

People of the Yankalilla District



George WILLISS (1806 - 1895)

Married:

Phoebe BOURNE (1810 - 1833)

Elizabeth Rebecca BURGESS (1816 - 1903)

Arrived in Yankalilla district: 1856

Settled at: Bullaparinga

Occupation: farmer

Buried: Bullaparinga Cemetery

Child of George and Phoebe:

Frances (1827 -) m James GOBELL

Children of George and Elizabeth:

Jane (1837 - 1883) m (1) William Robert HUCKS (2) John NEWBOLD

Elizabeth Rebecca (1840 -) m Robert NEWBOLD

George Henry (1842 -) m Eliza CROSER

John (1844 -) m Eliza WARREN

James Burgess (1846 -) m Lucy Ann THYER

Charles (1847 - 1894) m Elizabeth COLE

Emily Eliza (1850 -) m Charles William COLLINS

Ann (1852 -) m William Verco CORNISH

Benjamin (1854 - 1856)

Ellen (1857 -) m (1) John COAD (2) Richard William COLE

Benjamin Grove (1859 - 1954) m

(1) Sarah Kate WHYTE (2) Fanny

Elizabeth LORD



George WILLISS, his second wife Elizabeth, and two daughters Frances (from his first marriage) and Jane, emigrated to South Australia on the *Buckinghamshire*, arriving at Port Adelaide on 21 March 1839.

They lived for a time at Gleeville and then McLaren Vale, during which time they had eight more children (one of these, Benjamin, was killed in a dray accident in 1856 when he was two years old).

After settling at Bullaparinga, where they built their home "Spring Grove" (on what is now Bullaparinga Crescent), they had two more children, Ellen and Benjamin Grove. They lived in their first home for a number of years, but about 1885 George had a new home built on another part of his land (close to Main South Road), and moved there. This new home was also named "Spring Grove".

In March 1857 Williss was elected to the Rapid Bay Council. Not long afterwards, however, he was at odds with the Council over a road which ran through his land. Williss had blocked off the surveyed road and made another road, the route of which was more to his liking. A dispute with the Council ensued over the next few years, and resulted in the Council taking Williss to court in 1867. Fortunately for Williss, he got off on a technicality, as the Court ruled that as a question of title was involved it was out of their jurisdiction and the case was dismissed.

George Williss died on 24 February 1895. His obituary stated:

Death of an Old Colonist. — Mr. George Williss, a very old and highly respected resident in the District of Rapid Bay, and a colonist of 56 years, died at his residence, Spring Grove, on Sunday, February 24, at the ripe age of 88 years. ... Much sympathy is felt for the aged widow. There are eight children, sixty six grandchildren, fifty-five great-grandchildren, and six great-great-grandchildren. (Adelaide Observer 9-3-1895)

2021 compiled by Margaret Morgan

© Yankalilla Historical Society Inc.

For more information on other notable people of the district contact yank.hist.soc@gmail.com