Entry type: Person
Entry ID: AWE6117

Tuckwell, Eliza Sarah

(1836 - 1921)

Born	18360101, London United Kingdom
Died	19210801, Northern Teritory Australia
Occupation	Businesswoman, Landowner, Midwife, Nurse

Summary

Eliza Tuckwell was a very successful business woman and landowner in the Northern Territory. She was one of the few Territory women to pay taxes on her income in 1884 when the South Australian parliament imposed taxes on income. Also, at the age of 59, Eliza was on of 82 women who enrolled to vote after the franchise was granted to South Australian and Territory women in 1894.

Details

Eliza Sarah Hemmings worked as a domestic servant in London however, to improve her employment and marriage prospects, she applied for a berth on a ship headed to Australia. Alongside fifty-five other single women, Eliza arrived in Port Adelaide in March 1855. After an initial appointment at St Peters College, Eliza soon found a job at a coach builder's, followed by some flour mills in Hindmarsh.

In February 1857 Eliza married Edward (Ned) Tuckwell and she gave birth to their first child, Mary Ann, in November that same year. She had four more children before 1868. The family left Adelaide in December 1869 and met Ned in Port Darwin in January 1870 (Ned had travelled north with Surveyor General George Goyder's expedition party in December 1868). Together they had two more children; Charles Palmerston in 1871 and Eleanor in 1873. Ned also turned one of Darwin's very first hotels, the Commercial, into a house for his family.

With Ned's death in April 1882, and in need of an income to support her family, Eliza opened a boarding house which she named Resolution Villa. She supplemented her income by acting as a midwife and nurse to the local community. The family property had been transferred to Eliza's name after Ned's death, and she became one of the first resident female taxpayers in Palmerston.

In 1895, at the age of 59, Eliza was one of the 82 women who enrolled to vote after the franchise was granted to South Australian and Territory women in 1894. He daughter Eleanor had also enrolled to vote at this time.

Eliza 'Granny' Tuckwell passed away in August 1921 at the age of 85.

Archival resources

Northern Territory Library, Northern Territory Collection
Victor and Eliza

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