

## Ann LESLIE & JEFFREYS, nee McLEAN & Robert LESLIE & Jeff JEFFREYS

Biography as published in 1995

ANN McLEAN (1823-1910) - baptised at Kilmallie Argyllshire, Scotland on 6/4/1823 - the 6<sup>th</sup> child of Donald and his wife Christina (nee McPhee)

Ann was aged 14 when the family left Scotland to emigrate to South Australia by the "Navarino" which arrived on December 6th. - Ann next appears in the Census of 1841 as at Strathalbyn and "aged under 21 years". There is a photograph of her as a middle aged woman in the McDonald book. She married twice.

**MARRIAGE:** 1st to Robert Leslie (b. 18/12/1818 at Alvie, Invernesshire, Scotland, son of Simon and Isabel (nee Grant) Leslie. The marriage took place at Currie St. Adelaide and his brother Donald Leslie was a witness. Robert came to S.A. with another Donald (and wife Catherine) by the "Tomatin" commanded by Capt. Daniel Wingate which arrived on 11/3/1840. Fellow passengers were the brothers Donald and Hugh McLean who have been mistaken for members of the Donald and Christina McLean family of Strathalbyn. The Rev. Robert Haining, the only Presbyterian minister then at Adelaide would have officiated at his own house at Currie Street. Robert Leslie was a blacksmith by trade and set up in business at Strathalbyn in partnership with Jeff Jeffreys. Robert built a brick cottage for Ann, the first brick dwelling of the town, at the corner of what came to be named Angas Place and Jeff Street overlooking the River Angas above a gentle slope to the water. That cottage is still in use but attached to a larger house built in front of it. There do not seem to have been any children of the six year marriage.

**DEATH:** on 14/1/1848 of Robert Leslie in a severe flash flood at Strathalbyn He may have been buried at the original cemetery alongside the St. Andrew's Church where there is now a roadway. No record remains of the early burials either there or at the old cemetery above the present town swimming pool (only a plaque marks the area). Robert is said to have been the first adult to die at Strathalbyn. So at the age of 25 Ann was a widow. She arranged with her husband's partner Jeff Jeffreys to continue the blacksmith business.

**MARRIAGE:** 2nd to Jeff Jeffreys (also spelt Jeffries occasionally). No record has been found of Jeffs arrival in S.A. nor of the ship "Dover Castle" said to have been the one in which he travelled. If he came steerage his name would not have been shown as was often the case very early in the state's history. That he was of Scottish birth seems obvious.

Ann and Jeff went to the Victorian gold fields, returning in 1853; they did so well that they were able to purchase newly surveyed land at Belvidere. They bought 1400 acres consisting of sections 2614, 2615, 2616, 2617, 2618, 2639, 2758 and 2759. At Belvidere Ann had a niece of her first marriage, Robina Leslie living with her for a time, Robina was born 1/5/1842 to Donald and Catherine Leslie and a son, Simon, earlier on 1/6/1840 and when it became compulsory to register births in 1842 Donald rushed to Adelaide to have these two children first on the list. Robina's mother died when she was 13 and that was probably the time when she went to Ann. Ann and Jeff took a trip back to Scotland about 1854. They may have gone via Melbourne both ways as no direct arrival can be found at Mortlock Library shipping lists. At this period when William Rankine and some of his family took a trip back to Scotland they did the same thing, travelling by the "White Swan", a coastal vessel to and from Melbourne where the Royal Mail ship arrived, by-passing Adelaide.

It has been said that Ann and Jeff Jeffreys made two sorties to the Victorian gold fields. They apparently managed to bring back their takings without any trouble, but others of the district took no chances and on the list of Alexander Tolmer's first gold escort appear the names of John Chenton, Charles Soward (brother-in-law of Archibald McLean), a Janeway and others.

At Belvidere Jeff was both farmer and blacksmith, but the farming would have been done by hired labour as the blacksmith shop was his main Concern. It was across the River Angas as was his house "Crickhowall", built for Ann, The brickworks were set up nearby. At his "shop" besides endless repairs and shoeing and iron work entailed, Jeff also sold farm machinery and equipment, and in fact his business of that time, primitive by todays standards, was equivalent to a modern engineering workshop, and the whole countryside seemed ever going "up to Jiffs" as Matthew Rankine termed him.

From the Public Records, Adelaide ~ Authority C56 - 281/1854.

Unto His Excellency Sir Henry Edward Fox Young, Knight, Lieutenant Governor of the Province of South Australia and its Dependencies.

The PETITION of JEFF JEFFREYS of Strathalbyn. farmer and of ARCHIBALD McLEAN of the same place - farmer.

Humbly, herewith:- that a charge was made against your Petitioner, Jeff Jeffreys. of having on the nineth day of December 1853, feloniously stolen a COW - the property of one William Howard.

That your Petitioner Jeff Jeffreys having been served a summons appeared in obedience thereto. at the Local Court. Mount Barker, when the Prosecutor and witness were examined and the hearing was adjourned until the fourth day of January custant.

That your Petitioner Jeff Jeffreys was bound to appear at the said Court on his own Recognizance in the sum of twenty five pounds (50 dollars) and your Petitioner Archibald McLean was also bound as bail for the Petitioner Jeff Jeffreys in the sum of twenty five pounds (50 dollars), but that the Prosecutor and Witnesses who made the charge at the Court against your petitioner Jeff Jeffreys were not bound in any sum whatever to appear at the said Court on the adjourned hearing above mentioned to give evidence.

That on the 14th day of December last the Prosecutor came to your Petitioner Jeff Jeffreys and informed him that he did not really believe your Petitioner Jeff Jeffreys had feloniously taken from him A COW - or ever intended to do so. and that as he had made such a charge against your Petitioner, Jeff Jeffreys. he was sorry for it and was desirous to make any amends in his Prosecutor's power and would withdraw the charge which he had made.

That your Petitioners, J. Jeffreys and Archibald McLean being ignorant it would be necessary for the said Jeff Jeffreys to attend at the Local Court after such a statement on the part of the Prosecutor, neglected to attend the said Court on the said 4th day of January inst. and that neither Prosecutor nor witnesses attended Court.

That to the surprise of your Petitioner. they received intimation that their recognizances were estreated in the sum of 25 pounds (\$50) each making together 50 pounds (\$100). That immediately on being aware that your Petitioners had through ignorance incurred such heavy penalties. your Petitioners. the said Jeff Jeffreys and Archibald McLean attended at the next sitting of the said Local Court and also procured the attendance of the said Prosecutor although the said Prosecutor was not bound in recognizance and the said Jeff Jeffreys offered to surrender himself if the Court thought fit when the Prosecutor made statement to the said Court. but the surrender of your Petitioner Jeff Jeffreys was not accepted, but your Petitioners. the said Jeff Jeffreys and the said Archibald McLean were fined the sum of 25 pounds (\$50) each. making together the sum of 50 pounds (\$100) which was then and there paid in the presence of the Court to the clerk thereof.

That your Petitioners humbly and respectfully submit that it was unintentional and entirely through ignornace that your Petitioner the said Jeff Jeffreys neglected to attend the court arid not only will the loss of so large amounts be injurious to your Petitioners. but already your Petitioner had suffered much from the charges made against him which prove to hand to have been made without foundation.

May it therefore please your Excellency. under the circumstances above set forth, to order a return of the said two sums of twenty five pounds each as paid by your Petitioners aforesaid.

And your Petitioners will ever pray, etc.  
Jeff Jeffreys  
Archibald McLean.

Accompanying this petition was a letter of the same date - 19/1/1854 - to the H0r1. Colonial Secretary, Adelaide:

Sir. I have the honour to transmit for His Excellency the Lieutenant Governor's consideration, the accompanying Petition of Jeff Jeffreys and Archibald McLean.

I have the honour to be Richard B, Andrews. Hon. Stipendary Magistrate

The reply was dated 3/2/1854 - Ref. 281 - C.I.O. J. Bonnar L.Ot. Mt Barker.

I authorize the discharge of one half of the Entreat. February 3, 1854.  
Signed: E. F. Young ~ Lieut. Governor.

So half of their money was returned to them over what could be called "The Case of the COW which was NOT Stolen".

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"Jiff" Jeffreys as Matthew Rankine called him was continually mentioned in the latter's diaries. Such as :-

27/6/1856 - "Donald Sutherland is building a Public House for Jiff who has sunk a well by his house. He hit rock and the water sank through"

As Matthew broke swingle-trees, plough shares and other objects with monotonous regularity he frequently "went up to Jiffs" for repairs from his "Woodburn" property.

9/3/1857 - At the Bremer District Council Meeting, Matthew being a member. besides two licences of publicans of Strathalbyn being re-issued, a new one went to "Jiff" Jeffreys (Jeff was likewise a council member) and in future the Council was to meet at "Jiff's Belvidere Hotel instead of either at neighbours' houses or at the public house at Langhorne Bridge as the village was then.

In August 1858. when Matthew was enlarging his original "Woodburn" of wattle and daub at Angas Plains (there was a stone chimney with outside oven at the back) he went to Jiff to purchase 100 bricks to pave the kitchen floor.

7/11/1857 - During a Council meeting at the Belvidere Hotel. the wife of the first manager (on Jeff's behalf) Mrs Short. rushed in for protection from her husband who was "kicking up a great row and beating her". Short, a heavy drinker. was suffering from delerium tremens.

The Belvidere Hotel had 15 rooms. The dining room, known locally as the Big Room could be converted into a large area for meetings, dances, etc. It remained in use until July 9th 1931 when it burned down. It was opposite Jeff's blacksmith shop and was well patronised. The first two licensees (under Jeff) were the before mentioned William Short of the D Ts. from 11/3/1857 to 24/3/1858. He was followed by H. Pyeman from 25/3/1858 to 4/7/1860. Jeff himself took over as

the third for six years and not just for the 12 months mentioned in Ann's Obituary Jeff was gazette, dates were 5/7/1860 to 4/4/1866. Thereafter. although retaining the freehold Jeff installed managers and his only son inherited it in due course.

Belvidere was originally to have been called Raleigh but the story is that well educated John Cheriton, Jeff's brother-in-law, insisted on Belvidere and triumphed. From 1850 on it developed into a busy rural village at the intersection of the Strathalbyn and Lake roads. There was a weatherboard school which only closed in 1941, a church (demolished in 1973) - a bronze plaque marks the site, a Post Office from 1860 which only closed 107 years later. The brickworks produced more than a million bricks in its time. The Community Hall was a late addition, built only in 1921 and still extant and at one time housed Johnson's Picture Theatre. This was the centre and background of the Jeffreys family and that of Jane Cheriton, a sister of Ann.

Ann's niece, Robina Leslie whom she had mothered at Belvidere, married on 11/7/1865, Robert George Stewart of Willunga. The Jeffreys continued at their house "Crickhowall" for many years, and were well known and greatly liked throughout the Strathalbyn, Belvidere and Angas Plains districts.

Gypsies camped at the Belvidere Reserve, and were not always welcome. Jeff donated land of his Section 2616 to the Primitive Methodists for their church and from 1865 to 1867 rented out his section 2758 to John Jones, father-in-law of Mary Ann Jones, the eldest of the many daughters of John McLean of "Waterloo".

From Matthew Rankine again:

22/10/1860: Jiff Jeffreys came to visit him that day to view Matthew's new steam mowing machine and thought that he might buy one for himself. If Jeff did so no record remains.

Jeff added to his land in 1881 by adding Section 807 at Belvidere just before his death. Only one other early day mention of him in print is when, on 29/6/1866, "Miss Jeffreys" (who would have been the eldest daughter, Mary), declared the bridge which replaced the river ford at Belvidere "open" and named it the Cheriton Belvidere Bridge". Both Jeff and John Cheriton had been instrumental in having this project brought to a conclusion for the greater ease of travelers within the district.

Jeff made his Will only eleven days before his death and it is quite possible that he had had a stroke as he signed it only with an "X" because he was not illiterate. His death certificate is not in hand, but a copy of his Will comes from Di. Facey.

WILL of JEFF JEFFREYS. dated 27/1/1881, who died at his residence at Belvidere aged 59 years on 7/2/1991

"Jeffrey Jeffreys of Belvidere in the Province of South Australia, farmer. I appoint Matthew Rankine of "Woodburn" in the said Province, farmer, and John Tucker of Sandergrove in the said Province, farmer (hereinafter called my Trustees) to be Executors and Trustees of this my Will)

I devise part of section 2612 in the Hundred of Strathalbyn occupied by Heager for her sole and separate use. I Devise Upon Trust for them to let and manage the same during the lifetime of my wife and the minority of my son Edward (error for Edwin) and to apply and pay the rents and profits therefrom in the same persons as are entitled to the income of the money hereinafter directed to be invested and upon the decease of my wife should my son Edward (Edwin) have attained the age of twenty one years to convey to him the fee simple (i.e. the Freehold) of the said Belvidere Hotel and premises.

I devise and bequeath all the residue of my real and Personal Estate of whatever nature to my Trustees Upon Trust and with and subject to the powers hereinafter contained concerning the same, that is to say Upon Trust, to sell and convert into money the whole of my residuary estate or such part thereof as shall not consist of money and to stand possessed of the proceeds of such sale and conversion In Trust to invest the same in real or Government securities

and to pay out of the income and proceeds of such investments an annuity of £100 (one hundred pounds - (\$200) to my said wife during her life, the first payment to be paid at the expiration of six months from the day of my decease and then half yearly.

And, I declare that my Trustees shall in the case of the illness of my wife be at liberty in their discretion to increase the sum of £100 (one hundred pounds (\$200) to be paid to my wife to any sum not exceeding £150 (one hundred and fifty pounds - (\$300) and to divide the remainder of the income of the said investments equally between my children. share and share alike.

And upon the decease of my said wife my trustees shall pay one fourth of the whole of the principle herein before directed to be invested to my son Edward (Edwin) on his attaining the age of 21 (twenty one) and the residue of such principle sum shall be invested for each of my daughters in equal shares in trust for them to enjoy the income of their respective shares during their respective lives only and upon the decease of any one of my daughters her said share shall be divided equally between such of her children as shall attain the age of 21 (twenty one) years and I declare that the shares of all daughters under this my will shall be for their sole and separate use free from the debts and control of their respective husbands.

If any of my children shall die without having issue the share of such child shall be added to the shares of such of my children as may then be living. In witness whereof I have to this my Will set my hand this 27th day of January 1881. Signed and published by the said Jeffrey Jeffries in the presence of us present at the same time who in his presence and at his request have here unto subscribed our names as witnesses." J. H. Gordon, M. Rankine Jeffrey X Jeffries, his mark.

This is a Codicil in addition to my Will as before written and signed by me. I leave my wife an annuity of one hundred and fifty pounds instead of one hundred pounds' I give my trustees power to advance to my daughters any portion of their respective shares for the purchase of a house such to be held for their separate use so long as my trustees return enough to give my wife's annuity. I give my trustees power to postpone the sale of my real estate for any time they think fit the income thereof to be applied in the same way as the proceeds of sale of same had been sold. Signed this 27th day of January 1881.

The witnesses and signature were the same as for the Will proper.

Following the death of Jeff his wife Ann moved back to her cottage at Strathalbyn. One account says that she built a commodious house on two acres and another that she returned to the brick cottage where she lived as Mrs Leslie. Both statements could be correct as the house in front of and attached to the original is much larger. Ann had the reputation of generosity and hospitality and more than one young relative was married there. She visited her sister Rachel (Mrs Ewen McDonald) of Noradjuha, Victoria, on numerous occasions in her widowhood and was known to her nieces and nephews as "Aunt Jeff". When Ann died in 1910 only her sister Margaret (Mrs Keating, then Johns) and her youngest brother Hugh the younger of Strathalbyn survived her.

DEATH: of Ann Jeffreys on 21/10/1910 in her 88th year at Strathalbyn. Interred with her husband Jeff Jeffreys at the Strathalbyn Cemetery - grave 1/217. The headstone also records the death date of her only son Edwin.

There were three separate obituaries to Ann. The "Southern Argus" and two in the same column of the Adelaide "Observer" dated 29/10/1910. The longest and most informative of the three:-

"Mrs Ann Jeffreys:

On Friday night one of South Australia's earliest colonists in the person of Mrs Ann Jeffreys passed away at Strathalbyn at the age of 88 years Deceased was a member of the McLean family who arrived at Holdfast Bay by the sailing ship "Navarino" in 1837, and took up land adjoining the late Dr Everard's estate close to Adelaide.

It was here the deceased met and married her first husband Mr R. Leslie. The couple immediately came to Strathalbyn where the late Mr Leslie carried on his business as a blacksmith until his death. He was the first man to be buried in Strathalbyn. Mrs Leslie let the business to Mr Jeffreys and eventually married him. On the breaking out of the diggings the couple went to Victoria and were very successful. They returned to South Australia and in 1853 bought some 1400 acres of land then known as The Plains.

They then paid a protracted visit to the old land On their return they built the Belvidere Hotel but only remained in it 12 months letting the property thereafter. They farmed successfully until 1881 when Mr Jeffreys died. The widow then came to reside in Strathalbyn, having purchased a two acre block, and erected a commodious dwelling thereon. It was here Mrs Jeffreys died.

The deceased was a great philanthropist and of her it may be truly said "her right hand did not know what her left hand gave away". She was a genial and bonny Scotch woman beloved by whom all who came in contact with her and was ever fond of giving her experiences of the early days in the south. especially when the blacks were numerous and in tribal fights of no uncommon occurrence.

Only one of the old stock is now alive, a sister Mrs Johns who resides at Geelong, Victoria. (Note this was a error as Hugh the younger was still living). Mrs Jeffreys left three daughters - Mrs H. Lewis of Semaphore, Mrs J. Taffrey (error for Mrs J Tassie) of Glenelg – Mrs Borretl of Langhorne's Creek and one son. Mr Edwin Jeffreys of Manilla. NSW."

Note: The surrounding columns of this newspaper had a number of interesting reports'. A long account of a very early car fatality at Norwood, S.A. An inquest into the death of a Mr C. H. A.Mundy knocked down by a motor car at Norwood. At Bull's Creek, near Strathalbyn on 23/10/1910 a Miss Nichol had an altercation with a car as she returned home from Sunday School in her sulky. The horse panicked and capsized the sulky and her two friends were thrown onto the road. Miss Nichol fared the worst as she tried to hold the reins and she was dragged as the sulky with horse careered for 3 miles. The occupants of this early car were unharmed.

There were "Horsham, Victoria murders". an infant drowned in a tub at Bowden, near Adelaide, a suicide in a dam and a Mrs Lewis of Danivin. the oldest resident there had died. The largest advertisement on the page concerned a picture of an infant with a toy rabbit and headed "Cuticura Soap". "Because of its delicate. sanative, antiseptic properties derived from Cuticura, united with the purest of cleansing ingredients and most refreshing of flower odours, Cuticura Soap is the mothers favourite for preserving and protecting skin and hair health of infants and children. In the treatment of distressing disfiguring eruptions, Cuticura Soap and Cuticura ointment are absolutely unrivalled."

Advertisements have not changed a great deal in the last 80 years.

CHILDREN: The McDonald book gives the first child as Robina Ann "Jeffries", but this seems to be merely a coincidence as to name as only three surviving daughters and one son appear in Wills and Obituaries of Ann and Jeff Jeffreys. Therefore Robina is eliminated from the Jeffreys descendants. That she was related to Jeff Jeffreys is a possibility but not conclusive.

Children : None from Ann and Robert. Five from Ann and Jeff :-

1. Mary Ann Jane Jeffreys – born 12/3/1855 at Bevidere, SA. Married Henry Lewis. [See biographies 5113](#)
2. Rachel Jeffreys – born 22/8/1856 at Bevidere. Died aged 1 year and 7 months of "atrophy" at Belvidere. She was possibly buried at the now vanished Bevidere Cemetery, wherein 28 persons, mainly children, were interred last century.
3. Esther Maud Mary Jeffreys – born 10/4/1858 at Belvidere, SA. Married John Tassie. [See biographies 5116](#)
4. Henrietta Dover Castle Jeffreys – 9/9/1859 at Belvidere. Married George Borrett. [See biographies 5117](#)
5. Edwin John Jeff Jeffreys – born 26/7/1861 at 'Crickhowall', Belvidere. Married Wilhemena Strother. [See biographies 5120](#)

• SOURCE : This biography is an extract from "The History of Donald & Christina McLean and Their Descendants" which was published in 1995 – page 482 to 501.  
• COLONIALISTS : Christina and Donald McLean and their ten children migrated from Argyllshire to South Australia in 1837. This was in the earliest years of the colony. The McLeans initially settled near Adelaide where they grew the first wheat crop in SA. Then in about 1840 they pioneered the Strathalbyn area. There are now well over 20,000 descendants spread across Australia and elsewhere.  
• CHANGES : Please contact us with additions, corrections or suggestions about any part of this family tree.  
• CONTACT : Visit our website [www.christinaanddonaldmclean.com](http://www.christinaanddonaldmclean.com) or Strathalbyn Museum phone 08 8536 2656 to discover more about your family – and about privacy and copyright.