



Robert NORTON [1812-1891] & Mary MARSH [1804-1881]

Married on 25 December 1834
at St Martins in the Fields, London

Departed 9 September 1836 from London
Arrived 17 January 1837 at Holdfast Bay
on the

Coromandel

Children of Robert & Mary:

Mary Ann Louisa (1837-1916) m William COCK

James Hack (1839-1842)

William Robert (1841-1909) m Rhoda LANE

Louisa (1843-1883) m George CHANNING

Robert (1846-1915) m Sophia HUTCHINSON

Elizabeth (1848-1941) m William Thomas SUTTON

Charles Henry (1852-1930) m Jane DAVIS

Founder of Norton Summit

On Christmas Day 1834, Robert Norton, a gardener from Surlingham, Norfolk, married Mary Marsh, a governess from Guildford in Surrey. Robert and Mary took free passage on board the Coromandel and arrived in January 1837 at Holdfast Bay, where they camped in a tent near the Old Gum Tree.

Robert was first employed as a 'teamster' bullock driver carting posts and rails for West Terrace Cemetery and was the first to drive a team of bullocks up the steep Giles' Hill towards what is now Norton Summit. Here he built a log and mud house, said to possess a huge stone fireplace with no chimney "large enough to place wooden stools at embers, and the huge wooden kettle hung from a chain set high in the wall." (Chronicle 3 June 1937)

In early 1851, Robert purchased Section 1111, a 30 acre property at Grassy Flat (near present day Norton Summit) for £170. The area of stringy bark forests known as the Tiers between Mount Lofty and Norton Summit was exploited early by timber cutters. But in the 1840s the district around Grassy Flat began to be settled and a town was established.

Another of the early pioneers was William Sutton who also built a log and mud hut from which he sold groceries, sweets and wine. The settlement was known as Sutton's Summit until 1853 when a ballot was put to the settlers as to which family had arrived first, the Suttons or the Nortons - Norton won. So Norton's Summit it became, until 1917 when the apostrophe was dropped.

In May 1855 Robert Norton sold a small portion of his land to build a Baptist Chapel where Mary held the first school and pioneer missionary Rev Thomas Playford first preached. In 1869, the East Torrens Council purchased land on the south corner of Section 1111 to erect a school and teacher's residence. This became the Grassy Flat School, and in 1941, Norton Summit School. Nearby the Grassy Flat cemetery stands as a memorial to pioneer families buried there. Norton Summit is now known for its apples, cherries, wine and Premiers.

From information provided by Margaret Lewis
Robert & Mary's great great great grand daughter
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