



The *Rapid*, 1836 [SLSA PRG 280/1/38/68]

## Robert

## BUCK (1792-1872)

Married

## Maria ROBERTSON (1799-1857)

in 1816 St Paul's Deptford, Kent, England

Departed 1 May 1836 from London

Arrived 20 August 1836 at Nepean Bay on the

## Rapid

Children of Robert & Maria:

Robert (1819-1895) m Elizabeth WILLIAMS

William (1822-1906) m Elizabeth HANNAN

Maria (1824-1918) m Samuel SMITH

Susannah (1831-1912) m William TAIT

Henry (1832-1900) m Mary MALONE

Phoebe (1840-1922) m John GRIFFITHS

Nathaniel (1843-1918)

## Old Buck Pioneer

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Robert Buck was 21 when he commenced service in the Royal Navy on the *Marlborough* in 1812. On this ship he sailed to the Chesapeake Bay region of Northern America during battles that are considered an extension of the Napoleonic Wars.

When the South Australian Company called for mariners and settlers, Robert and his eldest son, Robert, were selected to join the crew of the *Rapid* in 1836, along with Colonel William Light. As ship's cook, Robert Snr, would have soon changed the culinary offerings from pickled meats and porridge to parrot pie and fresh meat from the unique wildlife.

With settlement came the need to quickly provide port services, and the father and son became lightermen, unloading cargo and settlers from the incoming ships. They operated from land on LeFevres Peninsular that became known as Buck's Flat, where he also operated cold salt water baths.

Robert's wife Maria and four younger children arrived in 1839 and they settled into in the Port Adelaide district.

Robert was also a shipbuilder and owner. He built the first barge in the colony – *Phoebe*. Other boats built or owned included the *William Henry*, *Robert & Maria*, *Fame*, *Lady Young*, *Joseph lee Archer*, and *Young E B*. With these, Robert and his sons transported goods and people around the coastal ports of South Australia and Victoria. In 1849, he discovered the natural harbour at the mouth of the Wakefield River. Initially named Port Henry, it was later proclaimed Port Wakefield.



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Robert and Maria were laid to rest in the old Albert Town cemetery, and are commemorated with pavers on Pioneer Walk.

From information provided by Heather Ernszt,  
Robert's great great great great granddaughter  
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