

## Reverend William Colley.

William Colley was born in 1828 in the little village of Strensall near York in Yorkshire. He was the sixth of nine children born to John and Mary Colley and he was baptised in the local church. The 1841 Census gives his father as a Lock-keeper and the 1851 Census as an agricultural labourer. The 1841 Census also shows William, then aged 13, as a Tile Maker.



*Strensall Village*

Strensall had a very strong Methodist presence with a small chapel being erected in 1823 and at some point during the 1840s, William came under the influence of the Primitive Methodists and gave his life over to the service of the Church.



*Old Methodist Chapel, Strensall*

He was soon called to become a local preacher and because of his “usefulness” he was asked to become a member of the regular Clergy.

He travelled to London where he was ordained in 1850 and began his labours in the London Circuit. In 1851 he was appointed to the Saffron Walden Circuit in Essex and in 1853 the Scotter Circuit which takes its name from a little village near Scunthorpe in Lincolnshire. His last English posting in 1854 was to the Doncaster Circuit in his native Yorkshire. During his travels and sometime before mid 1854 he met a young governess named Augusta King Rushbrook. She was born in Cambridge, Cambridgeshire, in 1830 to Frederick Henry and Harriet Wilson (nee King) Rushbrook and they were married on the 13<sup>th</sup> June, 1854 at St. Edwards Church, Cambridge, (*pictured below*) a Church which has a long evangelical history dating back to the Reformation).



William was asked by the Missionary Committee of the Primitive Methodist Church to travel to New South Wales to undertake work on behalf of the Church in the Colony and he and Augusta sailed from London in the “Jacob Roggeveen” in April, 1855 and arrived in Sydney on the 30<sup>th</sup> July, 1855.

A LIST of the Crew and Passengers, arrived in the Ship *Jacob Roggeveen* of Amsterdam, at the Port of Sydney, New South Wales, on July 30<sup>th</sup> 1855.

Passenger's Name	Rank	Age	Of what Nation	Names of Passengers	Particulars	Remarks
W. J. Colley	1 <sup>st</sup> Mate	27	Dutch	Miss Smith		
J. J. J. J.	2 <sup>nd</sup> Mate	20	Dutch	C. Powell		
B. J. J. J.	3 <sup>rd</sup> Mate	19	Dutch	Mrs. Colley		
M. J. J. J.	4 <sup>th</sup> Mate	18	Dutch	Mr. Lambert		
C. J. J. J.	5 <sup>th</sup> Mate	17	Dutch			
D. J. J. J.	6 <sup>th</sup> Mate	16	Dutch			
E. J. J. J.	7 <sup>th</sup> Mate	15	Dutch			
F. J. J. J.	8 <sup>th</sup> Mate	14	Dutch			
G. J. J. J.	9 <sup>th</sup> Mate	13	Dutch			
H. J. J. J.	10 <sup>th</sup> Mate	12	Dutch			
I. J. J. J.	11 <sup>th</sup> Mate	11	Dutch			
J. J. J. J.	12 <sup>th</sup> Mate	10	Dutch			
K. J. J. J.	13 <sup>th</sup> Mate	9	Dutch			
L. J. J. J.	14 <sup>th</sup> Mate	8	Dutch			
M. J. J. J.	15 <sup>th</sup> Mate	7	Dutch			
N. J. J. J.	16 <sup>th</sup> Mate	6	Dutch			
O. J. J. J.	17 <sup>th</sup> Mate	5	Dutch			
P. J. J. J.	18 <sup>th</sup> Mate	4	Dutch			
Q. J. J. J.	19 <sup>th</sup> Mate	3	Dutch			
R. J. J. J.	20 <sup>th</sup> Mate	2	Dutch			
S. J. J. J.	21 <sup>st</sup> Mate	1	Dutch			
T. J. J. J.	22 <sup>nd</sup> Mate	0	Dutch			
U. J. J. J.	23 <sup>rd</sup> Mate	0	Dutch			
V. J. J. J.	24 <sup>th</sup> Mate	0	Dutch			
W. J. J. J.	25 <sup>th</sup> Mate	0	Dutch			
X. J. J. J.	26 <sup>th</sup> Mate	0	Dutch			
Y. J. J. J.	27 <sup>th</sup> Mate	0	Dutch			
Z. J. J. J.	28 <sup>th</sup> Mate	0	Dutch			
AA. J. J. J.	29 <sup>th</sup> Mate	0	Dutch			
AB. J. J. J.	30 <sup>th</sup> Mate	0	Dutch			

This shipping list from the Jacob Roggeveen in 1855 shows Mr. and Mrs. Colley as Cabin Passengers.

William and Augusta’s arrival on July 30th was recorded in the Sydney Morning Herald on July 31<sup>st</sup>, 1854

**SHIPPING.**  
**ARRIVAL.**  
July 30.—Jacob Roggeveen, Dutch ship, 766 tons, Captain Van Marken, from London April 23. Passengers—Rev. Mr. Colley, Mrs. Colley, Mrs. Holland and 2 children, Messrs. C. Powell, Lambert, T. Powell, and 24 in the steerage. Brierley, Dean, and Co., agents.

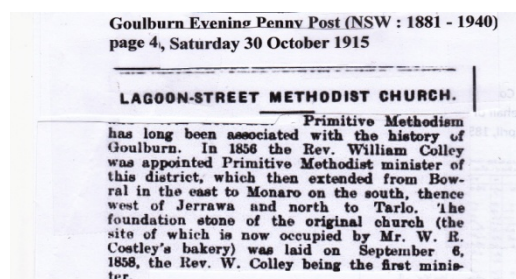
Morning Herald arrival notice

William was immediately despatched to Morpeth, a town on the Hunter River, which had become important as a shipping point for the local area. A Primitive Methodist Church had been opened in the High Street in March 1855 and by 1856 the Maitland Mercury described it as a “building of public character” to be admired. A source of happiness for William and Augusta must have come in October of 1855 when Augusta’s younger brother, Frederick Henry Rushbrook, a veteran of the Crimean War, arrived in the colony. (He married and became the patriarch of a large family still living in the Tamworth region of N.S.W.) In 1856 Augusta’s older sister, Frederica Rushbrook, arrived, but sadly drowned in the Hunter River in 1857.

When Morpeth was bypassed by the new railway system it lost importance as a port and William was called to open a mission in Goulburn in 1856 where his and Augusta’s first child, a daughter, Mary Louisa, was born in 1857 followed two years later by a second daughter, Harriet Jane. Mary was no doubt named for William’s mother, Mary Colley, and Harriet for Augusta’s mother, Harriet (nee King) Rushbrook.

Mary L Colley in the Australia, Birth Index, 1788-1922	Harriet J Colley in the Australia, Birth Index, 1788-1922
Name: Mary L Colley	Name: Harriet J Colley
Birth Date: 1857	Birth Date: 1859
Birth Place: New South Wales	Birth Place: New South Wales
Registration Year: 1857	Registration Year: 1859
Registration Place: Goulburn, New South Wales, Australia	Registration Place: Goulburn, New South Wales, Australia
Father: William Colley	Father: William Colley
Mother: Augusta	Mother: August R
Registration Number: 6716	Registration Number: 7400

Local historian, Kevin Bush, notes that soon after his arrival in Goulburn Mr. and Mrs. John Waters who were residing in Jerrawa (Greendale) and worshipping with the Wesleyans, invited Reverend Colley to visit. Regular services (probably in their home) were commenced thereafter and soon a “humble place of worship” was established before the building of a Primitive Methodist Church in 1862. Reverend Colley oversaw the building of the Lagoon Street Church in Goulburn whose foundation stone was laid September, 1858.

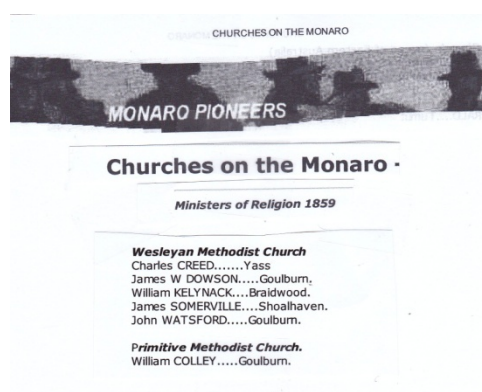


*Report from Goulburn Post*

The *Returns of the Colony* for 1857 show that William was serving in Goulburn and “six other places”.

<u>Number of Members</u>									
Spring Creek	"	S. Hays						2 in the City	500
								1 in business	500
								2 others in "Delaware"	500
									100
Camden	"	S. Longford	90					Camden	120
								Switzerland	100
								3 other places	110
South Plain	"	H. C. Hays	88					South Plain	150
								6 other places	120

The *Queenslander* reported William was highly thought of wherever he went and given pleasing Testimonials when he moved on to his next station. He is listed by the *Pioneers of the Monaro* as serving Goulburn in 1859.



After a brief return to Morpeth in 1860 William was called upon to serve the Church in Brisbane and he is listed in Ecclesiastical Returns as having responsibility for three Churches: Windmill Street, Fortitude Valley, Bulimba and Creek Street, Brisbane. While serving in Brisbane, William and Augusta were blessed with two more daughters, Sarah Brisbane Colley, born in 1861 and Augusta Brisbane Colley, born in 1863 their names celebrating their birthplace.



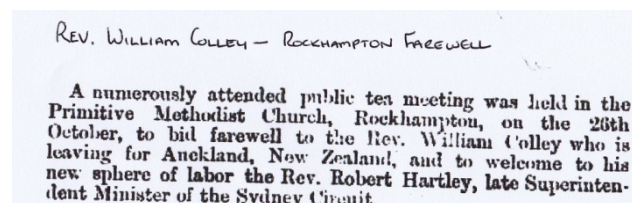
1867. BIRTHS IN THE DISTRICT OF <i>Brisbane</i> IN THE COLONY OF QUEENSLAND. REGISTERED BY <i>Rev</i>					
CHILD		PARENTS		OFFICER	WITNESSES
When and where born.	Sex, and whether first or not.	(1) Name and surname of father. (2) Rank or Profession of father. (3) Age, sex and (4) Religion.	(1) What and where married. (2) Name of Minister. (3) Name of bride and groom.	(1) Name, (2) Maiden Name of the Mother. (3) Age, sex and (4) Religion.	(1) Name, (2) Maiden Name of the Mother. (3) Age, sex and (4) Religion.
16th Decr 1867	Male Brisbane	(1) William Colley (2) Minister of the Gospel (3) 33 years (4) no faith England	(1) 16th July 1852 (2) Alexander Buchanan (3) Living (4) 23 years 2 Daughters 2 Sons	(1) Augustus King (2) 28 years (3) no faith (4) no faith England	William Colley (1) Father John McLeod Brisbane
21st April 1868	Female Brisbane	(1) William Colley (2) Minister of the Gospel (3) 34 years (4) no faith England	(1) 16th July 1852 (2) Alexander Buchanan (3) Living (4) 23 years 2 Daughters 2 Sons	(1) Augustus King (2) 28 years (3) no faith (4) no faith England	William Colley (1) Father John McLeod Brisbane

Having opened a station in Brisbane, he moved on to Rockhampton, further to the north and the *Central Queensland Family History Association* reports that “Reverend Colley visited Rockhampton at the request of Reverend Miles Moss and preached in an empty store opposite the Post Office. This was the installation of Methodism and on October 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1863 Mr. Colley took charge of the work.” A site was purchased and a Church opened on January 17<sup>th</sup>, 1864.



*Primitive Methodist Church, Rockhampton.*

According to the *Queenslander Newspaper* he was the “means of erecting three chapels in the province” before his health was adversely affected by excessive heat and later in the year Reverend Colley was farewelled from Rockhampton after receiving a “flattering presentation” and he journeyed to New Zealand to take up a position in Auckland.



Reverend Colley served in Auckland in 1864 and 1865. In “*Mow Cop to Airedale Street*” D. Phillipps observes that William conducted fortnightly worship at the Whau in west Auckland and oversaw the construction of a new Sunday School Room at Edwardes Street then early in 1865 a church was built in Freeman’s Bay. All of this was accomplished with the help of a substantial group of lay leaders. William’s ministry was cut short by ill-health and he was advised to leave the colony and return to New South Wales. A source of joy during their time in Auckland was the birth of William and Augusta’s son.

William Rushbrook Colley in the New Zealand, Birth Index, 1840-1950	
Name:	William Rushbrook Colley
Birth Date:	1865
Registration Place:	New Zealand
Folio Number:	9110

By 1867 he was serving in the Newcastle region of New South Wales and in 1869 was appointed to Kooringa in the mid-north of South Australia where for over two years he served the miners who were enduring a very difficult time due to the closing of copper mines.



Kooringa(Burra) P.M.Church

In 1869 William and Augusta welcomed a second son, Richard Ernest, into their growing family.

Richard Ernest Colley in the Australia, Birth Index, 1788-1922	
Name:	Richard Ernest Colley
Birth Date:	20 Apr 1869
Birth Place:	Kooringa
Registration Place:	Burra, South Australia, Australia
Father:	William Colley
Mother:	Augusta King Rushbrook
Page Number:	238
Volume Number:	73

Reverend Colley was granted licence to perform marriages in the Province of South Australia in 1869.

General Register of Births, &c., Office, Adelaide, March 2, 1869.  
**N**OTICE is hereby given, that pursuant to the provisions of the Act of Council No. 15 of 31st Victoria (1867), sections 9 and 10, intituled "An Act to amend and consolidate the Laws relating to Marriages in the Province of South Australia," the Reverend William Colley has been enrolled an officiating minister, with power to grant licences for marriages, and to perform the ceremony of marriage, within the meaning of the said Act.  
 JOHN F. CLELAND,  
 Registrar-General of Births, Deaths, & Marriages.

1869 Government Gazette Notice

and in February, 1870, he represented the Kooringa Circuit at the Annual District Meeting of the Primitive Methodist Church in North Adelaide. He is recorded as having delivered a number of sermons in an account of the meeting in the *South Australian Advertiser* on 8<sup>th</sup> February, 1870.

Tragedy struck the young family on the 31<sup>st</sup> March, 1870 when five year old William Rushbrook Colley died from Croup preceded by Diphtheria. This was followed by Richard Ernest's death on 22<sup>nd</sup> April, two days after his first birthday, leaving the bereaved parents "of those dear little boys" in deep grief.

The South Australian Advertiser (Adelaide, SA : 1858 - 1889)  
 1870, page 2

**DIED.**

**COLLEY.**—On the 31st March, at Kooringa, of croup, preceded by diphtheria, William Rushbrook Colley, aged five years, eldest son of the Rev. William Colley, Primitive Methodist minister.

**COLLEY.**—On the 22nd April, at Kooringa, Richard Ernest Colley, aged one year, the only remaining son of the Rev. William Colley, Primitive Methodist minister. An interest is asked in the prayers of God's people, not on behalf of the happy dead, but on behalf of the bereaved parents of those dear little boys.

The distraught parents

requested "an interest in prayers" on their behalf in the death notices of their sons.

In September of the same year some joy came in the birth of William and Augusta's daughter, Elizabeth Rushbrook Colley, who was to be their last child.

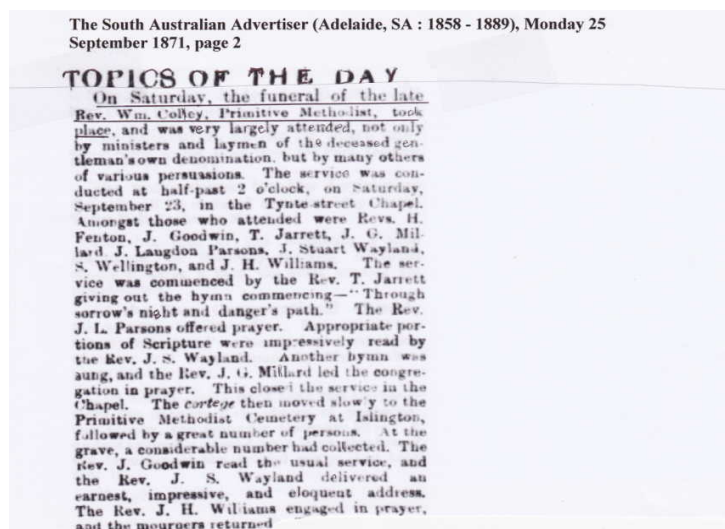
Elizabeth Rushbrook Colley in the Australia, Birth Index, 1788-1922	
Name:	Elizabeth Rushbrook Colley
Birth Date:	30 Sep 1870
Birth Place:	Koorunga
Registration Place:	Burra, South Australia, Australia
Father:	William Colley
Mother:	Augusta King Rushbrook
Page Number:	127
Volume Number:	88

In early 1871, William was called to the Second Adelaide Circuit and the family took up residence in the Manse in Wellington Square, North Adelaide.



*Old P.M. Chapel in Wellington Square*

Stricken by Consumption, his health was failing, but he continued his work until late June when he could no longer go on with his mission. After a steady decline, he died on 21<sup>st</sup> September, 1871, in his 44<sup>th</sup> year, in the manse in Wellington Square, North Adelaide and an account of his funeral was published in the *Advertiser newspaper*.



He was buried in the Islington Primitive Methodist Cemetery which is now a part of the Dudley Park Cemetery. Obituaries were published in the South Australian newspapers and in the Queenslander where he was fondly remembered. An Obituary by J. Stuart Wayland was included in the Minutes of the 1872 Primitive Methodist Conference. His life which had been characterised by great energy and purpose was ended prematurely by Consumption.

Augusta and her five daughters aged from one to fourteen years returned to Kooringa. The girls later married and had children of their own (the grandchildren William would never know) and Augusta died in Orroroo in the Kooringa district in April, 1906 and was buried in the Cemetery there. She was largely an unsung heroine of the story having travelled to the other side of the world from her native Cambridge and borne children in each of the districts her husband served in the colonies.



*Augusta's Headstone*

There were no surviving male children to carry on the Colley name but many of the grandchildren and their descendants were given the Colley name amongst their Christian names. William would have been proud of his descendants including grandsons who served on the other side of world in World War One (Albert William Colley Pollard and Harold William Colley Pollard). Frank Colley Darby would have brought pride and joy as he is reported in the *Port Pirie Recorder* in 1904 as being "the youngest person in the Commonwealth appointed to the position of Pipe Organist", a post which he held from the age of thirteen years at the Moonta Mines Methodist Church in the Kooringa district.

William's life was one of service to his God and his Church and he accomplished much in a relatively short time. Wherever he went, Chapels and Sunday Schools sprang up rapidly and his obituaries record the affection and respect held for him and the work he did. As Fitzroy reflects in his article "*Rockhampton's Early Clergy*": "Rockhampton, as well as other districts of Queensland, owes much to the courage, earnestness and self-sacrifice of those clergy of all denominations who were called to face the rigours of a hot and dry climate with other disadvantages of which but little was then understood, in order that the Gospel tidings should be spread among those pioneers who had penetrated into a new country to better their fortune and establish themselves in life ... It will easily be recognised that what was needed was men of almost special qualifications ... who were beloved and respected not only by their own special flocks, but by the community at large."