

Eliza Jane Pearce d 30 July 1894 aged 5½ years



IN LOVING MEMORY OF
OUR DEAR CHILD
ELIZA JANE PEARCE OF ROOSE
WHO WAS KILLED AT FURNESS ABBEY
JULY 30TH 1894
AGED 5 YEARS & 6 MONTHS
ALSO JAMES PEARCE
FATHER OF THE ABOVE
WHO DIED APRIL 5TH 1914 AGED 51 YEARS
INTERRED AT PRIMROSE CEMETERY TRANSVAAL, S.A.
AND OF JESSIE HOLMAN
WHO DIED JAN. 1ST 1940 AGED 73 YEARS
ALSO WILLIAM T. HOLMAN
HER LOVING SON
WHO DIED JAN 28TH 1955, AGED 60 YEARS.

"NO, NOT LOST, BUT GONE HOME"

This is quite a large stone, in a prominent place, for what was originally the resting place of a five year old killed on the railway at Furness Abbey.

Much of the population of Roose i.e. North Row and South Row, had their origin in Cornwall.

The Stank Mines, where many of the Roose miners worked, effectively closed in 1901, and this would explain why many Furness miners chose to go to South Africa, to work in the gold mines.

The *Barrow News* 31 July 1894 reported:

SHOCKING FATAL ACCIDENT AT FURNESS ABBEY.

A CHILD KNOCKED DOWN BY A TRAIN

Yesterday afternoon an accident of a most shocking character occurred at the crossing at Furness Abbey tunnel, near the guide's house. A woman named Pearce and her child, Eliza Jane Pearce, two years and eight months old (sic), living at 64 North Row, Roose, were about to cross the metals, and at the same time a train was proceeding along the line. The parties were very near to the metals, and the engine in passing struck the child before it had time to get out of the way, and knocked it several yards by the force of the blow. The mother picked up the child and it was carried into the house near the line, and subsequently conveyed to the hospital in Barrow. Concussion of the brain set in, and last night the child died from the effects of the injuries.

In the **1891 Census** living at 64 North Row, Roose were James Pearce (28) Iron Miner, born Perranuthnoe, Cornwall; his wife Eliza J. Pearce (23) born South Tawton, Devonshire; with their children Rose Pearce (3) born Barrow-in-Furness, and Eliza J. Pearce (2) born Barrow-in-Furness. Two doors away, at 66 North Row, was brother William Pearce (24) Iron Miner, born Perranuthnoe, Cornwall, and his wife Hannah (22) and child Lilly (2), both born in Barrow.

After their daughter's unfortunate death, the Pearces continued to live at 64 North Row. In the **1901 Census** the household contained James Pearce (38) Iron Miner; Eliza Jane Pearce (33) Wife; Rose Pearce (13) no occupation recorded; and Mabel Pearce (9) no occupation recorded. Pearces were also still at 66 North Row: William is absent, but Hannah Pearce (31) Married, is present with Lily Pearce (12); Victor Willoughby Pearce (8); and Joseph Pearce (3 months)

James Pearce had married Eliza Jane Webber at St. Luke, Barrow in Q1 1887.

In the **1881 Census** James Pearce was living with his birth family at 33 South Row, Roose. Father Henry Pearce (50) Iron Miner, born St. Perranuthnoe, Cornwall, (as were all the rest of the household), shared with wife Mary Pearce (51); and children Susan J. Pearce (21) General Servant (Domestic); James Pearce (18) Iron Miner; William J. Pearce (14) Iron Miner; Mabel Pearce (10) Scholar; Rose Pearce (8) Scholar; and Francis K. Pearce (1).

In the same **1881 Census** James' wife Eliza was living with her family at 66, South Row, Roose. The household consisted of Richard Rodda (25) Iron Miner, born Gwinear, Cornwall; Jessie A. Rodda (32) Wife, born South Tawton, Devonshire, Jessie Webber (14) Step-daughter, Scholar, born South Tawton; Eliza J. Webber (13) Step-daughter, Scholar, born South Tawton; William Webber (12) Step-son, Scholar, born South Tawton; James Webber (10) Step-son, Scholar, born South Tawton; Richard Webber (9) Step-son, Scholar, born South Tawton; John Webber (4) Step-son, Scholar, born Barrow, Lancs; and Laura Rodda (1 month) Daughter, born Barrow. *So Richard Rodda had married a woman with six children already, who quickly produced a seventh. According to Cumbria BMD, Richard Rodda married Ann Webber (née Cottle) in Barrow in 1880.*

The daughter Jessie Webber mentioned above, married George Holman at St Luke, Barrow Q2 1889. She is the aunt of Eliza Jane Pearce, killed by a train, and the sister of Eliza Jane Pearce (née Webber), the girl's mother. According to the CWGC website, her son George Harold Holman, Senior 4th Engineer on S.S. Glenartney, drowned as a result of an attack by an enemy submarine on 6 February 1918. He is commemorated on the Tower Hill Memorial, London, and on the Barrow Cenotaph.

A puzzle is why Eliza Jane Pearce disappears from the Ancestry records. I have not been able to definitively identify her, or daughters Rose and Mabel, in the 1911 Census in the UK. My suspicion is that they went out to South Africa to join James, and left the grave in Barrow to sister Jessie.

This speculation has since been confirmed by correspondent Lesley Lawson, James and Eliza Jane's great grand-daughter, and grand-daughter of Mabel Pearce. James and his wife and two daughters, Rose & Mabel, emigrated to South Africa in 1908. Mabel married a Cornish miner, Samuel Roach, in Johannesburg and Lesley's mother, Jean Roach, was born in 1918.

James Pearce worked in the South African gold mines, and died in 1914 of phthisis, a lung disease associated with mining.