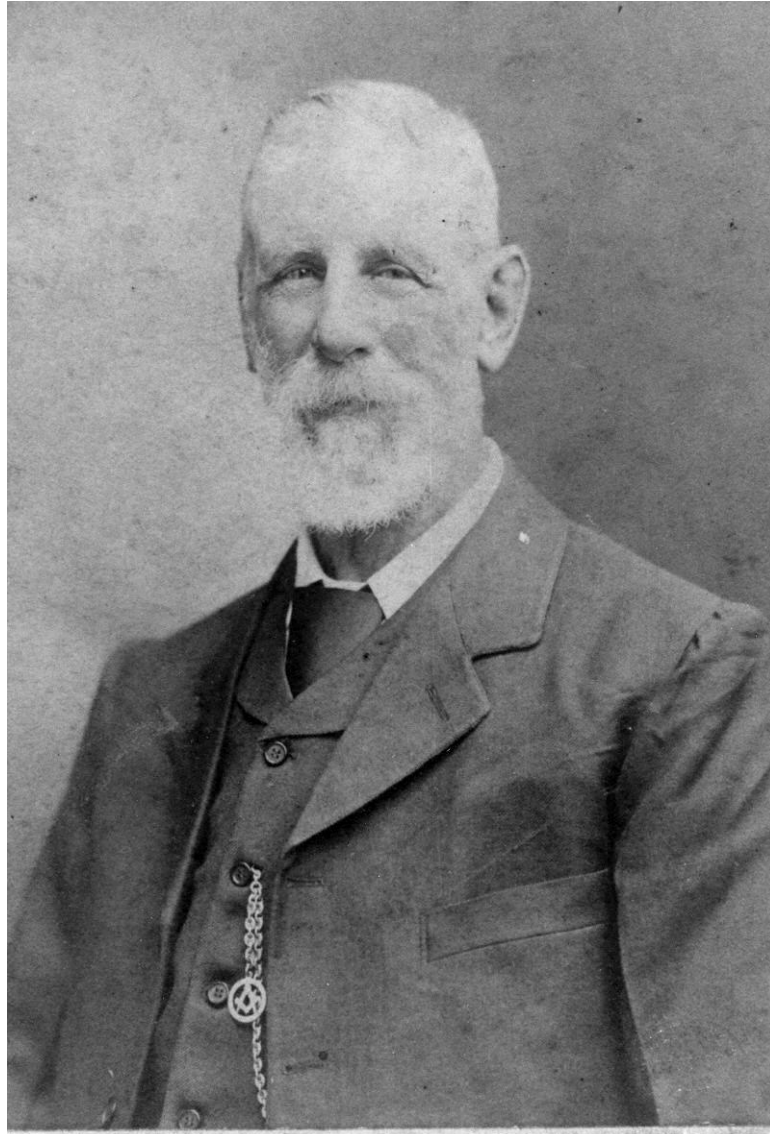


The Life and Times of Stephen Black

Master Mariner, School Teacher, Dairy Farmer



Born : 6th October, 1839, Great Yarmouth, England

Died: 15th July, 1927, Sydney, Australia

The Life and Times of Stephen Black

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Researched and compiled by his Great Granddaughter, Edna Harvey.

His daughter Ethel Beatrice Black was my grandmother. With thanks to my sister Rosemary Jarrett who started all this family history research back in 1978, and cousin Joan Black who is also a researcher and is a great granddaughter from the English family, while I am a great granddaughter from the Australian family.

Edna Harvey, 50 Iindah Road East, Tinana Qld 4650 5th March 2016

- ❖ *Revised 28th September 2016 with information supplied by great granddaughter Carolyn Black whose grandfather was Percy Lennox Black. Carolyn also researches family history.*



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Early Years

Stephen Black was the son of Captain John Black and his wife Mary Ann (Tuck). His Birth Certificate shows he was born on 6th October 1839 - his father as John Black, Mariner and mother Mary Ann Black formerly Tuck living at Row 109, Great Yarmouth. As far as we know Stephen was an only child.

The 1841 Census shows John Black (30), Mariner, with wife Mary Black (30) and 2 year old Stephen living at Row 116, Great Yarmouth. Also living with them is John Tuck (22) – presumably he is Mary’s brother and his occupation is given as a Twine Spinner.

The 1851 Census shows the family living at 42 Monument Road, Great Yarmouth. John’s occupation is as a Pilot (39), with Mary (40) and Stephen (11) and there is a house servant Susanna Mede aged 13. Captain John Black was a Trinity Pilot, working as a pilot for large ships entering the port of Yarmouth. A Trinity Pilot means he was registered with Trinity House in London and had the required skills to do this work.

Family history relates that when Stephen was about twelve years of age, he ran away to sea. However, he became very ill during a bad storm and was lashed to the deck to prevent him from being washed overboard. He returned home more dead than alive, and it took some three years for him to recover, during which time his parents hired a tutor for his education. It seems he also used to get very sea sick as a youngster until his father made him drink a cup of sea water. This apparently cured his sea sickness.



A Life at Sea

Despite these early setbacks however, Stephen did return to the sea and spent a good part of his life wandering the searoads of the then world. History records that when he applied for his Certificate of Competency as a Second Mate, on 9th December 1864, he had a total of 5 years 7 months and 20 days experience behind him. His address at the time of his application was given as Tower Road, Great Yarmouth.

This record shows –

Ship	Port of Registry	Rank	Start Date	End Date	Years	Months	Days
Harry	Yarmouth		1856	1856		4	
Pox	Yarmouth		1857	1857		4	
Foxhound	Yarmouth	OS	21/10/1858	7/3/1859		4	14
Thomas Campbell	Irvine	OS	27/06/1859	14/5/1860		10	17
Thomas Campbell	Irvine	AB	3/08/1860	23/6/1861		10	20
Thomas Campbell	Irvine	AB	3/09/1861	8/7/1862		10	5
Reigate	London	AB	8/11/1862	1/11/1864	1	11	24

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Ships ‘Harry’ and ‘Pox’

As his father worked around the port of Great Yarmouth as a Trinity Pilot and his mother’s family were seafaring people from Lowestoft, it is presumed that the first two ships in this record, ‘Harry’ and ‘Pox’ were possibly fishing boats – no records have been found for them at this time.

Ship ‘Foxhound’

The ‘Foxhound’ – similarly little has been found relating to this vessel. Perhaps it was the ‘Foxhound’ which is described as an English whaling vessel of 368 tons which was built in France and registered in London, and carried a crew of 26 – 28 men.

Ship ‘Thomas Campbell’

The ‘Thomas Campbell’ was a 3 masted wooden sailing ship of 630 tons built in 1851. It was a cargo carrying vessel and was registered at the port of Irvine. Stephen Black undertook three voyages in the ‘Thomas Campbell’ and it can be assumed that as the length of each voyage was of similar duration; each voyage was over the same territory. We have documented proof that the ‘Thomas Campbell’ arrived in Sydney, New South Wales on 5 November 1859 on a voyage from London with Stephen Black listed as an Ordinary Seaman on board. This was his first voyage on the ‘Thomas Campbell’, as listed on his Second Mate’s Application. Perhaps it was also his first visit to Australia.

Note: The port of Irvine was one of the most important ports in Scotland. Irvine's harbour at Fullarton functioned as the chief port for Glasgow until the early 18th century when [Port Glasgow](#) developed, then a century later the [River Clyde](#) was deepened to take ships directly to Glasgow. Exports from Fullarton included coal, tar, lime, and chemicals, whilst imports included hemp, iron, wood from Finland and Russia, [soda ash](#) from [Belgium](#) and a special sand for the Portland Glass Factory.

A report in the Norfolk News Newspaper of 24th August 1861 states – “*On Tuesday, four young men, named Godfrey Early, William Butler, William Carter and Stephen Black, apprentices to Messrs. Hewitt, smackowners of Barking, were charged by Mr C Spachett with refusing to go to sea, and thereby detaining their vessels in the harbor. Early having been previously convicted of a similar offence, was sentenced to three months imprisonment; and Butler and Carter to six weeks’ imprisonment each. Black was remanded, as he asserted that he was 21 years of age, and no longer an apprentice*”. Our Stephen certainly fits the age bracket for this incident, and given that he departed on the ‘Thomas Campbell’ some ten days later, we could wonder if his absence from the country for the next ten months was opportune.

Note: A Smack was a traditional fishing boat used off the coast of Britain. Large numbers operated from UK ports such as Brixham, Grimbsy and Lowestoft.

The Official Log Book for the third voyage undertaken by Stephen Black on the ‘Thomas Campbell’, obtained from the National Maritime Museum in London, shows him listed in the crew as an Able Seaman. The Log Book shows the commencement of the voyage as 3rd September 1861, leaving London, and the vessel arrived back in London on 8th July 1862. The master of the ‘Thomas Campbell’ for this voyage was Neil McKelvie whose wife was also on board. The Log shows that a baby girl was born to the master and his wife during the voyage, with the location being latitude 27° south, longitude 56° east – somewhere in the Persian Gulf –

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with the Log Book page showing between Calcutta and London. The Log Book also notes that Stephen's conduct and his seamanship was 'Very Good'. A copy of this Log Book is attached.

Ship 'Reigate'

Not much has been found regarding this vessel, what voyages it undertook, where it travelled etc. A newspaper report from 'The Australian News for Home Readers' dated 28 May 1867 lists the Reigate bound for London with produce aboard such as 668 bales of wool, 500 bags flour, 2151 bags wheat, 18 casks rum plus much more general freight including gold, sheepskins, etc. A report in The Sydney Morning Herald of 6 November 1905 states that the Norwegian Barque Reigate, 969 tons, built in London in 1862 has been sold to foreigners for £93. From this last report we could assume that this was the vessel listed on Stephen Black's Second Mate's Application. We can also assume that Stephen Black was an Able Seaman on probably what was this vessel's maiden voyage. As Stephen's Application to be made Second Mate states that his voyage on the Reigate lasted 1 year, 11 months and 24 days we could probably assume that the voyage took him around the world and back again!



Sixteen days after returning from the voyage on the Reigate, on 17th November, 1864, Stephen Black married Elizabeth Ann Fill at the Parish Church, Great Yarmouth. They were both twenty-five years of age. Elizabeth's father was Samuel John Fill who, at Nos. 39-40-41 South Quay, was the proprietor of a Steam Tug Office as well as a Ship's Chandler, Oil and Colour Man and Salt Merchant. He had a private residence at 31 Nelson Road, South Yarmouth. Elizabeth's mother was Elizabeth Jones Fill (possibly Jones was a family name).

Stephen's Certificate of Competency as a Second Mate was granted on 12th December 1864. His application for his Certificate of Competency was submitted on 27th May 1867, showing a total of 1 year 6 months and 15 days experience as a Second Mate. His address at the time of his application was given as 1 Alexandra Terrace, York Road, Great Yarmouth.

This record shows –

Ship	Port of Registry	Rank	Start Date	End Date	Years	Months	Days
Orient The Murray	London	2 nd Mate	26/04/1865	14/02/1866		9	19
	London	2 nd Mate	28/05/1866	23/02/1867		8	26

Ship 'Orient'

The 'Orient', 1032 tons, the pioneer of the Orient line of clippers was built for the Australian gold rush and was launched at Rotherhithe in December 1853. However, she was barely launched when she was taken over by the Government for the transport of troops to the Crimean War. In 1855 she was made into a hospital ship during the fighting in Odessa, and returned to London in 1856 to begin her work as a passenger ship in the South Australian trade. She made 21 voyages between London and Adelaide from 1856 until 1877.

The 'Orient' was a wooden ship 184 feet long and had a 61 foot poop for passenger accommodation. She generally took 95 days travelling via the Cape, calling in at Capetown and St Helena, as was the custom with ships carrying passengers. She also carried freight such as wool and copper ore. In the 1850's and 1860's the arrival of the 'Orient' was an event in

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Port Adelaide, and she used to fire guns on arrival. Second Mate Stephen Black, on his 1865/1866 voyage, would certainly have been part of this.

Perhaps he was also part of the shipment of sparrows to Australia. It is recorded that in the 1860's, the first batch of sparrows was transported to Australia but only one survived. Two years later, a second batch arrived and the birds were sold to private collectors. Within a decade, the spread of sparrows created panic in rural areas and a bounty was put on their heads. But the sparrows became too firmly established and within five years the bounty system was abandoned.

Ship 'The Murray'

'The Murray', also a clipper ship, was built in 1861, the last Orient liner to be built entirely from wood. 'The Murray' had a reputation for making very fast times between Britain and Australia carrying both passengers and cargo. 'The Murray' measured 193.7 feet in length, and 33.2 feet in breadth with a depth of 20.2 feet. She had a gross tonnage of 902 tons.



Stephen and Elizabeth Black's first child, a son named John Stephen, was born on 4th December 1865, his birth was registered on 4th January 1866. The birth was registered by Elizabeth Ann Black formerly Fill, giving the father's details as Stephen Black, Seaman (Merchant Service). Elizabeth gave her address and the place the baby was born as Alexander Place, Yarmouth. As Stephen arrived home from his voyage on the 'Orient' on 14th February 1866, the baby was two months old before Stephen saw him.



Stephen was granted his Certificate of Competency as First Mate on 30th May 1867. When he made application for his Master Mariner's Certificate on 18th May 1870, he had a further 2 years, ten months and 3 days experience. His address on his application at this time was given as Rose Cottage, Havelock Road, Great Yarmouth.

A second son, Harry Munt Black was born 28th May 1868 with his birth registered by Elizabeth on 24th June 1868. The address given was Rose Cottage, Havelock Road, Yarmouth. When this child was born, Stephen was sailing on board the 'Maori' and the baby was some two months old when Stephen got home. A daughter, Elizabeth Jones Black was also born during this period – she was born 10th June 1870, with her birth registered by Elizabeth on 6th July 1870, and the address again being Havelock Road, Yarmouth. Once again, Stephen was away when the baby was born, and the little one was a few months old when he returned home from his voyage.

The 1871 Census shows Elizabeth living at Rose Cottage, Havelock Road, Great Yarmouth, with John Stephen aged 5, Harry Munt aged 2 and Elizabeth Jones aged 9 months. As the Census was generally taken in April, we assume Stephen was away at sea at the time.



Stephen's Certificate of Competency as a Second Mate was granted on 12th December 1864.

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Stephen Black's application for his Certificate of Competency as Master Ordinary was submitted on 18th November 1870, showing a total of 2 years 10 months and 3 days experience as a Second Mate and also First Mate. His address at the time of his application was given as Rose Cottage, Havelock Road, Great Yarmouth.

This record shows –

Ship	Port of Registry	Rank	Start Date	End Date	Years	Months	Days
Maori	London	2 nd Mate	2/10/1867	7/08/1868		10	7
Sir Jamsetjee Family	London	2 nd Mate	14/09/1868	1/09/1869		11	18
Caduceus	London	1 st Mate	30/9/1869	8/10/1870	1	-	8

Ship 'Maori'

The 'Maori' was a ship of 800 tons which was chartered by the Shaw, Savill Co to bring immigrants to New Zealand in the 1860's. An excerpt from *White Wings Vol 1 Fifty Years of Sail in the New Zealand Trade, 1850 to 1900* tells us "*the Maori was a ship of 800 tons, but for her size was a very slow sailor, her average passages occupying about 120 days.*" A further excerpt from the same volume tells "*On the passage out in 1867 to Auckland Captain Roberts reported having experienced exceptionally heavy gales for several days in the English Channel, compelling him to take shelter at the Isle of Wight, where some repairs were effected. The ship finally sailed on September 26. When in the Southern Ocean on December 27, she passed a large number of icebergs, many over 300 ft in height. She was in sight of large ice drifts for three days subsequently, and Captain Roberts wisely ran under easy sail.*" The same volume gives sailing dates for the 'Maori' to Auckland when she did the run to New Zealand three times under the command of Captain Roberts, the second one of which matches the dates Stephen gave in his application as above.

Ship 'Sir Jamsetjee Family'

'Sir Jamsetjee Family' was a wooden full-rigged ship built in 1863 by Alexander Stephen & Sons of Dundee, with dimensions of 192 feet x 34 feet 8 inches x 21 feet 9 inches and 1049 tons. Between 1867 and 1878 it was under the command of Captain Charles Cobb. At this stage no records have been found to let us know what voyages were undertaken by this vessel.

Ship 'Caduceus'

The 'Caduceus' was a 1006 ton ship rigged vessel belonging to Shaw Savill & Co. Built in 1854 by Fletcher, Son & Fearnall, London, her dimensions were – length 186.2 feet x beam 34 feet x depth 21.5 feet and wooden construction. Completed in 1854 and chartered to Shaw Savill & Co for several voyages, she was purchased by them in 1869 and sailed out of Liverpool. In 1873 she was sold to H Edwards of South Shields and used as a Spanish trader.

Stephen's above application lists that he was First Mate on the 'Caduceus' from 30th September 1869 until 8th October 1870. Further to this, as will be mentioned later, the information from Lloyd's Register of British and Foreign Shipping gives us the information that Stephen served on the 'Caduceus' under the command of Captain Roberts from 1870 to 1871.

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An excerpt from 'Sailing to A New Land' from web page www.jewell.asn.au/sailing.htm gives us "According to the log, the *Caduceus* left Plymouth on the 16th October 1869 bound for Melbourne, and arrived on 8th January 1870. On board the ship were a total of 328 males, 73 children, and 9 infants (less than 1 year old)." We could presume that 'Caduceus' sailed back to England on the return voyage and that Stephen Black was First Mate.

An excerpt from *White Wings Vol 1 Fifty Years of Sail in the New Zealand Trade, 1850 to 1900* gives us the information that the 'Caduceus', a fine roomy ship of over one thousand tons, was one of the first vessels chartered by the Shaw, Savill Co. She was a frequent visitor to Auckland, and brought out a large number of settlers. Nothing of an eventful nature occurred on any of the voyages, with the exception that she experienced a very severe gale in the English Channel and had to put into Spithead for three days when bound for Auckland in 1870. She sailed finally on December 21, and had a favourable run out. On this occasion she was in command of Captain D.T. Roberts, who had made previous visits to Auckland in the 'Maori'. She made five voyages to Auckland including one with a sailing date of 16th December 1870, arriving in Auckland 23rd March 1871.



Stephen returned from his first voyage on the 'Caduceus' on 8th October 1870 and was granted his Certificate of Competency as a Master Mariner on 24th November of that year. His certificate number was C32850.

Lloyds of London Captains Registers lists the following voyages after his Master Mariner status was attained. These records are from the 1869 and 1877 registers. There are no records for him in the 1878-79 and 1880-1887 registers: ~

Year	Name/Official No.	Rank
1870 – 1871	Caduceus / 25240	Mate
1872-1873	Antipodes / 7774	Mate / Master
1873	Felixstowe / 71700	Mate
1874	Felixstowe / 71700	Master
1874-1875	Lotus / 45315	Master
1876	Forest Fairy / 20556	Mate
1876	Edwin Fox / 4673	Mate
1877	Duke of Wellington / 26048	Mate
1877	Lombardian / 67506	Mate

Information about these ships, taken from Lloyd's Register of British and Foreign Shipping is as follows ~

Ship 'Caduceus'

Official Number 25240 (1870-71 edition)

Wooden 3 mast ship; Tonnage 1006 tons; Built 1854 in London;

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Dimensions – Length 186.2 feet, Breadth 34 feet, Depth 21.5 feet
Owner – Shaw & Co; Port of Registry – London; Master – Roberts

Ship ‘Antipodes’

Official Number 7774 (1873-74 edition)
Wooden 3 mast barque; Tonnage 352 tons; Built 1853 in Harwich
Dimensions – Length 117 feet, Breadth 27.5 feet, Depth 19 feet
Owner – J Vaux; Port of Registry – Harwich; Master – Black

Ship ‘Felixstowe’

Official Number 67257 (1874-75 edition)
Wooden 3 mast barque; Tonnage 379 tons; Built in 1873 in Harwich
Dimensions – Length 148.5 feet, Breadth 29.9 feet, Depth 12.3 feet
Owner – J Vaux; Port of Registry – Harwich; Master – Black

Ship ‘Lotus’

Official Number 45315 (1875-76 edition – 7 vessels listed named *Lotus*)
Wooden Brig; Tonnage 200 tons; Built by Rust in Yarmouth in 1862
Dimensions – Length 103 feet, Breadth 23.3 feet, Depth 13.3 feet
Owner – G Wright; Port of Registry – Yarmouth; Master – G Wright

Ship ‘Forest Fairy’

Official Number 20556 (1876-77 edition)
Wooden Schooner; Tonnage 129 tons;
Built by Bayley in Ipswich in 1859
Dimensions – Length 101 feet, Breadth 20 feet, Depth 10.6 feet
Owner – E Pope & Co; Port of Registry – Falmouth; Master – Davis

Ship ‘Edwin Fox’

Official Number 4673 (1876-77 edition)
Wooden 3 mast barque; Tonnage 836 tons; Built in Calcutta in 1853
Dimensions – Length 144.8 feet, Breadth 29.8 feet, Depth 23.6 feet
Owner – Shaw Savill & Co; Port of Registry – London; Master – JS Davies

Ship ‘Duke of Wellington’

Official Number 26048 (1877-78 edition)
Wooden 3 mast barque; Tonnage 820 tons;
Built in Liverpool in 1842
Dimensions – Length 169 feet, Breadth 33 feet, Depth 18.9 feet
Owner – WS Lishman; Port of Registry – Liverpool; Master - ??

Ship ‘Lombardian’

Official Number 67506 (1877-78 edition)

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Iron Barque; Tonnage 760 tons;

Built by Austin in Sunderland in 1875

Dimensions – Length 188.4 feet, Breadth 31.4 feet, Depth 17.8 feet

Owners – J Tweddell Jnr; Port of Registry – Stockton; Master – Chapman



More on ‘Caduceus’

As mentioned earlier, Stephen Black had a second voyage in ‘Caduceus’ and it is assumed that it was the second voyage that is recorded in the Lloyd’s Register. Newspaper reports of the day tell us that this second voyage was to New Zealand.

The Illustrated Sydney News of 17th April 1871 under the heading ‘New Zealand’ says “*The ship Caduceus, lately arrived from London, brings a consignment for the Acclimatisation Society, in the shape of a number of yellow-hammers. Two hundred and fifty of these birds were shipped in London, and a hundred and twenty-five have safely reached New Zealand. Out of six hares shipped at home five have arrived in good condition.*”

Later a report in the Empire Newspaper of 28th October 1871 under the heading ‘English Shipping, gives “*Caduceus, 1006 tons, at Gravesend August 19 from Auckland*”. With another report in Sydney Morning Herald of 31st October 1871 giving “*Arrival: Ex Caduceus, from Auckland, 3300 packages*”



A fourth child, Walter Low Black, was born on 2nd July 1872. His birth was registered on 23rd July 1872 by Elizabeth with the details that he was born at Rose Cottage, Havelock Road, Yarmouth and his father’s occupation given as Seaman in the Merchant Service. We know that Stephen arrived back home from his voyage on ‘Caduceus’ around the end of October, but as will be shown, Stephen was also away from home when this child was born. Joan Black, Great Granddaughter of Stephen Black, is a granddaughter of Walter Low Black and lives in New Zealand. Walter emigrated to New Zealand in 1925 – little knowing that his father had also lived in New Zealand for a time and was living in Australia, not lost at sea as thought.



On 17th October 1876, Stephen lost the Master Mariner’s Certificate awarded to him on 24th November 1870. At the time, the loss of this certificate must have been devastating for him as he would have needed it to continue in his chosen seafaring life. Furthermore it cost him the sum of five shillings (5/-) for a replacement – a lot of money in those days. But for those of us researching his life some 140 years later, his Application for Renewal of the Certificate gives precious information that has often been difficult to find.

As part of the application he was required to make a Statutory Declaration in which he declared “*that the said Certificate was lost at London on Tuesday October 17th during a journey from*

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the City to Poplar between which places I travelled by Omnibus and Tramway.” A notation on the edge of the application also gives the information that the Certificate was in a black leather letter case which fell through his pocket, the lining of which was torn.

The Application for Renewal of the Certificate gives his personal details, including his address which is given as 4 Bethel Place, Rodney Road, Great Yarmouth, Norfolk. Family history tells us that this was the home of his aunt who was a milliner, who doted on him and who supported him from time to time – perhaps he was already separated from Elizabeth and the children at this time.

The Application for Renewal of the Certificate also has a section headed “Particulars of Service” where he states that he has been Mate on the ‘Forest Fairy’, registered at Falmouth and the voyage was from London to the Azores and West Indies, commencing February 1876 and ending July 1876. A further section headed “Some Other Vessels in Which Applicant Has Served gives –

Name of Ship	Port of Registry	Rating on board	Whether Foreign, Home or Coasting Trade	Commenced	Ended
Forest Fairy	Falmouth	Mate	Azores	Jan'y '76	Feb'y '76
Lotus	Gt Yarmouth	Master	Paysandu	Nov '74	Aug '75
Felixstowe	Harwich	Master	Bankok	Sept '73	Aug '74
Antipodes	Harwich	Master	China	May '72	Sept '73

Stephen’s new Master Mariner Certificate was issued on 2nd November 1876 and it was numbered C02530.



More on ‘Antipodes’

As shown above, Stephen sailed on the ‘Antipodes’ on a voyage to China, commencing in May 1872 and not arriving back home to England until September 1873. Lloyds’ Captain’s Registers show that he was both Mate and Master of the ‘Antipodes’ on this voyage. As a full Log of the voyage is not available at this time, we can only assume that at some stage during the voyage Stephen became Master of the vessel. A report in the Essex Standard Newspaper of 2nd May 1862 reads “*The fine barque Antipodes, belonging to Mr Vaux, of the Harwich Royal Naval Yard, having lately been on the slip here and re-classed, has since loaded a cargo of coals in this harbor, and sailed on Wednesday for Shanghae (sic), in China – probably the first vessel loaded and fitted out for China at this port.*”

More on ‘Felixstowe’

Lloyds’ Captain’s Registers show that Stephen Black was Mate on the ‘Felixstowe’ in 1873 and then Master in 1874. His declaration on his above Application for Renewal of his Master’s Certificate shows he commenced on the ‘Felixstowe’ in September 1873, and ended his time on board in August 1874 and that the voyage was to Bangkok.

There is a report contained on www.nzetc.org entitled ‘The Wreck of the Hyderabad’ contains some paragraphs relating to the loss of the ‘Felixstowe’. Excerpts from these paragraphs include “*Felixstowe, a 379 tons wooden barque had gone ashore at 4 a.m. on Sunday 13th October 1878.*” And “*The day after the wreck Felixstowe appeared undamaged and W J*

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Taylor, the second mate, took the crew back on board. But within a few days the pounding seas had opened a gaping hole in the bow where the planking was torn from the ribs.” Also “Felixstowe was only five years old at the time of her loss. She was owned by Mr Vaux, a Harwich ship-builder, and had only recently entered the inter-colonial trade. She was carrying a cargo of coal from Newcastle.”

From this information, it would seem that our Stephen was Mate and then Master of the ‘Felixstowe’ when she was brand new.

More on ‘Lotus’

As well as the information contained within his Application for Renewal of his Master’s Certificate which tells us that he was Master of the ‘Lotus’ on a voyage to Paysandu from November 1874 until August 1875, an ‘Agreement and Account of Crew’ obtained from the National Maritime Museum at Greenwich for the ‘Lotus’ gives us the information that Stephen Black was the Master on the voyage on this vessel which started at Newport 4th December 1874 and ended at Plymouth on 28th September 1875. This Agreement also shows that Stephen’s previous vessel was the ‘Felixstowe’ and that he remained on board the ‘Lotus’ at the end of the voyage. A copy of the Agreement is attached.

The voyage is described as being from Newport to Paysandu (Uruguay) and to any port or ports in the Brazil and/or West Indies, and/or United States and back to a final port of discharge in the United Kingdom or continent of Europe. Voyage not to exceed eighteen months. Stephen gave his address as 1 Chiltern Street, Hull when he filled out the Agreement. Another indication that he was separated from Elizabeth and the children.

More on ‘Forest Fairy’

Lloyds’ Captain’s Registers give us the information that Stephen was Mate on the ‘Forest Fairy’ in 1876, and the Application for Renewal of his Master’s Certificate gives us the information that he was on board from January 1876 until February 1876 on a voyage to the Azores. (The Azores is composed of nine volcanic islands in the North Atlantic Ocean about 1,360 km or 850 miles west of continental Portugal.)

The Gaff Rig Handbook by John Leather (page 181) describes fruit schooners which were two and three masted gaff schooners. Many fruiters were owned at Liverpool, Falmouth, Salcombe, Brixham, and a few at Dartmouth and Plymouth, but the centre of trade was with London. He further states that Bayley’s of Ipswich built several. As our records of the ‘Forest Fairy’ state that she was built by Bayley’s of Ipswich and was registered at Falmouth, it is probably safe to assume that she was this style of vessel, carrying cargo to wherever...

There is a newspaper report of 6th July 1876 which gives the information that the ‘Forest Fairy’ sailed from Falmouth for London, another report of 19th July 1876 shows that ‘Forest Fairy’ sailed from Deal for Dartmouth.

However a report contained on www.bardseyboattrips.com/history/shipwrecks gives details of an incident on 20th January 1878 when “A collision took place on Sunday evening, about half past seven pm at Bardsey Bay, SSW 16 miles, between the 3 masted schooner ‘Forest Fairy’ of Falmouth, Gregory, master, from Liverpool to Cardiff in ballast and the ketch ‘Intrepid’ of Jersey, Robinson, master, Liverpool to Weybridge in Cornwall, with grain.”

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More on 'Edwin Fox'

The 'Edwin Fox' is preserved in a dry dock at Picton, New Zealand.

Lloyd's Register records that Stephen Black was Mate on the 'Edwin Fox' in 1876.

From the "The 149 year Illustrated Log of the Edwin Fox" on the web page www.nzmaritime.co.nz/edwinfox.htm it is difficult to determine when Stephen Black joined the ship and the length of time he sailed on her. The Log indicates that on 12th January 1876, 'Edwin Fox' departed Surabaya for Calcutta, and in May that year sailed for Hull with a cargo of 12,673 bags of linseed oil, arriving in Hull 25th September after 140 days. The Log then indicates that 'Edwin Fox' sailed for Newcastle-on-Tyne in ballast on 11th November and that Captain Davies was relieved as Master at the end of the voyage.

Is it possible that our Stephen Black was somehow in Calcutta in 1876 when the 'Edwin Fox' left there in May that year, and managed to take a job on the 'Edwin Fox' to get him home to England? Or, as discussed later in this story, perhaps he was somewhere else along the route the 'Edwin Fox' took in her voyage back to England. From his Application for the Renewal of his Master's Certificate he states that he was on board the 'Forest Fairy' until February 1876. In 1875 'Edwin Fox' was doing an emigrant run from the UK to Wellington, New Zealand then across to Newcastle, New South Wales before sailing for Saigon and then to Surabaya and Calcutta.

We could presume that Stephen left the 'Edwin Fox' after it arrived back at Hull in September 1876, spent a few weeks at home, and was ready to go to sea again, because we know that on 26th October 1876 he was in London making his Statutory Declaration that he had lost his Master Mariner's Certificate

More on 'Duke of Wellington'

No information on this vessel, the voyages undertaken and when and where our Stephen sailed on board as Mate has been found to date. Lloyd's Register records that Stephen Black was Mate on the 'Duke of Wellington' in 1877.

More on 'Lombardian'

A record exists for the voyage of the 'Lombardian' for 1877. The Auckland Star Newspaper of 30th June 1877 records the arrival of the 'Lombardian' after a voyage of 106 days from Portsmouth. An excerpt from the article states "*The Lombardian is a fine iron barque, in build very similar to the Emily Chapin, which was constructed in the same yard and by the same builders, Messrs Austen and Co., of Sunderland. She is under charter to the New Zealand Shipping Co. Captain Chapman reports leaving London on the 23rd January last, and being towed to the Downs. Bore away and set sail from there, but when off the Isle of Wight a SE gale arose, in which the ship behaved very badly. Owing to defective storage, she refused to ride to the seas at all, but stood as stiff as a rock, receiving each one right over her, and at times making fearful rolls. Finding it impossible to go to sea in this condition, the captain squared away for Portsmouth, where repairs were effected, and a portion of the cargo re-stowed; though not enough of it to satisfy the captain or the crew, many of whom deserted rather than go to sea in her. Fortunately she has enjoyed an exceptionally fine passage; as it was, the masts had to be secured by means of hawsers. The Lombardian made the harbor and dropped anchor in the stream at 8 p.m. yesterday.*"

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Again, Lloyd's Register records that Stephen Black was Mate on the 'Lombardian' in 1877, but the voyage to New Zealand recorded here left London on 26th January 1877.

At this stage we must question, did Stephen Black sail on the 'Lombardian' when she departed London for Auckland, and then did he 'jump ship' and stay on in New Zealand? We know from Newspaper reports that the 'Lombardian' sailed from Auckland to Sydney and then to Newcastle and then to Hong Kong.



The 1881 England Census found Elizabeth Black living at 20 Morris Road, in the registration district of Poplar, in London. Perhaps she moved to Poplar in the hope of finding some information regarding her missing husband. She is registered as being a Widow, with her occupation as a Machinist. She has 15 year old John with her and his occupation is Paper Hanger, also 10 year old Lizzie and 9 year old Walter are living with her and are both Scholars. Her other son Harry was aged 13 and he was living back at Chapel Field Road, Great Yarmouth with his grandmother Elizabeth Fill. He was also a scholar in 1881.

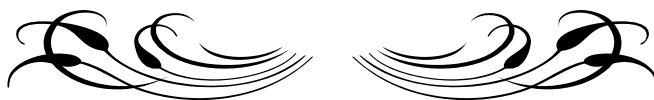
The 1891 England Census found Elizabeth Black at Poplar, London, with sons John (26) with occupation of House Decorator and Walter (18) with occupation of Clerk living with her. Daughter Elizabeth (20) was living back in Norfolk with her Aunt Emma Skinner's family and son Harry (22) was living with another relation at Newcastle upon Tyne with occupation of Marine Engineer.

Elizabeth Black died on 3rd April 1899, she was living at Southampton. Her Death Certificate states that she was the widow of Stephen Black, a Master Mariner.

The family left behind in England always believed that Stephen had been lost at sea. The story his Australian family were told was that he had owned a ship named the 'Clarissa' and that he had been shipwrecked in a storm and the ship and its cargo had been lost, and that he had been injured, breaking both his feet in the shipwreck. The story continued that it had taken him many months to recover and make his way back to England where he found that his cousin had claimed the insurance money for the lost cargo and that he was penniless.

When daughter Elizabeth Jones Black was married on 15th April 1899 she gave her father's details as Stephen John Black, that he was deceased, and that his occupation had been a Master Mariner.

Perhaps as far as Elizabeth and the English children were concerned, he was not so much '*lost at sea*' but '*lost to the sea*'.



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A Life Away from the Sea

There is a report from the Auckland Star Newspaper of 30th December 1878 that Captain Black of Opotiki had arrived at the Star Hotel. Opotiki is a small town in eastern Bay of Plenty region of the North Island of New Zealand. Is this our Stephen Black? If our Stephen stayed on in New Zealand after the 'Lombardian' sailed from Auckland, how did he spend his time?

We know that Stephen sailed from New Zealand as a passenger aboard the 'Tararua' which sailed from Auckland and arrived in Sydney on 10th March 1879. The 'Tararua' was a passenger steamer of 563 tons. Shipping records show that he had a cabin on board and was not one of the crew.

Presumably after some time in Sydney he made his way to West Maitland, or perhaps Dungog because it was in this area that he met Martha Myers. Family history tells us that Stephen had apparently seen Martha riding her horse at Dungog. Seemingly he was living at a boarding house at Dungog and had observed her riding by. He enquired as to who the young woman was, and observed 'that's the girl I am going to marry'! And marry her he did.

They were married at the Congregational Manse West Maitland according to the rites of the Congregational Church, on 30th September 1879. Stephen gave his occupation as a Master Mariner, his address as Dungog, and that he was a Widower. *And so the story of his new life began!*

Martha gave her address as Dungog and that she was a Spinster. She did not give an occupation although family history relates that she worked at Wades Cornflour Mill in Dungog. The cornflour mill was right in the heart of the main shopping strip of Dungog so it could safely be assumed that Stephen saw her riding to and from her workplace.

The NSW Teachers Rolls record Stephen Black being appointed a teacher at Dingo Creek on 3rd February 1880. This record says that he was aged 40 years in 1885. *He was actually 46 years of age in 1885.* With his education, and his qualifications as a Master Mariner, we could assume that it would not have been difficult to gain the teaching position. Dingo Creek is a locality not far from Wingham in New South Wales.

The first of the eleven children born to Stephen and Martha Black, Ethel Beatrice (Beatrice), was born on 31st July 1880. Stephen was the informant for the registration of her birth and he gave his details as being a Public School Teacher, aged 36 years, and that his birthplace was London, England. *Another little lie!*

Stephen was transferred to Camden Haven Public School on 21st April 1887. By then he and Martha had expanded their family to six children, with Clarissa Maude born in 1881, Francis Douglas (Douglas) born 1883, Percy Lennox born 15th April 1884, Ada Dorothea (Dadie) born 28th June 1885 and Arthur Randolph born 20th November 1886.

An early memory for Beatrice was of attending school from the age of four and that every morning, at breakfast time; her father took up the family Bible and read a passage to his family. She would recall that at these times, if any of the children were not paying attention to him, Stephen would 'glare them into submission', glaring at the miscreant over the top of his glasses. Even as an old lady, Beatrice could quote chapter and verse from the Bible.

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Another memory of Beatrice from these times was that on birthdays, the children would have a birthday cake baked for them, which they shared with the other children at school. She was taught from an early age that it was better to share on your birthday, rather than to expect to receive gifts. Her favourite cake was a Caraway Seed Cake, which her mother baked.

The Camden Haven School's name was changed to Kendall and Stephen was a teacher here until he tendered his resignation on 18th March 1892. By 1892 the family had increased and there were now nine children with Edwin Stanley (Ted) born 1st June 1888, Florence Amy (Amy) born 3rd March 1890 and Eric Selwyn born 1892.

Family history also tells us that Stephen Black had a temper and was known to get 'into a rage'. Perhaps this side to his nature was shown in 1892 when on 17th March, he was arrested and as reported in the Maitland Mercury & Hunter River General Advertiser on 2nd April 1892, "*Stephen Black, teacher of the Public School at Kendall, has been charged with indecent assaults upon four of his female pupils.*" A further report in the Maitland Mercury of 28th April 1892 states "*Stephen Black, a married man, and father of nine children, was committed for trial on April 16 by the Camden Haven bench, for an alleged assault with intent on a schoolgirl aged thirteen years, he being the school teacher at Camden Haven.*"

The Sydney Morning Herald of 19th July 1892 reported "*Stephen Black, Public school teacher at Kendall, Camden Haven, was acquitted on a charge of assaulting a pupil of the school. He was bound over to appear when called upon on three other charges of a similar nature.*"

A collective sigh of relief must have been felt by all the family when, as reported in the Maitland Mercury & Hunter River General Advertiser of 30th July 1892 "*The Attorney General has also instructed that no further proceedings be taken against Stephen Black, remanded from the last Quarter Sessions at Port Macquarie on charges of assault.*"

The NSW Teachers Rolls 1869-1908 record shows that Stephen requested permission to withdraw his resignation on 18th April 1892 and that in the light of his acquittal of the charges preferred against him, he could apply for his re-appointment.

The NSW Teachers Rolls record does not show whether he did resume teaching at Kendall School, however two more children were added to the family in the next four years with Evelyn Inez (Inez) born 25th March 1894 and Wilfred Fitzstephen born 1st June 1896.

During these years, as well as raising her own family Martha acted as a midwife, and helped bring countless babies into the world as well as her own, and in subsequent years, was midwife to her daughters. In later years, Beatrice often related the tale of how, when she was almost sixteen years old, she returned home to find that her mother's time had come to give birth to the youngest child, and the midwife had not arrived. Martha called for her and told her, "You are old enough Beatie, you can help me." Under instruction from her mother, Beatrice delivered a son to the family. She was allowed to name the baby and she named him Wilfred Fitzstephen – Fitzstephen being 'son of Stephen'. When the other boys in the family were shown their new brother, they chorused 'Well done, our side'. Wilfred was the last baby born to the family, and the boys were happy in their victory: 6 boys, 5 girls.

The 1901 Census for the Port Macquarie District of New South Wales shows S Black living at Kendall with 7 males and 4 females living in the household. All the family living at home with

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Stephen and Martha with the exception of Beatrice who was living in Sydney and Clarissa who was married in 1901.

Another incident often related by Beatrice occurred in 1906. Stephen and Martha were living at Terranora, New South Wales, just over the border from Queensland. Stephen had retired from school teaching and was now a dairy farmer, and Beatrice had returned to the family home for her mother to deliver her second baby (Joseph Stephen Lane). This was perhaps another example of Stephen's fiery temper. An argument arose between some of Beatrice's brothers who were living at home. Her father rose from his chair, went to his box where he kept his personal papers and removed them all. He took the papers to where the copper fire was burning and threw them into the fire, then turned to his sons and said; 'Now, you young bastards, you will never know who you are!'

Beatrice always believed that the papers he destroyed had been her father's claim to a link to the Earl of Lennox. The story of Stephen throwing his papers into the fire after a terrible argument with his sons seems to have been seared into the minds of the family, as Carolyn Black relates that she had been told the story by her father – her grandfather Percy Black had also been present at the time of the argument.

In 1913, the Sands Directory shows Stephen Black living at Mooball in northern New South Wales, aged 74 years; he was still involved with dairy farming.

When son Edwin (Ted) enlisted to serve in WWI on 25th October 1915, he gave his father as his next-of-kin with Stephen's address being Messenger Street, Byron Bay. Stephen and Martha were still living at this address in August 1919 when Stephen wrote to the military authorities regarding Ted's return to Australia.

In their later years, Stephen and Martha moved to Sydney to a house – Villa Brae, 2 Derby Street, (corner of Cambridge & Derby Streets), Vaucluse. This house was purchased by their son Edwin (Ted) and daughter (Dadie). I recall Ted telling my family that the house, which had a magnificent view of the harbour, was bought so that his father could easily see the ships entering and leaving Sydney Harbour.

Stephen suffered a fall and broke his hip and was in hospital when his wife Martha passed away on 6th August 1925. Uncle Ted told us that she had been nursing a baby, (perhaps a grandchild) when she said she did not feel well. The baby was taken from her and she passed away soon afterwards. Stephen was not told of Martha's death until he came home from hospital. He idolised Martha and on being told that she had died, he took to his bed and never recovered from the shock. He died two years later, having been bedridden all that time.

Stephen passed away on 15th July 1927. Both Stephen and Martha are buried at South Head Cemetery, Vaucluse, Sydney. There is no headstone on the grave although there once was a headstone which was bought by their daughter Inez who looked after them in their last years. Inez used to regularly visit the grave until she went there one day to find that the headstone had been removed and another person had been buried in the grave. She became very distraught and never went again.



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Family history also tells us that the naming of the Australian children was of some significance to Stephen and Martha, although some of the reasons for their names have been lost in time. Clarissa, of course, was named after the ship he had supposedly lost in a disaster of some kind. The name Lennox also had some significance to Stephen, as Percy's full name of Percy Lennox would imply. Also we can assume that Edwin came from the ship 'Edwin Fox' and thus Edwin Stanley was named.

Stephen, however, was reportedly reluctant to speak of his previous life in England. Perhaps the memories were always painful. However, his Death Certificate lists his two marriages and the names of all fifteen children. The Death Certificate also names his birthplace as London, England.



More on 'Clarissa'

At this stage there is no evidence to suggest that Stephen Black ever owned a ship of his own, much less that it was named the 'Clarissa'. However, there have been ships named 'Clarissa' but again I have found no evidence to suggest that Stephen sailed on them.

- A query to the World Ship Society brought an answer in 2008. It says *"It looks as if your 'Clarissa' might have been a lot smaller than a Clipper. On checking Lloyd's Register for 1871-72 I have found the brig 'Clarissa' of 256 tons owned by Cargill & Co., built at Sunderland in 1867 and was surveyed ready for a voyage from Dundee to the West Indies in November 1870. At that time her Master was J. Martin. She is not mentioned at all in the 1873-74 volume but she is back in the 1875-76 one owned by G.C. Wear, port of Newcastle, Master G. Burt, with the notation "damage repaired 1875". So if it is the correct 'Clarissa' she wasn't completely 'lost at sea' but met with some disaster and was eventually salvaged, repaired and returned to service."*
 1. We have records, as previously listed, for Stephen for these years and there is no suggestion that he was involved with this 'Clarissa' although there is every chance he could have had knowledge of her.
- The Sydney Morning Herald Newspaper of 18th June 1870 gives a report entitled "The Loss of the Ship Clarissa". The report details this was a Guatemalan ship 'Clarissa' 579 tons, with Captain Dean as Master. *"The original destination of the vessel was Valparaiso, but as she needed some repairs, the captain put into this port for the purpose of having them effected. He decided to sell his cargo of lumber, and upon completion of the repairs to load his ship with oranges for San Francisco. The following is translated from the Messenger de Tahiti, of the 12th March :- On Wednesday the 9th March, the Clarissa got underway at Papeete to proceed to Papeari, where she was to load her cargo of oranges for California."* The rest of the report details how the 'Clarissa' was lost, and the efforts made to save her.
 2. Valparaiso is a port city on the coast of Chile. Papeete is the capital of French Polynesia, located on the island of Tahiti. Again, there is no evidence that Stephen had any connection to this vessel, although, once

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again, there is every chance he could have had knowledge of her and her loss.

- A report in the Edinburgh Evening News of 2nd August 1876 entitled “Vessel Blown Up At Whydah” gives the following – *“Information received yesterday states that the French Barque Clarissa arrived at Whydah, on the West Coast of Africa on the 13th June, from Hamburg with a cargo of spirits, powder and salt. Soon after her arrival a fire was discovered to have broken out on board, and before it could be extinguished it extended to the portion of the vessel where the powder was stored, and a fearful explosion took place, blowing up, and, it is supposed, completely destroying the ship. The crew was saved.”*

3. *Is this the ‘Clarissa’ after which Stephen’s daughter Clarissa was named?* At this stage in the research there is a gap from February 1876 when our Stephen left the ‘Forest Fairy’ until he joined the ‘Edwin Fox’ later that year. More research is needed before we can tell if this is the one. Unfortunately there are no crew names in the report and while the report was listed in various English newspapers of the time, no other details were included.

More on being shipwrecked and made destitute

Family history does tell us however, that Stephen had been injured in some sort of shipboard accident. His daughter, Ethel Beatrice often related how he wore boots to support his ankles which were weak, and that his feet bore signs of where bones had not been set properly and therefore were not knitted correctly. She told us she used to help him take his boots off at the end of the day, and how his feet always gave him trouble. She also said that he had taken a long time to recover from the accident.

Perhaps the mystery of the shipboard accident does lie in the time between his leaving the ‘Forest Fairy’ in 1876 and his joining the ‘Edwin Fox’. From May 1876 the ‘Edwin Fox’ was sailing from Calcutta and arrived in Hull on 25th September of that year, calling at St Helena, an island in the South Atlantic Ocean off the western coast of Africa. Calcutta is the capital of India’s West Bengal State and was founded as an East India Company Trading Post. Whydah, in those days was a kingdom on the west coast of Africa – the modern name is Ouidah, and it is a city on the Atlantic coast of the Republic of Benin. In 1872 that part of Africa was colonised by the French – reason enough for a French vessel to be calling there in 1876.

It is possible that if our Stephen was involved in the ‘Clarissa’ disaster at Whydah, he somehow made his way to St Helena, and from there was taken on board the ‘Edwin Fox’ and ultimately made his way back to England. Whydah / Ouidah was a French outpost, while St Helena was a British territory. Also a look at the Atlantic Ocean in that region gives Whydah / Ouidah lying at 6° 22’ N, 2° 5’ E while almost directly to the south, on the other side of the Equator, and also the other side of 0° Longitude is Saint Helena Island lying at 15° 56’ S, 5° 43’ W. Not really all that far away.

However, there is nothing to suggest that a cousin claimed the insurance money and left him destitute. We know very little about his immediate family apart from his parents and an aunt, his wives and of course, the children. Perhaps it was all part of his reasoning for his leaving

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England or, as it seems, not going back to England, and thus turning his back on his English family. Perhaps he had 'had enough' of the sea and the lure of a new life in a new land was the cue to his arrival in Australia and the start of his Australian family.

Whatever his reasoning, our ancestor Stephen Black, was certainly a man worthy of a story to be told about him.