

# Obituary

## Miriam Kate Bottomley (nee Still) (24/6/1881 – 20/04/1971)



Miriam Kate Bottomley (known as Kate, and Gran to her grandchildren,) was born in June, 1881, to Adelaide (nee Hume) and Charles Still, and was the eldest of 11 children. Kate's father, Charles, was 23, (1858-1904) and her mother, Adelaide (nee Hume), was also 23 (1858-1931).

Kate received her education at St Finn Barr's school in Launceston, then trained as a teacher. She applied for a position with the State Education Department, using the Presentation Sisters, Launceston as her referee.

She was initially posted to the Upper Blessington School (1898) as an 18 year old teacher and was paid £40 per year.

After a short period, she requested a transfer to a Launceston school due to the fact that her father had deserted the family and her mother was ill. It appears that Charles and Adelaide must have reconciled as a further six children were born to the couple.

Following her mother's recovery, Kate was posted to a school at Mooreville Road, Burnie at a salary of £50 per year. Later she had to resign from her teaching position as her mother's condition once again deteriorated.

It is not known how Kate and Len met. She married Leonard Anderson Bottomley on 30 June 1909 in Launceston. They had three children during their marriage - Agnes (1910-1993), Barbara (1911-1985) and Sefton (1914-1950). Most of their life together was spent on Bruny Island.

The family lived in a large house at Lunawanna ("*Bankside*"<sup>1</sup>) when the children were small. The house, after standing for many years, burnt down in the 1980s or 1990s. Kate taught at the Adventure Bay School from 1924 to 1926).

In 1926, Leonard and Kate moved to the property *Sacriston* on North Bruny Island after Kate was transferred to teach at Barnes Bay School. Leonard and his son Sefton farmed together, while Miriam worked as a teacher (1927-29).

Below is a quote from "*South Bruny Island*" a book by Richard Pybus, page 137:-

*"Len Bottomley and his wife Kate left their small orchard property, "Bankside", at Lunawanna in 1921 and leased OLIVER DRAKE'S property, "Clovelly", overlooking Daniels Bay, Lunawanna. OLIVER DRAKE was believed to have taken up a Closer Settlement Board property on King Island; he had served overseas during World War 1."*

Another quote from the same book, page 156:-

*"The BOTTOMLEY family finally broke ties with South Bruny at the end of 1926 after MRS KATE BOTTOMLEY had been transferred to the Barnes Bay State School on North Bruny. Her husband LEN BOTTOMLEY, with the assistance of the Closer Settlement Board, had taken up sheep farming on land near One Tree point<sup>2</sup> (North Bruny) which had once formed part of the Land Grant to the PYBUS family in the early 1830s."*

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<sup>1</sup> This may have been Clovelly.

<sup>2</sup> Sacriston.

Len then took up the lease of a property called *Lauriston*, north of *Sacrison*, and farmed both properties with his son Sefton. When Kate's son Sefton married and moved his young family to *Lauriston*, Kate and Len moved with them.

Kate and Len separated, with Kate renting a cottage at Dennes Point owned by the Tate family for some years. In her later years, Kate suffered from Glaucoma – a condition which these days is successfully treated - and gradually went blind. She moved to Mary's Grange at Taroon, then Lord Fraser Home for the Blind in North Hobart.

Kate died on the 20<sup>th</sup> of April 1971 in Hobart, Tasmania, at the age of 89.

Compiled by Yvonne Bottomley. April 2022