



Cont. from previous page

We know, from a letter written on the 14th April 1902 to his brother Menas on the island, that Emmanuel Kritharis lived in the area of Mortdale, in George Street, not far from Sydney in a house called "Athena Cottage".

It is possible that, before settling in Mortdale, Emmanuel Kritharis had lived for a short time else where in Australia. Due to the distance between Hurstville and Sydney, he had little contact with other members of the Greek Community and although well known, every one called him "the monk".

that Spyro Bennett was a native of Greece¹³ and that his wife Mary was the Executrix and Trustee of Emmanuel's Will, what we don't know is, who Spyro really was and what was the connection with Emmanuel?

On the 7th of March 1913 Emmanuel Kritharis must have felt that the end of his life was near and signed his Will. With this Will he instructed that "all personal estate to be converted into money and to pay the proceeds together with all monies ready or otherwise to the Consul for Greece acting in the City of Sydney aforesaid to be applied by him in the Relief of the wounded Greeks and in the carrying on of the present War in which Greece is now engaged such Greeks as aforesaid to have received their wounds in such war...".

Emmanuel Kritharis died only two days after he had signed his Will, on Sunday the 9th of March 1913.² The cause of his death was a) valvular decease and b) pulmonary congestion, as certified by his doctor, James McLeod, who last saw him a day earlier on the 8th of March 1913. The burial service was conducted by Rev. Seraphim Phokas. The certificate of his death and burial was signed by John Comino (Kominos) and Spyro Bennett.

His death was announced in the local paper "Propeller" on Friday 14th of March 1913 as follows: "Mr (George) Kritharis Emmanuel of Mortdale, died on Sunday last, Aged (80). The remains of the deceased were interred in the Greek portion of Sutherland Cemetery on Monday, a large number of fellow-countrymen and friends being present at the graveside".

The burial ground of Emmanuel Kritharis stayed undisturbed in Woronora General Cemetery for eleven years to the day until his friend Spyro Bennett died on Thursday 13th of

March 1924 and was buried there in the same grave. Spyros name was never inscribed there, nor did any one ever corrected the mistakes that the engraver made on the original monument. Spyro Bennett as mentioned, was a native of Greece and the husband of Mary Bennett, the Executrix and Trustee of Emmanuel's Will but more importantly a very close friend and I suspect a trusted partner for very many years.

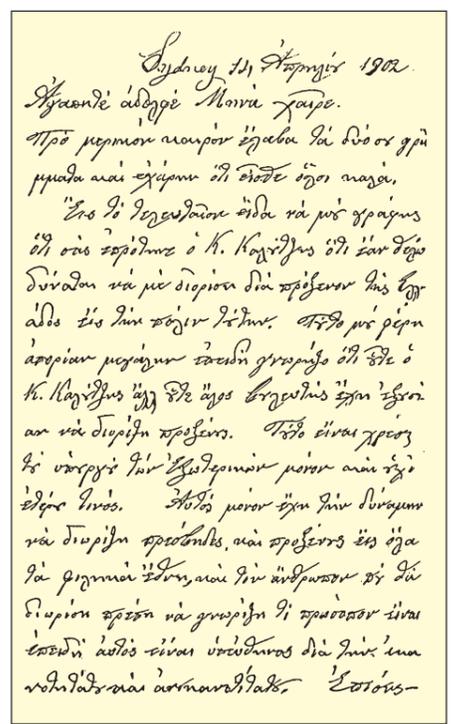
An agreement⁷ signed on the 25th of June 1913 between the Executrix of Kritharis' Will, Mary Bennett and his cousin George who lived at Katoomba N.S.W., before the Consul General for Greece, reveals that Spyro and Mary Bennett were to inherit properties and goods in Australia and George, all the property on the island Kythera. Details of the Will, were officially transferred to the registry of Potamos, Kythera, on 21 August 1913.⁸ This however is another story.

From the facts presented above we now know that:

- Emmanuel Kritharis was born on Kythera in 1832. 2, 3
He died on the 9th March 1913 at the age of eighty one (81) in Mortdale, N.S.W. 1, 2, 3
He was buried at Woronora Cemetery on Monday 10th March, grave no. 406. 1, 3, 12
Lived in N.S.W. for 52 years as a "Gentleman of independent means". 2
Kritharis' real estate was divided in to three equal parts. 7
Made a donation of over 30.000 franks to the war effort in Greece. 6, 9
Was never married and never became naturalized. 1, 2
He owned no business in Australia. 1, 4
If we allow one or two years until means of transportation was found and accept that he left Kythera at the approximate age of twenty, Emmanuel George Kritharis arrived here in 1854, a proposition that permits us to claim that he was the first Kytherian to reach Australia.

Sources and bibliography:

- State Government records.
Death Certificate No. 2366/1241.
Records of Woronora General Cemetery.
Valuer General's of N.S.W. records.



A hand written letter of Emmanuel Kritharis forwarded on the 14th April 1902 to his brother at Kythera

- Hand written letter by Emmanuel Kritharis to his brother Menas, 14 April 1902.
Kritharis' Will written and signed the 7 March 1913.
Agreement between Mary Bennett and George Kritharis signed 25 June 1913.
Transfer of details of Kritharis' Will to the Registry of Potamos, Kythera 21 August 1913.
'I Zoi en Afstralia' Sydney 1916.
'Australians and Greeks' Vol. I. Hugh Gilchrist. 1997.
Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of Australia Directory 1993.
'Propeller' Hurstville's local newspaper 1913
'Kythiraiki Idea' Jan- Feb. 2003.
Sydney Press 1840- 1914.
'A Shop Full of Dreams' Sydney 1993.

Peter Vanges Sydney 2005

DEATH REGISTERED IN NEW SOUTH WALES, AUSTRALIA. CERTIFIED COPY FURNISHED UNDER PART 8 OF THE REGISTRATION OF BIRTHS, DEATHS AND MARRIAGES ACT, 1995. Includes a table with columns for No., Date and place of death, Name and occupation, Sex and age, Cause of death, Name and occupation of father, Informant, Particulars of registration, When and where buried, Name and religion of Minister and names of witnesses of burial, Where born and how long in the Australasian Colonies or States, Place of marriage, age, and to whom, Children of marriage.