



The Herbert Family (Bill, Ruth & Jack)

In the period between the 1930's and the late 1980's, the name Herbert for many, was synonymous with success in the standardbred breeding, training and racing industry across North America. From their "Long Lane Farm" located just outside of Lambeth, the Herbert's (Bill his wife Ruth and son Jack) managed and operated a stable and breeding farm that at its height had over 100 horses. In recognition of his significant contributions to the sport of harness racing, Bill Herbert was elected into the Canadian Horse Racing Hall of Fame. In addition, two of the horses the family bred, raised, trained and drove were also inducted into the Hall of Fame, Dominion Grattan and Signing Herbert. Both Bill and Jack were inducted into the Western Fair Raceway's Wall of Fame.

Bill, Ruth and Jack Herbert

For many years, the name Herbert was synonymous with the success in the standardbred breeding, training and racing industry across North America. The operation was lovingly managed for many decades by Bill Herbert, his wife Ruth and son Jack, all of whom played integral roles in its success. Bill, who passed away at 88 in 1987, became involved with horses as a boy and once said: "I could look at a horse all day and never grow tired." He began his

career in the sport as a trainer and driver in the 1920's and quickly became one of the most respected horsemen in North America.

The Herbert's started naming their horses with their last name during the 1940's and there were hundreds of colts and fillies that carried that moniker and raced successfully both in Canada and in the United States.

To list the horses whose success can be traced to the Herbert's would take considerable paper, but a few of the names include Dominion Gratton, Birdie Abbedale, All Right, Tami Herbert, Singing Herbert, Roanie Lee, Dean Herbert, The Heiress, Tom Gratton, Trixie G, Tanya Herbert, Tamcee Herbert, Bold Herbert, Brisco Herbert, Bobby Herbert, Joe Herbert, Sonny G Herbert, Jack E Herbert, Seedling Herbert, Replica Herbert, etc..

Their horses set many track and stakes' records and won many prestigious stakes' events with Jack and Bill often driving against each other in the same races, both wearing their distinctive black and white racing colours. At the height of their success, their stable numbered over 100 horses.

In the 1930's, they moved from the Niagara Falls area to London, Ontario, where, in addition to the Standardbred operation, they operated the Brunswick Hotel for more than 30 years. Not only was it a popular spot to stay for many in the horse industry, it was also the site for many of the industry's meetings over the years. The hotel was purchased with the money generated by their top horse Dominion Gratton.

A nurse, Ruth was the head of the obstetrics department at the Chatham General Hospital, a position she retired from when she Married Bill. Her focus then shifted to running the hotel and the family's large horse breeding operation which was based on a 100 acre farm just outside of Lambeth. She would note that her experience helping to deliver so many babies prepared her for many years of delivering foals.

In recognition of his significant contribution to the sport of harness racing, Bill Herbert was elected in the category of "Builder", into the Canadian Horse Racing Hall of Fame. In addition, Dominion Gratton and Singing Herbert, two of the horses the family bred, raised, trained and drove were also accorded the sports' highest honour with their induction into the same Hall of Fame. Bill Herbert was also inducted to the Western Fair Raceway's Wall of Fame in 1977 as its inaugural inductee. In 1996 Jack Herbert joined his father on that same Wall of Fame.

Following Bill's death, Ruth donated many of the beautiful trophies that had been won by the Herbert horses over the years, to the Canadian Trotting Association (now Standardbred Canada). This impressive display is a lasting testament to the significant contributions that the Herbert family had made to the harness racing

industry and to the agricultural industry in Ontario for over the fifty-year period between the 1930's and the 1980's.

Today, in recognition of the contributions made by Herbert family, we induct Bill, Ruth & Jack Herbert into the Middlesex County Agricultural Hall of Fame.