



The First Farmer of Greenwith Farm

Thomas ROBERTS (1806-1857) & Hannah ROBERTS (née WEBB) (?-1890)

Departed 23 January 1839 from Liverpool
Arrived 10 June 1839 at Port Adelaide on the

Sir Charles Forbes

Children of Thomas & Hannah:

- William (1828-1904) m Sarah SMITH
- Thomas (1829-1833)
- John (1830-1917) m Elizabeth GILMOUR
- James (1832-1899) m Agnes SMART
- Elizabeth Ann (1834-1917) m Robert SMART
- Hannah (1837-1875) m George FIDOCK
- Paul (1843-1903) m Mary Ann WATSON
- Jane (1843-1923) m Charles SMART
- Emmanuel (1845-1915) m Elizabeth FOULIS
- Rosina (1847-1919) m Edward STEVENS
- Thomas (1848-1869)
- Henry (1851-1919) m Rebecca CARTER
- Charles (1854-1881)

Thomas, his wife Hannah, together with his brother Johnathon, his wife Ann, arrived in South Australia in June 1839. Bullock carts took their baggage to Adelaide where they were put in the Government cottages and given one week's rations. The brothers found work as quarry labourers soon after arrival.

Although Thomas was a miner in Cornwall, his aim was to own land and be a farmer. As there was no mining activity in 1839, Thomas purchased Lot 45 Section 1 of the Hundred of Adelaide (in Thebarton) from Colonel Light and by 1844 was also farming six acres at Hampstead.

When the South Australian Mining Association (SAMA) was formed in April 1845, Thomas, his son William and brother Johnathon became minor shareholders. The company's first acquisition was Montacute Mine where they all worked.

In September 1845 Thomas was appointed as the first Captain of the Burra mine. Under instructions from Henry Ayers, he was engaged to take charge of ten miners including his brother and son for one month. At the end of the month, about 10 tons of high quality copper ore was sent by dray to Adelaide.

In 1847 Thomas bought Section 2156 for £88 at Upper Dry Creek, the first purchase of land in this district, and became "a farmer of Greenwith Farm". Thomas donated land for a school where the Golden Grove School was eventually built and was also a Councillor in the Tea Tree Gully Council.

Hannah laid the foundation stone of the Greenwith Primitive Methodist Church in 1863 on land donated by her son Paul. A plaque on the church explains the connection with the Roberts family.

Thomas died in 1857 of asthma, aged 50 years. Hannah continued to live at Greenwith Farm with her children for many years. When she died at her daughter's home in Narridy in 1890, she had 9 children, 79 grandchildren and 43 great grandchildren.

From information provided by Di Skull,
Thomas and Hannah's great great great granddaughter
February 2016

