

ROBA FAMILY

NB: The following is prepared from Falkland Islands Registers and files – there may be other family born outside the Falklands. Unless stated otherwise, all dated births, deaths and marriages occurred in the Falklands and all numbered graves are in Stanley Cemetery. Various spellings of names are recorded as written at the time.

Augustine ROBA was born in 1822 in Italy and when he was a boy was kicked in the chest by a horse which left him with a crooked back. According to an article in the Penguin of 3 Jan 1933, Augustine came to the Falkland Islands as a young man and established a store at Port Louis where he acquired the nickname of “Me-no-gat”.

In the census taken 31 March 1843 at Port Louis A AROBA was recorded as resident at Port Louis having arrived 7 October 1842 from Gibraltar and a merchant, previously a sugar maker, a Roman Catholic and living in the stone house on No 1 allotment, the property of Antonina Roxa.

In June 1843 three bills drawn by Governor Moody at Port Louis for £79 (drawn 2 January 1843), £26-7-8 and £26-7-8 in favour of Augustine AROBA were refused payment as he had endorsed them Augustine ROBA. Subsequent bills drawn in his favour were for £216-13-4 on 8 August 1843, £21-13-4 on 15 August 1843, £21-13-4 on 15 November 1843, £150 on 1 January 1844 in part payment of building materials, and £32-10 on 30 January 1844 for redemption of notes.

According to the article in the Penguin fortune went against him and when he was about 30 years old he moved to the small collection of sod huts near Whalebone Bay and was principally engaged in building walls on the South Shore and other places about Port William. This would have been before the settlement was moved to Stanley.

It was during this time that Augustine swam Stanley Harbour, competing against another man for a barrel of beer. They started off from Whalebone Bay for a point directly opposite but on the way his companion, whose name had been forgotten, got into difficulties in the kelp and had to be assisted by Augustine. When the other man had been rescued by the accompanying boat, Augustine carried on swimming and won the barrel of beer.

In December 1844 Augustine sent a messenger to Bluff Cove for the purpose of inducing John ADAMS, a chainman, to leave his employment with the Government Survey Department.

Augustine wasn't recorded in the census taken 12 October 1846 but was recorded 30 December 1847 as a private in the Mounted Corps of Military Force of FI. In May 1848 Augustine was one of five men who took the Colonial Chaplain, the Reverend James Leith Moody, out on duty to HMS Plover and was paid 3s 3d. On 6 November 1848 he was recorded as a private in the Militia force of the Falkland Islands required to meet at the Flagstaff, Stanley. In the census of 22 February 1851 he was recorded as Augustine ROBA, age 28 and a labourer from Gibraltar.

Augustine was working for the Falkland Islands Co Limited in 1863 & 1865. He then appears to have moved to San Salvador and worked there for a number of years.

In 1933 there were several residents of Stanley who remembered Augustine as an old man of small stature with a crooked back and long flowing white curly hair and familiarly known as “Prim”. He lived at Salvador and was eventually brought into Stanley to die when he was over 70 years of old.

Augustine, age 79 and Italian formerly working at San Salvador, died in Stanley 29 March 1901, and was buried in Grave I 659 by St Mary's Roman Catholic Church. He doesn't have a headstone.

[Penguin 3 Jan 1933; D1; C1, 67, 267; D3, 248; H6; N/FA/San/5; E2, 150]



Photograph Cameron Family Album