

Rudolph Carl Paul Boehme 1875 - 1964

Born 19 Aug 1875 Woodside, South Australia

Died 4 Apr 1964 Magill, South Australia

Buried Apr 1964 Centennial Park, Adelaide, South Australia

Married (1) 28 Nov 1907 Kalgoorlie, Western Australia

Elsie Maude McDonald

Born 3 Jul 1892 Albury, New South Wales

Died After 1938

Married (2) 6 Dec 1937 Adelaide, South Australia

Louisa Pauline Otto

Born 12 Sep 1881 Kanmantoo, South Australia

Died 1 Nov 1965 Magill, South Australia

Buried 3 Nov 1965 Centennial Park, Adelaide, South Australia

Children of Rudolph Carl Paul Boehme and Elsie Maude McDonald

1.4.4.1. Lilia Adelaide May Boehme 1909 - 1988

1.4.4.2. Eileen Olive Merle Boehme 1911 - 1974

1.4.4.3. John Rudolph Glennis Boehme 1913 - 1991

Child of Rudolph Carl Paul Boehme and Louisa Pauline Otto

1.4.4.4. Angus Harold Otto 1919 - 1992

At one stage, his name was recorded as Rudolph Curt Paul Boehme, but this could have been the result of poorly handwritten records. Rudolph was born in 1875 at Woodside, and was the first of four sons, all born at Woodside, to Adelaide and Alfred Boehme.

At the beginning of the 1900s, much excitement spread throughout Australia, at the news that gold had been discovered in the Kalgoorlie district of Western Australia. Rudolph was one of the many people who flocked to the area in the hopes of making their fortunes.

In Coolgardie, near Kalgoorlie, Rudolph met Elsie May McDonald, who was born in Buninyong, Victoria, but at a very young age must have also accompanied her parents to the Western Australian gold fields.

On 28 November 1907, Rudolph, aged thirty two, married Elsie aged sixteen, at Boulder City, near East Coolgardie. In 1909, Rudolph and Elsie's first child was born and she was named Lilia Adelaide May Boehme, although in later years she became known as Lila.

We do not know why or when Rudolph and Elsie returned to South Australia, but the hardship and disease on the Western Australian goldfields is well documented. We do know that in 1911, their second child, Eileen Olive Merle (known as Merle), was born at Woodside, South Australia, where Rudolph was recorded as a labourer.

Their third child, and only son, was born in 1913 in Oakbank, near Woodside, and was named John Rudolph Glennis Boehme, who became known as Glen. In 1915, Rudolph suffered a great tragedy when Elsie disappeared. We must presume that the burden of motherhood became too much for her and she just walked out on Rudolph and her children, who were found at home alone, playing on the kitchen floor. Fortunately they did not suffer any harm.

We know from the school records that the family moved to Murray Bridge in 1917. The records at the Balhannah School (near Oakbank) stated that in April 1917, Lila Boehme had been transferred to that school from the Oakbank School, and then in August of that same year, she was transferred to the Murray Bridge School.

Rudolph gained employment in Murray Bridge with the South Australian Railways, but he must have found it very difficult to cope with the responsibility of raising three small children.

From the records of the Railway Staff list, we have found that Rudolph entered the service at the Murray Bridge Railway Station on 5 February 1919. He was employed as a labourer and his number was 5166 on the staff list. Before the days of road transport, Murray Bridge Station was a very busy and important junction, with trains going to and from Adelaide, Melbourne, Mt. Gambier in the south east, and Pinnaroo in the far east of South Australia. The railway also connected with the very important riverboat trade on the River Murray.

Except for a brief period as a "temporary packer", he continued as a labourer until 18 August 1940, the day before he turned 65 years of age. Government employees were required to retire from active duty at the age of 65 years, after which the Government paid the workers a weekly pension.

In 1918, Rudolph's cousin, Louisa Pauline Otto, aged thirty six and unmarried, took over the role of housekeeper for the family. In 1919, their son was born, and Pauline named him Angus Harold Otto.

Rudolph and Pauline did not marry until 1937. The delay may have been due to the difficulty in locating Elsie to arrange a divorce. They were married in the Registry Office in Adelaide, where the witnesses were recorded as Rudolph's daughter, Eileen Olive Merle and her husband, William Holliday.

They moved from Murray Bridge to live at 34 Chatham Road, Keswick. It was here that Pauline's sister, Elizabeth, and her daughter, Edna Lavinia, often visited Pauline. They loved to watch the planes flying low over the house, as the airport was not far away.

Later in his life, Rudolph developed gangrene in one of his feet and eventually his leg was amputated above the knee. He spent considerable time in the Magill Wards of the Royal Adelaide Hospital, and when he was able to return home to Keswick, he was grateful that his daughter-in-law, Daphne, was able to care for him.

He died in 1964 at the age of 88, only a year before Pauline. Their ashes are buried at Centennial Park Cemetery in the plot where their grand-daughter, Kayleen, aged fifteen months, was buried in 1955.

A History of the Weidenhofer Families in Australia 1846 - 2004. Written by Wyn Allen (née Weidenhofer) 2004 ©.

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