

The New Zealand Genealogist

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Sutherlands

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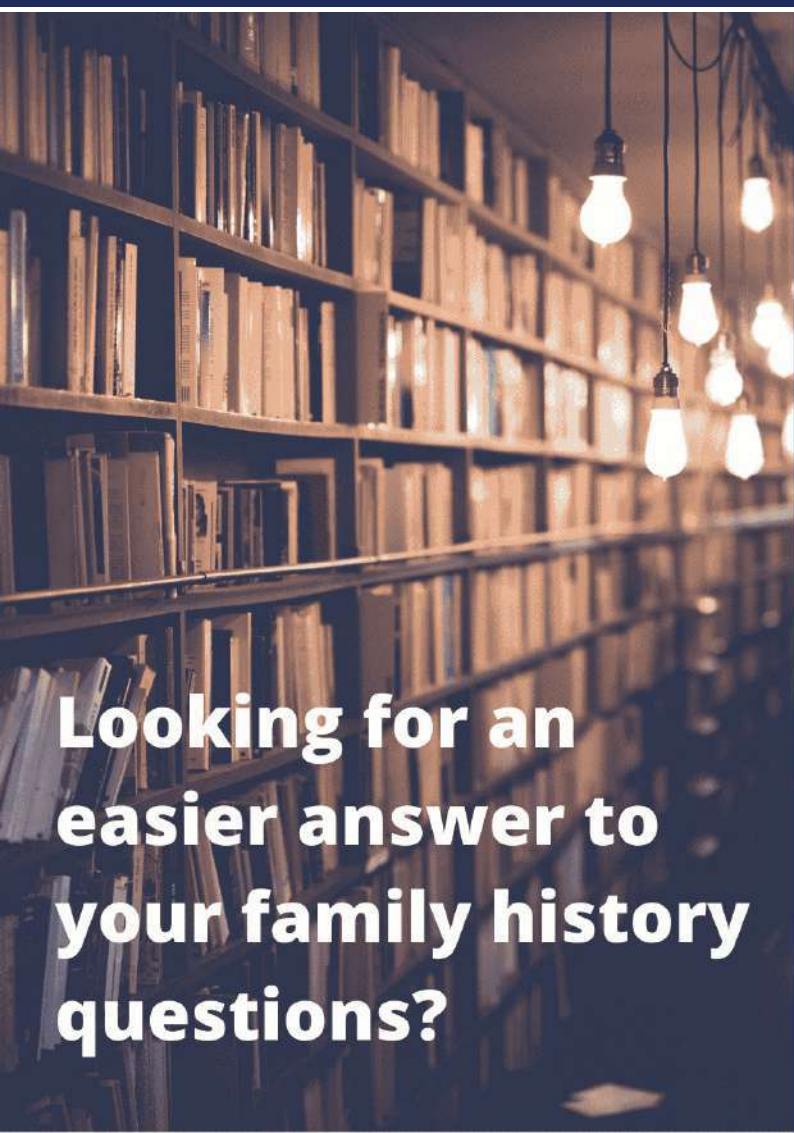
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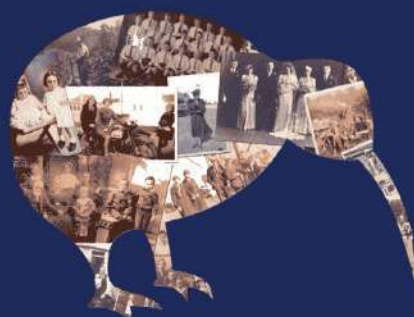
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Lantern slide :
Sutherland's Boarding
House,
Milford Sound
Muir and Moodie, 1890
[Canterbury Museum](#)



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The New Zealand Genealogist

This month's theme:
Where did they live?

Upcoming themes

March 2026
Occupations

September 2026
Miners and Mining

June 2026
Unions, Clubs and Societies

December 2026
Wellington region

Criteria

1. Relevance: related to people and their society; genealogy, family history, whakapapa, research, documentary sources, application, biography, genealogical technology etc.
2. Length: Feature articles 1800 to 2700 words (2–3 pages) plus images, short articles 500–900 words plus images.

Editing

The Editorial Team reserves the right to edit articles to meet standards and for readability, but if substantial changes are required the Editor will consult with the author.

Members' area

Members may submit queries on Contact Sought, Information Wanted, Information Offered, Trader and Reunion notices. Please do not abbreviate your enquiry. The first instance of any surname should be in capitals. There is no limit the number of entries you may submit, but your full name, email and membership number must be included with each entry.

Advertising

Contact the NZSG [National Manager](#) for information about rates, specifications and conditions, or find details on the [NZSG website](#) with other details about *The New Zealand Genealogist*.

Style Guide

You must refer to our Style Guide before submitting an article. This is available on our website:

genealogy.org.nz/NZG-Editors-Notes/11168/

Submission of copy

Submissions can be made in electronic format emailed to editor@genealogy.org.nz. Include your name, contact details and membership number.

Copy deadlines

Regular contributions, advertisements and feature articles submitted for consideration must be received by the Editor by the following dates:

Issue	Last date for consideration
March	17 January
June	17 April
September	17 July
December	17 October

BOARD REPORT



The year is coming to a close. Yet again—where does each year go? This is a great time to say thank you to those who make our Society what it is. Firstly, I would like to thank our three part-time employees who do all the operational things that keep our Society working. And then I would like to thank all our hundreds of volunteers. Our Library, Projects, Collections, Branches and Interest Groups, Accounts and Board are all undertaken by volunteers who freely give their time to our Society.

We continue to work to bring our collections into the twenty-first century. We recently had the entire NZSG Pedigree Collection digitally scanned, and the projects indexing team are working hard on reindexing the collection so all entries are consistent. We look forward to having the updated index on our website for you in early 2026.

The Shipping Collection Project is going from strength to strength. Teams around the country, many supported by our branches, are pulling together information to compile the list of voyages. We currently have over 200,000 voyages in the database. In early 2026 we will be moving into the next phase of the project, which will be pulling together all the information for each voyage into one PDF document. We are concentrating on 1840 to 1849 to begin with. Our Sydney-based team have found a lot of information for this period prior to newspapers being published in New Zealand, which has added a lot of information we would not be able to find from New Zealand. Thank you to the Sydney team. If you wish to volunteer, please get in touch. We especially need some more branches to assist with the collation in the next phase of the project.

The NZSG continues to work with others in the history and heritage sector to advocate on your behalf. A joint statement provided to the Ministry of Culture and Heritage on their proposed restructure added to other voices and prompted some change to their plans. It is a recurring theme that the history and heritage sector is very underfunded, and we risk losing valuable resources because of it. On a positive note, the NZSG has joined Historic Places Aotearoa as an Associate Member to do our small part in preserving New Zealand's heritage.

Do you know of any community events coming up in your area in 2026? If you, as individuals or as branches, are able to represent NZSG to promote membership of the Society, we can provide resources to promote our Society. Please contact our National Manager, Julian, if you require flyers or brochures.

Our strength comes from our members. If you have any thoughts to share with us, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Summer is upon us. On behalf of the Board, I would like to wish you safe travels if you are venturing about during the summer holidays.

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NZSG Manager

Julian Pinfold
T: 09 394 9549
E: nzsgmanager@genealogy.org.nz

Library Coordination Group

Volunteers
T: 09 394 9545
E: librarycoordinator@genealogy.org.nz

Membership Administrator

Kelley Miller
T: 09 394 9546
E: membership@genealogy.org.nz

Accounts Administrator

Don Cortesi (Volunteer)
T: 09 394 9547
E: accounts@genealogy.org.nz

Projects Coordinator

E: nzsg.projects@genealogy.org.nz

Webmaster

Jan Sherwood
E: webmaster@genealogy.org.nz

Auditor - Dellow Financial Services

Honorary Solicitor - Harold Kidd

Editor

E: editor@genealogy.org.nz

Production Team

Jan Sherwood (Editorial Lead)
Sue Dinsdale
Jenny Robertson
Pauline Weeks

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The New Zealand Society of
Genealogists Inc.
PO Box 14036, Panmure,
Auckland 1741
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Auckland 1072

General enquiries
T: 09 570 4248 Ext 1



Lyders family of Cargill's Castle, The Cliffs, Dunedin, 1907–1922

Adair Polson-Genge

New Zealand's only Castle ruin, Cargill's Castle, was built in 1876 for prominent Dunedin businessman and politician Edward Bowes CARGILL. Overlooking St Clair, the Castle was said to have 'a situation and picturesque scenery not equalled anywhere else on the colony' and 'all that art and science could accomplish was brought to bear in its construction'.¹ Using an Italian design, the house was built from concrete, a material not in general use at the time, but thought highly adapted for structures requiring solidity and strength. The architect was Francis PETRE, and the builder was Mr SMALL. In 1892 a destructive fire occurred following a house party, resulting in a gutted castle, a weakened structure, and the eastern upstairs wing being destroyed. Cargill rebuilt the interior to its original standard, but the two upstairs rooms were not replaced.² When he died in 1903, his daughter, Margaret (Mrs Francis Petre), inherited the house and advertised it for sale or lease periodically between 1903 and 1907.

In early May 1907, my great-grandfather, Dunedin builder and contractor Frederik Wilhelm LYDERS, purchased the Castle for his family home. He paid £2050 sterling for the property—in today's money, about three-quarters of a million dollars. The eldest of the family, my grandmother Dagmar, always wondered what had possessed her father

to buy the Castle and said her mother, May, was not happy about having to leave her beloved Queen Street residence near the Leith Valley, which was handy to the shops and schools. The isolated castle was not a match. Leslie Lyders said his father 'was very much a speculator of housing built, and he understood what it cost to buy a home and hold onto it for value. As soon as he saw the Castle and the price it was going for, he jumped on it. If he had had enough money, he would have bought Larnach's Castle!'³

It is easy to see the attraction for Frederik. The house boasted four large reception rooms, six bedrooms, kitchen, sculleries, and all set on 26 acres of land, which were in gardens, plantations, and grounds for the house, grass paddocks, with a permanent water supply.⁴ This was an ideal place for his energetic family to live and thrive, with a healthy seaside environment and plenty of space to play. However, the Castle had been vacant for some time, with damage from the ravages of weather and vandalism. A lot of renovation was done before the family, Frederik and May, with children Dagmar, Therese, Frederick, Geoffrey, Leslie, Caren, Mabel and baby Peter arrived at the Castle in September 1908. The youngest, Harold, was born at the Castle in 1909.

Image above: Cargill's Castle in 1907. Lyders boys sitting up on the balcony.

Lyders family collection

Peter Lyders gives a good description of the building.⁵ The foundations were big, shaped stones. Grey coloured stones had been broken up into road gravel size and burnt to construct the walls, which were then concreted on the outside. Frederik always said the concrete was made too coarse, and therefore disintegrated more quickly. A basement under the Castle had steep steps leading down. The downstairs floors were concrete, but upstairs were all wooden. There were deep concrete steps leading to the big, heavy front door. To the right was the gun room, and to the left a glassed-in conservatory with benches and a big array of pot plants. Another three steps to the door led into the main hall with a polished inlaid wooden floor. Straight ahead was the sitting room with a carpeted floor, and to the right was the dining room with a linoleum floor. Both these rooms looked out to the sea. On the left side of the hall were two reception rooms: the drawing room and library from Cargill's day. They were separated by a movable wall that could be lowered into the cellar to make a ballroom. Frederik kept this as two rooms, fixing the wall so it could not be moved by mischievous children playing with the pulley.

The front part was the children's playroom where they could read, do craft hobbies, and play games with their friends. There were big bookcases set up here. The back part was kept empty, but the children used it to play and ride their bikes. Stairs led down to another two rooms where the family lived and ate most of the time, as it was warm with the big coal range going. In the kitchen/scullery, there was a slate sink and big cupboards. Running off from the kitchen, there were four or five big walk-in pantries and a dumb waiter that went up to the dining room. The bathroom was off the kitchen. Up the main stairway and along the passage were the bedrooms. The boys' bedroom had a window that opened out onto the top balcony. The tower had two bedrooms. The top one, looking out to sea, was Frederik and May's bedroom. May would sit and sew here because it was so light. Another stairway led up to the gallery and a big balcony that looked out over St Clair. The roof was flat and tarsealed, so walking around up there was quite easy. There was a big seat that ran all around it.

Frederik built a new parapet all around the tower block using Oamaru Stone. The Castle was lit with kerosene lamps. They were on tall standard stands with ornate lights on top. Frederik installed a system of fine pipes for gas, but Peter says these were not very efficient.

The Castle had its own water supply—a spring with a windmill to pump the water into a big tank on top of the roof, as well as a tank in the backyard for rainwater. The numerous utility outbuildings included stables, a coach house, fowl houses, and a cottage used by the gardener in Cargill's day and rented in Lyders' day.

The two-storey stables were quite grand in Cargill's day. The Lyders used them to house their horse and traps, but mostly to raise young calves. The family had an old four-wheel dray wagon for cartage and a good buggy as a vehicle.

Education was important to both Frederik and May. In Denmark, Frederik had been compelled to leave school when he was 11 after his father died, and he was required to help with family finances. He continued his education, going to night school to learn cabinetmaking and later carpentry. May was educated in the 1870s–1880s. In Wellington she was taught privately, then went to Wellington Girls' High School and New Plymouth High School. In 1888 she passed the Civil Service Examination, which would have allowed her to go on to higher secondary study if she had chosen to do so. The Lyders children were expected to attend school regularly and encouraged to do their best. Alongside academia, they were constantly reminded of May's mantra that 'manners maketh the man' as the best guide to their social and moral responsibilities. They all gained their proficiency, attended secondary school, and some went on to tertiary education.

The trek up and down that long, steep hill from the Castle to get to school and college must have been a hurdle or a drudge, or both. Dagmar had the furthest to go to Otago Girls' High School. She talked about having to walk through the bush to St Clair to catch the tram to and from school,



***Frederik Lyders family
c 1917–1918***

***Fred Jnr, Therese, Leslie,
Dagmar, Geoff,***

May, Caren, Frederik Snr,

Harold, Mabel, Peter

Lyders family collection

and later to Training College. The bush was thick ngaio, and the muttonbirds would be scuffling in the undergrowth. Some days, she would hitch a ride down with her father in the horse and trap. The next eldest school-age children, Therese, Geoffrey, Frederick and Leslie, were enrolled at the newly built St Clair School. Their journey was much shorter.

Family life at the Castle was busy with school activities, hockey and/or basketball for the girls, and rugby for the boys, piano and singing lessons, and Sunday School; all this had to be fitted into the family's busy schedule, which included household and farm duties. May had outside help sometimes, but daughters were expected to do their share of the housework and sons were expected to help with the farmwork and wood chopping. Imagine the endless cooking and the amount of laundry. However, there was a lot of wind up on that cliff to dry the washing and air the bedding. Peter remembers his mother sewing the younger children sack suits to play in, which would have saved the washing.

The family had up to seven cows at any one time. The dairy supplied the house with milk and cream, and skim milk was fed to the calves. Later, a separator was bought to make the job easier. Butter was made in the big churn with children assigned to turn the handle. The buttermilk was popular as a health drink, and people came up to the Castle to buy it. Commercial market reports of the day show Frederik bought and regularly sold his dairy stock. The family kept poultry, beehives and an expansive vegetable garden and orchard. Gooseberries, red and black currants, strawberries and raspberries were abundant in the garden and preserves filled the pantry shelves. When they were old enough, Peter and Harold had the job of carting the manure from the dairy and stables to the garden. Frederik had large grapevines in the big glasshouses attached to the garden and usually grew up to 200 tomatoes, planted in kerosene tins. The children had the job of thinning the grape bunches and received many a reprimand for eating too many on the job. The grapes and tomatoes were sold at the market along with surplus eggs. Each year, there was pasture set aside for haymaking. Frederik was an expert with the scythe, having learnt as a boy on the family farm in Denmark, where he boasted he could cut four acres a day. He taught his elder sons. The younger children had to help turn the hay over to dry before it was loaded onto the big wagon and stored in the stables.



*May Lyders and her daughters c 1917–1918
Lyders family collection*

Play came after work, according to Leslie. 'You did your chores no matter what! The worst punishment or perhaps the best motivation was if your job wasn't finished, then you got no pie! And my mother made the best pies.'⁶ May Lyders always said that her family were her life and never a bother to her. However, that did not mean they did not give her cause to worry about them. They were up for adventure and pranks like any other children, and their father's quick temper did not seem to deter them either. Peter recalled that the Castle was a wonderful place to live; there were endless places to play, inside and out, and plenty of playmates. Sleds, trolleys, and stilts, made with the help of big brothers, were well-used playthings. Picnics in the grounds, rugby on the front lawn, 'Kick the Tin' over in the plantation, tree climbing and bird nesting kept the children entertained. If outside play was not possible, the two big reception rooms on the north side of downstairs were the children's playrooms.

In 1911, a letter to the paper suggested the Hospital Board should investigate securing the property of Mr Lyders of Cargill's Castle as an ideal place for TB patients to be housed because of the abundance of healthy, fresh air and added, 'while passing through the grounds the other day I saw the children of the present occupier of the Castle and I think they are about as strong and healthy children as I have seen in the Dominion'.⁷

The cliffs underneath the Castle were a particular drawcard for bird nesting. Peter and Harold often explored the cliffs and had found an old wire to help get down the roughly hewn steps. One day, in August 1919, two of Peter's young classmates, George BELL and Laurence GLOVER, were down the cliffs looking for pigeon eggs. Bell fell down the cliff to his death, but Glover managed to hold on until he was rescued. Frederik woke the boys in the early morning to ask where they used to go nesting so rescuers could find the lost boys. They had to cut a track down through the ngaio bushes to get to them.⁸ Bird nesting held no attraction afterwards.

Christmas was made a festive time for the younger siblings by their older brothers and sisters. On Christmas morning, the family opened the stockings hanging over the fireplace in the big kitchen. Christmas dinner included home baking, chicken, ham or pork. There was always a special Danish dish called Klejner, a Danish Christmas cookie, which was cookie dough cooked in butter. Frederik gave the instructions on how to make them. Also, Danish frickadeller, which were hamburgers made with mixed mincemeat and eggs. Frederik's brothers, Peter and Marius, would bring their families for dinner, and their children stayed on over the holidays. When the New Year came, the family and their cousins celebrated with a bonfire, crackers and fireworks, which the older children supervised. Grandparents did not have a presence in the children's lives. Frederik's parents were both dead, and May's parents, Annie and Arthur SMITH, lived far away on their farm in Taranaki.

The war years, 1914–1918, were anxious ones for the Lyders. In 1914 Frederik purchased a farm at Pukemona (Hillend), north-west of Balclutha. Now aged in his early sixties and moving towards semi-retirement from the building trade, the farm was a new interest for him as well as a start for his sons. In 1916 an accident during the

harvest resulted in Frederik severing his right hand at the wrist when working a chaffcutter. He was urged to recuperate in hospital but refused and opted for his top-storey bedroom instead, saying 'you couldn't get a view like this in hospital'.

In April 1917 Dagmar came home from Kaihiku, where she was teaching, and found her youngest sister, Mabel, very unwell. Dagmar recognised the symptoms of polio. Mabel had 18 months away from school as a result and was lucky to have only been left with a withered leg and a brace for the rest of her life. In 1918 the elder boys, Frederick and Geoffrey, were posted overseas. Frederick was seriously injured with a head wound on 1 September 1918 during the New Zealand Army's final push towards Le Quesnoy.

The war also created distrust of 'aliens' with German-sounding names. Anything European was akin to 'German'. The family came under suspicion, even though they were Danish, perhaps heightened by the mystique of the Castle hidden away up on the hill and rumours of a tunnel running down to the beach. Perfect for spies. One night, the family was woken by rowdy locals investigating a light burning upstairs during blackout hours. May was accused of ignoring the blackout and of sending signals to the enemy at sea. In fact, she was sitting sewing in her upstairs bedroom. Leslie, a teenager, was the 'man of the house' that night and joined his mother in defending the younger children and ordered the locals out. Peter Lyders described the follow-up visit: 'I remember waking up to all the noise of voices downstairs and the men being ordered out. Next day, two detectives came back to the house, looking suspiciously at the steep steps to the basement that might lead to a tunnel. They were not very brave to go down even though Mater said they could. She took them up to the boys' room and one, who was quite a portly chap, got stuck getting out of the window onto the verandah to see if there was any means of signalling out to sea. They quickly came to the realisation that there was no way a tunnel could run from the Castle to the beach.'⁹ The *Truth* published a lengthy and salacious report of the incident.¹⁰

A happier occasion at the Castle after the war was the marriage of my grandmother, Dagmar, to James Stuart WHYTE on 29 April 1920. Therese Lyders was the bridesmaid, and Jock Whyte the best man. The family did all the catering, and Peter said that cooking and preparation went on for days prior. It was Peter's job to operate the dumb waiter to get all the food up to the dining room for the wedding breakfast and all the dishes down to the kitchen afterwards. A grainy photo (not shown) is our only record of who attended, but unfortunately, no one is named. May and Frederik are easily spotted in the front row beside the bride and groom. The guests would have been aunts, uncles, cousins and probably some of Dagmar's school and college friends. They certainly made a handsome couple. Stuart recorded in

his diary the infamous lines, 'married Miss Lyders at The Cliffs. Motored home with my bride'.¹¹

On 3 December 1921, Frederik and May sold the Castle. Peter Lyders says his mother didn't want to leave, after not wanting to go there in the first place, but the house and the property were becoming too much for the smaller family unit to manage, and the building itself was falling into disrepair. They moved to a large house on Ravenswood Road.

Cargill's Castle has had many owners and purposes, but now it is a ruin. The Cargill Castle Trust is the present owner, and it is working hard to raise funds to have the building retained and strengthened as a safe ruin for visitors. It will never again be the grand building of earlier days, nor a family home, but it still retains an elegance and style. With all it has endured, from nature and human endeavour, it still stands defiant. In 2027 it will celebrate its sesquicentennial, and the Trust is hopeful it will be looking its best for a grand party.

Adair Polson-Genge
E: adairpolson@gmail.com

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Cargill's Castle Trust website: cargillscastle.nz



A defiant ruin—8 September 2024
Geoffrey Genge



From Herne Hill, London, to Herne Hill, Myross Bush

Zoe Pullman

Herne Hill was the name of the rural homestead of my 3x great-grandparents, Emma Mason THOMAS and John Nonnet SIMÔN.¹ Emma was one of the children of a Ngāi Tahu woman, Mary TUKUWAHA, and an Australian-born early settler and whaler, William Thomas. She was born at The Neck on Rakiura (Stewart Island), and her family later moved to Aparima, Riverton. It was here in 1872 that 19-year-old Emma met and married John Nonnet Simôn, who had arrived from England a few years prior to seek business opportunities with his brother Henry.²

The couple initially lived in Riverton, where their first six children were born. In 1883 they purchased 233 acres of native bush and swamp at the rural settlement of Myross Bush, about eight kilometres north-east of Invercargill, Southland, New Zealand.³ The property was located on the corner of Mill Road and Bainfield Road. Family lore has it that John walked 13 chains in from the boundary, put a stake in the ground, and declared that that was the site where their house was to be built. It was a large wooden homestead of two storeys high, consisting of 14 rooms, including a music conservatory. They named the house Herne Hill.

Why Herne Hill, you may ask? John Nonnet Simôn was born in Sydenham, London, in 1848. His next youngest brother, James, is recorded as being born at Cedar Lodge, Denmark Hill, Camberwell in London in 1850, so the family must have moved there sometime in between the births of these two sons. The Simôns continued to live in that home until 1879, when they moved down to Kent.⁴ Denmark Hill was also known as Herne Hill, with this name first found in the records in 1801.⁵ At the time the Simôn family lived there, it was a semi-rural, wealthy area, with large houses, leafy trees and gardens. Hard to imagine compared to the sprawling urban area that it is today.⁶

The Herne Hill of Myross Bush must have been a far cry from the Herne Hill of London for John. In 1905, Myross Bush was described as an agricultural and dairying district, with many fellmongeries. The 1901 census records the population of Myross Bush at 153 people. The Myross Bush community consisted of a school, a post office, and a church.⁷ The post office was established in 1884 and incorporated into the schoolhouse in 1896, with the schoolmistress acting as postmistress as well.⁸ A general store was built on the property of Herne Hill in the 1920s, and a community hall was built on Mill Road in the

*Image above: Herne Hill and Half Moon Lane (London) in 1823, painter unknown, published by D Walther
Herne Hill Society, [Wikimedia Commons](#)*

1950s.^{9,10} Myross Bush was one of at least 18 such 'bushes' in the Southland district—they were all small rural settlements that had been cleared for farming.¹¹ The origin of the name Myross Bush may either be after Myross in County Cork, Ireland, or a combination of the names of two of the early landowning families, 'MYERS' and 'ROSS'.¹²

John and Emma had to clear the native bush and swamp to turn Herne Hill into productive farming land. John hired 12 men and drays to level the land on the farm and fill in one of the gullies. It must have been a great expense at the time. The native timber had to be cleared, and in the early days the logs were taken out of Myross Bush by a tram line which ran through Herne Hill to a mill at Elles Road South in Invercargill. In a later clear-up of the property in the 1940s, some of their descendants located part of the old tram line. Eventually, the Simôn family developed a mixed farm, with sheep, cows, and crops.¹³

Alongside the Herne Hill homestead was a barn and stables, which had a room upstairs for the farm manager, an office for John, and a general sleeping area for the workers and visitors. Apparently, John's office was lined with tongue-and-groove timber and must have been a rather grand place to pay the workers from.¹⁴ Perhaps this was another nod to the more genteel Herne Hill of London. A lot of entertaining was done in those days, with Emma being a highly

respected hostess. The loft in the barn was called Bloomsbury Station because of the constant flow of visitors—blankets would be provided and the bible read to all who wanted to listen. With a full-time gardener in their employment, the grounds of Emma and John's home at Herne Hill must have been quite a showpiece.¹⁵

Emma and John went on to have a further seven children born at Myross Bush, with a total of seven sons and six daughters, 11 of whom survived into adulthood. The boys and girls all seem to have had a reasonable primary school education, with the younger ones attending the local Myross Bush School.¹⁶ Myross Bush School was started in 1866, but had a rather fiery history, burning down three times—first in 1868, then in 1884, and again in 1907.¹⁷ In the process of searching for corresponding newspaper articles about these school fires in Papers Past, I located so many articles regarding fires in the area of Myross Bush during this time, that I started to wonder if there was an arsonist on the loose. I will leave you to make up your own minds after reading the rest of the article.

On New Year's morning of 1905, the homestead of Herne Hill caught fire and was burnt to the ground. Emma discovered the fire and raised the alarm, and thankfully, everyone was able to escape. I found the 1905 *Southland*

Fires

Early on Saturday morning the 14-roomed residence of Mr J. N. Simon, at Myross Bush, was totally destroyed by fire. The inmates had retired as usual the previous evening, having previously extinguished the fire in the kitchen range, and taken the precautions which suggest themselves. The fire was discovered by Mrs Simon about 4 a.m., the kitchen being ablaze. She gave the alarm, and everyone got outside safely. There were no fire-extinguishing appliances, and efforts were confined to saving as much as possible from the burning building. Miss L. Simon, in whose care the younger children were, had an exciting experience. She managed to get them out safely, but returned to secure their clothes. The room was near the kitchen, and when she was leaving she found herself overtaken by the flames. She had to pass out on her hands and knees, and in doing so she was badly scorched about the face and hands.

The origin of the fire is unknown, and will probably continue so. Mr Simon was absent in Christchurch, and it will not be known for certain whether the building, which was valued at £1000, is insured or not, until he has been communicated with. The furniture, which was valued at £300, was also, so far as the family are aware, uninsured. A quantity of furniture belonging to Mr A. McGavock, surveyor, was in the house and was destroyed. It was insured in the South British office for £100. Mr McGavock also lost between £70 and £80 worth of surveying instruments. A library of books, which had belonged to the late Mrs A. McGavock, was also burned. Mrs Simon and family will have the sympathy of all in their trying experience.



Emma and John Simôn c1872
Te Hikoī, Riverton Museum

Times newspaper article describing the fire, pictured here. By this point in time, John had moved away from the family to conduct business in Christchurch, leaving Emma to run the farm and raise the children. Emma was also raising two of her grandchildren, Sally and George McGAVOCK, after their mother, Caroline McGavock (née Simôn), died at age 28 in 1903. It was interesting to read that some of their father Archibald McGavock's belongings were still being stored at Herne Hill at the time of the fire.

The barn and stables were unaffected by the fire, and I expect provided accommodation to the family while a new house was rebuilt on the same site. The second house, pictured below with the original barn and stables in the background to the left, was built on a smaller scale, with only six rooms this time. Emma Simôn left Herne Hill in 1919 to move to Invercargill with some of her daughters, leaving the farm to be run by her son, Alfred Simôn, known as Attie, who had recently returned from serving in WWI.¹⁸

From everything that I have read, Myross Bush was, and likely still is, a close-knit community. I located many old newspaper articles regarding social events from the era when my family lived there. The articles list the occasion, the host, the attendees by name, the songs that were sung (often by the Simôn or McGavock children), who they were accompanied by on the piano (again often a Simôn), the tone of the speeches that were made and by whom, and the gifts that were presented. One such article describes the party that they held in Emma's honour on her departure from Myross Bush and is reproduced on the next page.

Attie Simôn and his wife, Janet WILSON, had one son, Roy, born in 1920. Roy was the last of the family to live at Herne Hill and recalled that when his father took over the farm, the land had been cut down to only 113 acres and was very run down.¹⁹ Attie allowed his nephew, George McGavock, to

build a general store on the property in the 1920s (pictured on next page, with young Roy standing out the front). George and his wife, Mary McINTOSH, lived at the back of the store, and this is where their eldest son, Bill, my grandfather, was born in 1926. The store burnt down one night while George and Mary were out, and a young Bill was being babysat by his uncle, who rescued him from the flames before running to get help from Attie. Apparently, he dropped Bill in a ditch for safekeeping! The McGavock family sold the general store business and moved to Invercargill shortly after this event.²⁰

Roy Simôn went on to marry Nancy HENDERSON, and raise his family of three children at Herne Hill—they all attended Myross Bush primary school and recall a happy childhood there. The property was eventually sold. When the Simôn family had a reunion in Invercargill in January 1985, the original barn and stables were still standing, but I do not believe any of the buildings remain now. Myross Bush School is still there as is the Myross Bush Hall, and the community has a growing population of 1110 people (as of June 2024).²¹ I hope to visit there myself one day soon.

I would like to acknowledge Graham N SMITH, who dedicated much of his life to researching the history of this whānau, for the benefit of future generations. Graham passed away in July of this year.

Zoe Pullman
E: info@thefamilyarchives.co.nz

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The second (rebuilt) Herne Hill

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VALEDICTORY

SOCIAL AT KENNINGTON

The residents of the Myross Bush, Roslyn, and Kennington districts assembled in large numbers at the Kennington Hall recently to bid farewell to Mrs Simon and family, who, after a very long residence at "Herne Hill," Myross Bush, are removing to Invercargill. The meeting was characterised by the utmost heartiness. Mr Robert Baird, of Myross Bush presided, and eulogised the guests for their public-spiritedness and well-known hospitality. These sentiments were re-echoed by other speakers and heartily endorsed by the large audience.

Mr Fowler, of Kennington, in presenting Mrs Simon with a well-filled purse of sovereigns from the residents of the combined districts, spoke of the sincere friendships formed between the guests and the residents, who were glad indeed that the removal to town did not mean the severance of those friendships. To the old home at Myross Bush everyone had been heartily welcomed, and generous hospitality enjoyed by all visitors. The gift was accompanied by the donors' sincerest good wishes for the future happiness and well-being of the family.

Mr Wilson, a former teacher at Kennington, who had travelled from Lumsden to be present at the gathering, in handing to Miss Simon a gift of money, said that her musical gifts had for many years been unstintingly given to every good cause in the district. She had become popularly known in this way, not only in the immediate neighbourhood, but far beyond it. The sincerity of their feelings was not to be measured by the size of the gift.

Miss Mervyn Simon, whose vocal and instrumental talents have, like her sister's been most freely given to the district for many years past, was presented with a handsome travelling rug. Mr R. Cloughley of Roslyn Bush, referred to the uncounted occasions that had been enlivened by Miss Mervyn's presence and assured her of the hearty goodwill that accompanied the gift.

Mr Featherstone, also a former Kennington teacher, spoke of the sadness evoked by such gatherings, and of the part played in the great war by Mrs Simon's three sons, one of whom, Roy, fell at Gallipoli.

Mr A. Simon, in happy vein, briefly responded on behalf of the family, thanking the donors sincerely for the gifts and the kindly sentiments expressed.

During the evening enjoyable items were rendered by Misses Ashley and Simon (2), and Messrs Wilson, T. Baird, Mehaffey, and H. Hiskens. A short but very merry dance was brought to a close by the singing of "Auld Lang Syne" and "They are Jolly Good Fellows."



G S McGavock's General Store at Myross Bush
Pullman family collection

A place to call home

Christine Barbour

Not many have heard of Tirohia, a small farming community west of Paeroa with only a quarry, school, marae and until the 1970s, a community hall too. Close by, our family farm runs adjacent to the Te Aroha Road and down Cadman Road, six kilometres west of Paeroa.

Once, a railway line crossed the Cadman Road intersection, where the big blue New Zealand Railways bus on the Paeroa–Hamilton run dropped us off after school. With our heavy school bags, we trudged the 750 metres home, past our Nana and Pop's 1950 newly built home. As a child, it seemed such a long walk, especially in the heat of summer. We did not rush but enjoyed the company of our siblings and cousins, and the perfume of the wild, pink, rambling roadside roses. We also sipped the sweet nectar of the yellow honeysuckle and fashioned whistles from the tall, fluffy grass stems. Approaching a bevy of Californian quails on our metalled driveway, they quickly scampered away with surprising speed on blurred legs, to safety underneath the prickly blackberry hedge. Our weatherboard home, built by my Pop, George Henry HILL, a former builder, fortunately sat on a rise at the end of the potholed track. In the year of my birth, the floodwaters from the Waihou River came down the track and sat just 10-15 metres below our home. Fortunately, Pop had positioned the house just above the high flood line.

Dad was nine when his family shifted from Buckland, South Auckland to Paeroa, returning to his mother's hometown. Sarah TETLEY fortunately inherited her share of her parents' estate during the Great Depression, so here the Hill family of 10 settled. Dairy farming and beekeeping supported the large family during these tough times.



John Hill and his dog Laddie. Hill home early 1930s

After her 1950 marriage to Dad, my mother shifted in, her in-laws moving to a new-build also situated on Cadman Road. My parents raised their family of four in this home until moving on in 2011. This was my home until departing for 'the big smoke' of Hamilton in 1972. Now my nephew is working the land, still as a dairy farm, as his ancestors had before him. (William Tetley and family had arrived in Paeroa in 1880, purchasing this block of then swampy land.)

Typically, the house was built for the view and not to receive the warmth of the winter sun which my mother so desired in her home. The more than adequate airflow in our home made the scrim walls gently blow in and out, creating a crackling noise. My elder sister and I shared a double wirewove bed in the chattering cold south-side front bedroom. The black sticky roller blinds did not seem to keep any cold out. Come summertime, though, we had a wonderfully cool home.

The coal range heated our large family room lined with its dark-stained beadboard. The trusty green and cream coal range heated our hot water and cooked many of our household meals. Mum frequently had a large pot of soup on a rolling boil. The open fire heated the formal lounge. Beautiful wooden floors were covered in wall-to-wall Axminster wheatsheaf-patterned carpet during a late 1960s complete refurbishment. The scrim was replaced with gib board, then wallpapered in the fashion of the day. Enclosing the front porch added welcome extra room to the formal lounge, and many of the old wooden casement windows with their polished brass stays were replaced. After 30 years the kitchen was extended by a few metres. I recall the cupboards with multi-coloured doors in shades of pumpkin and pastels, with two large wooden pull-out bread and flour bins. The refurbishment included a new bath with an overhead shower and an inside toilet.



Paeroa, 74 Cadman Road. Hill home late 1960s

The laundry or wash-house, with the original toilet, was only a few metres across the covered back door area. The copper had previously been removed, but we still retained the original concrete double tub.

A steep wooden staircase wound upwards to the attic at the rear of the house, where my brother slept. Dusty family accounts with penny stamps attached were found in the wardrobe, and within the ceiling space, historic portraits and dusty books from long ago. The attic held our dress-up box, holding fur stoles, long silky gowns, and a pink lacy bridesmaid dress, all from a bygone era. With four bedrooms, a full kitchen, complete with a large classic green Formica table, a dining-come-family room and a formal lounge, it was a large home for the time. Mind you, Dad did have seven siblings!

The nearly half-acre section had a grass tennis court and a huge vegetable garden that we all cared for in the weekends. Weeding the carrot seedlings was never my favourite occupation. The huge, productive grapefruit tree dominated this area, where we loved to swing in an old sacking hammock that hung between two apple trees. About 100 metres from our home stood the cow shed. The aromas wafted over and through the trees, along with the steady pulsating noise of the milking machines in the early mornings and late afternoons.

A row of giant fragrant lawsoniana trees lined the back and side of the section until the chainsaw came out. That day I broke my arm, moving backwards, pulling on the rope guiding the tree down to the ground. Thus followed a quick but painful car journey to Thames Hospital with my Mum. I recall many a rat or bird fished out of the water tanks by Dad. These corrugated iron tanks sat up high on a solidly built wooden stand that doubled as a covered play area some days. This was our water supply until we connected to the town supply.

Our home stood strong on 9 January 1972 at 9.33am during the Te Aroha earthquake. Considered only of moderate magnitude at 5.1, the records show it was a shallow one. Standing in my bedroom, the walls went up on one side, then up on the other. A frightening experience. Dad saw the land flowing in a wave motion, then watched our three 92-year-old oak trees sway, the branches brushing the ground.

Many happy memories lie within the walls of my family home. I had a wonderful childhood with loving, committed, practising Christian parents, to whom I am ever so grateful.

Christine Barbour
E: cjbihug@gmail.com

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Joan Hill with grandchildren, January 1988



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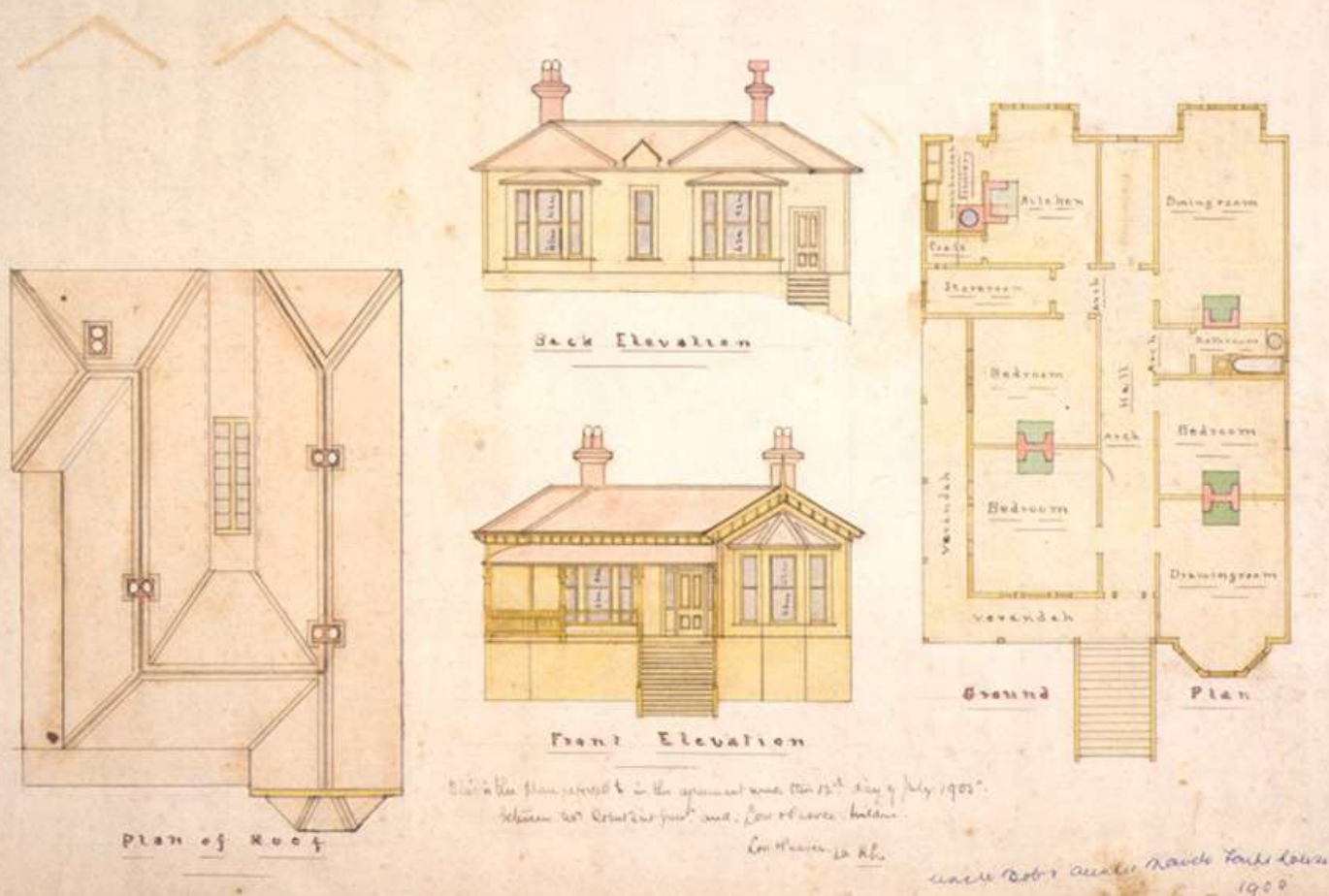
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Where did they live? Tracing the places your ancestors called home

Fiona Gray

Exploring the places where our ancestors lived—the land, homes, and communities they knew—offers more than just geographic information. It allows us to step into their world, to understand the influences that shaped their lives, and to connect more deeply with our own family stories. Knowing where people lived and how they moved over time often provides vital clues about their occupations, social status, and relationships.

The National Library of New Zealand holds an extraordinary range of resources that can help you uncover these details. From electoral rolls and directories to maps, photographs, and architectural drawings, both physical and online collections can reveal where your ancestors lived and how geography, migration, and opportunity shaped their experiences.

Research guides

A great way to begin is with the Library's online research guides—particularly *Family History* and *Architecture*. These offer overviews of useful resources, along with tips for effective searching. Although they focus largely on Wellington, many of the sources and methods can be applied to other regions across Aotearoa New Zealand.

- [Family History Research Guide](#)
- [Architecture Research Guide](#)

These guides can help you think strategically about your research: what types of records might exist, which institutions hold them, and how to verify information by cross-referencing multiple sources.

Searching the Library catalogue

The National Library website is also an excellent place to

Image above: House plan for a single-storey house on the corner of Harrold Street and Norna Road in Kelburn, Wellington, 1905, by Robert Tait. Ref: [Plans-97-001-004](#), Alexander Turnbull Library.

Robert Tait (1831–1926), architect and builder, was born in Lerwick, Shetlands, and came out as an assisted immigrant with his wife and family to Wellington in 1874 on the *Soukar*. The Turnbull Library has digitised seventeen of his plans.

At least two of these plans were for family members, including his son Robert Tait (1869–1952), (at one time, Deputy Town Clerk, Wellington City Council), for 3 Harrold Street, Taitville, later Highbury.

start your search. Use the dropdown menu beside the main search box to focus on either the National Library's published items or the Alexander Turnbull Library's wider range of published and unpublished collections.

Many materials—including maps, photographs, and directories—have been digitised and can be viewed online. However, others must be requested and viewed onsite in the Katherine Mansfield Reading Room. The [Researchers webpage](#) provides details about how to register, request items, make copies, and check opening hours.

For more specific searching, use Advanced Search to narrow results to a particular collection, such as the photographic archive. Selecting the gallery view and sorting by creation date can make it easier to browse digitised material in chronological order. If an item remains under copyright or has not yet been digitised, you can request to view it in person at the Library.

Electoral rolls

Electoral rolls are among the most valuable tools for tracing ancestors' locations over time. They record where registered voters were living and can sometimes identify other family members of voting age living at the same address or nearby.

New Zealand's first electoral roll was published in 1853, although Māori (1867) and women (1893) were added to the rolls later. Early entries often list only a town or street name, while later editions include street numbers. Physical copies of rolls from 1982 to 2025 are available at the Library.

The Habitation Indexes (dating from 1981) are another useful tool. These indexes list electors within an electorate according to street address, which is particularly helpful when searching for people with different surnames or adult children living at home. Earlier indexes can also be requested through the Library.

Directories

Directories complement electoral rolls by listing residents alongside their occupations and business addresses. They can confirm when a person lived at a specific address and what kind of work they did.

The Katherine Mansfield Reading Room holds an excellent browsing collection of *Wise's* and *Stone's* directories, as well as earlier almanacs. A complete set of *Wise's Directories, 1874–1954* is available on microfilm in the Family History Collection, along with other regional and trade directories.

Later telephone directories can also provide residential and occupational information. The most recent editions are located near the electoral rolls in the Library. Local public libraries may also hold historical directories for their area, with some large city libraries maintaining extensive collections covering Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch and Dunedin.

When working with addresses, remember that street names and numbering systems can change over time. Always cross-check with council archives or historic maps, many of which are now searchable online.

Building and architectural plans

For those researching a specific property, the Library's collection of around 30,000 individual house plans can be



Photos of the Nicol brothers and their families, circa 1904, by Robina Nicol

Ref: [1/2-233569-G](#) and [1/2-233571-G](#), Alexander Turnbull Library

These photos are almost identical, except that in one photo Robina Nicol (1861–1942) is standing at the back, and in the other, it is her husband, Alexander (1860–1943) who appears. The woman next to them is unidentified.

Also at the back, John and Ellen's second eldest daughter, Kathleen Alice Nicol (1895–1970), mirrors her aunt, Eva Mary Nicol, née Petherick (1872–1946), sitting at right on the porch balustrade.

Seated in front on chairs are John Collins (1843–1918) at left, daughter Ellen (1866–1955) and John's wife Eleanor Collins, née Griffiths (1833–1913), wearing a white cap. Seated at the very front of the steps are John Nicol, (1864–1940) holding his youngest child, Vera Maxwell Nicol (1905–1984), the girl is William Nicol's daughter, Ethel Marion Elizabeth (1898–1984), sitting next to her father, William, with Harold Methuen Nicol (1899–1976) at William's right; the lounging boy is most likely John Nicol's son, Alexander (1893–1963).

an invaluable resource. Try searching by the name of a building, street, architect, or property owner, and include terms like 'plans' or 'architectural drawings' to refine your search.

Among the collection are 17 house plans attributed to Robert TAIT (1831–1926), a builder and architect who emigrated from the Shetland Islands to Wellington under the Vogel Scheme in 1874. Tait's work helped shape the suburb once known as Taitville—now part of Highbury.

Photographs: Capturing homes and communities

Only a small fraction of the Library's vast photographic archive has been digitised, but these images can vividly illustrate the settings in which ancestors lived. In addition to online collections, there are drawers of prints—called the File Prints—arranged geographically and thematically on the first floor of the Library.

One remarkable example is the glass plate collection of Robina NICOL (1861–1942). Born in the Shetland Islands, Robina migrated to New Zealand with her family via the Vogel Scheme in 1874. She became an accomplished photographer, capturing intimate portraits and landscapes of family life in Wellington predominantly. Although she seldom labelled her negatives, her images—often assisted by her husband, Alexander Scott Nicol—document everyday moments, gatherings, Baptist Church friends, and domestic gardens that reveal much about settler life.

Property and ownership databases

The Library subscribes to QuickMap and Prover, property databases that can help identify the ownership and location of buildings. These are particularly useful for locating historical addresses—they only have the names of current owners of a property but may mention some historic owners within the last decade.

However, ownership does not always indicate residence—people might rent, live in rest homes, or hold property through a trust. Always cross-reference with other sources such as electoral rolls or directories.

Newspapers

The digitised newspaper archive [Papers Past](#) is another rich resource. Addresses often appear in notices about lost items, school results, sports events, and even jury duty.



For example, the address of Alexander Scott Nicol, Robina's husband, appears in a 1902 *New Zealand Mail* article noting his role as a juror. The same address, 50 Austin Street, also appears in electoral rolls and directories for over a decade before the family moved to 84 Austin Street around 1909—a home visible today through property records as a two-storey house with a spacious back garden, likely the backdrop of many of Robina's photographs.

More recent newspapers can be searched via subscription databases like Press Reader, accessible through most public libraries. It is particularly helpful for finding death notices. The *New Zealand Herald* is available from 2004, while *The Post / Dominion Post* can be searched from 2006.

Other valuable resources

Additional tools include the New Zealand Society of Genealogists' indexes—notably the *Kiwi Collection*, available by subscription. It lists schoolchildren's addresses and guardians more than a century old, complementing the three-yearly electoral roll cycle.

Archives New Zealand is another key repository. Through its [Collections Search](#), you can locate probates, land records, state housing plans, and company files that may list residential addresses or family details. Its [Land Research Guide](#) provides excellent context for tracing property ownership.

You can also consult the New Zealand Companies Register, which lists addresses for directors and shareholders, sometimes extending back decades. Older company files are also held at Archives New Zealand.

Other helpful sources include oral histories, local histories, letters, diaries, magazines, and Parliamentary Papers—often held by local museums, libraries, and regional archives. And not to be outshone, [DigitalNZ.org](#) is a gateway to a wide range of useful resources.

If you need help, you can submit a query to the Library's [Ask a Librarian service](#).

By combining these diverse resources, you can reconstruct not only where your ancestors lived, but also how they built their lives within their communities. Each address, directory entry, or photograph offers a doorway into the past—helping you see New Zealand's history through the homes and places your family once called their own.

Fiona Gray

E: Fiona.Gray@dia.govt.nz

Left: Photo of Kirk female family members with an unidentified woman and a dog, circa 1914, by Robina Nicol
Ref: [1/2-233775-G](#), Alexander Turnbull Library

Physical Description: Dry plate glass negative. Description: Photograph attributed to Robina Nicol, taken circa 1910–1916, showing the Kirk female family members in a domestic garden setting, with a dog. Seated, left to right, are Lily May Atkinson (née Kirk) (1866–1921) and Sarah Jane Kirk (1829–1916). Standing behind are an unidentified woman and Amy Kirk (1861–1945). Janet Atkinson (1904–1981) is perched on the arm of [her mother's] chair.



From there to here

Celia Geary

Our ancestors lived in various parts of the United Kingdom. They mostly lived in small towns or villages in rural areas, where finding work was difficult. They were dissatisfied with their existence, so they decided to immigrate to New Zealand. These people who committed their futures to the unknown were our great-grandparents.

George BAKER was born in the small village of Kenton, where the Baker family had lived for hundreds of years. George's father, William Baker, lived in a two-storey house on Widicombe Farm attached to Powderham Castle. He was a tenant farmer of the Duke of Devonshire. George Baker and his wife, Susannah GOODER, from the market town of Bovey Tracey in Devon, moved to find work in Exeter, where they married in 1836. In 1840, having seen the advertisements of the New Zealand Company offering free travel to New Zealand, they were quick to take advantage of the offer, as George had the necessary skills. With their two-year-old daughter, Harriet, they left for London to await a ship. Their application was successful for a free passage as steerage emigrants on the *Lady Nugent*. While waiting and gathering the goods and equipment needed for the voyage, their second child, George Jnr, was born in the Red Lion Inn in Holborn. He was four months old when the *Lady Nugent* left Gravesend on 21 October 1840.

It was a very troubled voyage, due to incomplete provisions on the part of the New Zealand Company, with food and water not lasting the whole voyage. There were fights, drunkenness, thefts and much illness. Twenty-one people, including several children, died on board. Due to the

foulness of the water, the *Lady Nugent* called into Hobart, where only seven crew members were allowed to land to gather fresh food and water. The captain was afraid that there would be a mass exodus of passengers and crew. There was a mutiny of the crew, and 12 of them abandoned ship, saying it was an unsafe vessel. However, with seven new crew members gathered, all the emigrants carried on to New Zealand, landing in Wellington on 17 March 1841, after a journey of five months.

Wellington was where the Baker family settled and grew. Their first of seven children born in Wellington was Caroline in 1842. She first married Ebenezer SHORT. The Short family had arrived on the *London* in 1840. The two George Bakers, and three Short brothers, among other interested citizens, formed a gold mining company. According to the book by James Brodie, *Terawhiti and the Goldfields*, this mine was directly under 'Bakers Hill', the home of George Baker Snr. That mine is now within the bounds of the Zealandia Te Māra a Tāne wildlife sanctuary, but that is for another story.

Caroline's second husband was Clarke LUCAS who was born in the village of East Hadden, Northampton. He and his first wife, Eleanor CHERRY, travelled to New Zealand on the *Golden Sea*, arriving in Wellington on 1 May 1874. Eleanor died in 1876, and Clarke Lucas then settled in Feilding, where he met the widowed Caroline Short, née Baker. They founded a second family in Feilding. Their eldest child was Charles, born in 1880.

Image above: *The Lady Nugent on High Seas* by George Richard Hilliard, 1840

Ref: A-113-016. Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand. natlibgovt.nz/records/23168647

William McDougall was born in 1837 in the small village of Kilmeny on the island of Islay, Scotland. His father, John McDougall, left Islay about 1847 to go to the mainland for work. Islay was over-populated, and there was no work for many. William's mother, Marion Sarah BROWN, was left with four children to care for. They all had to be baptised so that they could access Poor Relief from the church. The family left Islay between 1851 and 1861 to join John McDougall to live in a tenement in Paisley, where John had finally found work. The family stayed there for many years.

William left home to work on a farm at East Kilbride, Renfrew, where he became an expert ploughman. On a neighbouring farm there was a farm servant, Isabella DRUMMOND. She had been born in Appin in the Scottish West Highlands. William McDougall and Isabella Drummond married in Glasgow in 1862. They lived in Shettleston, where their eldest son, John, was born, and in 1864 they immigrated to New Zealand on the *West Australian*. William was sponsored to emigrate by one of the farmers in the Turakina area of New Zealand, who had been one of a group of Scottish immigrants to Turakina in the 1850s.

During the Land Wars, William McDougall joined the Turakina Mounted Rifles and, after the war was over, he was granted 200 acres of land at South Makirikiri, in acknowledgement of his service. Ten of the 11 children of William and Isabella attended South Makirikiri School. Their youngest child, Margaret Jane, born in 1884, was schooled at their new home, when they moved to a farm named 'Dunollie'. This was named after the McDougall clan castle in Oban, Scotland. The school was held in the front room of Dunollie. The first teacher was Annie McDougall, the eldest daughter of William and Isabella. Later, two acres of McDougall land was used to build Dunollie state school, which closed in 1947. The two-storey Dunollie homestead was accidentally burned down sometime after the estate was sold.

Henry STUNELL was one of 10 children born in Brighton, Sussex. In 1872, at the age of 19, he left England aboard the *Lady Jocelyn* to work in Lyttelton in the South Island of New Zealand. By 1875 he was living in Wellington, working for the man who was to become his father-in-law, Benjamin REEVES who had arrived in Wellington from Australia. Benjamin Reeves and his wife, Harriet WORT, were born in Nuneaton, Warwickshire, in 1815. Benjamin Reeves had travelled over much of southern Britain as a road maker with his growing family. Their youngest child, Rebekah, was born in Crumlin, Wales in 1862. She was to become my great-grandmother. After working in Australia for a few years, Benjamin Reeves arrived with his family in the growing town of Wellington, where he lived and worked for the rest of his life. Henry Stunell, after marrying Benjamin's youngest daughter Rebekah, continued working in Wellington until 1897 when he settled in Feilding as manager of the gasworks.

Henry BROWNING was born into a farming family in King's Somborne, Hampshire. He married Sarah PREECE, and their first child was David Henry Browning, born in 1873. This family immigrated to New Zealand on the *Rodney*, which arrived in Wellington on 29 August 1875. The *Rodney* had a very fine voyage. It was a well-equipped ironclad ship, with toilets in the cabins and fresh water supplies for the

passengers. The Browning family were assisted immigrants to the Manchester Block Settlement, newly set up at Feilding, in the Manawatu. Another son was born during the voyage, and David had his second birthday just before they landed. The Browning family travelled directly to the new town of Feilding to become some of the very early settlers in that Manchester Block settlement. Henry Browning had to work on the railroad and making roads to pay for their passage. They had a small cabin on an acre in the town area, but it was not until 1880 that they could take possession of the 40 acres granted to them at Makino, a few miles out of town.

On my husband's side of the family tree, his great-grandmother, Etahi TAPUTAE, was born in Aotearoa of Nga Mahanga and Taranaki iwi, some of the early tangata whenua of Aotearoa. She was the second wife of William GEARY, who was born in Hucknall Torkard, Nottinghamshire, in 1800. William Geary was sentenced to seven years' transportation for trying to steal a bushel of wheat in 1831. He was taken to the hulks in the Thames, then was transported to Hobart by the convict ship *Jupiter*, where he completed his sentence. After his release, he became a whaler on an American whale boat for two years. Finally landing back in Sydney, Australia, he was taken to Waikouaiti, Otago, by Johnny JONES. After two years there, he took his wages in a cow and calf and transported them across the Otago Harbour to Otakou. William Geary later bought land at Portobello on the Otago Peninsula, where he lived with Etahi.

The COWAN family, Robert and Jane BARRIE, came from Newton Mearns, Renfrew, Scotland. The Cowan family arrived on the *Lady Egida* in 1866. They settled on the Otago Peninsula and intermarried with the Geary family.

My husband's other ancestors came from Cornwall—William PEARCE and his wife, Mary Ann LETCHER, who was 35 years younger. They arrived in Dunedin in 1866. I have not found any certifiable proof of where in Cornwall they came from or any marriage. Possibly they were runaways who covered their tracks well.

All these families helped build the growing European settlement of New Zealand, and their descendants enabled my husband and me to meet, marry, and make our own family.

Celia Geary (née Browning)
E: celiageary3@xtra.co.nz

Sources:

Brett, Henry. *White Wings Vol. II*. The Brett Printing Co. Auckland, 1928
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Following Professor Young through Glasgow's lost university

Simon Young

It is 4 September 2025, and I am in Glasgow to follow in the footsteps of my 5x great-grandfather, Professor John YOUNG, FRSE (Fellowship of the Royal Society of Edinburgh) (1747–1820), who for nearly half a century was Professor of Greek at the University of Glasgow.

The son of a cooper (barrel-maker), John rose from modest origins to become one of the university's most beloved teachers. Students praised his lively style; he was known for bringing Lucian and Aristophanes to life in a Scots accent that could make the ancients laugh again. I have come to Glasgow not only to read his surviving papers in the archive, but to walk the ground he knew.

At Waverley Queen Street Station, I meet Dr Craig LAMONT, a present-day lecturer at Glasgow University who guides walks through the city's vanished university quarter. Over the next hour, he leads me through streets once filled with printers, merchants, and students—the same narrow grid my ancestor crossed daily.

George Square should have been our starting point, but today it is fenced off for renovation. The shrouded statues

feel symbolic: a city pausing mid-sentence, its heroes wrapped away for cleaning.

We turn instead into the Merchant City. The street names—Virginia, Jamaica, Glassford—speak of the trans-Atlantic slave trade that financed the Enlightenment. It is not something we like to think about much today, and I would love to think that, somehow, my ancestor was one of the 'good ones'. But history is not so simple. Education, publishing, and all the very civilised things we love were inextricably linked to that trade in human souls.

Lamont notes this ongoing conversation in the street names of Glasgow (and many other cities). In 1986, when apartheid still reigned in South Africa, Glasgow's St George's Place became Nelson Mandela Place, a cause of great embarrassment to the South African Consulate which stood there. More recently, Ingram Street, named for tobacco merchant Archibald INGRAM, was temporarily renamed Harriet Tubman Street in a public protest during the 2020 Black Lives Matter demonstrations. Memory, in Glasgow, is a civic argument written on the walls.

On Miller Street we stop before the Tobacco Merchant's House (1775), its Georgian façade one of the few survivors of the city's mercantile zenith. Behind the neat symmetry lay counting rooms, ledgers, and iron-bound safes—wealth measured in tobacco and human toil.

This was the Glasgow Professor Young knew—the smell of ink and tar, the talk of trade and philosophy mingling in the taverns near High Street. In 1753 the university printers Robert and Andrew FOULIS founded Britain's first public art school within the old college precinct, preaching that beauty and knowledge should be open to all. Their academy helped turn Glasgow into a city of learning as well as labour.

But in some ways, Georgian Glasgow was a victim of its own success. Its prosperity drew people in their thousands from surrounding villages and towns. By the mid-nineteenth century—only a few decades after Young's death—the old college was hemmed in by slums and smoke. In 1870 the university sold its site to the railway and decamped west to Gilmorehill where it now stands (a stunningly beautiful campus). The engines of modernity quite literally replaced the halls of learning. The modern site of High Street Station, built where the University once stood, is ... well, let's call it humble. You would have no idea this was once the heart of the city and of learning in Glasgow.

Standing opposite the station, I try to picture Professor Young climbing the same slope in academic gown, a sheaf of Greek verse in hand. The rhythm of the city has changed, but the slope (and the occasional rain somewhat reminiscent of Auckland) feels timeless.



*Professor John Young (1747–1820),
painting by Elizabeth Carmichael*

(currently under restoration at the Hunterian Gallery, Glasgow)

Wikimedia Commons

From the High Street we climb toward the cathedral precinct, where medieval and Victorian Glasgow overlap. At Ramshorn Kirk, Lamont shows me a worn flagstone marking the Foulis brothers' grave. Thousands tread over it daily, unaware. The inscription is almost gone, as though the city's progress has polished away its own memory.

Further uphill, the cathedral spire—also under construction—lifts through a light drizzle. Lamont tells me in passing about St Mungo, a name I have heard but know little else about besides the odd name. He tells me the story of St Mungo and the miracles he is known for, all of which seemed to involve the resurrection of fragile things. On the way back down High Street, there is a wonderful mural on the gable end of a building. It is a modern conception of St Mungo, a very gentle, bearded man in a beanie hat, with a bird perched on his hand, as he watches it beneficently.

I imagine Professor Young striding this route, perhaps rehearsing his next lecture on Homer's *Odyssey*. The rain then, as now, would have glossed the sandstone and pooled in the ruts of carts. It is oddly comforting to realise how little the weather changes.

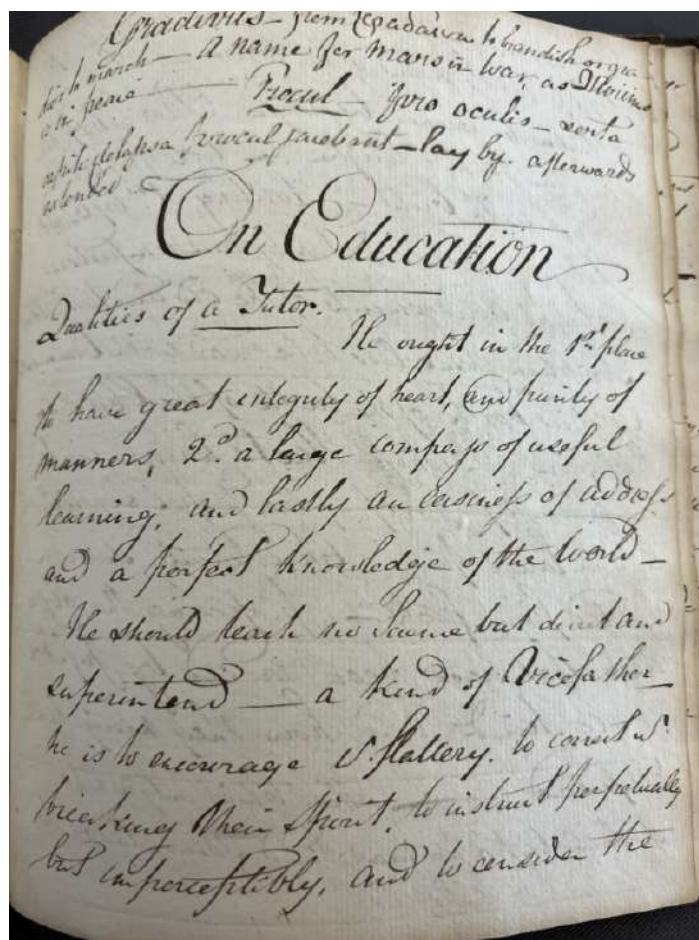
Gratefully farewelling Dr Lamont, I make my way to the University archives, to hold that most precious treasure—writing that comes directly from the hand of my ancestor. I am very lucky. Professor Young wrote letters, but even better, he kept a notebook outlining his approach to education. How exceedingly rare to have your ancestor, seven generations removed, speak directly about his line of work.

While his specialty was Greek, Professor Young had recommendations for an entire life's curriculum, covering Greek philosophy, Roman law, Bible study, practical skills, moral development, and modern scientific thinking (this was the Enlightenment, after all). He emphasised self-examination, understanding one's own temperament, and choosing education that fits one's nature.

'Qualities of a Tutor: He ought in the first place to have great integrity of heart and purity of manners, secondly a large compass of useful learning...' wrote my 5x great-grandfather. He believed a teacher should 'consider the welfare of his pupil not only as the business of his life but the reward of his labour'.



Simon Young and Dr Craig Lamont on a walk through the streets of Glasgow, 4 September 2025



**The notebook of Professor Young
University of Glasgow Archives,
Collection [GB 247 MS Gen 825/1](#) Photo: Simon Young**

About languages, he believed daily persistence made anything possible. 'Open a Bible. 20,000 words in all—a boy may learn 100 a day', he wrote. History? Also easy to learn, but he warned against simply regurgitating facts and figures. 'Be sure the learner to think.'

A younger version of me might have disagreed with his next point, but the 50-year-old me reluctantly agrees: 'Politics—without a knowledge of it—one is a stranger to his own country, or rather like a man in a deep sleep or like a passenger in a vessel that is carried he knows not wither.'

I think John's views on marriage may have sat quite comfortably in the late 1700s, but less so now: '[a wife should] make the welfare of her husband her principal study, the management of her family her material business, and the education of her children her supreme delight'.

I get the feeling that John was unusual for his time. He believed education should engage the heart as well as the head. 'Rudiments learned by play', he said, foreshadowing what modern educators know is an effective way to learn. He wanted to help people understand ancient texts by making them accessible to their modern sensibilities—a characteristic I am very glad to inherit.

Besides the notebook, there are letters, which feel very modern and chatty in their writing style, including this very relatable introduction to a long-overdue letter:

'My dear Sir,
I am alive; I have not forgot you, tho' I have neglected
too long to answer your letter. Heap coals of fire on my
head, & answer mine without delay.'

I feel like pretty much anyone could have got on with this man.

Later that day I met MacKintosh curator of the Hunterian Gallery, Joseph SHARPLES, who helped me imagine the sort of home a university professor might have occupied in the late 1700s. Not a mansion, he says, but a modest stone tenement close to the college: 'two storeys, maybe a shop beneath, perhaps a small garden court at the back. Professors lived among their students and tradespeople—it was a working neighbourhood'. The picture he paints is intimate and practical, a scholar's life folded inside the noise of a mercantile town.

It makes sense. The Scottish Enlightenment thrived not in isolation but in proximity—ideas rubbing shoulders with industry. The same closes that echoed with hammering also echoed with debate about virtue, liberty, and language. Teaching Greek in such a place meant teaching the roots of those words: *polis*, *ethos*, *logos*—city, character, reason.

Glasgow, Lamont says, has always been 'Atlantic-facing'—outward-looking, trading ideas as well as goods. My own

Yongs later served across the empire, in India and beyond, before one branch sailed to New Zealand. Their journeys, like mine today, grew from the same restlessness and curiosity.

As I finish my day in Glasgow, I look back toward the Clyde. The city has transformed again—shipyards into studios, smoke into glass. Yet beneath it all, the old Enlightenment pulse remains—a belief that learning can lift lives, even when the lesson begins in a damp tenement off the High Street.

Glasgow has a reputation for being a little rough around the edges. But my impression of it is of a welcoming place, a place that could feel like home. That has a lot to do with the kindness of Dr Lamont, Mr Sharples, the fine folks at the University archives, the surprising legacy of St Mungo, and—perhaps most of all—the enduring memory of the kindly and enthusiastic professor, my ancestor John Young.

Tracing an ancestor's address gives more than a map reference; it gives a sense of belonging. In Glasgow I found a city forever building over itself, yet never quite erasing the human need to think, teach, and begin again.

Simon Young
E: simonisntsoyoung@gmail.com

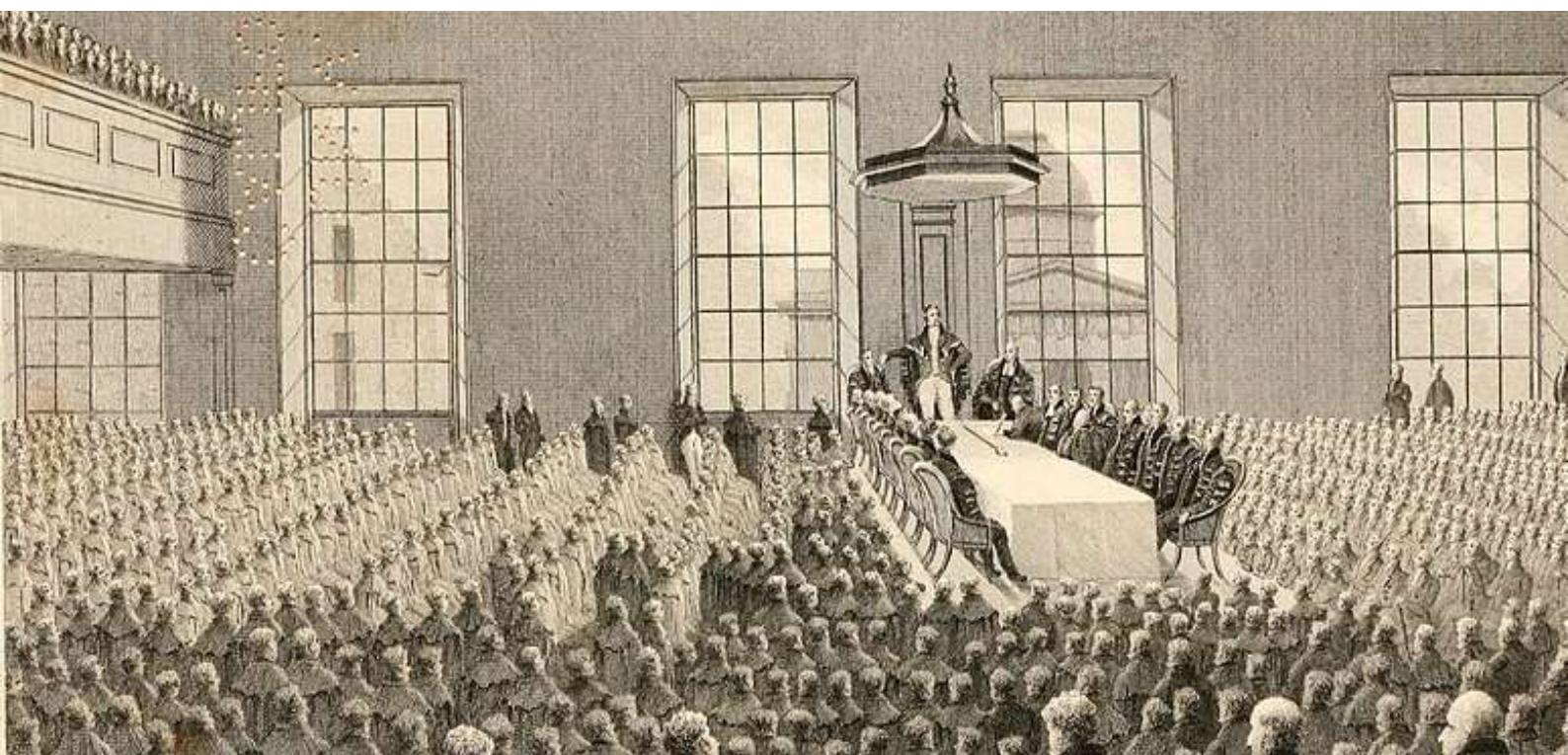


Image above: Glasgow University Lecture Hall, as it was in the time of John Young.

Inaugural addresses by Lords Rectors of the University of Glasgow

- to which are prefixed an historical sketch and account of the present state of the University (1839)



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Services and Benefits for NZSG Members

Supporting genealogy and family history in New Zealand

All NZSG members support the Society to make resources more accessible through projects and liaison with national organisations. Major achievements include access to birth, death and marriage registrations, improved content access to government records, and the creation of nationwide transcriptions, such as cemetery and school records.

The New Zealand Genealogist

We produce four issues per year of our award-winning journal, published since 1970. You access it online, including most back issues to 1977. The Editor welcomes articles for publication. Information on submissions is earlier in this journal and on our website.

Keeping in touch

Our newsletter, *e-KIT* (electronic Keeping In Touch), is a regular email full of up-to-date Society and genealogical news. *e-KIT* is available on our website, along with *The BIG Picture* (news for Branches and Interest Groups). Find them both [here](#).

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Online groups enable our members to get together, wherever they are in New Zealand or the World. One of our more popular ones is our [Online DNA Interest Group](#) (ODIG).

NZSG Library

The Library is based at the Family Research Centre (FRC) in Panmure, Auckland. The FRC is open to the public. Members receive a substantial discount on entry fees.

The Library is open Monday, and Wednesday to Saturday, 10am to 4pm, with late nights on Wednesday and the first Friday of the month. Check the website for opening hours around holidays.

See our website for the Library Catalogue and details on borrowing or using our Research Service.

FRC research service

We provide research guidance to members if you are unsure where to search next for that elusive fact about your ancestor or family member. We can also look up any of the resources if you are unable to visit the FRC.

E: researchservice@genealogy.org.nz.

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Members receive a discount on access to the Family Research Centre (FRC) and for some NZSG sales products. Other member discounts will be listed in the member-only section of the NZSG website and promoted in *e-KIT*.

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Members can request a letter of introduction for reciprocal access to Australian genealogical libraries, including the Society of Australian Genealogists in Sydney and the Genealogical Society of Victoria. Contact the Membership Administrator with details of your visit and your membership number

E: membership@genealogy.org.nz.

On our website - www.genealogy.org.nz

The NZSG website is the hub for information about the NZSG, both for the public and for members. Here you will find background, events and contact details.

Members and the public can:

- Access the NZSG Library Catalogue
- Access the member/public tier of the Kiwi Collection
- Access our Resources on Getting Starting and Research Skills, including *Getting It Right*, a guide on how to cite your sources and information on copyright
- Find their local Branch or Interest Group
- See what's happening in their local area
- Purchase products and services from the NZSG Shop (some are not available to non-members)
- Watch our monthly presentations on many different aspects of the NZSG and researching your family

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- Access to information on NZSG Record Collections
- Access Kiwi Resources and Kiwi Guides—help for researching in New Zealand; and our Overseas Resources for researching further afield
- Free access to historical newspaper databases for Great Britain and other countries through Gale Newspapers
- Free downloads of digital records on 'Discovery' at The National Archives (London)
- Submit entries to the online Register of Members' Interests
- Receive free assistance through the NZSG Research Service to search Library collections
- Receive assistance to search New Zealand land records (charges may apply)
- Subscribe to all the records on the Kiwi Collection

NZSG Record Collections

Members have collected a considerable amount of information over the years and made it available to other members. Information from the NZSG Record Collections is available to full NZSG members only, without charge (except for the Kiwi Collection). Access to the collections is a major benefit of your NZSG membership.

Full details on all our collections and how to access and contribute to them are available under Collections on our website www.genealogy.org.nz. Members are welcome to contribute new or updated material.

Access to some collections is through Research Services E: researchservice@genealogy.org.nz.

Certificates Collection

This collection was set up as a repository for certificates that members had obtained, but found to be unrelated to their research. We now accept certificates and miscellaneous documents of any kind whether they are related or unrelated to your research. We welcome further contributions.

Certificates can be accessed either through our online email service or through our postal service. Details on how to access these are available on our website. An index is included in the Kiwi Collection.

First Families

First Families is a collection of information about families, where the family emigrated to New Zealand before and including 1901 and where partners were married in New Zealand before and including 1901.

An index has been compiled from family record sheets, contributed by both members of the NZSG and non-members. Each family record sheet includes the names of three generations and their spouses where known. It can include parents who may not have come to New Zealand, thus bridging the gap between New Zealand and the country of origin.

Surnames can be searched by members in the database accessible on the First Families page on the website. An index and images are also included in the Kiwi Collection.

Pre-1856 New Zealand Marriage Records

This is a collection of New Zealand marriages that took place before compulsory civil registration. The collection contains over 28,500 entries from sources including civil registration entries, church records, newspaper notices, family and social history publications, Māori Mission records, Bible entries, ministers' diary and journal entries and submissions from NZSG members to name a few.

Access is through Research Services or by subscription to the Kiwi Collection. Contributions can be made through a form available online which can be emailed or posted to us.

Pedigree Registration

This is a collection of Pedigree Registration forms submitted by members. Every surname on the forms is indexed. These names appear in the Kiwi Collection.

An online search request form is on our website. A contribution form can also be found there. Please note the submission requirements.

Funeral Service Sheets

One of our newer Collections, Funeral Service Sheets are collected by members all over the country. An index is included in the Kiwi Collection. Access is through Research Services.

NZSG (Griffis) Illegitimacies

This collection is a name-searchable database involving illegitimate births in New Zealand between 1877 and 1950 that were available in public records, either at local court houses or National Archives. Virtually all of these records have now been transferred to Archives New Zealand.

The database includes details of the child (if named) the mother and the father, the location of the event, the record type and repository. Query results provide basic information only. Researchers are encouraged to go back to the original source record for fuller details.

Access is only to records more than 100 years old and is through Research Services or by subscription to the Kiwi Collection.

New Zealand Cemeteries

We have produced cemetery transcriptions for approximately 1400 cemeteries nationwide, for burials from 1812 through to 2020. Most municipal cemeteries are included, but a significant proportion of this collection includes private cemeteries, Māori Urupa and remote burial locations. Access is through Research Services or by subscription to the Kiwi Collection.

Obituaries Collection

This collection includes contributions from members nationwide from sources such as national and regional newspapers, club newsletters and periodicals. An index is included in the Kiwi Collection. Access details are on our website.

School Records

These records are a valuable resource for family historians because they not only put families together in local communities, but allow us to trace their movements from place to place. The NZSG has been transcribing and indexing school APW (Admission, Progress and Withdrawal) records from their earliest beginnings and over time has accumulated records for almost 2000 schools nationwide dating from 1858 to present time.

An index is available on the Kiwi Collection. Access is through our NZSG School Records Officer— see website for current details, or by subscription to the Kiwi Collection.

Kiwi Collection

The Kiwi Collection is our major database of more than 16 million New Zealand sources, including indexes to many of our collections, as well as images for an increasing number of datasets. The Kiwi Collection is an online, subscription-based service available exclusively to NZSG members. See the online shop for details on how to subscribe.

Shipping Collection Project

Launched in May 2024, this collection aims to collect information on every voyage to, from and around New Zealand up to 1920. The project will be conducted over four phases to ensure as much information as possible is collected.

See our website for more information on progress.



THE NEW ZEALAND FARMERS' UNION (Eketahuna Branch).—Standing: Messrs E. Goodban, N. P. Jensen, J. Scott, T. F. Calton, Albert Anderson, J. Bassett, B. Morriss, H. Stewart, W. R. Waldin, F. D. Polling, R. J. McLean (secretary), J. Carter (auditor), A. H. Vile, J. Jones, J. McDonald, G. H. Hickman, J. H. Edwards, R. Gyde. Middle Row: Messrs A. Pryde, H. Scharenweber, E. Vincent, A. G. Black, Anders Anderson, A. Walker, F. W. Dowsett, H. Dunn, S. Dawson, T. Bayliss, H. W. Black, J. Dorney, A. Dunstall, H. Vile. Front Row: Messrs A. Small, F. Wise, E. Tomlinson, W. B. Matheson (chairman and provincial delegate), T. Moss (vice-chairman), J. M. Davie, F. C. Turner, S. Keam. Annual meeting, 30th April, 1904; members present, 40. Total membership, 61. Winzenberg, Photo, Masterton.

Eketāhuna?

Sarah Hewitt

The only photo I've found (so far) of my great-grandfather Harold Wilson BLACK (1880–1940) is a grainy picture in *The New Zealand Mail* of 8 June 1904. He is sitting with a large group of distinguished gentlemen from the 'New Zealand Farmers' Union (Eketahuna Branch)'. In all honesty, Harold doesn't look much different to his brother Arthur Garfield Black who is sitting at the other end of the row—the grain is that good.

The interesting part is Eketāhuna. Harold had been born in Christchurch, went to Canterbury Agricultural College and finished his life in Gisborne. There was a known story about him, his wife May and son Kinley living near Waitomo during Kinley's younger years. But Eketāhuna was a brief mention on the Electoral Roll with no stories being told about it.

The Electoral Roll of 1905–06 gave Harold's address as 'Mangaoronga Road, Eketahuna'. A map of the area does not help in pinpointing any location. Mangaoronga Road winds its way south-east from Eketāhuna.

An online search using Harold's name found some more interesting results. Dawn CHAMBERS had transcribed some land records with the informative title of:¹

Land Transfer Office Wellington 1871-1913 Nominal Index "B"

Archives NZ Reference AEFT 19643 W299 LTOW299/9 Nominal Index A-E

Harold and his brother Arthur were on there with the consecutive reference numbers 15-558 and 15-559.

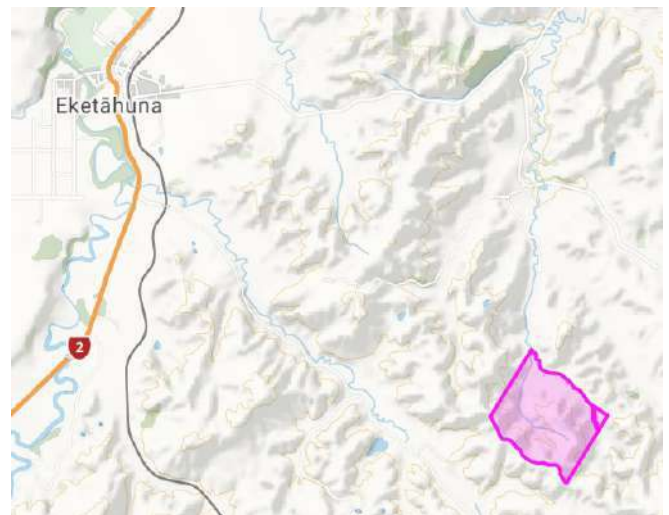
Fortunately, Dawn has also put instructions of what to do with these references on her [Pandora Research Collection](#)

website.² Following them through to Archives New Zealand's Wellington reading room led me to a land reference:

'Mangaone S.D. Secs 53 & 54 Blks X & XI'.

Experimenting on LINZ's [Land Record Search](#), the combination "Section 53 Mangaone" found me a result that fitted the information I had. And most importantly, it came up on the map, showing me where it was!

The map was not showing much in the way of roads.



However, this is my twenty-first century sensibilities showing. In the early twentieth century, the way to get anywhere was by horse. Horses do not need roads.

For the princely sum of \$8 and five minutes of my time waiting, I had the title deed in my inbox. Harold and Arthur had taken the lease on 21 August 1902:

Image above: The photo that got the search into Eketāhuna rolling

The New Zealand Mail, 8 June 1904

*Transfer of Lease 4653 produced 21st
 1856 1902 at 2 pm James Duncan
 Oldridge to Harold Wilson Black
 and Arthur Garfield Black as tenants
 in common. M. H. Hewitt*

Then they transferred it on 10 February 1906:

*Transfer (56442) of Lease 4653 produced
 10th February 1906 at 10 am Harold
 Wilson Black and Arthur Garfield
 Black to Albert Sigfred Andersson
 and Carl Victor Andersson. M. H. Hewitt*

The answer to the age old question of 'why' is unknown. However, there may be some hints in Harold's writing.

In later life, Harold was a popular children's story writer and storyteller on Gisborne radio. The first published story of his that I have found was written during the time he was in Eketāhuna.

Published in the *New Zealand Illustrated News*, '[What a Red Hankerchief Did](#)', it is set on a sheep farm to the north of Eketāhuna in the Ruahine Ranges.



THE following incident occurred on a large station in Hawke's Bay. It was away back where roads were unknown, where the rabbit throve despite poison, guns, and dogs, and where a few hundred sheep annually evaded the shearing muster, and remained among the scrub and flax bushes to develop into "double-fleecers."

*The countryside to the east of
 Eketāhuna today—
 sheep farming and forestry
 Photo: Sarah Hewitt*



His description of the time spent at the 'Out-Station' may have reflected his life in Eketāhuna:

We viewed the change, knowing it to be only temporary, with considerable satisfaction, for it meant batching, which for a few weeks is romantic, but scarcely so afterwards. Our work occupied all our time, during the day, and in the evenings we dabbled in the science of cooking. If we were there again, we should certainly not dabble to the same extent, but we were keen to learn the mysteries and dip deep in the romance of it all, and I remember it was one of the happiest moments of Jack's life when he struck a success in the nature of scones or small cakes.

The romance of a sheep farming section in the middle of nowhere (relatively speaking) may have diminished over time as both Harold and Arthur were young men.

From Eketāhuna, Harold moved to Gisborne where, apart from a brief few years in Waitomo, he remained until his death in 1940.

Recently, we decided to try out the new Te Ahu a Turanga highway from Ashhurst to Woodville and do a big loop up from Wellington and back down the other side. At Eketāhuna, we took a detour out into the countryside to see what it was like.

Overall, it is probably not too different to Harold's day. There are lots of gambolling sheep and rolling green hills. What he probably wouldn't recognise is the increasing amount of forestry in the region.

Sarah Hewitt
 E: sarahmhewitt@yahoo.com.au

References:

1. www.nzpictures.co.nz/pandoraresearchANZ-LTOW-299-9-B.pdf
2. www.nzpictures.co.nz/pandoraresearchANZ-LTOW-WhatToDoNext.pdf



The Beatsons' Rotherhithe

Simon Young

It is Monday night, and I have just landed in London for the first time ever. I chose as my temporary home base Rotherhithe, the former home to my BEATSON ancestors some 200 years ago.¹

In those 200 years, it has changed just a tad. Alright, perhaps more than a tad. It has completely changed from a place of dockyards to a charming low-rise suburb with an urban farm.

On my way to my Airbnb from the London Overground (Windrush Line), I take in the surrounding landscape.² In the dark, it is hard to see clearly, but I can sense that this is a beautiful park-like area. I am startled to see my first real live fox, which darts away as soon as it notices me.

Tuesday morning dawns bright. Peeking over the city of London across the Thames, the sun streams onto the nineteenth-century warehouses, now converted into stylish riverside apartments. I walk past The Ship & Whale—a charming pub which sadly is not open for breakfast—and wonder if my ancestors used to tread this same footpath.

My Airbnb listing said 'beach access free', which amused me as a New Zealander. I decided to check out this 'free beach'. It turns out the London idea of a beach is rather

different from the New Zealand one, but it is still lovely in its own muddy-foreshore way.

Later in the day, I stop by The Barn Café at Surrey Docks Farm, an urban farm where children feed goats, volunteers tend the gardens, and blackboards advertise community events.³ The farm embodies the rebirth of this once-industrial reach of the river.

Further along the Thames Path, a small outdoor display recalls the intense bombing that devastated the quays in World War II, when the Surrey Commercial Docks burned fiercely on 'Black Saturday', 7 September 1940.⁴ Fragments of pottery and bricks—small relics of that destruction—sit under glass.

It is hard to imagine this peaceful spot once heaving with noise and labour: ships bobbing at anchor, cranes swinging, pubs and chapels vying for the souls of the maritime workforce.

And it was in that world, in the 1830s, that my ancestors—the Beatson family—worked on this quay, running a ship-breaking business.⁵ When a ship owner, such as the Royal Navy, needed to dispose of a vessel, they turned to the ship breakers: the maritime equivalent of demolition specialists.

Image above: Commercial Dock Rotherhithe 1827

Engraved by George Cooke, after an unknown artist—[Wikimedia Commons](#)

The Beatsons' most famous project was dismantling *HMS Temeraire*, the veteran of Trafalgar, broken up in 1838.⁶ Before he began pulling her apart, John Beatson of Rotherhithe is said to have hosted a dinner party on board; the artist Turner immortalised the ship's final tow upriver in his painting *The Fighting Temeraire*.⁷

One of John's sons, my 3x great-grandfather, William Beatson, broke away from the family's maritime trade to join the profession of his father-in-law, architect John WALLLEN.⁸ By the late 1830s William had established his own practice on Bartholomew Lane in London.

In 1851 William and his family sailed for New Zealand aboard the *Midlothian*, arriving at Lyttelton in October before continuing by coastal vessel to Nelson.⁹ They settled first at Stoke (then called Suburban South), where William briefly tried his hand at farming. By 1859 he had returned to architecture, leaving a distinct mark on Nelson's emerging townscape.¹⁰

William understood the need to combine English stylistic familiarity with the realities of local materials and seismic risk. With the 1855 Wairarapa earthquake still fresh in memory, he often favoured timber for its resilience and abundance, though he used stone where it suited the design.¹¹ Among his surviving works are All Saints Anglican Church, St Barnabas' Church (Stoke), and the former Morrison, Sclanders & Co building—each now recognised for its heritage value.¹²

I am grateful, if still a little mystified, by the urge to farm that brought William Beatson and his family from the heart of the British Empire to one of its far-flung shores. I am equally grateful for the chance to stand, however briefly, where the family's earlier story began.

Walking today's Rotherhithe—quiet, leafy, bounded by the same silver-grey Thames—I can almost hear the clatter of iron against hull plates, the clang of chains and hammer blows, the shouts of dockers in the fog. A fox slips between the hedges of a modern housing estate, as if carrying a fragment of that industrious past into the present.

To trace 'where they lived' is to enter a layered conversation between landscape and memory. The ship-breaker's yard and the architect's drawing-board were two

ends of the same continuum: both dismantled and re-shaped the material world. The Beatsons' journey—from the tidal flats of Rotherhithe to the timber-framed churches of Nelson—embodies the restless creativity of their age.

I have seen London; next on my list is Nelson (shocking, I have never been yet!). As I walk beneath the spire of All Saints and the gabled roof of St Barnabas, I am sure I will hear in my mind's ear the echo of Rotherhithe's hammer and saw. The story of where they lived becomes, inevitably, the story of how they lived, moved, and remade themselves—a lineage of enterprise that stretched from the Thames to the Tasman, and somehow, improbably, to me.

Simon Young

E: simonisntsoyoung@gmail.com

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***The Fighting Temeraire* tugged to her last berth to be broken up, 1838, by JMW Turner (1775-1851)**

Held by the National Gallery

[Wikimedia Commons](#)

Emma Jane Gundry 1839–1915

Jeanette Grant

Emma was born in Devizes, Wiltshire, on 19 July 1839, the second daughter of grocer, Samuel GUNDRY (1809–1894) and his first wife, Emma HAYTER (1811–1841). She was christened at St James, Devizes, on 13 August 1839, but her mother died 'of a disease of the heart' soon after Emma's second birthday, leaving Samuel with three small girls. On 23 January 1847 he remarried—to Mary Ann LOWE (1825–1864)—and in February 1851 they embarked on the *Steadfast* and sailed to New Zealand. This was probably on the recommendation of his younger brother, William Richardson Gundry (1814–1855), who had come out in 1839 after the death of his first wife, Helen née WATERS (1816–1839), only seven months after their marriage.

On board the *Steadfast* were Emma's father, stepmother and two sisters, plus a younger half-brother and half-sister. In addition, the Surgeon Superintendent was another of her father's brothers—Dr John Seager Gundry, MRCS (Member of the Royal College of Surgeons) (1816–1886) and his wife, Isabella née BAYNE (1823–1906). Dr John kept a diary on the voyage, which tells us they arrived in Lyttelton on 8 June 1851.



Emma Jane Knowles, née Gundry

Samuel's name appears on a jury list in 1856 as a storekeeper and in 1859 as a merchant. He described himself as a grocer/wine and spirits merchant. Within weeks of reaching New Zealand, his wife Mary Anne set up a school as she was determined to see their children properly educated. They had four more children after reaching New Zealand and lived in a house called 'Steadfast Cottage' in Lyttelton, where she died aged 39 on 11 March 1864 after a lingering illness.

Emma spent her teenage years there and at the age of 20, married an accountant, Henry 'Hamilton' KNOWLES (1833–1915) on 26 October 1869 in the 'Temporary Church' at Lyttelton. This was a warehouse put back into use as a church when the new church building proved unsafe, as the green wood used in its construction warped dangerously. Hamilton, the eldest of the five sons of Henry Samuel Knowles and his wife Louisa Marianne HAMILTON, was born in 1833 in Ilminster, and had come to New Zealand at the age of eight on the *Oriental*, reaching Wellington on 24 Oct 1841.

In 1860 the *Daily Southern Cross* reported that 'Mr. Henry Hamilton Knowles was appointed to be Manager and Accountant of the Savings Bank, Nelson', and their first four sons, Walter, Charles, Herbert and Arthur, were born in Nelson between 1860 and 1866. As was typical of the time, their birth notices in the *Nelson Examiner* did not give the mother's name but just said 'at Merton Cottage, Nelson, the wife of H. Hamilton Knowles, Esq., of a son'.

Hamilton was with the Union Bank in Lyttelton when their next five children were born between 1868 and 1877. Emma went on to have a total of 11 children and was fortunate in that all her babies survived to adulthood. Tracking them down was easier than is often the case, as all were given at least two first names, while three had 'Hamilton' as their middle name. Francis (1868–1941) had 'Speke' as his middle name—a tribute to John Hanning SPEKE (1827–1864), the explorer who discovered the source of the Nile and was related to Hamilton's mother by marriage.

Then, from 1879–1886, Hamilton appears as the Head Teacher at the Kaikoura Town School. While the 1877 Education Act had made education free, national, secular and compulsory, there were staffing shortages, and I have found no evidence that he had any form of teacher training. However, at that time Inspectors were empowered to issue Certificates of Competency, and his name appears in 1880 on the List of Teacher and Civil Service Examinations with a rank of 'E2'. There was a reference in the 1958 Kaikoura Centenary book *Our School Grows Up* that 'Mrs Knowles must either teach full time or resign'. As her youngest two children were born in Kaikoura in 1879 and 1882, it is amazing that she had any spare time to spend helping in the classroom. A mention of their son Charles may also indicate that he assisted his parents. Certainly, the monitorial system of teaching was much in favour in nineteenth century England.

After several years of tension between him and some members of the School Board, Hamilton resigned in 1886 and became a flaxmiller in Bulls. An item in the *Feilding Star* on 13 December 1890 mentions him buying a 'well-appointed farm in Makino'.

Emma is one of the women whose signatures appear on the petition that resulted in New Zealand becoming the first country to give women the vote. The 1893 Electoral Act gave women over 21 the same voting rights as men, regardless of their ethnicity, education or income. Emma and their two eldest girls, Edith and Constance, all appear on the electoral roll for Makino. Their occupations?—'Home duties'.

On 15 February 1898 an advertisement appeared 'to hold a sale of stock and property before leaving the district'. The family then moved to Palmerston North where, in those days before old age pensions, Hamilton was (at the age of 67) appointed Sanitary Inspector from 17 May 1900 by the Town Council at a salary of £75 a year. On 23 April 1903 he was appointed an agent for the Labour Department.

Tragedy struck several times. Their son Ernest died unmarried of acute bulbar paralysis in Karapiro on 20 February 1902, while Charles and his wife, Annie JACK, lost their eldest son Roy at six weeks in 1896. My own grandmother, Edith, married Eric Manley CLARKE (1858–1932) on 19 December 1901 and had four sons between 1902 and 1908. The two youngest were twins—Maurice died on 23 November 1908 of measles and pneumonia at three months.



Henry 'Hamilton' Knowles
Grant family collection

Hamilton and Emma lived at 4 Ferguson Street and died within a few days of each other—Hamilton of 'heart disease' on 21 September 1915, aged 82 years, and was buried two days later at Terrace End, the Napier Street Cemetery in Palmerston North. Emma died of 'senile degeneration of the heart and arteries' on 30 September 1915, aged 76 years, and was buried with Hamilton on 2 October 1915. They had been married for almost 56 years and left 10 living children and 17 living grandchildren.

Family		
Henry Walter Knowles	b 19.09.1860	d 07.06.1936 osp
Charles Hamilton Knowles	b 03.07.1862	d 23.06.1943
Herbert William Knowles	b 18.06.1864	d 13.04.1950
Arthur Warrington Knowles	b 09.08.1866	d 13.05.1943
Francis Speke Knowles	b 25.07.1868	d 15.05.1941
Edith Marion Knowles	b 19.04.1871	d 28.08.1950
Emma Constance Knowles	b 30.06.1872	d 11.04.1960
Ernest Edward Knowles	b 01.08.1875	d 20.02.1902 osp
Ethel Louisa Knowles	b 19.09.1877	d 20.04.1944
John Hamilton Knowles	b 26.11.1879	d 07.12.1948
Nina Mary Hamilton Knowles	b 17.07.1882	d 06.04.1951 osp

(Note: osp = died without issue)

Jeanette Grant
E: jeanette.john.grant@gmail.com

[Emma was my great-grandmother, and as any researcher knows, tracking women can be very frustrating as their public identities tend to be swallowed up by their husbands. She was fortunate in having a father who liked to keep good family records, so I was able to start with much accurate information. JG]

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On the Wright trail... part 2

Paul Hickford

Even after 30 years of family research, the thrill of the chase remains as strong as ever. What began, in this instance, as a simple journey of discovery, evolved into something far larger than I envisaged.

At the WRIGHT reunion held in the Rawsonville Hall, New South Wales, Australia, in October 2008, it was acknowledged that there was a small number of yet to be identified first and second generation Australian and New Zealand family members missing from the family tree, along with earlier generations—siblings of 2x great-grandfather John Wright. Following the publishing of *On the Wright Trail, London, Melbourne, Echuca, Hokitika...* in the September/October 2009 (Vol. 40, no. 319) issue of *The New Zealand Genealogist*, I have been using every available resource to broaden my knowledge of the Wright family, and it has produced some startling and unexpected results.

Since 2010 family genealogists have witnessed a significant growth in the databases of the primary international family tree websites, the Society's Kiwi Collection and the proliferation of DNA testing, enabling researchers to delve further into their family histories.

Until the beginning of the millennium, I was unfamiliar with how I was related to the Wright family. The link proved to be through my maternal great-grandmother, Agnes Ann (Annie) Wright (1850–1914), daughter of John Wright, who married Thomas BARKER (1840–1894) in Hokitika, New Zealand, in 1872. Both were born in England, Annie in London and Thomas in Cumberland, now Cumbria.^{1,2}

Recently I discovered Annie's brother, James Relton Wright, and her future sister-in-law had also travelled across from Australia in the mid to late 1860s and were living in Hokitika. James, who was born in Hawick, Roxburghshire, in 1835 was a hotelier and dealer in music and musical instruments and was living with his partner, Jane Ann GRUBE (née RAE or REA), in the Melbourne Hotel on Gibson Quay.³ Together they had two New Zealand-born children—John Rae, b 1866 and Ellen Grube, b 1868—before returning to Australia to marry in Sydney in 1868 and then move down to Melbourne, where they had two further children.

While John's birth was registered in New Zealand, there is no trace of him after that and without being able to prove it, I presume he died at a young age.

To begin with, discovering Ellen's birth details was a challenge. There is no record of her birth in the New Zealand Births, Deaths and Marriages Historical Records or any reference to her in the Kiwi Collection.⁴ Therefore, it was necessary to start from the end of her life and work backwards. In the Form of Information of a Death, discovered in South Africa, her age and country of birth were revealed. It was noted that Ellen was born in New Zealand in Okatika, or as we know it, Hokitika.

Calculating her year of birth as 1868 was reasonably straightforward. At death she was 37 years old. Official records show her parents had married in Sydney in 1868 and her younger brother, John Dixon Wright, was born in Melbourne, Australia, in 1869.

At the age of 12, a series of tragedies began to unfold in Ellen's life, beginning with the death of her parents, James in 1879 and Jane in 1880. The circumstances surrounding their deaths are unknown. It is assumed that before reaching their majority Ellen and her siblings were cared for by a close relative.

In 1893, Ellen married Christopher de Lacy CLARKE, in Adelaide, South Australia.⁵ Christopher was a chemist and had earlier separated from his first wife, Jane Edith GRAYSON (1860–1942). Christopher's business interests had taken him to various parts of Australia, including Warwick, St George and Broken Hill, Queensland. By 1900, he and Ellen had settled in Balmain, Sydney. Within two years Christopher had ended his life on 4 March 1902. At the coroner's inquest Ellen stated, 'her husband had been unwell and took sleeping draughts'. A verdict of suicide was returned.⁶

Afterwards, Ellen left Australia to become the manageress of the Blaauwbank Hotel, Gauteng, South Africa. On 21 April 1906, while walking back to the hotel with a friend, she suffered a blow to the head with a knobkerrie, or similar, resulting in a compound fracture of the skull. She died from her injury.⁷

Ellen was survived by her son, Sydney Wright/Clarke, an employee of the Central South African Railways in Germiston, Gauteng. Sydney died at the age of 29 in Johannesburg. The circumstances surrounding his death are unknown, and any news of his passing was never reported in the Australian press.

Despite DNA matches and widening my work to include extended family, I have remained unsuccessful in tracing my Wright 3x great-grandparents, who clearly had a presence in England and Scotland in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

I was, however, to discover on closer examination of the 1841 United Kingdom Census for St Clement Danes, City of Westminster, London, England, that my 2x great-grandfather John Wright (1808–1876) and his eldest son, James (6), were living with Andrew Biggs Wright (1795–1852), John's older brother (my 3x great-uncle) and his family in Folgate, London. While in the census of the same year for Netherend West, Cumberland, I discovered that John's Scottish-born wife, Eleanor (née RELTON), and son John (4) were living with her parents.

Andrew's obituary, published in Volume 37 of *The Gentleman's Magazine*, reveals he was born in Carlisle,

Cumberland, yet the 1851 United Kingdom Census for England records his place of birth as Wigton, Cumberland. Despite extensive searching, his actual place of birth remains undiscovered.

As a young man, Andrew was educated at the University of Edinburgh and went on to take up a career in journalism based in London. He served as subeditor of the *Atlas*, London, Secretary to the Aborigines' Protection Society, co-editor of the *Tablet*, editor of the *Home News* for India and wrote articles for various periodicals.

In 1847 Andrew was a member of the Aborigines' Protection Society.⁸ References to the society are to be found in my son's book *Lords of the Land, Indigenous Property Rights and the Jurisprudence of Empire*, published by Oxford University Press, Oxford, England, in 2011.

Subsequently, and thanks to a DNA match with a Scottish relative, I discovered John and Andrew's sister, Frances (Fanny) WATSON (née Wright), who, according to the 1871 United Kingdom Census, was born in Egremont, Cumberland, in 1808. She was living with Frederick Selby and Henrietta (née Watson) MOORE, her son-in-law and daughter, in Islington, London. While finding no trace of Frances' birth in Cumberland, I believe she was born about 1811.

Over the years I have discovered several of my relatives were engaged in the arts, including creative expression. Frances was no exception as the 1861 Scottish Census reveals that she and her husband were actors and their daughter Henrietta a comedian.

My DNA matches produced previously unidentified Wright family connections, including, but not necessarily limited to, the following because some researchers are using an anonymous username: BELL, DOWD (New Zealand), FAIRWEATHER, FINNERTY (New Zealand), HOWDEN (England), KIDD, KINGSLEY (United States of America), MARR, NOURSE, OSBORNE, REEVE (Australia), SMITH, SNEDDON (Scotland), UNDERELL (New Zealand and United States of America) and YOUNG.

I was surprised to see that many branches of our family had a son or daughter with the second or third given name of Relton, which was my 2x great-grandmother's maiden name. To name a few, there were: Eleanor Relton CAMPBELL (1869–1946) in Scotland; Violet Patricia Relton Wright (1895–1971) in Australia; Rodney Relton Reeve (1931–2016), Australia; and Claude Relton Barker (1902–1988), New Zealand. The latter served with the Australian Army during WWII before returning home to New Zealand. He had the misfortune to be captured in Java in March 1942 and became a prisoner of war in Burma, where he worked on one of the infamous so-called 'death railways' until rescued by Commonwealth ground forces.⁹ Throughout his life he wrote numerous letters to his family, which are now held at the Anzac Memorial, Hyde Park, Sydney, along with other items of memorabilia.¹⁰

This has been a fascinating journey of discovery and one that I will look back on with satisfaction in the years to come.

Paul Hickford
E: hicky46@icloud.com

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Mary Wreay and her sampler

Eric Walton

I had the good fortune to travel to the United Kingdom in 2023. The primary aim of the trip was to visit the various towns and villages where my forebears came from, as I wanted to get a sense of place (where they lived) rather than do research per se.

After I returned home, I talked to various relatives about what I had seen. One cousin produced a sampler that had been made by Mary WREAY in 1810. It had been given to her by an aunt, who had been given it by a cousin after our paternal grandmother (Ada WALTON, née PILKINGTON) died in 1949. My cousin thought I should be the keeper of this family heirloom, which I very much appreciated. Until our conversation, my cousin was not exactly sure how Mary Wreay fitted into the family.



Mary Wreay sampler

So, who was Mary Wreay? When I did the initial research, I started with my paternal grandmother, Ada Pilkington, and worked backwards from what I knew. She was born in Dunedin in 1888 and was the eldest child of John Edward Pilkington (1864–1938) and Mary Ann CADDEN (1864–1895). John Edward was born in Blackburn, Lancashire, and was the eldest child of Peter Pilkington (1837–1916) and Frances PARRY (c 1838–1916). Frances was born in Liverpool and was the youngest child of Edward Parry and Mary WRAY (this is how she appeared in all the records, so that is the spelling I will continue with).

So, Mary Wray was my 3x great-grandmother. She appeared in the 1861 census for West Derby in Liverpool (as Mary Parry) with three of her children, including Frances. Mary was recorded as being born in Staveley, Lancashire and being married, but in fact she was a widow. Where the family was in 1851 remains unknown, but they do appear in the 1841 census for Liverpool. Mary was recorded as being born in Lancashire, but her husband Edward was not, and

neither was he recorded as being born in 'Scotland, Ireland or Foreign Parts'. As it turned out, he was born in Wales.

Searches for Mary and Edward's marriage have not been successful. However, all their children (Mary, Margaret, Jane, Ellen, Eunice, Ann, Scorpe Colquitt, and Frances) were baptised between 1821 and 1837 at the Liverpool Parish Church (St Nicholas) in Chapel Street, which was a few hundred metres from where they lived in Tempest Hey. Mary and Margaret were baptised on 23 September 1821, but based on information from other sources, I suspect Mary was born a year or two before Margaret (c 1819). I am also curious why they named their only son, presumably, after one of the members of the COLQUITT family who were prominent in Liverpool. Frances's death certificate states her father was a butler.

Finding the deaths and burials of Mary and Edward was relatively straightforward. Edward died on 21 May 1855 (he was living at Tempest Hey at the time), and Mary died on 7 July 1869. She was living in William Street, Liverpool, which is where her daughter Anne (HARRISON) was recorded living during the 1871 census. They were both buried in grave 719 at St Mary's Kirkdale in Walton Road, Liverpool.

The cemetery per se no longer exists; it was officially closed in 1898 and opened as Lester Gardens in 1905, named after Major LESTER, who was the vicar of the adjacent but separate St Mary's Church for 50 years. However, there is a very useful database created from the registers, and unlike many other cemeteries, it includes the names of the parents of the adults buried there (and sometimes the father's occupation), and this additional information proved very useful to find Mary and Edward's births.¹

Edward Parry's parents were given as Barnard (Bernard) and Mary. Using that information, I was able to find Bernard and Mary's marriage on 6 September 1794 in the Parish of St George, Denbighshire, Wales, and that Edward was born on 16 December 1794 and was baptised on 21 December



Lester Gardens, Liverpool

1794 at Dyserth, Flintshire, Wales. Bernard was a mason. DNA confirmed the fact that I had the right Parry family.

Edward's uncle, John Parry (1789–1868), was also a mason and initially a lay preacher in the Anglican Church.² He became dissatisfied with its doctrine and became a Baptist preacher, then joined the Reformed Baptists, and ultimately was baptised into the Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter-day Saints (LDS) on 12 September 1846. He immigrated to the United States of America in 1849 as part of a 249-strong group of Welshmen and headed for Salt Lake City. While crossing the plains, he organised the group into an informal choir. At a general conference in Salt Lake City, Brigham YOUNG asked John Parry to lead the choir in a few musical numbers. That choir became the nucleus of the Mormon Tabernacle Choir, and John became its first conductor. Given the connection with the LDS church and its interest in genealogy, I have numerous confirmatory DNA matches.

In the burial register, Mary Wray's parents are listed as Thomas and Mary. Finding her birth was not easy. Neither Ancestry nor Findmypast were particularly helpful, and I went down many blind alleys. I asked for help through the Lancashire Family History and Heraldry Society Forum, and I was presented with the answer by one of the members who used the Lancashire OPC site.³ Mary, the daughter of Thomas Wray, was recorded as being baptised on 22 May 1797 in the Bishop's Transcripts for the Priory Church of St Mary and St Michael, Cartmel, Lancashire. The family was recorded as living at Canny Hill, at the time of Mary's birth, in perfect agreement with the sampler!

Further research indicated that Mary had four siblings—Thomas, Richard, Edmund, and John, baptised in 1799, 1803, 1806, and 1809 respectively.

I visited Canny Hill during my visit to the United Kingdom—it is now a caravan park, clearly visible on Google Maps. I didn't take any photographs.

At the time of finding Mary's baptism, one of the Forum members queried why the family would trudge eight kilometres to the Cartmel Priory when there was a beautiful church (St Mary's) one and a half kilometres away in Staveley, which was renamed Staveley-in-Cartmel in 1979 to distinguish it from the other towns of Staveley. I agreed at the time, but decided to explore this further while writing this article. This involved accessing scans of the original records on FamilySearch. After a few challenges, this was achieved; the documents were titled 'Copy of the Registers of the Parish of Cartmel', not the Bishop's Transcripts of Priory Church in Cartmel. Some entries included the dates of birth and others did not, which suggests to me different sources of the input data.

So, how did the sampler get to New Zealand? Mary Wray's daughter, Frances (Pilkington), immigrated to New Zealand in 1875 on the *William Davie*, with her four children, six years after her mother died. However, I am uncertain when her husband, Peter, came to New Zealand, but some notes written by Jack RUTHERFORD in 2003 about the Pilkington family state that he emigrated before his family.

Eric Walton

E: ericwalton08@gmail.com

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St Mary's Church, Staveley-in-Cartmel

Photo: Eric Walton



Who was Henry Pim of Tokomairiro?

Robert Findlay

Tokomairiro Project 60, 'TP60', is so named because there are 60 names in the burial register. In time for the 150th anniversary of St John's Anglican Church, Milton, in April 2016, TP60 published *A History of the St John's Burial Ground, Back Road, Tokomairiro, Otago*. In it, the lives of 60 persons were profiled. Henry PIM was not included as his name is not in the burial register. This is surprising given that he was present at the first vestry meeting held in the Resident Magistrate's Court on 29 November 1864.

After his arrival, the Reverend R L STANDFORD gave notice that he would conduct divine service at the courthouse every Sunday at 11am and 3.30pm, except on the first Sunday when Holy Communion would be celebrated in the old church (on the back road adjacent to the burial ground). Present were Messrs A JONES, Pim, DEWE—the Resident Magistrate who donated the land for a chapel and burial grounds, GILLION, C JONES, PETIT, HOLLIICK, GRANT et al. Henry Pim was Stipend Fund accountant for the Church.

The Southern Cemeteries Archaeological Project (SCAP) was the first to identify Henry Pim's headstone during the 2016 excavation of St John's Cemetery in Milton, Otago, New Zealand, which aimed to locate graves beyond the existing fenced area and identify individuals buried there. TP60 and SCAP collaborated to locate and name more burial sites and to answer the question: Were the first pioneers' lives better in their new home than from whence they came? During topsoil stripping in the area behind the cemetery fence, 16 graves were uncovered and three of those buried were identified, plus Henry Pim's grave site, making four new known persons. His grave had a buried, broken headstone with the name 'Henry Pim' still legible—no other details were legible on the large headstone. Prior

to this discovery, there was no existing record of Henry Pim being buried in the cemetery. Because the excavation project had permission only to excavate unmarked and unidentified burials, Henry Pim's grave was left intact and not further excavated. This find was not unique, as the TP60 research team has discovered a further 15 persons buried at the St John's Anglican Back Road Burial Ground, Tokomairiro, with more likely to have been buried there.

Henry's burial is absent from the St John's Anglican Church burial register—an omission not uncommon. Henry's death was also not registered with the Registrar-General and is still not. In previous communications, the response from the Registrar-General was that they wanted 'more information' before they could officially document his death. Maybe this article will suffice.

In a first for New Zealand, permission was granted by the appropriate authorities* to exhume a number of unmarked graves to meet the objectives of the two projects. Bishop Kelvin WRIGHT said: 'These people ended their life journey here; they will now go on another journey revealing more about their lives and times before returning to this spot.'

*Owner of the site, Bishop Kelvin Wright on behalf of the Diocese Property Board, New Zealand Department of Health.

The TP60 research team members and their ancestors were: Mary Ann MILLER, Amanda Miller, Robert Miller, Gil BLAS, 1855; Kath CROY, Isobel MICHELLE and Robert FINDLAY, John and Elizabeth (SHAW) FINCH; John WICKLIFFE; Vivienne GALLETTY—Vicar of St John's, Milton.

Above left: The broken headstone, previously buried, held up by two of the Southern Cemeteries Excavation Team: Teina TUTAKI and Alana KELLY. Only the words Henry Pim were decipherable.

Above right: The restored headstone, courtesy of the principals of the Southern Cemeteries Archaeology Project, Peter PETCHEY of Southern Archaeology Ltd, and Associate Professor Hallie BUCKLEY, Otago University

Nine years after the 150th celebration of St John's Anglican Church, on 8 March 2025, a memorial stone was unveiled containing 75 names; the additional 15 were discovered after 2016. Special permission was sought and gained after initial refusal for a four-day search of the death records at the office of the Department of Internal Affairs Births Deaths and Marriages Registry in Wellington by Amanda Miller and Robert Findlay.

A supplement to *A History of the St John's Burial Ground*, listing the names and profiles of the fifteen more persons discovered, is planned (unpublished as at October 2025).

What we now know about Henry Pim (1838–1872)

The discovery of Henry Pim's headstone initiated a search by the author. The final nine years of Henry's 34-year life in Tokomairiro, today named Milton, have been pieced together through Papers Past, drawing from the *Bruce Herald* and *Otago Daily Times*, spanning December 1863 to October 1872, and the minutes of the Ancient Order of Foresters, Court Bruce no. 4526. While a lot has been found out about Henry's time in Tokomairiro, I found little else, apart from a possible sighting of a Mr H Pim, first cabin passenger, aboard the *Golconda*, 688 tons, Shaw Saville Line, Captain Montgomery, sailed from London on 30 January 1861, arrived in Wellington on 10 June.

I engaged the services of Genealogist Bruce RALSTON of Ralston Quercifolia Ltd, whose search encompassed: Papers Past, using variations of spelling of PIM, Archives New Zealand, Ancestry.com, findmypast.co.uk, MyHeritage.com, passenger records on FamilySearch, English, Wales and Scottish Censuses, British newspapers for a passenger list for the *Golconda* all with no obvious result.

The first known, documented record of Henry appeared in this advertisement in the *Otago Daily Times*, in September 1863, and subsequently in MacKay's Almanac 1864–1867:

TOKOMAIRO

HENRY PIM

Accountant, Real Estate Agent and Commission Merchant.
Accounts and Debts collected.

Unexceptional references given if required

His offices were at 2 Temple Chambers in Union Street to the south, adjacent to the White Horse Hotel.



The mural on the side of Temple Chambers reads: Colonial Mutual Insurance Society Limited. The small wording above the door: National Insurance, and the writing in the window is: D Reid Solicitor.

So, Temple Chambers had two offices, that of solicitor, D Reid, and of Henry Pim, Accountant, Real Estate Agent and Commission Merchant.

On 6 July 1865 Henry was engaged to supply particulars of a regular public auction for a Matthew Hay, stock and produce salesman of Lawrence: 'Of every description of live stock once a month within the yards of the White Horse hotel.' Henry also advertised as Secretary of the Sheepowners Society.

AUCTION SALES.

TOKOMAIRO.

MATTHEW HAY,

Stock and Produce Salesman,

Lawrence.

Will hold a Sale by Public Auction, of
EVERY DESCRIPTION OF LIVE
STOCK, &c., &c.,

Within the Yards of the

WHITE HORSE HOTEL, on

The Second WEDNESDAY of each Month.

Commencing on the Second Wednesday in July.

For further particulars apply to

HENRY PIM,

No. 2 Temple Chambers.

(Next Door to White Horse Hotel, Tokomairiro.)

N.B.—Special notificacon of Sals, by hand-
bill, previous to day of Sale.

NOTICE.

WHEREAS Dogs have been observed molesting Sheep in sundry Paddocks at present, the Sheepowner's Society offer a Reward of One Pound for every Dog caught in the act, and an additional reward of not less than one Pound where the evidence is such as to secure damages from the owners of such dogs.

The Paddocks referred to are those of Messrs. James Smith and John Martin.

HENRY PIM,

Secretary.

Image left: In this very early photo looking south, it shows there is an empty section between the two properties. This would have made the Temple Chambers beside the White Horse Inn in 1865.

After two and a half years in town, Henry, 'age 28, unmarried', was proposed to be a member of The Ancient Order of Foresters' Court Bruce no. 4526 on 19 August 1865. I was hopeful the minutes of Bruce 4526 would reveal who arranged and paid for Henry's funeral. The minutes showed that he was initiated as a member about one month later, on 2 September, and on 6 January 1866 Henry became Secretary. But not for long, as on 17 March 1866 the Secretary was to be fined 2/6 for meetings missed, although the fine was cancelled two weeks later on 31 March 1866. Henry may have felt wronged as he resigned office a fortnight later on 14 April 1866 on account of having 'changed his residence to some distance'. This is understood to be Caudletown/Helensbrook, (possibly) residing at the Royal Oak Hotel there. However, that was only a little over one mile from the centre of Milton.



Up to a year after his death in October 1872, there was no further mention of Henry in the minute book, suggesting that Court Bruce 4526 of the Ancient Order were not responsible for funding or erecting his headstone.

In the Resident Magistrates' Court, Tokomairiro, Milton, 4 May 1869, before J P MAITLAND Esquire, RM, Henry Pim appeared for the plaintiff. Mr Jones appeared for the defendant in the case HURRAN vs CUMMINE; Claim of £11 for damage through trespass of defendant's 100 sheep on

plaintiff's ground. Damaging two and a half acres of oats. Defendant pleaded not indebted. Calculated loss at 50 bushels an acre, with price at the time 2s 9d to 2s 10p per bushel. Judgement was for the plaintiff, £11 and costs.

One tantalising piece of information found was that in 1870 he advertised in the *Bruce Herald* that he 'had lost a letter from a Richard Pim, between Dunedin and Milton, and would like to get it back'. A death notice in the *Bruce Herald* of 16 October 1872 stated rather briefly: 'At Tokomairiro on Friday the 11th inst. Mr Henry Pim aged 34.'

From where, how and when Henry came to Otago remains a mystery to date. We (Findlay and Ralston) have been unable to learn anything more about him.

Postscript:

This article precedes the planned publication of a book *Henry Pim of Tokomairiro 1863–1872* which contains much more of his activities during that period than presented in this article.

Robert Findlay, Tpread Publishing, July 2025
E: FindlayRM@xtra.co.nz

Sources:

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Theme for March 2026 Issue — Occupations

Our theme for the March 2026 issue of *The New Zealand Genealogist* is 'Occupations'.

Did you have a family member who was a saggar makers' bottom knocker? Or some other interestingly named occupation? Do you have an item inherited from a now long-lost occupation? Do you have an interesting tale about an uninteresting job?

Work has shaped our family's experiences. Do you have a story to tell?

Make sure to look at the tips on submissions on our website genealogy.org.nz/NZG-Editors-Notes/11168/ before submitting your article.

Send your submissions to editor@genealogy.org.nz by 17 January 2025.

Resources on the NZSG Website



A recent addition to the Kiwi Resources came in November—the month we take the time to remember those who have served. Remembrance Day on 11 November marks Armistice Day—the day in 1918 the fighting finished for World War 1.

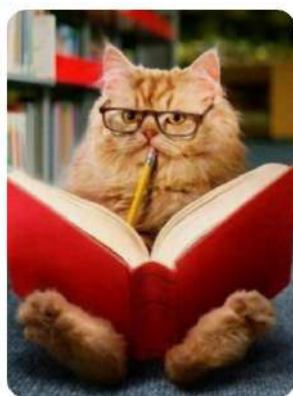
The addition to the Kiwi Resources section on [Military Records](#) highlights those who were conscripted. Member Don Hansen has kindly provided links to all the conscription ballots that were held, not only for WW1 but also WW2. You will find more about those that objected to their conscription reported in the newspapers found on [Papers Past](#).

Many of these conscription ballots were published in The New Zealand Gazette, which is the government's official newspaper. You can find how to access these on our [Government page](#) in the Kiwi Resources. Our Library has a copy of the searchable database, so you can send them an enquiry through our [Research Service](#).

The Military page also has various links to the multitude of other military records available. The military are very good at record keeping! And New Zealand has a long history of military presence.

You may not know that your family served. Many locations in New Zealand had a militia of some sort. With modern eyes it looks like blokes with guns having fun, sometimes on their horse (there were a lot of cavalries!). There are lots of records to be found, so have a look in the Kiwi Resources for more information.

The [Overseas Resources](#) will also give you a starting point on where to find military records for different countries.



Our [Library Cat](#) keeps her minions very busy! In addition to all the work they do running our Library and answering your research enquiries, they put together mini-exhibitions of books we hold.

As the theme of the next issue of *The New Zealand Genealogist* is Occupations, it is very timely that in October, they put together one on Occupations.

In addition to the usual suspects of policemen, nurses and domestic servants, we have a very interesting collection of books that cover subjects like:

- The theatre
- Funeral directors
- Barmaids
- Herd testing
- Pharmacists

And Hangmen... As well as many others. If you need background information, our [Library](#) is the place to look.



**Give the gift of family
this Christmas!
Gift memberships
available on our
website**



A research project—New Zealanders who served with 50 and 61 Squadrons, RAF in WWII

Paul Hickford

In an endeavour to locate logbooks, photograph albums and any other worthwhile memorabilia, I have been assisting a team of researchers attempting to trace families of New Zealanders who served with 50 and 61 Squadrons, Royal Air Force (RAF), while they were based at Skellingthorpe, Lincolnshire, England, during the Second World War.

The following are the New Zealanders who served with 50 Squadron. Names marked with a cross show those who flew in a Hampden bomber:

George Robert BLUNDELL (1922–2004)
 Roy Oldfield CALVERT (1913–2002)
 Morell McKenzie COLE (1914–2006)
 Douglas James CRUICKSHANK (1911–1998)
 William John Keand ENDEAN (1923–1993)
 Cedric John EVANS (c 1923–1945)
 Victor William (Vic) FERGUSON (1919–1943)
 Ernest HEAP (1922–1977)
 Keith Campbell JOHANSON (1921–1943)
 John Strathearn LAWREY (1920–2004)
 Ian James LOVERIDGE (1921–1945)
 Anthony Seton LUXMOORE (1914–1940)
 John Stone MARRIS (1923–2013)
 Mervyn George McLISKY (1912–1987)
 Denis (Dusty) MILLER⁺ (1918–2009)
 Murray McLaren MILNE (1915–1952)
 John David MOUAT (1922–2006)
 Richard John ODGERS (1917–1944)

John Brokenshire PRICE (1914–1986)
 Maldon Ullisse ROBINSON (1918–1944)
 John Charles ROY (1920–1942)
 Ernest Arthur SISSON (1914–1943)
 Hugh Henry SKILLING (1920–2004), Eric John Walter STIRLING (1919–1944)
 Francis Norman STOKES (1923–1987)
 Thomas Stephen Archer TARRANT (1923–1945)
 Alexander Cameron THOMPSON (1923–2004)
 Thomas Richard THWAITE (1924–1945)
 John Marshall WADDELL⁺ (1918–1941)
 Francis Arnold WALLIS (1913–1996)
 Alfred Owen WELLS (killed in a flying accident in England) (1923–1950)
 Rupert Sutton WHITCOMBE (1920–1943)
 John Henry Francis WHYTE (1917–1989)

Cedric Evans, Thomas Thwaite and Ian Loveridge were all in the same aircraft. Ralph Franklin CARRODUS (1923–1945) was also a member of the aircrew. He was born in Waverley, NSW, Australia, and joined the Royal New Zealand Air Force in May 1942.

The following flew with 61 Squadron and, with a few exceptions, all as members of aircrew on Avro Lancaster bombers. Those who earlier flew in Manchesters have their names marked with an asterisk, while those in Hampdens are again marked with a cross. During the war, the squadron was also based at other airfields, including

Moonlit "On Freedom's Wings", Norton Disney, Lincolnshire

Photo: [Claire Hartley Photography](#)

Woolfox Lodge, Rutlandshire, and Syerston, Nottinghamshire.

Richard Bruce (Pat) ANDERSON (1922–1945)
Thomas Lindsay BOLAND (1916–1942)
Donald Wedgewood BOON (c 1920–2009)
William Warwick BOUSKILL (1924–1995)
Ian Hamilton BYERS (1917–2011)
Ian Melville CAMPBELL (1921–1944)
Derek Charles Gray CLINKHARD* (1915–1940)
John Grant COX (1921–1944)
Geoffrey Ernest DALE (1916–1942)
Edmond Jack GOODYER (1912–1944)
Walter Duncan HAMER (1920–1943)
Alfred Trevor HARVEY (1916–1989)
Francis Sydney HASLEMORE (1920–1941)
Owen HAYNES (1914–1942)
Maurice Leonard HUNT (1920–1945)
Edward Owen JOHNSON (1915–1942)
Donald James KING (1918–1942)
Frank Skipworth KIRKE (1917–1957)
James Benjamin LEIGH* (1918–1941)
Lloyd John Holmes LINCOLN (1915–1942)
Stanley Holmes LINCOLN (1917–1942)
James Day McKEOWN (1919–1942)
Noel Roy MEYER (1920–1942)
Montague John MILN (1920–1944)
Alfred Cecil NUTTALL+ (1912–1941)
Aubrey William OSMAN (1919–1942)
Arthur Mitchell PAAPE (1907–1976)
Frederick Stanley PARTRIDGE (1913–1942)
Jack Graham STEWART (1913–1942)
Benson USHER (1916–1942)
Ronald James WARREN (1911–1994)
Ivan Fenton WAUGH+ (1921–1941)
Norman David WEBB (1913–2205)
John 'Colin' WEBSTER (1921–1942)
George Ernest WESTON (1919–1942)
Ian Alfred WOODWARD (1914–1993)

Many of these men had brothers serving either in the Air Force or another military service. Pat Anderson's brother, Charles Kenneth Butler Anderson (1916–1943), served with the New Zealand Army in Italy. The Lincoln boys mentioned above were brothers. Arthur Paape's brother, John Mitchell

Paape (1914–1942), was an RAF pilot with 214 Squadron, RAF, and George Weston's brother, Godfrey Randal Weston (1921–1944), was attached to Conversion Unit, no. 1657, RAF at the time of his death.

There is every possibility that more men could be added to both lists.

Harrison Stanley CAMMISH (1923–2024), who was born in England and retired in New Zealand, was a pilot with 50 Squadron.

For the purpose of my research, I have created a family tree for each of these men on www.ancestry.com.au and in their gallery page I have added photos, accident reports and images of headstones from www.nzwargraves.org.nz.

On Facebook there is also a page for 'Friends of Skellingthorpe (Home of 50 & 61 Squadrons)'. There are numerous posts on the site.

Earlier this year, a life-sized Lancaster Bomber Memorial was installed close to the A46 highway between Lincoln and Newark, Lincolnshire, England.

The most significant success I have had was discovering Colin Webster's logbook, photograph album and other items, which are held by his cousin who lives near Whanganui. Included was a Vale (obituary) written for Colin by a former work colleague at the Bank of New Zealand, Dunedin.

It has proven a challenging but extremely rewarding research project with only a handful of successes, but I know the team collating all this material would be extremely grateful for any further logbooks, photos or other personal items belonging to these men.

Paul Hickford
E: hickytoago@gmail.com

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Wickes family reunion—a meeting of cousins

Pauline Weeks

A successful reunion of WICKES descendants of Edmund Wickes (1836–1913) was held in Greymouth 5–7 September 2025. It coincided with the 160th anniversary of Edmund's arrival in the town. Seventy attended, including 10 from Australia.

Grey District Mayor, Tania GIBSON, officially opened the event. She was very interested in the Wickes family history, particularly the gold watch that was presented to Edmund Wickes in 1866 by the freeholders of Greymouth for representing them at the Canterbury Provincial Council regarding their leases. As well as the watch, attendees also brought along a great range of family memorabilia, including photographs, war medals and a bridal veil.

Name tags were colour-coded to indicate which line descendants came down from four of Edmund Wickes' seven children. There was much catching up to do with many 'cousins' having never met before the weekend. Pauline WEEKS presented on how everyone was connected.

A family history book, *Timber and Gold: A Wickes Family History*, compiled by Pauline, was launched, revealing

revelations, surprises and secrets found in researching the book. The book was in great demand, selling out, as has a second print run.

The afternoon included 'let's talk about' sessions on Wickes' weddings and Wickes' war service, with family sharing many previously unheard stories. A highlight for many attendees was the concluding animation of a photograph of Edmund Wickes smiling down on all his descendants.

Saturday night, a dinner was held at the Australasian Hotel. This was followed by a commemorative service at Karoro Cemetery on Sunday morning led by Deacon Barry SMITHSON, of Rununga. The service concluded with a moving rendition of *Abide With Me*, which was played at the funeral of Edmund Wickes in 1913.

The weekend of celebrations concluded with a lunch at Monteith's Brewery, where farewells were made. Many attendees then took the time to do a tour of Greymouth, visiting Wickes sites of interest.

Pauline Weeks

E: pauline.weeks@gmail.com



Left: The gold watch presented to Edmund Wickes

Left: Lynnette Beirne (Kaniere), Mayor Tania Gibson and Pauline Weeks (Sydney) discussing the watch
Below: Wickes family reunion attendees



Book Reviews

Grace Hirst: A Settler's Life in New Plymouth

By Ian Connor

Published by Heritage Press, 2025

This book has used rich sources of information from letters that were written by Grace to her family in England. The reader forms a visual picture of the events, and the book has a number of illustrations.

Chapter One describes the nightmare of the voyage out on the *Gwalior* in 1851. There was an inadequate crew with a drunken captain. By the time the ship arrived in New Zealand after an extremely long voyage, it had been written off as lost. Provisions were also inadequate, and Grace provided nursing care for the captain.

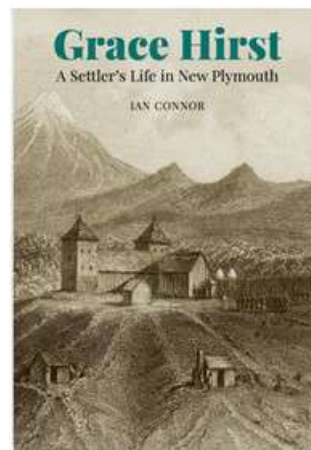
What did most early settlers do about building a home? Grace and family brought materials with them to erect a home once land had been bought. The home in Devon Street was, for many years, a New Plymouth landmark known as the 'Round House', although it was octagonal. Later the 'Square House' was built alongside. The family also bought land in Bell Block which they farmed.

With farming and trading, the family prospered. Significant detail is provided of their activities and their relationship

with the neighbouring Māori. Details are given of other activities, including flax milling.

Grace's long life provides continuity of detail in all aspects of their lives. Grace died in 1901 at the age of 96. She stated that they had had a better life in New Zealand than they would have had in England.

This book is a must for those with ancestors in New Plymouth, but it is also a valuable resource to anybody wanting details of life in the latter half of the nineteenth century. A family chart and index are included.



Reviewed by Margaret McGavin
FRC Shelf label: FH.HIRST

Pronouncing Dictionary of Scottish Place-Names

Published in 1990

Do you know that Kirkudbright is pronounced as KirKOOBree and not as KirCUD-BRIGHT? This and other unusual pronunciations are covered in this pocketbook of Scottish place names.

General information such as AU is pronounced as AWE, CH is pronounced as loCH is given. There is also a list of places for you to learn the pronunciation of before you travel to Scotland. Find out before you travel. I learned that the simple place name of Irvine was pronounced as Irvin on arrival.

Some examples are:

Aith as Aid
Hill of Row as ROO
Overtown as OVERun/tun
Riechip as Reh-hip

It is interesting to note that a survey which Scottish Secondary Schools submitted provided the names compiled.



Reviewed by Margaret McGavin
FRC Shelf label: SCT.DIC.PRONUNCIATION

**Student Memberships available
for the student genealogist aged 12-25!**

Maria R: Mary Queen of Scots: The Crucial Years

By The Duke of Hamilton

Published by Mainstream Publishing Company (Edinburgh) Ltd, 1991

This book, as implied by the title, covers what the Duke of Hamilton considered the crucial years of Mary Queen of Scots' life. The detail covered is considerable, including the names of many of the aristocracy.

If you have ever wondered why Mary chose Darnley as her spouse, this is probably explained by the list of suitors and information given about them. The details provided on page 34 read as the dregs of society. Phrases such as 'mad and getting madder' or 'hunchbacked, gluttonous, sadistic, megalomaniac, considered parricide' do not endear one to thinking highly of other suitors.

The plots and counterplots of Mary's reign are described in detail, and the participants in the plots are given good

coverage. If you have ancestors who were members of the aristocracy, you may find hitherto unknown information about them. The lead-up to Mary's decamping for England is extremely well described.

What makes this book interesting to the genealogist is the excellent glossary, bibliography, index, contents, maps, photos, bibliographical sketches and 30-page appendices. There is something for everybody.



Reviewed by Helen McLaren
FRC Shelf label: SCT.BIO.MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS

Members' enquiries and notices

This section is free to members for enquiries of a genealogical nature but is not available to non-members. Please be precise and state clearly what you want to know. For submission guidelines see the front of this journal. Where no details of a query are given it is presumed that the inquirer would be grateful for any information. When someone has taken the trouble to write to you with reference to your request for information, please acknowledge their letter whether the information they have shared is of use or not. It is customary to repay their postage.

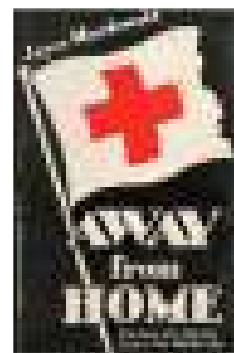
Information Offered

Just as a matter of interest, my mother wrote a book about her experiences as a New Zealand Army Nursing Sister with the 2nd NZEF in WWII, in Egypt.

The title is *Away from Home: The Story of a Nursing Sister in the Middle East* by Joyce Macdonald, printed 1946, published by Bookroom, Christchurch, New Zealand.

Two copies of this book have been given to Dunedin Library, and a copy is held by the National Library. It is available for purchase from Book Express, Browse Around Books and Unicorn Books.

Susan Guthrie
E: susan_guthrie@yahoo.com



Send your enquiry or notice to
editor@genealogy.org.nz



Find your nearest Branch
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website
www.genealogy.org.nz

Branch News



NZSG Howick Branch 40th Anniversary

On Saturday, 8 November 2025 the Howick Branch celebrated 40 years of affiliation with the New Zealand Society of Genealogists. The event was held at St Andrew's Church, Howick, our normal meeting venue. Fifty past and present members plus invited guests attended.

Convenor Robyn WILLIAMS opened with a welcome and a brief history of the branch. Sarah HEWITT, NZSG Chair, was the invited speaker and her talk, 'Sharing and Preserving Your Research Legacy', was well received.

Everyone then retired to the church hall, where a beautifully decorated cake was cut by Robyn and Sarah.

Those present were then able to partake in a lavish spread, mix and mingle, renew old acquaintances and view the many displays of photographs and information that adorned the walls.

It was a great day that everyone enjoyed. Many thanks to the Howick committee, who did a fantastic job of making this a memorable occasion.

Robyn Williams
Howick Branch Convenor
E: p.williams@xtra.co.nz



Above: Robyn William and Sarah Hewitt cutting the cake

Left: Gay Skinner, Graham Turner, Frances Lankow, Greg Clark, Rosemary Haden, Pam White.

Lynne Studman, Jennifer Clark, Robyn Williams, Ann Wheat, Annie Wells

NZSG Gore Branch is turning 50!

The Gore Group began in 1976 when Pam Milnes, who had been attending meetings in Invercargill, saw the need for such a group in Gore.

The inaugural meeting attracted 34 people, plus two from Invercargill as support. We have completed many projects over the years and have a core group of long-term members.

When I joined in 1983, there was an elderly couple, Jim and Agnes McFadzien, who are still remembered as strong

characters of the early club. He was the Treasurer, and she gave out the name tags as you came through the door, and look out if you did not hand it in at the end of the evening.

Our club has had no access to our holdings since lockdown, but we hope to move into new premises soon and will hold our celebration there on 28 March 2026.

Elaine Scott
E: ducknoff2@gmail.com
Convenor, Gore Branch



Online DNA Interest Group

A FREE benefit of NZSG membership

Sandra Metcalfe and Jane Chapman on behalf of the ODIG Planning Committee

Whether you are new to DNA and its application to genealogy, or experienced in its analysis, the ODIG Classroom has FREE resources for NZSG members of all levels of experience.

Many people take a DNA test out of curiosity to find out where their ancestors came from, not realising there is much more to gain from testing. The first step to maximising your results is to build an online tree based on what you already know. Start with yourself, link your test to your name, then gradually add on parents, grandparents and extended family. By building your tree and linking your test, you activate the ThruLines tool on Ancestry, which shows how you and your DNA matches may be connected to a Common Ancestor. Several AncestryDNA 101 videos on YouTube demonstrate this process and can also be found in the ODIG Google Classroom under New to DNA and Beginner Resources.

Note: Your tree needs to be either a public tree or a private indexed tree for ThruLines to work. They won't work if you have a private tree and have ticked the box to prevent your tree from being found in searches.

Understanding 'ethnicity' results

While it is generally common for people to talk about 'Ethnicity Estimates', the word 'ethnicity' is somewhat of a misnomer in this context. While MyHeritage still uses this term, AncestryDNA has moved away from it and now talks about 'Ancestral Regions'. FTDNA refers to 'MyOrigins'.

These estimates are, in fact, bio-geographical estimates. They show the estimated percentage of your DNA that looks most like the DNA from people with long histories in specified regions or amongst specific groups. AncestryDNA's Ancestral Regions give you a broad look at the people and places around the world you have ties to, and, according to AncestryDNA, are indicative of where your ancestors likely lived 1000+ years ago.¹ MyHeritage says its estimates go back 6–15 generations, or roughly 100–400 years ago.² While this suggests different approaches, both companies base their percentage estimates on Reference Panels. A Reference Panel is a set of people who have deep roots in a certain region or group and whose DNA is, therefore, typical of DNA from that place or group.

The Company compares your DNA to the DNA in the Reference Panels to identify the Reference Panel DNA that is most like each segment of your DNA. Each segment is then assigned to the region it most resembles. It is not a

precise science. All Ancestral Region percentages show as estimates with a +/- margin of error either way.

Different results—different companies

Each company has developed its own Reference Panels and algorithms for analysis. This is why your results differ between companies.

Different results over time

One of the first things that people look for when their DNA results arrive is their Origins. A sense of identity is a fundamental human need, and for those with little knowledge of their roots, seeing their 'ethnicity' results for the first time can be thrilling. However, it can be disappointing to find that—after an update from Ancestry or MyHeritage, your estimated percentages have changed—you may no longer be Norwegian, or Italian or Argentinian. For those unfamiliar with how these percentages are calculated, or who have done little genealogy research, it can be confusing or upsetting.

It is important not to take them too seriously. Use them to support your research alongside all the other information you have.

Your DNA doesn't change over time. What changes is the knowledge and ability each DNA company has by which to analyse it. Science and methods of DNA analysis evolve, and Reference Panels are changed and added to. The latest update at Ancestry is especially significant for those with European heritage, as there is now a more granular breakdown of regions. DNA testing technology is advancing rapidly, and the difference between today's analysis and what is likely to be available in five years is dramatic. In short, change is inevitable—new discoveries prompt refinement and lead to updated results.

The role of migration and history

Migration has been a constant in human history, while modern country boundaries are relatively recent. For example, Switzerland has four official languages—German, French, Italian and Romansh—reflecting its diverse origins before becoming an independent federation in 1848. Five hundred years ago, parts of Switzerland were under the Holy Roman Empire, while others were invaded by the French in 1798. AncestryDNA's results stretch back a long way. How different were things 1000+ years ago? Understanding the history and politics of your ancestral regions can help you interpret the regions assigned by the DNA companies.

The limits of DNA and genealogical records

While Ancestry’s Ancestral Regions give us a hint of who our ancestors were living amongst 1000+ years ago, it is highly unlikely that anyone has a tree—both accurate and complete on all lines—extending that far back! Reliable primary records are not available that far back. Nor do our

autosomal DNA match lists stretch back that far. With autosomal DNA tests, most DNA from such distant ancestors has been lost, and in any case, the reach of autosomal DNA is limited.

This chart shows the percentage of DNA inherited, on average, at each generation:

Number of ancestors	Relationship to you	Percentage of DNA shared, on average, with each ancestor	Average number of years between generations
1	You	100%	0
2	Parents	50%	25
4	Grandparents	13%	50
8	Great-grandparents	6%	75
16	2x Great-grandparents	3%	100
32	3x Great-grandparents	2%	125
64	4x Great-grandparents	1%	150
128	5x Great-grandparents	0%	175

This chart (ISOGG Cousin Statistics³) shows a different perspective of the probability that your autosomal DNA results will not find a detectable DNA relationship with distant genealogical great-grandparents:

Genealogical Relationship	Probability of No Detectable DNA Relationship
1 x great grandparent	0.00%
2 x great grandparent	0.00%
3 x great grandparent	0.01%
4 x great grandparent	0.56%
5 x great grandparent	4.95%
6 x great grandparent	17.76%
7 x great grandparent	37.43%
8 x great grandparent	57.53%
9 x great grandparent	73.50%
10 x great grandparent	84.38%
11 x great grandparent	91.12%
12 x great grandparent	95.07%
13 x great grandparent	97.31%
14 x great grandparent	98.54%

Ancestral Journeys (AncestryDNA)

Under the general heading ‘Origins’, Ancestry also provides Ancestral Journeys (in addition to the Ancestral regions talked about above). The MyHeritage equivalent is Genetic Communities.

Ancestral Journeys help you learn about where your relatives might have lived and moved in the past 300 years. These are determined differently from Ancestral regions. They do not draw on reference panels. Instead, Ancestral Journeys use your DNA matches to connect you with others

who come from a common group of ancestors.⁴ They show journeys and timelines dating back to the 1700s and are useful when used in conjunction with DNA match analysis.

While the more distant biogeographical information can provide valuable insights, especially if your parents come from different regions, the real key to success in using your DNA results to support your family history research is to focus on your DNA matches and ‘do the genealogy’.

Choosing a DNA test: Ancestry vs MyHeritageDNA

If you haven't taken a DNA test and are unsure which company to choose, there are many things to consider. Generally, most New Zealanders are best to start with AncestryDNA. It has the largest database (27 million+), and you cannot upload DNA data there from other companies.

MyHeritage has a relatively smaller database (6.5 million). It has recently stopped allowing uploads from other companies, so you may want to consider testing there as well, especially if you have unknown parentage or have roots that are primarily in Central or Eastern Europe.

A Regional Coverage Comparison⁵

Feature	AncestryDNA	MyHeritageDNA
Approx # regions	~1800+ regions	~2100+ regions
Primary Focus	North America, UK, Ireland & Europe	Europe, Middle East & global diversity
European Coverage	Very strong, especially British Isles & Scandinavia	Excellent for more Central, Eastern & Mediterranean sub regions
Asian Coverage	Expanding, good coverage for South & East Asia	Very strong across Middle East, South Asia & East Asia
Oceania & Pacific	Polynesian, Melanesian, Micronesian. Includes Māori	Similar Polynesian & Melanesian coverage
Jewish heritage regions	Ashkenazi, Sephardic, Mizrahi (strong)	Ashkenazi, Sephardic, Mizrahi (very strong, more sub groups)
Update Frequency	Regular algorithm & region updates	Less regular updates, often introduces new fine-scale groups

ODIG classroom resources relating to bio-geographical ancestry

The Google Classroom features four new videos explaining Ancestry's recent updates. They can be found under Biogeographical Ancestry ('Ethnicity' Estimates).

ODIG registration and support

To register for ODIG or for further information on accessing the Google Classroom, visit the ODIG section under the DNA tab on the NZSG website. For assistance, email onlinedna@genealogy.org.nz. Also refer to the ODIG articles in the March, June and September 2025 editions of *The New Zealand Genealogist*.

References:

1. support.ancestry.com/s/article/AncestryDNA-Ethnicity?language=en_US
2. education.myheritage.com/article/how-far-back-do-dna-ethnicity-estimates-go/
3. isogg.org/wiki/Cousin_statistics
4. support.ancestry.com/s/article/Renaming-Ancestral-Regions-and-Journeys?language=en_US
5. Comparative summary compiled by ChatGPT (2025), based on information from AncestryDNA and MyHeritage public documentation and update notes





Out of the ashes

Seven centuries of lost historical records covering espionage, political corruption and the lives of ordinary people in Ireland have been recovered and released. The Virtual Record Treasury of Ireland, a global academic collaboration led by Trinity College Dublin, deployed historians, computer scientists and other specialists to digitally recreate parts of a vast archive destroyed in Ireland's civil war.

It was long assumed that all was lost, but the project enlisted 75 archives and libraries in Ireland, the United Kingdom and around the world to source transcripts and duplicates of documents, many of which had lain, forgotten, in storage. The latest troves to be catalogued and digitised bring the total to 350,000 records and 250 million words of searchable Irish history.

The latest material includes 60,000 names from the lost censuses, creating a data hoard for genealogists and Irish diaspora descendants, among others, to trace family lineage, says Ciarán Wallace, a Trinity historian and co-director of the project. 'This is only a fragment of what's missing, but 60,000 is a huge improvement on a blank slate.' The material is searchable by surname or place name. Results will be linked to images of the manuscript or record, which will appear as part of the collection it belongs to. virtualltreasury.ie/2025-new-releases

Irish Roots

The Irish Roots magazine no. 135 third quarter 2025: Among the articles in this issue are: Using Griffith's Valuation Online Resource by Dr Mary Hatfield; From Matches to Segments: Getting started with Chromosome Browsers & Chromosome Painting by Donna Rutherford; Local Resources for Family Research Co. Monaghan by James G. Ryan; Brothers In Arms—1905 to 1922 by Pat Dargan; The Imirce Collection Irish Emigrant Letters and Life Stories—From North America by Marie-Louise Rouge; Surnames of Co. Monaghan by Séan Ó Murchadha and Landing Your Ancestral Research Trip to Ireland by Susan McKee.

Regular features—and another thing Steven Smyrl; Claire Santry's *What's New?* Review; *A Question of Genealogy* by Nicola Morris; *Australian Irish Connection* by Jennifer Harrison. *Irish Roots* 'provides readers with high quality informative content to assist them to overcome the many

hurdles so often encountered in Irish genealogy. This magazine offers valuable content for everyone from the budding family history enthusiast to the more experienced genealogist.'

Irish Roots magazine is available in digital format www.irishrootsmedia.com

Cumann Geinealais na béireann

Genealogical Society of Ireland—The Irish DNA Atlas Project 'The Irish DNA Atlas is a population DNA study of the island of Ireland established in 2011 and run by researchers at Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland (RCSI) in collaboration with the Genealogical Society of Ireland (GSI). Participants of the study provide a saliva sample and genealogical data. Analysis of this genealogical information by the Genealogical Society of Ireland allows the selection of participants whose eight great-grandparents have all been born within 50km of each other—meaning that the recent genetic and genealogical ancestry of each Irish DNA Atlas participant is representative of a specific location within Ireland.' familyhistory.ie/irish-dna-atlas/

Irish emigrant letters go online

A website has been launched containing a searchable database of digitised letters sent between Irish emigrants to North America and other destinations overseas and their relations back home in Ireland. Imirce imirce.universityofgalway.ie/p/ms was created by the University of Galway, and digitises a collection donated by US historian Kerby A Miller. Professor Miller's collection includes approximately 7000 letters from Irish emigrants dating from the late seventeenth to the mid-twentieth century, as well as memoirs and other historical documents. The letters provide poignant insights into ordinary people's lives.

[Extract from *Who Do You Think You Are* magazine]

Ireland calling—NZ family Robinson

As a teenager Daniel MAUNSELL, son of Michael Maunsell and Eileen O'REILLY of Castle Island, Co. Kerry, recalls a visit to their home from a New Zealand family named ROBINSON. After the visit from the Robinsons to Castle Island, Michael and Eileen kept in touch, however, over the past years, contact died off. Daniel would like to regain contact with the Robinson family.

Daniel's Grandparents, Patrick and Lily O'Reilly, were from Castle Island, his great-grandfather, Patrick O'Reilly, was from Roscrea, Co. Tipperary. Both Daniel's grandfather and great-grandfather were stonemasons by trade.

If you connect to the Robinson family that Daniel Maunsell is enquiring to make contact with, please email Irish.genealogy@xtra.co.nz.



Accredited Genealogists Ireland

The Accredited Genealogists Ireland (AGI) is the accrediting and representative body for professional genealogists on the island of Ireland (Ireland and Northern Ireland).

The recent AGI bulletin, Introduction to the Irish Census: A Guide for Family History Research, has been uploaded to our webpage.

genealogy.org.nz/filescust/CMS/Interest%20Groups/Accredited%20Genealogists%20Ireland%20-%20CENSUS2.pdf

Ireland's National Biographical Dictionary

An authoritative reference work of nearly 11,000 lives for scholars of Irish history, society and culture. www.dib.ie

Armstrong clan gathering

Clan ARMSTRONG announced their next gathering will be held in the Scottish Borders. The gathering has been confirmed as The Crown Hotel, Wetheral. Information on the Armstrong gathering is available at www.armstrongclan.info/gathering.html

Geraldene O'Reilly, Convenor, Irish Interest Group

E: IrishSIG@genealogy.org.nz

genealogy.org.nz/Branch-details/11084-s1100100/

The poster features a photograph of a street in Dunmanway, Ireland, with colorful buildings and trees. The text is overlaid on the image and a white background at the bottom.

Dunmanway Homecoming

Thursday 30 July to Saturday 01 August 2026

✿ Itinerary ✿

*Presented by the Dunmanway Historical Association
& the Descendants of Dunmanway and West Cork*

Thursday (Evening), July 30th

- ✿ 5PM Welcome Reception at Parkway Hotel
- ✿ Evening Family Meet Ups at the Parkway
- ✿ 7PM Official Opening, Welcome Address to the Dunmanway Diaspora

Friday, (All Day) July 31st

- ✿ Day Time Presentations on Family Tree Research and Local History
- ✿ 7:30PM Dinner Banquet and Toasting Event
- ✿ Evening entertainment with traditional Irish music and dance
 - ✿ Evening Family Meet Ups at the Parkway

Saturday, August 1st

- ✿ Bus Tour and Visits to Historic Sites around Dunmanway
- ✿ Visit to Ballinacarriga & Togher Castles & other historic sites
- ✿ Evening Street Entertainment commencing the Ballabuidhe Festival including; Ladies Day at the Races (Sunday), Horse Races (Sunday, Monday), Gig on the Green, Horse Fair Night Gathering (Tuesday) with traditional Horse Fair (Wednesday) and live music.

For more information, please email dunmanwayhc@gmail.com.

Branch and Interest Group Services

NZSG has over 50 Branches and Interest Groups throughout the country.

You can find your nearest group on the [Branches, Interest Groups & Area Contacts page](#) on our website.

HĀWERA

The SOUTH TARANAKI BIOGRAPHICAL INDEX consists of school admission records; newspaper birth, death and marriages; Anderson's memorialist records; funeral sheets. Request by surname. Send SAE and donation to: Jill Williams, Fairfield Road, Hāwera 4610 or email peter.williams@xtra.co.nz or julesmar@xtra.co.nz.

HAWKE'S BAY

HAWKE'S BAY BIOGRAPHICAL INDEX. Request by surname. Mail service only. Include contact telephone and/or email address. Send SAE and donation to Branch Secretary, c/o 200 Pakowhai Road, Frimley, Hastings 4120.

IRISH INTEREST GROUP – LOWER NORTH ISLAND

We hold education and research days locally, and across the Lower North Island region on request by branches and groups, and can also provide presentations and a helpdesk at genealogy events. Enquiries to Irish.LowerNI@genealogy.org.

NELSON

A database of half a million entries covering the wider Nelson area, from indexes and books in our library, Ancestors Attic. Includes pre-1856 marriage index, including Māori, passenger shipping lists 1840–1914 to and from Nelson and from the UK and Australia. E: nelson@genealogy.org.nz or PO Box 1879, Nelson 7040.

NORTH SHORE

Lookups for births and deaths c 1940 to date from *The New Zealand Herald*. Email request to northshore@genealogy.org.nz, or to Dennise Cook, Research Officer, North Shore Branch NZSG, PO Box 89045, Torbay, Auckland 0742. A small donation to the branch will be welcome, depending on results.

OAMARU

Oamaru Cemeteries CD Headstone Transcriptions. For both the Old and New Cemeteries. The Old Cemetery records have been updated. Cost \$25 including p&p. Enquiries to Oamaru@genealogy.org.nz.

PALMERSTON NORTH

Our SETTLERS DATABASE 1870–1900 contains 3,000 names or family groups. Cemetery headstone transcriptions; BDM newspaper clippings; school admissions transcriptions—20,000 and growing; funeral cards. Enquiries to: palmerstonnorth@genealogy.org.nz. Include what you already know. A small donation is requested.

PAPAKURA

The PAPAKURA AND DISTRICTS BIOGRAPHICAL INDEX includes Alfriston, Ardmore, Ararimu, Clevedon, Drury, Karaka, Kawakawa Bay, Maketu, Ramarama, Slippery Creek, Springfield and Wairoa South. Enquiries welcome, mail service only with SAE and donation to NZSG Papakura Branch, PO Box 72–993, Papakura 2244. E: papakura@genealogy.org.nz.

TE AWAMUTU

Booklets of MEMORIAL INSCRIPTIONS FOR ST JOHN'S and ST PAUL'S ANGLICAN CHURCHES including full transcriptions from cemetery and church interiors, plans, histories and index. Also digital images of inscriptions from both cemeteries, lookups for local school admission registers (varying dates) and local newspaper family notices (1911–1974). Enquiries to teawamutu@genealogy.org.nz.

WELLINGTON ARCHIVES RECORDS REQUESTS

While Archives New Zealand have suspended their digitisation programme, NZSG Kilbirnie Branch is available to do lookups for the Wellington Reading Rooms. Please provide the R reference from Archives NZ's Collections Search. A small koha is appreciated. Enquiries to Kilbirnie@genealogy.org.nz.

Contributions from branches and interest groups are always welcome in the journal—especially if you can pass on useful information from your area that may assist other members. Events, projects, new repositories and services, ways you have engaged in the community and given something back. Contact the Editor, E: editor@genealogy.org.nz



NZSG Certificates Collection

The NZSG's collection of over 136,000 Certificates is available via an email request service or by post.

An index is available on the Kiwi Collection.

Further details are available on our website

www.genealogy.org.nz