



## Did you know?

*In this section I hope to have information on subjects of interest about family members. Few would know that John Oxley the Surveyor General of New South Wales was actually a Member of the Molesworth family. I have more on him and some of his letters about the family that I will publish in future editions. (Ed)*

## John Oxley

*This is an account of John Oxley that I found in the Oxley library Brisbane, Queensland. The document was part of a number I was able to get copies of. (Ed)*

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### From the editor.

This newsletter is intended to provide members of the Molesworth family with information about the family both historic and current. I am hopeful that in some way it will unite and inform, and with the help of those family members around the world that are interested in sharing and learning more about a family with a long and distinguished history. I will be able to fill the pages with items of interest that inform us all of those Molesworths we may never see.

This is the first of the Molesworth newsletters. I hope it is of interest to you, if so, please let other family members know about it or give them a copy of this one. This letter is being sent out free as an introduction, and to get the idea started. It is planned to send it out quarterly. If you or any other family members you know wish to receive future copies please send Aus\$10.00 for surface mail within Australia or Aus\$14.00 for overseas to cover printing and postage to Phillip Molesworth indicating for Molesworth Newsletter and I will add your name to the mail list. Or if you are on the NET send me your e-mail address and I will add you to the e-mail list free.

We are currently looking for ideas and information to put in the newsletter so if you have an item to include please send it to me and I will see what I can do to include it. I have access to a lot of Molesworth information but could never have it all. If you have any items of memorabilia why not share them with the family by sending copies, photo's etc in, so we can add them to the newsletter.

Why not dig through that old scrap book and see what you can find? Im sure there are a lot of stories about the current and recent generations that will be of interest.

I can't guarantee that all of the information will get into the next edition but will distribute as much as I can. How about some stories of current family members and their exploits, or a story about your grandparents that others may not know. If Elizabeth Twells hadn't written the note on John Oxley we may never have known the history behind his name.

Attached you will find a note from the Hon. William Molesworth's titled "A Christmas Letter"  
For those of you that don't know William is the brother of the current Viscount Molesworth.

### Things my Mother told me.

**Extracts from letters written by Elizabeth Isabella Twells, elder daughter of Isabella Margaret Molesworth Dixon, who was the only daughter of Isabella Oxley, to John Norton Oxley.**

First of all our grand-father Oxley married Isabella Molesworth who was then about sixteen years of age at St. Martin's in the Fields, London.

It was a stolen match (from York I believe) and her father Lord Molesworth never saw her afterward, though after his death in 1792 Lady Molesworth was reconciled to her daughter and stayed once at least with her at Kirkham. My mother always spoke of her grandmother as 'Lady' Molesworth and her names were Isabella (after her mother) and Margaret Molesworth after her grandmother Lord Molesworth cut his daughters' name out of the register. You see I am using my mothers' own words without attempting to explain them.

After our grandmother Oxley's death my mother and her brother (Henry Lewis Molesworth Oxley) lived with their grandmother Molesworth at Canterbury, where Henry went to the Kings School, and afterward to St Omers where he became a Roman Catholic and entered the order of St Dominic. My mother became acquainted with Mr Broughton; afterward the first Bishop of Australia, when one of the masters where Uncle Henry was at school, and he often spoke of the kindness he had received from old Lady Molesworth when he was at the King School Canterbury. The little miniature represents Miss Molesworth at the time of her marriage with John Oxley. She was betrothed to Lord Digby, but eloped with John Oxley which caused her fathers anger against her. Lady Molesworth's name was (Isabella) Margaret Leaver, whose father was a Writer to the Signet in Edinburgh, and was in some degree related to Flora Macdonald of Jacobite fame.

My mother had a, fine old engraving of Robert, Viscount Molesworth with his Arms beneath the portrait. She said he was her great-grandfather I send you a copy of a miniature of Mrs Oxley our grandmother, Elizabeth Villeneuve who witnessed the marriage of John Oxley and Isabella Molesworth was maid to Lady Molesworth and helped her young mistress in her run-away marriage. At the time of her marriage in 1783 the Molesworth's are supposed to have been living at Croydon in Surrey. Richard Molesworth, father of Isabella Molesworth,

who succeeded to the title in 1758 had a son Garald or Raginal who died in infancy, and is the baby sitting on his mothers lap playing with the pearls round her neck in the oil painting which was painted by John Foldsome in 1763. Our grandmothers eyes were deep blue and those of the child in the picture brown. My mother said he died in childhood. Lady Molesworth died and was buried at Canterbury, The oil painting of Lady Molesworth and her infant son was brought out to Australia by her grandson John J. W. Molesworth Oxley R.N. in 1812. The miniatures of Richard Viscount Molesworth John Oxley and his wife Isabella and of Lord Digby (who was betrothed to Mrs Oxley) were given to John Norton Oxley by his Uncle Henry L. Molesworth Oxley about 1844. Uncle Henry told you that the Oxleys came from Kilburn Hall near Sherburn Yorkshire and that his grandparents were named John and Mary Oxley.

## Memorabilia corner.

*Greg Molesworth (Victoria, Australia) was able to find the gravesite of the White Greyhound. The following is an account of the story of the grave. (Ed)*

### **THE 1 ST. VISCOUNT'S WHITE GREYHOUND DOG.**

The first Viscount, Robert Molesworth, had a constant companion in the form of a snow-white greyhound. It was always by his side, and even travelled with him between England and Ireland for at one stage he asked his wife Lady Letitia Molesworth to send more blankets to "Brackentown" their home in Ireland saying.

**"If it were not for my dog I would have frozen to death."**

But the main story about this Faithful hound was centred at "Edlington" the Molesworth home in England. It appears that one day when Robert was working in the garden he made his way to the outside toilet when the dog pulled on his masters coat flap, and would not let him proceed. On a second attempt, the dog behaved in the same manner. Surprised at this interruption, he ordered one of his gardeners to go to the place; who, on opening the door, was immediately shot dead by a villain there concealed, whose intention was most probably, to rob the house when the family was retired for the night.

On the death of this hound, Robert had a monument erected to its memory. It was beneath a fine yew tree and consisted of an urn supported by a square pedestal. In the front of which was inserted a dab of white marble, on which is carved in bas-relief a figure of the dog, and also the following inscription, composed, it is said, by Dr. Lockyer Dean, of Peterborough. This is an English translation of the Latin inscription:

**STAY TRAVELLER!  
NOR WONDER THAT A LAMENTED DOG  
IS THUS INTERRED WITH FUNERAL HONOR.  
BUT AH! WHAT A DOG?  
HIS BEAUTIFUL FORM AND SNOW WHITE COLOUR,  
PLEASING MANNERS AND SPORTIVE PLAYFULNESS,  
AFFECTION, OBEDIENCE AND FIDELITY,  
MADE HIM THE DELIGHT OF HIS MASTER,  
TO WHOSE SIDE HE CLOSELY ADHERED  
WITH HIS EAGER COMPANIONS OF THE CHASE,  
DELIGHTED IN ATTENDING HIM.**

**WHENEVER THE MIND OF HIS LORD WAS  
DEPRESSED,  
HE WOULD ASSUME FRESH SPIRIT AND  
ANIMATION.  
A MASTER NOT UNGRATEFUL FOR HIS MERIT  
AS HE, IN TEARS, DEPOSITED HIS REMAINS  
IN THIS MARBLE URN.  
1714.**

The monument is still standing today though the marble slabs have gone. Covered by a wild garden only the urn can be seen. It is now situated in the front garden of "Blow Hall, Manor" in Edlington Wood.

The name of the local hotel is  
**"THE WHITE GREYHOUND."**



**The Monument to the White Greyhound**

*Do you have an item of interest you want to share? If so please send it to me. (Ed)*

## **Can you tell us?**

*The following is an account on silver mining in South Australia. We are curious as to who Molesworth is. Do you know? Can you tell us more about him and his family connection? If so please write to the editor so we can tell others. (Ed)*

The Ediacara Silver Mining Company Ltd., formed in May 1888, was a syndicate of 640 shares of \$200 each. This company held as many as twenty-one mineral claims. Most of its initial effort was concentrated on claim number 11,771 which was west of the claim held by the Beltana North. In the town of Beltana Mr Molesworth, an ex-lecturer on chemistry and geology was now engaged as an assayer and mining agent.

He worked at the "Mining Exchange" in Beltana for five days a week. On Saturdays the building was used for dances. After they had finished, the floor had to be cleaned, as the next morning the Mining Exchange was used for Church services. However during the five days Mr Molesworth occupied it he assayed minerals, made predictions, and most of all gave the answers everyone wanted to hear, 'Yes, there was silver'.

Specimens from the Ediacara mine were assayed by Molesworth as containing thirty-five ounces of silver to the ton. Some days later samples of ore were assayed and found to contain as much as forty-eight ounces per ton. What is interesting here is the fact that twenty-five percent of the shares in the Ediacara Silver Mining Company Ltd. were owned by residents of the Northern Flinders Ranges, even though they had a face value of \$200 each. Some of the northern owners were F.M. Buttfield who had three shares, P. Doig three, A. Doig one, J.W. Duck two, S.P. Richards two, and Mrs M. Gibbs owned four shares.

**Who was this man?**

## Poetry and dities

**Judge Hickman Molesworth**

**The following was in the The Australian newspaper on Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> March 1893**

In these days of debt and depressing when, through the private as well in public borrowings of certain members of Parliament, the great promissory-note scheme of finance has been superseded by a unchristian-like distrust, there is one public institution which, it seems to me has not received quite the measure of credit which is its due. Of course, I mean the, Insolvency Court. And yet we daily witness an indignity put upon the benevolent, Judge Molesworth and the nice Mr. Bell'. By some hole-and-corner private composition. No wonder they look at us reproachfully as men who would say " Isn't our shop good enough for you? What's the matter with our certificates of discharger' If they do lose patience now and again, is it not to be expected? Should the chief clerk say with asperity, " Don't rush it, my dear air. Take your turn. Don't you see we've an M.L.A. waiting, and the case is urgent?" don't judge them too harshly Consider the rush of business and the worry of cross-examining people who, -know exactly what they don't want to any. Since many of my dearest friends have lately had cause to bless the name of Molesworth, I make no apology for filing the appended rhymelet. The metre, you will observe, is the old familiar one learned at our mother's knee when we first showed that talent for borrowing coppers which has landed us-well, wherever we happen to be at present.

When life is one long 10 U  
And every dun demands his due,  
Who says, "cheer up. We'll see you through!"  
**Judge Molesworth!**

And when in financial sloughs we fall  
And bailiffs almost daily call,  
Who sequestrates our little all?  
**Judge Molesworth!**

When funds are low and fortunes flit;  
Who stops the pestilential writ?  
Remarking- well soon settle it."  
**Judge Molesworth!**

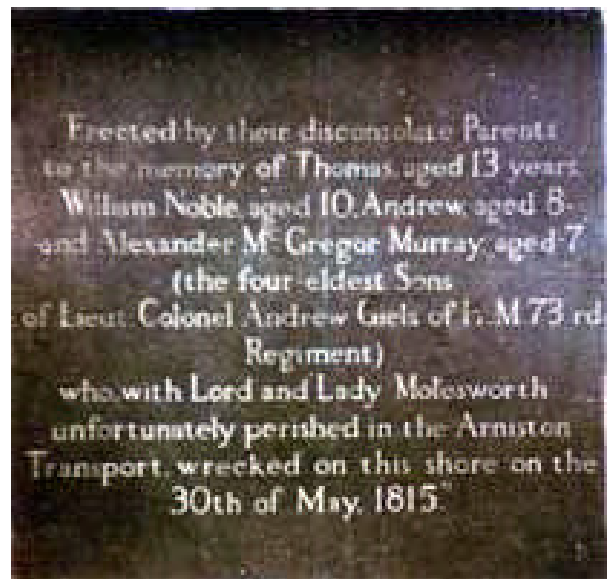
When facts are vague and memories fail.  
Who says, "To reconstruct your tale,  
Pray Lake a quiet week in gaol?"  
**Judge Molesworth!**

If on a race we rashly bet,  
Who says, "You needn't pay. Don't fret  
Here file, you'll make your fortune yet  
**Judge Molesworth!**

For be you Christian, be you Jew,  
Or be your assets large or few.  
There's one can make you good as new.  
**Judge Molesworth!**

**Do we have any writers or poets out there? Why not share it with us? I would love to be able to include your work in the letter.**

## Report from Viscount Robert Molesworth



Viscount Molesworth took this photo of the monument in South Africa when he was invited to inspect the memorial. He sent an account of the trip to Russel Molesworth in Victoria Australia, which I have reproduced below.

Dear Russell  
I hope you are well and had a good christmas and New Year. I have recently returned from a short trip to South Africa where I had the honour to be invited to inspect the memorial to the 6<sup>th</sup> Viscount who was shipwrecked off the coast, and to give my support to the 150<sup>th</sup> year celebrations of the Cape d'Aguthous lighthouse that was built in 1849 to prevent so many ships being wrecked in that area.  
It was a facinating and wonderful trip. A monument was built in 1817 by Mrs Geils whose four children all drowned. She

had the materials brought over the mountains by oxcart. The original monument was actually erected exactly where the shipwreck was; it is now near the village of Amiston which is about one mile from the wreck site. Amazingly bits of the wreck are still to be seen on the beach. The wreck was comprehensively dived in the mid 1980's and much was brought up and can be seen in the museum.

50% of what was found went to the government the other 50% was kept by the divers. One interesting find was a seal with the initials "F.M." This could possibly have belonged to the 6<sup>th</sup> Viscounts wife (Our only clue to her name)

There is very little left of the wreck now as is quite shallow and rough waters; however there are still plenty of canons and anchors there and it is my intention to dive on the wreck myself in the not too distant future.

On my return I have looked up the 6<sup>th</sup> Viscounts Army record. Very little is recorded but we know that he joined the 46<sup>th</sup> Foot Regiment (South Devonshire) America, in 1780 as a 16 year old.

1800 he joined the 9<sup>th</sup> Foot Regiment (East Norfolk) with Rank of Major. In 1804 joined 'Newfoundland Infantry' with rank of Lieutenant Colonel.

1805 he was "appointed not joined" to the 1st Ceylon Regiment. 1814 promoted to Major General.

30<sup>th</sup> May 1815 drowned on way back from Ceylon.

**Walter De Molesworth The first Molesworth**



**From: The Hon. William Molesworth  
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## A CHRISTMAS LETTER

"Il faut cultiver notre jardin." I do not think I could have done better this year than to have followed the advice of Voltaire in *Candide*. In fact I have stopped taking the newspapers. Drastic as this may be, I still seem to catch the import of major news, while at the same time avoid cluttering my mind with the trivial. This in turn has enabled me to achieve far more in my own endeavours. As a professional singer, I have been busy enough covering the length and breadth of this country: I have become an admirer of the small airlines, though not trains. I have added to my experience in dignified Victorian town halls, such as Stockport, in historic castle grounds, such as Bodelwyddan Castle in Wales, in splendid - but acoustically dead stately homes, such as Littlecote House in Berkshire, in over-amplified marquees, at open-air venues in front of thousands of picnickers, in opera extravaganzas with the band of the Blues and Royals, and in theatres such as the opulent Leeds City Varieties (of "The Goode Olde Days" fame) and at the beautiful little Opera House in the Isle of Man. Singing is now taking me abroad more frequently: next year I can look forward to another return to Madrid, a recital tour of Kenya, and the partnering of a leading principal from the Marensky Theatre, St. Petersburg. I am also taking on more operatic roles. starting in March with Lensky in Tchaikovsky's *Eugene Onegin*, nearer at hand at the excellent Richmond Theatre.

If I have taken an interest in public events this year, then it is because they have touched upon my life directly. The year has been very much an "annus mirabilis" for the Molesworths: many of you will be aware that my brother, Robert, and I had the honour to attend the wedding of our cousin, Sophie Rhys-Jones, who on 19th June married HRH The Prince Edward at Windsor Castle. It is entirely fitting that the Molesworths should once again acknowledge their historic allegiance to the crown, renewing a tradition dating back to the time of Sir Walter Lindsay de Molesworth, who with his wife was summoned by Royal Charter in 1308 to attend at the Coronation of Edward II, which was continued by the services of Robert Molesworth in the accession

of William III during the Glorious Revolution in 1688, who was later rewarded by George I in 1716 by his elevation to the Peerage of Ireland, which links were resumed by the attendance in 1902 of our great-grandfather, the 8th Viscount, at the Coronation of Edward VII, and again by that of our great-uncle, the 9th Viscount, at the Coronation of George V in 1911. The present family ties are now to be commemorated in the new Arms of the Earl and Countess of Wessex, which will be incorporating the supporter from the Molesworth Arms: a pegasus, wings elevated, with cross crosslets on the sinister, to balance the Royal Supporter on the Dexter.

Additionally. I have this year become immersed in research of our family history. I recently spent 5 action-packed days in Dublin, where I attended a conference on the Molesworth Circle". met several Molesworth and Byssie historians, discovered the site of the 1st Viscount's grand canal, tracked down an unknown portrait of the 4th Viscount ... but I must not go on, lest I bore those of you who are not of our blood. Along with this letter is a further one to our many cousins on this very subject

## **CALLING ALL DESCENDANTS OF THE 1ST VISCOUNT**

MY brother, Lord Molesworth, and I are aware that many of you are deeply interested in the family history. I am frequently asked to look things up about our ancestors, but all too often am limited to consulting the "Red Book which our grandfather produced in the 1930s. To remedy this, I have now decided to write a definitive history of the Viscounts Molesworth and their ancestors.

Still largely undocumented for this purpose is the wealth of primary sources in the public domain, our own heirlooms, as well as material kindly being loaned to me from other branches of the family. Then Alana Cooke in New Zealand, who is descended from the 1st Viscount's youngest daughter, Letitia, put me in touch with a historian at the University of Odense in Denmark. This historian is currently finishing a PhD on the 1st Viscount's Account of Denmark (first published London, 1693). I therefore attended a paper he gave at Cambridge and another later at University College, Dublin. By this time I had become his unofficial assistant and had also made contact with several other academics here in the UK, Ireland and

Germany, where research is constantly throwing new light on our ancestors and gradually bringing them out of obscurity. My interest was beginning to stir...

The aim of my project is not so much to catalogue a series of unrelated events, but to precis and present their lives, drawing especially from the considerable body of scholarly literature that has emerged over recent decades on the first three Viscounts, in order to produce a coherent thread that

finally puts our ancestors in their proper place in history. My eventual intention is to publish on-line, updating as further information appears. In addition to extended biographies, I will be including:

**Chronology:** a calendar of the main events in the lives of our ancestors, in chronological order, set in parallel with other relevant contemporary events in history. **Primary sources:** a listing of original manuscripts, pedigrees, letters, documents, leases, wills, heirlooms and other material recorded first-hand from personal knowledge or as contemporary authorised copies. where they are. deposited, and details on how modern copies may be obtained. **Locations:** a listing of the important places connected with family history that are open to the public or can be visited by arrangement in England, Ireland and elsewhere, with a full description of what there is to see and do. Helpful for those over here on short visits, especially from overseas. **Iconography:** a detailed study of the pictorial records in public domain or private ownership. In the former case, how copies may be obtained. In the latter case, my brother and I would eventually like to digitally photograph and store our portraits on disk, making them accessible for downloading. **Family trees:** lines of succession of the Viscounts, showing all known children, Royal Descents, relationship to the present Royal Family, and early ancestry of the Molesworths. NB: an attempt to include all known Molesworths in history lies outside the scope of this project, nevertheless this section will serve as a valuable reference for all other branches descended from the 1st Viscount. **Bibliography:** details of all known publications by the Viscounts, principally the 1st with dates and locations of each edition, other relevant contemporary publications, selected historical and modern genealogies, standard references, articles,

theses and miscellaneous publications. To date I have entered some 100 titles, to which I am adding my own commentary for suggested further reading.

To serve as a tool for further scholarship and related research, the exact source or authority of all information will be meticulously given. I also hope to make it readable, clear and entertaining, and to that end I will be including explanatory footnotes to provide wider context and background to many matters of interest.

I make two requests: firstly, do please send me details about anything you may have or may come across on the Viscounts, the Viscountesses, their ancestors and their immediate descendants, however seemingly trivial, but remembering to carefully state where you got your information from., secondly, would you please be patient, as this undertaking to likely last a number of years, if it is to be done properly. In the meantime I am quite happy to reply to specific queries and send out small amounts of information upon request. I do apologise in advance for not having an e-mail address, and look forward to hearing from you all in due course! With my very best wishes,