## **VICARS, Robert**

Robert Vicars was born on 7th August 1867, in Queensland (most likely in Rockhampton), son of John and Ann (nee Moor).1

On 6th March 1900, at the Ashfield Presbyterian Church, Mr. Robert Vicars, son of the late Mr. John Vicars, of Palace-street, Ashfield, and Miss Violet Halliday Little, daughter of the late Mr. James Little, of Telopea, Devonshire-street, Croydon, were united in the holy bonds of matrimony. Mr. and Mrs. Vicars left the following day for England; and expect to be absent about six months.**2**

Children of the marriage were:

Robert James, born 1901, district of Burwood

Violet M. [Mollie], born 1903, district of Burwood

John M., born 1905, district of Burwood

Jessie, born 1907, district of Marrickville

Kathleen A., born 1909, district of Marrickville

Margaret M., born 1912, district of Marrickville

Janet M., born 1917, district of Ryde**3**

In July 1905 Dobroyd Golf Club's new rinks were opened and Mr. Robert Vicars' trophy was played for.**4**

In 1914 he leased *Sheen*, cnr. Hannah and York streets, Beecroft, for Mr. L. G. Herring, whilst their new home was being built.**5**

In December 1915 Mr. R. Vicar’s new residence at Cheltenham [*Yallambee]* was progressing, the grounds being cleared of rocks. On 20th January 1917, at The Crescent, Cheltenham, the last child of Mr. & Mrs. Vicars, Janet M., was born.**6**

In July 1917, at the annual meeting of the Beecroft School of Arts, Messrs. Robert Vicars, C. Meadmore and J. I. Forsyth were elected as joint vice-presidents.**7**

In April 1919 the contest for the Vicar’s Shield, was presented by Mr. Robert Vicars, to be played for annually by the Beecroft and Cheltenham bowling clubs.

He also gave a silver shield to be played for annually by the members of the Beecroft and Cheltenham Croquet Clubs. In 1929 the last matches resulted in a win for Cheltenham, but as the shield had been won six times by Beecroft and only four times by Cheltenham, the former club will now hold it permanently. Mr. Vicars has promised to present another shield, to be played for under the same conditions, and members of both clubs are looking forward to resumption of contests.8

On 30th April 1931, at St. John's Church, Toorak, Claire Lathan, third daughter of Mr. W. I. Baillieu and the late Mrs. Baillieu of Heathfield, Kooyong road, Toorak (Victoria), was married to Robert James, eldest son of Mr. and Mrs. R. Vicars, of *Yallambee*, Cheltenham, Sydney.

The bride was given away by her brother (Mr. C. L. Baillieu), and the best man was Mr. G. H. Jeffrey, of Adelaide.

Those present included the bridegroom's parents (Mr. and Mrs. R. Vicars), and Miss Vicars, and his uncle and aunt (Sir William and Lady Vicars).

Mr. and Mrs. R. J. Vicars would make their future home in Sydney.**9**

On 27th May 1931, at Beecroft Presbyterian Church, Miss Mollie Vicars, eldest daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Robert Vicars, of Cheltenham, was married to Mr. G. H. Jeffrey, the only son of Mr. and Mrs. G. Jeffrey, of Adelaide.

She was attended by her three sisters, Jessie, Kathleen, and Margaret.

There was a marquee reception on the lawn, after the ceremony, at the Vicar’s home, *Yallambee*.**10**

On 11th July 1933, at the Beecroft Presbyterian Church, Miss Jessie Vicars, second daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Robert Vicars, of *Yallambee*, the Crescent, Cheltenham, was married to Mr. Felix John Lehane, only son of Mr. and Mrs. John Lehane, of Melbourne.**11**

On 10th July 1934, at the Presbyterian Church, Hunters Hill, Miss Margaret Vicars, fourth daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Robert Vicars, of *Yallambee*, Cheltenham, was married to Mr. William John Victor Windeyer, the eldest son of Mr. and Mrs. W. A. Windeyer, of Hunter's Hill.**12**

On 1st December 1934, Miss Kathleen Annie Vicars, the third daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Robert Vicars, of *Yallambee*, Beecroft-road, Cheltenham, was married to Mr. William Rae Laurie, is the only son of Mr. and Mrs. John Laurie, of Beecroft.

The ceremony and reception took place at *Yallambee*.**13**

In August 1950 Janet, youngest daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Robert Vicars of *Yallambee*, Cheltenham, was engaged to Dr Robert Taylor of Leabrook, Adelaide, S. Aust.**14**

Robert Vicars died in 1962, in the district of Chatswood.**15**

**John Vicars (senior)**

John Vicars born circa 1821, son of John and Helen, was a Scottish mill owner and manager of one of the leading mills, with an excellent knowledge of woollen manufacturing in the south of Scotland. The business was destroyed by a fire, so, in 1863, John Vicars came out to Australia, bringing with him his wife [Annie], his sons William and John, and two daughters. The vessel in which they came out to Australia was called the *Star of England*.

Attracted to the goldfields of Queensland he went to Rockhampton.

Thomas Barker, an Australian mill owner, went to Scotland a few years later, on a leisurely tour. While in the Ochils, between Edinburgh and Glasgow, he wanted someone to furnish him with an itinerary, and by some means fell in with a young man and they spent a holiday together. As he was shortly returning to Australia, he asked if there anything he could do for him. The man mentioned that he had a brother - a former mill owner - in Australia. If Mr. Barker were ever able to do his brother a good turn in the new land it would be sufficient reward. The brother, John Vicars, was at Rockhampton. On returning to Australia Thomas Barker wrote to the address that had been given him. As a result, in 1871, John Vicars left Rockhampton and went to Sydney, taking his family with him.

Thomas Barker had a woollen mill in Sussex-street, Sydney. In 1873 it was burned down. When it was rebuilt, John Vicars became manager of Barker's mill, which became his own in 1874, the business from that time bearing his name. Later it passed into the hands of his sons, who would direct its destinies. The firm of John Vicars and Co., Ltd., became a household name for more than half a century, and was foremost among the Australian manufacturers of woollen goods.

John Vicars died on 8th September 1894, at his residence, Palace-street, Ashfield, aged 73 years. At this time, the address of the firm, John Vicars and Co., tweed manufacturers, was 297 Sussex-street, Sydney.**16**

**VICARS, Frederick N.**

In January 1920 John Vicar’s son, Frederick N. Vicars, a Director and Works Manager of John Vicars, Ltd., woollen manufacturers, of Marrickville, died at his residence, *Briarholm*, Marrickville-road, Marrickville, The funeral took place at Rookwood Cemetery, and was largely attended. Mr. Vicars was 50 years of age and was unmarried. He had been connected with John Vicars, Ltd., for 30 years, and interested himself greatly in the welfare of all connected with the firm. He was also a generous supporter of charitable institutions, and, during and since the war, of funds for the benefit of soldiers and their dependents. Two of his brothers, Messrs. William and Robert Vicars, are members of the firm, and Mr. John Vicars, chairman of the wool committee, and Mr. James Vicars, civil engineer, of Challis House, are also brothers.**17**

**VICARS, William**

In January 1922 John Vicar’s son, Mr. William Vicars, C.B.E., of Sydney, was conferred the honour of Knight Bachelor by the King of England.

Sir William Vicars was a native of Scotland. He arrived in Queensland with his father, the late Mr. John Vicars, as a boy in 1863. Eight years later he went to Sydney, where his father had

established extensive woollen mills at Marrickville. Lady Vicars, formerly Miss May Hutton, was the daughter of Mr. James Hutton, station owner, Rockhampton. For years Sir William Vicars has taken an interest in philanthropic work, especially in ameliorating the lot of the returned soldiers. He succeeded Mr. Mark Sheldon in 1910 as chairman of the New South Wales Board of Repatriation and held that position until the appointment of paid officers in 1920. During his term about 20,000 cases were dealt with. He was a member of the Royal Prince Alfred Hospital board and acted as honorary treasurer during the absence in England last year of Sir Samuel Hordern. Sir William and his brother, Mr Robert Vicars, presented Pittown Farm to the church social campaign for training needy returned soldiers. For years he had been interested in Red Cross work, and succeeded Mr. J. O. Fairfax as chairman of the New South Wales division in 1921. He was president of the Chamber of Manufactures on several occasions.**18**

**VICARS, John (junior)**

In 1924 John Vicar’s son, Sir John Vicars, sailed to England on the *Ormonde*, on a tour expected to extend over twelve months.

Sir John Vicars was a native of Scotland, where he was born 60 years ago. As a child he accompanied his father, the late Mr. John Vicars, to Queensland. Eight years later he came to Sydney, where his father became established in woollen mills.

He and Sir William Vicars, one of his three brothers, were originally associated with their father in the well-known Marrickville woollen mills.

He married a daughter of Mr. James Harvie, Marrickville, and became a resident of Mosman about 1898.

Upon the death of his father, Sir John Vicars, and his brothers, William and Robert, took over control of the mills.

After 20 years association with the business, Sir John Vicars established a wool-scouring and wool-dealing business with Mr. James P. Johnson, under the name of Messrs. Johnson & Vicars. He ceased active operations in the business about 1912, when the wool scheme, known as B.A.W.R.A., was inaugurated, and a New South Wales committee was formed. Mr. Robert Vicars, a brother of Sir John Vicars, was appointed as the Chairman; but he was compelled, through ill health, to resign. It was then that Sir John Vicars took charge. In consequence of the work he performed as Chairman of the New South Wales State wool committee, and his patriotic work during the European war, the Imperial authorities decided to include his name among the New South Wales honours.

Eight months previous he was appointed, temporarily, a member of the Tariff Board during the absence of Mr. Herbert Brooks in Great Britain.

He had never taken any direct active part in politics and was associated with public movements only in a philanthropic way. His favourite sport was golf. For a time, he was captain of the Kensington Club, and on the death of Sir Denison Miller was elected to the office of president.

In February 1936, Sir John Vicars, prominent business figure, popular sportsman and loyal Australian, died.

"Those who enjoyed his companionship, knew what a splendid character he was." said Mr S. Waters, president of the Mosman Bowling Club. "He was not a lover of ostentation and did hundreds of kindly little services which were generally unknown." His daily arrival at the bowling-green punctually at 1.30 p.m. was almost a ritual and he always brought a happy atmosphere with him.

Sir John, who was born In Scotland in 1857 and came to Australia six years later, was under treatment for heart trouble, he preferred to remain, he once said, "in the active ranks" of sport until the last, and, true to this wish, he was playing golf and bowls up to the time of his tragically sudden death while being driven home last evening.

The Australian Golf Club, Kensington, of which he had been captain and president, abandoned today's competitions as a mark of respect to his memory.

Popular in all business circles, Sir John was perhaps most prominently identified with the wool and textile industry and during the war the Commonwealth Government made good use of his extensive knowledge and experience by appointing him chairman of B.A.W.R.A. For services in times of national stress, he was created Knight Bachelor.

Sir John was not actively interested in politics and though a director of several companies, had spent the last few years in the atmosphere of the sports he liked so much. He is survived by Lady Vicars, three brothers (Sir William and Messrs. James and Robert Vicars), and two sisters (Mesdames Dircks and Wright).**19**

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