



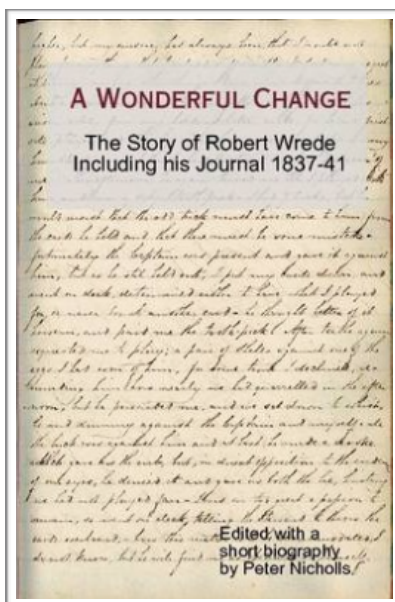
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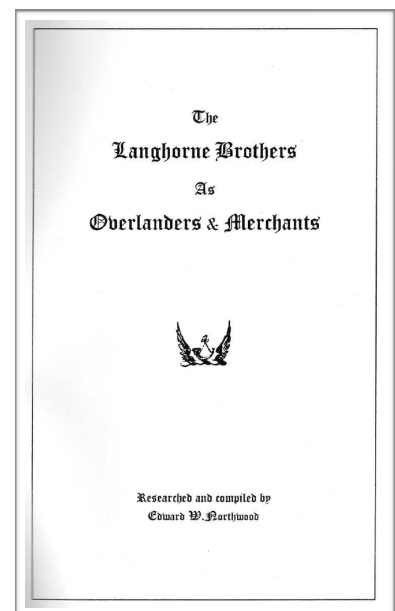
The Men Behind the Establishment of 'Altona & Laverton'

Robert William Wrede and Alfred Langhorne

The publication of two books in 2000 and 2012, together with information contained in earlier books, and news sources has enabled a more detailed and accurate consideration as to the establishment of the areas now known as Altona and Laverton.



The books are:
**A WONDERFUL CHANGE -
 The Story of Robert Wrede
 Including his Journal
 1837-41 : Edited with a short
 biography by Peter Nicholls -
 Published in Australia 2012**



and: **THE LANGHORNE BROTHERS AS OVERLANDERS AND MERCHANTS -
 Researched and compiled by Edward M. Northwood - Judith Langhorne McKenzie
 and Privately Published by Bradley William Keeley - Sydney 2000**

The Journal of Robert Wrede contains a virtual day to day account of his experiences during the years 1837 - 1841, and as the Editor, Peter Nicholls notes, this enables an accurate report of these activities, rather than those which would be contained in an attempt to recollect from memory details of events at a later date.

The Journal details the entirely accidental meeting of the two young men Robert Wrede and Alfred Langhorne when both were travelling towards the then Port Phillip, in 1838, they became friends and later neighbours and were an integral part of the establishment of early Melbourne and surrounds.



ROBERT WILLIAM WREDE

(No Image Available)

(Wrede is a relatively common Surname of Prussian/German origin, pronounced in German as Vrey-duh)

Robert was born the third child of Herman (or Hermann) Wrede (1770-1841) and Agnes (Miller) Wrede (1778 -1820) , in 1817, in London.



The father Herman Wrede is understood to have been born about 1770 in London (or possibly in Hamburg - Germany).

Herman Wrede was an established and renowned woodwind and piano manufacturer and sales agent operating in London. (Pictured left is a Clarinet circa 1810 with the H.Wrede Makers Name)

The Children of Hermann and Agnes Wrede were

1. Herman Wrede born July 30 1807 in London - he eventually worked in the family business of musical instrument manufacture and sales.
2. Sarah Wrede born in London ,eventually migrating to South Africa
3. Robert William Wrede - the subject of this article.

The Journals of Robert Wrede reveal at the age of 20, his travels during the period 1837-1841 when he travelled from England via Cape Town (where he visited his Sister), to Sydney then overland to Melbourne, by sea to Van Diemens Land

(Now Tasmania),back to Melbourne,Adelaide,Singapore,India,London and eventual return to Melbourne (1842) where he settled and eventually died in 1857.

He began his venture with the aim of promoting the sale of musical instruments and pianos as part of his fathers business, and also carried out the trade of piano tuning when available as a means of earning an income.

The Australian adventure Begins

Robert Wrede began his journey from Sydney to Melbourne after arriving in Sydney on 30 May 1838, he departed for Melbourne with two companions (Brown & Lang) on 19 June 1838, and encountered trouble during the journey with his horse in difficulty while crossing a stream, he sought assistance from a passer by, and later when the problem was resolved sought enquires as to the 'Port Phillip Road'.

He was advised to go with a companion to a hut 24 miles distant, and to wait a few days until a young man who was stopping there, named **Langhorne**, was ready to proceed with cattle Stock to Port Phillip.

(Wrede notes "This was too good and opportunity to refuse" : A Wonderful Change - page 77)

"After arrival,Mr.W (Wetherill) - introduced me to Mr. Langhorne, when after a good supper I turned in" - page78.

(The publication notes that Langhorne was about a year younger than Robert Wrede).

On 30 June 1838 they departed for Port Phillip and arrived in Melbourne on 16 July 1838, Wrede sold his horse, saddle and bridle, and was disappointed to find that he would have to wait to obtain passage by ship to Van Diemen's Land (Tasmania) as no vessels were in port, the likely wait was two weeks.

He immediately took the opportunity to begin making contacts locally for possible business sales, as he considered there was a need for Musical Instruments to be used for entertainment of the local residents.

He visited Alfred Langhorne's brother, the Reverend George Langhorne, at his Mission Station.

On 5 August he departed Melbourne for Hobart, arriving Launceston on 8 August, he made contacts in the area, enjoyed social gatherings and again returned to Melbourne for a period between 7 November 1838 and

January 30 1839 ,becoming reacquainted with Langhorne and others, had social engagements, played cricket, tuned piano's and the similar work.

On 31 January 1839 he sailed to Adelaide seeking Instrument sales,Social contacts and piano tuning work.

In April 1839 he returned to Van Diemens land ,and in May 1839 revisited Melbourne landing at Williams Town.

Renewed acquaintances, found difficulty in collecting outstanding debts for sales made, purchased an allotment of 28 acres for £700 pounds in Richmond, and continued to seek work as a piano tuner.

Departure from Melbourne

On 15 August 1839, he returned to Sydney by ship and eventually arranged to sail for Calcutta on 29 September 1839 and after visiting various countries arrived back in London 6 November 1840 to be reunited with his family.

Back to Australia

He eventually returned to Australia arriving at Port Phillip aboard "The Eagle" from London in 1842, bringing stock items with him.

He was married in 1843 to Mary Hodgson

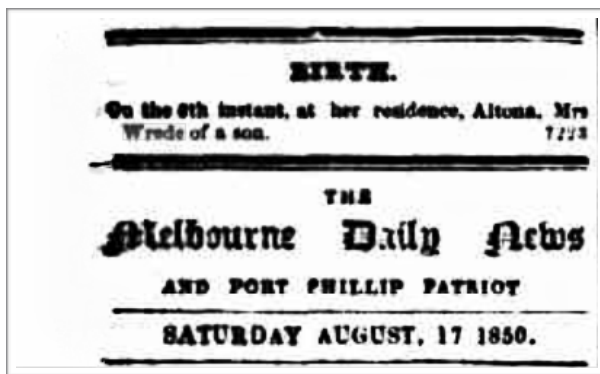
The Journal Notes edited by Nicholls, notes on Page 372, that he set up his first permanent homestead named 'Altona',in the area that is now known by that name.

(Peter Nicholls notes - "Altona is a suburb of Hamburg, from which Robert Wrede's family almost certainly originated")

The publication indicates that he refers to "Having a flourishing Station" in a letter dated 12 November 1842, though he does not mention it by name.

He first writes from 'Altona' on 31 May 1844.

It is stated that his house appears to have been on a block of land at the beach end of what is now Millers Road, and that he also obtained a block closer to Cherry Lake from which he used brackish water for his stock.



The Melbourne Daily News August 17 1850 reported the birth of a son at the residence Altona the Daily Sun reported the location as Altona, Wrede's Creek.

The Homestead of Alfred Langhorne was nearby, this being named 'Laverton'.

Apparently around this time misfortune set in, as the general economy in Victoria was not good, there were problems over land deals ,he was in debt to musical instrument suppliers and others in London and Europe, and it was becoming difficult to sell his goods in a depressed market.

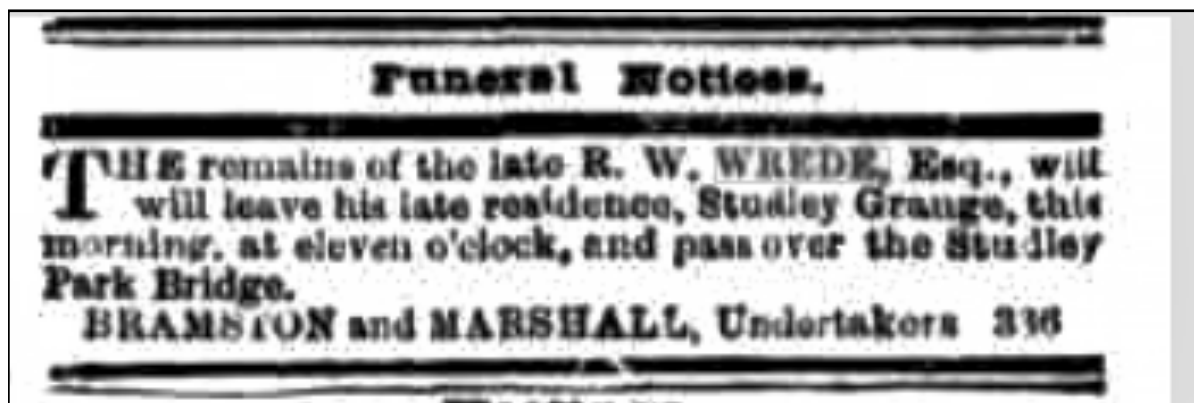
He was forced to sell some land and stock to his Father in Law.

Later letters on record showed some optimism as Port Phillip emerged from depression, Wrede became involved in German immigration consultation work, as German workers were brought into the country, he also began to have involvement with Gold, which had been discovered in Victoria.

He returned to London with his family ,and returned once again to Australia in 1855, working with a solicitor, living at Studley Grange in Boorondoorra (Kew).

He died on 21 December 1857 aged 40 years and is understood to have been buried at Kew Cemetery.

The clipping below appears in The Argus Melbourne December 22 1857 (Trove)



**ALFRED LANGHORNE****1817-1874**

Alfred Langhorne is commonly associated with his brothers George and William who also emigrated to Australia, **George** arrived in Sydney in 1832, worked in a Bank before offering his services as a Church Missionary to deal with Aboriginal prisoners in Sydney, eventually the Governor arranged for him to be a **Missionary** at Port Phillip.

In 1836 George Langhorne established the First Mission in the area near the Yarra River, now known as Prahran.

Alfred Langhorne - The book 'The Langhorne Brothers' reports that Alfred arrived at Port Jackson on April 29 1835, (aged 18) and that he quickly adapted to horse riding and the handling of sheep and cattle.

He founded with his brother a station at Dandenong in 1837 ,and overlanded cattle to Adelaide in the same year.

As noted in the comments earlier, he was overlanding cattle from Sydney to Port Phillip in 1838 when he encountered Robert Wrede.

He eventually spent some years in Adelaide where he met Sarah who he later married.

Returning to Melbourne in 1841 ,they resided in Stephen Street (now Exhibition Street) and there was a comment "Mrs. Alfred langhorne (pictured) was one of the most beautiful young women in early Melbourne".



Alfred became a businessman, and was admitted to membership of the Melbourne Club.

In 1843 depression hit Melbourne and Alfred was required to sell some of his land.

The Langhorne book indicates that Alfred 'squatted' on land 11 miles south west of Melbourne and asked a German, Lempriere to build a homestead facing the sea.

During 1841 materials arrived from Launceston, and in 1842 the homestead reached completion.

On page 197 ,it is stated “The name Laverton came into being in 1842 when Alfred Langhorne had Robert August occupy the Station as his overseer”.

The Port Phillip Electoral Role (June 1, 1850 to May 31, 1851) -
- Alfred Langhorne, dwelling house, Laverton, near Williamstown.

It is believed that Alfred chose the homestead name of Laverton as a tribute to a property of similar name owned by his Grandmother in England.

The Langhorne's Second son ,(Alfred Robert Langhorne) was born at Laverton in 1845.

In 1847 it was noted that Alfred Langhorne had no Tenure on the land and was technically trespassing.

During 1847 the Government established a system of tenure for pastoral leases of one year subject to a payment of £1 pound per acre.

In 1848 Langhorne was fined for neglecting to renew his pastoral licence.

During 1851, nearby bushfire alarmed Langhorne and he ordered the dwelling to be rebuilt in brick and bluestone.

1852 saw Langhorne associated with a group to establish a rail line between Melbourne and Williamstown, where he had business interests.

1853 saw the need to liquidate some Real Estate ,he leased Laverton run, and the family travelled to England to place his son at Rugby school.

1854 the family left Melbourne for London.

1860 William Cherry purchased part of the land holding.

The family returned to Melbourne in 1867 and Alfred was disappointed to find Laverton station in a run down state, he engaged his nephew to run the station.

Sarah Langhorne died at 'Laverton' June 26 1871 and was interred at Williamstown cemetery.

Laverton station of 2246 acres was sold to the Phelps brothers of Ireland in 1874.

Alfred Langhorne resided for a time at St Kilda and died in August 1874 and was buried at the Old Melbourne Cemetery.

The book 'Altona - A Long View' by Susan Priestley 1988 contains reproduced images of two plans, one a reproduction of Hoddle's sketch map Number 9 of 1842, and the second a similar reproduction of a sketch map drawn by Commanded Cox R.N. in 1861.

These have in part been redrawn as shown below to give an understanding of the two properties one to the other.

