



Mary BELL (1833-1886)

Married

Thomas WILSON (1821-1889)

on 14 October 1850 at St John's Church, Adelaide

Departed 7 October 1838 from London

Arrived 23 January 1839 at Port Adelaide on the

Resource

Children of Mary & Thomas:

Cora (1851-1891) m Thomas HAYWARD

Leonard (1853-1898) m Sarah LEWIS

Harold (1855-1931) m Emily FERBER

Alfred (1858-1915) m Joannah KERSLAKE

Florence (1860-1948) m Cephas Barker KEEN

Bertrum (1862-1926) m Martha ROTHWELL

Rebecca (1865-1868)

George (1867-1949) m Alice FERBER

Luther (1871-1871)

Mary (1871-1946) m William McEWEN

A Hard Life on the Land

Mary Bell arrived in South Australia with her parents, George, a timber cutter, and Jane, and her four siblings.

In 1850, at St John's Church, seventeen year-old Mary wed Thomas Alfred Wilson who had arrived in December 1839 aboard the *Moffatt* - carrying 316 passengers, the biggest number in any one ship to date. Thomas taught elocution at Mrs Wilshire's school, lectured, and wrote regularly for the *Farm and Garden* and newspapers of the day.

The village of Marion had been laid out by Colonel Light in November 1838. The land was cleared, and vegetables, vines, and other crops thrived in the fertile soil. Thomas' father purchased Sections 139/140 and 121 here in 1841 and named it 'Seaview Farm'. When Thomas inherited the property in 1856 it became an experimental farm where he invented a side draught to the reaping machine. He also became the first Chairman of the District Council of Brighton.

In 1860, and with their youngest child a year old, Thomas and Mary took up a pastoral lease north-west of Port Lincoln and established two sheep stations. Here, many hardships were experienced.

On occasion when Mary needed to travel to Port Lincoln over rough terrain, a feather bed was placed on a spring cart. They became friendly with the local aborigines and Thomas became known as 'the big white doctor'.

Unfortunately, severe drought during the mid-1860s forced them to relinquish these properties, and the family was on the move again. For five years, Thomas managed a vineyard at South Rhine near Mount Crawford.



Pulteney Street School, 1923
[SLSA - PRG 280/1/31/127]

All of Mary and Thomas's children attended the Pulteney Street School - taking prizes for poetry, writing and good manners.

From information provided by Margaret Lewis,
Mary's great granddaughter
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