544.

<sup>19</sup> *Cornwall Chronicle*, 18 December 1839.

<sup>20</sup> Cannon & MacFarlane, *Historical Records of Victoria*, 3, p 596.

was also married in Mauritius to Lieutenant Charles Forrest (b 1809, Cawnpore, India), who was to build one of the first houses in South Yarra, 'Waterloo', on Forrest Hill, and then 'the Hermitage' at the corner of Gardiners Creek (Toorak) Road and Church Street. Her mother, Mrs Grace Alexander, widow of Thomas Alexander, came to Melbourne and made her home at 'Llanmiloe', near the Charles Forrest and, her other married daughter, Augusta. Llanmiloe was in Williams Road (at approximately the present 222).<sup>21</sup>

Constantia was widowed in Britain in 1845 at the age of twenty-nine, after five years of marriage. They were childless.<sup>22</sup> The census of 1851 shows her living at Blackheath Hill, Greenwich, Kent, with four Polkington children, Ellen K, 20, Rose Emma, 20, Alice, 18, and Frederick, 15, scholar. All of the named women in the house, including Constantia were annuitants. They lived with two servants. Constantia eventually returned to Australia where she died. Melbourne directories show Mrs Brunswick Smyth as a resident of Marlton Avenue St Kilda in 1892, and a year later in Sorrett Avenue, Malvern.



Constantia Matthews Smyth (née Alexander).  
E M Robb, *Early Toorak and District* Melbourne 1934, p 119.

### The dreams and realities of land ownership

It is believed that Smyth arrived in the colony with a considerable fortune, and on retirement from the 80<sup>th</sup> Regiment, he received a remission. The Colonial Secretary on 17 April 1839 advised retired and half pay officers of the British Navy and Army to take the opportunity to obtain land with remission money,<sup>23</sup> and Smyth followed this advice. The old law memorials at

<sup>21</sup> E M Robb, *Early Toorak and District* (Melbourne 1934), p 119. There is an unsourced note in the Royal Historical Society of Victoria files showing the Alexander family's direct line of descent, via their Friend forbears, from William the Conqueror, and also from Catherine Parr by another branch.

<sup>22</sup> Constantia's death certificate, Victoria

<sup>23</sup> *Government Gazette*, 1 May 1839, p 516.

the Registrar-General's Office show twenty-six land dealings by George Brunswick Smyth, of which three relate to land that he had bought and sold in lot 49 (Brunswick Street, Fitzroy) which he part-subdivided. At this time he was busy establishing a new household for his wife when accommodation was scarce and rudimentary, even for those with ability to pay for better living conditions

The first suburban Crown land sales had taken place on 13 February 1839 and twelve lots of 25 acres [10 ha] were sold in Newtown, or what we now know as South Fitzroy. Lot 49 was bought by Thomas Walker, who on-sold it to Benjamin Baxter on 17 May 1839. Baxter sub-divided the lot and sold the western half to Smyth on 9 October 1839. Before the end of the month Smyth again subdivided and sold allotments of 3, 3 and 5 acres [1.2, 1.2 and 2 ha]. The name of Gertrude Street first appears in memorials of sale on 30 December 1839.

Smyth also purchased two large tracts of land in Heidelberg totalling 532 acres or 215 hectares to which he gave the name 'Chelsworth'. He was one of the first landholders in this district. A portion of the present Chelsworth Park, off the Boulevard, was part of his property. According to Donald Garden he used part of the fortune he brought with him to buy the Heidelberg land, as well as portion 1 in the Parish of Nillumbik, consisting of 958 acres or 388 hectares on the Plenty River, which he named 'Bois Cheri'. But it seems that he had overstretched his resources, as many did, and was forced to sell: he auctioned his property on Plenty on 2 August 1841 having previously sold his cattle and other stock.<sup>24</sup>

Constantia also owned 300 acres [121 ha] of land at Jika Jika, and owned land in allotment 2 section 2 in the City of Melbourne prior to her marriage, in her maiden name, Constantia Matthews Alexander.

In 1840 Smyth leased out the 296 acres [120 ha] of Chelsworth south of the road, known as Chelsworth Farm, and sold the northern section to Horatio Nelson Carrington (who had been a witness at Smyth's 1839 marriage). According to Donald Garden, Carrington fell into financial difficulties and the property came back into Smyth's hands. Smyth sold *Bois Cheri* and thereafter appears to have lived at Chelsworth, which he developed into a fine estate. It is believed that his homestead was on the later site of the Ivanhoe Golf Course clubhouse and was further developed by following owners of the land. His favourite activities included growing hops and breeding pedigreed shorthorns.<sup>25</sup>

## Melbourne Life

Smyth was gregarious, and a natural leader in the growing community, described by Robert Russell as 'handsome and full of life in his early days'. He was instrumental in the establishment of a number of clubs and associations. He was a foundation member of the Port Phillip Turf Club and the Melbourne Club, was involved in the creation of the first masonic lodge<sup>26</sup> and the Melbourne Mechanics' Institute, and was captain of the first cricket match to be played between the Military and others in the Port Phillip District under the auspices of the Melbourne Club.

## The Smyth & Snodgrass dispute of 1842

The Smyth and Snodgrass dispute of 1842 nearly brought down the Melbourne Club. According to Anne Marsden:

In 1842 trouble erupted for Smyth at the Melbourne Club as the result of a dispute with fellow members Peter Snodgrass and John Woolley. Financial stresses during the depression had resulted in Snodgrass quarrelling with Smyth, and after Smyth 'cut'

<sup>24</sup> D S Garden, *Heidelberg: the Land and its People*, 1838-1900 (Carlton [Victoria] 1972), pp 27-28

<sup>25</sup> Garden, *Heidelberg*, pp 27-28

<sup>26</sup> 'Garryowen' [Edmund Finn], *The Chronicles of Early Melbourne, 1835 to 1852: Historical, Anecdotal and Personal*, by 'Garryowen' (2 vols, Melbourne 1888), II, p.615

Snodgrass in Collins Street, the latter sent a representative, Woolley, to wait upon Smyth and demand an apology or issue a challenge.

At a special general meeting of the Melbourne Club held on 15 June 1842, the question before the meeting 'was simply whether Capt. Smyth was justified in refusing Mr. Snodgrass the satisfaction he demanded.' Conflicting proposals – 'That Capt. Smyth be heard in defence' and 'That Capt. Smyth be not heard further' – were voted upon. Smyth then read his defence. The members then voted on 'whether the conduct of Capt. Smyth has been derogatory to a member of this club.' In compliance with Rules of the Club, the vote was taken by ballot, the anonymity of which was probably welcomed by the members, who had been polarised by the incident. It appeared that in a ballot of forty-two members twenty-six voted that Capt. Smyth should cease to be a member of the Club, while sixteen voted he should remain a member. As two-thirds were required for exclusion, Capt. Smyth had a majority of two in his favour.

The meeting then debated upon the allegations made by Smyth that Woolley had been drunk whilst acting as Snodgrass's 'go-between'. The meeting was adjourned for two days and re-convened on 17 June. In the meantime, Smyth appeared to have tendered his resignation. A section of the Minutes [covering a proposal that the meeting should consider whether Smyth's resignation be accepted, and an amendment by Mr. Ebdon, seconded by Smyth, that Smyth's resignation be accepted] were crossed through in the Minutes.

The Minutes then record the members' agreement that Woolley's character had not been impugned by his part in the dispute between Smyth and Snodgrass. After a number of proposals and amendments the committee accepted Smyth's resignation.

The Melbourne Club appeared to be at crisis point, as further following sections of the Minutes are crossed through. Then the President, Mr. Verner, gave notice of his intention to move that the Club be dissolved. He also gave notice of his intention to move 'that the particulars of the last two days be expunged from the Book.' At this point, a supporter of Smyth, Mr Simpson (James Simpson, who was, through the 1840s, President of the Mechanics' Institute) gave notice of his intention to resign as a member of the Club. The Club was not dissolved. On 6 July 1842 a new President was elected to replace the founding President, Mr. Verner, and a member gave notice that he would move that a Committee be appointed to revise the Rules, in the event of Mr. Verner's intended motion [that the Club be dissolved].

Thus, this unfortunate quarrel nearly caused the closure of the Melbourne Club and must have significantly affected Smyth's standing in the Melbourne community.<sup>27</sup>

### Concluding Years in Port Phillip District

The depression of the 1840s was disastrous for Smyth and a number of his colleagues, as land speculators experienced heavy losses. It has been reported that Smyth was one of those most heavily hit by the crash, and lost £10,000. He was compelled to call a meeting of his creditors, and the fear that he would have to seek the protection of the Insolvency Court caused him to resign as a justice of the peace. His letter of resignation is most sad to read. Smyth is listed in *Kerr's Almanac* of 1841 and 1842 under the Surveyor's Department. In 1841 he is listed as a sole contract surveyor: 'George Brunswick Smyth Esq. Yarra Yarra'. However, in 1842 he is listed as a 'Contract Surveyor, George B Smyth and Crawford Mollison Esq.'

His partner, Crawford Mollison, was an Englishman from Hastings, Kent, who had come to Australia in 1838, and was later to be a commissioner of goldfields and warden of the goldfields at Heathcote. With his brothers he established large pastoral holdings at Coliban and Pyalong. His son left a notable legacy to the medical profession and Royal Women's Hospital.

Smyth and his wife returned to England in 1844<sup>28</sup> and Chelsworth and their other properties were sold.<sup>29</sup> Smyth died of albuminuria (protein in the urine) on 16 March 1845, aged thirty.

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<sup>27</sup> Marsden, 'George Brunswick Smyth'.

Robert Russell described it as 'an untimely end'. Smyth was buried at St Mary's, Lewisham, Kent, on 24 March 1845 in an altar tomb, which indicates a high standing of the family.

Constantia returned to Melbourne at some time after 1851 and lived to 83. She died on 2 November 1899 at 'Goonara', Sorrett Avenue, Malvern, and is buried in the St Kilda Cemetery.<sup>30</sup> She bequeathed the family silver<sup>31</sup> and the family bible to the family back in England, the Pocklingtons, and two oil paintings of George Brunswick Smyth<sup>32</sup> to Lady Maryon Wilson. Descendants have been identified in insert the? United Kingdom and correspondence has begun in an effort to locate the two oil portraits of Smyth.

### Naming Gertrude Street

Gertrude (also spelt Gertrud) is a female given name derived from Germanic roots that mean 'spear' and 'strength'. 'Trudi', originally a diminutive of Gertrude, has developed into a name in its own right. But this does not help to explain the naming of Gertrude Street, Fitzroy.

Mike Moore has established that the name of Gertrude Street appeared, for the first time to our knowledge, on 30 December 1839 when Benjamin Baxter sold one acre in the area to Alfred Lingham. There is an urban myth that 'Gertrude' was a daughter of George Brunswick Smyth and as he named Brunswick Street he may have named the cross axis of lot 49 'Gertrude' street. But this cannot be the case, as he died childless. So who is Gertrude and what significance did she have to be remembered in perpetuity?

The closest association found to date is a reference to Captain and Mrs Smyth attending a wedding of Gertrude Smyth at Kensington Palace in early 1840. It was reported to be a civil service function, albeit a grand affair held at Kensington Palace. The wedding guests included members of the aristocracy and Italian royalty.<sup>33</sup> The bride wore 'a rich white satin dress, trimmed and flounced with costly Brussels point lace, and wore a small bouquet of orange blossom in her hair, which was also ornamented with brilliants. The robe was confined at the waist by a superb band of diamonds'.<sup>34</sup>

The Duke of Sussex, 6<sup>th</sup> son of George III, gave the 'fair and accomplished' bride away. Gertrude's husband was the MP for Wallington and had been made the first Baron of Dinorden of Kinmel of the Kinmel Estate, Anglesey, in 1830. He was a respected member of society, being ADC to Queen Victoria, Colonel of the Anglesey Militia and champion of the poor, founding a free school for local girls in 1830. It was his second marriage, contracted at the age of 73. There was one child of this union, the Honorable Gwyn Gertrude Hughes who married Sir Arundel Neave on 26 September 1871. She died on 30 September 1916.

I believe that Gertrude may have been a cousin of George Brunswick Smyth, perhaps the child of one of his uncles, the Rev John Gee Smyth, or Charles Smyth and hence his use of her name for the street.

**Meg Lee has been a member of the Fitzroy History Society since 1993 and Convenor for several years. Her professional career was in education. An interest in history and research has led to the publication and web site of her family tree and of this article.**

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<sup>28</sup> *Port Phillip Herald*, 12 January, 1844.

<sup>29</sup> Garden, *Heidelberg*, p 40.

<sup>30</sup> *Argus* 3 November 1899, p 1.

<sup>31</sup> Will of Constantia Smyth, Public Record Office, Victoria.

<sup>32</sup> 1878 Pocklington (Chelsworth) Papers Suffolk records Office, England, national Archives, UK (Australian Joint Copying Project M982) 1878/2/18 .

<sup>33</sup> *Southern Australian* (Adelaide) 23 June 1840 p 3.

<sup>34</sup> *Hobart Town Courier*, 26 June 1840, p 3.