

JOHN WILLIAM RICHARD GUILDING

Philip Hart

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Historical Research Unit
Faculty of Arts & Social Sciences
The University of Waikato
Private Bag 3105
Hamilton, New Zealand

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Contact: prhart1940@gmail.com



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JOHN WILLIAM RICHARD GUILDING

Abstract: *Born in Auckland in 1842, by his late teenage years John William Richard Guilding was trading with Maori in the Piako district. Protected by a rangatira, he established a store at Kerepehi, but despite being known to be 'friendly' with Maori he was driven off after the start of the Waikato War. In 1864, again with the approval of a rangatira, he erected a store on the site of the future township of Thames. Although he claimed to have found signs of gold there, he was not the prospector who produced the samples that led to the opening of the goldfield. In 1869 he was appointed a licensed interpreter, in which role he assisted both the Crown and private individuals to acquire Maori land. Some of these transactions created controversy, and he was accused of tricking Maori. In 1875 his attempt to use his position as James Mackay's interpreter to acquire a lease of land at Tairua for his own financial gain provoked much criticism, and his 'irregular practices' led to his dismissal as a licensed interpreter in 1883. He would continue to act for individuals as both an interpreter and a land agent in Ohinemuri and Te Aroha in subsequent years.*

Guilding's close links with Maori were in part explained by his private life. Having married a 'half-caste' who later left him for another man, he had three more 'marriages' and several more children, who were brought up in Pakeha ways. Financially, he always struggled, filing as bankrupt twice and dying in straightened circumstances. At Te Aroha he held several minor official positions, sometimes being criticized for his performance. Active in local politics, he was generally unpopular and was never elected to the positions he sought. Throughout his life his reputation amongst a sizeable number of his contemporaries was poor.

HIS PARENTS AND BROTHER

In 1841, John Guilding, 'an old West Indian planter' who had been born in Worcestershire, arrived in New Zealand with his wife,¹ Anne.² In 1863 he had a dwelling house in Chancery Street but lived at 'Mechanic's Bay Hill, Waterloo Quadrant', a freehold property occupied by the provincial

¹ *Auckland Weekly News*, 1 April 1871, p. 12; *New Zealand Herald*, 5 January 1892, p. 5.

² Her son's family recalled her name as Mary Ann: see Death Certificate of John William Richard Guilding, 20 February 1915, 1915/818, BDM.

government.³ According to his elder son, John William Richard, he was a farmer,⁴ but at the time of his death in September 1864, of ‘general debility’, aged 65, he was a customs officer in Auckland, although he described himself as a gentleman.⁵ His obituary described him as ‘universally respected’ and an ‘exemplary’ citizen who had ‘long held an honorable appointment in Her Majesty’s Customs in Auckland’.⁶ His widow received £500, one third of his money, and a third of his furniture and effects; his two sons inherited two lots in Waterloo Quadrant, Auckland, and each received £500 and a third of the chattels.⁷

Anne Guilding died in June 1873.⁸ Her younger son, Thomas Edward, had died two years previously, aged 28; born in Auckland in 1843, at the time of his death he was a clerk in the harbour master’s office.⁹ Appointed lieutenant of the Auckland Naval Volunteers in 1863 and captain the following year, he participated in the war against Maori, and was ‘generally esteemed for many estimable qualities’.¹⁰ He had been active in both rowing in and organizing the Auckland regatta, and was secretary of the Sons of Old Colonists.¹¹ He had acquired a miner’s right for Thames, but no shareholdings have been traced.¹² There was a large attendance at his

³ Electoral Roll for City Board, East Ward No. 1, p. 4; Electoral Roll for City Board, East Ward No. 2, p. 10, *Auckland Provincial Government Gazette*, 23 May 1863, Supplement.

⁴ Death Certificate of John William Richard Guilding, 20 February 1915, 1915/818, BDM.

⁵ Electoral Roll for City of Auckland 1864-65, BADW 5989/21a, ANZ-A; Death Certificate of John Guilding, 14 September 1864, 1864/1146, BDM.

⁶ *New Zealand Herald*, 15 September 1864, p. 3.

⁷ Probate of John Guilding, Probates, BBAE 1568/238, ANZ-A; ‘Return of all the Houses, Cottages, and Warries with the name of their owners and principal occupiers ... in the district of Auckland in 1845’, Internal Affairs Department, IA 1, 1845/1939, ANZ-W.

⁸ Death Certificate of Ann Guilding, 1873/7238, BDM; Death Notice, *Auckland Weekly News*, 21 June 1873, p. 8.

⁹ Auckland Hospital, Register of Admissions 1870-1885, 62/1871, ZAAP 15287/2a, ANZ-A; Death Certificate of Thomas Guilding, 29 March 1871, 1871/3880, BDM.

¹⁰ Maori War Index, Army Department, AAYS 8661, AD 32, box 40, no. 1961, ANZ-W; *New Zealand Gazette*, 23 January 1863, p. 19, 6 May 1864, p. 189; *Auckland Weekly News*, 1 April 1871, p. 12.

¹¹ *Auckland Weekly News*, 4 January 1868, p. 3, 25 April 1868, p. 3, 2 May 1868, pp. 2, 5, 24 April 1869, p. 5.

¹² Thames Warden’s Court, Miners’ Rights Register 1868-1869, no. 10087, BACL 14358/2a, ANZ-A.

funeral, for he had been a Freemason and seen active service with the Naval Volunteers during the land wars, and was regarded as ‘one of the most actively benevolent men’.¹³ His friends bought a house for his widow and family.¹⁴

BEFORE SETTLING AT THAMES

John William Richard Guilding was born in Auckland on 14 January 1842.¹⁵ In 1860 he gave his occupation as farmer.¹⁶ In the early 1860s he ‘was in charge of a vessel trading with the natives on the East and West Coast and frequently visiting Australia on similar business’.¹⁷ At some time during that decade he lived with his father-in-law, William Nicholls,¹⁸ at a trading station established by Albert John Nicholas¹⁹ at Waiharakeke, on the banks of the Waihou River and on the southern boundary of the Aroha Block.²⁰ According to Guilding’s 1898 statement, for ‘some years’ before 1862 he was ‘running a vessel’ between the Piako River and Auckland. Matiu Te Katea, a rangatira who owned the Waipapa block, ‘used to suggest to me to put up a store there, at last I went there with a lot of goods’ to settle:

I know Te Kerepehi. I lived there. I lived at Rangitepu, I went there in 1862 to trade. Upon my arrival there was a dispute as to where I should put my store i.e. on whose land. It was decided that I should stop on Matiu Te Katea’s²¹ land. He employed some Natives to put up my store, he lived close to the store. The terms

¹³ *Auckland Weekly News*, 1 April 1871, p. 13, 16 November 1872, p. 4.

¹⁴ *Auckland Weekly News*, 16 November 1872, p. 4.

¹⁵ Te Aroha Warden’s Court, Old Age Pension Claims Register 1899-1909, no. 76, BBAV 11503/1a, ANZ-A.

¹⁶ Marriage Certificate of John William Richard Guilding, 23 January 1860, 1860/2625, BDM.

¹⁷ *Te Aroha News*, 22 February 1915, p. 2.

¹⁸ See paper on his life.

¹⁹ See paper on Maori land in Hauraki

²⁰ *Thames Advertiser*, 24 January 1873, p. 3; Albert J. Allom, *A Holiday Trip to Maungatautari, being the Journal of a Tour to the Waikato, via Ohinemuri and the Upper Thames* (Thames, 1873), p. 11.

²¹ See Thames Correspondent, *New Zealand Herald*, 10 May 1867, p. 5.

were rather troubling. Matiu being a great rangatira protected me. We lived on the hill, no one ever interfered with me.

He listed the Maori who had lived there permanently. ‘Ngatihako used to come from Te Awaiti’ and Ngati Rauhia ‘from up Piako to sell produce to me’. After living there ‘about a year’, he left ‘when the Koherua fight took place, but afterwards revisited Kerepehi, on the Piako River, to see a man he had ‘left there to trade’. Maori had ‘arranged for me to go there, then Matiu placed me in his land.... There was no agreement, one did not ask for any writing from a rangatira’. He had ‘a pig salting house’ near one corner of the Waipapa block. There were no cultivations, but he remembered ‘some grape vines near the store. I do not know who planted them. I used to eat them’.²²

In 1863, if not earlier, Guilding was in partnership with Frederick James Somerfield, a young man who was an early settler in the Thames district and would become a successful goldfield speculator.²³ Somerfeld claimed they were ‘the first settlers’ at Kerepehi.²⁴ In 1868, when giving evidence on behalf of another settler who had been forced to leave in 1863 after the outbreak of war in Waikato, Guilding deposed ‘that it was unsafe for Europeans to live at the Thames during the war’.²⁵ In October 1866, when seeking compensation for their losses during the this war, Somerfield stated that they ‘were disturbed in the middle of July 1863. We were compelled to leave – through the Native war’.²⁶ This bland statement gave no indication of what was reported at the time as an ‘escape’:

Last evening Mr J. Guilding arrived in the schooner “Victoria” from Piako, where he had been detained for some days by the natives of that district. It appears that on Thursday last, Mr Guilding left Auckland for the purpose of proceeding to his farm at Piako, with the view to securing the removal of his goods and chattels to Auckland, and for the carriage of which he had engaged the cutter “Frances” and the schooner “Victoria.” He arrived at his destination on Sunday. On the succeeding day Mr

²² Maori Land Court, Hauraki Minute Book no. 46, pp. 294-295 [punctuation added].

²³ Death Certificate of Frederick James Somerfield, 1885/3293, BDM; *New Zealand Herald*, 22 September 1885, p. 4; *Auckland Star*, 8 March 1915, p. 6.

²⁴ Compensation Court, *Daily Southern Cross*, 17 October 1866, p. 5.

²⁵ Compensation Court, *New Zealand Herald*, 23 January 1868, p. 4.

²⁶ Commission on Compensation Claims from Maori Wars, 1866, Minute Book, entry for 16 October 1866, Maori Affairs Department, MA 61/1, ANZ-W.

Chitham,²⁷ a settler of Piako, engaged with Mr Guilding for the removal of his (Mr C.'s) sheep – 400 in number – and they were gathered for the purpose of placing them on board, when the natives interfered. After a *korero* had been held, the natives said they would not permit them to be shipped until the sum of £5 was paid, and a native of some consequence, named Ati, made himself somewhat conspicuous by his bluster. The fine was paid, but through some obstruction only 120 out of the 400 were put on board. A second *korero* was afterwards held and Mr Guilding was ordered to be present. The second gathering had been convened in consequence of the “Frances” being on the point of starting to Auckland, and to consider whether any steps should be taken to arrest her progress. Mr Guilding, at the demand of the natives, offered himself as hostage for any claims they might have upon her, and she was then allowed to depart. On the same night a number of Maoris, of William Thompson’s [Wiremu Tamihana’s] party, came from Waikato, and visited Mr Guilding’s house for the purpose of taking away any guns he might have in his possession. Their errand was however fruitless, the guns having been sent away some time before. The visitors in departing informed Mr Guilding that “it was all right,” as the guns were taken away, because if he had had any on his premises he would have been the first to have been shot by them. On Tuesday morning, at 4 o’clock, three natives visited the house and informed Mr Guilding that it had been determined to rob the house and “to clear it out.” He inquired if anything more would be done to him than robbing him, and the Maoris hinted at the possibility of something more taking place – that he might be murdered. During the course of the morning many natives were seen prowling about the dwelling and outhouses, but not finding any guns, the house was not pillaged. In the afternoon a *runanga* was held, and Mr Guilding was asked to be present to hear what they had to say concerning his case. The natives appeared to be labouring under the impression that the “Frances” having arrived in Auckland, relief would be sent to Mr Guilding, and he was called upon to propose terms for his release. He entered into promises to send blankets, food, &c, in abundance, and a reluctant assent was given to his departure in the “Victoria.” He had previously conveyed on board the greater portion of his furniture.²⁸

²⁷ Either Alfred Chitham or his father: see *Daily Southern Cross*. 21 February 1860, p. 1, 19 November 1861, p. 4, 26 May 1862, p. 3, 7 June 1862, p. 3, 4 November 1864, p. 4.

²⁸ *Daily Southern Cross*, 31 July 1863, p. 2.

In 1927 Henry Medland Shepherd, who had been prominent in Hauraki mining,²⁹ recalled these events in an account headed 'Captured by Maoris During Waikato War'.

I was a young fellow about 20 years of age. A friend of mine named James Mackay, who was skipper of the schooner Victoria, told me that his vessel had just been chartered by a Mr John Guilding to go to Piako and remove the stock from the store, also to bring back his partner, a Mr Somerfield. Mackay asked me to go with him and just for the sake of the trip I consented. Neither of us had any idea that there was a certain risk in that trip.... The trip down was all right and we ran up the river to Kerepehi. We arrived free of hindrance from the Maoris, although at that time fighting was going on in the Waikato and also at Southern Wairoa. You see, Guilding was so friendly with the Maoris we never dreamed there would be any trouble about removing his goods. When we arrived at our destinations we found another cutter lying at anchor, which had been chartered to remove the stock from a store owned by a Frenchman names Louis Dihars.³⁰ A large number of Maoris were encamped on the eastern bank of the river. The position had been well chosen by the Maoris, as being surrounded by the river and a swamp it was safe from a surprise, like the majority of the situations selected by the Maoris during the war.

No sooner was our anchor down than some Maoris came off to search both vessels for arms and ammunition, but fortunately nothing contraband was found. The Maoris, however, took the precaution to remove the oars from the dinghy, and left guards in charge of both vessels. It was then I began to have some idea of the risk we had taken.

Trader's Store Raided.

Meetings were held by the Maoris two or three times each day, and it was quite evident to me that they were divided in their opinions as to what should be done with us pakehas. One night the Maoris went to Somerfield's store and searched it for arms and ammunition. Very fortunately, a week or two earlier Mr Somerfield's store and searched it for arms and ammunition. Very fortunately, a week or two earlier Mr Somerfield had sent his gun to Auckland to be repaired. Therefore, he had only some boxes of percussion caps on the premises. He took the first opportunity that offered to slip outside the store and scatter those caps as far abroad as he possibly could, and hurled the boxes into the fern so that they would not be found. The Maoris then ransacked the store. One would seize an article and say: "I will pay you when

²⁹ See *New Zealand Herald*, 28 July 1927, p. 12.

³⁰ Recorded as De Arr; see paper on Maori in Hauraki in the nineteenth century.

the war is over.” Others promptly followed the example set. By that time I had learned that we were practically in the centre of the Waikato fighting Maoris, and, of course, prisoners of war if they chose to consider us as such.

One day a meeting a meeting was held at which an old Maori chief and his wahine were the principal speakers. They were both fine specimens of the old rangatira, with the accustomed native dignity of speech and movement. Louis Dihars and myself were seated in the outer part of the ring of Maoris, listening to the arguments of the various speakers as to the advisability of allowing us to depart for Auckland or retaining us as prisoners of war. We were really upon our trial. We raised the plea that we had come there as peaceable people, and not in connection with the war, and our contention was supported by the rangatira and his wife. In proof of our statement, we laid special stress upon the fact that no arms or ammunition were found upon our schooner. Our advocates argued strongly that the peaceable people who came into the camp as traders with no firearms should be let go in safety. This was, however, as strongly opposed by another chief who lived near the mouth of the river....

It was not until after three days had been spent in the korero that it was ultimately agreed to let us go as non-combatants. Pointing to the hills to the west, the old chief said, “You must be away before the sun sinks beyond those.” I can tell you the permission was very welcome....

We would have gone at once had it not been for the fact that the natives wanted to sell us all the pigs and gum they had. They were determined to take advantage of the opportunity afforded of getting what money we had for the things they wished to sell. I have since thought that was the real reason why at last they agreed to let us go, for the Maoris who wished to detain us as prisoners of war all lived further away, and had no goods to sell....

Posing as Captain.

Mr Guilding came to me and said he had brought 100 sovereigns from Auckland, and was afraid that if the Maoris knew they would confiscate the cash. He suggested that I should take charge of the money and assume the position of skipper of the schooner, to which I agreed, and we took the precaution to hide the bag of gold underneath the ballast. Messrs Guilding and Somerfield then got busy buying pigs and gum from the Maoris. When, however, the time arrived for payment, Mr Guilding said he had no money but offered to bring it when he returned from Auckland. Evidently the Maori were afraid that the war would prevent him from coming back again, because they insisted upon it being a cash transaction. It was for this that I had been posing as skipper, for Mr Guilding said, “Perhaps the captain has some money he will lend me.” He then came on board the schooner,

accompanied by a number of Maoris, and formally requested that I should lend him the money. I replied very gravely that if I lent the money they might not let the schooner get away with the pigs and gum. At this the Maoris looked very gloomy, but finally I agreed to lend the cash, the Maoris promising on their part to put the pigs and gum on board and let us leave for Auckland. I then went down the hold and returned with a bag of sovereigns and we all went ashore. I sat beside Mr Guilding on the beach and as the pigs and gum were put on board paid over the cash.

Stuck on a Sandbank.

As soon as the cargo was aboard we set sail before the sun set behind the hills in the west. It was, however, recognized that we were not yet out of danger, as we had to go down the river and also to pass the point where was located the kainga of the chief who was so persistent in his desire to detain us as prisoners of war.... You can imagine our disgust when just before dark the schooner took the ground, as the tide was falling, and there was nothing for us to do but to wait for the next tide. That was a very anxious night for us, as we feared that any moment we might be attacked. Our fears were increased when before the tide rose sufficiently to permit the schooner sailing next morning a canoe came alongside, in which was a Maori who made the complaint that we had taken away from the store some sugar and other goods for which they had paid. In my capacity as captain I made formal inquiry, and, finding that it was true, ordered the goods to be handed to the Maoris. I also apologized for the mistake that had been made. The chief then handed to Mr Guilding an order for certain goods he was to return with in three weeks' time. The list included certain types of trousers and waistcoats, it being stipulated that the latter must have pockets large enough to permit of [percussion] caps being carried on one side and cartridges on the other. The list was a long one – but not so long as the time we intended to take before returning to that place.

As soon as our visitors had gone and the tide was high enough to float the schooner, we poled very quietly past the point where our enemy with the crooked mouth resided, and were thankful not to have been seen. Immediately we were well clear of the bay we relieved our pent-up feelings by giving three cheers, and sailed away from Auckland.³¹

Somerfield later gave details of what happened to their property:

The buildings were not destroyed only injured. The damage was not particularly great the claim is more for non occupation. We have never been back we could have gone in 8 or 8 months.... The

³¹ *Auckland Star*, 22 August 1927, p. 5.

stores were taken by natives. I ascertained the value from Invoice of Goods we got from town. We received nothing.³²

They claimed £393 10s 6d, of which the most notable items were a dwelling house valued at £30, a salting house worth £25, £85-worth of goods taken from their store, book debts of £230, and removal expenses of £8. They were awarded £103 10s 6d.³³ Somerfield believed 'we could have returned in about six or eight months. Other persons were back in about nine months'.³⁴ In 1898, when claiming to have participated in the war despite the Army Department knowing nothing of his involvement, Guilding sought compensation for unspecified military service; not having applied correctly, his application was rejected.³⁵

THAMES

In 1869, when asked whether any Pakeha had lived at Kauaeranga before Shortland, the southern portion of Thames, was established, Sinclair Puru³⁶ named Joseph Cook, a carpenter.

It is only since the Waikato war and peace was made that John Guilding lived there.
Who gave permission to Guilding to live there?
Hanauru Taipari was the first, and Rapana was the person who placed him there permanently.³⁷

³² Commission on Compensation Claims from Maori Wars, 1866, Minute Book, entry for 16 October 1866, Maori Affairs Department, MA 61/1, ANZ-W; Compensation Court, *Daily Southern Cross*, 17 October 1866, p. 5.

³³ Commission on Compensation Claims from Maori Wars, 1866, Notes on Claims: Coromandel, p. 16 Maori Affairs Department, MA 61/2; Return of Compensation Claims, 1866, Maori Affairs Department, MA 61/3, ANZ-W; Compensation Court, *Daily Southern Cross*, 13 August 1865, p. 5, 17 August 1865, p. 5.

³⁴ Compensation Court, *Daily Southern Cross*, 17 October 1866, p. 5.

³⁵ 'Reports of Public Petitions A to L Committee', *AJHR*, 1898, I-1, p. 6; Maori War Index, Army Department, AD 32, ANZ-W.

³⁶ See Ohinemuri Correspondent, *Thames Advertiser*, n.d., reprinted in *Daily Southern Cross*, 21 May 1870, p. 6.

³⁷ Maori Land Court, Hauraki Minute Book no. 2, p. 220.

Taipari, later known as Wirope Hoterene Taipari, was a leading Ngati Maru rangatira, as was Rapana Maunganoa.³⁸ In 1870 Guilding stated that he had known Taipari for ten years.³⁹ After Rapana ‘consented that Guilding should stay to trade with all the people’, Sinclair Puru erected his house. ‘All the natives wished the white man to come’.⁴⁰ Guilding claimed that by 1869 he had lived at Thames for eight or nine years, an exaggeration, because Nicholls first gave him land there in 1864.⁴¹ In 1888 he said that he had gone to live at Kauaeranga with Nicholls about three years before the goldfield opened,⁴² confirming the 1864 date. This land was on the beach, and under an agreement made in 1865 he paid rent to the rangatira.⁴³ Also in 1865, he owned the cutter ‘Kate’, which was chartered by traders to the Bay of Plenty.⁴⁴

Guilding had a store on the beach, near where the Hape Stream ran into the Kauaeranga (originally Whakaurunga) River, with ‘a good anchorage for small vessels’ opposite it.⁴⁵ In 1869 he recalled a squabble over the boundary of his land with his landlord, Rapana, after he had turned some Ngati Awa off the beach and started fencing the landing stage, forcing Maori to come ashore on tapu land.⁴⁶ He traded in kauri gum dug from the hills by Maori.⁴⁷

In August 1866, concerned at Pakeha smuggling arms and ammunition to ‘disaffected natives’, James Mackay, Civil Commissioner for Hauraki, enrolled Guilding, ‘a storekeeper on the Piako’, and several other men as special constables, and sent them ‘into the Piako to search vessels coming up the river’. When they boarded the cutter ‘Aloe’ they found weapons and ammunition hidden, and at the subsequent hearing in the Native Circuit Court, presided over by Mackay and ‘assisted by three native

³⁸ See paper on Maori and goldfields revenue.

³⁹ Evidence to Goldfield Discovery Reward Investigation, p. 278, Auckland Provincial Papers, box 21, Session 26, MS 595, Auckland Public Library.

⁴⁰ Maori Land Court, Hauraki Minute Book no. 2, pp. 220-221.

⁴¹ Maori Land Court, Hauraki Minute Book, no. 3, p. 12.

⁴² Maori Land Court, Hauraki Minute Book no. 19, p. 312.

⁴³ Maori Land Court, Hauraki Minute Book no. 19A, pp. 25-26.

⁴⁴ *New Zealand Herald*, 7 August 1865, p. 3.

⁴⁵ Maori Land Court, Hauraki Minute Book no. 19, p. 312; *Auckland Weekly News*, 3 August 1867, p. 6.

⁴⁶ Maori Land Court, Hauraki Minute Book no. 3, p. 12.

⁴⁷ Maori Land Court, Hauraki Minute Book no. 9, p. 43.

assessors', one being Taipari, Guilding and a Maori policeman were the principal witnesses.⁴⁸ Three months later, a Thames correspondent, in reporting that 'Sergeant-major Guilding' was boarding vessels at the entrance to the Waihou River to check for arms, commented that there was 'one vessel constantly running up the river which the Sergeant-major has always neglected boarding (viz, the schooner "Caroline"). Why she should be an exception I am at a loss to know'.⁴⁹ Presumably bribery was implied.

In about April 1867 some gold was found on 'European land, in the neighbourhood of Mr Guilding's place'.⁵⁰ In 1913, James Middleton recalled prospecting the district with Guilding and others. After spending two years on the Victorian goldfields, in 1863 he had returned to Auckland, where he met Guilding's brother Thomas, who told him 'he thought that alluring article was to be found at Thames. James Middleton, therefore, with his brother hit out for the Thames without hesitation. Mr John Guilding at this time (1863) kept a native store at Thames and the brothers stayed with him', and at the only place on the Karaka Creek they were permitted to prospect they found 'a fair lot of black sand and good colours of gold', which Middleton believed was 'the first gold ever found at the Thames'. But when his recollections listed his 'working mates' as his brother William, Walter Williamson, 'Joe Swalmann' (meaning Joseph Harris Smallman), and two Maori,⁵¹ it is clear that he was referring to the prospecting that took place in 1865: Taipari brought Walter Williamson and Joseph Harris Smallman to prospect there in that year,⁵² Guilding provided them with a pick.⁵³ Middleton recalled that while Maori were at a tangi at Hikutaia he went with his brother, Guilding, and two other men to test the Kuranui Creek, an area they had been told (by unnamed Maori) contained gold. By miscounting the creeks they only reached the Moanataiari Creek, where, although they 'hesitated to disturb the ground', he found a good prospect in the creek.⁵⁴ In 1870 Guilding claimed that three or four days after settling at Thames he 'first saw gold', subsequently obtaining samples from the

⁴⁸ *Daily Southern Cross*, 24 September 1866, p. 5.

⁴⁹ Thames Correspondent, *Daily Southern Cross*, 26 November 1866, p. 5.

⁵⁰ *New Zealand Herald*, 20 July 1867, p. 5.

⁵¹ *Observer*, 4 October 1913, p. 4.

⁵² See paper on Smallman.

⁵³ Evidence to Goldfield Discovery Reward Investigation, p. 278, Auckland Provincial Papers, box 21, Session 26, MS 595, Auckland Public Library.

⁵⁴ *Observer*, 4 October 1913, p. 4.

Karaka, Hape, and Moanataiari Creeks, 'but was not allowed to prospect there. Rapana threatened to burn my house'.⁵⁵ He did not mention prospecting with others, and cannot have found good prospects or he would have made more of his discoveries.

INTERPRETER AND LAND AGENT

When the township of Shortland was established late in 1867, Guilding's close association with Maori, who knew him as Hone Kirini,⁵⁶ meant he become an interpreter, although he was not appointed one officially until October 1869; not reappointed the following year, he was reappointed two years later.⁵⁷ In August 1872 he was referred to as 'the well-known native Interpreter and agent',⁵⁸ the latter referring to his involvement in acquiring Maori land. His obituary described him as James Mackay's 'right hand man', rendering 'great service' in negotiating leases and sales.⁵⁹ He also acquired an interest in one block of land for himself.⁶⁰ It was probably he, and not his brother Thomas as was reported, who in December 1867 took a census of Maori in Ohinemuri; he carried a letter from Mackay urging Maori not to let any miners into their district.⁶¹ Three months later he was able to clarify which Maori had stolen a safe from the courthouse.⁶²

In 1869, Guilding was a witness in a case against a Pakeha for cutting timber on land at Thames owned by Te Karauna Hou,⁶³ of Ngati Rahiri. He had been with Karauna when the latter saw the accused cutting the timber.

⁵⁵ Evidence to Goldfield Discovery Reward Investigation, p. 278, Auckland Provincial Papers, box 21, Session 26, MS 595, Auckland Public Library.

⁵⁶ R.J. Gill, Notes and Memoranda on Ohinemuri Goldfields, Paeroa, May-June 1882, p. 55, Maori Affairs Department, MA 1, 13/546, ANZ-W.

⁵⁷ *New Zealand Gazette*, 2 October 1869, p. 536, 11 October 1870, p. 512, 18 October 1872, p. 1776.

⁵⁸ *Thames Guardian and Mining Record*, 28 August 1872, p. 3.

⁵⁹ *Te Aroha News*, 22 February 1915, p. 2.

⁶⁰ 'Return of all Persons Interested in the Passing of the Native Land Administration Act Repeal Bill', *Journals and Appendix to the Journals of the Legislative Council of New Zealand*, 1888, Appendix no. 2, p. 15.

⁶¹ *Auckland Weekly News*, 14 December 1867, p. 23.

⁶² *Auckland Weekly News*, 21 March 1868, p. 13.

⁶³ See paper on his life.

‘When I went up I went to put some notices up’ forbidding this, and denied offering ‘£5 for the lower portion of the bush’.⁶⁴ When a surveyor encountered opposition over the Hihi and Piraunui block, near Thames, Guilding and Karauna went to sort out the problem.⁶⁵ In October 1871, Meremana Konui of Shortland advertised that the power of attorney given to Guilding in April had been revoked, and cautioned people against paying money to him on her account.⁶⁶ Guilding responded that he had not received notification of this revocation, and had ‘refused to act as Attorney or Agent’ for the last three months.⁶⁷ The following year, when a leading rangatira, Taraia, died, his relatives asked Guilding to obtain a glass-fronted coffin from Daniel Pollen, whom Guilding had supported in an election for Superintendent of the Auckland Province.⁶⁸

Guilding participated in a very minor way in the Thames goldfield. He acquired a miner’s right on 18 October 1867 and another on 4 November, presumably for a miner to work his sleeping share in a claim.⁶⁹ In 1869 he had 500 of the 20,000 shares in one mining company; three years later it sued him for £10 8s 4d, presumably for calls.⁷⁰ In 1873 he forfeited his 50 shares in another company because a call was unpaid.⁷¹ He was one of six owners in a Coromandel claim in 1871, within a month selling one quarter of his share for 5s.⁷²

In 1870, a Guilding, presumably John, was on the committee organizing a regatta at Thames.⁷³

⁶⁴ Thames Magistrate’s Court, Warden’s and Resident Magistrate’s Notebook July-August 1869, hearing of 5 August 1869, BACL 14457/1c, ANZ-A.

⁶⁵ Maori Land Court, Hauraki Minute Book no. 9, p. 42.

⁶⁶ Advertisement, *Thames Guardian and Mining Record*, 16 October 1871, p. 1.

⁶⁷ *Thames Guardian and Mining Record*, 17 October 1871, p. 2.

⁶⁸ *Thames Guardian and Mining Record*, 14 March 1872, p. 2; *Auckland Weekly News*, 18 September 1869, p. 2.

⁶⁹ Thames Warden’s Court, Miners’ Rights Register 1867-1868, nos. 1265, 1782, BACL 14358/1a, ANZ-A.

⁷⁰ *Auckland Provincial Government Gazette*, 23 August 1869, p. 773; Auckland District Court, Warrant Book 1868-1888, 85/1872, BADW 10478/1a, ANZ-A.

⁷¹ *Thames Advertiser*, 19 December 1872, p. 2, 14 March 1873, p. 2.

⁷² Coromandel Warden’s Court, General Register of Transferred Shares 1870-1872, folios 46, 50, ZAAN 1160/1a; Instruments 1870-1872, nos. 896, 897, AAAE 15180/4a, ANZ-A.

⁷³ *Thames Advertiser*, 17 December 1870, p. 3.

FIRST MARRIAGE

In January 1860, at Otawheo, near Te Awamutu, Guilding married Charlotte (later known as Harriet), the eldest daughter of William Nicholls and Hera Te Whakaawa. He was aged 18 and his bride was one year younger. They wed in church,⁷⁴ unusual for most inter-racial marriages. In 1879 a land speculator travelling up the Waihou River considered himself to have been fortunate to have on board ‘a very clever Maori linguist, named Harete, a daughter of Mr Nicholls’, for she was ‘thoroughly reliable’.⁷⁵ When the Te Ruakaka block at Te Aroha was before the court in 1869, Charlotte Guilding claimed ownership through her mother’s Ngati Haua ancestry: ‘I resided there before Tutuki and others of Ngatimaru came there’ and erected houses.⁷⁶ The court determined that, as her ancestor Parekauere ‘held undisturbed possession to the time of his death’, the land should be granted to his four nearest relatives.⁷⁷ Subsequently two of these, Charlotte and her uncle, Te Keone Te Wharenuui, a Ngati Haua rangatira,⁷⁸ applied for the title.⁷⁹ In 1882 another relative, Wiremu Te Huia, gave his Te Aroha land to her.⁸⁰

They had two daughters: Mary Anne, born in 1862, whose birth was registered,⁸¹ and Evelyn Alice, born two years later,⁸² whose was not. In mid-May 1869, Charlotte Guilding of Shortland was sued to enforce payment of goods worth £3 6s 3d.⁸³ Guilding must have parted from her shortly afterwards, because her first child by Joseph Harris Smallman was

⁷⁴ Marriage Certificate of John William Richard Guilding, 23 January 1860, 1860/2625, BDM; *Daily Southern Cross*, 14 February 1860, p. 2.

⁷⁵ Letter from S[amuel] Stephenson, *Thames Advertiser*, 13 October 1879, p. 3.

⁷⁶ Maori Land Court, Waikato Minute Book no. 2, p. 265.

⁷⁷ Maori Land Court, Waikato Minute Book no. 2, p. 305.

⁷⁸ Maori Land Court, Waikato Minute Book no. 2, p. 265.

⁷⁹ James Mackay to Daniel Pollen, 24 June 1872, Maori Affairs Department, MA 1, 13/85, ANZ-W.

⁸⁰ Wiremu Te Huia to – Joyce, 3 April 1882, Maori Affairs Department, MA 1, 13/86, ANZ-W.

⁸¹ Birth Certificate of Mary Anne Guilding, 1862/5290; Death Certificate of Evelyn Alice Guilding, 25 August 1872, 1872/9225, BDM.

⁸² Death Certificates of Mary Anne Guilding, 25 August 1872, 1872/9222; Evelyn Alice Guilding, 25 August 1872, 1872/9225, BDM.

⁸³ Thames Magistrate’s Court, Plaintiff Book 1869-1871, 48/1869, BACL 13737/1a, ANZ-A.

born in November 1870.⁸⁴ In August 1872, his daughters were drowned by the upsetting of a canoe at Mangamutu, near the junction of the Waitoki Stream and the Waihou River.⁸⁵ Accompanied by their aunt, Susan Nicholls,⁸⁶ the girls were travelling to Thames ‘on their way to Auckland, to be placed at school. The aunt managed to swim ashore, but the children (who could swim also, we believe) were not so fortunate’. Guilding hurried to the scene of the tragedy.⁸⁷ A local correspondent reported that Susan and the two ‘fine’ girls had tried to cross the river where the banks were ‘very steep and the current runs strong. Miss Nicholls was swept under for a considerable distance, and when she rose barely managed to get ashore in a very exhausted condition’. ‘Great sympathy’ was felt for the relatives, ‘old and well-known settlers in this district’.⁸⁸ Clearly, after their mother deserted them to live with Smallman, his daughters were being brought up by their aunt and grandfather because his occupation required him to live in Thames. Two weeks after the drowning, their bodies still had not been found. ‘The bereaved father, after using every means in his power to discover them, but in vain’, returned to Thames,⁸⁹ where he registered their deaths: Mary Ann was aged ten, and her sister eight.⁹⁰ There were no reports of their mother visiting the site of their deaths or of their bodies being found. A visitor who had a meal with the Nicholls family at Mangamutu in December found Susan Nicholls ‘in deep mourning’; he was told that the children had crossed the river ‘during a freshet’.

Their aunt, Miss Nicholls, who was with them, very nearly met the same fate in attempting to save them. She said that she would have been drowned but for the timely help of an old native woman, who jumped in to her assistance, and we could perceive that the circumstances of this terrible accident were so painful and recent that it would have been cruel to recall them by any unnecessary remark.⁹¹

⁸⁴ See paper on Smallman.

⁸⁵ For details of the location, see paper on William Nicholls.

⁸⁶ See paper on William Nicholls.

⁸⁷ *Thames Guardian and Mining Record*, 28 August 1872, p. 3.

⁸⁸ Ohinemuri Correspondent, *Thames Guardian and Mining Record*, 29 August 1872, p. 3.

⁸⁹ Ohinemuri Correspondent, *Thames Advertiser*, 9 September 1872, p. 3.

⁹⁰ Death Certificates of Mary Ann Guilding, 25 August 1872, 1872/9222; Eveylin Alice Guilding, 25 August 1872, 1872/9225, BDM.

⁹¹ Allom, p. 8.

LIVING IN OHINEMURI WITH A NEW WIFE

Although the 1873 electoral roll recorded Guilding's address as Grey Street, Shortland,⁹² he was also living in Ohinemuri. In November 1872 he helped to form a cricket club at Paeroa,⁹³ and he was a member of the committee that organized sports and races to celebrate the new year.⁹⁴ In September 1878, Rapata (sometimes Ropata) Te Pokiha, a rangatira of the Te Uriwha hapu of Ngati Tamatera,⁹⁵ told the land court that when he had lived at Opita pa 'Mr Guilding went to live there he had my daughter to wife at that time and it is through her he went there'.⁹⁶ Her name was recorded, variously, as Harete, Atareta, and Mete; her date of death is unknown, but was before November 1889.⁹⁷ Guilding stated that he lived near the eastern boundary of this land with Rapata's permission 'about six months about four years since', meaning 1874.⁹⁸ In July 1875, he was a witness at the wedding of Rapata to Raima Pohehe.⁹⁹ At another hearing, he said that he was put on the land because of marrying Rapata's daughter. 'I was perhaps 2 years there. Wini Kerei was my companion. Te Pokiha put him there'. He supported Rapata's claim to own Opita.¹⁰⁰ Two years later, Rohitoto Mataia, wife of William Grey Nicholls,¹⁰¹ deposed that Rapata Te Pokiha placed 'his son-in-law John Guilding' at Komata 'with his sister-in-law to wife', which confused the relationships.¹⁰²

A THIRD WIFE

⁹² *Thames Electoral Roll, August 1873-September 1874*, Auckland Provincial Government Papers, ACFM 8183, 3015/73, ANZ-A.

⁹³ *Thames Advertiser*, 8 November 1872, p. 2.

⁹⁴ *Thames Advertiser*, 27 November 1872, p. 3.

⁹⁵ Maori Land Court, Hauraki Minute Book no. 11, p. 296.

⁹⁶ Maori Land Court, Hauraki Minute Book no. 11, p. 327.

⁹⁷ Maori Land Court, Hauraki Minute Books, no. 24, p. 25; no. 29, p. 184; no. 39, p. 85; no. 49, p. 136.

⁹⁸ Maori Land Court, Hauraki Minute Book no. 11, pp. 337-338.

⁹⁹ Marriage Certificate of Ropata Te Pokiha, 19 July 1875, 1875/1670, BDM.

¹⁰⁰ Maori Land Court, Hauraki Minute Book no. 14, p. 179.

¹⁰¹ See paper on their lives.

¹⁰² Maori Land Court, Hauraki Minute Book no. 16, p. 275.

In December 1876, Guilding was living at Puke Te Wainui, on the Ohinemuri River, and three years later at 'Ohinemuri River'. Unable to remarry because his first (and second?) wife was still alive, he was by then living with Rebecca or Ripeka Parehuia, otherwise Parihina Parihuia.¹⁰³ As he remained married to his first wife, a year after she received £4 for her interest in a block of land in the Thames district, Guilding, recorded as being her husband, received £1 for it.¹⁰⁴

His third relationship produced two more daughters, neither of whose births was registered. Mary Anne, otherwise Mere (named after his first daughter?), was born in December 1876; she would marry a quarter-caste, Robert Henry Foley, in 1896, and die ten years later.¹⁰⁵ Martha, otherwise Mata, was born at Paeroa, in 1878; she married Titikura Rapana in 1895.¹⁰⁶ Through their ancestor Piniha Marutuahu, they had interests in many Ohinemuri and Aroha blocks.¹⁰⁷ When only five-years-old, Mary was a dummy for her father in his obtaining a residence site in Te Aroha.¹⁰⁸ They received £50 11s from the sale of their interests in one Ohinemuri block in 1883; because of their age, their father must have arranged the sale.¹⁰⁹

ASSISTING THE CROWN ACQUIRE MAORI LAND

¹⁰³ Register of Baptisms at Thames 1874-1880, nos. 534, 806, Anglican Archives, Auckland; St Mark's Church, Te Aroha, Marriage Register 1897-1905, no. 1, Anglican Diocesan Archives, Hamilton.

¹⁰⁴ Register of Payments to Individuals for Purchase of Land 1873-1880, p. 63, Maori Affairs Department, MA-MLP 7/7, ANZ-W.

¹⁰⁵ Register of Baptisms at Thames 1874-1880, no. 534, Anglican Archives, Auckland; Marriage Certificate of Mary Ann Guilding and Robert Henry Foley, 30 May 1896, 1896/560; Death Certificate of Mary Ann Foley, 13 May 1906, 1906/2919, BDM; Maori Land Court, Hauraki Minute Book no. 55, p. 24.

¹⁰⁶ Register of Baptisms at Thames 1874-1880, no. 806, Anglican Archives, Auckland; Birth Certificate of Martha Guilding, 4 October 1895, 1895/2101, BDM.

¹⁰⁷ Maori Land Court, Hauraki Minute Book no. 28A, pp. 63, 98-99; Aroha Block X11 section 36, Block Files, H1089, Maori Land Court, Hamilton; Aroha Block 1X section 20, Maori Affairs Department, Hamilton, BACS A102/5817, ANZ-A.

¹⁰⁸ Te Aroha Warden's Court, Register of Applications 1880-1882, folio 215, no. 315, BBAV 11594/1a, ANZ-A.

¹⁰⁹ 'Statements of the Facts and Circumstances Affecting the Ohinemuri Block', Appendix H, Lands and Survey Department, LS 36/25a, ANZ-W.

In 1881, Guilding was described as ‘well acquainted with native manners and customs’.¹¹⁰ Although not a government employee, in the 1870s James Mackay employed him as his interpreter.¹¹¹ His obituary stated that he did ‘good work’ preparing for the opening of the Ohinemuri goldfield.¹¹² Like other of Mackay’s employees, sometimes he paid storekeepers for goods supplied to Maori on Mackay’s instructions.¹¹³ In May 1873, when at one meeting in Ohinemuri he ‘was the only European present’, a correspondent believed ‘that the whole of the proceedings here and the movements of the pakeha are well reported to head quarters’.¹¹⁴

Appointed a licensed interpreter once more in May 1874,¹¹⁵ Guilding was widely used as such. In September 1873, he accompanied a candidate for Superintendent who was seeking Maori votes through Ohinemuri to Tauranga.¹¹⁶ Presumably he translated at Tauranga, for he attended meetings there and criticized press reports of them.¹¹⁷ When the ‘Broomhall Settlement’ was planned for part of the Aroha Block,¹¹⁸ he accompanied the vendor to inspect the land, Mackay explaining that, to avoid Broomhall ‘having to ask from natives there about the land’, he sent ‘my own interpreter (Mr Guilding) with him’.¹¹⁹

Guilding’s involvement with land sales created conflicts. In August 1874, when, at a large Maori meeting at Whakatiwai, on the eastern side of the Firth of Thames, Hopihana denied having received any money on account for Ohinemuri, Mackay produced receipts proving he had received over £300. ‘Hopihana denied it, and said that Guilding wrote the letter without his sanction, and that he would have him turned out of Ohinemuri’.¹²⁰ In January 1876, Riri was charged with assaulting Guilding at Thames. The report of the subsequent court case mentioned that it was

¹¹⁰ Te Aroha Correspondent, *Thames Star*, 16 February 1881, p. 2.

¹¹¹ James Mackay to Daniel Pollen, 17 July 1875, *AJHR*, 1875, G-5B, p. 3; Maori Land Court, Hauraki Minute Book no. 11, pp. 19, 22.

¹¹² *Te Aroha News*, 22 February 1915, p. 2.

¹¹³ *AJHR*, 1875, I-1, pp. 47-48.

¹¹⁴ *Thames Advertiser*, 8 May 1873, p. 3, Ohinemuri Correspondent, 15 May 1873, p. 3.

¹¹⁵ *New Zealand Gazette*, 21 May 1874, p. 330.

¹¹⁶ Ohinemuri Correspondent, *Thames Advertiser*, 30 September 1873, p. 3.

¹¹⁷ Letter from J.W.R. Guilding, *Thames Advertiser*, 11 October 1873, p. 3.

¹¹⁸ See paper on special settlements.

¹¹⁹ *Thames Advertiser*, 13 November 1876, p. 3, 16 October 1877, p. 2.

¹²⁰ *Thames Advertiser*, 24 August 1874, p. 3.

not the first time that Riri had assaulted people. Guilding deposed having seen him outside a hotel:

The defendant spoke to him about a land transaction in Manaia, about which he had not been paid. He asked plaintiff for the money. Plaintiff said that he had not received the money from the Government, upon which defendant said he was gammoning [deceiving],¹²¹ and struck him on the face and knocked him down. Two or three others who were with the defendant also struck him. He had given defendant no provocation. He had no connection with him except through Government land purchases.

Riri had been drinking but was not drunk; Guilding denied Riri's claim that he had given him drink. 'I was in company with you, and Karauna [Hou] yesterday nearly all day after I arrived from Ohinemuri'. Riri, who claimed to have been too drunk to remember the assault, was fined £10 or, in default, two months' imprisonment.¹²²

THE TAIRUA SCANDAL

When the Ohinemuri goldfield opened in March 1875 and claims were taken up at Karangahake, Waitekauri, and Tairua, Guilding was involved in a scandal. Although he was not involved in the illegal issue of miners' rights prior to the opening,¹²³ a prominent miner, Adam Porter,¹²⁴ in stating that neither Guilding nor Frederick Horton Crippen,¹²⁵ one of James Mackay's clerks, had a share in one claim for which these rights had been used immediately qualified his statement: 'none in their own names, at all events'.¹²⁶ Sir George Grey, then Superintendent of the Auckland Province,

¹²¹ Eric Partridge, *A Dictionary of Slang and Unconventional English*, 8 ed., ed. Paul Beale (:pmdpm. 1984), p. 444.

¹²² Police Court, *Thames Advertiser*, 21 January 1876, p. 3.

¹²³ See 'Ohinemuri Miners' Rights Inquiries Committee (Report of, together with Evidence and Appendix)', *AJHR*, 1875, I-3.

¹²⁴ See paper on his life.

¹²⁵ See Marriage Notice, *New Zealand Herald*, 7 July 1874, p. 6; *Thames Advertiser*, 25 September 1874, p. 2, letter from 'Inquirer', 22 April 1875, p. 3, 28 April 1877, p. 2; advertisement, *Thames Star*, 8 June 1878, p. 3.

¹²⁶ 'Ohinemuri Miners' Rights Inquiries Committee (Report of, together with Evidence and Appendix)', *AJHR*, 1875, I-3, p. 16.

entered into a flurry of correspondence with the central government over what he deemed to be corrupt dealings by Mackay and his staff; Guilding was accused of attempting to lease a Maori reserve at Tairua that was expected to be the site of a township.¹²⁷ Because he wanted the government to obtain this, Grey published details of sales of timber and water rights that were witnessed by Guilding, and forced an enquiry.¹²⁸

After George Thomas Wilkinson, a land purchase officer and a future native agent,¹²⁹ visited Tairua, he reported that during April Gerald Richard Disney O'Halloran, Mackay's clerk (and brother-in-law),¹³⁰

and Guilding went to Mercury Bay to see some of the Natives there in connection with the Government land purchases. It was then proposed that Guilding should have the management of matters in connection with the Tairua reserve of 1,000 acres on behalf of the Native owners, and it was to be surveyed forthwith.¹³¹

On 11 May, Peneamene Tanui of Mercury Bay asked Mackay to lay off the reserve. 'If you are willing, send over John Guilding to assist me in laying off the thousand acres. That will be well'.¹³² In July, Mackay informed Daniel Pollen, the Colonial Secretary, that after receiving this letter he had instructed Guilding to accompany the surveyor to Tairua to lay off reserves, and denied having asked to lease the township site.¹³³ As Wilkinson explained, at a meeting between the surveyor, Guilding, and Peneamene, Guilding asked the latter to lease the reserve to himself and O'Halloran for 21 years at £50 per quarter.

This, however, was not wholly agreed to, especially as regards the number of years, Peneamene and Miriama wishing the lease to be a yearly one, or at most three or four years. Although the matter does not appear by any means to be settled, Guilding took upon

¹²⁷ See 'Correspondence Relative to the Tairua Reserve', *AJHR*, 1875, G-5B.

¹²⁸ *Thames Advertiser*, 28 June 1875, p. 3, 2 August 1875, p. 3.

¹²⁹ See paper on Merea Wikiriwhi and George Thomas Wilkinson.

¹³⁰ See *Thames Advertiser*, 30 August 1875, p. 3.

¹³¹ Report by G.T. Wilkinson, 2 July 1875, appended to 'Report of the Tairua Investigation Committee, Together with Minutes of Evidence and Appendix', *AJHR*, 1875, I-1, pp. 48, 65.

¹³² Peneamene Tanui to James Mackay, 11 May 1875, *AJHR*, 1875, G-5B, p. 4.

¹³³ James Mackay to Daniel Pollen, 17 July 1875, *AJHR*, 1875, G-5B, p. 3.

himself to advance to Peneamene and Miriama £15 in cash, and also to take up an account of some £4 that they owed at Carina's store, Mercury Bay.

Thomas Carina, licensee of the Whitianga Hotel,¹³⁴ informed Wilkinson that he was present when Miriama, Peneamene, and Matene Pehi signed a deed written in English and Maori. 'He was given to understand' it was an agreement to lease the reserve to Guilding and O'Halloran. 'Cheques were made out and signed by Guilding to the amount, he thinks, of nearly £30, and paid to the Natives. There was no other interpreter present'.¹³⁵ When the survey was completed, the owners might sign the lease. 'Guilding told them not to go and demand rent from any of the Europeans now living on the block, as that would be payable to himself and co-lessee, the yearly rental from himself and O'Halloran being what the Natives were to receive'.¹³⁶

When informing Mackay that the reserve had been surveyed, Guilding did not mention leasing it.¹³⁷ Wilkinson did not believe either Mackay or O'Halloran were involved, for 'the whole of the business' was done by Guilding, and the owners did not consider themselves bound to grant a lease, 'nothing definite having been agreed to between them'. Whilst willing to lease the block to the government on 'suitable terms', they wanted 'to be held indemnified as against any action that might be taken' by Guilding and O'Halloran 'should those gentlemen be bold enough to institute proceedings against them'.¹³⁸ In a revised version of his report that, on Grey's instructions,¹³⁹ left out statements exonerating Mackay, Wilkinson

¹³⁴ See *Thames Electoral Roll, 1879*, p. 12; *New Zealand Herald*, 3 February 1877, p. 1, 2 July 1878, p. 3, advertisement, 15 August 1878, p. 1, Supreme Court, 23 January 1884, p. 2, 23 June 1888, p. 1; *Observer*, 13 June 1885, p. 22; *Auckland Star*, 16 March 1934, p. 5.

¹³⁵ Report by G.T. Wilkinson, 2 July 1875, appended to 'Report of the Tairua Investigation Committee', p. 66.

¹³⁶ Report by G.T. Wilkinson, 2 July 1875, appended to 'Report of the Tairua Investigation Committee', pp. 48, 66.

¹³⁷ J.W.R. Guilding to James Mackay, 16 June 1875, appended to 'Report of the Tairua Investigation Committee', p. 63.

¹³⁸ Report by G.T. Wilkinson, 2 July 1875, appended to 'Report of the Tairua Investigation Committee', pp. 49, 66.

¹³⁹ 'Report of the Tairua Investigation Committee', p. 24.

explained that his account was based on ‘purely native sources and as such can not be relied on as correct in every particular’.¹⁴⁰

Mackay left Guilding and O’Halloran ‘to vindicate their own conduct, which I have no doubt will bear the light of thorough investigation’.¹⁴¹ In his evidence to the select committee, he stated that Guilding had been present at the negotiations in late 1872 and early 1873 to purchase the Tairua block, knew that the sellers had been promised a reserve, and had witnessed the purchase.¹⁴² In May 1875 he sent Guilding and O’Halloran ‘to Mercury Bay to get some signatures to a deed. The Natives made a request that it should be surveyed, and I gave directions to Mr Guilding to go there with a surveyor and to survey the reserve’. The survey had become ‘necessary, as the ground near there was being worked’ by miners. Guilding reported to him about the survey in mid-June. Asked by the chairman, Grey, when he became aware that Guilding was about to lease the reserve, Mackay replied, ‘When your Honor first charged me with it’.¹⁴³ When he saw ‘the charge’ in a Thames newspaper, he telegraphed Guilding ‘and asked him if he had anything to do with it’. Guilding replied: ‘Have not got lease of Tairua reserve, but Natives have asked me to lease it. Do not see why I should not take it, as Jackson, of Tairua, will if I do not; besides which they owe me money’. O’Halloran telegraphed that he did not know of anyone obtaining the lease, but that ‘Natives have repeatedly asked me to lease reserve’.¹⁴⁴ On 26 July Guilding telegraphed again: ‘I have no lease of Tairua reserve, but have promise of one from Natives, and have paid money to them, and have got receipts on account of rent. Do not see why I should not take it’. He then sent a private telegram telling Mackay about the political machinations of Grey’s supporters at Thames, who, assisted by Taipari, were opposing the lease. He was told that, if he abandoned Mackay, opposition to his obtaining the lease would cease; Mackay thanked him for his ‘honourable conduct’.¹⁴⁵ Mackay denied that Guilding ‘had any more special knowledge than the whole public’ about the reserve, for a

¹⁴⁰ G.T. Wilkinson, Memorandum of 5 July 1875, Auckland Provincial Government Papers, ACFM 8180, 2661/75, ANZ-A.

¹⁴¹ James Mackay to Daniel Pollen, 17 July 1875, *AJHR*, 1875, G-5B, p. 3.

¹⁴² ‘Report of the Tairua Investigation Committee’, pp. 2, 3.

¹⁴³ ‘Report of the Tairua Investigation Committee’, p. 2.

¹⁴⁴ ‘Report of the Tairua Investigation Committee’, p. 2.

¹⁴⁵ These telegrams appended to ‘Report of the Tairua Investigation Committee’, pp. 63-64.

public document stated that the sellers had the right 'to select 1,000 acres in one or two blocks'.¹⁴⁶

Asked by another committee member whether Guilding 'was a paid officer of the General Government', Mackay explained that he never had been. 'I pay my officers and clerks out of my commission. I am paid by commission. I am not a salaried officer'.¹⁴⁷ The following day, asked by Grey whether, if Guilding had completed the lease and sold town sites, it would have meant 'a serious loss to the province', he replied: 'The province could never lose what it never possessed. It never possessed the 1,000 acres. That belonged to the Natives'. Although Guilding had, along with others, been present when the deed was signed agreeing to reserve 1,000 acres, it was for the sellers to select the site.¹⁴⁸ Mackay explained that he saw Guilding 'shortly after' learning that he was leasing the reserve.

I said that I was vexed that he had taken it; that he ought not to have done so. I thought he ought to have asked me, as it had caused me a great deal of trouble, and had caused a writ to be issued against me. Mr Guilding said that he had a right to take the lease. I said I wished he had first asked me whether I thought it was right for him to do it.¹⁴⁹

On 7 September, William Henry Grace, a land agent,¹⁵⁰ explained that with Daniel Tookey, a Pakeha Maori miner living at Thames,¹⁵¹ he was acting for Maori opposed to granting a license for the Tairua Prospectors' Claim.¹⁵² When he saw 'one of the Natives connected with' the Tairua block, 'I asked him what had been done about the Tairua reserve, and he said that O'Halloran and Guilding had been at Mercury Bay trying to lease the reserve for Mr Mackay'. Asked if he was sure it was for Mackay and not for Guilding, 'he said he thought it was for Mr Mackay'. The rent was £100 a year, but the owners wanted more. Questioned by Mackay about his link with Grey, Grace claimed that Guilding 'came to me one day' and, in the

¹⁴⁶ 'Report of the Tairua Investigation Committee', p. 3.

¹⁴⁷ 'Report of the Tairua Investigation Committee', p. 4.

¹⁴⁸ 'Report of the Tairua Investigation Committee', p. 7.

¹⁴⁹ 'Report of the Tairua Investigation Committee', p. 8.

¹⁵⁰ See *Observer*, 11 June 1910, p. 4; *New Zealand Herald*, 5 November 1913, p. 7.

¹⁵¹ See *Observer*, 17 May 1896, p. 19, 16 January 1904, p. 4; *Thames Advertiser*, 10 October 1896, p. 4.

¹⁵² 'Report of the Tairua Investigation Committee', p. 24.

presence of others, 'said that his firm', meaning Mackay's office, 'was no good, that he had not got anything out of Ohinemuri, Tairua, or Hikutaia', a reference to land acquired with his assistance, 'but that he had got them this time, and was going to stick to the reserve at Tairua'.

Afterwards he came to Mr Tookey and myself, and said, "If you like I will join you, and give you all the information you want about the purchases in the district of Hauraki. I will join you, but I would like a guarantee of a certain sum of money." I called Mr Tookey aside, and said, "We cannot trust him, for if he would throw Mr Mackay overboard, who has been his best friend, I think he will throw us over." We decided not to have anything more to do with him.

Argument followed about whether 'the overtures' came from Guilding or Tookey.¹⁵³ On 23 September, O'Halloran stated that he thought that Guilding was 'endeavouring to get a lease' but had not succeeded so far. Guilding had paid money to the owners, but O'Halloran did not know how much; he thought he had acquired an interest in the reserve in July, or possibly June, adding that Mackay 'said he regretted that I had had anything to do with it'.¹⁵⁴ For some unstated reason, Guilding was not required to give evidence.

The committee noted that Mackay 'did not report the special selection' of the township site until after the survey was concluded. The provincial government 'first learnt positively' on 2 July that this site had been selected by the Natives as their reserve of 1,000 acres' and that they had leased it. Later, Guilding, who 'had had full knowledge of the transactions', made O'Halloran 'a partner in this lease'. Concerning Mackay's role, the committee chose its words carefully: 'It appears that Mr Mackay was not cognizant of this transaction prior to its completion, and he states in evidence that he expressed his disapproval of it'. The committee considered 'that the leasing of this reserves by persons employed by Mr Mackay, and presumably with special information on the subject, not accessible to the public generally, is open to the gravest objection'.¹⁵⁵ Singling out O'Halloran and Crippen, it recommended that in future all those employed as government agents for the purchase of land, 'and all persons in their

¹⁵³ 'Report of the Tairua Investigation Committee', p. 25.

¹⁵⁴ 'Report of the Tairua Investigation Committee', p. 36.

¹⁵⁵ 'Report of the Tairua Investigation Committee', p. iii.

immediate employment', a reference to Guilding, should be government employees, to avoid conflict between their public and private work.¹⁵⁶

Editorials criticized Guilding. In early August, the *Thames Advertiser* wrote that 'no doubt' it would be argued that Guilding

had a perfect right to take advantage of his position, and lease the reserve if he thought proper, and that he would be justified in making the miners pay through the nose for their sections, if he desired to do so. Perhaps in a legal sense that may be the case, but the sooner such proceedings are rendered impossible the better for the public interest.¹⁵⁷

Later that month, it again referred to the issue:

The reserve at Tairua is now said to have been leased from the natives by Mr John Guilding on behalf of the Government, to prevent it falling into the hands of any private individual. This is a very happy thought on the part of Mr Guilding, who is not a Government officer, as Mr Mackay was careful to point out, but it shows that he occupies a very singular and peculiar position in the district.

He should have informed Mackay of his plan. It called for a radical change in the government's land purchase policy to avoid future 'accidents'.¹⁵⁸ A later editorial summarized the select committee's report and its conclusion that Guilding's leasing the reserve on the basis of information not accessible to the public was 'very wrong'.¹⁵⁹ It also published Wilkinson's report and some of the letters given in evidence.¹⁶⁰

FURTHER LAND TRANSACTIONS

In December 1875, a *New Zealand Herald* editorial complained of government delays in opening 'waste', meaning Maori, land, and referred to the current sitting of the land court at which Guilding, 'representing the Government', presented a list of blocks 'that he requires to have

¹⁵⁶ 'Report of the Tairua Investigation Committee', p. iv.

¹⁵⁷ Editorial, *Thames Advertiser*, 7 August 1875, p. 2.

¹⁵⁸ Editorial, *Thames Advertiser*, 25 August 1875, p. 2.

¹⁵⁹ Editorial, *Thames Advertiser*, 13 October 1875, p. 2.

¹⁶⁰ *Thames Advertiser*, 21 December 1875, p. 2, 11 January 1876, p. 3.

withdrawn'. It considered that Guilding, 'knowing all about the Tairua purchase', in leasing the best site for a township 'had done what he ought not to have done, but nevertheless, he is still apparently acting as agent for the General Government at the Thames'.¹⁶¹ In response, O'Halloran denied that Guilding had required land to be withdrawn but had merely requested deferring consideration of these blocks until the native agent returned; he made no reference to Guilding's fitness to act on behalf of the government,¹⁶² and Guilding did not respond to these strictures.

Although an Auckland newspaper in reporting a meeting of Maori with Mackay commented that he was 'now blamed for taking into his confidence and employment persons who are acting against him',¹⁶³ this did not refer to Guilding, who continued to interpret for him until 1878. When warned in April that year that he would lose his license if he did not attest some deeds, he had responded that he would only do so if his expenses of £175 were paid.¹⁶⁴ Asked to give evidence about payments made to Maori in Mercury Bay to the land court, 'he declined to attend, and upon examination it was found that the Court had no power to issue a subpoena. Subsequently Mr Guilding was prevailed on by Mr Mackay to come and give his evidence', prompting the government to take legislative evidence,¹⁶⁵ as explained (without citing names) by the *New Zealander*:

The prompt action taken by the Native Minister in introducing the Native Lands Act Amendment Bill yesterday, will probably open the eyes of those Pakeha-Maoris, agents, interpreters, &c, who have been accustomed to regard the Government as an excellent milch cow in all native land matters. It seems that an interpreter employed in negotiating a large purchase for the Crown at Thames, neglected to properly attest a number of the signatures. When required to remedy the omission he coolly demanded £175, for doing his duty. Mr [John] Sheehan [the Native Minister] refused this point blank, and informed the blackmailer that he would have to perform his duty, and that even when he had done so, his insolent conduct would be punished by cancellation of his license as an interpreter. The signatures were attested after this, but when the deeds came

¹⁶¹ Editorial, *New Zealand Herald*, 26 November 1875, p. 2.

¹⁶² *New Zealand Herald*, 1 December 1875, Supplement, p. 1.

¹⁶³ *Auckland Star*, 22 March 1876, p. 2.

¹⁶⁴ Register of Correspondence, 11 April 1878, Maori Affairs Department, MA 2/16, 78/3728, ANZ-W.

¹⁶⁵ *New Zealand Herald*, 27 July 1878, p. 4.

before the Court, oral evidence was required. Then it was discovered that the Native Lands Court had no power to enforce the attendance of witnesses, and the interpreter demanded £100 as the price of his attendance. It was to give the court power to compel him, and other similar men, to attend and give evidence, that the Bill yesterday was passed.¹⁶⁶

Although neither newspaper named Guilding, his name was public knowledge. At the start of that month, an editorial referred to the law being tightened to ensure that the government received the land it had paid for. When it was necessary to hear evidence from Guilding that payments had been made to an owner of Mercury Bay land, he ‘simply declined to attend’; after it was found that the court had no power to issue a subpoena, Mackay ‘prevailed upon’ him to give evidence.¹⁶⁷ Despite the minister’s threat to cancel his license as an interpreter, no such cancellation was gazetted, although Mackay and government officials may have been warned not to use him in future.

PROMINENT IN THE COMMUNITY

Guilding was prominent in the Ohinemuri community, for instance signing a memorial seeking the construction of a bridge at Karangahake.¹⁶⁸ He was a member of the Paeroa committee organizing a race meeting in the New Year holidays in 1876 and was clerk of the course.¹⁶⁹ He was on the sports committee for the following end-of-year events.¹⁷⁰ In August 1878, he chartered a boat to search for a missing Pakeha Maori, George de Thierry, who had been a rival Piako trader in the 1860s.¹⁷¹ After de Thierry’s drowned body was discovered, he helped raise money for his family, and

¹⁶⁶ *New Zealander*, n.d., reprinted in *Thames Advertiser*, 20 August 1878, p. 2.

¹⁶⁷ Editorial, *Auckland Weekly News*, 3 August 1878, p. 12.

¹⁶⁸ Auckland Provincial Government Papers, ACFM 8183, 1017/76, ANZ-A.

¹⁶⁹ *Thames Advertiser*, 24 November 1875, p. 3, 26 November 1875, p. 3, 1 January 1876, p. 3.

¹⁷⁰ *Thames Advertiser*, 8 December 1876, p. 2.

¹⁷¹ See Maori Land Court, Hauraki Minute Book no. 46, p. 294; *Daily Southern Cross*, 28 October 1868, p. 4; *New Zealand Herald*, 1 May 1871, p. 2; *Auckland Star*, 7 August 1878, p. 3; *Thames Advertiser*, 8 August 1878, p. 3.

was thanked by the dead man's brother, Richard, for his 'kindly sympathy and help'.¹⁷²

In late 1878, Guilding stood for the Ohinemuri Riding of the Thames County Council, but after failing to publish any newspaper advertisements withdrew from the contest.¹⁷³ A jocular description of the election as the 'Ohinemuri Plate' described him as 'Pakeha Maori', by 'Interpreter', out of 'Bounce'.¹⁷⁴ (Someone accused of 'bounce' was regarded as 'a pretentious swaggerer'.)¹⁷⁵ The following January he was elected to the Ohinemuri school committee with 57 votes.¹⁷⁶ Three months later, a local correspondent reporting a secretive meeting in Paeroa to discuss separating from the council mentioned that 'our ever watchful and enterprising fellow-settler, Mr Guilding, appeared on the scene'. He 'was asked to interview the members of the secret conclave and try to bring them to his way of thinking that the present hole-and-corner [underhand]¹⁷⁷ meeting ought to be a public one. Under the strong pressure of Mr Guilding's eloquence a public meeting was held in the Public Hall'.¹⁷⁸ According to 'Sauve qu'il Peut',¹⁷⁹ residents had known nothing of the separation meeting 'until it was pounced upon by our local Falstaff, who revealed the plot, which was against the interests of miners'.¹⁸⁰

The Falstaff and 'bounce' allusions indicated that he was not universally admired. In 1880, a publican (and drunkard), William Rose,¹⁸¹ called him 'a ----- scoundrel, a rogue, and a liar', or alternatively, a 'b----

¹⁷² *Thames Advertiser*, 8 August 1878, p. 3, 15 August 1878, p. 2, 26 August 1878, p. 3.

¹⁷³ *Thames Advertiser*, 21 October 1878, p. 2, 1 November 1878, p. 2, 6 November 1878, p. 2, 13 November 1878, p. 2.

¹⁷⁴ *Thames Advertiser*, 13 November 1878, p. 3.

¹⁷⁵ Partridge, p. 123.

¹⁷⁶ *Thames Advertiser*, 29 January 1879, p. 3.

¹⁷⁷ Partridge, p. 561.

¹⁷⁸ Ohinemuri Correspondent, *Thames Advertiser*, 30 April 1879, p. 3.

¹⁷⁹ The 'l' was a mistake: can be translated as 'Every Man for Himself'.

¹⁸⁰ Letter from 'Sauve qu'il Peut', *Thames Advertiser*, 13 May 1879, p. 3.

¹⁸¹ See *Thames Advertiser*, Police Court, 3 April 1874, p. 3, Licensing Court, 23 June 1874, p. 3, Licensing Court, 30 June 1874, p. 3, Licensing Court, 2 December 1874, p. 3, advertisement, 23 April 1877, p. 2, 15 May 1877, p. 3, 13 October 1879, p. 3, advertisement, 11 February 1881, p. 2.

scoundrel and a liar'.¹⁸² According to Guilding, Rose 'had a grudge against him ever since he gave evidence against him in a perjury case', thereby provoking Rose so that he 'behaved in such a manner that he was locked up till the following morning', when he admitted the abusive language and was fined.¹⁸³ In July 1878 Guilding enrolled as a private in the No. 3 Company of the Thames Scottish Volunteers, based in Paeroa, but two months later was discharged for drunkenness.¹⁸⁴ Three years later, in a case over an unpaid debt, a rangatira described a meeting in a hotel at which he 'was quite sober, but Guilding, the interpreter, was not', which the latter denied.¹⁸⁵ Despite no other references to a drinking problem, it is unlikely these were the only occasions that he was drunk.

FINANCES

Whilst at Thames, Guilding had occasional financial difficulties and was sued for small amounts. In 1870 he was sued by the Victorian Consuls Company for £1 19 9d, presumably unpaid calls, by a storekeeper for goods to the value of £3 19s 9d, and by another creditor for £2 4s.¹⁸⁶ The following year he settled a debt of £3 out of court and did not defend an Auckland case.¹⁸⁷ On 1 May 1872 he was sued for £10 8s 4d by another mining company; when he did not pay, the bailiff found that he had no assets worth selling to meet the debt.¹⁸⁸

On 27 April that year, he had declared himself unable to pay his creditors.¹⁸⁹ This inability was caused by 'Losses occasioned by destruction

¹⁸² *Thames Star*, 6 February 1880, p. 2; Police Court, *Thames Advertiser*, 7 February 1880, p. 2.

¹⁸³ Police Court, *Thames Advertiser*, 7 February 1880, p. 2, 9 February 1880, p. 2.

¹⁸⁴ Thames Scottish No. 3 Company, Capitation Roll, May 1880, Army Department, ARM 41, 1880/1p, ANZ-W.

¹⁸⁵ Magistrate's Court, *Thames Star*, 23 September 1881, p. 2.

¹⁸⁶ Thames Magistrate's Court, *Plaint Book 1869-1871*, 252, 940, 1364/1870, BACL 13737/1a; *Notebook March-December 1870*, hearing of 22 April 1870, BACL 14457/2b, ANZ-A.

¹⁸⁷ Thames Magistrate's Court, *Plaint Book 1869-1871*, 161/1871, BACL 13737/1a, ANZ-A; Magistrate's Court, *Auckland Weekly News*, 28 January 1871, p. 19.

¹⁸⁸ Auckland District Court, *Warrant Book 1867-1888*, 85/1872, BADW 10497/1a, ANZ-W.

¹⁸⁹ Declaration by J.W.R. Guilding, 27 April 1872, Bankruptcy Files, Grahamstown, 1872-1875, BACL 14471/5a, ANZ-A.

of property by Natives – Vessel and stores being burnt etc’ during the Waikato War, plus debts due by Maori which he was ‘unable to collect’, as well as ‘Losses in Gold Mining transactions’.¹⁹⁰ His statement of assets and liabilities included amongst the former an application for compensation for the loss of his cutter ‘Kate’ and stores estimated at £1,200. He had bad ‘Native Debts’ in the Piako district of £400, plus two more bad debts totalling £350 owed by two Whakatane men who were, reportedly, dead. Only one debt, of £20, was a good one. His clothing and personal affects were worth £5.¹⁹¹ In mid-June he applied to be discharged.¹⁹² The following month, consideration of his request was postponed because he did not attend the hearing, but one month later he was discharged.¹⁹³ The trustee reported Guilding’s claim to have a large surplus after paying off the liabilities:

But that statement does not give a truthful representation of matters as they stand at present. It appears that before the war broke out he was doing a large trade with the natives, and most of his liabilities were then incurred. £750 of his assets were debts then due by natives but are now worthless. His only other asset is a claim against the General Government for the loss of a Cutter & her stores valued at the large sum of £1200 and it too may be stated as of no value. In this way his liabilities may be stated at £1596.12.00 without any assets whatever to meet them.

During the last six months between October & April last his only receipts were “Sundry commissions at various times of which the Bankrupt kept no account” £45, and this sum is said to have been expended in supporting himself & family and if that was all the cost of self & family he cannot possibly be charged with extravagance.¹⁹⁴

¹⁹⁰ Declaration by J.W.R. Guilding, 15 May 1872, Bankruptcy Files, Grahamstown, 1872-1875, BACL 14471/5a, ANZ-A.

¹⁹¹ Lists of liabilities and assets of J.W.R. Guilding, Bankruptcy Files, Grahamstown, 1872-1875, BACL 14471/5a, ANZ-A.

¹⁹² Grahamstown District Court, Minute Book 1870-1884, entry for 18 June 1872, BACL 13818/1a, ANZ-A.

¹⁹³ *Thames Guardian and Mining Record*, District Court, 17 July 1872, p. 2, 18 July 1872, p. 3, 7 August 1872, p. 2.

¹⁹⁴ Report by Thomas Macffarlane, Trustee, 13 July 1872, Bankruptcy Files, Grahamstown, 1872-1875, BACL 14471/5a, ANZ-A.

After being ‘whitewashed’, the cynical expression describing those who were freed of their debts by becoming a bankrupt,¹⁹⁵ Guilding continued to have financial difficulties, being sued in August 1873 for goods to the value of £18 7s 8d and the following year for two dishonoured cheques, one of £12 10s and the other of £4 18s; he was ordered to pay the former and the other was settled out of court.¹⁹⁶ In 1876, a bad year for him, he was sued by two merchants for goods with a total value of £5 1s 6d, for £42 11s 6d for six dishonoured cheques, and £16 for a promissory note.¹⁹⁷ The following year a judgment summons forced him to pay a dishonoured cheque from the previous year, and he had to pay two accounts for goods received totalling £18 16s 4d, another dishonoured cheque of £10 11s, and a promissory note of £13 9s 6d that he paid only after receiving a judgment summons.¹⁹⁸ When the latter case was considered, the magistrate commented that, if Guilding would sell some land, he would be able to pay it.¹⁹⁹ In 1878, he was sued over three promissory notes, totalling £24 10s, and goods worth £24.²⁰⁰ The following year, he was sued over four promissory notes, one carried over from 1878, totalling £112 5s, goods worth £3 15s, and £1 for rates; once again, in four cases judgment summonses were required to enforce payment.²⁰¹

Guilding became bankrupt for the second, and last, time in January 1880.²⁰² Owing £240 6s 2d, he estimated his assets to be worth £519 9s 10d;

¹⁹⁵ Jonathon Green, *The Cassell Dictionary of Slang* (London, 1998), p. 1282.

¹⁹⁶ Thames Magistrate’s Court, *Plaint Book 1871-1875*, 559/1873, 235, 610/1874, BACL 13737/1b, ANZ-A.

¹⁹⁷ Thames Magistrate’s Court, *Plaint Book 1875-1880*, 147, 261, 291, 292, 303, 348, 386, 403, 517, 630/1876, BACL 13737/15b, ANZ-A; Magistrate’s Court, *Thames Advertiser*, 8 July 1876, p. 3

¹⁹⁸ Thames Magistrate’s Court, *Plaint Book 1875-1880*, 5, 507, 555, 594, 611, 714/1877, BACL 13737/15b, ANZ-A.

¹⁹⁹ Magistrate’s Court, *Thames Advertiser*, 13 October 1877, p. 3.

²⁰⁰ Thames Magistrate’s Court, *Plaint Book 1875-1880*, 63, 128, 173, 187, 302, 371/1878, BACL 13737/15b, ANZ-A.

²⁰¹ Thames Magistrate’s Court, *Plaint Book 1875-1880*, 108, 148, 176, 208, 209, 338, 307, 359/1879, BACL 13737/15b, ANZ-A.

²⁰² *Thames Star*, 14 January 1880, p. 3.

they realized £113 3s, enabling a dividend of £84 0s 10d to be paid.²⁰³ Pukateawainui No. 2, his freehold Ohinemuri section of just over five acres, with a river frontage, fenced and cultivated, plus five-roomed cottage and outhouses, fetched £244 at auction.²⁰⁴ In March he applied to be discharged, which was granted two months later. ‘His Honor: You can have your discharge Mr Guilding if it’s any good to you’.²⁰⁵

AT TE AROHA

In 1879, Guilding was living at Pukatea, Wairahi, near Paeroa.²⁰⁶ The following year, his residence was given as Paeroa.²⁰⁷ After taking out a miner’s right on the opening day of the Te Aroha rush, he acquired interests in two worthless claims, pegging one out himself.²⁰⁸ When, with others, he applied for surplus ground, he admitted that ‘he had not been on the claim, but had been told that there was surplus ground. He asked for an adjournment till after the holidays, to enable the claim to be surveyed’, which was granted, he paying the costs; less than two weeks later he withdrew his plaint.²⁰⁹ In 1882 he acquired a share in a Te Aroha claim on which prospecting had restarted, but quickly sold it.²¹⁰ Like so many others he did no mining, simply seeking to obtain a quick profit from share dealings.

Guilding had minimal involvement with Waiorongomai mining. In November 1881 he sued for the forfeiture of the Hero for non-working, but

²⁰³ ‘Return of all Bankruptcies and Assignments since the coming into operation of the “Debtors and Creditors Amendment Act, 1878”: District Court at Grahamstown, 1880’, Legislative Department, LE 1, 1883/106, ANZ-W.

²⁰⁴ *Thames Star*, 28 February 1880, p. 3, 5 March 1880, p. 2.

²⁰⁵ Grahamstown District Court, Minute Book 1870-1884, entries for 3 March 1880, 4 May 1880, BACL 13818/1a, ANZ-A; District Court, *Thames Star*, 4 May 1880, p. 2.

²⁰⁶ *Thames Electoral Roll, 1879*, p. 30.

²⁰⁷ *Thames Electoral Roll, 1880*, p. 19.

²⁰⁸ Te Aroha Warden’s Court, Miner’s Right no. 508, issued 25 November 1880, Miners’ Rights Butt Book 1880, BBAV 11533/1d; Register of Te Aroha Claims 1880-1888, folios 176, 202, BBAV 11567/1a; *Thames Star*, 17 December 1880, p. 2.

²⁰⁹ Te Aroha Warden’s Court, Plaint Book 1880-1898, 19/1880, BBAV 11547/1a, ANZ-A; *Thames Advertiser*, 23 December 1880, p. 3

²¹⁰ Te Aroha Warden’s Court, Register of Te Aroha Claims 1880-1888, folio 254, BBAV 11567/1a, ANZ-A.

withdrew his plaint two months later.²¹¹ He acquired interests in three claims on 23 March 1882, selling them on the same day for the price he had paid;²¹² presumably he was an agent for the second purchaser. He had a small interest in another claim, and scrip shares in one company.²¹³ His only other involvement was to invest in the Te Aroha Prospecting Association in 1893.²¹⁴

When Hamiona Haira was murdered, Guilding was quoted by the *Thames Star* as believing a Maori from Tauranga were responsible and as being fully informed about a murder for which Himiona was blamed.²¹⁵ Three days later, the rival Thames newspaper reported that his theory had been ‘exploded’.²¹⁶ Guilding told its Te Aroha correspondent that he was ‘very wrath’ about the *Star*’s report, and threatened ‘legal proceedings against the proprietor of that journal, saying that the paragraph in question is calculated to damage his native practice’.²¹⁷ No proceedings ensued.

Although in August 1882 his address was given as Paeroa, by mid-1883 he was living at Te Aroha.²¹⁸ The previous October, he had acquired two residence sites in Lipseytown, one in his daughter Mary’s name, the license for the other being ‘made out to’ Henry Ernest Whitaker’,²¹⁹ presumably because Whitaker²²⁰ had a mortgage on it. Mary’s site was forfeited nearly three years later, as was the other in 1889 after he ceased to pay the rent.²²¹ He later had a three-roomed house on a quarter-acre

²¹¹ Te Aroha Warden’s Court, Plaint Book 1880-1898, 52/1881, BBAV 11547/1a, ANZ-A.

²¹² Te Aroha Warden’s Court, Register of Licensed Holdings 1881-1887, folios 16, 20, 21, BBAV 11500/9a; Transfers and Assignments 1882, nos. 584, 589, BBAV 11581/2a, ANZ-A.

²¹³ Te Aroha Warden’s Court, Register of Licensed Holdings 1882-1887, folio 62, BBAV 115900/9a, ANZ-A; *New Zealand Gazette*, 27 April 1882, p. 647.

²¹⁴ *Thames Advertiser*, 30 January 1893, p. 2.

²¹⁵ Te Aroha Correspondent, *Thames Star*, 16 February 1881, p. 2.

²¹⁶ *Thames Advertiser*, 19 February 1881, p. 3.

²¹⁷ Te Aroha Correspondent, *Thames Advertiser*, 23 February 1881, p. 3.

²¹⁸ Thames Magistrate’s Court, Plaint Book 1881-1884, 229/1882, BACL 13737/12a, ANZ-A;

²¹⁹ Te Aroha Warden’s Court, Register of Applications 1880-1882, folio 215, nos. 314, 315, BBAV 11594/1a, ANZ-A.

²²⁰ See paper on Harry and Charles.

²²¹ Te Aroha Warden’s Court, Letterbook 1883-1900, p. 77, BBAV 11534/1a; Rent Register 1881-1899, folios 260, 261, BBAV 11501/1a, ANZ-A.

section in Lipseytown, with a ratable value at £7 in 1888 and of £8 nearly 20 years later.²²²

HIS LAST WIFE

After separating from Ripeka at an unknown date, in the early 1880s Guilding acquired his fourth wife, Erana, otherwise Ellen, Rangimawhiti,²²³ of whose antecedents nothing is known. In 1885 he was referred to as being married to ‘a distant relation’ of the Mokena family.²²⁴ Her brother was Te Rawiti Te Kohika,²²⁵ who has not been traced. She was described as Guilding’s wife in 1887, when a son of Joseph Harris Smallman was accused of stealing her horse.²²⁶ In 1892 she transferred her interest in the Maurihoro block to two of her children by Guilding, John and Clara.²²⁷ The following year, Guilding charged her with excessive drinking, and in 1900 sought a prohibition order against her.²²⁸ The following July she died,²²⁹ but as her death was unregistered neither its cause nor her age is known.

None of the births of their five children, all born in Te Aroha, were registered. The Maori version of their surname was Kiringi.²³⁰ Clara (otherwise Kara) Erana (otherwise Ellen), was born in January 1885; Maria, otherwise Maraea, was born in February 1887; John, otherwise Te Maha Kaitangata, was born in February 1889; Ernest Te Rua, otherwise Te Rua Whakahoro (or Whakahorou), was born in April 1894; and Jane Pareraukura, otherwise Heni Pareraukawa or Jane Pare Ruakawa, in

²²² Te Aroha Borough Council, Rate Books 1888, 1906-1907 [no pagination], Matamata-Piako District Council Archives, Te Aroha.

²²³ See Marriage Certificate of Maria Guilding, 28 December 1909, 1909/4706; Death Certificate of John William Richard Guilding, 20 February 1915, 1915/818, BDM.

²²⁴ Maori Land Court, Waikato Minute Book no. 13, p. 222.

²²⁵ Maori Land Court, Hauraki Minute Books, no. 28A, p. 15; no. 60, p. 91.

²²⁶ Police Court, *Te Aroha News*, 2 April 1887, p. 2.

²²⁷ Maori Land Court, Hauraki Minute Book no. 28A, p. 16.

²²⁸ Te Aroha Magistrate’s Court, Criminal Record Book 1881-1896, 1/1893, BCDG 11220/1a; Criminal Record Book 1896-1907, 24/1900, BCDG 11220/1b, ANZ-A.

²²⁹ Maori Land Court, Hauraki Minute Book no. 50, p. 334.

²³⁰ Aroha Block V Section 5A, Maori Affairs Department, Hamilton, BACS A102/9789, ANZ-A.

1900.²³¹ Only the baptisms of Maraea and Ernest into the Anglican Church have been traced.²³² When the children sought to sell some land in 1914, a firm of Te Aroha lawyers justified the sale:

The owners ... are of an entirely different class from the ordinary native; they have, in fact, been brought up as Europeans all their lives, have always lived amongst Europeans, and been educated and trained in the usual European way, and are not, as most natives are, dependent on their lands for their living. The eldest two are married to Europeans of good standing, John Guilding has been earning his own living for some time past, while the two minors have been living with their father.²³³

All attended the Te Aroha school, although not as often as other children. Clara at the age of eight years and eight months had only attended for one year, and left after six years.²³⁴ Two years later, when at the same age, Maria was not presented for the Standard 1 examination, her teacher noting: 'Native. Could not keep pace with class'.²³⁵ She had nine years of schooling, John had nine and passed Standard 5, and Ernest

²³¹ Te Aroha School, Admissions Registers no. 2 (1889-1896), nos. 756, 798, 864; no. 3 (1898-1904), nos. 1392, 1577, Primary School Archives, Te Aroha; Examination of Te Aroha School, 1895, Auckland Education Board, YCAF 4135/45a, ANZ-A; Maori Land Court, Hauraki Minute Book no. 50, p. 334; Aroha Block V Section 5A, Block Files, H976, Maori Land Court, Hamilton; Aroha Block V Section 5A3A Part, Maori Affairs Department, Hamilton, BACS A102/9789, ANZ-A; Church of England, Hamilton East District, Register of Baptisms 1879-1908, nos. 130, 448, Anglican Diocesan Archives, Hamilton; Marriage Certificate of Ernest Te Rua Whakahorou Guilding, 1919/2464; Death Certificate of Jane Pare Ruakawa, 3 December 1923, 1923/10342, BDM.

²³² Church of England, Hamilton East District, Register of Baptisms 1879-1908, nos. 130, 448, Anglican Diocesan Archives, Hamilton.

²³³ Bernard and Nicholls to Secretary, Waikato-Maniopototo District Maori Land Board, 24 November 1914, Aroha Block V Section 5A3A Part, Maori Affairs Department, Hamilton, BACS A102/9789, ANZ-A.

²³⁴ Examination of Te Aroha School, 1893, Auckland Education Board, YCAF 4135/37a, ANZ-A; Te Aroha School, Admissions Register no. 2 (1889-1896), no. 798, Primary School Archives, Te Aroha.

²³⁵ Examination of Te Aroha School, 1895, Auckland Education Board, YCAF 4135/45a, ANZ-A.

passed Standard 1 after attending for eight and a half years.²³⁶ In 1902, when charged with failing to send John to school, Guilding pleaded guilty, stating that he ‘was beyond his control. The Bench requested Constable Wild to take the boy in hand, and adjourned the case for a month’.²³⁷ As John was readmitted just over a week later, having left school nearly eight months previously, the charge was withdrawn.²³⁸

The only other time the criminal justice system was involved with his family was in August 1906, when George Isherwood, a labourer and flaxmill hand aged 25, was charged with ‘failing to provide for [the] unborn illegitimate child’ of Maria. The police arrested him in May 1910, in Taihape, but he was discharged because after Maria married a Pakeha grocer in 1909 she had the warrant cancelled.²³⁹ This child’s birth was not registered and its fate has not been traced.

The youngest child, Jane, being crippled, could not work.²⁴⁰ She would not marry before dying in 1923.²⁴¹ Nor did John marry.²⁴² Clara Ellen married a Pakeha.²⁴³ Ernest was the only child to marry someone with part-Maori ancestry.²⁴⁴

FURTHER LAND TRANSACTIONS

²³⁶ Te Aroha School, Admissions Registers no. 2 (1889-1896), nos. 756, 864; no. 3 (1898-1904), nos. 1392, 1577, Primary School Archives, Te Aroha.

²³⁷ Te Aroha Magistrate’s Court, Criminal Record Book 1896-1907, 26/1902, BCDG 11220/1b, ANZ-A; Te Aroha Correspondent, *Auckland Weekly News*, 24 July 1902, p. 34.

²³⁸ Te Aroha School, Admissions Registers no. 2 (1889-1896), no. 864; no. 3 (1896-1904), no. 1577, Primary School Archives, Te Aroha; Te Aroha Magistrate’s Court, Criminal Record Book 1896-1907, 37/1902, BCDG 11220/1b, ANZ-A.

²³⁹ Crime Report, 23 August 1906, and memorandum written after 30 May 1910, Te Aroha Magistrate’s Court, General Correspondence 1906, BBAV 11584/6b, ANZ-A; Marriage Certificate of Frederick Angus Stanley Walker and Maria Guilding, 28 December 1909, 1909/4706, BDM.

²⁴⁰ Clara Dimmock to Chairman, Native Land Board, Auckland, 4 July 1916, Aroha Block V Section 5A3A Part, Maori Affairs Department, Hamilton, BACS A102/9789, ANZ-A.

²⁴¹ Death Certificate of Jane Pare Ruakawa Guilding, 3 December 1923, 1923/10342, BDM; Death Notice, *New Zealand Herald*, 4 December 1923, p. 1.

²⁴² Index to Marriages, BDM.

²⁴³ Marriage Certificate of Clara Ellen Guilding, 1910/2419, BDM.

²⁴⁴ Marriage Certificate of Ernest Te Rua Whakahorou Guilding to Ruth Rangihoaia McArthur, 1919/2564, BDM.

Guilding continued to earn money as an interpreter, for instance in 1880 interpreting at a meeting designed to end a long dispute over constructing a road through the Komata block, to the north of Paeroa.²⁴⁵ When a witness on behalf of Gerald O'Halloran concerning money advanced to a rangatira for Te Aroha land, he described himself as a 'Native Agent and Licensed Interpreter'.²⁴⁶ Early in 1882, an investigation into the government's purchase of Ohinemuri received a statement of the debts of William Grey Nicholls' wife, Rihitoto Mataia, 'written by and signed by Hone Kirini (John Guilding)'.²⁴⁷ In July, during negotiations with Ngati Rahiri over the Wairakau block, a newspaper commented: 'No one need be surprised if, through the services of Mr Guilding, or some other equally useful native agent', Charles Stanislaus Stafford and Henry Ernest Whitaker bought it';²⁴⁸ as indeed they did.²⁴⁹ The following year, he wrote a letter for George Lipsey²⁵⁰ to sign justifying Mokena Hou's²⁵¹ claim to land on the western side of the Waihou River.²⁵²

Early in 1883, Harry Kenrick, the local magistrate,²⁵³ discovered a 'gross fraud' concerning a block of Ohinemuri land involving Guilding and a policeman, Albert Russell.²⁵⁴ After Guilding admitted 'having certified to an interpretation and signatures that were never made', Kenrick informed the Native Minister and the Minister of Justice that he had 'shown his unfitness to be entrusted with a License as an Interpreter at all'.²⁵⁵ The Minister of Justice investigated, sending 'papers re Guilding' for Kenrick's

²⁴⁵ *Thames Advertiser*, 5 April 1880, p. 3.

²⁴⁶ Supreme Court, *New Zealand Herald*, 15 July 1880, p. 6.

²⁴⁷ Ohinemuri Goldfields, Notes and Memoranda by R.J. Gill, Paeroa, May-June 1882, p. 55, Maori Affairs Department, MA 13/546, ANZ-W.

²⁴⁸ *Thames Advertiser*, 25 July 1882, p. 2.

²⁴⁹ See paper on Harry and Charles.

²⁵⁰ See paper on his life.

²⁵¹ See paper on his life.

²⁵² Annotation by Patrick Sheridan, n.d., on George Lipsey to H.E. Whitaker, 23 July 1883, Te Aroha Block, Maori Affairs Department, MA 1, 13/86, ANZ-W.

²⁵³ See paper on his life.

²⁵⁴ See *Auckland Weekly News*, 14 February 1907, p. 23.

²⁵⁵ Harry Kenrick to Native Minister, 6 February 1883, Thames Warden's Court, Receiver of Gold Revenue Letterbook 1878-1892, pp. 275-277, ZAAAN 14143/1b, ANZ-A.

opinion.²⁵⁶ Subsequently, the *New Zealand Gazette* announced in April that ‘His Excellency the Governor has been pleased to cancel the appointment held by John William Richard Guilding, of Te Aroha, as a Licensed Interpreter’.²⁵⁷ A notice published later that year indicated that his behaviour was not unique:

The attention of the Government has been called to irregular practices in the attempted acquirement of land owned by Maoris, and to which Licensed Interpreters have in some cases lent themselves.

The Government is informed that signatures of Maori owners to deeds of sale or lease are not infrequently taken, notwithstanding the knowledge that the same persons had signed similar, but valid, deeds previously....

It is expected that Licensed Interpreters, who are always presumed to be of good reputation, will carefully avoid making themselves partners to anything calculated to injure the Native race, either materially or by the degradation of its moral character.

Should their conduct not be ‘in conformity with these views’, they would be dismissed.²⁵⁸

Despite his dismissal, Guilding continued to act as an interpreter and agent for the purchase of Maori land. When Hone Werahiko’s widow was married at Thames in late 1883, he interpreted the service.²⁵⁹ He prepared the will of Rina Mokena, wife of Mokena Hou, and in 1885 translated the latter’s will into Maori and witnessed his signature.²⁶⁰ In September 1887, Charles Featherstone Mitchell,²⁶¹ when informing the court that Guilding was the witness to Tukukino selling shares in an Ohinemuri block, stated

²⁵⁶ Under-Secretary, Mines Department, to Under-Secretary, Justice Department, 15 March 1883, Justice Department, J 1, 83/998, ANZ-W; Under-Secretary, Justice Department, to Harry Kenrick, 24 March 1883 (telegram), Thames Warden’s Court, Inwards Correspondence to Resident Magistrate and Warden 1879-1892, BACL 13388/1a, ANZ-A.

²⁵⁷ *New Zealand Gazette*, 5 April 1883, p. 420.

²⁵⁸ *New Zealand Gazette*, 25 October 1883, p. 1536.

²⁵⁹ *Thames Star*, 18 October 1883, p. 2.

²⁶⁰ Maori Land Court, Hauraki Minute Book no. 19, p. 202; Waikato Minute Book no. 13, p. 221.

²⁶¹ See paper on the Thames Miners Union.

that he believed Guilding was ‘an upright man’, but in referring to his attempt to acquire another block said he did ‘not know whether Mr Guilding made a mess of this work’.²⁶²

Five days later, the court considered evidence about the will of Hapi Rewi, who had died in June 1886.²⁶³ Huria Ani, otherwise Huria Te Karu, stated that when Mereā Wikiriwhi,²⁶⁴ who lived near Te Aroha, brought her to that township to sign a document, Guilding asked her to sign it without either explaining it was Hapi Rewi’s will or interpreting it. When he asked her if she had seen Hapi Rewi sign the will, at Mereā’s request she stated that she had.²⁶⁵ In her evidence, Mereā stated: ‘I do not know that Mr John Guilding did any dishonest action against me’, but Huria had gone to Guilding claiming to be her and obtaining Mereā’s money in the Piraurahi Block. ‘I never made any application or authorise any one to write to the Govt to have his License cancelled’ because of this; it was cancelled ‘some time before this Will was made’.²⁶⁶

Guilding gave evidence that, as ‘Land agent and Native Interpreter’ for the district, he wrote part of Hapi Rewi’s will and witnessed the marks of Mereā and Huria after they told him that Hapi had signed it, and insisted that he had read out the will to Huria.²⁶⁷ In reply to William Grey Nicholls, he admitted that he no longer was a licensed interpreter. ‘I have been employed by the Court, and unpaid. I did lose my License. There was no enquiry (open) made. I believe you were at the bottom of it’. Since losing his license, Kenrick had employed him as an interpreter,²⁶⁸ presumably because no other one was available. The court accepted the validity of the will.²⁶⁹

At the end of 1888, all interpreters’ licenses were cancelled, and those wishing to pursue this occupation were required to provide testimonials and references showing they were of ‘approved moral character’.²⁷⁰ Guilding probably did not apply; he certainly was not reappointed, but continued to

²⁶² Maori Land Court, Hauraki Minute Book no. 19, p. 139.

²⁶³ Maori Land Court, Hauraki Minute Book no. 19, p. 91.

²⁶⁴ See paper on Mereā Wikiriwhi and George Thomas Wilkinson.

²⁶⁵ Maori Land Court, Hauraki Minute Book no. 19, pp. 159-160.

²⁶⁶ Maori Land Court, Hauraki Minute Book no. 19, pp. 200-201.

²⁶⁷ Maori Land Court, Hauraki Minute Book no. 19, pp. 201-202, 204.

²⁶⁸ Maori Land Court, Hauraki Minute Book no. 19, pp. 203-204.

²⁶⁹ Maori Land Court, Hauraki Minute Book no. 19, pp. 235-236.

²⁷⁰ *New Zealand Gazette*, 27 September 1888, p. 1039.

interpret for the courts, for example in 1888 and 1908.²⁷¹ In 1902, a solicitor used him to interview a Ngati Rahiri woman about her land.²⁷² In 1909 he still gave his occupation as land agent and interpreter.²⁷³

In 1886, Guilding was appointed to take the Maori census between Okauia, above Matamata, and Keripehi, and at the end of that year was deputy returning officer at Te Aroha for the Western Maori seat.²⁷⁴ Three years later, when an elderly drunk from Matamata went to sleep in the domain one Friday afternoon, 'his movements and the company he was with (one or two Maoris of indifferent repute)' attracted the attention of Guilding, who contacted the police.²⁷⁵ In 1901 he took the Maori census in Ohinemuri because of being 'well acquainted with the various kiangas'.²⁷⁶ A few months before his death he was a witness to the marriage of two prominent Maori.²⁷⁷ Contact of a different kind occurred in April 1900 when he charged Hohepa Tauhou with assault;²⁷⁸ the loss of the local newspaper means that details are unavailable.

EARNING AN INCOME

In 1882, Guilding gave his occupation as 'gentleman',²⁷⁹ which, if meant to imply that he had no need to earn his living, was misleading, for throughout his years in Te Aroha he was a land agent.²⁸⁰ The first issue of the *Te Aroha News* carried his advertisement as 'Native Interpreter and Land Agent, Te Aroha and Ohinemuri'.²⁸¹ In that year, in partnership with

²⁷¹ *Te Aroha News*, 24 October 1888, p. 2, 7 May 1908, p. 2, 26 November 1908, p. 2.

²⁷² Peter Gilchrist to W.H. Herries, 14 August 1902, Block V Section 5B Aroha SD, Maori Affairs Department, MA 1, 06/1059, ANZ-W.

²⁷³ Marriage Certificate of Maria Guilding, 28 December 1909, 1909/4706, BDM.

²⁷⁴ *Te Aroha News*, 13 February 1886, p. 2, 27 February 1886, p. 2, 4 December 1886, p. 2.

²⁷⁵ Te Aroha Correspondent, *Waikato Times*, 19 September 1889, p. 2.

²⁷⁶ *Ohinemuri Gazette*, 27 February 1901, p. 3.

²⁷⁷ Marriage Certificate of Te Wiremu Matene and Puti Pepene, 11 September 1914, 1914/1639, BDM.

²⁷⁸ Te Aroha Magistrate's Court, Criminal Record Book 1896-1907, 22/1900, BCDG 12200/1b, ANZ-A.

²⁷⁹ *New Zealand Gazette*, 27 April 1882, p. 647.

²⁸⁰ For example, Company Files, BADZ 5181, box 41 no. 259, ANZ-A; Petition of May 1892, Tourist Department, TO 1, 1891/198, ANZ-W.

²⁸¹ Advertisement, *Te Aroha News*, 9 June 1883, p. 1.

another man, he obtained a contract to place fascines on ‘the horrible piece of swamp road near the Maori pah’ at Te Aroha.²⁸² Also in 1883 he was appointed sub-registrar of dogs, and the following year was appointed collector of the dog tax and pound keeper.²⁸³ These posts provided a modest income: for instance, the fees for July 1887 totalled £3 10s.²⁸⁴ Two and a half per cent of the gross proceeds of the pound went to the county and, later, the town board.²⁸⁵ He became registrar of dogs again in 1890, and when appointed dog tax collector in 1898 was to receive a commission of ten per cent on all collars sold.²⁸⁶

The council was informed in February 1885 that he ‘had been sued by one party before he could get his trespass money for cattle impounded, and that he had never handed over any monies or statement’ to it.²⁸⁷ In response, he provided a ‘very detailed account of the transactions of the pound for the past twelve months (covering several sheets of foolscap). This statement showed a profit to the keeper of £19 8s for the year’. It led to his reappointment for another year on the same terms, namely that he received all the fees.²⁸⁸ Three years later, he was notified that ‘he must send in a proper statement of accounts every month in accordance with the terms of his appointment, no statement having been received from him for the past three months’.²⁸⁹ In September 1889, cattle and horses wandering through the township because so much land to the south was fenced off for flax drying prompted a correspondent to urge greater vigilance. ‘These stray animals should receive a little more watchful care from our efficient poundkeeper, Mr Guilding’.²⁹⁰ By 1895 he had been replaced as poundkeeper.²⁹¹

²⁸² *Te Aroha News*, 30 June 1883, p. 2.

²⁸³ *Waikato Times*, 6 February 1883, p. 2; *Te Aroha News*, 19 January 1884, p. 2, 12 April 1884, p. 7.

²⁸⁴ Piako County Council, *Waikato Times*, 2 August 1887, p. 2.

²⁸⁵ *Waikato Times*, 31 May 1887, p. 2; *Te Aroha News*, Town Board, 4 June 1887, p. 2, 2 July 1887, p. 2.

²⁸⁶ *Te Aroha News*, 24 May 1890, p. 2, 26 July 1898, p. 2.

²⁸⁷ Piako County Council, *Te Aroha News*, 14 February 1885, p. 2.

²⁸⁸ Piako County Council, *Te Aroha News*, 14 March 1885, p. 2.

²⁸⁹ Town Board, *Te Aroha News*, 9 June 1888, p. 7.

²⁹⁰ Te Aroha Correspondent, *Waikato Times*, 19 September 1889, p. 2.

²⁹¹ *Te Aroha News*, 28 January 1895, p. 2.

In addition, in the late 1880s Guilding was bookkeeper for a butcher, John Wood.²⁹² In this capacity he complained that a miner ‘abused him in a most unwarranted manner, using very foul language.... His conduct was very bad’.²⁹³ In mid-1898 he unsuccessfully applied to be town clerk, valuator, rate collector, and returning officer for the new borough, instead being appointed inspector of nuisances at an annual salary of £5.²⁹⁴ Two years later, the council resolved that he be sent a letter expressing ‘strong disapproval of his action’ in not carrying out the mayor’s instructions to bury dead animals.²⁹⁵ After being suspended from duty he was replaced, receiving no votes when the position was filled.²⁹⁶ In 1902 he revised the electoral roll for Te Aroha, and three years later canvassed between Te Aroha and Gordon to check that all eligible people were on the roll.²⁹⁷ Although he was granted an old age pension in 1907,²⁹⁸ he continued to work, in 1914 being employed by the Tourist Department; he was still working as a ‘government domain employee’ when he died.²⁹⁹

FAMILY LAND

²⁹² See *Te Aroha News*, 5 September 1921, p. 2, 7 September 1921, p. 3.

²⁹³ Police Court, *Te Aroha News*, 11 July 1888, p. 2.

²⁹⁴ J.W.R. Guilding to Borough Council, 25 July 1898, Te Aroha Borough Council, 1898 Correspondence, Matamata-Piako District Council Archives, Te Aroha; *Te Aroha News*, 26 July 1898, p. 2.

²⁹⁵ Te Aroha Borough Council, Minutes of Meeting of 17 October 1900, Minutes of Meetings 1898-1911, p. 84, Matamata-Piako District Council Archives, Te Aroha.

²⁹⁶ Te Aroha Borough Council, Minutes of Meeting of 20 November 1900, Minutes of Meetings 1898-1911, p. 124, Matamata-Piako District Council Archives, Te Aroha.

²⁹⁷ Paeroa Warden’s Court, Registrar of Electors Letterbook 1897-1906, p. 288, ZAAP 13297/1a, ANZ-A; *Te Aroha News*, 8 July 1905, p. 2.

²⁹⁸ Te Aroha Magistrate’s Court, Old Age Pension Claim Register 1899-1909, no. 76, BBAV 11503/1a, ANZ-A.

²⁹⁹ Barnard and Nicholls to Secretary, Waikato-Maniopototo District Maori Land Board, 24 November 1914, Aroha Block V Section 5A No. 3A Part, Maori Affairs Department, Hamilton, BACS A102/9789, ANZ-A; *Te Aroha News*, 22 February 1915, p. 2; Death Certificate of John William Richard Guilding, 20 February 1915, 1915/818, BDM.

His last wife was sole owner of part of Block V of the Aroha Survey District, at Mangaiti, fronting onto the main road.³⁰⁰ After her death, all her children had equal shares in these 78 acres.³⁰¹ When Mangaiti Road was made through it, the family received £100 in compensation.³⁰² In December 1910, when they sought approval for cutting off their interest, at the southern end of the block, Te Reweti Te Kohika, Erana's brother, objected, claiming Guilding was taking the 'best part of land'. Maraea Mere Peka,³⁰³ a prominent Ngati Rahiri woman, also objected. Guilding said he wanted most of the land between the road and the railway line, and the balance elsewhere. After an inspection, the court ruled that the partition was 'a fair one. The land West of the road is, part of it, certainly of good improved quality but the land East of the road is sufficiently poor to compensate for any advantage that may accrue' from having the land to the west. It was given to Guilding's children in equal shares; he did not receive an interest,³⁰⁴ although he would have controlled his children's use of it. They sold and leased portions, justifying this by having land elsewhere, being employed, and, in the case of the two eldest girls, being married to Pakeha.³⁰⁵

In 1979, a visitor who had once lived in Te Aroha as a boy recalled 'whilst he and his mate worked on the track from the domain boundary to the Bald Spur they found a noticeboard in the bracken which said "This land and bush was given to the people by the Guilding Family ... as far as Tui Park" '.³⁰⁶ No evidence has been found indicating that this land was ever owned by the family or donated to the residents.

MORE FINANCIAL PROBLEMS

³⁰⁰ Aroha Block V Section 5A No. 3A Part, Maori Affairs Department, Hamilton, BACS A102/9789, ANZ-A.

³⁰¹ Aroha Block V Section 5A No. 3A, Block Files, H976, Maori Land Court, Hamilton.

³⁰² Te Aroha, No. 1 file, Block Files, H792, Maori Land Court, Hamilton.

³⁰³ See papers on Reha Aperahama and Keepa Te Wharau.

³⁰⁴ Maori Land Court, Hauraki Minute Book no. 60, pp. 89-91.

³⁰⁵ Aroha Block V Section 5A no. 3A Part, Maori Affairs Department, Hamilton, BACS A102/9789; Aroha Block V Section 5A no. 3B, Maori Affairs Department, Hamilton, BACS A102/6030, ANZ-A.

³⁰⁶ Letter from 'Old Timer', *Te Aroha News*, 20 September 1979, p. 5.

As neither Guilding's occupations nor his family's land provided much income, he continued to be sued for small amounts. A tailor sued for £2 15s in August 1882, and a carter for £10 four months later.³⁰⁷ In January 1883 he was sued for £5 11s 6d and £1 2s 6d, four months later he was sued for £4 10s 10d, and in November had to pay £3 19s 3d.³⁰⁸ The following year, another merchant sought £3 16s 5d.³⁰⁹ In that August, when a distress warrant was issued against him to enforce payment of £8 8s 6d, the bailiff found no property to sell to meet this debt.³¹⁰ The following March, when a warrant was issued to meet a debt of £4 10s 3d, the bailiff reported the same circumstances.³¹¹ In June 1886, after a lawyer obtained a judgment summons against him over a debt of £4 7s, he was required to pay 10s a week or be imprisoned for 14 days.³¹² Five months later he was sued for £5.³¹³ For failing to pay his subscription to the *Waikato Times*, in 1889 he was required to pay £2 16s.³¹⁴ Other small amounts were sued for over the years, such as 12s 1d in 1892.³¹⁵ The following year he had still not paid a debt that should have been paid in November 1883: with legal fees it had increased to £4 11s 3d.³¹⁶ In May 1894, he was required to pay £1 13s 3d

³⁰⁷ Thames Magistrate's Court, Plaint Book 1881-1884, 229/1882, BACL 13737/12a; Civil Record Book 1881-1883, 342/1882, BACL 13735/1b, ANZ-A.

³⁰⁸ Te Aroha Magistrate's Court, Civil Record Book 1881-1884, 6, 57, 173/1883, BCDG 11221/1a; Thames Magistrate's Court, Civil Record Book 1881-1883, 351/1883, BACL 13735/1b, ANZ-A.

³⁰⁹ Te Aroha Magistrate's Court, Civil Record Book 1881-1884, 95/1884, BCDG 11221/1a, ANZ-A.

³¹⁰ Te Aroha Magistrate's Court, Home Warrant Book 1883-1928, 31/1884, BBAV 11498/1a, ANZ-A.

³¹¹ Te Aroha Magistrate's Court, Home Warrant Book 1883-1928, 2/1884, BBAV 11498/1a, ANZ-A.

³¹² Thames Magistrate's Court, Civil Record Book 1885-1887, 274/1886, BACL 13735/2b, ANZ-A.

³¹³ Thames Magistrate's Court, Civil Record Book 1885-1887, 469/1886, BACL 13735/2b, ANZ-A.

³¹⁴ Hamilton Magistrate's Court, Civil Cases 1885-1888, folio 16, BCDG A917/3, ANZ-A.

³¹⁵ Te Aroha Magistrate's Court, Civil Record Book 1889-1896, 37/1892, BCDG 11221/1c, ANZ-A.

³¹⁶ Te Aroha Magistrate's Court, Civil Record Book 1889-1896, Judgment Summons 173/83, BCDG 11221/1c, ANZ-A.

plus costs, immediately, or be imprisoned for seven days.³¹⁷ A judgment summons over £2 1s 1d sought in February 1900 was refused,³¹⁸ presumably because he lacked assets to meet it. He did not write a will, suggesting that he had little to leave his children.

POLITICS

Guilding played an active part in local politics. In 1885 he nominated and seconded candidates to the licensing committee.³¹⁹ Two years later he nominated a candidate to the town board, and the following year seconded a nomination to the licensing committee.³²⁰ At a meeting in 1888 he was asked to second a motion supporting the establishment of a borough, but refused,³²¹ for unstated reasons. Contradictorily, the following year he signed a petition seeking one.³²²

At the end of 1892, with others he called a public meeting to consider the actions of the domain board, and organized a petition to remove Edward Gallagher³²³ as a member because he had removed a rival livery stable's advertisement from its handbook, and proposed the motion that Gallagher not be a member because he was 'not fit and proper person'.³²⁴ One of his opponents over this issue, James Mills,³²⁵ explained to the local Member of Parliament that 'the reject Guilding' (he had not been elected secretary) had called the meeting ostensibly to ask the government to make the board elective but really to 'slate' Gallagher and other members. Although

³¹⁷ Te Aroha Magistrate's Court, Civil Record Book 1889-1896, Judgment Summons heard on 11 May 1894, BCDG 11221/1c, ANZ-A.

³¹⁸ Te Aroha Magistrate's Court, Civil Record Book 1896-1907, Judgment Summons heard on 7 February 1900, BCDG 11221/2a, ANZ-A.

³¹⁹ *Te Aroha News*, 14 February 1885, p. 2.

³²⁰ *Waikato Times*, 22 February 1887, p. 2; *Te Aroha News*, 18 February 1888, p. 2.

³²¹ *Te Aroha News*, 7 July 1888, p. 2.

³²² *Te Aroha News*, 23 October 1889, p. 2.

³²³ See paper on his life.

³²⁴ Edward Gallagher to Minister of Lands, 26 November 1892; John Bew, C.A. Cornes, J.W.R. Guilding to Minister of Lands, 19 December 1892; John Bew, C.A. Cornes, J.W.R. Guilding, Robert Harris, S.L. Hirst to Minister of Lands, 29 December 1892, Tourist Department, TO 1, 1891/198, ANZ-W.

³²⁵ See paper on his life.

Guilding was a Liberal, ‘you know what kind of Liberal’.³²⁶ In July 1893, Guilding and his three associates told the minister that three of them were active Liberals, and requested an elected board.³²⁷ When 400 people protested at the board dismissing the caretakers, he moved a motion condemning its action.³²⁸ Subsequently a resident wrote to the *Te Aroha News* stating that the whole fuss had been caused by ‘one evil-thinking, mischief-making, and suspicious man’,³²⁹ an attack on either Mills or Guilding. Whatever Mills may have thought of Guilding’s version of Liberalism, he publicly supported this party, seconding a motion supporting the local member and the government at an 1893 meeting.³³⁰

Scrutineer for the town board election in 1892,³³¹ four years later he stood for election, unsuccessfully, winning 51 votes; the next highest result, by the last candidate elected, was 65, with 81 being the highest vote.³³² In the mayoral election of 1898 he was a scrutineer for Thomas Gavin,³³³ Mills’ opponent.³³⁴

DEATH

Guilding seems to have enjoyed good health throughout his life, although he did suffer some accidents. When walking home one night in 1887 he tripped over ‘large boulders’ on the footpath and broke his ankle.³³⁵ Two years later, he complained about the state of the road to his house,³³⁶ but it caused him no further injury. In 1896, when the coach to Paeroa was

³²⁶ James Mills to William Fraser, 8 January 1893, Tourist Department, TO 1, 1892/96, ANZ-W.

³²⁷ J.W.R. Guilding, John Bew, Robert Harris, C.A. Cornes to Minister of Lands, 24 July 1893, Tourist Department, TO 1, 1892/96, ANZ-W.

³²⁸ *Auckland Weekly News*, 2 September 1893, p. 10.

³²⁹ *Te Aroha News*, n.d. [early September 1893], press cutting in Tourist Department, TO 1, 1892/96, ANZ-W.

³³⁰ *Thames Advertiser*, 14 March 1893, p. 3.

³³¹ *Auckland Weekly News*, 24 September 1892, p. 23.

³³² *Ohinemuri Gazette*, 19 September 1896, p. 4; *Thames Advertiser*, 19 September 1896, p. 2.

³³³ See paper on his life.

³³⁴ *Te Aroha News*, 7 July 1898, p. 2.

³³⁵ *Te Aroha News*, 2 July 1887, p. 2; *Waikato Times*, 7 July 1887, p. 3.

³³⁶ *Te Aroha News*, 20 April 1889, p. 2.

blown over in a severe gale, he was 'rather badly cut about the face and head'.³³⁷ During his last five years he suffered from fatty degeneration of the heart before dying in February 1915, aged 73.³³⁸

CONCLUSION

Guilding's obituary in the *Te Aroha News* recorded him as being 'one of the first European children born in Auckland' and limited his marriages to two. 'He was employed by the Government throughout his life', it inaccurately stated, 'and was greatly respected by the officials and natives'.³³⁹ Obituaries are always kind; this one was especially kind, for his reputation was poor. Clearly he was not popular with many Pakeha (some of whom mocked him as 'Falstaff') or with government officials, who finally cancelled his appointment as an interpreter (he continued in this occupation, privately). In 1875 he had tried to use his position as Mackay's interpreter to benefit himself, unsuccessfully, and always struggled to earn a living. His close links with Maori dating from his being a storekeeper in Piako in the 1860s, when he was known to be 'friendly' with Maori, were strengthened by his marriage to one 'half-caste' and his bigamous 'marriages' to three Maori women. He did his best to prepare his children for life in Pakeha society, and of all those who married all but one chose Pakeha partners. Overall, to use a typical obituary cliché, he was 'well-known' – but not always for the right reasons.

³³⁷ *Ohinemuri Gazette*, 29 August 1896, p. 4.

³³⁸ Death Certificate of John William Richard Guilding, 20 February 1915, 1915/818, BDM.

³³⁹ *Te Aroha News*, 22 February 1915, p. 2.