

STAFF.

SAM MASSEY.

Sam Massey was born in Cheshire, England and arrived in Invercargill about the middle 1870s. He procured a job milking cows and soon tiring of this he came to Hawkes Bay and went to Okawa about 1879.

After a couple of years he went to Hastings for a holiday, which must have been a good one as he returned drunk and was promptly given the sack by Grandfather.

At that time a builder was constructing a hotel for McDonald on the western side of the river at Kuripaponga. Sam, being a carpenter by trade, got a job with this builder, who had told his men the work would be finished by Christmas and they would be paid up then and could go to town.

The work was held up and the gang was told they would have to complete the job and enjoy their Christmas at Kuripaponga. This they refused to do so they were all sacked and Sam was out of a job again. After blowing in his cheque he decided to return to Okawa and try his luck again with the "Old Gentleman", as he used to call Grandfather. Grandfather engaged him a second time on the condition he never get drunk again, a promise I am afraid Sam did not keep.

He remained at Okawa until 1890 when he went to Whana. He married a maid who worked at Stonecroft. They had two girls and one son who unfortunately was killed in France in 1916.

They both remained at Whana until 1929. By this time Mrs. Massey felt she would like to live in Hastings where she had relatives, but Sam decided to stay on and a whare was built for him near the big house.

In 1932 Sam decided he had had enough and joined Mrs. Massey again in Hastings where he lived on a pension. From then until 1939 he came back each year to do the exporting, which he had done every year since 1906, and had looked after the same

engine - a white petrol engine - all that time. This engine was replaced in 1939 and this was the main reason he gave up the export's job.

He died on 15 September, 1942, aged 86 years and was buried in the Crownthorpe cemetery. Mrs. Massey died the following year on 14 August, 1943 and was buried beside Sam.

Sam belonged to a generation that is fast dying out. He was associated continuously with the Beamish family for over sixty years and during that time he, without fail, loyally gave of his very best. He saw three generations of Beamish children grow up, and we were the richer for having had the privilege of the many services he gave to the family.

He could turn his hand to anything and Whana abounds with monuments to his industry. He, with a labourer as help, built the woolshed and maori whare, now at Kohatunui. He laid miles of pipes for the water supply; he built his own cottage and "Bongula"; miles of fencing was his handywork and all the original kauri gates. If ever a farm problem had to be solved, the cry was, "send for Massey", and he never failed.

#### BOB RUSSELL.

Bob Russell, real name Robert Fry, arrived on the swag from Kereru and asked for a job about 1894. He was told there was no job available and next morning applied again, for anything at all, and was duly taken on. Later he told G.R.B. that Whana was his last chance and if he had been refused he had made up his mind to jump over the high cliff into the river, which he had seen when crossing. He was a man of good family and was educated at Dulwich College, London. He ran away to sea when a boy and came to N.Z. in the sailing ship "Lady Jocelyn" at a date unknown. He worked at bush felling in the Gisborne District and Herbert Brewster told me when he was in that locality, that there was an area there which is still called Fry's Clearing. He also worked

on the wool wash at Howhanga before he came to Whana. He was an odd job man who could turn his hand to almost anything <sup>and</sup> for many years he was head presser at shearing time. He was also in charge of the store.

After 1921, when he had begun to slow up, he spent a lot of time in my garden and used to bring down the milk and do the household chores, such as firewood etc. Of course drink had been his failing and in latter years I used to ration whiskey to him, and have many chits, he used to give me when getting dry.

His two abominations were plucking quail and feeding pet lambs.

He died in the Napier hospital and was buried in the Crown-thorpe cemetery on 11 May, 1929. A loyal servant and good friend.

#### HERBERT BREWSTER.

In 1920 Herbert, wearing a Harris tweed suit, and accompanied by an ex-cowboy named Metcalfe, arrived at Whana, both looking for jobs. The only one available was scrub cutting.

I took them out to look at two paddocks named Ngaio and White Boar Bush. We came to a satisfactory price for a contract and the next day they took out all their gear on pack horses and set up a camp.

When this job was completed and they were paid up, Metcalfe returned to Hastings and I did not hear of him again. Herbert decided to stay on and work on his own.

For the next sixteen years he lived most of the time in camps and cut all the manuka on my part of Whana-- some of it twice. He was always particular about putting up his camp and made it as comfortable as possible.. For years he had a black cat



During this period he was always available to come into the station and help out cooking, milking and any other odd jobs and many times it was a godsend to be able to rely on his help.

One lambing season when camped in Ngaio he had a horse and dog and did a lambing beat.

During all these years he seemed quite happy living alone. He would frequently see the shepherds or myself and he was never sick.

In 1936 when relief cooking, some of the men complained about the meals and he decided to leave. In 1940 he somehow got to England arriving there during the blitz. He had a sister and younger brother still living - the latter he did not like at all. His sister he had always been fond of and they had corresponded with one another. She wanted him to remain with her but he decided it would not work and returned to N.Z. in 1941.

Upon reaching Hastings again he hired a taxi - he was always a great man for taxis - and arrived at Whana a bit lit-up. Margie went to the door and he said - " Oh, it is nice to see those soft brown eyes again!".

As there was now no cookhouse at Whana, I asked him if he would like to come back and this he did. He lived in a where which had been built for Sam Massey and had his meals in our house.

He did gardening and odd jobs and when the land girl left at the end of the war, he took on the milking until 1958 when it was obvious age had begun to catch up with him. He went to live with a married daughter in Hastings. In 1960 he became very frail and went to the old mens' ward in the Napier hospital.

But there was still "life in the old dog yet". One pension day he ordered a taxi and went to collect. He must have felt this was his last chance because he had a glorious binge, suffered a heart attack and arrived back at the hospital unconscious, in an ambulance. After this, at pension time the ward sister would confiscate his clothes.

After his death in 1960, aged 81 years, he was cremated and Michael Bennis and I buried his ashes on the highest point in "Brewster's Camp" - a paddock named after him - just above one of his old camp sites.

The reason why he never did any good for himself was booze. His father was rector of a parish near Lincoln, England, and he was educated at Lincoln Grammar School and Russell, a school for son's of clergymen.

At the age of 19 he was sent to a man call St. Leger, who afterwards came into a title, and was farming up the coast from Gisborne. In those days the people there were a hard living lot and it must have been here he got into bad company.

He eventually married and was the father of two boys and four girls all of whom have done well for themselves. The elder son was one of the engineers who designed the Mulberry Harbours for the Normandy landing.

In 1914 when farming at Bay View, he left for England, joined the Royal Horse Artillery and survived all the rest of the war in France with no hurt to himself.

In 1917 unknown to one another he was at a rest camp and I was on an aerodrome at Verte Galante near Amiens.

Herbert returned to N.Z. in 1919, and sometime later his domestic arrangements blew up and he came to Whana.

Whenever he returned from town I could always tell what state he was in from the snappiness of the salute I would receive; the higher the pressure the more like a guardsman's it would be and then a beaming smile, and - "Remember Verte Galante."

Herbert was a most likeable man, loved children and we were all very fond of him. Of course we being on the side line could always enjoy the funny side. Naturally his own family were not amused.