

Rosalind Roberts
by Barry Roberts and
Myrna McNiven with
the help of Ceridwen,
Gomer and all of the
Grandchildren
Welsh Immigrant
Scythia
April 14, 1929



Rosalind Roberts and Children Idwal/Glyn/Ceridwen/Gomer

Rosalind Roberts (Davies) was born December 27, 1893 in Oswestry, England, the daughter of Edward and Sarah Davies (Lewis) who was a tailor by trade and had real estate. Rosalind, by trade, was a seamstress and also nursed the sick. She married Thomas Charles Roberts of Garn, Camarvon, Wales who was district manager of Pearl Assurance Co. They made their home in Newtown, Wales. Thomas suffered from heart trouble and died August 12, 1927 at the age of 43, leaving Rosalind, three sons Idwal, Glyn, Gomer, and one daughter Ceridwen. Before passing away Thomas wished Rosalind and the children to move to Canada where Rosalind's brother George Davies



had moved in 1927. From time to time of Thomas' death until they departed for Canada, Rosalind's father Edward moved in with the family helping care for the children while Rosalind did sewing.

On April 6, 1929, Rosalind at the age of 35 along with her four children, Idwal 16, Glyn 12, Ceridwen 10 and Gomer 5, departed from Liverpool, England aboard the ship S.S. Scythia arriving in Halifax, NS in April 14, 1929. Another week crossing Canada by rail brought them to Peers, Alberta in late April 1929 arriving in the early morning hours. The Station agent refused to let them in the station, so their first impression of a new hometown was sitting on a bench outside, all wanting to go back to Wales.

They spent the morning/afternoon at Holloway's and the night at the Peers Hotel for which Rosalind was \$5.00. She thought this a bit high so when she was asked to do some sewing for the owners she charged \$5.00. The following morning Jess Radcliffe took them to the south side of the McLeod River. The river was starting to break up and they had to jump from one piece of ice to the other to cross. Once on the north side of the river Jack Dixon and Ewen Jackson loaded them, along with all their belongings, onto the buggy and brought them north. With not much room left, Glyn and Ceridwen had to be tied in at the back so they would not fall out. They went to Scotty Dixon's farm where Rosalind's brother George Davies picked them up the next day. The family then stayed with George for about one year.



During the early years the family moved several times, occupying land where previous people had built a house or other buildings but then through various circumstances had to move on, taking with them their packable belongings and departing. People such as the Roberts would move into these vacant homes or cabins and live till they purchased their own land. They were called squatters on government land as the previous people may have been or may have placed a claim to the land with the idea of purchasing but let it go back to the government in lieu of unpaid taxes. It was a stroke of luck if one of these vacant homes or cabins were available or a family would have to live in a cave dug in a hillside till their homestead claim was approved and their own residence built. Shelter of some sort was a must.



After arriving in Canada in April of 1929 Glyn and Ceridwen started attending school at North Derby in May and June and Gomer in the fall of 1929. In the coldest of winter

months school would not be held. Idwal did not attend school in Canada.



In 1931 Rosalind filed on a homestead west of Rainbow Hill NE 24 57 14 W5 along the Whitecourt Road, where the whole family lived till 1938 when the Taylor quarters were purchased.

Everyone did their part to keep the family of five going; Rosalind did sewing on a machine she brought from Wales, which Ceridwen still has. Rosalind made all the clothing for her family. Sometime due to a shortage of material, she would take an old coat apart, turn the material over, cut a new pattern and sew it for someone smaller.

Rosalind also nursed some of the sick neighbours (Bowens, Gaskills). She did housework at Gaskill's to get their first cow. Schoolteachers also boarded with her for \$18.00 per month. Rosalind raised chickens; some eggs were sold but mostly traded to the grocery store for flour, salt etc. Never learning to ride a horse, she drove everywhere with a team hitched to a buggy or sleigh.

Rosalind was a member of the United Church and attended services when held at North Derby or Pella School. There were no churches in the community so all services, funerals, and some weddings were held in the schools.

Mail was picked up at the Mahaska Post Office once a week. The kids also worked hard, Idwal went to work for Spotlitini upon arrival in Canada. He also trapped/worked on the prairies during harvesting, hopped a freight to get there. He also worked in lumber camps. In 1941 he joined the army. Glym, Ceridwen, and Gomer worked on the farm milking cows, fieldwork and whatever else while attending school.

After finishing school Ceridwen did housework for various people for \$10.00 per month; Glyn worked the farm and ran a trap line. The family lived off the huge garden Rosalind kept and the wild game brought in by the boys. Moose and deer meat were canned to be used in summer. Mother Nature's freezer was used in winter, and garden produce was canned for off-season use.



In 1943 Rosalind and Gomer move to Cawston, BC for about a year, then returned and purchased the Gaskill-Upcott place living their until Rosalind's passing.

In 1952 Western Geophysical first came to this area camping on Rosalind's property. Ceridwen and Dorothy (Gomer's wife) helped Rosalind cook for the crew of 20-25 men who ate up at the family's home. Rosalind was able to save enough money to return to Wales in 1954 to visit her brothers and their families. In 1958 at the ages of 65 she received her old age pension, \$50.00 a month.

The most important time of the year was Christmas, starting with baking in October. One year Rosalind's brother Ted, who was a baker in England, made a cake and sent it over. Rosalind was santa at North Derby for many years and later at Fulham Christmas concerts. Christmas dinner was always at Rosalind's with all her family attending as well as many friends.



Flowers were a special part of her vegetable garden, in particular, sweet peas and gladiolus.

Rosalind had a very factual sense of humour when asked why when she was a widow at such an early age she never re-married, she replied "Lots wanted to cow but not four calves". She was very

dedicated to the family, first her four children and then the grandchildren as they came along, who were convinced Granny could fix just about anything in their small world.

All of her family married locally. Idwal to Della Barrass (daughter of Art and Ada) they had two children, Martin and Sharon; Glyn to Thelma Barrass (daughter of Art and Ada), they had three children, Wayne, Gwendolyn and Everett; Ceridwen married Chester (Spud) Barrass (son of Richard & Della) they had one daughter Myrna; Gomer married Dorothy Radcliffe (daughter of Jess and Lu Radcliffe) they had four children Roy, Barry, Perry, and Arlene. She has 10 grandchildren, 15 great-grandchildren, 13 great-great-grandchildren.



In 1962, after a short battle with cancer, Rosalind was laid to rest in the Shining Bank Cemetery along with her two sons, Glyn who passed away in 1989 and Idwal in 1997; and brother George who passed away in 1975.



Other family who have passed on are her on-in-law Spud 1964 and daughter-in-law Della in 1987; daughter-in-law Dorothy in 1995; grandson Perry 2001.

Ceridwen lives in Whitecourt, Alberta. All of Idwal and Ceridwen's families live in the Shining Bank area, Glyn's family in Edmonton and Edson. Gomer lives in Barriere, BC with his children living in Edmonton, central BC and Slave Lake, Alberta. Rosalind's brother George passed away in 1975. His three children and their families live in southern BC and Edmonton area.

Rosalind's descendants have gone on to

many various occupations over the years, ranging from Farming, logging, oil fields, transportation safety, teaching, nursing (a choice of Rosalind's though her grandmother made her go into tailoring as that was the family business), various tradesman jobs such as welding, plumbing, dry-cleaning, parts, mechanics, banking, trucking, real estate, bookkeeping, hair stylist, retail sales, and the service industry.

In 2001 Rosalind's daughter Ceridwen (accompanied by her daughter Myrna) traveled to Pier 21. She found it a very moving experience to be back at the sorting sheds and seeing the passenger train car, possibly the one the family travelled across Canada on when she first arrived in Canada 72 years ago at the age of 10. Two of Rosalind's grandchildren and their spouses have also visited Pier 21.

Prepared by Barry (Lynda) Roberts/Myrna McNiven(Barrass) (grandchildren) with the help of Ceridwen/Gomer (children) and all other grandchildren.

The Roberts Children



