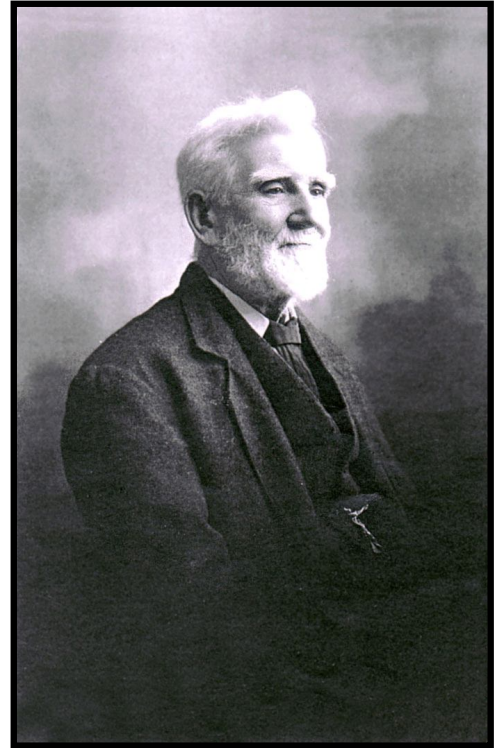
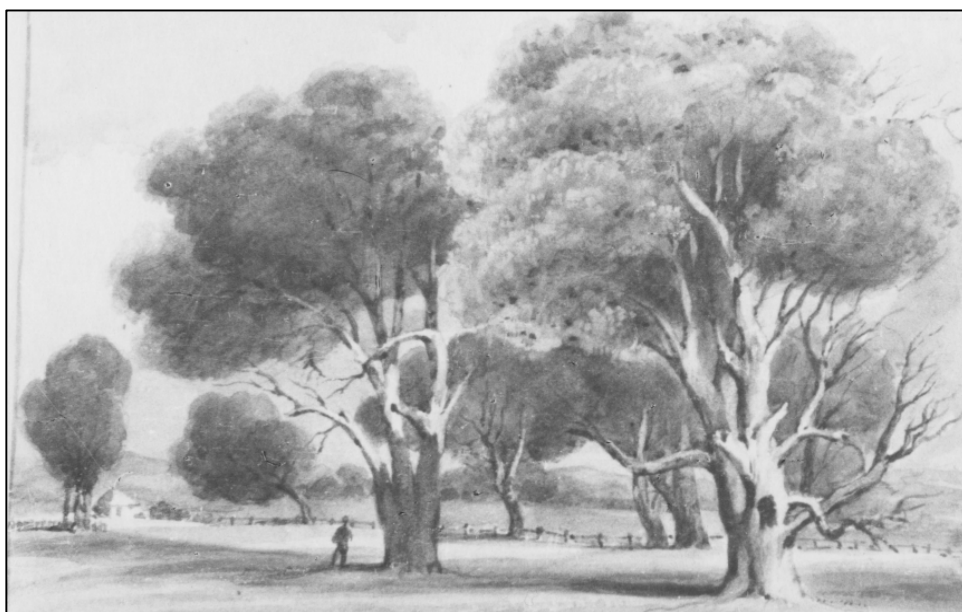


## HERBERT BERRY - THE GARDENER'S SON

The story of Herbert Berry and his family's association with the explorer Captain Charles Sturt first gained public prominence in 1927 when an article titled "Link With Sturt" was published in the Adelaide "Mail", on 5 November. That article reported that *"Having lived at Grange with Capt. Sturt nearly 80 years ago, Mr. Herbert Berry, of Beverly, who on Wednesday celebrated his eighty second birthday, is one of the few remaining links with the great Australian Explorer"*. The article went on to record that in his 82<sup>nd</sup> year this remarkable man was still actively working as a blacksmith, which trade he had followed for more than 60 years, that he was a Rechabite of some 50 years who continued to be the secretary of Lodge, Albert Trench No. 5, which position he had held for 40 years, that for more than 60 years he had attended the Kilkenny Church of England Mission Church, which he and two other men had built, and of which he had been church organist for 27 years.



The article further recorded *"As a lad of five Herbert and his brother William Henry played with the Sturt children (Charlotte Eyre and her brother Charles) and went fishing with them in the adjacent creek that is now known as the Port River. He also remembers Captain Sturt in 1850 as a tall and kindly middle-aged man, who was ever ready to invite the children of his gardener to have a meal with the Sturt family, and that the stream which now runs in front of Sturt's old residence at Grange used to run behind the house when Sturt lived there and that the country was much more swampy than it is now"*.



***Watercolour of gum trees behind Captain Sturt's Home by Lt. E. Frome, c 1849  
This is how Herbert Berry would have seen the property in 1850 - 1853***

Herbert Berry was the fourth child of John and Elizabeth Berry, born in England, on 2 November 1845. He arrived in the colony of South Australia on 11 December 1849, on board the "*Ramilles*", in the company of his parents, an older brother (William Henry), and his two sisters (Charlotte and Hester), all of whom were travelling as Government Immigrants in Steerage.

Herbert's father, John Berry, is recorded as following the occupation of "Cellarman, China Painter and Gardener" and as stated in "The Mail", in 1850 he was employed by Captain Charles Sturt to be his "gardener" at "Grange" which at that time was the Sturt family home, and where John Berry's last child, Alfred George, was to be born in December 1851. The Berry family lived on the property in a cottage close to "Grange" until 1853 when Captain Charles Sturt and his family departed for England. The oral history of the descendants of the Berry family records that the children of both families were playmates until that sad day when the Sturt family left for Port Adelaide in a bullock dray driven over the sand hills by John Berry. The Berry children climbed to the top of a nearby sand hill from which William Henry waved goodbye, using a red handkerchief, until their childhood friends passed from their sight forever. Today that handkerchief remains a treasured family possession in the hands of Herbert Berry's grandson, Malcolm, who still resides in the suburb of Grange.

Historians are also indebted to the Berry family for preserving a valuable fragment of Captain Charles Sturt's famous central expedition of 1844-1846. The oral history of the Berry family again records that prior to his departure for England in 1853, Captain Sturt gave John Berry a box of papers and books with instructions that they be burned. Fortunately for posterity he disobeyed his master's instructions, since those papers included a prayer book used by Sturt on his central expedition and another of approximately one hundred sheets of lined paper sewn and bound between hard covers. Those bound papers contained a record in Sturt's own handwriting, of events that occurred on his central expedition between 8 April 1845 and 10 November 1845 and they remained in the Berry family until 1904, at which time the State Library of South Australia purchased them from Herbert's younger brother Alfred Berry. Today those bound documents are held in the Mortlock Library, where they are catalogued as PRG 2/15 (formerly V28) and continue to fascinate historians and researchers alike, since they form an authoritative and controversial record that is markedly different from what has come to be regarded as "Sturt's official record" of that famous expedition.

Following the departure of Captain Sturt and his family for England, John Berry and his family went to live upon the banks of the Torrens River at Fulham. One of the most vivid memories retained by Herbert Berry was of the grand old pioneer Mr. "John White" who, though a wealthy man, used to wear a white smock when he rode to Adelaide, and used to kill a bullock once a week upon the "White Estate", so that persons nearby could get cheap meat.

After a few years at Fulham, the Berry family next went to live at Hindmarsh where Herbert Berry attended the school of a Mr. Chambers, but his scholastic career came to an abrupt end on 8 August 1859 when the ill-fated "*Admella*" was wrecked with the loss of eighty lives. Mr. Chamber's son was amongst those on board the ship who lost their lives by drowning, and as a consequence of his grief he closed the Chambers Academy of Learning. Herbert next went to

work on farms at Yankalilla and Two Wells and then as a young man became apprenticed to a blacksmith, which trade he followed for the rest of his active working life.

On 1 January 1873, Herbert Berry married Elizabeth Musgrave, and they established their family home on an acre of land that adjoined Princes Square, at Beverly. They had nine children (eight sons and one daughter), and enjoyed a long and happy marriage until Elizabeth's death in November 1923. Family research also indicated that Henry Berry had made a good match since Elizabeth Musgrave was an interesting lady in her own right, in that she was a distant relative of the Governor of South Australia, Sir Anthony Musgrave (1873-1877), and that "on occasions" Elizabeth received a visit from Sir Anthony.



***Herbert and Elizabeth***

Herbert Berry's older brother William Henry, who was known to all as "Henry", was also an interesting character who has left us another anecdotal record concerning Captain Charles Sturt and his family, in an article published by the "Adelaide Advertiser", on 5 June 1953. In that article a Mr. D. Dingle of Clarendon recalled that many years ago "*Mr. Henry Berry of Woodville told him that Mr. Justice Cooper lived in Capt. Sturt's house at Grange after the family went to England. That Judge Cooper planted the palms in front of the house*". Mr. Dingle also recalled that Mr. Berry had told him "*They cooked guinea fowl eggs in the reeds and played natives on Queen Victoria's Birthday, May 24, on which occasion the natives would gather on the old recreation ground south of the house where Captain Sturt would distribute blankets, sugar and other provisions to them, following which they would hold a corroboree*". It was also recalled that many years later, Henry Berry, who never married, wrote a letter to Charlotte Eyre (Missy) Sturt, who responded to his letter via a friend explaining that her sight was near gone but that she wished for a photograph of her old home. Henry provided the photograph as requested and that was the end of their correspondence. Henry Berry died in 1916 and Charlotte Eyre Sturt died at Upper Norwood in England in 1928.

Herbert Berry was to outlive all his sisters and brothers, and all but three of his nine children. He continued to lead an active and contented life until he died on 25 November 1933, aged 88 years, and was buried beside his wife and other family members in the Cheltenham cemetery. He was in every way a remarkable and modest man and with his passing he broke the last link between the Sturt and Berry children who had lived and played together at "Grange" in that time in our colonial past, when the Province of South Australia was still young and the explorer Captain Charles Sturt lived amongst us.

*By Arthur Jeeves.*

**Berry Family Grave Plot – Cheltenham Cemetery, South Australia**

Elizabeth Berry (nee Musgrave) 8/12/1849 to 29/7/1923  
Herbert Berry 2/11/1845 to 25/11/1933  
Elizabeth Berry (the only daughter) 8/12/1877 to 7/12/1879  
Aloiza James Berry (their son) 6/4/1880 to 2/5/1881  
Henry Martin (their son) 1/12/1873 to 6/9/1914  
Lydia, (his wife) who died 17/6/1957 aged 83 years

