PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES IN THE TE AROHA DISTRICT

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Te Aroha Mining District Working Papers

No. 121

Revised on October 28, 2026

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ISSN: 2463-6266

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THE UNIVERSITY OF WAIKATO
Te Whare Wānanga o Waikato

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Abstract: *Although Te Aroha was seen as being a healthy district, until the early twentieth century it lacked clean water and adequate sanitation. There were justifiable fears of typhus and other diseases both because of this and by the common 'nuisances' caused by unsanitary behaviour. Many people had a poor diet, which was normal for those prospecting far from their homes. For miners, their working conditions were always unhealthy, and miner's complaint was common, affecting battery hands as well.*

Medical services were inadequate until the twentieth century because doctors could not settle for long (for financial reasons) and there was no local hospital. Some doctors, nurses, and dentists visited, but the seriously ill had to be sent out of the district. For injuries, chemists and nurses did their best, as did a dubiously skilled local doctor. Self-medication was common.

Examples are given of breakdowns in mental health, which sometimes led to physical attacks on others or to suicide.

A HEALTHY DISTRICT?

According to a 1901 statement by Thomas Cecil Bell, who at that time ran a Te Aroha billiard room and would become registrar of dogs,[1] he was living in 'the healthiest town in New Zealand'.[2] In general, the *Te Aroha News* agreed, in its first year of publication, 1883, describing the district as 'undoubtedly one of the healthiest'.[3] It also argued, in 1910, that early settlers' good health was explained by their being 'made of sturdy material' that kept them active into old age.[4] In 1897 the level of fitness of a member of the younger generation was noted, approvingly:

> The other day a train left Te Aroha mostly filled with miners on their way to spend the holidays in town [Auckland]. During the trip a young fellow's hat blew off, and without hesitation he jumped off the train, saved his hat, and succeeded in springing on[to] the last carriage. Smart work, considering the train was going at a fairly good speed.[5]

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[1] See *Ohinemuri Electoral Roll*, *1899*, p. 7; *Ohinemuri Gazette*, Piako County Council, 24 February 1897, p. 2, 27 November 1897, p. 2, 11 May 1908, p. 2.

[2] *Thames Star*, 9 September 1901, p. 3.

[3] *Te Aroha News*, 27 October 1883, p. 2.

[4] *Te Aroha News*, 20 August 1910, p. 2.

[5] *Thames Advertiser*, 1 January 1897, p. 2.

This example was misleading, for at the end of the same month another Thames newspaper wrote that there was

> a great deal of sickness of a mild form about Te Aroha. The hot weather passed through is beginning to tell its tale, and the local paper says that those who persisted in taking hot baths during the warm weather merely for the pleasure and luxury of the thing, will now find the system run down and below par.[6]

The climate was blamed for ill health on other occasions, as when, in May 1884, 'the alternating heat by day and frost at night' was 'very trying to those of delicate constitution, and colds and catarrhal complaints' were 'rather prevalent'.[7]

Not all reported illnesses were serious, or even genuine. Influenza could be used as an excuse to avoid work, as illustrated in 1892 by a Waiorongomai example: 'One of the "Micks" [Irish] working at the tailing mill hit on a good plan to get off early the other night. He pretended to have la grippe [influenza] and got his mate to work half a shift'.[8]

WATER QUALITY

Serious ill health could result from impure water and inadequate sanitation, as was recorded as early as May 1881:

> We are suffering from the attack of low fever, which seems to be pervading the country from Auckland all through the Waikato and Thames districts. One or two families have several members laid up with it and it has been decided to obtain the attendance of a medical man from Hamilton or Cambridge. It is called scarlet fever here, but whether it is that or the milder form of scarletina, or maybe typhoid, does not appear to be distinctly understood. In all low-lying districts like this too much care cannot be taken to preserve the sweetness and purity of the water used for drinking.

This was not being done for the creek supplying

> the upper parts of the settlement, being largely impregnated with the decomposed carcasses of cats and puppies, and with the sewerage that must drain through the soil - where it is not openly emptied into the creek - mingled with the soapsuds of the upper ten on washing days, that are floated down to form the drink of the lower ten.

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[6] *Thames Star*, 30 January 1897, p. 2.

[7] Te Aroha Correspondent, *Waikato Times*, 8 May 1884, p. 2.

[8] 'Waiorongomai', *Observer*, 20 February 1892, p. 18.

Although it was illegal to use the creek either as a sewer or for washing, residents had to drink 'highly flavoured water, or soap and water sometimes', and illness 'must naturally follow'.[9] Waiorongomai would have a similar problem, a correspondent writing in January 1889 of a great shortage of water, 'not to hint at the quality of it'. It was 'a marvel', considering 'the number of cattle, and pigs especially, wandering about the township, together with fowls, geese and stray dogs', that the water used 'in this tropical weather' had not caused 'a serious outbreak of fever'.[10]

When the first Te Aroha town board was elected in 1887, it asked its engineer to devise a plan for a water supply.[11] Nothing eventuated, despite repeated prompts that one was needed.[12] Private enterprise later took some action: in 1898, when the Hot Springs Hotel was rebuilt after a fire, 'pending the establishment of the borough water supply' a temporary supply was obtained from the nearby creek.[13] Later that year, the borough was formed. James Mills, the first mayor,[14] had made providing a water supply one of his planks, based on his Lancashire experience.[15] Plans were drawn up,[16] and in December a correspondent wrote that 'we had great excitement re water supply, but the day was carried by a majority of four. It will be quite a boon in case of fire, etc'.[17] Judging from earlier concerns about the dangers of fire in a township built of wood and lacking a water supply,[18] many residents were more worried about conflagrations than about clean water. Although Mills forecast that water would be supplied within six months,[19] it was not provided until January 1900, just in time, for tanks and wells had run dry because of dry weather.[20] Apart from the improved quality and quantity of the water, it proved its worth when a store burned down a year later: it 'was fortunate there was a water supply, or it is probably the whole block would have gone. This was the

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[9] Te Aroha Correspondent, *Waikato Times*, 24 May 1881, p. 2.

[10] Waiorongomai Correspondent, *Waikato Times*, 29 January 1889, p. 2.

[11] *Te Aroha News*, 14 May 1887, p. 2.

[12] For example, *Te Aroha News*, 31 August 1889, p. 2.

[13] *Waikato Argus*, 25 October 1898, p. 2.

[14] See paper on his life.

[15] *Te Aroha News*, 5 July 1898, p. 2.

[16] *Thames Star*, 17 February 1898, p. 2.

[17] Te Aroha Correspondent, *Observer*, 17 December 1898, p. 22.

[18] For example, *Auckland Weekly News*, 1 February 1896, p. 15.

[19] *Thames Advertiser*, 9 January 1899, p. 2.

[20] *Te Aroha News*, 9 January 1900, p. 2, 18 January 1900, p. 2.

first fire since the introduction of the water supply, which proved of excellent service. With only one length of hose the brigade was able to confine the fire to the store'.[21]

SANITATION

Sanitation was non-existent when Pakeha settlement commenced. The health needs of Waiorongomai were rarely recorded, although in 1889 Denis Murphy, a miner and farmer,[22] did warn his fellow county councillors about the creek running down the middle of Grey Street, for unless drainpipes were installed, it would spread typhoid.[23] At Te Aroha, some settlers' behaviour was unsanitary, and in its first issue the *Te Aroha News* referred to some 'low-minded individuals, whom we cannot class as members of the community, have been betraying their filthy nature by committing nuisances in the immediate vicinity of the public baths',[24] 'nuisances' being a polite euphemism for urination and defecation. As early as June 1881 a Te Aroha meeting asked the government to provide a 'sum in aid of the public health'.[25] Two years later, the *Te Aroha News* wanted an inspector of nuisances appointed to improve the sanitation.[26] As improvements were not made, in 1885 a resident complained about 'the gutter opposite his door, from which came an unpleasant stench'.[27]

In April 1886, as there was not even 'the most embryonic scheme of sanitation' the county engineer warned of 'the great need for some sanitary measures'.[28] Eight months later, the licensing committee wanted hotels to stop keeping pigs because of the 'nuisance' they created.[29] The following May, the new town board was informed by one of its members that an improvement of the drainage 'at the earliest possible date' was an 'absolute necessity'; he also wanted an inspector of nuisances.[30] In the following month, the board abolished 'sunken closets' and ordered all night soil removed.[31] A complaint made late in the year about the state of the yard and piggery

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[21] *Thames Star*, 21 January 1901, p. 2.

[22] See paper on his life.

[23] *Waikato Times*, 9 July 1889, p. 3.

[24] *Te Aroha News*, 9 June 1883, p. 2.

[25] *Waikato Times*, 23 June 1881, p. 2.

[26] *Te Aroha News*, 1 September 1883, p. 2.

[27] Piako County Council, *Waikato Times*, 14 November 1885, p. 3.

[28] Editorial, *Waikato Times*, 10 April 1886, p. 2; Piako County Council, *Te Aroha News*, 17 April 1886, p. 2.

[29] *Te Aroha News*, 11 December 1886, p. 2.

[30] Town Board, *Te Aroha News*, 7 May 1887, p. 2.

[31] *Te Aroha News*, 2 July 1887, p. 2.

owned by a coaching company prompted the board to authorize its inspector of nuisances to prosecute in such cases.[32] April the following year saw a 'considerable discussion' about 'certain nuisances', the proprietors of the Hot Springs Hotel being told to stop 'offensive drainage flowing from their premises on to Whitaker Street'.[33] Such 'nuisances' continued, as for example in 1895, when several residents protested that pigs at a slaughterhouse adjacent to Te Aroha were polluting a watercourse.[34] The proprietors pleaded guilty to discharging 'blood and refuse'; being their first offence, they were fined the nominal sum of 5s.[35] Pigs continued to be a problem, and later were banned from much of the township.[36] Dead animals were also a health worry: for instance, in 1900 the pound keeper was sent a letter expressing 'strong disapproval' of his failure to bury some of these as instructed.[37]

In 1897, a correspondent wanted the drainage improved because Te Aroha's

> so-called natural drainage is all very well as far as carrying off rain or flood water is concerned, but in a township that is rapidly growing it becomes a delusion and a snare when refuse and slops are indiscriminately thrown out, generally at the back of dwelling houses, there to putrefy by the action of the sun and air combined, until by degrees fever beds are formed.

Only an 'efficient drainage scheme' would prevent typhoid outbreaks.[38] A week later, 'Porcupine' confirmed the need for improvements:

> At present there are six in[ch] pipe drains conveying slops and other offensive matter from other premises abutting on the main street into the water-tables. The latter are flushed by a trickling stream of water conveyed by a small pipe from the creek at the upper end of Kenrick Street. The efficaciousness of the said flushing is counter-balanced by the water-tables becoming silted up in places and forming traps wherein the offensive matter collects. The heat of the sun completes the business by causing decomposition with its attendant unhealthy odours, and when any sickness breaks out, we are inclined to raise our hands and exclaim a well-feigned

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[32] Town Board, *Te Aroha News*, 5 November 1887, p. 2.

[33] Town Board, *Te Aroha News*, 18 April 1888, p. 2.

[34] Piako County Council, *Waikato Times*, 19 October 1895, p. 2.

[35] Magistrate's Court, *Te Aroha News*, 30 October 1895, p. 2.

[36] Te Aroha Borough Council, Minutes of Meeting of 19 February 1902, Minutes of Meetings 1898-1911, p. 130, Matamata-Piako District Council Archives, Te Aroha.

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

[38] Te Aroha Correspondent, *Waikato Argus*, 27 March 1897, p. 4.

> surprise, "Who would have thought it?" The reputation of Te Aroha as a health resort ought to be jealously guarded by its rulers.[39]

Later that year, when three residents complained 'about nuisance caused by sewage from another section flowing over theirs', the board responded that it did not have 'sufficient funds in hand to do the necessary drainage' and instructed the inspector of nuisances 'to see that no filth was allowed to come into the watercourse'.[40] The following March, the local doctor pointed out that the by-law prohibiting 'sink closets' was being ignored, creating the danger of an epidemic. He suggested creating a night soil service, the cost to be shared equally between board and householders. The board agreed that this was necessary, but delayed action until residents decided whether to form a borough.[41] After one was formed, it agreed, in July, to connect the Palace Hotel to a drain to its boundary: 'only liquid sewage to be allowed to go into the drain'.[42] Three months later it agreed to connect the Hot Springs Hotel to the main drain.[43] The owners of the latter were praised because 'every attention has been paid to sanitation, the drainage system - leading straight to the river - being quite equal to that of any town hotel'.[44] (But the untreated sewage did lead 'straight to the river', which nobody seemed to consider to be a problem.)

Finally, in January 1900, sewer pipes were laid in the business section of the township.[45] As these simply transferred the pollution elsewhere, in February a councillor 'drew attention to the filthy state of the lagoon behind the Court house', and the works committee was ordered to investigate.[46] At the subsequent meeting, the same councillor wanted the sewer extended from the Palace Hotel to the river. The 'swamp' was 'used as a dumping ground for decaying vegetable matter of all sorts, also for emptying nightsoil, etc, etc, and it was no use leaving the thing any longer', for if 'a fever' broke out, the council would 'undoubtedly be to blame'. His proposal was defeated by one vote.[47] Councillors then 'decided that owners of certain Sections in

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[39] 'Porcupine', 'Te Aroha Notes', *Waikato Argus*, 3 April 1897, p. 2.

[40] Te Aroha Town Board, *Auckland Weekly News*, 25 September 1897, p. 36.

[41] Town Board, *Te Aroha News*, 19 March 1898, p. 2.

[42] Te Aroha Borough Council, Minutes of Meeting of 16 July 1898, Minutes of Meetings 1898-1911, p. 4, Matamata-Piako District Council Archives, Te Aroha.

[43] Te Aroha Borough Council, Minutes of Meeting of 7 September 1898, Minutes of Meetings 1898-1911, p. 13, Matamata-Piako District Council Archives, Te Aroha.

[44] *Waikato Argus*, 25 October 1898, p. 2.

[45] *Te Aroha News*, 18 January 1900, p. 2.

[46] Borough Council. *Te Aroha News*, 22 February 1900, p. 2.

[47] Borough Council, *Te Aroha News*, 22 March 1900, p. 2.

Bridge & Lipsey Sts be notified that a drainage nuisance must be stopped'.[48] Extending the drainage to the river was supported by the *Te Aroha News*, for the sewer emptied into a quarter-acre swamp which it described as an 'open cesspool' right in the heart of the township. If typhoid occurred, who would come to Te Aroha for their health, as encouraged by the domain board?[49] The subsequent council meeting re-litigated extending the sewer to the river, deciding to extend it in six months' time, funds permitting.[50]

Presumably as a result of these concerns, prompted by a fear of bubonic plague that was causing people in Auckland and elsewhere to kill rats, an unknown person played a practical joke. 'People going to the Te Aroha post office the other day were scared by noticing in the middle of the road a dead mouse, close to the prostrate form of which was fixed a 12 x 8 in[ch] flag bearing the words, "Beware of the Plague" '.[51] That dead rodents sometimes littered the township was indicated by the demand by the local newspaper a few years later that 'the practice of killing rats and leaving them in the streets to rot' must cease because it would drive away tourists. 'The other day three of these rodents in a high state of putrefaction were lying on the roadway opposite the Domain entrance, and the smell arising therefrom was something awful'.[52]

During 1901 plans were made to improve drainage to the lagoon and then on to the river, but in November councillors were informed that 'Health Officers had refused to sanction nightsoil drainage going into the river, as part of any new scheme'.[53] In January 1902, the council sought information from various local bodies about how to deal with nightsoil.[54] Three months later, when the district health officer advised it to apply for a government subsidy to improve drainage and to construct a septic tank, it agreed to apply when it had sufficient funds, in the meantime hoping that its night soil

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[48] Te Aroha Borough Council, Minutes of Meeting of 21 March 1900, Minutes of Meetings 1898-1911, p. 63, Matamata-Piako District Council Archives, Te Aroha.

[49] *Te Aroha News*, 29 March 1900, p. 2.

[50] Te Aroha Borough Council, Minutes of Meeting of 18 April 1900, Minutes of Meetings 1898-1911, p. 65, Matamata-Piako District Council Archives, Te Aroha.

[51] *Observer*, 19 May 1900, p. 15.

[52] *Te Aroha News*, 10 December 1908, p. 2.

[53] Te Aroha Borough Council, Minutes of Meetings of 25 January 1901, 10 November 1901, Minutes of Meetings 1898-1911, pp. 92, 121, Matamata-Piako District Council Archives, Te Aroha.

[54] Te Aroha Borough Council, Minutes of Meeting of 15 January 1902, Minutes of Meetings 1898-1911, p. 128, Matamata-Piako District Council Archives, Te Aroha.

system met 'present requirements'.[55] In mid-year, an Auckland sanitary inspector inspected the sewers emptying into the river with the object of replacing them with septic tanks.[56] After his visit, the district health officer reported on the lack of action:

> This town might be, from its natural advantages, a very perfect little health resort. Beyond a good water supply, however, very little has been done. There is no nightsoil service or refuse removal, and drainage is very incomplete in most places. Two sewers connect the hotels and sanatorium with the river, which is already beginning to show signs of pollution. The offer of a subsidy from the Government for the purpose of erecting a septic tank to remedy this was met with a reply that the Council could not afford it but were "contemplating a nightsoil service." I fear they have become so lost in the contemplation of this hypothetical scheme that they fail to grasp the fact that to be a health resort they must strive to do a little more than a backwoods township as regards sanitary matters.[57]

One correspondent considered these last comments to be unfair, for the borough's revenue was 'very small' and it already had 'a healthy overdraft'. Although data was being sought about a nightsoil service, a decision was delayed largely 'through the neglect of persons and bodies applied to for information to reply with promptitude'.[58] In that month, the council did agree to institute such a service at a cost of 4d per pan per week, and forbad pigs being kept within the area serviced.[59] After a resident was discovered 'burying nightsoil on his section in manner calculated to cause a nuisance', he was warned of prosecution if this continued, and this practice was banned within the sewered area.[60]

As contractors collected night soil only once a fortnight,[61] sanitary problems persisted. In March 1903, the works committee reported a 'nuisance arising from open drains in the locality of Te Aroha Boardinghouse. Drainage from several premises was flowing into these, and a serious nuisance existed'. It was decided to devise a scheme to

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[55] Te Aroha Borough Council, Minutes of Meeting of 22 April 1902, Minutes of Meetings 1898-1911, p. 137, Matamata-Piako District Council Archives, Te Aroha; *Auckland Weekly News*, 1 May 1902, p. 33.

[56] *Auckland Weekly News*, 26 June 1902, p. 28.

[57] *Thames Star*, 18 October 1902, p. 4.

[58] Te Aroha Correspondent, *Auckland Weekly News*, 16 October 1902, p. 33.

[59] Te Aroha Borough Council, Minutes of Meeting of 15 October 1902, Minutes of Meetings 1898-1911, p. 155, Matamata-Piako District Council Archives, Te Aroha; Te Aroha Correspondent, *Auckland Weekly News*, 23 October 1902, p. 32.

[60] Te Aroha Borough Council, Minutes of Meetings of 17 December 1902, 25 February 1903, Minutes of Meetings 1898-1911, pp. 158, 166-167, Matamata-Piako District Council Archives, Te Aroha.

[61] *Te Aroha News*, 25 March 1909, p. 2.

solve this problem.[62] In late 1904, it accepted the recommendations of the Public Works Office that more drainpipes be installed.[63] Problems continued, 'Visitor' writing in 1908 that filthy drains were causing cases of fever and urging that these be cleaned, for tourists came to Te Aroha to escape sickness.[64] A month later, the local newspaper was 'asked to draw the attention of the authorities to the almost unbearable stench at times arising from the open drain running down the upper side of Whitaker-street'.[65] In the following month, it gave further details about the bad drainage.[66]

In future years, not covered in this paper, the disposal of sewage and other pollutants had to be improved further, in the interests not only of health but because dairying required clean water.

One last sanitary problem to mention: in 1902, 'A Lover of Clean Streets' complained about a 'dangerous and filthy abuse. On Saturday last I went out to do some shopping, two shops I wanted to enter, but could not owing to the disgusting state of the pavement. It would have been like walking through a huge spittoon', and he wanted an inspector 'who would fear or favour no one. There is ample work for such a man'.[67]

TYPHOID

Fears of contracting typhoid fever from impure water were realistic, not alarmist. In the South Island goldfields in particular, a lack of clean water caused 'low fever', assumed to be a form of typhoid.[68] On 1 March 1883, after a three-week illness, William King, a miner aged 42, died at Waiorongomai from this disease.[69] Exactly one year later, a farmer, John Quin, died suddenly in a hotel. 'He arrived here a few weeks ago, and went to work in the Colonist mine, but was shortly afterwards taken ill. The cause of his death was fever induced or aggravated by the fumes of dynamite or some other explosive used in mining'.[70] According to his death certificate, the cause of death

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[62] Te Aroha Borough Council, *Auckland Weekly News*, 26 March 1903, p. 33.

[63] Te Aroha Correspondent, *Auckland Weekly News*, 22 September 1904, p. 37.

[64] Letter from 'Visitor', *Te Aroha News*, 5 September 1908, p. 3.

[65] *Te Aroha News*, 29 October 1908, p. 2.

[66] *Te Aroha News*, 24 November 1908, p. 2.

[67] Letter from 'A Lover of Clean Streets', *Te Aroha News*, 13 August 1902, press cutting in Te Aroha Warden's Court, Newspaper Cuttings 1895-1905, BBAV 11532.1a, ANZ-A.

[68] Steven Eldred-Grigg, *Diggers Hatters and Whores: The story of the New Zealand gold rushes* (Auckland, 2008), pp. 302-304.

[69] Death Certificate of William King, 1 March 1883, 1883/1090, BDM.

[70] *Te Aroha News*, 1 March 1884, p. 2.

was typhus, from which he had suffered for 18 days.[71] In 1887, Abraham Mason Wainwright, an early settler in the district,[72] after an illness of only 20 hours died of typhoid.[73] Ten years later, Reha Aperahama, a Ngati Rahiri rangatira,[74] died of typhoid after being ill for eight days.[75]

Because rumours of typhoid were bad for the tourist trade, in 1902 a correspondent rebutted a Hamilton report of a typhoid epidemic. There had been no infectious diseases during the past year apart from two mild cases of scarletina; for 'a health resort' such reports were 'likely to do much harm'.[76] Three years later, when a resident did have typhoid, the local newspaper argued he might have contracted it in Auckland.[77]

SCARLET FEVER

In May 1881 an outbreak of scarlet fever caused residents to be 'much alarmed'. It had 'attacked the child of a storekeeper', and it was feared that other family members would be infected. One father sent his children to Thames to 'be in safety'.[78] There was initial uncertainly about the nature of the disease, one correspondent describing children suffering from 'low fever, which, though hardly perhaps typhoid', was 'of a somewhat similar character'.[79] A doctor was brought from Hamilton, for nearly all the children in several families were feverish, but they recovered quickly and the disease did not spread as feared.[80] After his visit, there still remained 'a good deal of sickness' amongst children, but 'in the absence of a medical man' it was 'difficult to determine its nature'.[81] When the 15-year-old son of a miner died after an illness lasting 14 days, the cause of death was recorded as scarlet fever.[82] One correspondent reported it was

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[71] Death Certificate of John Quin, 29 February 1884, 1884/3866, BDM.

[72] See *Te Aroha News*, 14 July 1883, p. 3, 9 August 1883, p. 3, 11 April 1885, p. 2, 8 January 1887, p. 2.

[73] Death Certificate of Abraham Mason Wainwright, 4 January 1887, 1887/716, BDM.

[74] See paper on his life.

[75] *Ohinemuri Gazette*, 8 May 1897, p. 4; *Thames Advertiser*, 13 May 1897, p. 2.

[76] Te Aroha Correspondent, *Auckland Weekly News*, 2 October 1902, p. 32.

[77] *Te Aroha News*, 16 May 1905, p. 2.

[78] *Thames Advertiser*, 25 May 1881, p. 2.

[79] Te Aroha Correspondent, *Waikato Times*, 14 May 1881, p. 2.

[80] Te Aroha Correspondent, *Waikato Times*, 26 May 1881, p. 2; *Auckland Weekly News*, 28 May 1881, p. 9.

[81] Te Aroha Correspondent, *Waikato Times*, 7 June 1881, p. 2.

[82] Death Certificate of Henry Andrews, 5 June 1881, 1881/248, BDM.

'presumed' that he had scarletina, 'but had apparently got better, and his death may be attributed to the weakness induced by the disease'.[83]

James Beattie, a miner,[84] caused a panic in July 1881. Because of fears that he had scarletina or possibly diphtheria, he was sent to the Thames hospital, which at first refused to admit him because of the risk of infection before discovering that he had quinsy or inflammation of the tonsils.[85] It seems that his poverty helped cause his ill health:

> The man had been ill for some five or six weeks and was living in utter destitution by himself. A storekeeper here had found him the means of living, and a working woman had charitably nursed him. As he got weaker, Dr Harvey was asked to see him, and finding that he was, though still suffering from the after-effects of scarlet fever, in more danger from want of nourishment and nursing than from the illness, he said merely in the spirit of humanity that the best thing to do would be to try and get him to the hospital.[86]

DIET

Susceptibility to disease may have been heightened by poor diet. Prospecting and mining in new or distant fields located throughout the world meant that supplies of fresh food, especially fruit and vegetables, were usually inadequate, creating health problems.[87] In Tasmania, prospectors carried flour and a raising agent to make damper, the other 'essentials' being bacon (because it cooked in its own fat), tea, and sugar.[88] A rifle was carried to shoot game, and fish were caught. Reputedly "Philosopher" Smith, the famous Tasmanian prospector, had 'a portion of biscuit and a pannikin of tea or water' for breakfast and could survive for days on brown sugar and water.[89] Australian miners in the 1850s had a high energy, high protein diet which was rather deficient in fresh vegetables and dairy products. Every meal included plenty of bread, steak or mutton fried in fat, and tea, although some preferred coffee for breakfast. Plum pudding

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[83] Te Aroha Correspondent, *Waikato Times*, 7 June 1881, p. 2.

[84] Te Aroha Warden's Court, Register of Te Aroha Claims 1880-1888, folio 227, BBAV 11567/1a, ANZ-A; *Waikato Times*, 30 April 1881, p. 2.

[85] *Thames Advertiser*, 12 July 1881, p. 3, 13 July 1881, p. 3; George Thomas Wilkinson, diaries, entry for 12 July 1881, University of Waikato Library.

[86] Te Aroha Correspondent, *Waikato Times*, 16 July 1881, p. 2.

[87] See Eldred-Grigg, pp. 304-306, 308, 310.

[88] Nic Haygarth, 'The "Father of Tasmania"?: Measuring the legend of James "Philosopher" Smith' (Ph.D. thesis, University of Tasmania, 2002), p. 154.

[89] Haygarth, p. 155.

was a special Sunday treat. The meat provided the necessary calories for hard labour.[90] In Victoria, one digger described breakfast as being 'eternal chops' cooked on a frying pan and 'placed on a lump of bread', accompanied by 'scalding tea'.[91] 'Dinners' were taken to the claim along with 'the travelling pot of tea', the midday 'hasty meal' requiring both pannikin and pipe.

> After a hard day's work, one is not disposed to be too particular about the evening meal, and the mode in which it is prepared. Something has yet to be done. The morrow has claims. The damper is eaten. Taking a washing tin dish, and clearing off the dirt a little, six or eight pannikins of flour are thrown in; a half tablespoonful of carbonate of soda, and like quantity of tartaric acid, and a spoonful of salt are mixed together in a pannikin, and then well mingled with dry flour. Water is then poured in, the whole thoroughly knuckled, rolled into a good-shaped loaf, and tumbled at once in the warmed camp oven. Fire is applied beneath and above the oven in a way to ensure uniform heat, and a couple of hours or less will turn out a loaf fit to set before the queen. Saturday afternoon and Sunday morning are especially consecrated to cookery. The same camp oven has, perhaps, to turn out two loaves, a baked joint for dinner, and, mystery of mysteries, a boiled plum pudding in the bargain. Add to all this, potatoes, when you can afford to pay for them, not forgetting a few boiled onions, should you chance to boil in your oven a leg of mutton.[92]

Some men did not take the time to make bread, being content with 'dry or flat Johnny cakes, which are simply of flour and water, or with the addition of greasy accumulation of cookery, hastily prepared in the frying pan. Many lose health by inattention to meals'.[93] When walking to Coolgardie, in Western Australia, during the 1893 rush, a young digger carried in his swag 'twenty pounds of provisions – the same old flour, oatmeal, tinned meat, sugar, tea and tobacco'.[94] The flour was used for damper and johnny cakes.[95] The only food some prospectors carried across the desert were flour and 'tinned dog',[96] the colloquialism for tinned bully beef.[97]

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[90] Douglas Fetherling, *The Gold Crusades: A social history of gold rushes, 1849-1929*, rev. ed. (Toronto, 1997), p. 53.

[91] James Bonwick, *Notes of a Gold Digger and Gold Digger's Guide* (first published 1852, reprinted in Melbourne, 1942), p. 20.

[92] Bonwick, p. 21.

[93] Bonwick, p. 22.

[94] Geoffrey Blainey, *The Rush That Never Ended: A history of Australian mining* (Melbourne, 1964), p. 177.

[95] Blainey, pp. 177, 180.

[96] Raymond Radclyffe, *Wealth and Wild Cats: Travels and researches in the gold-fields of Western Australia and New Zealand* (London, 1898), p. 2.

On one New Zealand goldfield a man lived on bread and tea for over a week, and lack of fruit and green vegetables caused scurvy.[98] A Swedish prospector exploring the Grey River valley on the West Coast of the South Island in 1866 and 1867 told his family that 'food was scarce, containing only bad bacon, oatmeal, tea and sugar'.[99] When out in the 'wild forest' where 'meat was not to be had', he 'managed to catch another wild hen or sometimes fished an eel'.[100] An account written by another early West Coast miner noted cases of scurvy caused through 'too much salt provisions, without making use of vegetables of any kind to relieve the system'. Miners returning to the townships commonly suffered from diarrhoea, 'often brought on by a sudden change from [a] coarse, hard diet, to rich and abundant living, together with the use of liquor'.[101]

In 1862, the provisions the Auckland provincial government provided for prospectors consisted of flour, potatoes, salt beef, salt pork, tea, sugar, and tobacco.[102] One year later, Otago prospectors took flour, dark brown sugar, 'side meat', and black tea with them.[103] An American prospector found all foodstuffs to be expensive, and when a butcher

> killed a beef the meat was cut into pieces of five to ten pounds to suit himself. If you wanted a steak he wouldn't sell it to you. You had to either buy one of those "chunks" at 32 cents a pound or go without. A working man without meat will eat 18 pounds of flour a week, and with meat 11 pounds will suffice.[104]

One prospector, Billy Nicholl, who discovered the Martha lode at Waihi in 1880,[105] had a poor diet when working on several goldfields, claiming to have lived 'on damper and black tea for six months' at Coromandel during the early 1870s; any

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[97] Eric Partridge, *A Dictionary of Slang and Unconventional English*, 8 ed., ed. Paul Beale (London, 1984), p. 1237.

[98] Eldred-Grigg, pp. 305-306.

[99] I.F. Billmanson to his brother [name unrecorded], n.d. (January 1867), Billmanson Papers, in private possession.

[100] I.F. Billmanson to his brother, 2 February 1867, Billmanson Papers, in private possession.

[101] Reuben Waite, *A Narrative of the Discovery of the West Coast Gold-Fields* (Nelson, 1869), p. 24.

[102] *Auckland Provincial Government Gazette*, vol. 10 no. 9 (1862), p. 60.

[103] Matthew C. McKeown, *Some Memories of a Miner's Life, or Five Years on the Gold Fields of New Zealand* (Barnesville, Ohio, 1893), p. 38.

[104] McKeown, p. 43.

[105] See paper on Billy Nicholl.

income he earned was spent on 'flour, tea and sugar and tobacco'.[106] 'A good blow-out' for him was a meal of 'bread and cheese and bacon' washed down with tea.[107] When a baker, David Snodgrass,[108] later to acquire an interest in a Waiorongomai claim,[109] became a sleeping partner with a one-tenth interest in a Thames one in 1868, the terms of the agreement required him to supply provisions for the two working miners for two months. Each week, they were to receive one pound of coffee, 14 loaves of bread, four pounds of sugar, seven pounds of meat, and two pounds of butter.[110] When some men prospected in Ohinemuri in the late 1860s, their food consisted of 'tea, flour, sugar, bacon, oatmeal, biscuits, sardines etc'.[111] This was typical: when later working on a farm, one of these men lived mostly on 'tinned meats and damper', along with tea and tobacco, causing his health to suffer.[112]

A Thames miner recorded in November 1867 that one of the 'annoyances' of the new field was 'a deficiency or total absence of all vegetable food'.[113] Some shopkeepers quickly acted to solve this deficiency, for a week later he mentioned a greengrocer.[114] But financial difficulties meant some miners could not avail themselves of a better diet. 'One fine muscular man said, in a melancholy tone … that for the last month he had tasted nothing but dry bread and weak coffee. It was manifestly telling upon his manly frame terribly, yet he went on, hoping that the gold would soon appear and set him right'.[115] Even though better food was available on the Hauraki fields than in others, many could not afford to purchase it, subsisting instead on tea and biscuits.[116]

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106 W.S.C. Nicholl, untitled memoirs, n.d. [1927], p. 8, MS 1714, Alexander Turnbull Library.

107 Nicholl, p. 10.

108 See *Auckland Weekly News*, Ohinemuri Correspondent, 20 March 1875, p. 7, 13 May 1882, p. 17, 27 April 1895, p. 20; *Thames Advertiser*, 10 July 1876, p. 3, 22 August 1876, p. 3, 3 October 1879, p. 3, 31 January 1885 p. 3, 29 September 1885, p. 3, advertisement, 4 May 1886, p. 3, 29 July 1887, p. 2, 25 April 1895, p. 2; *Ohinemuri Gazette*, 5 November 1892, p. 4.

109 Te Aroha Warden's Court, Register of Licensed Holdings 1881-1887, folio 48, BBAV 11500/9a, ANZ-A.

110 Thames Warden's Court, Register of Agreements 1868, folio 137, BACL 14417/2a, ANZ-A.

111 'Charles Abraham's Travels to the Antipodes' (typescript, Taupo, 1991), p. 40 [held in Library of the Auckland Institute and War Memorial Museum].

112 'Charles Abraham's Travels', p. 47.

113 Theophilus Cooper, diary entry for 6 November 1867, printed in Cooper, *A Digger's Diary at the Thames 1867* (Dunedin, 1978), p. 9.

114 Cooper, diary entry for 14 November 1867, printed in Cooper, p. 12.

115 Cooper, diary entry for 23 November 1867, printed in Cooper, p. 15.

116 Eldred-Grigg, pp. 308, 310.

John Walsh, a pioneer of the Te Aroha rush,[117] died from 'serious apoplexy', aged 40, 16 days after leaving that district for the Tiki goldfield.[118] The inquest was told that on the evening before his death his meal had consisted of bread, butter, and coffee.[119] Six years later, at Maratoto, a miner provided a visiting journalist with a substantial breakfast of steak, bacon, eggs, bread, and tea.[120] On this same goldfield in the following year, John Hoey Moore,[121] a mine manager during the Te Aroha rush,[122] provided another journalist with two meals. The evening repast was described as 'a good meal of corned beef and "spuds," and the never-failing "billy" of tea near at hand'. For breakfast he had a 'hearty meal of stewed pigeon'.[123] At Karangahake ten years later, an English visitor chatted with miners 'after a good dinner of tinned mutton and tea'.[124] A miner living near the Waiorongomai mines took a pig to his home in 1889, presumably for butchering.[125]

Possibly some of these meals had included some unmentioned fruit and vegetables, either grown or purchased. Once settlements were established, miners' families planted gardens and fruit trees and kept chickens and cows.[126] When Waihi township was established in 1881, one party of miners had over an acre 'ploughed up and planted with vegetables in order to supply the necessities of the miners'.[127] By then, Chinese market gardeners had been well established at Thames.[128] At Waiorongomai, the only provisions advertised as being packed up-hill to the Quartzville settlement[129] were meat, bread, and groceries, unspecified. In March 1882, 'A Miner' visiting the Army claim was given 'some tea, bread, and beef' for lunch. At the Eureka he had what he described as a 'good supper' and breakfast, and at the Golden Crown (later the

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[117] Te Aroha Warden's Court, Register of Te Aroha Claims 1880-1888, folio 225, BBAV 11567/1a, ANZ-A.

[118] Death Certificate of John Walsh, 1 July 1881, 1881/4424, BDM; *Coromandel Mail*, 9 July 1881, p. 4.

[119] Inquest on John Walsh [recorded as Welsh], Justice Department, J 1 COR, 1881/1393, ANZ-W.

[120] 'Quaintan Queer', 'Trip to Thames', *New Zealand Herald*, 8 November 1887, p. 6.

[121] See paper on Billy Nicholl.

[122] *Auckland Weekly News*, 3 June 1893, p. 10, 8 December 1910, p. 17.

[123] Own Correspondent, *Auckland Weekly News*, 7 April 1888, p. 30.

[124] Radclyffe, pp. 150-151.

[125] *Te Aroha News*, 7 December 1889, p. 2.

[126] See Tony Simpson, *A Distant Feast; The origins of New Zealand's cuisine* (Auckland, 2008), pp. 104-110, 142, 145.

[127] *Thames Advertiser*, 16 July 1881, p. 3.

[128] For example, see *Thames Advertiser*, 19 March 1881, p. 3.

[129] See paper on this settlement.

Premier) had an evening meal of 'good steak and tea'.[130] Vegetables were certainly available: in 1886 and for some years later 'a couple of Chinamen' had a garden on George Lipsey's farm[131] 'in a very high state of cultivation', supplying 'vegetables of every description'.[132] When the Waiorongomai tramway was being constructed, it was suggested it would be made more speedily if the workers were given 'more beef and less cabbage'.[133] Although a 'kitchen garden' was started 'in connection with the hill store' at Quartzville in 1882,[134] the only account of food being eaten in its vicinity did not mention any of its produce. This was in February 1883, when a journalist visiting the New Find at lunchtime was given 'sundry pannikins of tea, some bread, butter, &c'.[135]

In addition to commercially available produce supplied by nearby farms, homes commonly had gardens and small orchards. Produce displayed at the Te Aroha Horticultural Society's first show in 1895 included grapes, apples (12 varieties), peaches, pears, plums, quinces, rhubarb, watermelons, rock melons, pie melons, broad beans, kidney beans, carrots, cucumbers, tomatoes, cabbages, onions, parsnips, pumpkins, marrows, beetroot, potatoes, and squash. Home cooking included jams, bottled fruits, jelly, and tomato sauce. Eggs were classified with milk, butter, cheese as 'dairy', and there was 'a fine sample' of homemade wine.[136] All this produce was judged again in 1900 along with nectarines, apricots, mulberries, strawberries, peas, a 'long red' variety of carrot, turnips, Savoy and red cabbages, lettuces, other varieties of onions and potatoes, shallots, leaks, radishes, parsley, dried apples, peaches, hops, and pickles.[137]

The bread and butter that was the basis of most meals was not only inadequate for a physically demanding occupation such as mining, but also, according to the Rev Vicesimus Lush, of Thames, was inadequate for his more sedentary occupation as well. In 1879, he complained about the food he received when staying with John Phillips,[138] a

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[130] 'A Miner', 'My Visit to Te Aroha', *Auckland Weekly News*, 4 March 1882, p. 11.

[131] See paper on his life.

[132] *Thames Advertiser*, 11 October 1886, p. 2; *Te Aroha News*, 19 June 1886, p. 2, 20 November 1889, p. 2; 'Obadiah', 'Shares and Mining', *Observer*, 2 September 1893, p. 7.

[133] 'Waiorongomai', *Observer*, 9 June 1883, p. 180.

[134] Te Aroha Correspondent, *Observer*, 18 November 1882, p. 153.

[135] Paeroa Correspondent, *Thames Advertiser*, 4 February 1883, p. 3.

[136] *Te Aroha News*, 9 March 1895, p. 2.

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

[138] See *Thames Advertiser*, Ohinemuri Correspondent, 10 July 1876, p. 3, 7 October 1876, p. 3, 23 August 1878, p. 2, 29 August 1878, p. 2, 10 April 1879, p. 3; *Cyclopedia of New Zealand*, vol. 2, p.

Paeroa storekeeper who had recently built a large house, which implied a successful business. Whilst being 'hospitably entertained', Lush lamented that on the first night he was given 'only bread and butter for tea - no meat! And, bread and butter for breakfast and Ditto repeated for tea, and no nice supper to make up for it, was rather hard on me after a toilsome day's work'. Only when departing late the next morning was he given a piece of cold chicken.[139]

Other foods must have been eaten, certainly when miners living on the hillside at Waiorongomai spent part of their weekends in the settlements on the flat. Sometimes food was dangerous, as in 1894, when a Te Aroha settler gave honey from a hive in his garden to his neighbours:

> Only a few hours afterwards nearly all who had partaken of the honey were taken very ill with fits. Mr Hall's children were especially bad, and for some time were scarcely expected to live. A young man named Earl was also very bad. Altogether, about four adults and five children have suffered from the poison. Dr [Charles Alfred] Cooper[140] and Mr [George] Robson,[141] chemist, did their best for the sufferers, and all are now recovered. The honey taken was unsealed, and in that state is said to be poisonous.[142]

The previous year there had been a report from Thames of a miner's family poisoned, once again not fatally, by wild honey.[143]

Restricted diets were not unique to miners. When Herbert Guthrie-Smith first arrived at his Tutira station, near Napier, in 1882, the previous owner prepared an evening meal of bread and salt pork plus the 'luxury' of flapjacks.[144] Guthrie-Smith and his partner lived on 'spartan fare' during the 1880s: 'bread, mutton, potatoes, duff'.[145] 'We cooked for ourselves; we lived on porridge and water, bread baked in camp ovens – there is no better bread in the world', along with the ever-present 'mutton, potatoes, and duff'.[146]

853; *Ohinemuri Gazette*, 29 July 1903, p. 2, 5 August 1903, p. 2, 12 August 1903, p. 3, 15 September 1903, p. 2.

[139] *The Thames Journals of Vicesimus Lush 1868-82*, ed. Alison Drummond (Christchurch, 1975), p. 212.

[140] See below.

[141] See below.

[142] *Thames Star*, 7 March 1894, p. 2.

[143] *Thames Advertiser*, 5 May 1893, p. 1.

[144] Herbert Guthrie-Smith, *Tutira: The story of a New Zealand sheep station*, 4 ed. (Seattle, 1999), p. 152.

[145] Guthrie-Smith, p. 397.

[146] Guthrie-Smith, p. 154.

Such a diet made men in sedentary occupations overweight. For example, when mining agent and sharebroker, Samuel Turtle,[147] who invested in two Waiorongomai claims and two companies,[148] died, the coroner described him as a 'very large man', being 15 stone.[149] When Charles Ahier, an accountant at Te Aroha during the 1880s and 1890s,[150] contemplated 'making an excursion to the summit of Mount Gentle Annie' (otherwise Te Aroha), a gossip writer feared he would 'not reach that far without the aid of a steam winch and a ship's cable'.[151] Patrick Quinlan, a publican at Te Aroha during the 1880s and then in Auckland,[152] by the early twentieth century weighed 17 stone, prompting jocular comments and cartoons about his size.[153] With one exception, no prospectors or miners were overweight: Karaka Kamura, a part owner of claims at Te Aroha before he assisted Hone Werahiko[154] to prospect Waiorongomai,[155] was described as being 'very stout' nine years later, when aged 36.[156]

THE UNHEALTHY LIFE OF MINERS

According to Edward Wakefield in his 1889 book praising all things New Zealand, prospectors were remarkably fine physical specimens who were able to triumph over all adversities:

> An experienced New Zealand digger, in the prime of life, is just about as fine a specimen of humanity as is to be found anywhere. He can walk or ride, or climb, or swim, to almost any distance, carrying a "swag," that is to say, a compact pack, containing all his baggage and utensils, rolled in his

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147 See *Thames Advertiser*, 17 June 1890, p. 2.

148 Te Aroha Warden's Court, Register of Licensed Holdings 1881-1887, folios 13, 25, BBAV 11500/9a, ANZ-A; *New Zealand Gazette*, 24 February 1881, p. 258; *Te Aroha News*, 1 August 1885, p. 7.

149 Inquest into Samuel Turtle, Justice Department, J 46 COR, 1890/357, ANZ-W.

150 See *Te Aroha News*, Domain Board, 12 February 1887, p. 2, editorial, 6 April 1889, p. 2; Te Aroha Correspondent, *Auckland Weekly News*, 11 November 1893, p. 23; *Observer*, 10 January 1895, p. 2.

151 'Thames Tittle Tattle', *Observer*, 8 April 1882, p. 54.

152 See paper on his life.

153 For example, *Observer*, Christmas Annual 1904, pp. 11, 13, 18 March 1905, p. 16, 10 February 1906, p. 7, 29 September 1906, p. 18, 13 July 1907, p. 17, 16 November 1907, p. 23.

154 See paper on his life.

155 Te Aroha Warden's Court, Notices of Marking Out Claims 1880, no. 74, BBAV 11557/1a; Notices of Marking Out Claims 1881, nos. 163, 354, BBAV 11557/1b; Register of Te Aroha Claims 1880-1888, folios 203, 219, 231, 245, BBAV 11567/1a; Karaka Kamura to Warden, 24 October 1881, Te Aroha Warden's Court, Mining Applications 1881, BBAV 11582/1a, ANZ-A.

156 *New Zealand Police Gazette*, 26 March 1890, p. 61.

> blankets or tent, and weighing enough to have crushed a Roman legionary. And neither hunger nor thirst, fatigue nor suffering, solitude nor danger can keep him from the goal that he has before him.[157]

In contrast, eight years previously an Auckland newspaper had quoted statistics proving the average life of a miner was 'ten years shorter than the generality of occupations'.[158] Hone Werahiko and Adam Porter were examples of lives being shortened by hardships they had to endure, the former when prospecting at Waiorongomai and the latter when building a water race on the West Coast.[159] Another example was Thomas Radford, a leading mine manager at Thames,[160] who invested in Waiorongomai mines in 1882,[161] whose careers in both mining and local government were curtailed by illnesses. In June 1890, the *Thames Advertiser* was 'glad' to see him 'able to walk about again after his severe illness', although he was 'still suffering from bronchitis'.[162] Later that month, he resigned as manager of the Alburnia 'owing to indifferent health',[163] and in the following year he had to resign almost immediately after being appointed to manage another mine.[164] The *Observer*, commenting on his forced retirement, wrote that 'a casual observer', looking at his 'colossal form and genial, rotund features, would consider him the last man upon whom Dame Nature would call to relinquish his situation owing to the fickleness of his health'.[165] A year later he became manager of the Alburnia once more and then supervisor of the Orlando, but late in that year another manager had to supervise the former during his 'indisposition'.[166] When obliged by his health to resign from it yet again, one mining reporter anticipating that this would be the last time that he would be a manager.[167] Nevertheless, from 1893 to 1896 he was able to manage five other mines, although

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[157] Edward Wakefield, *New Zealand after Fifty Years* (London, 1889), p. 169.

[158] *New Zealand Herald*, 27 April 1881, p. 5.

[159] See papers on their lives.

[160] See *Cyclopedia of New Zealand*, vol. 2, p. 861.

[161] Te Aroha Warden's Court, Register of Licensed Holdings 1881-1887, folios 2, 47, BBAV 11500/9a, ANZ-A; *New Zealand Gazette*, 10 August 1882, p. 1101.

[162] *Thames Advertiser*, 7 June 1890, p. 2.

[163] *Thames Advertiser*, 25 June 1890, p. 2.

[164] *Thames Advertiser*, 23 February 1891, p. 2, 4 March 1891, p. 2.

[165] *Observer*, 16 October 1891, p. 7.

[166] *Thames Advertiser*, 20 May 1892, p. 2, 13 October 1892, p. 2, 10 November 1892, p. 2, 19 November 1892, p. 2; *Observer*, 4 June 1892, p. 16.

[167] 'Obadiah', 'Shares and Mining', *Observer*, 26 November 1892, p. 14.

obliged because of his health to visit Te Aroha's thermal springs late in 1896.[168] Chairing a public meeting in mid-1896 that discussed how to find work for unemployed miners, he referred to himself as 'a miner, of fifty-two years standing, and an unemployed one too (Laughter)'.[169] From 1900 onwards, he resigned from all his public offices because of being seriously ill.[170] He died, aged 74, in 1907, after suffering for three years from 'cardiac degeneration'.[171]

Working in wet mines often made miners susceptible to rheumatism. Writing about the Hauraki goldfields in 1896, one observer noted that as 'miners, and others employed in mining' were 'often martyrs to rheumatism', they patronized the Te Aroha hot springs.[172] Daniel Ennis O'Sullivan, a 40-year-old miner soon to try his luck at Waiorongomai,[173] was admitted to the Auckland hospital on 30 September 1879 suffering so badly from rheumatism that he was not discharged for one and a half months.[174] This did not prevent him from managing several important mines in Hauraki, but this mining would kill him: he died in 1902, aged only 57, from miner's complaint.[175] Peter Martin, another miner who participated in the Te Aroha rush,[176] had earlier participated in the Thames rush,[177] and in 1875 had a claim at Waitekauri.[178] In the latter year was unable to work for four months through being bent nearly double by rheumatism. The Waiwera hot springs cured him within 14 days.[179] As this cure was

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[168] *Thames Advertiser*, 27 April 1893, p. 3, 20 February 1894, p. 2, 28 July 1894, p. 2, 2 April 1895, p. 2, 16 December 1895, p. 3, 6 July 1896, p. 3, 27 October 1896, p. 2.

[169] *Thames Advertiser*, 14 June 1898, p. 3.

[170] *Thames Star*, 24 April 1900, p. 2, 8 May 1900, p. 4, 14 April 1905, p. 1, 15 August 1907, p. 2; *Te Aroha News*, 17 August 1907, p. 2.

[171] Death Certificate of Thomas Radford, 15 August 1907, 1907/9800, BDM.

[172] George Edwin Alderton, *Auckland Goldfields Maps and Investors Guide* (Auckland, 1896?), p. 8.

[173] Te Aroha Warden's Court, Register of Te Aroha Claims 1880-1888, folios 31, 274, BBAV 11567/1a, ANZ-A; *Freeman's Journal*, 28 March 1884, p. 13.

[174] Auckland Hospital, Register of Admissions 1870-1885, no. 513 of 1879, ZAAP 15287/2a, ANZ-A.

[175] Death Certificate of Daniel Ennis O'Sullivan, 1902/1292, BDM; *Thames Star*, 24 March 1902, p. 2.

[176] Te Aroha Warden's Court, Miner's Right no. 986, issued 25 November 1880, Miners' Rights Butt Book 1880, BBAV 11533/1b; Register of Te Aroha Claims 1880-1888, folio 157, BBAV 11567/1a, ANZ-A; *Thames Advertiser*, 3 December 1880, p. 3, 14 April 1881, p. 3.

[177] For example, Thames Warden's Court, Miners' Rights Register 1867-1868, no. 2193, BACL 14358/1a; Claims Register 1868, folio 247, BACL 14397/1a; Claims Register 1867-1868, no. 596, BACL 14397/2a; Register of Agreements and Licenses 1868-1870, folios 37, 209-210, BACL 14417/1a, ANZ-A.

[178] *Thames Advertiser*, 22 May 1875, p. 3.

[179] *Thames Advertiser*, 17 December 1875, p. 3.

only temporary, in 1881 illness forced him to cease managing a Te Aroha mine.[180] An invalid by the following year, with eight children to support, he became a draper in 1883, but being without capital was forced into bankruptcy two years later because of 'bad trade'.[181] By 1894 he was paralyzed and seeking charitable aid.[182] When he died in 1902, his death certificate recorded that he had suffered from 'paralysis of brain' for 11 years, the immediate cause of death being apoplexy,[183] indicating that his later paralysis had been caused by a stroke. His death notice stated that he had died 'after a long and painful illness'.[184] Another sufferer, Martin Catran, a pioneer of the Tui portion of the Te Aroha goldfield,[185] in 1887 spent 120 days in the Thames hospital because of chronic rheumatism.[186] He was to die, aged 53, from rheumatism, according to a newspaper report;[187] his death certificate recorded his decease as being caused by 'morbus cordis', or heart disease, but this could have been a consequence of a bad attack of rheumatic fever.[188]

It was noted in 1895 that companies were 'required to provide houses where miners can change and dry their wet clothes', but these were not provided at Waiorongomai, even though 'during a great part of the year the men are bound, even if not working in wet ground, to get drenched on their way up the hill' to the mines.[189] Just over a month later, it was noted that, in the Loyalty,[190] 'the water which soaks through the reef in places has been a source of annoyance to the men, but at present they are not troubled on that account owing to the reef being more compact'.[191] In the Premier, in February 1896, there was 'a large flow of water from the face of the drive'

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[180] *Thames Advertiser*, 14 April 1881, p. 3.

[181] *Thames Advertiser*, 4 November 1885, p. 2, District Court, 17 February 1886, p. 2.

[182] Auckland Hospital and Charitable Aid Board, Applications for Relief 1888-1894, folio 1018, YCAB 15245/1a, ANZ-A.

[183] Death Certificate of Peter Martin, 26 November 1902, 1902/8232, BDM.

[184] *New Zealand Herald*, 28 November 1902, p. 1.

[185] Te Aroha Warden's Court, Register of Te Aroha Claims 1880-1888, folios 177, 189, 201, BBAV 11568/1a, ANZ-A.

[186] Thames Hospital Board, Register of Patients 1884-1902, folio 18, entry for 5 July 1887, YCAH 14075/1a, ANZ-A.

[187] *Thames Advertiser*, 30 August 1893, p. 2.

[188] Death Certificate of Martin Catran, 29 August 1893, 1893/3450, BDM; *Black's Medical Dictionary*, ed. C.W.H. Havard, 36 ed. (London, 1990), pp. 579-580.

[189] 'Iypax', 'Thistledown', *Te Aroha News*. 27 April 1895, p. 2.

[190] See paper on Thomas Gavin.

[191] *Te Aroha News*, 6 July 1895, p. 2.

in the lower level.[192] On the northern drive on the reef in the low level of the Cadman, driven in the late nineteenth century,[193] miners tried to cope with a water problem by erecting a corrugated iron roof over the face of the drive.[194]

Mining was the sole cause of some physical and medical problems. James Williams, who won second prize in an essay competition held by the Mines Department in 1906, included information about the 'general health' of the goldminer:

> Quartz-miners appear to tire easily, both mentally and physically. Public movements in mining districts flourish a little while and then die out. The practical miners attending the schools of mines are the least assiduous at their studies. Miners, as a rule, are not inclined to athletic exercises. On returning home from their work, they are generally less ready for domestic chores than other members of the working-class. Unless called out by business or social engagements, they usually sit about till bedtime in their digging-clothes. They often complain of headache and palpitation. Generally, they are pale and move slowly; but a week's holiday improves them marvellously. They soon revert, however, to their former condition.[195]

GAS AND FUMES

Although James Williams believed miners' paleness might result from working underground, he considered their headaches and fatigue to be the product of 'gaseous poisoning' caused by carbon monoxide produced by nitroglycerine explosions. Should the ground be wet, or detonation imperfect, the amount of gas produced could be 'considerable'.[196] Thames mines were notable for the amount of gas produced: one visitor to the Moanataiari mine in June 1880 noticed 'large quantities' of gas, which 'frequently put out my candle' when he lowered it to his knees. As the mines were 'well supplied by top air', the heavy gases flowed out 'like water'.[197] One man who mined, occasionally, at Thames, recalled that 'working in the shafts was most arduous, as you were often up to your knees in water…. The air in the shafts was also generally pretty

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[192] Waiorongomai Correspondent, *Auckland Weekly News*, 29 February 1896, p. 28.

[193] See paper on the Waitoki, Waitoki Extended, Werahiko, Success, Silver King, Cadman, and Bendigo mines at Waiorongomai.

[194] Personal inspection of this level, 29 October 2008.

[195] James Williams, essay in *Three Prize Essays on the Present Condition and Future Prospects of the Mineral Resources of New Zealand, and the Best Means of Fostering their Development* (Wellington, 1907), p. 197.

[196] Williams, p. 198.

[197] *Diary of E.R. Chudleigh 1862-1921: Chatham Islands*, ed. E.C. Richards (Christchurch, 1950), p. 288.

bad, and I felt sometimes as if I could float to the top, through being so filled up with gas'.[198] At Te Aroha gas was a problem only in the Tui and district and was only mentioned when Norpac mined there in the late twentieth century.[199]

A visitor to Waiorongomai in 1884 noted that the 'hard and wet ground' required the use of dynamite when driving, 'the deleterious fumes of which' were 'slow death to some men'.[200] Bert McAra, mine manager at Tui in 1949 and later a mining inspector, in his account of mining at Waihi noted that before the introduction of gelignite in the 1890s the usual explosive was dynamite. 'It had the serious disadvantages of being extremely sensitive when frozen, and of producing strongly irritant fumes'.[201] He also noted that nitrous fumes given off by nitroglycerine explosives caused 'headaches and sickness after more than a few minutes' exposure. The condition known as "gelly head" (severe prolonged headache) was caused by absorption of nitroglycerine through the skin'.[202]

As the effects of bad air were well known at Waiorongomai, some efforts were made to deal with them. In November 1883, the manager of the Canadian planned

> to make a fanner at the mouth of the drive to carry air into the face to drive out the dynamite fumes, which are very injurious to the working men, and under existing circumstances are the cause of a great loss of time, the men having to wait for a quarter of an hour for the smoke to clear out of the drive.[203]

It was not reported whether this was in fact done. In the New Find, in 1885, a contractor complained that wages men using dynamite 'caused the air to become so foul that they could not oftentimes work above half time at their contract'. The manager responded to this complaint by stating that the air was better after his men worked nearby 'owing to an additional steady supply being provided by means of a water blast specially erected in addition to fan'.[204] In 1896, the Premier installed 'a furnace draught, with pipes carried into the main drive and crosscut', which kept the workings

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198 T.E. Crowhurst, *Life and Adventures in New Zealand* (Auckland, c. 1920), p. 23.

199 See paper on Norpac and pollution.

200 Michael Landers, 'A Trip to Te Aroha and Ohinemuri Districts', *Freeman's Journal*, 28 March 1884, p. 13.

201 James Bert McAra, *Gold Mining at Waihi, 1878-1952* (Waihi, 1978), p. 250.

202 McAra, p. 328.

203 *New Zealand Herald*, 22 November 1883, p. 6.

204 Warden's Court, *Te Aroha News*, 8 August 1885, p. 7.

'fairly clear'.[205] Compressed air was primarily used to drive rock drills, rarely used at Waiorongomai.[206]

Fumes were also a problem when treating the ore. In 1888, for instance, when changes were made to the tailings plant, the sand, after leaving the roaster, was 'spread on the concrete floor' and 'allowed to cool naturally, thus getting rid of sulphur and other noxious gases' that were 'considered so deleterious' in saving gold;[207] the emphasis was on successfully treating the ore, any benefits to the battery hands' health being incidental. Using mercury and cyanide in batteries also endangered health.[208]

Charles Manuel's life[209] illustrated the consequences of being gassed. According to his own account, he had been involved in mining since the age of nine,[210] first being associated with Waiorongomai in 1909.[211] His health was then still seriously affected by having been gassed in the Caledonian in Thames in April 1886. Then a shift boss, with other volunteers he had attempted to rescue two miners overcome by carbonic acid gas and then brought their bodies out.[212] For this act he received a medal from the Royal Humane Society,[213] but for the next two years his health was critical. Doctors expected him to die, but when informed of this his 'courage and spirit asserted itself, and he resolved to leave the hospital and return to his home'.[214] This was in 1887, when he spent 42 days in hospital after coughing up blood, being finally discharged 'relieved' but not cured.[215] He would die, suddenly, aged 62, in 1914, when a cough broke a blood vessel in a lung.[216]

WOUNDS

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[205] Waiorongomai Correspondent, *Auckland Weekly News*, 29 February 1896, p. 28.

[206] For using compressed air for ventilation at the face of the Aroha Company's low-level drive as well as for rock drills, see George Wilson to Minister of Mines, 12 May 1898, *AJHR*, 1898, C-3, pp. 73-74.

[207] *Waikato Times*, 7 June 1888, p. 2.

[208] Eldred-Grigg, pp. 314-315.

[209] See paper on his life.

[210] *Te Aroha News*, 31 August 1911, p. 3.

[211] Te Aroha Warden's Court, Mining Applications 1909, 111/1909, BBAV 11289/20a, ANZ-A; *Te Aroha News*, Warden's Court, 29 July 1909, p. 2, 31 August 1911, p. 3.

[212] *Thames Advertiser*, 29 April 1886, p. 2, 30 April 1886, p. 2; *Morrinsville Star*, 17 March 1914, p. 2.

[213] *Thames Advertiser*, 6 August 1887, p. 2.

[214] *Te Aroha News*, 16 March 1914, p. 3.

[215] Thames Hospital Board, Admissions Register 1884-1902, folio 20, no. 114, YCAH 14075/1a, ANZ-A; see *Black's Medical Dictionary*, p. 318.

[216] Death Certificate of Charles Manuel, 14 March 1914, 1914/773, BDM; *Observer*, 28 March 1914, p. 4; *Te Aroha News*, 16 March 1914, p. 3.

McAra noted that septic wounds caused ‘many disabilities and much lost time. Injuries to hands and even loss of fingers were a high risk in work with sharp quartz boulders. The underground conditions of warmth and humidity practically ensured that any such wound would be infected’, requiring weeks in hospital.[217] As an example of this injury, when one miner, James Gordon,[218] injured his finger in the Talisman in 1913 he had to take 48 days off work.[219]

The battery was also a dangerous place, although not many accidents were recorded.[220] In 1894, a man working in the Waiorongomai battery was rushed to the Hamilton hospital after ‘his trousers were caught in the cogwheel of the amalgamator, and his leg was drawn in and severely crushed and lacerated, though fortunately no bone was broken’.[221]

MINER’S COMPLAINT

The greatest health hazard was miner’s complaint, otherwise referred to as miner’s phthisis, silicosis, or pneumoconiosis, the latter sometimes recorded as pneumonoconioisis or pneumoconiosis. The variety of names used on death certificates for this chronic lung disease makes accurate statistics difficult: it was ‘known variously as mining disease, miner’s consumption, miner’s phthisis or, quaintly, the disease of worn-out miners’.[222] Whereas mining disasters attracted public attention because men died quickly, this disease ‘passed unnoticed’ despite killing ‘many more workers slowly’.[223]

Miner’s phthisis ‘is a general term for silicosis, tuberculosis or a combination of both’, and pneumoconiosis is ‘the term which covers all lung disease caused by dust or fibres, including silicosis’,[224] the latter being caused by inhaling sharp particles of silica

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[217] McAra, p. 250.

[218] See paper on his life.

[219] Goldminers’ Relief Fund, Register of Applications, Public Trust, PT 1/193, ANZ-W.

[220] See paper on the Firth and Clark Battery at Waiorongomai.

[221] Hamilton Correspondent, *New Zealand Herald*, 24 August 1894, p. 6.

[222] Yolande Collins and Sandra Kippen, ‘ ”A Social Disease with Medical Aspects:” Miner’s Phthisis and the Politics of Occupational Health in Bendigo, 1880s-1910’, *Journal of Australasian Mining History*, vol. 6 (September 2008), pp. 73.

[223] Sandra Kippen and Yolande Collins, ‘Radical Reforms: The Role of Medical Men in Improving Working Conditions in the Bendigo Goldmines, 1890-1910’, *Journal of Australasian Mining History*, vol. 2 (September 2004), p. 77.

[224] Collins and Kippen, p. 71.

dust. Although ‘not usually in itself a life-threatening disease … its presence predisposes miners to other lung diseases, particularly tuberculosis’.[225] Geoffrey Blainey described its effects:

> In quartz mines the fine particles of silica slowly damaged men’s lungs and bronchial tubes. Such men continued to work vigorously for years, then got a recurring cough and mild bronchitis. They had to spit, a complaint popularly called the black spit. In time they were short of breath and tight in the chest and reluctantly retired from the only living they knew…. Their weak lungs were now vulnerable to tuberculosis. The tubercle germ spread rapidly in the quartz mines, for many men in the first stages of the miner’s disease passed on the germs by spitting or by shouting close to their mate’s face in order to be heard above the roar of the rock drill.[226]

McAra described its symptoms as generally taking

> the form of increasing shortness of breath, as the effective area of the lungs was reduced through destruction of the tissue and blockage of the minute air sacs, reducing the quantity of oxygen which could be absorbed into the bloodstream. Distress increased in severity through the poisonous chemical effect of the fine silica on the tissues, as well as the strain caused through loss of lung capacity, until eventually severe and fatal haemorrhaging occurred.[227]

For long, this disease was held to be an inevitable consequence of mining.[228] Quartz mining and milling released clouds of silica dust,[229] which miners could not avoid inhaling. Until the 1890s, its nature was poorly understood, although there was some recognition that it was exacerbated by dust, especially from pneumatic drills. Some believed that ‘the strong smell of explosive fumes was responsible’.[230] Diagnosis was handicapped because ‘systematic symptoms of the disease often did not make an appearance for some years after the miner’s exposure to dust’.[231]

James Williams wrote that ‘no observant man’ could ‘fail to have noticed the comparative youth of the superannuated quartz-miner. Fifteen years would seem to be about the average length of an underground career - twenty years would be exceptional’. He was referring to miners continuously working underground, not those

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[225] Kippen and Collins, pp. 75-76.

[226] Blainey, p. 301.

[227] McAra, p. 253.

[228] Kippen and Collins, p. 76.

[229] Collins and Kippen, p. 71.

[230] Kippen and Collins, p. 77.

[231] Kippen and Collins, p. 81.

with part-time occupations. ‘Five years’ constant employment on machine drills’ was ‘more than most men could stand’:

> This is not intended to convey that the miner necessarily dies at the end of this time, or even that he is permanently confined to his bed. But neither must it be taken that although unfitted for mining he is still able to do a day’s work “on top,” for, on the contrary, a climb up a fairly steep flight of stairs is beyond him; any continuous work, of course, also; nay, even a hearty laugh will turn to a body-racking fit of coughing. In his own parlance, he is “cooked.” Every man of forty or so that one sees in a mining district halting and fighting for breath on a gentle rise or staggering under a burden of which a strong fourteen-year-old boy would make light, is an indictment against the quartz-mining industry as at present conducted.[232]

A miner ceased to work underground when he felt he had miner’s complaint. ‘By dint of help from his relatives and friends, and with a little work from public bodies’ he managed ‘somehow to “rub along” ’. He was not normally ‘confined to his bed till the last bout’, which might last for two years, but his sufferings were ‘usually considerable’. He often contacted ‘some other pulmonary complaint’, which would be registered as the cause of death.[233]

Blainey explained why mechanical rock drills ‘intensified the fine dust in the mines. Its drilling speed created far more dust than the old hand drills that were hammered into the rock with the slow blows of a miner’s hammer’, and one drill was named ‘the widow maker’.[234] It was more difficult to ventilate deep mines (which did not exist at Waiorongomai), ‘and often no current of air blew away the dust from dead ends where men worked’. When three eight-hour shifts were used, this ‘gave the dust only Sunday in which to rest and settle’.[235]

A doctor told a hearing of the conciliation court in 1901 that ‘once the disease was contracted there was no hope of a recovery’, the affected man living for about another five or six years.[236] Examining cases of miner’s complaint at Waihi, McAra considered that, ‘while numbers of these men had sufficient lung damage to render them unfit for work, their lives were not greatly shortened’. As the disease was aggravated by tuberculosis, he judged that it was

> difficult to assess the part it played in many of the deaths. However, the effect of quartz-dust on the lungs - whether through its sharp nature, its

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[232] Williams, pp. 174-175.

[233] Williams, p. 196.

[234] Blainey, pp. 300-301.

[235] Blainey, p. 301.

[236] *Thames Star*, 11 May 1901, p. 3.

> extreme fineness, or its chemical reaction with the tissue - was many times worse than that of ordinary rock dust and phthisis was undoubtedly responsible for substantially shortening the lives of several hundred men at Waihi and Waikino.[237]

Battery hands were as susceptible as miners. According to the *Observer*, whilst a miner's life was 'not an enviable one', working in a big battery was even 'less pleasant'. In the Waihi battery in that year, 1896, the 'fatal particles' known as 'Waihi dust' had 'carried off more than one fine, strong young fellow to an untimely grave'.[238] Dry crushing, according to Percy Morgan,director of the Waihi School of Mines, writing in 1904, meant a dust-laden atmosphere 'not only at the stamps, but also at the rock-breakers, in the kiln drives, and in the treatment plant. In order to prevent the dust from injuring the battery employees, numerous expedients were tried, but none were altogether successful'. For several years dust prevention 'was taken up somewhat half-heartedly' by most managers, 'probably from a failure to realize the serious nature of the case'. Only after parliament required 'adequate dust-prevention appliances' did 'a marked improvement' occur.[239]

In 1895, a correspondent noted that dry crushing, then universal in Ohinemuri, was 'injurious to the health of the men in the battery. The Waihi Company made the use of respirators imperative', but it was said 'that the men did not take kindly to them'.[240] Prompted by the death of a 'strong, able-bodied young man' who had worked in the battery for six years before dying from the dust, a Waihi battery hand asked whether men could not be compelled to wear respirators:

> They would have a chance to live a year or two longer. The men in the tank shed, where he worked, are almost invisible for fine dust. We know that men are careless of themselves. Then "the powers that be" should step in and frame rules to minimize the risk as far as possible. It is a species of suicide, takes a little longer than putting a charge of dynamite in your mouth and firing it off, but is just as certain.[241]

This reluctance of miners and battery hands to adopt safety measures recurred at Waihi, although sometimes the company was blamed. The *Observer* in 1896 claimed it was a 'scandal' that 'nothing' was done in the battery to prevent 'men dying from the

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[237] McAra, pp. 251-252.

[238] *Observer*, 29 August 1896, p. 3.

[239] Percy G. Morgan, 'The Rise and Fall of Dry Crushing on the Hauraki Goldfield', *New Zealand Mines Record*, 16 March 1904, p. 331.

[240] Special Reporter, 'The Thames District', *New Zealand Herald*, 1 November 1895, p. 23.

[241] Letter from 'Pro Bono Publico', *Thames Star*, 3 July 1895, p. 3.

effects of inhaling Waihi dust'.[242] Ten months later, when recording the death of the eighth known victim, it wrote that fans were 'abating the dust evil'.[243] These fans, the first attempt to remove the dust from a Waihi battery, were invented by Henry Hopper Adams[244] and had been installed in April of that year. This invention, 'the first step of its kind taken in connection with dry crushing plants', was 'highly commended'.[245] The following year, 1897, Aroha Gold Mines[246] experimented with wet and dry crushing at Waiorongomai; as it was found more ore could be treated using the wet process 'and the health of the men preserved, the exhaustive trials made have resulted in favour of the wet crushing'.[247] When, based on the technique perfected in South Africa in the early twentieth century, a water spray was added to rock drills, many miners failed to use it, and were fined by the mining inspector, who was determined to enforce this preventative method.[248] Doctors who wanted better ventilation along with water sprays supported his stance.[249]

The 1911 Royal Commission on the Mining Industry, whilst agreeing on the deadly nature of the disease, considered it had 'not assumed serious proportions, as in Transvaal, Cornwall, or Bendigo', and could be 'much reduced, if not entirely eradicated', by suitable measures.[250] Medical examinations of all miners were required from January 1909, when a section of the Workers' Compensation Act was put into effect, causing mining to be 'somewhat disorganized' at Waiorongomai,[251] as elsewhere. Employers wanted to dismiss men with the disease, prompting miners at Waihi and Reefton to refuse to be examined; the Waihi union threatened to strike if any man lost his job for refusing the medical check. Under pressure from the New Zealand Federation of Miners, the government agreed to amend the legislation.[252] At Waiorongomai, miners working in the Premier[253] were 'examined and returned to work

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[242] *Observer*, 18 January 1896, p. 10.

[243] *Observer*, 31 October 1896, p. 3.

[244] See paper on his life.

[245] *Observer*, 11 April 1896, p. 9; *Auckland Weekly News*, 11 April 1896, p. 20.

[246] See paper on the New Zealand Exploration Company and Aroha Gold Mines Ltd.

[247] *Auckland Weekly News*, 7 August 1897, p. 13.

[248] *Auckland Weekly News*, 14 January 1909, p. 20, 21 August 1913, p. 23.

[249] Kippen and Collins, p. 82.

[250] Report of the Royal Commission of Mines, 16 December 1911, *AJHR*, 1912, Session 1, C-4, p. 29; for its recommendations, see p. 32.

[251] *Te Aroha News*, 7 January 1909, p. 2.

[252] Jeremy Mouat, 'The Ultimate Crisis of the Waihi Gold Mining Company', *New Zealand Journal of History*, vol. 26 no. 2 (October 1992), p. 194.

[253] See Te Aroha Warden's Court, Mining Applications 1909, 114/1909, BBAV 11289/20a, ANZ-A.

as usual', whereas those working for Waiorongomai Mines Ltd,[254] 'being Union Men', were 'awaiting instructions from the Union before acting'. Despite the *Te Aroha News*' anticipation of 'interesting developments',[255] the union did not instruct its members to refuse to be examined.

Reminiscing in 1985, McAra explained why battery owners persisted with dry crushing despite the health risk:

> Initially they used dry-crushing in order to get fine crushing - they thought if they kept it dry and so it more or less flowed, it didn't cake together then, they could get finer grinding and get the fine gold out of it. They had to have extremely fine ... grinding to get the fine gold out. If you had fragments too big, well it meant that ... the solutions couldn't get at the contained gold to dissolve it. So the idea was to crush it, and so in order to facilitate that they would heat the ore up - they'd put it in these kilns and put a layer of wood and a layer of ore and a layer of wood right through for about thirty feet up and set fire to it, and that would dry it out thoroughly and then that would be put into the crushers and crushed and, oh, the dust must have been terrible - the coarse dust - they didn't recognise at that time how injurious silica was, and of course it was pure silica.... The reason for the dry crushing, and drying the ore and so on, was mainly to get a better recovery, and ... instead of getting 35%, they got 65% as soon as they started that. And then the cyanide process came in in 1894, and that meant that they were dissolving the gold in cyanide solution, so they didn't need to worry about getting water in it, so they started wet crushing fairly soon after that and it was in operation at Waikino anyhow in 1901.[256]

McAra also recalled that, when he was supervising mining at Tui in the mid-twentieth century, as miners did not always hose down the face after a firing 'some of them got a bit of dust that way I suppose', although the amount would have been minimal.[257] This failure to adopt safe mining techniques was not simply a matter of laziness. At Waiuta, on the West Coast, contractors were reluctant to use water sprays because these slowed the work, thereby lowering their income.[258] Eric Coppard, when mining at Tui in the 1960s and 1970s, noticed

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[254] See 'Waiorongomai Notes', *Te Aroha News*, 22 December 1908, p. 2: *Observer*, 7 May 1910, p. 20.

[255] *Te Aroha News*, 7 January 1909, p. 2.

[256] Interview with J.B. McAra, Waihi, 4 August 1985, pp. 31-32 of transcript, Te Aroha Gold Mining Archive, University of Waikato Library.

[257] Interview with J.B. McAra, p. 33 of transcript, Te Aroha Gold Mining Archive, University of Waikato Library.

[258] Anthony G. Nightingale, 'Waiuta: A History of a Quartz Goldmining Community on the West Coast', (MA thesis, University of Canterbury, 1985), p. 64.

> one particular man, an Australian miner, was using the dry dust as a means of compensation. He was eligible for compensation under the Act because of the dusted lungs but he knew that if he could get just a little bit more ,he would get a better compensation and he was deliberately trying to make his lungs worse, which you wonder at - the mentality of people, but circumstances, I guess, dictated that sort of drastic action.[259]

The 1911 Royal Commission recommended measures to prevent dust and gases being inhaled.[260] It also recommended providing free medical advice for diseased miners as well as 'adequate relief' from the Gold-miners' Relief Fund.[261] The terms under which this relief was granted were not generous. In 1914, regulations permitted relief funds to be allocated to a miner or battery hand whose medical certificate proved he was incapacitated at the rate of 2s 1d per working day, the total sum not to exceed £50. This amount could be given in a lump sum if the Public Trustee was satisfied his incapacity was likely to be permanent and that he intended 'to invest the amount in a business to enable him or his family to earn a living'. Up to £50 could be paid 'for the relief of the family' of those who died from the disease, with up to £20 available for funeral expenses.[262] Because the legislation gave assistance only to 'moral' and 'sober' men, an *Observer* editorial on the Miner's Phthisis Act of 1915 was headed 'Let 'Em Rot! Phthisis, Miners, and Morals'.[263] This Act established a pension of £1 per week, with 12s 6d a week for widows, plus £20 for funeral expenses, at a time when the average weekly wage was approximately £2 10s. McAra noted that 'between 1915 and 1939, when miners' and miners' widows' pensions were transferred to the Social Security Act, over £1,000,000 was paid out'.[264]

The number of those who died of miner's complaint is not known, partly because it was not always recorded on death certificates even if it was the long-term cause of death. Various respiratory problems resulted from miner's phthisis: bronchitis, for instance, was often caused by it.[265] The Registrar General of Births Deaths and Marriages, requested in 1909 to report on the number of deaths, could not do so because of inadequate information, the type of mining often being unrecorded. He reported that

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[259] Interview with Eric Coppard, Waihi, 8 December 1985, p. 52 of transcript, Te Aroha Gold Mining Archive, University of Waikato Library.

[260] *AJHR*, 1912, Session 1, C-4, pp. 31-32.

[261] *AJHR*, 1912, Session 1, C-4, p. 32.

[262] *Auckland Weekly News*, 2 April 1914, p. 20.

[263] Editorial, *Observer*, 9 October 1915, p. 2.

[264] McAra, p. 251.

[265] Andrew G. Veale, 'Death in New Zealand', *New Zealand Genealogist*, vol. 20 no. 192 (March 1989), p. 628.

deaths from phthisis totaled 26 miners and three gold miners in 1899, 23 miners in 1900, 19 miners and two gold miners in 1901, 24 miners and one goldminer in 1902, 18 miners in 1903, 15 in 1904, 17 in 1905, 25 in 1906, 23 in 1907, and 14 miners and one goldminer in 1908, out of an average of 4.350 quartz miners in the latter year.[266] Some of those designated as 'miner' were coal miners, another cause of confusion in attempting to assess the impact on quartz miners.

The number of professional miners who participated in the Te Aroha rush and became part owners of claims was 137, and a further 15 who joined in the rush to Waiorongomai likewise became claimholders.[267] Many more full-time miners participated in these rushes and later worked at Waiorongomai and Tui, but as they did not acquire interests their names often are unknown and their careers have not been traced. These professional miners were distinct from those who tried their hand at mining for the first (and, almost invariably, last) time. There were also a considerable number who, despite sometimes describing themselves in official records as miners, were in fact speculators or storekeepers or other 'camp followers'. Only those who were full-time miners have been included in the total of those who died from miner's complaint. It should be noted that an accurate total is impossible, in part because not every miner's death certificate has been traced and in part because, especially before the disease was commonly recognized, often it was not recorded as the cause of death. In some cases, certificates recorded deaths as being caused by heart failure or stroke, and only by checking newspaper obituaries or earlier reports can the fact that they had had this disease be discovered. The figures given below are, therefore, under-estimations.

Of those miners who participated in the Te Aroha rush, 14 died of miner's complaint.[268] Of those who mined at Waiorongomai in the 1880s, 23 died of the same disease,[269] as did two who mined at Tui during the same decade,[270] three who mined

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266 'Miners' Phthisis: Report of Registrar General', 17 November 1909, Legislative Department, LE 1, 1909/188, ANZ-W.

267 A footnote documenting these figures would be long beyond belief.

268 Stephen Catran, Thomas Dunn, Thomas Gavin, John Bennetts Hicks, Thomas McDonough, William McPeake, William Francis MacWilliams, John O'Shea, Pierce Lynch, Edward Quinn, John Ryan, James Blake Slevin, Thomas Williams, John Woods.

269 Thomas Casey, James Courtney, Hugh Cowan, Charles Gemming, Henry Goldsworthy, Christopher Guy, Robert Guy, Henry Hughes, Samuel Meagher Hutchinson, Henry John Hyde, William George Sheriff Jeffrey, Thomas Kirker, Alexander Mackay, George Milnes, Patrick Moriarty, Matthew Quinton, Daniel Redwood, Joseph Roberts, William Frederick Roycroft, Robert Stackpole, Arthur William Taylor, George Edward Thom, James Richard Shaw Wilson.

270 John Allan Dobson, Alfred Newdick.

there or at Waiorongomai in the 1890s,[271] and two amalgamators who worked in the Waiorongomai battery in the late nineteenth century.[272] Men who mined at Tui, Te Aroha, or Waiorongomai in the twentieth century were still susceptible to the disease. Of those who mined in the first decade of that century, six died from this cause,[273] as did two who mined in the 1920s,[274] and four who prospected during the early 1930s.[275] These totals do not include miners who had become investors. For instance, Henry Brownlee acquired claims at Tui in 1909, but, although a certified mine manager, did not work on them personally, having become a publican in Thames in 1905.[276] Possibly he took up that less strenuous occupation because of his health, for he was granted a mine manager's certificate only seven years before he abandoned mining.[277] According to his 1901 evidence about mining on the Thames field, he had to 'beat out the gas with sacks, and in doing this they of course inhaled a portion of the gas. He had been in places where even a candle would go out'. He also 'had experience with rock-drills'.[278] When he died in 1931, aged 65, his occupation was recorded as 'miner', although he had not mined for 30 years; his death certificate recorded his having suffered from pneumoconiosis for six years, although his death was caused by heart failure.[279] 'A patient sufferer at rest', his death notice stated.[280]

As McAra noted, 'it usually took many years for the disease to manifest itself and a further lengthy period for it to cause incapacitation, sometimes more than twenty years'.[281] Because rock drills were used, briefly, in only a couple of Waiorongomai mines,[282] and the battery worked, intermittently, for only a few years, those working on this field did not die as quickly or at such a young age as some men at Waihi. For

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[271] Richard Dovell, Charles Henry Lawn, Francis Trainer.

[272] William Samson, De Courcy James Young.

[273] Walter Greening, James Sprague Jobe, William John McCormick, William Thompson McGregor, Denis Murphy, John Tallentire.

[274] Thomas Gillan, George Tilsley.

[275] Francis Vardon Hennah, Thomas Harold Roland Jones, Thomas Stewart, Charles Thomas Young.

[276] Te Aroha Warden's Court, Mining Applications 1909-1910, 129/1909, 10/1910, BBAV 11289/20a; Mining Applications 1913, 1/1913, BBAV 11289/22a, ANZ-A; *Thames Star*, 3 May 1905, p. 2.

[277] Mines Department, MD 1, 98/1805, ANZ-W.

[278] *Thames Star*, 13 September 1901, p. 2.

[279] Death Certificate of Henry Brownlee, 2 January 1931, 1931/13184, BDM.

[280] *New Zealand Herald*, 3 January 1931, p. 1.

[281] McAra, p. 252.

[282] See paper on New Find mine.

instance, John O'Shea, who participated in the Te Aroha and Waiorongomai rushes,[283] did not die until 1942, when aged 77. His occupation was recorded as 'goldminer', and the cause of death a stroke,[284] but by 1937 he was receiving a pension for having miner's phthisis.[285] In several cases, the length of time men suffered from the disease was unstated. Of this sample, the man who died in the shortest time was Thomas Casey, who mined at Waiorongomai in the 1880s, and then went on to mine elsewhere, particularly at Kuaotunu;[286] when he died in 1914 at the age of 54, the duration of his last illness was recorded as being 'over' six months.[287] He spent nearly three weeks in hospital before his death.[288]

Others had the disease for a very much longer, although often unspecified, period. For instance, John Allan Dobson, a mine manager at Tui in the 1880s and 1890s,[289] died in 1905 aged 71 of tubercular phthisis that had been 'chronic: gradual failure'.[290] Thomas Gavin,[291] who mined at Waiorongomai for over 30 years, died in 1913 after having been 'laid up for some time past, being a victim of the dread miner's complaint'.[292] He had suffered from this, along with asthma, for 20 years before dying at the age of 63.[293] Denis Murphy, who participated in the Te Aroha rush but whose main involvement in mining there was his Murphy's Find claim of 1908-1911,[294] died in 1918 aged 77 of 'chronic fibroid phthisis – miner's phthisis - chronic emphysema',

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[283] Te Aroha Warden's Court, Register of Te Aroha Claims 1880-1888, folios 164, 288, 289, BBAV 11568/1a; Register of Licensed Holdings 1881-1887, folios 6, 8, 28, 65, 121, 150, BBAV 11500/9a, ANZ-A; recollections of John O'Shea, *Te Aroha News*, 28 November 1940, p. 5.

[284] Death Certificate of John O'Shea, 17 May 1942, 1942/19789, BDM.

[285] Miners' Phthisis Pensions: List of all Pensioners, 22 December 1937, Department of Social Security, SS, W 1844, box 8, M 40, No. 3, ANZ-W.

[286] For example, Te Aroha Warden's Court, Register of Licensed Holdings 1881-1887, folios 28, 132, BBAV 11500/9a, ANZ-A; *Te Aroha News*, 4 December 1888, p. 2; *Thames Advertiser*, 19 July 1895, p. 2; Coromandel Warden's Court, Register of Special Claims 1896, folio 293, ZAAN 14044/5a; Register of Applications for Special Quartz Claims 1887-1911, folio 45: nos. 10, 12, ZAAN 1162/1a, ANZ-A.

[287] Death Certificate of Thomas Casey, 20 November 1914, 1914/94, BDM.

[288] Auckland Hospital, Register of Deaths 1905-1947, p. 71, ZAAP 15289/1a, ANZ-A.

[289] *AJHR*, 1889, C-2, p. 102; *New Zealand Mining Standard*, 24 April 1897, p. 3.

[290] Death Certificate of John Allan Dobson, 9 February 1905, 1905/728, BDM.

[291] See paper on his life.

[292] *Ohinemuri Gazette*, 10 December 1913, p. 2.

[293] Death Certificate of Thomas Gavin, 9 December 1913, 1913/8314, BDM.

[294] See paper on his life.

which he had endured for 25 years before his heart failed.[295] Pierce Lynch, who was briefly involved in the Te Aroha rush before mining at Coromandel,[296] died in 1930 aged 74 after suffering from pneumoconiosis for 30 years and chronic bronchitis and bronchiectasis for ten.[297] Another illness lasting at least this long was that of Thomas Gillan, who prospected and mined at Waiorongomai for over a year at the start of the 1930s.[298] When he died, in 1955, aged 81, the death certificate recorded 'Miner's phthisis at least 30 years', which finally resulted in a six-week attack of pneumonia 'sapping his vitality and leading to heart failure and death'.[299]

Clearly having miner's complaint did not mean an early death. The medical officer in charge of the Thames hospital for four-and-a-half years before 1911 stated that 'chronic lung-disease' was 'very prevalent' there. Those with this condition 'were old miners, who had lived at Thames for many years'.[300] Apart from those noted above, one Te Aroha miner, De Courcy James Young, died in his thirties, five in their forties,[301] six in their fifties,[302] thirteen in their sixties,[303] twelve in their seventies,[304]

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[295] Death Certificate of Denis Murphy, 8 September 1918, 1918/33932, BDM.

[296] Te Aroha Warden's Court, Miner's Right no. 647, issued 3 December 1880, Miners' Rights Butt Book 1880, BBAV 11533/1e; Register of Te Aroha Claims 1880-1888, folio 176, BBAV 11567/1a; Auckland Supreme Court, Bankruptcy Files, 93/17, BBAE 5628/5, ANZ-A.

[297] Death Certificate of Pierce Lynch, 2 September 1930, Deaths, 1930/4796, BDM.

[298] Thomas Gillan, Statement of Wages Paid from 24 September 1929 to 2 October 1930, Mines Department, MD 1, 10/7/23, ANZ-W.

[299] Death Certificate of Thomas Gillan, 18 October 1955, 1955/26878, BDM.

[300] Dr Denis Walshe, quoted in 'Report of the Royal Commission of Mines', *AJHR*, 1912, Session 1, C-4, p. 30.

[301] Robert Guy, 1 October 1894, aged 41: Deaths, 1894/697, BDM; Hugh Cowan, 10 July 1903, aged 45: Deaths, 1903/4858, BDM; Samuel Meagher Hutchinson, 2 December 1889, aged 47: Deaths, 1889/4330, BDM; Christopher Guy, 28 June 1900, aged 47: Deaths, 1900/4051, BDM; William George Sheriff Jeffrey, 3 May 1903, aged 49: Deaths, 1903/2672, BDM. [Note that on some of these death certificates and in some below, the cause of death did not always indicate miners' complaint: the fact that they suffered from this was obtained from other sources, in particular the lists of those receiving pensions because of it.]

[302] Robert Stackpole, 18 January 1911, aged 50: Deaths, 1911/371, BDM; Patrick Moriarty, 12 September 1914, aged 54: Deaths, 1914/9498, BDM; Francis Trainer, 5 October 1921, aged 55: Deaths, 1921/6453, BDM; John Tallentire, 17 April 1923, aged 56: Deaths, 1923/3984, BDM; James Richard Shaw Wilson, 18 December 1901, aged 56: Deaths, 1902/116, BDM; Henry Hughes, 14 May 1915, aged 56: Deaths, 1915/3060, BDM; Charles Henry Lawn, 17 November 1927, aged 58: Deaths, 1927/9742, BDM.

ten in their eighties,[305] and two in their nineties.[306] The youngest (Young) was 36 when he died at the Cambridge Sanatorium after fighting the disease for two years.[307] Young had worked in the Waiorongomai battery continuously from 1884 to 1889 and then for 'short periods of broken Time', and subsequently at batteries at Waihi, Waitekauri, Karangahake, and Komata Reefs. In 1899 he was again at Waiorongomai as the battery superintendent.[308] William Samson, an amalgamator at the battery in the 1880s,[309]

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[303] William John McCormick, 20 November 1928, aged 60: Deaths, 1928/7371, BDM; George Edward Thom [recorded as George Tom], 14 February 1896, aged 61: Deaths, 1896/2708, BDM; William McPeake, 13 September 1897, aged 61: Deaths, 1897/4033, BDM; Alexander McGruer, a August 1935, aged 62: Deaths, 1935/18310, BDM; Walter Greening, 22 December 1932, aged 63: Deaths, 1932/11453, BDM; Charles Thomas Young, 3 September 1938, aged 64: Deaths, 1938/22309, BDM; Thomas Kirker, 25 June 1912, aged 65: Deaths, 1912/4345, BDM; Matthew Quinton, 26 December 1903, aged 66: Deaths, 1903/7029, BDM; Henry John Hyde, 24 October 1926, aged 66: Deaths, 1926/10332, BDM; Henry Goldsworthy, 14 August 1918, aged 67: Deaths, 1918/5273, BDM; John Ryan, 20 January 1929, aged 67: Deaths, 1929/841, BDM; William Francis MacWilliams, 18 January 1931, aged 68: Deaths, 1931/736, BDM; George Tilsley, 8 November 1930, aged 69: Deaths, 1930/6155, BDM.

[304] Daniel Redwood, 13 October 1918, aged 70: Deaths, 1918/9694, BDM; Thomas McDonough, 30 April 1922, aged 70: Deaths, 1922/9732, BDM; Stephen Catran, 5 July 1922, aged 74: Deaths, 1922/5772, BDM; James Courtney, 25 November 1936, aged 74: Deaths, 1936/23085, BDM; James Blake Slevin, 19 May 1907, aged 75: Deaths, 1907/3133, BDM; Edward Quinn, 25 December 1924, aged 75: Deaths, 1924/8845, BDM; Arthur William Taylor, 18 November 1932, aged 75: Deaths, 1932/8687, BDM; Charles Gemming, 3 May 1932, aged 76: Deaths, 1932/4848, BDM; John Joseph Woods, 13 January 1929, aged 77: Deaths, 1929/9171, BDM; Thomas Williams, 4 April 1930, aged 77: Deaths, 1930/2998, BDM; William Thompson McGregor, 16 October 1951, aged 79: Deaths, 1951/29838, BDM.

[305] John Bennetts Hicks, 22 August 1931, aged 80: Deaths, 1931/7522, BDM; Richard Dovell, 6 September 1952, aged 80: Deaths, 1952/24358, BDM; George Milnes, 16 May 1939, aged 81: Deaths, 1939/27960, BDM; James Sprague Jobe, 22 August 1935, aged 82: Deaths, 1935/19079, BDM; Thomas Harold [Roland] Jones, 21 May 1971, aged 82: Deaths, 1971/33890, BDM; Alexander Mackay, 1 October 1918, aged 83: Deaths, 1918/7006, BDM; Alfred Newdick, 4 May 1930, aged 84: Deaths, 1930/11864, BDM; Francis Vardon Hennah, 12 October 1948, aged 84: Deaths, 1948/23217, BDM; William Frederick Roycroft, 12 October 1934, aged 86: Deaths, 1934/17428, BDM; William Samson, 21 September 1950, aged 87: Deaths, 1950/23791, BDM.

[306] Joseph Roberts and Thomas Dunn: see below.

[307] Death Certificate of De Courcy James Young, 29 October 1908, 1908/6896, BDM.

[308] See testimonials in Mines Department, MD 1, 99/2019, ANZ-W; see also Waiorongomai Correspondent, *Te Aroha News*, 3 November 1908, p. 2.

although receiving a miner's phthisis pension in the 1930s,[310] did not die until 1950, aged 87.[311] Also dying in that year was the second-oldest miner, Joseph Roberts, aged 93, who had suffered from pulmonary fibrosis for an unspecified number of years.[312] Roberts had received a miner's phthisis pension from at least 1932.[313] The sufferer who lasted the longest was Thomas Dunn, who had participated in the Te Aroha rush.[314] When he died in Thames Hospital after an unknown number of years fighting the disease, he was 99 years old.[315]

Mining in the Te Aroha district may have played only a small or even negligible part in causing these lung troubles, for all these men mined in other districts as well. William McPeake, for instance, participated in the Thames rush of 1867 and mined there for some years.[316] He joined the Ohinemuri rush of 1875,[317] and attended the opening day of the Te Aroha field, but held an interest in only one claim.[318] Returning to Thames, he mined there throughout the following decade, becoming a mine manager at Te Mata in 1889.[319] He may have given up mining because, in 1892, when 'taking

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309 See Marriage Certificate of William Samson, 21 September 1885, 1885/2089, BDM; *Tauranga Electoral Roll*, *1887*, p. 22.

310 Miner's Phthisis Pensions, List of all Pensioners, 22 December 1937, Social Security, SS, W 1884, box 8, M 40, no. 3, ANZ-W.

311 Death Certificate of William Samson, 21 September 1950, 1950/23791, BDM.

312 Death Certificate of Joseph Roberts, 10 April 1950, 1950/20589, BDM.

313 Miner's Phthisis Pensions, Lists of Pensioners, 1932, 22 December 1937, Social Security, SS, W 1844, box 8, M 40, no. 2, ANZ-W.

314 Te Aroha Warden's Court, Miner's Right no. 460, issued 25 November 1880, Miners' Rights Butt Book 1880, BBAV 11533/1c; Register of Te Aroha Claims 1880-1888, folio 152, BBAV 11567/1a, ANZ-A.

315 Death Certificate of Thomas Dunn, 8 June 1929, 1929/2863, BDM.

316 For example, Thames Warden's Court, Register of Miners' Rights 1867-1868, no. 1182, issued 16 October 1867, BACL 14358/1a; Claims Register 1868, folio 95, BACL 14397/1a; Claims Register 1869-1869, no. 609, BACL 14397/2a; Shortland Claims Register 1871-1872, no. 2572, BACL 14397/6a, ANZ-A; *Auckland Weekly News*, 7 June 1873, p. 15; *Thames Advertiser*, 9 March 1874, p. 2.

317 Thames Warden's Court, Miners' Rights Butt Book for District of Ohinemuri 1875, no. 231, issued 3 March 1875, BACL 14043/7h, ANZ-A.

318 Te Aroha Warden's Court, Miner's Right no. 461, issued 25 November 1880, Miners' Rights Butt Book 1880, BBAV 11533/1c; Register of Te Aroha Claims 1880-1888, folio 152, BBAV 11567/1a, ANZ-A.

319 Thames Warden's Court, Claims Register 1886-1888, nos. 1450, 1508, BACL 14397/17a, ANZ-A; *Thames Advertiser*, 21 January 1889, p. 2, 19 November 1892, p. 2.

down some loose rock which had previously been shattered by a blast', he received a 'severe gash in the fleshy part of his left leg just below the knee' from a falling piece of stone, and was hospitalized.[320] Alternatively, miner's complaint may have weakened his stamina. Whatever the reason, he became a grocer in Thames before dying five years later of phthisis pulmonalis, aged 61.[321]

In some cases, mining for coal or base metals may have contributed to, or even caused, the disease. Patrick Moriarty, for instance, died at the age of 54, of pulmonary tuberculosis and exhaustion, when farming at Waihou.[322] According to an obituary, he had 'been seriously ill for many months, suffering from the deadly "miner's complaint," but he was conscious till the last and had a peaceful ending'. After having mined at Waiorongomai during the 1880s, in the 1890s along with several other local miners he went to work at Broken Hill, but 'only remained there about six months, many of the band getting "leaded." It is thought that it was at Broken Hill where the deadly complaint which caused his death was contracted'.[323] The death certificate recorded that he had suffered from miner's complaint for 33 years, meaning his lungs had first been damaged in 1881.[324]

Thomas Mangan, who was not included in the earlier list of Waiorongomai because his involvement was as an investor,[325] was a successful tributer at Thames from 1879 to 1881.[326] First appointed as a mine manager in 1890, he gained his mine manager's certificate in the following year.[327] Shortly afterwards, he accepted an offer to manage Ralph Bros' coal mine at Huntly, but within four months he had become an amalgamator at the Waihi Company's plant.[328] This appointment was also brief, and he mined at Thames from 1892 to 1894.[329] After going to the new goldfield at Coolgardie,

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[320] *Thames Advertiser*, 19 November 1892, p. 2; *Auckland Weekly News*, 26 November 1892, p. 30.

[321] *Thames Advertiser*, 18 February 1897, p. 2; Death Certificate of William McPeake, 13 September 1897, 1897/4033, BDM; Probates, BBAE 1569/2713, ANZ-A.

[322] Death Certificate of Patrick Moriarty, 12 September 1914, 1914/9498, BDM.

[323] *Te Aroha News*, 14 September 1914, p. 2.

[324] Death Certificate of Patrick Moriarty, 12 September 1914, 1914/9498, BDM.

[325] Te Aroha Warden's Court, Register of Licensed Holdings 1881-1887, folio 133, BBAV 11500/9a; Certified Instruments 1883, no. 382, BBAV 11581/4a, ANZ-A.

[326] *Thames Advertiser*, 29 April 1879, p. 3, 15 November 1879, p. 3, 9 August 1880, p. 3; 'Thames Tittle Tattle', *Observer*, 17 September 1881, p. 6.

[327] *Thames Advertiser*, 15 April 1890, p. 2, 27 March 1891, p. 2; *New Zealand Gazette*, 11 February 1891, p. 299.

[328] *Thames Star*, 1 April 1891, p. 2; *Thames Advertiser*, 1 August 1891, p. 2.

[329] *Thames Advertiser*, 2 December 1892, p. 3, 7 February 1893, p. 2, 17 July 1893, p. 3, 25 October 1894, p. 3.

Western Australia, he returned after only ten months to become manager of another Thames mine.[330] Mangan was still mining at Thames in 1915,[331] dying three years later aged 60 of pneumoconiosis, which had seriously affected him for the previous three years.[332] It was likely that a combination of Huntly coal dust and dust from several gold mines had 'dusted' his lungs.

If only slightly affected by the disease, some miners kept working and were not entitled to a pension. In 1927, a doctor told Thomas Stewart, who had prospected and mined for many years at Te Aroha and elsewhere,[333] that he was not 'bad enough' to get one.[334] He continued to prospect at Waiorongomai during the 1930s, dying in 1944 aged 76 after 20 years of gradual physical decline.[335]

MEDICAL SERVICES

Because of illnesses created by mining, accidents in general, periodic epidemics threatening the lives of children, and the perils of childbearing, quite apart from more common ailments, provision of medical services was a priority in the Te Aroha district, but until the twentieth century it was inadequate. An outbreak of scarletina in 1881 meant residents were obliged to seek medical assistance from Hamilton, and a local correspondent suggested that the county council should arrange for periodic visits by a doctor.[336] This suggestion was ignored because an Auckland doctor, William Harvey,[337] moved there in June that year for a short period.[338] Harvey had, briefly, been

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330 Thames Correspondent, *Auckland Weekly News*, 3 November 1894, p. 18; *Thames Advertiser*, 23 December 1895, p. 2, 30 June 1897, p. 3.

331 Bank of New Zealand, Thames Branch, Gold Dealer's Book for 1913 and later years, entries [no pagination] for his working in Halcyon Special Quartz Claim and a Prospecting License in 1913 and in the Kuranui Tribute in 1915, Bank of New Zealand Archives, Wellington.

332 Death Certificate of Thomas Mangan, 10 October 1918, 1918/7865, BDM.

333 See paper on prospectors and investors in the Te Aroha Mining District in the 1930s.

334 Thomas Stewart to Inspector of Mines, n.d. [received 18 November 1927], Inspector of Mines, BBDO 10046, A902, S147, ANZ-A.

335 Death Certificate of Thomas Stewart, 1 June 1944, 1944/20491, BDM; note Thomas Stewart to Matthew Paul, n.d. [received 18 November 1927], Inspector of Mines, BBDO 10046, A902, S147, ANZ-A.

336 Te Aroha Correspondent, *Waikato Times*, 26 May 1881, p. 2, 11 June 1881, p. 2:.

337 *New Zealand Gazette*, 27 January 1881, p. 127.

338 *Waikato Times*, 18 June 1881, p. 2.

in charge of the Auckland Industrial School,[339] with his wife as its matron.[340] After his departure, there was no local doctor until February 1883, when John Bond, 'late surgeon to the passenger ship Hurunui', settled om Te Aroha. Being 'young, active, and a good horseman' and therefore available 'at all times and seasons',[341] his arrival was greeted with relief, for he would 'supply a want which has been very much felt in this neighbourhood lately, as in case of sickness we were hitherto obliged to send 40 miles for a doctor'.[342] Bond did not stay for long, being fondly farewelled in September with hopes for 'every success in his new charge' at Auckland Hospital. He had 'won the admiration of everybody by his cordial good humour and gentlemanly ways'.[343] In October, two more doctors announced that they would settle in Te Aroha, one of them, named Buckley (who was not listed in the medical practitioners' register in the *New Zealand Gazette*), replacing Bond.[344] The other was Arthur Richardson, formerly of Auckland.[345] Both would be needed, the *Te Aroha News* considered, because of the growing population.[346] Three months later, it reported that they were struggling to make a living: 'one medico has had five cases in three months'.[347]

In August 1884, Buckley left Te Aroha. As Richardson had left at an earlier but unstated date, Charles Alfred Cooper (whose work is described in detail later) was the only resident claiming medical knowledge; a correspondent wrote that 'in the interests of the inhabitants it is to be hoped that the demand for his services will not exceed his powers to perform'.[348] In late 1886, a petition asked the Minister of Lands for a doctor, the petitioners pledging to provide a subsidy of £150.[349] When the under-secretary

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339 *New Zealand Herald*, 'Toby Twinkle', 'Snap Shots', 11 December 1880, p. 3, editorial, 18 December 1880, p. 4, 3 January 1881, p. 4, 8 March 1881, p. 4, 11 March 1881, p. 4, editorial, 17 March 1881, p. 4, letter from 'A Visitor', 1 April 1881, p. 6, Police Court, 13 April 1881, p. 6, 14 April 1881, p. 4, editorial, 14 April 1881, p. 4, letter from J. Wright, 17 May 1881, p. 3; *Observer*, 28 May 1881, p. 398.

340 *Observer*, 19 February 1881, p. 228, 26 March 1881, p. 288, 9 April 1881, p. 315, 28 May 1881, pp. 397, 398.

341 Te Aroha Correspondent, *Waikato Times*, 20 February 1883, p. 2.

342 Te Aroha Correspondent, *Waikato Times*, 27 February 1883, p. 2.

343 *Thames Star*, 22 September 1883, p. 2; 'Te Aroha', *Observer*, 29 September 1883, p. 3.

344 *Te Aroha News*, 27 October 1883, p. 2; *Waikato Times*, 2 August 1884, p. 2.

345 *New Zealand Gazette*, 17 January 1884, p. 93.

346 *Te Aroha News*, 27 October 1883, p. 2.

347 *Te Aroha News*, 12 January 1884, p. 2.

348 Te Aroha Correspondent, *Waikato Times*, 2 August 1884, p. 2; *Te Aroha News*, 9 August 1884, p. 2.

349 George Wilson to Under-Secretary, Lands and Survey Department, 6 October 1886, Tourist Department, TO 1 1891/198, ANZ-W.

visited Te Aroha in the following month he was asked to provide a doctor in connection with the baths because the nearest doctors were at Thames and Hamilton; he advised his minister that if residents provided £100 a year for two years, he supported providing one.[350] Nothing eventuated, and Cooper had no competition until May 1887, when Alfred Wright settled, his consulting rooms being at George Robson's pharmacy. Wright had 'high qualifications and great experience' and intended to stay permanently 'should sufficient inducement offer'. Hoping that Te Aroha would become a sanatorium,[351] in July he decided to settle. The *Te Aroha News* was pleased, for 'the absence of a duly qualified doctor has been long felt, especially by many invalids sojourning at Te Aroha to avail of the thermal springs'.[352] Appointed physician to the domain board later that year, the board published his pamphlet extolling the curative qualities of the hot springs.[353] By the following year, Wright had moved his consulting room to the Hot Springs Hotel.[354] In February, in response to complaints that his fees were too high, he declared he never charged more than the minimum rates fixed by the New Zealand Medical Association, and, 'in consideration of the badness of the times', often charged much less. Fees for residents were 7s 6d for an ordinary visit if within a mile of his office and 5s per mile if living further away. Advice at his home cost 5s and night visits were double the normal rate. Visitors were charged from 7s 6d to 10s 6d, depending on the time involved. 'To poor persons, and those sent by Charitable Aid, or from Auckland, Thames, and other hospitals, to obtain the benefits of the mineral water', he provided 'advice and any medical attendance' required free of charge.[355]

Six months later, when Wright was appointed as surgeon at Westport hospital, the *Te Aroha News* lamented the town's 'great loss', noting that Wright had obtained a more lucrative post than Te Aroha could offer.[356] After his departure Robson, the chemist, acted as a doctor in the case of a burn victim, and a doctor was brought from Thames to treat two patients.[357] Not till July 1889 did another doctor, Edward Waddington, announce that he would settle. He came with commendations from the *Waikato Times* that he was very experienced and had 'the kindest and most sympathetic

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[350] Press cutting from *Te Aroha News*, 27 November 1886; Under-Secretary, Lands and Survey Department, to Minister of Lands, 8 December 1886, Tourist Department, TO 1 1891/198, ANZ-W.

[351] *Te Aroha News*, 7 May 1887, p. 2.

[352] *Te Aroha News*, 9 July 1887, p. 2, 16 July 1887, p. 3.

[353] Alfred Wright, *Te Aroha, New Zealand: A guide for invalids and visitors to the thermal springs and baths* (Te Aroha, 1887).

[354] *Te Aroha News*, 21 January 1888, p. 2.

[355] *Te Aroha News*, 11 February 1888, p. 2.

[356] *Te Aroha News*, 1 August 1888, p. 2.

[357] *Te Aroha News*, 22 August 1888, p. 2.

of dispositions'.[358] Waddington did not settle at that time, although he did visit for three days in November, when he was consulted by 'quite a number of patients'.[359] When he did settle, a year later,[360] the same newspaper forecasted that he was 'sure to become as popular' in Te Aroha as he had been in Waikato, where he still enjoyed 'the confidence of a very large number of friends'. He intended to turn Waverley House, a large boardinghouse, into 'a well-appointed hospital, on a small scale'. The newspaper repeated how fortunate residents were 'in having so skillful and popular a man':

> Already we have heard of some important cures having been effected by him in very trying and obstinate cases. The curative properties of the different waters, used under the direction of a physician, and in conjunction with other means, must under such circumstances produce results that could not be looked for under the ordinary haphazard use of the baths.[361]

Waddington denied that he would provide a hospital, for he was only planning to set aside rooms for 'massage, electro-therapeutics, and hydro-therapeutics'.[362] As copies of the local newspaper do not exist between mid-1890 and 1895, it is not known when he departed, but it was before the latter year.

Other doctors visited, most of them not staying. Frederick Samuel Daldy, of Auckland,[363] announced in August 1889 that he was available for consultation at the Palace Hotel.[364] In October 1895, Frederick Wright Simpson arrived from Auckland;[365] a correspondent considered there was 'undoubtedly an opening here for a doctor', and hoped he would 'be encouraged to stay'.[366] Another correspondent agreed that the want of a doctor had been 'a great drawback for years past'.[367] As Simpson was unsuccessful in asking the town board for a guarantee of his income, he left within weeks, not having received 'sufficient encouragement to establish a permanent practice'.[368] In the following month, a doctor had to be brought in from outside to treat one patient.[369] As

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[358] *Te Aroha News*, 3 July 1889, p. 2, 6 July 1889, p. 2.

[359] *Te Aroha News*, 13 November 1889, p. 2.

[360] *Waikato Times*, 8 November 1890, p. 4.

[361] *Waikato Times*, 13 January 1891, p. 2.

[362] *Waikato Times*, 22 January 1891, p. 2.

[363] *New Zealand Gazette*, 30 January 1890, p. 130.

[364] *Te Aroha News*, 18 August 1889, p. 2.

[365] *New Zealand Gazette*, 16 January 1896, p. 80.

[366] Te Aroha Correspondent, *Auckland Weekly News*, 26 October 1895, p. 23.

[367] Te Aroha Correspondent, *Observer*, 26 October 1895, p. 21.

[368] *Te Aroha News*, 16 October 1895, p. 2, 19 October 1895, p. 2, 13 November 1895, p. 2.

[369] *Te Aroha News*, 16 November 1895, p. 2.

an illustration of the problems created by the lack of professional care, the following experience was published:

> A settler at Shaftesbury [upstream from Waiorongomai], whose wife is lying in a dangerous condition, sadly in need of the best medical attendance, on Monday drove hurriedly into Te Aroha and though the local medico [Charles Cooper?] was not to be found, there was comfort in the fact that a visiting doctor from the Waikato was already on his way by train to Te Aroha, and accordingly down to the station the trap was driven, that no time might be lost in trans-shipping the doctor and hiring him out. But the doctor, hearing that the house was six or seven miles off, found that he would be unable to spare the time taken in going so far from most of his patients so the visit to the railway station was in vain. With the telegraph office about to close, an urgent wire was then sent to Dr Forbes, of Paeroa, but the wire did not reach him soon enough to permit of his catching the evening train. The distressed husband could but ride home, to return again next morning to meet the early train, by which Dr Forbes had hurried up and the Shaftesbury man had at last the satisfaction of having secured a doctor, although only after so much previous delay and vexation. It is apparent that no time should be lost in securing a resident doctor for Te Aroha.[370]

To obtain a 'duly qualified medical man' for the district, a meeting held in May 1897 established a medical association. A committee of 23 with power to add to their number was formed to draw up rules and ascertain which doctors might apply for the position. Subscriptions were set at 30s a year for heads of families, 10s for single people, and a fee of 1s 6d per visit levied to cover the cost of medicine. Circulars invited residents to join, and there was 'some talk' of starting a branch of the Oddfellows' Friendly Society, which 'would strengthen the hands' of the association.[371] The society's secretary attended a meeting of the town board to seek its 'aid and sympathy'. One board member, Thomas Gavin, said that he knew of 'many invalids' who would have stayed longer 'had there been a doctor available for consultation', and the board unanimously agreed 'to render every assistance'.[372] In July, it asked Alfred Philip Coker[373] to be 'professional advisor of its members'.[374] He declined, but in the following month two other doctors considered taking the post, with one, Gilbert Smith, being appointed resident doctor in September. To ensure that he received £100 in fees in his first year, the association applied to both government and domain board for a

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[370] *Thames Advertiser*, 6 August 1897, p. 2.

[371] Te Aroha Correspondent, *Waikato Argus*, 15 May 1897, p. 2; 'Twinkler', 'Te Aroha Notes', *Thames Advertiser*, 17 May 1897, p. 3..

[372] Te Aroha Town Board, *Thames Advertiser*, 24 May 1897, p. 3.

[373] *New Zealand Gazette*, 6 January 1898, p. 28.

[374] *Thames Advertiser*, 28 July 1897, p. 2.

subsidy of £50 per year.[375] The government obliged, Smith set up consulting rooms in the centre of town, and in May the following year announced that he would provide nursing at his house.[376] For a time he was a prominent member of the community, but by 1900 had moved to Paeroa,[377] meaning that once again doctors had to be brought in from outside the district. In January 1900, a Paeroa doctor advertised that he would 'immediately attend any Patient's House in Te Aroha on receipt of message or telegram'.[378] In July, the domain board, 'having received an assurance' from William Cairns[379] that he would settle permanently, agreed to give him the government's annual subsidy and was trying to get it increased.[380] Not until the government took control of the domain in 1903 and appointed a medical officer to supervise the sanatorium was the need for a doctor finally met.[381]

CHARLES ALFRED COOPER

Charles Alfred Cooper, born in 1844, was the second son of a York wine merchant.[382] In 1860, he passed the preliminary examination at Apothecaries' Hall in London, which required a knowledge of Horace and Cicero in the original Latin, the New Testament and the Iliad in Greek, algebra 'including Simple Equations', arithmetic, and Euclid, but nothing directly relating to medicine.[383] Subsequently, on an unrecorded date the Royal College of Surgeons of England certified that he had passed 'two Winter Courses of Anatomical and Physiological Studies with Dissections in the Medical School of St Bartholomew's' Hospital in London.[384] It is not known whether he practiced any form of medicine in England, but the Franco-Prussian War of 1870-1871 provided an opportunity to obtain medical (and surgical?) experience. In August

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375 *Thames Advertiser*, 17 August 1897, p. 3, 9 September 1897, p. 2.

376 *Te Aroha News*, 8 January 1898, p. 1, 19 February 1898, p. 2, 3 May 1898, p. 2.

377 *New Zealand Herald*, 22 November 1897, p. 5; *Te Aroha News*, 24 March 1898, p. 2, 29 March 1898, p. 2, 18 June 1898, p. 2; *Thames Star*, 19 January 1900, p. 2.

378 Advertisement for Dr Buckby, *Te Aroha News*, 27 January 1900, p. 2.

379 *New Zealand Gazette*, 10 January 1901, p. 118.

380 Te Aroha Correspondent, *Auckland Weekly News*, 6 July 1900, p. 31.

381 For example, *Auckland Weekly News*, 27 May 1909, p. 36.

382 'Baptism solemnized in the Parish of St Olave in the County of York', no. 1859, Roger McGirr Papers, in private possession; Death Notice, *New Zealand Herald*, 17 June 1903, Supplement, p. 3.

383 Certificate of achievement in Preliminary Examination at Apothecaries' Hall, London, 17, 18 July 1860, Roger McGirr Papers, in private possession.

384 Royal College of Surgeons of England, 'Anatomical Certificate of Candidates for the Diploma of Member of the College', n.d., Roger McGirr Papers, in private possession.

1870 he obtained the equivalent of an English passport to enable him to travel to Europe, where he helped sick and wounded French soldiers on behalf of the British National Central Committee for Aid to the Sick and Wounded in War.[385] In the following February, the Société de Secours aux Blesses Militaires [Society to Aid Wounded Soldiers] of Paris certified that Cooper, who had been attached to its ambulance service, had fulfilled his duties 'to the satisfaction of all'.[386]

In New Zealand's electoral rolls he described himself as a 'medical practitioner',[387] but his name was never listed in the *New Zealand Gazette*'s register of these. After arriving in Auckland in 1877, he was appointed as dispenser and clerk in the Provincial District Hospital there. In his application Cooper stated that he was 'not a diplomatized man, but he is possessing documents shewing that he has received a medical education at St Bartholomew's Hospital, London, and that he served in the field, during the late Franco-Prussian war'.[388] Until resigning (when he was still officially a dispenser) in December 1882, he was described as being the hospital's house surgeon.[389] After leaving Auckland he continued to describe himself, and to be described by others, as a surgeon,[390] but he did not work as one.

Having left Auckland in early 1883, in June that year he treated an accident victim in Paeroa.[391] Three months later the *Te Aroha News* understood that he intended 'settling down in this district, for the purpose of practicing his profession'.[392] His day-to-day ministrations were not recorded, but, presumably because of his hospital

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[385] Earl Granville, certificate requesting permission for Charles Alfred Cooper 'to pass freely without let or hindrance', 13 August 1870; Chairman and Secretary of the Central Committee, Aid to the Sick and Wounded in War', certificate authorizing Charles Alfred Cooper to work with the French army, 15 August 1870, Roger McGirr Papers, in private possession.

[386] Testimonial written by the head surgeon of the Fifth Ambulance division of the Societe de Secours aux Blesses Militaires, 13 February 1871, Roger McGirr Papers, in private possession.

[387] *Tauranga Electoral Roll, 1887*, p. 6; *Te Aroha Electoral Roll, 1890*, p. 7; *Ohinemuri Electoral Rolls 1896*, p. 11, *1900*, p. 18.

[388] District Surgeon to Colonial Secretary, 3 July 1877, Roger McGirr Papers, in private possession.

[389] Colonial Secretary to C.A. Cooper, 21 December 1882, Roger McGirr Papers, in private possession; *New Zealand Herald*, Police Court, 23 July 1878, p. 3, 7 February 1879, p. 3, 27 January 1881, p. 6, Public Notice, 4 October 1882, p. 8, 23 December 1882, p. 5; *Freeman's Journal*, 16 February 1883, p. 10.

[390] *Cleave's Auckland City, Suburban, Provincial, Commercial, Municipal and General Directory, 1893*, ed. Arthur Cleave (Auckland, 1893), p. 273; Death Notice, *New Zealand Herald*, 17 June 1903, p. 3.

[391] *Freeman's Journal*, 16 February 1883, p. 10; *Thames Star*, 11 June 1883, p. 2; *Wise's New Zealand Town Dictionaries*, *1897*, p. 644, *1903*, p. 810.

[392] *Te Aroha News*, 15 September 1883, p. 2.

experience, he was regularly called upon to treat those suffering from broken bones and other consequences of accidents not only at Te Aroha and its environs but also at Paeroa, Karangahake, Owharoa, Waitekauri, Waihi, Waitoa and Morrinsville.[393] On one occasion he removed tubes left inside a patient by an Auckland Hospital doctor, leading to a complete cure.[394] His rushed travels to treat injured people living some distance from Te Aroha led to his being injured by being thrown from his horse.[395] Over the years several testimonials were published to his kindness and competence.[396] And on occasions other doctors came to Te Aroha to consult about difficult cases.[397]

Cooper would have endeared himself to local miners in 1884 by contributing £5 1s to the Te Aroha Miners' Accident Relief Fund.[398] In September 1886, when a public meeting discussed a proposal that the government subsidize a doctor to settle in Te Aroha, 'this motion appeared to be altogether contrary to the views of the large majority of those present, mainly owing to the fact that the local medico, Dr Cooper, would, they thought, probably suffer if the request was granted'.[399] In the same July 1887 issue of the *Te Aroha News* that informed its readers that 'the absence of a duly qualified doctor' was about to be rectified by Alfred Wright settling in the township also reported that the friends and supporters of Dr Charles Alfred Cooper were about to form a medical club with him serving as their doctor.[400] The Aroha and Ohinemuri Medical Club was duly formed, and in the following month a Paeroa meeting established a club that was affiliated with it.[401] In February 1889 the Ohinemuri County Council appointed him as its Health Officer for 12 months, the term he had requested, for the

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[393] For example, *Thames Advertiser*, 31 October 1883, p. 2, 29 April 1885, p. 3, 12 February 1886, p. 3, 29 May 1886, p. 2, 1 December 1888, p. 2, 25 September 1893, p. 2, 27 July 1894, p. 2; *Te Aroha News*, 12 January 1884, p. 2, 8 August 1885, p. 2, 9 January 1886, p. 2, 19 March 1887, p. 2; *Waikato Times*, 29 January 1884, p. 2, 29 November 1884, p. 2, 9 December 1886, p. 2; *New Zealand Herald*, 20 April 1885, p. 6, Te Aroha Correspondent, 15 July 1895, p. 6; *Thames Star*, 27 September 1886, p. 2, 20 April 1889, p. 2, 13 June 1890, p. 2, 7 March 1894, p. 2, 1 July 1895, p. 4, 18 January 1896, p. 2, 29 September 1899, p. 2.

[394] *Te Aroha News*, 18 July 1885, p. 2; *Thames Star*, 27 September 1886, p. 2, 5 October 1886, p. 2.

[395] *Te Aroha News*, 23 May 1885, p. 2.

[396] *Te Aroha News*, letter from J. O'Conner, 7 February 1885, p. 7, 27 March 1889, p. 2; *Waikato Times*, 8 December 1888, p. 2, 21 February 1889, p. 2; *Thames Star*, 4 April 1892, p. 2

[397] For instance, *Thames Star*, 4 April 1892, p. 2.

[398] Advertisement, *Te Aroha News*, 16 February 1884, p. 8.

[399] *Thames Star*, 15 September 1886, p. 2.

[400] *Te Aroha News*, 9 July 1887, p. 2.

[401] *Te Aroha News*, 16 July 1887, p. 2, advertisement, 30 July 1887, p. 3, 27 August 1887, p. 2.

modest salary of £12 a year.[402] In the following May he was the victim of council cost cutting, being, as a correspondent put it, 'invested with the ancient order of the sack'.[403]

In his last years he dealt with fewer patients, usually after they had had accidents; there was mention of his treating people only once in both 1901 and 1902.[404] The last person he treated, just before his death in 1903, had accidentally shot himself but not seriously.[405] An obituary stated he had 'practiced but little in Te Aroha, and lived a somewhat retired life'.[406]

On occasions his competence was challenged. Alfred Henry Whitehouse,[407] a shoemaker, had chaired the meeting forming the medical club and was its secretary,[408] but in 1888, when his wife died after Cooper had treated her, Dr Wright told her inquest that if she had been given proper medical treatment she would not have died; however, as Cooper was at Paeroa at the time of her sudden death, he could not be blamed.[409] Ten years later, Dr Gilbert Smith stated that medicine for a man who had died when travelling to Hamilton from Te Aroha 'was prescribed by Mr Cooper, an unqualified and unregistered man', although he added that it would not have harmed the deceased.[410] In contrast, Edwin Hadfield blamed his being crippled after his leg was smashed in a mine accident on Cooper's mismanagement.[411]

Controversially, in 1897 Cooper had been charged with administering drugs to procure an abortion, but the accusation was not substantiated.[412] According to the Paeroa newspaper, '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'.[413]

Perhaps one reason why Cooper left Auckland and was occasionally criticized in later years was because of his drink problem. In 1887 he was charged with owing a

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[402] Clerk, Ohinemuri County Council, to C.A. Cooper, 5 February 1889, Roger McGirr Papers, in private possession; *Waikato Times*, 9 February 1889, p. 2.

[403] Paeroa Correspondent, *Waikato Times*, 17 May 1890, p. 2.

[404] *Thames Star*, 3 October 1901, p. 4; *Waikato Times*, 21 February 1902, p. 2.

[405] *Waikato Argus*, 20 May 1903, p. 2.

[406] *Ohinemuri Gazette*, 22 May 1903, p. 3.

[407] See paper on his life.

[408] *Te Aroha News*, 9 July 1887, p. 2, 16 July 1887, p. 3.

[409] *Te Aroha News*, 20 June 1888, p. 2; Inquest on Eliza Whitehouse, Justice Department, J 46 COR, 1888/366, ANZ-W; note Death Certificate of Eliza Whitehouse, 17 June 1888, 1888/2052, BDM.

[410] *Waikato Argus*, 24 February 1898, p. 4.

[411] See papers on the New Find and miner's and prospectors' working lives.

[412] See section on Harriet Healey in paper on women's lives at Te Aroha.

[413] *Ohinemuri Gazette*, 4 August 1897, p. 2.

bankrupt £2 5s for unpaid drinks.[414] Seventeen months later he was charged with excessive drinking. When asked by the magistrate whether he wished to comment on the application to impose a prohibition order, Cooper 'said he had no remarks to make, and wished the order should be made'.[415] In 1894, one 'Buz-fuz' wrote a letter, now lost, to the *Te Aroha News* about his drinking, provoking a response from 'Fair Play':

> The doctor in question may not be a Good Templar [total abstainer], but that he is an able man no one will dispute, and even "Buz-fuz" admits that, and so long as Dr Cooper attends to his business and there is no charge against him, it is unfair that he should be molested. It is well known that there is not sufficient here to keep a duly qualified man in our midst. Let us keep what we have in case by agitation we lose both – remember the old adage "half a loaf is better than no bread."[416]

In 1879 Cooper married Mary Jane Vaughan, who had been born in New Zealand in 1857.[417] They would have two boys and a girl, born between 1880 and 1884.[418] Mary Jane was a notable member of Auckland society, in 1881 being recorded as having attended a social event in the Choral Hall with 'her pretty little boy', her eldest son Vaughan.[419] Three months later, the *Observer* headlined her as 'A Belle of the Present – Mrs C.A. Cooper nee Mary Vaughan' in its list of the belles of Auckland:

> Although getting towards the last of the belles, certainly not the least, as far as looks and cleverness are concerned, comes pretty Mary Vaughan, who in 1877 took the part of Fredegonda with such success in "Chilperic," also Vivien in "King Arthur," charming everyone by her acting and singing. She was Miss Christian's favourite pupil. How is it we never have the pleasure of hearing her sing now? Are her matrimonial cares too great? Mary was a great favourite of Sir George Arney's[420] when he resided here, and he hardly ever passed through Parnell without calling to see (as he called her) "pretty little Mary." She is also one of Mr [William] Swainson's[421] favourites, and when she pays him a visit they generally have a musical

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414 Magistrate's Court, *Te Aroha News*, 26 November 1887, p. 3.

415 *Te Aroha News*, 17 April 1889, p. 2.

416 Letter from 'Fair Play', *Te Aroha News*, n.d., reprinted in *Thames Star*, 2 June 1894, p. 4.

417 Birth Certificate of Mary Jane Vaughan, 1857/2353; Marriage Certificate of Charles Alfred Cooper, 10 June 1879, 1879/935, BDM; Marriage Notice, *Auckland Star*, 20 June 1879, p. 2.

418 Birth Certificates of Vaughan Collett Cooper, 1880/383; Sarah Ward Cooper, 1881/6351; William Collett Cooper, 1884/6217, BDM.

419 *Observer*, 26 November 1881, p. 168; Birth Certificate of Vaughan Collett Cooper, 1880/383, BDM.

420 See *New Zealand Herald*, 11 April 1883, p. 5; *Auckland Star*, 11 April 1883, p. 5.

421 See *New Zealand Herald*, 26 January 1884, Supplement, p. 1, 3 December 1884, p. 5.

> evening. Although she has now two children to take up her time, we hope to hear her sweet and powerful voice again in public at no very distant date.[422]

The musically-minded were to be disappointed, for she was not mentioned in the Auckland press again until April 1885, when after having lived for about 18 months at Te Aroha she returned to visit her parents, William and Eliza; while she was staying with them, her father committed suicide.[423] If she did return to Te Aroha after her father's death she soon returned (with her children but without her husband) to Parnell, where she lived with her mother until the latter's death there in 1896;[424] Eliza's death notice recorded that she was 'the beloved mother of Mrs Cooper, of this city'.[425] There was no divorce, but Mary Jane continued to live in her mother's house in Parnell for some years before living in another part of this suburb until her death in 1946.[426] In one way or another, she learnt of her husband's death and officially recorded herself as being a widow.[427] The First World War would bring tragedy: the deaths of her elder son and her son-in-law.[428]

After his wife and children, left him, Cooper did not need a large house, and therefore acquired a residence site for a small cottage in July 1896.[429] When he died, an obituary recorded that he was believed to have a 'large grown up family', but their whereabouts was unknown.[430] His death occurred 'suddenly', in 1903, when he was

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[422] *Observer*, 25 February 1882, p. 377.

[423] Death Certificate of William Vaughan, 17 April 1885, 1885/2007, BDM; *Auckland Star*, 17 April 1885, p. 3; *New Zealand Herald*, 20 April 1885, p. 6.

[424] *New Zealand Herald*, 12 January 1891, p. 4; *Auckland Star*, Parnell Borough Assessment Court, 16 March 1894, p. 3, Death Notice, 5 November 1896, p. 8.

[425] Death Certificate of Eliza Vaughan, 4 November 1896, 1896/3375, BDM; Death Notice, *Auckland Star*, 4 November 1896, p. 8.

[426] *Parnell Electoral Rolls, 1896*, p. 16; *1900*, p. 12; *1905*, p. 20; *1911*, p. 35; *1915*, p. 37; *Auckland Star*, 14 October 1916, p. 10; Death Certificate of Mary Jane Cooper, 1946/34754, BDM; Probate, BBAE 1570, P1374/1946, ANZ-A.

[427] *Parnell Electoral Roll, 1905*, p. 20.

[428] Marriage Certificates of Sarah Ward Cooper, 26 July 1906, 1906/3780, Vaughan Collett Cooper, 1 March 1917, 1917/1571; Death Certificate of William Collett Cooper, 1918/51643, BDM; *Auckland Star*, Marriage Notice, 10 September 1906, p. 3, 14 October 1916, p. 10; *New Zealand Herald*, Marriage Notice, 9 March 1917, p. 1, 6 February 1931, p. 5.

[429] Warden's Court, License for a Residence Site, Section 4 Block 4 Morgantown, 9 July 1896, Roger McGirr Papers, in private possession; Te Aroha Warden's Court, *New Zealand Herald*, 13 July 1896, p. 6.

[430] *Ohinemuri Gazette*, 22 May 1903, p. 3.

aged only 57 and was living 'alone in a two-roomed cottage'.[431] A friend had discovered his body 'jammed between the bed and the wall' after, it was surmised, a fall, leading to his being suffocated.[432] At his funeral, 'a large number' followed the coffin to the cemetery, it being 'covered with floral emblems, testifying to the esteem in which the doctor was held by the community and by whom he will be sadly missed'.[433] Subsequently, at a 'citizens' meeting' held to discuss erecting a memorial over his grave, its chairman 'spoke of the doctor's habitual kindness to the people of the district, and other speakers made eulogistic references to his character'. A committee of leading residents was formed to collect subscriptions, which must have raised a considerable sum, for a lavish grave and headstone was erected.[434]

NEEDED: A HOSPITAL

In July 1883, the *Te Aroha News* complained that, despite the 'certainty' of the district becoming a large mining and farming centre, it had no provisions for the sick, who were generally taken to Thames for treatment. As it was 'out of all reason that a journey of such length should be needful', it was time to establish 'one of the most necessary as well as noble institutions, a properly equipped hospital'. Although the district was 'exceptionally healthy, and anything like epidemics' were 'unknown', this immunity would not continue, and with mining starting at Waiorongomai there would be a larger population with 'more accidents and illnesses'. Already some people had 'no means of procuring proper care and attendance in the event of their being prostrated by sickness', a number that would be 'very largely added to' when the mines were fully developed. It expected the government 'would at least lend some substantial assistance towards the erection of a suitable building and its furnishing', and that the council would then subsidise it, the government giving

> £ for £ on all subscriptions gathered from all sources. Not only is this afforded on direct voluntary contributions, but the net results of entertainments given in aid, of whatever kind, of charitable subscriptions gathered at churches or other, and we are sure that this district would

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[431] Death Certificate of Charles Alfred Cooper, 21 May 1903, 1903/2674, BDM; Death Notice, *New Zealand Herald*, 17 June 1903, Supplement, p. 3; press cutting from *Te Aroha News*, n.d. [May 1903], Roger McGirr Papers, in private possession.

[432] Inquest, Justice Department, ACGS 16231, J46 COR 1903/467, ANZ-A; press cutting from *Te Aroha News*, n.d. [May 1903], Roger McGirr Papers, in private possession.

[433] *Te Aroha News*, n.d., reprinted in *Ohinemuri Gazette*, 27 May 1903, p. 2.

[434] Press cutting from unknown newspaper, n.d.; photograph of grave in Te Aroha cemetery, Roger McGirr Papers, in private possession.

> readily assist in such a good cause. A local committee, elected by subscribers, would as in other places, manage the internal arrangements, and these are elected annually.

Miners who subscribed would 'insure themselves against a bad day', for they could 'demand admission in case of serious illness, as a right and not a charity'. As 'mishaps of greater or less consequence' were frequent in all mining districts, establishing a hospital was 'a paramount necessity', and the newspaper hoped that one would be established soon.[435]

The editor was being far too sanguine. Eight months later, in reporting that a Waiorongomai boy whose leg had been broken by a horse had been sent to the Thames hospital, a correspondent wrote that 'a considerable number of patients have been sent to that institution within the last few months'. He regretted that no steps had been taken to establish a local hospital, but understood that land had been 'set apart for hospital purposes', and hoped that 'before long' a 'suitable building' would be erected.[436] Nothing of substance happened until 1906, when there was 'an agitation' for the establishment of 'an emergency ward for urgent cases'.[437] After a man was thrown from his horse and 'dragged some distance', the local doctor treated the injuries to his head and thigh before sending him to Thames. This accident was cited as 'an instance for the establishment of an emergency ward' where accident victims 'could be properly looked after, pending their removal to the hospitals at Thames or Hamilton'.[438] Late that year, parliament voted money for an emergency ward.[439] As this grant led to nothing, in April 1909 a prominent resident, Captain Knyaston Forster Walter Lyons-Montgomery,[440] outlined the attempts made to obtain a hospital:

> Some years ago, a certain sum was placed on the Parliamentary Estimates for the purpose of erecting a cottage hospital at Te Aroha. £300 was used by the Government in acquiring a property, which (after purchase), on inspection, was condemned as unfit for the purpose for which it had been purchased, and although letters have appeared in our local press asking the Government to use the balance of the grant, as voted by Parliament, nothing has been done up to date. The modus operandi at present here is: The patient (whether suffering from an infectious disease or otherwise) has to be first removed by cart or cab to our railway station, then by train to Hamilton

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435 Editorial, *Te Aroha News*, 14 July 1883, p. 2.

436 Te Aroha Correspondent, *Waikato Times*, 22 March 1884, p. 2.

437 *Thames Star*, 24 January 1906, p. 2.

438 *New Zealand Herald*, 7 March 1906, p. 4.

439 *Thames Star*, 3 November 1906, p. 4.

440 See *Auckland Weekly News*, 18 June 1908, p. 25; *Te Aroha News*, 3 August 1909, p. 3, 2 September 1909, p. 2, 22 April 1911, p. 2.

> station, then again by cart or cab to Hamilton hospital. If this is not a disgrace to any Government, tell me what is. Why keep this amount locked up when it has been on the Estimates for years for the purpose of erecting a cottage hospital. Whether anyone suffering has died on account of the long journey from here (Te Aroha) to Hamilton I cannot say at the moment, but I would never be surprised to hear that it had been the cause of many patients not recovering.[441]

In May that year a deputation from the borough council asked the Minister in Charge of Tourist Resorts to provide a hospital, reminding him that not only had this been promised but that funds to meet the cost had been on the Estimates for the past two years. 'What the residents wanted was something in the nature of an emergency ward, under the control of the Department's medical officer' who ran the sanatorium on the domain. The minister responded that, although money might be granted for the building, 'it was quite out of the question to expect that the Department would maintain a hospital'. As well, he was 'afraid' that the amount allotted 'would not go far towards the erection of a suitable building'.[442] Not until 1912 was an 'up-to-date' hospital established in a private house, run by a former Auckland hospital nurse.[443]

OTHER WAYS OF PROVIDING MEDICAL ASSISTANCE

As Te Aroha lacked a dentist, visiting ones offered treatment in their hotel rooms. For example, in February 1885 a 'Surgeon Dentist, from Auckland', advertised that he could be consulted during that week at a hotel. 'ARTIFICIAL TEETH supplied on the spot. Painless extraction of Teeth. Teeth stopping in all its branches, etc'.[444] Two dentists visited simultaneously in 1889, one advertising that he would '(if inducement offers) visit Te Aroha at regular intervals'.[445] Several dentists would visit in later years.[446]

To some extent, local women met women's medical needs. In 1888, a resident of Waihou East, 'MRS BUTLER, LADIES' NURSE, (Late of Wellington and Auckland)', announced that she was 'open to receive ENGAGEMENTS, and

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[441] Letter from K.F.W. Lyons-Montgomery, *New Zealand Herald*, 15 April 1909, p. 3.

[442] Te Aroha Correspondent, *Auckland Weekly News*, 27 May 1909, p. 36.

[443] *Burrator Weekly News*, 31 August 1912, printed in Ted Axford, *A Childhood in Te Aroha, 1907-1912*, (Wellington, 1992), p. 61.

[444] Advertisement, *Te Aroha News*, 21 February 1885, p. 7.

[445] Advertisements for H. Pittar and A.M. Carter, *Te Aroha News*, 28 September 1889, p. 2.

[446] For example, *Te Aroha News*, 17 April 1895, p. 2, 4 May 1895, p. 2, 15 May 1895, p. 2, 21 April 1898, p. 2.

CONFINEMENTS, if required'.[447] In the following year, another professional nurse advertised her wide range of services: 'Medical, Mental, Surgical, Midwifery'.[448] These women were not mentioned in recollections of the early township, and may have only worked there for a short time. Recollections agree that for 31 years the principal nurse was Ann Devey,[449] wife of George.[450]

Without a hospital and without permanent doctors, other ways had to be found to cope with illness or accidents. In 1898, the St John Ambulance Association called a meeting to form a first aid class, and over 20 'of our more intelligent ladies' along with six young men (level of intelligence not noted) enrolled.[451] After attending a series of lectures, eight of the women passed their examination, which according to the secretary of the Auckland centre of the association was a 'much higher' percentage of successful candidates than was 'usual in country classes'.[452] Although several more women reportedly wanted to learn first aid,[453] later courses were not mentioned in newspapers, although these may well have been provided.

In serious cases, people had to go elsewhere for treatment. In 1889, for instance, a Waiorongomai miner, Robert Guy, was summoned to Auckland where his wife, who was seriously ill, had gone for medical help.[454] On this occasion, she recovered, but two years later she gave birth in Auckland to her first child, a daughter who died three days later.[455] Remaining at her mother's house there, she died aged only 34 because of 'persistent oozing of blood from fibroid of uterus one month after child birth',[456] illustrating that having access to medical attention was no guarantee of survival.

The hot springs were believed to cure many ailments, cheaply.[457] More expensive treatment was possible from some alleged medical experts who were employed to treat invalids, such as 'Professor' Cadman and his 'Magneto-Electric Continuous double

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447 Advertisements, *Te Aroha News*, 21 July 1888, p. 7, 12 September 1888, p. 7.

448 *Te Aroha News*, 24 August 1889, p. 2.

449 *Te Aroha News*, 4 December 1912, p. 2.

450 See paper on George Devey and his family.

451 *Te Aroha News*, 29 January 1898, p. 2, 3 March 1898, p. 2.

452 *Te Aroha News*, 24 March 1898, p. 2, 18 June 1898, p. 2, 23 July 1898, p. 2.

453 *Te Aroha News*, 18 June 1898, p. 2.

454 *Te Aroha News*, 17 August 1889, p. 2.

455 Birth Certificate of Annie Marion Guy, 13 June 1891, 1891/1425; Death Certificate of Annie Marion Guy, 16 June 1891, 1891/2278, BDM; *Auckland Weekly News*, 27 June 1891, p. 1.

456 Death Certificate of Annie Isabella Guy, 13 July 1891, 1891/3280, BDM; *Auckland Weekly News*, 18 July 1891, p. 1.

457 See paper on the Te Aroha hot springs.

Current Girdles' and similar inventions.[458] Upon application, the domain board permitted impoverished residents and visitors free use of the baths for a month or even longer.[459] Others, to ensure that they could afford medical treatment, paid regular contributions to the sick and funeral funds of a friendly society.[460]

CHEMISTS ACTING AS DOCTORS

During the first rush, chemists filled the role of doctors by sewing up wounds or providing both medicine and medical advice, although their competence was questioned.[461] In later years, George Robson, the local chemist, continued to be the professional of first resort, especially for the treatment of accidents. When a boy was badly burnt after playing near the fire in his Waiorongomai home in 1888, 'there being no medical man within reach', Robson was sent for. He 'dressed the wound and was most attentive to the poor little sufferer up to the time of his decease, doing everything he could to allay the pain'.[462] Robson had been a chemist at Hamilton from the late 1870s until moving to Te Aroha in 1882.[463] As the sole chemist from 1883 to 1907,[464] he was vital for the health of the community. Occasionally he was mentioned as treating the injured or ill. For instance, when one miner, Michael Quigley, fell 15 feet in the Colonist mine in 1883, Robson dressed his large scalp wound and inserted two stitches.[465] Eleven years later, he treated a woman who had broken a small bone in her arm.[466] In that same year, he treated people poisoned by eating wild honey.[467] Six years later, he had to deal with a crushed finger.[468] His skills included extracting teeth, and he

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458 *Te Aroha News*, advertisement, 28 August 1886, p. 3, 11 September 1886, p. 2.

459 Domain Board, *Waikato Argus*, 8 March 1898, p. 4.

460 For example, the record of the contributions made by Adam Menzies, bailiff at Te Aroha, to the Oddfellows in 1884, in Te Aroha Warden's Court, Mining Applications 1884, BBAV 11591/1a, ANZ-A.

461 For example, *Thames Advertiser*, 21 December 1880, p. 3, Te Aroha Reporter, 23 December 1880, p. 3; *Waikato Times*, 21 June 1881, p. 3.

462 *Te Aroha News*, 22 August 1888, p. 2.

463 *Te Aroha Mail*, n.d., reprinted in *Waikato Argus*, 7 February 1912, p. 2; advertisement, *Waikato Mail*, 23 September 1880, p. 1; *Waikato Times*, 4 June 1881, p. 2, 8 August 1882, p. 2, 10 August 1882, p. 2.

464 *Waikato Times*, 19 June 1883, p. 2; *Te Aroha News*, 12 March 1907, p. 2.

465 *Te Aroha News*, 27 October 1883, p. 2.

466 Te Aroha Correspondent, *Auckland Weekly News*, 17 November 1894, p. 23.

467 *Thames Star*, 7 March 1894, p. 2.

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

also sold medicines for horses and cattle.[469] 'Piako Gran' recalled that he had a room where he extracted teeth, bandaged cuts, treated stone bruises, or made slings for sprained arms. The local constable 'had a "blind eye" when it came to hours of trading in the chemist shop'.[470] That he kept up with all the latest medical inventions (and fads) was indicated by his 1905 announcement that he had electro-magnetic belts for sale.[471]

That chemists' skills were inadequate to deal with all accidents was revealed in January 1883 when Paerutu, son of a Ngati Rahiri rangatira, Keepa Te Wharau,[472] fell from a peach tree and broke both arms, one being a compound fracture. Keepa stated that 'almost immediately after the accident' his son 'was treated by someone in the district, who administered medicine until mortification set in, when he advised the father to take the child to the hospital'. The doctors there realized 'the case was too far gone, and the patient too weak to submit to amputation', and there was no hope 'for the poor little fellow's recovery'. A Thames newspaper considered that 'some steps should be taken by the authorities to ascertain the truth or otherwise of the statements made by Keepa as to the treatment of the boy'.[473] After his death, this newspaper received a telegram from Te Aroha stating that 'a local chemist endeavoured to set one of the arms', and 'assured his parents that it would be "Alright in a few days" '.[474] Whether Robson was the chemist referred to is not certain, for at the time an Auckland chemist, Matthew McGarvey Eccles,[475] had a branch pharmacy there until selling it to Robson in June 1883.[476]

AMATEUR DOCTORS AND NURSES

In late 1886, the domain board considered appointing 'Professor' J. C. Cadman as an unpaid 'hydropathist', there being no resident doctor at Te Aroha at that time.[477]

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469 Advertisement, *Te Aroha News*, 22 September 1883, p. 4.

470 Recollections of 'Piako Gran', *Te Aroha News*, 3 February 1978, p. 12.

471 *Te Aroha News*, 1 July 1905, p. 2.

472 See paper on his life.

473 *Thames Star*, 20 January 1883, p. 2.

474 *Thames Star*, 23 January 1883, p. 2.

475 See *Observer*, 6 November 1880, p. 59, 24 December 1881, p. 237, 11 March 1882, p. 404, 12 August 1893, p. 6, 25 August 1894, p. 11, cartoon, 14 September 1927, p. 6.

476 *Thames Star*, 7 August 1882, p. 2; advertisement, *Te Aroha News*, 9 June 1883, p. 1; Te Aroha Correspondent, *Waikato Times*, 19 June 1883, p. 2.

477 George Wilson to Under-Secretary, Lands and Survey Department, 6 October 1886, Tourist Department, TO 1 1891/198, ANZ-W.

Shortly afterwards, a miner living at Quartzville, Charles Peters,[478] placed a 'deserving word of praise' in the local newspaper lauding his skills in 'electopathy':

> For 19 years I have been a great sufferer from lumbago and rheumatism, the pain being so severe that I was unable sometimes to bend my back and walk. I was under the Professor's treatment for one week and he not only relieved me of all pain but I have ever since been able to touch the ground with my hands without bending my knees and not feel the slightest pain or inconvenience thereby. Prof. Cadman is deserving of patronage.[479]

However, by the time this was published Cadman had resigned his position because of controversy over his appointment.[480] On occasions, in the absence of a doctor residents had to rely on amateur nurses: for instance, two housewives nursed Eliza Whitehouse during her final illness.[481] In other cases, residents took what they considered to be appropriate action. In 1889, a Waiorongomai correspondent reported a 'distressing accident', when the 18-month-old son of Patrick Moriarty[482] drank kerosene:

> The mother's attention was attracted to the little chap by its violent spitting and coughing, and she saw at once what had happened. The child got rapidly worse and Mr Moriarty hastened to Te Aroha for medical assistance, but none was available. In the meantime, emetics were freely administered and with good results, and I'm glad to say the little one appears to be now out of danger.[483]

SELF-MEDICATION

Some people relied on self-medication. A drunken bushman arrested in 1889 was carrying a bottle of painkiller.[484] Bottle collectors who have searched the sites of whare and settlements on the hillside at Waiorongomai have discovered the most common

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[478] See *Te Aroha News*, 28 June 1884, p. 2, 18 October 1884, p. 7; *Tauranga Electoral Roll, 1885*, p. 22.

[479] Advertisement, *Te Aroha News*, 23 October 1886, p. 3.

[480] *Te Aroha News*, 11 September 1886, p. 3, 18 September 1886, p. 2, 25 September 1886, p. 2.

[481] *Te Aroha News*, 20 June 1888, p. 2.

[482] See *Te Aroha News*, Warden's Court, 5 April 1884, p. 7, 22 May 1889, p. 2, 17 February 1900, p 2, 14 September 1914, p. 2, letter from John Williams, 18 September 1914, p. 2.

[483] *Te Aroha News*, 2 February 1889, p. 2.

[484] Armed Constabulary Force, Return of Charges Taken at Te Aroha Lock-Up 1880-1903, 10/1889, in private possession.

bottles were of cough medicine with a high alcohol content.[485] William Tregoweth,[486] who invested in one claim during the Te Aroha rush,[487] in 1885 was tributing at Karangahake, when his partner complained that as Tregoweth could only do light work he was 'no good as a mate, and could not work, and had to put hot bricks on his feet every night to keep himself alive'.[488] Tregoweth continued to mine, more actively, until dying in 1908, aged 60, of fatty degeneration of the heart leading to heart failure.[489] The coroner was told he had complained 'several times lately about feeling bad inside' and had considered the cause to be indigestion and colic, for which he took a 'lot of pills and other medicines to cure himself'.[490]

How many people resorted to such 'remedies' cannot be determined, nor can they be identified, apart from Annie Wallace Brownlee, the wife of Henry, who for part of his life worked as a miner.[491] In 1902, her testimonial was included in an advertisement for Doan's Ointment, which, she averred, had cured her son of scurvy.[492] Patent medicines were available to treat all the ills known to mankind, including those of a very personal nature. For instance, in 1884 newspaper readers were informed 'That Husband of Mine is three times the man he was before he began using "Wells' Health Restorer" '. Three months later, those who had missed the point were given the following message: 'DECLINE OF MAN - Nervous Weakness, Dyspepsia, Impotence, Sexual Debility, cured by "Wells' Health Renewer" '.[493] For women, 'Towle's Pennyroyal and Steel Pills for Females quickly correct all Irregularities, and relieves the distressing symptoms so prevalent with the sex',[494] which was a disguised advertisement for an abortifacient - a very dangerous one.[495] According to the *Observer*, medicines to induce abortion were available in nearly every chemist's shop

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485 Information provided by Trevor Luders and Bruce Dean, bottle collectors of Tauwhare and Maungatautari respectively.

486 See paper on prospectors' lives.

487 Te Aroha Warden's Court, Register of Te Aroha Claims 1880-1888, folio 170, BBAV 11567/1a, ANZ-A.

488 Warden's Court, *Thames Advertiser*, 10 August 1885, p. 3.

489 Death Certificate of William Tregoweth, 17 October 1908, 1908/7434, BDM.

490 Inquest on William Tregoweth, Justice Department, J 46, 1908/953, ANZ-W; *Ohinemuri Gazette*, 21 October 1908, p. 3.

491 See paper on miners' working lives.

492 Advertisement, *Thames Star*, 8 October 1902, p. 4.

493 Advertisements, *Thames Star*, 14 July 1884, p. 2, 28 October 1884, p. 2.

494 Advertisement, *Thames Advertiser*, 2 May 1887, p. 2.

495 Google pennyroyal to discover the serious health effects of using pennyroyal.

in Auckland and other towns, sometimes even being displayed in the windows.[496] The following advertisement, which appeared in both the Te Aroha and Auckland press, may have referred to birth control rather than abortion: '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'.[497] Louis L. Smith of Melbourne advertised his mail-order services to 'patients suffering from nervous affections' who were 'afraid from sheer bashfulness and modesty to PERSONALLY consult a medical man' about 'their habits of life, and the nature of the disease'. A letter detailing the symptoms accompanied by a fee of £1 1s would result in medicine being sent 'in such a form as to defy detection'. He implied that he could cure not only venereal diseases but also the ravages produced by masturbation, and possibly even impotence.[498]

MENTAL HEALTH

Examples of mental breakdown from various causes have been recorded elsewhere: disappointments in love resulted in both Laura Devey and John Squirrell's daughter being sent to the asylum.[499] Not only women had breakdowns because of their love life, for in 1890 a Te Aroha contractor, a single man aged 38, was committed for 'Delusions of persecution' lasting one week that had been caused caused by 'Disappointed affections'. Five months later he had recovered and was discharged.[500]

Poor physical health could affect mental stability. For instance, a 63-year-old schoolmaster was committed after an attack of 'delusional insanity' caused by ill health had lasted for three months. Being in 'poor health and condition', implying a poor diet despite this being married, he died four months later.[501] In the asylum he was classified as suffering from religious mania.[502]

Miners could suffer from mental illness, especially those obsessed prospectors and miners known colloquially as 'hatters'. Alexander McLeod was aged 49 in late 1888 when he successfully applied on behalf of himself and two partners for the Kiwi,

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[496] *Observer*, 29 January 1898, p. 6.

[497] For example, advertisements [also printed on other dates], *Observer*, 29 January 1898, p. 6; *Te Aroha News*, 12 March 1898, p. 3, 23 July 1898, p. 1.

[498] Advertisement, *Observer*, 13 October 1888, p. 15.

[499] See papers on John Squirrell and on George Devey and his family.

[500] Avondale Asylum, Register of Admissions 1885-1896, no. 1663, YCAA 1021/2, ANZ-A.

[501] Avondale Asylum, Register of Admissions 1902-1906, no. 3157, YCAA 1021/4, ANZ-A.

[502] Avondale Asylum, Case Book 1903-1906, folio 264, YCAA 1048/10, ANZ-A.

four men's ground at Tui, which he intended to work with the adjacent Morgan's Claim.[503] A visitor noted, in October, that he was 'chiefly' working the latter:

> Very good finds have been made from this claim but mention of this would have escaped me but for the alleged eccentricity of the above-named Mac. It appears he occupies part of his daytime in cutting tracks through the bush, and indeed there are several evidences of his self-imposed labour in this way; where the bush has been thick, several chains of good clearings have been formed.[504]

In early 1889, when successfully applying for the Mararoa, 12 acres at Waiorongomai, he promised to invest £500 in it.[505] In May he told the warden that he was 'camped close to the boundary of' the adjoining Lord Nelson, where his 'mate' was living in a whare.[506] This is the full extent of his mining in this district to be traced.

McLeod was a single man, and his only relatives, two brothers, farmed near Ashburton.[507] Perhaps his loneliness drove him to drink, for in August 1889 he was charged in Thames, where he was then living, with being drunk in the street. A witness described him 'making a very peculiar noise, like that of a man in the horrors', meaning delirium tremens, 'and was disturbing the neighbours', who wanted him arrested so they could get some sleep. When a constable arrived, McLeod was in his house 'making the same kind of noise', being 'blind drunk'; he threatened to 'make it hot' for the constable, who described him as being 'in a filthy state'. In court, McLeod (alias John McLeod) 'admitted having had a few glasses, but denied that he was drunk, and said that if he had been left alone, he would have been all right'. The magistrate agreed, dismissing the case,[508] but in December McLeod was arrested for being of unsound mind and committed to the asylum. Being 'under a delusion that he had a mission to destroy the devil' he was seen as a danger to others or himself.[509] At the asylum he was diagnosed as having suffering from religious mania for three weeks. His health was

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503 Te Aroha Warden's Court, Register of Applications 1883-1900, 50, 116/1888, BBAV 11505/1a; Register of Te Aroha Claims 1880-1888, folio 335, BBAV 11567/1a, ANZ-A; Warden's Court, *Te Aroha News*, 5 September 1888, p. 2.

504 'Mines in the Te Aroha District', *Auckland Weekly News*, 27 October 1888, p. 37.

505 *Te Aroha News*, 23 February 1889, p. 7, 23 March 1889, p. 2.

506 Magistrate's Court, *Te Aroha News*, 29 May 1889, p. 2.

507 Avondale Asylum, Register of Admissions 1885-1896, no. 1600, YCAA 1021/2; Record Book of Investigation into Relatives' Ability to Pay Maintenance 1890-1899, folio 14, YCAA 1044/1, ANZ-A.

508 Thames Magistrate's Court, Criminal Record Book 1887-1889, 190/1889, BACL 13736/1a, ANZ-A; Police Court, *Thames Star*, 8 August 1889, p. 2.

509 *Thames Star*, 17 December 1889, p. 2.

'impaired' and his condition 'weak'.[510] A Thames doctor explained why he was committed:

> He is suffering from religious mania shouting and singing all night and saying that it is not he who shouts but God in him and that the words could not be understood by anyone else, that he is awaiting God's command to slaughter the Devil and all his followers, that he says he always sleeps soundly at night when God has finished his singing that he told the constable he was the devil and threatened to slaughter him and that he keeps up a disturbance all night.

An asylum doctor quoted him saying that 'he hears Jesus speaking to him, thinks he is at present imprisoned as a martyr and will eventually be brought before Kings for examination that he sings loudly and claps his hands without ceasing towards night becoming very excited'. On 22 December, an update:

> Tells me that he was sent here for speaking about his Saviour – that he found his Saviour nine years ago – He was not sent to the Asylum than as he was not perfect – He is now perfect and sings hymns at night in obedience to God – That others are only disturbed by these hymns because they are wrong and he is right – Continues quiet and diligent.[511]

He escaped, briefly, five months later, to be discharged 'relieved' on 3 June 1890.[512] Although never committed again, he may have been the Alexander McLeod who pleaded guilty in 1908 to being 'in a helpless state of drunkenness' in a Thames street.[513]

Donald McLeod, not a brother of Alexander despite being a partner in the latter's Kiwi claim,[514] was a Waiorongomai miner who had acquired a farm at Gordon.[515] He went to Australia in the early 1890s where an injury caused him to become blind. He then returned to live with his father (his mother appears to have died) on the latter's Gordon farm, unhappily, as a sympathetic correspondent described in 1892:

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[510] Avondale Asylum, Register of Admissions 1885-1896, no. 1600, YCAA 1021/2, ANZ-A.

[511] Avondale Asylum, Case Book 1890-1892, folio 420, YCAA 1048/5, ANZ-A.

[512] Avondale Asylum, Register of Admissions 1885-1896, no. 1600, YCAA 1021/2, ANZ-A; *Observer*, 31 May 1890, p. 10.

[513] Thames Magistrate's Court, Criminal Record Book 1906-1908, 67/1908, BACL 13736/6a, ANZ-A.

[514] Te Aroha Warden's Court, Register of Te Aroha Claims 1880-1888, folio 335, BBAV 11567/1a; Avondale Asylum, Register of Admissions 1885-1896, no. 1600, YCAA 1021/2; Register of Admissions 1896-1901, no. 2174, YCAA 1021/3, ANZ-A.

[515] See *Tauranga Electoral Roll, 1887*, p. 17; *Waikato Times*, 7 September 1886, p. 2; *Te Aroha News*, 28 August 1889, p. 2.

> He has frequently to be left alone from early morning until late at night, and the wretchedness of his life can well be imagined. Once or twice, he has even been left without company all night. His father has made repeated efforts to get him admitted into some of the public institutions for the feeble [minded] in the colony, and also into the Blind Institute in Parnell, and has expressed his willingness to support him to the best of his ability, but, for some reason or other, without avail…. If only the young man could be taught to read and write in the blind language, and be instructed in some simple trade, which would occupy his hands and mind, it would be a wonderful relief from the dreadful monotony of his life. Fancy him setting for many hours at a time without a soul to speak to, in an isolated cottage miles from any other human habitation, with nothing to relieve his mind from the contemplation of his blighted life![516]

After the Waikato Charitable Aid Board arranged for his admission to the Blind Institute, he was expelled 'for insubordination' after refusing to learn a trade. Accused of assaulting a staff member, McLeod claimed to have been struck in the face by this man and spoke of other mistreatment.[517] He was placed in the 'refuge' in Hamilton, but in 1894 his father could not afford to contribute to his upkeep.[518] In November 1896, when aged 29, after two years of suffering from dementia caused, it was believed, by heredity, he was committed to the asylum.[519] There a doctor quoted him as saying that 'there are murderers about who are not to be trusted & that they will injure him. He talks about events that happened to him at Coromandel & other places which he has never visited'. He was diagnosed as suicidal and dangerous. His father, John, said that his son had recently 'become unmanageable'.

> He has attempted to injure his brother & other persons & is very destructive in his home breaking furniture etc. That a Bill-hook was found hidden under his bed with which he stated his intention of injuring a neighbour…. He has frequently threatened to hurt & kill a man visiting at his house. Has been frequently violent requiring almost constant watching. A habit too of going out & keeping away all night.

His mother had become 'insane after bearing a large family. No history of drink either in patient or family'. His brother stated that 'he had a good memory & strong will & was of a dour disposition. Had been gold mining for 10 years. Led a lonely life was eccentric all his life but had no delusions till lately. History of Syphilis three years ago'. (As he was unmarried, someone had consoled his loneliness.) 'Head injured 18 years

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[516] Te Aroha Correspondent, *Auckland Weekly News*, 15 October 1892, p. 23.

[517] *Auckland Weekly News*, 9 September 1893, p. 23.

[518] Waikato Charitable Aid Board, *Waikato Times*, 8 February 1894, p. 5, 18 September 1894, p. 6.

[519] Avondale Asylum, Register of Admissions 1896-1901, no. 2174, YCAA 1021/3, ANZ-A.

ago'. As he was nearly blind in his right eye, and completely blind in the left, he was unable to work. The doctor noted that, although the syphilis had affected him, he was well conducted and denied that he was violent; he had hit his brother only after being hit by him. In the following April, a doctor noted: 'Hard to say if this patient is certifiable', but in subsequent years he was described as stupid, confused, violent, and dangerous. In 1907, he was 'Solitary and demented. Stands listlessly about airing-court and has no interest in anything. Kicks anyone who comes near him'.[520] McLeod never left the asylum, dying there in 1932, aged 65.[521]

'Melancholia' led to a 57-year-old unmarried miner being admitted to the Thames hospital in July 1886. As his condition had not improved, two days later he was transferred to the asylum.[522] There this diagnosis was confirmed, though the cause could not be discovered.[523] As a knife had been discovered under his bed in the hospital, it was assumed that he was probably suicidal. 'When admitted here was silent and apathetic – can give no account of himself & is very long in answering any questions. Very dejected in appearance, bowels obstinate & tongue furred'. Three months later, he was 'much improved in nutrition', but some of his facial muscles were paralyzed, probably because of an old wound; 'in conversation he is now quite rational'.[524] Accordingly, one month later he was discharged as having recovered.[525] In February 1888, when he was a shipbuilder at Parnell, he was recommitted, for 'Senile Melancholia'. Then 'in weak health anaemic & ill-nourished', he was discharged as recovered in April 1889,[526] and was never committed again.

Thomas Kenny mined at Waiorongomai in the early 1880s,[527] and was still a miner when he married a widow with three daughters in 1898, when he was aged 37.[528] Eight months later they had a daughter.[529] In 1905, when living in Auckland, and less

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[520] Avondale Asylum, Case Book 1896-1898, folio 76, YCAA 1048/7, ANZ-A.

[521] Avondale Asylum, Register of Admissions 1896-1901, no. 2174, YCAA 1021/3, ANZ-A; Death Certificate of Donald McLeod, 16 December 1932, Deaths, 1932/11413, BDM.

[522] Thames Hospital, Register of Patients 1884-1901, folio 13, YCAH 14075/1a, ANZ-A.

[523] Avondale Asylum, Register of Admissions 1885-1896, no. 1338, YCAA 1021/2, ANZ-A.

[524] Avondale Asylum, Case Book 1885-1887, folio 253, YCAA 1048/4, ANZ-A.

[525] Avondale Asylum, Register of Admissions 1885-1896, no. 1338, YCAA 1021/2, ANZ-A.

[526] Avondale Asylum, Register of Admissions 1885-1896, no. 1470, YCAA 1021/2, ANZ-A.

[527] Te Aroha Warden's Court, Register of Licensed Holdings 1881-1887, folio 132, BBAV 11567/1a; Register of Applications 1883-1900, 90/1883, BBAV 11505/1a; Te Aroha Magistrate's Court, Civil Record Book 1881-1884, 112/1883, BCDG 11221/1a, ANZ-A.

[528] Marriage Certificate of Thomas Kenny, 30 April 1898, 1898/2737, BDM; Auckland Hospital and Charitable Aid Board, Applications for Relief 1894-1907, folio 391, YCAB 15245/2a, ANZ-A.

[529] Birth Certificate of Ellen Christina Kenny, 30 December 1898, 1899/13634, BDM.

than three months after the birth of their fourth child,[530] he was arrested for firing two shots at his wife. 'When arrested Kenny stated that he merely fired the shots with the object of frightening his wife, and not with the intention of shooting her. He is said to have been in the habit of carrying a revolver for some time past'. His wife Mary gave evidence that her husband Had come home at 'about seven o'clock'.

> She could not say that he was sober. He had some words with the witness when he came in, using some bad language in speaking about witness' daughter and nephew. He said he was going to put an end to things, and went into the scullery, returning with a revolver…. Kenny told witness to "get," meaning to go away, and fired a shot which entered the floor about two feet from where she stood. She picked up the baby and ran upstairs, and when she reached the top, she heard another shot. The bullet penetrated the wall about five or six feet from where she was at that moment. Her husband had threatened several times to shoot her, and she was afraid of him. He always carried a revolver.
> "Do you fancy you have treated me as a wife should?" asked Kenny.
> "I am quite sure I have," replied Mrs Kenny, who said the only thing her husband could complain of was that she had told him a lie about 15 months ago to avoid a bother in the house.[531]

As Kenny 'seemed somewhat amused' by her evidence, he was warned by the magistrate 'that this was no laughing matter'.[532] A widow living in the house had heard Kenny tell his wife 'she could go, and he would keep the children'. In answer to Kenny's question, she said Mary had 'treated him fairly', although he had once seen her slap him 'in the face, and he did not hit back'. The arresting constable said that Kenny had wanted to frighten his wife, and 'was pleased' to be arrested, 'as it would give him a chance to expose a lot of things in Court'. Kenny boasted of being a good shot, and when formally charged had said, 'Without intention there's no guilt'.[533]

When on trial in the Supreme Court at the end of May for 'attempting to intimidate his wife by discharging firearms, with the intention of doing grievous bodily harm', Kenny said, 'I am not guilty of attempted murder. If I had attempted murder, it would have been murder'. Mary repeated that he seemed to have been drinking and had 'used some very offensive language towards her' and stated that he had said her daughter 'was pointing out things to him, whereas she was not'. The Crown Prosecutor then questioned her:

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[530] Birth Certificate of Veronica Kenny, 19 January 1905, 1905/317, BDM; Auckland Hospital and Charitable Aid Board, Applications for Relief 1894-1907, folio 391, YCAB 15245/2a, ANZ-A.

[531] Police Court, *Auckland Weekly News*, 6 April 1905, p. 31.

[532] *Thames Star*, 6 April 1905, p. 1.

[533] *Auckland Weekly News*, 6 April 1905, p. 31.

> Mr Tole: I believe that he has written a lot of things in a book, which you cannot make head or tail of?
> Witness: Yes, that is so.
> And since the Police Court proceedings, you have received a letter from him from the gaol? – Yes.
> Do you know what this letter is about? – No, I do not.
> The letter … was then read. In the course of his letter the accused stated that what he had to complain of in regard to witness' daughter was that she and another girl were always writing notes in books for him to see, which, he said, would go far to show the cause of his conduct. The prisoner then went on to relate a dream which he had had.

A doctor who had examined Kenny 'believed that he was under a delusion. He told him that he always carried a revolver, as a man at Waihi carried one, and he was afraid he might shoot him. In conversation he was quite irrational. He considered that it was not wise that he should be at large at present'. After all the evidence was heard, the judge told the jury that the 'medical testimony showed that it would be dangerous to acquit him upon the grounds of insanity', but that they could bring in a special verdict 'finding that he was insane at the time'. Disregarding this advice, the jury found him guilty of attempting to intimidate his wife, but not guilty of intending to commit grievous bodily harm. In giving sentence, the judge

> said that he regarded the prisoner as an honest, hard-working man, who was subject to such delusions that he would be a menace to the public if he were set at liberty. He was very reluctant to treat him as a criminal and would have been much better pleased if the jury, as suggested by the Crown Prosecutor, and recommended by himself, had acquitted him upon the grounds of insanity. The prisoner should, of course, be committed to the lunatic asylum. He did not know if there was any way of sending him there.
> Mr Tole replied that if the man was sent to gaol the authorities would have him examined at once, and, if necessary, transferred to the asylum.
> His Honor then passed a sentence of two years' imprisonment without hard labour. In doing so, he said that when the prisoner recovered sufficiently to be able to petition the Crown, he (the judge) would use his influence on his behalf.[534]

Not till November was Kenny admitted to the asylum for 'delusional insanity', caused, it was believed, by heredity.[535] A doctor recorded that he heard 'voices at all hours of night, whispering outside cell door, that he is being persecuted continually, that there is a conspiracy in Gaol to kill him…. Has written letters to a Mr Fitzgerald in which he describes visions of the Virgin Mary and that he has special influence with the Most High'. (Kenny was a Catholic.) Another doctor recorded more of his imagined

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[534] *Auckland Weekly News*, 1 June 1905, p. 21.

[535] Avondale Asylum, Register of Admissions 1902-1906, no. 3246, YCAA 1021/4, ANZ-A.

conspiracies. 'Warders listen at his door at night, that they have a down on him, that he will be even with them yet, gets excited says detectives have worked up a case against him. Asked how he knew there were men at the door, he said he could smell their feet'. His wife informed them that one of his relatives was in a mental hospital. 'Originally good memory, strong will, passionate, affectionate, energetic, had a severe blow on the head before he left home, no cause for grief, solitary life, has 4 children'. His 'condition' upon admission was recorded in detail:

> Says he was for several years a "Shift Boss" of a mine at Waitekauri and in consequence of his having dismissed two worthless men all the rest of the people conspired to injure him a Mrs Gulson waved lights at him at night to entice him into her house to get him into trouble, during his absence some person entered his house and tampered with his revolver to prevent him from being able to protect himself, one night while in bed he awoke and found the wife of one of the dismissed hands with an axe poised to kill him, as a result of this he came to live in Auckland with his wife children and step-daughters, he found after a while that two of his enemies had followed him and injured his reputation with his family accusing him of being a masturbator etc he used to find proof of this in books his step-daughter read, he would find passages marked in one way or another having vague reference to him, insulting his character etc he demanded an explanation from his wife and not receiving it, fired two shots to frighten her and he was sentenced to 2 years in prison. While he was in Prison people conspired against him also…. Patient hints at a close intimacy with God by means of which he found that his wife and family died recently.[536]

Kenny never improved, continuing to believe that asylum attendants were persecuting him, and was transferred to Tokanui mental hospital in 1919, dying there 20 years later.[537]

One man whose mind was affected by brooding over his perceived poverty was a storekeeper at Waiorongomai, Thomas Henry Whitmore Yate.[538] He had left home one Thursday while his wife was in Te Aroha.

> On the dressing-table was found a note to his wife, referring to their property, his wishes with respect thereto, his will, &c, and in a postscript he stated he was tired of this life and intended to go and lie down and die. Ever since it became known he was missing, search parties have been out in all directions…. Mr Yate had been low spirited of late, and allowed himself to worry unnecessarily about business, and the depression, but we are

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[536] Avondale Asylum, Case Book 1903-1906, folio 353, YCAA 1048/10, ANZ-A.

[537] Avondale Asylum, Register of Admissions 1902-1906, no. 3246, YCAA 1021/4; Case Book 1903-1906, folio 545, YCAA 1048/10, ANZ-A; Death Certificate of Thomas Kenny, 3 May 1939, 1939/27131, BDM.

[538] For his full name, see *Tauranga Supplementary Electoral Roll, 1887*, p. 3.

> informed that there was no special difficulty, financial or otherwise to trouble him, and this strange reaction of his appears unaccountable. He was a particularly steady man, and very much respected.[539]

A correspondent understood that, although 'not in embarrassed [financial] circumstances', Yate had been 'for some time in a despondent state', and during the two days prior to his disappearance had not 'partaken of food. In his weak condition it is feared that his mind has become affected' and that he would not be found alive.[540] After search parties failed to find him where he was hiding (in flax near his home, listening to the searchers,) after two days and nights in the open he returned late on Saturday night 'in a very weak exhausted condition'.[541] He gave 'no reason for his strange action', but 'for some time past' he had 'not been in good health' because of 'unwarranted anxiety, and worry about business matters', which appeared 'to have upset him completely; as no man in a rational frame of mind would act in such a manner'.[542] His wife thanked the searchers and the 'kindness shown on every hand'. Her husband's health had 'been failing for some months past, and this, together with over anxiety and worry about business matters, completely upset him for the time, and led to his acting so strangely'. She hoped that 'with complete change, and release from business for a while, he will soon be quite himself again'.[543]

Within weeks, Yate's estate was assigned to trustees, who advertised a 'Found Sale!!!' His goods were offered for sale at from 20 per cent to 50 per cent below normal prices, and the store was being sold as well.[544] £1,000-worth of goods would be sold at this 'very heavy discount' to ensure 'an immediate clearance'.[545] Clearly, he had had reason to brood over the state of his finances. And he had other reasons to brood. In 1887 his second son was born, but he died aged three-and-a-half months after an attack of pneumonia lasting just one day.[546] A daughter, born in 1889, would die when aged

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[539] *Te Aroha News*, 11 February 1888, p. 2.

[540] Te Aroha Correspondent, *Waikato Times*, 11 February 1888, p. 2.

[541] Te Aroha Correspondent, *Waikato Times*, 14 February 1888, p. 2.

[542] *Te Aroha News*, 18 February 1888, p. 2.

[543] Letter from Sarah Jane Yate, *Te Aroha News*, 25 February 1888, p. 3,

[544] Advertisement, *Te Aroha News*, 3 March 1888, p. 3.

[545] *Te Aroha News*, 3 March 1888, p. 2.

[546] Birth Certificate of Henry Walter Yate, 1887/5380; Death Certificate of Henry Walter Yate, 10 October 1887, 1887/4869, BDM.

four.[547] Two years after this second death Yate died, aged 61; his widow settled in Sydney, where his first son and last surviving child died in 1900.[548]

In 1915, a 46-year-old miner and bushman was committed to the asylum because of delusional insanity lasting a few days. He had had a previous attack.[549] He told his father he was being 'persecuted and threatened by wireless messages and was a witness to the battle of Moses' and told a doctor he was being mesmerized by people using telepathy and electricity shining on his mirror at night.[550] As these delusions persisted, he remained in the asylum. There he described hearing 'voices' jeering at and threatening him, including a threat to burn down his house. In 1918, he claimed to be 'a stone-reader and anointed the first three stones on this earth'. In the following year, when he was incoherent and occasionally violent, he had 'delusions of a grandiose type'.[551] Seemingly this was, at least in part, another example of religious mania.

It was believed some of those committed had inherited their mental problems. For example, when a 23-year-old labourer was committed in 1907, he was assessed as being a 'congenital idiot'. He would die in the asylum in 1921.[552] In 1908, a 26-year-old labourer was admitted for congenital melancholia. When aged 23 he had had the first of three attacks, resulting in committal to two other asylums. He had 'impaired health & condition' when admitted to the Auckland one but then recovered and was discharged four months later.[553]

Charles Cribb, a farmer in the Waihou and Waitoa districts,[554] was elected to the local school committees,[555] an indication of the respect in which he was held. He invested in one Waiorongomai mine.[556] In 1886, aged 27 and a labourer, he married Ellen Mills, a daughter of James,[557] later the first mayor of Te Aroha.[558] They were to

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[547] Birth Certificate of Amy Gertrude Yate, 1889/8044; Death Certificate of Amy Gertrude Yate, 1894/254, BDM.

[548] Birth Certificate of Arthur Lavington Rudworth Yate, 1883/10512; Death Certificate of Thomas Henry Whitmore Yate, 1896/2559, BDM; Death Notice, *New Zealand Herald*, 14 April 1900, p. 1.

[549] Avondale Asylum, Register of Admissions 1912-1916, no. 5139, YCAA 1021/6, ANZ-A.

[550] Avondale Asylum, Case Book 1914-1916, folio 243, YCAA 1048/15, ANZ-A.

[551] Avondale Asylum, Committed Patient Case Files 1915, no. 5139, YCAA 1026/44, ANZ-A.

[552] Avondale Asylum, Register of Admissions 1906-1912, no. 3351, YCAA 1021/5, ANZ-A.

[553] Avondale Asylum, Register of Admissions 1906-1912, no. 3586, YCAA 1021/5, ANZ-A.

[554] For example, *Te Aroha News*, 3 April 1886, p. 2, 9 July 1887, p. 2.

[555] See *Te Aroha News*, 30 April 1887, p. 2, 25 April 1888, p. 2, 9 October 1889, p. 2.

[556] Te Aroha Warden's Court, Register of Licensed Holdings 1881-1887, folio 172, BBAV 11500/9a, ANZ-A.

[557] Marriage Certificate of Charles Cribb, 30 March 1886, 1886/358, BDM; *Te Aroha News*, 3 April 1886, p. 2.

have six sons, two of whom died in infancy before Ellen died of pneumonia in 1895, aged only 30.[559] 'The greatest sympathy has been expressed for Mr Cribb, who is left with four young children', a Waihou correspondent wrote.[560] Two years later, he remarried.[561]

In August 1901, Cribb 'acted in an eccentric manner at Gisborne the other day and attempted to jump off a hotel balcony'.[562] Tried on the charge of lunacy, he was committed, and then diagnosed as having suffered from alcoholic insanity for four weeks before trying to jump.[563] He thought he was going mad, and had gone to Gisborne without knowing why. He was judged to be 'Forgetful Suicidal'. Although his wife said that he had become strange for the past four months, she did not consider he should be committed.

> Patient seems to have realized that he was becoming mentally afflicted & he decided to take a trip to Christchurch with his little boy in the hope that the change would benefit him. He arrived with his boy in Auckland but afterwards left for the South apparently forgetting all about the boy. He left the Steamer without any apparent reason & probably tried there to commit suicide.

In the asylum, he had delusions of persecution, claiming that people were annoying him at night.[564] After being let out on a trial basis in November 1904, he was discharged in the following month.[565] He was never readmitted again, and would die in 1948 aged 90.[566]

Cribb was not the only member of his family to suffer from mental problems. His eldest child, Arthur, had been born in December 1886.[567] In 1914, when farming in the Te Aroha district, he was committed after an attack of 'congenital delusional insanity'

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[558] See paper on James Mills.

[559] Death Certificates of Gerald Cribb, 5 June 1891, 1891/2332; George William Cribb, 1 January 1895, 1895/81; Ellen Cribb, 27 April 1895, 1895/2775, BDM; *Te Aroha News*, 1 May 1895, p. 2.

[560] Waihou Correspondent, *Auckland Weekly News*, 4 May 1895, p. 19.

[561] Marriage Certificate of Charles Cribb, 21 June 1897, 1897/4833, BDM.

[562] *Thames Star*, 31 August 1901, p. 2.

[563] *New Zealand Police Gazette*, 11 September 1901, p. 217; Avondale Asylum, Register of Admissions 1896-1901, no. 2646, YCAA 1021/3, ANZ-A.

[564] Avondale Asylum, Case Book 1900-1903, folio 153, YCAA 1048/9, ANZ-A.

[565] Avondale Asylum, Register of Admissions 1896-1901, no. 2646, YCAA 1021/3, ANZ-A.

[566] Death Certificate of Charles Cribb, 11 July 1948, 1948/30668, BDM.

[567] Birth Certificate of Arthur Cribb, 27 December 1886, 1886/15027, BDM.

lasting six months.[568] His step-mother stated that Arthur, who was unmarried, for some time had been 'persecuting with his attentions a girl living nearby, whom he says he has married, through the medium of thought readers in Auckland'.[569] Arthur died six years before his father, still incarcerated.[570]

In February 1896 Te Aroha's *Observer* Man reported that 'Volunteer A. McK. is the coming ladies' man'.[571] Archibald McKee had enrolled in the Te Aroha Rifle Volunteers in November 1894, when he was a messenger aged 17.[572] In April 1893 he may have been referred to in a gossip column: 'Who was the young lady who woke up talking something about an engagement ring? Too bad of you A. McK to let the secret out so soon'.[573] McKee quickly disappeared from gossip columns because in July 1896, when he was a post office cadet, he attempted to shoot the postmaster, Thomas Edward Clough.[574] The community was shocked, as the *Observer* Man reported:

> It is with much regret I have to communicate the sad news *re* Archie McKee; he was a general favourite with us all, and, needless to say, a sad gloom has been cast upon us to hear that poor Archie was deranged in his mind and had nearly shot the postmaster. There are many things sad, but this seems saddest of all. The poor mother is almost beside herself in her grief. Great thanks are due to those who sat up with the boy at night.[575]

As the attack of insanity was judged to have lasted for only one day, he was released from the asylum on probation into the care of his friends.[576] Upon admission he was diagnosed as having 'primary dementia', caused by an injury to his head.[577] The asylum doctors described him as 'always a cheerful active lad who did his work well. Sometimes given to drink on occasions & has been seen helplessly drunk two months

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[568] Avondale Asylum, Register of Admissions 1912-1916, no. 4973, YCAA 1021/6, ANZ-A.

[569] Avondale Asylum, Case Book 1914-1916, folio 77, YVAA 1048/15, ANZ-A.

[570] Avondale Asylum, Register of Admissions 1912-1916, no. 4973, YCAA 1021/6; Probate of Charles Cribb, Hamilton Probates, BCDG 4420/7509, ANZ-A.

[571] 'Te Aroha', *Observer*, 15 February 1896, p. 21.

[572] Te Aroha Rifle Volunteers, Nominal, Descriptive, and Capitation Roll and Musketry Return of the above Corps for the 14 months ending Feby 28th 1895, Army Department, ARM 41, 1911/66q, ANZ-W.

[573] 'Te Aroha', *Observer*, 15 April 1893, p. 17.

[574] *New Zealand Herald*, 23 July 1896, p. 4, 24 July 1896, p. 5.

[575] 'Te Aroha', *Observer*, 8 August 1896, p. 26.

[576] Avondale Asylum, Admissions Register 1896-1901, no. 2141, YCAA 1021/3, ANZ-A; *New Zealand Herald*, 22 September 1896, p. 3, 29 September 1896, p. 3.

[577] Avondale Asylum, Admissions Register 1896-1901, no. 2141, YCAA 1021/3, ANZ-A.

ago. Sustained an injury to his head by falling from his horse', and after suffering from a headache for two weeks, he had shot at his superior.[578] (Had he been drunk when he fell from the horse?)

When McKee was tried for attempted murder, Clough gave evidence that he 'always did his work well', and being 'very well satisfied with him', on the day of the shooting he had promoted him from messenger to assistant. McKee had seen £88 on the office table, and that evening lured Clough out of the office on the excuse that a man had had a fit. When the rifle was fired close to him, Clough asked McKee, 'What are you shooting at me like that for?', to which the latter replied, 'I did not know it was loaded'. When McKee was followed as he walked towards the river, he again fired at Clough, who in pushing the barrel avoided being hit. When the constable came on the scene, he considered that McKee was 'stark staring mad' because he was 'convulsed and bent himself up like a half-moon – in fact, he had never seen a man in such a state'.[579] After being locked up, McKee 'was convulsed every half hour' from 'severe shock'. The constable 'knew that at Volunteer banquets accused was inclined to imbibe too freely'.[580]

When the adjourned case was resumed, the Crown solicitor explained that it seemed McKee was 'pressed for money', having borrowed £5 which he could not repay. After Clough 'clutched McKee after the second shot was fired', he called out, 'Oh, Mr Clough, what have I done?' After being struck several times, 'McKee put his hand on his head and said, "Oh, my head, my head." Mr Clough saw a terrible change come over the young fellow's face then and thought he had gone mad'; his eyes 'rolled about and his features were contorted'. Clough understood that he had sustained a fractured skull when thrown from his horse about three months previously. The asylum records confirmed there was a depression on the skull where McKee complained of pain. His mother gave evidence of having noticed 'a difference in him some time prior to the shooting affair. His face would twitch at times, and he could not sleep at night'. During the month before the shooting occurred,

> she could not understand a silly look he had about his eyes. One night he came home looking strange and pressing his head with his two hands as if it were paining him. Sometimes he would come into the house and sit down and stare at the window. When witness called him, he would not answer. Subsequently she sat up with him on several nights. Each time he seemed to be suffering pain in his head. On one occasion the accused drove a party to the Thames but afterwards did not remember anything about it. Now he did

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[578] Avondale Asylum, Case Book 1896-1898, folio 43, YCAA 1048/7, ANZ-A.

[579] *New Zealand Herald*, 22 May 1897, p. 5.

[580] *Thames Advertiser*, 22 May 1897, p. 3.

> not recollect some things which happened before the shooting, and other things which had happened since.

The doctors stated that the depression in his temple could have created his homicidal mania. After being asked by the judge to consider whether they thought McKee was insane at the time of the shooting, they decided that he was, and he was sent back to the asylum, where he remained for five months before being released as recovered.[581]

No further attacks of madness were recorded, but in 1901 he was convicted at Waihi of stealing from a gum merchant, and, despite the magistrate's reluctance to imprison him because of his having been in the asylum, as his friends were unable to raise the sum of money required for restitution, he was sentenced to 12 months in prison.[582]

SUICIDE

In 1895, the *Observer* wrote that 'the suicide mania is still going on. There is no doubt it is a "perfect cure" for the troubles of this world. Whether it is so for those of the next is a moot point'.[583] Examples of attempted suicide are included in the paper on crime, and some examples of successful suicides are included in papers on men's lives.[584] The suicides of Jessie Smith and Elizabeth McLiver are included in the paper on women. There were several other suicides by those involved for a time in mining at Te Aroha, but as they did not live in this district these are not recorded.

In 1888, William Lincoln, a 50-year-old painter and glazier, committed suicide by jumping off the railway bridge and drowning. A single man, he had come to New Zealand in 1868 and had settled at Te Aroha before the goldfield opened.[585] At the inquest, a cabinetmaker stated Lincoln visited his workshop 'every day'.

> He last saw deceased about twenty minutes past four on Tuesday, when he came and picked up a sack off the workshop floor and cut it in half, at the same time he asked for a mattress needle and some twine, which witness brought; but declining to let him take the needle away, he left without making use of it. He saw him take down a piece of small rope from a post and carry it away when he left, only remaining about five minutes

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581 Supreme Court, *New Zealand Herald*, 10 June 1897, p. 3; Avondale Asylum, Admissions Register 1896-1901, no. 2234, YCAA 1021/3, ANZ-A.

582 *New Zealand Herald*, 10 April 1901, p. 7, 4 June 1901, p. 7, 10 June 1901, p. 7.

583 *Observer*, 21 December 1895, p. 7.

584 For example, papers on George Stewart O'Halloran and Charles Gallagher.

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

> altogether. He asked him what he intended to do with the sack, but he did not say. He appeared to have taken a little drink but was well able to take care of himself. He said to him, "Billy you've had a pint or two – take my advice and go to bed," to which he replied, "All right," and when he left went off towards his house. Witness recognised the piece of rope and half sack, produced (and which was round deceased's neck – the sack having a quantity of clay in it – when the body was recovered), as the same that he carried away…. He had a long conversation with deceased [on] Tuesday morning, and although he complained of dull times, he appeared to be in very good spirits; said he had got a job, and that a £1 would pay all he owed. Witness had known deceased as a resident at Te Aroha for the past ten years and previously at the Thames. He had no relatives in the Colony and was never married. He was fifty years of age. Deceased believed he had a brother living in London, never having heard of his death, but he had not heard from him for over twenty years; and did not know his address.

A merchant who had helped to recover the body had seen Lincoln before he took his life. 'He appeared as though he had taken a little drink but was quite capable of taking care of himself'. Two girls described seeing Lincoln 'climb over the railings of the bridge, on to one of the stringers, and after adjusting the rope and sack round his neck, let himself down, hang by his hands and then drop into the river'. Two flax mill workers had seen him hanging by his hands for 'about half a minute' before letting go and dropping into the river. Another saw him sitting on the bridge for about three minutes before letting himself down and hanging by his hands. 'Before he dropped, he appeared to try and draw himself up again'. The jury's unavoidable verdict was that Lincoln had drowned himself, without adding the usual caveat that he had done this 'while the balance of his mind was disturbed', although it must have been. No reason for the suicide was determined,[586] although relative poverty and being a single man who had lost contact with his family may have been factors.

CONCLUSION

During the early decades of Te Aroha and Waiorongomai, residents struggled with usually unpreventable physical problems and illnesses with little professional assistance. These problems were sometimes created or exacerbated by unsanitary habits, lack of pure water and sewerage, or, in the case of miners, some of the unavoidable conditions of their work. These experiences were typical of those endured by miners generally and of residents in other small towns and villages throughout the colony. Mental problems were believed by those treating them to have been created by disappointment in love, poor physical health, obsession, alcohol, religious mania and

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[586] *Te Aroha News*, 1 December 1888, p. 2.

other delusions, heredity, and financial worries; once again, these would have been typical for people living elsewhere.