

Notes on the mysterious

James Page/Susan Elizabeth Allen saga:

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BACKGROUND

JAMES PAGE AND SUSAN ELIZABETH ALLEN –

I have been trying to test some theories on Susan Elizabeth. She evidently came out with a dowry of one thousand pounds sterling - a small fortune in 1851, and according to mum, James Page also had money on arrival. Immediately he purchased a four roomed house at the Port, and another half dozen commercial lots, and his way into two already successful businesses, while at the same time setting about building a substantial six room house at Queenstown, and all this without touching Susan's money. How did he finance this? The Chancery case which resulted in him inheriting funds from his uncle was several years later. There is a huge mystery.

ANECDOTE TOLD TO RANALD STEWART BY HEATHER STEWART –

On Sunday 2nd June 2012 after visiting my mother (now aged 99, and a G-granddaughter of James Page, she repeated this family anecdote, and although the story has been around forever, she was in a particularly lucid mood, so I decided to write it down as I remembered her telling it, and without any reference to FWWI. Who knows, as we glean snippets from one place or another, a story can unfold.

We were talking about the deciphered shorthand notes from James' diary, and how he had intended meeting up with their (he and Joe Brown's) wives at an hotel, and mum said that was unusual as she was told he never took his wife anywhere, as being illiterate she was intimidated by social interaction. As has been recorded, she signed her wedding lines with a cross. It is possible however – if Joe was (as I suspect) – J M Brown who lived almost immediately below White Hall, that Joe's wife would have been friendly with Susan Elizabeth – they came out from England only several years apart, and was possibly one of her few friends. Also, James might have thought the landlady at the hotel, being a 'buxom dame and a jolly woman', might make his introverted wife feel comfortable.

According to mum, from what her mother (my grandmother Dorothy Hayward, nee Hogg) told her – and she knew James quite well as the Hogg's lived adjacent to White Hall in 'Haverhill', and she was 25 when he died, all the family accepted the following story as fact. I recall grandma telling it to me way back, but although I was interested then, unfortunately you never take the facts in at that age.

Evidently James' money was given under some agreement to remove Susan from England to somewhere as far distant as possible – which in those days equated with the Australian colonies. Evidently before that James did not have money, and this 'arrangement' – formal or otherwise, provided him and his new wife the means to set them up in a new country – even if forced to stay there!

By all accounts James' wife was beautiful, and had been a servant, or perhaps a resident, in some big and influential household, and her mother was a servant in the same house – housekeeper has been mentioned (this being an important position in noble houses with as many as 20 employees under her). The benefactor was said to be high born, and close to – possibly part of the royal family. Mum said a Duke was always mentioned (this is persistent in all variations of the story). Evidently the problem was – as the story goes, Susan was the daughter of a liaison between this Duke, (? – but let us call him that!) and the housekeeper – still an employee in the house. The duke's son was the same age as Susan, and they were raised together, but as they grew older, the son – being a chip off the old block, started taking a serious interest in his half-sister, although almost certainly that knowledge would have been withheld from him. Thus there was an imperative interest by the Duke to remove his illegitimate daughter as far as possible from the interest of his son before an even worse scandal occurred.

How James Page was aligned into this intrigue is unknown, but having spent five years at the Sorbonne studying languages, and another four at Hamburg University reading commerce and trade, he may have become friendly with the Duke's son.

Mysterious circumstances exist about how James became established so quickly, and purchased not only White Hall, but a number of commercial properties, also his way into established businesses, making feasible the possibility the story is at least partially correct. Whatever he (or she or both) was paid would have been substantial, and possibly ongoing, or at least for some time.

Regardless, it is always good to have a hint of scandal in the family tree – especially if there is some connection to royalty. How any of this can be verified – or otherwise, is no doubt difficult. If an influential and wealthy family could remit a social problem to the other side of the world, they could surely cover up an illegitimate birth here and there, which anyone involved in family research will know is hard enough to trace in any case.

Whether the above is entirely or partially true, it is almost the stuff movies are made of.

FOLLOWING ARE VARIOUS EXTRACTS FROM INFORMATION WE HAVE –

THE MAL PAGE FAMILY TREE:

James PAGE (b.1825 – London Middlesex U.K d.1913 South Australia

Sp: Muriel¹ Susan Elizabeth ALLEN (b.1825-Cheltenham,G,U.K d.1912-South Australia.

¹ Note: here we see the mention of Muriel in association with Susan Elizabeth for the first time. Apparently Mal and Marjorie have discovered the birth certificate?

SOUTH AUSTRALIAN PASSENGER LISTS – 1803 -1854 –
Passengers arriving 1850-02-17 in SA aboard the *Jane*

(360 t brq 1846) from London 1849-10-29, Captain Joshua Pallot

HOLLAND Henry, wife (Sophia POCTARCARRY?), Mary Ann², (Charles?) William, 2 ch
[Source:4,6,20]

HORACE³ James [Source:6]

PAGE James, William [Source:6,7,20]

CORRECTING THE DATA ON THE ARRIVAL OF THE PAGE BROTHERS –

As there has been some conjecture and confusion on this, and with recent information indicating William married in England in 1850 at Newbury Buckinghamshire, (died Shoreditch London in 1882 after fathering 6 children with his second wife Emily S Williams). I have spent time on researching the original report of the arrival of the *Jane*. To counteract the past inaccuracies in published passenger lists (e.g, the preceding, and the one on the following page), following is my own transcription of the text of the *South Australian Register*, Monday 18th February, 1850, direct from the newsprint:–

THE ' JANE' FROM LONDON.

The barque *Jane*, which left London on the 15th October, arrived yesterday, with nine passengers and a valuable cargo, including the engine and machinery for the steam dredge. On the homeward voyage the *Jane* took upwards of 1700 quarters of wheat from this colony, not a single bag of which was in the least damaged, a circumstance not usual with Australian vessels. The *Jane* is a Jersey built ship, and having given this undeniable proof of her admirable adaptation for carrying grain, we have no doubt she will soon be chartered for a similar cargo.

Sunday, February 17– The barque *Jane* 360 tons, Pallott, master, from London 15th October, and Downs⁴ 25th October. Passengers – Messrs

² Recent advice is that William Henry Page married his first wife Mary Anne in Newbury, Buckinghamshire in 1850. As William is definitely recorded as emigrating with James and Horace, did William return almost immediately to marry Mary Anne later in the year? It is feasible, but I cannot locate his departure from S.A, but it would solve the mystery of his never being reported or recorded in Australia again.

³ The HORACE James listed here is obviously Horace Haverhill Page who definitely arrived on the same ship. These lists were compiled by cadet journalists (leaning shorthand) at time of disembarkation, and can be confused and inaccurate. With the larger ships custom's clerks copied the manifests in longhand, and the lists were far more accurate.

⁴ The Downs is a natural harbor on the Kent coast and adjacent to the English channel, and was highly significant to sailing ships, which needed to wait there – sometimes for weeks, for a strong East wind to allow them to clear the rugged and dangerous English coast and obtain a fair passage up the relatively narrow (for a sailing ship) English channel. In those times hundreds of ships could be anchored there waiting for favorable winds.

June 11, 2012

James Horace and William Page. Mr Henry Holland wife and two children. Mr William Holland and Miss Mary Ann Holland.

Arrival: barque Jane

Master:	James Pallott		Source
Rigging:	barque		sar:1047
Weight:	360		sar:1047
Origin:	15 th Oct 1849	London	sar:1047
Destination:	16 th Feb 1850	Adelaide	sar:1047
Date	Event/Item	Details	Source
	built	Jersey	
	cargo	imports	sar:1047
1849 Oct 25 th	via	Downs	sar:1047

Passengers arriving at Adelaide

Name	Notes	Type	Source
Horace, Mr James ⁵			sar:1047
Page, Mr William			sar:1047
Holland, Mr Henry	and wife, 2 children		sar:1047
Holland, Mr William			sar:1047
Holland, Miss Mary Ann			sar:1047

Following is an extract from the obituary written by A T Saunders on the death of Lewis Richard Hogg, published in the Register, Adelaide on 28 August 1924: –

‘In the Jane, barque, 360 tons, Capt. Pallott, 1 February 17, 1850, Mr. James Page; Mr. Horace Page, and Mr. William Page. The first two I know well, they were both well-educated and spoke and wrote French fluently, which was very useful to Mr. James Page as William Morgan & Co., and Higginson, Morgan & Co. did a large business with the French of New Caledonia, and naturally Mr. James Page was made French Consul in Adelaide. Mrs James Page arrived at the Semaphore, February 17, 1851, a year to the day after her husband, in the ship Success. This ship was then a first-class Australian passenger ship. Now she is in America, exhibited as an Australian convict hulk! ‘

FROM WHENCE WE INHERIT – HOAN JENKINS

JAMES PAGE B. Oct. 1825 - D. Sept. 1913

ARRIVED South Australia Feb. 1850 on 'JANE' from England.

HUSBAND OF:

Susan Elizabeth Allen. B. Jan. 1826 - D. Feb. 1912.

⁵ Here we see how the inaccuracies of transcribing the original newspaper report are perpetuated– Horace Page reads as Mr James Horace.

Arrived South Australia Feb. 1851 on 'Success' from England. Married at Holy Trinity Church, North Terrace, Adelaide, Feb. 1851.

FATHER OF:

Alice m. Joseph Alfred Hornabrook. 3 daughters
Helen m. Lewis Richard Hogg. 7 sons, 5 daughters
Clara m. Harry Snell. 1 son, 1 daughter
Horace m. Clarice A.M. Fydell Lindsay. No issue
Ernest died aged 10 years
Laura m. Harry Philip Wilson. 1 son
Harriett spinster
Hilda died aged thirteen years
Haldur died aged twenty years.

The Colonial history of James Page is well documented and the path of his South Australian life has been easy to follow. Great Grandfather James was obviously a strongly motivated man, who having decided what he wanted from life, plotted his course and headed straight for his goal; no doubt the fact that Susan Elizabeth Allen, his English fiancée, was to follow him to South Australia within twelve months provided an added incentive for getting plans for both his business career, and a home, quickly underway.

James, immediately after his arrival in Pt. Adelaide, purchased a block of land from Robert Cleland - Part Lot 23, (Pt. Adelaide). A small four roomed wooden house facing Jane St. was already erected on the land.

James' fiancée Susan Elizabeth Allen was to leave England for Australia later in the year and no doubt the little house was for temporary accommodation until their own house was built. As those were horse and horse drawn vehicle days it was necessary to have a residence within reasonable distance of the business area, so subsequent to Susan Elizabeth's arrival, land was purchased in the Queenstown district and a house built; as adjacent Lots came on the market they were added to James' holdings. A list of the lots and a map showing their location is given here. The first four Lots (four acres) Nos. 190-191-192-193 faced Long St., and ran back to New St. The messuage, consisting of "house-six main rooms, plus kitchens, storerooms, laundry, cellar, out buildings, and gardens was located on those Lots. By 1855 three more Lots, Nos. 232-233-234, at the rear of that land, but facing into New St. and running back to Spring St. had been purchased, plus Lot 69 - a narrow strip of land between Spring St. and High St. (High St. faced the Port Road). Shortly after - no date given - Lot 49 in the same area was added. Lots 232,233,234, 69 were used for horses, stables, coach houses, etc. The three roomed house on Lot 49 was probably accommodation for the employee who looked after the horses and vehicles.

As previously stated, twelve months after James and his brothers came to South Australia Susan Elizabeth Allen (James' fiancée) arrived, on board the "Success". She was enrolled on the Passenger list as "Mrs Page" - this was probably because a pretty young woman travelling

out from England to join her husband would be less likely to have unwelcome attentions thrust upon her, than a single unattached girl.

The "Success" arrived February 16th 1851 and evidently James had all the arrangements well in hand for the wedding, because they were married two days later - Feb. 18th 1851 - at Holy Trinity Church, North Tce., Adelaide.

The "Success" arrived on Sunday, 16th February 1851. There is no official passenger list. The list published in the "Register" newspaper of 17 February 1851 gives mainly surnames only - 'Mr. and Mrs. Charles Hawker and servant, Miss Hawker, Mr. A. Hawker, Mrs. and 3 Misses Fenwick and 2 servants, Mrs. and 3 Misses Ryland, Masters Frederick, John and Mortimer Ryland, Mrs. Gunning, Mr. Guthrie, 3 misses Lewis, Miss Williamshurst, and Dr. Mosely Stark and Mrs. Page, J.P. Thomas, wife and 6 children, Mr. Charlwood, wife and 8 children, Peter Fining and wife, Mrs. Patterson, son and daughter, Messrs. Bishop, Frayne, Bott, Smith, Loder, Capel and Mackrell.

Susan Elizabeth was said to be a very beautiful girl, with charming manners - well spoken, with a Western English accent⁶ - but she could neither read nor write. In the early 1800's it was not uncommon for girls not to be educated, but all sorts of farfetched stories have been handed down - some involving gypsies - dukes, - Cinderella type fairy tales.

ANECDOTE VERSIONS:

The most persistent of these stories, handed down in every branch of the family relates to the Duke of . . . and while much the same in content, varies slightly from family to family. Both versions agree that Susan Elizabeth Allen had been brought up by the housekeeper at the Duke's country estate from infancy.

- First: – Susan Elizabeth was the Duke's illegitimate daughter who had been given into the care of the housekeeper.
- Second: – Susan Elizabeth was the orphaned granddaughter of the housekeeper.
- Third: – (Heather's version) – Susan was the illegitimate daughter of the Duke and the housekeeper.

From that point the stories are in agreement, and continue: The Duke's son and Susan E. had played together as children and when Susan developed into a very lovely girl the son had fallen in love with her; James and the Duke's son had been at school together and remained firm friends, with James often visiting the Duke's home; that when the Duke realised that James also was attracted to Susan, and that James was going to Australia, he grasped the opportunity to get his son (and himself, if the first – and third –version is correct) out of a very dicey situation. Obviously, if Susan was the Duke's daughter she was the son's half-sister (although the son was not aware of it); if the second version was correct and Susan was the housekeeper's granddaughter she would not be considered a suitable bride for the son.

⁶ Gloucestershire, although not truly Western England, is sometimes included as speaking Western English accent, with Gloucester being the least accentuated, and Cornwall and the South coast the extreme

The Duke trusted James with the full story of Susan's birth and asked him to marry her and take her to Australia with him; James agreed but because of his family's bitter opposition to such a marriage it was arranged that Susan should follow him to Australia, with the Duke's brother, (travelling incognito)escorting her out on the sailing ship to ensure no harm befell her; the brother returning to England as soon as possible after the wedding (the wedding was arranged to be two days after Susan's arrival in Australia).

Both stories agree that the Duke gave Susan Elizabeth a dowry of 1000 pounds sterling.

Certainly Susan did bring a substantial dowry with her - reference has been found in one of James' business documents to an investment partly in Susan's name, as 'dowry monies'. In that era such money was often considered to belong to the husband, but evidentially James preferred it to remain as Susan's property. These stories are probably 'Fairy Stories', but research experience shows that when one central figure persists in such stories that person will eventually emerge - so if ever the true facts of Susan's background surface the Duke will probably be there - but whether he will emerge as the hero, the villain of the piece, or merely an innocent bystander remains to be seen.

The only facts we know from Susan's Australian history are: she was beautiful, charming and illiterate.

Most of these old stories have some basis of fact, but successive generations add so much embroidery that it is almost impossible to arrive at the material underneath. Unsuccessful attempts have been made to verify Susan's background.

According to Grandma Helen, her father was ostracised by his family in England for marrying her mother. They had been bitterly opposed to the marriage from the outset, but James persisted. In view of the fact that he and Susan Elizabeth had over sixty years of a happy married life together he seems unlikely to have ever regretted the decision, but being obviously a man to whom family meant a great deal, there must have been sadness over the break the decision caused. In later years James' and Susan Elizabeth's son Horace was to describe his mother as: – "a wonderful person - an unselfish loving mother, dedicated to her family."

In South Australia Susan Elizabeth was usually known by her second name "Elizabeth", but because of possible confusion with other 'Elizabets' in this family history, from here on she will be referred to by her first name - Susan.

According to her death certificate Susan Elizabeth Allen was born at Cheltenham, Gloucestershire, England, January 14th 1826. We do not have her birth certificate or any other details.

Susan was not a social person. Quite happy in her home life she was prone to leave as much as possible to James when it came to entertainment, and undoubtedly was relieved when her daughters grew old enough to act as "hostess" for their father.

During the last year of her life, Susan was stricken with cancer - she died in February 1912 a month after her 86th birthday; she and James had been married for 61 years. James died September 30th 1913 - 8 days before his 88th birthday.

Susan died in February 1912, and James in September 1913. They are both buried in the Church of England cemetery Mitcham. There are four plots, (85, 86, 87 and 88) surrounded by wrought iron railing but no headstone still standing.

SOUTH AUSTRALIAN BOUND PASSENGERS 1851 –

The *Success* left England 27 October 1850 via Portsmouth – Master Captain B Stuart – arrived Port Adelaide 16 February 1851.

As the *Success* had no cargo and only a few passengers for Adelaide, she did not come inside the lighthouse, and proceeded to Melbourne the next day.

THE SUNDAY TIMES PERTH, 30 JANUARY, 1916 – NHE ‘SUCCESS’

This merchant vessel, ship rigged, built in Moulmein (?), Burmah, of teak (621 tons), and was built in 1840. On January 27, 1848, she arrived in Adelaide with immigrants, was stranded at the mouth of the Port Adelaide creek April 8, 1848, was re-floated April 22, and cleared from Port Adelaide for London October 28, 1848.

On February 17, 1851, the *Success* arrived at the Semaphore (Port Adelaide), landed some passengers, and at once sailed for Melbourne, where she arrived March 7, 1851, and cleared for London July 1. 1851. She arrived off Falmouth November 14, 1851, and sailed from London for Geelong (with 224 emigrants) January 5, 1852, where she arrived May 31, 1852.

On August 20, 1852, she arrived in Melbourne from Geelong, having been bought by the Government as a prison hulk, and was so used for years in Hobson's Bay, as were also the *President*, *Sacramento*, *Lysander*, and *Deborah*, the *Sir Harry Smith* being used as a police hulk.

SOUTH AUSTRALIAN REGISTER, 17 FEBRUARY, 1851 – SHIPPING INTELLIGENCE: ARRIVALS

Sunday Feb. 16th— The ship *Success*, 63⁷ tons, Stuart, master, from London and Portsmouth, 27th Oct. Passengers for Adelaide, and Port Phillip⁸ — Mr. and Mrs. Charles Hawker, Mrs. Hawker and servant, Miss Hawker, Mr. A. Hawker. Mrs. and three Misses Fenwick and two servants, Mrs and three Misses Ryland, masters Frederick, John, and Mortimer Ryland, Mrs. Gunning, Mr. Guthrie, three Misses Lewis, Mrs. Williamshurst, and Dr. Mosely Stark in the

⁷ The tonnage of 63 is obviously incorrect, and should be 630.

⁸ It is not clear if this is the full passenger list, including those for Adelaide and Port Phillip, or just those dropped at Adelaide. As the *Success* never entered Port Adelaide, she was not required to make her manifest available to Customs, and is not recorded in most of the arrivals i.e. Ozships etc., as on this occasion she never berthed in South Australia. This makes it difficult for historians, as the above information was recorded at the whim of some junior journalist, and might have been inaccurate or incomplete. This differs slightly from FWWI as I transcribed it from the original newspaper text.

cabin⁹; and Mrs. Page, J. P. Thomas, wife and six children, Mr. Charlwood, wife and eight children, Peter Fining and with Mrs. Patterson son and daughter, Messrs. Bishop, Frayne, Bott, Smith, Loder, Capel and Mackrell.

SUNDAY TIMES, PERTH, 27 JANUARY 1929 – NORRECTIONS ABOUT THE SHIP SUCCESS

—
The "Perth Gazette" of 25/3/43 records the arrival at Fremantle of the Success (Captain Keen) from London and 1/4/43 has an address to Captain Keen from the migrants.

In the "Gazette" of 15/4/43 is a long account of the Success having been blown ashore in the Fremantle Roads¹⁰, and 22/4/43 records that she was re-floated and contains a letter from G Rutledge, a passenger. The "Gazette" of 29/4/43 has a letter from the Fremantle Harbor Master respecting the Success and on 1/7/43 that on 14/6/43 Captain Keen, Midshipman Young, and two boys were drowned by the capsizing of the sailing boat of the Success going from Fremantle to the Success, the sole survivor being the son of Captain Keen. The "Gazette" 8/7/43 records that the Success (Captain Rutledge) sailed for 'Singapore from Fremantle, and was never at Fremantle again. She did not sail as above, for the "Gazette" 5/8/43 records her final sailing under Captain Rutledge for Madras and Calcutta.

The Success arrived from London at Port Adelaide 27/1/1848 with 246 immigrants, including the Kestral family. She loaded in Port Adelaide for London, but was stranded at the mouth of the Port Adelaide Creek, was badly strained, and did not sail till 28/10/48. She again arrived at the Semaphore. 17/2/1851, but only to land some passengers, and did not go into Port Adelaide, she went on to Melbourne, and the "Argus" of 26/2/1852 records that she had arrived at Falmouth from Port Phillip on 14/11/1851. She arrived 31/5/1852, at Geelong, with 224 migrants, in the midst of the Victorian gold diggings' rush, which attracted hundreds of criminals to Victoria, and there were no prisons to put them into. Consequently the Success, President. Deborah. Lysander. Sacramento, and Sir Harry Smith were bought to house the police, the criminals, and as hospitals. The "Sydney Morning Herald" of 17/12/1849 records the arrival of the Success at Sydney, via-Hobart, with 182 Government emigrants. The "Argus," Melbourne, of 26/2/1852 says the Success arrived off Falmouth 14/11/51.

The Melbourne "Argus." 14/6AS62, says the Success sailed from London for Adelaide (an error for Geelong), 6/1/1852, and on 1/6/1852 says the Success went to Geelong- yesterday with 224 emigrants and on 28/7/1852 says: The Government bought the ship President for a prison hulk for £2200. It is also said that the Success at Geelong was taken up for the same purpose," and on 20/8/1852 the Success ship came up from Geelong on "Wednesday, having been purchased by the Government for a prison hulk.

⁹ I can find no further mention of Dr. Mosely Stark in Australia, or on the internet generally. He was the only cabin passenger listed – there would have been only a small number of cabins on a ship that size, and he would have been privileged. Is there significance to 'and Mrs. Page' after his listing? Was this the incognito 'brother' of the 'duke' sent to chaperone Susan Allen and ensure she was married off to complete the contract? He would not have been the ship's surgeon as he disembarked. Usually ships of this size would only have 4 cabins in a cluster abaft the saloon – for the Captain, 1st mate, surgeon, and one spare.

¹⁰ The Gage Roads – the queue for ships waiting to enter Fremantle harbor.

The foregoing clearly shows that the prison hulk Success was the merchant ship Success not H.M.S. Success that was in Western Australia¹¹

THE MYSTERY OF THE 'DUKE'

ELIMINATING THE DUKE OF GLOUCESTER

The reference, or inference, about a duke being involved behind the scenes in the marriage of James Page and Susan Elizabeth Allen is persistent, and plausible. Susan's dowry, and James' unexplained fortune, infers some external source of funds from a benefactor – for whatever reason. Even the 1000 pounds sterling Susan is believed to have brought with her was considerable at the time, and would have purchased a substantial house and land, or profitable business. Unskilled wages at the time were about one pound per month – five shillings a week for a servant girl.

Surreptitiously the Duke of Gloucester has been mentioned in association with this story (often with bated breath), and no doubt this evoked the inference of the story involving royalty.

Over many years I have also heard the story of the Duke of Gloucester, and assume it is in association with Susan's birth place of Cheltenham, which is in the county of Gloucester.

Herein lays a big problem, which should have precluded that line from the start: no Duke of Gloucester existed at the time. The Dukes of Gloucester are the brothers of kings, and the title dies out with each one. One died about 1830, and in 1928 or thereabouts the next was created by George the fifth in favour of his brother. This was never a landed title; just a means of the royal family elevating their siblings up the pecking order for social gatherings etc. You can't have a king sitting at a table with a brother who is only a lowly earl - or worse.

WHO WOULD BE A LIKELY ALTERNATIVE DUKE?

Disposing of the Duke of Gloucester begs the question: if there was a duke, who was he, where did he reside, and was he (or his family) implicated in 'our' story?

The first question to be resolved is where did Susan live? We know she was born at Cheltenham in 1825, but did she continue living there or about? Before efficient rail transport the population was not highly mobile, and generally families worked and married close to the family unit. Additionally, as an illiterate, Susan would not have many career options – except marriage.

As far as the elusive duke is concerned, one theory is Susan was raised in the Duke of Beaufort's household. He was one of the richest men in England, and Badminton Hall – 20 miles from Cheltenham had about 40 staff. Also, the anecdotes say that she was the same age as the Duke's son, and they were brought up together when young. Susan was b. 1825, and the 8th Duke was born in 1824 - which puts them in the frame.

¹¹ Commander – Captain Stirling?)

THE DUKES OF BEAUFORT, BADMINTON HALL, BADMINTON, GLOUCESTER

By all accounts the family has a colourful history, and are one of the few families of this standing to acknowledge infusions of illegitimacy into their line. One account states the 8th Duke took to Queen Victoria papers attempting to legitimise their line, which would have elevated him about twenty places in the order of succession. After thanking him, and afterwards making a disparaging comment to her lady in waiting, the good queen threw the papers in the fire, instructing: we will not entertain *those* people again.

They were however one of the richest families in the Kingdom, which can carry with it greater privileges than title. In other words: at the time you could buy your way into, or out of almost anything. Is this what the 7th Duke did in 1850 with Susan?

History records he was ailing at the time, and was already concerned his son was having an affair with a commoner, and: if Susan was the same age – close by and they had grown up together in childhood; she was now an attractive young lady; and (being a chip off the old block, so to speak!) wouldn't it be logical for the young future duke to show interest? At the time the 7th duke knew he had but a few years left, and would have been keen to cover up mistakes of the past, and avoid new dilemmas in the future. All it would take was money and influence, and he had a surfeit of both.

THE 1841 CENSUS –

Somewhere in the 1841 census Susan must be recorded, although perhaps not? In the past week I have been going through the 1841 census trying to find her, but it is difficult. I wondered why all these girls were aged 15 – none 16 as Susan would have been, but the powers that be – in their wisdom, made everyone under 20 but 15 or over – 15. The reason given is most of the punters were illiterate anyway, and none could do maths – including the census takers, so rounding was easier for all. A further complication was some census clerks adhered to these instructions, but others recorded the given ages. Evidently the 1851 census is more accurate, but Susan left Portsmouth for Australia on the 'Success' on 27 October 1850, and would not have been in England at the time it was taken.

An additional point of confusion is we know Susan had at least two given names, but preferred to use Elizabeth. Now – from Mal and Marjorie's work, we have the information she had an additional first name – Muriel. If they have the birth certificate, that will be a good start in placing her in the 1841 census, and in whose household she resided. Unfortunately the census only records one name and it would be the one she chose to use at the time

Another problem is: if she was in a Duke's house, and if there was a scandal, would he let her be recorded anyway? Legally all present at the household needed to be assembled and interviewed, and with in-house staff, the duty of rounding them up would be the housekeeper's. If the intrigue we are imagining was true, a Duke – or the housekeeper, might not want to have the fruits of their misdemeanours recorded when he was in the process of disposing of her to places far away.

THE DUKE OF BEAUFORT'S ARCHIVES –

Apparently the Duke has considerable and well managed archives at his home, Badminton House, including wages books going way back in time, and the current Duke employs an archivist who is apparently cooperative to researchers. That is, providing – as some have done, the correspondent does not commence with a question such as: I believe my GG granddad was an illegitimate offspring of your ancestors – in which case they are told: we have no records of that – get lost.

I am prepared to write a diplomatic letter to the archivist of His Grace the 11th duke, but believe they would only give information such as recorded employees, and need more information. I don't imagine they would acknowledge something like an *ex gratia* dowry payment, or a monetary agreement to recompense someone marrying and removing a person overseas. Discretion would need to be the operative word.

Also, if Susan was in a privileged position – as it appears she was, she might not have been a servant in the true meaning, but more a guest under the family's protection, and thus would not appear in the wages books.

Although the present line of the Beaufort dukes includes known illegitimate stock, and most played around – as a lot of the aristocracy appeared to do in those days, complicating their blood lines further would be avoided at all costs. Already there are some incredible stories. Edmund Tudor married Margaret Beaufort – Countess Richmond, when she was twelve (she was originally married at eight, but this marriage had been annulled), and when Edmund died in the Wars of the Roses he left his bride widowed at thirteen, and seven months pregnant. Their child became Henry VII.

In the common law - the law of precedent - the marriage age is evidently still seven, qualified by established precedent presuming such contracts can be annulled up to the date they can be consummated, which is taken to be twelve for females, and fourteen for males. This precedent still applies to most English speaking counties, including Australia and the USA – unless over-ridden by current local statutes, and the monarchy and aristocracy often took advantage of this. When we look at Charles and Camilla we should not wonder too much.

HOW DID JAMES PAGE BECOME PART OF THIS EQUATION?

The biggest mystery was how James met Susan, unless it was a totally arranged marriage of convenience. People in those days did not travel far, and met only through schools or local interests. James went to the Sorbonne when 15 – he was absent from the Page household in the 1841 census, and was away for 9 years, and then came back and arranged to take Susan to SA. How had they met? Very mysterious, and instead of our grandmas listening to the stories, they should have been asking a lot more questions – as kids these days would do. As far as Muriel Allen goes – there was no one of that name mentioned in the whole of England in 1841. Evidently she preferred Elizabeth, but sometimes used Susan. In the census she could have used either, but apparently she never used Muriel.

JAMES PAGE – HARDNOSED OPPORTUNIST OR ROMANTIC?

When considering the form of the obviously arranged marriage between James and Susan, I believe we can make some assumptions. From all accounts we know our ancestor James was a dedicated family man, with high principles in all dealings he had in business, consular, community, and family affairs. To me this indicates he was more likely to be a romantic person rather than a hardnosed opportunist, and accepting this, it is unlikely he would marry without love, or at least a developing affection. Even if substantial financial inducements were available, there must have been at least a strong underlying attraction to Susan before he took the course he did. In fact, with his undoubted business aptitude, perhaps he was the prime mover in offering a solution to the Duke(?)’s immediate problems?

In one of the anecdotes detailed by Joan in FWVI, she states: ‘when the Duke realised James was also was attracted to Susan’, and this gives the clue – it is also an inference handed down through our family. To me this is the most likely scenario, as Joan also records the fact James and Susan Elizabeth had over sixty years of a happy married life together, and he seems unlikely to have ever regretted the decision to take whatever course he did. Having made the decision to travel to the other side of the world with his brothers to start a new life, substantial financial inducements would more likely have been accepted as fortuitous windfall by a person trained in finance, and with obvious goals to be met. In other words, James saw it as an opportunity to have the wife he desired, and make things easier for all concerned, and if it provided for him and his future wife’s wellbeing, then it was a win-win situation.

If we accept this version of events, it has a bearing on how the story will eventually unfold. One day it will all come together. The only down side James would have suffered is he became estranged from what obviously was a close family – who apparently did not approve of Susan or his intentions with her, and the cumulative events possibly contributed to his mother’s demise by suicide¹² later in the year he and his brothers left.

IS THE ‘DUKE’ A TOTAL MYTH, AND LEADING US UP THE GARDEN PATH?

Was a duke involved at all, and is he now related to us? Evidently you can have DNA tests done which proves blue blood – although very diluted. I would not waste my time, but it is important to examine all possible records to our roots as extensively as possible.

Yet even if the theories of a benefactor are true, and must be to an extent, does he have to be a duke? Any wealthy person of high standing would fit the story, and he may or not be close to Cheltenham.

To fit James Page into the equation it would be more plausible if this household was closer to London, although his brother Henry William – Ian Buckley’s ancestor, married a Cheltenham woman, and later conducted a business there, and his widow lived on there after his death, making it plausible James occasionally visited.

¹² The following is from Ian Buckley’s Notes on the Pages: The end of Jane Godden’s life was tragic indeed. Late in 1849 she had seen her sons depart for Australia, and the following year, 1850, a patient in a private (and expensive) lunatic asylum at Wood Green, Middlesex, she hanged herself.

One reason the Beaufort dukes do not fit the story is the 8th duke was born in Paris, was educated at Eton, joined the military at seventeen, and did not attend university (apparently the sons of most well born families – including the monarchy, who could not gain entry to Oxford or Cambridge bought commissions into the military) . For these reasons James Page was unlikely to be included in his sphere of movement, except to meet him when visiting his brother, although that would be unlikely.

Most of the anecdotes accept James was a friend or close associate of his benefactor's son. This would certainly be intriguing if true, as James attended Paris University – the Sorbonne, which is an intellectual centre and a hotbed of left wing egalitarianism. As such it was the antithesis of the English establishment, who would avoid it like the plague. Hamburg University however would be a different situation, as it was part of the establishment, and as Queen Victoria's family were of German stock, it is possible one of her family or connections attended there with James. This would revive the royal connection, and possibly another Duke. This time fitting Susan into the frame is the difficulty, unless some branch of the royal family had a country residence nearby.

Is there a royal residence – a sort of glorified holiday shack for monarchs close to Cheltenham?

WHERE TO FROM HERE?

As far as the Duke of Beaufort being our mysterious duke, one theory is good until another is advanced. Only careful research will point us in the correct direction. My strategy would be as follows:

1. Discover Susan Elizabeth Allen's birth certificate/christening etc., and any previous lines beyond.
2. Locate her and her household in the 1841 census – especially if she was with her mother, and if there was a father still on the scene.
3. If she was working or still domiciled at or near Cheltenham, to write to the archivist to His Grace the Duke of Beaufort to ask for any record of wages or employment of Susan Elizabeth or her mother (whatever her name might be).
4. If she was living/working somewhere other than Cheltenham, it could give the clue to the mysterious benefactor – duke or otherwise.

I doubt we will ever unravel the whole story. James' papers would have contained the truth as he was a meticulous man, and would have kept documentation of any contract – and obviously there would have been some paperwork.

In conclusion – by putting everything we know about Susan Elizabeth into one document, and advancing my own theories, I hope it will stimulate the efforts of our industrious and already successful researchers into delving further into the mystery? Definitely in here somewhere are the makings of a good historical novel and movie . . . so,

Good luck!

Ranald Stewart