

WILLIAM GREELY HOLT OF BENDIGO, VICTORIA, AUSTRALIA

William Greeley Holt (1831-1914), was a descendant of Nicholas Holt through Samuel, Samuel, Obadiah, Job, William (1765-1847), and William Jr. (1792-unk) who married Susan Munsell on December 11, 1816. They lived in Hermon, Maine, and became parents of William Greeley Holt, born in 1831. He obtained employment on a sailing ship as a carpenter's helper. It is possible William travelled with his friend, Zebina Lane, a mining engineer, from Bangor, ME. They left New York as part of a group sponsored by Cornelius Vanderbilt, known as the American Atlantic and Pacific Canal Company, in 1850. Their goal was to blaze a much shorter, more direct route to the California Gold Fields by going across Nicaragua, as opposed to crossing Panama. While they succeeded in that, they had little success in the goldfields of California, so in 1853, they joined the gold rush to Australia. Going to Bendigo in the state of Victoria, they found a rich reef in Wedderburn where they staked a claim. Both men lived in the Bendigo area and maintained their friendship for the rest of their lives.

William purchased land in Sandhurst, now called Bendigo, where he met and married Amelia Louisa Bolton on 30 June, 1856. She was born in London, England, in 1841, and arrived with family members at Port Phillip, Victoria, on the ship "Banshee" out of London, going on to Bendigo. William worked gold mines in the Bendigo, Mt. Moliagul, and Dunolly area. He purchased land at Avoca Forest, later known as Logan, where he built a house and cleared and fenced approximately 200 acres of land. A portion of his "chock and log" fence remains visible to this day. The family moved several times but stayed in the same vicinity, getting a larger house each time as their family grew.

Children of William Greeley and Amelia Holt, from *"The Holt Heritage"* by Thelma Meiers were:

Amelia and Thomas Kellett had six children

Edwin and Margaret McClelland had seven children

Susan and Robert Kellett had six children

Mary Ann and William Stephenson had nine children

Arthur and Ann Holt had eleven children

George and Rachel Wharton had ten children

James and Beatrice Hubbard had eight children

Samuel died in 1884 at Fenton's Creek in a threshing machine accident at age 13

Lavina and James Thomas had twelve children

Albert Holt was born in 1879 and died Jan 3, 1895 in Avoca River, Victoria, accidental drowning

Sarah and Harm Wandell had four children

Matilda Holt was born Sept. 1883 at Fenton's Creek, and died April 1884, age eight months

Ernest and Florence Bertram had eight children

William was considered to be a superior axman, a skill he passed along to his sons. They were able to supplement their farming income by cutting wood for mines, firewood for their neighbors and for building sleepers for the railway. During their 58 years of marriage, William and Amelia suffered hardships as well as happy times in this pioneer existence. Their courage, endurance and resourcefulness speak volumes and they are remembered with respect and affection by their numerous descendants. Both are buried at St. Arnaud Cemetery, in Victoria. At the time of his death William was survived by 9 children, 64 grandchildren and 19 great grandchildren.

We are indebted to Thelma Meiers, Lois Pinnell, Rachel Brown, and Arthur Holt for this information.