

Richard (1824-1897) and Eliza PERKS (1826-1890)

Richard was aged 33, born about 1824, a Wesleyan, literate, and a miner from Shropshire when he migrated to Tasmania on the 'Trade Wind' in 1858. He was sponsored by Thomas Young of Hobart Town. It is likely he was married to Eliza Perks (1826-1890) who was also a passenger on the 'Trade Wind'. She was aged 27 and not sponsored. Her shipping records show she was married whereas Richard's records noted he was single. Both were discharged from the Quarantine Station at Impression Bay at the same time – on the evening of 11 April 1858 on their own account.

No records could be found for Richard's and Eliza's marriage apart from the 1851 England Census recording them as being married and living at Dog Lane, Brierley Hill, Kingswinford, Staffordshire. Richard was aged 25, a coal miner and born Cannon, Shropshire; Eliza was aged 25 and born at Kinton, Shropshire.

It is likely Richard was the son of Richard Perks, born 1786, a coal miner from Shropshire and Ann nee Gennor (?), born 1786. They married on 26 June 1809 at Caynham, Shropshire. If so, this Richard was baptised on 11 April 1824 at Cainham, Shropshire.

Kangaroo Bottom Coal.
LIVE AND LET LIVE PIT!!!
THE Undersigned beg leave to inform the Public that they have succeeded in opening a
SPLENDID SEAM OF COAL
in the above locality, three feet nine inches thick, and which they are prepared to **DELIVER** to their Customers at the low rate of
£1 7s. 6d. per Ton
OR
£1 1s. Od. per Ton
AT THE PIT'S MOUTH.
Terms—Cash.
Agents:—
Lewis Riley, Victoria Tavern, Murray-street.
A. Heron, Globe Inn, Davey-street.
E. Lazarus, Windsor Castle, Liverpool street.
E. Payne, Waggon and Horses, New Town, and at
The Sawyers' Arms, Murray-street.
RICHARD PERKS,
JOSIAH TURNER,
THOMAS JONES,
THOMAS DOWLING,
Proprietors.
January 2nd, 1860. t th s 3 mo

*Hobart Town Mercury,
26/1/1860, for example*

After arriving in Tasmania Richard may have lived in the Seymour area on the East Coast of Tasmania around 1865. At that time coal mining was being undertaken at the Douglas River Coal Company. Richard purchased a little over one acre on 15 February 1865 at Seymour at a cost of £8.

By 1878 Richard was in the Beaconsfield district where he was highly regarded in the community. In 1878 he was a member of the Invincible Lodge No. 65 IOGT which was formed at Brandy Creek, situated northeast of Beaconsfield.

In 1881 he was the mining manager of the Grand Centre gold mine at Beaconsfield. He reported on 9 July 1881 'we have slabbed up the new shaft 12 feet, and logged it up 6 feet, put a good windlass frame and cover over the shaft, and shall commence to sink on Monday, 11th inst.'

Richard was involved in the formation of the Primitive Methodist Church in Beaconsfield in 1883. The Primitive Methodist Church had its origin in Stanley, Staffordshire in March 1810. Richard was a lay preacher in this church and preached at the Young Town church, near Launceston, in September 1883 to a good congregation. He was also the Circuit steward and church trustee for the Beaconsfield church.

It was widely reported in the Tasmanian and Victorian press, while attending a religious conference in Melbourne, Richard Perks, a storekeeper from Beaconsfield, was invited by two men to accompany them home to Little Bourke Street. The female on the premises

'made free with him' and shortly after he found his pocketbook and money gone. Perks said in court he had been a teetotaler for 17 years but had some to drink on that day. He had offered the people involved £5 for the return of his property, as he did not wish the matter reported in the press. Those charged were acquitted and discharged.

Richard's wife, Eliza, died on 4 June 1890. A death notice in *The Colonist* on Saturday 7 June 1890 recorded: Eliza the beloved wife of Richard Perks, storekeeper, Beaconsfield, aged 66 years. Her godly life terminated peacefully. The cause of Eliza's death was diabetes.

The following year Richard relocated to Mathinna '... to carry on the same business there. Mr Perks, until his departure for the above-mentioned district, lived here [Beaconsfield] from the commencement of the diggings ...' (*Daily Telegraph*, 7 Sep 1891, p4 – Country News Beaconsfield)

Richard died on Thursday, 13 July 1897 at the Beaconsfield Hospital in his 74th year. The cause of death was Syncope from Mitral Regurgitation.

1	July 13 th Beaconsfield	Richard Perks Born—England	Male	74 years	Stroke	Syncope from Mitral Regurgitation J. Howard Champ M.D.	John Be
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