



TOWN OF
VICTORIA PARK

2021 LOCAL HISTORY AWARDS



The Story of Patrick O'Reilly

by Patrick O'Reilly Low

Category: Original Research

THE O'REILLY FAMILY IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA

PATRICK O'REILLY



The purpose of this story is to provide background on the life of Patrick O'Reilly. It is not intended to be his complete story and there may be errors. I would encourage anyone with corrections, additional information or relevant photos to contact me.

Author: Patrick O'Reilly Low
Prepared: January 2021
Updated: May 2021
Email: patrickolow@bigpond.com

1. THE EARLY YEARS

Patrick O'Reilly was born in Ireland in County Galway in about 1861.

County Galway is on Ireland's western seaboard. Its eastern areas feature rolling farmland plains. To the west are the raised bog, heathered hills, lakes and mountains of Connemara. The county capital, Galway City, is known for its traditional music venues. It is one of Ireland's least populated counties.

Patrick was the son of Patrick O'Reilly and Sarah Glennon¹. His father was a farmer. Little is known of his early life. He did have a brother Thomas O'Reilly and one of Thomas' sons, Michael Francis O'Reilly (1900 – 1968) lived in Kalgoorlie and Hamilton Hill, Perth for many years. His daughter, Patricia Lorraine Spark (nee O'Reilly) lived in Hamilton Hill (1936 – 2015).

Patrick was born in a difficult and turbulent time for the common people living in Ireland. The Great Irish Famine of 1845 – 1851 had left many dead and of the those who survived many had decided to emigrate to England (especially Liverpool), North America and Australia. If Patrick's father was a tenant farmer then his family almost certainly suffered the worst of this time.

One of his grandsons, Royden Patrick Low, spent many a weekend as a boy with his grandmother, Kate O'Reilly, and aunt, Kitty O'Reilly, and they were very anti-British and spoke of the hard times imposed on the Irish population. They spoke of the Famine and the impact it had had on the families. So even 70-80 years after the event it was still shaping people's outlooks. Royden expressed similar views and was an ardent republican.

2. ARRIVING IN AUSTRALIA

According to his death certificate, Patrick spent 21 years in Western Australia, 1 year in Queensland and 14 years in New South Wales. He died at 56 years of age so appears to have arrived in Australia when he was about 20 years of age or about 1880. He was a carpenter by trade and a building contractor. It is not known whether he learnt his trade in Ireland, England or Sydney.

It is difficult to be certain when Patrick arrived in Sydney as there are a number of 'Patrick O'Reilly's' recorded as arriving about this time. The most likely candidate is a Patrick O'Reilly who arrived in Sydney from London via Adelaide and Melbourne on 26th July 1880 on the 'Potosi'. He travelled in steerage which suggests that he did not have much money at the time.

No doubt he spent the next few years trying to establish himself in a new country which would have presented numerous challenges.

¹ Source – Marriage Certificate. See P.3


3. MARRIAGE

On Wednesday, 20th July 1887 he married Catherine Flynn in the St Joseph's Church, Woollahra (now Edgecliff), Sydney.



St Joseph's Church, Albert Street, Edgecliff, Sydney

St Joseph's church is in the early English style of Gothic architecture and is built of brick on stone foundations. It has been operated by the Franciscan Friars since its opening in 1874. The suburb of Edgecliff has long been regarded as one of Sydney's fashionable areas, though the early congregations were for the most part made up of labourers, shopkeepers and a very large number of Irish girls in service.²


MARRIAGE REGISTERED IN NEW SOUTH WALES, AUSTRALIA.

CERTIFIED COPY FURNISHED UNDER PART V OF THE REGISTRATION OF BIRTHS, DEATHS AND MARRIAGES ACT, 1973.

No.	Date and place of marriage	Name and surname of bride	Residence of bride	Religion	Age	Profession or occupation	Bride's name, maiden's name and residence	Age	Profession or occupation
3138	20 th July 1887 St Joseph's Church, Woollahra.	Patrick O'Reilly	Woolahra, Sydney	Catholic	27	Carpenter	Patrick O'Reilly, Woolahra, Sydney	22	Dressmaker
		Catherine Flynn	Woolahra, Sydney	Catholic	22	Dressmaker	Catherine Flynn, Woolahra, Sydney		

Married in the Church of St Joseph, Woollahra.
 According to the rites of the Church of Rome.

By the Rev. P.A. Bennett, Minister in Charge.

I, VERNON MARK BENNETT, HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THE ABOVE IS A TRUE COPY OF PARTICULARS RECORDED IN REGISTER KEPT BY ME.

ISSUED AT SYDNEY, 19th AUGUST, 1987.

PRINCIPAL REGISTRAR

Copy of Marriage Certificate for Patrick O'Reilly and Catherine Flynn.

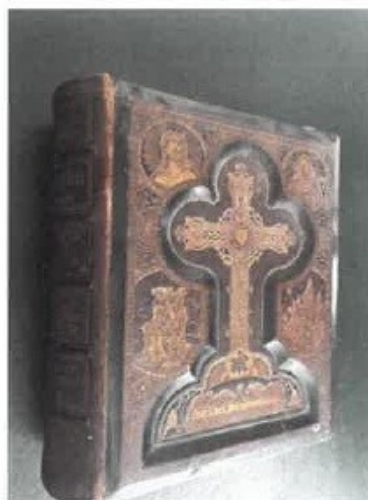
The Certificate indicates that Patrick was a Carpenter and Catherine a Dressmaker at the time.

² Source - St Joseph's Church website



Wedding photo for Patrick O'Reilly and Catherine (Kate) Flynn. 1887

As a wedding gift, Patrick inscribed and presented Kate with a Family Bible that is retained by the author today.



O'Reilly Family Bible

4. ESTABLISHING A FAMILY

Within 12 months of their marriage Patrick and Catherine Kate had their first child, Mary. In all they had 6 children with the first four born in Sydney. They were:-

- Mary Agnes O'Reilly (9 June 1888 to 22 October 1974)
- Sarah Anne O'Reilly (25 January 1891 to 9 December 1971)
- John (Jack) Thomas O'Reilly (24 April 1893 to 3 May 1917)
- Ellen (Nell or Nellie) O'Reilly (22 September 1894 to 24 July 1975)
- Kathleen (Kitty) O'Reilly (22 January 1899 to 17 October 1962)
- Stillborn Male O'Reilly (1905)



An early photo of Catherine and Patrick O'Reilly

Patrick appears to have been very enterprising throughout his career, so it is likely he was self-employed as a building contractor in this period. It's not known what types of buildings he was constructing but most likely private residences.

It's worth noting that during this period Kate operated a small Boarding House in Woollahra. She later used the profits from this business to purchase 3 building blocks in Midland Junction in Perth.³

In the late 1880's, early 1890's the family lived at 25 Renny Street, Paddington.⁴

³ See Attachment 1. Report of Bankruptcy proceedings for Patrick O'Reilly in Perth in 1905.

⁴ Ancestry. Sands Directories: Sydney and New South Wales.



25 Renny Street, Paddington, Sydney today.

In February 1895 Patrick entered voluntary sequestration (bankruptcy) and is identified as a Carpenter of Albion Street, Annandale.⁵ His bankruptcy was not declared until October 1896 and appears to have been a drawn out matter.

The Sands Directories for Sydney and New South Wales show that he was living at 132 Albion Street, Annandale in 1896 to 1898.

As an aside, the Grant family moved into 132 Albion Street soon after the O'Reilly family left for Western Australia. The Grants worked at the Sydney Museum and on a of trip to North Queensland took responsibility for a young full blood Aboriginal child who had survived a massacre. Douglas Grant went on to serve in France in WWI attaining the rank of Sergeant. On his return he had a range of occupations including draftsman, mechanical engineer and wool classer. He was a close friend of the poet Henry Lawson and visited him regularly.

According to his Death Certificate, Patrick spent 12 months in Queensland. It is assumed that this was before travelling to Western Australia, but we cannot be certain. He did this without his family and may well have been scoping the opportunities that did or didn't exist in the northern colony. It's worth noting that there is a 4 year gap between Ellen and Kitty's births which suggests separation (or abstinence!).

⁵ File No. 10581 in the Supreme Court of NSW. Bankruptcy matters.

5. MOVING TO WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Later in 1898 the family moved from Sydney to Perth. We can only speculate at the reasons. Was it to escape Patrick's financial difficulties or was it to establish a new life?

It is worth noting that the discovery of gold in the Coolgardie and Kalgoorlie areas just a few years earlier had resulted in a gold rush with the population of the colony of Western Australia increasing quickly and significantly. As a result of the gold rush and the associated need for more housing and new infrastructure, there would have been many opportunities for an enterprising building contractor. Keep in mind as well that the colonies had for some years been meeting to discuss the establishment of a Federation.

Their ship from Sydney would have arrived in Albany and they would have then had to move the family and their belongings to Perth where they settled. They did not arrive from Sydney empty handed. Today members of the family have large-framed family photographs, large framed holy pictures and furniture including a set of drawers made from the now rare Red Cedar (a mahogany species, *Toona Ciliata*, found on the northern New South Wales and southern Queensland coasts and prized as a furniture making timber) and a shamrock shaped table. They would no doubt have arrived with linen, crockery and cutlery, clothes and possibly other items of furniture.

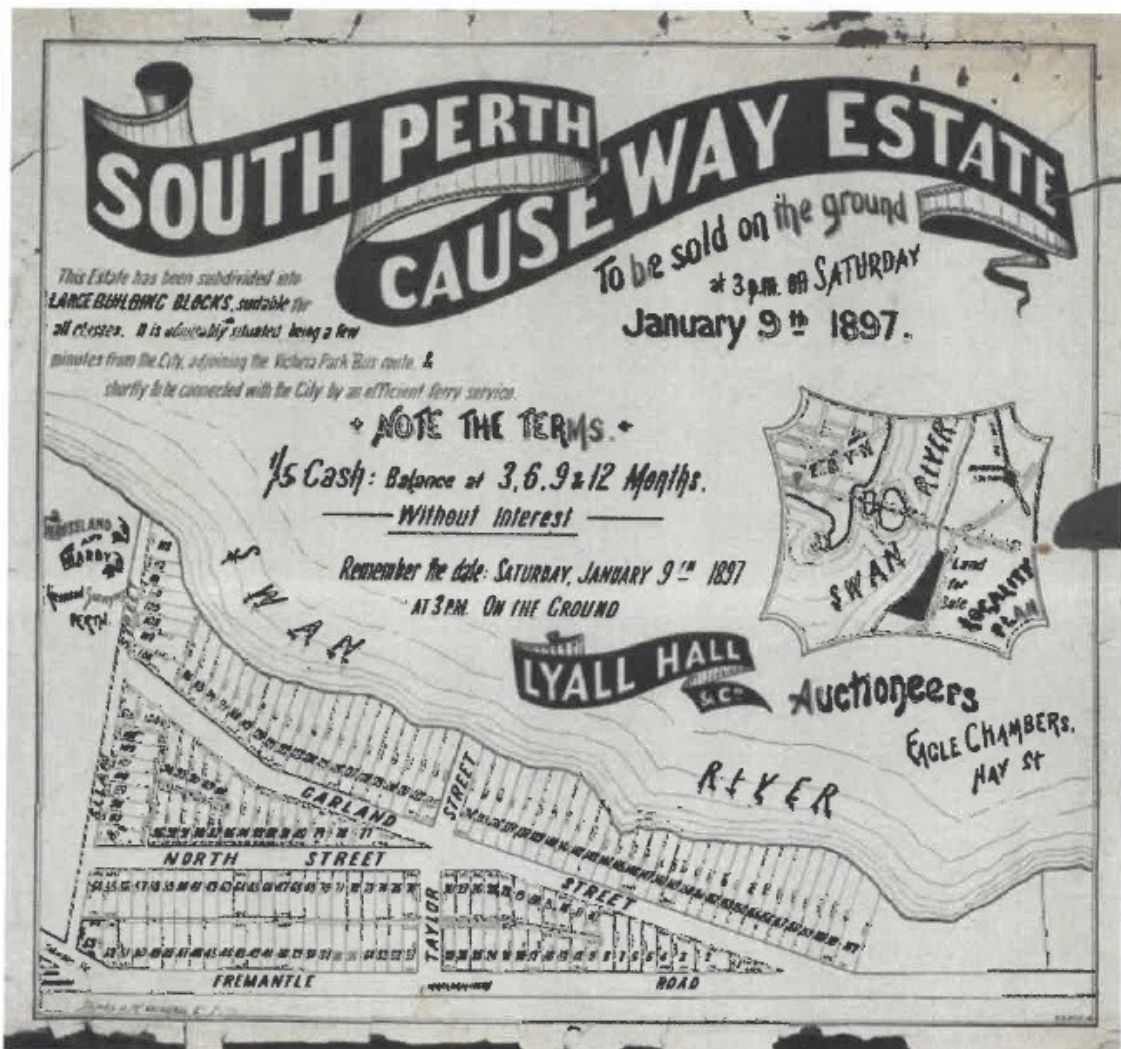


Portrait photo and Red Cedar drawers brought from Sydney to Perth.

6. WHERE DID THEY LIVE IN PERTH?

The O'Reilly family initially based themselves in South Perth. Their first home was on King William Street/Suburban Road between Albany Road and Suburban Road (now known as Mill Point Road)⁶. In 1900 King William Street was incorporated into Suburban Road. They were surrounded by bush, Chinese market gardens, dairy farms and other working families. No doubt a little different to the inner suburbs of Sydney. They must have purchased land there for in 1899 it is advertised that Patrick owes £1/7/11 in rates to the South Perth Roads Board.

The Rates Books of the Municipality of Victoria Park for 1901, 1902, 1903 and 1905 indicate that Patrick owned Lot 25 Fremantle Road (now Canning Highway) of the Causeway Estate near the corner of Taylor Street. This Estate was released in January 1897.

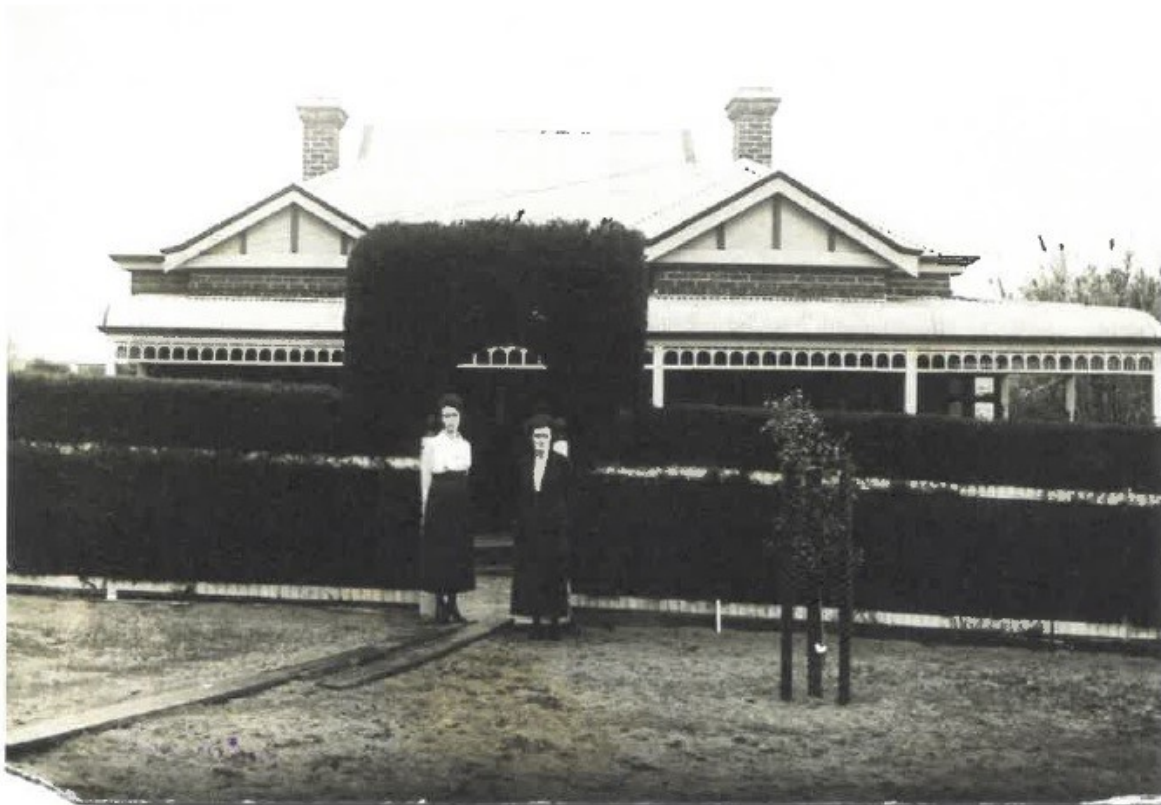


Estate Plan for the South Perth Causeway Estate

⁶ 1899 Post Office Directory. State Library of WA

The Electoral Roll of 1903 indicates that Patrick and Kate were living in Suburban Road, Victoria Park. It is understood they rented when they first moved in this area. This section of Suburban Road was re-named Fremantle Road and is almost certainly the Lot 25 in the Estate Plan referred to above.

By 1906⁷ the family was living in Gresham Street. Patrick built a duplex residence on the corner of Gresham Street and Shepparton and the family lived in one half from 1909 to 1912⁸. About this time the O'Reilly family was close friends of the family of Ernest W Mooney who lived at 14 Canterbury Terrace, Victoria Park. In 1912 a block of land was purchased in Kate O'Reilly's name at 20 Leonard Street, Victoria Park. Patrick quickly built a substantial home and in 1913 the family occupied it.



The house at 20 Leonard Street, Victoria Park. Nell and Kitty O'Reilly standing at the gate.

7. THE BUILDING CONTRACTOR

For the first one to two years after his arrival in Perth, Patrick worked as a carpenter. He then operated a building contractor erecting both residences and public buildings.

It is known that he built houses in Highgate, Midland Junction and Victoria Park and possibly in Coolgardie and/or Kalgoorlie. He built at least 2 houses in Gresham Street, Victoria Park

⁷ 1906 Post Office Directory. State Library of WA

⁸ 1909 - 1912 Post Office Directories. State Library of WA

and the duplex mentioned above.⁹ He appears to have built 4 houses in Highgate¹⁰ plus a villa.

He also built or worked on a number of significant buildings:-

- In 1911 Patrick was the building contractor who upgraded the Catholic Archbishop's Palace in Victoria Square, Perth. The Heritage Perth website provides the following information –

The Archbishop's Palace is a three-storey building constructed in 1855 for the Roman Catholic Bishop of Perth, Joseph Serra. Built by a well-known Benedictine brother, Giuseppe Ascione, from a design by Serra himself, it presented a rather striking example of Spanish Renaissance architecture, with its wrought iron balustrading to the balcony, supported by Doric columns.

In 1850, Bishop Joseph Serra had become the Roman Catholic Bishop of Perth. In the same year, he established a community of thirty religious Brothers on land purchased by his predecessor, Bishop Brady. Serra called the new establishment Subiaco. Labour for the erection of the Palace was provided by the brothers from Subiaco and, later, those from New Norcia.

Although the Bishop's Palace had been one of Perth's landmarks, by 1911 it had decayed into something of an eyesore. Further, its interior had originally been spartan, in accord with Benedictine principles, and was lacking in 20th century comfort and convenience. Under Archbishop Clune's direction the building underwent a thorough transformation in 1911 to supply much-needed extra accommodation, in addition to up-to-date offices and apartments with entirely new wing erected to the east.

The building has continued in use as the Archbishop's offices and as a short-term residential accommodation for Church purposes on the upper floors, although the Archbishop no longer resides in the building.

An item in 'The WA Record' on 12 June 1912 noted that "A very welcome change in the old order is evidenced by the transformation that has taken place at the Bishop's Palace, Victoria Square. From being an eye-sore to passers-by it has become one of the most up-to-date and artistic buildings in Perth."

⁹ His grandson, Royden Patrick Low, pointed out to the author at least 2 houses in Gresham Street built by Patrick O'Reilly.

¹⁰ See Attachment 4.



Cathedral House (previously known as the Archbishop's or Bishop's Palace), Victoria Square

Patrick's grandson, Royden Patrick Low, used some wrought iron balustrading which had come from Spain and was surplus to requirements on the Bishop's Palace as a feature in the front brick wall at 20 Leonard Street he built in the 1970's.

- The Victoria Park Town Hall. Construction commenced in 1898 and was officially opened in 1899. It cost about £2,000.

The Victoria Park Town Hall was built on a block of land that had previously been part of a dairy farm owned by a Mr Fairbrother. The foundation stone for the Hall was laid on the 3 June 1899. The Mayor at this time was A C Russell, and some of the official visitors to the foundation ceremony were David Garland, Secretary of the Perth Anglican Diocese; John Winthrop Hackett, owner of 'The West Australian' and also a member of the State Legislative Council and Lyall Hall MLA.

The Town Hall of stone and brick was a two-storey building built in an Italian Renaissance style. It had a seating capacity of 340 people. From 1914-1925 the hall was used as an extension to Victoria Park Primary School owing to population pressure on the school. Making way for progress, the hall was demolished in 1983¹¹. All that remains is the Foundation Stone now displayed in the foyer of the Administration Building of the Town of Victoria Park.

¹¹ Heritage Council of WA website – 'Old Victoria Park Town Hall Foundation Stone'



State Library of Western Australia

Victoria Park Town Hall about 1910. Flower Show opening. Shops were later added to the front.

The foundation stone, which records "P. O'Reilly: Contractor".^{12 13}



Victoria Park Town Hall Foundation Stone. L-R Elizabeth (Betty) Low, Brian Low, Aileen Low (nee Donnelly), Sean Low, Patrick Low and Mayor, Mick Lee, and Mayoress Lee. About 2000.

¹² See Attachment 1 regarding the return of the Foundation Stone.

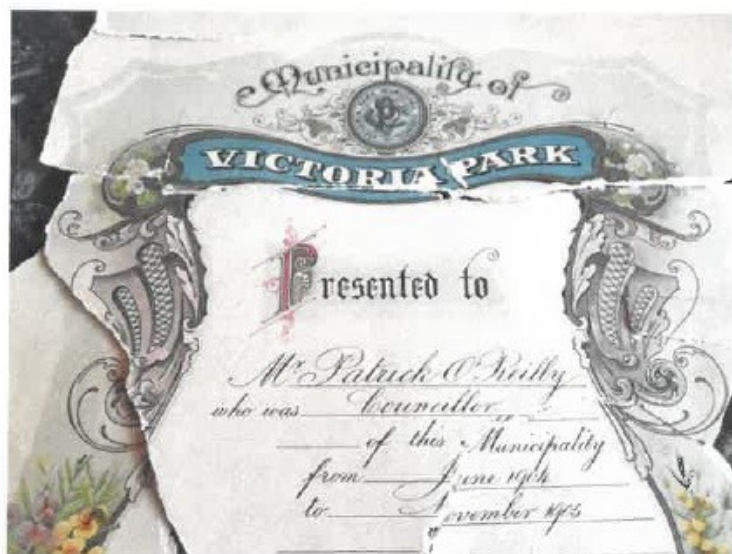
¹³ See Attachment 2 regarding the opening of the Victoria Park Town Hall.

- The first St Joachim's Church on Shepperton Road, Victoria Park. This weatherboard building was opened in January 1899 and served as a church, a school and a meeting place in its early days¹⁴. It's worth noting that Mr RT McMaster was the Architect for this building and as a fellow resident of Victoria Park active on the Municipal Council, there is little doubt that they knew one another well.
The original church was demolished in 1962 after being severely damaged by strong winds and was used as a classroom for some years after it ceased use as a church in the 1920's. For a period, Patrick and Kate, along with Mr Richard Claffey of Albany Road, provided temporary accommodation for some of the Sisters of Mercy nuns who had come out from Derry, Ireland to establish the new St Joachim's Convent.
- Royden Patrick Low also records in some notes on the O'Reilly family that Patrick built other churches around Perth but which ones they are/were is unknown. Perth Catholic churches known to have been built in this period are –
 - Redemptorist Monastery Church, North Perth (1899),
 - St Joseph's, Subiaco (1901),
 - Star of the Sea, Cottesloe (1903)

It seems that after building the house at Leonard Street, he stepped down as a contractor and went back to carpentry and associated work. It is known that at the time of his death in 1918 he was working as a supervisor in a timber yard in East Perth.¹⁵

8. COUNCILLOR

Patrick was active in the community and in June 1904 was elected as a Councillor on the Victoria Park Municipal Board. However, he was declared bankrupt in December 1905 and had stepped down a few weeks before.



Certificate of service as a Councillor for the Municipality of Victoria Park (damaged)

¹⁴ See Attachment 3. Newspaper article regarding the Church's opening.

¹⁵ See Attachment 4. First newspaper article.

9. BANKRUPTCY

As stated above, Patrick had entered voluntary administration in Sydney and was then declared bankrupt in October 1896. He again encountered financial difficulties in Perth. This suggests that being a building contractor was a precarious occupation as it appears he was neither a fool nor a villain. The fact that he put himself forward to be a Municipal Councillor suggests that he did not dwell on his first bankruptcy and perhaps hoped that no-one in Western Australia would be aware of it as it's not certain that a former bankrupt would be eligible to be a Councillor.

The newspaper report dated 13 February 1906 provides some interesting information regarding Patrick and Kate's business activities. Kate was clearly an entrepreneur in her own right and financially supported Patrick's contractor activities.¹⁶

The newspaper report dated 28 February 1906 states that he is working away in Geraldton. It's quite possible that this was required to obtain employment and something that he had done on other occasions.¹⁷

10. PATRICK'S MUSICAL BENT & COLLECTIONS

All of Patrick and Kate's daughters – Mary and Kitty in particular – had a musical bent. They all passed music and/or singing examinations and Mary regularly played the piano into her adulthood and Kitty had a selection of violins.

We can only assume that the daughters inherited this interest from Patrick who had a small melodeon which, apparently, he played regularly to entertain in the evening.



Patrick's melodeon with carry box thought to be at least 200 years old.

¹⁶ See Attachment 4 – first newspaper article.

¹⁷ See Attachment 4 – second newspaper article.

Patrick seems to have had an interest in collecting. For instance, he had a number of Aboriginal items including a knapped green glass spearhead that he got from an Aboriginal man near the Causeway one day. This is held by his great grandson, Sean Low. He also had a nulla nulla made of extremely heavy desert timber with markings on the handle, possibly obtained when in the Kalgoorlie area. This is held by the author. There was also a woomera with markings but its whereabouts are unknown.

11. FAMILY

After arriving in Perth, Patrick and Kate had two children – Kitty and a stillborn male. The other four children – Mary, Sarah, John and Ellen - had been born in Sydney. In time, Mary and Sarah returned to Sydney.

10.1 Mary O'Reilly (9 June 1888 to 22 October 1974)

Mary remained in Perth for some years after leaving St Joachim's convent school. In 1909 she completed the Trinity College of Music examination in Musical knowledge with honours and in October 1914 completed the College's examination in Solo Singing. Like her younger sister, Kitty, Mary was musically inclined.

We know from a collection of Postcards that she kept from about 1907 to 1912 that she worked at ES Wigg & Son (stationers) and then the convent school in Victoria Square.

The 1916 and 1917 Electoral Rolls indicate that she worked as a teacher on Well Station, Walkaway (near Greenough).



Well Station, Walkaway

At some point prior to 1920 Mary returned to New South Wales. In mid 1920 Edward, Prince of Wales, visited Australia. Mary related the story to the author that she was sailing on Sydney harbour with friends when they were invited aboard the Prince's yacht. Mary was a very sociable person and undoubtedly a jolly afternoon was had by all.

She met Daniel John Shannon, a dairy farmer from Pyree, Shoalhaven. While Daniel was 18 years older than her, they married in St Mary's Cathedral, Sydney on 4 June 1923.



Daniel Shannon and Mary O'Reilly on their wedding day.

But tragedy struck. Just 11 days after marrying, Daniel died suddenly. Mary inherited the 583 acre farm and operated the dairy herd of more than 120 cows until the mid-1920's. Daniel's two spinster sisters lived on the farm as well. When she eventually sold the farm, Mary divided the proceeds equally with her sisters-in-law, Catherine and Mary-Ann Shannon.

Widowed, she returned to Perth and lived with her mother, Kate, and sister, Kitty, at Leonard Street, Victoria Park. Mary bought a Rugby car (Registration number 8727) which took her and Kitty to tennis games on the weekend. It was one of the few cars in Victoria Park at the time.



Mary had a Rugby car like this one.

Eventually she met Thomas Henry (Harry) Green, a widower farmer from Jacob's Well near Beverley. At the age of 53 years in 1941 she married Harry who was 10 years her senior. By the late 1950's they had retired to Hale Street, North Beach where she remained until her death in October 1974 aged 86 years, Harry lived on for a few more years and died at the age of 100 years in 1978. Mary had no children. As mentioned above Mary was a keen piano player and kept an upright piano in her lounge room that she would play on occasions.

10.2 Sarah Anne O'Reilly (25 January 1891 to 9 December 1971)

Sarah returned to Sydney fairly early. In January 1913 she married Joseph William Hinds, a police officer and later a detective. For most of their marriage they lived at 27 Kirrang Street, Five Docks (now Wareemba), Sydney. In August 1914 their only child John (Jack) Patrick Hinds was born. Joseph passed away in 1945 aged 67 years. Jack remained single and had a stint in the Army during WWII and met his cousin, Royden Patrick Low, who was in hospital recuperating in Adelaide River in 1942. Sarah passed away in December 1971 aged 80 years. Jack remained in the Kerrang Street house and passed away in 1986 aged 71 years. In the early 1960's the author accompanied his father, Royden Patrick Low, on a business trip from Brisbane to Sydney flying on a DC3 and stayed at Kirrang Street. In about 1970 when in Sydney with his Aunty Betty and her 3 children, the author again visited Kirrang Street and caught up with Jack Hinds.

10.3 John (Jack) Thomas O'Reilly (24 April 1893 to 3 May 1917)

John (Jack) Thomas O'Reilly remained in Perth until going overseas for war service. The author has written a separate story on Jack which is available. Jack never married. He lived at home until enlisting. He died in action in Bullecourt, France on 3rd May 1917.



John Thomas O'Reilly

A separate history has been written by the author on John Thomas O'Reilly.

10.4 Ellen (Nell or Nellie) O'Reilly (22 September 1894 to 24 July 1975)

Ellen (Nell/Nellie) stayed in Perth. She married John (Jack) Green Low in October 1922 at St Joachim's Church, Victoria Park. It is known that Jack O'Reilly and Jack Low both worked as Cadets in the same section at the WA Government Railways which undoubtedly is how Jack Low met Ellen O'Reilly. A separate history on the Low family written by the author is available. She and Jack lived in Nedlands Perth and had four children – John O'Riley (1919 – 1995), Royden (Roy) Patrick Low (1923 – 1986), Elizabeth (Betty) Anne Low (1927 – 2018) and Brian John Low (1930 – living).



*Betty Low, John & Ellen Low, Brian Low, Aileen & Royden Carillon
Low 26th Feb. 1952 Perth*

Ellen and Jack Low with 3 of their 4 children. 1952

10.5 Kathleen (Kitty) O'Reilly (22 January 1899 to 17 October 1962)

Kathleen (Kitty) also stayed in Perth. After attending St Joachim's Convent, Kitty, in October 1913, passed University of Adelaide Public Examinations Board examinations in English Grammar, Composition, Dictation, Arithmetic, English History, Latin, French and Algebra.¹⁸ In the period 1911 to 1914 Kitty received various Trinity College of London certificates for

¹⁸ See attachment 5.

violin and solo singing. One of her violins is still held by the author along with these certificates.



Kitty O'Reilly's violin

In 1916 Kitty is recorded as successfully completing the Commonwealth Government Service examinations. In April 1919 'The W.A. Record' Catholic newspaper notes that Kitty O'Reilly of Victoria Park is seriously ill in the Perth Public Hospital (now Royal Perth Hospital). The nature of her illness is unknown.

She remained a spinster and spent much of the period 1919 to 1946 caring for her mother, Kate, at Leonard Street. Kate is recorded on the Electoral Rolls as being a Telephonist. She may well have had this occupation at times but according to her nephew, Royden Patrick Low, she was regularly employed as a temporary housekeeper for Catholic parish priests in the Perth metropolitan area. She was a very good tennis player and visited numerous tennis clubs for social and competitive tennis matches. Apparently, she remained a keen violin player into her later years.

12. DEATH

At about 10.30pm on 31st December 1918 Patrick O'Reilly, was killed by a goods train on the railway line near Burswood Station. His body was 'mutilated beyond recognition'. He was aged about 57 years. The subsequent Coroner's Inquest was unable to establish why Patrick would have been on the railway line at that time¹⁹ and delivered an open finding.

One can speculate that after having a few New Year's eve drinks at work in East Perth, he decided that the easiest way home was to follow the railway line across the river and back to Victoria Park with a fatal result. His daughter Nell always believed that he had been robbed as he often carried gold sovereigns on his person. She presented this information to the Inquest but there was conflicting information around this point and it was not pursued. The other possibility is that he committed suicide for some unknown reason.

He was buried at Karrakatta Cemetery on 2nd January 1919 in the Catholic section.

¹⁹ See Attachment 6 – Newspaper articles regarding Patrick's death.

ATTACHMENT 1

Community newsletter article regarding the return of the Victoria Park Town Hall Foundation Stone dated May 1999

NEWSLETTER MAY 1999

One Hundred Year Old Foundation Stone Returned

South Perth resident Mr Oliver Strang recently presented the one-hundred-year-old Foundation Stone from the original Victoria Park Town Hall to His Worship the Mayor, Mick Lee.

The Victoria Park Town Hall was demolished in 1985 after Mr Strang's father, Oliver Strang Senior, sold the Town Hall to a new owner. Mr Strang rescued the Foundation Stone, dated 3 June 1899, from the demolition site and stored it safely.

Mr Lee said the donation was a significant gesture to the Town, which was making a real effort to restore heritage values before they were lost forever.

"On behalf of the community of the Town of Victoria Park, I thank Mr Strang for this historically valuable gift. The Town will commemorate the centenary of the laying of the Foundation Stone in June, when it will most likely be permanently displayed at the Administration Centre."

The construction of the Victoria Park Town Hall was begun in June 1899, on the corner of Rushton

Street and Albany Highway. The Hall was built in stone and brick and measured 58 feet (17.5m) by 38 feet (11.5m) accommodating up to 450 people.

On 1 November 1917, the Municipality of Victoria Park was taken over by the City of Perth. The hall was available for lease and was used for theatre reviews, school dances and concerts. During World War II, the Civil Defence Council used it as a control centre and first aid post.

In 1983, Oliver Strang Senior, a local businessman and owner of O W Strang Motors, bought the



Mr Oliver Strang (left) presents the foundation stone to Mayor, Mick Lee

building from the Perth City Council in a bid to prevent it from being demolished. Unfortunately, due to ill health, Oliver Strang Senior sold the property in 1985.

Anyone who has memories or photographs of the Town Hall is urged to contact Jan Miller, of the Victoria Park Library, on 9361 1977 so that any memorabilia can be included in the Local Studies Collection.

ATTACHMENT 2

The West Australian
Monday, June 5, 1899

VICTORIA PARK TOWN HALL.

LAYING OF FOUNDATION STONE.

The ceremony of laying the foundation stone of the new town hall in Victoria Park took place on Saturday afternoon. The inclement weather interfered with the attendance to a considerable extent, but there were a large number of residents of the municipality present. Amongst those who attended the ceremony were the Rev. D. J. Garland, Mr. J. W. Hackett, M.L.C., Mr. Lyall Hall, M.L.A., Mr. W. G. Brookman, and representatives of suburban municipalities. The proceedings opened with a short address by Cr. Hutchinson, describing the progress that had been made by the Victoria Park Municipality since he came there a few years ago. Cr. Hutchinson pointed out, however, that it was essential to the prosperity of the town-ship that the tram line should be extended to it. With the advent of that line he anticipated that a large number of persons in business positions in Perth would make their suburban home in Victoria Park. Mr. G. Joachim, of the firm of Joachim and Ruck, the architects for the building, followed with a few remarks, at the conclusion of which he presented a silver trowel to the Mayoress of Victoria Park, Mrs. A. G. Russell, who, amid applause, declared the foundation stone of the building well and truly laid. The Rev. D. J. Garland afterwards addressed the gathering on matters of interest to the municipality, referring to the duty of the council to provide a recreation ground for the youthful members of the community, and concurring with those who objected to the purchase of the small block at the back of the hall, which he described as a back yard. He suggested, amid applause, that application should be made for part of the South Perth commonage, which lay within a gun-shot of where they were standing. Mr. Garland congratulated those present on the work on which they were engaged, and complimented the municipality on the energy and public spirit it had displayed. The Mayor (Mr. A. G. Russell), who also spoke, referred to the great advance the municipality had made in the last few years. Mr. Lyall Hall apologised for the absence of the Mayor and his brother councillors of Perth, whom other engagements had kept away that day.

Afternoon tea was then partaken of. On the invitation of the Mayor (Mr. A. G. Russell), an adjournment was afterwards made to the council chambers, where several toasts were honoured.

Mr. LYALL HALL proposed the toast, "Prosperity to the Victoria Park Municipality." He said that Victoria Park was now beginning to go ahead. Why it had been so backward... during the past few years he could never really understand, because it was, in his opinion, more favourably situated than many of the other more prosperous and more thickly populated suburbs. He thought, however, that now they had made a start on the road to increased

prosperity. They were forming roads and footpaths, and he understood that they were also to drain the low-lying parts of the town. The trams were sure to come there before very long, and he believed that in time Victoria Park would be one of the premier suburbs of Perth. There was no doubt that as soon as the tramway system for the city was complete the company would look around for other places where they could profitably extend the system, and judging by the traffic to and from the buses at present he thought an extension to Victoria Park would pay very well. He could not say that he had had a conversation with Mr. Cooke, the engineer for the Tramway Company, but Mr. Rogers had mentioned to him some time ago that there was a probability that the trams would be run to Victoria Park. (Applause.) He was pleased to hear that water was being laid on to the houses in the town.

The Perth City Council were endeavouring, to get the control of the Metropolitan Waterworks. (Hear, hear.) This would not be detrimental, to the interest of any of the suburbs, because an arrangement would be made whereby the latter could have a voice in the management of the works. In Mr. Russell the municipality had an excellent Mayor. He was extremely sorry when he found that Mr. Russell was leaving the North Ward, but he was pleased to see that so soon after leaving that ward he assumed the high and honourable position of Mayor of Victoria Park. (Applause.)

Mr. RUSSELL said it gave him much pleasure to respond on behalf of the Victoria Park Municipality, of which any man might well be proud to be mayor. He referred to the harmonious nature of the council meetings, so different in this respect from those of some neighbouring towns. In connection with the electric lighting of the Causeway the Perth City Council had agreed to defray one-third of the expenditure, but had afterwards informed them that to pay this sum would be an illegal action on their part. The Perth citizens obtained as much benefit from this work as they in Victoria Park did, and he considered that they should contribute something towards its cost. It was, he added, the intention of the council to spend several hundred pounds in draining the low-lying land in the municipality, and, in conclusion he expressed the opinion that Victoria Park would in time be the leading suburb of Perth.

The toast of "The Perth and Suburban Municipalities " was proposed by the Mayor.

Mr. LYALL HALL, replying on behalf of Perth, said that the Perth City Council had promised to pay a portion of the cost of lighting the Causeway, but the City Solicitor advised them that it would be illegal to do so. The only way they could possibly make the payment was by placing the " three per cent." under contribution ("The Mayor's parlour"). They could never take it out of that. (Laughter.) That would never do. He felt perfectly sure that if the Perth City Council could see their way clear to fulfilling their obligation they would so. (Applause.)

Cr. WALLACE, the acting mayor of Leederville; Mr. J. W. Johnson, town clerk of Leederville (on behalf of Subiaco), and Mr. J. H. Hunt (on behalf of Claremont), also spoke in acknowledgment of the toast.

Several other toasts were honoured before the gathering dispersed.

The site of the hall is at the corner of Albany-road and Kingston-road. An expenditure of £2,000 is contemplated, but it is at present only intended to proceed with a portion of the complete design, the outlay which has been authorised for this part being £500. The first

portion of the hall will be completed in about nine weeks. The plans for the complete building were displayed on Saturday afternoon, showing that the new hall will be a handsome and substantial structure. The architects are Messrs. Joachim and Ruck, and the builder Mr. P. O'Reilly.

ATTACHMENT 3

Newspaper article regarding the opening of the St Joachim's Church.

Daily News (Perth, WA : 1882 - 1950), Monday 30 January 1899, page 4

VICTORIA PARK ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH.

THE OPENING CEREMONY.

The opening ceremony in connection with the new Roman Catholic School-church of St. Joachim was performed at Victoria Park yesterday morning by Bishop Gibney, in the presence of a large number of local and Perth residents. Four buses were placed at the disposal of those who had to travel from the city. Besides the Bishop there were present—The Vicar-General (Monsignor Bourke), Fathers Martelli, Griffin, and Ryan, J.M.L., Messrs. T. F. Quinlan, M.L.A., R. F. McMaster (Mayor of Victoria Park), F. Spencer, and J. Corbett, the Rev. Mother Clare and Mrs. Brindras. The members of the Cathedral Choir were also in attendance, and at the entrance of the Bishop sang "Ecce Sacerdos Magnus." The ceremony of blessing the church was performed by Bishop Gibney, who was supported by Fathers Martelli and Griffin; while Monsignor Bourke acted as master of ceremonies. Afterwards mass was celebrated by Father Griffin. During the service the choir (which was under the conductorship of Mr. E. H. Zollner) sang the "Kyrie," "Credo," and the "Agnus Dei," together with the "Benedictus" from Gounod's Messe Solennelle, and the "Sanctus" and "Dona Nobis," from Mozart's Twelfth Mass. The soloists were—Soprano, Mrs. Foster; tenor, Mr. F. Smith; alto, Miss C. O'Callaghan; and bass, Mr. J. Orr. Mr. W. H. Coupland led the orchestra.

Bishop Gibney, in addressing the congregation, said that he was glad to be with them, especially on such an important occasion as the present. To establish a community of nuns as they had there was one of the noblest works that anyone could be capable of, and to erect such an institution as they had, in what was until recently a wilderness, was a

considerable achievement in itself. He did not know who was responsible for it, but he returned to find it erected. He found that a great deal had been done during his absence, and he was there as a witness of the many good works which were being carried out in the diocese. There was a great work before the nuns who had come to Victoria Park, for he believed that it was going to become a great place, and he considered it one of the principal attachments of the City of Perth. He wished, and was confident of, the success of the hitherto quiet little quarter; and the residents could congratulate themselves on having secured a good situation, while he had secured a good community of sisters to labor for the education of the young. He did not know whom he had to thank for the church; he believed that most thanks were due to the architect, the builder, and the secretary of the movement. He believed that the people would not only receive the Sisters well, but also see that they were well posted to carry out the great work that they had undertaken. He hoped to see erected on that site a convent similar to those which had already done so much good for the community; and he was confident that the success of the order just established would be as pronounced as that of the others to which he had referred. He reminded them that the work of teaching, commenced by the Sisters, was not a speculation with a view to monetary gain, but a work for the glorification of God, and with His blessing it must prosper.

The present community of six nuns and two postulants is from Derry (Ireland), and the members of it are residing in the house of Mr. R. F. Claffey, adjoining the school-church building, under the Rev. Mother Clare. Their scholastic duties will be entered upon to-day in the building just opened, which will be utilised for the purposes of worship and erudition. Mr. Claffey has taken up the movement strongly from the commencement, and to him and the

the committee, the establishment of the church is largely due. The plans of the building were furnished gratuitously by Mr RT Mc Master and the builder was Mr P O'Reilly. The building, which is in a high position, near the main road, is of wood, plastered and fitted pleasantly within and on the whole presents the appearance of a structure well adapted to the purpose for which it was erected. Its dimensions are 65ft. long, 30 ft. wide and 23 ft. to the ceiling. Victoria Park is a rising district with 2,017 persons in November last.

ATTACHMENT 4

News paper report on the circumstances of Patrick O'Reilly's 1905-6 bankruptcy.

Daily News (Perth, WA : 1882 - 1950), Tuesday 13 February 1906, page 3

AN UNSUCCESSFUL CONTRACTOR.

Patrick O'Reilly, whose counsel did not appear at the opening, said he was a contractor of Victoria Park. He came here nine years ago, and started trading in his own name seven years ago. The first year he made little, and then gave up contracting, and worked for wages at his trade, carpentering. He resumed contracting in 1903. He built four cottages at Highgate Hill for Mr. Ryan, this showed a slight profit. Then he built a villa, losing £75. On his next contract he lost £200 through faulty architecture. That was in October, and it was mainly due to this that his present position was brought about. His present liabilities totalled £514, and the only unsecured assets consisted of scaffolding and building plant worth £50. His secured creditors were Messrs. James and Darbyshire, £350. Mr. Thomas Bartlett £150. The first named held a mortgage over three one-quarter acre blocks, which he valued at £450, and on which was being erected a house, and Bartlett held a second mortgage on it. He never handled any money advanced by James and Darbyshire, this was taken by the bank for an overdraft. He did not pay off the whole of the overdraft. James and Darbyshire held £100, which would be paid when the house was erected. He still owed the bank £206. At the time of his arrangement with the bank he was pressed by Morgan and Puttock for £42. A writ was issued against him, and he called his creditors together. They met, and at a second meeting it was resolved to make him bankrupt. His position had not altered since then. After the meeting a writ for £175 was issued against him by Coombe, Wood and Co. At this meeting he was represented by counsel. His wife had some property at Midland Junction. She acquired it by saving up a little money in keeping boarders at Annandale on and off for four or five years. She paid a deposit. She bought a cottage at Annandale, taking over a mortgage and paying interest. She held it for 24 years, and sold it for £20. Debtor paid her passage over, and she bought three blocks for £60 at Victoria Park, paying one-fifth deposit, and the rest by instalments. She paid instalments up to £40, and then sold the land for

up to £20, and then sold the land for £39. With this money she bought land at Midland Junction on 18 months' terms, and built a house. He built the place at a cost of £150 out of the money she had saved, and the balance of the sale of the Victoria Park land. She raised £100 by means of mortgage on the property.

To Mr. Lohmann, (representing Coombe, Wood and Co. and Whitaker Bros.) He believed all the timber was supplied in his wife's name.

Mr. C. T. Russell, for Morgan and Puttock and Co., also examined the debtor as to certain advances.

At the conclusion of the examination Mr. Lohmann asked that a cash statement should be furnished by the debtor showing money received and spent by him since August last.

The examination was adjourned for a week.

A MISUNDERSTANDING

Patrick O'Reilly did not answer when called upon.

The Official Receiver said he believed that O'Reilly had gone to a billet worth £4 per week north of Geraldton. He had attended the court the week before, and he (Mr. Mass) had informed him that it was unlikely he would be wanted again, and could proceed to his billet. Having given him permission to go, he was not disposed to make an application now for his return.

Mr. Lohrmann, for the petitioning creditors, said he had been under the impression that, when the matter was adjourned previously, it was for a fortnight, and not for a week. He desired particularly to examine the debtor in regard to the second mortgage. It seemed to him that the creditors were entitled to more consideration than the debtor.

The Official Receiver: No; each is entitled to equal consideration.

Mr. Lohrmann said he would consent to a six weeks' adjournment.

The Registrar: But cannot the information be gained in any other way than by bringing the man away from his work.

Mr. Lohrmann said he particularly wished to bring Barlett and O'Reilly together.

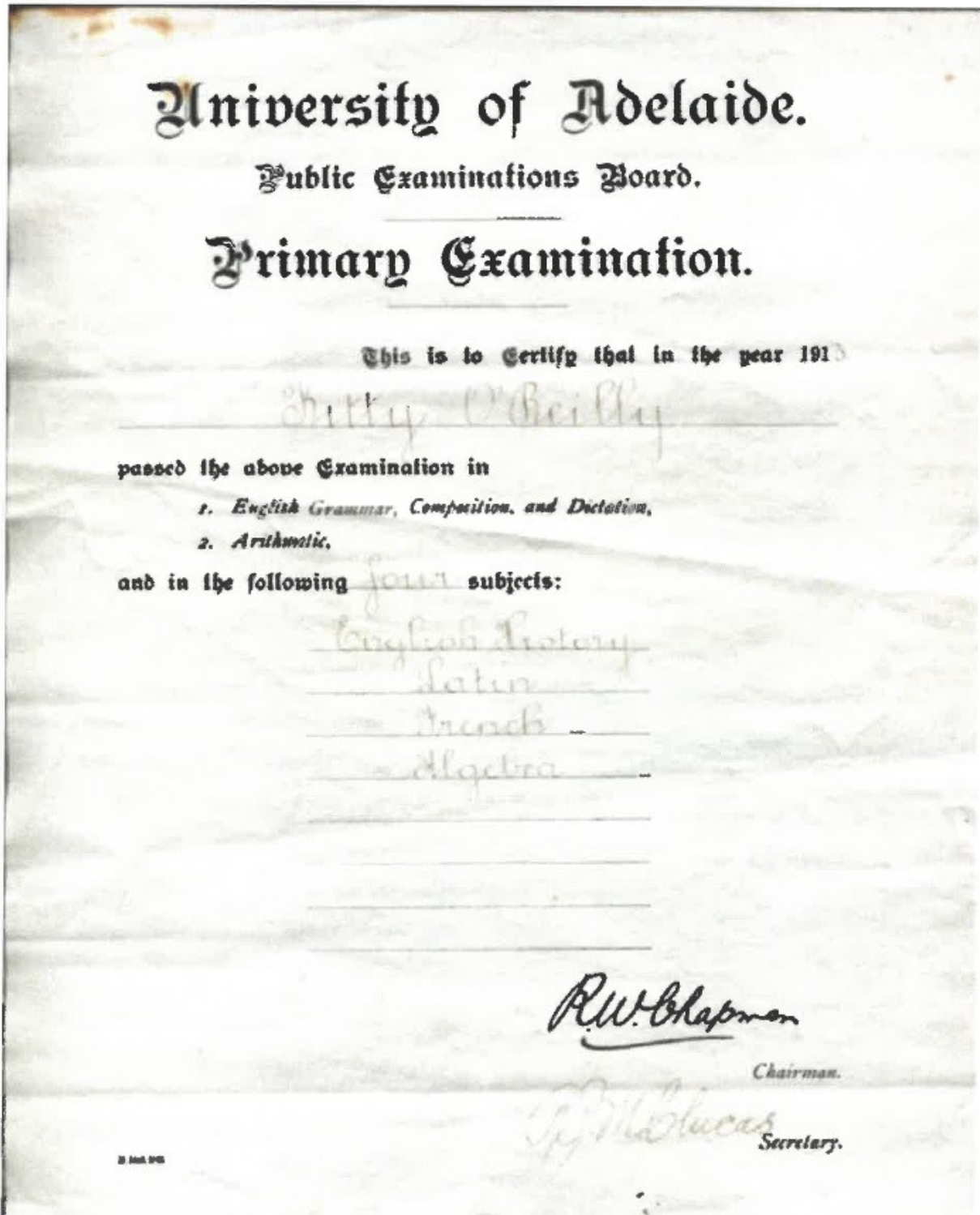
The Official Receiver intimated that a month would be ample for an adjournment.

The Registrar adjourned the matter for a month.

With reference to a paragraph which appeared in this column yesterday concerning a challenge on the part of a man named O'Keefe to open any safe, Mr. W. C. Rose, who represents the challenger, has pointed out that it is incorrect to say that O'Keefe has backed out of his challenge to Mr. Makutz, and has failed to put the money up. Mr. Rose as proof of his assertion has in his possession a receipt from the "West Australian" showing that on February 21 £25 was deposited with that newspaper to back O'Keefe in a match, and the challenger says the money is still there waiting to be covered.

ATTACHMENT 5

Kitty O'Reilly - School completion certificate.



ATTACHMENT 6

Patrick O'Reilly – Newspaper articles regarding the Inquest into his death.

1. The Daily News (Perth WA) Thu 2 Jan 1919, Page 7 – Burswood Railway Fatality



2. The Western Mail (Perth, WA) Fri 17 Jan 1919, Page 27 - Summary

No evidence being at present available to show how the deceased's body came to be on the railway line, the District Coroner (Mr. T. F. Davies, P.M.) and the jury considered it advisable to further adjourn the inquiry into the circumstances surrounding the death of Patrick O'Reilly, whose body was found mutilated beyond recognition on the railway line near Burswood station on December 31.

3. The West Australian (Perth, WA) Thu 23 Jan 1919, Page 4 – News and Notes

The Burswood Fatality.—Further inquiry was made yesterday by the District Coroner (Mr. T. F. Davies, P.M.) and a jury into the death of Patrick O'Reilly, whose body was found mutilated beyond recognition on the railway line near Burswood station on December 31. Miss Nellie O'Reilly, recalled, gave evidence that she knew that her father had in his possession a half sovereign and several sovereigns, which he invariably carried about with him, and a cheque for £1 10s. She had never heard her father say that he had been robbed, and as far as she knew the money had not been recovered. Deceased was of a cheerful disposition, and witness knew of nothing that would cause him to commit suicide, an act which would be the last thing she would expect of him. Thomas William Sedgman, who was employed in the same timber yard as deceased, deposed that O'Reilly had shown him a leather purse containing several sovereigns but had informed him about the middle of November that the purse and its contents were stolen from him. After hearing other evidence, the jury returned a verdict that deceased came to his death about 10 p.m. on December 31 through being run over by a railway train, and found that no blame was attachable to anybody.