

*A Study of the life of Eliza Broadhurst 1839- 1899
and her interest in the Women's Movement of
Western Australia.*



'Miranda'- J.W. Waterhouse (Pre-Raphaelite School)

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Introduction

The following report has been written as a result of a challenge set me by Dr Michael McCarthy at the Western Australian Maritime Museum i.e. to join his team for a brief period and to contribute to its work. At the time I was travelling abroad and while in Fremantle sought an opportunity to become involved in some aspects of museology and he recognised in me and in my background an opportunity to develop a theme in his research, the study of one of Western Australia's almost forgotten European settlers; Eliza Broadhurst (1839-1899).

Since April, 1983, a team of divers, volunteers and representatives from the museum led by Dr McCarthy, Curator of the Maritime Archaeology Department has been working on the recovery, assessment and conservation of Australia's first coastal steamer ship, the *S.S. Xantho* which sank off of the coast of Port Gregory in 1872. As a result of the recovery of the ship's rather unusual engine, the opportunity presented itself for the team to carry out invaluable and interesting research and to further their understanding of technical developments during the steam era of maritime history.

As research progressed and the components of the ships engine were pieced back together, it became clear that it was, in terms of Australian Maritime history, quite unusual. It was a 'trunk engine' design with horizontal pistons which were moved back and forth by way of a cylinder wrapped around them and into which the steam was pumped. A plaque found on the engine revealed it had been made by John Penn and Son in Greenwich, London and further research showed that it was an engine typical of the type found on gun boats used in the mid 1850s Crimean War. To add more intrigue to the less than straightforward history of the engine and its arrival to the Western Australian coast, it was also found to be assembled in such a way that in order to be able to move forwards, the engine had to be run backwards.

For the purpose of this particular study, the detail of these curious discoveries may be omitted, the research and details having been competently covered by McCarthy in his work (See *SS Xantho* publication lists). However, the degree of interest which these curious facts have generated resulted in his expansion of the *Xantho* project as the story of the ship has been somewhat of a beacon in the depths of Western Australian history. It has served to illuminate the lives of its' owners and many aspects of history; economic, social and cultural.

In the acquisition, of the engine—a raw 'primary' object—the team at the museum found themselves involved in the most exciting part of the interpretation and understanding of historical artefacts; the mystery of its story and the piecing together of clues. As a group of school children might be presented with a clay pipe and asked to answer as a way of understanding, "What was it used for?" "What is it made from?", so the team began to ask of this engine, "Who would have bought such a machine and why?" Recognising this as a powerful tool for the engagement of the visiting public's minds in the story and in involving themselves in the picture, a space has been allocated for conservation and

research on the *Xantho* engine and any associated material at the Maritime Museum's site in Fremantle.

This 'back door' form of interpretation was a new approach for the Maritime Museum and so, as a later appendix to this report we will be considering its success and the further potential for presentation of *Xantho* related material.

Of the many characters introduced to us by way of the *Xantho*'s story, that of the owner, Charles, Edward Broadhurst (1826-1905) is the one so far most explicitly researched. His abortive business endeavours in their number and variety have been instrumental in painting a picture of the slow development of economy and infrastructure in Western Australia in the second half of the nineteenth century. His was a man's world and it was this world which in many ways dictated the fate of the character central to our study; that of his wife, Eliza Broadhurst (nee Howes).

Charles Broadhurst began his career in Australia as a gentleman farmer in the Victorian country town of Kilmore before he was enticed into an attempt to settle in the virgin territory of the north of Western Australia. In his moves across thousands of miles for the fulfilment of projects and visions for pioneering settlements, Charles was dutifully followed by Eliza. Dr McCarthy, in his three studies of Broadhurst has uncovered several pieces of 'evidence' which all point to an interesting notion in terms of where the *Xantho* project might next lead us. Eliza, in her silence and her duty as a Victorian wife, not only proves an interesting example of a middle class woman's experiences in pioneer Australia but as was deduced by McCarthy, from certain sources, she also begins to express, in the limited evidence that we have about her private life, a strength of spirit and sense of self characteristic of an artist, society woman and a heroine. It is in the following study, the life of Eliza Broadhurst will be recounted in terms of not only the basic facts but as a speculative and empathising look at her likely experience and perceptions of her life as her own person.

The sources we have remain limited; the only record she kept of her life was in the form of selected literary cuttings which have since been compiled as a reference to Eliza's world by an descendant, Ms. Jane Brummit of South Australia.¹ As well as this, there are invaluable references to 'Mrs. Broadhurst' to be found in the contemporary diaries of a Mr Hillman in Perth and those of the Resident Magistrate R.J. Sholl and his son Trevarton whilst the establishment of a new European community at Roebourne in the period 1864-1867.

With the help of these and other sources we will attempt to bring Eliza to life and to paint a likely picture of the intriguing woman she very obviously was.

¹ The pages of Eliza Broadhurst's scrapbook entitled *Literary Cuttings From All Sources*, have been numbered temporarily for the purpose of reference. A copy of the work is housed in the Department of Maritime Archaeology library.

A Society lady

During her lifetime, the factual detail of the life of Eliza Broadhurst; of her marriage, her homes and her death, are acknowledged in as much as official documentation would allow.

Her social status and therefore success and happiness in life would have been assumed and defined according to the movements, the assets and the (numerous) failures of her husband Charles, Edward Broadhurst, (owner of the *S.S. Xantho*) pioneer settler, pearler, guano merchant and general entrepreneur.

It is only as we look back and begin to construct a picture of Broadhurst that his character and that of those around him has begun to come to life like the silent people in a favourite painting suddenly quite luminous and whole.

We cannot, in this study, pretend to *know* Eliza, or have any privileges allowing access to her thoughts or the detail of her everyday life. What we can do is place her in the context of her basic situation and begin to approach her in terms of the issues she expresses at least some interest in by including related cuttings in our most valuable source book; her scrapbook.

We know, from later references, such as the diarist Hillman's comment that "Bessie [his wife] is one of Mrs. Broadhursts' musical union,"² that Eliza was very gifted musically, and we can assume a general standard of living for her family and upbringing. This is part-based on the fact that her father, Florance [sic] Howes was a teacher and head teacher both in Ireland and in Victoria where at Belfast Grammar School in James St, Belfast, Victoria he taught a number of languages, philosophy, history, mathematics and so on. As a member of a large and educated family Eliza is likely to have been a sociable and cultured girl, rehearsed in etiquette and much exposed to some of the high points of Victorian culture and her circle of acquaintance is sure to have included some prominent society figures and wealthy characters.

Charles Broadhurst at this time was a gentleman farmer; settled and prospering with his brother in Victoria and boasting 259 hectares of land of his own. The son of a wealthy family in Manchester, England he was a pastoralist, grazer and respected member of the Victoria Agricultural Society. Charles was a well-respected character and Eliza's family would no doubt have approved of the match. They were married on 22 June 1860.

The couple settled at Kilmore in Victoria for several years and had two boys, Florance Constantine, born in July 1861, and Charles Henson, born September 1862. In considering the life that Eliza was able to enjoy here we might judge her opportunity according to this position of relative wealth and her husband's social standing. Yet as a woman, she had no assets of her own other than her good name and in looking for the

² Hillman, B., 1990. *The Hillman Diaries 1877-1884*, Private publication: 595,

concerns that filled her days we have only her own scrapbook to consult; she celebrated her own interests.

Eliza's position appears to be one of relative privilege when we read accounts of women in lower classes than hers and their early experiences of life in the Australian colonies. Back in Britain, the home country of the majority of immigrants, the British Government were sentencing women who had committed petty crimes to a lengthy sentence in the Australian penal colonies. Whilst in prison, the women used to "provide sexual gratification to male convicts and to keep them from rioting and homosexuality."³ When these women were released, they had little means to earn their ticket back home. Well paid work was not for women and education systems were not in place to encourage the ambitious (women with opinions were often considered 'unfeminine' by the 'civilised middle classes who ran the institutions). So the poor ex-convicts and other lower class migrants remained in Australia along with their reputations as 'damned whores'. This stereotype remained even after transportation had ceased and "excluded women tainted by it from marriage...the bourgeois family required wives who ideally were virgins. They were seen as a form of property..".⁴

And so the antitheses of this stereotype emerged from the moral yardstick, as an ideal of the civilised and wealthy European wife, daughter and sister. The term 'God's Police' was taken from a pamphlet which was written by a woman on emigration possibilities in an attempt to construct a positive role for women as the bringers of stability and morality to "...a ruthless, greedy and male dominated society dedicated to making money and grabbing land."⁵

Here we find a clue as to the nature of Eliza's role within Victorian and indeed, Victorian society at the time of her settlement in Kilmore. Eliza would have been perceived and her lifestyle assumed according to this role. It would dictate her day to day responsibilities. As the woman of the home Eliza would have been expected to tend to the children and bring them their spiritual and moral education, and to help servants in presenting the family home as an impressive totem of the achievements and status of the family (the husband largely).

There is to be found in Victorian literature repeated images, satirical and romantic of the fate of the 'Angel of the Hearth', for this is what her archetype came to be known. For example, the serialisation of novels was a popular form of magazine journalism and these were distributed amongst the educated society ladies. Culture was riddled with heroines and protagonists seemingly meek and thankful for the status their long pursued husbands can offer them. It is only in retrospect that we can begin to read between the lines and

³ From *Strength of Spirit*: incomplete reference

⁴ Summers, A., 1975, *Damned Whores and God's Police*. Allen Lane, Melbourne: 270.

⁵ Davidson, D., *Women on the Warpath*.

perceive Thomas Hardy's *Tess*, Jane Austen's *Eleanor* and the fate of Elizabeth Gaskell's imagined alter ego characters (as a proportionally small example) that we recognise this 'Angel' crying out from her 'happy' house for a life and recognition of her own.

This repeated image created an "audience" of women also and captured them, suggesting a spiritual fulfilment in the good upkeep of home and family standards. Diane Davidson chooses to cite the following quote from one Donald Home in 1964 when referring to a more modern Australian women's culture. He wrote:

"...the obsession of many Australian women with their homes goes beyond fashion or normal motherly concern; it represents an attempt to provide spiritual value in material things and modes of living." (5).⁶

Whilst we can recognise this fault in our contemporary consumerist culture, we can only imagine the sense of futility which would manifest in the knowledge that this is the only function your life is allowed to play. This is the likely dilemma of Eliza Broadhurst when we join her in Kilmore.

We must not overlook the obvious joy and contentment which would have been brought to Eliza in the delivery of the first of her two children, nor the apparent pleasures a life in educated Kilmore society would have brought her. However, with regards to further clues as to her life we have come to the end of the road as far as the existence 'society' values would have us believe she led (one which it is hard for us to believe in) and we must begin to look to a more private self.

Page '62' of Eliza's cuttings book features stories on new poetry, on dancing, on the antiquity of Rome, and on literature. Throughout the book, though we are not blessed often with *dated* cuttings, we find many 'science notes', natural history features and even references to various spiritualities amongst the listings of society events (page 56), bridal traditions (pg 38) and references to her husband's career (page 1). Eliza was exploring a world of knowledge and opinion for herself which elsewhere was not open to her.

We begin to wonder where Eliza is to direct this interest and opinion which apparently goes beyond polite attendance at recitals and cultural events as an expression of courtesy. Eliza has engaged her imagination on life's possibilities and become a lively and admired member of the social whirl (as suggestions of her correspondence with a poet in Victoria during the next 'phase' of her life suggests). As we chronologically move through Eliza's life, we might argue her intelligence and opinion are encouraged to gravitate towards an increasingly obvious cause.

⁶ Davidson, D. *op. cit.*

The Denison Plains company

In 1865, Charles Edward Broadhurst began to make plans to invest his wealth, career and family in what was reputedly a 'sure' and exciting business endeavour. In June 1864, a prospectus was published and distributed in Melbourne which featured a glowing description of an area of Western Australia which had been discovered by a team crossing the border from the Northern Territory. This area was named the 'Denison Plains', after the Lieutenant Governor at the time and had generated such a vision for settlement possibilities that the Denison Plains Company was established.

Eliza's husband, in his ambitious nature, was enticed, like the members of several other families, into buying shares into the company which would entitle him to a free passage to the plains, via Camden Harbour in the far North West, plus livestock, a year's rations and a pre-emptive right to 20,000 acres of land rent free. To give this decision some perspective, it is likely that it was helped along by the distinct possibility of establishing oneself as the nobility of the new frontier; "Rather than bringing in his baggage, the predisposition to establish a socialist Utopia, the immigrant (to Australia) came hoping to imitate the bourgeois class whose monopoly of wealth in England had forced him to leave his native land." ⁷ Although we cannot say that Charles' family were struggling for wealth back in England, his involvement in the Denison Plains Company and that of those around him is typical of the very essence of the Victorian era; development, industry, and a craving to 'pioneer' in anything; to enforce that which is 'civil' and morally 'pure' and benefit with a claim to 'modernity'.

Charles proposed to move his family; Eliza and the boys from their lives in Kilmore to an uncharted virtual 'promised land' of apparently green and lush terrain and ideal geographical position regarding the Indian and European trade routes. Having no part to play in business decisions and politics, it was of course Eliza's duty to show support and enthusiasm for her husband's plans and so the family left for Camden Harbour via Fremantle with Eliza six months pregnant.

So far, our most powerful tool in establishing the essence of Eliza's life has been a consideration of the oppression she is likely to have felt and the oppression of women's rights during her lifetime. This oppression has not only restricted our access to an inauthentic picture, but by doing so has lent itself as an approach to Eliza's history that is quite feminist. It is the next chapter in Eliza's life that arguably cements her growing feminist perspective and eventually sees her involvement in this cause as a movement in which to escape old social ties and stereotypes.

As the Broadhurst were boarding to leave Melbourne for the Denison Plains by way of Camden Harbour, out of date reports were being printed in the Melbourne press, telling

⁷ Summers, A. op. cit: 59.

of the beauty and fertility of the Plains. Elsewhere, a Captain Dow met, in the port of Surabaya, a ship full of the first settlers to have left for Camden Harbour. They were fleeing the place and were en route back south, tails between legs, having found a hostile terrain, unbearable heat and increasingly dangerous Aboriginal locals. The delay in communication at the time was such that it was only on the actual day of departure that a letter from a director of the Denison Plains Company was requested to be circulated amongst the migrating families, stating the impossibility of the trek from Camden Harbour to the plains. The letter, it is believed, was suppressed, possibly by Charles Broadhurst, and the ship sailed.

Docking at Fremantle, Broadhurst was approached by the Colonial Secretary of the time and was asked to abandon his plans and settle further south at Roebuck Bay. However, his ambition got the better of him and the party, with his own Eliza in the late stages of pregnancy, sailed North, to the mouth of Camden Harbour. Strong winds would not allow their vessel to dock and after several attempts, food rations were running very low, threatening the health of the passengers. Broadhurst would not allow the years' settlement supplies to be touched; a characteristic decision which likely earmarked the beginnings of his unpopularity. Eventually the passengers were forced to settle at Nikol Bay, hundreds of miles south and they then ranked merely seventh in a string of groups of settlers to the area.

Charles Broadhurst's appetite was not satisfied, no doubt. He joined, at Nickol Bay, the Withnell family who's homestead had become a gateway 'station' to the area. However, Broadhurst led his family to the Maitland River and two freshwater pools, five hours travel from the Nickol River Station. At *Miaree Pool*, Charles built thatched huts of white gum saplings and reeds, where his family, like the other Denison Plains Company shareholders were forced to live on half a pound of flour a day. Broadhurst still would not break into the company stocks. Eliza fed her children on bush food.

On July 18th 1865, Eliza gave birth to Sarah Eleanor, the first European girl to be born in the North West region (North of the Murchison River). This, we might hope, cheered her spirits in the face of the news that the Denison Plains Company, of which Charles was a director, had folded in Melbourne. In the following November, the diarist, Robert Sholl arrived at the Maitland River area from Camden Harbour and called on the Broadhursts. He found that their pool had receded in the drought, they were 'pinched for food' and Eliza had been attacked by an aborigine called the 'giant' whilst he was off exploring and had to fire Charles' gun to ward him off.

Maybe because of their fear that their name was ruined back home due to Charles' involvement in the Denison Plains Company debacle, the Broadhursts remained in the Nikol Bay area. In August 1866, the township of Roebourne was declared, and the Broadhurst name began to assume more status. This may be due to Charles' efforts to establish a pastoral industry and his explorations into the area's potential for trade, but it

is also likely to be due to Eliza's position at the centre of a growing community and her involvement with the growing European society and its activities.

At Roebourne, the new European community saw the slow but sure development of their social structure. Though not without its setbacks, we have the diaries of Robert Sholl to consult on the merry making of the population which often circulated around the Broadhurst household, where there were nights spent playing cards, conversing and singing. Sholl recounts a dinner given by Eliza, plus musical evenings centred around her talent on the piano. Her name is repeatedly amongst those who were picnicking as a group on the river and involving themselves in traditional celebrations such as the Sports Carnival on the Queen's birthday.

Eliza's involvement in these activities shows a remarkable strength, positivity and sense of comradeship after her struggles out at *Miaree Pool*. Mrs Marjorie Darling, Granddaughter of Eliza remembered this as one of the points in her life that she personally admired her for the most.

The birth of the Broadhursts fourth child, Percival Harry, in February of 1867 was overshadowed by news which was devastating to Roebourne. Many members of the community, including Trevarton Sholl, Robert's son, drowned in the sinking of the vessel *Emma* as it left Nikol Bay. Not only did the township suffer great personal losses but the loss of the vessel plunged them into a semi-famine.

The Broadhursts, after this tragic news, felt so despondent that they announced that they were to return to the Fremantle area to live. They finally did so on December 21 1867.

After the mental and physical strain of this period of their lives it is likely that both Eliza and Charles were very much hardened and their attitudes towards each other may not have been so good. Katherine Elime (pronounced Ell-e-may), Eliza's fifth child was born in 1868 after a while spent settling the family back in to a more civilised community. In Perth, however, Charles Broadhurst was not such public figure and so he departed on the day of Katherine's birth, for the North once again; this time seeking his fortunes in the pearling industry which was becoming increasingly lucrative.

A New Cause

Whilst Charles was away and she was in Perth, we can imagine that Eliza had time to reflect on her struggles in Roebourne. Fighting off natives and living on only flour is not the lifestyle promised by the 'Angel' role. Why should she accept the meek position of civilised and silent wife if she had been living in conditions which were far from civil? It has been commented that, in some ways, 'the bush' provided an escape for some middle class women from their anonymity in urban society. To an extent, this is what happened to Eliza; her role as a key figure in the community had given her status and credit for the

skills she had to offer. This is a mood, one of inequality that was recognised by women elsewhere in the developing colonies. In Britain, the source of much of the imported culture to early Australia, the struggle for women's rights was well under way.

The road to suffrage

In 1857, in Britain, the Marriages and Divorces Act was passed, finally making it possible for women to escape any unhappy marriages. However, the terms that accompanied this agreement were very extreme. The divorce could only be settled after the lady had been abandoned by her husband for two years or more or if he had committed adultery *and* incest. The terms relating to the husband's rights made it a lot easier for divorce to be granted him and the whole Act saw to it that women were left with little or no possessions. As a result, the Act only served to bring to women's attention, the inequalities which they were suffering, as did an Act placed in 1864 in Australia.

The Contagious Diseases Act features a clause which requested a compulsory examination of female prostitutes for disease. There was no mention, however, of this examination being compulsory for their partners and so it was spelt out quite clearly, the degree of worth placed upon the heads of those women. It was one Josephine Butler, who became a famous name in the history of the women's movement in Australia, who first regarded this as a comment on women's worth and began to campaign for the repeal of the Act.

Throughout the 1880's, pocket groups of campaigning women began peaceful pamphleteering and discussion groups on the possible remedies to a myriad of women's issues which had become important during the hard pioneering years in Western Australia. It is maybe because of these years with their struggles and the amount of practical input required by ladies in the pioneering West that women felt so strongly that they deserved equal rights and it was in 1899 that they finally received the right to vote; long before the Britain's women. "Vigorous local-level association enriches women's experience of pioneering and the frontier and ultimately, through encouraging a kind of female sub-culture, their visibility and confidence in settled community life." ⁸ These are the whispers of a more positive women's perspective that the Westralians had to build on.

Amidst this general social atmosphere, Eliza was experiencing a degree of hardship in Perth. Money was tighter than it had been and when Charles visited in 1870, at the end of the fishing season up coast, he returned to quite a bitter Eliza. She has since been remembered this way during this period of her life by descendants who recalled accounts from their relations.

Katherine, was eighteen months old at the time of Charles' visit, and her fathers face was a strange one.

⁸ Dixon, M., (incomplete reference) *The Real Matilda*: 182.

Charles had invested a lot of money into buying the *S.S. Xantho*; a steamer to be used on pearling expeditions. In 1872, off of the coast of Port Gregory, the *Xantho* sank, taking with it a large fraction of Broadhurst's fortune. This is where we came in. Only now can we truly begin to appreciate the impact which this event would have had on the family who we previously only knew as the name on the ownership records.

Though it is not dated, Eliza's cuttings book features the following poem;

"Fathers beheld the hastening doom, with stern delirious eye;
Wildly they looked around for help- no, alas, was nigh!
Mothers stood trembling with their babes, uttering complaints in vain;
No arm but the Almighty arm might stem the dreadful main!
Jesu, it was a fearful hour- the elemental strife
Howling above the shrieks of death, the struggling groans for life!"⁹

The poem is called *The Wreck* and is included in the cuttings book with bitter poignancy in light of both the fate of the *Emma* and the *Xantho*.

Charles and Eliza spent years living apart after this tragedy; Charles' insatiable ambition seeing him living on the Abrolhos Islands where he began to make a steady income in guano trade. Eliza remained in Perth, and from 1879 onwards she begins to be mentioned in the diaries of Major

Alfred James Hillman; her neighbour and friend. After the succession of events she had experienced, we can only admire Eliza when we read of her attendance at balls, of her establishing of a 'musical union' of amateur players with their performances at the town hall, and the key role she plays in the lives of a number of inhabitants.

When the Hillman's child died, the entry on May 27th 1881 says of Eliza's help to Bessie, "She bears her trial very well".¹⁰ This role of 'confidant' and women's counsellor appears to be one which Eliza was comfortable with. On October 5th, 1882, Hillman recounts his returning home to "shrieks of laughter", and a "hen convention" led by Eliza Broadhurst. In her struggles, and with the help of her charm and good humour Eliza became a strong and wise lady, no longer as bitter and feeling so cheated but sharing her experiences with other women and finding the confidence to please herself where she chose to invest her mental and practical efforts. Her life was no longer simply a shadow of what it should have been as a wife.

⁹ 'Swain' (Incomplete Reference), *The Wreck & Brummit*, Jane, Eliza Broadhurst Literary Cuttings 'From All Sources'. Copy Department of Maritime Archaeology, WA.

¹⁰ The Hillman Diaries, op. cit: 516.

On 18th August, 1882, Hillman's diary says, "The fancy dress ball had been the talk of the place for some weeks past and came off last night and was a great success. We got Mrs Broadhurst to bring home Margaret...she did not get in until 3 o'clock!" (10).¹¹

It seems, then, that the more carefree and fun Eliza of Victoria days begins to return maybe as a response to a new found piece of mind and an increasing self reliance.

Eliza's cuttings book features a number of articles which suggest that she finally began to identify with the growing womens' movement around her, and that she gained mental support from a new belief in her own rights as a woman and an enjoyment of involvement, at whatever level, of a new cause. On 'page 41', an article titled 'Crinoline Campaign' tells of an organised opposition to the re-introduction of the crinoline skirt. "Ask any woman you like, and she will tell you she dreads, she very much dreads, the crinoline coming" says the interviewee, interestingly a woman speaking under the alias of a man called John Strange Winter. This, a comparatively minor issue of contention has served to express a growing woman's culture or at least some sense of camaraderie, which, after all is only natural and an ancient form of community relationship amongst them. As in Eliza's mind it grew from an awareness of what was being suppressed or not achieved as a result of a male dominated culture and has led to the public celebration, as today, of the gifts of being a female.

Citing this article alongside one on Minna Caurr, a key figure in the European fight for women's vote, we can begin to understand that Eliza, in her state of refined opinion and as a strong ambitious woman begins to support the causes of the movement.

Also in Eliza's cuttings book are articles on the lives of several women of achievement. There is Madame Patti, a powerful Irish opera singer, an actress; Fanny Kemble, a poet, Beatrice Herrenden at the annual dinner of women writers and whose name is later associated with campaign letters to the government; and Miss Smyth, the Queen's favourite composer. Also featured is Christina Rossetti, whose epic poem, 'Goblin Market' earned her respect amongst her contemporaries, The Pre Raphaelite Brotherhood for featuring a woman heroine, an artistic approach mirrored in their portraits of a 'magical' womanhood.

It is possibly thanks to this new sense of empowerment and perspective on the nature of status as not relating to merely wealth, that Eliza was able to bravely take on board a position in the community which had previously been beneath her. She began to work as a teacher and set up a school in Perth. She advertised space for a 'limited number of pupils' who will be taught English, Latin, Arithmetic and French if required. The venture appears to have been quite a large one, since she also took boarders but no doubt it was approached with a sense of liberty and achievement at the prospect of finally being at the 'helm'.

¹¹ As above: 712.

In 1892, legislation was finally passed for the ownership of a married woman's own property. Research into the Broadhurst family history has come across a letter from Eliza which bequeaths her gas shares to her eldest son, Florance. From here on in, the campaign for women's rights was stepped up after the establishment of a responsible Government in 1890, and events raced towards the final granting of the vote for women in 1899.

During Eliza's time in Perth in the 1880's, a lady called Madeline Onslow, the young wife of the new Western Australia Attorney General, arrived into the state with her modern views on the role which she believed women should be playing. She had strong and positive ideas on the education of children and on a place for women in politics. She suggested the formation of a ladies reading circle and discussion group which was established and called the St George's Reading Circle. The result of the existence of high profile groups such as this was to put women more in touch with a sense of their own culture, which, though still rather defensive in its convictions, helped to provide a firm grounding for the more serious political activity which ensued after 1890.

In 1892 the Women's Christian temperance Union was established. It was a sympathetic institution which campaigned for the relief of unhappy circumstance brought upon women as a result of alcohol abuse. One petition which was compiled to presented to the Government was 1.6 kilometres long; this leaves no doubt as to the extent of the union's support. In October 1864, a Dr Emily Ryder, visiting the St. Georges Reading Circle, established the Karrakatta Club, as inspired by the men's clubs in the United States. Madeleine Onslow took up the position of president and as well as spending time on traditionally feminine pastimes, the club had a Legal and Educational Department to help its members to educate themselves to the degree they wished and to involve themselves in political achievement for women.

With all of this growing activity around Perth, Eliza cannot have failed to find moral support for her opinion on women's rights. The timing of these, most positive steps towards a change in attitude surely only served to fuel a stronger belief in her work as a teacher. The support of the womens' movement would also have made her reflect on her past role as a mother and pillar of the community. Thanks to the moral support of a womens' culture, Eliza, like countless others would have discovered the courage to take pride in her achievements and to credit themselves on the acquisition of a new powerful persona as a woman.

In 1895 Charles and Eliza Broadhurst moved to Bournemouth, England to retire and lived in a house which they called 'Karrakatta', or place of rest. The Broadhurst children were largely successful; Eliza's wisdom was not gathered and refined at the close of her life completely in vain. Our last account of the life of Katherine Elime Broadhurst is as a militant suffragette in London, locked in Holloway prison and being force fed, investing

all that she has in a belief in equal rights for women which began, ironically, with her mother; next to the hearth, and her husbands' memorabilia, in Eliza's home; the 'Angel's realm.