

BRERETON FAMILIES OF IRELAND

In Search of My Irish Ancestors (Volume 3)

By

Faye Brereton-Goodwin, Canada



One Irish Brereton Crest - a demi-unicorn, collared

*Researched and written by Faye Brereton-Goodwin - email contact@breretonhistory.ca
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BRERETONS OF PENNSYLVANIA

Descendants of Andrew Brereton of Vicar of Pierstown Landy (1643-1695)

In the publication *Biographical Annals of Franklin County, Volume I* there is a fairly detailed history of this family. The publication, which is undated (however appears to be very old) contains geological records of representative families including many of the early settlers and biographical sketches of prominent citizens. It identifies Reverend Andrew Brereton (MA 1660 Trinity College) and his third wife Mary as the parents of Thomas Brereton, merchant, of Dublin and Balbriggan, near Balrothery. The author has only identified the first spouse and children of Reverend Andrew. However, it appears quite possible that the aforementioned Thomas of Dublin was the father of this Pennsylvania line.

Andrew Brereton¹ who died 22 July, 1690 has also been identified as being *in descent from Sir William Brereton of Brereton, Malpas Castle, Cheshire, and Ireland and his wife Alice Savage*. Henry Brereton of Loughthoge, grandson of Sir William and Alice Brereton had a son Andrew of Philipstown and Killavowle, Ireland. He was a Captain during the Rebellion of 1641 and along with his brother William purchased the Philipstown property. In this history, I have shown Andrew as being without issue. Some have been suggested that Andrew of the Pennsylvania line was the son of William Brereton and Duncea Chichester. However the date of attendance at Trinity College and his date of death does not support this. Another possibility is the natural son of Andrew Brereton of Moyle (not the son of his wife Catharine Fitz-Simons-Brereton). Again the dates do not support the Franklin County information. This Andrew, who married Catherine Lynch of The Knock County Meath, has not been followed.

Additional hints regarding the family lineage can be found in *Miscellanea Genealogie and Heraldica*, dated 1888. In this volume Thomas Brereton of Yonkers, New York, identifies Thomas Brereton, Gent of Dublin (living there in 1724) as leasing a dwelling on Abbey Street, Dublin to Edmond MacQuire, Gent. He also states that Thomas Brereton who sailed on the *Betty* was a son of Thomas of Dublin. The reason given for the statements by Thomas of Yonkers was - he was searching for his ancestors. He also stated that he had the family's seal - namely the Brereton Arms: argent, 2 bars sable. With the crest: out of a ducal coronet - bears head muzzled.

In this history, the author has followed Andrew Brereton, Vicar of Pierstown Landy (1643-1695), the son of Rector Robert Brereton of Tymoge and grandson of John Brereton of Rahamargue, and Great Grandson of Sir William. While the date are not identical to those provided in the Franklin County Volume, Andrew did attend Trinity College - graduating in 1661 and he is shown as dying in 1695 (not 1690).

Unfortunately, without further information regarding Andrew Brereton's third wife we cannot follow the descendants with any certainty. Consequently, this history begins with Thomas Brereton who married Lucy (who resided at 105 Upper Leeson Street, Dublin). They had issue:

1) *Mary Brereton died unmarried*

2) *Thomas Brereton (baptised 11 June 1720), of Dublin married Sarah Marshall*

¹ On another web site I found a family tree for this line which supports the Franklin County record. It went further and identified William Brereton and Duncea of Chichester as the parents of Rev. Andrew. It continued with that line as outlined earlier in this history. I have not made this connection on paper as other records identify only two sons William and Henry Brereton who married the Blount sisters. However, there appears to be sufficient evidence that the family is correct. This connection would make his a great-grandson of William Brereton and Anne Boothe.

1) MARY BRERETON

In Mary Brereton's Will is still preserved ² in the family. She left £500 to be divided between her brother's two children with the stipulation that *in case either of them should die, £250 to the survivor, which sum to be divided and disposed of in the most advantageous manner for their benefit, but not to be paid into the hands of their mother.*

2) THOMAS BRERETON OF DUBLIN^{3 4} (31 May 1720 – 15 November 1787) *married Sarah Marshall*

Thomas, a Sea Captain, sailed from Liverpool in 1752, in command of the privateer *Betty* which was owned by John Walker a merchant of Liverpool and member of the firm of *Gildart & Company*. The *Betty* was a ship of about three hundred and fifty tons burden. It carried twelve guns of nine and six pounds weight besides swivel guns. It was manned by forty men. In 1763, Captain Brereton was in Baltimore, Maryland, U.S.A: this was not his first time in Maryland.

The first issue of *The Maryland Journal and Advertiser* (later renamed the Baltimore American) dated Friday 20 August, 1773 shows Thomas as still following a nautical vocation.

He was a broker, warehouseman, ship chandler and colonial correspondent of *Gildart & Company*. Letters addressed to him during this period, though entirely devoted to business show him to have had the confidence of his associates who sought his counsel and advice on all sorts of matters. He was a Notary Public of Baltimore and his notarial seal displayed the Brereton coat of arms. This seal has been preserved by his descendants. On several occasions he acted as executor for various estates and once for an estate in which Washington was interested. Washington's replies are treasured as precious heirlooms of the family.

On 26 February, 1781 Thomas married Sarah Marshall, daughter of Major Thomas John Marshall⁵, a Revolutionary officer who served in Colonel Gist's Regiment of Maryland Volunteers. Captain Brereton⁶ died on 15 November, 1787 at his residence, *Fell's Point*, Baltimore, Maryland, U.S.A. His widow Sarah Brereton married William Ross of Bladensburg, Maryland, U.S.A. Her second marriage was childless and she died at Bladensburg in 1813. A miniature portrait of Sarah as a young woman presents her as handsome with brown hair and eyes, with arched eyebrows. Thomas Brereton and Sarah left issue:

2.1) Thomas Brereton of Baltimore, Maryland, U.S.A (born 1785)

*2.2) John Andrew Brereton of Baltimore, Maryland, U.S.A. (15 April 1787 – 21 April 1839)
married Amelia Lovering*

² This information was collated by Thomas J. Brereton of Chambersburg, Pennsylvania from research conducted by Charles A. Hapin, Junior.

³ Family chart reference 882

⁴ This narrative was originally found at a different source, however this detail and more is also included in the Franklin County book.

⁵ His family came from Northampton, Virginia. Major Thomas was a descendant of John Marshall, who had sailed from London in 1635 and received a grant of a plantation on Allen Creek in that year. In 1729 Major Marshall inherited a plantation on Occohannock Creek, which is the boundary between Acomack and Northampton Counties into which the Virginia Peninsula is divided.

⁶ His widow Sarah Brereton married William Ross of Bladensburg, Maryland. Her second marriage was childless and she died at Bladensburg in 1813. A miniature portrait of Sarah as a young woman presents her as handsome with brown hair and eyes, with arched eyebrows.

2.1) THOMAS BRERETON (born 1785)

Thomas Brereton was born in Baltimore, Maryland, U.S.A. He was an Ensign in the United States Navy but died a young man.

2.2) DR. JOHN ANDREW BRERETON⁷ (15 April 1787 – 21 April 1839) *married Amelia Lovering* (11 August 1793 – circa 1848)

The younger son John Andrew Brereton was born in Baltimore on 15 April, 1787, a few months before his father's death. He was brought up at Bladensburg, Maryland along with Amelia Lovering⁸, a young girl who had been virtually adopted by his mother, the now Mrs. Sarah Ross.⁹ John Brereton graduated in medicine and surgery from the Maryland College of Physicians in 1808 and was appointed a Surgeon in the United States Navy three years later. He served throughout the War of 1812 in the frigate *Congress*. He was lame from infancy, apparently having been thrown over a fence by an intoxicated nurse who allowed him to remain there all night. This resulted in a permanent injury to his hip. John fell in love with his childhood companion and on 14 December 1814, he married Amelia Lovering¹⁰. Following their marriage Dr. John Brereton was stationed for many years in Washington D.C. where his botanical research gave him considerable celebrity. He published a catalogue of the flora of the District of Columbia, and edited the first botanical magazine to be published in the United States. He was prominent amongst early phrenologists¹¹ and *stood high* in Freemasonry. Later he was stationed at Fort Independence, Boston Harbour for some time prior to his death, which occurred at Charlestown, Massachusetts, on 21 April, 1839. By one who styled himself *his messmate and very particular friend* Dr. Brereton was described as *a gentleman of unblemished reputation, possessing a high sense of honour, a generous and noble heart, of high standing in his profession, much respected and esteemed by his brother officers*. Amelia Brereton was the only one of William Lovering's children whose descendants remained in America. Her half-brother Colonel Reid, an officer in the service of the East India Company died in Calcutta about 1840, severing the link of these Breretons with the home country. In her widowhood, William Lovering's third wife Susan White-Lovering lived with her step-daughter Amelia Brereton and her husband John Brereton. When Amelia died at Baltimore, Susan left her property to her step-grandchildren. There were five children of John and Amelia who survived infancy:

2.2.1) Captain Thomas John Brereton¹² (13 August 1822 – 18 September 1870) *married Amelia Melizena*

Denny Brereton (April 1832 – August 1898)

Henry Brereton

Mary Brereton

⁷ Family chart reference 1080

⁸ It was after the death of William Lovering's second wife that his daughter Amelia was placed in the care of Mrs. Ross, the widow of Captain Brereton; Lovering then returned to England. After an interval of eighteen months Lovering married a third wife, Susan White. Upon Lovering's death he was buried in Baltimore.

⁹ The story is told that General Washington, at a point in their childhood, during a visit to their mother, dangled both children on his knee.

¹⁰ Amelia, a Londoner by birth (from an Essex family) was christened in St. Paul's Cathedral. Her father William Lovering brought her to America at the age of one month. He was a distinguished architect and designed many of the early buildings in Washington, District of Columbia, USA

¹¹ Phrenology, from Greek: *mind and knowledge*, was especially popular from about 1810 until 1840. Following the materialist notions of mental functions originating in the brain, phrenologists believed that human conduct could best be understood in neurological rather than abstract terms. It is now considered a pseudoscience.

¹² Family chart reference 1270

*Eugenia Brereton**Emily Brereton***2.2.1) CAPTAIN THOMAS JOHN BRERETON** ¹³ (13 August 1822 – 18 September 1870)*married Amelia Melizena Denny*

Thomas was born in Washington, District of Columbia. On 22 August, 1822 entered the Boston Latin School and remained there until his father's death when the family moved to Washington: his mother had inherited a small property from her step-mother. Shortly afterwards he was appointed to a cadetship at West Point, by President Fillmore, at the request of General Towson, a devoted friend of his father. When Cadet Brereton graduated, the General presented him a gilded sword (which had saved his own life in battle): he was third among the honour men of the famous class of 1843. Thomas John Brereton first was assigned to a regiment of field artillery, but soon after was transferred to the Ordnance Corps in recognition of his high standing in his class.

When the Mexican War broke out he was ordered to the frontier and served on General Taylor's staff at the *Battle of Palo Alto* and *Resaca de la Palma* where he was brevetted *for conspicuous and meritorious bravery on the field of battle*. Despite his youth he was placed in Command of Fort Brown, the base where all the ordnance supplies for the armies, operating under General.

Upon returning to the United States he served at the *Arsenal of Frankfort, Allegheny and Mobile*. He then obtained a year's furlough and during this time he served in the capacity of chief engineer, constructed the *Allegheny Valley Railroad* as far as Kittanning, Pennsylvania. He later served as President of the Railroad. On 12 October, 1854 he married Amelia Melazena Denny, daughter of the Honourable Harmar Denny of Pittsburgh, one of the leading Pittsburgh families. Harmar's father, Jamor Ebenezer Denny was a Revolutionary Officer, a member of the Order of Cincinnati and the first Mayor of Pittsburgh. His mother Nancy Wilkins was a sister of the Hon. William Wilkins, United States Senator, Secretary of War and Minister of Russia. Mrs. Brereton's mother, Mrs. Elizabeth Denny was a daughter of General James O'Hara¹⁴ who was educated in France and became an ensign in the *Coldstream Guards*.

In 1858, Captain Brereton resigned from the Army so he could manage the large estate of Mrs. Denny. He also entered the oil business distilling petroleum from coal. He was an early adherent of the *Oxford Movement* in the American Church, a vestryman, churchwarden and member of the standing committee of his diocese. He died at Yonkers, New York on 18 September, 1870 leaving issue:

2.2.1.1.) Thomas John Brereton married Frances Maud Mary Lindsay

2.2.1.2) William Denny Brereton married Helen Hyde

Henry Edward Harmer Brereton

Denny Brereton (born 19 November 1876)

¹³ Family chart reference 1195

¹⁴ General O'Hara came to America as a young man, fought in the Revolution and became Quartermaster of the United States Army. By judicious investments he amassed a considerable fortune.

2.2.1.1) THOMAS JOHN BRERETON¹⁵ of Chambersbury, Pennsylvania, U.S.A *married Frances Maud Mary Lindsay*

Thomas, the elder son, graduated from Columbia University and followed his into the civil engineering field. He married Frances Maud Mary Lindsay, daughter of William Henry Lindsay of Dublin. Thomas was interested in family history and in 1900 wrote to his kinsman, Major William Robert Brereton of New Abbey:

I am sending you a photograph of four young cadets of the Brereton family, my sons, as a gentle reminder of your promise made long years ago to send me your likeness as the head of the family. It may add some interest to this photograph to say something of the blood which flows in the veins of these little chaps, and of which they have just cause to be proud. Their maternal grandmother was Jane Seton, descended in the eldest line and as far as I know the last of it, from the Seton Family¹. Mrs. Jane Seton Lindsay was the niece of Archbishop Magee of Dublin and a cousin of Archbishop Magee of York, in his time reputed the greatest preacher in England. On my side, besides the Breretons, they are descended from Sir John Denny who, with his eldest son, was killed at Agincourt. Their tomb and arms were recently shown in the Chapel of St. Denys at that place. Through their great-great-grandfather they descend from the O'Haras of Tyrawley who trace their ancestry to the ancient Celtic Kings of Ulster. It is a fact therefore that the best blood of the three kingdoms flows in them.

Thomas John Brereton died at Chambersburg on 3 February 1929, leaving issue:

2.2.1.1.1) Thomas Eugene Lindsay Brereton Landsown, Pennsylvania, U.S.A. (1885-1969)

P 2.2.1.1.2) Seton Lindsay Brereton (1889-1931)

P2.2.1.1.3) Harmar Brereton

P2.2.1.1.4) Denny Brereton

2.2.1.1.1) THOMAS EUGENE LINDSAY BRERETON¹⁶

Thomas, eldest son and representative of this branch had no surviving children. Consequently, his nephew Robert Marshal Brereton (born in 1923) the only son of his brother, Seton Lindsay Brereton identified her mother as the daughter of Thomas Eugene Brereton and **Emma Oyler** and her (1889-1931) became Thomas Eugene's heir. Recently Sarah Brereton Shaw contacted the author and grandparents as Thomas and Frances Maud Mary Lindsay Brereton. Sarah also identifies her sister Jean Seton Shaw.

2.2.1.1.2) SETON LINDSAY BRERETON¹⁷

Seton had issue:

2.2.1.1.2.1 Robert Marshall Brereton

2.2.1.1.2.2 Amelia Brereton *(missionary service of the United States Episcopal Church)*

2.2.1.1.3) HARMAR BRERETON¹⁸ of Lake George, New York State, U.S.A

¹⁵ Family chart reference 1270

¹⁶ Family chart reference 1380

¹⁷ Family chart reference 1381

¹⁸ Family chart reference 1382

Harmar had a long career in New York State politics as a member of the State Legislature and Senate and he had business interests in the lumbering industry and died without issue in 1957 at the age of ninety-one.

2.2.1.1.4) DENNY BRERETON¹⁹ of Lake George & Greenwich, Connecticut, U.S.A. (29 November 1867–1953) *married Mary Whiteside (25 August 1877–15 June, 1962)*

Denny who had interests in real estate and banking married Mary Whiteside (25 August 1854 – 15 June 1962) in June 1902. They left issue:

2.2.1.1.4.1) Randle Brereton

Denny Brereton

2.2.1.1.4.2) Harmar Brereton (19 May 1909) married Eleanor Collins

2.2.1.1.4.1) RANDLE BRERETON

Randle Brereton of Pittsburgh, a graduate of Yale University, U.S.A became a Vice President of *Fidelity Trust Company*.

2.2.1.1.4.2) HARMAR BRERETON (born 19 May 1909) married Eleanor Collins

In July 1934, Harmar Brereton married Eleanor Collins (24 November, 1909 - 25 December 1982). They had issue:

Constance Brereton

Linda Brereton

Harmar Brereton, MD

Derek Pomeroy Brereton²⁰ PhD (born 1945) married first, Bonita Pacala and second Pamela Gay Newcomb

2.2.1.2) CAPTAIN WILLIAM DENNY BRERETON²¹ (died 1925) married Helen Hyde William entered Columbia University and in 1880 was appointed to West Point. However, owing to injuries received during athletics, William resigned soon afterwards. In 1886, he married Helen Hyde, daughter of an English landowner, Thomas Hyde, Justice of the Peace, Worcestershire and sister of Captain Walter Hyde of the Royal Navy.

William was engaged in business in San Francisco, California, USA until 1888, when he returned to Allegheny to attend to his mother's interests in the Denny estate.

When the Spanish War broke out in 1898, he enlisted in the 1st *Volunteer Cavalry (Rough Riders)* but in a few months the war was over. When their sons entered Annapolis, William and Helen moved to that town, where they lived until their death in 1925. They had issue:

2.2.1.2.1) Captain William Denny (Bill) Brereton (1887-1974) married Nancy Collins

¹⁹ Family chart reference 1383

²⁰ Derek and Pamela organized the Brereton Reunion in Cheshire, in 2001

²¹ Family chart reference 1271

2.2.1.2.2) General Lewis Hyde Brereton married first Helen Clason Willis,
married second Ivy V. Larkin and third Zena Groves

2.2.1.2.1) CAPTAIN WILLIAM DENNY (BILL) BRERETON²² (born 15 December, 1887)
married Nancy Collins

In 1904 William entered the Navy as a Midshipman and by 1913 was commissioned as a Lieutenant. He commanded torpedo boats and a gunboat in China; and in the First World War, a destroyer and a transport.

He married Nancy Collins (she died in 1953) and had issue, three daughters, all of whom married. Her obituary identified Nancy as the wife of Captain William D. Brereton United States Navy (retired) of Longfellow Road, Jamestown. She was born in Hanibal, Missouri, USA daughter of the late Francis R. And Aleen Harrison Collins. Her children were identified as Mrs. Robert D. Swezy of New Orleans, Mrs. Hamilton Robinson of Washington D.C. and Mrs. Thomas P. Cutler of Chestnut Hill, Mass. Though not fit enough for sea duty in World War II, he served for four years as Naval Attaché to the American Embassy in Buenos Aires, Argentina and subsequently was Chief of Staff at the Naval Shipyard at Norfolk, Virginia, U.S.A. In 1946, after 42 years of active duty, he was placed on the retired list.

2.2.1.2.2) LIEUTENANT GENERAL LEWIS HYDE BRERETON²³ (born 1890) married
first, Helen Clason Willis, second, Ivy V. Larkin and third Zena Groves

Lewis Hyde Brereton was born at Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, U.S.A. 21 June, 1890. His career was a most distinguished and unusual one: he served in all three of the regular services of the United States. He graduated at Annapolis in 1911 three years after his elder brother Bill, as an Ensign United States Navy, however, having a preference for the Army, in 1912, he transferred that summer and became one of the first American military aviators in these pioneer days.

During World War I he served in the Philippines and France, was shot down twice by the enemy, and survived. He was awarded many medals, including the *French Croix de Guerre* with four palms, and the *Legion of Honour*. Explaining the Distinguished Service Cross, he later said: *I was flying like hell to get home and a lot of Huns got in the way.* He served as Air Attaché at the American Embassy, Paris from 1919 to 1923 and subsequently at Brussels and Madrid. For ten years he was instructor at military schools, including the Air Tactical College (now the Air University) and the Command and General Staff school. He wrote the basic texts for direct support air action.

When clouds were gathering over America in the autumn of 1941 he was commanding General of the Third Air Force, a position to which he had been appointed that July. In October he was summoned to Washington and upon arrival General Marshall asked him - *when can you leave for the Philippines?* General MacArthur, with whom he had served in World War I, had selected him to command the Far East Air Force. Upon his arrival early in November, Lewis was received by MacArthur in his dressing gown, having just emerged from the bath. He slapped Brereton on the back, and threw his arm over his shoulders.

²² Family chart reference 1386

²³ Family chart reference 1387

Well Lewis, he said, I have been waiting for you. I knew war was coming, and am damned glad to see you. You have been the subject of considerable conversation between me and General Marshall and (Hap) Arnold (General Henry H. Arnold).

On December 8, about 4 a.m. on the morning Brereton's phone rang. He was told that Pearl Harbour had been bombed and America was at war. He fought through the bitter days of plane losses on the ground and in the air to overwhelming Japanese numbers. After three weeks of uneven battle, rather than lose his remaining *Fortresses*, he was ordered to proceed with his headquarters south to Java. There he sent them into brilliant but unavailing raids and battles over the Indies, Java Sea, and the Strait of Makassar. His fighter protection dwindled and almost vanished. In addition to running the U.S. Air Force he was appointed Deputy Commander-in-Chief of all the ABDACOM Air Forces (Australian, British, Dutch and American Command) and Deputy Chief of Air Staff under Wavell; however this set-up did not last for long. General Brereton wrote in his diary:²⁴ *Lembang, Java, 23 February, 1942. The last conference at ABDACOM was held today. The Governor General of the Netherlands East Indies announced that ABDACOM was dissolved and that the defense of the Netherlands East Indies had been assumed by the Dutch. I was surprised and pleased in view of my relations with General Wavell, when he asked me to walk to his quarters with him. He commended me very frankly and expressed the hope that I would assume Command of the Air Forces in India and Burma. This was the first time he had expressed any appreciation of what the American Air Force had done.*

It was decided that Brereton should fly to India to build up a force to strike at Japan through China, leaving General Brett to take the remaining American planes to Australia. General Brereton flew by night to Ceylon, where Wavell joined him. He wrote in his diary: *General Wavell, who had left India only two months previously, said to his deputy, General Sir Alan Hartly, Well, here I am home again like a bad penny. I personally refrained from speculating on my present worth. The Japanese had chased me out of the Pacific all the way from the Philippines to India, and I was pretty damn sore about it.*

Frankly stated, except for direst need, he would not commit his 10th Air Force to any piecemeal operations. He had had enough of sending insufficient forces into battle and henceforth insisted on building up a striking air force. He led effective raids on Japanese installations in the Andaman Islands and on Rangoon.

General Brereton got on well with the British, but clung fiercely to his Americanism. He commanded his secretary to fine him every time he used a non-American expression. *Right ho's* used to cost him a rupee a time. Then in June 1942 he received orders to proceed to the Middle East to take such heavy bombers as were available to assist Auchinleck. He was chosen because of his wide combat experience; Tobruk at that time was in a critical position. In August, at a luncheon in the British Embassy, Churchill told him: *I was in the President's Office the day it was decided to whistle you from India over here to the Middle East.* He added that he remembered about Brereton, because of my English name. That month Alexander took over Command of the Middle East.

In August 1945, General Brereton directed *Operational Tidal Wave*, the daring low level attack to destroy the Ploesti Oil Refineries in Rumania, without doubt the most difficult assignment ever given to an air force. The mission required the bombers to fly across the Mediterranean

²⁴ *The Brereton Diaries* by Lieutenant General Lewis H. Brereton, New York

and over the Balkan mountains to reach Ploesti, a record round trip of approximately twenty-four hundred miles. Situated in an inverted *U-shaped* valley thirty-five miles to the north of Bucharest, this was one of the most heavily defended targets in Europe. Results were extremely successful; sixty percent destruction was achieved putting a serious dent in German oil supply.

The German girl who popularized *Lillie Marlene* on the Berlin radio to the troops in the desert announced, *Fine job of Ploesti, Brereton, but you lost too many.* In September 1943, at the end of the *North African Campaign* General Brereton arrived in London to assume Command of the United States Air Force in Europe (the 9th), the biggest job of his career. On the following page is an excerpt from his diary:

CHEQUERS - 11 March, 1944.

Guest of the Prime Minister at Chequers, the only other guest being a relative. It was the Prime Minister's habit to invite the senior American Commanders to his home for dinner to get acquainted with them and, I judge, to see how they were getting on with their British opposite number. I have met Churchill several times, and he always seemed to remember me. I presume he was briefed beforehand. At any rate he greeted me with 'Hullo, Brereton' how are you and the Ninth Air Force? 'and then talked shop for a while. During the evening, interesting conversations were held on the Russian situation and its future possibilities, Anglo-American relationships, the effect of our bombing on French civilians, and the organization of the Ninth Air Force. He had an agile mind, and a live personality. After dinner we gathered in the private screening room to see a film entitled 'Demi-Paradise' with Laurence Olivier. Churchill walked out on the picture, muttering, 'This is nothing but Russian propaganda, let's go get a drink, Brereton'. We returned to his study and, over brandy and cigars, continued our talk.

In August 1944 General Brereton formed the first Allied Airborne Army with General Browning as his Deputy Commander. *General Eisenhower, he wrote, was very flattering in his remarks about why I was chosen, and told me my name had been approved on the high level - which means, I guess, Churchill and the President.*

Their first major operation was at Arnhem, on which the General observed: *I oppose any suggestion that the airborne operation in Holland was a failure. It was an outstanding success. We accomplished every mission assigned us in the original plan. However the combined airborne ground operation was not a complete success because the ground forces did not make contact at Arnhem on schedule. Brooke, later Lord Alanbrooke and then C.I.G.S said on congratulating him after the Rhine crossing: I realize that our contribution has necessarily been limited in quantity, and that owing to our inability to provide trained reinforcements rapidly for the First Airborne Division, we have latterly been able to put only one division at your disposal.....? The leadership which you have exercised with such sympathy and understanding has resulted in a most happy fusion of the airborne forces of our two nations, and has made them into one team in a manner which must be nearly unique in military history.*

As General Brereton was the only United States General Officer who participated in operations on all the major fronts, his diary is especially interesting. It is also almost unique in that he does not criticize other war leaders. Upon retirement in 1948, General Brereton was appointed Chairman of the Military committee to the United States Atomic Energy Commission.

General Brereton married three times. He and his first wife, Helen Clason Willis had two sons and a daughter. In 1931, he married Ivy V. Larkin and in 1946 he married Zena Groves, daughter of Colonel Bell of the Indian Army. He met Zena during wartime London, when she was a motor unit driver and Special Service volunteer.

*Brereton Route, Australia*²⁵

The Brereton Route is named for Major General Lewis H. Brereton the United States Eastern Air Force Commander General, who had arrived in Australia from Manila in mid-1941 to survey an aerial supply route across the Australian Continent to bolster his Philippines forces in the event of Japanese invasion. With the aid of RAAF field officers, the FEAF Commander designated a network of northern airstrips & supply bases across the outback of Australia and by November 1941, the aerial supply route was dubbed the *Brereton Route*. This route extended nearly 3600 miles from Brisbane to Java passing through Western Queensland, the Northern Territory and Darwin. The Corporal in charge of the refueling crew at Cloncurry in November 1942 described the Brereton Route as follows: *You won't have any trouble finding your way to Darwin. Just follow the trail of crashed Kittyhawks, you can't go wrong.*

Following is an excerpt from an article on Paul Irvin *Pappy* Gunn regarding *The Brereton Route* in Australia in WWII: *Fighter aircraft and light bombers, originally destined for the Philippines were diverted to Brisbane and Townsville. Once assembled, they would be flown west to Darwin (Base Section One). From Brisbane they would fly 400 miles due west to Charleville, than continue a further 550 miles to Cloncurry, still in Queensland. Aircraft assembled in Townsville would fly 400 miles directly to Cloncurry. The next leg was a 500 mile hop to Daly Waters in the Northern Territory and then finally the leg to Darwin. The following are details of 3 groups of aircraft that travelled to Darwin via Daly Waters:*

GROUP 1

In mid-February 1942, a group of 25 Kittyhawks left Amberley on their way to Perth to be partially disassembled and placed on ships for Java. Major Pell of the 33rd Provisional (Pursuit) Squadron led the second flight of 15 Kittyhawks. When they reached Port Pirie, Major Pell and his group of 15 Kittyhawks were diverted to Darwin for convoy escort duty to Timor. They were then to be ferried to Koepang in Java. One of his aircraft crashed while at Port Pirie, killing the pilot and another 4 unserviceable aircraft were left behind. Only 12 of the Kittyhawks made it to Daly Waters and of these only 10 made it to Darwin on 17 February, 1942.

GROUP 2

On Christmas Eve 1941, Paul Irving *Pappy* Gunn was ordered to fly a load of passengers from the Philippines to Australia. Gunn made it through to Brisbane. On 20 January, 1942, twenty

²⁵ Paul Legay Brereton, Australia told the author about this route in April 6, 2003 – this information can be accessed on Source Google. A son of Paul's grandfather's youngest brother Geoffrey Le Gay Brereton (named Robert Le Gay Brereton) was a fighter pilot in the war. He was shot down in a flying battle over the English Channel and killed in action 31st August 1944. His older brother John Le Gay Brereton, who became a Professor at Armidale University, New South Wales (died February 1976). He was also in the air force and he married an American lady in June 1944. Her name was Florence Hatcher of Bloom, Kansas, U.S.A. In 2003, Florence was still alive (aged 87) and living in Armidale.

crated P-40 Kittyhawks arrived in Brisbane. Gunn rounded up a crew of American and Australian personnel and started to de-crate and assemble the Kittyhawks. More crated Kittyhawks were due shortly on another ship. Gunn also rounded up 25 pilots from the 17th Fighter Group who had recently arrived in Brisbane from the Philippines to help with the Kittyhawk assembly. The Kittyhawks were fully assembled, and test flown by the end of January 1942. On 16 February, 1942, 17 Kittyhawks, formed into two flights, and left Brisbane to travel the Brereton Route via Charleville, Daly Waters to Darwin. *Pappy* Gunn led one of the two flights in his Beechcraft (also known as a C-45). They arrived in Darwin 3 days later minus 3 Kittyhawks which had crashed along the way.

GROUP 3

On 8 March 1942, Captain James Selman took off from Williamstown airfield with 25 Kittyhawks of the 9th Pursuit Squadron of the 49th Fighter Group to traverse the Brereton Route headed for Darwin. They travelled via Brisbane, where Lieutenants Bud Howk and John Sauber were left behind with engine trouble. They arrived in Darwin several days later. The 23 remaining Kittyhawks staged through Charleville, where another two aircraft had mechanical problems. 21 Kittyhawks then pressed on for Cloncurry, being led by a B-17 Flying Fortress. There were two heavy landings at Cloncurry. Lieutenant Ed Smith's aircraft was written off. He was not injured and he then became a passenger on the B-17 for the rest of the journey. Now there were only 19 of the 25 Kittyhawks left to continue the next hop to Daly Waters on 14 March, 1942. During scattered thunderstorms, four Kittyhawks became separated and low on fuel, they eventually landed on an isolated sheep station way off the Brereton Route. These four aircraft were recovered later. The other 15 Kittyhawks managed to land at Daly Waters in between passing rain storms. They radioed Melbourne again and were reminded that they must reach Darwin as soon as possible. A three day stopover at Daly Waters allowed much needed repairs to their weary aircraft. On 17 March 1942, Lieutenant Spehr was on a test flight. He attempted an aerobatic barrel roll at low altitude. Unfortunately his engine stalled and his Kittyhawk crashed to the ground and burst into flames not far from the airfield. Spehr was killed immediately and was buried in the small local cemetery that evening. On 18 March, 1942, the remaining 14 aircraft headed off for the final leg to Darwin. Yet another aircraft had mechanical problems and failed to take off. Hence 13 of the original 25 Kittyhawks finally arrived in Darwin at midday on 18 March, 1942. They received orders to start operational patrols immediately. On 19 March, 1942, the four lost Kittyhawks who had landed at the sheep station, arrived in Darwin after a transport aircraft had brought them some fuel. After an assessment of the damage at Darwin airfield caused by the many Japanese bombing raids, it was decided to move the 9th Pursuit Squadron of the 49th Fighter Group to Batchelor airfield, 50 miles south of Darwin. Unfortunately, there was another serious accident at Daly Waters. 2nd Lieutenant Sid Woods made a crash landing on his arrival at Daly Waters. The Kittyhawk was written off and Woods' injuries caused him to be incapacitated for one month.

GROUP 4

On 5 June, 1942, Lieutenant Sells of the 9th Fighter Squadron of the 49th Fighter Group made a forced landing in his Kittyhawk during a flight from Charleville to Cloncurry. He was following the Brereton Route to Darwin. His engine overheated and he made a forced landing near the small station of Longreach. The Kittyhawk was abandoned there.