**Origins of Vicars fortune**

**Sydney Mail, Wed 18 Jan 1922**

Sir William Vicars, Kt, C.B.E.

THERE is something of romance in the history of the Vicars family. John Vicars was a Scottish mill owner. Fire swooped down upon him and he lost everything. Not very good business, you will say, but things did not move so quickly in the early half of last century as they do to-day. He had insurance arranged, but it was while completion was slowly coming that the fire happened. So, in 1863, John Vicars came out to Australia, bringing with him his wife, his sons William and John, and two daughters. Attracted to the goldfields of Queensland he went to Rockhampton.

Thomas Barker, an Australian mill owner, went to Scotland a few years later than the one mentioned. He was on a leisurely tour. reader of Sir Walter Scott, and as an ardent admirer wished to go and see for himself the places mentioned in his writings. While in the Ochils, between Edinburgh and Glasgow, he wanted someone to furnish him with an itinerary, and by some means fell in with a young man … … … and they spent a holiday together. He was shortly returning to Australia; was there anything he could do for him? The man mentioned that he had a brother — a former mill owner — in Australia. If Mr. Barker were ever able to do his brother a good turn in the new land it would be sufficient reward.

Where was the brother? At Rockhampton. So they parted, and Barker left for Australia. He did not forget, and wrote to the address that had been given him. As a result, in 1871, John Vicars left Rockhampton and went to Sydney, taking his family with him.

Barker had a woollen mill in Sussex-street, Sydney. In 1873 it was burned down. When it was rebuilt John Vicars took a lease of it, and that was the beginning of the Vicars fortunes.

The vessel in which Sir William Vicars came out, a lad, to Australia was called the Star of England.