

Descendants of

- William and Sarah Ann Harper ...
- Arthur and Lucy Harper, John Harper and others
1. David and Hannah Harper, of Temora, N.S.W.
  2. Ann and Fred Matulick, of Renmark, S.A. ...
  3. Joseph and Fanny Harper, of Ariah Park, N.S.W. ... 26 - 33
  4. Thomas and Sarah Harper, of Clarendon, S.A. ... 34 & 35
  5. Eliza and James Pike, of Willunga, S.A. ... 36 - 38
  6. Sarah and Albert Lawrence, of Brighton, S.A. ... 39 - 42
  7. Maria and John Marshall, of Prospect Hill, S.A. ... 43 - 46
  8. John and Hannah Harper, of Prospect Hill, S.A. ... 47 - 51
  9. Emily and Solomon Nicol, of Prospect Hill, S.A. ... 52 & 53  
(later Lovelock)

Descendants No 1 only shown here as they are the only ones in the Symonds Family Linage

Acknowledgments:

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Mrs. Betty Mason, of Hurstville, N.S.W.  
Hector Harper and family  
Will Pike, of Prospect Hill, S.A.  
Keith Griggs, of Prospect Hill, S.A.  
Roy Lawrence and family  
Mrs. Isabel Elliott, of Victor Harbor, S.A.

Apologies:

To those with whom contact could not be made, and any typographical errors, or misinterpretations.

Requests:

To anyone who can supply background information of our pioneering families (the first two generations in Australia), or anyone who can

WILLIAM HARPER was born in the year 1829, the son of John and Lydia Harper of Barrington in the County of Cambridge, England. A copy of the Baptismal Register of William is in the possession of one of his descendants and shows that he was baptized on the 14th day of February, 1830, in the same church where he later married Sarah Ann Jude. William was a well built, good looking man, short of stature, with the English colouring of fair hair and blue eyes.

SARAH ANN JUDE was born on the 31st day of March, 1831, to Jonathon Jude and his wife of Barrington in the County of Cambridge, England. Sarah Ann was small boned, with petite features, a pointy elfin chin, dark hair and dark brown eyes.

The marriage certificate of Sarah Ann and William shows their marriage was solemnized at the Parish Church in the Parish of Barrington in the county of Cambridge on the 11th day of February, 1849, in the presence of James Austin and Lydia Harper'.

On the 19th June, 1853, William and Sarah Ann, with their baby son David, arrived at Holdfast Bay (now Glenelg), South Australia, on the sailing vessel "Mary Green". The voyage from Southampton to South Australia was the only trip made by the "Mary Green" and took three long months, with Sarah Ann suffering severe seasickness the whole voyage.

After disembarkation, the couple settled firstly, it is thought, at Richmond or Woodville, but eventually moved to Meadows where William worked a property now owned by a Mr. Rowley. William walked from Adelaide through rough scrub country to reach Meadows, but it is not known whether Sarah Ann walked with him at the time or travelled to Meadows later by bullock dray.

The ship's register shows William's occupation as that of shepherd, but in this new country he started wheat farming; later taking up dairying. The farm at Prospect Hill was purchased, it is thought, in the year 1899 - the property originally owned by a family called Morris. The house still stands with little show of wear and tear, but is not now the property of a member of the family. It is the third house down the hill on the south side of the Prospect Hill Methodist Church. Their farm covered the area from this homestead to the Prospect Hill School (now closed). The Prospect Hill School property was purchased partly from Harper and the adjoining Grigg's' properties. William and Sarah Ann lived out the last years of their long life together at this home.

William travelled to Meadows once a week for provisions, but Sarah Ann was known to visit Meadows only twice after settling at Prospect Hill. To her travel was a hardship she could do without - perhaps the result of the long voyage to Australia.

Sarah Ann is remembered by those who knew her as a quiet and lovable person, secretly consoling grandchildren with cakes and apples when parents were, in her opinion, too severe. William was made of sterner stuff, which was the natural order for those Victorian days. Even though Sarah Ann was a gentle person, the proprieties of those days were strictly upheld, and one hopeful suitor to the hand of a granddaughter can recall being told when it was 9 o'clock and time to go home.

Beneath the quiet and gentle manner of Sarah Ann there must have been an indomitable spirit, as on one occasion when preparations had been made to attend church as usual, she hesitated as she was about to step up into the waiting buggy and decided against attending church that morning, and later that day a son was born. There was the occasion, too, when the same son found her up an apple tree with a stick knocking down apples - Sarah Ann was in her 90's at the time. Many observed her with a scythe cutting back the grass in her garden. A very keen gardener. Had a

great fondness for parsnips, recalls one granddaughter. And made the best mashed potato ever, recalls another. Gardening was an ever-present hazard for Sarah Ann, as she was allergic to bee stings, and twice very nearly died as the result of such stings. A great-granddaughter can recall being reproved for wiping plates two and three at a time instead of carefully one at a time.

The fads of those who seek help from today's health shops were not entirely unknown to Sarah Ann, as she was accustomed on occasion to chewing a small piece of charcoal as an aid to digestion. Today, charcoal tablets are available through chemist and health shops.

One of the best and happiest recollections held by grandchildren and some great-grandchildren is of the Christmas festivities held at "the old place". The big dining and kitchen tables covered with white starched tablecloths, and filled with Christmas fare. Those of William and Sarah's children who could, returned home for Christmas bringing their families by buggy from Lenswood, McHargs Creek, Willunga and Adelaide. Each family brought with them, among other things, a Christmas pudding and Christmas cake to be placed in a row down the centre of the tables. There would be gooseberries and cherries too, followed inevitably by bilious attacks among the younger ones. Three sittings at the tables would be needed to cater for all, the senior members of the family taking precedence over their children, followed by the grandchildren and great-grandchildren. The day would not have been complete for the young ones without receiving the gift of 6d each for Christmas from William and Sarah Ann.

A branch of a huge mulberry tree in the front garden held a rope swing with a wooden seat and was the scene of quite a few squabbles as the children competed for "a turn" at these Christmas reunions. The tree is still there, but has become misshapen with time.

The celebration of the Diamond Wedding Anniversary of William and Sarah Ann in the year 1909 was a great event. The 60th wedding anniversary was something of a "surprise" party for the old couple. There is a group photograph of the visitors and callers of that day to be seen in the Prospect Hill museum. The photographer also took a photograph of William and Sarah Ann to record the occasion. There are several copies of this fine photograph in the family, as it is understood that each of the children of William and Sarah Ann received a copy as a memento of the occasion. The photo shows head and shoulders of William in a dark suit with white flowing beard, and Sarah Ann a tiny figure in a black silk dress with a white fichu and wearing a small black bonnet trimmed with white flowers. This photograph is also to be found in the Prospect Hill Museum. The museum has been brought into being mainly through the work of Keith Griggs, on whose property the museum stands. Keith is a great-grandson of William and Sarah Ann.

William died at the age of 82 on the 29th August, 1911, of a respiratory condition after an illness of nine weeks, and was buried at the old Meadows cemetery. Because of the steep ascent to reach the old cemetery, William's remains were later disinterred and reburied at the Meadows cemetery as we know it today. The following is an extract from a local paper at the time of his death:-

"Mr. William Harper, an old and highly respected resident of Meadows South district, died at Prospect Hill last Tuesday evening at the age of 82 years. The deceased was one of the earliest settlers in this part. With his brother, Arthur, of Clarendon (who survives him) he carried on farming, and did several important building works. Mr. Harper, who was born in Barrington, Cambridgeshire, England, in 1829, came to this State in 1852 (should read 1853), in the ship Mary Green, with his wife.

After having resided at Richmond for about two years they removed to the Meadows South District, where they resided ever since. About two years ago Mr. and Mrs. Harper celebrated their diamond wedding - the first in the district. A widow, nine children, 52 grand, and 19 great-grandchildren survive. The sons and daughters living are: Messrs. David and Joseph (New South Wales), Thomas (Clarendon), and John (Prospect Hill), Mrs. Matulick (Renmark), Mrs. Pike and Mrs. S. Nicol (Prospect Hill), Mrs. Lawrence (Brighton), and Mrs. Marshall (McHarg's Creek."

Sarah Ann lived another twelve years after the death of William. She died in her 93rd year on the 24th August, 1923, following a short illness of one week from pneumonia, and is buried beside William.

There is a stained glass memorial window to William and Sarah Ann Harper and their daughter and son-in-law, Eliza and James Pike, in the Methodist Church at Prospect Hill: the church which William, with others, helped to build in the year 1873. He was elected senior society steward, which office he held until his death, when a son, John William Harper, succeeded him. William and Sarah Ann were the first of many of their descendants associated with the church. Today there are great-great-great-grandchildren still attending the church.

It is 120 years since William and Sarah Ann left England at the age of 23 and 20 years (as shown in the ship's register). Their start in South Australia was the same as other pioneers recorded in the area -- a home built of wattle and daub, a struggle to work unrelenting soil. (It was not until about 1911 with the advent of superphosphate that productivity of crops improved greatly, and not until the early 1920's that a son, John Harper, used superphosphate for pasture.) The high mortality rate among children. The ever-present challenge of fire in the summer months. A few of the many hardships of all the pioneering families of that time. William and Sarah Ann were among the fortunate ones who succeeded eventually in wresting a comfortable living from the land, and had the satisfaction of knowing that their four sons were following successfully in their footsteps.

Three brothers of the Harper family are known to have migrated to Australia. The first was William, followed by Arthur and then John.

ARTHUR and LUCY (nee Creek) HARPER, aged 19 and 18 years, arrived in South Australia on the "Lord Raglan" on the 24th October, 1854. He travelled with his young wife per bullock dray to Wickham's Hill and settled at Spring Grove, now known as Prospect Hill, where he spent many years, ultimately removing to Clarendon in what came to be called Harper's or Wesley Gully.

Arthur worked long and diligently for the community. Besides holding office and being a staunch supporter of his church, he was the sole survivor of the inaugural meeting of the Meadows Oddfellows' Lodge, of which for forty-nine years he was a member. The Agricultural Bureau made him a life member. The Recreation Ground Committee had the benefit of his very active membership.

Arthur and Lucy were married for over sixty years. Lucy died at the age of 87 years on the 24th July, 1920. Arthur died at the age of 89 years and nine months on the 1st October, 1924. They are buried in the Clarendon/Kangarilla cemetery. Three sons and five daughters survived them:-

George : Andrew : Herbert, and  
 Mesdames Jung: Hart: J. Spencer: W.A. Morphett:  
 and G.A. Morphett.

The above excerpts were taken from a copy of the obituary of Arthur Harper, a complete record of which is to be found in the Prospect Hill museum.

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John Harper was the third brother to migrate to Australia. Unfortunately the families lost touch, but it is thought that John went to Victoria or New South Wales. Records at the Archives in South Australia show that a John and Martha Harper (aged 23 and 20 years) arrived here on the 10th June, 1855, on the "Grand Trianon", but "Country of Origin" is shown as Tyrone, Ireland, which discounts kinship, as one would expect William and Arthur to be aware of their brother's visit or migration to Ireland. The possibility of a clerical error on the part of the recorder is not to be disregarded but is thought doubtful.

The first generation of Harpers in South Australia, thought that John Harper and his wife disembarked in another State of Australia, and in this way became separated from the family.

Mr. Ross Harper, of Blackwood, South Australia, a grandson of Arthur Harper, recalls being told by his father of John Harper settling in New South Wales.

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James and Lydia Harper are also shown in the records at the Archives as having arrived in South Australia on the 25th May, 1855, on the "Punjab", the records indicating they were from the County of Cambridge. Their ages 35 and 32 years. James Harper could be a cousin (forty-third or otherwise) to William and Arthur, as they are from the same area.

1st child of William and Sarah Ann Harper

DAVID HARPER

(b. 30th September, 1852                      d. 20th August, 1917)

married 26th January, 1878, in the Clarendon  
Methodist Church, S.A.

HANNAH SPENCER

(b. 12th March, 1856                      d. 22nd December, 1932)

(Hannah and Fanny Spencer (wife of Joseph Harper) were sisters, who formerly lived in Clarendon, South Australia)

David Harper was the only child of William and Sarah Ann to be born in England. He was about three months when they sailed from Southampton.

David Harper, his wife Hannah, four sons and two daughters left Hurtle Vale, South Australia, sometime during 1891. His sons would need land when they were older, and land was more reasonably priced in parts of the eastern States. They travelled by waggon, taking all their possessions. When the 90 mile desert was reached, the family boarded the train with horses and waggon, disembarking again when the desert was behind them.

David and family set off for land between Wycheproof and Birchip - 2,000 acres of mallee, virgin land. This land cost much less than the cleared land available in South Australia.

The eldest boy was 13 years and the youngest 18 months.

A daughter, Vera Lowe, recalls her mother saying she drove in 36 tent pegs every night so that the family could go to bed. David had the horses to unharness, feed and tie up for the night. The elder girl, aged 10 years, had to help unpack and prepare the evening meal.

Water was carried overland for drinking purposes, but it was always necessary to camp at nights where there was water for the horses.

When the family reached their destination, the first thing to be done was to clear enough mallee to pitch the tent. Fences were put up to keep a cow near at hand, and to hold a pig.

It is not known when the house was built, but the boy who was only 18 months when he left South Australia could remember the occasion when the pig escaped his pen and entered the tent.

David first built a very large mud kitchen-living room, an underground dairy and an underground tank.

Mallee had to be cleared in order to plant the first crop.

At the age of 13 years the eldest boy finished school, as he had to help on the farm. The other children drove four miles each day to school with a horse and buggy.

One more boy and three girls were born in the next ten years - two died in infancy.

In the year 1903 the Wycheproof home was burnt to the ground. Much hardship and heartache decided David and Hannah to move once more. Sandstorms and drought forced them to decide to leave Wycheproof and settle in Temora, N.S.W. The two eldest children had married, but later followed the rest of the family to New South Wales.

In March 1910 the three single boys - Norman, Will and Alban - set off by road with horses for Temora. They carried machinery and household goods, food for horses on waggons and a crate of fowls on a spring cart.

David, Hannah and three single daughters made the trip by train, staying in Melbourne for a day or two, before arriving in Temora a day before the boys with the waggons and cart.

An improved farm four miles from Temora had been bought by David for himself, the girls and youngest son. For Norman and Will he purchased 1,000 acres of land in an iron bark timber forest, which had to be cleared to enable the boys to make a living. Norm. and Will were to be married before long.

Both David's farms at Wycheproof and Temora were called "Sunshine Farm" because of the Sunshine machinery which was used on the farms. The machinery was manufactured in the Sunshine Machinery Factory at Sunshine, Victoria.

(Extracts from a letter of Mrs. Vera Lowe, daughter of David and Hannah Harper)