

### **Hector Vasyli (10-38-24)**

On Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> of June 1918 a procession of returned servicemen conveyed by motor vehicle left the military hospital at Kangaroo Point headed for Queen Street. About sixty cars made up the motorcade; they were provided and driven by local residents. Four or five young boys had gathered near the southern end of Victoria Bridge. One of these boys was eleven year-old, Hector Vasyli. His family owned an oyster saloon on Melbourne Street, South Brisbane. Young Hector was very patriotic and known to save up his money to buy presents and throw them to the returned servicemen as they passed by on parade. On the day in question he was doing just that when the tragedy unfolded.

W. J. Jackson, a local produce merchant was the driver of one of the cars. As vehicles ahead of him began to slow down he swerved to avoid a collision. His car went toward the side of the road and struck Hector. The Courier reported that he had "perfect control of the car" as he was able to pull it up swiftly after realizing what he'd done. Jackson quickly picked up the boy and sped off to St. Helen's hospital. Medical assistance was not immediately obtainable so they left and headed to the Mater Misericordia Public Hospital. It was too late; Hector had succumbed to his injuries (which included a skull fracture, compound fracture to the right arm, and other minor injuries).

The papers were quick to emancipate Jackson stating, "The tragic occurrence was quite unavoidable and Mr. Jackson did everything to avoid the fatal consequences."<sup>2</sup>

### **Doris Gilbert (10-28-7)**

Doris Eliza was the daughter of William Carrington Gilbert and his wife May née Lord. She was eight years old when she died on the 21<sup>st</sup> of February 1913.

*A fathers pet, a mothers dear  
A little darling slumbers here  
Weep not for me my parents dear  
I am not dead but sleeping here  
My time was short my grief was less  
I'm gone from pain to happiness.*

### **Sources**

1. See *Brisbane Courier* 12 September 1896 p.4
2. Hector Vasyli story researched and written by Steven Gil  
Verses collected by Joyce Simpson

# TOOWONG CEMETERY

*Suffer the children to come unto me*



JOL Negative number: 80930

**Hector Vasyli**

Brisbane's infant mortality rate in the latter half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century equalled that of the worse slums of the United Kingdom. More children died in spring and summer than winter and these rates did not improve between the mid-1870s and the 1890s<sup>1</sup>. In December 1876, 52 children under the age of eight were buried at Toowong Cemetery. The most common causes of death included childhood diseases, infections, drowning, burns and scalds. The most dramatic improvement did not occur until the fifth decade of the twentieth century and the advent of penicillin.

#### **Horsfall Family (13-3-12)**

Ann Elizabeth Horsfall died on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of September 1863 aged seven. Her siblings Thomas Lambert, Harry, Sarah and Rose had all died in infancy. They were the children of George and Ann Horsfall (née Tatlow) both from Coventry, England.

#### **Peter McCauley (13-10-4)**

Peter McCauley was the son of a private in H .M. 17th Regiment of Foot. He was accidentally drowned in January 1832 aged 5 years and 8 months. Peter and two other children were originally interred in the North Quay Cemetery and then re-interred at Toowong in October 1881.

*A Lovely Boy possess'd of every charm  
Could not the Tyrants fatal dart disarm?  
Engaging sweetness met the destined blo'  
And bid farewell to every human woe  
His spotless Soul now to his God restor'd  
Bliss inconceivable is his rich reward  
Then happy child my soul no more  
Shall humbly hope thro' an Almighty Grace  
One day to fold thee in sweet embrace.*

#### **Hiron Family (13-20-9)**

George and Mary Ann Hiron (née Prosser) lost a number of their children in childhood. Amelia Ann, George, George Edward James, Albert Edwin and Daisy Evelyn all died in infancy. Agnes Elizabeth died in September 1875 aged 11 years. Yet another George died in December 1901 aged 15 years. Following the custom of the day, names were recycled until a child lived long enough for a name to 'stick'.

#### **Edward Hobbs (13-55-5)**

Edward Hobbs was killed by falling tree at Redcliffe on the 4<sup>th</sup> of January 1875 aged 13 years and nine months. He was out shooting with a cousin when they sat down to watch some men felling a tree. The tree didn't fall in the direction which Edward anticipated and he was crushed. Edward's father was the well-known

doctor, William Hobbs, who, being in Brisbane at the time of the accident, was unable to assist his son. Edward was interred at the old Milton cemetery and then when it closed, relocated to Toowong.

*Green be the turf above thee  
Son of my happier days  
None knew thee but to love thee  
None knew thee but to praise  
While memory bids me to weep tho'  
Nor thoughts nor word are free  
The grief is fixed too deeply  
That mourn a lad like thee.*

#### **Gow Family (13-64-19)**

Five children were lost by James Gow and his wife Christina Philp between 1864 and 1882. None had reached the age of five. The family lived in Harcourt Street in Fortitude Valley. John Philip Gow was born on 1 Jan 1864 and died on 14 Nov 1864. Margaret Kirk died in August 1865 three weeks after her birth. Mary was born 14 June 1867 and died one week short of her first birthday. James was born 23 March 1878 and died on the 19<sup>th</sup> of May the same year. James John, named for his siblings, was born on 19<sup>th</sup> March 1880 and died on the 5<sup>th</sup> of Nov. 1882.

*Gone to the better land  
Asleep on Jesu's breast  
These happy babes have found  
Their everlasting rest.*

#### **Bruce and Ina Euphemia Wallace (9-46-9)**

On 22<sup>nd</sup> November 1899 Bruce Wallace and his two sisters were swimming off a small sandbank in the Brisbane River at West End. The girls got into difficulties and Bruce was able to save one of the girls but trying to save himself and his other sister proved too exhausting and they were both drowned. Bruce was fourteen years old and his sister Ina was ten. The children usually went swimming with their father at the same spot, but on this day, their father had business in the city, so the children went swimming without him, with tragic consequences. They were the children of Andrew Stephen and Eva Sarah Wallace.

*Bruce  
His happy face is gone, his songs are hushed  
Here rests his head upon the lap of earth  
In youth to fortune and to fame unknown.*

*Ina  
Thou who here see beautiful and fair  
That death should set in her glorious eyes.*