DEATH OF NAMBUCCA PIONEER

Mrs. Harriett Nelson Dies at Age of 90

"When you look into her life you see where we fall short. Surely her spirit will labor on as long as there is a church at Nambucca Heads."

Rev. F. J. Clark on Welnesday paid this funeral service tribute to Mrs Harriett Rebecca Nelson, who died peacefully at her Nambucca Heads home shortly before midnight on Monday.

The late Mrs Nelson, who passed away just 16 days after her 90th birthday, was regarded as the Grand Old Lady of Nambucca Heads. She leaves 185 descendants, including 13 of her 15 sons and daughters, 64 grandchildren, 102 great-grandchildren, and 6 great-great-grandchildren.

Rev. F. J. Clark was adding his tribute to that of the presiding minister (Rev. M. B. Reeve) at the Methodist Church service that preceded Mrs Nelson's funeral.

Rev. M. B. Reeve said Mrs Nelson was the spiritual foundation stone of the Methodist Church at Nambucca Heads.

"She loved all, irrespective of creed or religion," Mr Reeve added.

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The little church at The Heads was overflowing with relatives and friends who came to pay their last respects.

Pall-bearers at the funeral at Nambucca Heads cemetery were four of Mrs Nelson's six surviving sons—Charles, Frank, Bob and Harold.

Mrs Nelson had been ill for some months, but on Monday was well enough to be taken for a drive in her son Bob's car around The Heads and up the road toward Macksville. At about 11 o'clock that night available members of her family were summoned, and she passed away at 11.40 p.m. She retained possession of her bright mental faculties right to the last. "I'll soon be with Daddy," were her last words. On the eve of her ninetieth birthday, 16 days before, she had written a message for her son Hermon to read when, in her stead, he opened the annual Methodist flower show at The Heads.

LINK WITH EARLY AUSTRALIA

The late Mrs Nelson was a second generation Australian. Her grandparents came to this country from England with Governor Macquarie, and her parents were both born at Parramatta. One of the ten children of the late Joseph and Charlotte Barber, Mrs Nelson was born at Wollongong on September 16, 1860. She was five years old when the family moved to Kempsey. At Kempsey in September, 1877, when 17 years old, she married William John Nelson, who died three years

liam John Nelson, who died three years ago, aged 92 years. Born at Kempsey on January 5, 1855, the late Mr Nelson was a son of Robert Nelson, whose father, Robert, was a brother of Horatio Lord Nelson. Robert Nelson, junr., and his wife Elizabeth arrived in Australia from England in 1852. They took up land at Christmas Creek near Kempsey, and farmed on the Macleay for many years. Shortly after her marriage, Mrs Harriett Nelson accompanied her husband to the Manning River, and they spent a year at Tinonee before returning to Kempsey. There Mr Nelson managed Hennessy's sawmill for some years. Later he was for many years a building contractor, and had farms at Clybucca and Warrell Creek. They first went to Warrell Creek 58 years ago. In 1917 they built a home at Nambucca Heads, and there spent the remaining years of their lives. Mrs Nelson retained vivid memories of pioneer days on the Central North Coast. When as a bride of 17 years, she went from the Macleay to the Manning with her husband, they travelled on horseback. The journey occupied three days. A year later she rode back to Kempsey, Mr Nelson carrying their three-months-old baby on a cushion. In those days, over 70 years ago, Taree and Kempsey were tiny villages. Macksville, too, was a small place when the Nelsons came to the Nambucca over half a century ago.

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Mr and Mrs Nelson had a family of 15—eight sons and seven daughters. One boy died as a baby; another, Albert, was killed at Gallipoli in World War I. Four sons served in the First World War; and in World War II two others, too young for the 1914-18 conflict, were in the armed forces. Surviving sons and daughters of the late Mrs Nelson are: Elizabeth (Mrs R. Robertson, Nambucca Heads), Effie (Mrs F. W. Sanders, St. Mary's), Annie (Mrs J. Carbine, Brisbane), Hermon (Taree), Arthur (Hurstville), Charles (Nambucca Heads), Minnie (Mrs R. Cousens, Nambucca Heads), Lena (Mrs P. Robinson, Kempsey), Warrell (Bob) (Coolongolook), Frank (Bondi), Muriel (Mrs A. O. Crossingham, Burwood), Madge (Mrs J. Clarke, Nambucca Heads), and Harold (Nambucca Heads). Mrs Nelson is also survived by a sister, Mrs Theresa Clark (of Wollongong), and two brothers, Messrs Arthur Barber (Taree) and George Barber (Kempsey).

Mrs Nelson took a keen interest in public activities and the affairs of the Methodist Church. She was a life member of the Country Women's Association, a tireless Red Cross worker, and unveiled the World War II tablet on the Anzac Memorial at Nambucca Heads two years ago. She was a lover of flowers, and opened the Metholist flower show at The Heads last year on her 89th birthday.—("Nambucca News").

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