

WILLIAM AND CHARLES CRAFT

Twins, William Albert and Charles, were born in 1900 in Dunedoo where they lived until they moved to New Zealand in 1920, aged 20 years.

William married Sarah Alice Grime January 28, 1922. They had four children:

Alex	b. April 6, 1922
Clara	b. December 4, 1924
Raymond	b. 1932
William Jnr	b. January 25, 1934

Alex married Joyce, an Ellis Gilbert Islander (Polonaise) whose mother was a princess. They had six children. Joyce died in a fire then the family split up.

Clara married William Smith in Auckland. They had two children, Warren and Jennifer, who when teenagers visited Bernard and Margaret and later settled in Australia. Clara moved to the Gold Coast in later life. She died in 2001.

Raymond married Phoebe and had five daughters. Ray died in 1980.

William Jnr married Barbara Brady December 5, 1959 in Auckland. They have three children, Susan, David and Michael. When visiting son, Michael in Sydney in 1977 Judy Young had the pleasure of meeting William and Barbara when they called on her mum. William died November 26, 1999.

William Snr divorced Sarah and married Mona--- in the 1950's.

Charles was a bit of a mystery man until Elizabeth Wallis, one of his daughters, recently contacted Judy. When William Jnr was visiting Judy's mum in 1997 he was able to tell Judy of the areas Charles lived in but nothing of his family life. Thanks to Elizabeth we now know a lot more of the elusive Charlie.

Charlie had three different families that Elizabeth knew of but it was rumoured that there were other children. They were all defacto relationships.

Family No. 1

There are five children

Gladys, Betty, Eileen, John and Alice

Family No. 2

There are two children

Bernard and Margaret

Family No. 3

There are five children

Charles, Elizabeth, Alfred, Leslie and Raymond

Charlie's partners were Maori or part Maori.

Elizabeth said, “Dad was a builder for a lot of his life and a very good one. His tools were his pride and joy. I have memories of him keeping them clean, sharpened and oiled. His work kept him away from home for long stretches, however, a big part of me is not sad about that, as our life was always happier when he was away. He was also a very good vegetable gardener so the times when he was home was often spent there.”

His bad traits Elizabeth preferred not to talk about.

Charles lived in the East Cape area of New Zealand, which then was remote, as access was quite rugged. William Jnr in a letter to me in 1998 said, “From Te Araroa, which was Charlie’s home base, *IF* he had one, to Ruatoria seemed to be his *hunting ground*. Raymond my brother was born in Tiki Tiki around 1930 so it must be around then that Bill and Charlie were supposed to have built the church there.”

Joe Inder, Dunedoo, Emma Craft’s grandson, has just returned from a tour of New Zealand. Before going on the trip with his wife Irene, he phoned and asked me for relative’s phone numbers etc. I read William Jnr’s 1998 letter to him as well as passing on Barbara Craft’s phone number. Joe said while traveling close to the Bay of Plenty a tourist commented on the excessive number of tiny churches. The tour guide told them of one such church in Tiki Tiki on the far east coast which is quite remarkable. Joe asked the guide if it was the Catholic Church. The guide said, “As a matter of fact, it is.” So Charlie may have been an alcoholic womanizer but he had learned some worthwhile family traits.

William Jnr said it was a mystery why Charles had isolated himself out at East Cape. I have just completed Les’ story and looking at the sequence of events in his young life they no doubt contributed to his instability as an adult. Les lost his mum as a four-year-old. The twins, Billy and Charlie, came home from two years at boarding school to a home without their loving mum who had died just a few weeks prior. Two years later their dad married Josephine who is not reputed to be warm and loving. Their dad sold the store, and moved to Sydney with Les, wife Josephine and new son. The twins I think threw their hands up in the air and said, “Let’s make a new life.” The role models weren’t looking good.

Although leading separate and it appears quite different lives, the twins did stay in touch. William went to Tiki Tiki with his family to visit Charles and it seems stayed long enough for the pair of them to build a church. Charles made incredible three to four days journeys to visit William in Auckland.

William returned to Dunedoo when his son, Alex, was a baby and operated a fruit and vegetable shop in Dunedoo for a brief time then returned to New Zealand. Neither of the twins returned to Australia until 1970. They stayed with mum and dad while in Sydney and also visited Dunedoo. My impressions of them: They both “raged” but I felt Charlie was more accustomed to this role than William. I was amazed at their vitality, energy, and alcohol consumption. Charles died in 1978. Gladys from Charles No.1 family ran a rest/nursing home and she looked after William Snr. until his death on 12th June 1988.

Written by Judy Young