

Thomas DENNIS (1840-1920?)



Thomas was aged 16, a ploughman from Eriswell, Suffolk when migrating to Tasmania in 1858 on the 'Trade Wind'. He was accompanied by his parents: James (1812-1888) and Frances nee Spinks (1811-1868) and four siblings: Charles (1836-1910), Maria (1842-1917), Alfred (1845-1927) and Benjamin (1848-1927). 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.

In the 1841 and 1851 England Census the Dennis family were living at Rake Heath Farm Cottages in Eriswell.

The Dennis 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 W T Bell and subsequently by himself. Due to ill health, he relinquished the business and moved to Victoria.

Thomas was baptised on 9 August 1840 in Eriswell. It is not certain what happened to Thomas after his arrival in Tasmania. Some contributors on ancestry.com record that Thomas died in NSW in 1920, aged 79. Another Thomas Dennis died at Inveresk on 10 May 1886. His wife was Sarah. A Thomas Dennis was living at Forest in 1907. Another Thomas Dennis was a farmer in the 1890-91 Cornwall County PO Directory.