

*John Kelly, a 25 year-old English gardener and shepherd, arrived in Brisbane on 15 October 1865 aboard the Venilia accompanied by Susan (age 25), John (age 1?) and Elizabeth (an infant).*

*What can you discover about the lives of John, Susan, John and Elizabeth Kelly before they sailed from England and after they arrived in Queensland?*

## What was Susan Kelly’s maiden (or birth) surname?

The record created by the registration of a death (almost always) includes the name of the deceased at the time of death and the names of his or her parents. (Almost always, because sometimes the informant may not know the details of the parents.)

For a married woman, the surname of her father will have been her “maiden name” as previously recorded on the marriage certificate and the registration of birth for children of the marriage.

So identifying the record of death of Susan, the wife of John Kelly, in Queensland should provide her maiden surname which will allow us to search for records about her created in England before the family migrated.

It seems likely that Susan Kelly will be a fairly common name, but unless we carry out a search we cannot be certain.

<p>Given name(s)</p> <input type="text" value="susan"/>	<p>Family name</p> <input type="text" value="kelly"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Exact given name(s) match	<input type="checkbox"/> Exact family name match
<p>Refine results further:  <small>(Tip: You can refine your date ranges within these options)</small></p> <input type="checkbox"/> Births between 1829 and 1920 <input type="checkbox"/> Marriages between 1829 and 1945 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Deaths between 1829 and 1990</b>	
<p>Date of birth</p> <input type="text" value="dd/mm/yyyy or yyyy"/>	<p>optionally range to</p> <input type="text" value="dd/mm/yyyy or yyyy"/>
<p>Date of death</p> <input type="text" value="1865"/>	<p>optionally range to</p> <input type="text" value="1950"/>

- Search for her married name
- Ignore deaths before 1865 (she was alive when she arrived)
- Since she was 25 on arrival in 1865, by 1950 Susan would have been 110. We can ignore results after that.
- Since we are trying to find her parents’ names, do not type anything there.

That search produces just 8 results.

*Deaths of Susan Kelly in Queensland 1865 - 1950*

Surname	Given Names	Date	Register	Mother	Father	
Kelly	Susan	28/05/1894	1894/C/1068	-	James Landsdowne	
	Susan	19/04/1915	1915/B/21113	Harriett Hughes	William Breckels	
	Henrietta Susan	20/11/1946	1946/C/5575	Catherine Payne	John Joseph Moore	
	Mary Susan	12/04/1942	1942/B/56141	Catherine Dalton	Patrick ??	<i>unmarried?</i>
	Susan Harriet	19/09/1881	1881/C/2605	Rosetta Freshwater	John Kelly	<i>unmarried</i>
	May Susan Amelia Ellen	24/01/1884	1884/C/2097	Emma Gough	Michael William Kelly	<i>unmarried?</i>
	Susan	11/06/1896	1896/B/28818	Elizabeth Ready	John Kelly	<i>unmarried?</i>
Kealey	Susan	18/03/1868	1868/C/210	Ellen Whelan	George Kealy	<i>unmarried?</i>

One result shows what the (fuzzy) search has identified as a variant spelling of the surname - Kealy. A wildcard search (Ke\*) produces another 19 results of which Kenny (twice), and Keleher appear at least as plausible as Kealy.

Details of the father's name are provided in full for 7 of the 8 results. The other is incomplete with a given name only. The most likely inference is that his surname was omitted because it matched that of the deceased.

In 5 of the results, the surname of the deceased was the same as that of her father. This suggests that each of those Susans was unmarried.

It is most unlikely that any of these unmarried Susan Kellys could be the woman who arrived in Brisbane apparently married to John Kelly. But we can gather additional evidence to eliminate them from the search by demonstrating that they were either

- born after 1865, when we know Susan was in Brisbane as an adult, or
- present in Brisbane before 1865 and hence could not have migrated then.

In fact, four of the five women (in two cases, girls) fall into that first category:

Mary Susan                    b 1871 (Her father, Patrick, as expected was a Kelly)  
 Susan Harriet                b 1881  
 May Susan Amelia          b 1882 (Note: at her birth, mother was recorded as Emma Gooch)  
 Susan                            b 1896 (Note: at her birth, mother was recorded as Elizabeth Reidy)

Surname	Given Names	Date	Register	Mother	Father	
Kelly	Susan	28/05/1894	1894/C/1068	-	James Landsdowne	
	Susan	19/04/1915	1915/B/21113	Harriett Hughes	William Breckels	
	Henrietta Susan	20/11/1946	1946/C/5575	Catherine Payne	John Joseph Moore	
	Mary Susan	12/04/1942	1942/B/56141	Catherine Dalton	Patrick ??	29/03/1871 Birth 1871/C/482
	Susan Harriet	19/09/1881	1881/C/2605	Rosetta Freshwater	John Kelly	08/04/1881 Birth 1881/C/6472
	May Susan Amelia Ellen	24/01/1884	1884/C/2097	Emma <u>Gough</u>	Michael William Kelly	21/05/1882 Birth 1882/C/6525
	Susan	11/06/1896	1896/B/28818	Elizabeth <u>Ready</u>	John Kelly	09/06/1896 Birth 1896/B/58411
Kealey	Susan	18/03/1868	1868/C/210	Ellen Whelan	George Kealy	

There is no record of a birth in Queensland for Susan Kealy. The record of her death appears to be the only reference in Queensland to either of the named parents. It is therefore possible that she was an immigrant who died soon after arrival (less than 3 years from October 1865). However the significant difference in the surname makes this the least likely candidate and it can be set aside for the moment. .

That reduces the field of candidates to 3 Susans, each apparently having married a man named Kelly.

If we can locate a record showing that a marriage took place in Queensland, then that woman cannot be the Susan who migrated with a husband and two small children.

On 18 September 1888, Susan Breckels married Andrew Kelly (second son of John Kelly, Brisbane) at St Paul's Church Rockhampton. The bride's late father was described as being of Shoreditch, London.

There is no record of Henrietta Susan Moore marrying in Queensland, but soon after her death a Sydney paper reported an application for probate by Sidney Peter Moore in the estate of *Henrietta Susan Kelly formerly Henrietta Susan Finn formerly of Inverell In the State of New South Wales*. A search for a NSW marriage revealed that Henrietta married Edward William Finn at Inverell on 20 August 1875.

Although there is no record documenting how Henrietta Susan Finn became Henrietta Susan Kelly, there is ample evidence to show that it could not have been by marrying John Kelly in London before 1865.

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Kelly	Susan	28/05/1894	1894/C/1068	-	James Landsdowne	
	Susan	19/04/1915	1915/B/21113	Harriett Hughes	William Breckels	18/09/1888 Marriage 1888/C/1972
	Henrietta Susan	20/11/1946	1946/C/5575	Catherine Payne	John Joseph Moore	20/08/1875 NSW Marriage 2839/1975
	Mary Susan	12/04/1942	1942/B/56141	Catherine Dalton	Patrick ??	29/03/1871 Birth 1871/C/482
	Susan Harriet	19/09/1881	1881/C/2605	Rosetta Freshwater	John Kelly	08/04/1881 Birth 1881/C/6472
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Kealey	Susan	18/03/1868	1868/C/210	Ellen Whelan	George Kealy	<i>Unmarried ?</i>

IN the Will of HENRIETTA SUSAN KELLY (in the Will called 'Henrietta Susan Kelly formerly Henrietta Susan Finn') formerly of Inverell In the State of New South Wales, but latterly of Stanthorpe In the State of Queensland, Widow, deceased. [...] that Probate of the last Will and Testament (dated 15th February 1944) of the above named deceased may be granted to Sidney Peter Moore the sole Executor In the said Will named.

"Advertising" *The Sydney Morning Herald* 28 November 1946: 12

That leaves Susan Landsdowne as the last plausible candidate to be the wife of John Kelly and mother of his children John and Elizabeth.

Locating either a Queensland birth or marriage for Susan Landsdowne would disqualify her from consideration. In which case, the only reasonable inferences would be that "our" Susan Kelly died outside Queensland, or remarried, or both.

However, the search for a birth or marriage of Susan Landsdowne in Queensland returned no results. In fact, a search on the name Susan Lan\* (taking account of possible variant spellings of Lansdown, Landsdown, Landsdowne, etc) produced just 2 results - for Lane (b 1901) and Lang (m 1878).

On the basis of that evidence, we have reasonable grounds for believing that Susan Kelly who arrived in Brisbane in 1865 with husband John and their children was born Susan Landsdowne, the daughter of James Lansdowne. Unfortunately when she died in 1894, the informant (husband John?) did not provide the name of her mother.

## Next steps

Even without a name for her mother, we now have a reasonable basis to begin a search of English vital records for details of the marriage of John Kelly and Susan Landsdowne and the birth of their two immigrant children.

Or we could first search for the births of Queensland siblings for John (junior) and Elizabeth and the deaths (and possibly marriages) in Queensland of all the children.

At this stage, searching for the death of John Kelly (the father) in Queensland would be likely to produce a large number of possibilities with few grounds to differentiate among them.