

Henry James WATTS & Elizabeth CROSSMAN

From Suzanne Hirst:

Henry James WATTS

11th child of John WATTS & Ann Nancy AVERY.

Henry's parents arrived in South Australia on 12 Jan 1837 on the '*Coromandel*'.

Henry was born 9 Jul 1856 at Hindmarsh (Hindmarsh) S.A.

In the WATTS family histories, Henry James WATTS is referred to as Harry.

Elizabeth CROSSMAN

2nd child of John Young CROSSMAN & Hannah PERRY.

Elizabeth's parents arrived in South Australia on the 3rd Apr 1849 aboard the '*Mary Ann*'.

Elizabeth was born 10 Aug 1854 at Adelaide.

The Watts family histories say that Elizabeth was possibly born in Adelaide while the family was on its way to Riverton. In 1862 the CROSSMAN family returned to the Native Valley (Nairne) district. Elizabeth was 8 years old.

Henry James WATTS (Harry) and Elizabeth CROSSMAN were married on 31 Jan 1878 at the home of her parents, John Young CROSSMAN & Hannah (nee PERRY) at Dawesley Vale.

Harry and Elizabeth's first child, Susan Annie was born, in 1878 at Dawesley Vale. Harry owned 40 acres of farming land in Dawesley (it was sold in 1885). Harry was a registered brickmaker in 1880 and worked intermittently in the family business with his father and older brothers in Native Valley.

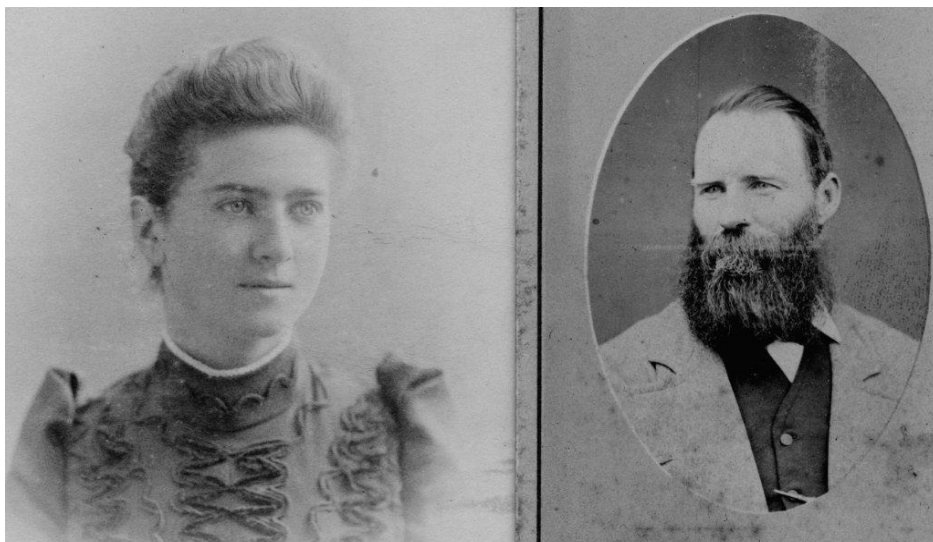


Dawesley boasted its own Methodist Church on the incline of the opposite hill behind the William Davies Bacon Factory, which combined a house & the business. Up at the crest of the hill on the cross-roads, on one corner was a private house purpose built as a private school and diagonally opposite beside the road which led down to the Crossman farm was the post-office and shop managed by the competent eldest sister of Harry Watts, Sarah Davies.

The children all attended the first little schoolhouse and received good schooling. They were involved in every way with the Dawesley Methodist church which had been built with the help of Watts, Crossman, Davies and other related families.



Dawesley School, with some members of various Watts kin which includes, Alfred John Watts, Alice Maud Watts, George Jacobs, Annie Watts, Bert Watts, Edith May Watts, Alice Lillian Watts



Harry and Elizabeth kept a milking cow and grew their own fruit and vegetables. Elizabeth had the help of her sisters Sarah and Amelia on the farm. The older children supported their mother and their younger siblings when Harry went away for shearing and family histories tell that he always returned with lollies and seed bead necklaces bought from Aborigines, but no money, as he had spent it all quenching his thirst. The family remember Harry as a big strong man, capable of much but carried a rough, bluff exterior. Nevertheless, the young children and especially his grandchildren remember and speak of him with love and fondness for his warmth, laughter, funny stories and adventures. He tried his hand at many tasks which included brickmaking, farming, a produce shop at one end of their house which later, was to be a butchers' shop, then carting, shearing and fencing. He tackled all tasks and trades but spent much of the hard-earned cash on alcohol and would be seen drifting off down to the ford with a brown paper bag holding a beer bottle.

Henry James WATTS had a partnership with Thomas BYRTH at Dawesley, trading as WATTS & BYRTH General Dealers. On 3 Sep 1887, the partnership was dissolved by mutual consent, and the business was carried on by Henry James WATTS on his own account and in his own name.

Elizabeth always kept the family together with her gentle ways, charm and quiet dignity. As were her Crossman sisters, she was well dressed and well presented with lace collar around her neck, a lace handkerchief tucked up her sleeve and her luxurious hair tied back in a knot held with pretty combs. She was loved dearly by all of her children and grandchildren and Harry was devoted to her. He was rough and uncouth, the opposite to his lovely wife but he was also, between drinking bouts, dependent and willing and tackled anything thrown at him. There was humour and love within the family. A story handed down is when Elizabeth asked him to hand over his dirty clothes he was wearing for washing, he lifted the dainty woman up and perched her on top of the railing that held the butchers' hooks around the walls of the little house shop. He refused to let her down until she ceased requesting his dirty clobber.



The couple celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary in 1928, with a large gathering of relatives at the family home in Dawesley.

Elizabeth died in Oct 1934 at Dawesley and was interred at Nairne 16 Oct 1934.

After Elizabeth's death, Henry would move about his family and live with different members. On the occasion he was staying with Bert Watts at the big house by the stockyards at Murray Bridge, Bert said he always knew which Murray Bridge pub his father was in by Bert's dog patiently waiting on the footpath outside.

Another occasion Harry Watts was stumbling his way back down to Bert's and he passed the Roman Catholic church. A family member drove pass and they waved to each other. On a later return of the same family member he saw Harry still passing the church so he stopped and asked where he was going. Harry replied back to Bert's house but this town was full of bloody catholic churches. Harry ended up in Court a couple of times, in one instance for being abusive and swearing at a neighbour when out near Bert Watts' Bacon & Smallgood Factory on Hungry Hill. Harry was fined and later was asked if he regretted his outburst. He said not, that it was a pleasure to hear the old biddy having to repeat his rude words in court to all and sundry.

In Jan 1935, advertisements were placed for the sale of Dawesley Allotments 31, 32, 33 & 34 Section 4414, Hundred of Kanmantoo, formerly belonging to Elizabeth WATTS. The property was described as being opposite Dawesley Post Office, right on the main bituminous road.

At the time when he was living with another son Clarrie and family on the Mannum road in Murray Bridge, he returned to Dawesley for the day to collect some rent on Elizabeth's property. He was missing for two days and a search was made. Mr. Kent of Dawesley found old Harry down at the bottom of the cellar steps at the ruins of the old Davies Bacon Factory. He was by now suffering from exposure and placed in the Mt. Barker hospital. He died in the hospital of cerebral thrombosis. Henry Watts died 31 Mar 1936 (79yrs). His occupation was listed as 'Butcher' from Dawesley. He was buried in Nairne Cemetery.
Nairne Cemetery

In Apr 1936, advertisements were placed for the sale of Dawesley Allotments 54 & 55 formerly belonging to Henry James WATTS.

Children of Henry James WATTS & Elizabeth CROSSMAN

Susan Annie WATTS (Annie)

b. 15 Dec 1878 at Nairne S.A.

m. George JACOBS (Geo) 29 Mar 1899 at Res. E. Downing, Nairne S.A.

d. 1957 at Mt. Barker S.A.

This is the CHILDS Family Connection

Charles Herbert WATTS

b. 17 Sep 1879 at Dawesley S.A.

m. Eliza Jane O'CONNOR 26 Sep 1906 at St. James Church, Blakiston S.A.

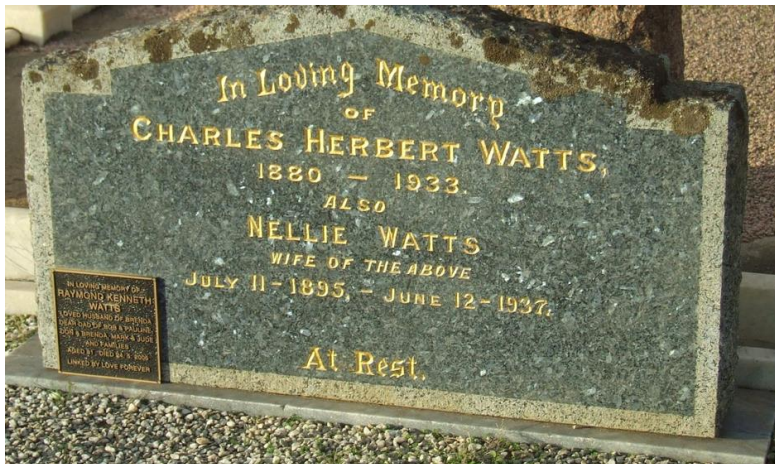
Around 1910, he came to Murray Bridge with his brothers to start the WATTS bacon curing factory. He was a butcher and in ran a bacon curing and smallgoods business with his brother Clarence at Murray Bridge. He was a JP and a councillor at Murray Bridge.

Charles was married twice and had 2 children from the first marriage, Mr. Rex WATTS and Mrs. J.G. Pilmore.

Eliza Jane WATTS died 22 Jan 1917 at Murray Bridge (32yrs) Nairne Cemetery

Charles d. 27 Nov 1933 at Murray Bridge (53yrs) His (second) wife was called Nellie in the obit.

Nellie WATTS died 12 June 1937 at Murray Bridge (Murray Bridge Cemetery)



Alice Lilian WATTS (Lil)

b. 12 Sep 1882 at Dawesley S.A.m. Elijah APPLETON (Jack) 3 May 1913 at Methodist Church, Nairne

Alice d. Dec 1952 (70yrs) at Harrogate S.A. Harrogate Cemetery (interred 3 Dec 1952)

Jack d. Jan 1962 (76yrs) at Harrogate S.A. Harrogate Cemetery (interred 25 Jan 1952)

Jack had a brother Bill who had married Alice's sister Edith May WATTS in 1908

Edith May WATTS

b. 13 Sep 1884 at Dawesleyvale S.A. (Dawesley?)

m. William Isaac APPLETON (Bill) 14 Apr 1908 at Methodist Church, Nairne S.A.

Known as Bill

Edith d. 1916 in Dangin W.A. (unconfirmed) perhaps 1911 in York W.A.

William d. 1960 in Nedlands W.A. (unconfirmed) perhaps 1960 in Perth W.A.

perhaps 1 child - Jack Appleton b. 22 May 1909

Clarence Arthur WATTS (Clarrie)

b. 1 Mar 1887 at Dawesley S.A.

m. Mabel MEYER 17 Apr 1913 at St. Mark Church, Maylands S.A.

d. 1969 at Murray Bridge S.A.

Clarence worked in the bacon factory at Murray Bridge and in 1933 helped set up the Adelaide Pork Exporters Co.

4 children? (One possibly Beryl Edith)

Harold Avery WATTS

b. 14 Aug 1889 at Dawesley S.A.

m. Edith SLATER on 14 Mar 1914 at Methodist Church, Dawesley S.A.

After the marriage, he moved to Milang to manage a bacon & cheese factory.

He enlisted 15 Aug 1916

and left behind his wife and two children, Elsie (18mths) & Harry (2 mths).

Embarkation date 21 Sep 1916. 8th Infantry Brigade, 32nd Infantry Battalion

d. KIA 29 Sep 1918 in France (32nd Batalion AIF)

Bellicourt British Cemetery, Bellicourt, Picardie, France

Edith was living at Milang at the time of Harold's death.

Edith Emily WATTS (nee SLATER) m. Benjamin David Moses WOOLFIT
on 6 Nov 1919 at Res. Mrs. Scutt, Magill

<http://www.connectingspirits.com.au/pages/soldiers/2015-soldiers/harold-avery-watts.php>



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL P09291 506



Lance Corporal HAROLD AVERY WATTS
32nd Battalion AIF - France 1918

John Lloyd WATTS (Lloyd)

b. 2 Nov 1891 at Dawesley S.A.

m. Ellen Catherine DANIELS on 8 Dec 1923 at St. Mary the Virgin Church, Milang S.A.

Worked with his brothers at the WATTS meatworks at Murray Bridge.

He was a qualified boiler attendant and engine driver.

He lived on Eleanor Terrace Murray Bridge.

He died 5 Dec 1950 (59yrs) at Murray Bridge.

Frank Perry WATTS

b. 30 Apr 1894 at Dawesley S.A.

Enlisted 15 Sep 1915. Embarked 9 Jun 1916

m. Eliza Millie STRACHAN 28 Apr 1920 at St. Andrews Church, Murray Bridge S.A.

1939, 1941 & 1943 electoral rolls shows them living at Berri

d. 7 Jan 1964 (age 69) at Strathalbyn S.A. Res. Milang, Milang Cemetery

2 children both born at Nairne

Frank Perry WATTS had an interesting WW1 service. He enlisted and went to England as a driver. He joined the Australian Flying Corps and flew in RE-8 aircraft doing reconnaissance. He was shot down and seriously wounded but came home and worked in Murray Bridge as a wedding photographer. He was friends with Ross and Keith Smith.

Kenneth Reginald WATTS

b. 16 Feb 1897 at Dawesley S.A.

m. Doris Irene COLLINS 23 Mar 1921 at Baptist School, Hackham S.A.

Worked in the factory at Murray Bridge (bacon curer)

Later of 45 Bakewell Rd. Evandale

Kenneth d. 26 May 1953 Centennial Park Cemetery (age at death 56)

also in same plot, Doris Irene WATTS

d. 17 Sep 1958 (73yrs) at Evandale

Father of Nancy, Mary, Ray & Betty. Father in-law of Kenneth.

Gordon Young WATTS

b. 26 Mar 1900 at Dawesley S.A.

m. Doris May ROSS on 22 Sep 1928 at Methodist Church, Mannum

Doris b. 23 May 1904 at Broken Hill

1941 electoral roll says Gordon (master butcher) Mannum (with Doris)

1943 electoral roll says Gordon (organiser) Croydon (with Doris)

Gordon d. 6 Oct 1977 at Stirling

Doris d. 16 Apr 2001 at Murray Bridge