

Duncan van Reenen Barry



Duncan van Reenen Barry (b. 11/04/1885, d. 20/05/1962) married Hubertha Deney van Velden (b. 14/05/1893, d. 08/08/1962) in 1919. This couple was inseparable and it is said that Hubertha died from a broken heart two and a half months after her husband passed away.

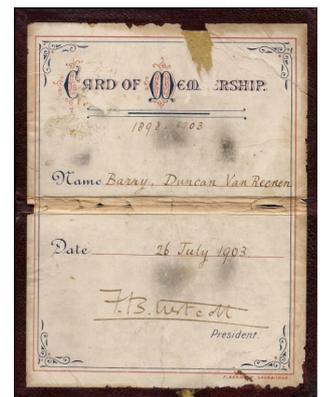
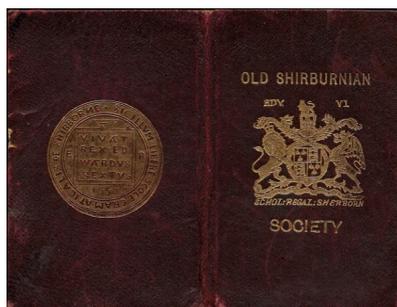
Duncan had a great sense of humour and loved life and people. He and Bertha were always “at home” for friends, neighbours, family and anyone visiting the district to join them for Sunday afternoon tea.

The farm Riverton was purchased by the mayor of Robertson, Hamilton Barry, in 1918 on behalf of his youngest brother Duncan Barry whilst he was fighting for the Allies in WW1.

Duncan Barry was the youngest of 13 children born to Michael and Aletta (Lettie) Catharina Barry and grew up at “The Firs” Rosebank in what is now the Irma Stern museum. Already a handful, he became impossible after his father died in 1897. The following year, his mother and much older brothers sent him to England at the tender age of 13 to complete his schooling at Sherborne. His sister Rose, (17), was admitted to the Dresden Finishing school (Rose’s name dated 1895 is etched into one of the windows of the Irma Stern Museum and can still be viewed today).

Duncan was a member of the Sherborne School 1st XV. The team members are all described in the School magazine, The Shirburnian, in March 1903, with Duncan’s entry as follows: ‘D. Barry. A strong, heavy forward, works hard and is often very prominent at the line-out, rather slow in the open, and must learn to use his feet more.’ He completed his schooling in August 1903 and returned to South Africa, a gentleman with the propensity to break into song, “*when King Alfred was at Sherborne he played in the 11*”, and a fine rugby player who went on to play for The Crusaders F.C. The Crusaders won “The Dewar” Challenge Shield in 1906. Duncan went to the farm Reenen, near Carnarvon, which was jointly owned by him and his brother Hamilton. When WW1 broke out he joined the South African Army Heavy Artillery and was sent to France.

Hubertha was the granddaughter of Ds. Dirk Van Velden (“Heilige Dirk) who was born in Hoorn, Holland on April 11, 1813 and died in Ladismith, W. Cape, South Africa on June 23, 1878. Her father Willem was born in Louvain, Belgium in 1843 and died in Ladismith in 1904. Her mother Johanna Reid passed away a few years later and the orphaned Hubertha was then taken in by her Uncle, Gerard Reid. Duncan and Bertha had 2 sons, George Joseph Barry (b. 11/7/1921) and Alfred Hamilton Barry “Ham” (b. 5/9/1923) and 3 daughters, Noelle Mary Johanna Barry (b. 25/12/1924), Helen Hubertha Aletta Barry (b. 12/2/1928) and Jean Duncan Barry (b. 12/2/1928).



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