

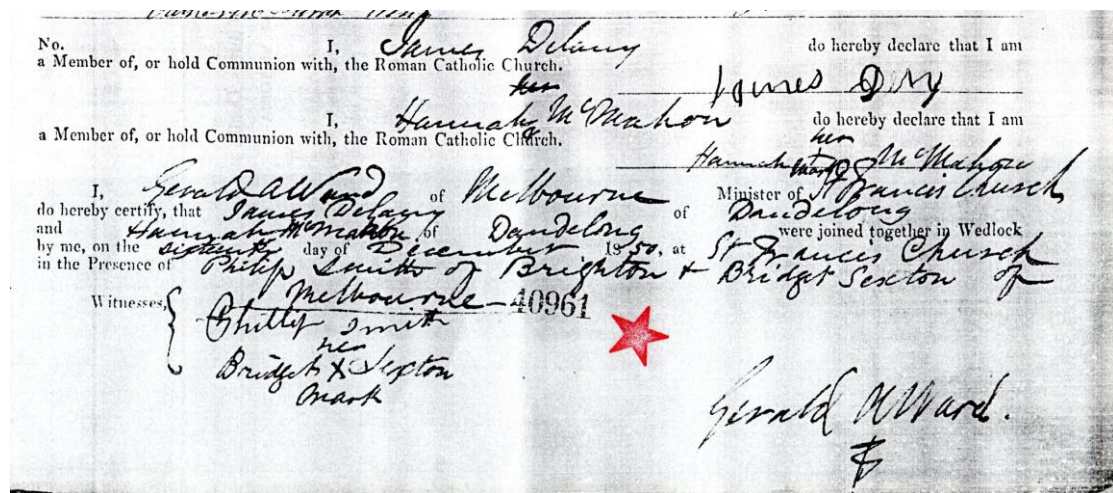
## Hannah McMahon per Pemberton to Melbourne 14 May 1849

Researched and written by Mary Thomas (gg granddaughter) in 2009,  
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Hannah McMahon was born about 1833 in Kilrush, County Clare and arrived in Victoria in 1849 under Earl Grey's Irish Famine Orphan Scheme. After being held in quarantine for a number of days, she was employed by James Delany, a widower who had a 3 year old daughter, Bridget. James is listed in the Squatting Register of 1849 living on the Bushy Park Pastoral Lease (which he leased and later purchased the Pre-emptive Right of that property). The property was located in what is know as Wantirna, a suburb of Melbourne and originally covered 1920 acres. The pre-emptive right was 620 acres.

Hannah travelled to what was then a very remote and inhospitable place, with few comforts to greet her. She left Melbourne on the 9 June 1849. The length of the journey is unknown but she would have been employed to look after James and his infant daughter and do all of the jobs necessary to run a very large property. The land was not considered to be good for farming, although they would have had to grow whatever they needed, presumably also grazing sheep and or cattle.

On 16 December 1850 Hannah married James Delany at St Francis' Catholic Church, Melbourne. The ceremony was performed by the recently arrived Rev Gerard Ward and the female witness to their wedding was Bridget Sexton, also a Kilrush, County Clare, orphan girl who arrived on the *Pemberton* [see copy of certificate below]



Hannah and James had eight children, averaging one a year up until 1861: four girls, and four boys:

1. Mary born 22 July 1852, died October 1861
2. Charles born 1853
3. Ellen born 1854, died 1937
4. Annie born 1855, died 1932
5. James Alfred born 1856, died 1936 (gg grandmother of Mary Thomas)
6. William born 1858, died 1861
7. Margaret born 1860, died 1861
8. Michael born 1861, died 1873.

This was Hannah's first family. There is very little information on how the family lived during these years, except that all the children were born at Dandenong Creek (which bordered their property).

In 1854 James' brother arrived and settled opposite his brother's holding. It was perhaps at this time that Hannah changed her name to Ann (being the name of the brother's wife).

They were well-known in the area and James is mentioned in various books about the district in the years prior to his death in 1861. James died on 20 October 1861 after falling from his horse on the way to church in Oakleigh (the details are in his inquest).

1861 was a very sad and busy year for Hannah and the family:

20 October James (her Husband) died result of an accident

23 October Mary Ann aged 10 died from scarlet fever

28 October Margaret aged 2 died from scarlet fever

1 November William aged 3 died from scarlet fever

Birth date of Michael, her eighth child, born in 1861, is unknown

James died intestate and Hannah should have received all his property, but as they did not own the property outright and a debt was owed to Denis Delany (not a relative) it is uncertain what occurred during this time. Hannah was probably helped and supported by James' brother's family. Sometime in 1864 the Bushy Park Pastoral lease was forfeited, and Hannah moved on.

On 31 October 1864 Hannah was in Oakleigh where she gave birth to a son Benjamin Delany (Little). The birth certificate, for which she was the informant, noted that she had married the father also Benjamin soon after the birth of their son.

Hannah and Benjamin Little had five children together: four boys, one girl, all born in Oakleigh:

1. Benjamin born 1865, died 1866
2. Mary Jane born 1866
3. Walter Benjamin born 1870, died 1882
4. William James born 1873, died 1946
5. John born 1878, died 1938

The five children brought the number of children borne by Hannah to 13, six of whom died as young children, mostly from scarlet fever. Hannah had started having her children at 16 or 17 and her last was born when she was aged 45. She outlived both her partners and was living with her daughter, Ellen and his husband John Dunn, at Clifton Hill at the time of her death on 8 April 1905. Her death certificate records she was buried in Oakleigh Cemetery under the name of Ann Little. Hannah was aged 75.

Hannah died from diabetes which she had for two years. Her death certificate also records her father as James McMahan, farmer, and her mother as Ann McMahan, formerly McMahan.

Hannah's surviving children, listed on her death certificate were:

- 1<sup>st</sup> Marriage: Ellen 53 years, Annie 52 years, Charles 50 years, James 48 years (Mary Thomas' great grandfather).
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Marriage: Mary 38 years, William 36 years and John 35 years.

This a picture taken in January 2005 of the house in Clifton Hill where Hannah McMahon was living with her daughter Ellen Dunn at the time of her death in 1905.

