

# The Hornsby Family from England to South Australia 1837

In 1834, the British Government passed an Act allowing the establishment of a colony in South Australia. The colony was to be based on the ideas of Edward Gibbon Wakefield. He proposed that the land in South Australia should be properly surveyed and sold at a "sufficient price" so that the money gained could be used to bring out the poor and unemployed labourers from England to work the land. There would be no convicts!

**Joseph Henry Hornsby** was born in 1817 in Surrey, England, the second of nine children to Joseph and Elizabeth (nee Green) Hornsby. He married a **Miriam Goldney**, daughter of William and Maria (nee Harrow) Goldney, on 28 March 1837 and that same year, as young newlyweds, they sailed away from Gravesend, England, on board the "Navarino" a 3-mast barque, arriving in Holdfast Bay on 6 December 1837. He was a tailor and she a seamstress.



(Above – Joseph Henry & Miriam Hornsby  
Right – Miriam (nee Goldney) Hornsby)

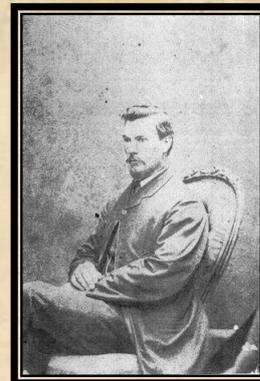
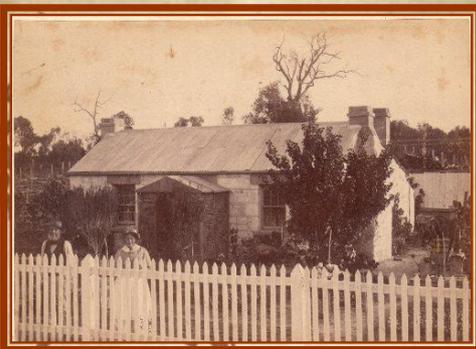


It is said that Miriam had a lucky escape from disaster on the voyage over. She had taken her sewing outside and sat on a sail that was lying on deck. After a time, there was a sudden gust of wind which took the sail, and Miriam, over the edge. There was nothing she could do. Fortunately the wind blew the sail back and she quickly got off. She said that no one knew that she was there and her fate would never have been known had she fallen into the sea.

The village of Marion on the Sturt was named by Lieutenant Henry Nixon who had also arrived on the same ship as Joseph and Miriam having been appointed as an assistant in the survey team of the Surveyor General, Colonel William Light. Slow surveying was affecting land sales and Nixon resigned his position to go into partnership with a William O'Halloran as a land agent.

Joseph and Miriam purchased land at Section 110 Marion Road, Marion, where they farmed wheat and barley. They raised seven surviving children - Joseph, Emily, Maria, Henry, Charles, Frederick and Samuel.

Joseph Henry's parents Joseph and Elizabeth also migrated to Australia aboard the "Diadem" arriving on 16 November 1840 accompanied by his five daughters. Tragically Elizabeth died on the voyage over.



(Photo left is thought to be the original Marion Road homestead and right is of the original Hornsby family homestead on Hindmarsh Island as it stands in more recent times.)

(Two of Joseph and Miriam's children left, Henry and right, Maria)

It has been documented that Miriam always maintained that the tree which became known as the "Proclamation Tree" was not the genuine one. Their description was of a "large upstanding tree with spreading limbs". It is said that in the December of 1837 of their arrival in South Australia, they ate Christmas dinner under its shade.

Joseph Henry died on 22 February 1885 and Miriam on 31 March 1894. They are both buried at the Hindmarsh Island Cemetery.



Text and photos provided by Vicki Rule and Jeannine Nolan, great great granddaughters of Joseph Henry and Miriam Hornsby. We also acknowledge the accumulated input over the years of many of the descendants of both the Hornsby and Goldney families.

