

Edward RUFFELS (1838-1909)

Edward was aged 18, single, could not read nor write, a groom and labourer from Suffolk when migrating to Tasmania on the 'Trade Wind' in 1858. Edward was sponsored by William Robertson of Hobart Town and was discharged from the Quarantine Station at Impression Bay to Mr William Amos of Swan Port during the evening of 30 March 1858. William Amos (1840-1877) was the son of James Amos (1808-1888) of Gala Mill, near Swansea.

Edward was born at Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk on 9 Jan 1838 and christened on 16 September 1838 in Bardwell, Suffolk. His parents were Simon Ruffels (1800-1886) and Mary nee Thompson (1811-1880). It is possible Edward and Elizabeth (1834-1919), who also migrated on the 'Trade Wind', were cousins.

Edward married Bridget nee Cowan (1840-1900) on 23 December 1863 in New Zealand. Bridget was born in County Clare, Ireland. Their first child was born in New Zealand and the remaining six in Tasmania.

According to an obituary in the *Circular Head Chronicle* of Thursday, 15 April 1909

Edward Ruffels was one of the most respected and well-known residents of Black River. He was aged 71 at his death on 11 April 1909. He was born at Bury St Edmunds [Bardwell], Suffolk and landed in Tasmania in 1857 (sic), with a very small sum of money in his pocket and not a friend or relation belonging to him in his land of adoption. He went to Swansea and afterwards to Oatlands, leaving for New Zealand after some years and eventually returning to Tasmania and settled in the Stanley district about 1883 (sic)¹. He was one of the best judges of horses in the State. Edward was of a frank and straight-forward character and was known far and near for his honesty and sterling character and for his rough and ready manner. He left a grown-up family of two sons (Alfred [1873-1918] and Henry [1870-1924]) and two daughters (Mrs William Medwin [1865-1937], Boat Harbour; and Mrs Joseph Medwin [1868-1921], Rocky Cape) to mourn their loss. A son and a daughter, Charles (1866-1892) and Annie (1876-1888), predeceased him. He had been ill for about 13-14 months so his death was not unexpected. Edward was one of the first initiated members when the Wellington Lodge IOOF was formed.

Bridget died on 18 December 1900, aged 60 and Edward on 11 April 1909, aged 71 – both at Black River. They were buried at the Stanley Old Pioneer Cemetery.

For further information contact bettypilgrim@hotmail.com.

¹ Edward had returned by 1866 as the first born son, Charles (1866-1892) was born in the Horton district of Tasmania on 20 Jun 1866.