

## **Ernest SLOW**

Ernest SLOW was born on the 6<sup>th</sup> of May 1890.

Ernest was son of Frederick Aldophus SLOW and Mary Philedelphia BELL nee WILLIAMS.

His mother had three sons from her previous marriage.

His parents had Frederick, Ernest, Maud and Ballance who was my grandfather.

All three boys went to Europe to serve in the New Zealand Expeditionary Force.

In 1929 Ernest appeared before the Timaru District Court charged with arson. It was the house in Gorge Road, the house of his mother who had recently died.

His brother Ballance was the owner of the house and there was disputes over this. ( I have the newspaper article about this and will forward)

Ernie become a well known poet in the McKenzie County and was the author of the ballad "The Devils Daughter" later made into an animated cartoon by famous cinematographer Bob STENHOUSE. This cartoon was nominated for an Academy Award in 1985.

In an article in the newspaper written by a William VANCE Ernies self reliance and independence was commented on. He was a man of dignity, nothing petty or mean about the man and he was never heard to say a mean word about anyone.

All his life he spent in the high country and there was not a station job he could not do. For years he was a gun shearer, he was a good rabbitier and a fencer. Even when he was a comparatively old man he built the snow line fence at Glentanner station.

He died on the 2<sup>nd</sup> May 1960, aged 70 years when his two bedroom cottage on the reserve in Fairlie caught fire.

Newspaper articles at the time say that Ernie had retired to bed and at about 11pm a fire started near the coal range in the kitchen.

Family stories are that Ernie was drunk again.

A neighbour E Cullimore was awoken by another neighbour when the fire was discovered and rang the fire brigade. I received a letter some years ago from Mr Cullimore's son who was a young lad at the time of the fire and remembers seeing the fire. (I will forward you a copy of this).

When I was in Kimbell recently I spoke to Brian Beatties wife. Apparently he was on the bus coming back from Timaru and he talked to Ernie. It was the day Ernie died and he told Brian he had been to see a publisher about getting his poems published.