

James DENNIS (1812-1888) and Frances nee SPINKS (1811-1868)



The Dennis family comprising of James (1812-1888), Frances nee Spinks (1811-1868), Charles (1836-1910), Thomas (1840-1920), Maria (1842-1917), Alfred (1845-1927) and Benjamin (1848-1927) were migrants on the 'Trade Wind' arriving in 1858. They came from Eriswell in West Suffolk, England. Eriswell is a small village set in the heart of a farming community, located 14 miles from Bury St Edmunds. Eriswell has a rich history; about forty scattered archaeological finds have been made there, including Bronze Age battle axes, palstaves, and rapiers. James was an agricultural labourer.

The family were discharged from the Quarantine Station at Impression Bay to their sponsor, Henry Howe of Launceston, on 7 May 1858. Henry Howe (1803-1878) was a well-known and much respected auctioneer in Launceston. He was initially in partnership with Mr WT Bell and subsequently by himself. Due to ill health he relinquished the business and moved to Victoria.

James was born on 6 October 1811 and baptised on 3 November 1811, at Eriswell, Suffolk, the son of Richard (1772-1850) and Elizabeth nee Presland (1768-1850). He was aged 45, a ploughman, and was able to read when arriving in Tasmania. He married Frances Spinks (1811-1868) in Eriswell, Suffolk on 18 November 1832.

Frances was the daughter of Benjamin (1774-1853) and Frances nee Maydens (1785-1862) Spinks of Hilborough, Norfolk. She was baptised on 22 April 1808 at Hilborough, Norfolk. In 1858, at the time of migrating to Tasmania, Frances was aged 46 and a housemaid.

James and Frances had six children before departing England. Their daughter, Eliza, who was baptised on 3 June 1838 in Eriswell, did not accompany the family to Tasmania.

James was in the Longford district after his arrival and worked as a labourer.

James died on 7 December 1888, in Perth, aged 78, a labourer, of old age. Frances predeceased him by twenty years. She died at the age of 60 years on 17 June 1868 in the Longford district. The cause of death was inflammation of the bowels. James remarried on 1 September 1869 to Elizabeth Holloway previously Saville (1820-1890) at Longford.

The six children of James, late of Perth, were recipients in his Will: Charles Dennis, Eliza Parr, Thomas Dennis, Maria Bean, Benjamin Dennis and Alfred Dennis.

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