The Hardey families arrived in Fremantle in February 1830, along with 371 other new settlers. The “Swan River Mania” generated by Stirling’s reports had resulted in an influx of settlers but the process of allocating land was slow. The government was faced with an administrative nightmare. Settlers camped on the beach and watched their goods perish while they waited their turn. Many, disillusioned with their treatment, left for Van Diemen’s Land.

This was not the case with the Hardey brothers. Keen to start farming they conducted their own survey and were impressed with an area of land by the Swan River called the Peninsula. Stirling had intended this to be used as a racecourse, but was persuaded to grant it to the Hardeys and some of their fellow Methodist travelers. On Peninsula Farm, Joseph Hardey began building a wattle and daub house with a thatched roof. In May 1830 Joseph and Ann moved into their new home and three weeks later, on May 29, their first daughter, Ann Margaret, was born. However this house was flooded in that first winter and Joseph actually had to build three houses before he mastered the new environment. The last, constructed of wood and brick in 1839, we know as “Tranby House” and it was the Hardey family home until 1913.

Five more daughters were born at Peninsula Farm during the next nine years - Susanna, Mary Jane, (the only daughter to marry) Sarah, Sarah Elizabeth (who lived only 26 days), and Elizabeth. One son, Richard was born in 1844. Richard was treated differently from his sisters in that he was sent back to England for his education at the age of 12 and remained away for 10 years. He took over the management of the farm on his return in the late 1860s. Richard was twice married and had 2 sons and 1 daughter.

At first life was hard for the Hardey family. Through the 1830s and 40s the colony was beset with major difficulties, many of which were solved with the introduction of convicts in 1850. They provided a much-needed labour force and markets for colonial produce and stimulated the flow of money. Joseph Hardey was determined to succeed even if it meant rationing food for his family and labourers. He was an experienced farmer and gradually he developed the Peninsula Farm into a successful and profitable enterprise. He grew wheat, barley, oats and rye, bred “a race of handsome horses”, cultivated his own vines and produced excellent wine and beer.

“Wines from his property were the first to win a gold medal in Paris in 1878”. The farm milled its own grain at the flourmill built by James Lockyer and Joseph introduced the latest technology to it when he imported a six horse power steam engine in the 1850s. Joseph planted fruit trees and received prizes at the Perth agricultural show for olive oil, almonds and raisins in the 1850s. He also ran a successful farm at York. He and his brother, John Wall, were active members of the Agricultural Society which had been formed in 1831. His son, Richard, was later to run a successful winery on the Glen Hardey Estate in the Darling Range.

The Hardey women took an active role in the life of the farm. Ann complemented the work of Joseph and was responsible for the rearing and education of the girls. Their daytime activities centred on the successful management of the household. The kitchen of which there are two - summer and winter, and the cellar were the hub of the life of the farm. Farm produce was stored, preserved and cooked here. Cleanliness was paramount.