

SUGARS

Thomas Sugars was born in the town of Ampthill, Bedfordshire on 26 July 1834, the son of George Sugars, an agricultural labourer and his wife Kitty¹. He was one of twelve children. Thomas married Sophia Breed on 20 April 1857 in Ampthill. Sophia was born on 3 July 1831².

Parish or Township of <i>Ampthill</i>		Ecclesiastical District of		City or Borough of		Town of <i>Ampthill</i>		Village of	
No. of Inhabitants	Name of Street, Place, or Road, and Name or No. of House	Name and Surname of each Person who abode in the house, on the Night of the 30th March, 1851	Relation to Head of Family	Condition	Age of		Rank, Profession, or Occupation	Where Born	Whether Blind or Deaf and Dumb
					Male	Female			
	<i>The Grange</i>	<i>George Sugars</i>	<i>Head</i>	<i>Mar</i>	<i>48</i>		<i>Ag Lab</i>	<i>Ampthill</i>	
		<i>Kitty d.</i>	<i>Wife</i>	<i>Mar</i>	<i>49</i>			<i>d.</i>	
		<i>George Thomas</i>	<i>Son</i>	<i>Un</i>	<i>16</i>		<i>do</i>	<i>d.</i>	
		<i>George</i>	<i>do</i>	<i>Un</i>	<i>13</i>		<i>do</i>	<i>d.</i>	
		<i>Elizabeth</i>	<i>Daughter</i>	<i>Un</i>	<i>12</i>		<i>Straw Plaiter</i>	<i>d.</i>	
Total of Houses	<i>1 4 U B</i>	Total of Persons ...			<i>8</i>	<i>0</i>			

1851 census entry for the Sugars Family living at the Grange, Ampthill. The youngest daughter, Elizabeth, is shown as a straw plaiter. © National Archives UK

They sailed on the *Irene* which departed Liverpool on 23 October 1857 and arrived three and a half months later in Moreton Bay on 11 February the following year³. They arrived with their infant daughter Sarah Ann and their immigration record shows that their religion was Church of England and that they could both read and write. Upon arrival, Thomas gained employment at the boiling down works in River Road, Redbank where sheep meat waste was rendered into tallow and remained there for six years⁴. In 1864, Thomas and Sophia moved to Moggill where they selected Portions 164, 175 and 176 fronting Hawkesbury Road near Mt Crosby Road. The three portions amounted to 187 acres and lots 175 and 176 fronted the Brisbane River, which proved to be a propitious choice. However, he spent the next 14 years timber-getting and nine years farming until in 1887, Thomas opened a blue metal quarry at the western end of Portion 175. It was quoted as "the best and nearest to Brisbane and one of the important industries in the district"⁵. By 1888, he employed 20 men, owned some 400 acres of land. The quarry had become a major supplier of bluestone basalt to the Brisbane construction industry. The stone extracted from the quarry was crushed in a steam-powered crushing plant and loaded onto awaiting lighters⁶.



The main face of Sugars' quarry looking towards the east from the river. Below: remnants of the steam-powered crushing plant © Neville Marsh 2014



Thomas and Sarah had 11 children, of whom four died in infancy. The surviving children were Thomas George, Mary Ann, Sarah Ann, Eliza, William, Frederick Charles and Albert Edward.

Thomas and Sophia's eldest son, Thomas George was born in 1859 and attended Moggill School until he was 13 years old, at which point he was needed on the farm. At age 16, he was apprenticed to a blacksmith in

Toowong and worked in that trade until he was 23. In 1892, he selected a 32 acre block (portion 151) on the corner of Hawkesbury Road and Church Road where he cultivated maize, potatoes, pumpkins and lucerne until his farm was inundated in the 1893 flood.



The site of Thomas George Sugars' farm (portion 151) at the junction of Church Road (in the foreground) and Hawkesbury Road (to the right of the picture) seen in the 2011 flood: a reminder of the 1893 inundation which ended Thomas' career as an arable farmer. © Vaughn Preddy

Thomas and Sophia's second youngest son, Frederick, died in an accident at the quarry on 22 February 1934. Fred was called into work on his day off, and the foreman of the shift failed to follow the safe practice Thomas Sugars had insisted on. There had been some wet weather and a 2 cwt boulder (about 100 kg) became dislodged about 40 feet up the rock face. As the men ran from the falling stones, Fred was fatally struck by the large rock⁷.

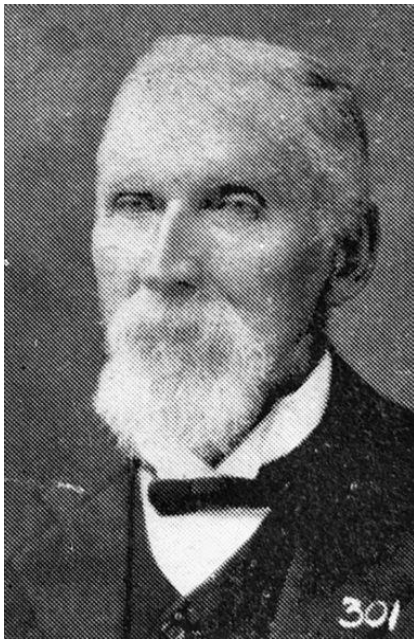
It is believed that Fred owned the first car in Moggill which was a 1918 Buick. In the 1930s during a rather severe flood, he rowed out to the top of a huge old gum tree near Pullen Creek Bridge, and thereupon nailed a board to mark for posterity the flood level⁸.

On 25 June 1888, Thomas became a Justice of the Peace and took a keen interest in the locality. He was a foundation member of Moggill Methodist Church, a supporter of the Salvation Army and a member of the Indooroopilly Divisional Board responsible for local roads.

Thomas' nephew, Charles Sugars, migrated to Australia in 1887. Charles married Jessie Mitchell in the Wesleyan Church in Moggill before settling nearby in 1893.

Three members of Sugars family are honoured on the Kenmore War Memorial: two of Thomas' grandsons, William George and Leonard Walter and a great-nephew, Vivian Vincent. William, a Temporary Farrier Corporal in 2nd Light Horse Brigade, saw action at the Battle of Romani in August 1916. Heavily outnumbered, their position was held throughout the night and before dawn the next morning, the 1st and 2nd Light Horse Brigades advanced on foot with the bayonet and Turkish resistance collapsed at this point, and large numbers of prisoners were taken⁹. Leonard was a Corporal in the Australian Army Supply Company.

Sophia Sugars died on 24 September 1914 and her husband, Thomas, on 11 May, a year later. They are both buried in Moggill Cemetery along with four of their children, George, Walter, Elizabeth, William.



Thomas and Sophia Sugars 1909

©State Library of Queensland, neg numbers 67827 and 67828

The Sugars family is connected with a number of other Moggill pioneers including the Eggar, Finlay, Greer, Hallett, Robert and Sexton families¹⁰. The Sugars name is commemorated by Sugars Road, which runs due east-west from Moggill Road to Hawkesbury Road and which forms the northern boundary of Bellbowrie. The family name is also remembered by the geological formation of basalt which bears the name 'Sugars Basalt'¹¹.

¹ National Archives of the UK, 1851 census, Class HO 107, Piece 1754, folio 232, page 1

² Sugars Family Tree on Ancestry.co.uk. <http://trees.ancestry.co.uk/tree/5285385/person/-1414602633> Viewed 10 December 2014

³ New South Wales Archives Assisted Immigrants Arriving at Moreton Bay, Reel 2138. Image of Irene immigrants downloaded from http://srwww.records.nsw.gov.au/ebook/list.asp?Page=NRS5316/4_4795/Irene_11%20Feb%201858/4_479500044.jpg&No=7, accessed 10 December 2014

⁴ Morrison, W Frederic *The Aldine History of Queensland* Volume 2, Appendix of biographical sketches: Moggill (unnumbered pages). Published by The Aldine Publishing Co., Sydney, 1888.

⁵ Morrison, *ibid*

⁶ Cameron, Ian. *A Green and Pleasant Land – An Account of the Pullenvale-Moggill District of SouthEast Queensland*. Published by Ian Cameron, 1999, p 68.

⁷ *Queensland Times* Saturday 26 January 1935, page 6

⁸ GreerGolliker Ancesters webpage <http://wc.rootsweb.ancestry.com/cgi-bin/igm.cgi?op=GET&db=greergolliker&id=I30> Viewed 9 December 2014

⁹ Australian War Memorial, *Battle of Romani* 04 August 1916 - 05 August 1916.
https://www.awm.gov.au/units/event_32.asp. Viewed 10 December 2014

¹⁰ Sugars, Bruce, *A Time To Remember - Descendants of Moggill Pioneers Souvenir Booklet*. Edited by Bruce Sugars and Mabel Kelly, 1988, p.45.

¹¹ Australian Government Geoscience Australia describes Sugars basalt as 'dark green olivine basalt with light grey-green tuff, amygdaloidal veined (spilitic) basalt.' It has a maximum thickness of 100 metres. Australian Stratigraphic Units Database: http://dbforms.ga.gov.au/pls/www/geodx.strat_units.sch_full?wher=stratno=17504
Viewed 10 December 2014