

AUSTRALIAN JOINT COPYING PROJECT

HENDERSON FAMILY

Papers, 1852-97

Reel M2254

**Sir Edmund Neville
Sloley Old Hall
Sloley Norfolk**

**National Library of Australia
State Library of New South Wales**

Filmed: 1976

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

George Henderson (1785-1864), the son of a naval officer, joined the Royal Navy in 1794. He was promoted to lieutenant in 1804. He served under Sir Alexander Cochrane and Sir Samuel Hood. He was appointed a captain in 1810 and took part in the capture of Mauritius. At the end of the Napoleonic Wars, he went on the retired list. He was made a vice-admiral in 1855 and an admiral in 1860. Henderson married Frances Walcott in 1817 and they had six children. The eldest son, William G. Henderson (1819-1905) was dean of Carlisle Cathedral and the third son, Samuel Hood Henderson (1823-1882) was an admiral.

Sir Edmund Yeamans Walcott Henderson (1821-1896) was the second son of George Henderson. He was born near Christchurch, Hampshire, and educated at King Edward's School, Bruton, Somerset, and the Royal Military Academy, Woolwich. He was commissioned as a second lieutenant in the Royal Engineers in 1838. He served in Canada from 1839 to 1848, apart from a year spent at Portsmouth, and carried out a detailed survey of the western half of New Brunswick to determine the possibility of establishing a railway between Halifax and Quebec. In 1847 he was promoted to captain and in 1848 he married Mary Murphy.

In 1850 Henderson was appointed comptroller of convicts in Western Australia and arrived in Perth with the first party of convicts and a guard of sappers. With the help of a company of the Royal Engineers commanded by Captain Henry Wray, he constructed a convict prison and quarters and a barracks and set up hiring depots in various towns. In 1855 Mary Henderson died and he returned to England with his son. He married Maria Hindle in 1857 and returned to Western Australia in 1858, taking over control of the colony's public works. He was promoted to lieutenant-colonel in 1862. By that time, 6500 convicts had arrived, road gangs were working throughout the colony, and 15 hiring stations had been established.

In 1863 Henderson and his family returned to England and he succeeded Sir Joshua Jebb as surveyor-general of prisons and inspector of military prisons. He sold his commission in the Army in 1864. In 1869 he became commissioner of the Metropolitan Police (Scotland Yard), which he greatly enlarged. In particular, he created the criminal investigation department. He was knighted in 1878 and retired in 1886.

John Edward Henderson (1826-1882), the fourth son of George Henderson, was educated at King Edward's School, Bruton, and Christ Church, Oxford. He was employed in the convict service in Western Australia from 1852 to 1861.

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Note: Edmund Henderson's family addressed him by his second name, Yeamans.

1. Extracts from Sir James Neville. *Records of my family* (printed)

Pages 16-26: Andrew Henderson (1717-1776)

Pages 27-35: John Henderson (1759-1849)

Pages 37-43: Admiral George Henderson (1785-1864)

Pages 57-75: Sir Edmund Yeomans Walcott Henderson (1821-1896)

Pages 80-81: John Edward Henderson (1826-1882). Incomplete

2. Letters from Edmund Henderson to Maria Henderson, 1860-62 (19 letters)

Letters from Henderson to his wife while he was away from Fremantle on official duties. They were written from Bunbury, Mandurah, Pinjarra, The Vasse, Guildford, Northam, York and Perth. Most of them are not dated. They describe his journeys on horseback, the countryside that he passed through, his accommodation, meals, meetings with local families, kangaroo hunting, race meetings, agricultural shows, and a stay at Government House in Perth. There are references to family and domestic matters and the arrival of a new governor, John Hampton, in 1862. There are frequent references to Sir Arthur Kennedy, Sir Thomas Peel, and the Clifton, Brockman and Molloy families.

3. Letters from Admiral George Henderson to Edmund, Maria and Douglas Henderson, 1860-63 (9 letters)

Letters from Henderson, written from St Heliers, Jersey, and Deal, Kent, to his son, daughter-in-law and grandson. They refer to family news, naval and military affairs, and Edmund Henderson's work in Western Australia. There are also two letters from A.H. Wilson and J.S. Douglas (Jan. 1864) to Edmund Henderson expressing sympathy on the death of his father.

4. Letters from Maria Henderson to Edmund Henderson, c. 1858-62 (11 letters)

All but two of the letters are undated. They were written from Fremantle and Rottneest Island and deal with family matters, meetings with friends including Lady Kennedy and her daughter, books, birds, and Henderson's garden.

5. Letter from P. Hurrie to Edmund Henderson, 22 January 1862

Written at Busselton, the letter seeks a conditional pardon for Hurrie. It states that his imprisonment commenced in 1851.

6. Letters from Maria Henderson to Admiral George Henderson, 1860-62 (7 letters)

The letters were written at Fremantle and refer to family news, their house and garden, Edmund Henderson's paintings, his future career, and the poor health of George Henderson. There are references to Edmund Henderson's long service in 'this desolated country' and his 'long banishment from the society of civilised men'.

7. Letters from Admiral George Henderson to Edmund Henderson, Maria Henderson and others, 1854-59 (8 letters)

The letters comment on family news, George Henderson's health and his life in Jersey, naval matters and European affairs, Edmund Henderson's 'Egyptian bondage', his valuable experiences in Western Australia and his hopes of promotion. There is also a letter (10 Nov. 1855) to Colonel J. Jebb referring to Governor Kennedy's testimonial on behalf of his son. In addition to the originals, there are typed transcripts of most of the letters.

8. Miscellaneous manuscript and printed items

The newspapers and newspaper cuttings include issues of the *Inquirer and Commercial News* (10 March 1858, 28 Jan. 1863), an article from an English newspaper entitled 'Celebrities at home: Colonel Henderson at Scotland Yard', an article by Henderson entitled 'Lost in the backwoods', *Murray's Magazine*, March 1887, pp 354-62, and his obituary in the *Royal Engineers Journal*, 1 Feb. 1897 (10pp). There is also a booklet containing addresses presented to Henderson on his departure from Western Australia in Jan. 1863.

The manuscript items consist of three accounts of the wreck of the *Eglinton* off the coast of Western Australia on September 1852. One is a letter from John E. Henderson, who was a passenger on the ship, to his father Admiral Henderson (1 Oct. 1852) describing the wreck in great detail and also his arduous journey on foot to Fremantle (12pp). The second is a copy of a letter from Mrs James Walcott, who was also a passenger, to her children at Cape Town, 4 Dec. 1852 (7pp). The third is an account by Edmund Henderson (7pp), transcribed by his father.