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Murder in the settlement

Federico Barilá tells us a little more about the Patagonian settlers, which included his ancestor Aaron Jenkins. Can you shed any more light on his family?

My great-great-grandfather Aaron Jenkins arrived when he was 35 years old on the 28th of June 1865, with 152 other Welsh that landed facing what is today the city of Puerto Madryn. The sea trip lasted two months.

The first few years were the hardest since the majority weren't farmers and the desert made the crops of wheat fail. They were very hungry and deprived.

It was in 1868 when Aaron Jenkins discovered the right form of irrigation, the ground diverting part of the water from the Chubut river. In March the first crop of wheat was made.

In January 1876 the Argentine government decided to appoint a civil authority in the colony that didn't seem to agree with the inhabitants, among other reasons, because of their nationality.

Antonio Oneto (Italian born) was appointed as the "national commissioner" and received instructions from Juan Dillon, from the Department of Immigration, to respect the autonomy of the settlement.

The Welsh were allowed self government through a council and a magistrate and judgment of the jury etc, but would report periodically to the authorities in Buenos Aires on the development of the colony.

These instructions were respected and complied with by Oneto, except in the case of a murder whose perpetrator was detained and judged by the settlers and sent (for petition of the commissioner) to Buenos Aires where it had to be judged for official request. In less than three years the murderer was free and was able to return to the Chubut valley.

Oneto stayed until April 1879 and was succeeded in provisional form by Petit Murat in 1879, during the period of the assassination of one of the most popular colonists, Aaron Jenkins, at the hand of a Chilean.

Before the passivity of the Argentine authorities, the Welsh decided to capture and kill the murderer and thus, since then, according to reports, they were never bothered by the "mixed race Indian-Argentines that frightened the area.

Aaron Jenkins is buried in the cemetery in Gaiman.

Aaron (35) and Rachel (32) Jenkins were from Mountain Ash and they had two children, James (2) and Richard (1).

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My intention is to find relatives of Aaron Jenkins in Wales. I thank you for your help.



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- Pontio: Dim prif weithredwr

Federico originally wrote to us in Spanish, so here's the original:

Historia de Aaron Jenkins, Mi tatarabuelo lleg a los 35 años de edad un 28 de julio de 1865, junto a otros 152 galeses que desembarcaron frente a lo que es hoy la ciudad de Puerto Madryn, el viaje dur dos meses.

Los primeros años fueron muy duros, ya que la mayora no eran agricultores y el desierto hacia fracasar las cosechas de trigo: Pasaron mucha hambre y privaciones, corria el año 1868 cuando Aaron Jenkins encontr la forma de irrigar el suelo desviando parte del agua del ro Chubut, haciendo en marzo la primer cosecha de trigo.

En enero de 1876 el gobierno argentino decidi nombrar a una autoridad civil en la colonia que no pareci ser del agrado de sus habitantes, entre otras razones, debido a su nacionalidad (10). Antonio Oneto, italiano de nacimiento, fue nombrado "comisionado nacional" y recibí instrucciones de Juan Dillon, del Departamento de Inmigracin, en el sentido de respetar la autonoma del asentamiento -su autogobierno a través de un consejo y un magistrado, de los juicios por jurado, etc.- e informar periodicamente a las autoridades en Buenos Aires sobre el desarrollo de la colonia. Estas instrucciones fueron respetadas y escrupulosamente cumplidas por Oneto, excepto en el caso de un asesinato cuyo autor fue detenido y juzgado por los colonos y enviado -por peticin del comisionado- a Buenos Aires donde deba ser juzgado por una instancia superior. En menos de tres años el homicida estaba en libertad y de vuelta en el valle del Chubut.

En 1879 Asesinato del colono Aarn Jenkis Oneto se mantuvo en su cargo hasta abril de 1879 y fue sucedido en forma provisional por Petit Murat durante cuyo mandato se produjo el asesinato por la espalda de uno de los más populares colonos, Aaron Jenkins, a manos de un chileno. Ante la pasividad de las autoridades argentinas, los galeses decidieron capturar y matar al asesino y as, desde entonces, segn los informes, nunca más volvieron a ser molestados por los "mestizos indio-argentinos" que atemorizaban la zona (11). Aaron Jenkins está enterrado en el cementerio de GAiman.

Aaron(35) and Rachel(32) JENKINS from Mountain Ash and their children James(2) and Richard(1).

Mi intencin es encontrar familiares de Aaron Jenkins en Gales, agradeceré vuestra ayuda.

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