

**George Thomas Light** was born in 1820 and came to South Australia in 1848 or early 1849, having been an instrument maker in Bristol, England. He was married to Marian Wilson in September 1850 at St Matthew's Church of England, Kensington. He was employed as a musical instrument maker and piano-forte tuner in Adelaide before obtaining a position as draftsman in a foundry. On 10 July 1856 he became a temporary draftsman in the Colonial Architect's Office, later receiving promotion to the position of Architect on 1 January 1874. On the appointment of E.J. Woods as Architect-in-Chief in 1878 G.T. Light became Assistant Architect. In October 1880 he obtained six months leave of absence and in July 1881 another twelve months leave; he was finally retrenched in 1883 and died in 1896.

He was responsible for the designs of many buildings in Adelaide and country centres; some of his most well known are the west wing of Government House and the original Public library, now the Jervois Wing of the State Library, housing the Mortlock collection of South Australiana. As a relaxation G.T. Light used to play the organ at Christ Church, North Adelaide. He and his wife had six children of whom two died in infancy.

**Arnold Alfred Light** was born in Bristol about 1823 and emigrated to South Australia on the *William Hyde* which arrived in May 1849, with his brother Walter. On the voyage out he had become acquainted with Miss Catherine Labron from Leeds in Yorkshire; they were married in October 1850 at St Matthew's Church, Kensington. Arnold Light became a public servant, surveyor and district clerk, living at Nairne, Clarendon, Adelaide and Edwardstown. He died in 1871 and his wife in 1904; there were seven children.

**Walter Light**, of whom little is known after he became established in South Australia, had considerable skill as an artist. His pencil sketches of early Clarendon and his Clifton Farm (named after his birthplace near Bristol) show a perceptive eye for the new sights of South Australia, as well as the Bendigo goldfields, which he visited in late 1851 and 1852.

George Thomas, Arnold Alfred and Walter Light were all cousins. Arnold's journal mentions his meeting with G.T. Light after their arrival in Adelaide in 1849, and the former was a witness at the marriage of George Light to Marian Wilson in 1850. One of G.T. Light's sons was named Walter Charles Arnold.

When Arnold Light's daughter Ellen Grace died in 1948, her obituary on 4 October in *The Advertiser* made mention of the fact that she was believed to be the last relative in Australia of Colonel William Light, the founder of Adelaide. The newspaper reported that Arnold Light's father Richard was a cousin of Col. Light.

Miss L. Ellershaw, a relative of Mrs Arnold Light, lent the originals of Arnold and Walter Light's journal and sketchbook for copying by the South Australian Archives in 1961. The bible and prayer book belonging to G.T. Light were donated to the Mortlock Library in 1991 by Mrs Denise Vass on behalf of Mrs C. Hooper of Perth, Western Australia.

#### Sources

G.T. Light Family Bible (PRG 935/3)

Page, Michael *Sculptors in Space: South Australian Architects 1836-1986* Adelaide: Royal South Australian Institute of Architects (S.A. Branch), 1986, pp. 38-9, 100-102.

Morgan, E.J.R. & Gilbert, S.H. *Early Adelaide Architecture 1836-1886*, London : Oxford University Press, 1969, pp. 150-1.

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Randell, W.G. Personalities Recalled in South Australian Register 2 December 1924, p. 10 column (h)

[Article about G.T. Light as an organist]

The Advertiser 4 October 1948 p. 2 column (1) [Obituary for Miss E.G. Light]

Biographical Index of South Australians 1836-1885 Marden: S.A.

Genealogy & Heraldry Society Inc. 1986, Volume III, pp. 972-3. [Entries for A.A. Light and family].

N.H.T. June 1991

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- Journal of a voyage to South Australia on the William Hyde,  
and pioneering experiences. 1  
1849-1850. 3.5cm. 228pp. Manuscript.  
[Photoprint copy of journal by Arnold and Walter Light.  
Transferred from D3907 (L).]
- Sketchbook. 2  
1849-1855. 1.5cm. 33pp. Manuscript.  
[Photoprint copy of sketches by Walter Light. Localities  
include Port Adelaide, Bremer Ranges, Clarendon, Mount  
Bold, Macclesfield, Mitcham, Wellington and Bendigo  
goldfields. Transferred from D3907 (L).]
- Bible. 3  
1854. 6.5cm. Printed.  
[Bible owned by George Thomas Light, presented to him in  
1856 by his brother Charles. Includes a family register of  
births, deaths and marriages 1820-1926.]
- Prayer Book. 4  
n.d. 3.5cm. Printed.  
[Book of Common Prayer of the Church of England, printed  
for the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge. The  
first page is stamped "G.T. Light".]
- Diaries of Alice Light. 5  
1879-1885. 4cm. Manuscript.
- Diary kept by Ellen Grace Light. 6  
1879. 1cm. Manuscript.
- Photograph albums. 7  
c.1862-c.1895. 13cms. Photograph.  
[Possibly owned by George Thomas Light, as many of the  
photographs are of his son Ernest and daughter Ada and  
son-in-law James W. Wright. Taken in Adelaide, Perth  
and England.]

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Photographs of silver cup. ca.1996. 0.5cm. Photograph. [Sterling silver cup inscribed "Presented to G.T. Light Esq. by a few admiring friends on his retirement from the Civil Service of South Australia July 1881" held by descendants in Western Australia.]	<u>8</u>
Copy of birth certificate. 1861. 0.5cm. Photocopy. [Birth certificate for Walter Charles Arnold Light, son of George Thomas Light and Marian (nee Wilson), born Adelaide 24 June 1861.]	<u>9</u>
Letters received by Alice Mary Light. 1865-1890. 0.5cm. [Includes two from her mother (n.d. and 3 October 1869), three from Arnold Light (14 October 1865, 2 October 1866, 4 October 1890), one from her grandmother M.A. Light (22 June), one from Lady Victoria Buxton (1 September 1890) and incomplete letter from unknown author (c.1868).]	<u>10</u>
Letter to 'Judy' from E.J.L. n.d. (22 April). 0.5cm. [Refers to 'my sweet sister Alice'. Written from Woodside.]	<u>11</u>
Poems by W.H Light. n.d. 0.5cm. [Two copies, each set out in copperplate writing. The poems are: 1. 'The Lay of the Emigrant, safely arrived at the end of his voyage, May 12th, 1849'. 2. 'To Arnold on his Marriage'. 3. 'Lines to Order'. 4. 'Ode on the birth of Emma Jane Light'. 5. 'A prayer for the Sabbath Evening'.]	<u>12</u>
Pencil sketches (4), presumed to be the work of Walter Light, plus photographs of four other drawings. 1848. 0.5cm. [Each sketch identified (all English): 1. Tunnel No.1 from Bristol. G1 Western Railway. 2. Hotwell House & Clifton. May 3 1848. 3. Clifton Church. View from Brandon. July 1848. 4. Stapleton Bridge near Bristol. August 16. 1848.]	<u>13</u>
Miscellaneous items relating to the family. 1947, 1967 and n.d. 0.5cm. [Items consist of: 1. Letter to 'my dear daughters' from 'mother'. September 16, 1947. 2. Letter to Lorna Ellershaw from Jane Anne Ellershaw. 4 August, 1967. 3. Handwritten list of miscellaneous facts. n.d. 4. Newspaper cutting from 'Vox' re Colonel Light paintings returning to Adelaide and Colonel Light in Penang. n.d. 5. Colour print of dahlia.]	<u>14</u>