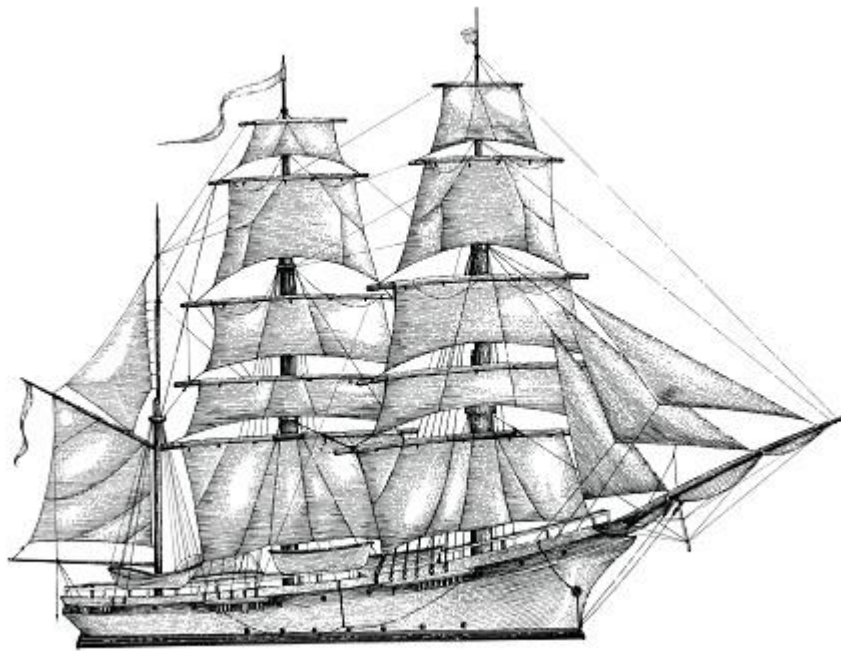


# Briese Family Emigration to Australia

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*David Briese  
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January 2022*



Briese Surname Project publication  
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# Briese Family Emigration to Australia

*David Briese (January 2022)*

How many Briese families are there in Australia? The simple answer to this question is five, but in genealogy, answers are not always simple. The Brieses in Australia owe their origin to German immigrants who came to this country during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Shipping records show that people with the surname Briese came from Germany to Australia on seven different occasions, either as individuals or family groups. Paper records indicate that these belong to five separate family groups. However, as we shall see later, this may be less and could even be one big family.

## *Chronological Order of Arrival*

The first record of a possible Briese emigrant to Australia was Johann Gotthilf Briese, a 68 year old widower from Meseritz in Posen appears on a list of "Old Lutherans" wishing to emigrate to Australia in 1838, along with his house-keeper, Theresa Schroedel.<sup>1</sup> However, he did not disembark. The original documents state that 41 of the 267 people on that list either renounced their desire to leave or were denied an exit permit by the Prussian authorities. Either way they did not arrive in Australia and their fate remains a mystery.

The first Briese to set foot in Australia was Johann Ludwig Briese<sup>2</sup>. The son of Christoph Briese of Potrymowo, Posen, Prussia, he travelled as a single man on the "Steinwaerder", arriving at Port Adelaide, South Australia, on 19 December 1855. At first he lived in the Barossa Valley, where he married Dorothea Bartsch. In 1867, they and a number of German families travelled by bullock wagon from South Australia to New South Wales, settling in Jindera area north of Albury. They had eight children and the descendants of this family are known as the Jindera Brieses. Some descendants remain in the Jindera area, but others have spread widely – to other parts of New South Wales, Queensland and Victoria, particularly in the Melbourne area.

The next Briese family to reach Australia were the Toowoomba Brieses. Friedrich Wilhelm Briese<sup>3</sup>, from Neugolz, Deutsch Krone, West Prussia, emigrated with his wife and two children aboard the "Humboldt", as assisted immigrants. They arrived at Moreton Bay, Queensland, on 5 November 1870 and travelled inland to settle in the Toowoomba area. Today, most descendants of their three children are in south-east Queensland. Also on board the "Humboldt" were August FW Briese and Emma EH Briese. It is not clear what their relationship was to the others. The father of Friedrich Wilhelm is not known and the father of August is given as Martin Briese<sup>4</sup>. August married Barbara Betzel in Queensland in 1894, with no apparent descendants, while Emma married Gustav Schimming in 1871 and had several children.

On 25 May 1878, the "Eduard" arrived at Port Adelaide, South Australia. On board were two Briese families (possibly related), also from the Deutsch Krone area in West Prussia. Franz Julius Briese, the son of Wilhelm Gustav Briese<sup>4</sup>, came from the village of Appelwerder and Friedrich August Briese, the son of Fritz Briese<sup>4</sup>, came from the nearby village of Clausdorf.

Franz Julius Briese<sup>5</sup>, his wife and three children moved to the Morgan area on the river Murray in South Australia. Five more children were born and the descendants of this family are known as the Morgan Brieses. They are centred in South Australia.

Friedrich August Briese<sup>6</sup>, who arrived with his wife and six children, spent four years in Adelaide, before travelling to Melbourne, Victoria, in November 1882 aboard the "Victoria" and settled there. His wife, Henriette, was descended from a different lineage of Brieses in the Deutsch Krone area. While they had seven children in all, including four boys, by the third generation there were no more male descendants with the Briese surname amongst

the Melbourne Brieses. There are a number of Brieses in the Melbourne area today, but these are a branch of the Jindera Brieses. The Melbourne Briese family is carried on via the female lineages. One of Friedrich August Briese's sons, Carl Friedrich, emigrated to South Africa in 1892, with his wife and two sons, but again the male surname line has become extinct.

The next Briese to arrive in Australia was Adalbert Gottfried Briese from Mogilno, Posen, Prussia. He was the nephew of Johann Ludwig Briese and arrived in Melbourne, Victoria, on the "Potosi" in December 1880. From here, he travelled to Jindera to join his uncle and family and, in 1884, married his cousin, Emilie Briese. Their descendants are part of the Jindera Brieses.

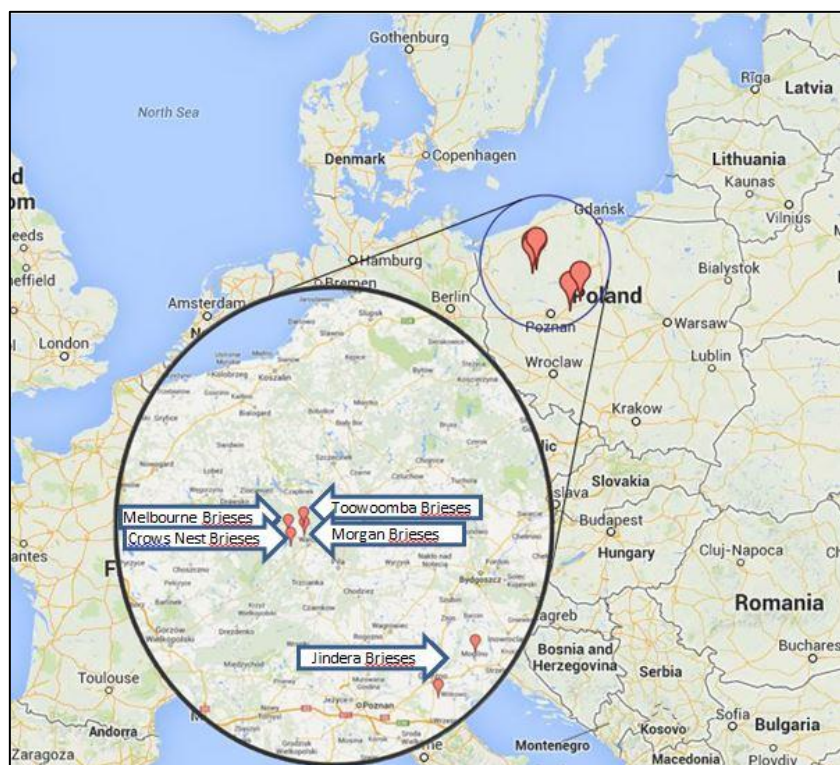
On 25 June 1884, Bertha Louise Briese, the daughter of Ernst Briese and Wilhelmine Pacholke from Klein Nakel, in the Deutsch Krone region of West Prussia, arrived in Queensland aboard the "Duke of Westminster". She moved to the Crows Nest area, where in 1886, she married Hermann Hartwig. Also on board the "Duke of Westminster" were Heinrich Steinmueller and his wife Marie Therese Franziska (nee Briese). Her

parents are given as Ernst Briese and Johannah Zieldorft from Klein Nakel. This poses the question of whether Bertha and Franziska may have been step-sisters with Ernst Briese as their father. Remarriage soon after the death of a spouse was very common in that time, especially when young children were involved. Papers records do not clarify this.

However, paper records do show that Bertha Briese was followed in later years by two of her brothers. The first brother, August Ferdinand Briese<sup>7</sup>, his wife and child, arrived on 15 Sep 1889 at Brisbane aboard the "Quetta". They too settled in the Crows Nest area and eventually had 13 children. Many of their descendants remain in the south-east Queensland area.

The younger brother, Ernst Eduard Briese<sup>7</sup>, arrived 10 years later, with his wife and three children. They disembarked from the "Duke of Fife" on 30 September 1899 at Brisbane and joined the rest of their family in Crows Nest. They had seven children and are also centred in south-east Queensland.

Details of these families are given in the Appendix.



**Fig. 1.** Map showing the origins of the Briese families that emigrated to Australia.

## *Inter-relationship of the Families*

Prior to the availability of Y-DNA testing, it has only been possible to speculate on the relationships between the different Briese families. While it was tantalising to hypothesise a connection, particularly as four of them emigrated from the Deutsch Krone region, in West Prussia, and the fifth from the nearby Witkowo region, in Posen (see map), this has not been possible from paper records.

The two Crows Nest Briese families are clearly related, being descended from siblings. Some genealogical researchers also speculated that this was the case for the Morgan/Melbourne Brieses, who arrived on the same ship, and there have been published family trees which show them as brothers. However, different names are given for their supposed father on their death certificates, which raises some doubt. Similarly, there have been attempts to link the Crows Nest and Toowoomba Brieses, who settled close to one another, but again, in the absence of paper records, this falls to the realm of speculation. It has not proved possible to find paper records that connect the Jindera Brieses to any of the other families, perhaps the least surprising as they emigrated from Posen, not West Prussia like the others.

Birth, death and marriage records exist incompletely for both these regions, though local church records show that the Briese name was very common in and around Deutsch Krone, West Prussia. Unfortunately, many records were destroyed during World War 2. The two main sets of records that concern the emigrant Briese families are for the Evangelical parishes of Lueben (1757-1837 and 1860-1874)<sup>8</sup> and Neugolz (1860-1872)<sup>9</sup>. Thus, for much of the critical period when our Briese emigrant ancestors were born or married, records are missing. This makes it difficult to link them to earlier generations and connect the different lineages.

By contrast, only one Briese family (the Jindera Brieses) appear in the Czerniejewo church

records (1780-1903)<sup>10</sup>. The death of the earliest ancestor of this line, Michael Briese, is recorded, but his birth place (ca 1738) is not indicated. Church records from the Lueben Evangelical Parish indicate that the name Michael was common amongst Briese families in the Deutsch Krone area in the 1700s. This provided very circumstantial evidence that a Briese family may have moved to Czerniejewo from Deutsch Krone in the early or mid-1700s. As will be discussed below, genetic studies confirmed this to be the case.

A Y-DNA study<sup>11,12</sup> was started to see whether genetics could shed light on the inter relationships of these five families, as well as Briese families that emigrated to North America. Y-DNA is inherited on the male line and, as such, it mimics the descent of a surname. Relationships can be determined by the pattern of shared DNA mutations and the age of different lines of descent can be estimated from the number of mutations. Details of these analyses are given in another paper<sup>13</sup>. Male descendants of four of the five emigrant Briese families provided DNA for testing. Unfortunately, the Melbourne Brieses could not be included in this study as there are no surviving male descendants.

The results showed that the four remaining Briese families shared a common ancestor who lived around the 16<sup>th</sup> century. Interestingly, when North American Briese families were tested, all eight plus the Australian families shared an even more distant ancestor, who lived around the end of the 15<sup>th</sup> century. From the information available so far, his descendants split into two lines, one centred on the Landsberg region and the other on the nearby Deutsch Krone region of Prussia. The Briese surname proliferated in Deutsch Krone and the Briese Surname Project database<sup>14</sup> lists almost 700 Briese births up to 1900.

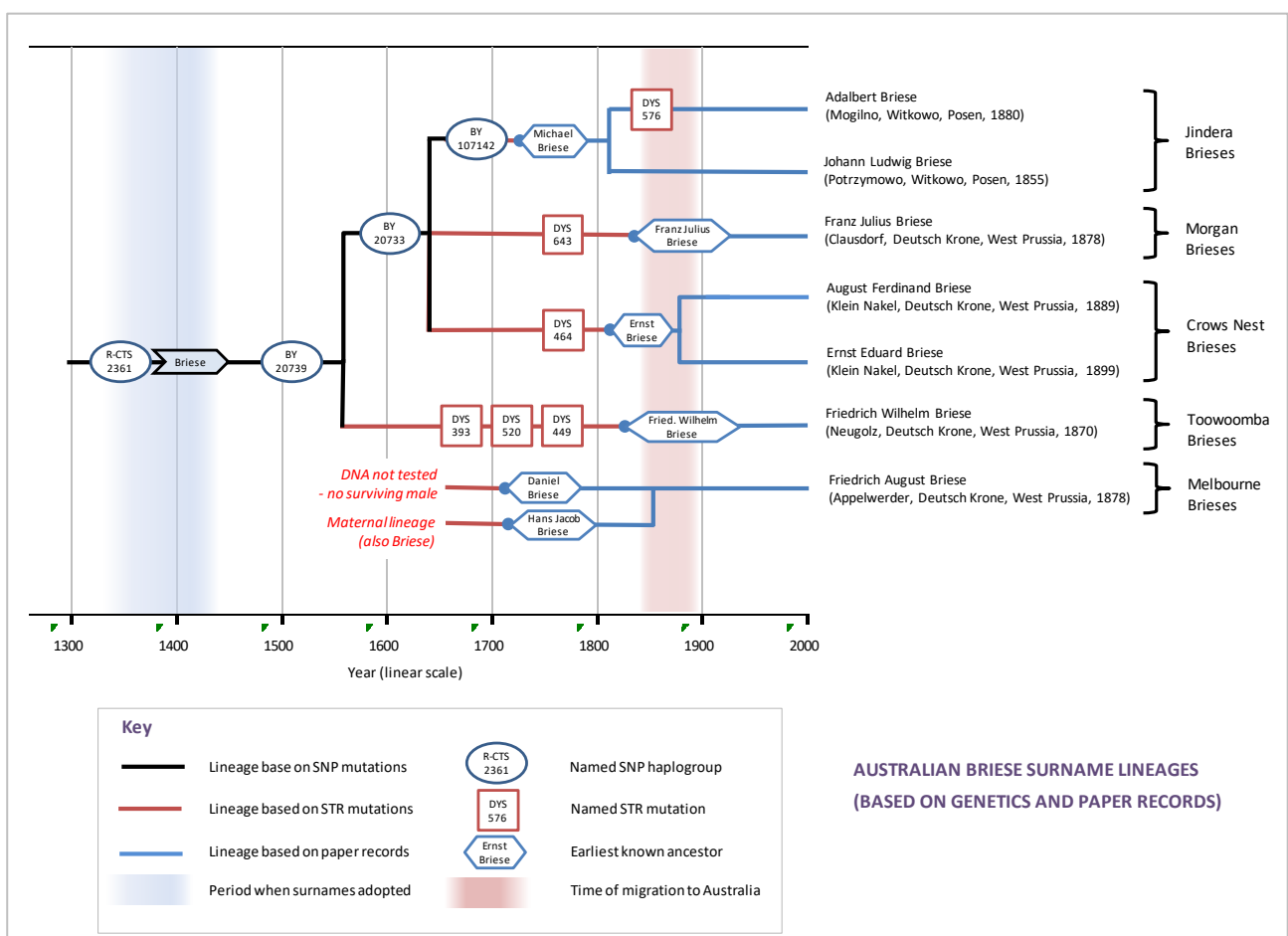
The four Australian Briese families are linked to this Deutsch Krone cluster (see Fig. 2). Y-DNA

data indicates that the Toowoomba Brieses separated from the others first, during the 16<sup>th</sup> century (i.e. ca 12-14 generations ago). Not long after, during the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the other three lineages (Morgan, Crows Nest and Jindera) also diverged. Thus, while it is now clear that these four Australian Brieese families are descended from the same ancestor, this is a distant relationship.

While the Melbourne Brieese lineage could not be DNA-tested, for want of a male descendant, the fact that they came from the Deutsch Krone area, strongly suggests they also share this ancestor. As

mentioned above, all 12 Brieese families tested that had emigrated to parts of the New World from here have a common ancestor.

Interestingly, the Jindera Brieses came from the Witkowo region province in Posen, some distance away from Deutsch Krone. The fact that they are genetically linked back to Deutsch Krone shows that there was a degree of internal movement of families within Prussia and neighbouring countries prior to overseas emigration.



**Fig. 2.** Hierarchical tree showing the genetic descent of the Brieese families that emigrated to Australia.

### Footnote

It is interesting to note how the pronunciation of the name has evolved following emigration from Prussia to Australia. The original German pronunciation of Brieese would have been bri:zə (breezer). In Australia, one lineage (Jindera) now pronounces the name bri:z (breeze), while the others (Morgan, Toowoomba and Crows Nest) pronounce it bri:zi (breezy).

## References

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2. [Biography of Johann Ludwig Briese.pdf \(gang-gang.net\)](#)
3. Short biography of Friedrich Wilhelm Briese needed
4. Father's names indicated on the death certificates
5. Short biography of Franz Julius Briese needed
6. Short biography of Friedrich August Briese needed
7. Short biography of August Ferdinand and Ernst Eduard Briese needed
8. [Evangelische Kirchenbücher Lüben \(Kr. Deutsch Krone\) - FamilySearch.org](#)
9. [Kirchenbücher Neugolz - Szukaj w Archiwach](#) Genealogical Society of Utah (1994)
10. Evangelische Kirche Schwarzenau (Kr. Witkowo) Kirchenbuch, 1780-1903 (microfilm)
11. [Briese DNA Surname Study - familytreedna.com/public/briese/](#)
12. [Briese Phylogenetic Analysis – genetic genealogy \(one-name.net\)](#)
13. [Briese Surname Lineages – genetic genealogy \(one-name.net\)](#)
14. [Briese Surname Project \(one-name.net\)](#)

## Appendix: Briese emigrants and the first generation of their families

The family details below are only as accurate as the information available. If there are errors or additional information, please contact the author.

### Jindera Brieses

**(Johann Ludwig Briese – Potrzymowo, Posen)** - arrived on 19 December 1855 at Port Adelaide, South Australia, aboard the "Steinwaerder". In 1867 he and his family moved to Jindera, New South Wales.

1-Johann Ludwig Briese b. 20 Oct 1823, Potrzymowo, Posen, d. 1 Jan 1911, Jindera, New South Wales (parents: Christoph Briese / Katherine Steinke)

+Johanne Dorothea Bartsch b. 23 Jan 1835, Saerka near Bautzen, Saxony, d. 5 Jan 1916, Jindera, New South Wales

2-Anna Juliane Amalie Briese b. 4 Jan 1860, Eden Valley, South Australia, d. 11 Jan 1951

2-Auguste Louise Johanne Briese b. 25 Mar 1861, Eden Valley, South Australia, d. 9 May 1867

2-Friedrich Wilhelm Briese b. 14 Apr 1863, Eden Valley, South Australia, d. 22 Feb 1902

2-Christiane Emilie Briese b. 2 Aug 1865, Eden Valley, South Australia, d. 14 Jan 1956

2-Anna Johanne Emma Briese b. 12 Dec 1867, Jindera, New South Wales, d. 5 Jun 1945

2-Hermine Bertha Briese b. 21 May 1870, Jindera, New South Wales, d. 1936

2-Johann Gottlieb Ludwig Briese b. 11 Feb 1873, Jindera, New South Wales, d. 16 Jul 1967

2-Theodor Ernst August Briese b. 1 Apr 1875, Jindera, New South Wales, d. 19 Dec 1958

**.. and his nephew (Adalbert Gottfried Briese - Wiecanowo, Mogilno, Posen)** – who arrived in 1880 at Melbourne, Victoria, aboard the "Potosi" to join his uncle in Jindera. He married

2-Adalbert Gottfried Briese b. 8 Oct 1855, Wiecanowo, Mogilno, Posen, d. 20 Aug 1920 (parents: Johann Gottlieb Briese / Wilhelmine Koerth, uncle Johann Ludwig Briese (see above))  
married Christiane Emilie Briese (see above)

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## Toowoomba Brieses

**(Friedrich Wilhelm Briese - Neugolz, Deutsch Krone, Westpreussen)** – arrived 5 Nov 1870 at Moreton Bay, Queensland, aboard the “Humboldt”.

1-Friedrich Wilhelm Briese b. 13 Feb 1838, Neugolz, Deutsche Krone, Westpreussen d. 7 Jul 1926 Toowoomba, Queensland (parents: unknown)

+Emilie Auguste Salge b. 09 Apr 1841, Clausdorf, Deutsch Krone, Westpreussen, d. 24 Jul 1924

2-Johann Gottlieb Briese b. 8 Jan 1866, Neugolz, Deutsche Krone, Westpreussen, d. 27 Mar 1949

2-Auguste Mathilde Briese b 23 Aug 1869, Neugolz, Deutsch Krone, Westpreussen, d. 14 Dec 1935

2-August Friedrich Briese, b. 6 Sep 1874, Toowoomba, Queensland, d. 30 Jul 1924

... also on board were:

1-August Friedrich Wilhelm Briese b. 1838, Deutsch Krone, Westpreussen, d. 17 Dec 1910, Toowoomba, Queensland (father: Martin Briese)

married Barbara Betzel in 1894 (no descendants)

... and

1-Emma Ernestine Henriette Briese b. 1850, Clausdorf, Deutsch Krone, Westpreussen, d. 1950 (father: Friedrich Briese) married Gustav Schimming in 1871

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## Crows Nest Brieses

**(August Ferdinand Briese - Klein Nakel, Deutsch Krone, Westpreussen)** – arrived 15 Sep 1889 at Brisbane, Queensland, aboard the “Quetta”.

1-August Ferdinand Briese b. 21 Apr 1861, Klein Nakel, Deutsch Krone, Westpreussen, d. 21 Dec 1943, Crows Nest, Queensland (parents: Ernst Briese / Wilhelmine Pacholke))

+Anna Maria Stark b. 1868, d. 1944

2-Augusta Pauliene Briese b. 2 Aug 1889 (at sea), d. 13 Aug 1962

2-Maria Olga Briese b. 14 Sep 1890, Crows Nest, Queensland, Australia, d. 10 Feb 1917

2-Heinrich Gustav Briese b. 31 May 1892, Crows Nest, Queensland, Australia, d. 9 Nov 1972

2-Johannes Carl Briese b. 7 Jan 1894, Crows Nest, Queensland, Australia, d. Sep 1978

2-Anna Maria Magdalena Briese b. 12 Aug 1895, Crows Nest, Queensland, Australia, d. 25 Apr 1981

2-August Ferdinand Briese b. 14 Sep 1897, Crows Nest, Queensland, Australia, d. 31 Jul 1987

2-Wilhelm Eduard Briese 26 May 1899, Crows Nest, Queensland, Australia, d. 15 Jun 1977

2-Hermann Ernst Briese b. 26 May 1901, Crows Nest, Queensland, Australia, d. 15 Apr 1966

2-Walter Johann Briese b. 5 Nov 1902, Crows Nest, Queensland, Australia, d. 13 Sep 1964

2-Alfred Briese b. 7 Dec 1906, Crows Nest, Queensland, Australia, d. 1928

2-Elsie Briese b. 7 Dec 1906, Crows Nest, Queensland, Australia, d. 3 Oct 1968

2-Ernst Briese b. 30 May 1908, Crows Nest, Queensland, Australia, d. 2 Jan 1985

2-Ruby Briese b. 1911, Crows Nest, Queensland, Australia, d. 2008

... and his brother

**(Ernst Eduard Briese - Klein Nakel, Deutsch Krone, Westpreussen)** – arrived 30 September 1899 at Brisbane, Queensland, aboard the “Duke of Fife”.

1-Ernst Eduard Briese b. 10 Sep 1863, Klein Nakel, Deutsch Krone, Westpreussen, d. 11 Oct 1940, Douglas, Queensland, Australia (parents: Ernst Briese / Wilhelmine Pacholke)

+Wilhelmine Louise Wolter b. 1 Jun 1866, d. 1905

2-Wilhelmine Augusta Emilie Briese b. 25 Sep 1891, Klein Nakel, Deutsch Krone, Westpreussen, d. Jun 1923

2-Paul Ernst Eduard Briese b. 1894, Klein Nakel, Deutsch Krone, Westpreussen, d. 31 May 1975

2-Emma Wilhelmine Henriette Briese b. 4 Aug 1898, Klein Nakel, Deutsch Krone, Westpreussen, d. Sep 1982

2-Auguste Pauliene Briese b. 11 Aug 1900, Douglas, Queensland, Australia, d. 2 Nov 1921

2-Martha Emilie Briese b. 11 Aug 1900, Douglas, Queensland, Australia, d. 1 Jul 1974

2-Ernst Heinrich Briese b. 25 Dec 1901, Douglas, Queensland, Australia, d. 9 Sep 1902

2-Gustav Heinrich Briese b. 29 Apr 1905, Douglas, Queensland, Australia, d. 1 May 1905

+Agnes Anna Hartwig (nee Polzin) b. 1860, d. 15 Aug 1938, Douglas, Queensland, Australia

### ... and sister

**(Bertha Louise Briese - Klein Nakel, Deutsch Krone, Westpreussen)** – arrived 25 Jun 1884 in Queensland, aboard the “Duke of Westminster”.

1-Bertha Louise Briese b. 6 Nov 1858, Klein Nakel, Deutsch Krone, Westpreussen, d. 14 Dec 1951 (parents: Ernst Briese / Wilhelmine Pacholke)

married Herman Hartwig in 1885

... also on board the “Duke of Westminster” was:

1-Marie Therese Franziska Steinmueller (nee Briese) b. 12 Sep 1849, Klein Nakel Deutsch Krone, Westpreussen, d. 17 Dec 1910 (parents: Ernst Briese / Johanne Ziehldorff)

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### Morgan Brieses

**(Franz Julius Briese - Klausdorf, Deutsch Krone, Westpreussen)** - arrived 25 May 1878 at Port Adelaide, South Australia, aboard the “Eduard”.

1-Franz Julius Briese b. 15 Mar 1849, Clausdorf, Deutsch Krone, Westpreussen, d. 25 Mar 1911, Morgan, South Australia (father: Wilhelm Gustav Briese?)

+Maria Wilhelmine Ernestine Briese b. 15 Jan 1846, Clausdorf, Deutsch Krone, Westpreussen, d. 08 Aug 1926

2-August Hermann Briese b. 22 Aug 1872, Clausdorf, Deutsch Krone, Westpreussen, d. 15 Jul 1936

2-Minna Maria Briese b. 21 Jul 1874, Clausdorf, Deutsch Krone, Westpreussen, d. 2 Oct 1940

2-Friedrich Karl Briese b. 10 Sep 1876, Clausdorf, Deutsch Krone, Westpreussen, d. 20 Jun 1932

2-Louise Emilie Emma Briese b. 27 Apr 1879, Lindley, South Australia, Australia, d. 10 Aug 1934

2-Ernestine Anna Bertha Briese b. 27 Apr 1879, Lindley, South Australia, Australia, d. 25 Jun 1942

2-Wilhelm Gustav Briese b. 7 Jul 1882, Lindley, South Australia, Australia, d. 14 Aug 1955

2-Johann Paul Briese b. 7 Jul 1882, Lindley, South Australia, Australia, d. 13 Jun 1966

2-Albert Julius Briese b. 19 Sep 1885, Lindley, South Australia, Australia, d. 4 Sep 1956

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### Melbourne Brieses

**(Friedrich August Briese - Appelwerder, Deutsch Krone, Westpreussen)** - arrived 25 May 1878 at Port Adelaide, South Australia, aboard the “Eduard”, then to Melbourne in Nov 1882 aboard the “Victoria”.

1-Friedrich August Briese b. 17 Mar 1831, Lueben, Deutsch Krone, Westpreussen d. 23 Apr 1915, Heidelberg, Victoria (father: Martin Briese?)

+Henriette Briese b. 19 Mar 1829, Klein Nakel, Deutsch Krone, Westpreussen <sup>a</sup>, d. 9 Aug 1907 (father: Michael Briese)

2-Emilie Briese b. 1857, Appelwerder, Deutsch Krone, Westpreussen, d. before 1874

2<sup>a</sup>-Wilhelm Julius Briese b. 19 Jun 1856, Appelwerder, Deutsch Krone, Westpreussen <sup>a</sup>, d. 4 Mar 1940

2<sup>b</sup>-Carl Friedrich Gotthilf Briese b. Nov 1858, Appelwerder, Deutsch Krone, Westpreussen, d. Feb 1917

2-Gustav Albert Briese b. 19 Dec 1860, Appelwerder, Deutsch Krone, Westpreussen, d. 18 Feb 1933

2-Hermann Paul Briese b. 23 Nov 1862, Appelwerder, Deutsch Krone, Westpreussen, d. 1 Apr 1956

2-Amalie Ottilie Bertha Briese b. 8 Feb 1865, Appelwerder, Deutsch Krone, Westpreussen, d. 1933

2-Elizabeth Auguste Briese b. 28 Apr 1867, Appelwerder, Deutsch Krone, Westpreussen, d. Jun 1942

2-Franz Briese b. 26 Mar 1869, Appelwerder, Deutsch Krone, Westpreussen, d. 3 May 1935

2-Emilie Briese b. 1874, Appelwerder, Deutsch Krone, Westpreussen, d. 1874

a = stayed in Germany and lived with his family in Berlin

b = emigrated to South Africa with his family in 1892

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