

THOMAS TINHAM

1827 ~ 1864

In 1827, Thomas Tinham's parents, James "Jem" Tinham and Maria "Mary" Bailey, accompanied George Wyndham of Dinton and his wife Margaret (née Jay) as servants on their voyage to Australia.

Their ship the *George Home* (pronounce "Hume" in the Scottish tongue) departed London on 17 August 1827, under the command of Captain John F. Steele.

Jem and Maria travelled in the steerage compartment with the other servants, while Mr. B. Powis, George and Margaret Wyndham, and the ship's surgeon, travelled in first class. Jem and Maria's infant daughter, Maria Tinham, also accompanied them on the voyage.

Midway through the trip, the *George Home* stopped at Île Saint-Paul (Saint Paul's Island) in the middle of the Indian Ocean. Here it spoke with the ship *Louisa*, carrying female convicts for Sydney.

It was off Saint Paul's island, on 6 November 1827, that Maria gave birth to Thomas. The child was named after Maria's older brother Thomas Bailey of Dinton. Although healthy, Thomas was unfortunately born with a harelip.

The *George Home* arrived in Hobart Town, Van Dieman's Land (Tasmania) on 30 November 1827. The ship landed a vast quantity of merchandise, imported by store owners J. C. Underwood, John Kerr, William Watchorn, E. Lee and S. Fraser.

The ship set sail again on 18 December 1827, finally arriving in Sydney on 26 December 1827.

In January 1828, George Wyndham purchased 2080 acres on the Hunter River, near the town of Branxton. George named the property *Dalwood*, after a wooded portion of Dinton Park Estate.

George Wyndham went on to become a successful grazier, farmer and winemaker in the region. Dalwood wines became well renowned and by 1886, it was the second largest vineyard in New South Wales.

Shortly after arriving in Australia, Thomas' parents parted ways with the Wyndhams and made a home for themselves in Sydney. The reason for their parting seems to have stemmed from some sort of discontent, with Thomas's father writing to his mother in England saying he should come home the first opportunity.

At the time of the 1828 New South Wales census, Thomas and his family were recorded as living on Pitt Street in Sydney. On the census record the family was listed per the ship *George Home*, however their surname was incorrectly spelled "Tennant".

Early in 1829, Thomas' younger sister, Jane Tinham, was born in Sydney. The child was named after her grandmothers, Jane Bailey and Jane Tinham of Dinton.

On 5 April 1829, Thomas and Jane, were baptised at Saint James' Church of England in Sydney. The christening was performed by Chaplain Richard Hill. On the baptism records Thomas' father was listed as a labourer living in Pitt Street, Sydney.

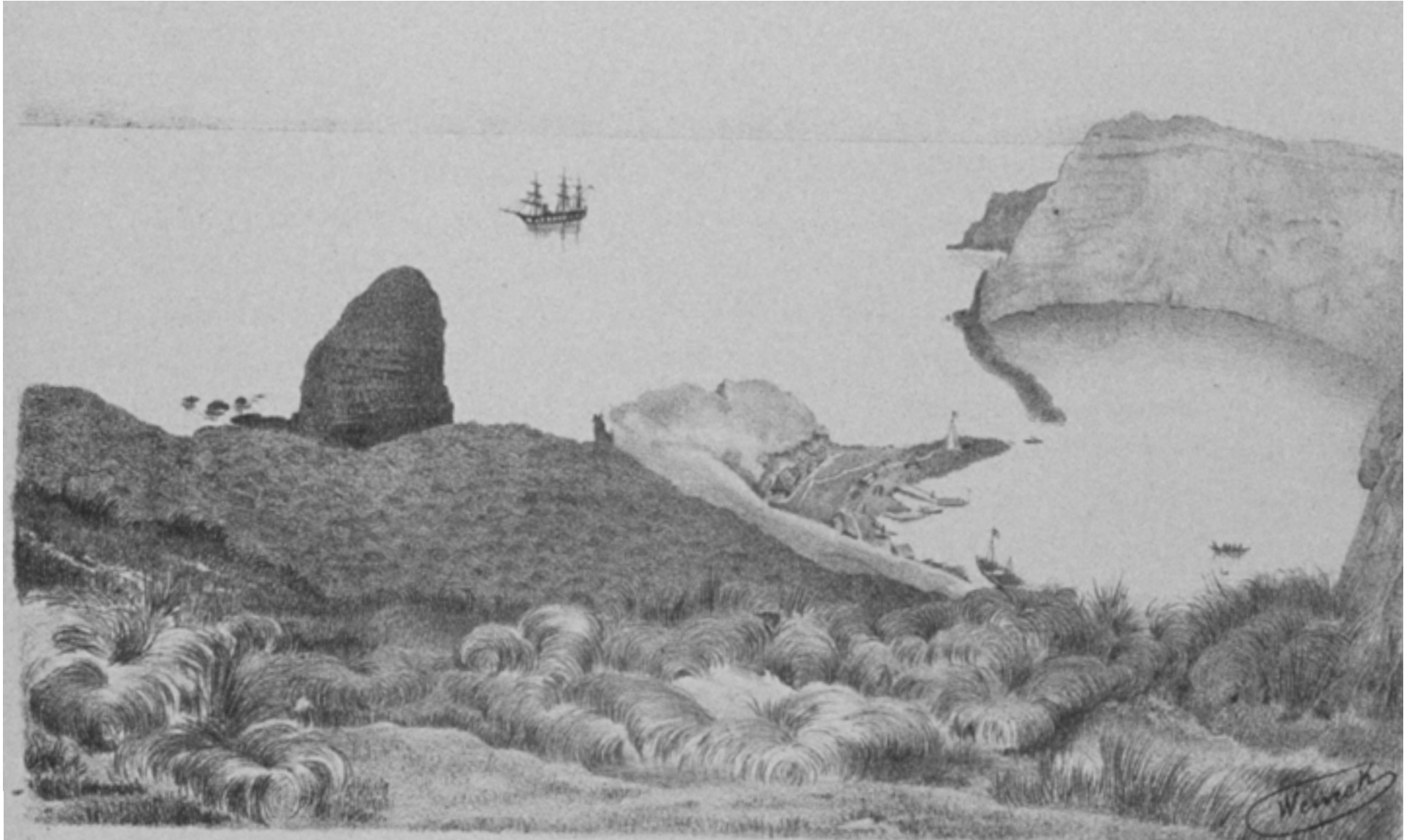
Sometime after this, the family moved to a new abode in Clarence Street, near the *Hope Tavern*.

In April 1831, another of Thomas' sisters, Sarah Elizabeth Tinham, was born in Sydney. The child was named after Maria's older sister, Sarah Bailey of Dinton.

Sarah was baptised on 17 May 1831, at Saint James' Church of England in Sydney. The christening was performed by Chaplain John Vincent. On the baptism Thomas' father was record as a labourer living on Clarence Street in Sydney.

On 24 November 1836, Thomas' younger brother, James E. Tinham, was born in Sydney.

James was baptised on 5 December 1836 at Saint Philips Church of England in Sydney. The christening was performed by Chaplain William Cowper. On the baptism record Thomas' father was listed as a butcher.



Crater Bay at St. Paul Island in the southern Indian Ocean. The *Gazelle* is anchored offshore. Drawing by Dr. Ladislaus Weinek.

Sometime around 1837-38 Thomas' father, James "Jem" Tinham disappeared. Jem's death was never officially recorded, perhaps having abandoned his family or having met his death in mysterious circumstances.

On 20 August 1838, Thomas' mother Maria re-married a calico printer by the name of Joseph Maypowder. The marriage was held at Saint Philip's Church of England in Sydney, described as "the ugliest church in Christendom", on a hill bounded by York, Grosvenor and Lang Streets.

The ceremony was performed by Chaplain William Cowper and witnessed by Richard and Anne McPherson of Sydney. On the marriage certificate Maria was listed as a widow.

Following the wedding, Thomas and his family moved to Sussex Street to live with their new step-father, Joseph Maypowder.

A little over one year later Thomas and his siblings were left orphaned when their mother Maria died on 20 October 1839. Maria was only 37 years old. She was buried the following day on 21 October 1839 in the Sandhills Cemetery, on the corner of Elizabeth and Devonshire Streets. The burial was officiated by the Reverend William Horatio Walsh.

Following the death of both parents, Thomas (age 12) and his step-father Joseph worked to support the family. Meanwhile, Thomas' three sisters, Maria, Jane and Sarah cared for the youngest child James (age 3).

By 1842 Joseph had left Sydney and was living in the Queanbeyan district. He appeared as a creditor in the insolvency proceedings of John Entwistle Turner, where he was owed £11 10s.

Thomas, Sarah and James eventually followed their stepfather to the Queanbeyan district, while their two older sisters Maria and Jane chose to remain in Sydney.

In 1846, Joseph was recorded in the Goulburn district where he subscribed £1 to the Irish Relief fund.

In 1850, Thomas' older sister Maria married Thomas Casey at the Presbyterian Church somewhere in the Lower Hunter Valley (either Denbie, Hunter, Maitland, Morpeth, Paterson or Singleton).

On 22 March 1850, Thomas' sister Jane (age 21) married Edward "Edwin" Hamlin (age 32) at Scots Church in Pitt Street, Sydney. The ceremony was performed by Reverend John Dunmore Lang.

On 17 April 1852, Thomas' sister Sarah (age 22) married Joseph Hall (age 23) at Saint Saviour's Cathedral in Goulburn. The ceremony was performed by Reverend William Sowerby and was witnessed by Edward and Eliza Lee. On the marriage certificate Sarah's residence was recorded as Collector, as was Joseph's.

In 1856, Thomas' stepfather Joseph gave a subscription of 10s towards the erection of a schoolhouse in Goulburn, raised by the Collector Catholic Church.

On 17 April 1859, Thomas' sister Maria Casey (nee Tinham) died at her residence in Milson's Point, at the age of 34. Maria was buried two days later in the Roman Catholic section of the Sandhills Cemetery on Devonshire Street.

The same year, Thomas' step-father Joseph died in 1859 at Beechworth Hospital, Victoria, having never re-married. It is likely he had journeyed there in search of gold like the many other fortune hunters of that period.

On 6 October 1863, Thomas married Mary Chaplain, at Saint John's Church of England in Canberra. Thomas was 36 years old and Mary 19. The marriage was performed by Reverend Pierce Galliard Smith and was witnessed by his sister Sarah Elizabeth Hall (née Tinham) and his brother-in-law Joseph Hall.

In 1864, Thomas was working as a bullock driver for landowner Henry Hall of *Charnwood*. At the same time Thomas' wife Mary was expecting their first child.

On 30 June 1864, Thomas was driving his bullock team home from Queanbeyan with a load of flour belong to Henry Hall. On his way out of town he called in at the *Farrier's Arms Inn*, where he treated a few men to a drink, but drank nothing himself. At about 4 o'clock, Thomas left the public-house in the company of Joseph Dickinson. On their way out of town they passed by Robert Jackson.

At close to dusk, the pair reached the Molonglo River on the Gundaroo road. The crossing-place had been greatly damaged by recent floods, with many tons of large stones having been washed into the crossing. Upon attempting to cross the river Thomas' team got stuck fast in the mud. Thomas rushed to free his bullocks however in doing so the dray's pole lifted into the air and the back of the dray fell beneath the water with its load of flour. Thomas swam clear of the dray and sought safety on the opposite bank while Dickinson, who was very drunk at the time and could scarcely sit on his horse, went back into town for help.

Whilst in town, Dickinson again came across Robert Jackson and inquired of him where a team of bullocks could be borrowed. Having no success Dickinson remained in town that night.

The next morning Dickinson returned to the river to find the dray still bogged, however he could not find any sign of Thomas. A man crossing sheep called Dickinson's attention to a hat tied to a tuft of rushes on the bank of the river. Dickinson went back into town and reported the circumstance to the police. On receiving the information, Sergeant Latimer, of the Queanbeyan police force, dispatched Senior-Constable Walmsley to Charnwood, to gather tidings of Thomas. When Walmsley returned, he stated that Thomas had not been home and a search was carried out in the river. After dragging the river for a little while, the body of Thomas was found and brought to the bank. Two bullock bows were tied in front of his neck by a cord with his left hand fastened close to his neck. The police searched Thomas' body and found four shillings and six pence, a silver tobacco pipe and matches.

A coroner's inquest was held into Thomas' death, with Dr. Hayley examining the body. The jury returned a verdict of *felo de se* (suicide). Thomas was 36 years old.

At the time, suicide was regarded as a sin and a criminal offence. Consequently, many churches did not allow suicide deaths to be buried within consecrated ground. Thomas was hence laid to rest outside the fenced enclosure of Saint James' Church of England in Canberra, on the north west side of the churchyard.

Thomas' estate was subsequently sold, consisting of a bullock dray, 8 bullocks, tackling and a plough.

Almost 3 months after his death on 21 September 1864, Thomas' wife Mary gave birth to a daughter. The child was named Thomasina Jane Tinham in memory of her father.

Thomasina was baptised the following year on 22 January 1865 at Saint John's Church of England in Canberra. The christening was performed by Reverend Pierce Galliard Smith.



Saint John's Church of England where Thomas was married and later buried. Drawing by H. Grant Lloyd