

George REAY and Elizabeth Ann COATES - a migrant family life in New Zealand

George REAY was born on 20 February, 1847. He was the youngest of eight children, the fourth son of a mariner, Robert REAY and his wife Jane BURDON.¹ The family lived at 4 Pemberton Street, in East Sunderland, England, not far from the soon-to-be opened Hudson South Dock. With the Hendon Point Ropery to the south and the Hendon Ladge Saw and Planing Mills to the east, this appears to have been a very industrial area and quite likely handy to the work of George's father, Robert.

By the time of the 1861 census,² Robert and Jane had moved to the more attractive address of 13 Bridge Street in central Sunderland, close to the Wearmouth Bridge which spans the River Wear. George, age 14, a butcher's boy, was living with his parents and his older brother John and sister Thomasine. In pursuing the profession of butcher, George followed in the footsteps of his older brother William (1836) and several of William's descendants.³

Elizabeth Ann COATES, George's future wife, was the seventh child of grocer Richard COATES and his wife, Jane TURNBULL. Elizabeth was born in Robinson's Lane, Sunderland on 30 June, 1842.⁴ This area, running north from the parish church Holy Trinity to High Street, was to become a squalid area that was later demolished. Today, this East End area is a mixture of new housing alongside areas of severe deprivation.⁵

At the 1851⁶ Census, Richard, Jane and family lived at 9 Mariners Lane in the 'East End' of Sunderland. Richard must have moved his family shortly after the census as the 1851 Hagar and Co.'s Directory of Co. Durham records⁷ Richard lived at 4 Prospect Row, where he ran a grocery shop. The family continued to live there at the time of the 1861 Census,⁸ and Richard's brother, Robert COATES, lived and operated the *British Flag* pub next door at 3 Prospect Row.

Some time after 1861 the *British Flag* was demolished and the *Prospect Hotel* was built at 1 Prospect Row, as shown on the 1896 Ordnance Survey Map.⁹

On 19 March, 1868¹⁰ George REAY married Elizabeth Ann COATES. Elizabeth was living at 16 Clark Terrace, East Sunderland at the time, close to Hudson Dock South and not far from where George was living at 74 Lawrence Cr. some four streets away. We can only speculate that they met through attendance at the Hendon, Bishopwearmouth, Parish Church where they were married.

¹ UK National Archives Births Register 1847(2), Vol 24, page 302, Sunderland

² 1861 UK Census RG9/3765, folio 74, page 9

³ Sarah Reay and T. Fred Smith *A Dynasty of Butchers* Journal of the Northumberland and Durham Family History Society, Vol 29, No 4, p 108, 2004

⁴ UK National Archives Births Register 1842(3), Vol 24, page 275, Sunderland

⁵ <http://www.sunderland-coi.org.uk/coi-hendon/>

⁶ 1851 UK Census HO107/2397, folio 58, page 18, Sunderland

⁷ <http://www.historicaldirectories.org/hd/d.asp> Pg. 120

⁸ 1861 UK Census RG9/3777, folio 79, page 11, Sunderland

⁹ Co Durham Sheet 8.15, Sunderland (East) 1896, published by Alan Godfrey Maps

¹⁰ UK National Archives Marriages Register 1862(2), Vol 10a, page 586, Sunderland

George and Elizabeth's first child, George, was born in 1869.¹¹ According to the 1871 Census, the family had moved to 3 Thornton Place, Bishopwearmouth.¹² Four more children were to follow: Jane Coates (1871),¹³ Richard Coates (1874),¹⁴ Robert Coates (1876),¹⁵ and Alfred Ernest (1879).¹⁶ At the time of Richard Coates' birth the family was living at 3 Silksworth Row, where Elizabeth's father Richard COATES is noted to have died in 1876. George's older brother, William was to die some 12 years later in 1888¹⁷ at 11 Silksworth Row.

Following the birth of Alfred in 1879, George and Elizabeth made the courageous decision to emigrate to New Zealand. The family departed the UK on board the 'Potosi' (Figure 1), recorded as arriving in Melbourne on 21 July, 1880 and on ward bound to Sydney where they arrived 26 July, 1880. From here it is assumed they left for Nelson, New Zealand arriving about 1881.¹⁸

According to the passenger list, an Elizabeth REAY age 16 was accompanying George and Elizabeth. She has been something of a mystery.

Elizabeth lived in New Zealand as Elizabeth Jane REAY until her marriage to Richard PALMER in 1888¹⁹ when her real surname was revealed as BRABANT. Her birth was established as 5 Dec., 1863, at High Street, Sunderland and her parents were John BRABANT, a master butcher and Eleanor STOREY.²⁰ As John BRABANT and George REAY were both butchers it is likely they knew each other.

Elizabeth BRABANT's parents both died when she was a child; Eleanor BRABANT died in 1871²¹ and John BRABANT died in 1873.²² Elizabeth had a brother Alfred (Fred) Thompson BRABANT (1861)²³ who had emigrated to New Zealand, possibly in the late 1870's.²⁴ Perhaps Elizabeth accompanied George and Elizabeth REAY to New Zealand in 1880 to reunite with her brother. Nevertheless, it is believed that she lived as a REAY until her marriage.

George and Elizabeth possibly first settled in Wakefield²⁵ and then moved to the Hope – Brightwater region, all close to Nelson on the north shore of the South Island, and situated on a coastal plain between the Tasman Bay and a backdrop of mountains. It would have been a

¹¹ UK National Archives Births Register 1869(4), Vol 10a, page 525, Sunderland

¹² 1871 UK Census RG10/4997, folio 51, page 41, Bishopwearmouth

¹³ UK National Archives Births Register 1871(4), Vol 10a, page 538, Sunderland

¹⁴ UK National Archives Births Register 1874(1), Vol 10a, page 657, Sunderland

¹⁵ UK National Archives Births Register 1876(3), Vol 10a, page 614, Sunderland

¹⁶ UK National Archives Births Register 1879(4), Vol 10a, page 477, Sunderland

¹⁷ UK National Archives Deaths Register 1888(4), 10a, 303, Sunderland. Headstone, Bishopwearmouth Cemetery (now Sunderland Central), Will.

¹⁸ Death Certificate for Elizabeth Ann (1907) records 26 years in New Zealand, that for George (1915) records 33 years in New Zealand

¹⁹ New Zealand Marriages Index 1888/1380

²⁰ Birth Certificate, UK National Archives Births Register 1863(4), 10a, 466, Sunderland

²¹ UK National Archives Deaths Register, 1871(1), Vol 10a, Page 301, Sunderland

²² UK National Archives Deaths Register, 1873(2), Vol 10a, Page 312, Sunderland

²³ UK National Archives Births Register 1861(1), Vol 10a, 408, Sunderland

²⁴ Private correspondence

²⁵ Nelson Evening Mail, Vol. XVIII, Issue 80, 5 April 1883, George advertises he has disposed of his Wakefield butchery business.

sharp contrast to the crowded and polluted streets of Sunderland. A map showing the vicinity around the Brightwater region is presented in Figure 2.

George and Elizabeth had a further two children born in New Zealand: Wilfred George (1885)²⁶ and Lucy Elizabeth Harriet (1891).²⁷ Their full family tree is shown in the Appendix.

It is reasonable to assume that on arrival, George followed his profession of butcher, first in Wakefield and then in Brightwater²⁸ and Hope²⁹. However, by 1898 he had turned to farming and was resident at 'Allington' in Brightwater.³⁰

'Allington' was described as 'containing 363 Acres of magnificent Agricultural and Pastoral Land, well watered and conveniently subdivided. The property, which comprises some of the best of the land in the Waimea, is close to the Railway Station and Sales Yards. Large Dwelling House, Stables, Barns and other Farm Buildings'.³¹ The dwelling house, a substantial two-storey weatherboard house still standing today, was the home of George and Elizabeth Ann up to their deaths (Figure 3).

A photograph of Elizabeth Ann (Figure 4) indicates a woman of considerable strength of character. From the brief amount of anecdotal information on George's character, she would have needed to be strong willed. From his photograph (Figure 5) George appears to have the short stature characteristic of the REAY family. He is reputed to have been a heavy drinker and lost his right hand after falling from his horse when drunk.³² This accident which 'necessitated the removal, first of three fingers, and then the whole of the right hand at the wrist' was reported in the local press.³³

George was a well-known figure in the Brightwater region and 'Allington' was the site for disc plow trials, conducted by Bisley Bros. & Co.³⁴ The company also cites George as a reference for their mixed rye grass and clover seed.³⁵

Associated with 'Allington' was Reay Island in the Wairoa River. It was here that George ran sheep that were attacked by dogs in 1901.³⁶ It is to be assumed such attacks continued to be a problem as George advertised in 1904 that 'Poison will be laid for dogs on my Land (known as "Reay's Island")'.³⁷

In addition to 'Allington', George owned a sheep run 'comprising 4000 Acres of splendid undulating sheep country of limestone formation, well grassed, securely fenced, and

²⁶ New Zealand Births Index 1885/12091

²⁷ New Zealand Births Index 1891/2629. Birth certificate 9 May 1891.

²⁸ New Zealand Post Office Directory 1890/91

²⁹ New Zealand Electoral Roll 1893, Nelson

³⁰ Nelson Evening Mail, Vol. XXXII, Issue 165, 22 July, 1898, page 2

³¹ Nelson Evening Mail, Vol. XXXIV, Issue 297, 17 December, 1900, page 4. Advertisement for the sale of the property.

³² Family anecdote

³³ Colonist, Vol. XLIV, Issue 10089, 24 April 1901, page 3

³⁴ Colonist, Vol. XLVII, Issue 11291, 27 March, 1905, page 4

³⁵ Nelson Evening Mail, Vol. XXXI, Issue 98, 27 April, 1897, page 4

³⁶ Nelson Evening Mail, Vol. XXV, Issue 224, 23 October, 1901, page 4 and Vol. XXXV, Issue 249, 29 October, 1901, page 4.

³⁷ Nelson Evening Mail, Vol. XXXVIII, Issue 99, 27 May, 1904, page 3.

conveniently subdivided. New Dwelling House, Wool Shed, Sheep Yards, and other improvements'.³⁸

George is recorded as offering for sale '121 Acres rich Agricultural Land, with house, stable, barn, and good orchard' in June 1900.³⁹ It is not clear whether this was part of 'Allington', but it seems likely as in December 1900 George advertises the sale of 'Allington' and the 4000 Acre sheep run.⁴⁰

After Elizabeth Ann died at 'Allington', age 59 on 3 July, 1907⁴¹ George advertised the sale of 'Allington' in October 1907, now 143 acres along with 69 acres and 100 acres at Brightwater.⁴² The sale of 'Allington' 142 acres was further advertised in December 1907, 50 acres in barley with the balance in English grasses. The house is described as a 'good eight-roomed residence'.⁴³

'Allington' 142 acres is again advertised in January, 1908⁴⁴ with a final advertisement on 8 March, 1908. No further advertisements have been found. It is possible that the sheep run, known as 'Riversdale' was purchased by the Bisley brothers in 1908.

It would appear that George sold or bequeathed the land associated with 'Allington' over the period from 1900 to 1908 'piece-meal'. However, he continued to live there until his death at age 68 on 11 March, 1915.⁴⁵ There is no mention of the property in his Will.

George died a prosperous man leaving legacies totaling £4000⁴⁶, over NZ\$500,000 at current value.⁴⁷ This is evident from the prosperous appearance of 'Allington', the wedding photograph of his son Alfred Ernest taken at the BODDINGTON farm (see Figures 3 and 6) and the description of daughter Jane's wedding, reported below.

The rise of George, with the support of Elizabeth Ann, from a modest butcher in the North East of England to a significant property owner in New Zealand is the epitome of the migration 'success story'.

George REAY Jnr. (1869)

George Jnr, like his father, was a farmer and butcher. He married Eliza Phoebe Ophelia VERRY(1876)⁴⁸ on 9 April, 1901 at St Joseph's Wakefield.⁴⁹

³⁸ Nelson Evening Mail, Vol. XXXIV, Issue 297, 17 December, 1900, page 4. Advertisement for the sale of the property

³⁹ Nelson Evening Mail, Vol. XXXIV, Issue 141, 18 June, 1900, page 4

⁴⁰ Nelson Evening Mail, Vol. XXXIV, Issue 297, 17 December, 1900, page 4. Advertisement for the sale of the property.

⁴¹ Death certificate, New Zealand Deaths Index 1907/5994. Death notice Nelson Evening Mail, Thursday, 4 July, 1907

⁴² Colonist, Vol. XLIX, Issue 12065, 14 October 1907, page 2

⁴³ Nelson Evening Mail, Vol. XLII, 10 December 1907, page 4

⁴⁴ Nelson Evening Mail, Vol. XLII, 28 January 1908, page 4

⁴⁵ Death certificate, New Zealand Deaths Index 1915/1605. Death notice Nelson Evening Mail, Friday 12 March, 1907.

⁴⁶ Will, Archives New Zealand, AA00 17072 W5410 1362, Probate Number 1362

⁴⁷ Based on CPI purchasing power New Zealand Reserve Bank, <http://www.rbnz.gov.nz/statistics/0135595.html>

⁴⁸ New Zealand Births Index 1876/4503

⁴⁹ Parish records, St Joseph's, Wakefield and New Zealand Marriages Index 1901/2037

Eliza was the daughter of Charles VERRY (1851) and Eliza IVES (1852).⁵⁰

Charles was the son of Charles VERRY (1821) and Rhoda Ann PAGE. Charles VERRY (Snr), a sawyer, arrived in Nelson, at the age of 20, from Cheshunt, Hertfordshire, England⁵¹ with his parents on 11 May, 1842 on board the 'Clifford'.⁵² Eliza IVES, born in Brightwater, is believed to be the daughter of William IVES and Elizabeth PARSLOW who arrived in Nelson from Hugenden, Buckinghamshire, England⁵³ on board the 'Sir Charles Forbes' on 22 August, 1842.⁵⁴

George and Eliza had one daughter Elizabeth Lucy REAY (1912).⁵⁵ She married Frederick John Adolphus BRUNELL (1929), a butcher, on 31 July, 1929.⁵⁶ Our research suggests that the BRUNELL family originated from Jersey, Channel Islands, UK, where they may have been originally known as BUERNEL and likely arrived in Nelson between 1850 and 1860. Frederick died 14 March, 1965 and that same year his wife, Elizabeth, remarried to Leslie Douglas PRIEST.⁵⁷

There are living descendants for both families.

George died 17 May, 1932⁵⁸ and Eliza died 13 June, 1950.⁵⁹ Both are buried in Otaki Cemetery.

Jane Coates REAY (1871)

Jane Coates married Thomas Benjamin FREEMAN (1871), a carpenter and farmer, on 20 July, 1898,⁶⁰ St Paul's Church, Brightwater.⁶¹

The report of their wedding in the Nelson Evening News is extensive and detailed,⁶² 'the bride entered the Church, on the arm of her father, beautifully attired in a dress of white silk, trimmed with lace and orange blossoms, carrying a beautiful shower bouquet .. followed by two charming little bridesmaids, (the bride's sister Lucy Reay, and Trixie Palmer⁶³) in ruby velvet trimmed with yellow silk, and wearing gold and ruby brooches (the gift of the bridegroom). The bridegroom was attended by Mr R Reay as best man.⁶⁴ .. the wedding party and a number of invited guests went to the residence of the bride's father, where a large marquee had been erected, and a sumptuous wedding breakfast was provided.'

Thomas Benjamin born June 5, 1871 at Spring Grove, Brightwater,⁶⁵ was the son of Thomas Graham FREEMAN Jr.(1833), also a carpenter, and Sarah NEWMAN. Thomas Graham

⁵⁰ Private correspondence

⁵¹ UK Census 1841, HO107/444/12, folio 12, page 8, Cheshunt, Hertfordshire

⁵² The Early Settlers Database Nelson City Council, <http://www.nelsoncitycouncil.co.nz>

⁵³ UK Census 1841, HO107/52/13, folio 4, page 2, Hugenden, Buckinghamshire

⁵⁴ The Early Settlers Database Nelson City Council, <http://www.nelsoncitycouncil.co.nz>

⁵⁵ New Zealand Births Index 1912/2241, re-registered 1970, 12101/70. N. Mulholland private communication.

⁵⁶ New Zealand Marriages Index 1929/4350 and marriage certificate

⁵⁷ Private correspondence

⁵⁸ Death notice, The Dominion, Thursday, 19 May, 1932, page 1. New Zealand Deaths Index 1932/5275

⁵⁹ Death notice, The Dominion, Thursday, 15 June, 1950, page 1. New Zealand Deaths Index 1950/21218

⁶⁰ New Zealand Marriages Index 1898/3011

⁶¹ Anglican Diocese, Nelson, marriage register for Waimea South

⁶² Nelson Evening Mail, Vol. XXXII, Issue 165, 22 July, 1898, page 2

⁶³ Beatrix, the eldest daughter of Elizabeth Jane BRABANT and Richard PALMER

⁶⁴ Her brother Robert

⁶⁵ Colonist, Vol XXIV, Issue 1430, 9 June 1871, page 6 and New Zealand Births Index 1871/3903

FREEMAN Jr., with his parents, Thomas Graham FREEMAN (1802) and Margaret SCHWEITZER (1809) and their family, arrived in Nelson, from England on 10 April, 1842 on board the 'London'.⁶⁶

Thomas' wife, Sarah NEWMAN (1833)⁶⁷ arrived in Nelson with her parents Thomas NEWMAN and Mary MURRANT and family, from England on 15 March, 1842 on board the 'Bolton'.⁶⁸

Jane and Thomas had a son George Wilfred Reay (1899)⁶⁹ and a daughter Lucy Georgina Elizabeth (1902).⁷⁰ George FREEMAN married Gwendoline Carol FAYEN, who had had two previous marriages⁷¹, in 1952.⁷² Lucy FREEMAN married Frank Murray WADSWORTH in 1924.⁷³ Frank's ancestors from Bedfordshire, England arrived in Nelson on 14 December, 1842 on board the 'Bombay'.⁷⁴

There are living descendants for both families.

Jane died 21 February, 1943, Nelson⁷⁵ and is buried in Wakapuaka Cemetery.⁷⁶ Thomas died 5 June, 1950, Dannevirke⁷⁷ and is buried in Manatera Cemetery.⁷⁸

Richard Coates REAY (1874)

Richard Coates, a butcher like his father, married Hilda Edith HAASE (1885)⁷⁹ on 22 March, 1905.⁸⁰ Hilda was a descendant of early German pioneers. Hilda's parents were Frederick William HAASE and Frances Emily RUFFELL (1857).⁸¹ Frederick's family arrived in New Zealand on the 'Golconda' on 27 December, 1859.⁸² Frances RUFFELL was the daughter of Harry RUFFELL of Lyminster, Hampshire, England and Sarah Emily CLARKE of Weston Supermare, Somersetshire, England who were married in Nelson in 1855.⁸³

Richard and Hilda had three sons and one daughter; Douglas Richard (1905),⁸⁴ who married Beatrice Bertha PAHL in 1929,⁸⁵ Frederick George (1907)⁸⁶ who died in infancy,⁸⁷ Hugh

⁶⁶ The Early Settlers Data Nelson City Council, <http://www.nelsoncitycouncil.co.nz>

⁶⁷ Death notice age 66, 12 January, 1899, Nelson Evening Mail, Vol XXXIII, Issue 10, 13 January, 1899, page 2

⁶⁸ The Early Settlers Data Nelson City Council, <http://www.nelsoncitycouncil.co.nz>

⁶⁹ New Zealand Births Index 1899/7340

⁷⁰ New Zealand Births Index 1902/8276

⁷¹ To Barry John PATTEN in 1927 (New Zealand Marriages Index 1927/0546) and Joseph Hendy FRASER in 1940 (New Zealand Marriages Index 1940/16938)

⁷² New Zealand Marriages Index 1952/08358

⁷³ New Zealand Marriages Index 1924/5923

⁷⁴ The Early Settlers Database Nelson City Council, <http://www.nelsoncitycouncil.co.nz>

⁷⁵ Death notice Nelson Evening Mail, Monday 22 February, 1943, page 4

⁷⁶ Nelson City Council, Cemeteries, Wakapuaka, plot 026, block 13, <http://information.ncc.gov.nz>

⁷⁷ Death notice The Dominion, Monday, June 5, 1950, page 1. New Zealand Deaths Index 1950/27999

⁷⁸ Headstone

⁷⁹ New Zealand Births Index 1885/6883

⁸⁰ New Zealand Marriages Index 1905/6209

⁸¹ Private correspondence

⁸² <http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~ourstuff/Golconda1859.htm>

⁸³ Nelson Examiner and New Zealand Chronicle, Vol XIII, Issue 706, 31 January, 1855, page 2

⁸⁴ New Zealand Births Index 1905/19918

⁸⁵ New Zealand Marriages Index 1929/07670

⁸⁶ New Zealand Marriages Index 1907/3648

⁸⁷ Died age 4 months and buried on 13 March, 1907, Karori Crematorium/Cemetery, Wellington

Coates (1919),⁸⁸ who was killed in WWII,⁸⁹ and Lorna Frances (1909).⁹⁰ Lorna married a butcher, Richard William HODGES on 10 August, 1931.⁹¹

Beatrice PAHL was a descendant of the PAHL pioneering family who arrived in Nelson on the 'St Pauli' on 14 June, 1843.⁹² Beatrice died in July, 1986.⁹³ Douglas REAY died 12 July, 1972 after being an invalid for many years.⁹⁴

Lorna's husband, Richard William 'Bill' HODGES was the son to Richard HODGES and Rose KELLY. Bill died 27 May, 1977 and Lorna died 31 August, 1989.⁹⁵

Doug REAY and Lorna (REAY) HODGES families both have living descendants.

Richard and Hilda divorced and both remarried.

Richard married Annie Anita (Nita) HANSON (1891) in 1931.⁹⁶ Richard died in 1955⁹⁷ and Nita died 1971⁹⁸ both in Palmerston North. They both are buried in Kelvin Grove Cemetery.

Hilda's second marriage was to William MCCONKEY in 1932.⁹⁹ William had been previously married to Caroline Annie RATBUN (in 1889).¹⁰⁰ They had two children: William Manley (1889)¹⁰¹ (who died age 8 months)¹⁰² and Percy Manley (1893).¹⁰³ Caroline Annie died in 1922.¹⁰⁴

Hilda's marriage to William did not last long. A family contact has suggested that Hilda met Fred SOWMAN (1884) through her brother, Doug HAASE, in Wellington. It also has been suggested that Hilda and Fred had been high school sweethearts. Hilda went to live with Fred on his farm in Blenheim for a number of years in the late 1930s. Fred and Hilda decided to marry in 1943 just prior to Hilda's death.¹⁰⁵

Hilda SOWMAN died on 31 August, 1943 at Wairau Valley, Blenheim¹⁰⁶ and is buried Upper Wairau Cemetery, Marlborough.¹⁰⁷ Fred SOWMAN's third marriage was to Hazel

⁸⁸ Based on age 25 on death in 1944. Commonwealth War Graves Commission.

⁸⁹ Died 27 August 27, 1944. Flight Sergeant, Royal New Zealand Air Force, 53 Squadron (Coastal Command). Panel 264 Runnymede Memorial. Commonwealth War Graves Commission.

⁹⁰ Private correspondence

⁹¹ Ibid

⁹² Early Settlers Passenger Details (1841 – 1850), Nelson City Council, <http://www.nelsoncitycouncil.co.nz>

⁹³ Nelson Cemetery Database

⁹⁴ <http://www.waitakere.govt.nz/cnlser/cm/cemeterysearch/cemeterydetails.aspx?id=51636>

⁹⁵ Private correspondence

⁹⁶ Personal family history

⁹⁷ Cemetery records, Kelvin Grove, died 16 December, 1955, buried 19 December, 1955, area M, block 002, plot 079. New Zealand Deaths Index 1955/31052

⁹⁸ Cemetery records, Kelvin Grove, died 27 August, 1971, buried 30 August, 1971, area M, block 002, plot 079

⁹⁹ Personal family history

¹⁰⁰ New Zealand Marriages Index 1889/2205

¹⁰¹ New Zealand Births Index 1889/13378

¹⁰² New Zealand Deaths Index 1890/2336

¹⁰³ New Zealand Births Index 1893/18245

¹⁰⁴ New Zealand Deaths Index 1922/9166, burial 14 October, 1922, records Karori Cemetery, Wellington

¹⁰⁵ Personal family history

¹⁰⁶ New Zealand Deaths Index 1943/24283 and headstone

¹⁰⁷ Headstone, Marlborough, Upper Wairau Cemetery

Eileen BARTLETT in 1948 with whom he had five children. Fred died 14 March, 1971¹⁰⁸ in Blenheim and is buried at Fairhall Cemetery.

Robert Coates REAY (1876)

Robert Coates became a dairy engineer and married Helen Isabel SIMPSON (1887)¹⁰⁹ in 1906.¹¹⁰ Helen was born in Motueka, NZ and was the daughter of Michael William SIMPSON (1856) and Phillis TALBOT. Michael emigrated with his parents John W.S. SIMPSON and Sarah ROLLINSON from Lancashire, England. Phillis TALBOT was the daughter of Daniel TALBOT and Mary Ann SHEPHERD who also emigrated as government assisted passengers with their family from England in 1856 on board the 'Emma Colvin'.¹¹¹

Robert and Helen had a daughter, Phyllis Elizabeth (1909)¹¹² who married newspaper manager, Gordon M. NASH (1909) in 1936.¹¹³ At the time of Gordon's death, he was a senior director of the Manawatu Standard Ltd. Gordon's father, Norman Henry NASH, was the proprietor of the Manawatu Standard, which his son later managed.¹¹⁴

The NASH family came from NSW, Australia and there are living descendants.

Helen died in 1942¹¹⁵ and Robert Coates in 1956.¹¹⁶ They are buried together in Kelvin Grove Cemetery, Palmerston North.

Alfred Ernest REAY (1879)

Alfred Ernest, a farmer, married Katherine BODDINGTON (1879)¹¹⁷ in 1905.¹¹⁸ The marriage application was lodged on 14 April, 1905 at St Joseph's, Wakefield.¹¹⁹ The wedding day photograph (Figure 6) reinforces the image of a financially comfortable family. It is assumed that the central figures are Alfred and Katherine. George Snr is clearly identified seated on the left probably with a grandson [possibly Jane Coates' first born, George Wilfred Reay FREEMAN (1899)]. Elizabeth Ann is seated on the right side, next to the bridesmaid. Unfortunately, no others have been identified.

Katherine BODDINGTON was the daughter of William BODDINGTON (1837) and Agnes WALLACE (1839). William was the son of Robert BODDINGTON (1808) and Ann WALKER (1808)¹²⁰ who emigrated to Nelson from Coventry, Warwickshire, arriving on 8 February, 1842 with their family on board the ship 'Mary Ann'.¹²¹

¹⁰⁸ Headstone, Marlborough, Fairhall Cemetery, Block 2, Row 0, Plot 10

¹⁰⁹ New Zealand Births Index 1887/1896

¹¹⁰ New Zealand Marriages Index 1906/5031

¹¹¹ <http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~ourstuff/EmmaColvin1856.htm> and private correspondence,

¹¹² New Zealand Births Index 1909/25269

¹¹³ Private correspondence

¹¹⁴ http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_8066/is_20051122/ai_n46847772/

¹¹⁵ Cemetery records, Kelvin Grove, died 26 March, 1942, buried 27 March, 1942, area F, block 001, plot 079. New Zealand Deaths Index 1942/17557

¹¹⁶ Cemetery records, Kelvin Grove, died 16 October, 1956, buried 18 October, 1956, area F, block 001, plot 079. New Zealand Deaths Index 1956/27964

¹¹⁷ New Zealand Births Index 1879/17210

¹¹⁸ New Zealand Marriages Index 1905/7106. Katherine's surname is incorrectly recorded as BRADINGTON

¹¹⁹ Parish Records, St Joseph's, Wakefield and New Zealand Marriages Index 1905/7106

¹²⁰ International Genealogical Index, marriage Robert BODDINGTON to Ann WALKER, 1831, Coventry, Batch number M043671

¹²¹ Early Settlers Passenger Details (1841 – 1850), Nelson City Council, <http://www.nelsoncitycouncil.co.nz>

Alfred and Katherine had two daughters, Elizabeth Agnes (1906)¹²² and Kathleen Margaret (1915).¹²³ Elizabeth married Horace H. ALEXANDRE in 1930 and Kathleen remained single up to her early death on 14 March 1950, age 35.¹²⁴ There are living descendants of Elizabeth and Horace.

Alfred died on 26 May, 1941¹²⁵ and is buried in the Belfast Cemetery, Christchurch. Katherine died seventeen years later on 14 April, 1958¹²⁶ and is buried separately in Ruru Lawn Cemetery, Christchurch.

Wilfred George REAY (1885)

Wilfred George, the first New Zealand-born member of the family, married Mabel Lillian STONE (1896)¹²⁷ in 1916.¹²⁸ Her parents John STONE (1860), a miner, and her mother Emma Jane WILLIAMS (1874) were married in Tasmania in 1891 when Emma was just 16.¹²⁹ John, originally from Kent, England, and Emma emigrated to New Zealand in 1897¹³⁰ with Mabel and their two other daughters Stella Aurora (1892)¹³¹ and Dora Linda (1894).¹³² Emma, who had been born in South Australia,¹³³ was the daughter of Jeremiah WILLIAMS (1847), a miner and Susan BAWDEN (1849).¹³⁴ It is possible that Jeremiah was the son of the Jeremiah WILLIAMS (1817) who was transported to Tasmania in 1834, age 18 for stealing a handkerchief and gown,¹³⁵ but no firm connection has been established.

It is believed by 1902 Emma decided to desert her husband, John and their three daughters.¹³⁶ They were subsequently divorced with due cause, in 1904.¹³⁷ This woman displayed an interesting lifestyle likely quite embarrassing for the family at the time. Mabel apparently never again did meet her mother, Emma.¹³⁸

Wilfred was a farmer in the Brightwater area. Wilfred and Mabel had three sons, Wilfred George (1918),¹³⁹ Jack (1920)¹⁴⁰ and Geoffrey (1923)¹⁴¹ and two daughters Sheila (1926)¹⁴²

¹²² New Zealand Births Index 1906/23371

¹²³ From death notice, reference 103

¹²⁴ The Press, Christchurch, Monday, March 13, 1950, Page 1. Headstone, Belfast Cemetery, Christchurch

¹²⁵ New Zealand Deaths Index 1941/30053. Newspaper death notice. Christchurch City Council Cemeteries Database

¹²⁶ New Zealand Deaths Index 1958/38541. Newspaper death notice. Christchurch City Council Cemeteries Database

¹²⁷ Tasmanian Births Index, 23 May, 1896, 1166/1896 RGD 33 Lefroy, Tasmania, Australia

¹²⁸ New Zealand Marriages Index 1916/2713. Private correspondence and headstone record.

¹²⁹ Tasmanian Marriages Index, Mar 15, 1891, 900/1891 RGD 37, Strahan, Tasmania, Australia

¹³⁰ Private correspondence

¹³¹ Tasmanian Births Index, 17 December, 1892, 1206/1893 RGD 33 Lefroy, Tasmania, Australia

¹³² Tasmanian Births Index, 10 October, 1894, 1215/1894 RGD 33 Lefroy, Tasmania, Australia

¹³³ South Australia Births Index 8 August, 1874, Cross Roads, district Dal, book 139, page 32, Father Jeremiah WILLIAMS and Mother Susan BAWDEN

¹³⁴ South Australia Marriages Index 1867 district Dal, book 72, page 91, records ages and groom's father as Jeremiah WILLIAMS

¹³⁵ Archives Office of Tasmania, <http://www.archives.tas.gov.au/nameindexes>, CON31/1/47, image 119 and CON18/1/18, image 65

¹³⁶ Private correspondence

¹³⁷ The Star, Christchurch, Issue 8024, 30 May 1904, page 3

¹³⁸ Private correspondence

¹³⁹ Private correspondence and Nelson Cemeteries Data Base

¹⁴⁰ Private correspondence

¹⁴¹ Private correspondence and Nelson Cemeteries Data Base

and Margaret Elizabeth (1929).¹⁴³ Wilfred George married Mary Margaret SINCLAIR in 1946.¹⁴⁴

Jack married Irene (Joyce) PALMER in 1950, Geoffrey married Patricia GARDNER in 1950, Sheila married Gordon HYSLOP and Margaret married William A. POTTINGER in 1955.¹⁴⁵

All families have living descendants.

Wilfred died in 1946¹⁴⁶ in Brightwater and Mabel died in 1959,¹⁴⁷ also in Brightwater. They are both buried in St. Paul's Cemetery, Brightwater.

Lucy Elizabeth Harriet REAY (1891)

Lucy Elizabeth Harriet (1891) is the youngest and best documented of George and Elizabeth Ann's children.¹⁴⁸ She married Dr Leslie Hatton WHETTER (1887)¹⁴⁹ in Chertsey, England in 1919¹⁵⁰ while serving with the New Zealand Expeditionary Force as a nursing sister during WWI.

Leslie WHETTER was the son of Robert Gill WHETTER (1860),¹⁵¹ and Edith Marion HATTON (1868). Robert WHETTER was a pupil-teacher at the Forbury School, Dunedin in 1876, ultimately rising to headmaster.¹⁵² He later became Inspector of North Island Education Boards. He was the son of William Henry WHETTER, a musician, shoemaker born in the Scilly Islands, UK.¹⁵³ William married Caroline Amelia GILL (1846)¹⁵⁴ and migrated to Australia at some time between 1850 and 1857.¹⁵⁵ They remained in Australia until 1864 and the family then emigrated to Otago, New Zealand where William held the office of Mayor of Cromwell for some years up to 1870.¹⁵⁶

Leslie WHETTER's mother, Edith Marion HATTON was the daughter of Joseph HATTON and Marion HANOVER. In the 1870's, the HATTONs left Bristol, Gloucestershire, England for Amsterdam to further the temperance movement and where they established the first Good Templars Lodge.¹⁵⁷ They arrived in Dunedin, NZ sometime in the 1880's.

Leslie's grandmother, Marion HANOVER was very involved in the suffragist movement in New Zealand as is recorded in the Dictionary of New Zealand Biography.¹⁵⁸ His grandfather, Joseph HATTON, was a magazine editor, a writer and a prolific novelist.¹⁵⁹

¹⁴² Private correspondence

¹⁴³ Private correspondence

¹⁴⁴ New Zealand Marriages Index 1946/05027

¹⁴⁵ Private correspondence

¹⁴⁶ New Zealand Deaths Index 1946/36833

¹⁴⁷ New Zealand Deaths Index 1959/36426

¹⁴⁸ *Dr. Leslie Hatton WHETTER: Eccentric Explorer and Curious Citizen* Susan Enns and T. Fred Smith *The Genealogist* March 2010, Vol XII, No 1, page 4, published by The Australian Institute of Genealogical Studies

¹⁴⁹ Birth certificate, 10 December, 1887. New Zealand Births Index 1888/4177

¹⁵⁰ Marriage certificate, 3 April, 1919. UK National Archives Marriage register 1919(2), 2a, 201, Chertsey

¹⁵¹ Birth certificate, 22 October, 1860, Ballarat East, Victoria, Australia, opt cit

¹⁵² <http://www.nzetc.org/tm/scholarly/tei-Cyc04Cycl-t1-body1-d2-d18-d6.html>

¹⁵³ Birth certificate Richard Gill WHETTER, 1861 Vic#2264, Ballarat, Victoria, Australia

¹⁵⁴ UK National Archives Marriages Register 1846(2), Vol 9, page 568, Stoke Damerel

¹⁵⁵ Based on the births of their children

¹⁵⁶ Tuapeka Times, Vol II, Issue 103, 29 January, 1870, page 6 and Vol III, Issue 111, 24 March, 1870, page 6

¹⁵⁷ Dictionary of New Zealand Biography, http://www.dnz.govt.nz/DNZB/alt_essayBody.asp?essayID=2H21

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid*

Lucy and Leslie had no children and lived out their lives in quiet seclusion in the small community of Matakana, north of Auckland. Leslie died on 3 December, 1955¹⁶⁰ and Lucy 6 July, 1968.¹⁶¹ Both are buried in the Matakana Cemetery, Rodney District.

We might wonder if George or Elizabeth ever wrote home to their families describing their lives in New Zealand. There is no evidence that either the British descendants of the REAY and the COATES lines knew anything about the 'New Zealand connection'. Nor for that matter, do the New Zealand REAYs appear to know much about their British origins.

The REAY family proved to be a most intriguing immigrant family from Sunderland, Durham, England.

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Figure 1 The ship 'Potosi'

¹⁵⁹ Otago Witness, Issue 2415, 21 June, 1900, page 60

¹⁶⁰ Matakana Cemetery Records, block 1, Row 1, plot 69A, seq 1. New Zealand Death Index 1955/27461

¹⁶¹ Matakana Cemetery Records, block 1, Row 1, plot 69A, seq 1. New Zealand Death Index 1968/33881



Figure 2 Brightwater and region showing the location of 'Allington'



Figure 3 'Allington'



Figure 4 Elizabeth Ann (COATES) REAY



Figure 5 George REAY



Figure 6 The Wedding of Alfred REAY and Katherine BODDINGTON

Appendix

Family Tree for George REAY and Elizabeth Ann COATES

Robert Reay (1805) Bishopwearmouth , Sunderland, Co. Durham
& Jane Burdon (1807)

George Reay
1847, BWM, Sunderland, Durham
& Elizabeth Ann COATES
1842, Sunderland, Co. Durham
m. 19 May 1868, BWM, Sunderland, Durham

George Reay
1869, Sunderland, Co. Durham
& Eliza Phoebe Ophelia VERRY
1876, Wakefield, NZ
m. 9 Apr 1901, St. Joseph's Wakefield, Nelson, New Zealand

Jane Coates Reay
1871, Sunderland, Co. Durham
& Thomas Benjamin Freeman
1871, Spring Grove, Brightwater, NZ
m. 16 Jul 1898, St. Joseph's Wakefield, Nelson, New Zealand

Richard Coates Reay
1874, Sunderland, Co. Durham
& Hilda Edith Haase
1885, Nelson, New Zealand
m. 22 Mar 1905, New Zealand
& Annie Anita 'Nita' Hanson
1891, Levin, Wellington, NZ
m. 1931

Robert Coates Reay
1876, Sunderland, Co. Durham
& Helen 'Nellie' Isabel Simpson
1887, Motueka, NZ
m. 1906, New Zealand

Alfred Ernest Reay
1879, Sunderland, Co. Durham
& Katherine (Kate) Boddington
1879, Foxhill, Nelson
m. 14 Apr 1905, St. Joseph's Wakefield, Nelson, New Zealand

Wilfred George Reay
1885, Brightwater, NZ
& Mabel Lillian Stone
1896, Lefroy, Tasmania
m. 1916, Nelson, New Zealand

Lucy Elizabeth Harriet Reay
1891, Hope, Bridgewater, New Zealand
& Leslie Hatton Whetter
1887, South Dunedin, NZ
m. 3 Apr 1919, Chertsey, Surrey, UK