

## **Elizabeth Isabella Broughton**

**14 November 1807- January 1891**

This colour illustration is a portrait of Elizabeth Isabella Broughton aged approximately seven years old, 1814 watercolour by Richard Read c. 1765-1872.

With this portrait comes two stories, one of collectors instincts and another of murder and mayhem.

In the 1950's a New Zealand art dealer, Sir Rex Nan Kivell, spotted the portrait in the window of an antique shop in Salisbury England. He thought the lighting in the painting was not English but Australasian so he bought it. Behind the portrait, he found a long manuscript description of the events that led to this painting.

William Broughton came to Australia as a servant of the First Fleet and later served at Norfolk Island. There, he married Elizabeth Heathorn who had arrived in 1792 as a convict. Elizabeth and William Broughton has five children. In 1809, Elizabeth and her two-year-old daughter, Betsey, sailed for England on the ship "General Boyd" which on the way visited the Bay of Islands in New Zealand to obtain a cargo of timber. At Whangaroa the crew and passengers, save for Betsey and three others, were killed by a tribe of Maoris. Three weeks later, Alexander Berry, a Scots merchant also seeking timber, heard of the massacre and came to investigate and rescue prisoners. Betsey was taken to South America on board Berry's ship, for his cargo was destined for Lima, and waited there a year until a ship bound for New South Wales arrived. After her return to Sydney, her father has this portrait painted as a gift for the family who had cared for her in Lima.

This is the saga Sir Rex Nan Kivell found in the frame, written by her father William Broughton to Don Gisparido Rico.

"Elizabeth Isabella Broughton, the subject of this portrait is the daughter of William Broughton Esq. Deputy Commissary General and one of His Majesty's Justices of the peace for the colony of New South Wales.

She was born on Norfolk Island in the South Pacific Ocean, 13 November, 1807 and embarked from that place on board the ship 'City of Edinburgh' 9 September 1808 for Port Jackson in New South Wales and arrived November following. On 8 November 1809 she sailed for England under the protection of her mother in a ship called the General Boyd commanded by Captain John Thompson; but that vessel touched (unfortunately) at the Island of New Zealand, for the purpose of obtaining spars, where the whole crew and passengers (except one woman and a boy and two infant) were inhumanely murdered by the cruel natives of that place. The subject of this picture, whose Mother fell a victim, was more than three weeks among the savages and suffered incredible hardships, providentially however for the survivors, the ship City of Edinburgh arrived a short time after the event took place for a supply of spars gaining information among the natives that a British vessel has been cut off in the Bay of Islands and that every person on board except the persons before mentioned had been murdered. Mr. Berry the owner, boldly entered the harbour in a boat, the crew of which were armed and succeeded in getting two of the principal Chiefs of the District into his possession, one of them he despatched in search of the child, the other he kept a hostage for the true performance of the mission whom he threatened with instant death if the child was not produced in a given space of time.

In a few hours, to the agreeable astonishment of Mr. Berry, she was produced and although the child was in a very emaciated state, it still afforded him much pleasure for she was the daughter of his friend. By the intrepidity and courage of this worthy man the child's life was preserved for owing to the unwholesome food of which from necessity she had been obliged to partake during her stay in common with the savages, it occasioned a disease which must have inevitably put a period to her existence had she remained with them but a few days longer.

About the latter end of January or beginning of February 1810, Mr. Berry took his departure from New Zealand and after encountering various perils and hardships he arrived at Lime safe, there he discarded his cargo and repaired the ship and from thence sailed for Rio de Janerio at which place he fell in with a British Brig called the Atlanta bound for New South Wales, on board which the child embarked and arrived in safely about the latter end of May 1812 to the great joy of her disconsolate father who respectfully inscribes this portrait to Don Gasparido Rico and the other Spanish gentlemen and Ladies as a tribute of respect and grateful their protection and benevolent treatment of the child during her residence for eleven months and deems himself honoured in subscribing himself,

Their most obliged, grateful and devoted humble servant

William Broughton

Sydney New South Wales

8<sup>th</sup> April 1814

NB. Governor Macquarie requested that Lord Strangford would use his endeavours to forward the above mentioned portrait to Lima”

Sir Rex Nan Kivell died in 1978 and this portrait now belongs to the Australian National Library.

Betsey Broughton stayed in New South Wales and in 1824 at the age of seventeen married Charles Throsby Junior.

Charles junior was the nephew of Dr Charles Throsby who arrived in New South Wales in June 1802. He was appointed Medical Officer and Magistrate of Castle Hill. In 1818he accompanied Hamilton Hume to seek an overland route between Sydney and Jervis Bay. For this and subsequent explorations, Throsby was granted 1,000 acres in the new country. This grant lies to the south west of the present town of Moss Vale. Throsby has a small cottage built upon it that was to become known as Throsby Park. He was one of the first settlers in the district. In 1822, Governor Macquarie granted Throsby a further 700 acres of land adjoining Throsby Park. It was these 700 acres that was to become known as the Mount Broughton Estate. The property was originally called 'Wallton' and seven convicts were assigned to work the land. Upon Dr Throsby's death, the Wallton Estate passed to his nephew and heir Charles Throsby Junior.

Charles Throsby Junior arrived in Sydney as a free settler in 1820 and lived with his uncle at Glenfield Farm prior to his marriage to Elizabeth Broughton in 1824. Following their marriage, they moved to Moss Vale and lived in a simple weatherboard cottage on what became known as the Throsby Estate.

In 1834 when Charles and Elizabeth has six children, more accommodation was needed so building commenced on the new house, the present Throsby House. Charles Junior become oil in 1850 and in 1852 the Mount Broughton Estate passed to a trust headed by Elizabeth (nee Broughton) Throsby. Mount Broughton was one of the Throsby's pastoral properties, which included Glenfield farm and Throsby Park. The property was run by one of Charles and Elizabeth's sons.

Charles Junior died in 1854 and is buried at Christ Church Bong Bong. Charles and Elizabeth funded the building of the Christ church Bong Bong at Moss Vale, and contributed substantially to the upkeep and improvement of the little church. In 1868 Elizabeth returned to live in the weatherboard cottage in which she has commenced her married life.

She died in 1891 at the age of 84 and is buried at Christ Church Bong Bong with her husband and sons. Charles and Elizabeth had seventeen children, seventy-eight grandchildren and eighteen great grandchildren.

The 'Scrutineer', a local newspaper, printed a long article about Elizabeth's funeral. There were over fifty vehicles in the funeral cortege and twenty horsemen. 'Surrounded with all the means of wealth and al the opportunities if luxury and self-indulgence, she denied herself and lived frugally in order that she might give to the poor and help those in need'. This comment was made by Reverend Leech who told his congregation; 'She needs no monument, no memorial. This church, which she helped to build, is her monument.'

**The Mount Broughton Estate has been named after Elizabeth Broughton.**



