



William
PRESCOTT [1800-1876]
&
Christian
ELVE [1799-1884]

Married
10 July 1826, Dover

Departed 11 June 1838 from Gravesend
Arrived 23 September 1838 on the

Winchester

Children of William & Christian:

- William (1827-1894)
- Alfred (1828-1904)
- Edward (1829-1910) m Mary Ann COLLINS
- George (1831-1905)
- Eliza (1833-1923)
- Michael (1836-1907)

Across the Sea from White Cliffs to Eucalypts

William Prescott grew up on his family's farm on the outskirts of Dover. He went into a business with his brother John, and in 1826 married Christian Elve, daughter of a local well-to-do shipping merchant, and they had six children.

William's strong character and eloquence marked him for public life at an early age and he became an outspoken advocate for reform. In 1835 he published the first edition of *The Dover Chronicle and Cinque Ports and Kent Advertiser* with himself as editor. The same year he was elected as a Councillor of the Town Ward in the first election that gave ratepayers the right to elect their own local representatives. And although he continued to work for the community, he now turned his thoughts to the future of his family and the opportunities that could be afforded them in the new colony of South Australia.

On arrival in South Australia, William quickly acquired land on Rundle Street, not far from the East End Market, on which he set up a garden and ran some livestock. Life was difficult and William was disappointed by the rivalries among the colonial leaders. But his continual promotion of progressive planning, soon saw him appointed Architect and Land Steward for the SA Company and he supervised the erection of shops and dwellings along Rundle Street. His most outstanding contribution to the Company however was as overseer of the construction of the port facilities at Port Adelaide.

As the Colony started to struggle financially, William decided to augment his income by acquiring land for farming. The two sections leased to him were located in what are now the suburbs of Rose Park and Toorak Gardens and were known as Prescott Farm. His sons set about planting crops, and further land holdings were taken up in Meadows and Mount Torrens.

But bad seasons and low prices brought hard times to the family and in the 1850's William disposed of all his freehold property, leaving only Prescott Farm which was still leased from the SA Company. Despite persistent requests to purchase the land, it had become so valuable that the Company refused to part with it - although they allowed him to remain on the site for the remainder of his life. He passed away on the Farm at the age of seventy-six.



Prescott Farm, Toorak Gardens c1900.

From information provided by Sue Coppin
William's great-great-great granddaughter
March 2014

