

JOHN WOODHEAD 2 Nov 1797 - 5 Aug 1876.

This is the story of John Woodhead an Old Colonist in South
Australia.

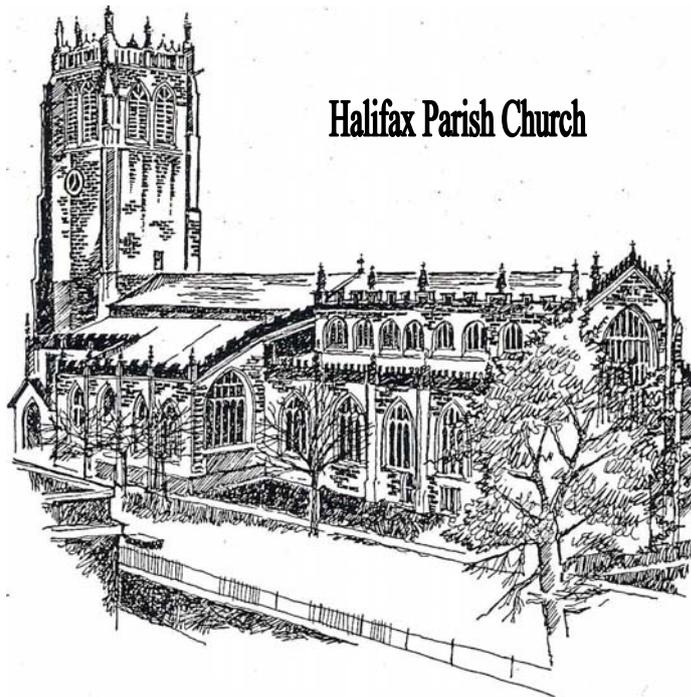


WHINNEY ROYD FARM

John Woodhead was born on 2 Nov 1797 as was his twin brother Tome. They were the sixth and seventh children of Robert and Sarah Woodhead (nee Ambler). They were born at Whinney Royd Farm in Tan House Lane near the village of Northowram in the Parish of Halifax, County of West Yorkshire. Whinney Royd was built in the early 1400's and is still occupied today. John was Christened on 24-12-1797 at Northowram with his brother Tome.

John was married on 5 July 1821 in the Halifax Parish Church, Yorkshire. The Parish records show, "John Woodhead of Northowram in this Parish, farmer and bachelor and Ann Flather of Hipperholme in this Parish, spinster, by License. Witnesses, Richard Bates and Mary Stocks."

Ann Flather was the daughter of Thomas Flather and Elizabeth (nee Birkett.) There were three children from the marriage and the Parish records show they were Christened in the Chapelry of Coley, Parish of Halifax.



Halifax Parish Church

WOODHEAD

William Birket	christened	2-1-1822	John and Ann of Northowram, Farmer.
Henry Alfred	“	9-11-1823	John and Ann of Hipperholme Shopkeeper.
Robert	“	26-2-1826	John and Ann of Hipperholme Shopkeeper.

Ann Woodhead died on 22-6-1827 aged 27. She was buried at St Matthews Church, Lightcliffe, Yorkshire. The transcription of her headstone reads:

SACRED TO THE MEMORY OF ANN
 THE WIFE OF JOHN WOODHEAD OF HIPPERHOLME
 AND DAUGHTER OF THOMAS AND ELIZABETH FLATHER
 WHO DEPARTED THIS LIFE JUNE 22 1827 AGED 27 YEARS.

Farewell husband and children dear
 I am at rest you need not fear
 No grief nor sorrow for me take
 But love my children for my sake.

Six years later on 30-7-1833 John married Sibyl Wharton the daughter of Priscilla his sister and George Wharton. Sibyl had come to keep house for John after the death of Ann and was 20 at the time of her marriage, John was 36.

John and Sibyl and the three children from the first marriage William, Henry and Robert left London on 30-10-1838 aboard the "Thomas Harrison." They arrived at Port Misery on 25-2-1839. John was always proud of the fact that he paid the full fare for himself and his family to come to Australia. At the time it was 85 pounds.

John and Sibyl had 4 children, all born in South Australia.

1. Ambler b. 15-7-1840 d. 1-8-1858
2. Sarah Ann b. 31-5-1843
3. Joseph b. 5-10-1845
4. Lucy b. 21-5-1850

I don't know much about John from the time he arrived in South Australia until he bought his farm at Plympton but I will include some extracts of a short history written by his grandson Reuben Hornabrook Martin one of Lucy's sons.

Details from 1841 census.

District A

Name	Sex	Age under
John Woodhead	m	50
William Woodhead	m	21
Sibyl Woodhead	f	35
Robert Woodhead	m	21
Ambler Woodhead	m	7
Mount Barker (Village of Hahndorf)		
Henry Woodhead	m	21

In 1840 it was recorded that John was working Greenslip on section 101, Hundred of Adelaide.

On the 18th July 1849, John bought section 2033, Hundred of Adelaide, comprising 51.5 acres, from Michael Featherstone for 200 pounds. 100 pounds was paid on 13th July 1850 and the remainder was paid on 22nd July 1853.

The “South Australian Land Returns for 1843” by A. & S. Twining shows John Woodhead, Richmond Mill, 27 acres of wheat, 6 acres of barley, half an acre of garden, 20 cattle, 1 pony and 11 pigs.

In 1846 his property was referred to as ‘Abbingford.’ In ‘Papers Relative to Affairs of S.A.’ in the archives it was found that ‘John Woodhead had a well 20 feet deep with 3 feet of water, property was not enclosed and he had a brick house.’

In 1856 John was elected as a member of the West Torrens Council. At the annual meeting of ratepayers held in March 1858, John although nominated was not re-elected. Woodhead Street in West Beach is named after him.

From the book ‘Adelaide 1836-1976, A History of Difference’ by Derek Whitelock, page 109.

OLD COLONISTS

In December 1872, Adelaide was invaded by a plague of locusts. ‘Happily’ records Hodder, ‘the Botanic Garden escaped their ravages.’ That same month, to quote Hodder again, ‘The largest number of old South Australian colonists ever assembled at the same time met at a banquet given by Mr. Emmanuel Solomon in the Town Hall, Adelaide.’ The distinction of being an Old Colonist, especially if one had come out on the ‘Buffalo,’ or before about 1840, without an assisted passage, was already being jealously guarded and proclaimed in Adelaide.

John Woodhead died on 5th August 1876 aged 78 of prostatic disease.

Sibyl Woodhead died on 10th April 1880 aged 67 of bronchial affection.

Both are buried at All Saints Uniting Church, Marion Road, North Plympton, on the corner of Mooringe Avenue.

There are no headstones as the graveyard was built over. The building is called ‘Pioneer Annexe’ and the headstones were placed beneath the floor.

Mrs. M. Sheahan from the church gave me the transcription of the headstone on 18th June 1981.

SACRED TO THE MEMORY OF
JOHN WOODHEAD
WHO DIED 5-8-1876
AGED 78 YEARS

ALSO

SIBYL WOODHEAD
WIFE OF THE ABOVE WHO DIED
10-4-1880

AGED 67 YEARS

ALSO

AMBLER WOODHEAD
SON OF THE ABOVE
WHO DIED 1-8 1858

AGED 18 YEARS

ALSO

JOHN AMBLER
SON OF JOSEPH AND SOPHIA WOODHEAD
WHO DIED 18-6-1880

AGED 10 MONTHS

ALSO

JOSEPH
SON OF JOHN AND SIBYL WOODHEAD

DIED 29-4-1915

AGED 69 YEARS

“THERE REMAINETH THEREFORE A REST FOR THE PEOPLE OF GOD.”

John's death notice appeared in "The South Australian Register" on Friday 11th August, 1876 and read as follows -

WOODHEAD – On the 5th August, at his residence, Plympton, John Woodhead, aged 78 years.

A colonist of 37 years.

Sibyl's funeral notice appeared in "The South Australian Register" on Monday 12 April 1880 and read as follows -

The friends of the late Sibyl Woodhead are respectfully informed that her remains will be removed from her late residence, Plympton, this Monday afternoon, at 3 o'clock for internment at Plympton cemetery. A. Pengelley, Undertaker.

The same notice appeared in "The South Australian Advertiser."

IN MEMORIAM

One by one those who may be regarded as the pioneers of the colony are dropping into the silent grave. On Saturday, 5th August 1876, Mr. J Woodhead, of Plympton, peacefully departed this life, having almost attained the ripe old age of fourscore years. He arrived in 1839, and a few months afterwards settled in the spot where all his remaining days were spent. As he never took any part in public affairs he was but little known beyond the circle of his friends and neighbors; but he was much esteemed by all who knew him for his strict honesty, and manly straightforwardness. For many years he was identified with the Congregational Church at Glenelg, but was also much interested in the Wesleyan Chapel at Plympton, where some of his family attended and assisted in the Sunday school. For about six months before his death he was unable through growing infirmities to leave his home, and was looking forward with joyful anticipation to the close of his earthly career. Death for him had no sting; it found him ready to enter on "the rest which remaineth for the people of God.." On the Tuesday following his decease, his remains were interred in the little burying ground adjoining the Wesleyan Chapel at Plympton, the Rev. C. Manthorpe conducting the service in a very impressive manner. The long procession of mourners who attended the funeral, including neighbors for miles around, together with many from a distance, abundantly testified to the feelings of respect which were cherished towards the deceased. Mr. Woodhead has left a widow and numerous children and grandchildren to mourn their loss.

From "The Methodist Journal," 18th August, 1876.

The following is an extract from a history written by Reuben Hornabrook Martin, (1886-1968) son of Lucy Martin (nee Woodhead) and grandson of John Woodhead.

“Grandfather Woodhead was engaged by Captain John Walker to manage a property at Paradise.

Captain Walker was a man of considerable experience. He entered the Royal Navy in 1806. On his discharge, he engaged in mercantile pursuits in India and Mauritius, and came to South Australia in the year 1838. His home “Havering” formed part of section 509 on the River Torrens, and his name was given to the suburb of Walkerville. In addition to farming, Captain had agencies and various commercial interests, and was appointed to a board of police commissioners.

He was, however a victim of the 1840 depression, and had to surrender to his creditors his entire estate, with the exception of his furniture, which was permitted for the use of his wife.

In 1841 he was arrested for being unable to meet his commitments, which on examination revealed debts of 23,000 pounds. Some arrangement must have been agreed upon, as he carried on until 1845 or 46, when he partitioned the Government for employment. I have not been able to find any reliable record of his movements after, but believe he left South Australia about 1847 for New South Wales, and died in Tasmania.

Grandfather must have been a man of substance, as after twelve months service without pay, he left Captain Walker, and bought 51.5 acres at Plympton, where he farmed, until his death.

In support of my observation that he was not a pauper, he was able to buy the land at Plympton, and as a child, whenever the family history was mentioned, mother never failed to remind me that her father paid the fare for himself and his family to the new colony, as distinguished from the assisted passengers.”