
HAWKER, James Collins

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Series List

James, the third son of Admiral Edward and Joanne Hawker, was born at Catsfield, Hampshire, England on the 10 April 1821. Several early years were spent under private tuition in France, Switzerland and Italy. He completed his schooling at the High School, Tavistock Square, London.

At the very young age of seventeen, he decided to come out to the Colony of South Australia and left England on the 28 May 1838 on board the *Pestonjee Bomanjee*. Together with his fellow passengers (including Colonel Gawler) they arrived in Adelaide on the 12 October 1838.

For a very short time after his arrival, James acted as an extra ADC and assistant in the Private Secretary's office. He was subsequently appointed junior officer to a Government Survey Party of which John McDouall Stuart was draftsman. James was engaged in sectional surveying from St Marys to Maclaren Vale. He resigned from this position to return to England in April 1840 on board the *Katherine Stewart Forbes*.

He arrived in England and discovered that his two brothers had left for South Australia some two months before. James then decided to return and departed England once again on the 4 December 1840 aboard the *Siam* arriving in Holdfast Bay on the 25 April 1841.

Ten days after his arrival James volunteered, in a party of men commanded by Lieutenant Field, to try and recover a large number of sheep taken by natives from Messrs. Inman and Field on their overland journey from New South Wales. The expedition and ensuing encounter were unsuccessful, due to the large number of natives (between 200-300) and the small party of 10 volunteers as well as the wounding of Lieutenant Field.

James joined another expedition, where he was appointed Commissioner, under the command Major O'Halloran. This was to protect the survivors of Mr Langhorne's overland cattle party who had been attacked some days previously by the natives, resulting in 4 deaths and 2 injuries.

(The first two diaries give detailed descriptions of James' journeys by ship and the first two expeditions - together with sketches and newspaper clippings.)

The three Hawker brothers bought sheep and moved near where Nurioopta now stands. Shortly afterwards they moved to the Hutt River near Clare. During a prospecting expedition by his two brothers, the water supply they were using ran out and James had to move the sheep to where Bungaree Station now stands (later the home of George Charles Hawker).

On 14 September 1842 James and Charles Hawker were members of a party that set out to find the whereabouts of Mr C. Dutton, who had not been heard of for some time and concerns were raised, considering the amount of native unrest that had been experienced. They suffered great hardship through lack of food and water and the intense heat. No trace of Mr Dutton could be found and it was ascertained some

time afterwards through some natives that Mr Dutton and his party had been murdered.

In 1843 James sold his share of Bungaree Station and moved to Moorundie on the River Murray with Mr Edward Eyre and Mr E.B. Scott (they were the first 3 settlers on the Murray).

In 1844 James joined Captain Charles Sturt's exploration into the interior, going as far as Lake Bonney. James surveyed the creek supplying the lake with water, which Sturt named Hawker's Creek, but it is known as Chamber's Creek after a local property owner.

James was appointed as a landing waiter with Her Majesty's Customs in 1847. He was subsequently appointed as Tide Surveyor and then Measuring Surveyor of Shipping to the Board of Trade. In 1863 he was appointed Comptroller of Her Majesty's Customs. James retired in August 1872 due to poor eyesight, after nearly 25 years in Customs. He then entered into the business of land and station agency and surveyor.

On the 24 October 1850 James married Louisa, daughter of Captain Thomas (Harbourmaster and Collector of Customs) and Elizabeth Lipson, at Trinity Church, Adelaide. James was attended by Fred Dutton and James Hamilton. Louisa was attended by her sister Emma and Misses Baker, Howard and O'Halloran. They must have been a popular couple, as all ships in the harbour hoisted their colours and several houses on shore were decorated with flags. Bunting and rows of flags were hoisted up in several streets for the carriages to pass under.

James founded the first rowing club at Port Adelaide called the Pelican in 1860 of which he was a captain and oarsman for many years. He was a keen sportsman with gun and rod. Together with Mr John Newman, he organized the first gun club in the Colony in 1868. He took a keen interest in horse racing and boating regattas (his diaries have many newspaper clippings of these events pasted in them).

James held a life long, active interest in the Freemasons, having first been initiated in 1847 and thereafter holding many high positions in the order. His devotion to the interests of the order had largely helped to ensure its continuance in South Australia.

E.S. Wigg and Son published a book of James' in 1889 named 'Early Experiences in South Australia'. Excerpts from this were regularly published in the 'Adelaide Observer'. A second in the series was published by Wiggs in 1901 under the same title; and in 1975 the State Library of South Australia produced a one volume facsimile of both originals.

On the 24 October 1900' , James and Louisa celebrated their Golden Wedding Anniversary.

James passed away on Wednesday, 15 May 1901, aged 80 years. He was survived by Louisa, three sons and five daughters.

Sources:

The Adelaide Observer: Saturday, 29 May 1897
 Saturday, 25 May 1901
The Register: 7 September 1872

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Angus and Robertson: Sydney, 1965 p. 53.
- Statton, Jill (Ed.). *Bibliographic Index of South Australians 1836 - 1885.*
Volume II. South Australian Geneology and Heraldry
Society Inc.: Adelaide, 1986 p. 698.
- Gibbney, H.J.,
Smith A.G. (Eds.). *A Bibliographic Register 1788 -1939.* Volume 1
A-K. Australian Dictionary of Biography: 2987, p. 313.
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- Diary of J C Hawker, detailing his voyage from England to
South Australia. 1
1838 1 cm
AVAILABLE ON MICROFILM
- Journal by JC Hawker of an expedition made to the River
Murray 'against the natives in order to recover sheep.
(and) to protect another overland party.'
1841-1845 2cm 2
AVAILABLE ON MICROFILM
- Diaries kept by JC Hawker on an almost daily basis. See 3
Special List for details.
1846-1901 46cm (35 volumes)
- Monthly timetables and diaries. Issued by various local 4
companies, these include train, tram, and bus timetables
for the state as well as suburban areas. April 1880-
December 1881; February 1882-January 1883,
miscellaneous months May 1883-October 1916. There
are infrequent brief entries. Some may not be JC
Hawker's. Item 53 is a September 1915 *Adelaide*
tramways guide.
1880-1916 5cm (53 items)
- Book of poems. Copies of poems by various poets. Volume 5
started May 1848.
n.d. 1cm [1 volume]
- Miscellaneous papers. See Special List for details. 6
1837-1872 1cm