

WILLIAM BUCHANAN MAXWELL: A VETERAN WHO BECAME 'TE  
AROHA'S PET ADORNMENT'

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THE UNIVERSITY OF  
**WAIKATO**  
*Te Whare Wānanga o Waikato*

## WILLIAM BUCHANAN MAXWELL: A VETERAN WHO BECAME ‘TE AROHA’S PET ADORNMENT’<sup>1</sup>

**Abstract:** *Famous in Te Aroha as a veteran soldier, Maxwell had fought in the Crimea, China, and India before fighting against Maori in New Zealand. Proud of his four wounds, he would lead a detachment of volunteers marching off to war in 1915. In his personal life, despite his involvement in the New Zealand land wars he would marry a Maori. After the fighting ceased, he had a variety of low-skilled jobs in Rotorua, Tauranga, and Ohinemuri before settling in Te Aroha, where he was a fireman. He was involved in mining, in a small way, at both Karangahake and Te Aroha. His jovial personality made him one of Te Aroha’s most popular residents.*

### A FIGHTING MAN

William Buchanan Maxwell<sup>2</sup> gave differing details of the place and date of his birth. In 1905, when applying for an old age pension, he declared that he had been born in Kent on 22 June 1840.<sup>3</sup> When enrolling as a Taranaki Military Settler in August 1863 he gave his birthplace as Chatham, in Kent, and his age as 28, meaning a birth date of 1835;<sup>4</sup> when admitted to hospital in 1895 and 1898 his ages were recorded as 59 and 62, giving a birth date of 1836.<sup>5</sup> In recording his death in August 1915, the *Te Aroha News* gave his age as 80, as did his death certificate, and an Auckland obituary stated he was born in 1836.<sup>6</sup> It was unlikely that he was wrong about being born on 22 June, but the year seems to have been 1837. The 1841 census recorded him as being three years old then: as it was taken

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<sup>1</sup> *Observer*, 21 November 1914, p. 5.

<sup>2</sup> For photographs, see *Observer*, 19 July 1913, p. 5; *Te Aroha News*, 19 June 1931, p. 3; *Ohinemuri County Diamond Jubilee 1885-1945* (Paeroa, 1945), p. 87.

<sup>3</sup> Te Aroha Magistrate’s Court, Old Age Pension Claim Register 1899-1909, no. 64, BBAV 11503/1a, ANZ-A.

<sup>4</sup> Army Department, Nominal and Descriptive Roll Book, Taranaki Military Settlers, Regimental No. 195, microfilm.

<sup>5</sup> Thames Hospital, Register of Patients 1884-1902, folios 68, 95, YCAH 14975/1a, ANZ-A.

<sup>6</sup> Death Certificate of William Buchanan Maxwell, 17 August 1915, 1915/280, BDM; *Te Aroha News*, 18 August 1915, p. 2; *Auckland Star*, 18 August 1915, p. 2.

on 6 June, he was almost four years old then, and living with his family at Sheerness, a naval town on the Isle of Sheppey in Kent.<sup>7</sup>

In 1913, the *Observer* published his photograph, along with a eulogy of his fighting days:

The gallant veteran whose picture you are gazing at is William Buchanan Maxwell, of Te Aroha, where he is better known than the Domain or the baths or the mountain, and a member of the Fire Brigade. He's crammed a lot of adventure into a life 76 years long, for when he joined the Royal Navy in the dim days of 1854 he was rushed off to the Crimea, and as you see wears two medals for that historic campaign. He swung a cutlass, too, in the China War, and got the medal, and then looked in to the Indian Mutiny, and as you see again he not only wears the medal for the great campaign but the good conduct medal also.<sup>8</sup>

One obituary recorded that 'during the Crimean War he served on H.M.S. Majestic, in the China War on H.M.S. Shannon in 1856, and in the Indian Mutiny, in Peel's Naval Brigade, in 1857 and 1858. When he came to New Zealand, at an unknown date, he fought against Maori, serving under Captain [Charles] Stapp<sup>9</sup> and Major [Harry] Atkinson<sup>10</sup> in 1860, at Patea', and under four other officers 'between 1865 and 1866'.<sup>11</sup> In fact, the Patea campaign was in 1865,<sup>12</sup> and he was recorded in the English census of 1861 as living with his family at Sheerness and working as a shipwright.<sup>13</sup> According to his death certificate, he arrived in New Zealand in 1861,<sup>14</sup> and, according to the *Te Aroha News*, he 'had not been ashore four hours before

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<sup>7</sup> 'William Buchanan Maxwell', ancestrylibrary.com.au; Te Aroha Cemetery Records, Matamata-Piako District Council; 1841 census and other information provided by Paora Maxwell, a descendent.

<sup>8</sup> *Observer*, 19 July 1913, p. 5.

<sup>9</sup> See Maori War Series, Army Department, AD 32, box 63, no. 4193; Lands and Military Claims Commission, 1896, Lands and Survey Department, LS 69, box 31, no. 1858, ANZ-W; James Cowan, *The New Zealand Wars*, vol. 2 (Wellington, 1922), pp. 109-110.

<sup>10</sup> For a brief outline of his military career, see T.W. Gudgeon, *The Defenders of New Zealand* (Auckland, 1887), pp. 43-46.

<sup>11</sup> *Auckland Star*, 18 August 1915, p. 2.

<sup>12</sup> *The Oxford Companion to New Zealand Military History*, ed. Ian McGibbon (Auckland, 2000), p. 326.

<sup>13</sup> Informadtion provided by Paora Maxwell, 10 April 2018.

<sup>14</sup> Death Certificate of William Buchanan Maxwell, 17 August 1915, 1915/280, BDM.

he was a fighting man again'.<sup>15</sup> This would put his date of arrival as 1863, for in August that year, when he was a seaman living at Dunedin, he enrolled in the Taranaki Military Settlers, formed in that month.<sup>16</sup> The *Observer's* eulogy continued:

Still burning with ardour, he came to New Zealand and served under Major Atkinson in the Taranaki "Bushrangers," and under Col. [H.J.] Warre<sup>17</sup> never missed an engagement which that gallant officer fought. Mr Maxwell in the Patea campaign was highly esteemed for his soldiering qualities, and he in turn speaks with the greatest admiration and affection of those brave leaders, Cols. T[homas] McDonnell<sup>18</sup> and [George] Whitmore,<sup>19</sup> and the famous and fearless Prussian, [Gustavus Ferdinand] Von Tempsky.<sup>20</sup> With Col. Whitmore he fought in all engagements in the Urewera and Opotiki districts and took his discharge at Tauranga in 1869 before you were born, you young fellows of forty. He has been wounded four times in various engagements, and if you talk about "conscientious objectors," he gets very angry – and we don't blame him.<sup>21</sup>

Another *Observer* article published in the following year declared that he took

a vigorous hand in the Maori war. He bore himself well in those campaigns and judging by his wounds formed a habit of getting where the bullets were thickest. Mack is proud of his four wounds, and, providing the visitor's appearance pleases him, will even go to the extent of removing his false teeth to better display the fact that the whole of his left lower jaw has been lost in the service of his country,<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> *Te Aroha News*, 17 December 1910, p. 2.

<sup>16</sup> Army Department, Nominal and Description Roll Book, Taranaki Military Settlers, Regimental No. 195, microfilm; *The Oxford Companion*, p. 326.

<sup>17</sup> For brief mention of his fighting in Taranaki, see Cowan, pp. 54-57.

<sup>18</sup> For brief outline of his military career, see Gudgeon, pp. 183-186.

<sup>19</sup> For brief outline of his military career, see Gudgeon, pp. 248-252.

<sup>20</sup> For a brief outline of his military career, see Gudgeon, pp. 227-232.

<sup>21</sup> *Observer*, 19 July 1913, p. 5.

<sup>22</sup> *Observer*, 21 November 1914, p. 5.

Maxwell fought in two battles with a future Te Aroha miner, William Morris Newsham,<sup>23</sup> as a private in the Taranaki Bush Rangers.<sup>24</sup> His last battle in Taranaki was at Te Ngutu-o-te-Manu, in September 1868,<sup>25</sup> in which another future Te Aroha miner, Sergeant Henry Southey,<sup>26</sup> also participated.<sup>27</sup> Upon leaving Taranaki, Maxwell enrolled in the Armed Constabulary, giving his age as 28, again recording his occupation as seaman.<sup>28</sup> In 1903 he would become a member of the King's Empire Veterans; earlier he had received three medals for the Crimea, one for the Indian Mutiny, and another for the New Zealand Wars.<sup>29</sup>

Maxwell was proud of his military career and enjoyed meeting old comrades, in 1900 attending an 'At Home' for veterans held at Government House in Auckland.<sup>30</sup> In the following year he attended a luncheon (attended by the Duke and Duchess of Cornwall and York) given to both veterans and to troopers who had returned from the Boer War.<sup>31</sup> Two years later he went to Auckland to receive the bronze medallion of the Empire Veterans' Association from the Governor.<sup>32</sup> In August 1904 he gave a gift of tobacco to residents of the Veterans' Home in Auckland.<sup>33</sup>

Understandably, he was known in Te Aroha as 'old Mac', the 'Old General', and 'Veteran Mac'.<sup>34</sup> When a member of the Te Aroha Rifle Club in 1907 he sang at one of its 'smoke socials'.<sup>35</sup> At the outbreak of the Great

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<sup>23</sup> See paper on his life.

<sup>24</sup> Maori War Index, MW 340, Army Department, AD 32, ANZ-W; for an outline of the fighting in Taranaki, see *Oxford Companion*, pp. 374-375, 379, 381.

<sup>25</sup> See Gudgeon, pp. 184, 185; *Oxford Companion*, 381.

<sup>26</sup> See *Te Aroha News*, 18 October 1884, p. 7.

<sup>27</sup> *Te Aroha News*, 12 September 1908, p. 2.

<sup>28</sup> Armed Constabulary Force, Description Book, Register 172, folio 5, Police Department, P 8/1, MICRO 6429, ANZ-W [recorded as William Maxwell].

<sup>29</sup> *Roll of Honour, 1840 to 1900: Defenders of the Empire resident in New Zealand* (Wellington, 1902), p. 33; *Auckland Star*, 23 May 1903, p. 5, 18 August 1915, p. 2; *Te Aroha News*, 23 August 1914, p. 2.

<sup>30</sup> *New Zealand Herald*, 11 May 1900, Supplement, p. 3.

<sup>31</sup> *Auckland Star*, 12 June 1901, p. 5.

<sup>32</sup> *Auckland Star*, 23 May 1903, p. 5.

<sup>33</sup> *New Zealand Herald*, 5 August 1904, p. 4.

<sup>34</sup> *Te Aroha News*, 14 January 1909, p. 2, 16 February 1909, p. 2; Death Notice, *New Zealand Herald*, 18 August 1915, p. 1.

<sup>35</sup> *Te Aroha News*, 11 April 1907, p. 3.

War he ‘again volunteered, although bordering on 80 years, and received a courteous reply that he was accepted, and would be called upon when required’.<sup>36</sup> When the Acting Belgian Consul established a fund in aid of his country, ‘Veteran W.B. Maxwell, R.N.’, contributed.<sup>37</sup> The *Te Aroha News* considered it ‘worthy of note that the first member to join the Te Aroha branch of the National Reserve was Veteran Maxwell’.<sup>38</sup> In November 1914 he was reportedly ‘wildly excited about the war and never misses telling the visitor about the campaigns in which he himself figured’.<sup>39</sup> One of the four local recruiting officers, in 1915 he headed the parade of recruits marching to the railway station; ‘the “boys” ’ were reportedly ‘pleased that “Old Mac” was there to see them off’.<sup>40</sup> Although, according to this newspaper, his only son fought at Gallipoli,<sup>41</sup> this report was incorrect. Not only was the name wrongly recorded as William, George was too old, so any descendant fighting would have been a grandson; but he did not have a grandson named William, and no record of any grandson joining the army has been traced.<sup>42</sup>

#### AFTER HIS FIGHTING DAYS WERE OVER

After Maxwell was discharged from the Armed Constabulary in November 1869,<sup>43</sup> details of his career are elusive. When revisiting Rotorua in 1907, he claimed ‘to have been the first guide in Rotorua away back in 1869’,<sup>44</sup> but there is no contemporary confirmation of this. Probably he was the William Maxwell who gave evidence in December 1874 about the death of Hone Werahiko’s first wife<sup>45</sup> at Ohinemutu two months previously.<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> *Auckland Star*, 18 August 1915, p. 2.

<sup>37</sup> *New Zealand Herald*, 10 November 1914, p. 8.

<sup>38</sup> *Te Aroha News*, 12 May 1915, p. 2.

<sup>39</sup> *Observer*, 21 November 1914, p. 5.

<sup>40</sup> *Te Aroha News*, 28 May 1915, p. 2, 18 August 1915, p. 3.

<sup>41</sup> *Te Aroha News*, 18 August 1915, p. 3.

<sup>42</sup> Maori Land Court, Rotorua Minute Book no. 163, pp. 348, 350, 352; Army Department, First World War records, ANZ-W (online).

<sup>43</sup> Armed Constabulary Force, Description Book, Register 172, folio 5, Police Department, P 8/1, MICRO 6429, ANZ-W.

<sup>44</sup> ‘Personal Pars’, *New Zealand Truth*, 5 October 1907, p. 1.

<sup>45</sup> See paper on his life.

<sup>46</sup> Maketu Magistrate’s Court, *Daily Southern Cross*, 18 December 1874, p. 5.

In 1870 William Maxwell (Buchanan was not recorded) was living at what was then known as Te Papa, which became the town centre of Tauranga.<sup>47</sup> A William Maxwell was recorded as bravely fighting fires in Tauranga in 1877, 1878, and 1881;<sup>48</sup> as he would later be a leading member of the Te Aroha fire brigade, this was almost certainly William Buchanan Maxwell. Presumably these actions led to his receiving three medals from the Royal Humane Society.<sup>49</sup> In October 1881 William Maxwell, probably the same man, was sued in Tauranga for the £6 7s 6d remaining from a £12 15s debt. The plaintiff explained ‘that this debt was due a couple of years. He was aware that defendant had been in employment, and in the receipt of good wages. Recently defendant had been acting as valet to Mr [Samuel?] Radcliffe,<sup>50</sup> a gentleman that had the reputation of being a millionaire, and would consequently be expected to pay good wages’. Maxwell ‘stated that the debt was contracted in connection with a partnership arranged between him and Mr [Andrew] Wilson<sup>51</sup> at Katikati, where they had been engaged in the bush business. He was willing to pay his share, and he thought his partner ought to be made to pay his’. As Radcliffe’s valet he had received £9 10s; he was owed £27 by two other employers, and was willing to pay his debt once one of them paid the £18 owed. ‘He had a wife and two children to support’. He agreed to pay within a month.<sup>52</sup>

From 1881 until 1890 Maxwell was recorded as being a labourer living at Rotorua.<sup>53</sup> In March in the latter year, a Rotorua correspondent reported that Maxwell, ‘our fellow townsman’, had ‘made a very lucky purchase in horseflesh. He bought a pony a short time ago for £5’, and when a man saw it ‘do a spin in company with one of the crack Waikato stock’ he offered Maxwell £10 for it.<sup>54</sup> According to the electoral rolls, he was still based in Rotorua in 1893, 1894, and 1896.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> *East Coast Electoral Roll 1870-1*, p. 7.

<sup>48</sup> *Bay of Plenty Times*, 3 October 1877, p. 3, 24 September 1878, p. 3, 25 June 1881, p. 2.

<sup>49</sup> *Auckland Star*, 18 August 1915, p. 2.

<sup>50</sup> See Ohinemutu Magistrate’s Court, *Bay of Plenty Times*, 13 October 1881, p. 2.

<sup>51</sup> See *Bay of Plenty Times*, 21 October 1876, p. 3, 22 November 1876, p. 2, 3 January 1877, p. 3, 14 December 1878, p. 3, 30 January 1879, p. 3, 13 May 1879, p. 3.

<sup>52</sup> Magistrate’s Court, *Bay of Plenty Times*, 10 October 1881, p. 2.

<sup>53</sup> *Tauranga Electoral Rolls, 1881*, p. 13, *1882*, p. 17, *1885*, p. 17, *1886*, p. 17, *1887*, p. 16.

<sup>54</sup> Rotorua Correspondent, *Bay of Plenty Times*, 24 March 1890, p. 2.

<sup>55</sup> *Bay of Plenty Electoral Rolls, 1893*, p. 36; *1894*, p. 33; *1896*, p. 37.

In 1891 he was for a while at Whangamata, still working as a labourer.<sup>56</sup> In the following February he tendered, unsuccessfully, to the Rotorua Jockey Club for refreshment booth 'privileges'.<sup>57</sup> When his elder daughter married Edward Douglas in May 1893 he was living with her and the Douglas family at Halfway House, erected in 1882 at Ngawaro, on the back road between Tauranga and Rotorua,<sup>58</sup> and gave his occupations as both labourer and guide.<sup>59</sup> He was recorded in the electoral rolls as being a labourer living at Rotorua from that year until 1896.<sup>60</sup> By the latter date he had shifted to Paeroa, in September 1895 working as a 'boots' in a hotel there;<sup>61</sup> in the following year he was a member of the Paeroa fire brigade.<sup>62</sup>

## MINING

In September 1895, with two others, Maxwell applied for a dredging claim at Karangahake.<sup>63</sup> How much work he did on it is not known. It seems it was not a success. Because the rent was not paid, an indication of a failed venture, a summons was issued against him in September 1904, but was not served because he could not be found; the arrears were remitted five years later.<sup>64</sup> In 1897 he was recorded as being a miner living in Paeroa,<sup>65</sup> though in October 1899 he was granted a residence site at Mackaytown,<sup>66</sup> closer to Karangahake, though he probably did not live there as he had settled in Te Aroha by then. In January 1899, he wrote from there to the Minister of Mines:

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<sup>56</sup> *Te Aroha Electoral Roll, 1891*, p. 23.

<sup>57</sup> Rotorua Correspondent, *New Zealand Herald*, 12 February 1892, p. 6.

<sup>58</sup> *Bay of Plenty Times*, Maketu Licensing Court, 6 June 1882, p. 2, advertisement, 16 May 1885, p. 3, 10 January 1917, p. 2.

<sup>59</sup> Marriage Certificate of Annie Maxwell, 31 May 1893, 1893/4027, BDM.

<sup>60</sup> *Bay of Plenty Electoral Rolls, 1893*, p. 36; *1894*, p. 33; *1896*, p. 37.

<sup>61</sup> Thames Hospital, Admissions Register 1884-1901, folio 68, YCAH 14075/1a, ANZ-A.

<sup>62</sup> Photograph, *Ohinemuri County Diamond Jubilee 1995-1945* (Paeroa, 1945), p. 87.

<sup>63</sup> *New Zealand Herald*, 4 September 1895, p. 6.

<sup>64</sup> Paeroa Warden's Court, Register of Special Claims 1887-1895, p. 184, ZAAP 13294/1A, ANZ-A.

<sup>65</sup> *Ohinemuri Electoral Roll, 1897*, p. 39.

<sup>66</sup> Warden's Court, *Ohinemuri Gazette*, 28 October 1899, p. 2.



I am out on the ranges here prospecting and I think that before very long I will have something very good to show, in the meantime I wish to know if you could give me any assistance from any prospecting association or if any subsidy can be given to prospectors.

I have been laid up by accident for some 4 months, and have run pretty short otherwise I would not apply for any funds.

I intend giving the place here a thorough good trial.<sup>67</sup>

This accident had led to the amputation of his thumb, necessitating his spending over a month in the Thames hospital in the previous September; he told the hospital he was a miner.<sup>68</sup> A copy of the regulations relating to applications for assistance was sent to him,<sup>69</sup> but he did not apply. In June 1901, he purchased the Golden Crown Special Quartz Claim, just over 53 acres near Te Aroha's hot springs.<sup>70</sup> Because he paid the rent only until the end of 1901, he forfeited it in January 1903 and the following January was sued for £5 8s and costs. A distress warrant was issued, but 'returned No Effects', meaning he had no assets to seize to meet the debt;<sup>71</sup> in late 1905 the rent was treated as unrecoverable.<sup>72</sup> Although in his probate he was described as a miner,<sup>73</sup> this was the end of his mining career.

## FAMILY

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<sup>67</sup> W.B. Maxwell to Minister of Mines, 12 January 1899, Mines Department, MD 1, 99/72, ANZ-W.

<sup>68</sup> Thames Hospital, Admissions Register 1884-1901, folio 95, YCAH 14075/1a, ANZ-A.

<sup>69</sup> Under-Secretary, Mines Department, to W.B. Maxwell, 24 January 1899, Mines Department, MD 1, 99/72, ANZ-W.

<sup>70</sup> Te Aroha Warden's Court, Plaints 1903, 9/1903, BBAV 11572/3a, ANZ-A.

<sup>71</sup> Te Aroha Warden's Court, Register of Licensed Holdings and Special Claims 1887-1909, folio 141, BBAV 11500/8b; Te Aroha Magistrate's Court Home Warrant Book 1883-1928, 11/1904, BBAV 11498/1a, ANZ-A.

<sup>72</sup> Piako County Clerk to Minister for Mines, 25 September 1905, Piako County Council, Letterbook 1905-1906, Matamata-Piako District Council Archives, Te Aroha; Te Aroha Warden's Court, Register of Licensed Holdings and Special Claims 1887-1909, folio 141, BBAV 11500/8b, ANZ-A.

<sup>73</sup> Hamilton Probates, BCDG 4420/602, ANZ-A.

Despite his years of fighting Maori, in the early 1870s he married Te Aira Te Teira Te Taipu,<sup>74</sup> probably at Rotorua, under Maori custom; neither their marriage nor the births of their children were registered. Her father, Te Teira Te Taipu,<sup>75</sup> was a rangatira of Ngati Rehu and the Ngati Tawana hapu of the Te Arawa confederation of tribes, and, through his mother, Toetoe, he belonged to the Ngati Rangiwewehi hapu of Te Arawa. He also had tribal affiliations to Ngaiterangi of Tauranga.<sup>76</sup> In the battles between the Arawa and Waikato tribes between 1835 and 1844 he was described by a contemporary Maori historian as ‘a warrior, a stout-hearted man when going to fight in war parties’. After killing two or three men in battle, ‘he continued to take victims stealthily’.<sup>77</sup> Te Aira was one of his three children by his wife Aterete, all born in Rotorua.<sup>78</sup> Atarete was of Ngati Ranginui and Ngati Wairere (Waikato) descent.<sup>79</sup>

In September 1895 Maxwell declared that he was married, but three years later described himself as being a widower.<sup>80</sup> His death certificate, clearly filled in some 17 years later by Te Aroha friends who did not know any details about his English and New Zealand families, recorded that he had married an unknown Maori at an unknown time and place and had one

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<sup>74</sup> Marriage Certificate of Annie Maxwell, 31 May 1893, 1893/4027, BDM.

<sup>75</sup> For his genealogy, see Maori Land Court, Tauranga Minute Book no. 2, between pp. 42 and 43, and facing p. 167; Rotorua Minute Book no. 3, p. 340.

<sup>76</sup> Lands and Survey Department, Certificates of Title and Memorials of Ownership of Maori Land, ABWN 8910, W5278, box 14, no. 2044; ABWN 8910, W5278, box 18, no. 2697, ANZ-W; Maori Land Court, Rotorua Minute Book no. 3, pp. 334, 340; *Bay of Plenty Times*, 6 May 1891, p. 4; information provided by Paora Maxwell to Philip Hart, 5 March 2018, email, and on 10 April 2018.

<sup>77</sup> Manuscript written by Wiremu Maihi Te Rangikeheke for Sir George Grey, n.d. [before 1854], in Jenifer Curnow, ‘Te Rangikaheke, Wiremu Maihi: A book describing the murder of Te Hunga, the history of the wars formerly carried on between the tribes of Rotorua and Waikato’, *Journal of the Polynesian Society*, vol. 99 no. 1 (March 1990), p. 10.

<sup>78</sup> Maori Land Court, Tauranga Minute Book no. 2, p. 181; Rotorua Minute Book no. 3, p. 338.

<sup>79</sup> Information provided by Paora Maxwell on 10 April 2018.

<sup>80</sup> Thames Hospital, Admissions Register 1884-1901, folios 68, 95, YCAH 14075/1a; Te Aroha Magistrate’s Court, Old Age Pension Claim Register 1899-1909, no. 64, BBAV 11503/1a, ANZ-A.

son and two daughters.<sup>81</sup> In fact, he was not a widower, although well before 1895 he had separated from his wife, for reasons now unknown, and may have described himself as such because by then he knew she had married another man.

Te Aira's second husband was a cousin, Wharemokai Kaingarara, by whom she would have one child, Henry (or Henare) Kaingarara, in August 1897.<sup>82</sup> His father was a Pakeha named Simpson, perhaps Peter Simpson, an early trader in Poverty Bay.<sup>83</sup> Her son may have been related to, or named after, Kaingarara, of Ngati Rangiwewehi and Ngati Mataka, who lived in the Rotorua district and was a 'great fighting chief'; he had died fighting the British in 1864.<sup>84</sup> Early in 1914, Wharemokai attended a meeting of the 'Chiefs of Ngaeterangi' held in Tauranga to arrange the erection of a memorial to Rawiri Puhiraki, who had fought against the British in the battle of Te Ranga in 1864. 'He had come from Rotorua last night to attend the meeting so as to understand the position', and was collecting money at Rotorua for the memorial. (On this occasion he gave his tribal affiliation as Ngati Rehue).<sup>85</sup> Interestingly, in 1913, when he was living at Te Awahou, Rotorua, Te Wharemokai (as he signed himself) Kaingarara applied for a New Zealand War Medal. He declared that 'I was under fire at Whakarae in 1870' and 'was in garrison at Ohiwa for 3 years'.<sup>86</sup> Gilbert Mair, who was consulted, commented that he would 'never help any one to get a medal for Whakarae' because, apart from other issues,

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<sup>81</sup> Death Certificate of William Buchanan Maxwell, 17 August 1915, 1915/280, BDM.

<sup>82</sup> Information provided by Paora Maxwell, 10 April 2018; Birth Certificate of Henry Kaingarara Simpson, 10 August 1897, 1958/137421, BDM; Maori Land Court, Rotorua Minute Book no. 92, p. 25; Waikato Minute Book no. 48, p. 53.

<sup>83</sup> See Joseph Angus Mackay, *Historic Poverty Bay and the East Coast, North Island, New Zealand* (Gisborne, 1949), pp. 99, 103, 103, 132; Trevor Bentley, *Pakeha Maori* (Auckland, 1999), p. 171.

<sup>84</sup> *Daily Southern Cross*, 23 June 1864, p. 4, Maketu Correspondent, 30 June 1864, p. 9; Maketu Correspondent, *Bay of Plenty Times*, 4 October 1876, p. 3; C.P. Davis, 'Maori Birds No. 2: The kaka – brown parrot – Nestor Meridionalis', *New Zealand Herald*, 2 July 1881, p. 6.

<sup>85</sup> *Bay of Plenty Times*, 18 February 1914, p. 5 [recorded as Ngati Reho].

<sup>86</sup> Declaration of Te Wharemokai Kaingarara, 15 July 1913, Army Department, AAYS 8661, AD 32, 21/1006, ANZ-W.

there 'was no firing'.<sup>87</sup> In response to his request being declined because of not having been under fire, he stated: 'I was present at the fight at Whakarae against Te Kooti and his followers of Hauhaus' and afterwards joined the militia 'and for about 12 months I was doing police work at Maketu'.<sup>88</sup> His letter was simply filed. Of course fighting Te Kooti in 1870 did not mean that he had been on the side of the British in 1864.

In 1910, at a meeting held at Ohinemutu by Arawa, Wharemokai (no other name was recorded), a member of Ngati Rangiwewehi, 'made a magnificent offer of 500 acres of land as an endowment' for a Maori college to be established in the Rotorua district to educate Arawa boys.<sup>89</sup>

Te Aira's life has not been traced in this paper; she died on 17 July 1927.<sup>90</sup>

Although separated from his family, Maxwell had kept in touch with them, for in his will, drawn up on 22 July 1909, he listed his children as George, Annie and Ema, and knew that both of his daughters were married and living at Rotorua, and gave all three equal shares in his estate.<sup>91</sup> Their full names were Ani Okeroa (sometimes Okeroa Kotua), born in 1871, George Horowaewae, her twin, and Ema (sometimes Emma) Taitimu, born in 1879.<sup>92</sup>

Ema would marry a Maori, Heke Kaiawha, a rangatira of Tauranga,<sup>93</sup> and Annie married Edward Rangi Douglas in 1893,<sup>94</sup> but only Annie registered her marriage. Her marriage certificate recorded that she had been born at Oropi, on the back road from Tauranga to Rotorua, and that she was illiterate and of 'full' age, meaning aged 21 or above, as was her husband. His birth had not been registered either; he was the son of Edward Douglas, who owned Halfway House.<sup>95</sup> His mother was Korowhiti

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<sup>87</sup> Gilbert Mair to Registrar, Army Department, 1 August 1913, Army Department, AAYS 8661, AD 32, 21/1006, ANZ-W.

<sup>88</sup> Clerk of Court, Rotorua, to Te Wharemokai Kaingarara, 11 August 1913; Te Wharemokai Kaingarara to Adjutant General, Army Department, 4 November 1913, Army Department, AAYS 8661, AD 32, 21/1006, ANZ-W.

<sup>89</sup> *New Zealand Herald*, 12 August 1910, p. 4.

<sup>90</sup> Maori Land Court, Rotorua Minute Book no. 163, p. 348.

<sup>91</sup> Probate of William Buchanan Maxwell, Hamilton Probates, BCDG 4420/602, ANZ-A.

<sup>92</sup> Maori Land Court, Tauranga Minute Book no. 2, p. 190.

<sup>93</sup> Information provided by Paora Maxwell on 10 April 2018.

<sup>94</sup> *Te Aroha News*, 18 August 1915, p. 3.

<sup>95</sup> Marriage Certificate of Annie Maxwell, 31 May 1893, 1893/4027, BDM.

Tuataka, who as Isabella Te Karowhiti had married Douglas in 1874; he assisted her unsuccessful attempts to obtain the Okauia block in Waikato.<sup>96</sup> Like Maxwell, before marrying a Maori he had fought in several battles against iwi. When Douglas died in December 1917 he left a widow, 11 children, 59 grandchildren, and five great grandchildren.<sup>97</sup>

Horowaewae Maxwell, son of Buchanan and Te Aira Maxwell, married two women from leading Ngati Rangiwewehi families. With his first wife, Te Hineiamoamohia Hakopa, he had three sons and a daughter. After her death he married Iranui Mohi Tarau in 1928, and had a further eight children. Maxwell Road in the Ngati Rangiwewehi village of Awahou, close to Ngongataha and Lake Rotorua, was named after the family because it is where the Maxwell homestead is located. Some of the many descendents of Te Aira and Maxwell are still prominent both in the district and nationally.<sup>98</sup>

#### AT TE AROHA

His *Te Aroha News* obituary estimated that he had lived in Te Aroha for ‘over 20 years’, rendering it ‘invaluable assistance’

in many ways, especially in connection with Fire Brigade and Band matters. He was a member of the former institution since its inception many years ago, and was, up to the time of his death, caretaker of the station. He held the five year service medal, bars, and many certificates.<sup>99</sup>

He joined the volunteer fire brigade immediately upon its formation in 1900, and two years later was elected its foreman.<sup>100</sup> In 1905 he received ‘the five years medal’.<sup>101</sup> In 1909 he was training new firemen.<sup>102</sup> Also in

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<sup>96</sup> Marriage Certificate of Annie Maxwell, 31 May 1893, 1893/4027, BDM; *Auckland Star*, 28 March 1895, p. 8, 18 June 1897, p. 3, 5 October 1899, p. 4; *Bay of Plenty Times*, 10 January 1917, p. 2.

<sup>97</sup> *Bay of Plenty Times*, 10 January 1917, p. 2.

<sup>98</sup> Information provided by Paora Maxwell, 10 April 2018; Marriage Certificate of Horowaewae Maxwell, 1928/10758, BDM; Philip Andrews, *Rotorua Streets* (Rotorua, 1999), p. 73.

<sup>99</sup> *Te Aroha News*, 18 August 1915, p. 3.

<sup>100</sup> *Thames Star*, 5 October 1900, p. 2; *Auckland Weekly News*, 16 October 1902, p. 33.

<sup>101</sup> *Auckland Star*, 28 September 1905, p. 2.

that year, to get a very sick man to the Thames hospital he drove the ambulance to the railway station.<sup>103</sup> Two years later he was still ‘closely allied’ with the fire brigade.<sup>104</sup> In 1914, at a meeting of its sports club, ‘an enlarged photograph of Veteran Maxwell was presented’;<sup>105</sup> he was this club’s ‘hon. Collector’.<sup>106</sup>

It is believed by his descendants that he played a musical instrument,<sup>107</sup> and in 1909 he was the local brass band’s librarian.<sup>108</sup> Amongst his talents was as a euchre player, winning a prize in a tournament in aid of the local convent school.<sup>109</sup>

According to the *Te Aroha News*, ‘everyone who knows Mr Maxwell is impressed with his cheery, vigorous personality’.<sup>110</sup> The personality of his faithful dog Dingo was less popular, for someone poisoned it.<sup>111</sup> According to the *Observer*, writing in the last year of his life, Maxwell was ‘as much a piece of Te Aroha as the mountain itself.... He must be approaching the age of the mountain, but he’s just as sprightly as the spring lamb the poets rhapsodise about and the butchers advertise but never sell’. It described him as ‘a fine old chap’ and ‘Te Aroha’s pet adornment’.<sup>112</sup>

In September 1908, he was sufficiently robust to be a full back in the fire brigade and football club rugby match.<sup>113</sup> The following month, after he had been confined to bed for some days, the newspaper commented that it took ‘a good deal to keep “Mac” in bed’.<sup>114</sup> Not until a month later could he leave his house ‘after his recent severe illness’.<sup>115</sup> His illness in the following year was sufficiently severe for the newspaper to report his

<sup>102</sup> *Te Aroha News*, 14 January 1909, p. 2, 30 January 1909, p. 2.

<sup>103</sup> *Te Aroha News*, 19 January 1909, p. 2.

<sup>104</sup> *Te Aroha News*, 29 April 1911, p. 2.

<sup>105</sup> *Te Aroha News*, 10 August 1914, p. 2.

<sup>106</sup> *New Zealand Herald*, 8 October 1914, p. 10.

<sup>107</sup> Information provided by Paora Maxwell, 10 April 2018.

<sup>108</sup> *Auckland Weekly News*, 27 August 1908, p. 39.

<sup>109</sup> Te Aroha Correspondent, *New Zealand Herald*, 20 July 1908, p. 7.

<sup>110</sup> *Te Aroha News*, 16 February 1909, p. 2.

<sup>111</sup> *Te Aroha News*, 29 April 1909, p. 2.

<sup>112</sup> *Observer*, 21 November 1914, p. 5.

<sup>113</sup> *Te Aroha News*, 17 September 1908, p. 2.

<sup>114</sup> *Te Aroha News*, 15 October 1908, p. 2.

<sup>115</sup> *Te Aroha News*, 12 November 1908, p. 2.

recovery.<sup>116</sup> He was severely ill early in 1910.<sup>117</sup> In January 1912, he had a severe attack of 'neuralgia of the stomach'.<sup>118</sup> His final illness, gastrointestinal inflammation, lasted only five days, and he died in a private hospital at Te Aroha in August 1915.<sup>119</sup> As he had 'emerged triumphantly' from periods of illness over the past two years, 'his death came as a shock to the whole town and district'.<sup>120</sup>

His will, made in 1909, divided his estate equally between his three children, and when probate was sought it was estimated that the value of his estate was less than £200.<sup>121</sup> His executor then discovered its value to be nil.<sup>122</sup> If, as is sometimes assumed about Pakeha who married Maori, he had married to obtain land rather than for love, this seems not to have been so in his case, for he obtained no shares in his wife's land and died in poverty.

Fondly remembered, a photograph of 'Veteran Maxwell' was published in the local newspaper in 1931.<sup>123</sup> He was recalled 50 years later as 'always good for a yarn' and 'particularly popular with children'.<sup>124</sup>

## CONCLUSION

Maxwell was another example of men who had fought Maori then becoming intimately acquainted with them; George Thomas Wilkinson was especially notable.<sup>125</sup> Like so many others, he had a variety of occupations in a variety of places; less commonly, his personality was such that he was one of the most popular residents of Te Aroha and was fondly remembered for many years.

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<sup>116</sup> *Te Aroha News*, 9 September 1909, p. 2.

<sup>117</sup> *Te Aroha News*, 24 March 1910, p. 2.

<sup>118</sup> *Te Aroha News*, 25 January 1912, p. 2.

<sup>119</sup> Death Certificate of William Buchanan Maxwell, 17 August 1915, 1915/280, BDM; *Te Aroha News*, 18 August 1915, pp. 2, 3.

<sup>120</sup> *Te Aroha News*, 18 August 1915, p. 3.

<sup>121</sup> Probate of William Buchanan Maxwell, Hamilton Probates, BCDG 4420/602, ANZ-A.

<sup>122</sup> Testamentary Register 1915-1916, folio 337, BBCB 4208/10, ANZ-A.

<sup>123</sup> *Te Aroha News*, 19 June 1931, p. 3.

<sup>124</sup> Charles Kingsley-Smith, *This is Te Aroha: The story of the founding of Te Aroha and the settling of its adjoining districts, 1880-1980* (Te Aroha, 1981), p. 44.

<sup>125</sup> See paper on Mereia Wikiriwhi and George Thomas Wilkinson.