

MAN OF MYSTERY - WILLIAM BREWER

by Wendy Baker

The late Alan Moore, a descendant by marriage of William Brewer's daughter Mary Elizabeth Brewer, went to a great deal of trouble in an attempt to find out more about him. He wrote "The Adams/Brewer Family" in August 1995 and below (by kind permission of his wife) is the only relevant extract of information about William.

"Family legend has it that William went to America with the intention of sending for his wife and daughter once he was established there, but they never heard from him again. In the 1851 census Elizabeth was living with her mother in "Halls House" in the village of Fivehead. Jane is listed as married, but there is no sign of the elusive William, so perhaps the story was true. In 1861 Jane is listed as a widow, boarding with an Elizabeth Westlake." And later ... "Jane was a widow in 1861 census, born Puckington, Somerset, England, about 1807. Jane's occupation was "glover".

Poor Jane! Whether William deserted, or perhaps died, it must have been traumatic for her and the young Mary Elizabeth and she was fortunate that she was able to live with her mother. As yet we do not know when he left England for America. The fact that she listed herself as a "widow" may or may not have meant that – for many women the shame of being deserted was masked in census returns. I hope one day to find the true story.

As far as we know Jane and William had just the one child, Mary Elizabeth; born in 1835. Mary married Henry Adams in 1855 and between 1856 and 1868 they had seven children, including Louisa Beatrice Adams who would grow up to marry William Moore, the overseer on the huge Highland Valley farm north of Strathalbyn, South Australia. They also had seven children (including my grandmother Ruby Gladys Moore); one of their sons, Walter Harry Moore born in 1900 married Alice Mabel Roberts in 1926. They had three sons, the oldest being Alan, and to him I am indebted for most of the information I have on the whole Adams/Brewer/Moore connections.
