

ROSA JANE ESCOTT

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https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/176891118/rosa_jane-meadows

OUR ROSA JANE: Rosa's story is one that deserves to be shared.

Rosa Jane ESCOTT was the 9th daughter and youngest of 11 children of Thomas ESCOTT and Elizabeth BRUFORD. Born 5 March 1849 in Taunton, Somerset, ENG, she packed an amazing amount into her 66 years until she succumbed to cancer 9 days after her birthday in 1915.

The death of her father Thomas in May 1852 caused Rosa's first "O.E.". Mother Elizabeth made the momentous decision to emigrate to Australia! From the words of family historian Elise Padreny: "The following April his wife Elizabeth travelled as an unassisted immigrant aboard the Miles Barton arriving in Melbourne on 24 July 1853. With Elizabeth travelled seven children, Elizabeth, Mary, Johanna, Thomas, Fanny, Ellen and Rosa. Twins Matilda and Ann had died prior to the family departure and two older children Isaac and Sarah, remained behind, married, then joined the family with their respective spouses and three children in February 1855. Elizabeth Escott was 48 years of age when she embarked on the new phase in her life in 1853 - the journey itself would have been traumatic enough! Why she came to Australia and suffered such hardships remains unanswered. She was truly a pioneer and a brave lady of whom we can be justly proud. Tragedy beset the intrepid family group where they settled in Blacksmith's Gully, on the west side of the Chewton-Fryerstown Road near Castlemaine. Mary died in 1854, Fanny of consumption in 1855, and the mother Elizabeth of general debility on 15 June 1856."

Elizabeth was buried alongside daughter Fanny at Specimen Hill, opposite where they lived. Their little grave surrounded by a wrought-iron fence is now noted as a historic site for the Castlemaine District. A beautiful poem is still legible on the headstone: "A tender mother and a loving wife, here sleeps in humble hope of better life, by side of daughter, loved and cherish'd well, we leave the Judgement Day the rest to tell"

In September 1861 younger brother Thomas had left Australia for Otago. Older brother Isaac, followed on the "Gothenburg" in December 1862. Isaac and wife Sarah, who had assumed care of his two youngest sisters, brought Ellen and Rosa along with their own children John and Elizabeth to Otago. Subsequently Isaac returned to Australia. Rosa's new life in New Zealand began by walking from Dunedin to Central Otago. The Escott's engaged a dray in Dunedin to carry their belongings to Cromwell, the price being 1s per lb, and all the family walked. Rosa's sister Ellen married John McCORMICK in Dunedin in 1864. John was a well known Central Otago hotelier and bridge builder. His bridges included Bannockburn, Victoria Bridge (over the Kawarau River between Cromwell and Queenstown) and Rocky Point.

Rosa married William Usher GOODALL in the Registrar's Office, Clyde on 6 March 1867. William was recorded as aged 26, Occupation coalminer and Rosa

was 19. William was born 5th September 1838 in Bath Street, Dublin. He emigrated from London to Launceston in July 1852 with his widowed father Thomas, Aunt Jane and two brothers. Following their marriage, Rosa and William settled at Bendigo, Central Otago. William and Rosa had seven children: Six were born at Bendigo: William Thomas, Fanny (Frances Matilda), Edward Usher, Ernest, Thomas Usher, Nellie (Ellen Frances Rosa) and their seventh was recorded as the first white child born at Hawea Flat: Thomas Usher GOODALL (2nd)

Rosa was widowed for the first time at 26, with five children aged seven years to three months when William died of pleurisy in November 1875 at "Blinkbonny". William was buried in Cromwell alongside 3-y-o son Thomas, who had died in February of the same year.

Rosa then married Thomas COOPER, a sawyer and farmer of Hawea Flat in the Registrar's office at Cromwell, 19 May 1877. Thomas COOPER was listed as being aged 39 at the time. He was a native of Penrith, Cumberland, England. Rosa and Thomas settled on "Blinkbonny" at Hawea Flat and the Goodall children attended the local school. Rosa and Thomas added seven more children to her brood: Jack (John Joseph), Joe (Joseph Carr), Ernie (Thomas Ernest), Bessie (Frances Elizabeth), William, Izzie (Lavania Florence Isabel) and Lily (Lillian Ethel McCormick).

Rosa was widowed a second time on 19 July 1888, when Thomas died, aged 53 in Cromwell Hospital. The coroner's verdict was "pulmonary apoplexy accelerated from the effects of the severe accident which occurred to deceased on the 22nd June last." He was moving a house on skids and it slipped off and trapped him.

Rosa married for the third time on 8 September 1891, again at the Cromwell Registrar's Office, to 42 year old Englishman Thomas MEADOWS, a widower from Tarras; son of Thomas Pope MEADOWS, Master Mariner, and Mary Ann Upton. A report of their marriage was also published in early October: "A marriage at Hawea Flat has been the topic of the hour, Mr Thomas Meadows, formerly in the hotel line in Invercargill, having married Mrs Cooper, of the Hawea. All the neighbours and many of the residents in the surrounding district assembled on this momentous occasion to honour the happy couple with the music from impromptu drums, &o."

The only child from Rosa and Thomas Meadows marriage was Mabel Rosamund MEADOWS, born 25 August 1892, died 23 June 1900 from pneumonia at aged 7.

Rosa Jane Meadows (formerly Goodall, formerly Cooper, nee Escott) died in Dunedin Hospital on 13 March 1915 Aged 65 years; Cause of death Carcinoma uterus, Duration not known, Attendant Dr A R Falconer.

She was buried at Andersons Bay Dunedin on the 15 March 1915 in Block 29, Plot 0028. Rosa is buried with son from her second marriage John (known as Jack) Cooper and his wife Jane and two of their daughters: Gladys Lillian and Ethel Jean Cooper. There is no headstone for any of them, but the grave is surrounded by concrete and the name RJ MEADOWS is on the footplate