

The Quarterly Newsletter of the

Entwistle Family History Association

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Editorial

Welcome to you all. I hope you are coping ok with the heatwaves which seem to be affecting many of us.

On the 6th June we held an early summer get-together at the Strawbury Duck in the ancient township of Entwistle, from where many of our ancestors originated. It was good to meet some prospective new members as well as an existing member not previously met in person.

Our new Secretary, Steve Entwisle, is developing the use of a new membership programme, ***membermojo*** and in this issue he explains the benefits it should bring to our association.

Jim Fleming (member 416) has sent the third article about his Entwistles from Edgworth (between Darwen and Bolton, Lancashire, England), their lives (and deaths!) and their links to Australia. We published the first of these articles in the previous Winter edition of Twissle Times. In our Spring issue we had the story of Martha Entwistle's exciting journey to Australia as a convict and her development as Australia's first mental health nurse. See if you recognise any links to your own family!

[Eileen Cowen, Editor & member 246]

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BETTY ENTWISTLE'S FAMILY

by James Michael Fleming © 2025

Written for Twissle Times

Jim Fleming has been researching and writing family history for over forty years. He published All Our Tracks and Ways in 2024, about his pioneering ancestors, the Reed family of Staffordshire and Australia. After obtaining an Economics degree from the University of Sydney in 1978, Jim enjoyed a 33-year career with Australian Customs, culminating in several years as a Director. In retirement he lives on Sydney's lower north shore, enjoys travelling and sings baritone in two choirs. Jim is a committee member and historian for the international Clan Fleming Scottish Society and a member of the Society of Australian Genealogists, the Bathurst Family History Group, the Entwistle Family History Association and the Turton Local History Society.

Website: **http://jimfleming.id.au/up/index.htm**

Articles in our last two issues explored how the Entwistle family of Edgworth suffered in the early 19th century when the rise of powered looms disrupted their livelihoods as handloom weavers. Among the casualties were Harry Entwistle and his cousin Henry, both of whom died prematurely. Their wives, Martha and Ann, were transported to Australia as convicts, along with other relatives. In this final instalment, Jim Fleming turns his attention to the family of his five-times great-grandmother, Betty Entwistle—Harry's older sister.

Shortly after turning twenty, Betty married 25-year-old James Grime of Haslingden on 1 April 1784. Over the next dozen years, they raised six children while farming a small plot owned by Richard Orrell. Betty's brother, Harry, leased the neighbouring farm from Orrell.

On 30 March 1807, Betty and Harry likely travelled together to Bolton for a double family wedding: their sister Sarah wed James Nuttal, while Harry's son William married Ann Yates (also known as Nuttall).

Around this time, Harry appears to have entangled both brothers-in-law in criminal activity. James Grime was charged with stealing tools in 1806, and four years later, both James Nuttal and Harry faced charges of breaking and entering.

Meanwhile, Betty's youngest daughter, Mally, married Solomon Mather in August 1809, and her youngest son, James Grime the Younger, wed Jane Hardman in January 1815. Betty's brood of grandchildren soon grew to include James Grime the Youngest, born in 1816.

James Grime the Elder served two separate three-month sentences for larceny in 1814 and 1816 while his brother-in-law Harry Entwistle remained confined aboard prison hulks awaiting transportation.

Following Harry's release in 1817, the extended family became embroiled in his forged currency network. In June 1818, he sold five counterfeit one-pound notes from Betty's home. By September, both Harry and James were arrested for possessing and passing forged notes, alongside Betty's son James the Younger, son-in-law Solomon Mather, and nephew William Entwistle. Harry and James received death sentences while, to avoid the same fate, the younger men pleaded guilty and were given transportation sentences.

Betty and Mally campaigned vigorously to have the sentences reduced. In February 1819, they arranged for a letter to be sent to the Governor of the Bank of England, appealing for clemency for James the Elder, James the Younger, and Solomon. Their efforts succeeded in part: older James' sentence was commuted to 14 years' transportation, but younger James and William Entwistle were actually transported aboard the *Malabar* in June.

Two months later, younger James' wife gave birth to a second son, William Grimes, who died at just two months old. While Jane's fate remains unknown, it seems likely that her elder son James was raised by his aunt, Mally Mather.

James Grime the Elder was held aboard the hulk *Retribution*, while Solomon Mather waited on the *Justicia*, but neither was ever transported. Betty and Mally persisted in their advocacy, eventually securing a reduction of James's sentence to seven years. After six long years in custody, both men were released on parole and returned to Edgworth, where they lived out their days without further legal trouble.

In Australia, William Entwistle was assigned to work for Gregory Blaxland, one of the explorers who had charted the first route across the Blue Mountains in 1813. William remained in Blaxland's service even after receiving a ticket-of-leave, later becoming a dealer, acquiring land, and opening a grocery shop at Parramatta.

Betty passed away in mid-January 1831, and her husband James followed nine months later.



It's unlikely that news of their deaths reached younger James, who had married Catherine Long in 1827 and also settled at Parramatta. The couple had four children (including yet another James Grime) before James abandoned the family to work as a ship's carpenter. He sailed the South Seas aboard the whaler *Harpooner* (1846–1848), then the *Litherland* to the Bering Strait, before returning to Hobart. He later crossed Bass Strait aboard the *City of Melbourne*, likely seeking fortune on the goldfields.

Ironically, while James lived in Australia as a paroled convict, his son back in England, James the Youngest, served as a Sergeant of Police! He was named executor in the will of his aunt, Mally Mather, who died in 1863. By 1871, he had risen to Police Inspector before his death the following year at age 56.

By 1858, James the Younger had returned to Parramatta, where his cousin William Entwistle provided surety for his brief tenure as publican of the *Star Inn*. William died in 1864 and is buried at Parramatta, while James eventually relocated to Victoria, dying at the Benevolent Asylum in North Melbourne on 1 March 1869, aged 72.

No known family in Australia's history had more sentences of convict transportation than the Entwistles of Edgworth. Between 1809 and 1826, twelve members of Betty's family received that sentence. As the table shows, seven were actually sent to Australia; one died aboard a prison hulk; one was released but reoffended and was hanged; and three were eventually paroled in England.

In addition, three members of the Thorpe family (related to the Entwistles by marriage) were either transported or executed. William Thorpe (also known as Thomas or John) of Edgworth Moor was almost certainly married to Betty's sister Alice. When he was hanged for highway robbery in October 1813, the *Manchester Mercury* reported that he had "married into a family of the name of Entwistle who resided in the neighbourhood … (five or six of whom were … transported)." His parents, James and Ellen Thorpe, were both transported aboard the *Surrey* and *Wanstead* respectively in 1814.

Including the Thorpes, the extended Entwistle family saw fifteen members convicted and sentenced to transportation or execution. Their desperate lives, marked by defiance and criminal enterprise, underscore the social upheaval that resulted from the industrial revolution. As we now stand on the brink of another revolution, driven by artificial intelligence, their story reminds us to tread carefully, lest history repeat itself!

No.	Name	Sentenced	Outcome	Betty's
1	John	1809	per *Indian* 1810	Brother
2	William	1811	per *Indefatigable* 1812	Nephew
3	Martha	1812	per *Broxbornebury* 1814	Sister-in-law
4	Ann	1813	per *Broxbornebury* 1814	Nephew's wife
5	Henry	1813	hanged Lancaster 1819	Brother
6	Joseph	1813	died hulk *Captivity* 1813	Brother
7	James	1813	released 1817	Nephew
8	William	1813	per *Malabar* 1819	Nephew
9	James Grime Younger	1819	per *Malabar* 1819	Son
10	James Grime Elder	1819	released 1825	Husband
11	Solomon Mather	1819	released 1825	Son-in-law
12	Ann	1826	per *Harmony* 1827	Cousin's wife

TABLE: TWELVE OF BETTY ENTWISTLE'S FAMILY MEMBERS WERE SENTENCED TO TRANSPORTATION

[James Michael Fleming, member 416][1]