

WOMEN'S LIVES IN THE TE AROHA DISTRICT

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Abstract: *Pioneer women were praised for their hard work, and this paper deals with all aspects of their lives in this district in the late nineteenth and, occasionally, the early twentieth century. Details are provided of all the women who held shares in local mines, not all of who lived in the district and some of whom were probably dummies for their husbands. Some women had paid work, sometimes out of necessity rather than a desire to be independent, and they struggled to become financially secure on low wages. Servants were not always well treated by the women who employed them.*

Women's lot included a variety of unpaid work and endless domestic duties. Some were fortunate enough to have money of their own, and sometimes held their husbands' property in their own name, usually to protect it against his creditors. Land was also held in women's names, usually to enable the family to hold more sections than the law permitted. Because of poverty, some women were forced to seek charitable aid.

Many women were active in community life in a variety of ways, notably their churches, charity, nursing, and temperance. Younger ones enjoyed the outdoors and sports. Competition for popularity (and for a mate) meant a considerable amount of time was spent in trying to look their best and in displaying their finery at the many socials held in the district.

Some women got into trouble for improper behaviour, notably drunkenness and even violence, but most of the female crime recorded was minor. Sexual misbehaviour included illegitimate children (some of whom had a short life) and abortion. Some wives were deserted, but some women were able to remarry. At the end of this paper, there are accounts of several women's lives, some of them unhappy – unhappiness being more easily uncovered because of the sources available for historians.

ONE VIEW

Edward Wakefield, writing in 1889, lavished praise on the women of the goldfields:

The female population of the gold-fields, too, notwithstanding their somewhat ungraceful surroundings, are almost invariably gentle and amiable and full of sensibility, devotedly attached to their people and their home, but yet kindness itself to visitors and strangely influenced by any attention or sympathy that is shown to them. Their lot is rather a hard one, though their material

wants are abundantly supplied; but they adapt themselves to it with admirable cheerfulness, and manage to make very happy homes out of not very promising materials.¹

This paper will examine various aspects of women's lives in the Te Aroha district, mostly in the late nineteenth century.

SHAREHOLDERS IN LOCAL MINES

Eighteen women held shares under their own names, although in most cases it is likely that they were dummies for fathers or husbands. They were Agnes Burns, later Agnes Wilson,² Emily Letitia Cuff, Annie Donnelly, Annie Clifton Firth,³ Louisa Jane Forsman,⁴ Eliza Gaudin, Ann Hotchin, Lavinia Johnson,⁵ Rachel Joy, Emilia Hendrika and Margretha Kilian,⁶ Annie Margaret Long,⁷ Frances Ann O'Halloran,⁸ Elizabeth Russell, Marie Louisa Smith, Maria Taylor, Merea Wikiriwhi,⁹ and Sarah Wood. All but four, Donnelly, Firth, Gaudin, and Long, lived in the district for part of their lives. Two, Lavinia Johnson and Merea Wikiriwhi, were Maori. What can be discovered about the lives of those not outlined elsewhere are described here.

Emily Letitia Cuff, the daughter of a Jamaican sugar planter,¹⁰ was the wife of Joshua, a lawyer and mining investor and, in his opinion, a mining expert.¹¹ Like her husband, she obtained a residence site; these

¹ Edward Wakefield, *New Zealand After Fifty Years* (London, 1889), pp. 167-168.

² See paper on George Wilson.

³ See paper on the Battery Company.

⁴ See paper on the Roycroft Brothers.

⁵ See paper on Lavinia and Henry Dunbar Johnson.

⁶ See paper on the Kilian family.

⁷ See paper on Thomas Francis Long.

⁸ See paper on George Stewart O'Halloran.

⁹ See paper on her life.

¹⁰ Death Certificate of Emily Letitia Cuff, 16 October 1944, 1944/28809, BDM.

¹¹ See Joshua Cuff to Minister of Mines, 12 October 1885, Mines Department, MD 1, 85/1259; Joshua Cuff to Minister of Public Works, 23 March 1888, Mines Department, MD 1, 88/233, ANZ-W; *Thames Advertiser*, 7 May 1883, p. 2; *Te Aroha News*, 23 January 1886, p. 7; *Cyclopedia of New Zealand*, vol. 1 (Wellington, 1897), p. 1281.

were sold, on the same day in September 1882, to a mine manager.¹² It is highly unlikely that she personally pegged out two claims with this man three months later, as they recorded in the warden's office.¹³ Her investments, in two claims and one company, were different to her husband's.¹⁴ Her occupation in Te Aroha was 'housewife',¹⁵ and probably remained so after she left the district, as she had five sons and four daughters.¹⁶ Her later life has not been traced, apart from her death in 1944, aged 99, after nearly 35 years of widowhood.¹⁷

The identity of **Annie Donnelly** remains a mystery. In 1883, when she purchased a quarter share in the Last Find at Waiorongomai, which was almost immediately converted into 75 scrip shares in the company of that name, she was recorded as being an Auckland spinster.¹⁸ She was not one of the three Annie Donnellys who married subsequently.¹⁹ It is possible that she had been a barmaid living in the Waverley Hotel, in Auckland, when it burnt down in the previous year;²⁰ George Isles Panter, who was still her employer in 1883, ran it.²¹ Panter, a leading publican,²² invested in

¹² Te Aroha Warden's Court, Register of Applications 1880-1882, folio 171, BBAV 11505/3a; Rent Ledger 1881-1900, folios 109, 110, BBAV 11501/1a, ANZ-A.

¹³ Te Aroha Warden's Court, Notices of Marking Out Claims 1882, nos. 214, 216, BBAV 11557/2a, ANZ-A.

¹⁴ Te Aroha Warden's Court, Register of Licensed Holdings 1881-1887, folios 64, 118, BBAV 11500/9a, ANZ-A; *New Zealand Gazette*, 31 May 1883, p. 722.

¹⁵ *New Zealand Gazette*, 31 May 1883, p. 722.

¹⁶ Death Certificate of Joshua Cuff, 12 December 1909, 1909/932, BDM.

¹⁷ Death Certificate of Emily Letitia Cuff, 16 October 1944, 1944/28809, BDM.

¹⁸ Te Aroha Warden's Court, Register of Licensed Holdings 1881-1887, folio 84, BBAV 11500/9a, ANZ-A; *New Zealand Gazette*, 20 September 1883, p. 1345.

¹⁹ Marriage Certificates of Annie Donnelly, 1888/464, 1891/2725, 1904/4229, BDM.

²⁰ *Auckland Weekly News*, 25 February 1882, p. 13.

²¹ *New Zealand Herald*, 4 September 1883, p. 3.

²² For example, evidence by G.I. Panter, Auckland Supreme Court, Judges' Notebooks, Conolly J, Civil 1889-1890, pp. 268-269, BBAE A304/134, ANZ-A; *Auckland Provincial Government Gazette*, 25 September 1874, p. 187; advertisement, *Auckland Free Lance*, 11 January 1879, p. 1; *Observer*, 25 April 1885, p. 15; *Waikato Times*, 22 November 1887, p. 2; *Thames Advertiser*, 6 May 1890, p. 2; *New Zealand Herald*, 20 February 1919, p. 8.

many Hauraki mines,²³ but did not invest in the same mines as Annie Donnelly, and his only involvement in the Te Aroha district was in one Tui claim in 1900.²⁴

Annie Clifton Firth lived in the shadow of her husband Josiah,²⁵ attaining little public prominence. Her only involvement with Te Aroha was in 1889, when her husband wrote that ‘to increase the attractions of the Domain’ she wished the domain board to accept ‘a case of bulbs of various kinds’. She promised to provide tulip and hyacinth bulbs at a later date.²⁶ Her only investments were in the Silver King at Waiorongomai and the Te Aroha Silver and Gold Mining Company.²⁷ It is possible she invested her own money, for when Josiah died in 1898 she deposed that he had property worth £3,000 ‘over and above what will pay my just debts’.²⁸ When she died seven years later, the net value of her estate was £5,744 10s 2d, but after her debts were paid the final value was £3,519 9s 2d.²⁹

Upon her death in 1905, the obituary was more about her father’s life than hers, apart from her having several children who would ‘have the sincere sympathy of a wide circle of friends’.³⁰ A granddaughter, Mona Gordon, described her as having a ‘beautiful character’,³¹ but wrote that, ‘strangely enough, I seem to grasp the personality of my grandfather, whom I never knew, more easily than that of my grandmother whom I knew as intimately as a child of four, five and barely six can understand such things’.³² Her recollections reveal the domesticity that others must have

²³ For example, *Auckland Provincial Government Gazette*, 26 September 1872, p. 292; *New Zealand Gazette*, 18 November 1875, p. 736, 15 June 1882, p. 861, 3 October 1895, p. 1574, 30 July 1896, pp. 1241, 1242, 13 August 1896, p. 1300.

²⁴ Te Aroha Warden’s Court, Mining Applications 1900, 8/1900, BBAV 11289/16a, ANZ-A.

²⁵ See paper on the Battery Company.

²⁶ Domain Board, *Te Aroha News*, 12 January 1889, p. 2.

²⁷ Te Aroha Warden’s Court, Register of Te Aroha Claims 1880-1888, folio 328, BBAV 11567/1a; Register of Licensed Holdings 1881-1887, folio 158, BBAV 11500/9a, ANZ-A; Te Aroha Silver and Gold Mining Company, Register of Shareholders, 7 March 1890, VPRS 932, Victorian Public Record Office, Melbourne, Australia.

²⁸ Probate of Josiah Clifton Firth, Probates, BBAE 1569/2798, ANZ-A.

²⁹ Probate of Annie Clifton Firth, Probates, BBAE 1569/5668; Testamentary Register 1903-1906, folio 192, BBCB 4208/5, ANZ-A.

³⁰ *New Zealand Herald*, 11 November 1905, p. 4.

³¹ Mona Gordon, *The Golden Age of Josiah Clifton Firth* (Christchurch, 1963), p. 286.

³² Gordon, p. 154.

shared, for instance ‘the endless sewing on which she was always engaged’.³³ In the evenings, when Josiah told the children stories ‘she would seldom join in but sat quietly sewing in the lamplight.... Sometimes she would look up and smile at a sudden burst of laughter from the other end of the room, but her peace of mind was a serenity that passeth all understanding’.³⁴

Ann’s gifts were many and various and she had abandoned everything that did not concern the family. For instance, with a large house and servants to manage, who would sit down to paint a Chinese pheasant on a skeleton leaf – a bird whose blue and russet plumage starred with “eyes” is as brilliant today as when by some intricate process she placed her colours on the filmy veining? Or, who would “do” a butterfly in velvet black and green about to explore a spray of double oleander, rose-coloured and fringed, and on rice paper too? And very rarely as a treat she would make the piano bring to life again some plaintive Scottish air she had learned in girlhood.

As for jewellery, Ann seldom wore any.... They were all for the girls in a far off future.... Ann loved these pretty things which she may well have inherited from her mother, but she made no display of them.

“The Mater” ... was indeed one of those exceptional women whom it is a privilege to know and an impossibility to portray. She seemed faultless to her children, the pivot round whom all their lives revolved. Her predilections were for travel (which was denied her), reading (for which she found time only in later life), growing flowers in garden and conservatory, raising many from seed, and stamp-collecting, which she had begun early and was to continue all her life.

At four years old I used to sit on her bed and fondly imagine that I was “doing stamps” too.... I can recall, too, the fragrant bouquet of her cup of strong tea, and the taste of it sipped as a treat from a silver spoon.

Her manner of bringing up the family, all so evenly spaced from one another, was by love and love alone. Harsher methods were not her way; they were foreign to a nature very near to perfection....

Although Ann’s activities were later and to a certain extent curtailed, she reached her late sixties in comparatively good health. I was the last of all the children in her life, my childhood corresponding with what, to me, was her old age, and she taught me the 23rd Psalm and several others, to read and to sew ... and

³³ Gordon, p. 151.

³⁴ Gordon, p. 146.

to recite poems which had been the poetry of her own young days.³⁵

Near the end of her book, because ‘the beautiful character of Ann – Annie as her husband always called her – has not, in these pages received sufficient prominence’, Gordon cited one of her grandmother’s letters to an unnamed son:

Take care of yourself, study what is required for your advancement in business, trust in God and he will bless you, and do not break the Sabbath and you will prosper. I pray for you especially every day that you may be kept in the right path.³⁶

Eliza Gaudin was as prominent in Hamilton as her husband Frederick. Her only mining investments were at Waiorongomai, where in 1882 she purchased a quarter share in the Three Fools claim and in the following year had 240 scrip shares in the Waiorongomai Company.³⁷ Frederick was a shareholder in the Te Aroha battery company, established in 1881, and the following year seven pounds of ‘very fine specimen stone’ from the New Find were displayed in his hotel.³⁸

In 1883, Eliza described herself as a housewife,³⁹ but although the mother of five children,⁴⁰ she was much more than just a housewife, assisting her husband to run hotels in Auckland and Hamilton.⁴¹ In 1889, they jointly gave a bill of sale over furniture in their current hotel as

³⁵ Gordon, pp. 151-154.

³⁶ Gordon, pp. 286-187.

³⁷ Te Aroha Warden’s Court, Register of Licensed Holdings 1881-1887, folio 64, BBAV 11500/9a, ANZ-A; *New Zealand Gazette*, 31 May 1883, p. 722.

³⁸ *New Zealand Gazette*, 28 April 1881, p. 476; *New Zealand Herald*, 9 March 1882, p. 3.

³⁹ *New Zealand Gazette*, 31 May 1883, p. 722.

⁴⁰ Death Certificate of Eliza Gaudin, 2 September 1906, 1906/3913, BDM.

⁴¹ Supreme Court, Judges’ Notebooks, Conolly J, Civil Notebook 1889-1890, entry for 10 July 1890, BBAE A304/134, ANZ-A; *Auckland Weekly News*, 19 December 1868, p. 9; advertisement, *Waikato Mail*, 23 September 1880, p. 4; *Waikato Times*, 14 September 1880, p. 2, 17 March 1881, p. 2, 22 December 1885, p. 2, 14 February 1889, p. 2, 2 May 1893, p. 2; *Mercantile and Bankruptcy Gazette*, 30 March 1889, p. 89, 12 October 1889, p. 313, 4 October 1894, p. 461; *Observer*, 4 August 1894, p. 3; *Waikato Argus*, 3 September 1906, p. 2.

security for a loan of £100.⁴² According to *A Return of the Freeholders of New Zealand*, in 1882 both Eliza Gaudin and Mrs Frederick Gauden owned property in Hamilton worth £300; as they were the same person, her property was probably worth this amount, not £600. The total value of her husband's property was £512.⁴³

Frederick was a leading member of the Hamilton West town board in the 1870s and subsequently a member of the Hamilton borough and city council.⁴⁴ In 1881 he stood for the mayoralty but was defeated.⁴⁵ Two years after becoming a member of the licensing committee, he was in court for making drunken accusations against the man who had defeated him in the latest election.⁴⁶ Both he and Eliza publicly supported a rival candidate for mayor in 1884.⁴⁷

In 1906, Eliza died aged 57 from bowel cancer.⁴⁸ Her obituary stated that she had been 'a great favourite in all circles, and many acts of neighbourly kindness endeared her to all classes'.⁴⁹ All her estate, value unrecorded, went to her husband.⁵⁰ After her death, Frederick lived with one of his sons because as 'he had no means he depended on' him. After being 'depressed and morbid' and wanting to die for some time, he shot himself in 1921, aged 77. His son said he had 'always been a little peculiar since my mother died'.⁵¹

Ann Hotchin was the wife of Moses, whose career is summarized in the chapter on temperance. In addition to investing in one Te Aroha claim

⁴² *Mercantile and Bankruptcy Gazette*, 30 March 1889, p. 89.

⁴³ *A Return of the Freeholders of New Zealand ...* (Wellington, 1884), p. G 9.

⁴⁴ *Waikato Times*, 10 September 1881, p. 2; Peter Gibbons, *Astride the River: A history of Hamilton* (Christchurch, 1977), pp. 316, 320.

⁴⁵ *Waikato Times*, 5 November 1881, p. 3, 1 December 1881, p. 2.

⁴⁶ *Waikato Times*, 13 February 1886, p. 2, 9 February 1888, p. 2.

⁴⁷ *Waikato Times*, 11 November 1884, p. 3.

⁴⁸ Death Certificate of Eliza Gaudin, 2 September 1906, 1906/3913, BDM.

⁴⁹ *Waikato Argus*, 3 September 1906, p. 2.

⁵⁰ Probate of Eliza Gaudin, Probates, BBAE 1569/6015; Testamentary Register 1913-1914, folio 46, BBCB 4208/9, ANZ-A.

⁵¹ Death Certificate of Frederick Gaudin, 6 December 1920, 1920/5005, BDM; Inquest on Frederick Gaudin, Inquests, Justice Department, J 46, 1921/728, ANZ-W; *Waikato Times*, 7 December 1920, p. 5.

and the subsequent company,⁵² she owned two residence sites and jointly owned another with her husband.⁵³ She was not prominent locally, unlike Moses, at least in part because of bringing up four sons and six daughters.⁵⁴ Undoubtedly she would have assisted to run his temperance hotel. In 1883 she gave her occupation as a journalist;⁵⁵ there is no other reference to her being such. Could she have been the anonymous *Observer* Man? Whilst this is possible, it is unlikely that the O.M. would have given such a clear hint of his/her identity. When she died in 1900, aged 69, she was simply referred to as ‘an old identity’.⁵⁶

Little is known about the life of **Rachel Joy**, although her husbands’ careers can be traced in some detail. Her first husband, Charles Mansfield Clark Joy, the son of a doctor, was born in Norfolk, England, and spent some time in Gippsland, Victoria, before coming to New Zealand.⁵⁷ In 1859, he married Rachel Howse in Melbourne;⁵⁸ they were to have five children.⁵⁹ When her eldest daughter had an illegitimate child and, one year later, married a miner with whom she went to Australia, Rachel had custody of the boy.⁶⁰

⁵² Te Aroha Warden’s Court, Register of Licensed Holdings 1881-1887, folio 122, BBAV 11500/9a, ANZ-A; *New Zealand Gazette*, 4 October 1883, p. 1437.

⁵³ Te Aroha Warden’s Court, Register of Applications 1880-1882, folios 97-98, BBAV 11505/3a; Mortgage by Moses and Ann Hotchin to Thames Land Company, 12 May 1884, Certified Instruments 1884, BBAV 11581/11a; Letterbook 1883-1900, p. 369, BBAV 11534/1a; Rent Ledger 1894-1910, folio 190, BBAV 11570/7a, ANZ-A.

⁵⁴ Death Certificate of Ann Hotchin, 17 July 1900, 1900/3481, BDM.

⁵⁵ *New Zealand Gazette*, 4 October 1883, p. 1437.

⁵⁶ Death Certificate of Ann Hotchin, 17 July 1900, 1900/3481, BDM; *Ohinemuri Gazette*, 21 July 1900, p. 2.

⁵⁷ Death Certificate of Charles Mansfield Clark Joy, 26 September 1887, 1887/3332; Birth Certificate of Robert Joy, 27 March 1884, 1884/11401, BDM; *Te Aroha News*, 1 October 1887, p. 2.

⁵⁸ Birth Certificate of Marion Mary Joy, 17 June 1879, 1879/14600, BDM.

⁵⁹ Death Certificate of Charles Mansfield Clark Joy, 26 September 1887, 1887/3332, BDM.

⁶⁰ Birth Certificate of Robert Joy, 27 March 1884, 1884/11401; Marriage Certificate of Emily Anna Joy, 12 September 1885, 1885/2089, BDM; Waiorongomai Sunday School, Admission Book 1884-1889, entry for 20 January 1889, Methodist Archives, Auckland; William Samson to A.McL. Wallace, 23 July 1888, Te Aroha Warden’s Court, Certified Instruments 1888, BBAV 11581/9a, ANZ-A; *Te Aroha News*, 26 September 1885, p. 2.

Joy obtained his first miner's right at Thames in September 1868, for mining at Tararu.⁶¹ Nine months later, a man who already was, or would soon become, his friend, Charles Jenkins, arrived on the field.⁶² Jenkins was a Welshman.⁶³ They held, individually or jointly, interests in several Thames claims. In July 1869, Jenkins witnessed Joy's agreement to work an interest in the Yarrawinsen, at Tararu,⁶⁴ and they were two of the six owners of Buninyong,⁶⁵ both names that reflected Joy's time in Australia. In November that year they were sued for wages for working the latter. A miner deposed that 'Joy and Jenkins came to my place and asked me to help to pay wages to keep his share going': at their request he paid £12 in a mine that failed to produce gold. Joy responded that in April he had told the other partners that he could 'lay them on to a piece of ground if they felt inclined. They took the ground up. After the 2 months expired Jenkins paid the wages'. The latter stated that the agreement was that the plaintiffs were to work for two months and then be paid out of the proceeds of the crushings; he denied promising to pay wages, but the warden found against him.⁶⁶

They were part owners of two claims in 1870, two out of 11 owners in Pride of Hindon and two of the three in the Golden Bower, at Tapu.⁶⁷ In 1875, they were two of the three owners of another claim.⁶⁸ The following year they were the only owners of one and two of ten owners in another.⁶⁹ In 1877, they held two of the three interests in one claim and two of six in

⁶¹ Thames Warden's Court, Register of Miners' Rights 1868, no. 12240, issued 29 June 1868, BACL 14358/2a, ANZ-A.

⁶² Thames Warden's Court, Register of Miners' Rights 1869, no. 1553, issued 31 March 1869, BACL 14358/3a, ANZ-A.

⁶³ Marriage Certificate of Charles Jenkins, 5 November 1888, 1888/2789, BDM.

⁶⁴ Thames Warden's Court, Register of Deeds 1869, folio 420, BACL 14417/4a, ANZ-A [the spelling is uncertain].

⁶⁵ Thames Warden's Court, Claims Register 1869, no. 1493, BACL 14397/4a, ANZ-A.

⁶⁶ Thames Magistrate's Court, Notebook October-December 1869, hearings of 16 November 1869, 23 November 1869, BACL 14457/1d, ANZ-A.

⁶⁷ Thames Warden's Court, Shortland Claims Register 1870, nos. 2144, 2219, BACL 14397/5a, ANZ-A.

⁶⁸ Thames Warden's Court, Register of Claims 1875-1876, folio 37, BACL 14397/9a, ANZ-A.

⁶⁹ Thames Warden's Court, Register of Claims 1875-1876, folios 161, 177, BACL 14397/9a, ANZ-A.

another, the Little Emily,⁷⁰ possibly named after Joy's eldest daughter Emily Anne, although she was no longer 'little' in the sense of being very young, for she married eight years later aged 19.⁷¹ The following year, Joy worked Luck's All with his eldest son, William, and was very optimistic about its prospects, telling a newspaper that he had 'five year's work before him, with only his son and a wage's man'.⁷² In 1879 he gave Jenkins a third-interest two days after this claim was re-registered, their last joint ownership of a Thames claim.⁷³ Joy's mining at Thames was, at least in the long term, unsuccessful, for when he left for Waiorongomai in 1881 he owed about £125. As mining at Waiorongomai was even more unsuccessful, within two years he was bankrupt with liabilities of £545 11s 6d and assets of £135.⁷⁴

Because Joy had five children,⁷⁵ the unmarried Jenkins could more easily participate in rushes to new fields. He was at Te Aroha on opening day, pegging off ground immediately, and gave up managing the Luck's All Company's mine at Thames to be a mine manager there.⁷⁶ Joy did not shift his family until the Waiorongomai field had been discovered.⁷⁷ Both men plus Rachel held interests in the New Find and the later company.⁷⁸ When

⁷⁰ Thames Warden's Court, Register of Grahamstown Claims 1876-1878, claims 471, 485, BACL 14397/11a, ANZ-A.

⁷¹ Marriage Certificate of Emily Anne Joy, 21 September 1885, 1885/2089, BDM; *Te Aroha News*, 26 September 1885, p. 2.

⁷² *Thames Advertiser*, 24 September 1878, p. 3.

⁷³ Thames Warden's Court, Register of Grahamstown Claims 1878-1880, claim 739, BACL 14397/12a, ANZ-A.

⁷⁴ *Thames Star*, 24 October 1883, p. 3; *Te Aroha News*, 9 February 1884, p. 2.

⁷⁵ Death Certificate of Charles Mansfield Clark Joy, 26 September 1887, 1887/3332, BDM; Probate of C.M.C. Joy, Probates, BBAE 1569/173, ANZ-A.

⁷⁶ Te Aroha Warden's Court, Miner's Right no. 905, issued 25 November 1880, Miners' Rights Butt Book 1880, BBAV 11533/1a, ANZ-A; *Thames Star*, 26 November 1880, p. 2, 14 December 1880, p. 3; *Te Aroha Miner*, 11 January 1881, reprinted in *Thames Star*, 12 January 1881, p. 2.

⁷⁷ Te Aroha Warden's Court, C.M.C. Joy, Miner's Right no. 1798, issued 5 November 1881; Rachel Joy, Miner's Right no. 1841, issued 8 December 1881, Miners' Rights Butt Book 1881, BBAV 11533/1i, ANZ-A.

⁷⁸ Te Aroha Warden's Court, Register of Licensed Holdings 1881-1887, folio 30, BBAV 11500/9a; Plaintiff Book 1880-1898, 67/1882, BBAV 11547/1a; *New Zealand Gazette*, 23 March 1882, p. 490.

Joy went bankrupt in 1883, the trustee informed a creditors' meeting that he 'had examined Mrs Joy regarding 1,000 New Find scrip held by her, and she had consented to assign 200 for the benefit of the estate, their value being £85'. Joy explained that of the 800 New Find shares appearing in his wife's name only 200 were her own, the others 'being held in trust for other persons'.⁷⁹ This was further clarified when he was discharged:

After perusing the trustee's report the Registrar remarked that there appeared to be one or two rather shady circumstances connected with the bankruptcy – for instance, the thousand New Find scrip held by Mrs Joy. The debtor was examined on oath on this point, and said the scrip had been held by his wife jointly in her own right and partly as trustee for two others, Charles Jenkins and William Joy. She had paid all calls upon them prior to his insolvency, and he (the debtor) had nothing whatever to do with the stock.⁸⁰

William Joy was her son; none of his recorded investments were the same as his mother's.⁸¹ Despite claiming to have had nothing to do with his wife's interest in this mine, Joy attended a meeting of shareholders on at least one occasion.⁸² They were both sued in mid-1882 for not paying £10 towards its survey.⁸³ They had no other investments in common.

Jenkins and Rachel held interests in two other Waiorongomai claims and she had some in the Diamond Gully Company, which he managed for a time.⁸⁴ In March 1882, she gave her occupation as 'household duties', and in November as farmer;⁸⁵ perhaps she was assisting her son William on his

⁷⁹ *Thames Star*, 24 October 1883, p. 3.

⁸⁰ District Court, *Thames Advertiser*, 6 February 1884, p. 2.

⁸¹ For his holdings, see Te Aroha Warden's Court, Register of Te Aroha Claims 1880-1888, folio 153, BBAV 11567/1a; Register of Licensed Holdings 1881-1887, folios 4, 6, 8, 157, BBAV 11500/9a, ANZ-A.

⁸² *Thames Advertiser*, 28 October 1881, p. 3.

⁸³ Te Aroha Warden's Court, Plaintiff Book 1880-1898, 67/1882, BBAV 11547/1a, ANZ-A.

⁸⁴ Te Aroha Warden's Court, Register of Licensed Holdings 1881-1887, folios 13, 24, BBAV 11500/9a, ANZ-A; *Thames Advertiser*, 4 February 1882, p. 3; *New Zealand Gazette*, 14 December 1882, p. 1885; Public Notice, *Te Aroha News*, 14 March 1885, p. 7.

⁸⁵ *New Zealand Gazette*, 23 March 1882, p. 490, 14 December 1882, p. 1885.

small Waiorongomai farm.⁸⁶ Joy spent £150 on improving it.⁸⁷ Between November that year and March 1885, he sold 50 of her shares in the Diamond Gully Company and was liable to forfeiting the remaining 86 if a call was not paid.⁸⁸

Joy's death notice implied that he had been in considerable distress before he died, in September 1887: 'His end was peace'.⁸⁹ His final illness, bronchitis, lasted one week: aged 65, he left sons aged 25, 15, and 13 and daughters aged 21 and eight.⁹⁰ The eldest son, William, had been mining and farming at Waiorongomai since 1881,⁹¹ and his eldest daughter had married two years before his death.⁹²

Joy's will, written two days before his death, anticipated the possibility of Rachel promptly remarriage. After leaving all his estate (estimated as worth less than £300) to her, he ordered that should she get married 'before the arrival of the money from England', it was to be divided equally amongst his children.⁹³ Her remarriage was not prompt because Jenkins was in Gippsland and did not return until October the following year. One month later, he married Rachel: they were both aged 47.⁹⁴ The local newspaper only learnt of the wedding after the event:

A wedding took place on Monday last at Te Aroha, the bride and bridegroom hailing from Waiorongomai; but so quietly were the proceedings carried out that very few were aware of the event until after it was over. The bride was Mrs Chas. Joy, bridegroom Mr Chas. Jenkins, formerly of Waiorongomai, but who, for several

⁸⁶ For this farm, see Thames High School Board of Governors, Minutes of Meetings of 7 February 1883, 6 March 1883, High School Archives, Thames; *Thames Star*, 7 June 1881, p. 2; *Thames Advertiser*, 21 June 1881, p. 3; *Te Aroha News*, 20 March 1889, p. 7.

⁸⁷ *Thames Advertiser*, 24 October 1883, p. 3.

⁸⁸ *New Zealand Gazette*, 14 December 1882, p. 1885; advertisement, *Te Aroha News*, 14 March 1885, p. 7.

⁸⁹ Death Notice, *Te Aroha News*, 1 October 1887, p. 2; *New Zealand Herald*, 10 October 1887, Monthly Survey, p. 12.

⁹⁰ Death Certificate of Charles Mansfield Clark Joy, 26 September 1887, 1887/3332, BDM.

⁹¹ *Thames Advertiser*, 21 June 1881, p. 3, 24 October 1883, p. 3, 29 January 1884, p. 3; *Te Aroha News*, 20 March 1889, p. 7.

⁹² *Te Aroha News*, 26 September 1885, p. 2.

⁹³ Probates, BBAE 1569/173, ANZ-A.

⁹⁴ Marriage Certificate of Charles Jenkins, 5 November 1888, 1888/2789, BDM.

years past, has resided in Gippsland, from whence he returned about a fortnight ago.⁹⁵

Jenkins mined once more at Waiorongomai, in 1889 having his collarbone broken by falling down an incline in the New Find, only the quick assistance of his mate preventing a worse accident.⁹⁶ This followed cutting his wrist on broken glass lying on the ground when climbing through a fence on William Joy's farm and Rachel having her arm gored by a cow she was letting out of the bail.⁹⁷ In mid-1890, they sold all their property (including land, cattle, horses, and a piano),⁹⁸ and left not only the district but also the country. Their lives have not been traced beyond this date.

Their wedding illustrated how other friendships continued over many years, for it was held in the house of Richard Nathaniel Blencowe, whose wife Emma was a witness.⁹⁹ The Blencowes had arrived at Thames at around the same time as the Joys.¹⁰⁰ Blencowe had interests in local mines, including the Pride of Hindon with Joy and Jenkins in 1870.¹⁰¹ His investments in Waiorongomai mines included three in which Jenkins was a part owner and one in which Joy was.¹⁰²

Elizabeth Russell was an owner of a Tui claim in December 1880. Twelve days after her half share was registered, she wisely sold half her interest.¹⁰³ This was her sole investment in any goldfield. Her husband, Albert Hannington Russell, invested in two Tui and three Waiorongomai

⁹⁵ *Te Aroha News*, 10 November 1888, p. 2.

⁹⁶ Waiorongomai Correspondent, *Te Aroha News*, 20 July 1889, p. 2.

⁹⁷ *Te Aroha News*, 22 May 1889, p. 2, Waiorongomai Correspondent, 13 July 1889, p. 2, 18 September 1889, p. 2.

⁹⁸ *Te Aroha News*, 4 June 1890, p. 2.

⁹⁹ Marriage Certificate of Charles Jenkins, 5 November 1888, 1888/2789, BDM.

¹⁰⁰ Thames Warden's Court, Miner's Right no. 11329, Register of Miners' Rights 1868, BACL 14358/2a, ANZ-A.

¹⁰¹ Thames Warden's Court, Shortland Claims Register 1870, no. 2144, BACL 14397/5a, ANZ-A.

¹⁰² Te Aroha Warden's Court, Register of Licensed Holdings 1882-1885, folios 8, 13, 15, 55, BBAV 11500/9a; Plaintiff Book 1880-1898, 75/1881, 78/1881, BBAV 11547/1a, ANZ-A.

¹⁰³ Te Aroha Warden's Court, Register of Te Aroha Claims 1880-1888, folio 178, BBAV 11567/1a, ANZ-A.

claims;¹⁰⁴ he also invested in other goldfields, mainly in Ohinemuri.¹⁰⁵ Being a police sergeant, based in Paeroa, he assisted at Te Aroha in 1881.¹⁰⁶ He was criticized for his performance both as a policeman and as clerk of court.¹⁰⁷ In February 1883, the magistrate, Harry Kenrick,¹⁰⁸ asked for his dismissal for attesting that a deed concerning a block of Maori land had been signed in his presence when the signatories were not present and in some cases were deceased.¹⁰⁹ His superior officer reported to his minister that 'Mr Kenrick is of opinion that owing to the fact that the Sergt. Is reported to be mixed up in mining speculations at the diggings nearest to Paeroa it is desirable that he should be removed to another district, in which opinion I concur'.¹¹⁰ He was 'ordered to Hokitika without delay' at the end of March, and 'discharged on compensation at Westland' in October 1885.¹¹¹

¹⁰⁴ Te Aroha Warden's Court, Register of Te Aroha Claims 1880-1888, folios 201, 203, BBAV 11567/1a; Register of Licensed Holdings 1881-1887, folios 25, 47, 62, BBAV 11500/9a, ANZ-A.

¹⁰⁵ Thames Magistrate's Court, Plaint Book 1881-1884, 300/1882, BACL 13737/12a; Register of Licensed Holdings 1875-1882, folios 143, 161, 165, 182, BACL 14397/10a; Register of Claims 1880-1882, no. 963, BACL 14397/13a, ANZ-A; *New Zealand Gazette*, 18 August 1881, p. 1088, 3 November 1881, p. 1442, 30 July 1882, p. 988;

¹⁰⁶ Armed Constabulary Force, Descriptive Book, no. 311, Police Department, P 8/1, ANZ-W; *Thames Star*, 29 January 1881, p. 2, 20 April 1881, p. 2 *Auckland Weekly News*, 14 February 1907, p. 23.

¹⁰⁷ Sub-Inspector Bullen to A.H. Russell, 9 December 1877, 25 April 1877, Mackaytown Armed Constabulary Letterbook and General Order Book 1875-1878, BAVA 4895/1a, ANZ-A; Warden's Court, *Thames Advertiser*, 2 December 1881, p. 3.

¹⁰⁸ See paper on his life.

¹⁰⁹ Harry Kenrick to Native Minister, Superintendent Thompson, and Minister of Justice, 6 February 1883, Coromandel Warden's Court, Receiver of Gold Revenue Letterbook 1878-1892, pp. 277-280, ZAAN 14143/1b, ANZ-A.

¹¹⁰ Memorandum by Inspector Thomson, n.d. [February 1883], Justice Department, J 1, 83/998, ANZ-W.

¹¹¹ A.H. Russell to Harry Kenrick, 30 March 1883, Thames Warden's Court, Inwards Correspondence to Warden and Magistrate 1879-1892, BACL 13388/1a, ANZ-A; Armed Constabulary Force, Descriptive Book, folio 89, no. 82, Police Department, P 8/1, ANZ-W; *Waikato Times*, 1 May 1883, p. 2; *Auckland Weekly News*, 14 February 1907, p. 23.

After leaving the police force, Russell was a publican at Greymouth,¹¹² presumably assisted by Elizabeth. In 1889, when a publican at Opotiki, Elizabeth either bought the hotel furniture with her own money or ownership was vested in her, as she arranged a bill of sale over it.¹¹³ Two years later, when he was a storekeeper as well, she assigned the hotel's furniture and chattels to two brewers as security for repayment of £233.¹¹⁴ Subsequently he was a clerk in the Defence Department in Auckland until he died in 1907 of a stroke, aged 64; there had been an earlier stroke after learning of his son Albert's death in the Boer War.¹¹⁵ They had two other sons and five daughters.¹¹⁶ Two daughters predeceased their mother, who died in 1920, aged 68, after suffering from heart disease for the previous eight years.¹¹⁷ It is not known how much money she had inherited from her husband, but she left an estate of £798 12s 6d, to be shared equally amongst her daughters.¹¹⁸ Something of her personality can be gleaned from her will, devised two years before her death: 'I request that no mourning shall be worn by any person on account of my decease and that no flowers used or displayed at my funeral or upon my grave and that only horse vehicles will take part in or follow my funeral'.¹¹⁹

Marie Louise Smith purchased four of the 100 shares in the Admiral Fairfax in November 1888, for £1.¹²⁰ On the same day, her husband, Arthur Anthony Smith, who was the secretary of the syndicate owning this ground,¹²¹ purchased 25 shares, a quarter of the interests, for the same sum

¹¹² Applications for Land Grants, 1889-1892, no. 663, Lands and Survey Department, LS 66/7, ANZ-W.

¹¹³ *Mercantile and Bankruptcy Gazette*, 23 March 1889, p. 82.

¹¹⁴ *Mercantile and Bankruptcy Gazette*, 7 May 1891, p. 122.

¹¹⁵ Death Certificate of Albert Hannington Russell, 8 February 1907, 1907/138, BDM; *Auckland Weekly News*, 14 February 1907, p. 23.

¹¹⁶ *Auckland Weekly News*, 14 February 1907, p. 23.

¹¹⁷ Death Certificate of Elizabeth Russell, 22 May 1920, 1920/12466, BDM.

¹¹⁸ Testamentary Register 1920-1921, p. 642, BBCB 4208/12; Probate of Elizabeth Russell, BBAE 1569/14828, ANZ-A.

¹¹⁹ Probate of Elizabeth Russell, BBAE 1569/14828, ANZ-A.

¹²⁰ John Bew to Marie Louise Smith, 7 November 1888, Te Aroha Warden's Court, Certified Instruments 1888, BBAV 11581/9a, ANZ-A.

¹²¹ *Te Aroha News*, 8 December 1888, p. 7.

from the same seller.¹²² Later that month he purchased another share, and the following March bought 15 shares in another claim, close to Te Aroha.¹²³ He was chairman of the syndicate working the latter.¹²⁴

Before settling in Te Aroha, Smith was a publican at Kurow, inland from Oamaru, owning property in the Waitaki County worth, in 1882, £1,700.¹²⁵ From mid-1885 until early 1892, he was licensee of the Hot Springs Hotel.¹²⁶ At first he was in partnership with James Don, but in 1889, ‘after having been mates one way or another for nearly a quarter of a century’, they dissolved their partnership, Smith ‘carrying on the business’.¹²⁷ The following year he had to give a bill of sale over the hotel’s furniture and fixtures as security for a loan of £600.¹²⁸ After he left Te Aroha in early 1892, he became a publican elsewhere in the North Island.¹²⁹ They had seven children,¹³⁰ and to boost the family finances in 1889 Smith formally consented to his wife entering into a partnership with a local jeweller, Albert Berger,¹³¹ and a farmer to ‘manufacture and sell Berger’s

¹²² John Bew to Arthur Anthony Smith, 7 November 1888, Te Aroha Warden’s Court, Certified Instruments 1888, BBAV 11581/9a, ANZ-A.

¹²³ Purchase by Arthur Anthony Smith of one share in Admiral Fairfax, 24 November 1888, Te Aroha Warden’s Court, Certified Instruments 1888, BBAV 11581/9a; James Don to Arthur Anthony Smith, 14 March 1889, Te Aroha Warden’s Court, Certified Instruments 1889, BBAV 11581/10a, ANZ-A.

¹²⁴ *Te Aroha News*, 27 February 1889, p. 2.

¹²⁵ *A Return of the Freeholders of New Zealand*, p. S 47.

¹²⁶ Te Aroha Magistrate’s Court, Register of Publicans’ Licenses 1882-1892, nos. 13, 25, BBAV 11493/1a, ANZ-A; *Waikato Times*, 23 June 1885, p. 3, 1 March 1892, p. 2.

¹²⁷ Te Aroha Magistrate’s Court, Criminal Record Book 1881-1896, 19/1888, BCDG 11220/1a, ANZ-A; Te Aroha Correspondent, *Waikato Times*, 2 July 1889, p. 2.

¹²⁸ *Mercantile and Bankruptcy Gazette*, 22 March 1890, p. 82.

¹²⁹ *Waikato Times*, 1 March 1892, p. 2; *Waikato Argus*, 7 July 1898, p. 2; *Auckland Weekly News*, 28 June 1906, p. 23, 21 May 1908, p. 32, 12 July 1908, p. 26.

¹³⁰ Birth Certificates of Herman Arthur Smith, 1872/7632; Ernest Ralph James Smith, 1873/21225; Gertrude Louise Smith, 1876/8400, BDM; Alberta Alexandrina Smith, 9 December 1879, Register of Te Aroha Baptisms 1884-1949, no. 15, Catholic Archives, Auckland; Violet Sophia, 1882/4381, BDM; Eloisa Smith, 16 December 1883, Register of Te Aroha Baptisms 1884-1949, no. 16, Catholic Archives, Auckland; Darcy Reginald Smith, 3 February 1889, 1889/17444, BDM.

¹³¹ See advertisement, *Te Aroha News*, 3 September 1887, p. 3.

Patent Automatic Candle Extinguisher'.¹³² That neither made a will implies that they left their children very little money or property.

When Smith sold his hotel, the Hamilton newspaper commented that during his years at Te Aroha he had 'taken an active interest in the welfare of the place and we feel sure that he will be greatly missed'.¹³³ He had been active in the jockey club and the Masonic lodge.¹³⁴ In response to a numerously signed requisition, he stood for the Te Aroha riding of the county council in 1887, but the 39 votes he received were insufficient to secure election; the highest tally was 64.¹³⁵

Smith died in 1923, aged 83, leaving his widow all his estate, estimated to be less than £1,000.¹³⁶ She died 13 years later.¹³⁷

Maria Taylor's only investment was in one Waiorongomai claim, in September 1883.¹³⁸ In May that year, she had purchased a business site in this settlement, and held it until 1898.¹³⁹ On this section, in Grey Street, she ran a small shop, but the rent was a heavy burden when the goldfield faded, as she explained to the Thames High School Board of Governors in June 1886. As she was 'carreing on a small Business consisting of Toy's Lollies etc', she was required to pay £5 per annum in rates. 'Owing to the depressed state of the place, and being at the extreme end of a Back St no longer pays me to do so and would respectfully beg that you will reduce my rent during the depression if you cannot do so I shall be compelled to closed,

¹³² Formation of Partnership of Berger Smith and Schmidt, 28 May 1889, Consents, Deposited Documents 1841-1943, Lands and Deeds Department, BACT A1009/4h, ANZ-A.

¹³³ *Waikato Times*, 1 March 1892, p. 2.

¹³⁴ *Te Aroha News*, 30 October 1886, p. 2, 31 December 1887, p. 2, 22 December 1888, p. 2, 25 December 1889, p. 2.

¹³⁵ *Te Aroha News*, 23 October 1887, p. 2, 12 November 1887, p. 2, 19 November 1887, p. 3.

¹³⁶ Death Certificate of Arthur Anthony Smith, 9 February 1923, 1923/2383, BDM; Death Notice, *New Zealand Herald*, 10 February 1923, p. 1; Probates, BBAE 1569/16330, ANZ-A.

¹³⁷ Death Certificate of Marie Louise Smith, 19 May 1936, 1936/16159, BDM; Death Notice, *New Zealand Herald*, 20 May 1936, p. 1.

¹³⁸ Te Aroha Magistrate's Court, Register of Licensed Holdings 1881-1887, folio 157, BBAV 11567/1a, ANZ-A.

¹³⁹ Te Aroha Warden's Court, Rent Ledger 1881-1900, folio 191, BBAV 11501/1a; Maria Taylor to E.M. Wilkinson, 13 September 1898, Warden's Office General Correspondence 1899, BBAV 11584/5d, ANZ-A.

and fall back upon the residence terms'.¹⁴⁰ As the governors did not reduce her rent, she abandoned her shop and used the section as a residence site, meaning a rental of £1. At the beginning of 1888, she protested to the council at the condition of Grey Street, 'in consequence of the bad state of which vehicles could not get up to her house, and foot passengers would be unable to do so were it not for the bridge built by her husband'. As she had been paying rates 'for some time', she wanted action.¹⁴¹ As the dangerous drain near her house required a bridge which would cost £2 or £3, the council simply received her letter.¹⁴² Her husband, Daniel George, was a blacksmith.¹⁴³ As he had no mining investments, it must be presumed that she invested in her own right, not as his dummy.

They moved to Auckland in the 1890s, and called their home 'Aroha'.¹⁴⁴ Taylor died there in 1918, aged 80, and six months later his widow died, aged 76, when visiting old friends at Te Aroha; they both died of heart disease.¹⁴⁵ As they had no children, Maria's estate, worth £938 9s 7d, went to Mary Ellinor Taylor, who was recorded as a friend, not a relative.¹⁴⁶

Sarah Wood had shares in one Te Aroha claim and, later, two Waiorongomai ones, her interests being converted into scrip shares in the companies formed to work these.¹⁴⁷ Her husband, John, also invested in the Little Jimmy, one of these Waiorongomai claims.¹⁴⁸ He had participated in the Te Aroha rush, acquiring interests in two Tui claims and the battery

¹⁴⁰ Mairia Taylor to Thames High School Board, 21 June 1886, Te Aroha Warden's Court, Plaints 1886, BBAV 11572/1a, ANZ-A.

¹⁴¹ Piako County Council, *Waikato Times*, 21 January 1888, p. 2.

¹⁴² Piako County Council, *Te Aroha News*, 21 January 1888, p. 2.

¹⁴³ Death Certificate of Daniel [George] Taylor, 12 November 1918, 1918/7264, BDM.

¹⁴⁴ *Eden Electoral Roll 1899*, pp. 74, 75; Death Notice of Daniel George Taylor, *New Zealand Herald*, 13 November 1918, p. 1.

¹⁴⁵ Death Certificates of Daniel [George] Taylor, 12 November 1918, 1918/7264; Maria Taylor, 28 May 1919, 1919/3754, BDM; *Te Aroha News*, 30 May 1919, p. 3.

¹⁴⁶ Probate of Maria Taylor, Probates, BBAE 1569/13334; Testamentary Register 1919, folio 370, BBCB 4208/15, ANZ-A.

¹⁴⁷ Te Aroha Warden's Court, Register of Te Aroha Claims 1880-1888, folio 224, BBAV 11567/1a; Register of Licensed Holdings 1881-1887, folios 4, 25, BBAV 11500/9a, ANZ-A; *New Zealand Gazette*, 16 November 1882, p. 1732, 14 December 1882, p. 1885.

¹⁴⁸ Te Aroha Warden's Court, Register of Licensed Holdings 1881-1887, folio 25, BBAV 11500/9a, ANZ-A; *New Zealand Gazette*, 16 November 1882, p. 1732.

company.¹⁴⁹ In the 1880s he would be sole owner of one Te Aroha claim and part owner of four at Waiorongomai and one at Tui.¹⁵⁰ He held interests in three other companies.¹⁵¹ Whereas Sarah transferred her interests to the companies for no financial return, her husband sold six of his shares in the Little Jimmy for £165 before the company was floated.¹⁵² In early 1882, he showed what were described as excellent specimens to the Hamilton newspaper.¹⁵³

Before the Te Aroha rush, they had shared the running of a popular hotel in Morrinsville.¹⁵⁴ Upon settling in Te Aroha just before the rush, he erected a butcher's shop and livery and bait stables.¹⁵⁵ In 1882 Sarah described herself as a farmer.¹⁵⁶ During the 1880s her husband acquired land at Te Aroha West, where he would farm for the rest of his life.¹⁵⁷ In 1882 Sarah had property in Hamilton worth £750 and John had 27 acres in

¹⁴⁹ Te Aroha Warden's Court, Miner's Right no. 318, issued 25 November 1881, Miners' Rights Butt-Book 1880, BBAV 11533/1a; Register of Te Aroha Claims 1880-1888, folio 201, BBAV 11567/1a; Plaintiff Book 1880-1898, 19/1881, BBAV 11547/1a, ANZ-A; 'Waikato Whisperings', *Observer*, 18 December 1880, p. 126; *New Zealand Gazette*, 28 April 1881, p. 476.

¹⁵⁰ Te Aroha Warden's Court, Register of Te Aroha Claims 1880-1888, folios 295, 325, BBAV 11567/1a; Register of Licensed Holdings, folios 55, 64, 84, BBAV 11500/9a; Plaintiff Book 1880-1898, 90/1881, BBAV 11547/1a; Letterbook 1883-1900, p. 7, BBAV 11534/1a, ANZ-A.

¹⁵¹ *New Zealand Gazette*, 23 March 1882, p. 490, 17 August 1882, p. 1131, 31 May 1883, p. 722.

¹⁵² Te Aroha Warden's Court, Transfers and Assignments 1882, nos. 129, 140, BBAV 11581/1a; nos. 459, 460, 462, 548, BBAV 11581/2a, ANZ-A.

¹⁵³ *Waikato Times*, 2 February 1882, p. 2.

¹⁵⁴ *Auckland Weekly News*, 5 May 1877, p. 8, X.Y.Z., 'To Te Aroha by Waikato and back by Thames', 5 March 1881, p. 11; *Thames Advertiser*, 24 February 1879, p. 3, 26 May 1880, p. 3; *Waikato Times*, 20 March 1880, p. 2; *Descriptive Handbook to the Waikato* (Hamilton, 1880), pp. 33, 66; *Te Aroha News*, 3 June 1936, p. 8.

¹⁵⁵ *Thames Advertiser*, 15 November 1880, p. 3, 2 December 1880, p. 3, 21 January 1881, p. 3; Te Aroha Correspondent, *Waikato Times*, 11 November 1880, p. 2, 22 January 1881, p. 2.

¹⁵⁶ *New Zealand Gazette*, 16 November 1882, p. 1732.

¹⁵⁷ *Te Aroha News*, 9 February 1884, p. 2, 23 May 1885, p. 7, 6 February 1886, p. 2, 3 April 1886, p. 7, 10 April 1886, p. 2, 25 June 1887, p. 2, 23 January 1889, p. 2, 7 September 1921, p. 3.

Piako, 25 acres in Waikato, and property in Hamilton, all with a total value of £750.¹⁵⁸ Having no children herself, she had held £50 in trust for the son of John Allwood,¹⁵⁹ her brother.¹⁶⁰ In 1883, her estate was worth £440, all of which went to her husband.¹⁶¹

In February 1882, Sarah rode up to the New Find with her husband, brother-in-law, another local man, and 'a lady friend from Auckland'.¹⁶² This should not imply that she was in good health, for she had been suffering from chronic ovaritis, or inflammation of the ovary,¹⁶³ for many years, and died almost one year later, aged 47.¹⁶⁴ 'The respect in which she was generally held was amply testified by the large attendance at her funeral'.¹⁶⁵ John would live until 1921, when he was 84.¹⁶⁶ He left an estate worth £6,328 9s 8d.¹⁶⁷

PAID WORK

As Belich has noted, some women were forced to earn money to support their families. 'Women with dead, absent or incapable husbands could run small businesses themselves, and they did. There are many examples of women running pubs, stores, farms and trade workshops after the demise of their husbands. For example, 245 women ran farms on their own in 1874'.¹⁶⁸ In addition to these married or widowed women, some unmarried women had to work as well to support themselves in various ways, some more pleasant and remunerative than others.

¹⁵⁸ *A Return of the Freeholders of New Zealand*, p. W 72.

¹⁵⁹ See section on publicans in paper on the drink problem in the Te Aroha district.

¹⁶⁰ Magistrate's Court, *Te Aroha News*, 12 January 1884, p. 7.

¹⁶¹ Probate of Sarah Wood, Probates, BBAE 1568/599; Testamentary Register 1883-1886, folio 40, BBCB 4208/2, ANZ-A.

¹⁶² Te Aroha Correspondent, *Waikato Times*, 28 February 1882, p. 2.

¹⁶³ *Black's Medical Dictionary*, 36 ed., ed. C.W.H. Havard (London, 1990), p. 505.

¹⁶⁴ Death Certificate of Sarah Wood, 9 February 1883, 1883/1104, BDM.

¹⁶⁵ *Waikato Times*, 13 February 1883, p. 2.

¹⁶⁶ Death Certificate of John Wood, 2 September 1921, 1921/3454, BDM.

¹⁶⁷ Probate of John Wood, Hamilton Probates, BCDG 4420/1454; Testamentary Register 1920-1921, folio 833, BBCB 4208/12, ANZ-A.

¹⁶⁸ James Belich, *Making Peoples: A history of the New Zealanders, from Polynesian settlement to the end of the nineteenth century* (Auckland, 1996), p. 392.

William McLean, who was tramway manager during 1892,¹⁶⁹ soon lost this job, in part because of his drinking.¹⁷⁰ During the late 1880s he had spent over two years visiting most of Australia's goldfields, leaving his family in poverty. After he had been away for over a year, his wife, Harriet, told the council she was unable to pay the rates because 'she had received no support from him since he left, and had only the milk of four cows wherewith to support a family of 7 children', six aged under 12.¹⁷¹ Although he did not die until 1911, of cirrhosis of the liver, when 67,¹⁷² it seems that since the late nineteenth century she was the main financial support for the family. In 1892 her occupation was recorded as 'dairy', and she acquired a shop in the main street of Te Aroha.¹⁷³ She was described in 1900 as a 'hardworking respectable woman' who was 'doing her best to earn an honest living and to bring up her large family in a respectable manner'.¹⁷⁴

Inability to obtain an adequate income could mean loss of children, as illustrated in 1883 when a Te Aroha woman wrote to a newspaper:

I am acquainted with a very respectable woman, who some years ago, when her husband died, was obliged to put four of her children in the Home. She made application for them about two years ago and the master told her she could have them, but when she went for them he had sent them out to service. Now their time is up two months ago, and he will not let them away, as he says he had the control of them until they are twenty-one; their ages are 16, 14, and 13.... The mother is a respectable woman, and poverty alone compelled her to place them there at the time. As she has now a good home for them, she wishes to have them with her.¹⁷⁵

¹⁶⁹ See paper on the Piako County tramway at Waiorongomai.

¹⁷⁰ Piako County Council, *Waikato Times*, 26 November 1892, p. 2.

¹⁷¹ Piako County Council, *Te Aroha News*, 18 June 1887, p. 2; *Waikato Times*, 8 December 1888, p. 2.

¹⁷² Death Certificate of William McLean, 13 July 1911, 1911/5448, BDM.

¹⁷³ 'Te Aroha', *Wise's New Zealand Directory, 1892*, p. 352; *Te Aroha News*, 2 April 1898, p. 2.

¹⁷⁴ Letter from Charles Brunn, *Te Aroha News*, 17 February 1900, p. 2.

¹⁷⁵ Letter from Katherine Banks, with editor's response, *Auckland Weekly News*, 1 December 1883, p. 10.

Clearly this mother had worked very hard to establish 'a good home'. Six years later, a letter about excessive rents referred to the struggles of another widow:

A widow, who was one of the first to come here and start business, has had to succumb to the hard times and work at washing, charring, etc, to support a young family. She is the unfortunate holder of a business site, for which she must pay £5 per annum. Upon the section, when times were good, she built her house.... Last year this poor woman had to borrow £5 for her rent, which is again due, and she is compelled to part with her sewing machine to raise the necessary money.¹⁷⁶

Another woman, unable to work through poor health, was able to obtain a modicum of aid from the Waikato charitable aid board in 1890:

Mrs Donnelly, of Te Aroha, applied for some assistance. She stated she was suffering from rheumatism and being unable to do anything for herself, could not do without the help of her little girl, and all she had to live on was the earnings of one son. With reference to this case Sergt Emerson reported that Mrs Donnelly was in destitute circumstances. She had arrived at Te Aroha on February 1st from New Plymouth with her daughter, and had one son, aged sixteen, at work who was earning £1 per week, and did all he could for his mother, but out of this he had to keep himself. She had another daughter married to a farmer named Kirkpatrick, but they were unable to assist her as the farm was not paying. It was decided to grant Mrs Donnelly 5s per week relief.¹⁷⁷

Married women supplemented their husbands' incomes in a variety of ways, such as the wife of the local architect selling boxes of bees for 10s a box.¹⁷⁸ Henry Hopper Adams' wife became a 'poultry expert' in her later years.¹⁷⁹

Some women ran, or assisted their husbands to run, hotels and boarding houses. One unmarried woman, Emily Jex, ran a hotel by herself, to the disapproval of some males who considered it inappropriate

¹⁷⁶ Letter from 'Cyclops', *Te Aroha News*, 11 December 1889, p. 2.

¹⁷⁷ District Hospital and Charitable Aid Board, *Waikato Times*, 6 March 1890, p. 3.

¹⁷⁸ Advertisement, *Te Aroha News*, 9 January 1886, p. 7.

¹⁷⁹ See paper on Henry Hopper Adams.

employment;¹⁸⁰ she later married a publican.¹⁸¹ Women usually ran boarding houses with their husbands, as in the case of Mary Faes, wife of Pietro, who had settled in Te Aroha as a tailor.¹⁸² They later established the Railway Boarding House, opposite the railway station, where Faes also had a refreshment room.¹⁸³ Mary continued to operate it after her husband's death, and by the time she died had run it for over 35 years, 'highly respected by all who knew her'.¹⁸⁴ In 1888, a correspondent reported that a 'most commendable' temperance boarding house at Waiorongomai, run by John and Maria Mace,¹⁸⁵ was 'doing a very fair trade'. It was 'large and roomy' and well conducted.¹⁸⁶ A son recalled them moving to Te Aroha in the first rush: 'His mother was determined to accompany his father and share the hardships ... and so that they could have a place to live in on arrival she made a large tent. This they lived in for several months while his father was building a house'.¹⁸⁷

Jane, wife of John Benjamin Johnson,¹⁸⁸ was recalled as having run a boarding house and being involved in community life before family responsibilities took over her life:

Mrs Johnson faced the hardships which confronted all pioneers of this district, and while her husband followed, with varying fortune, occupations of farming, plumbing, flax-milling, and general provision store-keeping, Mrs Johnson lent her co-operation in promoting for the general welfare of the scattered community of that time.

¹⁸⁰ See paper on the drink problem in the Te Aroha district.

¹⁸¹ *Waikato Times*, 8 June 1886, p. 3.

¹⁸² *Thames Star*, 7 August 1882, p. 2; advertisement, *Te Aroha News*, 9 June 1883, p. 1.

¹⁸³ *Ohinemuri Gazette*, 31 December 1896, p. 2, 30 January 1897, p. 4; *Journals and Appendix to the Journals of the Legislative Council of New Zealand, 1897, Appendix No. 9, 'Particulars of Leases of Railway Property'*, p. 6; *Te Aroha News*, 20 May 1907, p. 2.

¹⁸⁴ Te Aroha Warden's Court, Register of Mining Privileges 1894-1910, folios 9, 10, BBAV 11500/2a, ANZ-A; *Te Aroha News*, 12 June 1924, p. 5.

¹⁸⁵ See *Thames Advertiser*, 8 November 1882, p. 3; *Te Aroha News*, 17 December 1887, p. 3, 16 June 1888, p. 2, 1 September 1888, p. 2, 12 June 1889, p. 2, 19 June 1889, p. 2, 20 July 1889, p. 2, 19 April 1918, p. 2.

¹⁸⁶ Te Aroha Correspondent, *Thames Advertiser*, 6 September 1888, p. 2.

¹⁸⁷ Recollections of George William Mace, *Te Aroha News*, 26 October 1927, p. 5.

¹⁸⁸ See *Te Aroha News*, 11 January 1940, p. 5.

During the busy period of the establishment of the railway line between Te Aroha and Thames she conducted the boarding house “River-view” ... which had been previously managed by her grandmother. She eventually became the mother of a large family and her interests gradually centred around her home, and apart from her work in the Presbyterian Church she spent the latter part of her life in retirement.¹⁸⁹

Frederick James Lawrence and his wife Georgina ran a dining room in Te Aroha from 1881 until the goldfield faded.¹⁹⁰

As well as teaching in schools, some women, usually unmarried, taught outside them. In February 1887, ‘Miss Wainwright, a really excellent pianist’, announced that she was ‘prepared to give music lessons’.¹⁹¹ This was because her father, Abraham Mason Wainwright, a ‘gentleman’, had died the previous month, leaving little to his family, which included two unmarried daughters.¹⁹² The previous December, another woman sought employment:

LADY HELP, OR USEFUL GOVERNESS – Advertiser is thoroughly experienced in Household Duties and the care and Education of Children. Will be disengaged at Christmas. Present position over two years and a half. Excellent references.¹⁹³

Ellen Louisa Featon was born in 1872, the only daughter of John, a journalist and historian of the Waikato War who was ‘well known in mining circles’ as an investor.¹⁹⁴ In 1902 the *Cyclopedia* praised her in its section on Te Aroha:

¹⁸⁹ *Te Aroha News*, 29 July 1943, p. 5.

¹⁹⁰ Advertisement, *Thames Advertiser*, 13 January 1881, p. 2; *Waikato Times*, 15 July 1882, p. 3; *New Zealand Herald*, 16 May 1932, p. 11.

¹⁹¹ *Te Aroha News*, 12 February 1887, p. 2.

¹⁹² Death Certificate of Abraham Mason Wainwright, 4 January 1887, 1887/716, BDM; Charles Ahier to Hesketh and Richmond, 19 August 1891, Hesketh and Richmond Papers, Box 26, 1051/C, MS 440, Auckland Public Library; *Te Aroha News*, 8 January 1887, p. 2.

¹⁹³ Advertisement, *Te Aroha News*, 11 December 1886, p. 3.

¹⁹⁴ Birth Certificate of Ellen Louisa Featon, 1872/14975, BDM; Probate of John Featon, BBAE 1569/8961, ANZ-A; *Auckland Free Lance*, 12 July 1879, p. 2; *Auckland Weekly News*, 19 July 1879, p. 8; *Cyclopedia of New Zealand*, vol. 2, p. 828.

This young lady is a vocalist of no mean order.... She was a pupil of Prof. Carl Schmitt for two years, and in order to seek further tuition went to Australia, where she was for eighteen months under M. Recardi. Miss Featon returned to Auckland in 1892, and has appeared before the Auckland public on many occasions. She sang with Mr Gee up to the time of his departure from the Colony. At the early age of 15 years she was a soloist in the Choral Society. Miss Featon took the contralto solos in "The Woman of Samaria," and made a successful appearance in "Judas Maccabeus." She took a prominent part in "Princess Ida," when she was as usual accorded a good reception.¹⁹⁵

She first sang in public in Auckland in 1889, always receiving good reviews.¹⁹⁶ The last time she sang there before leaving for Sydney was in January 1891.¹⁹⁷ For a time in 1892 she taught singing in Sydney.¹⁹⁸ Her first performance upon her return was in July 1893.¹⁹⁹ From then onwards she sang in Auckland until her last performance there in October 1897, always being praised for her beautiful voice.²⁰⁰ In December 1895, when described as 'the favorite Contralto', she sang at Te Aroha as a member of the Fuller Family, otherwise the Fuller Concert Company.²⁰¹ Despite recording her occupation as 'domestic duties', when living at Te Aroha in the late 1890s she was a music teacher.²⁰² In November 1901, 'the annual fancy dress ball, marking the termination of the season of Miss E.L. Featon's dancing classes held during the winter, took place in the Public

¹⁹⁵ *Cyclopedia of New Zealand*, vol. 2, p. 828.

¹⁹⁶ *Observer*, 15 June 1889, p. 14, 29 June 1889, p. 3, 7 September 1889, p. 14, 21 September 1889, p. 8, 18 October 1890, p. 17.

¹⁹⁷ *Observer*, 31 January 1891, p. 17.

¹⁹⁸ *Observer*, 30 April 1892, p. 1.

¹⁹⁹ *Observer*, 22 July 1893, p. 8.

²⁰⁰ *Observer*, 16 September 1893, p. 9, 30 September 1893, p. 5, 4 November 1893, p. 17, 3 February 1894, p. 16, 21 April 1894, p. 7, 30 June 1894, p. 7, 1 September 1894, p. 9, 6 October 1894, p. 7, 20 October 1894, p. 15, 8 June 1895, p. 9, 15 June 1895, p. 9, 14 March 1896, p. 10, 20 June 1896, p. 17, 1 August 1896, p. 10, 30 March 1897, p. 16, 3 April 1897, p. 15, 8 May 1897, p. 16, 24 July 1897, p. 16, 28 August 1897, p. 10, 18 September 1897, p. 16, 2 October 1897, p. 16.

²⁰¹ *Te Aroha News*, 18 December 1895, p. 2,

²⁰² *Ohinemuri Electoral Roll, 1899*, p. 36; *Te Aroha News*, 22 February 1900, p. 2.

Hall'.²⁰³ The following year she married a Wellingtonian,²⁰⁴ and left Te Aroha.

Agnes Hamilton was a teacher aged 26 when she married William George Sheriff Jeffrey, a Waiorongomai miner,²⁰⁵ in December 1885.²⁰⁶ The following May, she was appointed a temporary assistant teacher at Te Aroha while one teacher was absent for a few weeks.²⁰⁷ Although, according to her 1948 recollection, she subsequently became a teacher at Waiorongomai for 'many years',²⁰⁸ she was never included in the official list of teachers.²⁰⁹ In mid-1895 she became postmistress and telephonist at Waiorongomai.²¹⁰ In 1903, her husband died, aged 49, from miners' complaint, leaving her with five children aged between 16 years and nine months.²¹¹ The following year she moved to Auckland and became postmistress at Grey Lynn. In 1948, when in her ninetieth year, she told the *Te Aroha News* that 'for 40 years I was a government employee, first as a school teacher and then as a postmistress'.²¹²

Dressmaking was a common occupation for unmarried women, as illustrated by a brief advertisement: 'Misses Goldsworthy, dressmakers, Waiorongomai'.²¹³ Frances Mary Quinlan, sister of Patrick,²¹⁴ advertised in 1884: 'WANTED, a Good Assistant or Apprentice to the Dressmaking. Apply to Miss Quinlan, Te Aroha'.²¹⁵ The following August she again advertised for an apprentice.²¹⁶ Four months later, at the age of 33, she married a

²⁰³ 'Te Aroha', *Observer*, 2 November 1901, p. 26.

²⁰⁴ Marriage Certificate of Ellen Louisa Featon, 18 June 1902, 1902/6383, BDM; Marriage Notice, *Auckland Star*, 12 July 1902, p. 8.

²⁰⁵ See William Jeffrey to James Mills, 16 March 1895, 13 April 1895, Mines Department, MD 1, 97/1072, ANZ-W; *Te Aroha News*, 26 September 1885, p. 2, 23 January 1895, p. 2, 6 February 1895, p. 2, 20 February 1895, p. 2.

²⁰⁶ Marriage Certificate of Agnes Hamilton, 30 December 1885, 1885/2851, BDM.

²⁰⁷ *Te Aroha News*, 15 May 1886, p. 2.

²⁰⁸ *Te Aroha News*, 10 February 1948, p. 5.

²⁰⁹ See paper on education in the Te Aroha district in the nineteenth century.

²¹⁰ *New Zealand Gazette*, 25 July 1895, p. 1140; *Cyclopedia of New Zealand*, vol. 2, p. 835.

²¹¹ Death Certificate of William George Sheriff Jeffrey, 3 May 1903, 1903/2672, BDM.

²¹² *Te Aroha News*, 10 February 1948, p. 5.

²¹³ Advertisement, *Te Aroha News*, 26 May 1888, p. 7.

²¹⁴ See paper on Patrick Quinlan.

²¹⁵ Advertisement, *Te Aroha News*, 1 November 1884, p. 7.

²¹⁶ Advertisement, *Te Aroha News*, 29 August 1885, p. 7.

miner,²¹⁷ which probably meant her dressmaking days would soon be over. A daughter of George Sherlock, a cordial manufacturer at Te Aroha,²¹⁸ never married, and was still working as a dressmaker and living with her parents after her father retired.²¹⁹

Daniel James Frazer was an ironmonger at Te Aroha before leaving the colony in 1889.²²⁰ Two years previously, his wife, Louisa Jane Gleeson, whom he had married in 1882 when she was aged 24,²²¹ had purchased the Premier Bakery, and continued this business under her name.²²² Presumably she employed a baker and other staff, as she had two small children.²²³ Three months after acquiring the bakery, it was reported that 'Mrs Frazer has recently opened up as a confectioner (in connection with her bakery), in premises immediately opposite the Hot Springs Hotel; tea, coffee, etc, being also obtainable'.²²⁴ Another three months later, she became a 'general storekeeper' and gave up the bakery.²²⁵ By April 1888 she had 'disposed of her grocery business'.²²⁶

Joseph Bailiff Heathcote, a builder and contractor,²²⁷ died in the asylum in 1893, aged only 39.²²⁸ He was committed, just three months

²¹⁷ Marriage Certificate of Frances Mary Quinlan, 27 December 1885, 1885/3855, BDM.

²¹⁸ See *Cyclopedia of New Zealand*, vol. 2, p. 830; *Te Aroha News*, 19 July 1933, p. 1.

²¹⁹ *Te Aroha News*, 3 November 1926, p. 4.

²²⁰ See *Te Aroha News*, advertisement, 7 July 1883, p. 3, 13 September 1884, p. 2, 8 February 1885, p. 2, 27 February 1886, p. 2, 21 August 1886, p. 2, 4 June 1887, pp. 2, 3, 26 November 1887, p. 2, 14 April 1888, p. 7, 19 May 1888, p. 2; *Te Aroha Correspondent*, *Waikato Times*, 26 February 1889, p. 2, 9 April 1889, p. 2.

²²¹ Marriage Certificate of Daniel James Frazer [recorded as Frazier], 3 January 1882, 1882/200, BDM.

²²² *Te Aroha News*, 16 April 1887, p. 3, advertisement, 7 May 1887, p. 3.

²²³ Birth Certificates of Lydia Robley Frazer, 11 October 1884, 1884/6205; Osborne Ernest Frazer, 16 July 1886, 1886/9967, BDM.

²²⁴ *Te Aroha News*, 9 July 1887, p. 2.

²²⁵ *Te Aroha News*, 15 October 1887, p. 2, 29 October 1887, p. 3.

²²⁶ *Te Aroha News*, 4 April 1888, p. 2.

²²⁷ See *Te Aroha Mail*, 10 June 1882, p. 2; Magistrate's Court, *Thames Star*, 17 October 1884, p. 2; *Waikato Times*, *Te Aroha Correspondent*, 16 August 1883, p. 2, Piako County Council, 15 September 1883, p. 2, 29 December 1883, p. 2, 9 July 1889, p. 2; *Te Aroha News*, letter from T.G. Sandes, 22 September 1883, p. 3, 30 June 1883, p. 2, Domain Board, 13 June 1885, p. 2, 5 September 1885, p. 2, 23 January 1886, p. 2, 26 February

before his death, because of ‘mania caused by worry’; he was ‘incapable of employment, being restless and excited’.²²⁹ In 1883, he had married Mary Jane Hotchin, when he was aged 28 and she was 21.²³⁰ On his death he left four young children, a ‘small house mortgaged for £75’, and ‘no other property’.²³¹ His widow would remain at Te Aroha until she died in 1947, when her estate was valued at £3,000 9s 11d.²³² Forced to earn a living, she ran Hazelwood House for many years.²³³ In 1898, the *Thames Star* wrote that ‘visitors to Te Aroha cannot do better than take up their abode at Mrs Heathcote’s private boarding house, where they will find every convenience. The house is situated within three minutes walk of the baths and is in all respects a most comfortable establishment’.²³⁴

Few women had officially certified skills, the only nurse and midwife in the late nineteenth century being the unqualified Ann Devey.²³⁵ A new skill, typesetting, was acquired late in the nineteenth century, noted by the O.M. in 1895 as another excuse to gossip. ‘I see our local paper has girls employed in the type-setting line. G. says E. is teaching him the art’.²³⁶ Three years later he mentioned ‘our lady printer’.²³⁷ Five months later it was reported that ‘the new lady comp. seems to “take on” ’.²³⁸

Farming skills were always in demand, as illustrated when a Waiorongomai resident advertised in 1888 for a married couple: ‘WANTED – A Good Steady Farm Hand, to take entire charge of a small farm; wife

1887, p. 2, 25 April 1888, p. 2, 8 September 1888, p. 2, 6 July 1889, p. 2, 21 May 1890, p. 2.

²²⁸ Death Certificate of Joseph Bailiff Heathcote, 8 June 1893, 1893/2122, BDM.

²²⁹ Avondale Asylum, Register of Admissions 1885-1896, no. 1849, YCAA 1021/2, ANZ-A; Inquest on Joseph Bailiff Heathcote, Inquests, Justice Department, J 46, 1893/341, ANZ-W.

²³⁰ Marriage Certificate of Joseph Bailiff Heathcote, 24 January 1883, 1883/1773, BDM.

²³¹ Avondale Asylum, Record Book of Investigations into Relatives’ Ability to Pay Maintenance 1890-1898, folio 111, YCAF 1044/1, ANZ-A.

²³² Probate of Mary Jane Heathcote, Hamilton Probates, BCDG 4420/P7160, ANZ-A.

²³³ *Wise’s New Zealand Directory*, 1898, p. 692; *Te Aroha News*, 24 September 1908, p. 2.

²³⁴ *Thames Star*, 23 November 1898, p. 2.

²³⁵ See paper on George Devey and his family.

²³⁶ ‘Te Aroha’, *Observer*, 2 March 1895, p. 21.

²³⁷ ‘Te Aroha’, *Observer*, 14 May 1898, p. 21.

²³⁸ ‘Te Aroha’, *Observer*, 15 October 1898, p. 21.

competent to milk and undertake the work of a small dairy'.²³⁹ Four years previously, a couple had advertised for work:

Wanted, a Situation by a Married Couple (one child only, eight years old). Man accustomed to all kinds of Station and Farm work, and competent to take entire charge. Wife first-class Cook, Dairy Woman, and Laundress. Excellent References.²⁴⁰

Working for farmers had its complications, as illustrated by the experience of Elizabeth Caldwell, wife of Thomas, a farm manager.²⁴¹ They both sued the owner

for wages due under agreement by the female plaintiff to take charge of and provide all labour necessary for the management of defendant's dairy at Waitoa between 1st and 9th September, and also one month's wages in lieu of notice, amounting in all to £15 17s 4d.... The defence was that plaintiff had left her employment without permission for a period of six days, and further that she had entertained her husband on the premises in contravention of her engagement. The defence was sustained as regards the claim for wrongful dismissal, and judgment given for £2 10s for the services rendered.²⁴²

Why a wife should not be allowed to 'entertain' her husband was not explained. After John Samuel Hill, formerly manager of the Waiorongomai tramway,²⁴³ died at the age of 63, his widow ran his small farm.²⁴⁴

The remuneration of charwomen and washerwomen was very low, as illustrated by a widow's appeal for charitable relief in 1890. With children aged nine, eight, and seven, after her husband had died 19 months previously 'she had kept herself by washing, but now, owing to a number of men having left the mines, she is unable to do so any longer'.²⁴⁵ A woman appointed to clean the Waiorongomai school received just £6 10s a year.²⁴⁶

²³⁹ Advertisement, *Te Aroha News*, 8 September 1888, p. 7.

²⁴⁰ Advertisement, *Te Aroha News*, 1 November 1884, p. 7.

²⁴¹ See *Thames Advertiser*, 7 May 1881, p. 3, 5 March 1884, p. 3, 5 April 1884, p. 3.

²⁴² Magistrate's Court, *Waikato Times*, 17 December 1881, p. 2.

²⁴³ See paper on the Piako County tramway at Waiorongomai.

²⁴⁴ Death Certificate of John Samuel Hill, 22 January 1941, 1941/16309, BDM; *Wise's Auckland Provincial Directory 1943* (Auckland, 1943), p. 423.

²⁴⁵ Hospital and Charitable Aid Board, *Waikato Times*, 8 May 1890, p. 2.

²⁴⁶ *Te Aroha News*, 12 April 1884, p. 7.

Such work was often taken up because of financial difficulties. Jean Erasmus, wife of carpenter and miner John,²⁴⁷ in December 1889 was chosen to clean the Te Aroha school for £1 3s 4d, less than she would have received had she been required to clean the ‘closets’ as well, which was done by a man.²⁴⁸ John had been admitted to the Thames hospital earlier that year, and died from heart disease, aged 59, nearly four months after Jean’s appointment.²⁴⁹ His obituary revealed he had been unable to provide for his family in his last years, having ‘suffered for a length of time from a complication of diseases, and his case had long been considered hopeless’.²⁵⁰ Four years after his death, Jean ‘applied for remission of rates on the grounds of poverty’.²⁵¹ In 1907 she qualified for an old age pension.²⁵²

In February 1898, a ‘respectable women between 40 and 50 years of age’ whose husband was ‘far from able-bodied’ was appointed to clean the warden’s office.²⁵³ Two months later, when this woman was neglecting this work to devote all her time to a boarding house, she was replaced with a woman whom the clerk of court believed ‘can be relied on. Her husband has, through an accident, been unfit for work for some time past, and she herself endeavours to make a living by doing washing & odd jobs’.²⁵⁴

Paying such women was not a priority for some. In 1883, ‘another champion mean man has been unearthed at Te Aroha. Four months ago a friend entrusted him with 1s 6d to pay a washerwoman. When he returned the other day, he found that the money had not been paid to the poor woman’.²⁵⁵

²⁴⁷ For examples of his working life, see *Te Aroha News*, 21 March 1885, p. 2, 8 August 1885, p. 7.

²⁴⁸ Te Aroha School Committee, *Te Aroha News*, 4 December 1889, p. 2.

²⁴⁹ Death Certificate of John Erasmus, 27 March 1890, 1890/323, BDM; *Te Aroha News*, 20 February 1889, p. 2, 29 March 1890, p. 2.

²⁵⁰ *Te Aroha News*, 29 March 1890, p. 2.

²⁵¹ Piako County Council, *Waikato Times*, 18 September 1894, p. 7.

²⁵² Te Aroha Magistrate’s Court, Old Age Pension Claim Register 1899-1909, no. 92, BBAV 11503/1a, ANZ-A.

²⁵³ R.S. Bush to Under-Secretary, Justice Department, 11 February 1898, Te Aroha Warden’s Court, Letterbook 1883-1900, p. 456, BBAV 11534/1a, ANZ-A.

²⁵⁴ J.M. Hickson to R.S. Bush, 4 April 1898, Te Aroha Warden’s Court, Letterbook 1883-1900, p. 464, BBAV 11534/1a, ANZ-A.

²⁵⁵ *Observer*, 22 September 1883, p. 14.

Some women were employed at the hot pools. One abandoned wife with two children lost her charitable assistance of 5s per week after being appointed 'to a position at the baths'.²⁵⁶ After a labourer, Robert Michael,²⁵⁷ died in 1902, the borough council recorded its respect for his work for it and selected his unmarried daughter from the 19 applicants to be a 'lady attendant in the domain ticket office' for £1 a week.²⁵⁸

Some wealthier residents employed servants, all female, and usually young. For instance, in 1882 a publican advertised for 'a Girl, about 15, for Hotel at Te Aroha, to make herself generally useful'.²⁵⁹ Three years later, a Waiorongomai resident sought a 14-year-old servant: 'Settler's daughter preferred'.²⁶⁰ Unusually, in 1884 two shopkeepers advertised for 'an Elderly Female as Cook and Housekeeper, for Waiorongomai Store'.²⁶¹ An ability to undertake a variety of tasks was an asset, some advertisements specifying a general servant.²⁶² Another asset was indicated when the postmaster's wife advertised for 'a Respectable Young Girl as Servant'.²⁶³ There was sufficient demand for servants for one woman to establish, briefly, a servants' registry.²⁶⁴ Although the rates of remuneration were not recorded, presumably they were similar to those in Auckland, where housekeepers and cooks received from 15s to 20s a week, housemaids from 10s to 12s, and parlour maids 12s.²⁶⁵

Servants were viewed as inferiors.²⁶⁶ Some mature ones caused amusement by their remarks:

Overheard in Whitaker Street. First lady-help (meeting a friend who has recently obtained a similar situation): "Well, Mary, how do you like your new place?" Second lady-help: "Very well indeed. When I told some of my friends that I was going to Mrs ----, they

²⁵⁶ Waikato Hospital and Charitable Aid Board, *Waikato Times*, 7 December 1893, p. 5.

²⁵⁷ See paper on his life.

²⁵⁸ *Auckland Weekly News*, 22 May 1902, p. 32.

²⁵⁹ Advertisement, *Thames Star*, 14 August 1882, p. 3.

²⁶⁰ Advertisement, *Te Aroha News*, 7 November 1885, p. 7.

²⁶¹ Advertisement, *Te Aroha News*, 26 April 1884, p. 7.

²⁶² Advertisements, *Thames Star*, 11 December 1883, p. 2, *Te Aroha News*, 28 November 1888, p. 7.

²⁶³ Advertisement, *Te Aroha News*, 14 February 1885, p. 7.

²⁶⁴ Advertisement, *Te Aroha News*, 9 June 1883, p. 1.

²⁶⁵ *Waikato Times*, 13 May 1884, p. 2.

²⁶⁶ See paper on social relations and class divisions in the Te Aroha district.

said I would never get along with her husband: but I think he's just splendid."²⁶⁷

In 1910, the *Te Aroha News* published an article on 'The Servant Girl', written by a 'Mere Man':

She's a silly creature, but I am sorry for her; a great deal sorrier than I am for the mistress with whom she will not abide. Though I am Mere Man, I have some knowledge of her, for I have seen her in my own house, and in the houses of my friends and in those of my acquaintances. Also I have had the privilege of observing the dissection of her by my lady friends. Also my wife has told me many things about her.

To be sure there are exceptions to the rule that she is silly. She is a paragon - in patches - but I wish she were less severe on the crockery. I have paid for a new tea set and a new dinner service this year, and all because of her. But her silliness - she smirks - barring the exceptions - and she giggles. She would feign hunt fabulous wild game - the boy of her futile imagination; she discusses volubly with her fellows a tame topic - the vulgar boy of her acquaintance; she is entranced with the study of an unprofitable subject - the preposterous man of the tenth-rate novel. She spends more in dress - barring the exceptions - than her mistress, and carries all her worldly goods upon her back. But what can you expect? She is just as wise as her mother was before her and as her children will be after her.

However, in spite of her weaknesses, the little servant girl has my sympathies. Probably she has been trained with conspicuous unwisdom. Moreover - barring the exceptions - she has for ten shillings a week or maybe less, to do and to suffer what I wouldn't do and suffer for a thousand pounds a year. Her work is hard and her hours long - usually - and much of her toil is monotonous. But worse than the dreary labour and the long hours is the vulgar mistress. For vulgarity appears to thrive as luxuriantly in the drawing-room as in the kitchen; and democracy, though it has popularised education of a sort, has not diffused culture. Perhaps it is too much to expect her to succeed in a wide field when aristocracy has largely failed even in a small one.

Yes, they fill me with astonishment - some of the mistresses I know. Estimable women in many ways, mind you. They would be kind to the little servant if they didn't know her as a servant. But, somehow, it's only an "extra special" woman that can help being snobbish. The relation of superior to dependant seems too hard a thing to bear. I call to mind a lady I once knew - the wife of a professional man. I haven't the least doubt she considered herself

²⁶⁷ 'The Porcupine', 'Te Aroha Notes', *Waikato Argus*, 3 June 1897, p. 2.

on the road to Heaven. Was she not on calling terms with the leading houses? Still, her treatment of “the girl” always seemed to me to lack cordiality. For example, washing day. Girl has a heavy wash on hand. Up to her elbows in suds. Baby has a cold, and trickles at the nose. Mistress, to one of the elder children, “Go and tell the Object I want her.” Child at wash-house door, “Object, mother wants you.” The “Object” takes quite a long voyage upstairs and receives the order, “Creature get a handkerchief and wipe the baby’s nose.” In a little while there is a vacancy for “a girl.” “Objects” come and “creatures” go, but the vacancy, with spasmodic fillings, continues forever. Why should a vulgar nickname be used? And why should a busy girl be pestered with some petty office that Her High Mightiness Lady De Prigge might well discharge in person?

I have said that, barring exceptions, the little servant girl is silly. I have known quite a number of exceptions. In my own house I think that, on the average, there have been about three exceptions to one case that follows the rule. Some luck must have come my way. I have noticed, however, that the exceptions occur usually in houses where “the girl” is regarded as belonging to the same species of animal as the mistress.²⁶⁸

How Frances Maria McFarland, the wife of Edgar James McFarland, an Anglican clergyman for some years at Te Aroha,²⁶⁹ treated a servant created considerable excitement in 1900. After leaving the Parnell Orphan Home, Daisy Reilly lived with them and their children for ‘about 15 months’ before suddenly vanishing.²⁷⁰ The *Te Aroha News* reported her ‘strange disappearance’ on a Sunday night, ‘taking with her everything she possessed – the window being her mode of exit.... No reason can be assigned for her sudden disappearance, as the girl had declined any effort made to secure her another place, and she seemed lately to be especially happy’.²⁷¹ An unflattering description was published:

She is between 15 and 16 years of age, about 4ft 4in high, strong short build, long body, short legs, small eyes, brownish complexion, and is not very intelligent looking; her neck also

²⁶⁸ ‘Mere Man’, ‘The Servant Girl’, *Te Aroha News*, 19 July 1910, p. 2.

²⁶⁹ See *Ohinemuri Electoral Roll, 1900*, p. 61; *New Zealand Herald*, 29 December 1944, p. 6.

²⁷⁰ *Waikato Argus*, 2 April 1900, p. 2.

²⁷¹ *Te Aroha News*, 1 March 1900, p. 2.

appears to be sunk between her shoulders, so she would be easily recognised.²⁷²

Another newspaper gave her height as ‘about 4ft 8in with a stoop’.²⁷³ There were rumours ‘that she had been forcibly abducted’.²⁷⁴ After a week of a fruitless police search, it was feared that she might have ‘met with some mishap’.²⁷⁵ ‘Nercus’ was appalled:

We eat and drink and sleep, whilst the fate of a child of tender years (known to be weak minded) is uncertain, perhaps lured away to a fate worse than death; and yet with the odour of sanctity we preach to the ninety and nine, and forget the one wandering on the bleak mountainside. Alas for the rarity of Christian charity! If it had been the pet of one of our own households, what efforts would have been put forth to find the wanderer? but because she may be a nameless waif, never having known the love and care of a mother or the protection of a father, who cares? If it be as report says I trust that the young men, and those who have children of their own, will at once come forward, give their names in to your office as willing to organise a systematic search of mountain and valley, and so solve the uncertainty now existing.²⁷⁶

Shortly afterwards, Mrs McFarland received a letter from Daisy, posted in Morrinsville:

I wish you would understand by this that I am not going to come back to your place to be sent back to the Home or anywhere else; I am quite safe where I am now, so far. I will die before I’ll come back if you go on hunting for me.²⁷⁷

One month later, she was found in a whare on Te Aroha mountain in ‘a pitiable condition. She was clad in a pair of men’s trousers and was lying in a corner of the hut on some straw beside a dog’.²⁷⁸ As described by the *Observer*, early on a Sunday morning three men

²⁷² *Waikato Argus*, 2 April 1900, p. 2.

²⁷³ *Te Aroha News*, 1 March 1900, p. 2.

²⁷⁴ *Observer*, 14 April 1900, p. 5.

²⁷⁵ *Te Aroha News*, 6 March 1900, p. 2.

²⁷⁶ Letter from ‘Nercus’, *Te Aroha News*, 6 March 1900, p. 2.

²⁷⁷ *Te Aroha News*, 10 March 1900, p. 2; *Thames Star*, 14 March 1900, p. 2.

²⁷⁸ *Thames Star*, 14 April 1900, p. 2.

discovered the derelict in a small broken-down whare in a secluded spot on the mountain side, where she admitted she had been living since her disappearance, along with a man named Jack Hood. She was clad in a pair of man's trousers, and was lying in a corner of the shanty, upon some straw, which she shared with a dog.

(Was he John Hood, a miner, who usually worked at Maratoto?)²⁷⁹ One of the searchers, Robert Edward Crombie, a local photographer,²⁸⁰

took her to his home and reported the circumstances of the discovery to a public meeting of the Women's and Children's Protection Society, which was held in the Town Hall on the Monday evening, the Rev E.J. McFarland presiding. Mr Crombie *inter alia* stated that the girl had stated that her reason for leaving the vicarage was that she had been treated cruelly. It was decided that the committee should investigate the case, and the president, after stating his utter disbelief in the girl's statement, resigned his position in connection with the Society.

Both Crombie and Constable Fred Wild investigated her claims. Before their verdict was released, McFarland wrote to the local newspaper explaining that Daisy told those questioning her that 'she had been kindly treated; she had never been punished or struck in any way. The only thing alleged was that on the 11th November Mrs McFarland had pushed her down the steps and hurt her side'. McFarland stated that Daisy had 'muttered then she would run away, but subsequently begged Mrs McFarland to give her another trial, and since then had behaved much better'. His letter concluded that she 'did not run away, but was willfully enticed, as all the circumstances prove, or why did she not go four months ago?', when, she claimed, she had been pushed.²⁸¹

The committee reported to a meeting of the executive committee of the Te Aroha branch of the Society for the Protection of Women and Children:

Report of evidence given in the Court House, Te Aroha. Questions – Constable Wild – Daisy Reilly, you state that Mr and Mrs McFarland have been cruel to you. Reply – Mr McFarland has always been kind. Who was cruel? Reply – Mrs McFarland. How

²⁷⁹ See *Ohinemuri Electoral Roll, 1900*, p. 45

²⁸⁰ See *Ohinemuri Electoral Roll, 1900*, p. 21.

²⁸¹ *Observer*, 14 April 1900, p. 5.

was she cruel? She pushed me down the steps. Why did she push you down? I was taking some food from Allan's plate when she came and pushed me out of the back door and down the steps, telling me that I could go away. In falling I hurt my side. When did it happen? On the Saturday. Were there any other acts of cruelty; did she ever strike you or beat you? No; once she took the broom from my hand and told me to sweep quicker. Did you get sufficient food? Yes. Sufficient clothes? Yes. Any other acts of cruelty? Do you remember none? Do you think she intended to hurt you to make you fall? No answer. What did you do after? I came in and had my dinner, and in the afternoon went to [Adam] Fawcett's [a local farmer].²⁸² Did anyone else in the house treat you cruelly? No one. Was anyone else in the house unkind? No one.

Mrs McFarland stated the date was November 11 – four months ago. She remembered the time referred to. She had some visitors in the front room, and hearing an uproar in the kitchen, where the children were having their dinner, she came in and found Daisy teasing the youngest child. She remonstrated with her, and on her refusing to stop she ordered her out of the kitchen, whereupon the girl put out her tongue, making a face. She then placed her hands upon Daisy's shoulder, and pointed her to the back door and the porch, and ordered her to go out at once. Daisy went down the steps. She may have slipped, but when on a level with the kitchen window she looked in and made faces. The girl stayed out until recalled.

As the committee deemed Daisy's statement 'exaggerated' and her charge not sustained, it was not referred to its head office.²⁸³ The *Observer* commented that some locals had 'been putting the Rev. E.J. McFarland into hot water, or, at any rate, trying to do so', and did not consider Daisy had been abducted, rather that 'she was a willing agent'. There was 'no reasonable ground for concluding she had been unkindly treated', and McFarland's resignation from the protection society was 'both impetuous and uncalled for'. If the girl was under-age, Hood, with whom she had lived for six weeks, 'should be made to answer for his conduct.'²⁸⁴ (No criminal charge was made against him.)

²⁸² See *New Zealand Herald*, 7 November 1893, p. 6, Death Notice, 17 January 1924, p. 1; *Ohinemuri Electoral Roll, 1900*, p. 30; Piako County Council, *Waikato Times*, 20 April 1905, p. 3.

²⁸³ Te Aroha Correspondent, *Thames Star*, 18 April 1900, p. 2.

²⁸⁴ *Observer*, 14 April 1900, p. 5.

Another case of harsh treatment of a servant was implied by an 1890 report:

The amusing scene was witnessed on Saturday night last of three persons marching down the street in single file. The leading man was observed to be the Copper, carrying a swag; the second a female, who I understand had run away through bad treatment; and in the rear was a man of higher rank, with a large stock whip in his hand.²⁸⁵

Presumably her whip-wielding master had accused her of theft, but she was not placed in the lock-up; in the absence of the relevant court records, it is not known whether she was charged.

UNPAID WORK

In an age with few labour-saving devices and, for most living in this district, few servants, hard (and unpaid) work was the expected lot of most women, although once their children became older they were required to assist. In 1892, a Waiorongomai resident wrote that his wife had recently been very ill, 'which has left her so weak and low that I am afraid she would never be able to undertake the duties of a Settler wife'.²⁸⁶ Most of these duties were the care of husband, children, and house and garden or small farm.

Agricultural and horticultural shows illustrated some of the required domestic skills. In the first Te Aroha one, in 1895, women won all the prizes for pot plants, all but one prize for cut flowers, and all the cookery categories and collections of grasses.²⁸⁷ Two years later, they won almost all the prizes for cut flowers, butter, eggs, and poultry, and all the prizes for bottled fruit, jam, pickles, chutney, jellies, tomato sauce, and cookery (apart from a man with the best shortbread, unless the newspaper left the 's' off 'Mrs').²⁸⁸ Three years later, there was 'a really splendid collection of bottled fruits, which the judge stated were all worthy of high commendation, and

²⁸⁵ 'Te Aroha', *Observer*, 26 July 1890, p. 18.

²⁸⁶ G.R. Beeson to Commissioner of Crown Lands, Auckland, 20 November 1892, Lands and Survey Department, BAAZ 1108/103a, ANZ-A.

²⁸⁷ *Te Aroha News*, 9 March 1895, p. 2.

²⁸⁸ *Auckland Weekly News*, 6 March 1897, p. 35.

he had some difficulty in deciding which of the competitors was best'.²⁸⁹ Women won prizes for jam, ham, dried hops, pickles, tomato sauce, chutney, jellies, dried hops, hen eggs, duck eggs, dressed poultry, butter (salted, unsalted, and fancy), clotted cream, bread made with yeast and with baking powder, plain and fancy scones, jam tarts, puff pastry, jam rolls, currant cakes and buns, seed cakes, and shortbread. They also won awards for cut flowers, pot plants, and needlework.²⁹⁰

Dressmaking was another desirable skills, as illustrated by a report in the local newspaper in 1895:

Miss Forbes is now at Te Aroha giving lessons in the "Excelsior" system of dress-cutting, making, etc. Dress makers and ladies that would like either themselves or their daughters to learn how to cut and make perfect fitting dresses without any fitting on in so short a time as six or seven lessons should not miss this opportunity.²⁹¹

One Waiorongomai woman thought of a way to make domestic chores easier: in 1890, Laura Graham, whose life has not been traced, applied for a patent for 'a scraper-attachment to brushes'.²⁹²

FINANCIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

A minority of women had money of their own, held separately from their husband's estate, though they usually provided it to their husbands as part of the family's capital. In an 1889 case, for instance, the wife of a Te Aroha West farmer, shortly after her marriage, had lent her husband '£150, receiving as security an assignment, and subsequently also a Bill of Sale over the stock, furniture and effects the property of her husband; neither of which, however, had been registered as was necessary in order to comply with the Chattels Securities Act'. She had brought this money from Ireland, and within two years her husband had spent all but 'some £40 to £50' on the farm and the upkeep of his paralyzed sister. She commented that 'she never anticipated, when she married, having to support her husband's people'.²⁹³

²⁸⁹ *Thames Star*, 30 January 1900, p. 4.

²⁹⁰ *Te Aroha News*, 30 January 1900, p. 2, 1 February 1900, pp. 2-3.

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

²⁹² *New Zealand Gazette*, 10 July 1890, p. 781.

²⁹³ Magistrate's Court, *Te Aroha News*, 6 April 1889, p. 7.

Edwin Hadfield, a Waiorongomai miner who wanted to be a publican,²⁹⁴ was another example of how wives assisted their husbands' business ventures. In explaining why he became bankrupt, Hadfield stated that his wife 'had £490, which was expended partly in living and partly in the erection of the hotel', the balance of the cost being borrowed from a brewer.²⁹⁵

Another wife whose property was used by her husband for their mutual benefit was Mary Ann Moffat. In April 1882, her first husband, publican Edwin Missen,²⁹⁶ died, aged 39, from liver disease.²⁹⁷ Three months later, she married John Moffat; they both gave their ages as 23, but when she had married Missen in 1878 she had claimed to be 21.²⁹⁸ From her first husband she had inherited £475 4s 4d.²⁹⁹ She also owned ten shares in a Thames mining company but sold these in the month following his death.³⁰⁰ Moffat, a publican at Waitoa when they married, later became a butcher at Te Aroha.³⁰¹ At a meeting of his creditors in mid-1886, he agreed to pay half his liabilities of £157 within 12 months and the balance within another six months, his wife agreeing 'to have the said debt charged against her estate'.³⁰² Three months later, their Waitoa house, which was her property, was completely destroyed by fire. It was insured for £150 and the furniture for £100.³⁰³ Moffat, his wife, and their three young children were all asleep when it caught fire early in the morning, and when discovered the fire could not be put out. It was believed to have started from clothes drying beside the stove in the kitchen.³⁰⁴ Although many clothes and

²⁹⁴ See paper on the New Find mine.

²⁹⁵ District Court, *Thames Star*, 6 August 1884, p. 2.

²⁹⁶ See *Auckland Weekly News*, 23 November 1878, p. 8, 21 June 1879, p. 16, 28 June 1879, p. 13; *Thames Star*, 8 March 1881, p. 2; *Waikato Times*, 3 May 1881, p. 2, 11 April 1882, p. 2.

²⁹⁷ Death Certificate of Edwin Missen, 10 April 1882, 1882/276, BDM.

²⁹⁸ Marriage Certificates of Edwin Missen, 21 March 1878, 1878/747; Mary Ann Missen, 8 July 1882, 1882/1730, BDM.

²⁹⁹ Testamentary Register 1876-1882, folio 161, BBCB 4208/1, ANZ-A.

³⁰⁰ Company Files, BADZ 5181, box 33 no. 201, ANZ-A.

³⁰¹ *Te Aroha News*, 11 August 1883, p. 2, 23 February 1884, p. 2, 9 January 1886, p. 2, 8 May 1886, p. 2, 12 June 1886, p. 2,

³⁰² *Waikato Times*, 15 June 1886, p. 3.

³⁰³ *Te Aroha News*, 11 September 1886, p. 2.

³⁰⁴ Te Aroha Correspondent, *Waikato Times*, 9 September 1886, p. 2.

the piano were saved, less than half the furniture was rescued. Mary had purchased both piano and house out of her private means. Moffat told a coroner's jury investigating the fire that he had 'not had any employment' for the previous four months. He had intended to go to the West Australian goldfields with a relative, leaving his family behind, and 'had not made any effort to sell the place'. After a farm manager gave evidence that the house had burnt slowly and that Moffat could have used water to try to put it out, the jury's verdict was that, whilst there was no evidence how the fire started, it was 'of opinion that Mr Moffat neglected to take ordinary means to extinguish the fire'.³⁰⁵ The implication was that he wanted the insurance money. Immediately afterwards, his wife's furniture and effects and the freehold allotments and cottage she owned were sold,³⁰⁶ and they left the district.

Edward Hugo Ross Raue was, variously, a cook, a barber, a butcher, and a labourer.³⁰⁷ Financially insecure, immediately after participating in the Te Aroha rush he became bankrupt.³⁰⁸ Four years later, a Te Aroha shopkeeper in suing him for £3 15s 6d stated that Raue's wife, Anne Elizabeth, had told him that she would pay for the hats and other goods purchased for herself and her children but not for those bought for her husband. 'She was earning money for herself. Mrs Raue had several credits for money paid and work done; she used to work for me'. Raue admitted owing £2 13s 6d, which he was required to pay at the rate of 10s a month,³⁰⁹ an indication of his financial state.

Some women protected their capital by a marriage settlement. An example was Henry Elmes Campbell, one of the first solicitors to settle at

³⁰⁵ *Te Aroha News*, 18 September 1886, p. 2.

³⁰⁶ *Te Aroha News*, 25 September 1886, pp. 2, 3.

³⁰⁷ See Birth Certificates of Herbert William Raue, 29 July 1880, 1880/9402; Violet [Lawrence] Raue, 3 July 1883, 1883/10468, BDM; *Te Aroha News*, 11 August 1883, p. 3, recollections of R.J. Raue, 9 January 1937, p. 5; *Waikato Electoral Roll, 1884*, p. 18.

³⁰⁸ Te Aroha Warden's Court, Miner's Right no. 426, issued 25 November 1880, Miners' Rights Butt Book 1880, BBAV 11533/1c, ANZ-A; 'Return of all Bankruptcies and Assignments since the coming into operation of the "Debtors and Creditors Amendment Act, 1878": District Court of Auckland Holden in Hamilton', Legislative Department, LE 1, 1883/106, ANZ-W; recollections of R.J. Raue, *Te Aroha News*, 9 January 1937, p. 5; *Waikato Times*, 9 December 1880, p. 3.

³⁰⁹ Magistrate's Court, *Te Aroha News*, 17 May 1884, p. 2, 31 May 1884, p. 2.

Te Aroha, who invested heavily (and unprofitably) in property there.³¹⁰ In 1881, when sued for maintenance of his illegitimate child, born to his housemaid, he told the court that as his legal practice in Thames ‘was worth nothing’, he was living ‘upon his wife’s income’, although he had ‘no control over’ it. ‘He drew the money for her through the National Bank of New Zealand’.³¹¹ An associate who sued in April 1881 for money he was owed for work done said Campbell had ‘promised payment upon the death of his wife, when he expected to have plenty of money’.³¹² She died of cancer, aged 79, the previous month.³¹³ Rumour had it that Campbell came ‘into a considerable sum of money’ from her estate, but all he would admit to his creditors, in 1883, was that he had received ‘some money’ and that ‘there was nothing more coming to him from his wife’s estate. He was quite clear as to this’.³¹⁴ Her will, made in 1872, bequeathed to her ‘dear husband’ her leasehold house and all ‘monies and premises’ she was entitled to under her marriage settlement. When probate was granted, the value of her estate was estimated as being under £20, but turned out to be nil.³¹⁵

Some husbands registered their property under their wives’ names for reasons of financial prudence in case of adversity. In 1898, the *Observer* noted that ‘in Auckland about nine out of every twelve bankrupts make large assignments to their wives’.³¹⁶ Earlier, in its ‘First Reader’, allegedly for schoolboys, it explained this process:

Who is the man riding in the carriage? – He is a bankrupt.
 I thought bankrupts were men who had no money? – That is because you are young and innocent, my son. When you grow up you will know better.
 Will you tell me how it is this bankrupt has money? – It is very easily explained. Six months before this man went bung he made

³¹⁰ See *Thames Advertiser*, 5 May 1883, p. 3; *Te Aroha News*, 16 June 1883, p. 2, 30 June 1883, p. 3, 25 August 1883, p. 3, 1 September 1883, p. 2, 24 November 1883, p. 3, 27 December 1884, p. 2; *Waikato Times*, 23 February 1886, p. 2.

³¹¹ Police Court, *Thames Advertiser*, 16 February 1881, p. 3.

³¹² District Court, *Thames Advertiser*, 4 April 1883, p. 2.

³¹³ Death Certificate of Jane Campbell, 17 March 1881, 1881/1078, BDM.

³¹⁴ *Thames Advertiser*, 5 May 1883, p. 3.

³¹⁵ Probate of Jane Campbell, Probates, BBAE 1568/943; Testamentary Register 1876-1882, folio 115, BBCB 4208/1, ANZ-A.

³¹⁶ *Observer*, 13 August 1898, p. 15.

over all his property to his wife. A man seldom values his wife so much as when he is going to fail in business.

And so the bankrupt kept all his money? Most of it.

And what did his creditors get? – Sixpence farthing in the pound, my son.³¹⁷

Two years later, its article on ‘The Model Bankrupt’ included details of how a successful businessman protected his capital:

Like a prudent, honest, careful man, he now begins to make provision for those near and dear to him and to provide for his old age. He buys a nice suburban property; he builds a mansion; he insures his life for £50,000, payable in ten years’ time, the insurer paying proportionately heavy premiums which he carefully does out of the borrowed capital. Like a faithful and loving lord, he settles all these good things on his dear spouse, “all for pure love and affection.” ...

Then comes bad times; the Model Bankrupt has to succumb, and informs his creditors with tears in his eyes, “I am a ruined man.”

“What about your property and the life policy?” roar the indignant creditors.

“Ah, very sad,” he replies, “but you see it’s my wife’s, and she refuses to part with it.”

He pays 1d in the £, and is a duly discharged bankrupt. He walks Queen-street with a light and airy step; he wears broad-cloth and fine linen; he makes his trips to Europe, and drives his wife’s trap at home....³¹⁸

This was an Auckland example, but similar practices were common in smaller towns as well. That this was a long tradition was illustrated by a Thames example in 1878, when a bankrupt, in applying for his discharge, referred to his house, which seemed to be his only asset:

The house he lived in at present was not his own, he having sold it in 1872. His brother bought it back, and it was now in his wife’s name. He did not know how it came to be in his wife’s name. – The opposing creditor made a statement to the effect that McCormick had spent large sums of money without paying his creditors, and had made over his home, thereby defrauding his creditors. – His Honor said he did not think there was any

³¹⁷ ‘Observer First Reader’, Lesson III, *Observer*, 9 February 1889, p. 11.

³¹⁸ ‘Saunterer’, ‘The Model Bankrupt’, *Observer*, 15 August 1891, p. 4.

difference in this application from the usual run of bankruptcy cases and discharged the bankrupt.³¹⁹

There were dangers in this method of escaping creditors. In 1902, the *Observer*, in referring to a woman who had run off with a younger man along with her husband's property, held in her name, asked: 'When will men discontinue the folly of making over their property to their wives?'³²⁰ Nothing as dramatic as this happened in the Te Aroha district; and as residents were less wealthy as those lampooned by the *Observer* their financial difficulties involved less impressive amounts.

Some men also used other family members to evade creditors or the provisions limiting the number of sections one person could rent. For an instance of the former, when Edwin Hadfield was examined over his bankruptcy, he admitted having 'assigned a section of land to his son early in the year; could not account for the deed being dated 24th June – seven days before he filed'.³²¹ Robert Mackie provided a blatant instance of such behaviour.³²²

Robert Harris, a storekeeper and, later, land agent,³²³ in August 1895 applied for 12 unoccupied residence sites in Te Aroha 'for grazing purposes'.³²⁴ Two weeks later he reduced this number by half, but his wife sought another eight for the same purpose; the town board protested at one family having so many.³²⁵ Immediately they settled Harris and his wife, Anna Mary, acquired residence and business sites. In March 1883 he bought a residence site in Lipseytown, which was later transferred into her name.³²⁶ In June 1886 Anna bought another residence site there, selling it

³¹⁹ District Court, *Thames Advertiser*, 14 June 1878, p. 3.

³²⁰ *Observer*, 17 May 1902, p. 16.

³²¹ District Court, *Thames Star*, 6 August 1884, p. 2.

³²² See paper on Robert and Elizabeth Mackie.

³²³ See *Descriptive Handbook to the Waikato* (Hamilton, 1880), p. 30; *Te Aroha News*, 7 February 1885, p. 2, 12 March 1887, p. 3, 2 April 1887, p. 2, 10 March 1888, p. 2, 31 March 1888, p. 2, 16 June 1888, p. 2, 2 April 1890, p. 2, 23 July 1890, p. 2, 3 July 1909, p. 2.

³²⁴ Te Aroha Warden's Court, Mining Applications 1895, 41/1895, BBAV 11289/14a, ANZ-A.

³²⁵ Te Aroha Warden's Court, Mining Applications 1895, 46/1895, BBAV 11289/14a; Register of Applications 1883-1900, 47/1895, BBAV 11505/1a, ANZ-A.

³²⁶ Te Aroha Warden's Court, Rent Ledger 1881-1900, folder 26, BBAV 11501/1a, ANZ-A.

five months later to Harriet McLean, wife of William (discussed below), from whom she had purchased a business site on the previous day.³²⁷ They jointly mortgaged two allotments between 1887 and 1890.³²⁸ In 1888, two houses and their sections were held in his name and two sections, one with a stable, were held in hers.³²⁹ After his store burnt down, he explained that it and the attached four-roomed house were her property: 'I did not buy it, my wife exchanged another property valued at £100 for it'.³³⁰ She subsequently called tenders to remove the destroyed building.³³¹ Whereas he thanked one insurance company 'for their early settlement', she thanked another for their promptness; the stock has been insured in his name and the buildings in hers.³³² The following month, she arranged a bill of sale over her furniture and other chattels as security for a loan of £10.³³³ In the early twentieth century, his shop and two houses were in Anna's name.³³⁴ In 1909, when they left for Auckland, she sold these.³³⁵ She had had her own property, or at least held it in her name, before they settled in Te Aroha; in 1882 her Hamilton property was valued at £300.³³⁶ Harris had no freehold property at that time, having been forced to assign his estate over to his creditors in 1880 and to file as bankrupt in late 1882.³³⁷

³²⁷ Te Aroha Warden's Court, Rent Ledger 1881-1900, folders 303, 421, BBAV 11501/1a, ANZ-A.

³²⁸ Mortgages by Robert and A.M. Harris, 8 February 1887, Certified Instruments 1887, BBAV 11581/8a; 3 October 1888, Certified Instruments 1888, BBAV 11581/9a; 29 March 1890, Certified Instruments, 1890, BBAV 11581/11a, ANZ-A.

³²⁹ Te Aroha Town Board, Rate Book 1888, Section 15 Block II, Part Sections 2, 15 Block XI, Section 33 Lipsey's Block, Matamata-Piako District Council Archives, Te Aroha; Valuation Court, *Te Aroha News*, 18 May 1889, p. 2.

³³⁰ *Te Aroha News*, 10 March 1888, p. 2.

³³¹ *Te Aroha News*, 14 April 1888, p. 7.

³³² *Te Aroha News*, 10 March 1888, p. 2, advertisement, 14 April 1888, p. 7.

³³³ *Mercantile and Bankruptcy Gazette*, 28 April 1888, p. 129.

³³⁴ Te Aroha Borough Council, Rate Book 1906-1907, Section 15 Block XI, Section 2 Block XI, Matamata-Piako District Council Archives, Te Aroha.

³³⁵ *Te Aroha News*, 12 June 1909, p. 2, 31 July 1909, p. 2.

³³⁶ *A Return of the Freeholders of New Zealand*, p. H 22.

³³⁷ *Waikato Times*, 7 February 1880, p. 2, 3 June 1882, p. 3, 18 November 1882, p. 3, 21 November 1882, p. 3, 4 January 1883, p. 2, District Court, 10 February 1883, p. 3.

In the later 1890s, they jointly attempted to buy 25 acres of land close to Te Aroha from Hutana Karapuha,³³⁸ who, Harris claimed, after receiving 'more money than the land came to' refused to complete the conveyance and was sued for the money received.³³⁹ An earlier investigation had revealed that 'Hutana got into debt to a Storekeeper and promised under the threat of legal proceedings to sell him his interests in the block, but when he got the partition he conveyed the land absolutely to his wife'.³⁴⁰ Clearly he had learnt the ways of the wily Pakeha. When appealing, unsuccessfully, for government assistance to obtain this land, Harris stressed that they had nine children to provide for.³⁴¹

In 1895, Robert and Anna, along with another applicant, sought a

section amounting to one acre each for grazing purposes. – The Warden pointed out that he could not possibly grant such a large area to one individual, he would be willing to grant any one section as a residence site, provided they carried out the conditions of such. Applications withdrawn.³⁴²

In 1900, when a man sought the forfeiture of one of Anna's residence sites, which she had held since 1896 but had not occupied and had only partly fenced and was now offering for sale.

Mr Harris, on behalf of defendant, made a statement to the effect that this was a clear case of jumping, as the miner's right was only taken out a few days before action was taken. The section was not taken up for speculative purposes; it was intended for a

³³⁸ See Maori Land Court, Hauraki Minute Books no. 28A, pp. 30, 38; no. 36, p. 128; no. 44, pp. 17-18; no. 46, p. 363; no. 47, p. 147; no. 49, pp.287-288; no. 52, p. 338; no. 53, p. 371; no. 65, p. 65; Aroha Block XII Section 30, Hamilton Office, Maori Affairs Department, BACS A102, 1905/2, ANZ-A; *Te Aroha News*, 27 May 1914, p. 2

³³⁹ Robert Harris to Native Minister, 29 April 1899; Under-Secretary, Native Department, to Robert Harris, 16 June 1899, Aroha Block IX Section 29, Maori Land Blocks, Maori Affairs Department, MA 1, 1908/164, ANZ-W;

³⁴⁰ W.G. Mair to Chief Judge, Native Land Court, 16 March 1897, Aroha Block IX Section 30, Maori Land Blocks, H 983, Maori Land Court, Hamilton.

³⁴¹ Te Aroha Magistrate's Court, Civil Record Book 1896-1907, 17/1897, Judgement Summonses heard 10 January 1898, 1 April 1898, BCDG 11221/2a, ANZ-A; Magistrate's Court, *Waikato Argus*, 13 April 1897, p. 3, 13 May 1897, p. 3; Magistrate's Court, *Te Aroha News*, 13 January 1898, p. 2.

³⁴² Warden's Court, *Te Aroha News*, 30 November 1895, p. 2.

place of business for his daughter, who at that time was under age, and so could not have the section in her own name.

Under cross-examination, he admitted that his daughter 'already possessed a business and a residence site. The sections in question were under offer for sale because she wished to get some money'. He gave evidence, 'on defendant's behalf, that they had been in continuous occupation, during which they had fenced and grassed it at a cost of £23. He stated that this was the first test case of the sort, and there were some 125 sections similarly affected. They had expected some money from a land transaction', a reference to the failed attempt to acquire Hutana's land; if they had acquired this land 'they would have built, but as this was not forthcoming they were unable to do so'. He still hoped to build.

As they had a family, he thought it only right that they should make provision for them, and their intention had been to put up a place for their daughter, who would not then have to be paying rent to a stranger. He hoped the Warden would give him time, and they would put up a building as soon as their means would permit.

Plaintiff's counsel, after denying this was a test case, said 'it was a bare-faced attempt to hold a section for speculative purposes', Harris knowing 'perfectly well he was not complying with the Act'.

His Worship pointed out that any one over 14 years of age, who held a miner's right, could take up a residence site, and that therefore defendant's daughter could have originally taken up the section. He could not allow defendant to hold a residence site, seeing that both she and her husband were already provided for in that respect, and, moreover, resided elsewhere. He would not grant another site to anyone who was already the holder of one, and was against allowing a husband to hold one site while the wife held another, unless they were each prepared to reside on their own sections. He was not satisfied that the section in question was legally fenced, inasmuch as it was not sub-divided. He could not very well listen to the plea for time, otherwise such a case as this might be continued for years.

Forfeiture was granted, but Harris was given two weeks 'to remove his fencing material and some potatoes which he had in the ground'.³⁴³ As

³⁴³ Magistrate's Court, *Te Aroha News*, 8 February 1900, p. 2.

another example of Harris using his family to gain control of property, when secretary of the Te Aroha Public Hall and Reading Room Company in the early 1890s most of its shares were held by himself, Anna, and eight of their children, all minors.³⁴⁴

Purchasing property in the name of wives was both common and unremarkable. For instance, in 1886 a solicitor wrote to Elizabeth Fraser, wife of William, formerly the magistrate in Thames,³⁴⁵ about her husband's overdue promissory note, owed to a Thomas Hull. 'This pro: note was given we understand in part payment of property purchased from Mr Hull in your name and we are instructed to collect the amount at once'.³⁴⁶ Six years later, the solicitor told Fraser he was 'not able to negotiate the amount you require on Mrs F's "Tararu Property" ';³⁴⁷ the property was in her name, but he was treating it as his and seeking to raise money on it, no doubt with her approval.

Nathaniel Baskett, despite having 'been a farmer all my life' and having had 'the management of an estate in England',³⁴⁸ struggled to make a living for his family when farming at Waiorongomai and Gordon.³⁴⁹ In 1883 he started draining and farming part of the high school endowment.³⁵⁰ Three years later he owed £150 in rent, and, although initially sympathetic, in February 1887 the board won its claim for rent and re-possession of the

³⁴⁴ Company Files, BADZ 5181, box 41 no. 259, ANZ-A; for an example of his actions as secretary, see 'Te Aroha', *Observer*, 2 April 1892, p. 17.

³⁴⁵ See paper on Harry Kenrick.

³⁴⁶ James Russell to Elizabeth Fraser, 7 December 1886, Letterbook no. 33, p. 102, Jackson and Russell Papers, MS 360, Library of the Auckland Institute and War Memorial Museum.

³⁴⁷ Jackson and Russell to William Fraser, 6 January 1893, Letterbook no. 51, p. 68, Jackson and Russell Papers, MS 360, Library of the Auckland Institute and War Memorial Library.

³⁴⁸ Nathaniel and A.E. Baskett to Commissioner of Crown Lands, 4 June 1892, Lands and Survey Department, BAAZ 1108/102b, ANZ-A.

³⁴⁹ See *Te Aroha News*. 1 September 1883, p. 2, 29 September 1883, p. 2, 22 August 1885, p. 7, 5 March 1887, p. 3, 22 November 1888, p. 2; *Thames Advertiser*, 1 October 1883, p. 2, Thames High School Board, 6 June 1886, p. 2, Magistrate's Court, 26 February 1887, p. 3, 24 September 1887, p. 3.

³⁵⁰ *Te Aroha News*, 1 September 1883, p. 2, 29 September 1883, p. 2.

land.³⁵¹ When it sold the lease later in 1887, it described most of the land as ‘of First Class Quality ... all Fenced and Drained, and has been well cultivated for a number of years’.³⁵² Almost immediately after his former farm was sold, Baskett’s wife, Agnes, unsuccessfully applied for other farm sections there.³⁵³ The family continued to live at Waiorongomai, fencing their three village sections in 1888;³⁵⁴ presumably they did some very small-scale farming.

Having failed to succeed at Waiorongomai, Baskett tried to farm at Gordon while working mainly as a contractor making roads.³⁵⁵ At Gordon, Agnes, not her husband, was listed as a member of the settlement’s association, with 102 acres.³⁵⁶ Two years after obtaining this land, she was required to show cause why it should not be forfeited, as she had failed to be ‘continuously in residential occupation’.³⁵⁷ Baskett replied, ‘Pro Agnes E. Baskett’, outlining all the work done by himself and his eldest son; as most of his seven children required schooling, he could not settle at Gordon.³⁵⁸ One year later, Agnes was summonsed to force her to pay £20 10s, rent owing. She responded that she could pay half now and as she was ‘expecting money from England by the July English Mail’ she would send the remainder when it arrived.³⁵⁹ Shortly afterwards, she offered to pay £4 a month.³⁶⁰ After judgement was given against her for outstanding rent, she

³⁵¹ *Thames Advertiser*, 13 March 1886, p. 3, Thames High School Board, 6 June 1886, p. 2, Magistrate’s Court, 26 January 1887, p. 2,

³⁵² Advertisement, *Thames Advertiser*, 24 September 1887, p. 3.

³⁵³ *Te Aroha News*, 8 October 1887, p. 2.

³⁵⁴ *Te Aroha News*, 28 November 1888, p. 2.

³⁵⁵ Memorandum on arrears and legal proceedings, n.d., Lands and Survey Department, BAAZ 1108/102b, ANZ-A.

³⁵⁶ List of Members of Gordon Special Settlement Association, 16 March 1887, Lands and Survey Department, BAAZ 1108/102a, ANZ-A.

³⁵⁷ A.P. Etheridge (Chief Clerk, Crown Lands Board) to A.E. Baskett, 4 March 1889, Lands and Survey Department, BAAZ 1108/102a, ANZ-A.

³⁵⁸ Nathaniel Baskett ‘Pro Agnes E. Baskett’ to Crown Lands Board, 19 March 1889, Lands and Survey Department, BAAZ 1108/102a, ANZ-A.

³⁵⁹ A.E. Baskett to Thomas Humphries, 22 February 1890, Lands and Survey Department, BAAZ 1108/102b, ANZ-A.

³⁶⁰ A.E. Baskett to Thomas Humphries, 4 March 1890, Lands and Survey Department, BAAZ 1108/102b, ANZ-A.

made no further offers of payment.³⁶¹ In January 1891, she explained that she had not received the expected money from England and asked whether she could pay £3 a month.³⁶² As this offer was not accepted, the land was forfeited.³⁶³

They continued to rent land at Waiorongomai, most of it in Agnes' name. In 1889 they both held two sections: hers were valued at £40 and his at £10.³⁶⁴ Their lack of money meant more difficulties paying the rent. In 1889 Agnes was sued for outstanding rent amounting to £48.³⁶⁵ In 1892, she was ordered to pay arrears of rent on two Waiorongomai residence sites and forfeited them.³⁶⁶ In 1898 she was ordered to pay £2, arrears of rents, on two residence sites.³⁶⁷ Although they moved to Te Aroha in 1902,³⁶⁸ she continued to rent some sections at Waiorongomai. In 1903 she surrendered a residence site there, but two years later had two sections.³⁶⁹

When one of their sons was killed in an accident at Karangahake in 1894, they received £300 from his estate,³⁷⁰ the worst possible way to acquire money. As Baskett did not leave a will when he died, aged 80, in 1919,³⁷¹ it is not known how much he left to his family, but when his widow

³⁶¹ Thomas Humphries to Under-Secretary, Lands and Survey Department, 1 July 1890, Lands and Survey Department, BAAZ 1108/102b, ANZ-A.

³⁶² A.E. Baskett to Thomas Humphries, 10 January 1891, Lands and Survey Department, BAAZ 1108/102b, ANZ-A.

³⁶³ Memorandum on arrears and legal proceedings, n.d., Lands and Survey Department, BAAZ 1108/102b, ANZ-A.

³⁶⁴ Assessment Court, *Te Aroha News*, 18 May 1889, p. 2.

³⁶⁵ Te Aroha Magistrate's Court, Civil Record Book 1889-1896, 67/1889, BCDG 11221/1c, ANZ-A.

³⁶⁶ Te Aroha Warden's Court, Complaint Book 1880-1898, 2/1892, 3/1892, BBAV 11547/1a, ANZ-A.

³⁶⁷ Te Aroha Warden's Court, Complaint Book 1880-1898, 8/1898, BBAV 11547/1a, ANZ-A.

³⁶⁸ Te Aroha Correspondent, *Auckland Weekly News*, 6 March 1902, p. 33.

³⁶⁹ Te Aroha Warden's Court, Surrender of Section 110B Block V Waiorongomai, 29 September 1903, Complaints 1903, BBAV 11572/3a, ANZ-A; Piako County Council, Rate Book 1905-1906, Te Aroha Riding, Block V Lot 110B, Block VI Lot 133, Matamata-Piako District Council Archives, Te Aroha.

³⁷⁰ *Auckland Weekly News*, 15 December 1894, p. 15; 'Te Aroha', *Observer*, 29 December 1894, p. 22; *Mercantile and Bankruptcy Gazette of New Zealand*, 23 May 1895, p. 279.

³⁷¹ Death Certificate of Nathaniel Baskett, 4 November 1919, 1919/7500, BDM.

died nine years later her estate was estimated at being worth less than £500.³⁷²

James Clarke was a storekeeper at Te Aroha in the 1880s.³⁷³ His first major financial setback was in 1879, when he ‘was a great loser’ by a fire in an adjoining shop in Thames.

His large stock of goods, crockery, glassware, provisions, etc, was totally uninsured, and the way in which the various lines were innocently blended in the street, in the frantic effort to save something in case the fire extended, was a caution. To save the pieces, crockery and glassware were thrown together in admired disorder.³⁷⁴

In 1884, after he filed as bankrupt, his creditors had ‘a lengthy and animated discussion, in the course of which the bankrupt’s conduct was condemned in strong terms’.³⁷⁵ A motion was passed ‘That this meeting deprecate in the strongest terms the conduct of the bankrupt in not keeping a perfect set of books, and beg to call the attention of the Court to the fact that upon two previous occasions Mr Clarke has compounded with his creditors’. The estimated value of his assets meant a ‘deficiency’ of £123 18s 5d.³⁷⁶ The following year he was accused of fraudulent bankruptcy by hiding some assets. His wife, Margaret Ann, gave evidence that her husband had not known she had taken these goods from the store for the use of her children.³⁷⁷ The charge of fraudulent bankruptcy was ‘dismissed on technical grounds, His Honor holding that the debtor should have been formally asked by the Assignee if he had disclosed the whole of his

³⁷² Probate of Agnes Elizabeth Baskett, Probates, BBAE 1570, 597/27, ANZ-A.

³⁷³ See *Thames Advertiser*, 22 September 1876, p. 3, Police Court, 15 November 1878, p. 3, 22 March 1879, p. 3; *Thames Star*, 31 July 1882, p. 3, 1 August 1882, p. 3, 7 August 1882, p. 2; *Te Aroha News*, 29 November 1884, p. 2, 17 January 1885, p. 7; *Auckland Weekly News*, 7 June 1890, p. 5, Te Aroha Correspondent, 26 October 1895, p. 23.

³⁷⁴ *Thames Advertiser*, 22 March 1879, p. 3.

³⁷⁵ *Thames Star*, 26 November 1884, p. 2, 13 December 1884, p. 2.

³⁷⁶ *Thames Star*, 13 December 1884, p. 2.

³⁷⁷ Police Court, *Thames Advertiser*, 28 February 1885, p. 3.

estate'.³⁷⁸ All his property was sold for the benefit of his creditors, who received 1s in the £.³⁷⁹

In 1888, his son was convicted of fathering an illegitimate child and required to pay maintenance.³⁸⁰ Failure to pay this resulted in his being sentenced to two terms of imprisonment.³⁸¹ His mother, in attempting to avert the second imprisonment, told the magistrate that 'we have tried every possible means to raise the money to get the boy released. I have tried the Building Society and also the Bank to mortgage my property but failed to do so'.³⁸² Clarke claimed to be doing all he could to keep his son out of gaol by paying what he could, but the aggrieved grandfather of the child claimed he had more assets than he admitted.³⁸³ One year later, Clarke was sued for £36 12s which he had 'personally guaranteed to pay, on behalf of his son',³⁸⁴ whom he had saved from being returned to prison through this guarantee. Required to meet the debt to the mother of his 'natural' grandchild, he filed as bankrupt, stating that he had no assets at all.³⁸⁵ He gave his occupation as labourer.³⁸⁶ Afterwards, he became a dairy farmer at Waiorongomai.³⁸⁷ No doubt to protect himself from his creditors, the farm, its livestock, and all other property was held in his wife's name.³⁸⁸ She had always had some property, in 1877 having the same number of shares in a Thames mining company as her husband.³⁸⁹ In 1888, she owned their house in Te Aroha and purchased residence sites there in each of the following two

³⁷⁸ Supreme Court, *Thames Advertiser*, 28 March 1885, p. 3; Supreme Court, *Auckland Weekly News*, 4 April 1885, p. 14.

³⁷⁹ *Waikato Times*, 13 December 1884, p. 2; *Te Aroha News*, 17 January 1885, p. 7, 7 February 1885, p. 2, 14 February 1885, p. 2, 21 March 1885, p. 2, 1 August 1885, p. 2.

³⁸⁰ See paper on Robert and Elizabeth Mackie.

³⁸¹ *Te Aroha News*, 13 October 1888, p. 2, 10 April 1889, p. 2, 13 April 1889, p. 2, Magistrate's Court, 17 April 1889, p. 2.

³⁸² Magistrate's Court, *Te Aroha News*, 20 April 1889, p. 2.

³⁸³ Magistrate's Court, *Te Aroha News*, 15 May 1889, p. 2.

³⁸⁴ Magistrate's Court, *Te Aroha News*, 14 May 1890, p. 2.

³⁸⁵ *Te Aroha News*, 4 June 1890, p. 2, 14 June 1890, p. 2; *Mercantile and Bankruptcy Gazette*, 7 June 1890, p. 173.

³⁸⁶ *Auckland Weekly News*, 7 June 1890, p. 5.

³⁸⁷ Te Aroha Correspondent, *Auckland Weekly News*, 26 October 1895, p. 23.

³⁸⁸ *Te Aroha News*, 21 September 1895, p. 2, 16 October 1895, p. 3.

³⁸⁹ *Thames Advertiser*, 26 November 1877, p. 2.

years.³⁹⁰ Predeceasing her husband by six years in 1918, aged 74, she left an estate of £378 0s 9d.³⁹¹ Her freehold Auckland house was left to her unmarried daughter as a home for herself and Clarke.³⁹²

One grocer, Robert Elliott Laybourne, two months before selling his store, made an ‘absolute assignment’ of his furniture and effects to his wife, Kesiah Lily.³⁹³ Although he had done a good trade earlier,³⁹⁴ Laybourne’s financial position must have become less secure, for two months after assigning this property a trustee required all those with claims on his estate to lodge them promptly.³⁹⁵ Shortly afterwards, he was ordered to sell some of his possessions if a debt was not paid.³⁹⁶ In 1884 the magistrate noted that his house was in his wife’s name.³⁹⁷

Gossip columns occasionally referred to women in financial difficulties. In 1883, for instance, the Waiorongomai *Observer* Man asked why ‘the knight of the cleaver’, meaning a butcher, attempted ‘to cheat the girl out of her money?’ He also asked ‘How did those trustees succeed in bullying the woman into paying the money on that cheque?’³⁹⁸

Thomas Roberts, who mined at Waiorongomai for a short time in the 1880s,³⁹⁹ was an example of how poverty affected families. In 1892, the Waikato Hospital and Charitable Aid Board considered their case:

³⁹⁰ Te Aroha Town Board, Rate Book 1888, Block 36 Section 2, Matamata-Piako District Council Archives, Te Aroha; Te Aroha Warden’s Court, Rent Ledger 1881-1900, folios 220, 241, BBAV 11501/1a, ANZ-A.

³⁹¹ Death Certificates of Margaret Ann Clarke, 17 June 1918, 1918/1174; James Clarke, 19 June 1924, 1924/2174, BDM; Testamentary Register 1917-1918, folio 526, BBCB 4208/11, ANZ-A.

³⁹² Probate of Margaret Ann Clarke, Probates, BBAE 1569/1222, ANZ-A.

³⁹³ *Mercantile and Bankruptcy Gazette*, 16 April 1887, p. 114.

³⁹⁴ *Te Aroha News*, 16 August 1884, p. 2, 30 August 1884, p. 2, 13 September 1884, p. 2, 13 June 1885, p. 2, 8 May 1886, p. 2, 29 May 1886, p. 7, 12 June 1886, p. 2, 13 June 1886, p. 2, 2 April 1887, p. 2, 16 June 1887, p. 2.

³⁹⁵ *Te Aroha News*, 25 June 1887, p. 3.

³⁹⁶ *Te Aroha News*, 9 July 1887, p. 3.

³⁹⁷ Te Aroha Warden’s Court, Register of Applications 1885-1892, folio 1, BBAV 11505/7c, ANZ-A.

³⁹⁸ ‘Waiorongomai’, *Observer*, 2 June 1883, p. 170.

³⁹⁹ For his only claim, of which he was the sole owner, see Te Aroha Warden’s Court, Notices of Marking Out Claims 1884-1885, no. 35, BBAV 11557/2c; Register of Te Aroha Claims 1880-1888, folio 134, BBAV 11568/1a, ANZ-A.

Mrs [Mary] Roberts, Waiorongomai, applied for relief. Her husband has been away from her for six years, and although sending a little money, but not enough to keep her, and when he sent her the last £1 nine weeks ago, he said he was leaving his then address, and he did not say where he was going. He had gone to look for work, and had sent money from time to time, but not enough for her three children and herself.⁴⁰⁰

Temporary relief was granted, 5s a week, in stores;⁴⁰¹ no doubt there was a fear that if given cash, she might spend it on drink, although there was no indication that she drank. On the board's request, Roberts was traced to Reefton, where he was mining, 'but he had not earned 12s a week for some time past, things there being in a deplorable state'.⁴⁰² The following month, Mary reported that 'she had received some money from her husband with the promise of more in the future, and she would not require any further relief'. She thanked the board for its 'kind assistance',⁴⁰³ and never had to trouble it again. Although Roberts returned to his family, in his last years of life he cannot have earned much, for when he died at Waiorongomai in 1902 aged 56 he had suffered for the previous two years from heart disease.⁴⁰⁴

If a husband willfully failed to provide for his wife, it was grounds for separation. In 1906, a woman sought separation 'on grounds of willful neglect to provide complainant with reasonable maintenance. Ordered that Complainant be no longer bound to cohabit with the defendant her husband. Costs of the order 7/- to be paid by defendant'.⁴⁰⁵

ACTIVE IN COMMUNITY LIFE

Women were notable for being involved in church activities, as illustrated in the paper on religion and also, like their charitable acts, recorded in the examples of notable men and their wives given in this and

⁴⁰⁰ Hospital and Charitable Aid Board, *Waikato Times*, 3 August 1893, p. 2.

⁴⁰¹ Hospital and Charitable Aid Board, *Waikato Times*, 7 September 1893, p. 2.

⁴⁰² Hospital and Charitable Aid Board, *Waikato Times*, 5 October 1893, p. 2.

⁴⁰³ Hospital and Charitable Aid Board, *Waikato Times*, 2 November 1893, p. 2.

⁴⁰⁴ Death Certificate of Thomas Roberts, 12 July 1902, 1902/4555, BDM.

⁴⁰⁵ Te Aroha Magistrate's Court, Criminal Record Book 1896-1907, 4/1906, BCDG 11220/1b, ANZ-A.

other papers. Further examples of women active outside the home are given here.

Just as her husband, publican Ralph Lake Somers, was a prominent figure in Te Aroha affairs in the early twentieth century,⁴⁰⁶ Catherine Louisa Somers was a leading figure in its social life. Upon her death in 1936, she was recalled as being 'the popular hostess of the Hot Springs Hotel' and 'one of the social leaders of the district'.⁴⁰⁷ Her obituary provided considerable detail of her role:

Coming to Te Aroha some thirty three years ago, Mr and Mrs Somers took over the license of the Hot Springs Hotel, and it was in the active sphere of hostess that Mrs Somers claimed a wide circle of friends and was known far and near for her kindness and generosity. During the period 1906-14 when her husband became Mayor of Te Aroha Mrs Somers filled the position of Mayoress with every credit to herself and to the town.... To Mrs Somers fell to a great extent the responsibility of catering for the entertainment of many prominent visitors.... Her ably conducted garden parties, which were usually held in the domain amidst ideal surroundings, will be remembered by a host of the town's earlier residents, who recall with infinite pleasure the success of such functions and the capable and gracious manner in which the Mayoress handled them.

In the sporting sphere, too, Mrs Somers was a well-known and highly respected figure, and in this way afforded her husband ... every assistance and co-operation.

During the war period she was especially active in the promotion of patriotic movements, and ex-diggers will recall the royal welcome which awaited them on their return from active service, for which Mrs Somers was personally instrumental.

She was also an active member of the Catholic Church, and showed great interest in all things connected with it. A year or two following her retirement from the Hot Springs Hotel, Mrs Somers suffered a severe illness, which made her an invalid for the remainder of her life. In spite of this heavy handicap she continued to take a bright, intelligent interest in local affairs, and endeared herself to all who knew and visited her. Ever patient and cheerful in her suffering, and still exhibiting her life-long characteristic a sympathetic interest in others, she was loved by those who knew her intimately and many will mourn her passing.⁴⁰⁸

⁴⁰⁶ See section on publicans in paper on the drink problem in the Te Aroha district.

⁴⁰⁷ *Te Aroha News*, 20 July 1936, p. 1.

⁴⁰⁸ *Te Aroha News*, 22 July 1936, p. 1.

Some women's desire to develop their healing skills led to a meeting in February 1898 to form a class to learn first aid.⁴⁰⁹ The wives of two Anglican clergymen were treasurer and secretary.⁴¹⁰ Within a month, over 20 'of our more intelligent ladies' had enrolled, eight passing the St John's Ambulance examination three months later.⁴¹¹ During the influenza epidemic of 1918, Ellen Elizabeth Sherlock, wife of George, was a 'devoted nurse' who 'did not spare herself'.⁴¹²

The second topic to be debated by the Waiorongomai Debating Society asked: 'Is the mental capacity of the sexes equal'.⁴¹³ The arguments for and against were not reported, neither was the outcome, but, although involvement in the work of the various churches was commendable, any leading role taken by women was cause for comment. 'A novel feature' of the meeting to mark the opening of the Wesleyan church in 1881 'was an address by a lady, Mrs Harvey', the wife of a doctor and the first teacher at Te Aroha.⁴¹⁴ 'Mrs Harvey is a very fluent and graceful speaker, and greatly interested the audience by relating her experiences in connection with church work at the Great Queen-street Methodist Church, London'.⁴¹⁵ Politics, however, was another matter, as illustrated by one topic at a literary society debate in 1910: 'That women would lose the tribute of chivalry, if engaged in public life'.⁴¹⁶

Despite discouragement for women being associated with politics, some were noted for being interested and involved. When James Mills stood for mayor in 1898,⁴¹⁷ 'besides the sterner sex several ladies were present' at his election address.⁴¹⁸ 'A Female Elector', writing about some of the 'tickets' being run, claimed some people were standing 'with the avowed intention of being in opposition to the mayor'.⁴¹⁹ When Mills' daughter Alice died, her

⁴⁰⁹ *Te Aroha News*, 3 February 1898, p. 2.

⁴¹⁰ *Te Aroha News*, 5 February 1898, p. 2.

⁴¹¹ *Te Aroha News*, 3 March 1898, p. 2, 18 June 1898, p. 2.

⁴¹² *Te Aroha News*, 20 July 1951, p. 3.

⁴¹³ *Te Aroha News*, 24 May 1884, p. 7.

⁴¹⁴ See paper on education in the Te Aroha district in the nineteenth century.

⁴¹⁵ *Te Aroha Correspondent*, *Waikato Times*, 11 August 1881, p. 2.

⁴¹⁶ *Te Aroha News*, 1 September 1910, p. 2.

⁴¹⁷ See paper on his life.

⁴¹⁸ *Te Aroha News*, 5 July 1898, p. 2.

⁴¹⁹ Letter from 'A Female Voter', *Te Aroha News*, 9 July 1898, p. 2.

obituary recalled that, although she ‘for the most part led a retiring life in her family circle, she was a great reader and took a keen interest in politics – the latter being in line with the main interests of her well-known father’.⁴²⁰ Alice’s preference would have been for the political Left, which other women supported also. Margaret Lawless, wife of Thomas,⁴²¹ was one of those who nominated an Independent Liberal candidate for Ohinemuri in 1899,⁴²² and nine years later Christina Greening, wife of Walter, a mine manager,⁴²³ was one of the eight nominees of the Socialist candidate for this seat.⁴²⁴

Women were as patriotic as men during the Boer War. One woman complained that a committee appointed to raise money for the Transvaal War Fund had not promised to provide any money themselves. ‘A promenade concert was proposed, but in a matter of this sort the blood of the best of the land is worthy of something different from that. If the eight gentlemen who were elected as the Committee will each give £5, I will give £10’.⁴²⁵ During the First World War, Minnie Lipsey, wife of Augustus,⁴²⁶ was secretary of the Women’s Patriotic League and its entertainment committee.⁴²⁷ Her obituary stressed her involvement in the community:

In her younger days Mrs Lipsey was a keen golfer and won many medals and trophies in competitions at Te Aroha. She was a particularly fine church worker, being always kind and generous and ever ready to assist in any way possible in the various church organisations. She was a member of the Anglican Church Guild and also sang in the Anglican choir. One of the first choral societies in Te Aroha was started by Mrs Lipsey, and for a time she was associated with Miss [Ellen Louisa] Featon in a dancing school.

During the First World War she served on the Entertainment Committee and was one of the foundation members of the Patriotic Committee. Later she was a member of the Benevolent

⁴²⁰ *Te Aroha News*, 20 September 1943, p. 3.

⁴²¹ See paper on his life.

⁴²² *Ohinemuri Gazette*, 29 November 1899, p. 2.

⁴²³ See paper on Hardy’s Mines.

⁴²⁴ *Ohinemuri Gazette*, 9 November 1908, p. 2.

⁴²⁵ Letter from ‘a lady correspondent’, *Te Aroha News*, 13 January 1900, p. 2.

⁴²⁶ See paper on Akuhata Lipsey.

⁴²⁷ *Te Aroha News*, 25 August 1916, p. 2, 22 August 1917, p. 2.

Society, now defunct, and a foundation member of the Ambulance Brigade and gave valuable assistance on the Plunket Society.⁴²⁸

Participation in public issues was rarely noted, and was usually in connection with a matter of particular importance to women, as on the drink question in 1884:

The Blue Ribbon people here are still vigorously carrying out their special mission, and the ladies have now commenced active out of doors operations. Parties of them are canvassing the district for signatures to a petition to the Legislature praying that females may be allowed to vote in the regulation of the liquor trade. The document has been largely signed, and if the crusade is being carried on everywhere else as resolutely as it is here, there is every probability that their object will be gained.⁴²⁹

Petitions from all round New Zealand were presented later that year asking for a Local Option Extension Act enabling 'women of mature age' to vote on granting liquor licenses. The public petitions committee of parliament did not 'consider it necessary to offer any opinion'.⁴³⁰ Unfortunately the names of those who signed the Te Aroha petition have not survived.⁴³¹

Sometimes enjoying activities outside the home was combined with working for the churches, as illustrated in 1903: 'During the winter season monthly socials have been organized by the Te Aroha Methodist Church Ladies' Guild, and have been very successful. The usual programme has been music, parlour games, and refreshments'.⁴³² Unmarried women led the local branch of the Young People's Society of Christian Endeavour.⁴³³ When money was being raised to erect the Anglican church, 'a committee of ladies' worked 'for several months' to organize a bazaar.⁴³⁴

PHYSICAL ACTIVITIES

⁴²⁸ *Te Aroha News*, 3 August 1948, p. 4.

⁴²⁹ Te Aroha Correspondent, *Waikato Times*, 13 May 1884, p. 2.

⁴³⁰ Public Petitions Committee, *AJHR*, 1884, I-1, pp. 19-20.

⁴³¹ Legislative Department, LE 1, 1884/7, ANZ-W.

⁴³² Te Aroha Correspondent, *Auckland Weekly News*, 3 September 1903, p. 34.

⁴³³ *Te Aroha News*, 13 July 1895, p. 2, 31 August 1895, p. 2.

⁴³⁴ *Te Aroha News*, 13 November 1886, p. 2.

In February 1882, Sarah Wood, her husband John, her brother-in-law, John Bernard Kilian,⁴³⁵ ‘and a lady friend from Auckland’ rode up the new upper track to see the Waiorongomai mines. At the New Find, some rich specimens had just been found, ‘which the ladies did not forget to christen with brandy’. They were ‘the first ladies that have been courageous enough to face the dangerous task’.⁴³⁶ Quite apart from the dangers of the steep track, if they had left it there was a danger of becoming bushed. In May 1900, several ‘lady visitors’ staying scaled the mountain, left the track, became lost, and spent a night in the bush ‘only lightly clad’ before being found.⁴³⁷ The weather was also a problem, as illustrated in 1894: ‘Some of the fair sex of Te Aroha started for the mountain last week, but failed to reach the summit, as they were washed down’.⁴³⁸

Women were praised for their grace in physical activities. In 1882, ‘Mrs M.’ was ‘considered the most graceful horsewoman in the Waiorongomai district’.⁴³⁹ In 1889, a Waiorongomai correspondent reported on the local rink, or roller-skating, club. ‘The graceful skating of many of the ladies was also much admired by those present; one especially whose name need not be mentioned, but who is a recent arrival here, was particularly pleasing in her sylph-like movements along the floor’.⁴⁴⁰

Women participated, in a minor way, in sports events. For example, when the golf club was established in 1897 there was ‘a prospect of several ladies joining’.⁴⁴¹ In 1890, ‘a novelty in boat racing’ occurred ‘when some Te Aroha young ladies pulled a mile race in two-oared boats, and showed themselves to be quite capable of handling the oars gracefully and well’.⁴⁴² Women always had a supporting role on sporting occasions. For example, in 1900, when the Te Aroha cricketers played a Waihou team, ‘at the close of the game the usual cheers were called for, special mention being made of the agreeable manner in which they were looked after by the ladies’.⁴⁴³ Nine years later, when a cricket match was held at Waiorongomai against a

⁴³⁵ See paper on his family.

⁴³⁶ Te Aroha Correspondent, *Waikato Times*, 28 February 1882, p. 2.

⁴³⁷ *Ohinemuri Gazette*, 30 May 1900, p. 2.

⁴³⁸ ‘Te Aroha’, *Observer*, 9 June 1894, p. 17.

⁴³⁹ *Observer*, 23 December 1882, p. 230.

⁴⁴⁰ Waiorongomai Correspondent, *Te Aroha News*, 29 June 1889, p. 2.

⁴⁴¹ *Ohinemuri Gazette*, 9 June 1897, p. 2.

⁴⁴² Te Aroha Correspondent, *Auckland Weekly News*, 8 October 1890, p. 23.

⁴⁴³ *Te Aroha News*, 6 March 1900, p. 2.

Morrinsville team, 'The ladies, in their usual good style, served out afternoon tea'.⁴⁴⁴ Later that year, at a match against Matamata, 'the ladies provided a sumptuous afternoon tea which was much appreciated'.⁴⁴⁵

Socials were highlights of women's lives, especially those able to afford fancy dresses. According to Barry McGowan, writing of one Australian goldfield, 'the vast majority of social activities were probably held at the instigation of the women and the success of the functions was almost totally dependent upon their exertions',⁴⁴⁶ a view confirmed by women's roles in the Te Aroha district. Although a male doctor was the secretary of a series of winter socials held in 1898, women were probably on the management committee. 'A sumptuous repast was provided by the ladies' for the first social.⁴⁴⁷ A month later, 'a most enjoyable dance, given by the ladies', was held at Waihou.

Despite the threatening appearance of the weather, it was numerously attended, and dancing was kept up till an early hour the next morning. The ballroom was prettily decorated and the floor was in excellent condition, contributing much to the success of the evening. A sumptuous repast was indulged in. Much praise is due to the ladies for the manner in which they carried out the preparations, no end of trouble being spared.

The secretary and seven of the nine musicians were women.⁴⁴⁸ In 1902, when a series of winter socials were held in the Te Aroha public hall, a correspondent facetiously recorded that, 'as the first had been managed by a committee of ladies, the second was entrusted by way of division of labour, to the control of mere men, who, allowance being made for their natural limitations, did as well as could be expected'.⁴⁴⁹

COMPETITION FOR POPULARITY

⁴⁴⁴ Waiorongomai Correspondent, *Te Aroha News*, 11 March 1909, p. 2.

⁴⁴⁵ *Te Aroha News*, 14 December 1909, p. 2.

⁴⁴⁶ Barry McGowan, *Lost Mines: Historic Mining Sites in the Monaro-Southern Tablelands Districts of New South Wales* (Canberra, 1994), p. 3.

⁴⁴⁷ *New Zealand Graphic*, 23 July 1898, p. 119.

⁴⁴⁸ *New Zealand Graphic*, 13 August 1898, p. 215.

⁴⁴⁹ Te Aroha Correspondent, *Auckland Weekly News*, 24 July 1902, p. 32.

At dances, it was common practice to name a belle of the ball.⁴⁵⁰ After a bachelors' ball at Te Aroha in 1884, the *Te Aroha News* was diplomatic: 'Who was the belle of the ball was it would be invidious to say when all were so charming'.⁴⁵¹ Three years later, when reporting a Waiorongomai fancy dress ball, it had 'no intention of entering an opinion as to who was the belle of the ball, but will leave the ladies to decide that (probably much-vexed question) for themselves'.⁴⁵²

In 1894, a baby show and a beauty show were held on the same day. The *Observer* commented that there were 'so many nice-looking girls in Te Aroha, and they all wanted the prize' for 'the prettiest and most tastefully-dressed young lady under twenty one'.⁴⁵³ These contests, held during a promenade concert, created 'great amusement', especially the one for 'the prettiest and most tastefully-dressed young lady' aged under 21:

The competition for the prettiest Te Aroha belle excited the keenest emulation among the fair sex, and as local feeling on the matter ran high, the judges had an exceedingly difficult task. When so many were so fair, it was indeed difficult to say who was fairest. The public, however, felt every confidence in the competency of the judges, assured that not even the thousand and one sweet, insinuating smiles showered on them could shake their fairness and impartiality.

The two joint winners 'blushingly received their prizes'.⁴⁵⁴ Two weeks later, the show was still 'the talk of the town'.⁴⁵⁵

Dress sense as well as beauty had been assessed, and women were very fashion conscious. Newspapers published full details of the dresses worn at dances and entertainments.⁴⁵⁶ Gossip columns also noted particularly fetching attire. In 1882, for instance, 'Miss C. looked well in a

⁴⁵⁰ For example, *Te Aroha News*, 10 October 1885, p. 7.

⁴⁵¹ *Te Aroha News*, 23 February 1884, p. 2.

⁴⁵² *Te Aroha News*, 28 May 1887, p. 2.

⁴⁵³ *Observer*, 14 April 1894, p. 7.

⁴⁵⁴ 'Te Aroha', *Observer*, 14 April 1894, p. 21.

⁴⁵⁵ 'Te Aroha', *Observer*, 28 April 1894, p. 17.

⁴⁵⁶ For example, *Te Aroha News*, 27 June 1885, p. 2, 10 October 1885, p. 7, 29 May 1886, pp. 2, 7, 21 August 1886, p. 3; *New Zealand Graphic*, 23 July 1898, p. 119, 13 August 1898, p. 215.

dark-green riding-habit at the Te Aroha Races'.⁴⁵⁷ The wealthier paraded their jewellery.⁴⁵⁸ Having taken such trouble with their dresses, women did not want them spoilt. In 1908, a 'lady dancer' hoped 'that the young men who contemplate visiting the numerous dances, balls, and socials, to be held in Te Aroha during the next month will speculate in a pair of white gloves, as young ladies strongly object to their white dresses bearing any finger prints'.⁴⁵⁹ Sometimes new fashions were seen as shocking. 'The proposed hurdle race at Te Aroha for horses ridden by lady jockeys in bloomers – and astride – may be good for the gates, but is a doubtful way of booming the village', the *Observer* fulminated in 1900.⁴⁶⁰

Early in the twentieth century a 'lady dancer' wrote to the *Te Aroha News* hoping that young men planning to participate in 'the numerous dances, balls, and socials' to be held would 'speculate in a pair of white gloves, as young ladies strongly object to their white dresses bearing any finger prints'.⁴⁶¹ In a reversal of this problem, the O.M. had earlier asked: 'Who was the young lady at a certain dance that spoilt all the young men's gloves with her pretty bodice?'⁴⁶² '“Cleanliness is next to godliness,” and “a stitch in time saves nine,” are maxims a certain young lady should take to heart', according to the O.M. 'A button off the back of a dress, and some very dirty linen showing through, look anything but nice in church'. As for Bella, she 'should choose a more appropriate time to perform her ablutions'.⁴⁶³

False teeth seem to be the subject of two snippets: 'Miss E. looked very handsome at the fancy dress ball. The ivory did shine'.⁴⁶⁴ 'I hear Mr R. is coming up from Auckland soon to see M.E. Won't the ivory shine then?'⁴⁶⁵ As another example of smart fashion, 'A young grass widow not a hundred miles from here has retained the services of a smart dashing page boy, who accompanies her everywhere like Mary's lamb of old'.⁴⁶⁶

⁴⁵⁷ *Observer*, 16 December 1882, p. 214.

⁴⁵⁸ For example, *Te Aroha News*, 29 May 1886, pp. 2, 7.

⁴⁵⁹ Letter from 'A Lady Dancer', *Te Aroha News*, 8 September 1908, p. 2.

⁴⁶⁰ *Observer*, 15 December 1900, p. 3.

⁴⁶¹ *Te Aroha News*, 8 September 1908, p. 2.

⁴⁶² 'Te Aroha', *Observer*, 24 March 1894, p. 19.

⁴⁶³ 'Te Aroha', *Observer*, 29 September 1883, p. 8.

⁴⁶⁴ 'Te Aroha', *Observer*, 30 July 1892, p. 19.

⁴⁶⁵ 'Te Aroha', *Observer*, 17 September 1892, p. 18.

⁴⁶⁶ 'Te Aroha', *Observer*, 28 April 1894, p. 17.

An example of adding to one's beauty was mentioned in 1896. 'A pretty barmaid at Te Aroha, celebrated for her beautiful blond hair, lost her tresses in the late fire. She had no time to save them'.⁴⁶⁷ Hair prompted 'Fashion', of Waiorongomai, to seek 'a cure for taking hair off the face'. The newspaper warned that, although 'various preparations' were available, their use was 'not satisfactory, as though they destroy the hair for the time being, the roots live, and they frequently grow again more vigorously than ever'. Even if pulled out individually 'they not infrequently grow again. Consulting a chemist or a medical man would perhaps be the safest course for you to follow'.⁴⁶⁸

SEEKING SPOUSES

The local *Observer* Man, known as the O.M., reported, in 1893, that 'If O.M. stood for Old Maids, there would be any amount in Te Aroha'.⁴⁶⁹ It is clear that many if not all of that status sought to change it. One (unmarried) woman 'fairly brought down the house' at a Band of Hope meeting at Waiorongomai, 'her recitation relating to a sale of bachelors having been held, when the old maids present carried their purchases shoulder-high'.⁴⁷⁰ Less dramatically, at one ball 'the young ladies in the corner by the stage seemed to carry out flirtation to the letter, which seemed to please their admirers immensely, many of them being greatly captivated'. The O.M. listed the various courting couples he saw sitting in the corners of the hall.⁴⁷¹ More desperately, 'M. says she will die an old maid, because she has been jilted so often, if she can't catch M'.⁴⁷² They were often caught, willingly. In 1884, a correspondent wrote that 'within the last week no fewer than five courageous bachelors have swelled the ranks of the Benedicts, and as many blushing damsels have thereby been made happy'.⁴⁷³ Sometimes the latter required parental assistance, as when a Te Aroha West farmer placed an advertisement in the press (with his daughters' approval?):

⁴⁶⁷ *Observer*, 1 February 1896, p. 3.

⁴⁶⁸ Letter from 'Fashion', and editor's reply, *Auckland Weekly News*, 3 August 1895, p. 15.

⁴⁶⁹ 'Te Aroha', *Observer*, 14 January 1893, p. 15.

⁴⁷⁰ *Auckland Weekly News*, 15 November 1884, p. 18.

⁴⁷¹ 'Te Aroha', *Observer*, 9 June 1894, p. 17.

⁴⁷² 'Te Aroha', *Observer*, 6 May 1893, p. 17.

⁴⁷³ Te Aroha Correspondent, *Waikato Times*, 26 April 1884, p. 2.

WANTED, - A steady young man to join in matrimony with one of my daughters, by which he will receive a wedding present of 40 acres of land and 6 good milking cows as a start in life.⁴⁷⁴

Perhaps another advertisement was meant as a joke; certainly the *Te Aroha News* had its doubts:

A gentleman in quest of a female partner requests us to insert the following adv't, which from minuteness and detailed particulars could not well be eclipsed. He commences his grievance in the usual orthodox manner with the eye catching inscription "Wanted a wife" and proceeds as follows:- "A gentleman residing at ---- but at present on a visit to Te Aroha, is desirous of providing himself with the above domestic appurtenance. As regards age he is of the middle category and as to his appearance – well if not prepossessing he is not altogether unattractive. As to means, after the lapse of the present month he will be in receipt of at least £1200 a year. As to home and domestic surroundings these are of a nature conducive of the utmost earthly felicity. Regarding the object of this want the lady applicant to ensure consideration must be of middle age, not flippant but dignified in her deportment, of temperate habits, of irreproachable virtue, appearance presentable, stature passable, and tongue controllable. Moreover she must have an inclination for music, vocal and instrumental, a knowledge of culinary science and a handy manipulator of the needle. This want is *bona fide* and applications for the post of Mrs --- will receive earnest consideration. Applications with photos and particulars enclosed to be addressed to --- Te Aroha." As we have our misgivings as to the advertiser's sincerity or we may say his *bona fide* we refrain from publishing names, we only publish the foregoing in order to give the ladies a chance, leaving to themselves the task of discovering the wanter and satisfying if possible his many scruples.⁴⁷⁵

This advertisement certainly outlined what was seen as desirable by the respectable. Was the following advertisement seeking a wife or a more informal arrangement?: 'Wanted, a Healthy Wife, under Twenty-five. Send photograph. Address, "Partner," Box 19, Aroha'.⁴⁷⁶

⁴⁷⁴ 'Te Aroha', *Observer*, 30 August 1890, p. 17.

⁴⁷⁵ *Te Aroha News*, 16 June 1883, p. 2.

⁴⁷⁶ Advertisement, *Te Aroha News*, 30 June 1883, p. 2.

The qualities of an ideal wife were voted on during the 1937 Queen Carnival, when both men and women placed a list of virtues in 'their relative order of value':

Considering that something like two thousand votes were handled, the general consensus of opinion becomes something more than a mere competition, and may even be taken as an indication of the average person's sense of values in this connection or a basis of judging the psychology of a community in its attitude towards wifely accomplishments.

The final vote resulted in the following votes being cast for respective attributes for the Ideal Wife:

1. Faithful - 453
2. Affectionate - 428
3. Cheerful - 306
4. Cleanly - 299
5. Motherly - 271
6. Domesticated - 208
7. Honest - 162
8. Homely - 123
9. Thrifty - 107
10. Good-looking - 86
11. Practical - 65
12. Rich - 62
13. Ambitious - 56
14. Entertaining - 56
15. Industrious - 53
16. Religious - 34
17. Placid - 31
18. Clever - 21
19. Musical - 18
20. Athletic - 9⁴⁷⁷

This was a pre-selected list; and if anyone devised a list of desirable virtues for an Ideal Husband, it was not published. The attributes of one were perhaps being joked about at a meeting held that year of the Te Aroha Mutual Improvement Society. One member was asked 'to give his idea of what constitutes a model husband, and did so very concisely by saying that he was one who stayed at home in the evening, smoked his pipe, and got up in the morning to light the fire for his wife'.⁴⁷⁸

⁴⁷⁷ *Te Aroha News*, 15 September 1937, p. 5.

⁴⁷⁸ *Thames Star*, 17 August 1891, p. 4.

Early in the twentieth century, modesty was a rare virtue amongst newlyweds, according to the *Observer*:

In the days of our youth it was the aim of newly-married couples to hie them bashfully to some secluded locality, direction unknown even to their friends, there to blush away the first few embarrassing days of the honeymoon. To-day, it is the usual thing to ask the newspapers not only to advertise the place of retreat, but to describe the bride's costume, lest she should fail to be identified. And a Whangerei couple, who have patronised the side of Mount Te Aroha, have improved even upon this, by placading at one of their spooning grottos the fact and purpose of their visit, with interesting particulars of the picnic breakfast they had there. Times have indeed changed.⁴⁷⁹

To assist in finding partners, bachelors' balls were held, as at Waiorongomai in 1886:

Particularly noticeable on entering was a large banner over the stage bearing the inscription "Welcome" in large gold letters on black ground, whilst directly underneath two hearts closely united, and surrounded by the words "Our Hearty Union," was represented; underneath which was the following "From the Bachelors":

With greetings to you ladies,
We bid you all to-night,
To join with you both heart and hand
It is our chief delight.⁴⁸⁰

Men changed their behaviour so that they were viewed as marriageable. For instance, in 1891 the O.M. noted one man who 'attends church regularly now. He evidently means business. Get the cans ready, boys',⁴⁸¹ a reference to the 'rough music' inflicted upon newlyweds.

Not all publicly expressed desires for a wife were to be taken at face value, as illustrated in a case, brought by Margaret Donnelly against a Te Aroha man, heard in Auckland in October 1913 (his first name was wrongly recorded: it was George):

⁴⁷⁹ *Observer*, 7 March 1903, p. 16.

⁴⁸⁰ *Te Aroha News*, 21 August 1886, p. 3.

⁴⁸¹ 'Te Aroha', *Observer*, 6 June 1891, p. 18.

Roderick Spence, an old man of 77, for whom Mr Lundon appeared, was the defendant in an application for a maintenance order in respect of two illegitimate children, aged respectively two years and six months. Mr Singer, who appeared for the complainant, stated that the paternity of the children was not in dispute, the defendant having acknowledged it in writing.⁴⁸²

The defendant, on being put in the box, said he admitted paternity. He was examined at considerable length as to his means, and at first stated that he had about £10 in the bank, and that his income was a little over £100 a year. Cross-examination, however, elicited the admission that he owned some property at Te Aroha, and that £800 had recently come to him through the falling-in of a mortgage. He stated, however, that he had used about £500 of this in paying off old debts. He was a widower with a family of twelve, apart from the two children in question. He paid the complainant £35 in a lump after she left him, and the result was that she got arrested the next night for drunkenness. Afterwards she assaulted him in the street.

The complainant, who said that her age was 34, stated that she first met the defendant three years ago. He was introduced to her originally by the proprietress of a boardinghouse as an old gentleman of means who wanted a wife. She lived with him for two years as his wife at Te Aroha and afterwards in Parnell, and left him in January last. She was now earning her living in service, and the children were in a registered home. She had to pay 12/6 a week for the maintenance of each of them. The defendant for a time paid her 10/- a week.

The witness displayed a good deal of heat on being cross-examined by Mr Lundon, and repeated at regular intervals that she didn't want the past dragged up; she merely wanted maintenance for her children. The court got so noisy at length that Mr Kettle [the magistrate] adjourned the case till the afternoon, but the hearing was resumed when the complainant had promised to control her feelings. A few minutes later, however, an attack of hysterical weeping again disturbed the court.

"From what I know," said the witness a little later, "I am convinced that his net income is about £10,000."

"Why didn't you marry him?" she was asked.

"He knows best," replied the witness, "and at the next sitting of the Supreme Court he may have to explain."

Mr Kettle said that the only question to be decided was how much the defendant could pay. His evidence as to his means was

⁴⁸² Confirmed in Auckland Magistrate's Court, Criminal Record Book 1913, folio 129, BADW 10254/81a, ANZ-A.

unsatisfactory, but it indicated that he was able to contribute liberally to the cost of bringing up the children.⁴⁸³

In another report of the hearing, Spence was quoted as saying that he had given her £35 'to tide her over difficulties, but the next night she was locked up for drunkenness. This raised a suspicion in his mind that the money was not being put to its proper use'. In this version, the magistrate commented that his payment of only 10s for each child 'was certainly insufficient'.⁴⁸⁴ Instead, Spence was ordered to pay 15s, hardly a great increase.⁴⁸⁵

Clearly this could be interpreted as a case of a woman being a 'gold-digger' as well as of a foolish old man trying to evade his responsibilities. She did not, as threatened, sue him in the Supreme Court for breach of promise to marry, but, like some other women, she made it clear who was the father of her child, even though no father was recorded: he was registered as Roderick Donald Spence, the surname she used.⁴⁸⁶ When registering their second child, a daughter, Margaret used the surname Donnelly-Spence.⁴⁸⁷ She did not receive the maintenance allowance, for on the same day that Spence was ordered to pay the increased amount the police successfully charged both children with being 'not under proper control' and they were sent to Catholic industrial schools (her daughter at the age of six months).⁴⁸⁸ A few weeks later, a boardinghouse keeper sought five weeks' board from Spence. She told the court 'that a young woman named Margaret Donnelly, who said she was married, came to her early this year. A child was born on May 31 and the mother continued to live in the house with her baby up till July 1. She then left without giving any notice. No payment had been made since June 3', despite Spence having agreed to pay all outstanding accounts. Spence responded that he had made 'a full settlement of all expenses' in his lawyer's office, which was confirmed,

⁴⁸³ *Auckland Star*, 10 October 1913, p. 4.

⁴⁸⁴ *New Zealand Herald*, 11 October 1913, p. 5.

⁴⁸⁵ Auckland Magistrate's Court, Criminal Record Book 1913, folio 139, BADW 10254/81a, ANZ-A.

⁴⁸⁶ Birth Certificate of Roderick Donald Spence, 1911/14946, BDM.

⁴⁸⁷ Birth Certificate of Monica Jean Christine Donnelly-Spence, 31 May 1913, 1913/2816, BDM.

⁴⁸⁸ Auckland Magistrate's Court, Criminal Record Book 1913, folio 137, BADW 10254/81a, ANZ-A.

and the case was adjourned 'to that Miss Donnelly might be found'.⁴⁸⁹ No further developments in the case were reported in the press.

Margaret Donnelly was hardly an innocent led astray. Two years later, after twins were born to her and an unrecorded father,⁴⁹⁰ she charged a Maungaturoto man, John Lamont, for the maintenance of these children, who (like the older ones) had been placed in St Mary's Industrial School. After giving evidence in court as to paternity, when cross-examined she (so the *New Zealand Herald* reported)

became very excitable, and was warned several times by the magistrate that she would be committed to prison if she did not answer questions properly. Witness replied that she would be better in prison than going through the ordeal of cross-examination. After further warnings, witness wept, and ultimately His Worship decided that he could not accept the evidence of a witness who behaved as in the present instance. He dismissed the case.⁴⁹¹

Truth was delighted with the case, reporting the 'sultry allegations' and other evidence verbatim. Its reporter described her as 'a well-built sort' who, at a preliminary hearing some weeks previously, had 'said all kinds of nasty things' to the magistrate, Lamont's counsel,

and anybody and everybody. So warm was Margaret that everyone present went outside and fanned themselves when the case was adjourned. Briefly her story was that while working at a boardinghouse in Maungaturoto she met Lamont. In June of last year, she came to Auckland to take on a job at the Huia Hospital. Lamont, according to her, came to Auckland that month and they lived as man and wife. Twins were born in March of this year and Lamont was stated to be the father.

Several witnesses gave evidence to connect up with Margaret's tale of woe while one chap named McKenzie reckoned he had been more than a casual acquaintance.

Margaret was warming up all hands in Court, so Magistrate Kettle, who got a full share of the bombardment, adjourned the matter....

At the adjourned hearing, Margaret

⁴⁸⁹ Magistrate's Court, *Auckland Star*, 2 December 1913, p. 7.

⁴⁹⁰ Birth Certificates of Joyce Donnelly, 1915/8442; Kathleen Donnelly, 1915/8443, BDM.

⁴⁹¹ Magistrate's Court, *New Zealand Herald*, 16 October 1915, p. 5.

started to go off about being brought to the Court again.
 “Look here,” she said, “it’s immaterial who keeps the children. Lamont is the father of them. Somebody will have to keep them, but I don’t care who it is.”

Lamont’s counsel described her as being ‘a very decent sort when sober, but is totally different when she has drink in her’. After being asked to be quiet to permit proceedings to continue, she accused this counsel of telling Lamont ‘I was dragged out of a brothel’. Asked to confirm that she had two other children, she responded: ‘Don’t you ask me that. They are being kept by their father’, then repeated that she did not want to keep her children. The solicitor then stated that, although Spence was paying for the maintenance of her first two children, he understood he was not in fact their father; Margaret did not respond. Asked about other men who frequented the boardinghouse, she denied knowing two men but admitted that if she wrote to another one it was ‘under the influence of liquor, and I don’t remember’. During a ‘general riot’, with four people all ‘trying to chip in at the same time’, Margaret shouted: ‘I am not a bad woman, am I, Mac (to chief detective)?’ As to the charge of being ‘dragged from a brothel’, she told the solicitor: ‘By God, I’ll have you for that’. After she attempted to punch Lamont on the jaw, the magistrate wondered if she was drunk, but the chief detective responded: ‘The woman is all right. She is a bit excited’. Her parting shot was: ‘I don’t care who pays so long as I get the children’⁴⁹²

A few months later, Margaret was convicted in Auckland for ‘drunkenness, breaking her prohibition order, and entering licensed premises while prohibited. The battered appearance of the woman’s face indicated that she had had a rough handling’. The man she had knocked down with a bedroom jug declined to prosecute,⁴⁹³ presumably to avoid publicity over a tryst gone wrong. Two years later, her four-year-old daughter died.⁴⁹⁴ The last report about her was published in 1922, when she was fined for being drunk for the second time within six months.⁴⁹⁵

IMPROPER BEHAVIOUR

⁴⁹² *NZ Truth*, 16 October 1915, p. 7.

⁴⁹³ Police Court, *Auckland Star*, 31 March 1916, p. 6; Police Court, *New Zealand Herald*, 1 April 1916, p. 9.

⁴⁹⁴ Death Certificate of Kathleen Donnelly, 1918/8817, BDM.

⁴⁹⁵ Police Court, *Auckland Star*, 31 January 1922, p. 5.

Although ‘female larrikins’ existed,⁴⁹⁶ some of their behaviour really gave no great cause for concern, as, for instance, in 1885:

At the recent bachelor’s party a few young ladies of the Sunday School caused a great deal of surprise by their behaviour. They would not join in the naughty dance, but preferred kiss-in-the-ring outside, and on being remonstrated with came inside and started some other tomfoolery. Perhaps they will know better as they grow older.⁴⁹⁷

In 1890 the O.M. wrote that ‘Those female larrikins who attend the Presbyterian Church services should endeavour not to make their remarks so audible’.⁴⁹⁸ The following year, he had two more reproofs. ‘Who were the two young ladies that entered the fruit gardens while the proprietors were away? ... It looks bad of those young ladies in St Mark’s choir to be laughing all the time the sermon is going on. Is it to make them look more attractive?’⁴⁹⁹ The following month, he disapproved at their behaviour at the hall one Sunday night:

The female larrikin element was well represented, under their well-known leader. No doubt they thought their conduct excited admiration in the breasts of the gentlemen present; but had they only known the disgust which was felt at their immodest whispers and bold glances they would perhaps have conducted themselves better.⁵⁰⁰

Improper behaviour came in several forms. In 1889, for instance, ‘Observer’ asked a question of the *Te Aroha News*:

I am very curious to hear the name of the lady who promenades our streets and domain, carrying a gentleman’s hunting crop and accompanied by a ferocious bulldog, which fastens on to any unoffending dog who has the misfortune to come in his way. On Friday afternoon last I saw him (the bulldog) seize another by the throat, and after shaking him well his gentle mistress addresses the by-standers thus:- “Why don’t some of you men take him off,

⁴⁹⁶ See paper on larrikins in the *Te Aroha* district.

⁴⁹⁷ ‘Te Aroha’, *Observer*, 25 April 1885, p. 16.

⁴⁹⁸ ‘Te Aroha’, *Observer*, 8 March 1890, p. 14.

⁴⁹⁹ ‘Te Aroha’, *Observer*, 18 July 1891, p. 17.

⁵⁰⁰ ‘Te Aroha’, *Observer*, 15 August 1891, p. 17.

you are stronger than I am;” and when, in response to her request, a gentleman, at the risk of being bitten by the brute, shakes him off, this courteous lady and her pet went on without even a civil “thank you, sir.”⁵⁰¹

Another woman, possibly from out of town, was criticized ten years later. ‘What excitement at the football match! Who was the irate female who stalked forth into the field brandishing a gingham [umbrella] and screaming “Oh you brutes!” every time Te Aroha scored? It made me positively “ill” to see the danger she ran into’.⁵⁰²

Drunk and disorderly women were to be found in all goldfields.⁵⁰³ At Te Aroha, drunkards were mostly male, but women who imbibed too freely were the butt of public criticism. ‘Who are those two young ladies at the Club that call for “port wine, hot,” every night?’⁵⁰⁴ When one notable female drunkard, Annie Curnow of Waiorongomai,⁵⁰⁵ was before a justice of the peace in 1884, he ‘reprimanded the defendant, remarking on the disgraceful nature of the charge against a female’.⁵⁰⁶ Punishments for being drunk were not severe, at least for first offenders; for instance, in 1908 the case against one drunk and disorderly woman was adjourned for two days ‘to allow accused to clear out of the town which she did’.⁵⁰⁷ Between 1881 and 1900, only three women were before the court for drunkenness: Annie Curnow, Margaret McLean, and Mary O’Halloran, who was also notable for obscene, abusive, and insulting language, for which she would be imprisoned in 1884.⁵⁰⁸ Margaret McLean, a Waiorongomai resident, was clearly an alcoholic. In 1886, the first prohibition order was issued against her,⁵⁰⁹ but

⁵⁰¹ Letter from ‘Observer’, *Te Aroha News*, 27 March 1889, p. 2.

⁵⁰² ‘Te Aroha’, *Observer*, 9 July 1899, p. 22.

⁵⁰³ For example, Stevan Eldred-Grigg, *Diggers Hatters and Whores: The story of the New Zealand gold rushes* (Auckland, 2008), pp. 417-420.

⁵⁰⁴ ‘Te Aroha’, *Observer*, 25 July 1891, p. 17.

⁵⁰⁵ See paper on the drink problem in the Te Aroha district.

⁵⁰⁶ Police Court, *Te Aroha News*, 14 June 1884, p. 2.

⁵⁰⁷ New Zealand Constabulary, Charges taken at Te Aroha Lock-Up 1903-1917, 71/1908, BACB 11355/1a, ANZ-A.

⁵⁰⁸ Te Aroha Magistrate’s Court, Criminal Record Book 1881-1896, 5/81, 3/1882, 73, 74/1884, BCDG 11220/1a, ANZ-A.

⁵⁰⁹ Te Aroha Magistrate’s Court, Criminal Record Book 1881-1896, either no. 21, 22, 23, 24 or 25/1886 [portion of register missing], BCDG 11220/1a, ANZ-A.

the following year she was again charged with being drunk.⁵¹⁰ In 1889, after she pleaded guilty to being drunk and excessive drinking, another order was issued.⁵¹¹ In 1894, she admitted being drunk once more.⁵¹² Three years later, the police obtained yet another order against her.⁵¹³ Ten years later, having lived at Waiorongomai for 23 years, at the age of 70 she was admitted to the old people's home at Thames because of 'general debility and senility'; despite her history of drinking, her health was 'fairly good'.⁵¹⁴ (Her husband was also a frequenter of the Waiorongomai hotels, and when giving evidence in a case against a publican selling liquor to a prohibited person he admitted having 'three or four drinks' with the latter, his wife having 'about the same number of drinks also'. According to the *Te Aroha News*, he 'fenced the questions put in every possible way, and answered in a most unsatisfactory manner'.)⁵¹⁵

Criminal acts by women were rare and, usually, minor. In January 1902, for instance, the *Te Aroha News* was 'requested by an old age pensioner to state that if the lady who appropriated a supply of onions from his garden on New Year's Day waits on the owner, he will present her with a packet of seeds, in order that she may grow her own in future'.⁵¹⁶ Ten women had criminal charges made against them between 1881 and 1900, inclusive. Two were charged with obscene language (and one of these for having no visible means of support), one for assaulting a bailiff in the execution of his duty, a publican for keeping her hotel open after hours, one for failing to pay half the cost of erecting a fence, one for stealing a purse and 4s 4d (she was imprisoned until the rising of the court), one for permitting two cows to trespass on the railway line, a father charged his

⁵¹⁰ Te Aroha Magistrate's Court, Criminal Record Book 1881-1896, 20/1887, BCDG 11220/1a, ANZ-A.

⁵¹¹ Te Aroha Magistrate's Court, Criminal Record Book 1881-1896, 77, 78/1889, BCDG 11220/1a, ANZ-A.

⁵¹² Te Aroha Magistrate's Court, Criminal Record Book 1881-1896, 17/1894, BCDG 11220/1a, ANZ-A.

⁵¹³ Te Aroha Magistrate's Court, Criminal Record Book 1896-1907, 23/1897, BCDG 11220/1b, ANZ-A.

⁵¹⁴ District Home, Tararu, Register of Inmates 1906-1921, folio 71, YCAH 14073/1a, ANZ-A.

⁵¹⁵ Magistrate's Court, *Te Aroha News*, 10 April 1886, p. 2.

⁵¹⁶ *Te Aroha News*, n.d., reprinted in *Observer*, 18 January 1902, p. 3.

daughter with being a lunatic, and a Maori attempted to commit suicide.⁵¹⁷ The most notable fight occurred between two miners' wives 'residing near each other on the hill' behind Waiorongomai. 'There have been frequent quarrels among them which culminated in the violent assault'⁵¹⁸ by Mary Roberts, wife of Thomas, on Mary Quinton, wife of Matthew.⁵¹⁹

Mary Quinton, sworn, stated: The affair first arose through defendant's dog snapping at her (Quinton's) little boy, who then struck the dog with a stick. After this defendant called witness all sorts of names, and later on caught her by the back of the neck and thumped her with her hand, and also knocked her down twice. Witness further stated that defendant appeared to have a regular "down" on her for the past year or two; always when her husband was away, and she was without any protection. She had given her no provocation whatever. Had to call in the doctor through the treatment she had received.

A son of complainant's, a bright little lad of 10 years of age, was examined by His Worship as witness, and in reply to questions put said: He remembered Mrs Roberts quarrelling with his mother on the day after St Patrick's Day; when his mother went down the road to get some firewood, and Mrs Roberts stole out quietly and caught her by the neck and gave her a blow on the side of her head, knocked her down, and when she got up said "You b-----y b-----r for one pin I'd smash your head in two." Mrs Roberts knocked his mother over and kicked her in the back. His mother had previously said nothing to Mrs Roberts except "Are you going to his me?" and Mrs Roberts said "Yes."

Dr Cooper, on being sworn, stated: He was called in on March 20th by Mrs Quinton, whom he found in bed in a very nervous state, and suffering from two contusions on the forehead. She said she had been assaulted.

Accused was bound over to keep the peace for six months in her own surety for £10, and ordered to pay the costs 29s.

A cross-summons for abusive language was dismissed.⁵²⁰

SEXUAL MISBEHAVIOUR

⁵¹⁷ Te Aroha Magistrate's Court, Criminal Record Book 1881-1896, 5/1881, 3/1882, 68, 69, 74/1884, 4, 11/1888, 1/1891, 15/1894, BCDG 11220/1a; Criminal Record Book 1896-1907, 8, 27/1898, 15/1899, BCDG 11220/1b, ANZ-A.

⁵¹⁸ Magistrate's Court, *Waikato Times*, 1 April 1886, p. 3.

⁵¹⁹ For Quinton's life, see paper on Billy Nicholl.

⁵²⁰ Magistrate's Court, *Te Aroha News*, 10 April 1886, p. 2.

‘Where was Mick White when the girl was crying out for help?’⁵²¹ What happened at Waiorongomai in mid-1883 that prompted this cryptic report cannot be traced, but it could refer to sexual harassment. Flirtations, if ‘innocent’, were seen as fun; two married women, for instance, went to a bachelors’ ball dressed as ‘Flirtation’ and ‘Pet of the Boys’.⁵²² But there were sexual predators around, as the Te Aroha O.M. warned:

The gay and festive old cuss [‘a man, possibly with overtones of being of doubtful quality’],⁵²³ Mac, who sports a rose in his button-hole is worth watching. He shines through in his role as friends of the family and fern collector. What pleasant occupation for young ladies is fern collecting, especially for sale. Don’t read this, - A word on the quiet to *pater* and *mater familias*. Old Mac is worth watching. He is a married man, and don’t trust your girls with him especially fern collecting in the bush.⁵²⁴

In 1893, L.B. was ‘the greatest lady-killer in Te Aroha’,⁵²⁵ testimony to his seductive charms, not his desire to become a husband. Cases of indecent assault were rare, or perhaps more accurately were rarely reported.⁵²⁶ Rape must also have occurred, but the first Te Aroha case, heard in 1909, was dismissed because ‘Prosecutrix broke down in her evidence’.⁵²⁷ And the O.M. implied adultery between several people, but who was involved is now usually impossible to trace.⁵²⁸

⁵²¹ ‘Waiorongomai’, *Observer*, 2 June 1883, p. 170.

⁵²² *Te Aroha News*, 23 October 1887, p. 2.

⁵²³ Eric Partridge, *A Dictionary of Slang and Unconventional English*, 8 ed., ed. Paul Beale (London, 1984), p. 281.

⁵²⁴ ‘Te Aroha’, *Observer*, 20 October 1883, p. 8.

⁵²⁵ ‘Te Aroha’, *Observer*, 24 June 1893, p. 22.

⁵²⁶ For examples of charges of indecent assault, see Te Aroha Magistrate’s Court, Criminal Record Book 1896-1907, 79/1907, BCDG 11220/1b; Criminal Record Book 1913-1918, 12/1914, BCDG 11220/2b, ANZ-A.

⁵²⁷ New Zealand Constabulary, Report of Charges taken at Te Aroha Lock-Up 1902-1917, no. 114, 22 July 1909, BADB 11355/1a, ANZ-A.

⁵²⁸ Examples cited in paper on private lives in the Te Aroha district.

Prostitution was a feature of many goldfields, including Thames.⁵²⁹ Although no woman living at Te Aroha or Waiorongomai was charged with being a prostitute, in 1884 a 21-year-old Irish laundress was charged with 'Having no visible lawful means of support' and sentenced to three months in gaol plus an additional month for obscene language.⁵³⁰ The severity of this sentence, in contrast to another woman who, charged with the same offence in 1902, was merely cautioned,⁵³¹ suggests she was being punished for the latter offence rather than for being a vagabond. Also in 1884, one woman charged a man with 'Making use of threatening abusing and insulting language to prosecutor by calling her an old flapper and an old hag and also that he would strike her on the mouth with a whip'. Her prosecution was dismissed because she failed to appear in court.⁵³² What made this abuse particularly offensive was that flapper was a slang term for 'a very young harlot',⁵³³ and this meaning of being an immoral woman presumably still applied even though she was old. The only known case where a miner's wife worked as a prostitute was Alexander Mackay's wife (along with her sister),⁵³⁴ but they did not prostitute themselves at Te Aroha.

ILLEGITIMATE CHILDREN

As the outcome of 'lady killing' could be an illegitimate child, 'Pater Familias', provoked by an 1889 example, supported the conviction of a man

⁵²⁹ Eldred-Grigg, pp. 294, 371, 385-388, 390-392, 394-400, 412, 441; John Milton Hutchins, *Diggers, Constables, and Bushrangers: The New Zealand gold rushes as a frontier experience, 1852-1876* (Lakewood, Colorado, 2010), pp. 163-167, 176-177, 285-286; Rosemary Killip, *To Find a Fortune: Women on the Thames Goldfield, 1867-1893* (Wellington, 1995), pp. 82-84; David Arbury, *Prostitution on the Goldfield* (Thames, 2001).

⁵³⁰ Armed Constabulary Force, Report of Charges taken at Te Aroha Lock-Up 1880-1903, 39/1884, in private possession; Te Aroha Magistrate's Court, Criminal Record Book 1881-1896, 68, 69/1884, BCDG 11220/1a, ANZ-A.

⁵³¹ Te Aroha Magistrate's Court, Criminal Record Book 1896-1907, 48/1902, BCDG 11220/1b, ANZ-A.

⁵³² Te Aroha Magistrate's Court, Criminal Record Book 1881-1896, 62/1884, BCDG 11220/1a, ANZ-A.

⁵³³ Partridge, p. 401.

⁵³⁴ See paper on his life.

who failed to pay maintenance and fulminated against the double standard applied:

Too long has it been allowed that the seducer escapes scot free, and is sometimes thought more highly of by some in consequence of his lady killing abilities, whilst his poor frail victim suffers all the pain and shame; their reputation being blasted for life, and no chance being given them to recover their once good names.⁵³⁵

Sometimes fathers admitted paternity of children born out of wedlock, as illustrated by John Hawkins, below. Perhaps one snide comment by the O.M. hinted at a father delighting in a child born to him out of wedlock. 'Does not R. (Taranaki)⁵³⁶ look delighted wheeling the perambulator round the Domain? Look out, R., somebody might give you away'.⁵³⁷

On one occasion an illegitimate birth resulted in the marriage of the parents and the separation of the grandparents, as explained by the Catholic priest to his bishop:

My Lord I require a dispensation in a mixed marriage immediately. The girl is a catholic and a child has lately been born extra matrimonium. I suppose your Lordship heard of a civil separation that took place between two catholics of this district. They are parents of this girl, who I believe was the immediate occasion of the separation. Her father objected to her marriage with this man and the mother upheld it. There is no knowing what the father may do if he discovers the state of the case now. So I wish to have it done privately, and as soon as possible to avoid unpleasant consequences. If it is kept quiet for some time the father will be gone from here.⁵³⁸

The worst case of a woman giving birth to an illegitimate child was in 1909. An inquest was held at the Waiorongomai Hotel

⁵³⁵ Letter from 'Pater Familias', *Te Aroha News*, 20 April 1889, p. 2.

⁵³⁶ Presumably indicating his place of birth, although there was a claim of that name near the hot springs later in the decade: Warden's Court, *Te Aroha News*, 24 August 1895, p. 2; *Waikato Argus*, 22 October 1896, p. 2, Warden's Court, 14 November 1896, p. 2.

⁵³⁷ 'Te Aroha', *Observer*, 15 April 1893, p. 17.

⁵³⁸ Father McGuinness to Bishop Lenihan, 27 June 1905, Te Aroha Parish Papers 1897-1910, LEN 35-2, Catholic Archives, Auckland.

on the stillborn child of an unfortunate young woman who was for some time employed in one of the Te Aroha hotels, from which she was dismissed several months ago. The circumstances surrounding the case were of a most distressing and painful nature. The young woman, it appears, had been sleeping out in the ti-tree for several nights, and eventually found her way to the Waiorongomai hotel on Saturday last. During the afternoon she left the hotel, and nothing was heard about her until the next morning about four o'clock, when one of the hotel boarders, who happened to be in the yard, heard screams coming from the direction of the ti-tree near the hotel. The lodger went to investigate and was astonished to find a young woman crawling on her hands and knees through the ti-tree. She appeared half dead and stated she had given birth to a still-born child on the Saturday afternoon. The child was found in the scrub, covered with leaves, ti-tree and earth. The young woman was conveyed to the hotel and the doctor sent for.

Everything possible was done by Mr and Mrs Brunton for the unfortunate young woman. Doctor Axford, in his evidence, stated the child had not breathed. A verdict was returned accordingly. It is intended to take the young woman, who is in a very feeble state, to the Waikato Hospital for treatment.⁵³⁹

As she was 'in a very low state' when sent to the hospital, 'doubts' were 'entertained as to her recovery'.⁵⁴⁰ Hamilton hospital records for this period no longer exist, but her death has not been traced.

When illegitimate children were born, the fathers were often sued for support, if they could be found.⁵⁴¹ In one case, the clerk of the court recorded: 'Summons not Served – Def cannot be found – Case adjourned sine die'.⁵⁴² This case was never reactivated. In another example, 'defendant having married the complainant' four months after the birth, 'further proceedings' were 'abandoned'.⁵⁴³ When the father of a yet unborn child was about to leave the colony without making provision for maintenance he was

⁵³⁹ *Te Aroha News*, 9 March 1909, p. 2.

⁵⁴⁰ *Te Aroha News*, 11 March 1909, p. 2.

⁵⁴¹ For example, Te Aroha Magistrate's Court, Criminal Record Book 1896-1907, 21/1896, 16/1897, 55/1901, BCDG 11220/1b, ANZ-A.

⁵⁴² Te Aroha Magistrate's Court, Criminal Record Book 1881-1896, 29/1887, BCDG 11220/1a, ANZ-A.

⁵⁴³ Te Aroha Magistrate's Court, Criminal Record Book 1896-1907, 55/1904, hearings of 24 January 1905, 27 April 1905, BCDG 11220/1b, ANZ-A; Marriage Certificate of James Hamilton and Annie Baker, 1905/6584, BDM.

ordered to pay 7s per week; to enforce payment, he and two sureties being required to deposit a bond of £150 each.⁵⁴⁴

Some unwanted illegitimate children had a short life. Amongst other hints it published about infanticide, the *Observer* was very direct in 1898: ‘*They Say* that the Auckland climate seems to be rather deadly at present for illegitimate infants. Rather strange, isn’t it?’⁵⁴⁵ A year later, ‘the number of love-children who have been taking wing from this vale of tears lately needs some explanation’.⁵⁴⁶ There was n evidence of that in the Te Aroha district; although Louisa Forman’s child died soon after birth, there was no suggestion of foul play.⁵⁴⁷ In 1882, the 20-year-old sister of Robert Stackpole, a Waiorongomai miner,⁵⁴⁸ was accused of infanticide, with her sister and mother as possible accomplices, but was not convicted because medical evidence suggested that her daughter died whilst she was unconscious after giving birth.⁵⁴⁹ A coroner’s jury considered the baby had lived for about 15 minutes, dying of ‘Want of proper care at birth; mother being at the time insensible’, and a grand jury found she had no case to answer.⁵⁵⁰

Bearing an illegitimate child was no automatic bar to marriage, even though in a small community there was no secret about the birth. For instance, in March 1884 Emily Anna Joy, aged 18, had an illegitimate son;⁵⁵¹ in September the following year, she married 22-year-old William Samson in a Wesleyan ceremony.⁵⁵² Samson, an amalgamator at the

⁵⁴⁴ Te Aroha Magistrate’s Court, Criminal Record Book 1896-1907, 37/1905, BCDG 1220/1b, ANZ-A.

⁵⁴⁵ ‘*They Say*’, *Observer*, 5 February 1898, p. 3.

⁵⁴⁶ *Observer*, 18 February 1899, p. 3.

⁵⁴⁷ See paper entitled ‘Two Roycroft Brothers and Two Brothers-in-Law’.

⁵⁴⁸ See *Cyclopedia of New Zealand*, vol. 2, p. 841.

⁵⁴⁹ Birth Certificate of unnamed daughter of Annie Stackpole, 12 December 1882, 1882/2013; Death Certificate of unnamed daughter of Annie Stackpole, 12 December 1882, 1882/809, BDM; *Thames Advertiser*, 13 December 1882, p. 3, 14 December 1882, pp. 2-3.

⁵⁵⁰ Inquest on unnamed daughter of Annie Stackpole, December 1882, Justice Department, J46, 1882/2641, ANZ-W; *Thames Advertiser*, 22 December 1882, p. 3; Supreme Court, *Auckland Weekly News*, 20 January 1883, p. 19.

⁵⁵¹ Birth Certificate of Robert Joy, 27 March 1884, 1884/11401, Te Aroha BDM.

⁵⁵² Marriage Certificate of William Samson, 21 September 1885, 1885/2089, BDM.

battery,⁵⁵³ was a member of the Wesleyan Sunday School at Waiorongomai and a leader of the Band of Hope, a temperance body, and their elder son, born in 1887, was baptized as a Wesleyan.⁵⁵⁴ Their marriage, which produced two more children, lasted until Samson's death in 1950.⁵⁵⁵ In a small community like Waiorongomai, he must have known of his wife's 'indiscretion'. And what happened to this child? There was no formal adoption and no indication that Samson adopted him informally; he seems to have been brought up by his grandmother, for in 1889 he was living with her and attending the Wesleyan Sunday School along with her youngest daughter.⁵⁵⁶

ABORTION

Although aborting an unwanted illegitimate child was an option for the desperate, there were no hints about abortion in the O.M.'s dispatches from Te Aroha and Waiorongomai. However, in 1883 there was an implication of this occurring in Auckland: 'What is the scandal in connection with the grass widow? The doctor had better be careful. It means a heavy fine, if not imprisonment'.⁵⁵⁷ Information, it was implied, about how to prevent having unwanted children was advertised in the *Te Aroha News* in 1898: 'THE WIFE'S WELFARE – Treatise posted free. It will teach you more than all the years you've lived. Every woman should read it. Write Prof. Hermann, French Specialist, 40 Collins-place, Melbourne'.⁵⁵⁸ The *Observer*, which also published this advertisement,⁵⁵⁹ claimed that

⁵⁵³ Marriage Certificate of William Samson, 21 September 1885, 1885/2089, BDM; *Tauranga Electoral Roll, 1887*, p. 22.

⁵⁵⁴ Waiorongomai Sunday School, Admission Book 1884-1889, entry for 13 July 1884, 3050/888; Upper Thames Circuit, Baptismal Register 1881-1929, no. 126, Methodist Archives, Auckland; *Te Aroha News*, 8 December 1883, p. 2.

⁵⁵⁵ Death Certificate of William Samson, 21 September 1950, 1950/23791, BDM.

⁵⁵⁶ Waiorongomai Sunday School, Admission Book 1884-1889, entries for 20 January 1889, 27 January 1889, 3050/888, Methodist Archives, Auckland; for the daughter, see Birth Certificate of Marion May Joy, 17 June 1879, 1879/14600, BDM.

⁵⁵⁷ *Observer*, 4 August 1883, p. 15.

⁵⁵⁸ For example, advertisements, *Te Aroha News*, 12 March 1898, p. 3, 23 July 1898, p. 1.

⁵⁵⁹ For example, *Observer*, 2 October 1897, p. 6.

medicines to induce abortion were available in nearly every chemist's shop, sometimes being displayed in the windows.⁵⁶⁰

For an example of a probable attempted abortion by a Te Aroha teenager, see the section on Harriet Healy, below. The danger of having an abortion was illustrated by the death of the third wife of Malcolm Niccol, an Auckland shipbroker, harbour board member, and Grand Secretary of the New Zealand Freemasons,⁵⁶¹ who had a very small investment in Waiorongomai mining.⁵⁶² Two years after his second wife died, at the age of 52 Nicholl married a 16-year-old, Blanche Beatrice Gretchen von Sturmer.⁵⁶³ Seven years later, she died suddenly, leaving a son aged six and a daughter aged four.⁵⁶⁴ A labourer's wife, Madeline Winter, who had some nursing experience, was present at her death. Evidence taken at the inquest strongly implied that, when they were alone together, Mrs Winter had attempted an abortion by means unknown, with fatal consequences. She claimed that Blanche told her she 'was trying to prevent' becoming pregnant, and had earlier induced miscarriage 'with a tangle tent or tangle net or tangle something'.⁵⁶⁵ Blanche's doctor revealed that she had told him that she intended to procure a miscarriage by going to 'Mrs Winter, because she could do it with air, without pain'.⁵⁶⁶ Doctors who examined the body were unsure as to the cause of death, but the coroner's jury, after considering their verdict for an hour, resolved: 'That the death of Mrs Niccol was caused during the process of a miscarriage, under circumstances of grave suspicion against Mrs Winter'. Because of the lack of a clear cause of death, the police did not take any action against her.⁵⁶⁷ In the nineteenth

⁵⁶⁰ *Observer*, 29 January 1898, p. 6.

⁵⁶¹ See *Cyclopedia of New Zealand*, vol. 2, pp. 139-140; *Observer*, 19 April 1902, p. 5; *New Zealand Herald*, 28 July 1925, p. 10.

⁵⁶² Te Aroha Warden's Court, Register of Licensed Holdings 1881-1887, folio 41, BBAV 11500/9a, ANZ-A; *New Zealand Gazette*, 6 September 1883, p. 1266, 29 November 1883, p. 1703.

⁵⁶³ Marriage Certificate of Malcolm Niccol, 20 August 1896, 1896/1684, BDM.

⁵⁶⁴ Death Certificate of Blanche Beatrice Gretchen Niccol, 7 October 1903, 1903/7384, BDM.

⁵⁶⁵ Inquest on Blanche Beatrice Gretchen Niccol, Justice Department, J 46, 1903/905, ANZ-W.

⁵⁶⁶ *Auckland Weekly News*, 15 October 1903, p. 39.

⁵⁶⁷ *Auckland Weekly News*, 22 October 1903, p. 38.

century and early twentieth century, no woman in the Te Aroha district died from an abortion that had gone wrong.⁵⁶⁸

WIVES WHO WERE DESERTED AND/OR NOT SUPPORTED

Several cases of wife desertion have been noted elsewhere, for instance in the papers on James Gordon, Thomas Quoi, and Laura Devey.⁵⁶⁹ The first case of wife desertion was reported in early 1881 in the *Observer*:

It is the curse of that fine body of men, the Auckland police, that there are bad eggs amongst them who are constantly bringing them into disrepute. A Te Aroha miner [named Allen]⁵⁷⁰ sends me a most extraordinary story of ill treatment. It appears that about the 10th of January this man was arrested at the diggings on a charge of wife desertion, and forthwith brought to town, being, however, locked up for no less than *three nights* (viz, at Paeroa, the Thames, and Auckland) on the way. When, at length, he was arraigned at the Police Court, there turned out to be no case against him, and the charge was dismissed. Mr Barstow told the unfortunate man he ought to be very much obliged to the police for their kindness to his wife. Strange to say he doesn't agree with his Worship. He declares, in fact, that some of the police were *too kind* to his wife, and that it would have suited them all over to have got him safely locked up out of the way. One man, he declares, under pretense of helping the good lady, took her to a bad house in ----- street, and other active and intelligent constables also made overtures of a similar nature. The letter is too strong to publish.⁵⁷¹

Three weeks later, the journal reported the result of its investigation into his accusations:

The fellow's whole story was, from end to end, a base fabrication. His wife (who bears an excellent character, and is now in a respectable situation) was starving when the police took pity on her and her children, and, out of their own pockets, found them sufficient money to get a night's lodging. Allen has a grudge

⁵⁶⁸ Register of Deaths, Te Aroha BDM.

⁵⁶⁹ The latter is in the paper on George Devey and his family.

⁵⁷⁰ *Observer*, 9 April 1881, p. 315; he has not been identified.

⁵⁷¹ *Observer*, 19 March 1881, p. 277.

against the police for arresting him for wife desertion, and is trying to revenge himself by slander.⁵⁷²

In August 1882, Mrs Elizabeth Newell of Ngaruawahia was charged with lunacy. Her husband, Robert, believed to be in Te Aroha, had left his family 'totally unprovided for', there being insufficient food and no changes of clothing for his two-year-old and ten-month-old children. This lack of food was believed to have caused his pregnant wife's insanity. If her husband, sought by the police,⁵⁷³ had been in Te Aroha, he did not remain there to be arrested. In response to the accusation that Newell had left her in a destitute state before she left for Hamilton, a Ngaruawahia store stated that his credit with them was sufficient to supply all her needs.⁵⁷⁴ Certified as suffering from delusions, Elizabeth Newell spent 38 years in the Avondale mental asylum before dying there.⁵⁷⁵

The wife of one man charged him with deserting their three children, but the case was dismissed because she did not appear in court.⁵⁷⁶ Perhaps the shock of prosecution had been sufficient to force him to agree to pay maintenance. In another case, failure to pay maintenance resulted in a separation order:

Consent plea – Separation as prayed – on grounds of willful neglect to provide complainant with reasonable maintenance. Ordered that Complainant be no longer bound to cohabit with the defendant her husband. Costs of the order 7/- to be paid by defendant.⁵⁷⁷

In 1888, Julia Esther Taylor sought a protection order over her property against her husband John, a farm labourer at Shaftesbury,⁵⁷⁸ because he had failed to maintain her and their children, which he denied.

⁵⁷² *Observer*, 9 April 1881, p. 315.

⁵⁷³ *Auckland Weekly News*, 19 August 1882, p. 21.

⁵⁷⁴ Letter from Friar and Davies, *Waikato Times*, 19 August 1882, p. 2.

⁵⁷⁵ Case files on E.J.B. Newell, Avondale Asylum, YCAA 1021/2, 1048/4, 1048/5, ANZ-A.

⁵⁷⁶ Armed Constabulary Force, Report of Charges taken at Te Aroha Lock-Up 1880-1903, 11/1889, in private possession.

⁵⁷⁷ Te Aroha Magistrate's Court, Criminal Record Book 1896-1907, 4/1906, BCDG 11220/1b, ANZ-A.

⁵⁷⁸ See *Tauranga Electoral Roll, 1887*, p. 24.

According to a correspondent, her suit ‘occupied the court a considerable time and afforded a little amusement’.

The plaintiff in her statement alleged that for four months she had received no support whatever from her husband, that he had been away from home for about twelve weeks, but on his return he had been living on her and robbing the garden. She could swear there was plenty of work to be had, but he refused to take it. He had threatened her life on one occasion with a knife, but had never struck her, as she got out of his way. Once he had locked her in the house, and threatened to set fire to it, when she got out of the window, and alarmed the neighbours. Three witnesses were called who proved that the man could have got remunerative work, but did not care to do it when offered, also that he was in the habit of drinking. One of the witnesses, Mr [Edward Francis] Roche [a Shaftesbury farmer],⁵⁷⁹ stated the plaintiff was a hard-working industrious woman, but for assistance given by Mrs [Sophia] Cox [the wife of Edward Young Cox, another Shaftesbury farmer]⁵⁸⁰ and himself he was certain the family would have starved. Defendant on being sworn said that as he could not get employment he went away. He had given his wife two small cheques not four months ago. He always gave her all his earnings. She found the money for him to go to Auckland to work, whilst there he had earned a few shillings, and wishing to see the old place, he had returned, but could get no employment. He also stated that his wife had been in the habit of looking after the house for one of the witnesses, who lost his wife eighteen months ago, and that this fact had a great deal to do with the present proceedings, but in being questioned by plaintiff on this matter he admitted she did so with his consent. In reply to the Bench, defendant stated that he had his liquors given him, and while in Auckland he only drank ginger-beer, but His Worship took a different view to this, remarking that it was, to say the least of it, a remarkable instance of free liquor. In giving judgment His Worship commented strongly on defendant’s conduct towards his wife, and with regard to his leaving her, remarked, “One cannot live on the air of New Zealand, good as it is, for four months.”⁵⁸¹

⁵⁷⁹ See *Tauranga Electoral Roll, 1887*, p. 21; *New Zealand Herald*, 29 September 1903, p. 5.

⁵⁸⁰ See *Te Aroha Electoral Roll, 1890*, p. 8; *Cyclopedia of New Zealand*, vol. 2, p. 826; *New Zealand Herald*, Death Notice, 22 March 1901, p. 4, 18 July 1904, p. 6.

⁵⁸¹ Te Aroha Correspondent, *Thames Advertiser*, 8 September 1888, p. 2.

The order was granted, 'Mrs Taylor to have the children'.⁵⁸² One year later, she charged him with failing to maintain them.⁵⁸³

Julia Esther Taylor (sworn), said: I have six children in my custody, aged from two to twelve years. I am principally in the employ of Mr E.Y. Cox, my own earnings are about 18s per week. The only reason my husband gave me for not maintaining his children was that he said he would do nothing until he came back to his home, and then he would do the best he could for them. My husband has been in regular work for about the last three months at Mr Roche's. Mr Roche told me he paid him 2s 6d a day and his food, or at the rate of 15s a week and found [meaning his food was provided]. My two elder sons, when in employ, give me their wages. One earns about 6s and the other about 5s per week.

E.Y. Cox (sworn), said: Mrs Taylor is in my employ. She receives 12s from my wife from washing, etc, and 3s from me for washing out the schoolhouse, etc. This occupies about four days a week, and I believe she generally gets about another day's work in the week.

John Taylor (sworn): All I have drawn is £6 during the last three months, as I could only get work on fine days. I have done a good deal of work for Mr [John] Squirrell, storekeeper,⁵⁸⁴ but half my earnings are deducted towards paying the back debts incurred before my wife got separation.

His Worship: Mrs Taylor asked for and got the custody of the children at her own request, she agreeing to take absolute charge of them, as she said with the assistance of her two eldest boys, she thought she would be able to maintain the family. I don't think therefore she should ask for this. Defendant objected to the custody of the whole of the children being given plaintiff, at the time the order was made.

Defendant: I am willing now to take charge of all the children, and wish to have them.

His worship: That will relieve Mrs Taylor of the maintenance. In fact, I think, if it could be so arranged between them, the best thing for all concerned for the parties in this action to make up their differences and run together again. Defendant appeared to be keeping sober now and willing to work.

Plaintiff stated she would not consent to that, but would rather withdraw the plaint and struggle on as she had been doing.

⁵⁸² Te Aroha Magistrate's Court, Criminal Record Book 1881-1896, 42/1888, BCDG 11220/1a, ANZ-A.

⁵⁸³ Te Aroha Magistrate's Court, Criminal Record Book 1881-1896, 38/1889, BCDG 11220/1a, ANZ-A.

⁵⁸⁴ See paper on his life.

Case withdrawn at request of plaintiff.⁵⁸⁵

Nearly three weeks after Julia moved to Auckland in July 1890, she applied for relief because she was unable to support her children. She was then 39, with six dependent children. Her eldest son, aged 17, was working in a Te Aroha hotel, and her second eldest, 16, provided her with 6s a week from his earnings at a Huntly flax mill. Her husband, then working on a Manawaru farm, was required to pay 17s 6d a week, and she was trying to earn some money as a laundress and needlewoman.⁵⁸⁶

Sometimes men accused of deserting and not supporting their wife would, upon prosecution, return to their wife. For instance, Annie Curnow in 1884 accused her husband, a fellow drunkard, of deserting her and leaving her without adequate means of support, but withdrew this charge one month later;⁵⁸⁷ they continued to live and drink together for as long as can be traced.⁵⁸⁸

In 1890, William Maloney was charged with 'Cruelty to his wife Ellen Maloney without adultery and for Protection Order under Married Women's Property Act 1880'. After he pleaded guilty, the order was made; 'Mother to have exclusive custody of children (three girls) till they shall have attained the age of 18 years'.⁵⁸⁹ In March 1904, a wife charged her husband, James Lowrie, with assault and sought maintenance of herself and her children, but then withdrew both suits. One month later, she renewed the application for maintenance, which was adjourned for another month at his request 'on the understanding that James Lowrie consents not to interfere in any way with complainant's property or herself'. When the case was heard, the magistrate decreed that she 'be no longer bound to cohabit with her husband' and have custody of the children, the eldest aged four years and three months and the youngest ten months. Lowrie was required to provide

⁵⁸⁵ Magistrate's Court, *Te Aroha News*, 4 September 1889, p. 2.

⁵⁸⁶ Auckland Hospital and Charitable Aid Board, Applications for Relief 1888-1894, folio 677, YCAB 15245/1a, ANZ-A.

⁵⁸⁷ Te Aroha Magistrate's Court, Criminal Record Book 1881-1896, 35/1884, BCDG 11220/1a, ANZ-A.

⁵⁸⁸ See paper on the drink problem in the Te Aroha district.

⁵⁸⁹ Te Aroha Magistrate's Court, Criminal Record Book 1881-1896, 32/1890, BCDG 11220/1a, ANZ-A.

15s a week for his wife and 5s for each child, paying £3 every two weeks to the clerk of the court.⁵⁹⁰

Wives uncertain whether their husbands had abandoned them permanently sought charitable relief. In 1890, one Waiorongomai resident applied for relief, not for herself, but for her children, aged three and one year. Since her husband had left eight months previously, she had heard nothing from him. She was willing to become a servant 'if she could get something done for her children', for her three brothers were unable to assist. Temporary relief of 5s a week was granted.⁵⁹¹ Four years later, a Te Aroha woman applied for relief for herself and her two children. 'She had been over a year from Sydney, when her husband was supposed to follow her, but did not do so'. She was living with her parents, 'but the father who was of dissolute habits did not contribute anything to the support of either of them'. The charitable aid board considered she 'was capable of earning wages by going to service, and she would then be able to contribute something towards the support of her children'; accordingly, it did not grant any aid.⁵⁹²

Another wife who sought charitable aid was Rebecca Hardisty, married to a 34-year-old carpenter who was locked up by the Te Aroha police in September 1884 because he had not paid a £1 fine for obscene language. To avoid spending 48 hours in the lock-up, the fine was paid, possibly by his wife, and he was released.⁵⁹³ Two days later, he was accused of excessive drinking, but the case was withdrawn.⁵⁹⁴ Three years later, Rebecca, who had moved to Auckland, had to apply for charitable aid because she had six children aged between 11 and two and her husband had been living in Melbourne for the past two years.⁵⁹⁵

⁵⁹⁰ Te Aroha Magistrate's Court, Criminal Record Book 1896-1907, 19, 20, 25/1904, BCDG 11220/1b, ANZ-A.

⁵⁹¹ Hospital and Charitable Aid Board, *Waikato Times*, 2 October 1890, p. 2.

⁵⁹² Hospital and Charitable Aid Board, *Waikato Times*, 18 September 1894, p. 6.

⁵⁹³ Te Aroha Magistrate's Court, Criminal Record Book 1881-1896, 67/1884, BCDG 11220/1a, ANZ-A; Armed Constabulary Force, Report of Charges taken at Te Aroha Lock-Up 1880-1903, 37/1884, in private possession.

⁵⁹⁴ Te Aroha Magistrate's Court, Criminal Record Book 1881-1896, 69A/1884, BCDG 11220/1a, ANZ-A.

⁵⁹⁵ Auckland Hospital and Charitable Aid Board, Applications for Relief 1888-1894, folio 202, no. 767, YCAB 15245/1a, ANZ-A.

Some wives deserted their husbands. For instance, 11 years after leaving her husband, the wife of Edmund Cornes of Te Aroha (brother of the notable miner Clem Cornes)⁵⁹⁶ asked a newspaper whether, having been separated for over seven years and receiving no maintenance, she could remarry, but was warned that she would be committing bigamy.⁵⁹⁷

REMARRIAGES

Remarriage in the case of Rachel Joy, whose life is outlined below, was clearly for love, based on long association and affection. In other cases, remarriages for both widows and widowers were sometimes undertaken because their young children needed support, although an element of love must be assumed in choosing the new partner; Lucy Harriet Roffey, whose complicated matrimonial career is traced below, is an example. George Sherlock, a miner and then amalgamator in batteries who became a cordial manufacturer,⁵⁹⁸ married Elizabeth Mary Nicol in December 1876 when he was 23 and she was 16.⁵⁹⁹ They had two daughters, but three weeks after the birth of the second in September 1879 she died, aged 19, of 'Brain fever Effusion into Ventricles of brain'.⁶⁰⁰ In 1891 he married again, when aged 38, to 18-year-old Ellen Elizabeth Crawley.⁶⁰¹ They were to have two sons and six daughters; all his children from both marriages were still alive when he died in 1933.⁶⁰² His second wife lived until 1951;⁶⁰³ like her

⁵⁹⁶ See paper on Clement Augustus Cornes.

⁵⁹⁷ *Auckland Weekly News*, 20 February 1897, p. 15, letter from Edmund Cornes, 13 March 1897, p. 19.

⁵⁹⁸ See District Court, *Thames Advertiser*, 5 March 1884, p. 3, 4 June 1884, p. 3; *Cyclopedia of New Zealand*, vol. 2, p. 830; *Te Aroha News*, 19 July 1933, p. 1.

⁵⁹⁹ Notices of Intentions to Marry 1876, p. 213, Births Deaths and Marriages, BDM 20/21, ANZ-W; Marriage Certificate of George Sherlock, 21 December 1876, 1876/2360, BDM; *Thames Advertiser*, 22 December 1876, p. 2.

⁶⁰⁰ Birth Certificates of Laura Cecilia Sherlock, 1 February 1878, 1878/620; Elizabeth Emma Nicol Sherlock, 25 September 1879, 1879/16606; Death Certificate of Elizabeth Mary Sherlock, 18 October 1879, 1879/4421, BDM.

⁶⁰¹ Marriage Certificate of George Sherlock, 7 January 1891, 1891/3820, BDM.

⁶⁰² Death Certificate of George Sherlock, 16 July 1933, 1933/9617, BDM.

⁶⁰³ Death Certificate of Ellen Elizabeth Sherlock, 10 July 1951, 1951/17950, BDM.

husband, she was a staunch Methodist.⁶⁰⁴ In Te Aroha she worked as a nurse, and in the 1918 influenza epidemic 'she did not spare herself'.⁶⁰⁵

An example of remarriage for companionship was that of Heber Caudwell, a contractor in the 1880s who became a prominent farmer at Te Aroha West.⁶⁰⁶ In 1888, he married Amy Julia Reynolds,⁶⁰⁷ and they had one daughter and five sons, one of whom died at five months and another died aged nine.⁶⁰⁸ Some years after he retired to Auckland, his wife died, aged 60, after being in ill health for some time. She was recalled as being 'known for her kindly disposition and many acts of neighbourliness and sympathy'.⁶⁰⁹ A year later, when aged 63, Caudwell remarried, to Maude Cooke, 15 years his junior; they had 19 years together before he died after a long battle against stomach cancer.⁶¹⁰

MENTAL STRESS

⁶⁰⁴ See *Te Aroha News*, 22 May 1909, p. 2, 20 July 1951, p. 3.

⁶⁰⁵ *Te Aroha News*, 20 July 1951, p. 3.

⁶⁰⁶ For contracting, see *Te Aroha News*, 3 October 1885, p. 2, 13 February 1886, p. 7, 14 August 1886, p. 2, 6 November 1886, p. 2, 4 December 1886, p. 2; for mining investments, see Te Aroha Warden's Court, Register of Licensed Holdings 1881-1887, folio 5, BBAV 11500/9a, ANZ-A; *New Zealand Gazette*, 14 December 1882, p. 1885; for farming, see *Cyclopedia of New Zealand*, vol. 2, p. 833; photograph, *Auckland Weekly News*, 27 July 1902, Supplement, p. 8; Bank of New Zealand, Paeroa Branch, Manager's Memorandum Book 1902-1914, p. 106, Bank of New Zealand Archives, Wellington; John Bollard to Secretary, Auckland School Commissioners, 23 May 1906, Lands and Survey Department, BAAZ 1113/1d, ANZ-A; *Te Aroha News*, 31 August 1942, p. 2.

⁶⁰⁷ Marriage Certificate of Amy Julia Reynolds [indexed under her name alone], 26 January 1888, 1888/291, BDM; *Auckland Weekly News*, 4 February 1888, p. 1.

⁶⁰⁸ Birth Certificates of Alfred Heber Caudwell, 31 October 1888, 1888/7751; Henry Spencer Caudwell, 5 February 1891, 1891/4103, BDM; Henry Caudwell, 4 June 1892; Percival Augustus Caudwell, 6 November 1893, Church of England, Hamilton East District, Register of Baptisms 1879-1908, nos. 296, 356, Anglican Diocesan Archives, Hamilton; Ernest Wilfred Caudwell, 18 May 1895, 1895/5855; Sylvia Doris Annie Caudwell, 29 October 1902, 1902/13245; Death Certificates of Henry Spencer Caudwell, 12 July 1891, 1891/3523; Henry Caudwell, 27 June 1901, 1901/5020, BDM.

⁶⁰⁹ Death Certificate of Amy Julia Caudwell, 31 January 1922, 1922/714, BDM; *Te Aroha News*, 2 February 1922, p. 2.

⁶¹⁰ Marriage Certificate of Heber Caudwell, 1923/3279; Death Certificate of Heber Caudwell, 22 August 1942, 1942/25451, BDM.

There were several cases of battered wives, for instance Cecilia Tonge and Harriet Healy, whose lives are outlined below. Punishment varied, but an 1886 case, when the husband was found guilty of assault and ordered to keep the peace for 12 months and provide a surety of £20,⁶¹¹ was typical. Although being beaten, even if only once, must have created mental stress, this did not require admission to the asylum. Those women who were committed suffered from a variety of stresses and manias. Laura Devey was admitted three times through 'disappointment in love' combined with post-natal depression.⁶¹² A 32-year-old married domestic servant was committed after an attack lasting six months, the diagnosis being 'congenital imbecile'.⁶¹³ The cause of her insanity was, according to her brother, 'disappointment in not marrying the father of her illegitimate child', then seven years old. She herself blamed her sister for trying 'to cut her out with a young man'.⁶¹⁴ A 21-year-old Waihou woman was committed for 'adolescent insanity'.⁶¹⁵ Her mother revealed it was really religious mania brought on by attending a Catholic mission. 'After a series of attendances at Mission Services she began to pray and mimic the priest at the alter, then saying she would sacrifice herself for the family, went to the convent at Te Aroha to become a nun. Since that time, she has been talking religion almost incessantly, has not slept' for four days, and 'was at times violent'. In addition to 'continually praying with her hands and imitating the priest in manner', she 'tried to dress like a priest'.⁶¹⁶ The following year, an unmarried domestic servant aged 22 was admitted for 'adolescent insanity' also.⁶¹⁷ Assessed as being simple-minded, she thought people were laughing at her and contemplated suicide. She told that local policeman 'that at the Palace Hotel where she has lately been working, she was treated with every

⁶¹¹ Te Aroha Warden's Court, Criminal Record Book 1881-1896, 2/1886, BCDG 11220/1a, ANZ-A.

⁶¹² See paper on George Devey and his family.

⁶¹³ Avondale Asylum, Register of Admissions 1902-1906, no. 2871, YCAA 1021/4, ANZ-A.

⁶¹⁴ Avondale Asylum, Case Book 1900-1903, folio 375, YCAA 1048/9, ANZ-A.

⁶¹⁵ Avondale Asylum, Register of Admissions 1906-1912, no. 3981, YCAA 1021/5, ANZ-A.

⁶¹⁶ Avondale Asylum, Case Book 1908-1910, folio 287, YCAA 1048/11, ANZ-A.

⁶¹⁷ Avondale Asylum, Register of Admissions 1906-1912, no. 4221, YCAA 1021/5, ANZ-A.

kindness', despite which 'she expresses no desire for anything but death'. She would spend her next 14 years in the asylum.⁶¹⁸

Two women did commit suicide; one was the wife of a prominent mine manager, the other an unmarried charwoman. Hugh McLiver managed several mines at Waiorongomai and elsewhere.⁶¹⁹ In July 1871 he married Elizabeth Tunstall at Thames; he was aged 22, and she gave her age as 21.⁶²⁰ As she was aged 30 at the time of her death in 1886, she had really been 15.⁶²¹ Presumably she had recorded her age as 21 because at that age no parental approval to marry was required.

According to her death notice, Elizabeth 'accidentally drowned' in the Waihou River.⁶²² Her body, 'very well dressed' and with three gold rings on her fingers, was discovered four miles downstream of Te Aroha after being in the river for two weeks. It showed no sign of violence. Hugh, who had believed she was with friends in Thames, had to identify her. 'As might be supposed the poor fellow was terribly cut up, by the sad and sudden shock'. When he had accompanied her to catch the coach to Thames on 8 October she was in good health and good spirits. 'Having no family, and finding the place rather dull at Waiorongomai, she was in the habit of paying visits to her friends for two or three weeks at a time', he said, and he had not been alarmed by her not writing since she left.⁶²³ At the coroner's inquest, the coach driver gave evidence:

The deceased came up as a passenger in the coach I was driving, from Paeroa on Saturday 16th October, to Te Aroha. She seemed peculiar in her manner and was talking to herself at times, and crying; she got out just before we came into Te Aroha, saying she would go away by the train. There was a train left about half an hour afterwards. I, however, saw her between five and six o'clock after the train had left, she was then walking down the railway line towards the river bank, where a crowd of people had congregated to witness some boat races. I have not since seen her

⁶¹⁸ Avondale Asylum, Committed Patient Case Files 1911, no. 4221, YCAA 1026/15, ANZ-A.

⁶¹⁹ See papers on the New Find and on Henry Hopper Adams.

⁶²⁰ Marriage Certificate of Hugh McLiver [recorded as McCliver], 12 July 1871, 1871/6765; Birth Certificate of Hugh McLiver, 1849/413, BDM.

⁶²¹ Death Certificate of Elizabeth McLiver, c. 16 October 1886 [registered 27 October 1886], 1886/4926, BDM; Death Notice, *Thames Advertiser*, 6 November 1886, p. 2.

⁶²² Death Notice, *Te Aroha News*, 6 November 1886, p. 2.

⁶²³ *Te Aroha News*, 30 October 1886, pp. 2-3.

alive. She apparently went down amongst the people. I certainly thought she was not quite in her right mind, from her strange conduct on the journey up, and mentioned the circumstance to Mr [Thomas] Lawless⁶²⁴ and others....

I recollect that she went down with me as a passenger to Thames about ten days prior to her return. There was then nothing strange about her, she appeared all right. Her husband came in with her to Te Aroha on that occasion, bought her ticket for her, and saw her off. On the sixteenth she arrived at Paeroa by the Thames coach, and came by my coach from Paeroa. She did not give me the impression of having been drinking on that day. She remarked on the journey up, when talking to herself, she wished she was dead; but I had no idea she intended to do herself any harm. She seemed however, desirous of getting away from Te Aroha. There were two other passengers on the coach the day I brought Mrs McLiver back.... They did not appear to take much notice of deceased's manner, beyond remarking she seemed peculiar.⁶²⁵

The driver had discussed her 'strange conduct' and desire to escape from the district with several people but not with her husband, but this may not imply that the marriage was believed by the locals to be unhappy but simply that he was mining, not having been told she would return then. The only other witness was a woman who lived besides the punt landing who had noticed Elizabeth sitting on a seat there late in the afternoon. 'She took off her hat, and rolled her hair, and then pinned it up, and put her hat on again.... I noticed she kept looking at the water for a time with her hands folded before her, but after that she got up and walked away from the river up the road. I have never since seen her alive'. The jury returned the 'open verdict' of 'found drowned'.⁶²⁶ Nothing is known about their domestic life, but he may have been difficult to live with sometimes, judging by his taking a brother to court over a small debt incurred nearly eight years previously and having his case 'at once dismissed' after the evidence was heard.⁶²⁷

Her funeral was 'a very large one, nearly every household in Waiorongomai and the Hill being represented, as well as a large number of Te Aroha residents and settlers, the greatest sympathy being felt for Mr

⁶²⁴ See paper on his life.

⁶²⁵ *Te Aroha News*, 30 October 1886, p. 3.

⁶²⁶ *Te Aroha News*, 30 October 1886, p. 3.

⁶²⁷ *Thames Star*, 26 January 1893, p. 2.

McLiver in the great trial that has befallen him'.⁶²⁸ At a meeting held later that month about the bad state of the cemetery, he spoke with 'sadness' because 'the only tie he had got had lately been laid to rest' there; he and his friends were prepared to give £20 to improve it.⁶²⁹ He would remarry in 1899 when aged 50 (his certificate claimed 48) to Ellen Smith, aged 34.⁶³⁰ Four years and four months later, he died;⁶³¹ there were no children from this marriage either.

Jessie Smith, an unmarried Te Aroha charwoman who had been living at Hamilton, was committed to the asylum in October 1892 after an attack of insanity lasting for one week. The asylum doctors diagnosed melancholia caused by privation,⁶³² although at Hamilton she had been considered to be 'suffering more or less from religious monomania'. A Hamilton correspondent recalled that when she gave birth to a son 12 years previously⁶³³ she had 'stoutly maintained it was a case of "immaculate conception" '.⁶³⁴ Incoherent and excited through 'poverty and worry' when in the asylum, she was quoted as saying 'the world is going to be burned up etc'.⁶³⁵ After being on trial release with her brother, who lived in Auckland, for three months, she was discharged in March 1893 as recovered.⁶³⁶

She was readmitted in April 1902, when aged 54, after an attack of insanity lasting two weeks. The diagnosis was mental depression caused by privation, as she had 'impaired health and condition'.⁶³⁷ The Te Aroha constable had found her one Sunday afternoon dancing in front of the Anglican church and pawing the ground with her feet. Examples were recorded of her meaningless ramblings, but her delusions soon ceased.⁶³⁸

⁶²⁸ *Te Aroha News*, 30 October 1886, p. 3.

⁶²⁹ *Te Aroha News*, 20 November 1886, p. 2.

⁶³⁰ Marriage Certificate of Hugh McLiver, 5 April 1899, 1899/2162, BDM.

⁶³¹ Death Certificate of Hugh McLiver, 19 August 1903, 1903/4703, BDM.

⁶³² Avondale Asylum, Register of Admissions 1885-1896, no. 1817, YCAA 1021/2, ANZ-A.

⁶³³ Birth Certificate of Waldo Smith, 1880/12487, BDM.

⁶³⁴ Hamilton Correspondent, *Auckland Weekly News*, 15 October 1892, p. 23.

⁶³⁵ Avondale Asylum, Case Book 1890-1892, folio 795, YCAA 1048/5, ANZ-A.

⁶³⁶ Avondale Asylum, Case Book 1890-1892, folio 795, YCAA 1048/5; Record Book of Investigation into Relatives' Ability to Pay Maintenance 1890-1899, folio 96, YCAA 1044/1, ANZ-A.

⁶³⁷ Avondale Asylum, Register of Admissions 1902-1906, no. 2719, YCAA 1021/4, ANZ-A.

⁶³⁸ Avondale Asylum, Case Book 1900-1903, folio 223, YCAA 1048/9, ANZ-A.

She was discharged as recovered four months later.⁶³⁹ One evening a week later she left her home at Te Aroha, where she was living with her father, and disappeared.⁶⁴⁰ A week later her 22-year-old son found her naked body in the house's water tank. Her brother told the coroner that, as she had only been 'really bad' because of religious mania for three days, he had taken her out of the asylum, whereupon she had insisted on returning to Te Aroha to live with her father, aged 85, totally deaf and nearly blind. He considered his sister's mind to have been 'feeble' because of lack of money, and that she drowned herself. The Te Aroha constable was more charitable, stating that she might have climbed into the tank to have a bath, not to commit suicide.⁶⁴¹ Her death certificate bluntly recorded that she had been 'found dead in water tank entered by herself whilst Temporarily Insane'.⁶⁴²

If a suicide attempt failed, the judgment was merciful. For instance, two women who attempted suicide were 'Convicted and ordered to come up for sentence when called on'.⁶⁴³

CATHERINE YOUNG/GLEESON

During the 1880s, David Kerr Young was mining at Waiorongomai.⁶⁴⁴ In 1868 he had been married for only one month before his daughter Mary Catherine (sometimes known as May or Mary Helen or Mary Ellen) was born.⁶⁴⁵ In January 1887, Edmund George, a miner aged 23, married her in the registrar's office at Thames,⁶⁴⁶ six months before their first child, a son,

⁶³⁹ Avondale Asylum, Register of Admissions 1902-1906, no. 2719, YCAA 1021/4, ANZ-A.

⁶⁴⁰ *Ohinemuri Gazette*, 27 August 1902, p. 2.

⁶⁴¹ *Ohinemuri Gazette*, 11 September 1902, p. 2; Inquest into Jessie Smith, Inquests, Justice Department, J 46, 1902/789, ANZ-W.

⁶⁴² Death Certificate of Jessie Smith, 23 August 1902, 1902/4564, BDM.

⁶⁴³ New Zealand Constabulary, Charges taken at Te Aroha Lock-Up 1903-1917, 66/1913, BADB 11355/1a; Te Aroha Magistrate's Court, Criminal Record Book 1913-1919, 46/1915, BCDG 11220/2b, ANZ-A.

⁶⁴⁴ See Te Aroha Court, Register of Te Aroha Claims 1880-1888, folios 142, 146, BBAV 11567/1a; Register of Licensed Holdings 1881-1887, folio 143, BBAV 11500/9a, ANZ-A; *Te Aroha News*, 8 August 1885, p. 7, 5 March 1887, p. 2, 12 May 1888, p. 2, 2 June 1888, p. 2.

⁶⁴⁵ Marriage Certificate of David Kerr Young, 26 July 1868, 1868/7457; Birth Certificate of Mary Catherine Young, 27 August 1868, 1868/18482, BDM.

⁶⁴⁶ Marriage Certificate of Edmund George, 12 January 1887, 1887/2039, BDM.

was born.⁶⁴⁷ A daughter was born in 1889.⁶⁴⁸ Only after they had been married for 18 months did the couple, after moving to Waiorongomai, tell her parents that they had married and had two children.⁶⁴⁹

Young's younger daughter, Catherine (registered as Kate), was born in 1876.⁶⁵⁰ On 1 April 1890, George was arrested, six miles from Morrinsville,⁶⁵¹ and two months later, when he was charged with 'carnally knowing girl under fourteen years', Catherine Young gave evidence to the Supreme Court, as recorded by Judge Conolly:

I was 14 on 16th April. I know accused. He is my brother in law. On 21st March last he was living at W[aiorongomai] with his wife. Not very far from my father's house, about 100 yards I shd. think. I remember 21st March last. There were races at Te Aroha on that day. I saw my brother in law that day, at my father's house. My brother, 17, came home to dinner, & then went back to work. Then I was in house by myself. He came up for a bucket of water & sd he was coming back again with my mother's scissors. This was about 1/2 past 12. He came back again afterwds about 1 o'clock. I was washing up the dishes. I looked round & saw his head halfway through the passage door. He came in & went into my brothers' bedroom. As I was going to one of the rooms passing between my brothers bedroom door & the passage door he took hold of my arm & pulled me inside the bedroom. He put me on the bed and had connection with me. Then he went outside to catch a pig. After catching it he went in the stable loft. Called me. I asked him what he wanted. He said I want to speak to you. I asked him what he wanted to say. He sd only to speak to you. I then went up in the loft. He was standing at the door. When I got up there he shut the door. Then he caught my arms & put me on the floor and had connection with me. He told me not to tell anybody. He sd if I did we would both be shot. He went down out of the loft, and went into the kitchen. Had conversation with him 26 Jany. He asked me his age. I gave him no answer. I don't remember his asking me more than once.

⁶⁴⁷ Birth Certificate of Edmund Percival George, 12 July 1887, 1887/5253, BDM.

⁶⁴⁸ Birth Certificate of Kathleen Mary George, 1889/12171, BDM.

⁶⁴⁹ Supreme Court, Auckland, Conolly J, Judge's Notebook 1889-1890, pp. 238, 239, BBAE A304/119, ANZ-A.

⁶⁵⁰ Birth Certificate of Kate Young, 16 April 1876, 1876/6871, BDM; Baptismal Certificate of Catherine Young, born 16 April 1876, Register of Thames Baptisms 1874-1886, Catholic Archives, Auckland.

⁶⁵¹ Supreme Court, Auckland, Conolly J, Judge's Notebook 1889-1890, p. 240, BBAE A304/119, ANZ-A.

Under cross-examination, she admitted having sex with him seven times between January and March. 'He used to come in the daytime & say I want you tonight I want to speak to you. I did not consent on every occasion. He always used to say Kitty I will not do any harm to you. He did not have connection every time he saw me. I deny that I consented on 21st March'. Conolly then 'read part of her deposition to her as to consenting to both acts of connection', to which she responded that her sister had asked her 'to try to get him off'.

I swear not more than seven times. He told me he was up there tell eleven o'clock at night. I did not go. – When I cd not go out to speak to him I was to show a lighted candle. That was only once. Something was sd about smelling a rat. My mother would he said. Not my mother, the little woman, meaning his wife. – Went to the spring and had connection there when he wanted to speak to me twice. Did not scream or tell my mother. 21st March was the last occasion of connection. He always told me it was not wrong. That was all I thought about it. – Mr Carter lives near our place, 22 or 23 yds. – Never told him my mother was angry about going out back way, and suspected something. Another day he killed a pig, my mother was at door knitting. He sd see if yr mother is sitting down Kitty. He did not come with me that day. I once went with him to dairy. Had not connn then. Remember his sharpening an axe at my mothers one day. Had no connn that day: my big brother was there. My little brother was at the races. Only went once in loft with prisoner. – Went to his house for a loaf of bread while his wife was at my sister's [a confusing statement: Young had only two daughters, another having died in childbirth]. He gave me the key. We had no connection then. In Jany he asked my age. At my sister's house. He mentioned three numbers. Either 13 14 15 or 14 15 16. I gave no answer. I swear that I did not say 14. (Depositions referred to.) I am quite sure now that I did not say I was 14. Had connection with him near Murphy's fence. He would have stopped then if I had called out.

She recalled her sister telling her the ages of herself and George and that she, Catherine, would be 14 in April.

Remember Sergt of Police coming to take my statet before I was examd at Te Aroha. My sister told me to tell the truth. I never said that my mother wd not let me tell the truth that I tried to. I never sd anything of the sort.... Remember seeing sister at mothers house, after accused was committed, She asked me

whether I had told prsr that I was 14. I told her no. I swear that I did not say yes.⁶⁵²

Her mother then gave evidence:

I have two daughters. Accused married to other one. Do not know how long. He has two children. Remember seeing him 31st March in his own house. I told him that he ought to be ashamed to leave his wife & chn without fire or food. He sd you are in a hell of a lot of trouble now but mind you will be in more trouble before you are aware of it – time works all things. He gave me such a look at the time.

I went home. Had a talk with youngest girl. Then went back to his house. Asked him what he had done to my child. He sd so help me God I never did anything to the little girl more than I wd my own sister. Do you think I'm a dog? I sd you did, the child has confessed all to me. He then sd he did, and I cd do nothing to him. I sd her father will shoot you tonight when he comes home. I said she is not of age, she is only thirteen. He turned as white as a sheet & sd "my God I am in for rape."

Cross-examined, she denied having any quarrel with George. 'Never told Kate showed him too much attention. Never suspected them in the least. – Only suspicion was from his look. Never laid a trap to catch him.... His wife told me she thought there was something between them'.⁶⁵³

Her father then gave evidence that George and his family lived in his house for four months whilst George was at work.

He came home from Saty to Monday. I had one quarrel with him. I knocked him down he did not wait for any more. It was in my own house. I never turned my little girl out of the house. He boasted of the crime that he committed with my child. This was since he was out on bail.⁶⁵⁴

In his evidence, George stated he had married 'about 18 months before I knew the family'. He insisted that he had asked Catherine several times if

⁶⁵² Supreme Court, Auckland, Conolly J, Judge's Notebook 1889-1890, pp. 235–238, BBAE A304/119, ANZ-A.

⁶⁵³ Supreme Court, Auckland, Conolly J, Judge's Notebook 1889-1890, pp. 238-239, BBAE A304/119, ANZ-A.

⁶⁵⁴ Supreme Court, Auckland, Conolly J, Judge's Notebook 1889-1890, p. 239, BBAE A304/119, ANZ-A.

she was 14, and certainly 'before the first connection'. Cross-examined on this point, and only this point, he said he had asked her age 'because I knew that she cd not consent unless she was fourteen. This was in my own house – wife & chn lying in bed in next room. I sd if May finds it out she will shoot you'.⁶⁵⁵

His wife gave evidence of a discussion after January about ages when her sister had said she was just 14. When the police sergeant came to take her sister's deposition, she told her to tell the truth. When Catherine came out of the preliminary court hearing after giving evidence, 'She put up both her hands "Oh May I tried to but mother made me" '. Catherine told her that she had told George that she was 14. 'There was ill feeling between my father & my husband'. Had not told Catherine when she would be 14 because 'I did not then know when her birthday was'.⁶⁵⁶ (Clearly birthday presents were not a feature of the Young household).

George's counsel said 'he could not defend the prisoner on moral grounds, for his crime was too black, but on legal grounds he must say that he could defend him. The prisoner clearly had reasonable grounds for supposing that the girl was over fourteen'. The prosecutor did not address the jury, but Conolly in his summing up referred 'in unmeasured terms to the blackguardly conduct of the accused in deliberately planning the ruin of a child, his own sister in law, whose honour he should have been the first to protect'. He then 'summed up strongly in favour of the supposition the prisoner had reasonable grounds for believing that the girl was over fourteen'.⁶⁵⁷ After deliberating for an hour and a half, the jury asked Conolly 'whether the prisoner in his position with relation to the girl's family was not bound to make enquiries as to her age. I reply in negative'. Seventeen minutes later, the jury brought in a guilty verdict. Conolly 'being of opinion that the verdict is agst the evidence and that the prisoner had reasonable cause, reserve judgment for considn of the Court of Appeal', prisoner to be placed in custody until recognizances entered into.⁶⁵⁸ After

⁶⁵⁵ Supreme Court, Auckland, Conolly J, Judge's Notebook 1889-1890, p. 240, BBAE A304/119, ANZ-A.

⁶⁵⁶ Supreme Court, Auckland, Conolly J, Judge's Notebook 1889-1890, p. 241, BBAE A304/119, ANZ-A.

⁶⁵⁷ *Te Aroha News*, 11 June 1890, p. 6.

⁶⁵⁸ Supreme Court, Auckland, Conolly J, Judge's Notebook 1889-1890, p. 241, BBAE A304/119, ANZ-A.

two weeks the money was found, and George was discharged from prison.⁶⁵⁹ Conolly had wondered whether he could over-ride the jury and direct an acquittal but 'did not know any authority on the subject', so decided to refer the case to the higher court.⁶⁶⁰

The *Auckland Weekly News*, which considered the evidence to be 'unfit for publication', described Catherine as 'well grown for her age, and by no means unintelligent', who 'did not attempt to deny that she was a consenting party'.⁶⁶¹ The Court of Appeal considered that Conolly should have stopped the case, and squashed it.⁶⁶² After this case concluded, Mary Catherine/Mary Ellen did not divorce her husband; after 1905 her mother lost all contact with her, though she believed she was still in New Zealand.⁶⁶³ Only one Edmund George died in New Zealand before 1970, in 1913, but his age was given as 50, not 47; the only Mary Ellen George died in 1962, aged 76, the wrong age (no Mary Catherine George was recorded).⁶⁶⁴ George's future was that of a drunken labourer. In 1903, when living in Auckland, he was convicted of drunkenness and committing an indecent act (the normal expression for urinating in a public place) and imprisoned for seven days.⁶⁶⁵ In December 1897, he was admitted to the Auckland hospital because of alcoholism; discharged recovered, he was readmitted 11 days later for the same reason.⁶⁶⁶ In 1905, he was again admitted for acute alcoholism.⁶⁶⁷ A year and a half later, when seeking assistance, the Auckland charitable aid committee considered sending him to the Salvation Army's home for alcoholics on Rotoroa Island.⁶⁶⁸ By the end

⁶⁵⁹ *New Zealand Police Gazette*, 18 June 1890, p. 119.

⁶⁶⁰ *Te Aroha News*, 11 June 1890, p. 6.

⁶⁶¹ Supreme Court, *Auckland Weekly News*, 14 June 1890, p. 19.

⁶⁶² *Thames Star*, 8 November 1890, p. 2; Supreme Court, *Auckland Weekly News*, 6 December 1890, p. 19.

⁶⁶³ Probate of Catherine Young, Probates, BBAE 1859/2439, ANZ-A.

⁶⁶⁴ Death Certificates of Edmund George, 1913/6058; Mary Ellen George. 1962/39654, BDM.

⁶⁶⁵ *New Zealand Police Gazette*, 8 April 1903, p. 101.

⁶⁶⁶ Auckland Hospital, Register of Patients 1893-1899, folios 168, 170, ZAAP 15288/3a, ANZ-A.

⁶⁶⁷ Auckland Hospital, Register of Admissions and Discharges 1904-1908, folio 52, YCAB 15288/4a, ANZ-A.

⁶⁶⁸ Auckland Charitable Aid Committee, Minute Book 1903-1909, folio 204, YCAB 13034/1a, ANZ-A.

of 1909, he had been convicted 11 times and had spent two prison terms for breaching a prohibition order and then begging in the streets.⁶⁶⁹ In much of this behaviour he had something in common with his father-in-law, who on three occasions between 1890 and 1900 was in trouble with the law for being drunk and disorderly.⁶⁷⁰

The judge's opinion that Catherine had been corrupted by her brother-in-law could be supported by the fact that, two years later, when aged 16, she had a daughter to an unnamed father.⁶⁷¹ In August 1897, when 21, she married a miner two years her senior, William Cornelius McPike.⁶⁷² They had no children, and, five years after he died in Australia after being married for only 11 months, she was remarried in Auckland to James Huntly Beeson, aged 27, less than eight months before the birth of their first child.⁶⁷³ As he was a bushman, they lived at Mercury Bay, Kaihu, Matakohē, and Mokai before finally settling in Auckland in 1910.⁶⁷⁴ They had seven children (three of whom died when very young).⁶⁷⁵ In her 1920 petition for divorce, she stated that since their marriage her husband had been an 'habitual drunkard' and from 1915 onwards was 'guilty of persistent cruelty' by 'beating her and by using abusive and threatening language towards her'. In addition, since about 1910 he had left her 'without adequate means of support'. In 1908, he had been convicted of being drunk in an Auckland street and discharged after paying for the 'cost

⁶⁶⁹ *New Zealand Police Gazette*, 23 June 1909, p. 262, 1 December 1909, p. 503.

⁶⁷⁰ Armed Constabulary Force, Return of Charges taken at Te Aroha Lock-Up 1880-1903, 13/1892, 1/1900, in private possession; Te Aroha Magistrate's Court, Criminal Record Book 1881-1896, 34/1890, 22/1892, BCDG 11220/1a; Criminal Record Book 1896-1907, 1/1900, BCDG 11220/1b, ANZ-A.

⁶⁷¹ Birth Certificate of Catherine Hazel Young, 7 September 1892, 1892/11968, BDM.

⁶⁷² Marriage Certificate of Catherine Young, 31 August 1897, 1897/3477, BDM.

⁶⁷³ Marriage Certificate of Catherine McPike, 17 July 1902, 1902/4152; Birth Certificates of James Huntly Beeson, 4 February 1875, 1875/2381; Huntly Tracey Beeson, 5 February 1903, 1903/17316, BDM; Beeson v. Beeson, High Court, Divorce Files, BBAE 4984/1566, ANZ-A.

⁶⁷⁴ Beeson v. Beeson, High Court, Divorce Files, BBAE 4984/1566, ANZ-A.

⁶⁷⁵ Birth Certificates of Huntly Tracey Beeson, 5 February 1903, 1903/17316; Sydney Beeson, 1904/13112; Florrie Dulcie Beeson, 1906/196; Noel Raymond Beeson, 5 December 1906, 1907/9220; Daphne Erroll Beeson, 1909/17083; Phyllis Catherine Beeson, 29 December 1911, 1911/6348; Death Certificates of Sydney Beeson, 1904/6537; Florie Dulcie Beeson, 1908/673; Daphne Erroll Beeson, 1909/2647, BDM.

of treatment and £1-2-9 damage to Constable Murphy's trousers'. In 1911, when he was a labourer at Penrose, she had obtained a prohibition order against him. In her evidence, Catherine stated that he had started drinking when they were living at Matakoho.

He used to come to town for a short time and in that time went through a lot of money. He couldn't get drink at Mokai. He was all right there. Ist serious matter was at Te Aroha. He brought me to the hotel there. He went away and said that he would be back soon and left me only £1. He did not return that day nor the next and I was very ill at this time. I lost sight of him for some time. I then came to Auckland to search for him. I was not able to find him. I then took maintenance proceedings against him in Auckland and he was ordered to pay 30/- but he sent £2 from Northern Wairoa and some little time after he turned up himself. Order 1907. We were living in Wellington St Auckland and he turned up there and said that he would turn over a new leaf and I lived with him. He was excavating somewhere near the wharf. He then started drinking worse than ever. I did sewing and one time I received 17/-. The lack of money has been my complaint all during my married life. My brother and father have supplied me with money right through my married life. This is the house where midnight escapade [not explained]. He turned up in 1907. In July the following year 1908 my father came to see me and he died suddenly and my husband was on the spree then I having a little money. He made me give it to him. This was money that came from my father. One night I was awoken with a noise in my bedroom and I sat up and saw my husband leading in a man bleeding from the face and head. Both man and husband very drunk. I asked him if he knew what he was doing. He said yes but keep quiet. I told him that he could not stay in the room and told him that he was mad. He then came to me and told me that he would hit me if I made a fuss. I took my baby and slept with it on the kitchen floor. Man and Husband slept in my bed. Man and he disappeared next morning, and was away for a week and I found him at Newmarket with a man named Sherry. His condition was frightfully in drink and the police had him under observation. I promised the police to come for him at night if they would not touch him. I took him home and he could not [missing words?] look after him for 3 days and when he got better he was away for a few days, to the same man and when he came back we got notice to quit. We took then furnished rooms at Onehunga. He went with me and asked me to get house and said that he had gone out for furniture. He said that a pal was going to lend him £23 but at midnight he came home with no furniture and no food and he was drunk. Landlady gave me mattress. A Week £8 or £10 for furniture on time payment. I had 2 children then and a week

after I had 3rd child, but this child died. It was premature born.⁶⁷⁶ I remained in Onehunga for 1 year. I had to do sewing for livelihood. Husband was drinking very much all the time. He lived with me sometimes working at odd jobs and then did trimming trees, and kept on drinking all the time. In 1909 things got so bad that I had to go to father at Te Aroha [as her father had died in the previous year, she must have meant her brother]. Husband followed me there and he kicked up such a row that I had to come back with him. In 1910 I went to Ellerslie and he lived at home with me and did not work. He got bordering on delirium tremens. He imagined that he saw persons behind him. He brought Claude Reid to live with him and he was a drunkard. I then took him to Taihape and wanted him to get him into the bush. I gave him a £1 and ticket. Instead he went to Hamilton and went on the spree and sold all his things. He got seriously ill there. He was [a] month or 6 weeks sick. He had doctor attending him at Hamilton through his habits. I did not pay the doctor. Some weeks after this he got work. He came back to Ellerslie after spree for me to keep him again and for about 6 weeks he kept sober and that was 1st money I had for 18 months. He was working at the freezing works. Then he was had up for being drunk and was prohibited. That would be end of 1910....

Since May 1910 I have received practically no money. In Sept 1910 we came to Penrose. When he shifted there the 1st day I arrived there at 4 o'clock but husband had gone. Prohibition order had no effect. I then got another order for separation but he refused to leave me. He said that if I got 30/- per week from him I would have to keep him. I didn't get 30/- per week and had to keep him. He was drinking as usual. I got into debt and we had to shift from that house and we shifted to another house in Penrose. Landlord offered it to me if I would clean it up. I cleaned it up. I took in boarders and husband lived with me. He works for a while and then goes on spree. He goes on bush contracts and then goes on sprees....

I became seriously ill because of excessive work. I went to the Hospital. Husband wanted to borrow money on furniture. I consented to find money for nurse and doctors. He did not pay doctor by spent money on drink. He came to see my once but on other occasions he was turned away by the authorities as he was too drunk. When I came out of the hospital we went to Te Tapu. It was just a shack and had neither windows nor doors. He started cutting firewood there. I helped him to bag it up and sometimes cut some. He gave me some orders to collect money but he always got it before me. In 1914. In 1915 in beginning we went to Horitiu [near Hamilton] to the freezing works. And for 2 months he got 10/- per week. We were then burnt out. I went back to Penrose

⁶⁷⁶ Neither its birth nor death was registered.

and took two rooms, my husband then came from Horotiu and went to freezing works near here. He drank heavily and was discharged. In 1916 he spent 4 months in continuous drinking. He got a job at Penrose at £3 per week. That lasted a month when he was sacked again for drink. Early in 1917 we went to Matamata and I arrived home in about March and he sent me very little money. He sent me about 10/- per week. He had a bit of money when he came home. There is no hotel at Matamata. He then went on spree again which lasted until July. He became brutal to me at times through drink. In the morning when he had not had drink he seems to be worse. One time in 1918 he was using very bad language and one of the boys said Dad don't swear and he jumped through the window and threatened our lives and I and children had to go out and stay out until 3 in [the] morning until he had gone to sleep. I myself tried to start milk round as we had a few cows. He got 23 acres and got cows on time payment. He said that he would go share milking if I would milk cows at home. I had 13. I and [one] boy did the work. He came home during Xmas holidays for 5 days but I got no money from him as he said that he wanted it himself. One of boys ill at the time and his temperature was 103 degrees. He wanted to send him to milk before sending him for the milk. I got angry and he knocked me on the floor. I got 25/- from him at this time. I got into difficulty over money and bailiff was put in and took possession of cows. He told me not to worry as he had 3 months money to collect from Harrison for whom he was working and I believed him. I found that there was nothing owing and that he had drunk it all.

4 of [the] calves were taken without my consent because Beeson had sold them without consent or knowledge. March to Sept 1918 he did no work at all.

In Oct he got another alleged milking job from Cox. This was at Mangare, From Oct 1918 till Apr 1919. During that time he came home twice only. On Xmas time he was on spree. He only stayed 2 or 3 hours in Feb the other occasion. In April 1919 he arrived home late at night and fell through the window. He was completely drunk and could not get off floor.

In the earlier part of our marriage he used to say when children grew up he would not drink. Now he says that he does not care where you got your money. Child born a week after he got home this time. 3 weeks after[wards] bailiff was in to claim for rent.

I then took at Penrose [a] vacant shop [it] has dwelling house at the back and I support myself with aid of son. Since April last parents [meaning her mother] have sent me £80 and more money arrived here this morning. I have lived there ever since. He comes home now and has turned place into a drinking den.⁶⁷⁷

⁶⁷⁷ Evidence of Catherine Beeson, *Beeson v. Beeson*, High Court, Divorce Files, BBAE 4984/1566, ANZ-A [typographical errors corrected].

(Her mother died at her house in mid-June, aged 72, shortly after being reunited with her.)⁶⁷⁸ John Russell, a Penrose builder, gave evidence that he had first met Catherine in 1910.

The morning after they took my house I went down to see if they had made arrangements with tradesmen. I saw resp[ondent] lying on bed with bottles under the bed. I met him a few days later on the street when he was drunk. I found out later that children were hungry and I brought them food. Petner [petitioner] often sent for me when there was trouble. I went to lower Court to see case [against Beeson] when it was heard. I had another house and I said that petner could go in there if she kept it clean. He lived with Petner most of the time. I sometimes saw a good deal of him and then I would not see him for days. He was a good workman when he liked and was a tip top bushman. In 1913 when wife ill he came to me for loan for £30 to pay medical expenses but not with consent of petner. I would not give him anything without her consent. Petner then went to hospital. His condition while she was away was that he was drunk most of the time. They did not pay the rent to me.... In 1916 she started a milk round. Resp condition was the same. All tradespeople look to petner for payment and not to Resp. He is hopeless.⁶⁷⁹

Her older son's evidence was brief: 'I don't think that I can remember him coming home not drunk. He used to always kick me'. As Beeson, at that time a farmer at Penrose, did not appear to defend himself, the divorce was granted and Catherine obtained custody of her children.⁶⁸⁰ It should be noted that for at least part of this dreadful marriage, Catherine continued to give Beeson his conjugal rights, willingly or otherwise, her last child, Eric Leo Keith, being born in May 1919; for some reason, his birth was not recorded.⁶⁸¹

⁶⁷⁸ Death Certificate of Catherine Young, 15 June 1920, 192012141/, BDM; Probates, BBAE 14894, ANZ-A; *Te Aroha News*, 18 June 1920, p. 2.

⁶⁷⁹ Evidence of John Russell, Beeson v. Beeson, High Court, Divorce Files, BBAE 4984/1566, ANZ-A [typos corrected].

⁶⁸⁰ Beeson v. Beeson, High Court, Divorce Files, BBAE 4984/1566, ANZ-A.

⁶⁸¹ Beeson v. Beeson, High Court, Divorce Files, BBAE 4984/1566, ANZ-A; Death Certificate of Eric Leo Keith Beeson, 1969/25404, BDM; *Auckland Star*, 4 June 1941, p. 8, 9 October 1945, p. 6; *New Zealand Herald*, 16 December 1941, p. 8.

Six years later, her former husband was before the Auckland police court charged ‘with committing mischief by willfully damaging a door’ and being in Catherine’s house in the night. His counsel said he ‘had not been very well lately. He ran a farm, and his two sons lived with their mother’. He had drunk ‘one or two bottles of wine and went to his wife’s place to get his sons to milk for him. There was a “scrap” and the door was damaged’, which he was ordered to pay for; ‘on the other charge he was convicted and ordered to come up for sentence when called upon’.⁶⁸² He died in 1945, aged 70; she died in 1962, aged 86.⁶⁸³

THE KENNYS OF PARK HOUSE

From mid-August 1894 until the first issue of March 1895, the following advertisement appeared in the *Observer*:

PARK HOUSE.
Te Aroha Hot Springs.
 PRIVATE BOARDING HOUSE
 OPPOSITE THE DOMAIN.
 NEW LIBRARY AND READING ROOM.
 Visitors and Travellers will receive every
 attention and comfort.
 TERMS22s 6d per week.
 Telegrams and Letters promptly attended to
 MRS KENNY, PROPRIETRESS⁶⁸⁴

In September 1894, the *Observer* Man noted this advertisement and wondered why other boarding houses and hotels did not advertise in this way, with the tourist season ‘fast approaching’.⁶⁸⁵

Mrs Martha Kenny ran Park House with the assistance of her unmarried daughter Mabel Elizabeth. Martha Allen had been married in 1872, when aged 18, to a master mariner, John Longford Kenny, of Onehunga.⁶⁸⁶ He was master of a cutter, ‘Flora MacDonald’, which traded

⁶⁸² Police Court, *Auckland Star*, 10 September 1926, p. 5.

⁶⁸³ Death Certificates of James Huntly Beeson, 1945/20909; Catherine Beeson, 1962/40011, BDM.

⁶⁸⁴ Advertisements, *Observer*, 18 August 1894, p. 9 – 2 March 1895, p. 19.

⁶⁸⁵ ‘Te Aroha’, *Observer*, 29 September 1894, p. 21.

⁶⁸⁶ Marriage Certificate of John Longford Kenny, 1872/6680, BDM.

between Onehunga and Raglan.⁶⁸⁷ The year after their marriage, twin girls were born: Mary Eleanor and Mabel Elizabeth.⁶⁸⁸ Shortly after their birth,⁶⁸⁹ at six o'clock on the morning of 2 February 1874,

the signalman at the Manukau Heads made out a cutter labouring heavily in the stiff south-westerly gale blowing, and endeavouring to make the entrance to the harbour. A very heavy sea was running at the time, and the signal was made "bar dangerous, stand off." The cutter, whether in distress or from what cause is not known, stood on for the bar, taking the southern channel. All went safely till just when it was hoped she had passed all danger she broached to and capsized, sinking almost immediately.⁶⁹⁰

It had left for Raglan the previous evening with a cargo of freight, five passengers, and a crew of three. The New Zealand-built vessel was designed for crossing harbour bars, but was 15 years old and had 'lately been leaking considerably when caught in wet weather'. Kenny had previously crossed the bar when the danger signal was flying, and on this occasion had drifted towards it after the wind changed when he was off Waiuku.⁶⁹¹ It was believed

he in all probability had no alternative but to run the gauntlet. His vessel was evidently jammed down, and it was impossible for him to have stood out to sea.... No blame should therefore be attached to the memory of the man as having recklessly exposed his vessel and the lives under his charge. In all probability the helmsman was washed from the tiller by one of the immense rollers, and before he could recover himself the cutter broached to, fell over on her beam-ends, and sank. It was the work of a few moments, and although observed by the signalman from the heights above, no human aid was possible to save the lives of those on board.⁶⁹²

⁶⁸⁷ *New Zealand Herald*, 8 March 1870, p. 3.

⁶⁸⁸ Birth Certificates of Mary Eleanor Kenny, 1873/37075; Mabel Elizabeth Kenny, 1873/37078, BDM.

⁶⁸⁹ *Auckland Star*, 3 February 1874, p. 2.

⁶⁹⁰ *Auckland Star*, 2 February 1874, p. 2.

⁶⁹¹ *Daily Southern Cross*, 3 February 1874, p. 3.

⁶⁹² *New Zealand Herald*, 4 February 1874, p. 3.

In response to criticism of Kenny, a man who had ‘intimately known’ him wrote that ‘his kindness of manner and attention to the wants of his passengers are generally known at Onehunga and Raglan, and will cause much heartfelt sympathy to be felt, in both these places at least, for him, and regret for his untimely death, and also as regards Mrs Kenny and helpless offspring’. He stressed that ‘no skipper could possibly be more solicitous for the lives and property committed to his care’, and he would not have ‘wilfully exposed a single life to unnecessary risk’. Kenny had been known ‘to wait four days at Manukau Heads and a week at Raglan for the weather to be settled’. When the head wind became a gale, ‘what could he do but put back, as he was off an ironbound coast, with bar harbours, broadside on to the ocean’s sweep, and in danger of losing every stitch of his canvas? Al went well, I believe, till the tiller broke – a not very surprising occurrence to any one who knows the spot’.⁶⁹³

Widowed at such an early age, Martha was forced to make her own living; how she did so before taking over Park House has not been traced. In March 1875, her elder twin died, aged only 15 months.⁶⁹⁴ When she died at Te Aroha in 1922,⁶⁹⁵ she had been a widow for 50 years.

She struggled to make ends meet: when seeking a loan from an Auckland solicitor in May, she was told to wait until Mabel turned 21, for unclear reasons:

I regret that I cannot lend you the money you require – It is always difficult to procure money upon personal property & I have no clients that will lend on that kind of security – It is not long to wait until October when your daughter will be of age & I strongly advise you to put up with any inconvenience rather than go to the expense of borrowing.⁶⁹⁶

In late 1895, after they had returned to Onehunga,⁶⁹⁷ the boardinghouse was sold to a man who spent ‘a good deal of money in

⁶⁹³ Letter from ‘Honour to the Brave’, *Daily Southern Cross*, 7 February 1874, p. 2.

⁶⁹⁴ Death Certificate of Mary Eleanor Kenny, 4 March 1875, 1875/2148, BDM; Death Notice, *Waikato Times*, 6 March 1875, p. 2.

⁶⁹⁵ Death Certificate of Martha Kenny, 1922/5729, BDM.

⁶⁹⁶ James Russell to Mrs Kenny, 30 May 1894, Letterbook no. 55, p. 610, Jackson and Russell Papers, MS 360, Library of the Auckland Institute and War Memorial Museum.

⁶⁹⁷ Marriage Certificate of Mabel Elizabeth Kenny, 27 May 1896, 1896/429, BDM.

renovation' just before it was destroyed in a fire; he rebuilt it.⁶⁹⁸ When she died in 1922, she left all her estate, estimated to be worth under £500, to her daughter, Mabel.⁶⁹⁹

Park House was mentioned in gossip columns as a place for flirtations. In February 1893, 'A local man says he will have to go and stay at the Park House. Is Miss A. the attraction?'⁷⁰⁰ Three years later, the O.M. asked: 'What takes J.D. and P.H. to Park House? Is it to cultivate their voices, or capture the young ladies?'⁷⁰¹ All of which suggests musical evenings and innocent flirtations.

In February 1895, the O.M. reported that 'Mr and Mrs William Cassels are in town visiting her mother'.⁷⁰² Emma Jane Thomson had married William Cassels, a Te Aroha 'telegraphist', in a Presbyterian service in Mrs Kenny's home two years previously.⁷⁰³ A year after her marriage she was noted as singing in a concert at Morrinsville even though she never sang at Te Aroha, where she was living.⁷⁰⁴ Was she the Emma who earned a reproof in mid-1892?

Last Friday evening a toff dance was held in Park House, and the recipients of invitations rolled up *en masse*. One young lady in this community who thinks herself a little angel, stated she would not mix up with the likes of barbers and boarding-house girls. Don't forget yourself, Emma. There is an old saying, "Cast the beam out of thine own eye, before thou look at thy neighbour's."⁷⁰⁵

Their 1895 visit resulted in her receiving a letter from an Auckland legal firm:

⁶⁹⁸ *Thames Star*, 25 January 1896, p. 2; *Ohinemuri Gazette*, 25 January 1896, p. 6, advertisement, 22 August 1896, p. 3.

⁶⁹⁹ Hamilton Probates, BCDG 4420/1614, ANZ-A.

⁷⁰⁰ 'Te Aroha', *Observer*, 11 February 1893, p. 21.

⁷⁰¹ 'Te Aroha', *Observer*, 15 February 1896, p. 21.

⁷⁰² 'Te Aroha', *Observer*, 2 February 1895, p. 21.

⁷⁰³ Marriage Certificate of Emma Jane Thomson and William Cassels, 23 December 1893, 1893/3034, BDM; *Waikato Electoral Roll, 1893*, p. 6; Marriage Notice, *Auckland Star*, 3 January 1894, p. 8.

⁷⁰⁴ 'Morrinsville', *Observer*, 22 December 1894, p. 22.

⁷⁰⁵ 'Te Aroha', *Observer*, 30 July 1892, p. 19.

We are instructed by Mrs Kenny of Te Aroha boarding house keeper to write to you respecting certain statements made by you to Mrs Davenport and Mrs Burton of Parnell respecting Mrs Kenny and the character of the house kept by her. These statements were to the effect that the house kept by Mrs Kenny was not a respectable house – that it was a bad house – that men were seen coming out of the house at all hours of the night and morning, and much more to the same effect. You moreover stated to these ladies that you had cautioned others by making similar statements to them.

You must of course be aware that statements of this nature are certain to do our client great harm in her business of a boarding house keeper, as well as irreparable injury to her character. They are charges too serious to be passed over and our instructions are to at once take proceedings against you for damages in the Supreme Court unless a full and ample apology and retraction is made by you which our client can publish in newspapers.

We have to request an answer from you by Thursday next at 10 o'clock as to whether you will make the apology referred to – failing which we shall issue a writ to recover damages suffered by our client for this most unjust and wicked slander.⁷⁰⁶

The two women named had informed Mrs Kenny of what Emma Thomson had said about her and her daughter.⁷⁰⁷ Three days after the solicitor's letter was sent, she wrote a written apology, to be informed that

under the circumstances our client will not accept. There were statements made by you respecting Miss Kenny which were gross untruths & her name must be included in the apology. We have drawn out an apology, which Mrs Kenny will accept if signed by you – also in your maiden name as shown in pencil on the apology.

If she would sign this apology and meet the legal costs 'we will advise Mrs Kenny to let the matter drop'.⁷⁰⁸ Once Emma signed and paid the legal

⁷⁰⁶ Jackson and Russell to Emma Cassels, 22 February 1895, Letterbook no. 58, pp. 120-121, Jackson and Russell Papers, MS 360, Library of the Auckland Institute and War Memorial Museum.

⁷⁰⁷ James Russell to Mrs Kenny, 23 February 1895, Letterbook no. 58, p. 131, Jackson and Russell Papers, MS 360, Library of the Auckland Institute and War Memorial Museum.

⁷⁰⁸ Jackson and Russell to Emma Cassels, 7 March 1895, Letterbook no. 58, p. 226, Jackson and Russell Papers, MS 360, Library of the Auckland Institute and War Memorial Museum.

fee and cost of advertising, the solicitor hoped Mrs Kenny would see this as 'sufficient';⁷⁰⁹ she did. The advertisement was published the following day:

I wish to apologize to Mrs and Miss Kenny, of Park House, Te Aroha, for the false statements I have made to different persons about them. I now say that Park House is very respectable and of good repute, and my statements that it was otherwise were incorrect and I have to express my sincere regret for the damage I have done to their characters.... Emma Cassell (nee Emma Thompson).⁷¹⁰

What evidence Emma Cassells thought she had about Park House being a place of ill repute is unknown, apart from her claiming that men visited at all hours of day and night, with Mrs Kenny's daughter clearly seen as being free with her sexual favours.

Mabel Elizabeth Kenny had been born in October 1873, in Auckland.⁷¹¹ Before her marriage she featured prominently in the *Observer's* gossip columns. Was she the M.K. who, in June 1887, 'looked to be slightly in it on Sunday night. Who was the masher, I wonder?',⁷¹² because if so she was very young. In May 1893, after first recording that 'the young lady at the Park has many admirers', the O.M. noted that F.E., who has not been identified, 'the new arrival' at the Hot Springs Hotel, was 'a great lady's man'.⁷¹³ One month later, 'F.E. will soon have to get a new pair of boots if he goes to the park house so often to listen to the young lady playing the piano, "What will you do love when I am going?"'⁷¹⁴ Two weeks later, 'F.E. seems to be going to the park still. Knocking at the door is out of fashion, F. Tapping at the window and whistling is coming in'.⁷¹⁵ One month later, 'I hear that F.E. is going to board at the Park House. What is the attraction?'⁷¹⁶ Another month later, 'F.E. seems down-hearted since

⁷⁰⁹ James Russell to Mrs Kenny, 12 March 1895, Letterbook no. 58, p. 268, Jackson and Russell Papers, MS 360, Library of the Auckland Institute and War Memorial Museum.

⁷¹⁰ Personal Advertisement, *New Zealand Herald*, 13 March 1895, p. 1 [spelling of names as in original].

⁷¹¹ Birth Certificate of Mabel Elizabeth Kenny, 1873/6192, BDM.

⁷¹² 'Te Aroha Tips', *Observer*, 18 June 1887, p. 18.

⁷¹³ 'Te Aroha', *Observer*, 27 May 1893, p. 21.

⁷¹⁴ 'Te Aroha', *Observer*, 24 June 1893, p. 22.

⁷¹⁵ 'Te Aroha', *Observer*, 8 July 1893, p. 23.

⁷¹⁶ 'Te Aroha', *Observer*, 5 August 1893, p. 21.

M.K. took her departure for town. Cheer up, F., some day she'll wander back again'.⁷¹⁷ Yet another month later, 'F.E. was piling it on with A.F. at the Social the other week. What would M.K. say if she knew?'⁷¹⁸ The following month, F.E. was 'often seen at the Domain gate whistling "only to see thy face again."' Is it M.K.'s face he means?'⁷¹⁹ In March 1894, 'What makes M.K. so sad since she has returned from⁷²⁰ Hamilton. Has S.H. given her the cold shoulder?'⁷²¹ S.H. has not been identified, but he, like F.E., was no longer of interest to her.

By 1894, Mabel was being noticed for her beauty and good taste in clothes. In April, at Te Aroha's first Horticultural Show, 'Miss E. Kenny' was equal first place in the competition for the 'prettiest Te Aroha belle'.⁷²² Two months later, 'Miss Kenny' wore a 'black and rose-pink' dress to a ball.⁷²³

In May, five months before her 21st birthday, the *Observer* Man reported that M.K. was 'anxiously waiting for the 21st birthday of E.S. Oh good gracious'.⁷²⁴ E.S. was Ernest Smardon, born in September 1875,⁷²⁵ who would not be of age for two years and four months. He was first noted in the local newspaper at a fancy dress ball in 1888, dressed as a footballer.⁷²⁶ He was a partner in Smardon Bros, coach proprietors, with his brother John Samuel, who would die in 1899 aged 33.⁷²⁷ Was he the Ernest who was noted as being 'out on the Waiorongomai road so often' in July 1891? The O.M. wondered whether he was 'thinking of running in double harness with

⁷¹⁷ 'Te Aroha', *Observer*, 9 September 1893, p. 21.

⁷¹⁸ 'Te Aroha', *Observer*, 14 October 1893, p. 21.

⁷¹⁹ 'Te Aroha', *Observer*, 18 November 1893, p. 21.

⁷²⁰ 'To', in original.

⁷²¹ 'Te Aroha', *Observer*, 10 March 1894, p. 22.

⁷²² 'Te Aroha', *Observer*, 14 April 1894, p. 21.

⁷²³ 'Te Aroha', *Observer*, 9 June 1894, p. 17.

⁷²⁴ 'Te Aroha', *Observer*, 5 May 1894, p. 17.

⁷²⁵ Birth Certificate of Ernest Smardon, 18 September 1875, 1875/3375, BDM.

⁷²⁶ *Te Aroha News*, 22 September 1888, p. 2.

⁷²⁷ Te Aroha Warden's Court, Miscellaneous Applications 1896, 73, 153, 154/1896, BBAV 11289/14a, ANZ-A; Bank of New Zealand, Paeroa Branch, Half-Yearly Balance Book to 30 September 1895, entry under 'Smardon Bros', Bank of New Zealand Archives, Wellington *Wise's*; *New Zealand Directory*, 1900, p. 694; *Thames Advertiser*, 10 June 1897, p. 2; Death Certificate of John Samuel Smardon, 20 August 1899, 1889/3888, BDM.

one of the Capt's daughters'.⁷²⁸ The following year, he participated in a four-oared gig race on the river.⁷²⁹ In August 1893, 'E.S. says he knows every foot of the race course road',⁷³⁰ presumably on amorous visits. The following June, 'M.K. very jealously coveted E.S.'s company most of the evening' at a dance, 'and seemed most disconsolate when alone'.⁷³¹ A week later, 'E.S. and M.K. are still very attentive. Wonder if the cards are out yet',⁷³² a reference to an announcement of marriage. The following month, 'E.S. says that Miss K. shall have a ridy pidy in a coachy woachy someday, and ma will be so pleased';⁷³³ the coach was presumably a wedding coach, and the baby talk was what courting couples supposedly spoke to each other. At a dance held 13 months later, the O.M. claimed that 'E.S. and Miss T. were doing the heavy. Where, oh where, was Miss K.'s eyes?',⁷³⁴ possibly meaning her spy; and was he being tempted away? In December 1895, after a very amateur 'lady artist' included Smardon on horseback in her sketches of Te Aroha people, he was reportedly 'half a foot taller since he saw that flattering sketch'.⁷³⁵

In February 1896, 'E.S.⁷³⁶ seems quite lonely since Miss K's departure'.⁷³⁷ Two weeks later, 'E.S. appears quite happy since M.'s return'.⁷³⁸ Three months later, when still 20 but with his father's consent, Smardon married his Mabel, after she had to wait for over two years.⁷³⁹ Presumably his youth explained why his parents insisted he delay his marriage until he was almost of age, and the fact that they had their first child in December⁷⁴⁰ must have convinced his father to permit their

⁷²⁸ 'Te Aroha', *Observer*, 25 July 1891, p. 17.

⁷²⁹ *Thames Star*, 22 September 1892, p. 4.

⁷³⁰ 'Te Aroha', *Observer*, 5 August 1893, p. 21.

⁷³¹ 'Te Aroha', *Observer*, 9 June 1894, p. 17.

⁷³² 'Te Aroha', *Observer*, 16 June 1894, p. 21.

⁷³³ 'Te Aroha', *Observer*, 28 July 1894, p. 22.

⁷³⁴ 'Te Aroha', *Observer*, 17 August 1895, p. 21.

⁷³⁵ 'Te Aroha Faces: By a Lady Artist', *Observer*, 21 December 1895, p. 7.

⁷³⁶ Wrongly printed as G.S.

⁷³⁷ 'Te Aroha', *Observer*, 8 February 1896, p. 21.

⁷³⁸ 'Te Aroha', *Observer*, 22 February 1896, p. 21.

⁷³⁹ Notices of Intentions to Marry 1896, folio 512 no. 267, Births Deaths and Marriages, BDM 20/42, ANZ-W; Marriage Certificate of Ernest Smardon, 27 May 1896, 1896/429, BDM.

⁷⁴⁰ Birth Certificate of Dorothy Annie Elizabeth Smardon, 1897/808, BDM.

wedding. It was a quiet one in a private house in Onehunga. 'The bride wore a beautiful bridal gown of crème corded silk, tastefully finished with orange blossoms and the customary wreath and veil'.⁷⁴¹ The first time the newly wedded Mabel was mentioned in a social column was in mid-June, when she attended a 'grand Masonic Ball' wearing a black dress 'relieved with silver'.⁷⁴² Two years later, they led the grand march at a Te Aroha social, Smardon being the M.C.⁷⁴³ They were to have five children.⁷⁴⁴ In the next few years he became prominent locally as a Volunteer, a rugby player, performer in benefit concerts, a leading Mason, captain of the fire brigade, and a member of the borough council.⁷⁴⁵ The only misfortune they suffered was his bankruptcy in 1905; the beneficiary of his mother's estate, his hopes had been dashed when it proved to be worthless.⁷⁴⁶ When he died in 1937 he was remembered as a leading figure in the district, 'noted for his upright character, his kindness and generous disposition'.⁷⁴⁷ Mabel lived until 1956, when she was 84.⁷⁴⁸

HARRIET HEALY

Edmond Healy, a Waiorongomai labourer and bushman who was briefly involved with mining there,⁷⁴⁹ blighted his marriage through drink and violence. He was an old soldier who joined the 18th Royal Irish in 1844 and served in Burma, India, China, Crimea, and in New Zealand with the

⁷⁴¹ 'The Social Sphere', *Observer*, 6 June 1896, p. 8.

⁷⁴² 'The 'Social Sphere', *Observer*, 13 June 1896, p. 8; for Smardon's involvement with the Masons, see *Thames Star*, 8 October 1900, p. 3.

⁷⁴³ *Te Aroha News*, n.d., reprinted in *Ohinemuri Gazette*, 5 March 1898, p. 2.

⁷⁴⁴ *Te Aroha News*, 18 January 1937, p. 5.

⁷⁴⁵ *Thames Star*, 11 August 1897, p. 1, 5 September 1898, p. 4, 8 October 1900, p. 3, 15 January 1902, p. 4; *Auckland Star*, 21 May 1900, p. 3, 16 August 1900, p. 3, 14 September 1900, p. 3.

⁷⁴⁶ Probates, BBAE 1569/5838; Testamentary Register 1906-1908, folio 18, BBCB 4208/6, ANZ-A; *New Zealand Herald*, 20 February 1906, p. 6, 1 March 1906, p. 3.

⁷⁴⁷ *Te Aroha News*, 18 January 1937, p. 5.

⁷⁴⁸ Death Certificate of Mabel Elizabeth Smardon, 1956/37340, BDM.

⁷⁴⁹ Te Aroha Warden's Court, Register of Te Aroha Claims 1880-1888, folio 280, BBAV 11567/1a; Te Aroha Magistrate's Court, Plaintiff Book 1881-1893, 106/1884, BCDG 11224/1a, ANZ-A; *Te Aroha Supplementary Electoral Roll, 1891*, p. 2; *Waikato Electoral Roll, 1893*, p. 16.

First Waikato Regiment and then the Armed Constabulary.⁷⁵⁰ Subsequently he was a bushman in the Waikato.⁷⁵¹ When working in the bush near Ngaruawahia in 1880, he did some prospecting and claimed to have found gold.⁷⁵² He had not,⁷⁵³ and nor was he successful in his first attempt to marry.

Two years previously, he had charged Ellen Cheshire, a servant at a Ngaruawahia hotel, with stealing a gold locket off his watch chain, value 15s. It came out in the evidence that informant had been previously engaged to be married to defendant, but that the match was broken off. Before that time plaintiff had allowed the defendant to get goods at his cost at Fitzpatrick & Co.'s store to the extent of some £14 or £15'. On the day of the alleged robbery he went to the back of the hotel, where Ellen was washing,

and entered into conversation with her at the open window with the object of getting back the presents made to her when engaged to him. Finding he could not succeed, he drew her attention to the locket on his watch guard, saying it contained the likeness of a better-looking girl than ever she was. Defendant made a snatch at the locker, broke it off the guard, and refused to give it up; and Healy left, declaring he would make her pay for it. He obtained a search warrant, and the premises were searched, but without finding the locket in question. It was afterwards found by defendant in the yard where she had thrown it from her, and given by her to the police. The Magistrate dismissed the case.⁷⁵⁴

He had other faults. In 1866, when a sergeant with the 1st Waikato Regiment, he was court-martialed for being drunk and absent from guard

⁷⁵⁰ For details of his military career, see Army Department, Nominal and Descriptive Roll, 1st Regiment, Waikato Militia, no. 34 (microfilm); Armed Constabulary Force, Description Book, no. 423, Police Department, P 8/1; Land Grant Applications, no. 221, Lands and Survey Department, LS 65/2; Applications for Land Grants, 1889-1892, no. 344, Lands and Survey Department, LS 66/4, ANZ-W; *Auckland Weekly News*, 17 December 1892, p. 39; *Thames Advertiser*, 8 January 1897, p. 2; *Waikato Argus*, 7 January 1897, p. 2.

⁷⁵¹ Auckland Hospital, Register of Admissions 1870-1885, folio 64, ZAAP 15287/2a, ANZ-A.

⁷⁵² *Waikato Times*, 29 April 1880, p. 3.

⁷⁵³ *Waikato Times*, 5 June 1880, p. 2.

⁷⁵⁴ *Auckland Weekly News*, 16 March 1878, p. 8.

duty.⁷⁵⁵ In 1871 and 1877 he was imprisoned in the Ngaruawahia lock-up for being drunk.⁷⁵⁶ Presumably Harriet or Harriett Lockley, a domestic servant born in England, was unaware of some of his past behaviour when she married him in March 1878, just before the court case against his first intended. According to the marriage certificate, he was aged 40, whereas she was only 22.⁷⁵⁷ In fact, the age difference was greater: in 1880 the police recorded his age as 52, and when he died 19 years after his marriage, his age was given as 70, with his age when married as 51.⁷⁵⁸ Perhaps she felt she had no choice about marrying her aged suitor, because nearly seven months after the wedding she gave birth to her first child, Norah.⁷⁵⁹ Three years later, their second and last child, Edmond, was born.⁷⁶⁰

For some of the time at least, it cannot have been a happy marriage. In 1880, he was arrested, locked up in the police cell, and then fined 5s for drunkenness.⁷⁶¹ In 1884, he was bound over to keep the peace for 12 months after assaulting Harriet.⁷⁶² Eight years later, he was arrested and placed in the lock-up for threatening to kill her.⁷⁶³ He pleaded guilty to using threatening language and was bound over to keep the peace for a similar period. Although he pleaded not guilty to excessive drinking, a prohibition order was taken out against him.⁷⁶⁴ Perhaps this order was the reason why, four days later, Harriet charged him with using threatening language and

⁷⁵⁵ Court Martials 1864-1868, 9 September 1866, Maori War Index, Army Department, AD 32, no. 5004, ANZ-W.

⁷⁵⁶ Ngaruawahia Lock-Up, Charge Book 1870-1898, nos. 54, 352, BADX 4909/1a, ANZ-A.

⁷⁵⁷ Marriage Certificate of Edmond Healy and Harriett Lockley, 3 March 1878, 1878/251, BDM.

⁷⁵⁸ Ngaruawahia Lock-Up, Charge Book 1870-1898, no. 417, BADX 4909/1a, ANZ-A; Death Certificate of Edmond Healy, 6 January 1897, 1897/405, BDM.

⁷⁵⁹ Birth Certificate of Norah Healy, 29 September 1878, 1878/15819, BDM.

⁷⁶⁰ Birth Certificate of Edmond Healy, 3 October 1881, 1881/11178, BDM.

⁷⁶¹ Ngaruawahia Lock-Up, Charge Book 1870-1898, no. 417, BAXD 4909/1a, ANZ-A.

⁷⁶² Magistrate's Court, *Te Aroha News*, 12 January 1884, p. 7.

⁷⁶³ Armed Constabulary Force, Return of Charges taken at Te Aroha Lock-Up 1880-1903, 5/1892, in private possession.

⁷⁶⁴ Te Aroha Magistrate's Court, Criminal Record Book 1881-1896, 7, 8/1892, BCDG 11220/1a, ANZ-A.

seeking sureties for his good behaviour; this case was struck out, presumably because she chose not to proceed with it.⁷⁶⁵

Healy was not a good provider for his family. Their two residence sites were in Harriet's name, and she had considerable difficulty in paying the rent, forfeiting one in 1888 for this reason.⁷⁶⁶ In 1893, when he was admitted to hospital, the local constable sought charitable aid because 'his family would be without support'; a temporary grant of 5s per week was made.⁷⁶⁷ One way he sought to make his fortune was by inventing, so he claimed, a perpetual motion machine, which was scorned by those he attempted to interest in it.⁷⁶⁸ In 1892, he asked a newspaper about his chances of obtaining land for his military service. The newspaper explained the legislation, commenting that 'we are afraid your anticipations of becoming rich in landed estate at the expense of the Government is doomed to disappointment'.⁷⁶⁹

Two other reasons for marital disharmony were nationality and religion. Healy, an Irish Catholic, would have a Catholic funeral.⁷⁷⁰ Harriet had been born in England and would have a Church of England funeral, as did her daughter when she died a year later.⁷⁷¹ They had been married in a registrar's office,⁷⁷² possibly because they could not agree on which church to use. Their children went to the Wesleyan Sunday School,⁷⁷³ possibly another source of contention.

⁷⁶⁵ Te Aroha Magistrate's Court, Criminal Record Book 1881-1896, 9/1892, BCDG 11220/1a, ANZ-A.

⁷⁶⁶ Te Aroha Warden's Court, Register of Applications 1883-1900, folios 358, 359, BBAV 11505/1a; Plaintiff Book 1880-1898, 8/1887, BBAV 11547/1a, ANZ-A; Piako County Council, Letterbook 1893-1899, p. 673, Matamata-Piako District Council Archives, Te Aroha.

⁷⁶⁷ Charitable Aid Board, *Waikato Times*, 2 November 1893, p. 2.

⁷⁶⁸ John Watson to Edmond Healy, 3 March 1886, Letterbook 1893-1899, p. 339, A. & G. Price Archives, Thames; 'Answers to Correspondents', *Auckland Weekly News*, 29 March 1884, p. 15.

⁷⁶⁹ 'To Correspondents', *Auckland Weekly News*, 17 December 1892, p. 39.

⁷⁷⁰ Death Certificate of Edmond Healy, 6 January 1897, 1897/405, BDM.

⁷⁷¹ Birth Certificate of Norah Healy, 29 September 1878, 1878/15819; Death Certificates of Harriet Healy, 30 April 1903, 1903/2671; Nora Elliott, 10 January 1904, 1904/629, BDM.

⁷⁷² Marriage Certificate of Edmond Healy, 3 March 1878, 1878/251, BDM.

⁷⁷³ Waiorongomai Sunday School, Admission Book 1884-1889, entries for 17 March 1889, 24 March 1889, Methodist Archives, Auckland.

In November 1896, ‘while holding a packhorse’ Healy had ‘the flesh torn off one of his fingers by the rope, which caught it as the horse suddenly backed’.⁷⁷⁴ Within two months, he died of pneumonia,⁷⁷⁵ leaving his family in poverty. A concert was held in the Te Aroha public hall three weeks after his death to raise money for them, the singers and instrumentalists performing for free: it was crowded for this ‘deserving cause’.⁷⁷⁶ Just over six years later, Harriet died, aged 43, also from pneumonia. Curiously, whoever filled in the death certificate did not know whether she had been married.⁷⁷⁷

After her husband died, Harriet had problems with her children. In 1901, she took out a prohibition order against her 20-year-old son,⁷⁷⁸ a miner.⁷⁷⁹ Nearly seven months after husband’s death she charged Charles Cooper with ‘Supplying drug to procure the miscarriage of Hanorah Healy at Te Aroha’ on 16 July 1897 and charged William Jackson of ‘attempting to procure the miscarriage of Hanorah Healy at Waiorongomai’ on the following day.⁷⁸⁰ Hanorah was correctly Norah or Nora, aged 19.⁷⁸¹ Cooper was a ‘well known’ but unqualified local medical practitioner,⁷⁸² and Jackson a farmer at Te Aroha West.⁷⁸³ When the case went to court, the police obtained a remand to enable them to produce evidence. Jackson’s lawyer ‘stated he was not surprised at a remand being asked, for as from what he could gather, the charge was entirely without foundation, and should never have been made’. Bail of £100 each in two sureties ‘was immediately forthcoming’.⁷⁸⁴ Seven days after this hearing, the case was

⁷⁷⁴ *Thames Advertiser*, 23 November 1896, p. 2.

⁷⁷⁵ Death Certificate of Edmond Healy, 6 January 1897, 1897/405, BDM.

⁷⁷⁶ *Ohinemuri Gazette*, 23 January 1897, p. 4.

⁷⁷⁷ Death Certificate of Harriet Healy, 30 April 1903, 1903/2671, BDM.

⁷⁷⁸ Te Aroha Magistrate’s Court, Criminal Record Book 1896-1907, 52/1901, BCDG 11220/1b, ANZ-A.

⁷⁷⁹ Gold Miners Relief Fund, Register of Applicants 1911-1915, entry for Edmond Healy, ABSQ 6366/1a, ANZ-A; Death Certificate of Edmund Healy, 1 June 1920, 1920/12158, BDM.

⁷⁸⁰ Te Aroha Magistrate’s Court, Criminal Record Book 1896-1907, 25, 26/1897, BCDG 11220/1b, ANZ-A.

⁷⁸¹ Birth Certificate of Norah Healy, 29 September 1878, 1878/15819, BDM.

⁷⁸² See paper on physical and mental health in the Te Aroha district.

⁷⁸³ *Ohinemuri Gazette*, 24 July 1897, p. 5.

⁷⁸⁴ *Waikato Argus*, 27 July 1897, p. 2.

withdrawn for lack of evidence.⁷⁸⁵ Afterwards a newspaper wrote that ‘no one who knew Dr Cooper would for a moment believe him capable of such an act, and we are very glad that the charge fell through as it has done’.⁷⁸⁶

What was the evidence that had provoked a mother to make public her daughter’s sex life? She had provided the police with three letters Nora wrote to Jackson, the first written at Waiorongomai on 16 July:

My dear Willie,-

Could you manage to come over for a few minutes to-night? I am very ill and wish to tell you something particular.

I am so sorry to trouble you Will, but I should like to see you if you can find it convenient to come over.

The second letter was dated 21 July:

Dear Willie,-

I have seen Dr Cooper and he told me to go into Te Aroha when I had finished the medicine, I have decided to go in on Saturday night, so will you meet me at Mrs Tonge’s at about half-past seven o’clock? I shall go in whether the weather be wet or fine.

My mother came home to-day, she has an idea that something is wrong and is very uneasy about it.

Cecilia Tonge had refreshment rooms at Te Aroha.⁷⁸⁷ The third letter was undated, but appears to have been written later on the same day:

Dear Willie,-

I have just received the inclosed note from Dr Cooper. He expects me in, whether it rains or not, so, as I am much better this morning, I shall have to go in and see him tonight.

You will see what he says in the note.

I shall wrap myself up well and then the damp weather will not harm me.⁷⁸⁸

⁷⁸⁵ Te Aroha Magistrate’s Court, Criminal Record Book 1896-1907, 25 26/1897, BCDG 11220/1b, ANZ-A; *Thames Advertiser*, 2 August 1897, p. 2.

⁷⁸⁶ *Ohinemuri Gazette*, 14 August 1897, p. 2.

⁷⁸⁷ *Te Aroha News*, 6 March 1895, p. 2.

⁷⁸⁸ Nora Healy to William Jackson, 16 July 1897, 21 July 1897 [two letters], Te Aroha Magistrate’s Court, General Correspondence 1897, BBAV 11584/5b, ANZ-A.

Unfortunately for the police, Jackson must have destroyed Cooper's letter, and without this potentially incriminating evidence the case could not proceed. However, Harriet's suspicions clearly had some basis.

Nora did not marry her Willie; instead, at the end of the following March, when still aged 19, she married a 28-year-old Cambridge labourer.⁷⁸⁹ If Cooper had provided the 'noxious drugs' as accused,⁷⁹⁰ they worked, for Nora did not have a baby either before or immediately after her marriage.⁷⁹¹ But her story did not end happily: in January 1904 she died, aged 25, of septic peritonitis and salpingitis, meaning infection and inflammation of the fallopian tubes, leaving a four-year-old daughter.⁷⁹² As for Jackson, in 1905 he was charged with failing to maintain his illegitimate son, born in 1901;⁷⁹³ as he did not appear to defend himself, a warrant was issued against him.⁷⁹⁴

CECELIA TONGE⁷⁹⁵

Charles Henry Albert Tonge was a builder, contractor, and boardinghouse keeper at Te Aroha.⁷⁹⁶ Before moving there in 1881, he had mined at Thames and operated a small treatment plant.⁷⁹⁷ When he applied in mid-1883 for a license for his planned Domain Hotel, the licensing

⁷⁸⁹ Marriage Certificate of Honora Healy, 31 March 1898, 1898/174, BDM; *Te Aroha News*, 14 April 1898, p. 2.

⁷⁹⁰ *Thames Advertiser*, 27 July 1897, p. 2.

⁷⁹¹ Index of Births, 1897-1898, BDM.

⁷⁹² Death Certificate of Nora Elliott, 10 January 1904, 1904/629, BDM.

⁷⁹³ Birth Certificate of Charlie Baker, 29 July 1901, 1901/12795, BDM.

⁷⁹⁴ Te Aroha Magistrate's Court, Criminal Record Book 1896-1907, 5/1905, BCDG 11220/1b, ANZ-A.

⁷⁹⁵ Her first name was often recorded as Cecilia; but as her headstone gave it as Cecelia (photograph provided by a descendant, Bradley Ryan, 24 September 2016, email) this spelling has been used throughout.

⁷⁹⁶ See, for example, Magistrate's Court, *Te Aroha News*, 29 September 1883, p. 2; District Court, *Thames Advertiser*, 4 June 1884, p. 3; advertisement, *Te Aroha Times and Waiorongomai Advocate*, 3 November 1897, p. 2; *Auckland Weekly News*, 12 March 1898, p. 23.

⁷⁹⁷ *Thames Advertiser*, 10 February 1874, p. 3, 9 March 1874, p. 2, 24 June 1874, p. 3, 2 December 1880, p. 3, 25 December 1880, p. 3, 22 January 1881, p. 2, Te Aroha Correspondent, 17 February 1881, p. 3; *Waikato Times*, 27 January 1881, p. 2.

commissioners declined to grant it because Te Aroha had sufficient hotels.⁷⁹⁸ Accordingly, he converted the premises into a temperance accommodation house.⁷⁹⁹ Described as 'large', it was 'opposite to the entrance to the Hot Springs Domain'.⁸⁰⁰

In September 1883, two judgment summonses issued against him by two building firms, for a total of £16 5s 11d, were heard. To the first claimants, owed £4 17s 8d, he 'admitted having been in constant work. He had built and been paid for several bridges, and now had a contract on for £95. He also admitted having a large boarding house, and that he had been building a house for himself to the value of £100. The section belonged to his wife'. He was ordered to pay this amount within one week or be imprisoned for 14 days. To the second claimants, he admitted having 'contracts in hand of over £100. Should make £10 out of it, and expected to make 12s a day for three weeks out of them. He valued his property at £300 over the mortgages on it, and stated as a reason for not selling that he expected to make more out of it'. He was ordered to pay in weekly instalments of £2 or be imprisoned for one month.⁸⁰¹ In March 1884, his boardinghouse and adjourning shop was sold on the sheriff's orders for £535, thereby meeting the amount of the mortgage, although they had cost him £850 to erect. The furniture was sold for £100.⁸⁰² The following month, he filed as bankrupt.⁸⁰³ He explained that his liabilities exceeded his assets by from £300 to £400.

The excess was caused by his building largely at Te Aroha, prior to the decadence of the field. The buildings and furnishing cost him about £900, and he had opened it as a boarding house, for which there was a great necessity at the time. He had borrowed £500, giving a mortgage and bill of sale over the property as security. The mortgagee foreclosed, offered the property by auction, and bought it at the amount of the bill. In consequence of the losses in this respect he had been unable to meet his liabilities.⁸⁰⁴

⁷⁹⁸ *Thames Star*, 7 June 1883, p. 2; *Te Aroha News*, 9 June 1883, p. 2.

⁷⁹⁹ *Thames Advertiser*, 21 November 1883, p. 3, 12 March 1884, p. 2.

⁸⁰⁰ *Thames Advertiser*, 18 April 1885, p. 3.

⁸⁰¹ Magistrate's Court, *Te Aroha News*, 29 September 1883, p. 2.

⁸⁰² *Te Aroha News*, 15 March 1884, p. 2.

⁸⁰³ *Te Aroha News*, 5 April 1884, p. 7.

⁸⁰⁴ District Court, *Thames Advertiser*, 4 June 1884, p. 3.

His creditors received 1s in the £.⁸⁰⁵

Before coming to New Zealand, Tonge had married Cecelia Bryce, the daughter of an artist; they were to have four boys and three girls, one of their boys dying when 16 months.⁸⁰⁶ Although elected to the Church of England vestry several times,⁸⁰⁷ an indication of apparent respectability, Tonge had a serious drink problem. In 1881, Cecelia charged him in the Thames court with ‘willfully assaulting her’. The case was adjourned in the hope that ‘some arrangement’ could be arrived at, as it was, the case being struck out because they returned to Te Aroha.⁸⁰⁸ In June 1884, Cecelia charged him with ‘Excessive drinking of liquor mis-spends and wastes his estate and interrupts the peace of his family’. He pleaded not guilty, and the case was dismissed.⁸⁰⁹ Four years later, he charged a man with assault and threatening language and in his turn was charged with assault, but as neither appeared in court the cases were struck out.⁸¹⁰

At the end of that year, Cecelia applied for a protection order under the Married Women’s Property Protection Act of 1880.⁸¹¹ After explaining that she kept a small store at Waiorongomai ‘for the sale of fruit, &c’, she asked for it ‘on account of the drunkenness and disorderly conduct in my house’:

My husband is in the habit of staying out till all hours of the night drinking and playing cards, and then comes home and turns me out in the street, and ill treats me. For two years I have had to support myself and children; he drinks all he earns, and I cannot submit to the treatment he has subjected me to any longer. He has many times beaten me very cruelly. All I ask is the

⁸⁰⁵ *Te Aroha News*, 25 April 1885, p. 7.

⁸⁰⁶ Death Certificates of Cecelia Tonge, 12 April 1906, 1906/387; Albert Tonge, 28 March 1870, 1870/2442, BDM.

⁸⁰⁷ *Church Gazette*, October 1882, p. 94, April 1883, p. 37; *Te Aroha News*, 5 April 1884, p. 2, 24 April 1886, p. 2, 16 January 1889, p. 2.

⁸⁰⁸ Thames Magistrate’s Court, Criminal Record Book 1881-1883, 248/1881, BACL 13736/35a, ANZ-A; Magistrate’s Court, *Thames Star*, 15 December 1881, p. 2; Police Court, *Thames Advertiser*, 16 December 1881, p. 3.

⁸⁰⁹ Te Aroha Magistrate’s Court, Criminal Record Book 1881-1896, 55/1884, BCDG 11220/1a, ANZ-A.

⁸¹⁰ Te Aroha Magistrate’s Court, Criminal Record Book 1881-1896, 5, 6/1888, BCDG 11220/1a, ANZ-A.

⁸¹¹ Te Aroha Magistrate’s Court, Criminal Record Book 1881-1896, 59/1888, BCDG 11220/1a, ANZ-A.

custody of my two boys, whom I am prepared to keep as well as myself, and do not ask any maintenance from my husband, but only that myself and my earnings be protected from him. The things in the house are my own, but anything Mr Tonge likes he can take.

In reply to defendant: I have been cruelly treated by you, I have had to save myself several times now, and run for my life at twelve and one o'clock at night. Every night for the past fortnight you have been out drinking and playing cards at the public house. Sometimes you do not come home for four days at a time.

Michael Cronin⁸¹² (sworn): I am a 'bus driver, and reside at Waiorongomai; next door to Mrs Tonge's.

In reply to plaintiff: You came to my house twice seeking protection, on one occasion at about eleven at night, and again about one in the morning. Tonge came a few minutes afterwards and asked you to go home; he appeared to have drink taken; you said you were afraid to go home. Last night you came to my house at about a quarter to one in your night dress asking to be let in, as you had to run for your life from Mr Tonge. I advised you to go home.

In reply to defendant: I believe you have been working pretty regularly of late. I have seen you the worse of drink a few times since you came to Waiorongomai to live.

Frederick Tonge (14 years), sworn: I know when my father comes home at night he kicks up a row and throws my mother out. He is not always all right even when he is sober. I know he drinks from seeing him. He generally comes home at and after eleven.

In reply to defendant: I have seen you go to strike my mother, and tell her to clear out.

Tonge told the magistrate he would be 'most happy' if the order was granted but wanted 'to have charge of the boys'. The order was granted, but he did not get the boys because the magistrate considered that a mother was always the appropriate person.⁸¹³ Tonge promptly informed the public that he would no longer be responsible for any of his wife's debts.⁸¹⁴ In the light of her husband's behaviour, it was not surprising that Cecelia supported a temperance movement, the Band of Hope.⁸¹⁵

⁸¹² See *Te Aroha News*, 31 December 1934, p. 1, 3 November 1950, p. 5.

⁸¹³ Magistrate's Court, *Te Aroha News*, 5 December 1888, p. 2.

⁸¹⁴ Public Notice, *Te Aroha News*, 12 December 1888, p. 7.

⁸¹⁵ Waiorongomai Band of Hope, Minute Book 1883-1889, entries in mid-1880s for her selling tickets for fund-raising concerts, 3050/916, Methodist Archives, Auckland.

Tonge lived separately from his family from then onwards, even when residing in the district. Electoral rolls for the early 1890s recorded him living at Waiorongomai while his wife and family were at Te Aroha.⁸¹⁶ In 1890, he lived for a time at Tararu, on the outskirts of Thames, then for two years was a contractor at Karangahake and later a battery hand at Waikino.⁸¹⁷ In 1896 he was a carpenter at Rangiriri.⁸¹⁸ The following year, he advertised that he had returned to Te Aroha and was 'prepared to undertake all classes of work in the building line', but he lived at Waiorongomai while his wife and sons lived at Te Aroha.⁸¹⁹ In 1900, he was employed at the pumice works at Rangiriri, and died near there, at Ohinewai, aged 65. After dancing, he complained of the heat, went outside, and died of a heart attack 'induced by over-exertion'.⁸²⁰ His employer told the coroner that he had not been drinking and appeared healthy; an autopsy revealed a heart so loaded with fat that death could have come at any time.⁸²¹ As he was separated from his wife and family, none of them attended the inquest, his death certificate could not record his parents, where he was born, whether he had married, or whether he had any children.⁸²² One of his sons collected his body.⁸²³ It is not known where he was buried; Cecelia would be buried, alone, in the Te Aroha cemetery.⁸²⁴

After separating from her husband, Cecelia had to earn her living. This was not something new, for immediately after they moved to Te Aroha

⁸¹⁶ *Waikato Electoral Rolls, 1893*, p. 38, *1894*, p. 38.

⁸¹⁷ Thames Hospital, Register of Patients 1884-1901, folios 36, 46, YCAH 14075/1a; Paeroa Warden's Court, Register of Miners' Rights 1893-1898, no. 32920, issued 6 April 1898, ZAAP 13786/1a, ANZ-A; Supreme Court, *Auckland Weekly News*, 11 February 1893, p. 21.

⁸¹⁸ *Waikato Electoral Roll, 1896*, p. 56.

⁸¹⁹ Advertisement, *Te Aroha Times and Waiorongomai Advocate*, 3 November 1897, p. 2; *Ohinemuri Electoral Roll, 1899*, p. 144.

⁸²⁰ Death Certificate of Charles Henry Albert Tonge, 21 September 1900, 1900/5811, BDM; *Waikato Argus*, 24 September 1900, p. 2.

⁸²¹ Inquest into Charles Henry Albert Tonge, Justice Department, J 46 COR, 1900/776, ANZ-W.

⁸²² Death Certificate of Charles Henry Albert Tonge, 21 September 1900, 1900/5811, BDM.

⁸²³ Inquest on Charles Henry Albert Tonge, Justice Department, J 46 COR, 1900/776, ANZ-W.

⁸²⁴ Headstone of Cecelia Tonge, Area A, Row 34, no. 245, Te Aroha Cemetery, New Zealand Cemetery Records, Microfische 055.

she opened a general store.⁸²⁵ When her husband owned the boardinghouse, it must be assumed he ran it with her assistance. After his bankruptcy, she ran a small store at Waiorongomai ‘for the sale of fruit, etc’.⁸²⁶ In February 1890, she leased Park House, opposite the domain, containing 22 rooms, and ran it as a private boardinghouse.⁸²⁷ Three months later, she sold all her furniture and effects,⁸²⁸ as she was taking her two youngest sons to Broken Hill, ‘where the lads have been promised at first rate wages’. The local newspaper described them as ‘smart, industrious boys’ who were ‘sure to get on’.⁸²⁹ As this venture was not successful, they had returned by 1895, when she opened the Te Aroha Refreshment Rooms.⁸³⁰ She also leased a tenement.⁸³¹ In 1897, she successfully tendered for the refreshment booth at the hack sports.⁸³² That she was financially successful was indicated in the following year, when ‘a seven-roomed cottage’ she owned and was renovating ‘completely disappeared’ in a gale, ‘nothing being left but the floor’.⁸³³ In the twentieth century, she was a fruiterer, probably assisted by her son Frederick, also a fruiterer.⁸³⁴

Cecelia died in 1906, very suddenly, of apoplexy, aged 69.⁸³⁵ Despite her age, she still ‘did her household duties besides attending to her shop without help’.⁸³⁶ She left an estate of £189 6s 3d.⁸³⁷

JANE MAISEY

Robert Job Maisey, a farmer aged 32, married Jane Cumming, aged 25, in a Presbyterian ceremony in her father’s house in Melbourne, Victoria,

⁸²⁵ *Thames Star*, 4 March 1881, p. 3.

⁸²⁶ Magistrate’s Court, *Te Aroha News*, 4 December 1888, p. 2.

⁸²⁷ *Te Aroha News*, 26 February 1890, p. 7.

⁸²⁸ *Te Aroha News*, 28 May 1890, p. 2.

⁸²⁹ *Te Aroha News*, 31 May 1890, p. 2.

⁸³⁰ *Te Aroha News*, 6 March 1895, p. 2.

⁸³¹ Te Aroha Correspondent, *Auckland Weekly News*, 7 March 1896, p. 23.

⁸³² *Te Aroha Times and Waiorongomai Advocate*, 3 November 1897, p. 2.

⁸³³ *Auckland Weekly News*, 2 July 1898, Supplement, p. 1.

⁸³⁴ Probate of Cecelia Tonge, Intestate Probates, BBAE 1591/30, ANZ-A.

⁸³⁵ Death Certificate of Cecelia Tonge, 12 April 1906, 1906/387, BDM; *Auckland Weekly News*, 19 April 1906, p. 23.

⁸³⁶ Inquest on Cecelia Tonge, Justice Department, J 46 COR, 1906/375, ANZ-W.

⁸³⁷ Testamentary Register 1906-1908, folio 19, BBCB 4208/6, ANZ-A.

on 1 November 1883. Maisey, who had been born in Melbourne but whose usual place of residence by then was Auckland, was the eldest son of Robert Charles Maisey, a farmer; his bride was the daughter of another farmer, Donald Cumming, who lived at Donald,⁸³⁸ in inland Victoria.⁸³⁹ The newly married couple immediately left for Auckland, where their first child, Jesse Mace, recorded in the birth certificate as a girl named Jessie and later known as Roger, was born 13 days later.⁸⁴⁰ (He must have been named after a relative, for Jesse Mace Maisey farmed in Otago until his death in 1902, aged 56.)⁸⁴¹ No reason for this ungentlemanly delay in getting married has been discovered, apart from the fact that he had been in New Zealand and presumably arrived back in Victoria just in time for the wedding. The closeness of the dates was not disguised on the birth certificate, but later they claimed to have arrived in New Zealand in 1882, by implication having been married before then.⁸⁴² Descendants repeated the 1882 date of the marriage, either because they were misinformed or wished to gloss over this impropriety, and on the photocopy of the marriage certificate reproduced in an unpublished history written for family members the date had been altered to that year.⁸⁴³ The family always insisted that they married and came to New Zealand in 1882.⁸⁴⁴

This unexplained tardiness in getting married did not foreshadow an unsatisfactory marriage, and they produced eight sons and five

⁸³⁸ Marriage Certificate of Robert Job Maisey and Jane Cumming, 1 November 1883, 1919/1883, Victorian BDM; *Te Aroha News*, 27 August 1930, p. 5; Gordon Maisey, 'Our Maisey Family' (typescript, Te Aroha, 1980), p. 2.

⁸³⁹ *Road Atlas of Australia*, 4 ed. (Sydney, 1976), Map 305, E 1.

⁸⁴⁰ Birth Certificate of Jesse [recorded as Jessie] Mace Maisey, 14 November 1883, 1883/14897; Marriage Certificate of Jesse Mace Maisey, 1923/4703; Death Certificate of Jesse Mace Maisey, 1961/26806, BDM; Probate of Robert Job Maisey, Hamilton Probates, BCDG 4420/2769, ANZ-A; Gordon Maisey, pp. 2, 7; *Te Aroha News*, 6 August 1915, p. 2.

⁸⁴¹ Death Certificate of Jesse Mace Maisey, 1902/370, BDM; *Otago Witness*, 3 March 1883, p. 15, 8 May 1901, p. 32.

⁸⁴² *Te Aroha News*, 1 September 1915, p. 3, 27 August 1930, p. 5, 19 December 1944, p. 8.

⁸⁴³ Muriel Maisey, 'Portrait of a New Zealand Pioneer Woman', *Journal of the New Zealand Federation of Historical Societies*, vol. 1 no. 1 (July 1981), p. 20; Marriage Certificate of Robert Job Maisey, in Gordon Maisey, p. 6, and photograph appended.

⁸⁴⁴ For example, their obituaries: *Te Aroha News*, 27 August 1930, p. 5, 19 December 1944, p. 8.

daughters.⁸⁴⁵ After Jessie Mace the children were registered at Te Aroha: Robert Job in July 1885, Mary in October 1886, William John in May 1888, Olive Jane in December 1889, Charles Henry in March 1891, Thomas Donald in July 1892, Norman Ernest in June 1894, Euphemia (Effie) Zealand in July 1896, Aroha Thelma in December 1898, Albert Edward in November 1899, Frank Gordon in February 1902, and, finally, Vera Beryl in September 1905.⁸⁴⁶ Francis Montague, born in 1889,⁸⁴⁷ who lived at Gordon in his youth, recalled ‘a competition between the Maiseys and the Orrs for the championship’ for having the largest families. ‘I remember Bill Orr coming to school and saying, “Well, we’ve beaten them now; we’ve got twelve and they only have eleven”’.⁸⁴⁸ According to a daughter-in-law, Muriel Maisey, although Jane ‘loved all her family, her sons had first place in her affections. She would definitely not have approved of Women’s Lib’. Jane recalled a visitor ‘who admired the long dining table, and asked how many could be seated round it. When told he sighed, and said sadly, “How lucky you are, my wife and I have no bairns at all”’.⁸⁴⁹⁸⁵⁰

Muriel Maisey outlined Jane’s ancestry:

Her grandfather, Harry Mitchie⁸⁵¹ of Aberdeenshire, seems to have been something of a character. He combined the occupations of game-keeper, farmer and land-steward, he was an elder of the Church of Glengairn, he was a champion highland dancer and a

⁸⁴⁵ *Te Aroha News*, 27 August 1930, p. 5, 19 December 1944, p. 8; *Morrinsville Star*, 29 August 1930, p. 5.

⁸⁴⁶ Birth Certificates of Robert Job Maisey, 5 July 1885, 1885/10200; Mary Maisey, 13 October 1886, 1886/19449; William John Maisey, 26 May 1888, 1888/11677; Olive Jane Maisey, 6 December 1889, 1890/1835; Charles Henry Maisey, 12 March 1891, 1891/1436; Thomas Donald Maisey, 9 July 1892, 1892/11959; Norman Ernest Maisey, 20 June 1894, 1894/2432; Euphemia Zealand Maisey, 17 July 1896, 1896/4423; Aroha Maisey, 16 December 1898, 1899/14252; Albert Edward Maisey, 9 November 1899, 1900/16280; Frank Gordon Maisey, 25 February 1902, 1902/6908; Vera Beryl Maisey, 15 September 1905, 1905/15974, BDM.

⁸⁴⁷ Birth Certificate of Francis Montague, 21 August 1889, 1889/12177, BDM.

⁸⁴⁸ Recollections of Francis Montague, *Te Aroha News*, 1 August 1938, p. 5.

⁸⁴⁹ Muriel Maisey, ‘Portrait’, pp. 20- 22.

⁸⁵⁰ Muriel Maisey, ‘Portrait’, p. 21.

⁸⁵¹ His daughter spelled the name as Michie: Marriage Certificate of Robert Job Maisey, 1 December 1883, 1919/1883, Victorian BDM.

first-class marksman. He was an avid reader and took part in whisky smuggling.

One of his daughters, Effie, was housekeeper to Queen Victoria at Balmoral Castle, and another daughter, Jane, married Donald Cumming. Jane and Donald emigrated to Australia, and raised a family of six, one of whom, Jane the younger, became my mother-in-law.⁸⁵²

Maisey's father was a goldminer in Victoria before becoming a sheep and wheat farmer at Donald. In 1878, when aged 56, he was killed in an accident, after which, according to a descendant, Gordon Maisey, his family 'experienced hard times'.⁸⁵³ Despite this, Maisey studied at the Presbyterian College in Ballarat 'until he was 19 – hoping to be a doctor – but this did not eventuate'.⁸⁵⁴ 'An ardent cricketer', he 'played for his college against W.G. Grace's team in the 1860s'.⁸⁵⁵ In 1882, 'he harvested a good crop of wheat' which enabled him to travel to New Zealand.⁸⁵⁶ According to family tradition, when the newly married couple arrived in Auckland, 'Jane had a small bag of golden sovereigns fastened round her waist. It was all their worldly wealth'.⁸⁵⁷ Another family story has it that he had been working in a butcher's shop before they were married and had 'saved up quite a large sum (for those days anyway) and for safe keeping he hid it in a wheat field; somehow it was stolen; just imagine the upset and consternation at the loss and them wanting to come by ship to N.Z. All was well and it was found just in time and they were able to sail away'.⁸⁵⁸ In another account, from working as a butcher he had saved 'a goodly sum for his wedding day and to come over to N.Z. He was at his sister's place at this time and she was married to a racing horse man; and a jockey in his employ stole Job's cash; somehow it was located in the nick of time'.⁸⁵⁹

'On landing in Auckland Job was very keen to purchase a fish shop to serve fish meals, but Jane flatly refused, one thing she hated was frying

⁸⁵² Muriel Maisey, 'Portrait', p. 20.

⁸⁵³ Gordon Maisey, p. 2.

⁸⁵⁴ Gordon Maisey, p. 9; *Te Aroha News*, 27 August 1930, p. 5.

⁸⁵⁵ *Matamata Record*, 28 August 1930, p. 4.

⁸⁵⁶ Gordon Maisey, pp. 7, 9.

⁸⁵⁷ Muriel Maisey, 'Portrait', p. 20.

⁸⁵⁸ Gordon Maisey, p. 13.

⁸⁵⁹ Gordon Maisey, p. 14.

fish'.⁸⁶⁰ Family tradition has it that they spent a year in the South Island,⁸⁶¹ but this cannot be confirmed; according to Muriel Maisey, he 'came to New Zealand to follow the elusive gold trail'.⁸⁶² His obituaries stated that he was a miner and contractor at Mercury Bay, Tapu, Karangahake, and Komata before settling at Waiorongomai.⁸⁶³ Another family story is that they went to Thames, where, when Jesse was two years old, 'he disappeared one afternoon and the miners formed a search party to scour the district. He was eventually found, fast asleep, behind a large sofa, but just the same his father had to "shout" for all the men who had helped look for him'.⁸⁶⁴

The only claim Maisey ever owned was at Waiorongomai, the Gordon, of which he was the sole owner from July 1886 until the following May.⁸⁶⁵ He worked this ground, the former Phoenix, with a 'party' of unknown size.⁸⁶⁶ Probably little work was done, as he obtained protection immediately he was granted it.⁸⁶⁷ Both before and after acquiring this ground, he worked as a mining contractor. In 1885, with three others he had a contract to drive the low level in the New Find.⁸⁶⁸ In 1888 he employed 12 men to extract ore from the Arizona portion of the New Find.⁸⁶⁹ He tendered for other contracts as well.⁸⁷⁰ 'When her husband worked the late shift Jane would watch the light of the lantern he carried until it disappeared' up the upper track.⁸⁷¹ After becoming a farmer, he

⁸⁶⁰ Gordon Maisey, p. 14.

⁸⁶¹ Gordon Maisey, p. 7.

⁸⁶² Muriel Maisey, 'Portrait', p. 20.

⁸⁶³ *Te Aroha News*, 27 August 1930, p. 5; *Matamata Record*, 28 August 1930, p. 4.

⁸⁶⁴ Muriel Maisey, 'Portrait', p. 20.

⁸⁶⁵ Te Aroha Warden's Court, Register of Te Aroha Claims 1880-1888, folio 134, BBAV 11567/1a, ANZ-A.

⁸⁶⁶ *Te Aroha News*, 9 October 1886, p. 2.

⁸⁶⁷ Te Aroha Warden's Court, Register of Applications 1883-1900, 65/1886, BBAV 11505/1a, ANZ-A.

⁸⁶⁸ *Te Aroha News*, 8 August 1885, p. 7.

⁸⁶⁹ *Te Aroha News*, 12 May 1888, p. 2; *Waikato Times*, 15 May 1888, p. 2, 7 June 1888, p. 2.

⁸⁷⁰ *Te Aroha News*, 12 May 1888, p. 2, 18 August 1888, p. 2, 4 December 1888, p. 2.

⁸⁷¹ Muriel Maisey, 'Portrait', p. 20.

ceased any active involvement in mining apart from acquiring shares in the Bendigo Company in 1912.⁸⁷²

When first at Waiorongomai, the family 'rented a lovely two-storied home which was later removed to Takapuna'.⁸⁷³ Situated half way between Te Aroha and Waiorongomai, this was owned by Henry Hopper Adams.⁸⁷⁴ Later they lived in a former hotel at Waiorongomai.

It was in a bad state of neglect, and, with so much borer in it, the floors were quite dangerous. The stove in the kitchen ran right along one wall, with ovens on each side and on a cold day there was a rush when the children came home from school to sit on top of the ovens to get warm. There were long passages upstairs and the first child to be sent to bed would lie full length on the floor in the dark, while the later ones would trip over him. They ended in a tumbled heap. It was here Jane nursed her eldest son through a bout of rheumatic fever and he recalled how every movement in the old building jarred his aching body.⁸⁷⁵

This building had been the Premier Hotel; another owner demolished it in 1898.⁸⁷⁶ For an unknown time, Jane ran a boardinghouse at Waiorongomai. Muriel Maisey 'was amused to hear Jane refer to an unused plate or cup as a sunbeam, and she told me this came from the boarding-house days. With no such thing as a dishmaster, there was a large amount of washing-up to do by hand and a clean article not needing to be washed was indeed a sunbeam'.⁸⁷⁷

One winter Jane nursed her husband through a serious illness. Her family wasn't very large then, but times were hard and she was glad of the help her family in Australia sent her. She would buy a pig's head to get cheap meat and chuckled when she told me of the doctor's remark when he called. "Can you really eat pig's faces?" he asked.⁸⁷⁸

⁸⁷² Bendigo Gold Mining Company, List of Shareholdings, 30 May 1912, Company Files, BADZ 5181, box 226 no. 1332, ANZ-A.

⁸⁷³ Muriel Maisey, 'Portrait', p. 20.

⁸⁷⁴ See paper on his life.

⁸⁷⁵ Muriel Maisey, 'Portrait', p. 20.

⁸⁷⁶ *Te Aroha News*, 29 March 1898, p. 2.

⁸⁷⁷ Muriel Maisey, 'Portrait', p. 20.

⁸⁷⁸ Muriel Maisey, 'Portrait', p. 20.

Maisey also earned money contracting to make roads and clear bush.⁸⁷⁹ Then, 'as the family increased it was decided to obtain a small farm'.⁸⁸⁰ In August 1888, one of the agricultural sections of the Thames High School Endowment was transferred to Maisey, who planned to have a dairy farm. A solicitor advised the school board that Maisey 'appeared to be a very suitable lessee', and, according to his obituary, he 'farmed successfully'.⁸⁸¹ In 1890, with a partner,⁸⁸² he erected a flax mill on it, using a small steam engine previously used on the tramway. The plant was 'specially erected with a view to being easily removed from one place to another, so as to avoid as far as possible the expense of carting the raw material long distances'. There was sufficient flax on his farm 'to supply all requirements for several months to come'.⁸⁸³

In those early days a farm was often a place for a family to live and grow food, while the husband worked in the mines or on the roads to provide an extra income.

In the ensuing years Jane Maisey had to work very hard indeed. She grew all the vegetables and fruit for her large family and made provision for the winter months by preserving and pickling. She made her own bread always, eight large loaves at a time. A few cows were kept and some pigs; they made butter and cheese, and, I have been assured, the most delicious bacon and ham. In the early stages of home cheese-making, the cheeses had to be turned every two hours, day and night. With always a baby to be tended, and an ex-baby, plus the cheeses, Jane could hardly have had very peaceful nights. Her husband came home every fortnight and when he rode back to the mines he carried on the front of the saddle a large box of butter and cheese to supply his work-mates. The early farms were rough and largely unfenced and often the cows could not be found at milking time. However, they usually turned up the next day when their swollen udders became uncomfortable.

The milk was set in pans and skimmed for butter-making. Cooking was done on a Shacklock wood stove while the water supply came from springs or creeks. I can remember Jane saying "Such lovely water it was, much better than we get now-a-days."

⁸⁷⁹ *Te Aroha News*, 5 March 1887, p. 2; Piako County Council, *Waikato Times*,

⁸⁸⁰ Muriel Maisey, 'Portrait', p. 21.

⁸⁸¹ *Te Aroha News*, 8 August 1888, p. 2, 27 August 1930, p. 5.

⁸⁸² *Te Aroha News*, 22 February 1890, p. 2.

⁸⁸³ *Te Aroha News*, 8 March 1890, p. 2.

Splendid watercress grew in the creeks and was used for salads.⁸⁸⁴

Muriel Maisey understood that, 'despite his hard work in the gold mines, Robert Maisey didn't make a lot of money and it was at farming he was most successful. The family was growing up; the sons had done a good deal of bush-clearing and at one time had run a chaff-cutter'.⁸⁸⁵ Having acquired 163 acres at Gordon, early in 1898 the family left for this new farm, where the last four children would be born.⁸⁸⁶

When the family shifted to the Gordon they lived on a farm which had the official name of Mount Pleasant. But the neighbours called it Poverty Hump and it was very stony. Here, the washing was done in a stream fifty yards from the house. In the summer everyone went bathing while in the winter baths were taken in a large tub, usually in front of a fire. The water was heated on top of the stove or in a large outdoor copper.

To keep a wood fire going all the time needed plenty of firewood, and there was plenty of this commodity, in bulk anyway. But it still needed to be cut up and Jane's boys were skilled in using an axe. Several of them took part in wood-chopping competitions with success. I still have, at the top of the bathroom cabinet, a cut-throat razor won by my husband before the First World War. He told me that when the family went for an outing his mother could never resist picking up good pieces of firing and carrying them home in her apron. The girls didn't like this much and seemed to think it wasn't the correct thing to do, but dry firewood must have played a big part in Jane's life.

She had a gift for cooking and had been well taught by her mother. She entered in the competitions at the country shows and won many prizes. She made splendid fruit cakes and sent many overseas in wartime. With all the healthy, hungry children around, Jane sometimes ran out of hiding places for the goodies meant for special occasions. There were times when she went to serve afternoon tea to the visitors and found the cake tins empty. Like Mother Hubbard, someone had got there first.⁸⁸⁷

Gordon Maisey recorded that Jane 'was well known for her special cooking ability. Out of necessity she was good at cooking vegetable dishes,

⁸⁸⁴ Muriel Maisey, 'Portrait', p. 21.

⁸⁸⁵ Muriel Maisey, 'Portrait', p. 23.

⁸⁸⁶ Gordon Maisey, p. 7; *Te Aroha News*, 12 March 1898, p. 2.

⁸⁸⁷ Muriel Maisey, 'Portrait', p. 21,

because meat was not always available. She was even able to cook up dock roots into an edible dish’..⁸⁸⁸ However, ‘one thing she hated was frying fish; Job was so very fond of fish and on trips to town he would come home with a parcel of fish for the family’. One of her daughters recalled her mother ‘just hating the procedure of fish cooking’..⁸⁸⁹

Muriel Maisey was also impressed Jane’s manifold accomplishments:

My mother-in-law could make anything in the way of clothes for herself and the children; the treadle sewing-machine was seldom idle for long. I have a photograph showing the girls in frilled dresses and pinafores and the boys in Norfolk suits, all of them made by their mother. She sewed their wet-weather outfits too, strong drill coats with shoulder capes and rain hats. These were coated with a mixture of linseed oil, resin and bees-wax and they kept the wearers dry in the rainy season.

Over the years there were not many economies Jane did not practice. In those times there was no limited shooting season for ducks, pigeons and pheasants, so there was often game to be plucked and cooked, as well as their own poultry. In addition to the game being a source of food, the feathers were used to make mattresses and pillows.

Stores were obtained from visiting traders or the nearest town. The tip-dray came back loaded with sacks of flour, bags of sugar and other necessities. Robert Maisey had a good sense of humour and liked to tease his wife. She would make out a shopping list and when he returned she would find half the items crossed off. It was just a joke and all the goods were brought home if they were available. Many times I’ve heard Jane say proudly, “My man was always a good provider”....

I’ve often heard my husband say, “Give Mum a hammer and a few nails and she could make anything”. ... She made carts and trollies for her boys, with wheels made of circles of wood. She mended chairs, made padded seats from cheese crates; nothing seemed to daunt her..⁸⁹⁰

Maisey had more land near Gordon, described as ‘a large stretch of hill country’..⁸⁹¹ By 1903, he owned 160 acres freehold and soon acquired

⁸⁸⁸ Gordon Maisey, p. 13.

⁸⁸⁹ Gordon Maisey, p. 14.

⁸⁹⁰ Muriel Maisey, ‘Portrait’, pp. 21-22.

⁸⁹¹ *Morrinsville Star*, 29 August 1930, p. 5.

more.⁸⁹² Two years later, 892 acres were held in his name and 595 in Jane's.⁸⁹³ In 1904 or 1906, after Firth's Matamata estate was opened for purchase, 'it was decided to buy fifteen hundred acres of land at Turanga-o-moana, some miles from Matamata'.⁸⁹⁴ As the family still lived at Gordon, 'the men would row across the Waihou River and camp on the new farm, going home on weekends. The bright axes swung and the land was gradually cleared'.⁸⁹⁵ 'Considered one of the poorer sections with the lightest soil – it was covered with stunted manuka scrub and heavily infested with rabbits. It was gradually cleared and broken in with the help of the family'.⁸⁹⁶ After 1914 the Gordon farm was sold, the profits being used for freeholding his new farm and erecting a house,⁸⁹⁷ and the family moved their dairy cows to Turanga-o-moana. A stable, a cowshed, and a 'large homestead' were erected.⁸⁹⁸ They also had several hundred sheep, both at Gordon and their last farm.⁸⁹⁹ 'Jane Maisey at last moved into a house specially built for her. Pride and joy was a stove with a hot water cylinder at the side. It was the first one in the district and people came from quite a distance to admire and, no doubt, envy it'.⁹⁰⁰

Maisey's success as a farmer led to his being a director of the New Zealand Dairy Association for 12 years and enjoying 'the close friendship of

⁸⁹² Union Bank of Australia, Auckland Branch, Manager's Minute Books 1896-1904, vol. 2, p. 17, 025, ANZ Bank Archives, Wellington; Bank of New Zealand, Te Aroha Branch, Manager's Diary 1905-1919, entries for 15 May 1906, 21 September 1906, Bank of New Zealand Archives, Wellington.

⁸⁹³ Piako County Council, Rate Book 1905-1906, Matamata Riding, Wairere Block X Sections 26, 27, 27A, Matamata-Piako District Council Archives, Te Aroha.

⁸⁹⁴ *Matamata Record*, 28 August 1930, p. 4; Gordon Maisey, p. 7; Muriel Maisey, 'Portrait', p. 23.

⁸⁹⁵ Muriel Maisey, 'Portrait', p. 23.

⁸⁹⁶ Gordon Maisey, p. 7.

⁸⁹⁷ Bank of New Zealand, Te Aroha Branch, Manager's Diary 1905-1919, entries for 21 January 1911, 13 November 1914, Bank of New Zealand Archives, Wellington.

⁸⁹⁸ Gordon Maisey, p. 7; *Morrinsville Star*, 29 August 1930, p. 5.

⁸⁹⁹ 'Annual Sheep Returns', *AJHR*, 1910, H-23, p. 27, 1911, H-23, p. 15, 1912, H-23, p. 15, 1913, H-23, p. 15, 1914, H-23, p. 15, 1914, H-23, p. 15, 1915, H-23, p. 15, 1916, H-23, p. 16, 1917, H-23, p. 16, 1918, H-23, p. 17, 1919, H-23, p. 47; 'Return of Sheepowners', *AJHR*, 1920, H-23B, p. 17, 1921, H-23B, p. 17, 1922, H-23B, p. 16, 1923, H-23B, p. 16.

⁹⁰⁰ Muriel Maisey, 'Portrait', p. 23.

Wesley Spragg,⁹⁰¹ a leader of the dairy industry.⁹⁰² After six years, he was re-elected director with 12,552 votes to his opponent's 4,657.⁹⁰³ Three years later, when re-nominated, the *Te Aroha News* expected him to 'receive solid support, for men of his sterling calibre are required at the head of such a concern'.⁹⁰⁴ In 1924 he was described as 'one of the best known farmers' in the valley.⁹⁰⁵

An obituary described Maisey as 'keenly interested in public affairs and imbued with a fine progressive spirit', illustrated by his being 'a valued member of the Piako County Council for many years'.⁹⁰⁶ In November 1911, he was elected by a margin of just one vote over the nearest candidate.⁹⁰⁷ He resigned in January 1914 because he was moving to the Matamata district.⁹⁰⁸ One critic claimed his election was unexpected, and that he had been a silent member.⁹⁰⁹ When at Gordon he had been a member of the school committee.⁹¹⁰ He also had a 'long association' with the Agricultural, Pastoral and Horticultural Association 'and numerous other bodies'.⁹¹¹

Maisey was one of the first farmers to own a motor car, which he christened 'Eliza', and which he drove into town every Wednesday.

Sometimes Frances would go into town with Grandad on a Wednesday; the hassle of waiting for him to get up and ready to go was exasperating to say the least; the car would be loaded up with sheepskins to sell, odd bags of wool and a box of home-made butter to sell at the grocers; it often arrived in a very SOFT state. Once in the car and sedately seated Grandad just HAD to fill and light his pipe before "Eliza" would think of moving off. He had to sit to one side of the wheel because his tummy was too big. Quite often the car would get stuck and a neighbour who perhaps had come along for the trip had to help with the big push. When

⁹⁰¹ *Te Aroha News*, 27 August 1930, p. 5.

⁹⁰² *A Dictionary of New Zealand Biography*, ed. G.H. Scholefield (Wellington, 1940), vol. 2, pp. 317-318.

⁹⁰³ *Te Aroha News*, 31 August 1917, p. 2.

⁹⁰⁴ *Te Aroha News*, 17 March 1920, p. 2.

⁹⁰⁵ *Te Aroha News*, 15 January 1924, p. 1.

⁹⁰⁶ *Te Aroha News*, 27 August 1930, p. 5.

⁹⁰⁷ *Te Aroha News*, 11 November 1911, p. 2.

⁹⁰⁸ Piako County Council, *Te Aroha News*, 23 January 1914, p. 2.

⁹⁰⁹ 'Weekly Newsletter', *Te Aroha News*, 26 January 1914, p. 2.

⁹¹⁰ *Auckland Weekly News*, 4 May 1900, p. 16.

⁹¹¹ *Te Aroha News*, 27 August 1930, p. 5.

“Eliza” arrived at a gate Grandad would not get out to open it, so he would sometimes throw Grandma a half a crown (2/6) to oblige. Getting home again was a similar procedure and many a late meal had to be got ready in a hurry.⁹¹²

‘As well as her own large family Jane usually boarded the school teacher’.⁹¹³ One ‘begged to come back because he missed her fine meals’.⁹¹⁴ Once the boys went

fishing when they should have been at school. The teacher inquired why they were absent and suggested they might have spent the day down at the creek.

“My boys play the wag?” was the indignant reply. “Of course they wouldn’t do such a thing.” But she was wrong and had to apologise and mete out suitable punishment.⁹¹⁵

Muriel Maisey cited other examples of her unquestioning love for her children, and especially her boys:

A favourite game of the children was to swing on the rata vines far out over the stream and then let go. Their mother worried so much in case they got hurt she asked a neighbour to cut the vines down at the swimming-hole. Not to be outdone the boys used an old rope which broke, but fortunately no one was hurt....

When the boys were playing football at school their mother liked to go along to lend her support. She would cheer them when they tackled an opposing player but it was a different story when HER boys were on the ground. She objected strongly.⁹¹⁶

Jane encouraged her children to participate in sport and social activities:

Life was not all work. As well as football, the boys played cricket and the girls tennis. There was a piano and they had sing-songs with the neighbours. There were family picnics and a district school picnic once a year. Socials were held at the school and in

⁹¹² Gordon Maisey, p. 13.

⁹¹³ Muriel Maisey, ‘Portrait’, p. 21.

⁹¹⁴ Gordon Maisey, p. 13.

⁹¹⁵ Muriel Maisey, ‘Portrait’, p. 22.

⁹¹⁶ Muriel Maisey, ‘Portrait’, p. 22.

the long holidays Jane would give parties for her own and the neighbours' children.⁹¹⁷

Gordon Maisey revealed that Jane's Presbyterianism was less strict than her husband's:

The family had a nice tennis court, visitors liked to play of course and Sunday being the only free day we had to play in the morning; Granddad would usually be in bed; he did not approve of this playing on Sunday, but Grandma was a sport and kept an eye on when he was likely to be stirring, so all could stop and gather up the net and racquets; as he declared he would plough the lawn up; but never did.⁹¹⁸

At his home 'anything in the social line was curtailed (although the girls were taught music and singing)', but when he went to meetings of the dairy company or to Auckland for the wool sales, 'house parties and the like were enjoyed'.⁹¹⁹

Maisey was a guarantor of the Matamata Racing Club.⁹²⁰ And he liked a drink; when driving the pony and trap from Gordon to Te Aroha he stopped at the Waiorongomai Hotel, telling whichever young son was accompanying him 'to mind the horse while he went "to see a man about a dog"'.⁹²¹

'On the whole the Maisey family were pretty healthy, which was just as well as it was not easy to get a doctor. Jane, herself, would sometimes be called in to help a neighbour, and she told me of a fatal accident where she stayed until the priest came'.⁹²²

Jane had a deep religious faith and in time of trouble gained much comfort from her religion. Whenever possible she attended Church and sent the children to Sunday School. This was sometimes held at the school and sometimes in the Maisey home. At one time they were the only Presbyterian family in a Catholic settlement. Irish troubles go back a long way and many were the fights Jane's boys had with their Irish school-mates. A battered

⁹¹⁷ Muriel Maisey, 'Portrait', p. 22.

⁹¹⁸ Gordon Maisey, p. 13.

⁹¹⁹ Gordon Maisey, p. 13.

⁹²⁰ *Matamata Record*, 28 August 1930, p. 4.

⁹²¹ Gordon Maisey, p. 13.

⁹²² Muriel Maisey, 'Portrait', p. 22.

lad, faced with superior numbers of the enemy, would pick himself up when he heard his brothers coming to help. With a battle cry of “I won’t be beaten up by a Micky” he would hurl himself into the fray again. It is well to remember these lads were good friends and neighbours in later years.⁹²³

Maisey was recalled as having ‘a great sense of humour’.⁹²⁴ When he returned from trips to Auckland, Jane ‘would ask him what he did there. He would answer he stood on a corner of Queen Street and admired the girl’s ankles as they lifted their long skirts to board the tram’.⁹²⁵

In the 1914-18 war Jane had four sons serving in the forces. A fifth son would have gone but, because he was in a reserved occupation, he was not allowed to enlist. One son was wounded at Gallipoli and died on the hospital ship *Cecelia*. He was buried at sea.⁹²⁶

This was Norman, who died aged 21.⁹²⁷

Another son was badly wounded in Egypt and arrived home on Christmas Eve. Jane refused to cook the Christmas turkey until her boy was well enough to eat it. Another son gained a commission in France and was one of two soldiers chosen to represent New Zealand in a Victory Parade in Paris. Jane was always so proud of her sons.⁹²⁸

The first of these was Tom, who had fought at Gallipoli, and returned to his home four months after his brother died; the other was Jesse.⁹²⁹ Shortly after Norman’s death was reported, Maisey called for the conscription of both men and wealth for the war effort, and wanted Germany’s unconditional surrender.⁹³⁰

⁹²³ Muriel Maisey, ‘Portrait’, p. 22.

⁹²⁴ Gordon Maisey, p. 13.

⁹²⁵ Muriel Maisey, ‘Portrait’, p. 22.

⁹²⁶ Muriel Maisey, ‘Portrait’, p. 23.

⁹²⁷ *Te Aroha News*, 6 August 1915, p. 2.

⁹²⁸ Muriel Maisey, ‘Portrait’, p. 23.

⁹²⁹ *Te Aroha News*, 8 August 1915, p. 2, 8 December 1915, p. 2.

⁹³⁰ Letter from R.J. Maisey, *Te Aroha News*, 1 September 1915, p. 3.

In 1922, her third youngest child, Albert Edward, died, aged 21, and her daughter Aroha died in 1930. All her other children outlived her.⁹³¹

The sons and daughters married and made homes for themselves, but there was always a warm welcome when they visited their parents. How Jane loved her grandchildren; she had a great number of them although none of the family came anywhere near her record. She made the wedding cakes for her daughters and some of them were married from the family home, with Jane doing the catering.⁹³²

‘For some years she was President of the Matamata branch of the Red Cross, and worked hard cutting out and sewing garments for the less fortunate’.⁹³³

Maisey died in August 1930 of a heart attack, aged 81.⁹³⁴ An obituary described him as ‘a well-known and highly respected resident of the Upper Thames Valley. Of a happy, jovial disposition, he made lasting friendships wherever he settled during his long and active career. Coupled with his sunny nature, Mr Maisey was a pioneer of sterling qualities and was noted for his integrity and soundness of judgment’. He was ‘ever known for his strong active measures’, and ‘his long useful life will stand as a lasting monument as a settler of the highest type’.⁹³⁵ At his funeral, the Presbyterian minister eulogized him:

Everyone who knew Mr Maisey honoured him for his rugged honesty and respected him as a neighbour and friend. Of a calm and philosophical nature, he served and honoured God in a quiet and unassuming way, and was ever ready to help in a case of necessity or in the work of the church. Continually on the lips of the deceased during the last few days were the words: “I can not complain, the Lord has been very good to me.”⁹³⁶

Maisey left an estate of £9,811 9s 9d, all of which went to his widow.⁹³⁷ After his death,

⁹³¹ Gordon Maisey, p. 7.

⁹³² Muriel Maisey, ‘Portrait’, p. 23.

⁹³³ Muriel Maisey, ‘Portrait’, p. 23.

⁹³⁴ Death Certificate of Robert Job Maisey, 23 August 1930, 1930/5030, BDM.

⁹³⁵ *Te Aroha News*, 27 August 1930, p. 5.

⁹³⁶ *Matamata Record*, 28 August 1930, p. 4.

⁹³⁷ Probate of R.J. Maisey, Hamilton Probates, BCDG 4420/2769, ANZ-A.

A good part of the farm was sold, but the youngest son took over the home portion and Jane moved into the township. She remained active until well past eighty years of age, when she suffered a broken hip. The doctor wanted to put her in hospital as she grew more helpless, but the family felt this was a poor return for all she had done for them. Between them all they cared for her as well as they could. They were not her happiest years, for she did not take kindly to an invalid's life, and all the years of hard work made her impatient to have to "sit idle," as she called it, and be waited on.

She died in her 88th year and she had six strong sons to carry her to her last resting place. She was always a proud mother and she would have been proud of that day, I am sure. Her favourite hymn was sung, the one taken from the psalm "The Lord is my Shepherd."⁹³⁸

On the coffin was 'a spray of white roses, Gran's favourite flower',⁹³⁹ She left £4,209 3s to her children.⁹⁴⁰

Her obituary stated that in all Maisey's 'public duties he was greatly assisted by his wife. Mrs Maisey is remembered by the older residents of Te Aroha as having taken a keen interest in church affairs, and in both wars she took an active part in patriotic work until this was curtailed by failing health'.⁹⁴¹ Shortly after her death, Muriel Maisey wrote that 'those busy hands are folded now, after a lifetime of toil.... We did not regret her passing for her own sake.... But, for the family, it seems as if the king pin has gone'.⁹⁴² She later recalled Jane's 'tender heart and her fine qualities'.⁹⁴³ Although usually following her husband's wishes, on one occasion she would not:

Although I do not think my mother-in-law would have much in common with Women's Lib, there was a time when she took a firm stand. A few people may remember the story of the Bell family; a book was written about their adventures called "Crusoes of Sunday Island." Mr Bell wanted to found a little kingdom of his

⁹³⁸ Muriel Maisey, 'Portrait', p. 23.

⁹³⁹ Muriel Maisey, 'Gran Passes On', *New Zealand Outlook*, 26 June 1946, reprinted in Gordon Maisey, p. 8 [this journal has not been traced; is the name incorrect?].

⁹⁴⁰ Probate of Jane Maisey, Hamilton Probates, BCDG 4420/6251, ANZ-A.

⁹⁴¹ *Te Aroha News*, 19 December 1944, p. 8.

⁹⁴² Muriel Maisey, 'Gran Passes On', in Gordon Maisey, p. 8.

⁹⁴³ Muriel Maisey, 'Portrait', p. 23.

own and decided to settle, with his family, on this remote island. Mr Bell and Robert Maisey were friends and he urged him to share in the project. Jane's husband loved the sea and had quite a streak of adventure in him. He was all for it but his wife put her foot down firmly. She didn't mind hard work but she was going to stay where she knew what was ahead of her. If you have read the book you will know this was a wise decision.⁹⁴⁴

As Thomas Bell had settled his family in this remote island in the Kermadec Group in 1878, well before their marriage, it was probably in 1889, when the New Zealand government opened up the island to other settlers, that Maisey raised the idea of moving there.⁹⁴⁵ The account of the Bell family's travails does not mention a friendship with Maisey.

Despite the emphasis in her descendants' recollections, Jane had some breaks from farm life and child rearing:

Jane was to make three visits to Australia and on one of those visits she took her two youngest sons with her, aged eighteen months and three years. They were on the train in Australia when the boys went down with measles. Quite a few Australian relatives paid visits to New Zealand.⁹⁴⁶

ALICE HOTCHIN

The following poetic exchange allegedly took place in March 1886:

This is what C. told A. the other night:-

Last night I left my heart with you,
A captive to your winning grace;
As you have one that's kind and true,
Pray send me yours to take its place.

Miss Alice answered:-

As you have left your heart with me,
I'm sure I shan't regret it,
And as for mine - well, let me see -
Call round at the back gate to-night and get it.⁹⁴⁷

⁹⁴⁴ Muriel Maisey, 'Portrait', p. 21.

⁹⁴⁵ E.K. Morton, *Crusoes of Sunday Island* (London, 1957), pp. 56, 112, 114, 152, 175-176.

⁹⁴⁶ Muriel Maisey, 'Portrait', p. 22.

⁹⁴⁷ 'Te Aroha Twists', *Observer*, 6 March 1886, p. 16.

Charles Ernest Balcke, a stationer, married Alice Harriet (sometimes Harriet Alice) Hotchin in September the following year, when he was 24 and she was 19.⁹⁴⁸ A stationer and tobacconist who also sold 'fancy goods' for a time he was also a hairdresser and a bookseller.⁹⁴⁹ Their first daughter was born in the following February, five months after the wedding, and the second nearly two years later.⁹⁵⁰ Two years after the second birth, Balcke became seriously ill. 'He is justly popular on account of his genial and happy disposition, and a large number of friends are hoping that he may be restored to health again'.⁹⁵¹ Instead, 'after some days of semi-consciousness and intense suffering', he died from 'inflammation of the brain'.⁹⁵² The cause was meningitis; he was only 29.⁹⁵³ His funeral was 'one of the most largely attended ever seen in the district, everyone who could possibly attend being present to show respect to the departed'.⁹⁵⁴ A Paeroa newspaper described him as 'greatly respected'.⁹⁵⁵

Ten days before his death, he made a will leaving his entire estate to his widow.⁹⁵⁶ He owned two shops in Whitaker Street, one rented out for 8s 6d a week, and a house on two acres, with a total rateable value of £405,⁹⁵⁷ but the total value of his estate was not recorded. He had insured his life for £200, but after three years had failed to pay the premiums. As he died just five days before the redemption value of his policy expired, the company decided to pay his widow the sum insured for, less the unpaid premiums.⁹⁵⁸

⁹⁴⁸ Marriage Certificate of Charles Ernest Balcke, 5 September 1887, 1887/322, BDM.

⁹⁴⁹ 'Thames Tittle Tattle', *Observer*, 17 June 1882, p. 218; advertisements, *Te Aroha News*, 14 July 1883, p. 1, 22 September 1883, p. 2, 29 September 1883, p. 3, 1 December 1883, p. 1, 6 December 1884, p. 7; *Cyclopedia of New Zealand*, vol. 2, p. 831; Death Certificate of Charles Ernest Balcke, 5 April 1892, 1892/2034, BDM.

⁹⁵⁰ Birth Certificates of Florence Gertrude Balcke, 17 February 1888, 1888/13421; Burnett Balcke, 18 March 1890, 1890/5843, BDM.

⁹⁵¹ Te Aroha Correspondent, *Auckland Weekly News*, 2 April 1892, p. 23.

⁹⁵² Te Aroha Correspondent, *Auckland Weekly News*, 9 April 1892, p. 23, 16 April 1892, p. 20.

⁹⁵³ Death Certificate of Charles Ernest Balcke, 5 April 1892, 1892/2034, BDM.

⁹⁵⁴ *Thames Advertiser*, 11 April 1892, p. 2.

⁹⁵⁵ *Ohinemuri Gazette*, 9 April 1892, p. 3.

⁹⁵⁶ Probate of Charles Ernest Balcke, Probates, BBAE 1569/1140, ANZ-A.

⁹⁵⁷ Assessment Court, *Te Aroha News*, 18 May 1889, p. 2.

⁹⁵⁸ *Auckland Weekly News*, 26 November 1892, p. 23.

This was fortunate, for earlier that month her shop had been totally destroyed in a fire, and although the stock and the building were insured for £250, she was a 'very heavy loser'.⁹⁵⁹ Although most of her stock was saved, she had had 'a very large stock of fancy goods on hand' and her loss was estimated at £150.⁹⁶⁰ Eight months later, her 'very nice shop and dwelling-house' was about to reopen.⁹⁶¹ She advertised it as the 'Te Aroha Fancy Bazaar and Novelty Emporium'.⁹⁶² As described in the *Cyclopedia of New Zealand*, the premises consisted of 'a double fronted shop in a central position' in the township. 'A large and general stock of stationary and fancy goods, including clocks, is kept by the proprietress. There is a large connection throughout the district'.⁹⁶³ In 1895 she was in charge of the British and Foreign Bible Society's depot.⁹⁶⁴ She carried on the business until she remarried in a 'quiet wedding' in 1898 to a man six years her junior, by whom she had a daughter in 1902.⁹⁶⁵ The shop remained her property, the land being mortgaged two days before the wedding to her father as trustee for her elder daughter; her second husband, a former miner, took over its management.⁹⁶⁶

EMMA BLENCOWE

Emmalah (known as Emma) Blencowe, wife of Richard Nathaniel Blencowe, arrived in New Zealand in 1865.⁹⁶⁷ When at Thames in the early years of that goldfield, he was a publican.⁹⁶⁸ He later became a butcher at

⁹⁵⁹ *Auckland Weekly News*, 12 November 1892, p. 30.

⁹⁶⁰ *Thames Advertiser*, 10 November 1892, p. 2.

⁹⁶¹ Te Aroha Correspondent, *Auckland Weekly News*, 8 July 1893, p. 23.

⁹⁶² Advertisement, *Te Aroha News*, 11 September 1895, p. 1.

⁹⁶³ *Cyclopedia of New Zealand*, vol. 2, p. 831.

⁹⁶⁴ *Te Aroha News*, 3 July 1895, p. 2.

⁹⁶⁵ Marriage Certificate of Harriet Alice Balcke, 20 January 1898, 1898/220, BDM; *Te Aroha News*, 22 January 1898, p. 2; Birth Certificate of Mavis Lawn, 31 March 1902, 1902/6895, BDM.

⁹⁶⁶ Te Aroha Warden's Court, Mortgage dated 18 January 1898 from H.A. Balcke to Moses Hotchin, 18 January 1898, Certified Instruments 1898, BBAV 11581/15a, ANZ-A; *Te Aroha News*, 22 January 1898, p. 2; *Cyclopedia of New Zealand*, vol. 2, p. 831.

⁹⁶⁷ Waikato Immigration Register of Contingent Land Payments and Transfers 1865-1876, folio 139, BAAZ 1967/2a, ANZ-A.

⁹⁶⁸ *Auckland Provincial Government Gazette*, 28 July 1869, p. 643, 12 August 1870, p. 327.

Ngaruawahia and Huntly.⁹⁶⁹ In 1880 he settled at Kihikihi, 'but being dissatisfied he went to Te Aroha' in time for the 1880 rush.⁹⁷⁰ After the Waiorongomai field was discovered, he invested in 19 claims and seven companies.⁹⁷¹ In 1883, he managed the Arizona mine and prospecting this unsuccessful claim with three men.⁹⁷² He was sole owner of the Little Wonder at Tui in 1886,⁹⁷³ a claim that did not live up to its name. At the end of the following year, he was elected to the provisional committee of the Te Aroha Prospecting Company.⁹⁷⁴ In 1889, he was the leading member of a syndicate mining, briefly, at Upper Tararu, Thames.⁹⁷⁵

Blencowe also worked as a butcher at Te Aroha.⁹⁷⁶ He then became a contractor making goldfield tracks.⁹⁷⁷ In 1884, he had a timber license for a section close to the township.⁹⁷⁸ In 1886, he was fencing, clearing and draining his ten-acre paddock adjoining Te Aroha on the lower side of the road to Waiorongomai in preparation for sowing grass. 'The investment should be a remunerative one to the owners, as the need of town paddocks is

⁹⁶⁹ *Waikato Times*, 14 September 1880, p. 2; *A Return of the Freeholders of New Zealand*, p. B 51.

⁹⁷⁰ Te Aroha Warden's Court, Miner's Right no. 349, issued 25 November 1880, Miners' Rights Butt Book 1880, BBAV 11533/1a; Register of Te Aroha Claims 1880-1888, folio 164, BBAV 11567/1a, ANZ-A; *Auckland Weekly News*, 24 January 1891, p. 14.

⁹⁷¹ Te Aroha Warden's Court, Register of Te Aroha Claims 1880-1888, folios 286, 287, BBAV 11567/1a; Register of Licensed Holdings 1881-1887, folios 2, 4, 6, 8, 13, 15, 23, 28, 38, 53-55, 88, 97, 154, BBAV 11500/9a; Register of Applications 1880-1882, 11505/3a, folios 109, 100, BBAV 11505/3a, ANZ-A; *New Zealand Gazette*, 13 July 1882, p. 961, 10 August 1882, p. 1101, 17 August 1882, p. 1132, 14 September 1882, p. 1264, 14 December 1882, p. 1885, 6 September 1883, p. 1265; *Te Aroha News*, 1 August 1885, p. 7.

⁹⁷² *Te Aroha News*, 1 September 1883, p. 2, 13 October 1883, p. 2.

⁹⁷³ Te Aroha Warden's Court, Register of Te Aroha Claims 1880-1888, folio 145, BBAV 11567/1a, ANZ-A.

⁹⁷⁴ *Te Aroha News*, 3 December 1888, p. 2.

⁹⁷⁵ Warden's Court, *Thames Advertiser*, 31 May 1889, p. 2, 28 June 1889, p. 2, 30 May 1889, p. 2.

⁹⁷⁶ Magistrate's Court, *Te Aroha News*, 7 July 1883, p. 3; *Tauranga Electoral Roll, 1887*, p. 3.

⁹⁷⁷ *Te Aroha News*, 7 November 1885, p. 2, 13 February '886, p. 7, 13 March 1886, p. 2, 20 March 1886, p. 2, 10 July 1886, p. 2.

⁹⁷⁸ Te Aroha Warden's Court, Register of Applications 1883-1900, 33/1884, 38/1884, BBAV 11505/1a, ANZ-A.

much felt'.⁹⁷⁹ This leasehold land was drained in 1888.⁹⁸⁰ In that year, he called tenders for clearing eight acres of manuka, and the following year advertised for 'A Strong Boy, must be a good milker, and willing to make himself generally useful'.⁹⁸¹ He owned three houses adjacent to his paddock.⁹⁸² When he died, in 1891, his occupation was given as miner, although he really was a small farmer, for on the day of his death he was seeking a plough and a boy who could milk.⁹⁸³

Residents respected Blencowe sufficiently to elect him to the improvement committee in 1886.⁹⁸⁴ But three years previously, at Emma's request a prohibition order operative from Te Aroha to Thames was taken out against him.⁹⁸⁵ In 1889, when charged with being drunk, he pleaded guilty and was convicted and cautioned. He also pleaded guilty to excessive drinking, and another prohibition order was imposed, covering the districts from Waitoa to Thames.⁹⁸⁶ Despite his drunkenness he was a Wesleyan.⁹⁸⁷

In January 1891, Blencowe attended a stock sale at Waitoa. Returning home, he 'was thrown from his horse and struck a telegraph post, smashing the whole of the left side of the skull, and exposing the brain'. Taken home unconscious, he died the following morning;⁹⁸⁸ he was only 48.⁹⁸⁹ When the question of whether he had been drunk was raised at the inquest, Annie Curnow, no stranger to strong drink,⁹⁹⁰ said that when travelling to Te Aroha 'I heard a horse coming behind me like lightning – I turned round

⁹⁷⁹ *Te Aroha News*, 21 August 1886, p. 2.

⁹⁸⁰ Piako County Council, *Te Aroha News*, 21 January 1888, p. 2.

⁹⁸¹ Advertisement, *Te Aroha News*, 29 August 1888, p. 7, 23 February 1889, p. 2.

⁹⁸² Te Aroha Town Board, Rate Book 1888, Section 4 Block XXXI, Section 6 Block XXXI, Section 7 Block XXXI, Matamata-Piako District Council Archives, Te Aroha; *Te Aroha News*, 5 May 1888, p. 2.

⁹⁸³ Death Certificate of Richard Nathaniel Blencowe, 17 January 1891, 1891/248, BDM; Inquest into R.N. Blencowe, Justice Department, J 46, 1891/75, ANZ-W.

⁹⁸⁴ *Te Aroha News*, 15 May 1886, p. 2.

⁹⁸⁵ Magistrate's Court, *Te Aroha News*, 7 July 1883, p. 3; *Thames Star*, 7 July 1883, p. 2.

⁹⁸⁶ Te Aroha Magistrate's Court, Criminal Record Book 1881-1896, 36, 37/1889, BCDG 11220/1a, ANZ-A; Magistrate's Court, *Te Aroha News*, 17 August 1889, p. 2.

⁹⁸⁷ Death Certificate of Richard Nathaniel Blencowe, 17 January 1891, 1891/248, BDM.

⁹⁸⁸ *Thames Advertiser*, 19 January 1891, p. 2, 20 January 1891, p. 2.

⁹⁸⁹ Death Certificate of Richard Nathaniel Blencowe, 17 January 1891, 1891/248, BDM.

⁹⁹⁰ See Police Court, *Te Aroha News*, 14 June 1884, p. 2, 18 August 1888, p. 2, 16 February 1889, p. 2.

and said “Oh! you foolish man! If you don’t pull up, that horse will kill you.” He passed me just like a chain of lightning, and went nearly as far as the next telegraph post when the horse suddenly stopped’, throwing him against the post. She did not blame the horse, ‘as it stood quite still after the accident happened and was led back by a boy’. He had had only one drink at the Waihou hotel.⁹⁹¹ As an indication of the respect in which he and his widow were held, 300 people from all parts of the district attended his funeral.⁹⁹²

After her husband’s sudden and unexpected death, Emma was a widow for 32 years until her death in 1923, aged 80. She had no children to assuage her grief.⁹⁹³ Blencowe’s will left all his estate to his wife, but its value is not known.⁹⁹⁴ In 1893, Emma gave her occupation as ‘household duties’,⁹⁹⁵ but she had to earn an income; details of how she did are incomplete because of large gaps in the local newspaper for the 1890s. In 1895 she sold fruit and confectionary and ran the Te Aroha Refreshment Rooms.⁹⁹⁶ In 1897, when she made her only known investment in a (local) mining company, she was a fruiterer.⁹⁹⁷ In 1894, a niece from England joined her and must have assisted in the shop, but six years later the niece married,⁹⁹⁸ and would probably have ceased helping either then or shortly afterwards.

Emma owned property. Although one shop occupied by a draper was burnt down in 1896, she had insured it for £100.⁹⁹⁹ By 1906 she owned five houses, each of four rooms, and a boardinghouse.¹⁰⁰⁰ Six years previously it was advertised in Thames:

⁹⁹¹ Inquest on Richard Nathaniel Blencowe, Justice Department, J 46 COR, 1891/75, ANZ-W.

⁹⁹² *Waikato Times*, 20 January 1891, p. 2.

⁹⁹³ Death Certificate of Emmalah Blencowe, 9 August 1923, 1923/1289, BDM.

⁹⁹⁴ Probate of Richard Nathaniel Blencowe, Probates, BBAE 1569/894, ANZ-A.

⁹⁹⁵ *Waikato Electoral Roll, 1893*, p. 4.

⁹⁹⁶ Advertisements, *Te Aroha News*, 28 January 1895, p. 1, 23 March 1895, p. 1.

⁹⁹⁷ *New Zealand Gazette*, 6 May 1897, p. 1036.

⁹⁹⁸ *Te Aroha News*, 24 July 1956, p. 4.

⁹⁹⁹ *Auckland Weekly News*, 1 February 1896, p. 15.

¹⁰⁰⁰ Te Aroha Borough Council, Rate Book 1906-1907, no pagination, Matamata-Piako District Council Archives, Te Aroha.

Carlton House, Te Aroha (Opposite the Town Hall) – Private Board and Residence. Every Home Comfort. First-Class Accommodation for Invalids and Tourists. The house is newly built and comfortably furnished throughout. Cuisine a speciality. Mrs Blencowe, Proprietor.¹⁰⁰¹

The following year, it was taken over by Anna Rowe Smardon, another widow,¹⁰⁰² but within a few years Emma re-acquired it, conducting it until selling it in 1914.¹⁰⁰³ She was recalled as a well known ‘boarding house personality’ who ‘would never turn down a penniless “Digger” but would rather buy their “holdings” for a certain figure and keep them until this was exhausted. She was also leader in the local Band of Hope, which would seem understandable’,¹⁰⁰⁴ meaning she would prefer miners to pay her board rather than spend their money on drink. When she died she still owned three town sections, and left an estate of £3,993 9s 11d.¹⁰⁰⁵

Emma was active in the community in a variety of ways. Probably because of her husband’s drunkenness, from the early 1880s onwards she was a leading member of the Band of Hope, being elected to its committee in 1888.¹⁰⁰⁶ In 1895, she chaired one of its meetings.¹⁰⁰⁷ The following year, she was elected to the local temperance movement’s committee.¹⁰⁰⁸ She was also a leading member of the Methodist church.¹⁰⁰⁹ A leader of its Sunday School, she was elected its secretary in 1885, teaching in Waiorongomai as well as Te Aroha.¹⁰¹⁰ In 1920, when she attended an old residents’ meeting, it was noted that she had ‘63 years of Christian life to her credit’.¹⁰¹¹ Upon her death from bronchitis and pleurisy three years later, aged 81, she was

¹⁰⁰¹ Advertisement, *Thames Star*, 26 July 1900, p. 4.

¹⁰⁰² See section on publicans in paper on the drink problem in the Te Aroha district.

¹⁰⁰³ *Thames Star*, 28 October 1901, p. 2; *Te Aroha News*, 4 September 1914, p. 2.

¹⁰⁰⁴ Recollections of C. Kingsley-Smith, *Te Aroha News*, 16 September 1980, p. 8.

¹⁰⁰⁵ Probate of Emma Blencowe, Hamilton Probates, BCDG 4420/1730, ANZ-A.

¹⁰⁰⁶ *Te Aroha News*, 15 March 1884, p. 2, 11 December 1886, p. 2, 8 September 1888, p. 7.

¹⁰⁰⁷ *Te Aroha News*, 4 December 1895, p. 2.

¹⁰⁰⁸ *Thames Advertiser*, 7 March 1896, p. 2.

¹⁰⁰⁹ *Te Aroha News*, 13 January 1900, p. 2, 21 May 1920, p. 2, 9 August 1923, p. 1, 30 September 1924, p. 1; *Strong Blow the Winds: A brief record of the history of the Te Aroha Methodist Church and Circuit 1881-1956* (Te Aroha, 1956), no pagination [p. 20].

¹⁰¹⁰ Waiorongomai Sunday School, Minute Book 1884-1894, entry for 21 December 1885, 3050/881, Methodist Archives, Auckland; *Te Aroha News*, 2 May 1885, p. 2.

¹⁰¹¹ *Te Aroha News*, 21 May 1920, p. 2.

described as an ‘ardent worker’ for the church.¹⁰¹² One year later, when a memorial tablet in the church was unveiled, it was recorded that she had done ‘great work’ for it, especially by collecting money for its construction. One of those present ‘doubted whether any church had a more wholehearted worker.... Frail though she was she did a great deal of work’.¹⁰¹³

Emma was active in other areas of public life. In 1892, it had been ‘rumoured that the “Widdy B.” is going to stand for the Town Board’,¹⁰¹⁴ but if this was ever a serious intention, she abandoned it, and was never again mentioned as wanting to participate in local government. In 1895 she was the sole woman on the committee of the Te Aroha Horticultural Society, and at the end of that year organized a New Year’s Day picnic for the schoolchildren.¹⁰¹⁵ Five years later she was elected as the first secretary of the local branch of the New Zealand Society for the Protection of Women and Children and Prevention of Cruelty to Animals.¹⁰¹⁶ In 1914 she formed a ladies’ committee of the Reform Party.¹⁰¹⁷

LUCY HARRIET ROFFEY/WILLIAMS/HAWKINS/TRAINER

Gossipmongers did not publish anything about this woman’s complicated marital history in either the local newspaper or the *Observer*, and, as is normal, more can be discovered about her partners’ lives than her own. The story began in Auckland in April 1875, when Joseph Williams, a Cornish labourer and miner, married Mary Purvis, a servant, the daughter of an Irish labourer. He was aged 21, and she was from four to seven years older. Both were illiterate.¹⁰¹⁸ They had three children, all born in the Waikato: James, in March 1876, Mary Jane, in September 1877, and John,

¹⁰¹² *Te Aroha News*, 9 August 1923, p. 1.

¹⁰¹³ *Te Aroha News*, 30 September 1924, p. 1.

¹⁰¹⁴ ‘Te Aroha’, *Observer*, 1 October 1892, p. 17.

¹⁰¹⁵ *Te Aroha News*, 9 March 1895, p. 2, 18 December 1895, p. 2.

¹⁰¹⁶ *Te Aroha News*, 24 March 1900, p. 2.

¹⁰¹⁷ *Te Aroha News*, 29 October 1908, p. 2; *Auckland Weekly News*, 2 July 1914, p. 67.

¹⁰¹⁸ Notices of Intentions to Marry 1875, folio 82, Births Deaths and Marriages, BDM 20/20, ANZ-W; Marriage Certificate of Joseph Williams, 28 April 1875, 1875/1396; Birth Certificate of Mary Jane Williams, 20 September 1877, 1877/6929; Death Certificate of Mary Williams, 18 September 1879, 1879/3412, BDM.

in September 1879.¹⁰¹⁹ Ten days after John's birth, Mary died of peritonitis.¹⁰²⁰

Four months later, Williams was remarried, to Lucy Harriet Roffey, aged 21, five years his junior.¹⁰²¹ She had been born in Victoria to a miner, George Peter Roffey, who would die in New Zealand in 1896.¹⁰²² Williams joined the rush to Te Aroha in November, and was an owner of a claim from December 1880 till its abandonment the following May.¹⁰²³ As he had earlier mined at Thames, he was elected the manager.¹⁰²⁴ Their son Joseph was born in 1881, but not registered.¹⁰²⁵ His financial struggles were revealed when he was sued in January 1882 for £1 owed to a shopkeeper; failing to pay as ordered, he was threatened with a week's imprisonment if this amount plus costs was not paid within a week.¹⁰²⁶ In November, he was ordered to pay £4 13s 2d to another storekeeper, William Wilson.¹⁰²⁷ Once again he failed to pay, and after a judgment summons was served the case was adjourned for a month to enable him to pay 5s a week.¹⁰²⁸ In the same

¹⁰¹⁹ Birth Certificates of James Williams, 7 March 1876, 1876/6191; Mary Jane Williams, 20 September 1877, 1877/6929; John Williams, 8 September 1879, 1879/8592, BDM; Te Aroha Magistrate's Court, Criminal Record Book 1881-1896, 12/1884, BCDG 11200/1a, ANZ-A.

¹⁰²⁰ Death Certificate of Mary Williams, 18 September 1879, 1879/3412, BDM.

¹⁰²¹ Notices of Intention to Marry 1880, folio 255, Births Deaths and Marriages, BDM 20/25, ANZ-W; Marriage Certificate of Joseph Williams and Lucy Harriet Roffey, 26 January 1880, 1880/1186, BDM.

¹⁰²² Marriage Certificate of Lucy Harriet Williams, 10 May 1896, 1896/1464; Death Certificate of George Peter Roffey, 1896/2277, BDM.

¹⁰²³ Te Aroha Warden's Court, Miner's Right no. 959, issued 25 November 1880, Miners' Rights Butt Book 1880, BBAV 11533/1b; Register of Te Aroha Claims 1880-1888, folio 194, BBAV 11567/1a, ANZ-A.

¹⁰²⁴ *Thames Advertiser*, 8 January 1881, p. 3; *Waikato Times*, 8 January 1881, p. 3.

¹⁰²⁵ Methodist Church, Upper Thames Circuit, Baptismal Register 1881-1929, no. 7, Methodist Archives, Auckland.

¹⁰²⁶ Te Aroha Magistrate's Court, Civil Record Book 1881-1884, 1/1882, Judgment Summons heard on 28 February 1882, BCDG 11221/1a, ANZ-A.

¹⁰²⁷ Te Aroha Magistrate's Court, Civil Record Book 1881-1884, 72/1882, BCDG 11221/1a, ANZ-A.

¹⁰²⁸ Te Aroha Magistrate's Court, Civil Record Book 1881-1884, Judgment Summons heard on 16 January 1883, BCDG 11221/1a, ANZ-A.

month, he was ordered to pay a carpenter £9 3s 6d.¹⁰²⁹ He did not pay the carpenter, who took out a distress warrant, but as he had no chattels to be sold the debt remained unpaid.¹⁰³⁰ After waiting another six months, at the beginning of June 1883 Wilson took out a judgment summons, and he was ordered to pay the debt (now £5 8s because of court costs) by weekly instalments of 10s or serve 14 days hard labour in Mount Eden prison.¹⁰³¹

Williams' solution to his financial problems was to run away. The following month he was charged with deserting his wife and family, and when he failed to appear in court a warrant was issued for his arrest.¹⁰³² Discovered by the Wellington police working as a labourer on the railway, he was ordered to pay 8s a week for his daughter Mary Jane's maintenance.¹⁰³³ As the *Te Aroha News* explained in the following January, when Lucy heard he had been found she 'caused a warrant to be issued for his apprehension. The man was arrested, but in consequence of representations made to the local authorities by Mrs Williams to the effect that her husband had promised to contribute to the support of herself and the children the man was released'.¹⁰³⁴

As he did not pay as agreed, at the beginning of the following year, Lucy, whose stepsons had been enrolled at the Waiorongomai school in November, abandoned her stepchildren.¹⁰³⁵ Another warrant for Williams' arrest was issued,¹⁰³⁶ but none was issued against Lucy. The *Te Aroha News* was appalled by this 'most unnatural cruelty', for she had 'disappeared, taking with her two of her own children and leaving the unfortunate step-children literally without support'. (If she had literally

¹⁰²⁹ Te Aroha Magistrate's Court, Civil Record Book 1881-1884, 4/1883, BCDG 11221/1a, ANZ-A.

¹⁰³⁰ Te Aroha Magistrate's Court, Home Warrant Book 1883-1928, 2/1883, BBAV 11498/1a, ANZ-A.

¹⁰³¹ Te Aroha Magistrate's Court, Civil Record Book 1881-1884, Judgment Summons heard on 5 June 1883, BCDG 11221/1a, ANZ-A.

¹⁰³² Magistrate's Court, *Te Aroha News*, 7 July 1883, p. 3.

¹⁰³³ Auckland Industrial School, Register of Inmates, Girls, 1875-1894, folio 134, BAAA 1955/4, ANZ-A.

¹⁰³⁴ *Te Aroha News*, 26 January 1884, p. 2.

¹⁰³⁵ Waiorongomai School, Class Lists, November 1883, YCAF 4135/10a, ANZ-A; Waikato District Hospital and Charitable Aid Board, *Te Aroha News*, 9 February 1889, p. 2.

¹⁰³⁶ Te Aroha Magistrate's Court, Criminal Record Book 1881-1896, 13/84, BCDG 11220/1a, ANZ-A.

disappeared, she soon reappeared, and remained at Waiorongomai for the rest of her life.) Once the local police sergeant was informed, he arranged to have the children committed to the Thames orphanage until aged 15. 'We trust that the authorities will not rest till this most flagrant breach of the law of humanity has been punished'.¹⁰³⁷ The authorities did not share the newspaper's zeal, for no action was taken against her. Later it was reported that Williams had fled to New South Wales immediately he deserted his family,¹⁰³⁸ but in fact he had gone to find work in Wellington.¹⁰³⁹ In 1884 he ceased working as a navvy on the railway at Paekakariki and went to Masterton; as the police then lost his trail he could not be sued for the amount owing on the maintenance of his children.¹⁰⁴⁰ In February 1889, when the Waikato District Hospital and Charitable Aid Board received a bill for over £100 for maintaining the children, it recorded that he had worked on the Auckland docks for about two years after he fled Te Aroha.¹⁰⁴¹

The second child mentioned by the *Te Aroha News*, Frances Elizabeth, born in January 1884, was not registered either. Her month of birth can be calculated from her enrolment at the Waiorongomai school in 1894, when, like her brother Joseph, she bore the surname Hawkins;¹⁰⁴² John Hawkins was the next man in Lucy's life. Frances Elizabeth was aged 21 when she married a local miner on 8 January 1905,¹⁰⁴³ making her birthday the very beginning of that month. Curiously, on her 1926 death certificate she was recorded as Hawkins' daughter, and Lucy's maiden name was either not recalled or deliberately omitted (she was still alive) from the death certificate.¹⁰⁴⁴

Williams never paid for his children's maintenance, and presumably never saw them again. When the Thames orphanage closed in December

¹⁰³⁷ Te Aroha Magistrate's Court, Criminal Record Book 1881-1896, 12/1884, BCDG 11220/1a, ANZ-A; *Te Aroha News*, 26 January 1884, p. 2.

¹⁰³⁸ *Te Aroha News*, 9 March 1889, p. 2.

¹⁰³⁹ *Te Aroha News*, 26 January 1884, p. 2.

¹⁰⁴⁰ *New Zealand Police Gazette*, 30 September 1885, p. 169.

¹⁰⁴¹ Waikato District Hospital and Charitable Aid Board, *Te Aroha News*, 9 February 1889, p. 2.

¹⁰⁴² Waiorongomai School, Class Lists for November 1894, YCAF 4315/41a, ANZ-A.

¹⁰⁴³ Marriage Certificate of Frances Elizabeth Williams and Thomas Roberts, 8 January 1905, 1905/4794, BDM.

¹⁰⁴⁴ Death Certificate of Frances Elizabeth Roberts, 10 June 1926, 1926/2247, BDM.

1893, his daughter was transferred to the Auckland Industrial School, the following year being discharged to become a servant in a private house at Thames.¹⁰⁴⁵ By 1897 she was ‘respectably married’ and receiving an income.¹⁰⁴⁶ Her elder brother, who had not been transferred to Auckland, by 1898 was married, respectable, and receiving earnings.¹⁰⁴⁷ Her younger brother, who became a servant in 1892, was recorded in mid-1906 as ‘Good character – received earnings’.¹⁰⁴⁸

Williams and Lucy were Wesleyans, although he died a Baptist,¹⁰⁴⁹ which may have been why they never divorced, meaning she could not legally remarry until after his death in the Thames hospital in 1928. Then aged 83, he was recorded as being a labourer.¹⁰⁵⁰

John Hawkins, another Waiorongomai miner,¹⁰⁵¹ was first recorded as living there at the beginning of 1884 (unless he was one of the ‘Hawkins & Co.’ who did some tunnelling for the tramway the previous year).¹⁰⁵² He was

¹⁰⁴⁵ Auckland Industrial School, Register of Inmates, Girls, 1875-1894, folio 134, BAAA 1955/4, ANZ-A; Industrial Schools Nominal Rolls, Thames Industrial School, folio 18, Child Welfare, CW14/9, ANZ-W.

¹⁰⁴⁶ Industrial Schools, Register of Past Inmates 1883-1896, Auckland Industrial School, folio 240, Child Welfare, CW 15/1, ANZ-W.

¹⁰⁴⁷ Industrial Schools, Register of Past Inmates 1883-1896, Thames Industrial School, folio 176, Child Welfare, CW 15/1, ANZ-W.

¹⁰⁴⁸ Industrial Schools Nominal Rolls, Thames Industrial School, folio 17, Child Welfare, CW 14/9; Register of Past Inmates 1883-1896, Auckland Industrial School, folio 280, Child Welfare, CW 15/1, ANZ-W.

¹⁰⁴⁹ See baptism of Joseph Williams, 9 August 1881, Upper Thames Circuit, Baptismal Register 1881-1929, no. 7, Methodist Archives, Auckland; Te Aroha Resident Magistrate’s Court, Criminal Record Book 1881-1896, 12/1884, BCDG 11220/1a, ANZ-A; Magistrate’s Court, *Te Aroha News*, 26 January 1884, p. 7; Death Certificate of Joseph Williams, 26 May 1928, 1928/1348, BDM.

¹⁰⁵⁰ Death Certificate of Joseph Williams, 26 May 1928, 1928/1348, BDM.

¹⁰⁵¹ Te Aroha Warden’s Court, Register of Te Aroha Claims 1880-1888, folio 323, BBAV 11567/1a, ANZ-A; Thames School of Mines, Assay Book 1886-1887 [no pagination], three samples from Stoney Creek, School of Mines Archives, Thames; *Te Aroha News*, 26 September 1885, p. 2, 6 February 1887, p. 2, 23 June 1888, p. 2, 26 March 1890, p. 2, 3 August 1895, p. 2.

¹⁰⁵² Te Aroha Tramway: Costs, appended to H.A. Gordon to Under-Secretary, Mines Department, 3 December 1883, Mines Department, MD 1, 07/1014, ANZ-W; *Te Aroha News*, 23 February 1884, p. 2; *Waikato Electoral Roll, June 1884*, p. 9; Te Aroha

born in Somersetshire, to George and Mary Jane Ann Hawkins; his father's occupation was not recorded.¹⁰⁵³ He was aged 36 in September 1885 when their first child, John Henry, was born. Both parents signed the register, the birth certificate recording him as the son of Hawkins and Lucy Harriet Roffey, then aged 24.¹⁰⁵⁴ She had reverted to her maiden name, but those who knew the family would have understood that her two children were from an earlier, and still current, marriage. All her children, therefore, were born with the surname Roffey. Charles Ethelbert was born in September 1888: again, both parents signed the register.¹⁰⁵⁵ (He was known as Bertie and, in the twentieth century, as Albert.)¹⁰⁵⁶ Olive Jane, born in May 1890, did not have Hawkins recorded as her father: instead, he was the informant, having been present at the birth.¹⁰⁵⁷ She died after nine days from 'Severe Cold and Debility from birth'; Hawkins was again the informant, having been 'present at death'.¹⁰⁵⁸ Her death had been expected, for she was baptized into the Church of England beforehand, when she was recorded as the illegitimate child of Hawkins.¹⁰⁵⁹ James Harold was born in February 1892; no father was listed.¹⁰⁶⁰ Their last child, Joy Myrtle Anne, was born in February 1894: Hawkins was not recorded as the father.¹⁰⁶¹

Illegitimacy was something to hide not only from the neighbours but also one's children. All the children born to Hawkins were registered with

Warden's Court, *Plaint Book* 1880-1898, 29/1884, BBAV 11547/1a; *Miner's Right* no. 2314, issued 23 August 1884, *Miners' Rights Butt Book* 1884-1885, BBAV 11533/1n, ANZ-A.

¹⁰⁵³ Birth Certificate of John Henry Roffey, 25 September 1885, 1885/1512; Death Certificate of John Hawkins, 3 November 1894, 1894/799, BDM.

¹⁰⁵⁴ Birth Certificate of John Henry Roffey, 27 September 1885, 1885/1512, BDM.

¹⁰⁵⁵ Birth Certificate of Charles Ethelbert Roffey, 5 April 1888, 1888/12169, BDM.

¹⁰⁵⁶ Waiorongomai School, *Class Lists* for 1894, 1898, 1899, YCAF 4315/41a, 4315/49a, 4315/52/a; *Probate of Lucy Harriet Trainer*, *Hamilton Probates*, BCDG 4420/2986, ANZ-A.

¹⁰⁵⁷ Birth Certificate of Olive Jane Roffey, 18 May 1890, 1890/17408, BDM.

¹⁰⁵⁸ Death Certificate of Olive Jane Roffey, 27 May 1890, 1890/1971, BDM.

¹⁰⁵⁹ *Te Aroha Register of Baptisms* 1879-1908, no. 199, Anglican Diocesan Archives, Hamilton.

¹⁰⁶⁰ Birth Certificate of James Harold Roffey, 10 February 1892, 1892/5576, BDM.

¹⁰⁶¹ Birth Certificate of Ivy Myrtle Anne Roffey, 5 February 1894, 1894/17248, BDM.

his surname when they enrolled at school.¹⁰⁶² When Charles Ethelbert was married in 1913, his marriage certificate gave his mother's latest partner's name but omitted Hawkins as a previous husband before giving her maiden name;¹⁰⁶³ in that way, whether intentionally or not, he had revealed the true legal circumstance of his birth. When Ivy Myrtle Ann married the following year, her mother again had the surname of her third partner and was recorded as 'formerly Hawkins', maiden name Roffey.¹⁰⁶⁴

On 24 October 1894, Hawkins was admitted to the Thames hospital suffering from heart disease;¹⁰⁶⁵ he died there on 3 November, aged 48. His death certificate recorded that he was unmarried; the informant was 'Lucy Williams, friend present at the death, Waiorongomai'.¹⁰⁶⁶ A Te Aroha correspondent wrote that he

had been a miner on the Thames and Te Aroha goldfields for many years, and was very well liked by everyone who knew him. He had been suffering from heart and lung troubles for some time, so that his death was not entirely unexpected. He leaves a wife and several young children.¹⁰⁶⁷

As many local people must have known, she was not his wife, but she was given this courtesy title by a Waiorongomai correspondent three months later: 'The meanest theft I've heard of for a long time is the robbery of Mrs Hawkins' orchard. She is a poor widow with a large family of young children, dependent on her cows and garden for a living, and with plums at a penny a pound, hers are stolen'.¹⁰⁶⁸

Cows, and pigs, were the cause of the only time Hawkins was in trouble with the law. In December 1888, he was convicted of hitting a miner, John Brien,¹⁰⁶⁹ 'on the arm with a ti-tree pole', and fined £1 and costs. As was common, the newspaper provided considerable details of this

¹⁰⁶² Waiorongomai School, Class Lists, YCAF 4315/41a, 4315/46/a, 4315/47/a, 4315/49/a, 4315/52/a, ANZ-A.

¹⁰⁶³ Marriage Certificate of Charles Ethelbert Hawkins, 22 May 1913, 1913/604, BDM.

¹⁰⁶⁴ Marriage Certificate of Ivy Myrtle Ann Hawkins, 15 December 1914, 1914/3640, BDM.

¹⁰⁶⁵ Thames Hospital Board, Register of Patients 1884-1902, folio 61, YCAH 14075/1a, ANZ-A.

¹⁰⁶⁶ Death Certificate of John Hawkins, 3 November 1894, 1894/799, BDM.

¹⁰⁶⁷ Te Aroha Correspondent, *Auckland Weekly News*, 17 November 1894, p. 23.

¹⁰⁶⁸ Waiorongomai Correspondent, *Te Aroha News*, 16 September 1895, p. 2.

¹⁰⁶⁹ See *Te Aroha News*, 18 October 1884, p. 7, 20 December 1884, p. 2.

petty squabble, usefully providing a window into the lives of ‘ordinary’ people. Brien was the first to give evidence:

On last Sunday morning I went down to defendant’s house, but did not see him at home. Saw a woman there, and I called out for John Hawkins. She came out, and said he was not at home. I said I would call again by-and-bye. I went round the allotment, and saw him coming towards me. He said, “I will not allow you to come here talking to my missus.” I said, “If you don’t keep your cattle and pigs out of my allotment I will shoot them.” He said, “Will you shoot them?” I said, “I will.” He then took up a ti-tree pole and struck me on the arm at the elbow. I stooped for a stone, but did not touch it. I had to go home and lie on the bed all day with the pain. I own the two allotments next to defendant, and have paid three years’ rent on them. He feeds his pigs and cows on these allotments, and has buried a cow in one of them.

In reply to defendant: I never offered to give you the allotments if you liked to pay the rent on them. I did not see you do up the fence or sow grass seed on them. There is grass on the allotment. I did offer to rent you the allotments about a fortnight ago. I never challenged you to fight. You did ask me to contribute towards the cost of repairing the dividing fence, and I said No. I did not call you a b --- thief.

Defendant did not deny striking plaintiff, but declined to be sworn. By permission of the Bench he made a statement to the effect that plaintiff gave him the land about a year ago, and that he did it up and sowed it into grass, which came up well, and plaintiff then came and claimed the allotments back again.¹⁰⁷⁰

A month later, he sought a milch cow near to calving to add to his herd.¹⁰⁷¹ His squabble with Brien was eventually resolved in February 1890 by Brien selling the two allotments to him for £1.¹⁰⁷²

Hawkins was of some note in the community, in 1890 being elected to the school committee.¹⁰⁷³ When first at Waiorongomai, he played sport.¹⁰⁷⁴ Because happy marriages and normal behaviour rarely merited much space

¹⁰⁷⁰ Te Aroha Magistrate’s Court, Criminal Record Book 1881-1896, 60/1888, BCDG 11220/1a, ANZ-A; Magistrate’s Court, *Te Aroha News*, 4 November 1888, p. 2.

¹⁰⁷¹ *Te Aroha News*, 26 January 1889, p. 2.

¹⁰⁷² John Brien to John Hawkins, 24 February 1890, Te Aroha Warden’s Court, Certified Instruments 1890, BBAV 11581/11a, ANZ-A.

¹⁰⁷³ *Te Aroha News*, 30 April 1890, p. 2.

¹⁰⁷⁴ *Te Aroha News*, 23 February 1884, p. 2; entry for 11 October 1884, p. 2, may refer to W.H. Hawkins.

in the newspapers, especially ones published elsewhere, the only other time anything else was published about his family was in the year before his death, in a Thames paper (no doubt the local one reported the event also, but it has not survived for this year). His small son, presumably the youngest, James Harold, had fallen into a well adjacent to his house, along with a cat. The cat extricated itself easily, but Lucy found her son floating face up. Neighbours rescued him (presumably Hawkins was away mining), and ‘after two or three hours of incessant rubbing, the little boy showed signs of returning life, and the next morning he was running about almost as well as before’.¹⁰⁷⁵

After lost her second partner in November 1894, in May 1896 Lucy, then aged 32, married a 32-year-old (and illiterate) Waiorongomai miner, Frank Trainer, at her home. He had been born in Northumberland (was that why he was nicknamed ‘Geordie’?)¹⁰⁷⁶ to another Frank, another miner. She was married as Lucy Harriet Williams, a widow; as a date of becoming a widow was recorded as ‘unknown’. The name Hawkins did not appear,¹⁰⁷⁷ and would not appear when her last children were registered: officially she was the widow of Williams, and there had been no other man in her life. Having lost contact with Williams, either she hoped or believed he was dead or simply invented his death to enable this, her last marriage, to be legal, thereby avoiding the evasions and subterfuges caused by her relationship with Hawkins. Perhaps she simply was in a rush and did not bother with the formalities, hoping nobody would point out that she was committing bigamy, for three months after the wedding she gave birth to their first son, Norman Edward.¹⁰⁷⁸ Eleven months later, Frederick Thorndon was born, followed by Mavis Linda in 1902 and Earnest (their spelling) Stanley in 1904;¹⁰⁷⁹ he was Lucy’s last child, making a total of 11. It is likely that

¹⁰⁷⁵ *Thames Advertiser*, 21 August 1893, p. 2.

¹⁰⁷⁶ Death Notice, *Te Aroha News*, 7 October 1921, p. 2; *New Zealand Herald*, 10 October 1921, p. 1.

¹⁰⁷⁷ Marriage Certificate of Frank Trainer and Lucy Harriet Williams, 10 May 1896, 1896/1464, BDM.

¹⁰⁷⁸ Birth Certificate of Norman Edward Trainer, 14 August 1896, 1896/8275, BDM.

¹⁰⁷⁹ Birth Certificates of Frederick Thorndon Trainer, 25 September 1897, 1897/13046; Mavis Linda Trainer, 4 September 1902, 1902/13254; Earnest Stanley Trainer, 5 March 1904, 1904/15385, BDM.

Trainer's stepchildren lived with him; in 1905 Frances Elizabeth was married at his house.¹⁰⁸⁰

Trainer was making little money from either mining or farming, and had difficulty in paying the rent on the 71 acres he leased on the Thames High School Endowment.¹⁰⁸¹ In his last years he was also a drunk, in 1917 being fined for being drunk, along with another man, in the domain at midnight.¹⁰⁸² The following year he was fined on a Saturday morning for being drunk and by evening was drunk once more, and was fined for obtaining liquor while a prohibition order was current.¹⁰⁸³

Trainer died in 1921, aged 55, of miner's complaint. He received a Methodist funeral,¹⁰⁸⁴ as did Lucy when she died in 1931 of a heart attack, aged 74. The only marriage recorded on her death certificate was to Trainer, and the only children listed were born to him;¹⁰⁸⁵ it would have been filled in by one of these children, who knew of earlier children from earlier relationships. An indication of their standard of living was that Trainer left an estate estimated at under £300 and Lucy one of £364 10s 3d.¹⁰⁸⁶ Her will shared her property around six named children, all of Trainer's and two of Hawkins'.¹⁰⁸⁷

CONCLUSION

In the 1930 book on Te Aroha and its district, published to celebrate 50 years of development in this 'fortunate valley', one contributor lauded the women as well as the men for their hard work on their farms during the 1880s:

Very few settlers were able to make a living on their farms during this decade. In order to earn a little ready money, they

¹⁰⁸⁰ Marriage Certificate of Frances Elizabeth Williams, 1905/4784, BDM.

¹⁰⁸¹ *Thames Star*, 1 September 1902, p. 4; Thames High School, Minutes of Board of Governors' Meetings, 7 December 1903, 29 February 1904, 28 March 1904, 1 March 1905, 5 April 1905, 23 February 1908, High School Archives, Thames.

¹⁰⁸² *Te Aroha News*, 14 March 1917, p. 2.

¹⁰⁸³ *Te Aroha News*, 10 July 1918, p. 2, 15 July 1918, p. 2.

¹⁰⁸⁴ Death Certificate of Francis Trainer, 5 October 1921, 1921/6453, BDM.

¹⁰⁸⁵ Death Certificate of Lucy Harriet Trainer, 2 September 1931, 1931/5299, BDM.

¹⁰⁸⁶ Hamilton Probates, BCDG 4420/1473, 4420/2986, ANZ-A.

¹⁰⁸⁷ Hamilton Probates, BCDG 4420/2986, ANZ-A.

had to take such work as [was] offered: road and bridge-building, flax-cutting and scrub-cutting, draining and fencing and sowing and harvesting on the big estates. In the intervals between the jobs they undertook for other people, they developed their own farms. While the men were absent the women “kept the home-fires burning.” It was quite a usual thing for them to take charge of the little herd, milk the cows, make the butter, and carry it to market. The old process of butter-making was a tedious business – setting the milk to stand in shallow pans, hand skimming and hand churning, washing and salting and making up the butter ready for market. They seldom received any cash for it: they “took it out” in groceries.

It was hard enough for women to do all this work at the same time as their household cares were pressing upon them, and families in those days were not small; but it was made doubly hard by the discomfort in which it was done. There were no labour-saving devices in the houses, and the household equipment was reduced to bare necessities. Not seldom the few cows were milked in bails unsheltered by any roof; and in wet weather it was a bedraggled heroine who carried her pails of milk-and-rain-drops to her makeshift dairy. Of the rush of distractions enjoyed or endured by her grand-daughter she knew nothing. An occasional dance in the station barn and the annual district picnic made the sum of her dissipations. She was the greatest pioneer of them all. *Requiescat.*¹⁰⁸⁸

Some miners’ wives also milked as well as gardened and tended an orchard, and all had the same responsibilities to look after their families without modern labour saving devices. Certainly women were fundamental to the running of the community, and some were able or obliged to be in paid employment or self-employment. In the townships of Te Aroha and Waiorongomai there were more ‘distractions’ from the daily grind, but mostly only younger and unmarried women could take advantage of these, as the gossip provided by the O.M. illustrated. One problem with most of the sources used is that it is far easier to find information on unhappy relationships, especially after marriage, than happy ones, but none of the behaviour uncovered was in any way unusual, surprising, or unique.

Appendix

Figure 1: ‘Heard on the Telephone’, Observer, 12 October 1895, p. 15.

¹⁰⁸⁸ G.W. Wild, ‘Agricultural Development in the Thames Valley’, in *Te Aroha and the Fortunate Valley*, ed. F.W. Wild (Te Aroha, 1930), p. 60.



Heard on the Telephone.

THE COMMERCIAL HOTEL (to the Waitemata): How-d'ye-do, Mrs Endean? How are your mining ventures? I hear you and John own half of Coromandel.

THE WAITEMATA HOTEL (to the Commercial): We are doing nicely, thanks. But why grudge us half of Coromandel, Mr Kidd, when you have got the whole of Waihi?

