

CHARLES MANUEL: A MINER AND FARMER IN THE TE
AROHA DISTRICT

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Abstract: *Born in Cornwall, Charles Manuel claimed to have mined from an early age. From 1876 onwards he mined at and near Thames, one notably experience being ‘gassed’ during a rescue attempt in the Caledonian mine. Although from the 1880s and until the end of his life he also farmed and took up a variety of contracts, he never abandoned mining, becoming a mine manager in 1896 and working on several Hauraki fields into the early twentieth century. To defend his interests in one mine, he threatened rivals with a revolver. His brother-in-law, William Deeble, was associated with him in various activities, notably on the Thames County Council, where they were a disruptive element.*

In 1900 he became a farmer in the Piako district, and in 1908 became involved in Waiorongomai mining, obtaining claims and being a director of the Bendigo and Seddon companies. A colleague in these mining ventures was John Endean, along with his wife and son. As a member of the Piako County Council he worked hard for the community, as usual, but also as usual was pugnacious and difficult to work with. In politics, also, he always spoke his mind.

A hard worker in his private affairs and public issues, he was successful financially.

EARLY LIFE

Charles Manuel was born in Cornwall, in Feock, a small village near Truro, in December 1852, to Charles Manuell, as his surname was recorded, a miner, and Elizabeth, née Cock.¹ That he was proud of his Cornish heritage was illustrated by his naming his last farm ‘Truro’.² In 1911, he stated that he ‘had been mixed up with the mining industry ever since he was nine years of age’.³ No details have survived for his Cornish years to explain why he was involved when was so young, but presumably he was

¹ Ancestry.co.uk; Death Certificate of Charles Manuel, 14 March 1914, 1914/773, BDM; *Te Aroha News*, 16 March 1914, p. 3; *Morrinsville Star*, 17 March 1914, p. 2; *Ordinance Survey of Great Britain, Sheet 190*.

² Death Notice, *New Zealand Herald*, 16 March 1914, p. 1; *Morrinsville Star*, 17 March 1914, p. 2.

³ *Te Aroha News*, 31 August 1911, p. 3.

assisting his father. Two years previously he had stated that he had ‘followed up mining for 40 years’,⁴ making him 17 when he commenced mining, not nine. During the 1870s and 1880s he used his father’s spelling of his surname.⁵

Manuel arrived in New Zealand as an assisted immigrant, aged 23, in December 1875, and settled on the Thames goldfield.⁶ When he married, in October 1877, he was aged 25 and had been mining there for a year and a half.⁷ Only twice was he recorded as being a shareholder in any claims. In June 1876, he was one of four owners of the Rising Sun, at Moanataiari Creek, selling his interest a month later.⁸ In July 1879, he was an owner of the Master, at Waiotahi, having a quarter of the interests; it was certified as being abandoned in December the following year.⁹

MINING IN THE THAMES AREA, 1882-1886

According to one obituary, Manuel was ‘in business at Tairua’ before moving to Tapu,¹⁰ up the coast from Thames, but no record of his being at Tairua in any capacity has been traced. He had settled at Tapu by 1880,¹¹ where he held interests in several claims. In January 1882, with Richard Mills Hawkes, a prominent Tapu resident and the local publican,¹² Manuel

⁴ *Auckland Weekly News*, 9 September 1909, p. 36.

⁵ For example, Notices of Intentions to Marry 1877, folio 187, Birth Deaths and Marriages, BDM 20/22, ANZ-W; Birth Certificates of Phoebe May Manuell, 10 September 1878, 1878/15879; Mary Elizabeth Manuell, 11 April 1880, 1880/4641; Charles Reuben Manuell, 1 November 1881, 1881/11070; James Samuel Manuell, 28 October 1886, 1886/19505; Henry Morton Manuel [first entry using this spelling], 23 September 1891, 1891/13009, BDM.

⁶ Shipping Lists, ‘Brodict Castle’, IM 15/244, ANZ-W; *Te Aroha News*, 16 March 1914, p. 3.

⁷ Notices of Intentions to Marry 1877, folio 187, Births Deaths and Marriages, BDM 20/22, ANZ-W; Marriage Certificate of Charles Manuell, 13 October 1877, 1877/2335, BDM.

⁸ Thames Warden’s Court, Register of Grahamstown Claims 1876-1878, claim 405, BACL 14397/11a, ANZ-A.

⁹ Thames Warden’s Court, Register of Grahamstown Claims 1878-1880, claim 747, BACL 14397/12a, ANZ-A.

¹⁰ *Thames Star*, 16 March 1914, p. 4.

¹¹ *Coromandel Electoral Roll, 1880*, p. 14.

¹² See *Coromandel Electoral Roll, 1885*, p. 14; R.M. Hawkes, ‘The Early Days of Tapu’, *Thames Advertiser*, 9 June 1891, pp. 1, 4, 10 June 1891, p. 4, 11 June 1891, p. 1.

owned the Reuben, but it was abandoned four and a half months later.¹³ (His first son, Charles Reuben, had been born in the previous November.)¹⁴ In August 1884, he bought half the interests in the Search and Find, which was abandoned three months later.¹⁵ Also in November, he became joint owner of Tapu Creek, which they abandoned in the following May.¹⁶ He became the sole owner of Little Reuben, two men's ground, in March 1885, abandoning it a month and a half later.¹⁷ Also in May, he was registered as one of four owners of Cock-a-toos; it was abandoned three months later.¹⁸

In August 1885, he was one of the ten owners of the Silver Crown, at Waiomu.¹⁹ The following month, with three others, he was granted the Bonanza King, between Waiomu and Puhoi Creeks.²⁰

GASSED IN THE CALEDONIAN MINE

An obituary stated that 'soon' after settling at Thames Manuel 'held the position of shift boss at the Caledonian, and other mines'. It was 'in the Caledonian mine that the event happened which is considered to be the real cause of the ill health afterwards suffered', for on 28 April 1886 gas 'overcame several miners, and after others had been driven back Mr Manuel got through and carried out the bodies of two miners'.²¹ Another obituary referred to 'one of the noble traits of his character' being revealed in this disaster:

¹³ Thames Warden's Court, Register of Claims 1880-1882, no. 1011, BACL 14397/13a, ANZ-A.

¹⁴ Birth Certificate of Charles Reuben Manuell, 1 November 1881, 1881/11070, BDM.

¹⁵ Thames Warden's Court, Register of Claims 1882-1884, no. 1197, BACL 14397/14a, ANZ-A.

¹⁶ Thames Warden's Court, Register of Claims 1884-1886, no. 1254, BACL 14397/15a, ANZ-A.

¹⁷ Thames Warden's Court, Register of Claims 1884-1886, no. 1298, BACL 14397/15a, ANZ-A.

¹⁸ Thames Warden's Court, Register of Claims 1884-1886, no. 1308, BACL 14397/15a, ANZ-A.

¹⁹ Thames Warden's Court, Register of Licensed Holdings 1885-1886, folio 4, BACL 14397/16a, ANZ-A.

²⁰ *Thames Advertiser*, 21 August 1885, p. 2; Thames Warden's Court, Register of Applications for Licensed Holdings 1881-1886, folio 125, BACL 14452/1a, ANZ-A.

²¹ *Te Aroha News*, 16 March 1914, p. 3.

Several men were imprisoned owing to generation of carbonic acid gas. Mr Manuel called for volunteers to enter the mine, but there was only one, a miner named McInness, who responded, and these two faced the fumes, and reached the unfortunate men, only to find them dead. They brought the bodies to the surface.²²

This story was contradicted by contemporary accounts, which did not mention Manuel (nor McInness, perhaps correctly John Alexander McInnes?)²³ but listed several of the ‘about 20’ rescuers who worked under the direction of the mine officials.²⁴ Nor did he give evidence at the inquest.²⁵ He was certainly involved, for in August the following year the Royal Humane Society of Australasia awarded him and the other rescuers a medal and certificate for the ‘courage and humanity displayed’.²⁶ One obituary stated that Manuel’s medal was a gold one, another that it was bronze; it was bronze, and Manuel was the last of the 13 recipients to be listed.²⁷

The *Observer* commented that this ‘brave deed’ was largely responsible for his continued ill health,²⁸ and an obituary stated that he was so poisoned by gas that

for two years his condition was critical. Doctors considered that he would have difficulty in recovering, but when he was informed that he would die the patient’s courage and spirit asserted itself, and he resolved to leave the hospital and return to his home. He recovered sufficiently to be able to work a small farm on the Thames coast.²⁹

²² *Morrinsville Star*, 17 March 1914, p. 2.

²³ See *Thames Star*, 6 April 1915, p. 4.

²⁴ *Thames Star*, 28 April 1886, p. 2, 29 April 1886, p. 2; *Thames Advertiser*, 29 April 1886, p. 2.

²⁵ *Thames Star*, 29 April 1886, p. 2; *Thames Advertiser*, 30 April 1886, p. 2.

²⁶ *Thames Advertiser*, 6 May 1886, p. 2, 6 August 1887, p. 2; *Te Aroha News*, 16 March 1914, p. 3.

²⁷ *Thames Advertiser*, 6 August 1887, p. 2; *Te Aroha News*, 16 March 1914, p. 3; *Morrinsville Star*, 17 March 1914, p. 2.

²⁸ *Observer*, 28 March 1914, p. 4.

²⁹ *Te Aroha News*, 16 March 1914, p. 3.

This story cannot be confirmed from contemporary sources. The only time he was admitted to the Thames hospital was in late October 1887, when he was suffering from what was recorded as ‘haemophysis’, meaning haemophylis influenzae, which causes acute inflammation of the epiglottis, amongst other severe illnesses.³⁰ After spending 42 days in hospital, he was discharged as relieved, not cured.³¹ Nor was he admitted to the Auckland hospital.

MINING IN THE THAMES AREA AFTER BEING GASSED UNTIL 1890

Despite later statements that he was incapacitated after being gassed, Manuel continued to mine at Tapu and Waiomu. In May 1886, he became one of four owners of the Mary, between the Waiomu and Puhoi Creeks; he abandoned his interest three months later.³² In mid-June, he was registered as one of the three owners of the Golden Star, at Waiomu, with four of the ten shares; it was certified as being abandoned in September 1887.³³ In mid-June 1886, a Waiomu correspondent reported that the prospectors working there had ‘started work again by cleaning out their winze. Mr Charles Manuel is now working with them. I believe he represents Mr Clark’,³⁴ meaning Joseph Clark, a bush worker.³⁵ In August, he became one of three owners of the Good Morning, at Tapu Creek, and three months later held the same interest in the Little Artful, at Waiomu; both were declared abandoned in September 1887.³⁶

³⁰ *The Cambridge Historical Dictionary of Disease*, ed. Kenneth F. Kiple (Cambridge, 2003), pp. 81-82, 214.

³¹ Thames Hospital Board, Admissions Register 1884-1902, folio 20, no. 114, YCAH 14075/1a, ANZ-A.

³² Thames Warden’s Court, Register of Claims 1886-1888, no. 1483, BACL 14397/17a, ANZ-A.

³³ Thames Warden’s Court, Register of Claims 1886-1888, no. 1496, BACL 14397/17a, ANZ-A.

³⁴ Waiomo Correspondent, *Thames Advertiser*, 15 June 1886, p. 2.

³⁵ See Thames Warden’s Court, Register of Claims 1886-1888, no. 1483, BACL 14397/17a; Thames Hospital, Register of Patients 1884-1901, folios 86, 87, YCAH 14075/1a, ANZ-A.

³⁶ Thames Warden’s Court, Register of Claims 1886-1888, nos. 1532, 1574, BACL 14397/17a, ANZ-A.

In November 1887, Manuel became one of three owners of the Golden Fleece, at Waiomu, with half the interests.³⁷ In January 1888, he was one of 11 owners of the Lucky Trial, at Te Mata, but held only one of the 20 shares.³⁸ In August, he was granted the Goldfinch at Waiomu or Puru (records varied), but forfeited it three months later.³⁹

In February 1890, with three others he became an owner of the Unknown, at Diehard Creek, just south of Tapu; they abandoned it less than two months later.⁴⁰ In April it was reported that he and another miner were working the late Puddling Company's ground at Tapu. Although they were only just covering their expenses, they intended to continue prospecting.⁴¹ In May, he was a joint owner of Non-such, also at Diehard Creek, which they abandoned a year later.⁴² In October 1890 he was reported to be mining successfully, but no details were provided.⁴³

FARMING AT TAPU

Whilst living at Tapu, Manuel combined mining with farming. In 1880, he owned 43 acres at Totara Point, close to Thames.⁴⁴ In October that year, he was reported to have two acres at Tapu planted in potatoes and to be breaking in other acres.⁴⁵ His 300 freehold acres were valued in 1882 at £150.⁴⁶ In October 1882 he discontinued his application for a road,

³⁷ Thames Warden's Court, Register of Claims 1886-1888, no. 1634, BACL 14397/17a, ANZ-A.

³⁸ Thames Warden's Court, Register of Claims 1886-1888, no. 1657, BACL 14397/17a, ANZ-A.

³⁹ Thames Warden's Court, Applications for Licensed Holdings and Special Claims 1887-1896, folio 43, BACL 14376/1a; Register of Licensed Holdings 1887-1891, folio 144, BACL 14355/1a, ANZ-A; *Thames Advertiser*, Warden's Court, 10 August 1888, p. 2, 22 November 1888, p. 3.

⁴⁰ Thames Warden's Court, Register of Claims 1888-1898, no. 1815, BACL 14397/18a, ANZ-A.

⁴¹ *Thames Advertiser*, 5 April 1890, p. 2.

⁴² Thames Warden's Court, Register of Claims 1888-1898, no. 1831, BACL 14397/18a, ANZ-A.

⁴³ *Thames Star*, 9 October 1890, p. 2.

⁴⁴ *Thames Star*, 24 February 1880, p. 2, Magistrate's Court, 18 November 1880, p. 2.

⁴⁵ *Thames Star*, 1 October 1880, p. 2.

⁴⁶ *A Return of the Freeholders of New Zealand ...* (Wellington, 1884), p. M 10.

‘applicant not agreeing to conditions proposed by Warden’.⁴⁷ The following March he was granted a road at Tapu Creek, presumably to his farm; it was forfeited in 1890.⁴⁸ In May 1883, he ran 158 sheep, but during the following 12 months sold all of them.⁴⁹

In June 1884, Manuel was granted a timber license for the ‘Black Swan Bush, Tapu’.⁵⁰ Three months later, he was charged with cutting kauri trees illegally.⁵¹ As a newspaper noted, ‘the evidence was very voluminous, and much of it most contradictory ... but it showed plainly ... that a great deal more timber had been cut than had been paid for’.⁵² Manuel had been permitted to cut 40 in the Black Swan Creek but may have cut as many as 105 without paying 25s per tree as required. When 105 stumps were found by the ranger, Manuel told him ‘he had cut 35 trees, but he was entitled to 85, having 60 in his own name, 4 in Davidson’s, 1 in Johnstone’s, and 20 in Vaughan’s’. Evidence revealed he had been cutting timber for sleepers and shingles for two years, employing several men, and had first marked the trees he intended to cut in 1880 without informing officials. H. Rodgers, an occasional prospector,⁵³ claimed that Manuel ‘did not point out the marked trees’ to George Wilson, later the mining inspector,⁵⁴ when he inspected, afterwards telling this witness ‘that in taking Mr Wilson through the bush he had led him a nice dance, and that he would be a fool to pay for what he could get for nothing’. Julia Rodgers, who admitted that her husband and Manuel ‘were not on good terms’, deposed that before Wilson visited, Manuel said to her: ‘There’s one of those blarned Government men coming down about the kauri trees; I want you to tell your husband not to show him the trees at the back of the house. I don’t see why we should pay for trees we can get for nothing’.

⁴⁷ Thames Warden’s Court, Register of Rights, Tunnels, etc, 1875-1882, folio 371, BACL 14431/2a, ANZ-A.

⁴⁸ Inspector of Mines, Thames, Letterbook 1888-1892, p. 302, YBAZ 1240/1, ANZ-A.

⁴⁹ ‘Annual Sheep Returns’, *AJHR*, 1885, H-11, p. 7.

⁵⁰ Thames Warden’s Court, Register of Rights, Tunnels, etc, 1875-1882, folio 452, BACL 14431/2a, ANZ-A.

⁵¹ *Thames Star*, 1 September 1884, p. 2.

⁵² *Thames Star*, 4 September 1884, p. 2.

⁵³ See County Council, *Thames Advertiser*, 3 March 1887, p. 2.

⁵⁴ See paper on his life.

Chas. Manuel deposed that he had 85 trees in the Black Swan Creek, and 20 in the Kaka Creek. He had cut up to last February 35 trees, leaving 50 uncut. The trees were large, and were very scattered, the 105 mentioned extending over at least 200 acres. He had made several roads to the various clumps. Persons had been cutting in the Black Swan bush before he went there. He was quite clear that he had not cut more timber than he had bought. He had owned 20 trees near Brokenshires; 4 he had cut, and 16 sold to R.M. Hawkes. Did not buy a tree behind Rogers', nor did he give Rodgers any authority to mark trees for him. He then explained his agreements with the shingle splitters. The trees behind Rodgers' were not cut for him. The trees were marked without his authority. He was led to believe that several trees were unauthoritatively marked. What Mrs Rodgers had stated was untrue. Never went with Rodgers to mark trees, but was with Rodgers when the latter marked certain trees. The reason that Rodgers had marked some trees, he supposed, was that he had bested Casey. To a certain extent Rodgers had marked trees with his authority, but the trees were not officially marked, they were merely "touched" with a knife, so as to see if they were worth buying.

His brother-in-law, William Deeble,⁵⁵ stated that he 'was to a certain extent in partnership with Manuel' in timber dealings at Tapu. Rodgers was employed by Manuel 'principally in connection with working his land. When he went through the bush with Manuel some of the trees were marked; he was not quite sure with what mark. Rodgers did not mark any of the trees, he went with them to point out those worth marking'. After a timber cutter gave evidence that he 'had during the last three months fallen perhaps a dozen unmarked trees for Manuel', the warden, Harry Kenrick,⁵⁶ ruled that there was 'not a shadow of doubt that trees were being marked and cut for Manuel without their being paid for, and not without his consequent authority or knowledge', but noted that other residents cut kauri illegally also. 'Those who cut the trees down without paying for the privilege were doing that which was tantamount to picking a man's pocket'. After imposing the full penalty of £5 plus costs of £18 16s, he reminded Manuel that he was 'civilly liable for the value of the trees illegally cut down'.⁵⁷ Kenrick's recommendation that the Auckland Land Board take further proceedings against him for cutting timber on Crown land was accepted by the board,

⁵⁵ See below.

⁵⁶ See paper on his life.

⁵⁷ Warden's Court, *Thames Star*, 4 September 1884, p. 2.

but after ordering that he be sued for the value of the timber it failed to take further action.⁵⁸

‘Sylvain’ criticized Kenrick’s decision, describing Manuel as a martyr and criticizing William Good, a farmer at Tapu,⁵⁹ who had given evidence against him.⁶⁰ Good responded that, as eight pairs of shingle splitters produced at least 100,000 shingles each week, a large number of trees had indeed been felled.⁶¹ ‘A Tapu Resident’ immediately replied:

I once heard of a Yankee who, on being pressed on a certain point, said, “Wal, I guess if I said it, I’ll swear to it.” I think, with some truth, the same reply would do for Mr Wm. Good, now of Tapu. He first says the whole of the 105 stumps cut in the Black Swan were for Manuel, and cut by Manuel’s men. This he, as well as every resident in Tapu, knows to be untrue, as timber was cut in the Black Swan before either Mr Manuel or Mr Good came to Tapu.

His total number of shingles cut was impossible and ‘a flagrant falsehood’. After more criticisms of Good, he referred to ‘the crosshacking of his innocent lad, that certainly was too bad, particularly when Mr Good remembers how Mr Manuel acted on that saintly youth on an occasion which Mr Good cannot yet well forget’,⁶² presumably a reference to his son being charged, but found not guilty, of ‘maliciously wounding a steer’.⁶³ As the editor of the *Thames Star* decided that ‘little good’ could come ‘from a continuation of this controversy’, he refused to publish any more letters.⁶⁴

⁵⁸ Auckland Land Board, Minute Book 1882-1884, meeting of 9 October 1884, pp. 315-316, BAAZ 4019/1; Auckland Magistrate’s Court, Civil Record Book 1884-1885, BADW 10246/3b, ANZ-A.

⁵⁹ See *Coromandel Electoral Roll, 1882*, p. 13; *Thames Advertiser*, Police Court, 19 November 1883, p. 3, 10 January 1884, p. 3, 23 July 1885, p. 2.

⁶⁰ The *Thames Advertiser* for this period has been lost, but this letter is referred to in a letter from William Good, *Thames Star*, 26 September 1884, p. 2.

⁶¹ Letter from William Good, *Thames Star*, 26 September 1884, p. 2.

⁶² Letter from ‘A Tapu Resident’, *Thames Star*, 30 September 1884, p. 3.

⁶³ *Thames Advertiser*, Police Court, 19 November 1883, p. 3, 10 January 1884, p. 3.

⁶⁴ Editorial note appended to letter from ‘A Tapu Resident’, *Thames Star*, 30 September 1884, p. 3.

After this dispute, Manuel was sued by the lawyer who had defended him to enforce payment of his fee of £5 9s.⁶⁵

In August 1889, Manuel and his wife were each granted an occupation license of 50 acres at Whakatete, between Tararu and Te Puru, but these were later cancelled, 'being found to be Native Land'.⁶⁶ Two months later, Deeble applied for 40 acres to the west of Manuel's 'homestead selection'.⁶⁷ In February 1891, when Deeble was granted an agricultural lease at Tapu Creek, his site adjoined 'Manuel's selection' on the Waipatakau Creek, up the valley from Tapu. A man named McMahan,⁶⁸ later to be the cause of some conflict with Manuel, lived on the other side of Deeble's land.⁶⁹

CONTRACTOR

In addition to mining and farming, Manuel occasionally sought contracts. In February 1887, he tendered, unsuccessfully, for part of the Waiomu Road contract.⁷⁰ In July 1890, when he living at Puru, he wrote to the Thames evening newspaper revealing local squabbles over county contracts:

A wonderful discovery! How to make a rise in these bad times! First, you must be a ratepayer in the Hastings riding of the Thames County, and then circulate a report that you intend to be a candidate for the coming election of County Councillor; and then pretend to make a great noise about the Council voting £50 to Mr Aitken,⁷¹ &c, &c. And what then? Why, the Council will do

⁶⁵ Magistrate's Court, *Thames Advertiser*, 24 January 1885, p. 3.

⁶⁶ Warden's Court, *Thames Star*, 22 August 1889, p. 2; Thames Warden's Court, Hauraki Occupation Licenses 1889-1894, nos. 7, 8, BACL 14454/1a, ANZ-A.

⁶⁷ *Thames Star*, 30 October 1889, p. 2.

⁶⁸ Either William or Michael, both miners, of Tapu: see *Thames Advertiser*, 10 January 1884, p. 3; *Thames Electoral Roll, 1890*, p. 24.

⁶⁹ Thames Warden's Court, Hauraki Occupation Licenses 1889-1894, no. 123, with plan of sections, BACL 14454/1a, ANZ-A.

⁷⁰ *Thames Advertiser*, 8 February 1887, p. 2.

⁷¹ Presumably Thomas Aitken, the chemist, rather than Thomas Aitken, the post office clerk: see *Thames Directory for 1881* (Thames, 1881), p. 99; F.W. Weston, *Thames Goldfields: A history from pre-proclamation times to 1927: Diamond Jubilee souvenir* (Thames, 1927), p. 186; *Thames Electoral Roll, 1880*, p. 1; *A Return of the Freeholders of New Zealand*, p. A 7.

the same by you as they do to by Mr McMahon at Tapu. The Council will let you a little private contract, such as turning Burns' Creek, and give you £5 for the job. Now, sir, I am not the best of men, though I can do three jobs like that in one week – not so bad for these dull times. The Council will do something better still for you, they will give you a little private contract to cart sandstone, about four chains, at one shilling a load, and they will allow you to cart in a contrivance which Mr McMahon calls a trollie [his spelling]. It carries about twelve feet if well filled. Now Mr McMahon does not do this work himself; he hands it over to boys who should be going to school. I have seen them at work several times. They do not fill it more than two-thirds full. So it will take three loads for one yard; not so bad for these times. The rate of three shillings a yard for carting sandstone, the average distance to cart is four chains, but there, the Council do not stop at small things. Last week they called for tenders to cart shingle off the beach, and I saw in the advertisement that there would be a man on the ground on the 30th June to point out the work. I with others went to see the work pointed out by the Foreman of Works. He showed 45 chains of road to be repaired with the shingle off the beach, to be spread six inches in depth by ten feet in width, so that it would take about 630 yards to complete the job. My friend and myself made out our tenders accordingly, but to our great surprise, when we went to the Council office to see the specification, we could not see anything to correspond with the work as pointed out by the Foreman. After inquiring of Mr [Edwin Wise] Hollis [the county clerk]⁷² about the specifications, that gentleman showed us a sheet of paper, which simply stated: "Tenders for carting 100 loads of shingle, more or less, on the Thames-Coromandel road." He also stated that was the correct specification, so we at once could see what the little game was. They wanted the same little trolley at work which I have already described. So my friend, Mr J. Bennett,⁷³ was rather wrath at being fooled about so much, but, said he, "they shall not have one shilling for their little trolley loads, I will put in 7 1/2d," and he did so accordingly. I also put in one shilling per load; but alas! neither my friend nor I were allowed to make a rise. We were very soon asked by one of the Councillors what kind of loads we intended to cart. After trying to explain what we intended, the Chairman accused us of humbugging the Council. Sir, if the Chairman of the Thames County Council reads these few lines, he will see who is the humbugging party.⁷⁴

⁷² See paper on the Thames Miners' Union.

⁷³ Either James, a boatman at Tapu, or James Jr, a settler living at the same place: see *Thames Electoral Roll, 1890*, p. 3.

⁷⁴ Letter from Charles Manuel, *Thames Star*, 7 July 1890, p. 4.

The following day, his attempt to have another letter published in this newspaper was declined, it 'having already appeared in another paper',⁷⁵ presumably in a missing edition of the morning one.

Four months later, Manuel was elected to join the councillors he had accused of corruption.⁷⁶ After ceasing to be a councillor in 1893, he sought more contracts from it. In February 1894, he unsuccessfully tendered for the Tapu Creek road, but another tender the following month, for £39 and supplying metal at 4s 9d per cubic yard, was accepted.⁷⁷ Less than a month later, he sued the council for damages amounting to £44,⁷⁸ caused by it carting metal over the road he was repairing. Manuel, describing himself as a contractor residing at Tararu, explained that during the repairs it was agreed that 'no matter' was to be carted over the road until it was 'formed all ready for metal', but despite this, over several days the council carted 'large drays of metal drawn by four horses'; as this prevented his completing his contract, he 'sustained serious damage'. Another condition of his contract was to repair a bridge, but without his knowledge or consent the council let another contract to pull down and repair it, thereby preventing Manuel carting materials for some days, again causing him 'serious damage'. Thirdly, the council instructed one of his workers 'to do work which was altogether outside of the specifications, and kept the said man doing such work for three days', to Manuel's 'great loss and damage'. After providing detailed evidence of the work done, he estimated its value at £34. 'Did not complete the contract, and had not yet done so. Put an end to the contract because it was impossible to satisfactorily finish it on account of the reasons already given'.⁷⁹ The magistrate decided that Manuel 'had no justification in stopping his work', non-suited him, and required him to pay costs of £7 11s.⁸⁰ The following day, his tender of £59 17s 6d for improvements to the Tararu school grounds was accepted.⁸¹ No further contracts have been traced.

⁷⁵ 'Notes to Correspondents', *Thames Star*, 8 July 1890, p. 2.

⁷⁶ For his behaviour on the council, see below.

⁷⁷ *Thames Advertiser*, 22 February 1894, p. 2, 23 March 1894, p. 2.

⁷⁸ Thames Magistrate's Court, *Plaint Book 1890-1895*, entry for 14 May 1894, BACL 13737/2a, ANZ-A.

⁷⁹ Magistrate's Court, *Thames Advertiser*, 19 May 1894, p. 2.

⁸⁰ Magistrate's Court, *Thames Advertiser*, 22 May 1894, p. 2.

⁸¹ *Thames Advertiser*, 23 May 1894, p. 2.

MINING IN THE THAMES DISTRICT IN THE 1890s

In July 1891, with others, he was granted both the Panama and Belle of the West at Tapu.⁸² In that year, with another miner, he found good ore at Waiomu, leading to the formation of the Mount Zeehan Company.⁸³ In September, a letter to the editor asked why Manuel, then a member of the council, had not asked it to make a road to this mine. 'I have heard on the most reliable authority that Cr. Manuel *was* a large shareholder in the Mount Zeehan, but has recently sold out for a considerable sum of money'. The writer claimed that Manuel worked in the mine for a couple of months and then, 'having made something out of the mine', did 'not care whether the district sinks or swims'.⁸⁴ Manuel did not respond, but in the following year told his fellow councillors that he was extensively prospecting the Puru district, and requested the construction of a road.⁸⁵ In July 1893, a Waiomu correspondent, in referring in passing to his behaviour on the council, wrote that 'Charlie Manuel is on the war-path – this time looking for gold. He evidently has considerable faith in this valley'.⁸⁶

According to an obituary, during the mining boom of the mid-1890s Manuel 'again held responsible positions, being manager of several big mines in turn, including the Sylvia and Monowai, and afterwards managing director of a number of mining syndicates. He became averse to working for wages and commenced prospecting for himself'.⁸⁷ In fact, he managed these two mines during the following decade. After settling at Tararu in the early 1890s,⁸⁸ he concentrated on mining there. In May 1896, he was granted the Star of England Extended, and one month later obtained six months' protection for it.⁸⁹ The following March, he was granted a water race and

⁸² Thames Warden's Court, Register of Claims 1888-1898, no. 1857, BACL 14397/18a, ANZ-A; Warden's Court, *Thames Advertiser*, 25 July 1891, p. 2.

⁸³ *Thames Advertiser*, 19 August 1891, p. 3.

⁸⁴ Letter from 'Transvaal Prospector', *Thames Advertiser*, 10 September 1891, p. 2.

⁸⁵ *Thames Advertiser*, 7 July 1892, p. 2.

⁸⁶ Waiomu Correspondent, *Thames Advertiser*, 20 July 1893, p. 2.

⁸⁷ *Te Aroha News*, 16 March 1914, p. 3.

⁸⁸ See Birth Certificates of Henry Morton Manuel, 23 September 1891, 1891/13009; Victor Manuel, 19 March 1897, 1897/4464, BDM; Thames Warden's Court, Mining Applications 1896-1897, 358/1897, BACL 14350/1a, ANZ-A; *Thames Advertiser*, 17 June 1898, p. 2.

⁸⁹ Warden's Court, *Thames Advertiser*, 8 May 1896, p. 4, 5 June 1896, p. 1.

withdrew his request to work it with one instead of five men.⁹⁰ In September 1897 it became part of Dixon's Consolidated Special Claim.⁹¹

During 1896 he was an original shareholder in two companies, the King Solomon, at Tararu, and the Orion, at Puru.⁹² In September that year, he was granted the Eagle Hawk, at Tararu, and two months later was permitted to work it for four months with two men instead of the required 32.⁹³ In December he sold it to the Eaglehawk Company for £63 15s, receiving one-tenth of its scrip shares.⁹⁴ The following month, he asked the council to provide a better road on the right-hand branch of the Upper Tararu Creek for this and other mines.⁹⁵ In April 1898, it was reported that mining had resumed in it, under his management.⁹⁶

In announcing his appointment in September 1896 as manager for the Rangatira Company, which mined at Waiomu, the *Thames Advertiser* commented that the directors had 'secured the services of a thoroughly practical miner ... who in the early days of the Thames goldfield found gold in this mine'.⁹⁷ Two months later he commenced a low level to test the lode at depth.⁹⁸ In February 1897, the *New Zealand Mining Standard* reported that the mine was being developed 'in a practical and workmanlike manner' under his management. A 'Maori claimant' had turned up claiming all its ground 'and that all works done by the said company shall benefit him, and that the said company shall clear out, stop work, and allow Mr Claimant to resume possession'.⁹⁹ Manuel's views were not recorded, but would have

⁹⁰ Thames Warden's Court, Mining Applications 1896-1897, 304/1897, BACL 14350/1a, ANZ-A; Warden's Court, *Thames Advertiser*, 19 March 1897, p. 3.

⁹¹ Thames Warden's Court, Register of Licensed Holdings and Special Claims 1895-1896, folio 65, BACL 14355/3a, ANZ-A.

⁹² *New Zealand Gazette*, 25 June 1896, p. 1016, 20 November 1896, p. 1961.

⁹³ Thames Warden's Court, Applications for Licensed Holdings and Special Claims 1896-1897, no. 870 of 1896, BACL 14376/2a, ANZ-A; Warden's Court, *Thames Advertiser*, 11 September 1896, p. 4, 19 December 1896, p. 4.

⁹⁴ Thames Warden's Court, Register of Licensed Holdings and Special Claims 1895-1896, folio 239, BACL 14355/3a; Instruments 1897-1898, no. 72352, BACL 15182/2a, ANZ-A; *New Zealand Gazette*, 7 January 1897, p. 79.

⁹⁵ *Thames Advertiser*, 4 February 1897, p. 3.

⁹⁶ *Thames Advertiser*, 30 April 1898, p. 4.

⁹⁷ *Thames Advertiser*, 28 September 1896, p. 3.

⁹⁸ *Thames Advertiser*, 21 November 1896, p. 3.

⁹⁹ *New Zealand Mining Standard*, 20 February 1897, p. 10.

been brisk, and no more was heard of this claim of ownership. The following month, he was granted a warrant to act as provisional mine manager, but resigned this post within six months, although in November his active development of the mine was described in detail.¹⁰⁰

In October 1896, he was granted the Specimen Lead, between the Waiomu and Puhoi Creeks.¹⁰¹ The following March, with an Auckland hotelkeeper he acquired the Alameda, at Puru.¹⁰² Two months later, he was granted a license for a water race at Puru.¹⁰³ Also in May, he was granted the City Club there, but the license was cancelled in the following month.¹⁰⁴ Also in May, his application (with a partner) for the Moana, at Waiomu, was refused because the surveyor had not been paid.¹⁰⁵ In August, he was granted the Big Reef Extended, also at Puru, which he had applied for 13 months previously after taking an encouraging sample from this ground.¹⁰⁶

In February 1899, when appointed to manage the Waitekauri King Company's mine, the *Thames Advertiser* described him as 'an experienced miner having served in various capacities, and during the last few years has been principally engaged in supervising mines in the out districts'.¹⁰⁷ This is the only reference to his mining there, as he normally worked in an area bordered by Te Mata to the north and Tararu to the south. His involvement

¹⁰⁰ Inspectors' Reports on Applications for Warrants to Act as Provisional Mine Manager, no. 169, Mines Department, MD 4, 2/47, ANZ-W; *Thames Advertiser*, 21 November 1896, p. 3.

¹⁰¹ Thames Warden's Court, Applications for Licensed Holdings and Special Claims 1896-1897, no. 352 of 1896, BACL 14376/2a, ANZ-A; Warden's Court, *Thames Advertiser*, 16 October 1896, p. 4.

¹⁰² Thames Warden's Court, Register of Applications for Licensed Holdings and Special Claims 1896-1897, 567/1896, BACL 14376/2a, ANZ-A.

¹⁰³ Warden's Court, *Thames Advertiser*, 19 May 1897, p. 1.

¹⁰⁴ Warden's Court, *Thames Advertiser*, 19 March 1897, p. 4; Thames Warden's Court, Register of Licensed Holdings and Special Claims 1896-1897, folio 60, BACL 14355/4a, ANZ-A.

¹⁰⁵ Thames Warden's Court, Applications for Licensed Holdings and Special Claims 1896-1897, 687/1896, BACL 14376/2a, ANZ-A.

¹⁰⁶ Thames Warden's Court, Applications for Licensed Holdings and Special Claims 1896-1897, 535/1896, BACL 14376/2a, ANZ-A; Warden's Court, *Thames Advertiser*, 25 August 1897, p. 4; Thames School of Mines, Assay Book 1895-1897, entry for 7 July 1896, School of Mines Archives, Thames.

¹⁰⁷ *Thames Advertiser*, 2 February 1899, p. 4.

in Waitekauri was brief, as in early September he was a member of a tribute party in the Bullion, at Tapu.¹⁰⁸ According to obituaries, he made his best find in it, 'out of which he derived a sum estimated at some thousands of pounds'.¹⁰⁹ His financial state during that decade is not known, but on occasions he may have struggled, for in 1896 and again in 1898 he was sued because of dishonoured promissory notes, the first for £10 and the other for £4.¹¹⁰

STANDOFF AT THE DAY DAWN MINE

An obituary mentioned a story that revealed Manuel's 'indomitable courage. He pegged the Day Dawn claim at the Thames but his rights were disputed, and throughout a whole day he sat on the site, and defended it with a revolver'.¹¹¹ This drama resulted from he, John Dennerley, and Fred Bennett becoming the owners of it, three men's ground at Tinker's Gully, in October 1894.¹¹² Both Dennerley and Bennett were miners living at Tararu.¹¹³ In mid-November, Dennerley applied for permission to work it for three months with two men.

Mr F. Bennett appeared for the applicant, and stated that the party was composed of the speaker, the applicant, and another man, who went to Coolgardie about three months ago. They had done a lot of dead work, having constructed 20 chains of roadway, and being also engaged in putting in a new level. The County Council had aided them to a small extent. Although one of the party had gone to Coolgardie he was welcome to resume his interest in the claim when he came back. For the present he had given the speaker's mate the control of his interests as far as concerned the employment of labour, etc. The interest had not

¹⁰⁸ *Thames Advertiser*, 5 September 1899, p. 3.

¹⁰⁹ *Te Aroha News*, 16 March 1914, p. 3; *Observer*, 23 March 1914, p. 4.

¹¹⁰ Thames Magistrate's Court, *Plaint Book 1895-1910*, 170/1896, 279/1898, BACL 13737/2b, ANZ-A.

¹¹¹ *Te Aroha News*, 16 March 1914, p. 3.

¹¹² Thames Warden's Court, *Register of Claims 1888-1898*, no. 1892, BACL 14397/18a, ANZ-A; Warden's Court, *Thames Star*, 16 August 1894, p. 2; Warden's Court, *Thames Advertiser*, 21 June 1895, p. 2.

¹¹³ See *Thames Advertiser*, 22 July 1892, p. 3, 9 May 1894, p. 2, 21 June 1895, p. 3, 31 January 1896, p. 2, 5 February 1896, p. 1 (but note 1 April 1896, p. 2); *Thames Star*. 27 January 1899, p. 2.

changed hands, and the application was made because they were anxious to secure the three men's ground. They were confident the ground was payable.

The Warden said that, if the application were granted, two men would be holding three men's ground.

In answer to a question by the Warden as to whether there was any public objection the Mining Inspector (Mr G. Wilson) stated that he did not know the place or its position.

Mr Bennett stated that the claim was in Tinker's Gully above the City of Dunedin mine.

The Mining Inspector said that miners in such an inaccessible locality as this should be given every encouragement.

The application was granted.¹¹⁴

The following June, the City of Dunedin Company sued Manuel because since 13 May he had mined on their ground 'and unlawfully removed and carried away certain quantities of auriferous stone belonging to the complainants'. It explained that there was now only one owner of the Day Dawn apart from Manuel, who, when he registered it, did not have a miner's right, his having expired three weeks previously. Manuel responded that 'he was not aware that his miner's right had run out', and had 'started work merely in order that proceedings might be instituted against him, as he was fully of opinion that he had a legal interest in the Day Dawn claim. He had not removed any quartz'. The warden, Henry Eyre Kenny,¹¹⁵ imposed 'nominal damages of 1s, and an order to cease trespass', plus costs of £7 19s.¹¹⁶

Three weeks later, Manuel sued this company, seeing forfeiture of their ground for under-manning. After addressing 'the Court at considerable length upon the evidence he intended to adduce', he called as his first witness a tributer in the City of Dunedin mine who stated that little work had been done because the results were not payable. Dennerley then gave evidence that when he and Bennett 'took up the Day Dawn claim they did not hold a 20s miner's right. The surveyor told him that the Day Dawn was within the City of Dunedin holding, and he then went and took out a miner's right on the 5th of April'. Whilst Manuel was in Coolgardie he left his interest 'in witness' charge', and when he returned in May Dennerley

¹¹⁴ Warden's Court, *Thames Advertiser*, 16 November 1894, p. 3.

¹¹⁵ See *Cyclopedia of New Zealand*, vol. 1 (Wellington, 1897), p. 1506; *Observer*, 6 February 1897, p. 18.

¹¹⁶ Warden's Court, *Thames Advertiser*, 21 June 1895, p. 2.

‘told him that he could have his interest’. (Referring to this, Manuel’s only visit to Australia, an obituary stated that after farming for some years, he ‘went to Australia but only stayed away for about twelve months, and again returned to Thames’.¹¹⁷ His in fact much briefer visit to Coolgardie was prompted by the mining boom there.)¹¹⁸ ‘As soon as they found the gold the City of Dunedin Co. came and said: “You are on our ground”’, but ‘eventually’ let him and Bennett work it on tribute. ‘They did not offer Manuel a share in the tribute, but witness could not say why. The tribute had paid pretty well’. In reply to Manuel, Dennerley explained there ‘was a verbal agreement between us by which I had power to control your interest in reference to the employment of labor. Was not aware that the ground was on native land when he took out 10s miner’s right’.

Bennett gave evidence that for the first three months of the year nobody was working in the City of Dunedin. Cross-examined by the company’s counsel, he admitted having worked in the Day Dawn ‘before it was discovered that it was in the City of Dunedin ground’. They were held a tribute for ‘the ground in which they got the gold. In November last they applied to the Warden for protection to work the Day Dawn with two men, but almost immediately afterwards there were six or seven at work’.

A surveyor explained that, after making a special surveyor, he found that ‘all the workings of the Day Dawn were in the City of Dunedin holding’, but when asked by Manuel admitted ‘there were no visible lines nor any pegs noticeable’. A director admitted that the company had never obtained payable returns, and that after Bennett and Dennerley, whom they did not know were working in their ground, found gold a tribute was agreed to on 13 April. The two men retained the gold they had extracted, and the agreement ‘was as nearly as possible Dennerley’s own suggestion. Dennerley admitted that they were within the City of Dunedin ground, and witness simply acted in what he considered a fair manner’. The agreement ‘provided that not less than four men should be employed’. As for Manuel, he ‘had never made any claim upon the company on his return from Coolgardie’. Kenny declined to forfeit the ground, instead fining the company £10.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁷ *Te Aroha News*, 16 March 1914, p. 3.

¹¹⁸ See Geoffrey Blainey, *The Golden Mile* (St Leonards, 1993).

¹¹⁹ Warden’s Court, *Thames Advertiser*, 12 July 1895, p. 3.

Dissatisfied at the outcome, Manuel announced that he would institute further proceedings for forfeiture.¹²⁰ At the August hearing, he claimed that the company did not possess miners' rights when it first claimed ownership on 10 April, and had left the rent unpaid. 'At the time the Day Dawn was pegged out and for more than seven months after there were no lines visible nor pegs in', and the claim was then being worked by Fred Bennett, John Donnerley, and [either Alexander Spiers or his brother Andrew] Thorburn¹²¹ 'as a claim taken up on ground deemed to be abandoned'. He also claimed that the permission granted to work with four men 'was obtained by misrepresentation', and asked to be granted the ground. 'In opening his case Mr Manuel said he would not go into detail. He had brought an action against the company four weeks ago. On that occasion he thought that the plaintiff was laid so as to allow him to proceed for all breaches of the Act, but he found on coming to the Court that he was confined to the labor clauses. Hence the present case'. After hearing evidence, judgment was given by Kenny for the company.¹²² In conducting his case, Manuel had argued 'with considerable ingenuity, showing an intimate acquaintance with all the ins and outs of mining law'.¹²³

Also in August, his application for the Opal, at Tararu, was refused.¹²⁴ One month later, when he applied for it the City of Dunedin Company claimed to have prior possession, proved by its having been granted protection in May for four months. Because his solicitor 's 'conveyance had suffered a break down on the road from Waihi',¹²⁵ he had to conduct his case. In his evidence, he 'objected to the company's miner's right, this being the same as was produced in Court when the Dunedin ground was involved. Witness contended that this right had nothing to do with the Opal, which was not amalgamated with the Dunedin'. He had marked out the ground on 10 August and applied for it two days later; 'at the time of marking out it was unoccupied ground, no work having been done on it for two years'.

¹²⁰ Warden's Court, *Thames Advertiser*, 16 July 1895, p. 2.

¹²¹ See *Thames Advertiser*, 2 November 1894, p. 3, 1 March 1895, p. 3, advertisement, 27 July 1896, p. 4, 19 December 1896, p. 4, 18 January 1898, p. 2; *Thames Star*, 28 May 1906, p. 2.

¹²² *Thames Star*, 8 August 1895, p. 2.

¹²³ Warden's Court, *Thames Advertiser*, 9 August 1895, p. 2.

¹²⁴ Thames Warden's Court, Register of Applications for Licensed Holdings and Special Claims 1887-1896, folio 128, BACL 14376/1a, ANZ-A.

¹²⁵ *Thames Star*, 5 September 1895, p. 2.

Under cross-examination by the company's counsel, Thomas Cotter,¹²⁶ he admitted knowing 'that the Opal had once been the property of the company as a licensed holding. Knew that a register of holdings and their owners was kept, but did not go to examine it'. He understood protection meant that no one but the owner could peg out or use the ground, but had he 'known that the Opal was protected he would nevertheless have pegged it out. The Mining Act provided that a second period of protection could not be granted unless the ground had been continuously worked in the interval following the first protection', and as he could prove that no work had been done on the Opal for two years he 'held that there was no protection, and that the ground was abandoned, and for this reason he pegged it out'.

At this stage the spectators interrupted the proceedings by loud applause and cries of "hear, hear." When silence had been restored His Worship said that he had been all over New Zealand, but had never known people behave so disgracefully as those present. If there was any more similar conduct he would clear the Court.

The cross examination was continued in a very loud tone, both Mr Cotter and witness using their voices to every possible advantage. Mr Cotter accused Mr Manuel of playing to the gallery.

Mr Manuel retorted that he would not play to Mr Cotter. He was going to give his answers in his own way, not in the way Mr Cotter desired.

His Worship said Mr Manuel was not doing his case any good. He came to the Court and insulted everyone all round.

Mr Cotter said he took into consideration the fact that the applicant was not represented by counsel. Otherwise he would have interfered previously.

Witness further stated that he knew of the protection order before lodging his application. He had taken no steps to upset the protection or have the ground forfeited. Witness considered that in the present case it did not matter whether the company had paid the rent or not.

After evidence was presented that the company was the registered owner and that the period of protection had not expired, Kenny told Manuel that its not having a separate miner's right for the Opal was irrelevant.

Mr Manuel delivered a highly impassioned address at considerable length. He said that for the past two years the Company had not done a stitch of work on the Opal ground, and

¹²⁶ See *Cyclopedia of New Zealand*, vol. 2, p. 122.

had only paid up the rent, which was £27 in arrears, when “we” (Mr Manuel and others) found the gold. The City of Dunedin G.M. Company had robbed him (Mr Manuel) and had done nothing but harm to Tararu. Where one man was now working on the Company’s holdings there were ten before the Company came into existence. He could prove it. It was the height of swindling to float ground in England which they had no legal right to.

After citing the clause in the Mining Act about protection he stated that he could prove that in the interval between it being granted in 1891 and again in 1895 ‘no work was done on the ground, and the granting of the second protection was therefore contrary to the Act. The Warden had been entrapped into granting it’, a view not shared by Kenny. After hearing legal argument by Cotter, Kenny, ‘before giving judgment referred to the conduct of the spectators earlier in the afternoon, and hoped it would not occur again’. He considered that the protection ‘would hold good, even if obtained by misrepresentation, till it was set aside, and it was necessary for the applicant to first prove the protection invalid by plaint’, although he could not see how one could be sustained. After he dismissed Manuel’s application, Manuel gave notice of appeal.¹²⁷

The basis of his three challenges to this company was that his party had pegged out the ground, which it had not claimed until they ‘had discovered the run of gold’. Manuel’s legal defeats, a Thames correspondent believed, ‘somewhat embittered him’.¹²⁸ In September, William Henry Argall,¹²⁹ attorney of the Tararu Creek Company, an English one formed to work the Norfolk, City of Dunedin, and adjacent ground, instructed the manager, James McLean,¹³⁰ ‘to put on an increased staff of miners in each of the various sections, in order to systematically develop and test the same’. On the morning of 23 September, McLean took four miners to sink a winze ‘upon which is known as the Day Dawn reef at the Smithy level, at which point a run of gold was recently discovered by a party of tributers’.¹³¹ His act provoked Manuel, who, in the words of the *Thames Advertiser*, had ‘on several occasions fought so stoutly’ against the company, ‘at last, by a

¹²⁷ *Thames Star*, 6 September 1895, p. 2.

¹²⁸ Thames Correspondent, *New Zealand Herald*, 24 September 1895, p. 5.

¹²⁹ See *Cyclopedia of New Zealand*, vol. 2, p. 464.

¹³⁰ See *Cyclopedia of New Zealand*, vol. 2, p. 480.

¹³¹ Thames Correspondent, *New Zealand Herald*, 24 September 1895, p. 5.

rash action', to 'put himself in a very awkward predicament'. When McLean and his miners arrived,

they found Manuel in charge of the drive with a six-chambered revolver, with which he threatened to shoot the first man who attempted to enter. As he seemed quite in the humour to carry out his threat, Mr McLean sent to town for the police, and Constables Berne and Stapleton were soon in attendance. After the practice of a little diplomacy they managed to secure their man without any accident.¹³²

Bail being refused, Manuel was imprisoned overnight until the case could be heard.¹³³ That there was some sympathy for Manuel, and not just at Thames, was indicated by an *Observer* comment:

It seems to us just possible that the man Charles Manuel, who is in the hands of the Thames police on a charge of threatening to shoot the manager of the City of Dunedin mine, has a sound grievance against somebody. Manuel's own behaviour points to that conclusion. Recently, he had a plaint concerning this same City of Dunedin mine before the Warden's Court, and the decision was so far contrary to what he wished that he gave Warden Kenny a sound jacketing [severe reprimand]¹³⁴ in Court. Indeed, we are told that he talked to him straighter and with more force than a father would talk to a naughty son. But Mr Kenny forbearingly overlooked the contempt of Court. Manuel has now, it seems, gone to the mine and threatened to shoot the manager there. It seems strange that he should behave so oddly unless he has been wronged in some way by somebody.¹³⁵

When this journalist received 'several' letters from 'what I usually consider to be reliable sources, saying that there might be "another side" to the case', he responded that Manuel's threatening behaviour 'should not prejudice his claim to a share in the property one way or the other'. His claim to an interest might be 'utterly groundless, but Manuel himself appears to have been so strongly convinced that he had a claim' that he behaved as he did. 'This certainly looks as if his mind were disturbed by a

¹³² *Thames Advertiser*, 24 September 1895, p. 2.

¹³³ Thames Correspondent, *New Zealand Herald*, 24 September 1895, p. 5.

¹³⁴ Eric Partridge, *A Dictionary of Slang and Unconventional English*, 8 ed., ed. Paul Beale (London, 1984), pp. 609-610.

¹³⁵ *Observer*, 28 September 1895, p. 7.

sense of some injury suffered, and is a strong reason why the whole matter should be investigated in open Court'. He considered Manuel to be 'the weaker party in this matter, that he has been moved by a real or fancied sense of wrong to threaten violence, and that he should be assisted to a full and fair hearing of his claim'.¹³⁶

Manuel was charged by McLean with using threatening language, to wit, 'I'll shoot the first man that attempts to go in that drive', and, 'By God, I will shoot the first man that goes in that drive'. McLean wanted him bound over to keep the peace. Manuel, who pleaded not guilty, conducted his own case. McLean, the first to give evidence, explained that he had gone with four miners to work the smithy level of the Dunedin.

When he got there Bennett, Dennerley and Manuel were there. Bennett and Dennerley were tributers in the [licensed] holding. Dennerley said to witness: "Where are you going?" Witness replied: "I have instructions to start on this level." Dennerley said: "I object to you going in that level." He then added "What do you say, Mr Bennett?" Bennett answered: "I object too." Witness then said to Dennerley: "Did you arrange with Capt. [William Henry] Argall [the mine manager] that you would put no obstruction in the road of our starting this level?" Dennerley replied: "Yes," but that he had seen Argall afterwards, and had objected in the presence of accused. Witness answered: "I have instructions from Captain Argall to start and I must do so." He then made a move towards the mouth of the drive. Accused, who was sitting down, then sprang up, pulled off his coat, ran up on the side of the cutting leading into the drive, and picked up a parcel wrapped in a newspaper. He quickly unfolded it and produced a revolver, and presenting it he said, "I will shoot the first man that goes in that drive." Witness showed how accused held the weapon. Accused was half kneeling and half sitting as he presented the revolver. He also said: "By God, I will shoot the first man that enters that drive." Witness did not remember any other words. In the ordinary course it would have been witness' duty to go first into the drive. Accused was in a very excited state. Dennerley said: "Be careful, Mr Manuel, what you say." ... Witness thought that accused would do him serious bodily harm if he proceeded with his duties. The threats of Manuel prevented him from obeying Argall's instructions. He told the miners to stay where they were till he came back, and he then came down and laid the complaint.

¹³⁶ *Observer*, 5 October 1895, p. 2.

In reply to questions from Kenny, McLean explained that he had not entered the drive 'because he was afraid of Manuel shooting him. Witness did not know whether the revolver was loaded. He saw Manuel lift the hammer with his thumb while he was speaking his first words'. In reply to Manuel, McLean stated that neither the City of Dunedin nor the Tararu Creek companies had made the Smithy drive, which had been put in by Bennett and Dennerley, but Kenny ruled that 'these questions were irrelevant. Accused must conduct the case as he was directed, otherwise the Court would have to take serious action as regards him'. Cross-examination resumed only after 'considerable argument and much shouting on the part of the accused'. McLean produced a letter from Manuel, received before the clash, informing him that as he had applied for surplus ground in the City of Dunedin 'he objected to any men being put on'. McLean 'did not notice the letter', nor did he visit to warden's office to see whether a plaint had been laid. He had 'always been friendly with' Manuel, and until this incident had

never had cause to fear him. The door of the drive was locked yesterday morning. Manuel pointed the revolver across the drive, and waved it sometimes, thus pointing it now and again at witness. He would swear that accused did not threaten to shoot anyone who "broke open the door." Witness could see a lock and chain on the door of the drive. Accused did not threaten to shoot anyone in particular.

Manuel was 'not two feet from the entrance of the drive' when 'brandishing' his revolver. Witness was six or seven yards from the entrance to the drive. His four men were standing around, but he was nearest to the drive'. In reply to Manuel, McLean said he 'had no object in employing strange men to start at the Smithy level'.

William Coad, a bookseller and the local reporter for the *New Zealand Herald*,¹³⁷ described being there at eight o'clock in the morning because Manuel had told him he would prevent McLean sinking a winze on the Day Dawn reef by threatening to shoot the first man who attempted to enter the drive. Manuel had produced the revolver from a parcel, cocked it, and pointed it towards the drive, saying that he would shoot the first man who attempted to enter it. While brandishing the revolver, sometimes covering those present, he talked 'in an excited state about protecting his right', declaring 'that until the Supreme Court case was decided or until he was

¹³⁷ See *New Zealand Herald*, 12 July 1917, p. 6.

lodged in Mount Eden, he would prevent anyone from entering the ground'. He was 'determined to shoot anyone who attempted to break open the door, and that he was a good shot, and not likely to miss'. Dennerley said, two or three times, 'That will do, Charley; don't say no more'. When the policemen brought by McLean approached, Manuel 'ran up the bank and took up his old position', pulling back the hammer of his revolver, and pointing it at the mouth of the drive.

Constable Stapleton said: "Well, Charley, what's the matter?" Accused said, "I mean to defend my interest. This drive is my own property, and I will shoot the first man that attempts to enter it." Accused pointed out to the constable the chain and padlock, and explained his grievance. Constable Stapleton said, "You would not shoot the police, would you, Charlie?" Accused remarked that he did not know, and that he would just as soon shoot the police as anyone else. He said he might as well be hung as robbed. After a while Stapleton said: "Never mind, Charlie, we'll look after your interests." Accused said: "Do you mean that?" Stapleton replied: "Yes. We will see that no one breaks open the door of the drive." Accused replied: "That's all I want; I am satisfied." Accused, who had been half kneeling, then rose up, put on his coat, put the revolver in his pocket, and came down to Constable Stapleton.

One miner deposed that, one evening before this incident, Manuel had asked him whether he knew that work was to start 'at the tributers' level'. When he said he did not know about this, 'Manuel said he would go up to the drive and ask them not to go in, and if they persisted he would have to put a bullet through them'. This miner seems not to have informed others of this threat. Stapleton produced the revolver, its six chambers loaded, as they had been when taken from Manuel; at the request of a lawyer, he 'turned the revolver in another direction'. Stapleton mentioned that Manuel 'gave no trouble after he was arrested', and did not think he would 'shoot anyone who did not attempt to enter the drive'.

The accused addressed the Court at great length. He argued that his conduct was justifiable and that he was defending his own property. If he had prevented the City of Dunedin men from entering their own ground, he would unquestionably have been in the wrong, but this was not the case, as he was only protecting his own. He was prepared to call Mr [Edmund William] Porritt [a

solicitor]¹³⁸ and prove that the ground rightfully belonged to him (Mr Manuel).

His Worship said that the Court could not allow this, as it did not affect the case. The question of ownership did not count. Even if the accused was rightful owner he had broken the law in threatening to shoot.

After Kenny read Section 65 of the Criminal Code Act, 1893, which permitted a property owner to use force against trespassers as long as he did 'not strike or do bodily harm', Manuel quoted it again, contending 'that he had neither "struck" nor "done bodily harm," and therefore he was innocent'.

In the course of Mr Manuel's tirades the public on several occasions manifested a tendency to applaud, and His Worship severely commented on their conduct....

His Worship said the Bench had no doubt as to the course they should take, and had decided to order accused to find sureties that he will in future keep the peace. If a man threatened to shoot another man –

The sentence was left unfinished owing to Mr Manuel jumping from his seat and vigorously protesting. He said he would allow no one to say he had threatened to shoot a man. He only threatened to shoot the drive. He would protest against this, even if he got 20 years for it.

Mr Manuel continued his discourse, and amidst great excitement, the Clerk of the Court, instructed by His Worship, announced that the Court would be adjourned till this morning.

The accused was conducted from the building declaring his grievances in a loud voice.

The Court was crowded during the proceedings.¹³⁹

When the sitting resumed for the sentencing, Kenny criticized

the disgraceful disturbance which took place during yesterday's proceedings. He was sorry to say that it was not the first time this sort of thing had occurred here. He knew that none-tenths of the people who attended the Court were perfectly respectable, but there was a small number who could neither control themselves nor behave. These people were in the habit of giving vent to their feelings by stamping, hissing, and indulging in the sort of noises one hears at a public meeting. He had never seen people behave

¹³⁸ See *Cyclopedia of New Zealand*, vol. 2, 845.

¹³⁹ Police Court, *Thames Advertiser*, 25 September 1895, pp. 2-3.

in this manner anywhere throughout the colony except here and at Coromandel. He regretted that this conduct had been indulged in here on several occasions, and it was high time that the practice was put a stop to.... He had given instructions to the police, and anyone detected either to-day or on any future occasion would be imprisoned without the option of a fine. For this offence they were liable to 14 days' imprisonment, and if anyone was convicted he would feel inclined to sentence him to several days. It was absolutely necessary that order should be maintained.¹⁴⁰

After these instructions to observers, Manuel was ordered to find sureties to keep the peace for six months, he to provide one of £100 and two others to provide £50 each, and he was to pay all the costs, £5 7s.

At this stage Mr Manuel interrupted and produced a manuscript which he wished to bring under the notice of the Court, in order that the reporter might publish it.

His Worship said that if the accused again interrupted he would consult the Bench and commit him for contempt of Court.

Accused: I give notice to appeal against your sentence.

Mr Manuel further said that he had the guarantee of the Constable in the presence of six witnesses that the door of the drive would not be unlocked not broken, and therefore it could not be disturbed until the case and the appeal were decided.

His brother-in-law, William Deeble, immediately provided one surety, and another miner gave the other.¹⁴¹ Manuel had 'agreed to leave the revolver and ammunition in the hands of the police till his bail expires'; Kenny regretted that anyone should 'carry a revolver in a civilized country'.¹⁴²

Rewriting history, an obituary claimed that, 'although he had powerful Counsel against him, including the late Mr Cotter, he conducted his own case and emerged triumphant'.¹⁴³ Writing after the verdict was given, the *Observer* described the claim that he had received a fair hearing as 'Tommy rot'. Opposing him were James Armstrong Miller,¹⁴⁴ 'the ablest mining lawyer in the North Island', and Cotter,

¹⁴⁰ *Thames Star*, 25 September 1895, p. 3.

¹⁴¹ Police Court, *Thames Advertiser*, 26 September 1895, p. 3.

¹⁴² Police Court, *Thames Star*, 25 September 1895, p. 2.

¹⁴³ *Te Aroha News*, 16 March 1914, p. 3.

¹⁴⁴ See *Cyclopedia of New Zealand*, vol. 2, p. 876.

reckoned to be a fair match in cross-examination for the proverbial Philadelphia lawyer. Manuel could have had very little chance of winning his case with such odds opposed to him, even if his facts had been ever so sound, and his claims ever so good. It requires some considerable ability to bring out these facts, and to place them clearly before the Court, and Manuel possessed neither the legal training nor the ability to do this. Neither had he the means with which to pay a good lawyer to do it for him. How, then, can this be called a fair trial?¹⁴⁵

Because there was ‘much sympathy with Manuel amongst the working miners of the Thames, and also amongst a section of the business people’, subscriptions were being raised to pay for a lawyer to argue his case for a share in the City of Dunedin mine. The Thames Naval Brigade had arranged a benefit concert for him. His opponents argued that, by going to Coolgardie, he had forfeited his interest, but the *Observer* considered that it

only right that his claim should be disproved under equal conditions in open Court. It is hard to believe that men threaten to shoot other men in cold blood unless they have suffered some wrong. And even at the risk of bolstering up a bogus claim, it is desirable that Manuel should have a fair chance against his opponents.¹⁴⁶

Immediately after the trial, a subscription list was opened ‘in aid of Mrs C. Manuel and family, and a request was made that the editor of the STAR should act as treasurer to the fund’, which he had consented to do.¹⁴⁷ The following day, ‘overtures having been made to the Naval Band *re* assisting Mr Manuel and family, they have decided to play a series of selections at the Bank corner’ at which ‘a collection will be taken up, when those desirous of assisting will have an opportunity of doing so’.¹⁴⁸ Early in October, this band held an open-air concert, and, after adding earlier collections, £7 12s 10 1/2d was presented to Manuel’s wife.¹⁴⁹ Subsequently, Manuel placed a notice in the press:

¹⁴⁵ *Observer*, 5 October 1895, p. 2.

¹⁴⁶ *Observer*, 5 October 1895, pp. 2-3.

¹⁴⁷ *Thames Star*, 26 September 1895, p. 2.

¹⁴⁸ *Thames Star*, 27 September 1895, p. 2.

¹⁴⁹ *Thames Star*, 7 October 1894, p. 2.

THANKS. MR CHAS. MANUEL desires to THANK the Public and his many kind friends, and especially the Thames Naval Artillery Band for the Unsolicited Support accorded to him in his present difficulties with the City of Dunedin Company, and begs to state that he intends to have justice at all hazards.¹⁵⁰

Immediately after the court case,

the door of the drive, which had been left padlocked, was some time last night bodily removed by some of the company's employés, and this morning the men were at work. Shortly afterwards, Mr Manuel arrived on the scene, and as a result, the tributers – Messrs Dennerley and Bennett – who are working from the same drive, left a truck load of their quartz on the tramline on the boundary of their tribute and the company's portion of the level. The truck was lifted across the line of the tributers, and as the company's men were thus prevented from carrying on work without interfering with the tributers' property, it was found necessary to seek further legal advice as to how the obstruction could be removed.

At the same time, Manuel went to Auckland to consult his solicitor 'regarding further proceedings, which promise to be of a very interesting character'.¹⁵¹ In mid-October, the local Member of Parliament asked whether the Minister of Mines would grant an inquiry 'and thereby remove an impression that Manuel, Dunnerley, and Bennett have been hardly dealt with'.¹⁵² This question was asked privately, not in parliament, and the answer clearly was 'no', for there were no further proceedings nor any enquiry, perhaps because by then 'the various matters in dispute' had been 'amicably arranged' and the company had taken over the tribute.¹⁵³ Presumably some monetary compensation was given to the tributers, who by October the following year were again working the Day Dawn; an obituary stated that Manuel worked it 'to considerable benefit to himself'.¹⁵⁴

Soon after the matter was resolved, the *Observer* noted: 'Warden Kenny and Charles Manuel were passengers to the Thames by the same

¹⁵⁰ Public Notice, *Thames Advertiser*, 9 October 1895, p. 3.

¹⁵¹ *Thames Star*, 26 September 1895, p. 2.

¹⁵² Wellington Correspondent, *Thames Advertiser*, 19 October 1895, p. 2.

¹⁵³ *Thames Advertiser*, 17 October 1895, p. 2.

¹⁵⁴ *Thames Advertiser*, 2 October 1896, p. 3; *Te Aroha News*, 16 March 1914, p. 3.

steamer the other day. Manuel made himself comfortable in the saloon. Kenny stayed on deck'.¹⁵⁵

MINING IN THE THAMES DISTRICT IN THE FIRST DECADE OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

In February 1901, Manuel sought the forfeiture of the Sheridan, at Tapu, which had been 'a prolific yielder of gold for years past'.¹⁵⁶ In July 1902, with another man he was tributing in the Bullion, formerly the Sheridan.¹⁵⁷ The following month, the owners of the Bullion 'bought out' his 'interest in the tribute', intending to float a company. 'This piece of ground has yielded not less than 1075 ounces of gold valued at £3332, from 85 tons of quartz to Manuel and party'.¹⁵⁸ According to the *Observer*, because Manuel's party lacked the capital to develop the mine, they were selling it, receiving 18,000 shares half-paid-up plus £450 in cash.¹⁵⁹ He remained interested in this ground, in August 1905 seeking the forfeiture of the Bullion Special Quartz Claim.¹⁶⁰

Manuel purchased several claims at Tararu between 1904 and 1907: the Ophir (the former Sylvia) in October 1904, the Ophir Extended a year later, the Sylvia Extended in March 1906, and the Brilliant in April 1907.¹⁶¹ At the end of August 1904, when he pegged out the Sylvia, the *Thames Star* wrote that he had 'been for years identified with the mining industry at Thames and elsewhere, and his appearance on the scene is always suggestive of a renewed activity in mining'.¹⁶² In mid-October it was reported that Manuel, 'the successful tributer and prospector', would start work in the Ophir at once, being 'sanguine that he will be able to unearth a

¹⁵⁵ *Observer*, 26 October 1895, p. 3.

¹⁵⁶ Thames Warden's Court, *Plaint Book 1899-1943*, 6/1901, BACL 13820/1a, ANZ-A; *Observer*, 6 September 1902, p. 9.

¹⁵⁷ *Thames Star*, 31 July 1902, p. 3, 27 August 1902, p. 3.

¹⁵⁸ *Thames Star*, 27 August 1902, p. 3.

¹⁵⁹ *Observer*, 6 September 1902, p. 9.

¹⁶⁰ Thames Warden's Court, *Plaint Book 1899-1943*, 24/1905, BACL 13820/1a, ANZ-A.

¹⁶¹ Thames Warden's Court, *Register of Applications for Licensed Holdings and Special Claims 1897-1909*, 19/1904, 23, 24/1905, 2/1907, BACL 14376/3a, ANZ-A; *Thames Star*, Warden's Court, 3 October 1904, p. 3, 21 October 1904, p. 3.

¹⁶² *Thames Star*, 31 August 1904, p. 2.

gold bearing lode' in its low level.¹⁶³ At the beginning of December, he withdrew his application to work it for three months with two men instead of the required 15, instead being granted six months' protection.¹⁶⁴ Five months later, he was permitted to work it for six months with two men, and in September 1905 was granted licenses for a machine site and water race.¹⁶⁵ In October, he was granted the Ophir Extended, and in the following month agreed to sell the two Ophir claims, along with the machine site, to the New Sylvia Company for £300 in cash and 25,000 shares, each of 2s, paid up to 6d.¹⁶⁶ In December, he held 7,700 of the 75,000 shares and his wife and daughter had 500 each.¹⁶⁷

In January 1906, on behalf of the company Manuel asked the council to construct a road to its low level.¹⁶⁸ Later that month it was reported that pumps had been placed in the mine 'principally due to' Manuel's 'foresight', for previously a water problem had prevented it from being worked.¹⁶⁹ Two months later, when granted the Sylvia Extended, Manuel said that because a great deal of capital was required to develop it, he would form a 'strong company', and was 'confident' he could 'successfully form such a Company within six months'.¹⁷⁰ Three weeks later, he obtained six months' protection.¹⁷¹ In late May, he returned from Auckland with the news that a 'strong syndicate' had 'offered most satisfactory terms for an option over the New Sylvia mine'.¹⁷² However, five months later he told the warden that 'so far we have not succeeded in fully accomplished our object'. He intended 'with the concurrence of those interested with me to carry the floatation aforesaid to a successful issue', but in the meantime requested permission

¹⁶³ *Thames Star*, 21 October 1904, pp. 2, 3.

¹⁶⁴ Warden's Court, *Thames Star*, 6 December 1904, p. 2.

¹⁶⁵ Warden's Court, *Thames Star*, 17 May 1905, p. 2, 5 September 1905, p. 2.

¹⁶⁶ Warden's Court, *Thames Star*, 17 October 1905, p. 2; Thames Warden's Court, Registrations 1906-1909, no. 2650, BACL 11343/13a; Company Files, BADZ 5181, box 200 no. 1202, ANZ-A.

¹⁶⁷ Company Files, BADZ 5181, box 200 no. 1202, ANZ-A.

¹⁶⁸ *Thames Star*, 10 January 1906, p. 2.

¹⁶⁹ *Thames Star*, 26 January 1906, p. 2.

¹⁷⁰ Thames Warden's Court, Applications 1906, 72/1906, BACL 14350/51a, ANZ-A; Warden's Court, *Thames Star*, 20 March 1906, p. 2.

¹⁷¹ Warden's Court, *Thames Star*, 10 April 1906, p. 2.

¹⁷² *Thames Star*, 24 May 1906, p. 2.

to work with two men 'in prospecting and putting mine in order'.¹⁷³ In November he was permitted to work the Sylvia Extended with two men for six months.¹⁷⁴

In March 1907, he sold the Sylvia Extended to the New Sylvia Company for £50 and 20,000 shares paid up to 7d.¹⁷⁵ Puzzlingly, in December 1908 he and John Albert Endean¹⁷⁶ sold the same ground to the same company for the same shareholding, valued at £583 6s 6d.¹⁷⁷ In May 1908, he was driving a low level in the Ophir section because the 'top workings' were 'worked out', but later that year retired as supervisor and became a director.¹⁷⁸ The following year, he was planning to erect a battery for the company.¹⁷⁹ In 1917, his estate still held 100 scrip shares in the Sylvia Reefs Company, formed in 1910.¹⁸⁰

By April 1907 he had sold all his 250 shares (out of 100,000) in the Trafalgar Company.¹⁸¹ Also in that year, he sent a sample of ore from both Puru and Tararu for assaying, seemingly on his own behalf and not a company.¹⁸² In 1910, he had 1,200 of the 125,000 shares, nominal value 2s, in the Commonwealth Company, which mined at Tararu, plus 500 paid up to 6d.¹⁸³ In the following year he arranged to test a sample of its ore.¹⁸⁴

OTHER MINING INVESTMENTS IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

¹⁷³ Thames Warden's Court, Applications 1906, 223/1906, BACL 14350/53a, ANZ-A.

¹⁷⁴ *Thames Star*, 18 July 1906, p. 2, Warden's Court, 6 November 1906, p. 2.

¹⁷⁵ Thames Warden's Court, Registrations 1906-1909, no. 3098, BACL 11343/13a, ANZ-A.

¹⁷⁶ See below.

¹⁷⁷ Company Files, BADZ 5181, box 200 no. 1202, ANZ-A.

¹⁷⁸ Thames Warden's Court, Applications 1908, 124/1908, BACL 14350/58a, ANZ-A;
Auckland Weekly News, 28 January 1909, p. 49.

¹⁷⁹ Thames Warden's Court, Applications 1909, 131, 200/1909, BACL 14350/61, ANZ-A.

¹⁸⁰ Company Files, BADZ 5181, box 342 no. 1910, ANZ-A.

¹⁸¹ Company Files, BADZ 5181, box 203 no. 1218, ANZ-A.

¹⁸² Thames School of Mines, Assay Book 1907-1919, entries for 11 November 1907, 30 November 1907, School of Mines Archives, Thames.

¹⁸³ Company Files, BADZ 5181, box 252 no. 1471, ANZ-A.

¹⁸⁴ Thames School of Mines, Assay Book 1907-1919, entry for 7 February 1911, School of Mines Archives, Thames.

In December 1906, he was allotted 1,000 scrip shares in the South Kapanga Company, mining behind Coromandel township.¹⁸⁵ The following year he was allotted 2,000 shares in the Karangahake Company, and an additional 2,000 paid up to a quarter of their value.¹⁸⁶ Appointed as supervisor of its mine, his scheme for working it was accepted by the directors.¹⁸⁷ His continued involvement with this company has not been traced. He was also one of four owners of both the Rahu and Crown Nimrod at Karangahake, which they sold to the Bendigo Company of Waiorongomai in 1908.¹⁸⁸ In 1909, he became a shareholder in the Glamorgan Company, at Whangamata, and was appointed its chairman of directors.¹⁸⁹

WILLIAM DEEBLE

William Deeble, who was born in Cornwall in 1841, married Manuel's sister-in-law, Caroline Morton, in Llantrisant, South Wales.¹⁹⁰ His Cornish heritage included Cornish wrestling, in which he competed, unsuccessfully, at the Christmas Sports of 1872.¹⁹¹ An obituary stated that after some years in Adelaide, South Australia, where his brother managed a large business, he settled in Thames and 'went through all the ups and downs associated with the early mining days'.¹⁹² In 1881 he said he had had 'about seven or eight years' mining experience at the Thames and at Coromandel', including in the Caledonian in the early 1870s.¹⁹³ In 1870, he started out as a grocer and later a butcher as well.¹⁹⁴ As this business became more profitable, he

¹⁸⁵ Company Files, BADZ 5181, box 27 no. 154, ANZ-A.

¹⁸⁶ Company Files, BADZ 5181, box 217 no. 1290, ANZ-A.

¹⁸⁷ *Auckland Weekly News*, 12 September 1907, p. 26, 26 September 1907, p. 45.

¹⁸⁸ Company Files, BADZ 5181, box 226 no. 1332, ANZ-A.

¹⁸⁹ Company Files, BADZ 5181, box 244 no. 1430; Thames Warden's Court, Applications 1909, 253/1909, BACL 14350/63, ANZ-A.

¹⁹⁰ Birth Certificate of Emma Deeble, 22 September 1877, 1877/6829; Death Certificates of William Deeble, 7 April 1927, 1927/3318; Caroline Deeble, 17 June 1938, 1938/17369, BDM; *Thames Advertiser*, 26 January 1892, p. 2.

¹⁹¹ *Thames Advertiser*, 30 December 1872, p. 3.

¹⁹² *Thames Star*, 9 April 1927, p. 5.

¹⁹³ Warden's Court, *Thames Advertiser*, 23 August 1881, p. 3; *Thames Guardian and Mining Record*, 31 October 1871, p. 2.

¹⁹⁴ *Thames Advertiser*, 6 April 1875, p. 2.

ceased to have much involvement in mining.¹⁹⁵ In 1882 he briefly prospected at Te Aroha, his only known involvement in this field.¹⁹⁶ In 1880, he acquired land near Tapu, which he farmed until 1894.¹⁹⁷ When he obtained 40 acres of Crown land at Tapu Creek in 1889, Manuel's selection adjoined it.¹⁹⁸ Like Manuel, he combined farming with some prospecting, for example being a member of a party examining the Puru and Waiomu districts in 1880, though Warden Kenrick had heard a (false) rumour that their prospecting was 'confined to shingle splitting'.¹⁹⁹ Four years later, when Manuel was charged with illegally cutting kauri at Tapu, Deeble acknowledged he was 'connected' with these 'timber transactions ... to a certain extent in partnership with Manuel'.²⁰⁰

Deeble's career in local government has not been traced in detail. Despite being a Wesleyan and, for a time, a prominent member of the Salvation Army,²⁰¹ often his relations with other members of the public bodies he was elected to were uncharitable. In 1878, he was elected, with the highest vote, for the Kauaeranga Riding of the Thames County Council.²⁰² He was re-elected in 1881, polling second this time.²⁰³ When

¹⁹⁵ For examples of his expanding business, see *Thames Advertiser*, 3 March 1876, p. 3; *Thames Star*, 26 February 1881, p. 2; *Thames Advertiser*, 15 June 1891, p. 2, 16 June 1891, p. 2, 19 June 1891, p. 2, advertisement, 23 March 1896, p. 3; Company Files, BADZ 5181, box 205 no. 1227, ANZ-A.

¹⁹⁶ *Thames Advertiser*, 13 July 1882, p. 2.

¹⁹⁷ For example, *Thames Advertiser*, 20 September 1880, p. 3, 30 November 1886, p. 2, 13 April 1892, p. 2, 2 February 1894, p. 2; 'Reports of Waste Lands Committee', *AJHR*, 1882, I-4, p. 2; 'Annual Sheep Returns', *AJHR*, 1887, H-15, p. 7; 1888, H-13, p. 19; 1892, H-30, p. 21; 1896, H-23, p. 23.

¹⁹⁸ *Thames Star*, 30 October 1889, p. 2.

¹⁹⁹ William Deeble to Under-Secretary, Mines Department, 15 December 1880; Memorandum by Harry Kenrick, 16 December 1880; Harry Kenrick to A.J. Allom, 16 December 1880; Memorandum by J.M. McLaren, 18 January 1881, Thames Warden's Court, Inwards Correspondence 1879-1896, BAOL 13388/1a, ANZ-A.

²⁰⁰ Warden's Court, *Thames Star*, 4 September 1884, p. 2.

²⁰¹ For being a Wesleyan, see Deaths Certificates of Emma Deeble, 7 November 1877, 1877/2650; Beatrice Deeble, 23 May 1879, 1879/2520; William Deeble, 7 April 1927, 1927/3318, BDM; for his involvement with the Salvation Army, see *Observer*, 'Our Thames Letter', 21 September 1889, p. 12, 1 February 1890, p. 12.

²⁰² *Thames Advertiser*, 14 November 1878, p. 2.

²⁰³ *Thames Advertiser*, 17 November 1884, p. 2.

defeated three years, later, he was ‘met with signs of disapprobation’ at the declaration of the poll. ‘He claimed that he was elected by the genuine ratepayers of the Riding; the candidates declared elected had been placed in their positions on the roll by roll-stuffing. The birch which they had made would, he hoped, be used to whip them’.²⁰⁴ His attempt to overturn the election of one successful candidate failed.²⁰⁵ He was defeated once more in 1887, this time for the Hastings Riding, meaning the Tapu area.²⁰⁶ The following year, when he organized a petition for road work that had already been approved (as he knew), a councillor commented that Deeble ‘bore him no love. Anyone could see that it was a personal matter, and that the public interest was in no way concerned’.²⁰⁷ The following month, when he announced he would stand in a by-election for the Totara Riding, the *Thames Advertiser* described him as ‘a shrewd man of business’ who possessed ‘an intimate knowledge of matters connected with the County Council, and is well qualified for the position’.²⁰⁸ Despite this endorsement, he came bottom of the poll.²⁰⁹ When he stood for the Middle Ward of the borough council in 1889, he was defeated once more.²¹⁰

In 1890, Deeble was elected, unopposed, for the Kauaeranga Riding of the county council.²¹¹ Later that year, he accused county officials of corruption in granting contracts and of trying to keep him off the council.²¹² That November, he topped the poll for his riding at the election in which Manuel joined the council.²¹³ Claiming the council was ‘hopelessly in debt’, he tried to dismiss almost all its employees, a move defeated by his colleagues.²¹⁴ As shown below, he worked with Manuel against the majority of the council and against its officials.

MEMBER OF THE THAMES COUNTY COUNCIL

²⁰⁴ *Thames Star*, 13 November 1884, p. 2.

²⁰⁵ *Thames Star*, 10 December 1884, p. 2.

²⁰⁶ *Thames Advertiser*, 9 November 1887, p. 3.

²⁰⁷ *Thames Advertiser*, 24 July 1888, p. 2.

²⁰⁸ *Thames Advertiser*, 29 August 1888, p. 2.

²⁰⁹ *Thames Advertiser*, 17 September 1888, p. 3.

²¹⁰ *Thames Star*, 7 September 1889, p. 2, 13 September 1889, p. 2.

²¹¹ *Thames Advertiser*, 8 January 1890, p. 2.

²¹² Letter from William Deeble, *Thames Star*, 8 November 1890, p. 2.

²¹³ *Thames Star*, 13 November 1890, p. 2.

²¹⁴ *Thames Star*, 4 December 1890, p. 2.

The first public office to which Manuel was elected was the Tapu school committee, in 1882.²¹⁵ In November 1890, when he stood for the Hastings Riding of the county council, the *Thames Star* described him as ‘an old settler down the coast’ who ‘should obtain a large measure of support, as his watchword is to be “Retrenchment and reform”’. He wanted to spend revenue ‘on roads, tracks, and bridges, instead of on officials’.²¹⁶ He topped the poll, with 28 votes.²¹⁷

An obituary described him as being ‘quite a young man’ when elected to the council;²¹⁸ being still under 40, compared with other councillors he was indeed quite young. Another obituary stated that, when first on the council ‘he had an up-hill fight, but his determined and persistent efforts in claiming his rights for the ratepayers gained for him the admiration of all the councillors’.²¹⁹ He certainly had fights, being an active councillor, working in association with Deeble. At his first meeting, he seconded Deeble’s unsuccessful nomination of Edward Kersey Cooper²²⁰ as chairman, and in January 1891 was the only councillor apart from Deeble who tried to reduce costs by dismissing the engineer,²²¹ James Monteith McLaren,²²² whose appointment Deeble had opposed.²²³

The following month, a Tapu correspondent reported his boastful speech at a public meeting ‘to take into consideration the best means of getting the main road, Thames to Coromandel, kept open for wheel traffic’:

Our member, Mr Manuel ... said that he could assure them that there was no use looking to the Council for any expenditure in the way of keeping the road open, as the Council were now at their wits’ end to find money sufficient to pay salaries and interest on overdraft. Of course it would be necessary to keep certain roads in repair. By this he meant roads to claims on the Thames, from

²¹⁵ *Auckland Weekly News*, 4 February 1882, p. 17.

²¹⁶ *Thames Star*, 8 November 1890, p. 2.

²¹⁷ *Thames Star*, 13 November 1890, p. 2.

²¹⁸ *Te Aroha News*, 16 March 1914, p. 3.

²¹⁹ *Morrinsville Star*, 17 March 1914, p. 2.

²²⁰ See paper on his life.

²²¹ *Thames Star*, 26 November 1890, p. 2; County Council, *Thames Advertiser*, 8 January 1891, p. 3.

²²² See paper on Harry Kenrick.

²²³ *Thames Star*, 3 July 1890, p. 2.

which the county derived the large revenue from gold duty [and] water race charges; but for all main roads in out-districts the county would not have a shilling for the next two years at least. He was not long in office before he had made himself thoroughly acquainted with the county finances, and though not a college educated man, he assured the meeting that he was now quite posted in all the intricacies of county matters. One thing he could claim credit for, and that was getting the road cleared to the extent it was now being done, as were it not for him not a shovel-full of soil would have been removed. Great blame was due to the late member, who should have had the work done long before his term of office had expired. £150 was lying idle in the county office, being the unexpended portion of a grant for the road, Tapu to Waikawau. This their late member treated in the dog-in-the-manger style, and if he had done his duty to his constituents he would have acted as Charles Manuel. He (Mr Manuel) was sorry to say he had great difficulty in getting at the county books, but he did get at them, with the result that he found this money lying idle. He interviewed Mr [Henry Andrew] Gordon [Inspecting Engineer for the Mines Department] on his last visit, and was pleased to say with the result that he got £100 expended from Tapu to Thames.... He was sorry that his party was in the minority in the Council, but if the Tapu people would stick to him, his little voice would yet be heard and listened to at County meetings.

Mr Manuel's address lasted over an hour, but the main portions had no reference to the matter before the meeting.²²⁴

The details of Manuel's career on the council have not been traced in detail. Later in 1891, he was criticized for not urging the council to make a road to the Mt Zeehan mine at Waiomu, and in the following July he asked it to make a road to assist prospecting at Puru.²²⁵ In January 1893, he accused both McLaren and the clerk, Edwin Wise Hollis,²²⁶ of not referring two letters of complaint to the council. The morning newspaper headlined its report: 'County Letters. Cr Manuel on the Warpath. A County Breeze'. Manuel raised the issue by moving that all letters to the engineer or clerk concerning county works must be read at each meeting. In doing so he

²²⁴ Tapu Correspondent, *Thames Advertiser*, 9 February 1891, pp. 2-3.

²²⁵ *Thames Advertiser*, letter from 'Transvaal Prospector', 10 September 1891, p. 2, 7 July 1892, p. 2.

²²⁶ See *Cyclopedia of New Zealand*, vol. 2, p. 867.

referred to a letter sent by the Tairua publican, Henry Laycock,²²⁷ and another from a man named Sheridan.

The Chairman [Thomas Aitken Dunlop]²²⁸ pointed out to Cr Manuel that such a resolution as he had proposed was already in force, and to move another resolution was useless. He also thought that Councillors should place reliance in their officials, and he was confident that no letters would or had been held back by the Clerk.

Cr Deeble said that Cr Manuel was a young Councillor, and no doubt had not been aware that such a resolution was in the books, but he sympathized with the mover

Cr [James] Coutts²²⁹ said the friction had been caused during his term of office as chairman. Mr Sheridan had written to Mr McLaren, and it was solely to Mr McLaren, as the letter had been shown to him, and it was not written to the Council as it had been made out.

Cr Deeble maintained that the Engineer was a servant of the County Council, and therefore letters in connection with his business were also the property of the Council. He proceeded to say that a man came to his shop the other day and said that he had sent a letter to the Council which had not been dealt with.

The Chairman: Who was the man?

Cr Deeble: I will not name him.

The Chairman: You have made an accusation against the County officials, and you should give the name of your informant.

Cr Deeble. He is a working man, but I am not going to name him.

After Deeble was accused of ‘unmanly’ conduct by not proving his accusations, the matter was dropped as nobody seconded Manuel’s resolution. At the same meeting, because of a rumour ‘gaining ground outside’ it was agreed to inquire ‘into the truth of a statement that the amount in favour of a Mr Taylor was not paid to or received by him’; Deeble was appointed to the committee to investigate.²³⁰

A disapproving editorial, bluntly headlined ‘Mischief Makers’, noted that Manuel had been ‘to some extent supported by Cr Deeble, who while ventilating a grievance against them, declined to give the names of his

²²⁷ See *Thames Advertiser*, advertisement, 17 September 1888, p. 2, ‘My First Trip to the East Coast’, 3 December 1889, p. 3, 2 June 1892, p. 3.

²²⁸ See *Cyclopedia of New Zealand*, vol. 2, pp. 479, 866; *Observer*, 11 November 1905, p. 4; *Thames Star*, 11 May 1908, p. 2.

²²⁹ See *Thames Star*, 20 June 1896, p. 2, 1 August 1913, p. 5.

²³⁰ County Council, *Thames Advertiser*, 12 January 1893, p. 2.

informants'. The editor considered that their work was 'sufficiently trying for the officials without their being made still more uncomfortable by having groundless charges preferred against them', and recalled that Manuel had recently made 'some damaging remarks' when the council had taken over the Puriri bridge contract from the contractor.

On that memorable day one of the officials was the subject of Cr Manuel's spleen, but through the official's magnanimity, his accuser was permitted to go unpunished – and we should have thought that Cr Manuel would have been the last to have brought charges which he could not substantiate. The majority of the council were indignant at the action of Crs Manuel and Deeble – who while endeavouring to damage the reputation of the officials, either could not, or would not, offer any evidence in support of their charges.²³¹

The following month, a committee of councillors reported that Manuel's charge, that 'certain money drawn in favour of Walter Alma Taylor, a miner who settled near Tapu,²³² 'was not received by him', was groundless.

Cr Manuel: I will deny that I ever said Mr Taylor did not receive the money. What I said was that the voucher shown to me on the Saturday was different to the one passed round the table on the Wednesday night.

Cr [William Henry] Paltridge,²³³ continuing, said that at the time referred to, Cr Manuel spoke about some foul works being carried on within the County office, and the speaker was so taken back that he said to Cr Manuel, "Why, you have the County books there, go and prove your charge." Cr Manuel then said, "Oh, you can do anything with books."

After discussion about what had happened, Coutts, who had been chairman when the voucher was passed for payment, asked for an investigation,

²³¹ Editorial, *Thames Advertiser*, 12 January 1893, p. 2.

²³² See *Thames Advertiser*, advertisement, 13 December 1882, p. 2, 26 July 1888, p. 2, advertisement, 4 December 1889, p. 2, County Council, 8 May 1890, p. 2; *Thames Electoral Roll, 1890*, p. 36.

²³³ See *Thames Advertiser*, 13 April 1894, p. 2; *Thames Star*, 10 February 1897, p. 4; *Auckland Star*, 12 February 1902, p. 5.

and said he would not allow Cr Manuel or any other person to alleged that he had received or kept back money dishonestly. In fact if he did not get satisfaction now, he would go further.

The Chairman: Well you have all heard the report, has any other Councillor anything to say upon the matter.

Cr Manuel here rose, and said that he wished to say a little, and no doubt after the threat made by Cr Coutts he would receive nothing short of hanging. However he could take it all, and notwithstanding all that had been said in the report, he was quite willing to stand by, and would stand by, what he said. But as regards the enquiry, the committee had taken into account all that Cr Paltridge had said, but as regards himself, they did not want his (Cr Manuel's) statement. No, gentlemen, he said, the committee did not want to hear the two sides of the story, they only wanted to hear what Cr Paltridge had to say.

Chairman: I cannot allow this, Cr Manuel.

Cr Manuel: You will have to allow it, Mr Chairman. I have been slated to-night, and now I am going to protect myself, and the only way that you will stop me, is to put me outside, and then I will take good care I come in again.

Several of the Councillors here protested against such language being used, but Cr Manuel maintained that he was going to have his say at all costs.

Cr Manuel proceeded with his statement, and he maintained that it was most unjust that an enquiry should be made in front of the accused, without the accuser being present, or even asked to attend. "No, gentlemen," he said, the committee of inquiry did not want him, nor did they solicit any statement from Mrs Taylor, but the whole facts of the case were these: the committee wanted to box up the affair between themselves, and this they had proved by their action that evening in bringing up such a report.

He went into elaborate details about there being two vouchers, the first of which had not been stamped.

Cr Coutts: Do you mean to say Mr Taylor had not been paid?

Cr Manuel: Not since the voucher was passed.

A Councillor: Of course not, he received it before.

A little more quibbling was indulged in, after which the Clerk said, "Will you listen to these statements?"

Cr Manuel to the Clerk: You have nothing whatever to do with this, and I do not wish to listen to your statements; but if you want something you might have it plenty time enough.

After Hollis and McLaren explained how the vouchers were issued,

the report was again read over, when Cr Deeble asked by whose authority the last clause with reference to the Clerk's honour and integrity was put in.

The chairman: By my own, because he had heard Cr Manuel say in the presence of three other reliable witnesses that Hollis was an old fraud, and that he falsified his books.

Cr Manuel: You never.

Chairman: I did.

Cr Manuel: You never.

The Chairman here moved that the report be adopted.

Cr Coutts seconded.

Cr Manuel moved an amendment that the report be not adopted, as the case did not bear upon Mr Hollis' honesty and integrity.

The amendment was then put and lost, only the mover and seconder voting for it.

The resolution was then put and carried, Crs Deeble and Manuel voting against.

After this contretemps, Dunlop placed 'a voluminous amount of correspondence' on the table, explaining that as 'it had been stated certain letters had been suppressed' in the office without being presented to the council 'he had gone to a considerable amount of trouble in collecting all the letters and resolutions passed thereto, that had passed between the Council and the parties in dispute', and invited councillors to 'peruse the letters, and it would seen that everything had been fair, square and above board'. When they were read out, Deeble queried whether all had been included, charging that 'The whole thing is rumped up', and Manuel claimed that others about a particular contract had not been read out.

When asked about it Mr Hollis said that none had been received, and he (Cr Manuel) having a right to believe that it had, went to the Post Office to see if he could trace the letter, but his efforts in that direction were fruitless, as only registered letters could be traced. Of course he was jammed in a corner with reference to the matter, and the Councillors were going to have a slap at him.

Cr [James] McEnteer²³⁴ here rose with indignation and objected to Cr Manuel using such language, for he was not going to have a slap at him.

Cr Manuel contended that the letters were brought forward as a slap at him. He had said that letters had been received in the County Office, but had not been read at the meetings, and he was going to prove his case.

²³⁴ See *Auckland Star*, 28 January 1931, p. 6.

He then referred to a letter received two years ago from Richard Mills Hawkes, the Tapu publican, about obtaining a government subsidy for the road from Tapu to Mercury Bay. When he had asked Hollis whether that letter had been received he was told it had not. Later, when he visited the office and saw that Hollis was 'awfully excited' about a letter in the *Thames Advertiser*,

he asked whether he had received any letters from Tapu. Mr Hollis replied, "let me see," and going to a file took down the very letter which the Council was supposed never to have received. The letter was then handed to him (Cr Manuel) and he had held it ever since, about eight months. Having a desire to promote harmony, he did not utilize the letter, but as he was now doubted he brought it forward as evidence.

After reading it, he claimed that its not being read earlier meant the Hastings Riding had been 'defrauded' of £100. 'Now could the Councillors say that all letters received had been read. He had been accused by the ADVERTISER of being a mischief maker, but had he desired to be a mischief maker he could have made mischief long ago'. Citing a recent example, Dunlop 'pointed out that a letter might at any time go astray'.

He believed this letter had been put there for no other purpose than to be taken back.

Cr Manuel here threw the letters on the table.

The Clerk: You cannot prove that you did not take this letter, and that's what you did.

Cr Manuel: You're a -----.

Cr Deeble sprung to his feet and said he thought it was most impertinent for the Clerk to accuse Cr Manuel of stealing a letter. He should be reprimanded unless he apologized.

Cr Manuel: Never mind, Cr Deeble, if I did steal it I had a right to it.

Cr Paltridge re-read the letter and asked what benefit would there be to keep back such a letter. Why the Council would be the gainer by Mr Cadman's suggestion being carried out.

Cr Coutts: Cr Manuel admits that he has kept the letter back eight months, and he states that the Hastings Riding has been defrauded by £100. Is so, the Hastings Riding has been defrauded by its own representative, Cr Manuel. Here we have a chance of getting money from Government for this road, and the very one that should assist us, keeps back the help to it for eight months, and says nothing about it during the whole of that time.

Cr Manuel: I wanted to create harmony, but as I had been turned upon and accused of certain things I now bring it forward, whilst I knew that the time for obtaining the subsidy had also expired.

Cr Coutts: All I can say is that you have inflicted an unpardonable injury upon your own people in keeping back this letter.

Cr Paltridge also spoke on the matter, after which it [was] dropped.²³⁵

After this meeting, Hawkes wrote to the press to explain ‘the systematically disgraceful manner in which the Tapu portion of the Hastings riding has been treated for the last two years and more’ by the council. As most of the settlers lived alongside the creek the road to Mercury Bay was their ‘only means of communication’, and it was also used by the timber and mining industries. Having contacted Cadman about a subsidy to repair it, he received a reply offering a subsidy. ‘Now why was that letter suppressed? I hold, Sir, that a monstrous fraud (closely allied to previous ill-treatment) has been perpetrated’. If it was not the act of the whole council, the latter should ‘find whose act it was, and brand such individual as he deserves’; if it did not, he would ‘lay the whole case before the Minister of Justice’.²³⁶

Their behaviour prompted ‘Robinson Crusoe’ to describe Manuel and Deeble as ‘two real beautiful specimens of manhood’. Manuel ‘seems to be very vindictive, for though he knows full well that Mrs Taylor received the money before the voucher was passed, he keeps harping on the one string, “that the money had not been paid after the voucher was passed at the Council meeting,” the inference of course being that the money had not been paid at all’. His keeping back a letter for eight months was ‘a most dirty piece of business, and I sincerely hope that the riding he represents will make him give them a clear and lucid explanation as to how he got possession of the letter’ and why he did not protect their interests over it. ‘And I hope that if he tries to push down their throats that it was for the sake of maintaining harmony in the Council, and was afraid to be just because of a row, they will show him in a most practical manner that he has proved himself to be a most unworthy servant, and a disgrace to his Riding’.²³⁷

²³⁵ *Thames Advertiser*, 10 February 1893, p. 3.

²³⁶ Letter from R.M. Hawkes, *Thames Advertiser*, 15 February 1893, p. 3.

²³⁷ Letter from ‘Robinson Crusoe’, *Thames Advertiser*, 16 February 1893, p. 3.

A report of the next meeting, in March, was headlined: 'County Trouble: Another "Row": A Bear Garden: Some Plain Speaking'. At the conclusion of ordinary business, Dunlop in referring to the charge of suppressing correspondence stated that 'it was only his duty to inquire into the matter not only for the officials' and late chairman's benefit but for the satisfaction of the whole Council'. He had obtained written statements from the officials concerned, and read the first one, from Hollis:

As I had no opportunity at the last meeting of the council to reply to Cr Manuel's charges against me ... I can produce evidence

(1) That about twelve months ago I entrusted letters to Cr Manuel who promised to deliver them to Mr R.M. Hawkes of Tapu, to whom they were addressed.

(2) That instead of delivering them he opened the envelope, appropriated the documents it contained, and retained possession of them until he produced them at the last meeting.

(3) That being in some doubt about this peculiar transaction as affecting himself, he made overtures to Mr Hawkes to assist him, in order that he may be in a position to state that he obtained the letters from Mr Hawkes not by other questionable means.

(4) That his action in this matter was the boast of a relation of his, in the Governor Bowen Hotel, while he himself has admitted having opened and retained a letter I entrusted to him for delivery to Mr Hawkes. Comment on the foregoing is unnecessary. Cr Manuel stated "If he did steal the letter he has a right to take it," but the law does not recognize such a right (?), but calls the opening of a letter, and the appropriation of its contents by the ugly word "larceny."

Cr Manuel here rose with great warmth, but at the request of the chairman, he again took his seat.

A statement by McLaren was then read which supported Hollis' recollection of having given letters to Manuel to take to Hawkes.

Long after the above, Cr Manuel in conversation to me acknowledged he had opened and read a "letter you had sent by him to be delivered to Mr Hawkes, of Tapu," adding "It was not likely he was going to deliver a letter from Hollis to Hawkes without finding out all that was in it."

Cr Manuel said that the last beat all, and with reference to it he did not know what to say. It was too hot, and he could not find words enough to express his indignation. However, he might say that so far as Mr McLaren's report was concerned, there was not the slightest particle of truth in it, indeed so disgusted was he (Cr Manuel) that he did not wish to dwell upon it. Why, if the

information was true did they not hear all this before? At the last meeting of the Council the chairman had hunted up all the information possible, and now four weeks afterwards they came up with another story. It was indeed, he contended, barefaced in the extreme, and anyone that had the least bit of common sense could plainly see that it was a concocted story got up just because he had made accusations that letters had been suppressed. Cr Manuel then referred to the statement of Mr Hollis, and he said he thanked God that the Clerk's own report at the present meeting had cleared him of stealing the letter. Mr Hollis admitted that he gave it to him (Cr Manuel) about twelve months ago.

Then turning to Mr Hawkes, who was in the room, Cr Manuel asked his forgiveness for opening the letter.

The Chairman: You cannot make requests to any private individual sitting in the Council Chambers.

Cr Manuel said, "Oh, very well" and continuing contended that the Chairman and the officials were most cowardly in their attacks.

The Chairman objected to such remarks being made.

Cr Manuel said he could object away, for he was going to have his say in spite of all, and in again referring to the statements read at the last meeting, he said that they were most carefully prepared. Then another four weeks were taken to concoct another yarn, but he did not give the officials credit for the last one made, as it did not in any way correspond with the first one. He was glad that the reporter of the ADVERTISER was present, and he could testify to the fact that when he (Cr Manuel) had given in the letter that had been kept back – letter given to him by Mr Hollis – the Clerk said, "there is nothing to prove that you did not take these letters, and that is what you did, you stole them." Now Mr Hollis contradicts this statement by saying that he gave them to him (Cr Manuel) twelve months ago, letters which had been handed in to the Clerk by Mr McMahan himself, two years ago. Therefore he contended that by Mr Hollis' admitting that he had given the letter, he had acquitted him of stealing the letter, while the same statement also proved that the letters had been in the County Council Chambers without being brought before the Council, and now it could be seen by the public whether he had not good grounds for stating that letters had been held back. He had nothing further to say, but he felt exceedingly pleased indeed that the officials had by their own reports cleared him of any dishonest act.

Cr Deeble said he thought that when the minutes were read and confirmed the matter was dead and buried, but much to his astonishment the same question is again brought forward, and he must say that he never in his experience of County Chairmen had he known one to do a more underhanded dastardly, trick-taking piece of work than that undertaken by the present Chairman,

who by his action proved that he had done his best to get the officials to slate a brother Councillor. He contended that the Chairman had never given Cr Manuel a chance to defend himself. The Chairman: He had a show after the reports had been read.

Cr Deeble maintained that this was not the thing. Cr Manuel should have received the same privilege that was extended to the officials, namely, to put his statement in writing, and he (Cr Deeble) must say that any man who had any respect at all for his character would not descend to blowing his own trumpet, as the clerk had done about the way in which his books were kept, etc. In keeping his books properly he had simply done his duty. He again reiterated his statement that the action taken by the Chairman in getting the officials to slate a brother councillor was most dastardly, and (striking the table with his fists) he contended that such statements would, and must fall to the ground.

Cr Manuel: Never mind.

Cr Deeble: Don't get angry. It's all right now.

After Paltridge criticized Deeble's statements, he referring to Manuel 'opening a letter given to him to deliver to another person – such action he maintained being stealing, and nothing short of stealing'. When Dunlop asked whether any councillor objected to hearing Hawkes' views, 'Cr Deeble strongly objected', and the meeting closed.²³⁸

Two days later, the *Thames Advertiser*, in responding to Manuel's statement that Hollis had held letters for 12 months before he was given them, pointed out that the date of McMahon's covering letter was 21 December 1891.

The communication addressed to Mr R.M. Hawkes, and which was entrusted to Cr Manuel, who promised to deliver it about February 1892, never apparently reached its destination, and its discovery by Cr Manuel, and subsequent presentation to the Council meeting in February last, proves that he had it in his possession for nearly a year, so that Cr Manuel's idea of *time* would appear to be somewhat chaotic.²³⁹

A further two days later, a letter from Hawkes was published:

I was present at the meeting of councillors on last Wednesday evening, and as a matter of course heard the question of the

²³⁸ County Council, *Thames Advertiser*, 9 March 1893, p. 3.

²³⁹ *Thames Advertiser*, 11 March 1893, p. 2.

suppressed business letter thrashed out. I must certainly say, that they are a very unruly family, and the language used more forcible than polite. As the meeting broke up in an uproar, and without any satisfactory conclusion, I think it my duty now, to throw a little more light on the closing scene. When appealed to by the chairman to state what I knew, I felt then undecided, as I thought at such a late hour – and seeing the very bad temper indeed of some members at that meeting – that if some of the remarks were made of me, or to me, that were passing so freely among themselves, the scene would change. I was therefore relieved when Cr Deeble objected to my speaking then, but he forgot that I can speak now – and without fear of being insulted. As a natural sequence, several Thames friends asked me the following day, what it was that I had to say on that subject, and on my telling them, the unanimous feeling was that it would be unjust of me to hold it back. I shall state what occurred without any comment, and then all the readers can judge if I am right in giving this information. A few days before the council meeting last month (February), Cr Manuel was at my place, and asked to see me privately. We went to a private room, when he told me he intended to have a slap at Hollis about keeping back letters intended to go before the meeting. He said he now had a great chance at the ----, and if I helped him he would be right. I said, “Are you quite sure that Hollis had done such a thing as that – I never thought it of him.” He said, “You will see directly,” - and taking an envelope from his pocket said: “Do you know that writing?” I saw immediately that it was mine, and said so. I then asked what it was, and he told me it was a request about the Hastings - Mercury Bay road. I immediately recollected the whole circumstance, but could not just then remember how it had been dealt with by the Council. He then said that letter he (Hollis) had stowed away, and though he hunted the office for it many times he could never find the plant, until some months ago, when the Kersey Cooper rumpus was on,²⁴⁰ he found Hollis in the right humour, and said, “Oh, by the way Hollis, is there not a letter here some where that Hawkes and McMahan sent some time ago about the Tapu Creek road?” Mr Hollis said “Yes,” and got it out of some hole (pigeon-hole I think he said) and asked him to return it to me. He promised to do so. “Well,” said he, “you see I didn’t, but I want you to say, if you are asked, that I did. Now, here is the letter, and you can say with truth I gave it to you.” The only remark I made was, “Well Charley I didn’t think you would try to make a cat’s-paw of me that way.” “Oh,” said he, “Don’t be afraid – I’ll take care you don’t get into trouble.” I thought not much danger of that, in this case.

²⁴⁰ See paper on Edward Kersey Cooper.

When he asked Hollis why the road works were not done, he was told the county lacked the necessary funds.²⁴¹ In the same issue, an editorial writer considered it the newspaper's 'duty' to examine Manuel's conduct after he and Deeble accused Hollis with 'systematically suppressing letters'.

At the February meeting a considerable number of these letters were produced, with authentic memoranda attached, showing how they had been dealt with by the Council, when Cr Manuel rose to his feet, excitedly exclaiming, "I've got one here," and produced a letter from Mr McMahon to the Council, and two private letters connected to the subject matter of his letter from Mr R.M. Hawkes. The question is, were these letters suppressed and if they were, in what manner, and under what conditions, did they come into Cr Manuel's possession?

We think our readers will accept the County Clerk's statement as the correct one, that they were entrusted by him to Cr Manuel for honourable delivery to Mr Hawkes – that Cr Manuel appropriated them, and kept them for something like twelve months – and the base purpose for which they were retained by him, is clearly shown in Mr Hawkes' letter. Therefore the charge of "suppression" must be made against Cr Manuel, and not the Clerk, because they were only in the office some two months – the date of the covering letter being December 21st, 1891, and Mr McMahon's acknowledgment clearly shows that two of these letters must have been considered as private, and the conditions of the other could not – as the County Chairman informed him – be complied with.

We must confess that a more dastardly plot against the reputation of an official has never come under our notice, and we trust for the credit of the constituency that Cr Manuel represents, that it does not contain another person like himself. The proposals he made to Mr Hawkes, which that gentleman instantly rejected with scorn, are simply shameful, and revealed a depth of moral depravity and malignity, which we should have hesitated even to credit a Manuel with.

The behaviour of this person and his Mentor, Cr Deeble, at the last meeting of the Council, was as disgraceful as the action regarding the letter.... Another peculiar idea, entertained by these two remarkable representatives, is, that because they cannot induce a majority of the council to adopt their views – however unworthy they may be – they are opposed by a "ring."

In conclusion we may say, that we sincerely trust ... that Crs Deeble and Manuel may see the wisdom of ascertaining in a manly and becoming way, the true facts of any matter upon which they may have doubts, before airing their ideas at the

²⁴¹ Letter from R.M. Hawkes, *Thames Advertiser*, 13 March 1893, p. 3.

Council Board, and thereby covering themselves with ridicule and contempt.²⁴²

The *Observer* published a cartoon of the councillors squabbling, with Deeble insisting on speaking despite the protests of others.²⁴³ Manuel was silenced for a time, but at the council's June meeting created what the *Thames Advertiser* described as 'A Gentle Breeze' over McLaren's report on the contract being carried out on the Thames-Tapu road. Claiming that after all the trouble taken in preparing the specifications, 'the most important portions of the specifications were struck out by the Chairman, thus making a fool of himself (Cr Manuel), a fool of the Engineer, and a little fool of the whole Council'. Criticizing other actions by Dunlop, 'he maintained that the Chairman had no right to over-ride resolutions passed by the Council'.²⁴⁴ When he moved that funds be requested from the Minister of Mines for new roads at Upper Tararu and Tapu Creek (both being mining areas in which he was personally interested), Dunlop pointed out the 'efforts in this direction that had already been made'. Manuel 'evidently thought' that Dunlop 'was trying to put him off, and he showed by his action he would not be bounced out [bullied out]²⁴⁵ of the speech. Nor was he bounced out of it, for he delivered the most powerful oration he intended to make'. Although the *Thames Advertiser* considered it was 'very powerful', it suggested that his listeners would have appreciated if he had 'put to use the musical term *pp*, for he sang out that *ff* that it would have done great credit to a speaker in a 50 acre paddock'. It also advised him to address his colleagues 'and not turn himself to the Press and any of the public who might happen to be present'. When Manuel doubted Dunlop's word that a letter had been sent to the minister, 'the letter book had to be produced and the letter read', disproving his claim. The newspaper regretted that Manuel 'should be so unreasonable, and mistrusting, for he apparently goes to the meetings with the idea that he is the only honest member, and with a determination to have a "go" at somebody for their misdoings (in his sight)'. It suggested that he 'let his thoughts rest for a

²⁴² Editorial, *Thames Advertiser*, 13 March 1893, p. 2.

²⁴³ Cartoon, *Observer*, 18 March 1893, p. 16.

²⁴⁴ County Council, *Thames Advertiser*, 8 June 1893, p. 3.

²⁴⁵ Partridge, p. 124.

while on the County funds available instead of the actions of the Councillors, which we feel sure, are as pure as those of Cr Manuel's'.²⁴⁶

Manuel did not stand for re-election, and at the conclusion of his last meeting struck a discordant note after another councillor moved 'a hearty vote of thanks' to Dunlop for the manner in which he had performed his duties.

Cr Manuel said that he was in a somewhat different footing to the other Councillors in as much as they had been nominated again, whilst "it was the contrary with Charlie Manuel." He had expected that there would be a little "buttering up" that night, and as he had been a little odd from the start of the play, he would continue so to the finish. A hope had been expressed that the Councillors would meet again at the table, but, said Cr Manuel, "I hope you will not, gentlemen, and I sincerely hope that the ratepayers will show their good sense in keeping you out." He said that he could not say one word in favour of the Chairman or Mr Hollis, and he was not going to. – Cr [James] McEnteer [a mine manager]²⁴⁷ spoke in favour of the resolution, and urged Cr Manuel to leave the meeting good friends all round, but Cr Manuel said, No! he could not make friends with the Chairman.²⁴⁸

Commenting on his departure, the *Thames Advertiser* noted that his district was

in a much better position now, than when he took office. Without doubt he has worked hard for his riding, and it must be both pleasing to himself and to those whom he represented, that so much money in the shape of grants and subsidies await expenditure. We are not going to say that such a happy state of affairs is due entirely to Mr Manuel's efforts, but we maintain that his staunch persistent advocacy of the claims of his district played a prominent part in the gathering of the "plums".... However, we would have much preferred to have seen "Charlie" as he left the Council forgive the other Councillors their trespasses, even as they forgave him his.²⁴⁹

²⁴⁶ *Thames Advertiser*, 9 June 1893, p. 2.

²⁴⁷ See *Cyclopedia of New Zealand*, vol. 2, p. 866.

²⁴⁸ County Council, *Thames Advertiser*, 2 November 1893, p. 2.

²⁴⁹ *Thames Advertiser*, 2 November 1893, p. 2.

Shortly afterwards, as well as noting that Manuel was now ‘relegated to oblivion’, it praised Dunlop’s ‘consummate tact’ in dealing with his obstructive behaviour.²⁵⁰ Two years later, Manuel renewed his attacks in a letter to the editor:

I see at the annual statutory meeting of the Thames County Council that Cr Corbett said that “at present there was no occasion for a change; under Cr Dunlop’s guidance they had got along very well, and the state of the Council had improved.” Well, sir, I would like to know in what way the Council had improved. I think if Cr Corbett was to take the trouble to go over the greater number of our goldfield’s roads, and also a trip to Tapu, he would find that there is no improvement in the state of our roads. I think it is a disgrace to the Council to see the roads in such a state, and to do so little to remedy them. And more especially when taking into consideration the extra amount of revenue the Council is deriving from Hastings and Totara ridings out of this mining boom. Now there was one thing about Cr Dunlop’s remark that greatly amused me. Cr Dunlop told the Councillors that he had “no desire to stand for re-election this year were it not that several works which he and the clerk had in hand remained to be completed. Now, sir, as one who has had a little experience in County matters, I would like to give the Councillors and also the Engineer a little advice. And my advice is that they all retire at the end of their term, because I can assure them that if the Chairman (Cr Dunlop) and Mr Hollis, the Clerk, have any works in hand remaining to be completed, you may leave them to themselves and it will be well done. I can certify to that.”²⁵¹

Deeble, who ‘Settler’, of Tapu, claimed had as his creed: ‘(1st) his own personal advantages, (2nd) his personal animosities’,²⁵² topped the 1893 poll.²⁵³ Commenting on the result, the *Thames Advertiser*, which had praised him in 1888, noted that his relations with other councillors had ‘not been always of the happiest’ because he always thought he was right and they were wrong.²⁵⁴ Relations would improve, and by the time of his re-election in 1905 had served for 20 years.²⁵⁵ In 1899 a Puriri correspondent

²⁵⁰ *Thames Advertiser*, 10 November 1893, p. 2.

²⁵¹ Letter from Charles Manuel, *Thames Star*, 29 November 1895, p. 3.

²⁵² Letter from ‘Settler’, *Thames Advertiser*, 3 October 1893, p. 3.

²⁵³ *Thames Advertiser*, 9 November 1893, p. 2.

²⁵⁴ *Thames Advertiser*, 10 November 1893, p. 2.

²⁵⁵ *Thames Star*, 28 October 1905, p. 2, 9 November 1905, p. 2.

noted that ‘a noticeable trait in his character’ was ‘that he has a mind of his own, and has the moral courage to express it’.²⁵⁶ Having been a council representative on the harbour board since 1891, he was elected its chairman in both 1900 and 1902.²⁵⁷ As a member of the hospital board, on his death he was recalled as having taken ‘a lively interest in local affairs, and was ever ready to assist any worthy object for the advancement of the town’.²⁵⁸

FARMING IN THE PIAKO DISTRICT

An obituary stated that part of the profit derived from Manuel’s Bullion mine was invested in land, first at Manawaru. ‘Selling again to advantage’, he moved to Morrinsville, ‘and reposing faith in the village as it was then, speculated in town sections and estates at Motumaoho and Hinuera. He still owned the former and part of the latter farms till the end’.²⁵⁹ The *Observer* considered that his ‘faith’ in the ‘future of Morrinsville was justified by results’.²⁶⁰

After buying 188 acres at Manawaru in 1900 for £4 per acre, Manuel erected a house and stable; there must have been other improvements as well, for in October 1903, after farming there for three years, he sold the property for £13 an acre.²⁶¹ After selling this land, he settled at Motumaoho, near Morrinsville, where he had owned land since 1894.²⁶² In 1902, with two others, he refused to contribute towards the cost of clearing a drain because of unsatisfactory work, but they were forced to pay.²⁶³ In 1905, he owned and occupied Section 4 of the Hangawera Block, also near

²⁵⁶ Puriri Correspondent, *Thames Advertiser*, 31 January 1899, p. 4.

²⁵⁷ *Thames Advertiser*, 10 February 1891, p. 2; *Thames Star*, 30 April 1900, p. 2, 27 February 1902, p. 2.

²⁵⁸ *Thames Star*, 9 April 1927, p. 5.

²⁵⁹ *Te Aroha News*, 16 March 1914, p. 3.

²⁶⁰ *Observer*, 28 March 1914, p. 4.

²⁶¹ Bank of New Zealand, Paeroa Branch, Manager’s Memorandum Book 1902-1914, Property Sales, October 1903, Bank of New Zealand Archives, Wellington; *Te Aroha News*, 11 August 1903, p. 3.

²⁶² Lands and Deeds Registry, Auckland, Nominal Primary Index No. 2, no. 487, DOSLI, Auckland.

²⁶³ Te Aroha Magistrate’s Court, *Auckland Weekly News*, 3 July 1902, p. 39, 7 August 1902, p. 33.

Morrinsville, comprising 461 acres 2 roods 24 perches, with a ratable value of £1,540, and also 10 acres at Motumaoho, part of Section 10 of the No. 2 block, ratable value £63. His wife had two house lots in the latter block, ratable value £390.²⁶⁴ In 1937 he was described as having been a 'very energetic type of settler', farming a 'large area of 886 acres' but still taking part in community affairs, and was 'associated with' John Endean²⁶⁵ in establishing a dairy factory at Te Poi. 'Manuel was the kind of settler to whom the whole of the Upper Thames owes its prosperity'.²⁶⁶ An obituary described him as 'a progressive and successful farmer' on his 'large area of land at Morrinsville'.²⁶⁷ In April 1909 he ran 163 sheep on his Hangawera farm, but sold them during the following 12 months.²⁶⁸ In 1910, after purchasing 3,000 acres in the Okauia district (near Matamata), he ploughed and grassed a third of this land and built up a dairy herd.²⁶⁹ In April 1912, when he completed the sale of 'Truro', his estate of 900 acres at Motumaoho, houses were being built on it.²⁷⁰ Six months later, he sold 300 acres at Hinuera.²⁷¹ He still ran a dairy farm at the time of his death.²⁷²

In August 1901, he purchased 30 of the 1,000 shares in the Manawaru Co-operative Dairy Company, of which he became a director two years later.²⁷³ One of the first directors of the Norfolk Cheese Company at Motumaoho, he was its chairman at the time of his death.²⁷⁴ In the following year, when the Norfolk Co-operative Dairy Company was formed, his son Henry, who farmed at Motumaoho, was one of the first directors.²⁷⁵

WAIORONGOMAI MINING

²⁶⁴ Piako County Council, Rate Book 1905-1906, Waitoa Riding [no pagination], Matamata-Piako District Council Archives, Te Aroha.

²⁶⁵ See below.

²⁶⁶ C.T. Harris, *Settlement and Development of the Upper Thames Valley, 1877-1937: Diamond Jubilee of the Piako County* (Te Aroha, 1937), p. 98.

²⁶⁷ *Thames Star*, 16 March 1914, p. 4.

²⁶⁸ 'Annual Sheep Returns', *AJHR*, 1909, H-23, p. 29; 1910, H-23, p. 27.

²⁶⁹ Te Aroha Correspondent, *Auckland Weekly News*, 29 September 1910, p. 49.

²⁷⁰ *Te Aroha News*, 20 April 1912, p. 2.

²⁷¹ *Te Aroha News*, 4 October 1912, p. 2.

²⁷² Hamilton Probates, BCDG 4420/371, ANZ-A.

²⁷³ Company Files, BADZ 5181, box 164 no. 1026, ANZ-A.

²⁷⁴ Harris, p. 172; *Te Aroha News*, 16 March 1914, p. 3.

²⁷⁵ Company Files, BADZ 5181, box 325 no. 1822, ANZ-A.

Despite devoting most of his last years to farming, Manuel continued to take an active interest in mining, both close to his farms and in the goldfields he had been associated with earlier. In June 1908, when he stated that he had no doubt that 'before long' Waiorongomai would 'prove to be one of the best gold-producing districts of the Dominion', the local newspaper, always keen to publicize such prophecies, described him as 'a practical miner of considerable experience'.²⁷⁶ One year later, when a deputation from the Ohinemuri River Silting Association sought the county council's support for stopping the use of the Ohinemuri and Waihou rivers as sludge channels, Manuel objected that this 'might prove detrimental to mining at Waiorongomai when the big reefs were unearthed'.²⁷⁷

Manuel strongly opposed the proposal. He said that the removal of the proclamation from the rivers would mean putting such restrictions upon the mining industry that would kill it within five years. It was all very well to say that the big companies could afford to pay 1s a ton for stacking, but all the companies were not rich, and the inference was not a fair one. As they all knew, there was a probability that the industry would soon be flourishing at Waiorongomai, but if the mining companies there were to be denied the use of the rivers and creeks as sludge channels they would be blocked. It was easy to talk of stacking, but with tailings reduced to the fineness characteristic of modern treatment, it would be impracticable to prevent them from being washed into the creeks or blown about. It would take all the time in the Dominion to keep them from washing away. The real trouble with the Ohinemuri and Lower Waihou were the willows, and not the tailings. He favoured action to minimise the trouble, but thought the farmers and the mining people should work hand in hand, for both industries were valuable. It might eventually be possible to build a race from Waihi to the Thames foreshore, but it would never do to deny mining the use of the rivers.²⁷⁸

In September, when as a councillor he was invited to visit Paeroa where parliamentarians were inspecting the silt problem, he 'protested against the attempt to drag support from outside public bodies' when Paeroa residents were divided on the issue. 'Some people at Paeroa were greatly concerned at the damage done to some of the land (for which the

²⁷⁶ *Te Aroha News*, 16 June 1908, p. 2.

²⁷⁷ Piako County Council, *Te Aroha News*, 17 June 1909, p. 3.

²⁷⁸ Piako County Council, *Auckland Weekly News*, 29 July 1909, p. 36.

willows are mainly responsible), but they would not scruple to shut up some prosperous mining townships, and injure a most important industry'.²⁷⁹ The following month, he told the council that the solution was to destroy the willows and other 'hard' obstructions. 'At Waihi they had one of the biggest gold mines in the world, and the Government was being calmly asked to destroy this enormous industry for the sake of a few people on the banks of the lower part of the river. The cost of killing the willows would be a mere bagatelle'.²⁸⁰ 'Anti-Silt' was unimpressed with his suggestion that tailings should be permitted to go into the river and the Hauraki Gulf, from whence they could be dredged.²⁸¹

In September 1909, the *Te Aroha News* reported that 'mining enthusiast Manuel spoke very encouragingly the other evening on the prospects at Waiorongomai'.²⁸² At a social at Waihou, he had responded to a toast to the industry:

He had been following up mining for 40 years, and he would say deliberately that Waiorongomai was the richest place he had ever seen in New Zealand. The reefs were large and numerous, and all carried gold. When the necessary capital and skill had been obtained, and the necessary machinery erected, the mines would become dividend-paying at once. His knowledge had been gained in the school of experience, and his opinion was that Waiorongomai would some day outshine Waihi.²⁸³

Later that month, he was granted the Day Dawn (reusing the name of his Tapu claim), mainly situated in the Mangakino Valley,²⁸⁴ which he would work in association with Thomas Gavin.²⁸⁵ Six months later, Gavin informed the warden that the Day Dawn and Gavin's adjacent Premier Extended had been offered to John Watson Walker,²⁸⁶ who was going to

²⁷⁹ Piako County Council, *Auckland Weekly News*, 30 September 1909, p. 49.

²⁸⁰ *Auckland Weekly News*, 28 October 1909, p. 23.

²⁸¹ Letter from 'Anti-Silt', *Te Aroha News*, 9 November 1909, p. 3.

²⁸² *Te Aroha News*, 2 September 1909, p. 3.

²⁸³ *Auckland Weekly News*, 9 September 1909, p. 36.

²⁸⁴ Te Aroha Warden's Court, Mining Applications 1909, 127/1909, BBAV 11289/20a, ANZ-A.

²⁸⁵ See paper on his life.

²⁸⁶ See paper on his life.

London hoping to float a company to work them.²⁸⁷ This was ironic, as in 1899 Manuel had protested at large companies being granted large areas of largely unmanned ground; changes to the law, made to suit two companies at Thames and one at Coromandel, 'were only framed to suit the capitalist', not miners or businessmen.²⁸⁸ Walker was the leading proponent of granting large areas to English investors.²⁸⁹ After prospecting his Day Dawn, Manuel was granted six months' protection.²⁹⁰ As this attempt to attract English capital was unsuccessful, it was surrendered in April 1912.²⁹¹ Rent owing for the previous two years amounted to £18 13s 6d, but, after Manuel pleaded poverty, officials agreed to treat it as unrecoverable.²⁹²

In March 1908, Manuel and others floated the Bendigo Company,²⁹³ to work the claim of that name. Two months later, with three others he sold two Karangahake claims to it for 30,000 shares paid up to 6d. One of the initial directors, Manuel became chairman of directors in 1911. His initial shareholding of 1,000 had risen to 5,730 by May 1909, but fell back to 1,000 by the following year, where it remained until the company was wound up in 1913. His wife and daughter commenced with 250 shares, which increased to 750 by 1910, and remained at that amount; his son James' initial 250 shares increased to 375.²⁹⁴ That his family acquired an increasing amount of shares and did not sell them indicated that he expected the mine to be profitable. In 1909, he extravagantly claimed that 'the Bendigo reef was far richer than the Martha', at Waihi, 'was when he

²⁸⁷ Te Aroha Warden's Court, Mining Applications 1910, 11/1910, BBAV 11289/20a, ANZ-A.

²⁸⁸ Letter from Charles Manuel, *Thames Advertiser*, 5 December 1899, p. 4.

²⁸⁹ See paper on his life.

²⁹⁰ Te Aroha Warden's Court, Mining Applications 1910, 13/1910, BBAV 11289/20a, ANZ-A.

²⁹¹ Te Aroha Warden's Court, Mining Applications 1912, 51/1912, BBAV 11289/21a, ANZ-A.

²⁹² County Clerk, Ohinemuri County Council, to Under-Secretary, Mines Department, 11 July 1912; Receiver of Gold Revenue, Te Aroha, to Under-Secretary, Mines Department, 27 June 1913, Mines Department, MD 1, 12/1412; Under-Secretary, Mines Department, to Minister of Mines, 2 July 1913; Memorandum by Minister of Mines, 5 July 1913, Mines Department, MD 1, 1913/1426, ANZ-W.

²⁹³ See paper on the Bendigo Battery.

²⁹⁴ Company Files, BADZ 5181, box 226 no. 1332, ANZ-A.

first saw it', at an unstated date but, by implication, 1881. 'What had made Waihi was the right kind of men, and money'. The Silver King reef²⁹⁵ 'was doubly as rich as the Martha, the ore was sulphide, and the deeper it went the better it became'.²⁹⁶ When the Bendigo battery was christened by his daughter in August 1911, Endean thanked him 'for the arduous work he had so cheerfully carried out', stating that he was 'mainly responsible for the Company having reached its present progressive state'.²⁹⁷

The Seddon Company was established in August 1909, to work the claim of that name, in which Manuel held half the interests and John Endean had the other half.²⁹⁸ During 1909, he told the warden, a considerable amount of prospecting was done, and tests of the ore proved that cyanide treatment was required. An unnamed expert had inspected the ground, and an unnamed Aucklander had the property 'in hand for flotation in London', where he would be going soon. As the ground contained a large, low-grade, lode, it required working in a 'wholesale manner'. The new company would first drive a low-level tunnel, and, if the reef proved payable, a good plant would be erected, all at an estimated cost of £50,000.²⁹⁹ A director from the time of the company's incorporation, by 1912 he was its chairman. His confidence in it was indicated by his increasing his holding from 8,400 of the 100,000 shares in August 1909 to 9,150 in October the following year, a number he retained until it ceased work in 1912. By October 1912 he had been replaced as chairman. In his last report as chairman in March that year, he explained that 'owing to the disappointing nature of the treating of the Bendigo ore' in 1911, the mine had closed and protection been sought 'until such time when there will be a reasonable prospect of successfully treating the quartz'.³⁰⁰

JOHN ENDEAN

²⁹⁵ See paper on the Bendigo Battery.

²⁹⁶ *Auckland Weekly News*, 9 September 1909, p. 36.

²⁹⁷ *Te Aroha News*, 31 August 1911, p. 3.

²⁹⁸ Warden's Court, *Te Aroha News*, 29 July 1909, p. 2.

²⁹⁹ Te Aroha Warden's Court, Mining Applications 1909, 111/1909, BBAV 11289/20a, ANZ-A.

³⁰⁰ Te Aroha Warden's Court, Mining Applications 1910, 89/1910, BBAV 11289/20a; Company Files, BADZ 5181, box 244 no. 1431, ANZ-A.

John Endean, another Cornishman, was born in 1844, to John, a miner, and Grace, née Nicholls.³⁰¹ After mining in Cornwall, when aged 19 he went to the Australian goldfields, then one year later to California and on to Nevada. After briefly working on New Zealand's West Coast, reports of rich finds at Thames brought him there in 1870, where he married in the following July.³⁰² One of the first tributers, his 'practical experience and ability stood him in good stead, enabling him to work the gold bearing country with considerable success'.³⁰³ First mining in the Caledonian in 1871, he became one of its shift bosses.³⁰⁴ During the 1870s he acquired shares in at least two companies, and was a director of both a Thames and Owharoa one.³⁰⁵

Endean was prominent for other reasons as well. In 1915, the *Observer* wrote that, despite being over 70, he was 'credited with looking at least 48 by his intimates'. His Cornish accent was 'still unimpaired'.

Jack can be induced now and then to revert to the roaring days of the Thames ... when two great friendly factions (the wild Irish and the untamed Cornish) did occasional battle for the pugilistic championship of the field. Jack was a don ['expert']³⁰⁶ "hand" in those days with his fists, and much respected on that account.³⁰⁷

He also participated in Cornish wrestling, unsuccessfully so in the Christmas Sports of 1872.³⁰⁸

His brother William, who first mined in Thames in 1874, by 1896 had mined in five countries, including managing mines in South Africa.³⁰⁹

³⁰¹ Notices of Intentions to Marry 1871, folio 159, Births Deaths and Marriages, BDM 20/16, ANZ-W; Death Certificate of John Endean, 3 January 1925, 1925/209, BDM; ancestry.co.uk.

³⁰² *New Zealand Gazette*, 22 May 1869, p. 240; *New Zealand Herald*, 5 January 1925, p. 8; Marriage Certificate of John Endean, 20 July 1871, 1871/4560, BDM.

³⁰³ *Cyclopedia of New Zealand*, vol. 2, p. 466.

³⁰⁴ *Thames Guardian and Mining Record*, 31 October 1871, p. 2; *New Zealand Herald*, 9 May 1916, p. 9.

³⁰⁵ Company Files, BADZ 5181, box 16 no. 88, ANZ-A; *New Zealand Gazette*, 7 September 1876, p. 633; *Thames Advertiser*, 4 October 1876, p. 2, 14 August 1878, p. 2.

³⁰⁶ Partridge, p. 327.

³⁰⁷ *Observer*, 6 March 1915, p. 5.

³⁰⁸ *Thames Advertiser*, 30 December 1872, p. 3; *Thames Star*, 30 July 1927, p. 5.

In 1872, Endean became the publican of the Shotover Hotel, at Beach Road, between Grahamstown and Tararu.³¹⁰ In 1877, he was licensee of another hotel, but sold all his furniture and fittings in it in November because he had purchased the Railway Terminus Hotel in Auckland.³¹¹ In 1878 he spent over £6,000 in purchasing the Britomart Hotel, but quickly sold his interest.³¹² He retained the Railway Terminus until 1887, when he took over the Waitemata Hotel, which became one of Auckland's leading hotels.³¹³ 'Endean's Buildings', erected close to the waterfront, was another profitable investment.³¹⁴ In 1882, he owned freehold property in Auckland valued at £1,050, in 1897 built 'a splendid residence' in Symonds Street, in 1909 was reported to have invested £12,000 in Queen Street property, and on his death in 1925 left an estate of £54,223.³¹⁵

Endean invested heavily in mines throughout the Hauraki Peninsula from the 1880s onwards.³¹⁶ In the boom of the mid-1890s, he was a sharebroker, a member of the Auckland Chamber of Mines, and a director of

³⁰⁹ *Thames Advertiser*, 9 March 1894, p. 2; *New Zealand Herald*, 28 September 1896, p. 6, 14 October 1896, p. 3.

³¹⁰ *Thames Advertiser*, 20 September 1872, p. 3; Thames Electoral Roll, 1873-1874, Auckland Provincial Government Papers, ACFM 8183, 3015/73, ANZ-A; *Auckland Provincial Government Gazette*, 5 September 1876, p. 349.

³¹¹ *Thames Advertiser*, 19 September 1877, p. 2, 29 November 1877, p. 2, 3 December 1877, p. 2.

³¹² *Thames Advertiser*, 11 November 1878, p. 3; advertisement, *Auckland Free Lance*, 11 January 1879, p. 1.

³¹³ *Auckland Free Lance*, 11 January 1879, p. 2; *Thames Advertiser*, 27 September 1881, p. 2, 16 March 1887, p. 2; Licensing Meeting, *New Zealand Herald*, 5 June 1884, p. 6; *Thames Star*, 24 September 1904, p. 4; *Observer*, 15 September 1906, p. 7, photograph, Christmas Annual 1906, p. vii, 1 September 1923, p. 4.

³¹⁴ *Observer*, 1 October 1904, p. 7; *Auckland Weekly News*, 29 September 1904, p. 21, 26 January 1905, p. 23, 3 April 1913, p. 22, 16 October 1913, p. 32.

³¹⁵ *A Return of the Freeholders of New Zealand*, p. E 14; *Observer*, 7 August 1897, p. 3, 13 February 1909, p. 4; Probates, BBAE 1569/17696, ANZ-A.

³¹⁶ For example, *New Zealand Gazette*, 20 June 1895, p. 996, 17 October 1895, p. 1654, 21 November 1895, p. 1828, 13 February 1896, p. 315, 2 July 1896, p. 1069, 9 July 1896, p. 1096, 26 November 1896, p. 1993; Company Files, BADZ 5181, box 240 no. 1409, ANZ-A; *Thames Star*, 6 June 1900, p. 1; *Observer*, 14 December 1895, p. 3, 8 December 1906, p. 7.

the Auckland Free Stock and Mining Exchange.³¹⁷ He was a director of many companies, mainly in the Coromandel district.³¹⁸ In 1905 he became a director in the New Sylvia Company, whose Tararu mine Manuel supervised for several years.³¹⁹

In the article presumably written by Edean for the *Cyclopedia of New Zealand* in 1902, it was stated that 'Mrs Edean also is largely interested in mining matters, and has successfully speculated in scrip, showing a shrewdness and ability possessed by few of her sex'.³²⁰ Ellen had been 'interested' since the 1870s, a gossip writer noting in 1879 that Edean's 'amiable little wife has given up scrip dealing (she says your Thames brokers at two-and-a-half were just one half too many for her)'.³²¹ It is not known how long she gave this up, but by 1890, if not earlier, she was trading once more.³²² During the boom of the 1890s she invested in several companies.³²³ In 1895, with her husband she was reputed to own half the mines at Coromandel, and was described as 'the leading lady mining expert of the Southern Hemisphere'.³²⁴ She always had, the *Observer* wrote in the following year, a 'keen eye for a good investment'.³²⁵ She continued to invest

³¹⁷ *Observer*, 13 November 1897, p. 5; *List of Companies Registered with the Auckland Chamber of Mines...* (Auckland, 1896), p. 6; Company Files, BADZ 5181, box 72 no. 492, ANZ-A.

³¹⁸ For example, *Thames Advertiser*, 25 April 1891, p. 2; Company Files, BADZ 5181, box 60 no. 411, box 80 no. 536, box 148 no. 950, box 149 no. 953, box 107 no. 699, box 217 no. 1290, box 247 no. 1445, ANZ-A; *List of Companies Registered with the Auckland Chamber of Mines*, pp. 2-3; *New Zealand Gazette*, 4 July 1895, p. 1071, 17 February 1898, p. 356; *Thames Star*, 1 February 1901, p. 4, 30 November 1901, p. 4.

³¹⁹ Company Files, BADZ 5181, box 200 no. 1202, ANZ-A; *Thames Star*, 25 January 1906, p. 1; *Auckland Weekly News*, 1 February 1912, p. 36.

³²⁰ *Cyclopedia of New Zealand*, vol. 2, p. 466.

³²¹ 'Red Cap's Thames Letter', *Auckland Free Lance*, 1 November 1879, p. 3.

³²² Thames Warden's Court, Share Transfers 1889-1890 in Just in Time Licensed Holding (Kuaotunu), transfer dated 19 July 1890, BACL 14288/1c, ANZ-A.

³²³ *New Zealand Gazette*, 25 July 1895, p. 1164, 3 October 1895, p. 1574, 31 October 1895, p. 1734, 19 December 1895, p. 1957.

³²⁴ *Observer*, 12 October 1895, 'They Say', p. 3, cartoon, p. 15.

³²⁵ *Observer*, 25 April 1896, p. 19.

in the twentieth century, and when she died, 15 years before her husband, she left an estate valued at £5,994 7s.³²⁶

Endean took no notice of Waiorongomai mining until March 1908, when he and his son John Albert, a chemist and qualified assayer who had been educated in the Thames School of Mines,³²⁷ were amongst those applying to register the Bendigo Company.³²⁸ This son, born in 1875,³²⁹ early in 1908 had applied, unsuccessfully, to Tuhoi for permission to prospect the Urewera country.³³⁰ It is possible that the 14 samples tested for Endean in the Thames School of Mines in March had come from the Bendigo ground; if so, the results were discouraging, as all assayed as ‘trace, nil’,³³¹ meaning a trace of gold of no value. Endean was a director from start to finish of this company.³³² When he spoke at the opening of its battery in 1911 he thanked Manuel, on behalf of the other directors, ‘for the arduous work he had so cheerfully carried out’, crediting him with being ‘mainly responsible for the Company having reached its present progressive state (applause)’.³³³

In August 1908, Endean and his wife visited Te Aroha.³³⁴ The following month, through the agency of Thomas Gavin, he applied for the Seddon, adjacent to the Bendigo.³³⁵ It was granted, but in the following July he obtained protection for six months while more capital was sought. By then, Manuel owned half the interest.³³⁶ Two months later, they sold it to the Seddon Company for £375, ‘represented by thirty thousand shares’ paid

³²⁶ Company Files, BADZ 5181, box 208 no. 1240, ANZ-A; Testamentary Register 1908-1911, folio 100, BBCB 4208/7, ANZ-A.

³²⁷ *Cyclopedia of New Zealand*, vol. 2, p. 162

³²⁸ Company Files, BADZ 5181, box 226 no. 1332, ANZ-A.

³²⁹ Birth Certificate of John Albert Endean, 1 November 1875, 1875/3381, BDM.

³³⁰ *Observer*, 7 March 1908, p. 5.

³³¹ Thames School of Mines, Assay Book 1909-1919, entry for 16 March 1908, School of Mines Archives, Thames.

³³² Company Files, BADZ 5181, box 226 no. 1332, ANZ-A.

³³³ *Te Aroha News*, 31 August 1911, p. 2.

³³⁴ *Te Aroha News*, 27 August 1908, p. 2.

³³⁵ Te Aroha Warden’s Court, Mining Applications 1908, 32/1908, BBAV 11289/19a, ANZ-A.

³³⁶ Te Aroha Warden’s Court, Mining Applications 1909, 111/1909, BBAV 11289/20a, ANZ-A; Warden’s Court, *Te Aroha News*, 29 July 1909, p. 2.

up to 3d of their 2s value.³³⁷ John Albert Endean arranged this sale, and another son, William Phillips Endean, a solicitor,³³⁸ drew up the agreement. One of the first directors, in the following year Endean was replaced by John Albert, but he became a director again in 1911, remaining one until the company collapsed in the following year. His wife held 500 shares.³³⁹

PIAKO COUNTY COUNCIL

An obituary described Manual as ‘a moving progressive spirit in every district in which he resided, and has always devoted a portion of his time to the public good’.³⁴⁰ He became active in the Morrinsville district from the moment he settled there, in 1908 becoming a member of the first Morrinsville town board.³⁴¹ The following year, he was a director of the Thames Valley Printing Company, newly formed to purchase and operate the *Te Aroha Mail* and the *Morrinsville Herald*.³⁴² His most prominent role was as a member of the county council, being elected for the Waitoa Riding in July 1907 with 171 votes to his rivals’ 53 and 42.³⁴³ He was a member for eight years, being chairman from November 1911 onwards, a post he held at the time of his death. An obituary described him ‘devoting a lot of time to the work’ of the council, and he ‘was talking in his usual keen manner over county business’ with the county clerk just before his death, ‘actually dying in harness’.³⁴⁴

His work on the council has not been traced in detail. On occasions, he could be as pugnacious as when on the Thames one. In January 1910, when it discussed the failure of the government to provide money for two roads, one at Motumaoho, he ‘spoke with much warmth’, saying ‘he had no wish to use harsh words, but the statement of the Minister would not bear inquiry’. Neighbouring counties had received grants averaging £9000, ‘whereas Piako had virtually got nothing’, and the Prime Minister should be told of

³³⁷ Te Aroha Warden’s Court, Mining Registrations 1909-1910, no. 1370, BCDG 11288/3a, ANZ-A.

³³⁸ See *New Zealand Herald*, 27 February 1906, p. 6; *Auckland Star*, 30 May 1906, p. 6.

³³⁹ Company Files, BADZ 5181, box 244 no. 1431, ANZ-A.

³⁴⁰ *Te Aroha News*, 16 March 1914, p. 3.

³⁴¹ Harris, p. 128.

³⁴² Company Files, BADZ 5181, box 239 no. 1406, ANZ-A.

³⁴³ *Te Aroha News*, 20 July 1907, p. 2.

³⁴⁴ *Morrinsville Star*, 17 March 1914, p. 2.

this 'great injustice'.³⁴⁵ In March, when on a council deputation to the Prime Minister, he

spoke very warmly in support of the Motumaoho request, pointing out that the money asked for would greatly assist a large body of deserving settlers, by not only giving access to their lands, but also by providing them with an outfall drain. Besides, it would tap and bring within the range of settlement 30,000 or 40,000 acres of some of the finest swamp land in the Dominion.³⁴⁶

In June, 'the administration of the general finance was somewhat strongly criticized by Mr Manuel, who argued that the position of the Council was some £2000 worse this year than last, owing to the want of care manifested in the allocation of money, and the somewhat too expensive ideas of the supervisors'. Other councillors disagreed, for this spending had provided good roads.³⁴⁷ As a representative of the council, he was a member of the Thames Harbour Board from 1910 until his death.³⁴⁸ In 1912, reflecting his involvement in the Bendigo Company, he became a member of the council's tramway committee.³⁴⁹

At the conclusion of the ordinary business at the April 1912 meeting, in moving that the engineer, Walter Robert Johnson, 'send in his resignation', Manuel 'stated that he would rather the engineer had been present'. He explained that

his reason for the motion was that in every branch the County works were costing far too much. They were paying £280 in salary to Mr Johnson and last year they had to pay a surveyor £57 for work which a certificated engineer would have been able to do. This he considered brought up the engineer's salary to £337. Notwithstanding paying a good salary for an engineer they had no engineer. Mr Johnson was only an engineer by name. He had not the qualifications of an engineer. Cr Manuel thought it time that the County Council had a competent engineer.

³⁴⁵ *Auckland Weekly News*, 27 January 1910, p. 22.

³⁴⁶ *Auckland Weekly News*, 10 March 1910, p. 49.

³⁴⁷ *Auckland Weekly News*, 30 June 1910, p. 33.

³⁴⁸ *Te Aroha News*, 13 January 1910, p. 2, 16 March 1914, p. 3.

³⁴⁹ Piako County Council, Minutes of Meeting of 20 January 1912, Matamata-Piako District Council Archives, Te Aroha.

His motion was carried by four votes to two.³⁵⁰ Consequently, in September, Johnson sued Manuel for libel because of describing him as ‘only an engineer by name. He has not got the qualifications of an engineer. It is time that the County Council had a competent engineer’. Johnson claimed Manuel had ‘caused’ these words to be published in the local newspaper, and sought £750 in damages.

An affirmative defence was set up, defendant denying that he spoke or published the words complained of, or contending that if they were used they were spoken without malice, and in the belief that they were true, and under such circumstances as to make it a privileged occasion.

Defendant denied further that he caused the publication of the words alleged, but admitted that they were published as alleged, and said they occurred in a report of the proceedings of the County Council.³⁵¹

The assistant manager of the *Te Aroha Mail*, who had attended the meeting, stated that although Johnson’s dismissal was not mentioned during the evening, on that evening he was taken by another councillor to meet Manuel, ‘who said he had something to tell him as to what took place after the reporters had left the meeting. Mr Manuel then dictated the report which appeared in the paper the following day’.³⁵² He had ‘heard subsequently that the report he put in was a fair one’. The editor of the *Te Aroha News* had also seen Manuel in the evening, ‘who dictated several statements’, which were published. Since then, some councillors complained that the report unfairly suggested that all of them were critical of Johnson.

Johnson gave evidence that he had been appointed foreman of works in 1905. In 1908, on Manuel’s motion he was appointed supervisor of works, and in January 1911 Manuel seconded the motion that he be appointed engineer.

When Manuel was first elected to the council witness had some dispute with him over some work at Morrinsville, Manuel wanting witness to gravel some private roadways. Manuel in the course of his remarks told witness that “he would be sorry for the day he had gone against him.” On another occasion the council had instructed witness to put a clause in a specification of some

³⁵⁰ Piako County Council, *Te Aroha News*, 25 April 1912, p. 3.

³⁵¹ *Auckland Weekly News*, 26 September 1912, p. 24.

³⁵² As copies of this newspaper for this period have not survived, this report has been lost.

filling in of a bridge. Mr Manuel, during the witness' absence, started the contractor working differently to the specification and upon plaintiff remonstrating Manuel said witness "was foolish to go against him, as there would be trouble." At a financial meeting of the council a discussion over the account arose and Mr Manuel wanted to be paid for some sand and the matter was referred to witness, who was against Mr Manuel. At the ordinary meeting of the council the next day loan proposals were raised and Mr Manuel objected to the loan, stating that they had not a good enough man to look after the work. Subsequently when out driving with Manuel, the latter had told witness that he had opposed the loans because witness had objected to the payment of the sand. Two months prior to his dismissal Mr Manuel proposed that witness should resign, his reason being that he could not work with witness. On the recommendation of Mr [William Philip] Chepmell [a councillor and former chairman]³⁵³ the resolution was withdrawn. He had had no complaints of his work except from Mr Manuel prior to the meeting. The newspaper report was the first intimation he had of his dismissal. He had never professed to the council that he was a certificated engineer nor did he know of any county engineer that was certificated. The statement that Manuel made that the county had no engineer was false as he was appointed county engineer by the council themselves. The rest of the statements as to his incompetency were also false. These statements had done him a good deal of harm as he would not have much chance of succeeding in any subsequent applications.

Under cross-examination, he admitted not having had 'any lessons in draughting plans', despite drawing up plans for a bridge. 'He did not consider himself an engineer till the council made him one', until then being a road supervisor. He answered detailed questions about the bridges and culverts he had built, and about problems with a stone crusher. He did admit making a mistake with filling in one road through 'using a different level to the one he was accustomed to', which cost the council 'about £12', and similar mistakes in making specifications for roads and drains. 'Manuel had spoken to him once or twice about the cost of the different work he had constructed'.

The clerk of the Raglan County Council, where Johnson came second out of 34 candidates for a similar position, confirmed that no counties had certified engineers. A councillor, James Buchanan Thomas,³⁵⁴ described him

³⁵³ See *New Zealand Herald*, 18 October 1930, p. 14.

³⁵⁴ See *New Zealand Herald*, 4 August 1930, p. 12.

as 'a very capable road foreman, and his appointment as supervisor had been unanimous', as was his appointment as engineer. Since he was in charge, 'there had been considerable improvement in the roads', and his work 'was very satisfactory and his estimates generally reliable'. At the April council meeting he had not known that the question of Johnson's dismissal was coming up, for it was only raised by Manuel after the reporters left. When Manuel proposed that Johnson be asked to resign, Thomas 'demurred' because he was not present.

Witness spoke of an incident which occurred in the council some three years previous, when Manuel complained that Johnson was not following the instructions of members. At a later meeting, Manuel proposed that Johnson should resign, alleging that he was not taking an interest in his work. Witness considered this tirade was due to the Te Aroha incident. Manuel considered that the purchasing of the stone crusher as ill-advised, but he, witness, thought it was a good thing, as they had since sold it at the full price.

In reply to a question from Manuel's lawyer, he 'thought that Manuel had always had animosity against Johnson'. A contractor, Thomas James Stanley,³⁵⁵ then described Johnson as a strict and careful engineer whose work 'was very satisfactory'.

On April 24 he met Manuel, who asked him if he could keep a secret for two hours. Witness said "Yes," and Manuel told him that Johnson was going to get the sack. Some time later witness was circulating a subscription list for Johnson at the Hot Springs Hotel. Manuel was there and told him he had better take it back or he would not get any more contracts.

John Brady, a councillor from 1899 to 1905, considered Johnson's 'conduct as engineer had always been exemplary', but recalled Manuel complaining 'that different work had not been proceeded with fast enough'.³⁵⁶

As this concluded the case for the plaintiff, Manuel's counsel requested a non-suit, as the words used in the meeting and to the reporters were privileged and there 'was no evidence of special damage or claim'. Mr

³⁵⁵ See Army Department, WW1, 12/4094 (Record R7820678), ANZ-W; *Auckland Star*, 18 November 1916, p. 6.

³⁵⁶ *Waikato Argus*, 21 September 1912, p. 2.

Justice Cooper, who considered only the last point to be strong, let the case proceed. In his evidence, Manuel claimed to have 'no animosity against Johnson; in fact, he rather liked him as a man'. When his citing of Johnson wasting money on work done four years previously was challenged because it was before he became engineer, Manuel 'interjected from the box that he would not bother with what happened' before then. His lawyer asked for an adjournment to consult him because if they agreed to omit 'evidence of incompetency before January, 1911, it would shorten the case considerably'. In granting the adjournment, the judge 'commented on defendant's evident honesty of purpose'. When the case resumed, it was announced that works done before April 1910 would not be considered.

In continuing his evidence, Manuel noted that his criticisms in January, in Johnson's presence, had not prompted any 'remarks', Johnson remaining 'as friendly with him as before'. He criticized several aspects of his work, 'the concrete work', for instance, being 'a monument of ignorance'.³⁵⁷ After he met Johnson at the Te Aroha show and 'accused him of not looking after his work' because he did not know the stone crusher had broken down, Manuel proposed at the next council meeting that Johnson should resign.³⁵⁸ 'On Johnson undertaking to do better in future the matter was dropped. After this Johnson did worse than ever and didn't seem to care whether his work was done or not'. After criticizing other work, Manuel 'admitted that the words used by him in the council were fairly correct', and reiterated that 'he had no animosity to Johnson outside county work and had never sought to injure him in any way'. He had given information to reporters because Chepmell and Thomas had accused him 'of belittling a man behind his back' and handicapping Johnson in a legal case.

The evidence of Stanley about an alleged conversation was false and the conversation in the Hot Springs Hotel about getting no more contracts if the subscription list for Johnson was not stopped was also false. As a matter of fact Stanley had had more contracts than any three contractors since. When witness became chairman he proposed and carried a resolution to appoint five surfacemen to assist Johnson. These were under Johnson's own supervision. He never opposed any scheme to help Johnson in his work.

³⁵⁷ *Waikato Argus*, 23 September 1912, p. 2.

³⁵⁸ The issue of the *Te Aroha News* covering this meeting has been lost.

Manuel was then cross-examined by Thomas Cotter, now a King's Counsel,³⁵⁹ who had opposed Manuel in his 1895 trial. Manuel told him that he considered Johnson's work to be satisfactory but he objected to the expense of his appointment, adding that 'at that time Johnson was no more an engineer than himself, His Honour or Mr Cotter'. When the judge warned him 'to be careful about making rash statements', he 'promised to be more careful'. He had not informed counsellors prior to the meeting that he would raise the issue about Johnson because it was 'perfectly unnecessary and was never done at any meeting'. It was the first time that Johnson happened not to attend a meeting, and what he said 'was the mildest form in which he could have spoken'. Stanley's evidence could be explained by his regarding Manuel as an enemy, for he 'had stopped Stanley's progress payments and kept him up to the mark on one or two contracts'. He 'was under the impression that one reporter was present' when he criticized Johnson, and provided information to reporters 'in order that there might be no misunderstanding as far as the public was concerned' and to ensure that Johnson was not 'prejudiced' in a legal case. One councillor stated that he, Manuel, and another councillor had 'agreed on the morning of the meeting that as few reasons as possible should be given for Johnson's dismissal'.³⁶⁰

Other witnesses, including two civil engineers, criticized some of Johnson's work as unnecessary, incompetent, and expensive. In response, Cotter called four civil engineers who praised his work, one describing him as 'thoroughly competent', another as 'very competent', and a third as 'capable and painstaking'.³⁶¹ 'At this stage the jury intimated to His Honour that they considered that the plaintiff was and is a competent engineer, and they did not desire to hear any more evidence on the point of competency'. Their interjection ended the taking of evidence, after which counsel gave long addresses. Manuel's claimed that his client was 'a perfectly honest man' who had not 'shown any vindictiveness or desire to get even with Johnson. It was a plain statement made to the council by a man who had not complete command of words, and who did not understand their real value'. Manuel had not realized that it was not necessary to have a

³⁵⁹ *Auckland Weekly News*, 26 September 1912, p. 24.

³⁶⁰ *Waikato Argus*, 24 September 1912, p. 2.

³⁶¹ *Waikato Argus*, 24 September 1912, p. 2, 25 September 1912, p. 2, 26 September 1912, p. 2.

qualified engineer, but this 'stupid blunder' was 'a perfectly honest one, and no malice had been shown'.

He had not slandered Johnson's moral character, and had been actuated by purely conscientious motives. Owing to the evidence given by the experts Johnson was actually in a better position today professionally than he had ever been before, the jury had cleared him of the imputation, and were they then going to punish Manuel by giving damages against him for injuries which they could not conceive Johnson had suffered?

Cotter considered the real cause of the trouble to be Manuel's wish that Johnson 'obey him and not the council'. Manuel had told the council in January that one or the other had to go, and although the 'breach was temporarily healed', his 'antagonism' continued. As Johnson had been 'laid up' in April, he 'had written asking that any question concerning him should be held over till the following meeting. Notwithstanding this Manuel proceeded to dismiss plaintiff; therefore his action was treacherous'. He denied 'that the statement was made by a man of free words. The defamation was gratuitous', and Johnson was dismissed without the usual month's notice, secretly, when reporters were not present, a 'malicious' act by Manuel, who although stating 'that he could have brought very much stronger charges against Johnson ... when pressed had not done so'. Nor had he apologized for doubting Johnson's competence. And Manuel's statements to reporters were not privileged.³⁶²

In his summing up, the judge agreed with the last point. 'Manuel was a man of hasty temper; a man who did not pick and choose words', and the jury must decide whether his words showed malice. 'It did not necessarily follow that because a man was hasty tempered that he was malicious; but if a man made defamatory statements with the best intention he had still to answer for the damage they caused'. The plea of justification had failed, but damages 'should not be excessive, as the injury was only hypothetical'.³⁶³ A newspaper commented that his summing up was 'distinctly in favour of the plaintiff'. The jury took about two hours to determine that Johnson was competent and had performed his duties satisfactorily, and that Manuel,

³⁶² *Waikato Argus*, 26 September 1912, p. 2.

³⁶³ *Waikato Argus*, 26 September 1912, pp. 2-3.

‘actuated by malice’, libelled him by making false statements and causing them to be published. £375 was awarded in damages.³⁶⁴

NATIONAL POLITICS

In 1896, Manuel and Deeble attended James McGowan’s election meeting in Thames to ask questions critical of him and the Liberal government’s policies about mining.³⁶⁵ Deeble stood for the Ohinemuri seat in 1899 as an independent critical of some Liberal policies, and in the 1902 election chaired a meeting of an anti-Liberal ‘Labor candidate’.³⁶⁶ In November 1899, after McGowan spoke at Tapu, at first nobody asked any questions.

The only one out of about 100 who found a voice was the irrepressible Mr Charles Manuel, and he was unusually tame. He only got on his hind legs to question Mr McGowan’s statement of an explanation re advising the young men to leave the place in search of work, and said Mr McGowan’s version was wrong, and the report in the papers was right, and he had that on the authority of one who was not five yards from Mr McGowan when he said it, and he knew there was no mistake, as that man was Mr Manuel. Mr McGowan, however, insisted that he knew what he said, and if Mr Manuel would persist he might find himself called on to prove his version. This seemed to remind Mr Manuel of “the man on his track” and he collapsed.³⁶⁷

The following month, Manuel’s letter complaining about low manning rates made possible by the Mining Acts of 1898 and 1899 was published. As an example, he claimed that only six men were sufficient to hold 1,000 acres if the Moanataiari were to amalgamate with other claims.

There is no doubt in my mind that these laws of ’98 and ’99 were made to suit three existing companies – two on the Thames and one at Coromandel. Now, I say that every man or woman that has the welfare of the Thames at heart would do well to read for themselves these injurious clauses of the Mining Act before

³⁶⁴ *Waikato Argus*, 27 September 1912, p. 2.

³⁶⁵ *Thames Advertiser*, 16 November 1896, p. 3.

³⁶⁶ *Thames Advertiser*, 11 November 1899, pp. 2-3, 13 December 1899, p. 3; *Thames Star*, 14 November 1902, p. 2.

³⁶⁷ Tapu Correspondent, *Thames Advertiser*, 16 November 1899, p. 2.

recording their votes in favor of Mr McGowan, who had a hand in making these laws, and which are decidedly against the working classes and equally so against the business people. They are only framed to suit the capitalist. When at Tapu Mr McGowan was very careful not to say anything about the mining laws, the only thing he said that referred to mining was that the tributers were more secure now, as before any tribute is secure it must have the approval of the Warden. The tributers have the Government tribute forms to work by, and consequently if there was any dispute there was the Warden's Court to fall back on, and this bit of bunkum only put the tributer to more bother and expense. I just mustered courage enough to say that what appeared in the papers referring to the "packing their blueys" men was quite correct, as I was very close by him when the words were made use of. Mr McGowan's reply to me was that I would likely want the papers to help me before it was finished with. Now, Mr Editor, you know what a very nervous man I am. I almost tremble at signing my name to these few lines after these great threats.³⁶⁸

In February 1910, it was rumoured that Manuel, 'well-known throughout the Thames Valley', would stand for parliament, but nothing came of this, an obituary explaining that in his last years he was 'inclined to seek honours in the political arena, but his failing health prevented him'.³⁶⁹ Unless he had changed his political leanings, he would have opposed the Liberal Party.

FAMILY LIFE

Ellen Morton was born either in Aberdere or Llantrissant, South Wales.³⁷⁰ In October 1877 her father, Samuel, a miner, gave permission for her to marry Manuel, as she was only 17; Manuel was 25. They married in the Thames Wesleyan church.³⁷¹ Their first child, Phoebe May, was born in the following September.³⁷² Mary Elizabeth (later Rosina Mary Elizabeth)

³⁶⁸ Letter from Charles Manuel, *Thames Advertiser*, 5 December 1899, p. 4.

³⁶⁹ *Te Aroha News*, 24 February 1910, p. 2, 16 March 1914, p. 3.

³⁷⁰ Birth Certificates of Phoebe May Manuell, 10 September 1878, 1878/15879; James Samuel Manuell, 28 October 1886, 1886/19505, BDM.

³⁷¹ Notices of Intentions to Marry 1877, folio 187, Births Deaths and Marriages, BDM 20/22, ANZ-W.

³⁷² Birth Certificate of Phoebe May Manuell, 10 September 1878, 1878/15879, BDM.

was born in April 1880, Charles Reuben in November 1881, James Samuel in October 1886, Henry Morton in September 1891, and Victor in 1897.³⁷³

On 27 March 1885, six-year-old Phoebe was taken from Tapu to the Thames hospital suffering from burns, but died later that day.³⁷⁴ A newspaper explained that she had been brought to the hospital in the morning

suffering from serious injuries by burning, received on the previous day. It appears that the little one had wandered away from home and approached a spot where a quantity of fern was being burned. A spark arising from the fire ignited her dress, and before the man who witnessed the occurrence could render assistance, her back and legs were badly burned.³⁷⁵

She died eight and a half hours after being admitted, the hospital recording that she was 'badly burnt about the back and thighs without hope of recovery'. William Deeble explained the circumstances to the coroner's jury:

I have a man employed about 300 yds from Manuel's house cutting fern. On 26th instant they were burning what had been cut after the fire had gone over the land. Deceased was walking near where the fire had been about 200 yds from dwelling house, the hind part of her dress took fire, as the child ran the fire burned brisker – all was done that could be done by the parents.³⁷⁶

One son, in 1896, when aged ten, was a victim of a paedophile who lived up to the nickname of 'cocksucker' bestowed on him by Thames

³⁷³ Birth Certificates of Mary Elizabeth Manuell, 11 April 1880, 1880/4641; Charles Reuben Manuell, 1 November 1881, 1881/11070; James Samuel Manuell, 28 October 1886, 1886/19505; Henry Morton Manuel, 23 September 1891, 1891/13009; Victor Manuel, 19 March 1897, 1897/4464; Marriage Certificate of Rosina Mary Elizabeth Manuel, 1915/3075, BDM.

³⁷⁴ Thames Hospital, Register of Patients 1884-1901, folio 6, YCAH 14075/1a, ANZ-A; Death Certificate of Phoebe May Manuell, 27 March 1885, 1885/846, BDM.

³⁷⁵ *Thames Advertiser*, 28 March 1885, p. 2, 30 March 1885, p. 2.

³⁷⁶ Inquest on Phoebe May Manuel, 28 March 1885, Inquests, Justice Department, J 1, 1885/634, ANZ-W [punctuation added].

boys.³⁷⁷ Two years later, his son Charles, then 16 and working for a Tararu grocer, had his arm broken when a horse rolled on him.³⁷⁸

When he died, Manuel's four sons and his daughter, known as Rose, were still alive, and, unusually, all were unmarried.³⁷⁹ Rose, their second daughter, whose full name was Rosina Mary Elizabeth, was married in the following year.³⁸⁰ One obituary described Manuel as 'a devoted husband and an exemplary father'.³⁸¹ Ellen, who continued to live on the family farm, outlived her husband by 26 years, dying in 1940, when all the children who had survived to adulthood were still alive.³⁸²

ILL HEALTH AND DEATH

In August 1913, Manuel had his right leg amputated above the knee 'consequent upon an injury sustained some time ago'.³⁸³ It was later explained that 'a diseased bone in the knee' had necessitated the amputation.³⁸⁴ At the end of October, a banquet was given by councillors and other prominent residents to express their pleasure at his recovery from the operation, but despite their optimism he suffered 'from the resultant weakness'.³⁸⁵ By the following year, he 'had been in indifferent health for some considerable time, suffering from miners' complaint and the effects of an accident to his leg' some years previously.³⁸⁶

³⁷⁷ Police Court, *Thames Advertiser*, 20 October 1896, p. 2, 23 October 1896, p. 3; Conolly J, Notebook 1895-1897, pp. 227-231, Supreme Court, Judges' Notebooks, BBAE A304/124, ANZ-A.

³⁷⁸ *Thames Advertiser*, 17 June 1898, p. 2.

³⁷⁹ *Te Aroha News*, 16 March 1914, p. 3.

³⁸⁰ Marriage Certificate of Rosina Mary Elizabeth Manuel, 1915/3075, BDM; Hamilton Probates, BCDG 4420/4855, ANZ-A.

³⁸¹ *Morrinsville Star*, 17 March 1914, p. 2.

³⁸² Death Certificate of Ellen Manuel, 2 October 1940, 1940/18413, BDM; Death Notice, *New Zealand Herald*, 3 October 1940, p. 1.

³⁸³ *Thames Star*, 1 August 1913, p. 4, 16 March 1914, p. 4.

³⁸⁴ *Te Aroha News*, 16 March 1914, p. 3.

³⁸⁵ Te Aroha Correspondent, *Auckland Weekly News*, 30 October 1913, p. 68; *Te Aroha News*, 16 March 1914, p. 3.

³⁸⁶ *Morrinsville Star*, 17 March 1914, p. 2.

Manuel died on Saturday, 14 March 1914, aged 62, of fibroid phthisis haemophysis, or 'haemorrhage of the lungs'.³⁸⁷ The *Te Aroha News*, after noting that 'genuine sorrow was felt throughout the whole district' when it was known that he had 'passed away at his home at Motumaoho', gave full details:

The death was unexpected by the family of the deceased, because, although his condition had been critical on the previous Sunday, he had so far improved in health and spirits during the last few days [as] to lead them to believe he would recover.... He was particularly bright on Saturday morning, and surprised his wife and daughter by proposing to sell his Motumaoho property and to reside permanently in Morrinsville. During the afternoon he negotiated a considerable amount of business with the County Clerk, Mr R.S. Hanna, who visited him at his residence, and it was while speaking of County matters that he was overcome by a cough which caused a breaking of a blood vessel, and his death at 2 p.m. in the presence of his wife and Mr Hanna. Although unable to speak during his last moments, spent in the arms of his wife, his face bore a contented appearance, and this despite the pain experienced.³⁸⁸

The Morrinsville newspaper reported that, when 'seized with a fit of coughing', he 'moved on to the sofa, and Mrs Manuel immediately entered the room. The doctor was sent for, but a few minutes afterwards the deceased had passed away'. It described him as 'one of the most widely known and respected settlers', whose family had 'the sincere sympathy of the people of the district'.³⁸⁹ In a headline, the *Te Aroha News* described his death as 'The District's Loss':

The death of Mr Charles Manuel is a distinct loss to the district with which he has been so long identified. It is often remarked in cases where people leave a town or district that their places will soon be filled, and while this is true to a certain extent, there are often exceptions to the rule, and the decease of Mr Manuel leaves a gap in public life that will indeed be difficult to fill. He was essentially a public man, for in addition to being Chairman of the Piako County Council, and a member of other institutions, he was a man of a decidedly progressive nature, and in cases where he

³⁸⁷ Death Certificate of Charles Manuel, 14 March 1914, 1914/773, BDM; *Te Aroha News*, 16 March 1914, p. 3.

³⁸⁸ *Te Aroha News*, 16 March 1914, p. 3.

³⁸⁹ *Morrinsville Star*, 17 March 1914, p. 2.

took up land, immediately laid out a scheme for improvement, and this assisted very materially towards the progress of the district. Mining in the Thames was considerably furthered by his efforts in that direction; large blocks of land taken up by him in an unimproved condition are now prosperous farm holdings, while his work in connection with the Piako County Council will long be remembered to his utmost credit. It can truthfully be said that what the late Charles Manuel accomplished while a member of the Council was executed directly in the interests of the ratepayers. Doubtless if he had acted with more regard to himself, and less for the settlers, his position as Chairman would have been much less onerous. But he was never a man to shirk whatever he considered to be his duty, and although of late his health had been in critical state, even at the time of his death he was engaged in County Council business. His indomitable courage, and his strict sense of duty as a representative marked him as one who could ill be spared from the public life of a district such as this, to the interests of which he was ever true and loyal.³⁹⁰

It concluded by stating that ‘many persons and institutions’ had ‘benefited materially by his assistance, and his loss is a severe one to the whole of the Thames Valley’.³⁹¹ His funeral at Morrinsville was ‘the largest and most representative assemblage of people’ ever. ‘The pall-bearers were his fellow-councillors and the clerk’, and the officiating Wesleyan minister, Thomas Nicholas Griffin,³⁹² traced his life

back 40 years ago, when he remembered him in the old country. His life has been such that it could, with advantage, be emulated by every young man. He did not live for himself; he worked for those around him and the public when his body was that frail that he could scarcely move about. He was never known to refuse assistance to a good cause, and the fact of so many people, representing all the walks of life, paying their tribute of respect to him, is an indication of the high esteem in which he was held.³⁹³

³⁹⁰ *Te Aroha News*, 16 March 1914, p. 2.

³⁹¹ *Te Aroha News*, 16 March 1914, p. 3.

³⁹² *New Zealand Gazette*, 29 January 1914, p. 349.

³⁹³ *Morrinsville Star*, 17 March 1914, p. 2.

Manuel ‘died wealthy’, an obituary reported, and his estate was valued at £13,665 8s 2d.³⁹⁴ His will, made two months before his death, left his Motumaoho farm to his widow, to be managed by his son Henry, who would inherit it on her death. The stock at Hinuera belonging either to Manuel or to his partnership with Endean were to be sold, Ellen was to receive £4,000, and £12,000 was to be divided equally amongst their children.³⁹⁵ When Ellen died in 1940, her estate of £5,027 16s 7d was shared equally amongst her children.³⁹⁶

PERSONALITY

An obituary stated that Manuel ‘was well and favorably known at Thames’, where he had ‘a large number’ of friends; although he ‘always spoke his mind and was not afraid to call a spade a spade, he made a host of friends and few enemies’.³⁹⁷ Another described him as ‘always generous and charitably inclined. He had the courage of his convictions to a decided degree, was a really strong man and a leader of men’.³⁹⁸ This was a kindly analysis; others saw him as too aggressive; for instance, in 1900 the *Thames Star* refused to publish one of his letters because it was ‘too long and too personal’.³⁹⁹ His continued ill health cannot have calmed his temperament.

In 1909, he chaired a public meeting at Morrinsville:

In the course of an eloquent speech, Charles produced this pearl of oratory: “These proceedings reminds me of something written by one of these ’ere poets, which goes like this: ‘ ’E ’oo steals my purse steals trash; ’E ’oo steals my good name steals something which I never possessed, and which jewels could not buy’ ”. And then the chairman wanted to know what the assembled Morrinsvillains were laughing at.⁴⁰⁰

³⁹⁴ *Te Aroha News*, 16 March 1914, p. 3; Testamentary Register 1913-1914, folio 125, BCB 4208/9, ANZ-A.

³⁹⁵ Hamilton Probates, BCDG 4420/371, ANZ-A.

³⁹⁶ Hamilton Probates, BCDG 4420/4855, ANZ-A.

³⁹⁷ *Thames Star*, 16 March 1914, p. 4.

³⁹⁸ *Te Aroha News*, 16 March 1914, p. 3.

³⁹⁹ ‘Notice to Correspondents’, *Thames Star*, 20 June 1900, p. 3.

⁴⁰⁰ *Observer*, 6 February 1909, p. 5.

Usually his sallies caused conflict rather than amusement, as illustrated throughout his life.

CONCLUSION

Manuel was a hard-working miner and farmer who stood up for his rights, vigorously and without fear or favour and no matter what others thought. His hard work, especially in farming, brought financial success; mining was less remunerative, especially his Waiorongomai ventures, but compared with other miners gained a comfortable financial position. Particularly in his earlier years, his career illustrated how it was necessary to take whatever work was available to earn money for his family. He was unusual compared to most miners by his involvement in two county councils, his behaviour on both being unrestrained by the normal niceties of debate. And he was even willing to threaten to shoot rival miners to make a point, though probably would not have followed through with the threat.

Appendix

Figure 1: 'Emanuel and the Deevil or Long Winded Delivery: A long & lively meeting of the Thames C.C.', *Observer*, 18 March 1893, p. 16.

Figure 2: 'Blo' [William Blomfield], 'Old "Jack" and Young "Jack." The Waitemata Duo', *Observer*, 22 December 1906, p. 5.

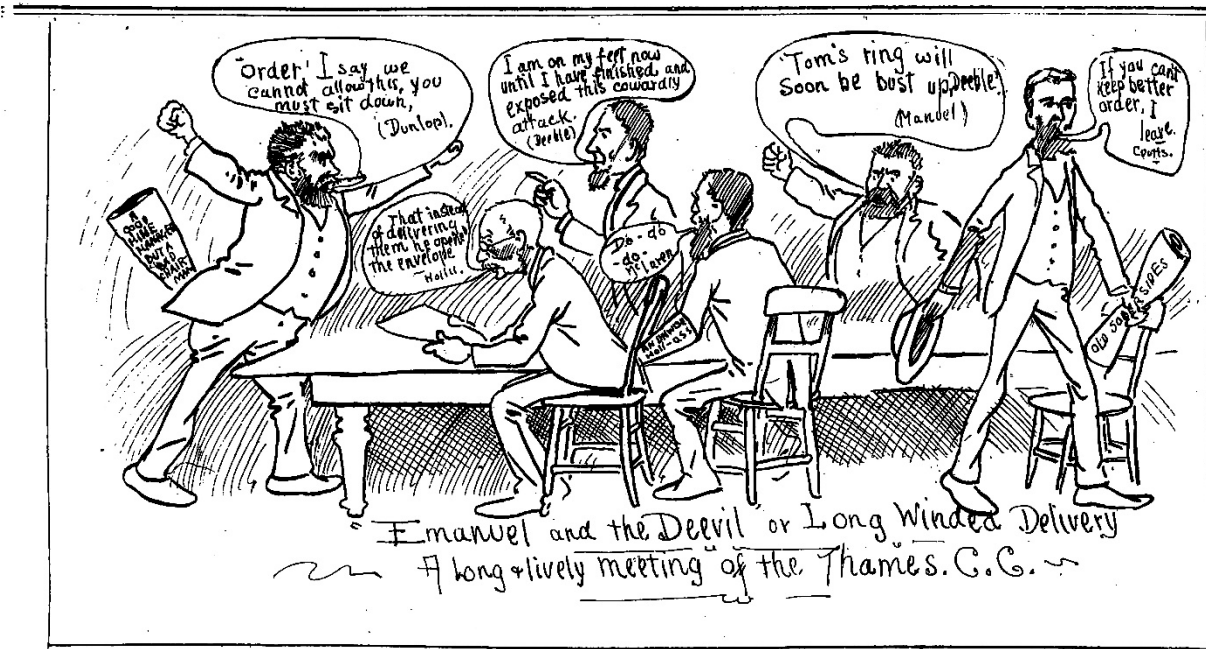


Figure 1: 'Emanuel and the Deevil or Long Winded Delivery: A long & lively meeting of the Thames C.C.', *Observer*, 18 March 1893, p. 16.



OLD "JACK" AND YOUNG "JACK."
The Waitemata Duo.

Figure 2: 'Blo' [William Blomfield], 'Old "Jack" and Young "Jack." The Waitemata Duo', *Observer*, 22 December 1906, p. 5.