



New Zealand FAMILY TREE



Published Three Times Yearly

Te Rakau Whakapapa o Aotearoa
P.O. Box 13-301, Armagh, Christchurch 8141

My Family Castle? by Heather Crow

Are you lucky enough to have a castle in your family history? When I was in the UK in 2018 I visited a distant cousin, Lin Galley and her husband John. Lin and I share the same great-great-grandfather. They live in a small village called Horning not far from Norwich. Lin and I have connections with the Orkney Islands and she and John had not long returned from a visit there and I was on my way north to visit the islands. We were going through family history stuff when Lin asked me if I had heard of Bucholly/Buchollie Castle that had once belonged to the Mowat family for about 300 years from 1306 to 1661. Mowat was our great-great-grandfather's surname. I didn't know anything about it so she proceeded to tell me how she and John had visited the castle on their way back from their trip to Orkney and said I should go and have a look on my way to Orkney. She said it was just a short walk across a paddock to the coast and



The peninsular the castle was built on.

the castle ruin. As it was not out of my way and I had the time I decided I would go and take a look.

The castle is on a very small peninsular on the east coast of Scotland between Wick and John o' Groats and I had no trouble finding the area. I parked the car, grabbed my bag and camera and hopped over the fence straight into

knee-high soaking-wet grass. It had been raining just before I arrived, and after half a dozen steps my trousers were soaked past my knees. I decided because I was already so wet that I may as well keep going, muttering a bit as I went, a few not so kind words to my cousin.

You cannot see the castle from the road so as you walk toward the coast - it slowly comes into view. There is very little of the castle left now, so it is where the castle is situated that is amazing. It must have been some job to get the building materials onto the peninsular and then to build, as some of the walls are very close to the cliff edge. I do wonder how many workers fell to their deaths. As much as I would have liked to have got inside what's left of the castle I thought better of it as I was on my own and it was quite a drop down to the bottom of the cliff and the grass was wet and slippery. I stood there for quite a while just looking and taking photographs, and thinking of what life must have been like to have lived there when it was in its prime. I then turned round to walk back to the car, again through the long, wet grass. When I got back to the car I changed my trousers and got dry socks and shoes which made me feel more comfortable, then it was off to Scrabster to catch the ferry to Stromness in Orkney.

Do I have a castle in my family history? A bit of research is required as at the moment I am not sure, but quite a few of the Mowat family did migrate north to Orkney and Shetland. I like to think some of my DNA may come from the Mowats of Bucholly/Buchollie Castle.



What the Castle may have looked like in its prime.

Brief history of the Castle Sweyn Asleifsson

Regarded by many as the last and 'Greatest' of all the Vikings, Sweyn Asleifsson was born in Caithness. His father was Olaf, Lord of the Norwegian lands of Orkney and Caithness, and Sweyn's long and bloody career is documented in *The Orkneyinga Saga* (written or

compiled later in Iceland, the saga details the fighting lives of the Earls of

Orkney). Outlawed in his youth for a casual killing, Sweyn went into exile in the Hebrides, where he grew to be a talented player in the complex and merciless world of Norse/ Scottish dynastic struggle. Around 1139, Sweyn succeeded his father and raided and feuded for some thirty years, his depredations reaching down to the Scilly Isles.

In 1140, as a notorious pirate and thief, Sweyn/Sveinn Asleifsson built the fortress on a very small peninsular on the east coast of Caithness in Scotland, not far from John o' Groats. The building has been identified as Lamba Borg and is mentioned in *The Orkneyinga Saga* book. There was one problem with the castle. Easy to defend, but if you came under siege there wasn't really any easy means of escape. In 1152 Sveyn was besieged in his castle by Count Rognvald whose displeasure he had sustained. Sveyn's henchmen had killed a prominent local in a rent dispute. The nobleman's son had complained to the count that he arrives with strong force to arrest Sveyn. Sveyn refused to hand over his personal henchman, Margad, to the Justice of the Courts and secured himself and his sixty men in the castle. When his supplies were nearly exhausted, he and companion in arms, Margad Grimson, descended into the sea from the 9 m-high castle rock by means of a rope and then both swam along the shore to save themselves to escape the Earl.

The Saga writers say Sweyn died in 1171 while attacking Dublin. The Irish and Anglo-Norman sources say this particular Orcadian attack was led by a Viking called 'John the Mad' (or 'John the very angry'), which description may or may not refer to Sweyn. His implausible dying 'confession' in the *The Orkneyinga Saga* is generally regarded as a pious invention, but like many Viking lords of this period the appalling Sweyn was probably just as content to found a church as a drinking hall – or to burn either, if they weren't his. (From: *Scotland: 1001 Things You Need to Know*. Edwin Moore.)

Bucholie Castle has been identified with 'Lamba Borg' mentioned about 1143 in *The Orkneyinga Saga*. This would imply an earlier castle on the site. After Sveyn's death, complete silence fell on the castle/Lamba Borg.

In the 1300s Buchollie estates were given to the House of Mowat, nobles from Aberdeenshire, by King Robert the Bruce. Over the next years the fortress was greatly expanded by the Mowats. In 1661 the castle was sold by the Mowats to the Sinclairs and the abandoned castle fell into ruin. Not much is known about what happened to the Mowats but it is known some went north

to Orkney and Shetland. On the north coast of Caithness stands the Canasbay church and there are many Mowat headstones in the churchyard. It is also said the font in the church was donated by the Mowats.

Bucholly Castle (locally accepted spelling) and its plan have been described by previous written authorities on the subject. The building on the west side of the courtyard survives as a grass covered walling about 1.3 m high. The surviving lower foundations of the castle are covered by thick vegetation.

Another description of the castle is as follows:

Buchollie (Mowat 1631) or Bucholie Castle. This castle, dating from period 1400 – 1542, stands on a peninsula 30 m high, cut off from land by a trench 2.1 m wide and 2.7 m deep.

The keep, which rose from edge of this trench, measured only 4.2 m x 6.1 m overall. Only the west wall standing 9 m high, and part of south wall remain. Walls of a vaulted basement are 1.2 m thick, but on the floors above, only 75 cm. An entrance passage 1.35 m wide gave access to a long narrow courtyard, flanked by buildings mostly bonded with clay.

An extensive kitchen midden (a refuse heap) lies along the cliff-top to seaward. The castle was formerly known as Freswick. The property belonged to the Mowats from the time of King Robert I (1306-1329) until 1661, when it was passed to the Sinclairs.

Seven small fragments of brownish unglazed pottery from a refuse heap at Bucholly Castle were donated to the National Museum of Antiquities of Scotland by A.O.Curle.

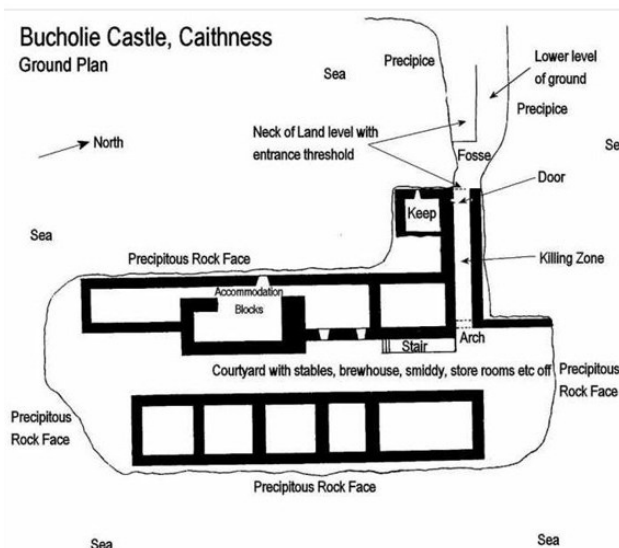
Bucholly Castle can be found on an isolated rocky stack called the Castle Geo, a few miles south of John o' Groats on the northeast coast of Scotland. The site is spectacular, but cannot be seen from the public roads, and requires a walk through fields which terminate at a sheer drop over the cliffs. Access to the castle may be possible in dry weather, but is dangerous, and since none of the site is fenced, is not to be encouraged. A short distance to the north is sandy Freswick Bay, but the rest of the coast for some distance to the south is rocky cliffs, so no wider strategic reason for the castle to be at this site rather than anywhere else can be established.



All that is left of Bucholly Castle today.

The principal remains of the castle are those of the gatehouse, which is separated from the mainland by a narrow spit of cliff breached by what is probably a rock cut ditch. The gatehouse has a single tower to the south, and a long narrow arched entrance passage - the northern side of this passage is actually a curtain wall. Above this

was a single chamber, with a second floor above. It is likely this was reached via a wooden bridge, probably incorporating a drawbridge of some description. Behind this is a narrow courtyard occupying most of the summit with ranges of buildings to the east and the west – the courtyard narrows to a point at its southern end and is only walled on the shore – facing the side unless the outer wall has fallen into the sea through erosion. The eastern (sea facing) range



consists of five chambers, and survives as low walls only, those to the north are more eroded than others, so that only three of these are obvious. The western range was almost certainly the principal residential range, with a square room to the rear of the gatehouse proving one half of the innermost section of the gate passage. To the south of this was a larger rectangular hall block which projected slightly into the courtyard, and to the

south of this another rectangular room of smaller size. In addition, a small square tower projected out to the west from the largest room. Again, most of this area only survives as low walls up to a maximum of 1.5 m height.

President's Report April 2025



Hello to you all.

We've had a busy start to the year, with the committee gathering at our rooms for a working bee in late January.

We then had our annual social barbecue at the beginning of February, on Trevor's golf course and a round of croquet on the back lawn.

For our March meeting, we learned about early Chinese settlers and miners at Lawrence.

The following weekend was our annual field trip, which this year went to Dunedin. Thanks to Kevin and Margaret White for organising this once again and apologies I was unable to attend.

At our April meeting, I spoke about a project 25 years in the making. The 1914 All England women's tour of New Zealand.

Just how I ended up studying women's hockey and the story behind the tour, you will have to come and hear my talk, and I'm sure we can share some of the story in this magazine in coming months.

In May, Tony will lead a session on Irish history, and then June will be our annual general meeting. We are always looking for more committee members, so please consider putting your name forward. We meet once a month and I try to keep the committee meetings short. Happy reading!

David Hill

FHSNZ Programme May – September 2025

4 May Tony Gordon - *Irish genealogy research*

8 June **AGM** Caroline Fitzgerald "*Letters from the Bay of Islands*"

6 July Annual Mid-Winter Christmas dinner – venue TBA

1-3 August **Family History Expo**, Tūranga Public Library

7 September Field trip to Rangiora or Hanmer Springs – TBA

5 October – Pauline and Stewart Taylor "*Where's Martin? The search for Martin McNulty.*"

2 November Clare Simpson "*Cycling in 19th Century Christchurch*"



Family History Society Annual Field Trip 2025

March came round very quickly this year and before we knew it we were off on our annual field trip; this time Dunedin was our destination.

We gathered on the first night at a



restaurant as we always do. This one was very special as it was housed in the world-famous Dunedin Railway Station. After photographing the Station itself, we were soon reaching for our cellphones again to record our food being delivered by a robot.



We met the next morning at the Toitū Early Settlers Museum. We were greeted in the research room by staff, who guided us to various search options. The one that people were most excited about was a database set up by Bob Matthews called OASES - Otago and

Southland Early Settlers. Settlers up until 1900 are still being added. A fabulous resource to use for genealogists!



I particularly liked the portrait gallery; all four walls are covered in photos and computers are available to put names to faces.

Larnach Castle was our next stop. We were given a brochure and proceeded to do a self-guided tour. Some had been there before but several years have elapsed between visits, we

were all enthralled with the history attached to what is New Zealand's only

castle. We had lunch in the ballroom. Later a very kind and patient young tourist took a photo of us on the front steps.



We then had a couple of hours free time. Two of our group bravely took on the walk up Baldwin Street, the steepest street in the world. We met up again at the Carey's Bay Historic Pub for dinner. Lovely food and some amazing old photos on display.



The next morning, we met at 9:30 am at Olveston. This historic home is a real treasure. Owned by just one family, the house and all its contents were left to the city in 1966, by the last surviving child, Dorothy Theomin. It was opened to the public in 1967. We were all impressed with the extensive display of delftware in the kitchen and the impressive staircase leading to the bedrooms.



Next came a drive up a long and at times very narrow road which took us up to the Signal Hill lookout, which had fabulous views of the city. A memorial stone from Edinburgh reminded us of Dunedin's Scottish heritage and the reason for its nickname "the Edinburgh of the south".

Kevin read the first verse of a poem written by Thomas Bracken, the author of the lyrics of our National Anthem.

Dunedin from the Bay.

BY THE LATE THOMAS BRACKEN

Go, trav'ler, unto others boast
Of Venice and of Rome :
Of saintly Mark's majestic pile,
And Peter's lofty dome :
Of Naples and her trellised bowers ;
Of Rhineland far away :—
These may be grand, but give to me
Dunedin from the Bay.

The text on the stone reads,

This stone hewn from the rock on which Edinburgh stands, was given as a centennial memorial token by the people of Edinburgh to signify the bond which forever binds the cities of Edinburgh and Dunedin. Auld Lang Syne. 3 April 1941



We just had time to squeeze in some lunch and a quick look around Dunedin's Botanic Gardens, including the statue of Peter Pan, before we had to make our way to the Dunedin Public Library.



Here we were joined by members of the Dunedin Branch of the New Zealand Society of Genealogists and were treated to a very interesting presentation by Heather Bray. She focused on the extensive Dunedin resources available to us and provided very useful handouts. We were then able to do some research in the McNab Collection room.



It is always special to be warmly welcomed and to be given the opportunity to share information with like-minded societies. Another great trip over, however everyone agreed you need much more than a weekend in Dunedin, to fully appreciate this special city.

Margaret White



Tales from the Top of the South by David Hill

When I was 16 years old in 1992 I attended a McIsaac family reunion with my mother and grandmother.

For decades I assumed the McIsaacs were my first ancestors to arrive in New Zealand, in Nelson in May 1842. (The above picture is a scene of Nelson in 1842.)

Not so, my earliest ancestor to step foot in New Zealand was John Barnes in 1841 – though it was short-lived.

John secured employment with the New Zealand Company in 1841, working as a boatman onboard the ship “*Whitby*”, which was carrying the advance party for the settlement in Nelson, New Zealand.

The “*Whitby*” left Gravesend on 27 April 1841, arriving in Wellington on 18 September 1841 and then in Nelson on 4 November. John Barnes was to set up a home for his family in Nelson, with his wife Mary and the children to follow on another ship several months later.

But when he arrived in the colony, John decided colonial life was not for him. Less than 16 days after arriving in Nelson, he was discharged from his New Zealand Company contract. He boarded the ship “*Arrow*” on 20 November 1841, and went back to England via China.

There was a less than flattering mention of John Barnes in New Zealand Company agent Arthur Wakefield’s journal:

“Discharged John Barnes, one of the Deal Boatmen at his own request being a discontented cantankerous man who had been dissatisfied ever since he left Teneriffe. States he wrote to his wife...”

(Teneriffe – now Tenerife – is an island in the Canary Islands in the Atlantic Ocean, off the coast of northwest Africa.)

Meanwhile, Mary Barnes had boarded the ship “*Lloyds*” with the couple’s four children. Tragically two of the children died on the journey, leaving only Samuel (born April 1836) and Elizabeth “Betsy” (born 1837, died 1905). The “*Lloyds*” arrived in Nelson on 16 February 1842.

One can only imagine the predicament for Mary Barnes. She had survived a harrowing journey to a strange land on the other side of the world with two young children, having lost two children on the voyage, only to find her husband, who was supposed to be setting up a home for the family, was already on his way back to England.

As it happens, a man named John Atwood was on the “*Whitby*” with John Barnes. His wife and children were supposed to meet him in the colony, but they remained in England. What led to John Atwood meeting Mary Barnes we can only speculate, but clearly, soon after her arrival Mary and her children were living with John Atwood. There is no evidence of John Atwood and Mary Barnes ever marrying, but she appears to have been known as Mrs Atwood and the couple had three children together.

First to Settle

Eight days before the “*Lloyds*” arrived, the “*Mary Ann*” dropped anchor off the coast of Nelson on 8 February 1842, with the Gill family on board. Ellen Gill (pictured right, from Nelson Museum) was later to marry Samuel Barnes in 1854, when both were 18 years old.

The voyage out on the “*Mary Ann*” is recorded to have taken four and a half months. Among the passengers were William Gill (31), stonemason, Harriett (31), Henry (11), Benjamin Cornelius (10), Sophia (8), Ellen (7), George (3) and Mary Ann (infant). Also onboard was William’s brother Henry (listed as age 22, but he would have been 28), farm labourer, and his sisters Jane (21) and Mercy (19), both servants.



Ellen Barnes (nee Gill)

William's mother Mary and her second husband Peter Higgins were also onboard, with their children Sydney (15), Angelina (14) and Rhoda (10), and Mary's grand-daughter Selina (6), whom she had adopted. Mary was later married for the third time to Daniel Eyles.

I have attempted to trace my ancestors' lives in New Zealand in newspapers, via the Papers Past website.

According to jury lists in the *Nelson Examiner* and *New Zealand Chronicle*, William lived in Cambria Street in 1845 and 1846, and his occupation is given as a labourer. From 1847, he was living at Wakapuaka, also known as Suburban North or Suburban Districts, Nelson. Tragically, William's wife Harriett passed away in Nelson in 1855. He remarried the following year to Ann Edwards.

In the *Nelson Provincial Gazette* and the *Nelson Examiner and New Zealand Chronicle* in 1854, William's occupation is listed as a farmer and a property owner, and as a freeholder in 1856.

In 1855, it appears William put up at least part of his farm for sale. An advertisement in the *Nelson Examiner and New Zealand Chronicle* in July 1855 lists 50 acres at Wakapuaka, 5½ miles from Nelson, a four-room dwelling substantially built of wood, barn, stockyard and conveniences, and farm implements for sale. It included six acres of bushland "well-covered in valuable timber", 20 acres fenced and under cultivation, ½ acre of orchard well-stocked with fruit trees.

In the same month an advertisement warns - "*for sometime past several horses have been trespassing upon my land, damaging my fences, crops, etc., this is to give notice that, if not kept up, they will be impounded. Also a number of pigs, which after this date will be destroyed. W Gill, Wakapuaka, July 3*" (*Nelson Examiner and New Zealand Chronicle*). Livestock trespassing on the Gill farm seems to have been an ongoing challenge.

Efforts to sell the farm appear to have been unsuccessful, as in November of the same year the sale was favoured to Mr Alexander Aitken, with instructions to dispose of it at the Albert Auction Room on Thursday, 6 December (*Nelson Examiner and New Zealand Chronicle* November 1855).

Despite the efforts to sell up, it appears William continued to own land at Wakapuaka and continued to have issues with livestock roaming on his land. In 1857 he placed an advertisement advising the owners of a 3-year-old strawberry heifer branded OJ on the rump and an unbranded 18-month-old strawberry

heifer, to come and collect them or they would be sold at auction to defray expenses (*Nelson Examiner and New Zealand Chronicle*).

Later that same year he offered for sale a rising 4-year-old cart horse, broken in and standing 16 hands high. The advertisement said he would accept cattle or sawn timber in exchange (*Nelson Examiner and New Zealand Chronicle*).

In 1858, advertisements to sell the farm at Wakapuaka described it as being 247 acres of land, with a comfortable six-roomed house, out-houses, sheds and stockyards. It had five grass paddocks, an orchard stocked with the “choicest variety of fruit-trees”. There was 175 acres of fern land, 50 acres of bush containing white and red pine trees, totara etc. alongside a never-failing stream of water with a fall of 20 feet, giving water power equal to 20 horses for driving a sawmill or grist mill (*Nelson Examiner and New Zealand Chronicle*).

William took out an advertisement in the Nelson Examiner and New Zealand Chronicle after his bay mare strayed. The mare was described as being “rather heavy with a small white spot on the forehead, tail cut square above the hocks, is branded”.

In the same year, William and Benjamin faced a court case with Charles Henry Martin claiming damages. William and Benjamin appear to have been roading contractors and had damaged Martin’s fence while performing a contract to repair the road. The judge ruled for the plaintiff, awarding damages of £5 and costs of £3 5s. (*The Colonist*).

William was back in court a year later, this time to claim expenses of £25 4s., from his neighbour as a contribution towards a boundary fence between the two properties, with the judge ruling in William’s favour (*Nelson Examiner and New Zealand Chronicle*).

William found himself in the resident magistrate’s court in 1861, being fined 10 shillings and costs for “*permitting his horses to wander at large*” (*Nelson Examiner and New Zealand Chronicle*). He was fined £1, plus costs in 1862, after being summoned to the resident magistrate’s court after his dog was found “to be at large without a ticket” (*Nelson Examiner and New Zealand Chronicle*).

In 1870, the resident magistrate's court ordered William to pay £1 plus costs, after neglecting to file his returns to the Chief Inspector of Sheep on the number of sheep in his possession on 1 January. But William evidently got his returns filed on time in 1879, when he had a mixed flock of 200 ewes (*Nelson Evening Mail*).

William's second son Benjamin died in 1876. The Colonist newspaper reported on Benjamin Gill's probate being presented to the District Court. He left his widow and family with under £100.

In 1876, the newspaper *The Colonist* reports of William's young son, Willie, having a serious accident.

"The lad had climbed into a willow tree and was engaged breaking off branches which he was throwing to some cows, when the branch upon which he was standing broke, and he was precipitated to the ground, falling about 15 feet. The bone of his left leg was broken just about the instep. Dr Farrelle was at once sent for and was on the spot as quickly as possible, but the poor boy's feet and leg were too much swollen to allow the bone to be set. It is probable the swelling will not be sufficiently decreased to allow anything to be done for several days yet."

In 1879, a correspondent to *The Colonist* reports of 20 hours of rain at Wakapuaka:

"Such as has not been witnessed for many years.

It caused large land slips in every direction, creeks were flooded, soil, crops and fencing taken, fords, bridges, roads destroyed and gardens covered with clay, three feet thick. W Gill was among those who felt the ill-effects of the storm.

"Funerals have had to be put off on account of the road between town and cemetery being completely blocked by numerous slips."

William is listed in *A Return of Freeholders of New Zealand* October 1882 as resident at Wakapuaka, Waimea, owning 741 acres with a value of £1420.

William Gill passed away at Kelvin Grove, Todd's Bush, Wakapuaka, on 17 March 1885, aged 74 years. A funeral notice appeared in the *Nelson Evening Mail* the next day advising of the funeral leaving from his residence at Todd's Bush, Wakapuaka, the next day at 2 pm for the new cemetery.

On 24 November 1885, a notice in *The Colonist* advises that William's farm was to be let for tender for a five-year lease. It comprised 235 acres, growing crops.

We will pick up the story of William's daughter Ellen and her husband Samuel another time.

The Ship Under the Bank by Kevin White



On a visit to the Wellington and Carterton area last year for a Queen's Scout honours board unveiling, we spent a day in Wellington awaiting our flight home to Christchurch. We visited the usual haunts, parliament grounds, the Beehive, the cable car and a walk along Lambton Quay. Near the cable car is a wonderful statue to John Plimmer "The Father of Wellington." The statue depicts John walking away from Plimmer steps with his dog. John was an entrepreneur arriving in Wellington on the "*Gertrude*" in 1841.



I suggested to Margaret that we should head up the steps and visit the heritage Antrim House, the headquarters of Heritage New Zealand on The Terrace. We managed to find a short escalator ride up the hill, then a number of steep steps lead to the Terrace and in front of us was Antrim House. This heritage building has been recently restored by Heritage New Zealand and is open to the public. We were shown around this magnificent building by a heritage guide. She explained that it was originally the home of Robert Hannah, the founder of Hannahs, the shoe company. My father Ken White worked at the Hannahs factory in Wellington for 30 years. He was their head shoe designer and pattern maker. Apparently, Robert Hannah was very generous to his workers, this legacy must have stayed on after Robert's death in 1930, as my father was always talking about the generosity of his employers. He was given a silver canteen of cutlery during his 25th year of employment, and on my father's early death, aged 59, my mother was left with a sizable pension, plus a 70% discount on all Hannahs' shoes, which was also issued to me and my siblings.

As we were leaving Antrim House, the guide asked us how we got up the hill. Hearing that we climbed the Plimmer Steps, she said that we should go down via a lift directly opposite the house that would take us down to Lambton Quay. We were grateful, she then said. "*When you arrive on the Quay go directly over the road to the old bank, there's a ship in the basement!*" We were intrigued.

She also said for us to wait until the hour strikes at the globe clock in the bank – “*it’s worth a look.*” We headed off.

The old BNZ bank is now a shopping arcade and sure enough we found the sign directing us to the ship. What an intriguing story.

<https://tecuriocabinet.wordpress.com/2018/04/24/plimmers-ark-at-the-old-bank-arcade-what-are-you-doing-there/>

In 1849 the “*Inconstant*” was sailing from Australia to Peru and stopped off in Wellington to get fresh water. Unfortunately, it became grounded on rocks at Pencarrow Head and had to be towed into the harbour by a navy vessel. It was beached at Wellington’s Te Aro beach. The ship was eventually sold to John Plimmer for £80. John had the vessel shifted further along the beach, to near the Plimmer Steps, named in his honour. John righted it and filled the bilges with soil. He levelled the upper decks down and built a pitched roof store on the hull structure.

On its completion it was renamed Plimmer’s Noah’s Ark. A small bridge was built from the ship to Lambton Quay. The ship now served as Plimmer’s office, a bond store, a wharf and immigration centre. In 1855, Wellington was hit by an 8.2 earthquake. The whole foreshore was lifted by 1 m and the ark fell on its side. It could no longer be used as a warehouse. The ribs of the ship were cut down to ground level and eventually it was buried. It could no longer be used as a wharf, but it continued to be used for storage. The city was growing and eventually it engulfed the hulk.



In 1899 an excavation rediscovered the old ship. Part of the hull and the ribs were turned into mementoes for a new bank. A chair was made out of the remains and given to the Alexander Turnbull Library where it is still proudly on display. The remains were reburied where they stayed for another 100 years. During renovations to create the Old Bank Arcade in the 1990s, the “*Inconstant*” was rediscovered. Thankfully the remains were so well buried and preserved, that they remained intact.

Archaeologists Susan Forbes and Mary O'Keefe sift through mud looking for artefacts in the basement of Wellington's old Bank of New Zealand building in 1997. Alexander Turnbull Library, Dominion Post Collection (PAColl-7327) Reference: EP/1997/1994 Photo



A display was created in the bottom of the Old Bank Arcade to house the timbers. This is how it will remain, a permanent reminder of Plimmer's Noah's Ark. The future of the Ark and the "Inconstant" looks bright. Directly above the basement ship is the foyer of the old bank. Hanging from the roof is a clock, shaped like a globe.

We watched and waited, then just as the hour struck, the globe began to



Little, K M.

Photograph of John Plimmer standing on the remains of Noah's Ark. Ref: PAColl-3398

unfold like the segments on a mandarin and four animated scenes of early life in Wellington appeared. In one tableau the scene had soldiers



standing on Te Aro beach, raising the Union Jack up a flagpole. Another shows the Wellington earthquake with barrels rolling about on a pier and John Plimmer's Ark can be seen in the foreground. Another

shows early Wellingtonians walking about in front of the bank. The last shows workmen digging outside the bank, presumably preparing the site for the new



bank. The tableaus rotate and the whole production take about 3 minutes to view. All this happens to the sound of French horns and a recorded narration – all for free, just above the "ship under the bank".

Submitting Articles to NZ Family Tree

Any members who may possess an interesting story pertaining to family or early historical matters, especially to the greater Canterbury area, or anywhere in New Zealand, or any interesting research sources, methods or completed research are invited to write about it and submit it to the editor.

Any matter may be written down or typewritten and provided facts of the story, names etc., are clearly indicated, we can do the editing if you consider you are not that good at putting down a story. If you have a computer and e-mail facilities, this is the best way to submit material as it can be edited on receipt and inserted directly into our publishing program.

Regarding photographs: the best way is to submit electronic images in either a JPEG, TIFF or PDF format as reproduction proves better and sharper. However, a good photocopy will generally be adequate.

If e-mail is preferred the address to send articles, photos and stories to is: **philipcreed@xtra.co.nz** or address any correspondence to: The Editor, 28 Ensors Road, Opawa, Christchurch 8023.

Our next issue will be published in AUGUST 2025.

Disclaimer: *Whilst every effort has been made to accurately compile the information contained herein, The New Zealand Family Tree nor any of its contributors or advertisers accept no liability for any errors or omissions or any inadvertent disclosure of any information not meant for publication. New Zealand Family Tree neither endorses nor accepts responsibility for the products or services of any advertisers in this publication. Opinions expressed shall not necessarily be those of The Family History Society of New Zealand (Inc.).*

Family History Society of New Zealand Inc.

“Te Rakau Whakapapa o Aotearoa”

e-mail: familyhistory.nz@hotmail.com

Patron

Dame Jillian Lord, QSM, DLJ, FNZFHs

Committee 2024-2025

President – David Hill FNZFHs

Vice president – Philip Creed FNZFHs

Immediate past president* – Kevin White FNZFHs

Secretary – Kevin White

Treasurer – Pauline Taylor

Research officers* – Jill Lord, Kevin White

Committee – Jill Lord, Judith Munro FNZFHs, Barbara Miller FNZFHs, Margaret White FNZFHs, Nigel Larsen

Editor* – Philip Creed

Librarian* – Jill Lord

** Denotes ex-officio committee members.*

Membership – Tony Gordon FFHSNZ

Society Contact – Kevin White Phone 021 0826 6331

New Zealand Family Tree:

This is the official journal of the New Zealand Family History Society, which prints and publishes the magazine three times a year. The contents are copyright, and all rights are reserved worldwide. The opinions expressed by the contributors and advertisers are their own, and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the society. The society's financial and membership year begins on April 1, and the subscription charges are listed below. All enquiries may be addressed to PO Box 13-301, Armagh, Christchurch, New Zealand. Persons interested in joining the society will be posted a prospectus on enquiry. Regardless of the time of joining, the full subscription for the year should be paid, and back copies of the magazine (if any) will be sent.

Meeting times – 2 p.m. on the 1st Sunday of the month at Elmwood Park Bowling Club rooms, Heaton Street, Strowan, Christchurch

Library hours – 401A Papanui Road. Every Monday 10 a.m. to 12 noon, every Saturday 10 a.m. to 12 noon. Closed on public holidays and public holiday weekends.

Classes of membership:

Full membership – Open to individuals and entitles them to receive a newsletter.

Fee – \$40 per year, Family \$50 per year.

Associate membership – Open to historical associations, genealogical societies, public libraries, and similar organisations. This entitles them to receive the magazine and advertise free of charge in the magazine on behalf of their organisations. These privileges do not extend to individuals in these organisations. **Fee** – \$50 per year.

