

## REYNOLDS Charles Albon

Charles Albon Reynolds was the second son of Richard Reynolds and Eleanor Reynolds nee Hinde. Charles was born on the White Hills Goldfield Bendigo 25<sup>th</sup> May 1862. Both his parents were English migrants, Richard being born in London and Eleanor was born in Lancashire. His father Richard, aged thirty when he migrated, did so with the assurance that he could get a position in the planned Mint to be built in Melbourne, as Richard had experience in this area. Unfortunately this took many years to eventuate and in the meantime Richard now with a family worked as a miner. When Charles was ten years of age his father died of lung disease, leaving a family of seven children, the youngest an infant. Charles spent a lot of time helping look after this baby sister named Amelia.

His elder brother, also named Richard, at thirteen years, left and learnt to be a shearer. This he did for the rest of his life and remained a bachelor. His mother Eleanor managed to support her family by keeping hens, making and selling butter, growing vegetables etc. The cost of a child attending school was sixpence a week, so with four sons she sent a child each week to school and the others helped at home. Despite having little time at school Charles enjoyed classes and did well. Four years after her husband died she remarried Arculus Opie, a Cornish miner. Arculus was a widower with no children.

Charles was now fourteen years of age. Arculus who travelled a lot to obtain work took Charles along with him, so at a young age he travelled around a lot of Australia. He went to Tasmania and worked at Mt. Lyell at one time. Charles had natural engineering ability and at a later stage obtained a certificate for operating a Mine Engine. He also at one time went with his Jorgensen relatives to build a Poppet Head at Fiji.

It was when Charles was Tin Mining in North Queensland that he met and married his wife Ellen Kemp on the 25<sup>th</sup> January, 1888, at Herberton. Place of Residence - Watsonville. She was visiting and helping her married sister, Catherine, who was operating a small hotel in the area, with her husband James Gibbons.

Charles had a log cabin built for Ellen and himself. I think it was cedar and it cost ten pounds.

Their first child, Amelia, was born at Eureka Creek. Their second daughter Louisa was born at Herberton. The family were very happy in this beautiful part of Australia but when the Queensland Bank shut its doors in the Bank Crashes of this period 1894, the family were forced to return to Victoria. They went by Cobb and Co. to the Coast and probably returned by sea.

In Victoria they stayed a few weeks with Eleanor, the mother of Charles. This was the first time she met her grand-daughters and daughter-in-law Ellen. They then went to stay with Ellen's parents in the Mallee and their first son Robert was born in 1895 in this area. Ellen's parents, Honora and Richard Kemp, had a large wheat farm which later failed because of drought. Their next move was back to Bendigo where Charles had spent his childhood. Returning they purchased the Mandurang property which was a very good vineyard and promised great hopes for the future. At some stage not long after all the vines in the Bendigo area had to be pulled out to prevent the spreading of a grape disease which was believed to have been discovered somewhere around Bendigo... This was another disastrous blow to Charles and family. As a result Charles had to often find work elsewhere and leave his family alone on the farm. In 1897 a second son named Hugh was born, reg.no.167 in

Bendigo. This child did not survive.

In May 1900 a third son was born in Mandurang. He was named Hector Baden after Hector McDonald and Baden Powell. This was the time of the Boer War.

The Reynolds' children attended the Mandurang State School. Teacher Mr. Casey?

Charles and Ellen agreed that to further their childrens' education it would be necessary to move to Melbourne. They sold the Mandurang farm and purchased a home in Albert Park Melbourne.

During the <sup>first</sup> second world war their son Robert became ill after army training in Watsonia -Simpson Barracks. He died of pneumonia in January 1916. at Albert Park.

Because of Robert's death the family moved again to Auburn. After renting a house they bought another in Auburn. Exactly what work Charles was able to obtain in Melbourne and when he retired I do not know. His wife Ellen at this time was not well and she died in

May 1925 age fifty-nine. Daughter Amelia, Frank and grand-daughter Iris moved into this home at this time to take care of Charles. Grand-daughter Ruth born later.

Despite a lack of formal education Charles was quite clever. He taught his grand-daughter Ruth how to read and write, basic maths and other things of importance, all before she commenced schooling. However Charles never described his own life.

Charles lived to the age of eighty-six years. At the time of his death his descendents were his daughters Amelia and Louisa, his son Hector and five grand-daughters Iris, Ruth, Joan, Lois, June and one grandson Rex, also two great-grand-daughters Suzannne and Janine.

I lived with my grandfather for eighteen years. He was my mentor and my best friend.  
Ruth Pendavingh.