

Alfred and Elizabeth Seymour

Passengers of the sailing ship, 'Netherby'. Shipwrecked,
14th July, 1866, King Island, Tasmania.



"The Smithy" Lucy Walburn

Elizabeth Everson was known as 'Bessie' to her family. She was born at 'The Smithy' on the 26th June 1841, Lakesend, Cambridgeshire. She was the

Commemorating and remembering the strength, faith, commitment and perseverance of Alfred and Elizabeth. Natives of Cambridgeshire, England. Passengers of the ill fated sailing ship 'Netherby', 14th July 2016, King Island, Tasmania.

second of 10 children to Egbert Everson and Phoebe (nee) Whittlesea. Her father was a wheelwright, carpenter, coffin maker and blacksmith at Lakes End. The house had come into the family in 1808 and was situated in the centre of the village. Later a post office was run from the front room of the house and only closed in the 1930's, the home still stands today in Lakesend.

Alfred was born in 1844 at neighbouring Cock Fen Farm, Downham, Cambridgeshire, to parents Richard Seymour, farmer and Mary Ann (nee) Clark. Alfred was baptised on the 2nd April 1844 he was the second youngest of eight children.

Alfred and Elizabeth Seymour grew up near each other and were married at the parish church of Upwell St. Peter, Norfolk, Isle of Ely on the 27th March 1866. According to a story handed down by Elizabeth's niece, Rose Westland; Elizabeth wore a white satin gown and had in attendance six bridesmaids all wearing different coloured silk gowns and held large bouquets of flowers. She was transported to the church by carriage which was drawn by white horses. Their wedding reception was attended by the village people and took place in a barn with its internal walls and floor dressed in calico so that the dresses would not catch on the bricks. They ate pork pies, cured hams, tongues and chickens. The celebration lasted three hours and included speeches, toasts, the cutting of the wedding cake, music, singing and dancing.

It could be assumed that Alfred and Elizabeth were encouraged by Alfred's brother Richard to join him in Ipswich, Queensland, as; soon after their marriage they boarded the sailing ship 'Netherby'. Richard Seymour was the eldest and one of only two sons born to Richard and Mary Seymour. Richard junior had arrived in Australia with his wife Ann Taylor whom he had married in The Wesleyan Chapel, Ely, Cambridgeshire in July 1852. Their immigrant vessel 'Agricola' docked in Brisbane on the 2nd March 1853, they settled in Ipswich, Queensland. Richard was to become a successful sawmill proprietor.

On the 4th April 1866 'Netherby' sailed from London and 13th April sailed Plymouth for Brisbane. Elizabeth and Alfred were two of the approximately 450 passengers and crew who sailed on the 'Black Ball' Immigrant ship

'Netherby' with no ports of call en route to Australia. The voyage was to last 140 days.

The voyage was marred by bad weather. On the 14th July at 7.15 pm the ship struck a reef of sharp granite rock and was wrecked on King Island. Captain Owens, being afraid of loss of life in the dark rough seas, kept all passengers on board throughout the night even though the ship had started to take on water. They pumped water through the night to keep the badly bilging vessel upright. At 8 am the passengers began landing and the task was completed by 3 pm that day with no loss of life. Their granddaughter Essie Foote used to tell the story that her grandparents and the other passengers had to throw all their possessions overboard to help float the ship closer to shore, which meant the loss of sentimental wedding gifts for Alfred and Elizabeth. During the days the passengers waited on the Island for their expected rescue Alfred is said by his descendents to have been one of the passengers who made the daily swim to the wreck to offload provisions for the stricken survivors. He was evidently a strong swimmer, unusual for the time. After 9 days the passengers of the 'Netherby' were rescued and taken to Melbourne to recover.

Whilst many passengers chose to remain in Victoria, Elizabeth and Alfred were among the passengers who continued their journey via the steamship 'City of Melbourne' to the intended port of Brisbane. However, the cost of this second voyage was born by Alfred and Elizabeth causing them to be debt for some time afterwards. They were met in Brisbane by the Rev. W. Buckle and then the following day boarded the wooden hulled paddle steamer, 'Settler' to Ipswich.

Alfred and Elizabeth lived in Ipswich at brother Richard's home in Roderick Street at first and this is where their first child Edred was born in December 1866. After two years they moved to Bremer Mills, where at this time there was a flour mill in the area. Later Alfred purchased 'Stradbrook Farm' at 'Bundanba', now known as Bundamba.

Alfred worked as a bullock driver, labourer and investor. He never worked on Sunday. It is said that the other drivers could not understand how 'Seymour' reached his destination ahead of them, his bullocks already rested! In his own way he was a missionary for his faith as wherever he found himself on Sunday

he would teach Sunday school to the local children. He was involved in the local community and was on the committee that raised funds to start Bundamba State School.

Tragically Alfred died at Bundamba following an illness lasting 10 days. Rheumatic fever was said to be the cause by the attending medical physician, though his granddaughter Essie Foote would tell that he died as a result of drinking fouled creek water. It was the 5th November 1878 and he was aged just 34 years. Some months prior to this he is said to have had an accident where a log had rolled on him. He was buried on the 6th November according to the rights of the Primitive Methodist church by Rev. E. Fuller at the Ipswich general cemetery (the site of his grave now unknown). Alfred had died intestate; however fortunately all of his goods and land were granted to Elizabeth 14 days following his death by the supreme court of Queensland.

At the time of his death his occupation was listed as farmer and his youngest son George was just three months old. His oldest son Edred was 12 years old. In order to assist the family financially Edred left school and went to work at his Uncle Richard Seymour's sawmill. Elizabeth continued to manage 'Stradbrook Farm' and took in sewing tasks. One of these jobs was to embroider the fabric on the inside of coffin lids.

Elizabeth remarried after Alfred's death to John Jones on the 18th September 1880 at Toowong. Jones was a local Bundamba employee of prominent resident James Ivory. They had one son together, John Bertie. 'Bertie' remained unmarried and lived with his mother till her death. Sadly Elizabeth's second husband John Jones deserted her whilst Bertie was still a babe in arms. Elizabeth was committed to her Christian faith and was present at the opening of the Primitive Methodist Church, Bundamba. In a later church, memorial windows were placed in the church to Alfred and Elizabeth and Richard Seymour. These windows were removed at the deconsecrating of the old church on Brisbane Road when it was sold to private business. The last service was held there on 29th July 2007.

Elizabeth lived at 'Stradbrook Farm', Bundamba until her death at 87 years of age on 5th February 1929. Three months earlier she had fallen and fractured her femur. She was buried on the 7th February in the Ipswich general

cemetery, with the service being conducted Rev F.J.Harris of the Methodist church.

At a remembrance service for the late Elizabeth Jones on the 18th February the Rev. Harris described Elizabeth as a very old and esteemed member of the Bundamba Methodist church. He said that she led a quiet unassuming home life and that she maintained her faculties and physical strength until the accident some weeks before her death.

Elizabeth and Alfred had seven children though six children living and 25 grandchildren. A death notice was placed in The Queensland Times on the 11 January 1873 for an infant daughter of Alfred and Elizabeth Seymour of Bundamba, Elizabeth Ann, aged five months. Several years later they were to name another daughter Elizabeth Ann (the writer's great grandmother).

Edred (b1866) married Margaret Watson. They had five children. He was a farmer and carpenter and also worked as a pit carpenter in the coal mines of Ipswich. In 1911 he built a family home in Mary St., Bundamba on what was a portion of 'Stradbrook Farm'. It was completed just in time for their youngest child Margaret to be born there. Margaret (Sugars) and her sister Lillian Seymour lived in this home until their deaths. This home remained in the family until 2015. Edred was heavily involved in community matters in particular was a founding member of the Anzac commemoration committee and worked hard to raise funds for the Bundamba soldier's memorial.

Esther (b1868) was head dressmaker at Cribb and Foote store Ipswich. She married James Lindsay and had two children. James was a mounted police officer and was killed when thrown from his horse in 1898. She married Robert Foster in 1904 and moved to Sydney.

Edith (b1870) became a teacher and spent most of her working life at Bundamba State School, retiring in 1936. She lived with her mother and when her mother died she moved to a house close to brother Edred's home in Mary Street. Edith is buried alongside her mother in the Ipswich General Cemetery.

Alfred William (b1874) was a carpenter. He was responsible for the work on many of Ipswich's beautiful old homes. One of those homes was 'Calcorian' at

6 Glebe Road Ipswich. Designed by George Brockwell Gill it was completed in 1900 for Alfred's youngest sister, Elizabeth and her new husband, Walter Foote. Brother Edred was working with him at this time. Essie Foote would tell, "mother's brother's built 'Calcorian' ". Alfred married Elizabeth Watson, sister to Margaret. They had three children. Uncle Willie, as he was known, with the help of his oldest brother Edred, built a dresser each year for the Bundamba school fete as a fundraiser.

Elizabeth Ann (b1876) was a seamstress at Cribb and Foote Store in Ipswich. She married Walter Foote, a cashier at the store. Their marriage took place at 'Stradbrook Farm' on the 19th September 1900, Walter's birthday. Elizabeth's sister Esther sewed her wedding gown and also the christening robe for their four children.

George (b 1878), served in two wars. He volunteered to go to the Boer War in the first contingent, mounted infantry, sailing 31st October 1899 to the North West Cape Colony and returning, January 1900. He married Ethel Jane Rossner and moved to Biggenden. In 1916 he enlisted in the 5th Light Horse AIF (21st reinforcement) and served in Egypt as Lance Sergeant. He then served in Palestine with the Australian Provost Corps. He was also in the pioneers in WWII. He died in 1952 and is buried in Degilbo cemetery near Biggenden.

John Bertie, Elizabeth's child to John Jones (b1881) lived at 'Stradbrook Farm', until his death in 1948. He worked as a joiner and farmer. He also is buried alongside his mother.

On the 8th May 1999 a local park in Bundamba which is part of the old 'Stradbrook Farm' was named in honour of Alfred Seymour. Many of his descendants were present including two of his surviving grandchildren, Margaret Sugars (nee Seymour) and Lillian Estelle (Essie) Kahler (nee Foote).

This history was compiled by great- great- grand daughter Megan McCawley of Brisbane from searches of historic newspapers and record,, the research of great -granddaughter June Burt of Bundamba, their late granddaughter- in -law Nancy Foote (Brisbane), Elizabeth Seymour's great niece the late Lucy Walburn (Rhos-on-sea. Wales, U.K) and author Don Charwood.