Monumental Mistakes

FRANCIS ANNIE JACKSON
DIED 14 JANUARY 1914 · AGED 15 YEARS
ELIZABETH JANE JACKSON
DIED 11 JULY 1931 · AGED 56 YEARS
ALFRED JACKSON
DIED 10 DECEMBER 1955 · AGED 85 YEARS
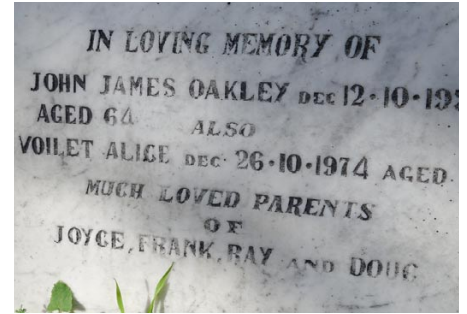IN LOVING MEMORY
FROM THEIR GRANDCHILDREN

Gender-bending is not a new development unless, that is, Francis Annie was a Catholic nun taking her name from Francis of Assisi. So hat's off to Francis Annie, a cross-gender pioneer ahead of her time. Or it is an inscription error, the carver not realising that it is Francis (masculine) and Frances (feminine).

One indication of how prosperous a family or indidual was in the 19th and 20th centuries can be found in the monumental masonry, as expenseive then is it is today. This, however, is not the full story. Family size and mortality played a part; it was also a more religious age with, arguably, a higher sense of familial duty. Thus even poorer families might have felt they needed to fully commerate the life of family members. But is was not an expense born lightly and inscription mistakes could not easily be corrected. Put the two together (expense and mistakes) and sometimes it was best to "just ignore it and hope no one notices." Oh, but they do.

IN LOVING MEMORY
DEAR WIFE RUBY FRANCIS
PASSED AWAY ON THE 15TH FEBRUARY 1946
AGED 58 YEARS
MARK MUIR WYHATT
DIED 5TH OCT 1958 AGED 66 YEARS
PEACE PERFECT PEACE

Two for the price of one! Another Francis/Frances gender-bender. Well done Ruby Francis. It probably came as a shock to the Whyatt family that not only did they have a Francis Ruby, but someone surnamed Wyhatt found his way into the family grave.

DIED 2ND OCTOBER 1916
AGED 55 YEARS.
ALSO HER BELOVED SON
BASAL HENRY
DIED 4TH FEBRUARY 1915
AGED 33 YEARS
ALSO THE ABOVE
WILLIAM J. CRAIG

While it is possible to argue that this is a Celtic or other variation of Basil; both his Birth and Death certificates list him as Basil. So almost certinly an inscription error, though one more plausibly explained away than others.

IN LOVING MEMORY OF
JOHN JAMES OAKLEY DEC 12·10·19
AGED 64 ALSO
VOILET ALICE DEC 26·10·1974 AGED.
MUCH LOVED PARENTS
OF
JOYCE, FRANK, RAY AND DOUG

Roses are red and voilets are... Wait! What? What's a voilet? And whatever it is, is it violet? Of course, this could be a little known variant of the name of the colour and flower that lent itself to the women's name. That, presumably, is what the Oakley's told everybody.

What's In A Name?

The names alone of the more than 1,300 internments in the cemetery from 1872 to the present day can provide a wealth of information. They can also throw up one or two interesting quirks. Given that most internments date from the early 20th century to the 1970s, the names reflect a very Anglo-Saxon or Anglo-Celtic origin with an occasional Angelo, Elfriede, Henrikus, Lambertus, Ulrich and Wera in the record. As to be expected, there are no Abduls, Indiras, Lakshmis, Dilkis, or Chens, nor are there any sub-Saharan African names.

If you were male and born before the 1950s, you stood an excellent chance of either William, Jonathan (or John), James or Robert as a first or second name. Female names offered slightly more potential variation, not only with individual names but versions within each name, as per the variants of Maria, Isabella and Anne.

Surprisingly, given the era and origin of most settlers in Victoria, there are few quintessential Victorian names: Ambrose, Cedric, Edgbert, Augusta, Bernice, Enid, Rosabell and Wilhemina (one instance of each); Archibald, Dudley, Bertha, Beryl and Cordelia (two instances); Cyril, Wilfred, Beatrice and Blanche (three instances), and Cecil, Hubert, Constance, and Winifred (four appearances), with five to seven examples each of Clarence, Ethel, Gertrude, Gladys, Harriet, Maude, Myrtle, Phyllis and Percival.

More oddly, there are only three instances of Victoria, in each case appearing only as a second name, and, depressingly, not a single instance of Marmaduke, a name that is surely overdue for a revival.

Either it was never as popular a name as imagined, or pre-1980s parents possessed a high degree of foresight as to how the meaning of words can change over time, but there isn't a single Gay in the cemetery.

As for unusual names, try: Arnot, Beulah, Berkley, Briscombe, Bulmer, Clavel, Culmer, Davidene, Delwyn, Dryll, Gethyn, Howatson, Janedith, Loveday, Maida, Morva, Myrus, Panton, Rigby, Scholey and Soutal. Oh, and there's only one old Biddy (Lorraine Biddy Gissling) buried in the Grantville Cemetery but a couple of Purves.

Before laughing too hard, imagine how some early 21st century names will appear to those in 2118. How will they react to YOUR name?

Name	Count	Name	Count
William	x 107	Mary	x 58
John/Jonathan	x 103	Ann /Anne / Anna /Annie	x 50
James	x 66	Elizabeth	x 39
Robert	x 46	Margaret	x 32
George	x 44	May	x 33
Thomas	x 40	Jane	x 28
Charles	x 35	Alice	x 25
Henry	x 34	Florence	x 20
Alexander	x 27	Isabella / Isobel / Isabel / Isabelle / Ishbel	x 18
Edward	x 27	Sarah/Sara	x 16
David	x 19	Jean	x 15
Ronald	x 19	Lillian / Lilly Lilian / Lily	x 15
Joseph	x 18	Eliza	x 13
Albert	x 16	Maria / Marie / Maree	x 13
Alfred	x 17		
Peter	x 17		
Frederick	x 16		