

## JOHN BLACK AND ELIZABETH BLACK



*John Black and Elizabeth Black.*

*As the couple were born in 1786 and 1788 respectively this photograph is a remarkable piece of family history. We have no indication of the date or where the photograph was taken but New Zealand is the logical place due to its age.*

*Vincent Leonard collection.*

*During the 1960s, Chrissie Leonard, a great granddaughter of John and Elizabeth's was in contact with Willie Kerr, in Scotland and he sent her his recollections of the Black Family. Willie was Chrissie's 'half first cousin once removed'. As he was born in 1890 he would have had been told these stories by his mother or even his grandfather Thomas. We have been unable to validate some of the information he wrote; a few facts are incorrect and some we have yet to prove.*

## JOHN BLACK AND ELIZABETH BLACK

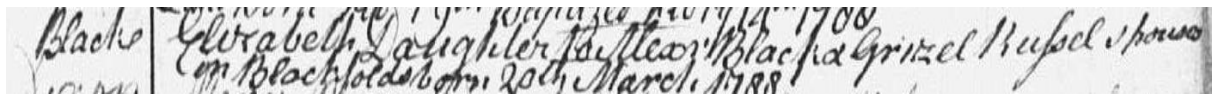
### JOHN BLACK

*Melodies and Memories* tells us that 'John Black, born in 1786, was the eldest son of John Black and Catherine Leckie and this family farmed Crooklands, Auchengray near Callacrofts'. The census records show John was born in the parish of West Calder so his birthplace was at his grandfather's property at Bushdyke, before his father took up a tenancy at Crooklands. The family worshipped at Longridge Freechurch and as these records are lost we cannot confirm this theory or provide his exact birth and baptism details.

Amazingly part of a letter written home to Scotland by John Black when he was 82 has survived. It shows he had a sound education as the spelling is generally good and the handwriting clear. The letter shown later, is a little disjointed but the one thing that shines through is his strong Christian faith. No doubt he read his Bible daily and knew many passages from memory.

### ELIZABETH BLACK

Elizabeth Black's birth was squeezed into the Whitburn parish records of 1788 stating she was the daughter of Alexander Black and Grizel Russell from Blackfaulds.



*Parish records - Whitburn.*

Black: Elizabeth, daughter of Alexander Black and Grizel Russell, spouses in Blackfaulds, born 20 March 1788.
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Whereas John was the son of a tenant farmer, Elizabeth's father was the owner and occupier of Blackfaulds.

### MARRIAGE AND CHILDREN

*Melodies and Memories* explains that:

John succeeded his father, having as wife his cousin, Elizabeth Black from Blackfaulds. They had a numerous family of both sexes. After leaving the farm, and staying some time in Longridge, the whole family emigrated to New Zealand about 1859.
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All three sentences in this extract are not quite accurate. The marriage probably took place in 1813 at Longridge Freechurch as the record cannot be found. John was 27 and Elizabeth 25 but they were more correctly first cousins once removed and yes John did eventually succeed his father and take over the lease at Crooklands. 'A numerous family' is difficult to quantify but we

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can account for nine possible children and these have been listed in the table below. The last statement that 'the whole family emigrated to New Zealand' is incorrect.

CHILDREN	BIRTH	EVIDENCE OF BIRTH	CAME TO NZ	EVIDENCE IN NZ
John	27 June 1814	Parish records and 1851 census.	1859 on the <i>Alpine</i>	Numerous and his death certificate.
Catherine (Kate)	abt 1815	No evidence she existed except from Willie Kerr's information.	Willie claimed Kate emigrated to NZ	None
Alexander	abt 1817	1841 census living at home.	Willie claimed Alexander emigrated to NZ	None
Grace (Girzy)	abt 1818	1851 census.	1872 on the <i>William Davie</i>	Obituary
Thomas	31 May 1819	Documented on all census records and his father's letter home.	No but two of his children did.	-
Mary	14 June 1824	Parish records and census records	1859 on the <i>Alpine</i>	Obituary
Elizabeth (Lizzie)	abt 1827	1841 census.	1859 on the <i>Alpine</i>	Numerous articles.
William	14 June 1829	1841 census and parish records.	1858 on the <i>Strathfieldsaye</i>	Death records and newspapers
James	About 1831	1841 census.	Willie claimed James emigrated to NZ.	None

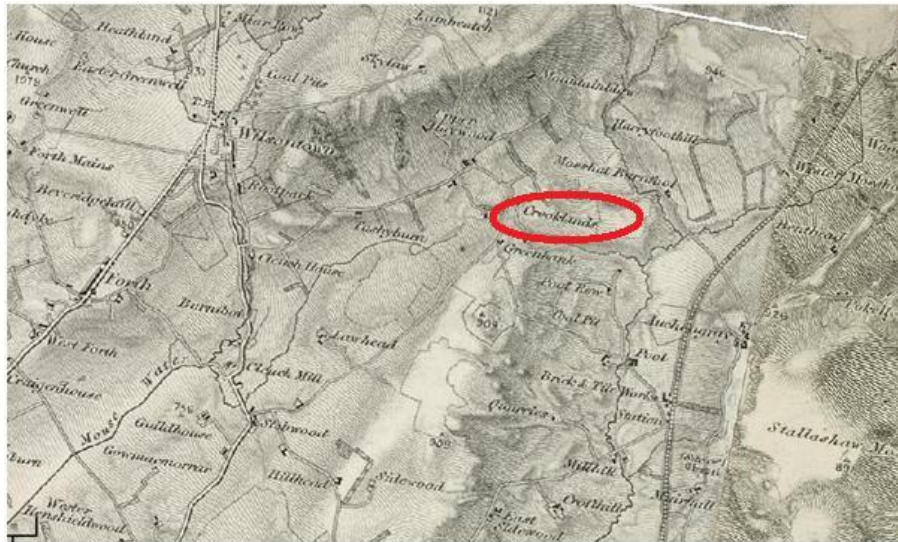


As expected the baptisms records are incomplete but indications are that all nine children were born at Crooklands in the parish of Carnwath.

Crooklands was very isolated and obviously unable to provide employment for all of John's siblings when their parents died. The land today is still impoverished and desolate and the surrounding district is home to many wind farms.

*Crooklands 2017.*

# JOHN BLACK AND ELIZABETH BLACK



*Crooklands in the parish of Carnwath.*

John's younger brother Thomas and his family were also living at Crooklands in 1841 and shown as a separate household, but by that time John and Elizabeth were in their fifties and only four of their children were still living at home.

CENSUS RECORD SHEET			
DISTRICT: Lanarkshire		YEAR 1841 (6 JUNE)	
LOCATION: Crooklands, Carnwath			
NAME	AGE	OCCUPATION	BORN AT:
John Black	54	farmer	Scotland
Elizabeth Black	53		Scotland
Alexander Black	23		Lanarkshire
Elizabeth Black	14		Lanarkshire
William Black	12		Lanarkshire
James Black	10		Lanarkshire
James Thomas	18	labourer	Scotland



*Crooklands 2017 – possibly the Black home.*

By 1851 John and Elizabeth had left Crooklands and were living a few miles away at Climpy. John's occupation had changed to agricultural labourer. Willie claimed that John and Elizabeth

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left the farm when their home burnt to the ground. We assume, as they were tenant farmers, there was no incentive to remain and they probably lost everything in the blaze. In 1851 the farm was being run by David Balantyne who claimed Crooklands was 180 acres so this may give an idea of the farm size when John and his brother Thomas Black were there.

CENSUS RECORD SHEET				
DISTRICT: Lanarkshire			YEAR 1851 (30 MARCH)	
LOCATION: Climpy, Carnwath				
NAME	DESIG	AGE	OCCUPATION	BORN AT:
John Black	head	64	Ag lab	Westcalder, Midlothian
Eliza Black	wife	63		Whitburn, Linlithgow
John Black	son	36	Ironstone miner	Carnwath, Lanark
Eliz Black	daug	24		Carnwath, Lanark
William Black	son	22	Ironstone miner	Carnwath, Lanark
Plus 2 boarders	boarder			



The village of Climpy was built to accommodate workmen following the discovery of ironstone in the area. Although John was working as a farm labourer, his sons John and William were miners along with at least one of the family's boarders. We suspect times were tough if they were taking in lodgers and realistically houses were small so there would have been many to a bedroom.

*These houses in Climpy were built for the miners by the Wilson Brothers around 1798.*

Returning to *Melodies and Memories* we had read that 'After leaving the farm, and staying some time in Longridge, the whole family emigrated to New Zealand about 1859.' Longridge was the village near Whitburn where the Blacks worshipped and close to where Elizabeth grew up. We know they were there by 1855 as the Whitburn church records for that year show the birth dates and baptisms of sons John and William when they were 41 and 26 respectively. The registers do not claim these births occurred in that parish but record correctly their occurrence in the parish of Carnwath some twelve miles away. Also recorded was John and Elizabeth's grandson (also John) the son of Thomas Black and Margaret Crawford. He was nine; his mother had died and his father had remarried so John must have gone to live with his paternal grandparents.

### **Whitburn Parish Registers (all dated 1855)**

William son of John Black and Elizabeth Black spouses of Crooklands, parish of Carnwath was born 14 June 1829 and baptized.

John son of John Black and Elizabeth Black spouses of Crooklands, parish of Carnwath was born 27 June 1814 and baptized.

John son of Thomas Black and Margaret Crawford spouses of Carluke, parish of Carnwath was born 18 June 1846 and baptized.

Our only explanation for these belated entries, all made on the same day, involves the family's emigration to New Zealand. Willie believed they received financial support from the Free Kirk of Scotland to assist with their passage. Eligibility may have required membership of the parish. William left for New Zealand three years after the entries were made and the two Johns sailed the year after William.

## NEW ZEALAND

When we read the last sentence from *Melodies and Memories* we visualise nine little children clutching their parents as they sailed forth to the other side of the world. The real story is quite different and currently we can prove that only five of the nine children came to New Zealand and even then they came on three different ships. More importantly John and Elizabeth were in their seventies when they immigrated to New Zealand so all their children, if still alive, were adults in 1859.

Realistically it is unlikely that John and Elizabeth were the instigators of the resettlement to New Zealand. William would have written home to his siblings and encouraged them to come and John, Elizabeth and Mary were probably reluctant to leave their elderly parents behind. There is a sense from the 1868 letter that the Blacks were coming to the 'Promised Land' and there was an almost biblical element to the journey.

We have transcribed Willie's notes which, as already stated, are unproven but smile at the crossing out!

They emigrated to New Zealand in 1859 with the following members of their family:- (~~impossible as he would be 73~~). John, Alexander, James, Kate, Mary, Elizabeth, leaving the eldest son Thomas and a daughter Grace (known to the family as Girsy) in Scotland.

Of those remaining, Thomas was not the eldest and Grace did emigrate but much later; William, who was the first to leave, was missing from Willie's list altogether and we have no evidence that Alexander, James and Kate ever left Scotland. Realistically we now believe that these three died before their parents left Scotland. The family retained strong links over several generations and over the oceans and no knowledge existed of them in New Zealand, and Thomas's descendants didn't know of their existence in Scotland and nor did John Black of *Melodies and Memories* fame. Despite this, twelve known members of the Black family, covering three generations, were included in the '500 souls on board' the *Alpine* that left from Clyde on 10 June 1859. Stories from the Scottish branch tell us that also on board was Robbie Burn's nephew, possibly a minister but he is not evident on the passenger list.

The *Alpine* landed at Port Chalmers three months later on 12 September. The *Otago Witness* bears out their arrival with an entry for John Black and Mrs Black their 34-year-old daughter Mary and

her husband William Walker, the Walker's four surviving sons and two other grandchildren, Jessie and John Black who were Thomas's children. John aged thirteen and Jessie aged eight, were recorded as children of the Walkers. As already noted, their mother had died and their father Thomas remarried and remained in Scotland with his new family. Their story is told in another document.

Two more of John and Elizabeth's adult children were on the boat but were recorded either deliberately or by error as a second 'John Black and wife'. Evidence will show that these were John and Elizabeth's unmarried children, also named John and Elizabeth, aged 45 and 32 respectively. Married couples were preferred emigrants and their ages may have made emigration to New Zealand more difficult, especially as the second and third generation were likely assisted emigrants. John we assume was the '1 miner' listed in the *Otago Witness*. Another passenger by the name of James M'Conie was identified and he enters our story later.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> An Ann Black was also on board with her four daughters and she gave birth to a son during the journey. The baby was named Alpine Crawford Cochrane Black, after the ship, the captain, the doctor, and the parents. There does not seem to be any connection to our Blacks. The Dunedin Settlers Museum says there was a seaman called John Black on board the *Alpine* but he had the middle name Duncan and it is believed this was Ann's husband.

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THE OTAGO WITNESS.

DUNEDIN, SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 17, 1859.

Shipping News.

ARRIVED.

Sept. 13.—*Seblim*. 111 tons. Lumber, 620 feet timber, 51,700 feet palings, 31,000 shingles, 620 posts and rails, 98 cases brandy, 2 cases thimbles, 24 barrels and 1 cask oatmeal, 2 boxes, 3 casks, and 1 crate crockery.

September 11.—“*Alpine*,” 1164 tons, R. Crawford, from Glasgow, with 90 casks beer, 1 hhd. ale, 16 casks bottled beer, 69,450 railway chairs, 1 cask and 1 bundle wire, 10 coils cordage, 1 cask blocks, 1 bale sail-cloth, 1 cask tinware, 1 box blacksmiths tools, 10 boxes, 1 roll, and 1 bale stationery, 1 box drawers, 1 cask soda, 2 casks molasses, 2 casks tar, 6 bags nills, 16 bundles spades, 1 cask putty, 4 casks ovens, 35 bars iron, 5 boxes boots, 3 carts, 9 pair wheels, 9 axes, 1 box blacking, 2 casks scythe stones, 2464 flooring boards, 45 drums oil, 60 bags salt, 2 pkgs. mangles, 1 chaff-utter, 8 casks paint, 1 gig, 72 boxes, 54 bales, 2 casks, 5 cases, and 3 pkgs. merchandise, 2 hhds. and 3 casks wine, 5 hhds. and 14 casks brandy, 6 casks whisky. Passengers—*Cabin*: Charles J. Taylor, G. H. Munro, Wm. A. Yule, Wm. Hall, Jas. H. Sutter, Mrs. Sutter, W. H. Davidson, Archd. W. R. Davidson, William Hussey, James Rolland, Mrs. Rolland, William, Rebecca, Eliza H. Adam, James H., Wm. S., and R. Rolland. *Intermediate and Steerage*:—Robert Aitken; Mary, Barbara, Betty, and Janet Allan; Thos. Brown, wife, daughter, and two sons; Wm. Allison, David Aitchison, Robert Boag and wife, Barbara Boag, Ann Black and four daughters, Archibald Brown, wife, son, and daughter, James Buchan, wife, and child, George Brown, wife, two sons and two daughters, James Cameron and wife, Martin Campbell, wife, and two sons, John, Alison, and Margaret Cochrane, John Davidson, wife, and child, Alexr. Duguid, Alexr. Frew, wife, and two daughters, John Fleming, wife, and child, Thomas Gordon, Robert Gray and wife, Jas. Gavin, Millar Gilchrist, two sons and two daughters, Donald Gordon, Mary and John Gordon, Edward Gibbs, John Hutton, Matthew Martin, Jas. Hynd, John Harvie, Alex. Isdale, wife, and son, Wm. Justice, wife, son, and daughter, Thos. Johnstone, Andrew Kinninmouth, James Keir, wife, son, and daughter, Alex. Kinloch, Andrew Lindsay, wife, and daughter, Jas. Mills, wife, and two sons, Ann Meikle, Wm. Moir, Robert Murdoch, wife, five sons, and daughter, David Marchbanks, wife, and child, Alex. Mathieson, Daniel Munro, wife, and daughter, Donald M'Lennan, James M'Gregor, wife, two sons, and daughter, John, Alexander, Kenneth, Ann, and Sarah M'Donald, John M'Ara, Dugald M'Millan, Alex. M'Gregor, Angus Mackinnon, two sons and daughter, James Mackay, Archibald M'Intyre, Alexander M'Naughton, wife, son and daughter, John M'Donald and wife, Henry Potter, wife, two sons and daughter, Thos. Park, wife, son, and three daughters, William Patterson, wife, four sons and daughter, Wm. Parker, wife, two sons and daughter, Duncan Robertson, wife, son and daughter, Margaret and Susan Robertson, Thos. Seal, Jane

Wm. Smith, William, Ann, Elizabeth, and Agnes Strachan, Jas. D. Sibbald, Wm. Smith, George and Robert Sutherland, Richard Thomson, James Tannock, wife, son, and two daughters, Susan Turner, George Thomson, Thomson Wilson, C. R. Walker, David Whittock, wife, three sons and five daughters, Robert Wilson, Mary Westland, Andw. Lees, Janet and Margaret Dow, David Dow, wife, two sons and daughter, Alexander Birss, Edward Todd, wife, two sons and daughter, Adam Bell, wife, four sons and daughter, Isaac and Hugh Marwick, John Mainland, John Reid, Hugh Yorstan, wife, three sons and three daughters, Archibald M'Coll, wife, five sons and two daughters, James Corbett, Elizabeth, Catherine, and Johan Calder, John Loftus and wife, Duncan M'Donald, Wm. Tweedie, wife, six sons and two daughters, William Farquharson, William Clark and wife, Allan Marshall, wife, son and two daughters, Anthony Milligan, Wm. Cameron, John Black and wife, William Walker, wife, five sons and two daughters, John Black and wife, Peter Dick, wife, son, and daughter, Wm. Asher, Walter Park and wife, Jas. Petrie and wife, Walter, William, Robert, Jane, and Agnes Watson, James Leith, Robert M'Gillivray and wife, Thos. Waugh and wife, Christiana Dods, Malcolm M'Lean, Andrew Adams and wife, James, Jane, and Andrew Adams, Wm. Gray, Peter Hunter, James Marshall, wife, three sons and three daughters, Wm. Diack, Margaret Ginnings, Wm. Galbraith, Amelia, Edward, Isabella, James, and Amelia Provost, Peter Stewart, Thos. Bryce, wife, six sons and daughter, Wm. Turnbull, Chas. Campbell, wife, two sons and six daughters, Janet M'Lucas, Alex. M'Lean, wife, two sons and daughter, Jas. Florence, John Geary, wife, and child, James Wallace and wife, Daniel Gillies, wife, son, and daughter, William Dunlop, Wm. Calder, James Dixon, Mrs. John Carruth and daughter, Margaret Simpson, James Paul, James Hamilton, Wm. Blackwood, wife, and 5 daughters Richard Blackwood, Mrs. Jean Sinclair, Jean, Mary, and Charles Sinclair, Archibald Carrick, Archibald Haddo, John Murray, Robert M'Lew, James M'Conie, James Crossgrove, wife, and three sons, Elizabeth Dickie, Alexander Calder, John Millar, wife, three sons and three daughters, James M'Indoe, wife, two sons and daughter, Wm. G. Jenkins, John M'Farlane and wife, Elizabeth M'Bain, Arthur Calder, Margaret Strachan, Alex. and James Begg, Chas. Wallace, Emanuel Turner, William Gowans and wife, Duncan, Wm. Smith, and Agnes Gowans, Janet Knox, two sons and daughter, M. Calder and wife, J. Bennett, Catherine M'Millan.

The above list includes 22 carpenters, 6 blacksmiths, 1 cabinetmaker, 1 miller, 1 miner, 2 masons, 1 teacher, 1 saddler, 1 shoemaker, 4 gardeners, 17 farmers, 41 ploughmen, 11 shepherds, 32 labourers, 4 dressmakers, and 33 domestic servants.

SUMMARY.

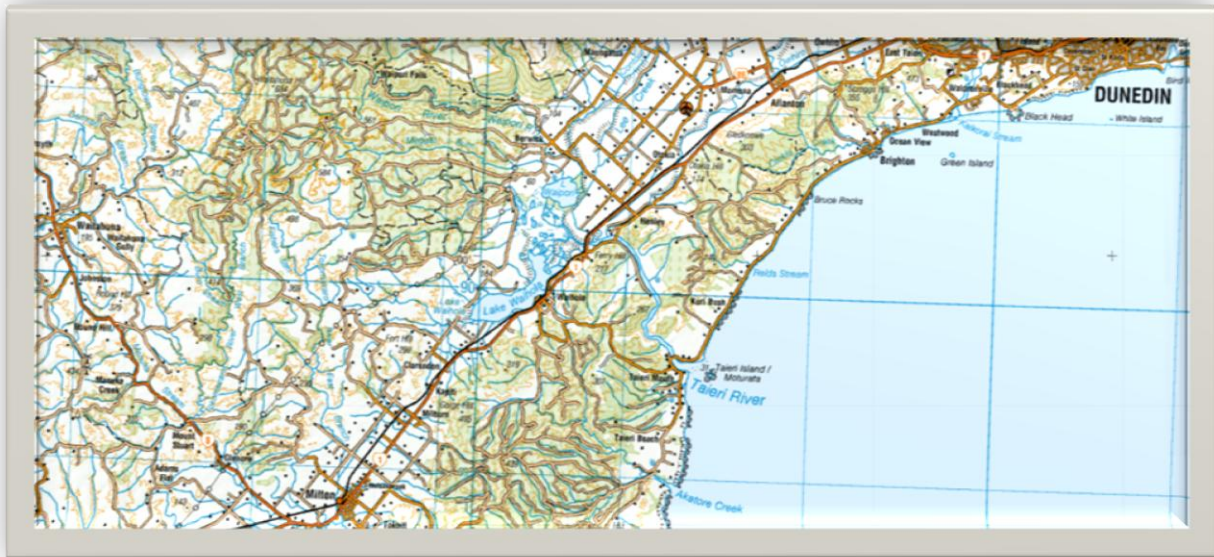
Adults (65 Married couples)	130
Single Males of 12 years and upwards	116
Single Females do. do.	56
Male children under 12 years of age	85
Female children do. do.	73
	460
Equal to (adults)	358

Otago Witness - The Ann Black highlighted is not related.



## TOKOMAIRO - MILBURN

*Brave Days* had already told us that one of John and Elizabeth's sons had previously immigrated to New Zealand and as stated this was William. The extract (shown later in the chapter) tells us the Blacks left the ship at Port Chalmers and travelled to Milburn where William was farming on the Tokomairiro Plains, his property we learn later was a quarter mile south of the Milburn railway station on the main road and named Newhouse Farm.



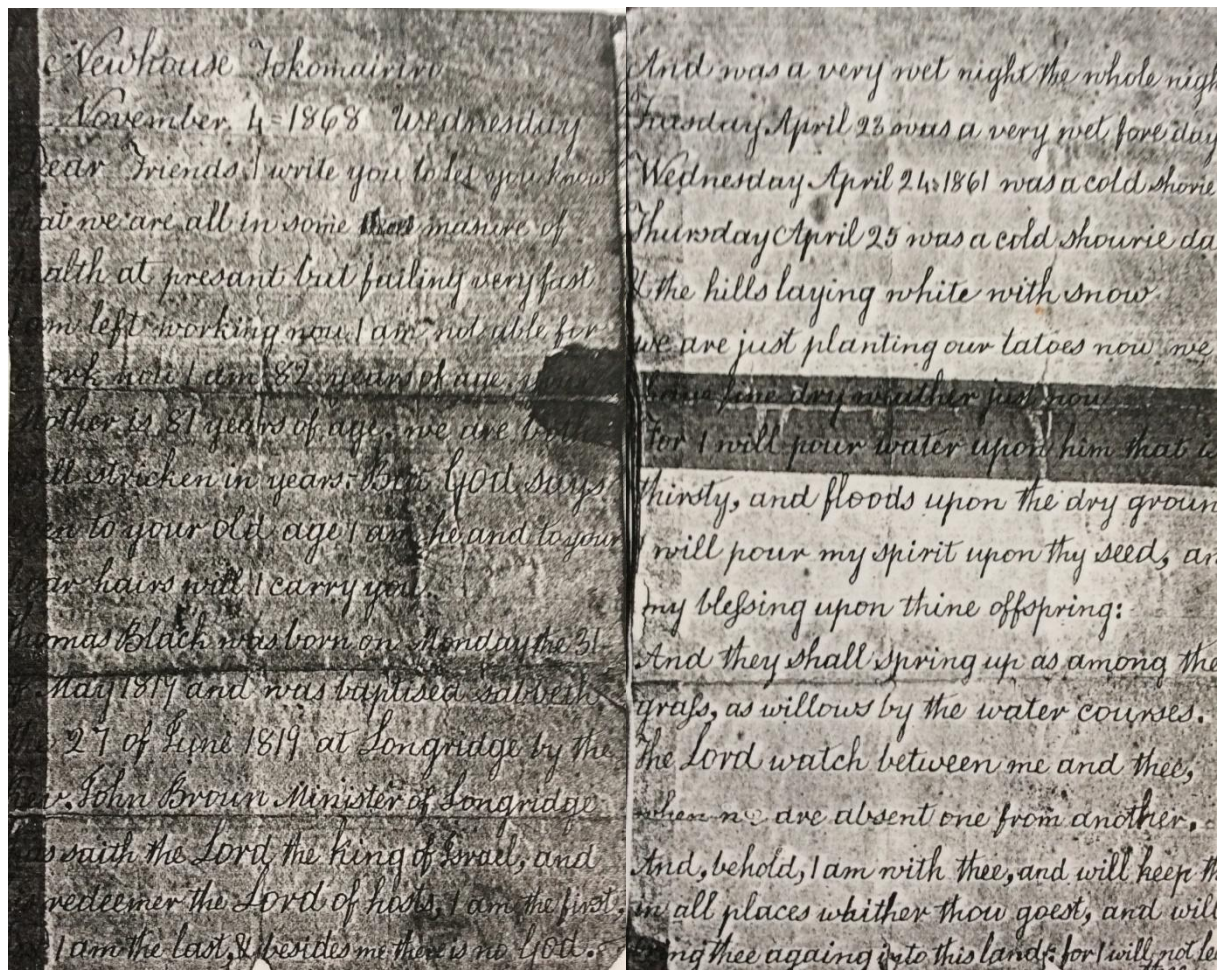
*Dunedin is at the top right, Waitahuna (previously Havelock) at the middle left and the Tokomairiro Plains lie between Milton (previously known as Tokomairiro) and Milburn. William's farm was a quarter of a mile south of Milburn.*

Joining William acquiring farming properties on the Tokomairiro Plains was his oldest brother John and his brother-in-law William Walker. John and Elizabeth must have felt that their family was finally settled on the other side of the world. All this was to change with the discovery of gold at Gabriel's Gully in May 1861. In no time the family were separated when their son John and the Walkers quickly joined the throng taking with them their grandchildren Jessie and young John Black. William appears not to have been afflicted with gold fever as he remained in Milburn with his parents and sister Elizabeth. It wasn't long before she too left when she married James McOnie in July 1861.

When the Walkers left their farm, John and Elizabeth may have taken up residence on the property. When the land was finally offered for sale in November 1862, interested parties were requested to 'Apply to Mr JOHN BLACK, on the premises or to Mr WM. WALKER, Waitahuna.' After the property sold they probably moved in with William at Newhouse Farm.

Life changed again for John and Elizabeth when William died unexpectedly in February 1867. No death certificate means we are unsure of the cause and he also had no will so John was left to run the farm and settle William's estate; information about this follows.

The letter referred to earlier was written in November 1868 by John to his son Thomas in Scotland and is transcribed below. Only half survived and was in the possession of Robin Aitken in Scotland, a descendant of Thomas.



Photocopy of an incomplete letter written by John Black to his son Thomas and other friends in Scotland.

Newhouse Tokomairiro

November 4 1868

Dear Friends. I write you to let you know that we are all in some measure of health at present but failing very fast. I am left working now I am not able for work now I am 82 years of age. Your Mother is 81 years of age. We are both well stricken in years. But God says even to your old age and I am he and to your hoar (grey) hairs will I carry you.

Thomas Black was born on Monday the 31st May 1819 and was baptised Sabbath the 27 of June 1819 at Longridge by the Rev. John Brown Minister of Longridge. Thus saith the Lord the king of Israel, and his redeemer the Lord of hosts, I am the first and I am the last, beside me there is no God

**Page 2 missing.**

And was a very wet night the whole night. Thursday April 23 was a very wet fare day. Wednesday April 24 1861 was a cold shorie day. All the hills laying white with

snow. We are just planting our tatoes now. We have fine dry weather just now. For I will pour water upon him that is thirsty and floods upon the dry ground: I will pour my spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring: And they shall spring up as among the grass as willows by the water courses. The Lord watch between me and thee and when we are absent one from another. And behold I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest and will bring thee again into this land for I will not leave thee

**Page 4 missing.**

From the letter it appears that the elderly couple were by now suffering ill health and unsurprisingly unable to work. We are not sure why John described the weather on a day, three years before he wrote this letter.

## WAITAHUNA

### **Bruce Herald**

**5 January 1870**

FRIDAY, 7th JANUARY, 1870,

At 1 o'clock.

VALUABLE FREEHOLD FARM,  
HORSES, CATTLE,  
GROWING CROPS, Se., &c.

R W. CAPSTICK has received instructions from the proprietor to sell by public auction, on the ground, on Friday, the 7th January, at 1 o'clock,

That valuable property known as "Newhouse Farm," situate on the Main South' Road, and being directly opposite the residence of W. Black, Esq., Milburn, being sections 21 and 22, Block III Tokomairiro, containing by admeasurement 105 acres (more or less), all fenced and under cultivation; together with Dwelling-house and all other buildings thereon.

Immediately after the sale of the above, the whole of the Horses, Cattle, Carts Ploughs, Harrows, Growing Crops, &c, &c., will be also sold.

For further particulars apply to Mr Capstick, the Auctioneer.

Terms Liberal.

Despite being in their eighties, the couple held on to Newhouse Farm for a year after William had died. It was not until January 1870 that the property was advertised for sale. We cannot help but wonder who had been planting crops and doing much of the physical work in the interim. John and Elizabeth had been living at Tokomairiro for over eleven years and would have been well established in the community including regular attendances at the local Presbyterian Church.

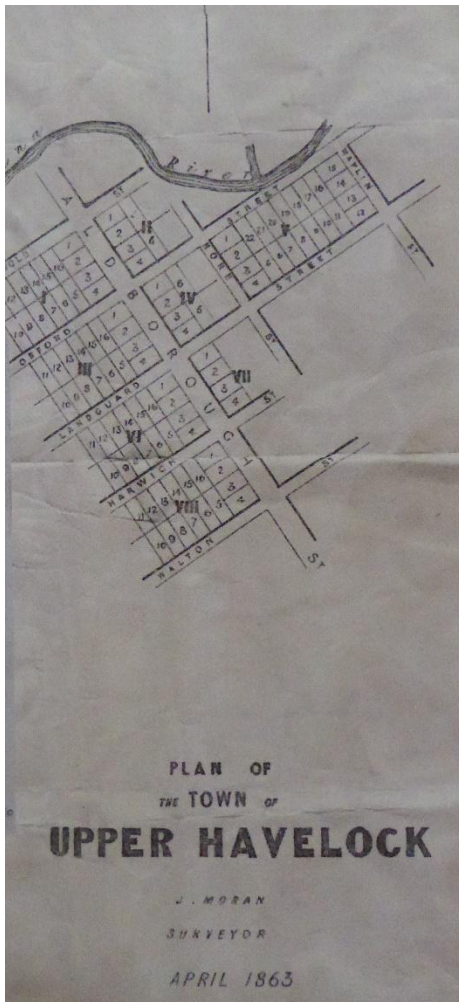
With Newhouse Farm sold the couple went to live at Waitahuna Gully. Logically one might have thought they had gone to live with Mary but the Walkers had by now left the goldfields for a farm in Balclutha. Instead we find them living with their eldest son John and their daughter Elizabeth McOnie. Elizabeth had either been widowed or abandoned and had moved to the goldfields with her small child Mary; probably to keep house for her brother. By the time John and Elizabeth had arrived at the Gully things had become more civilised with a school (1863) a bank (1862) church services (1862) and an Athenaeum and a library

(1870). Conditions however would have been harsh and the area was totally barren from seven years of gold digging. The following is from *Waitahuna Memories* page 25.

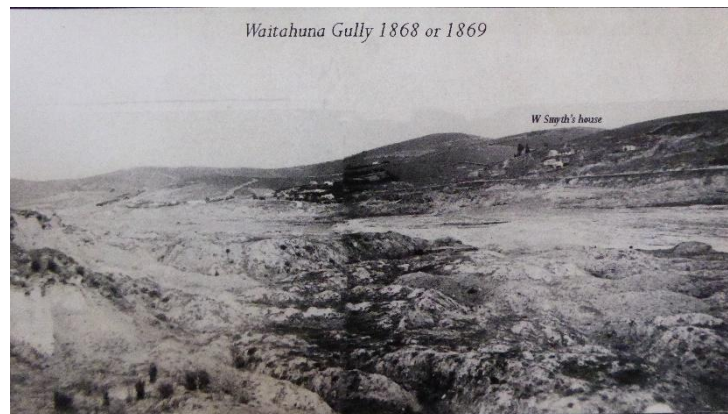
In the early months following the discovery of gold, the Gully must have presented a picturesque and animated scene. Up and down its whole length, hundreds of miners

toiled with pick and shovel as they sand to bedrock, treating the wash in the tin dish, cradle or sluice box whenever water was available... Scores of tents dotted the higher ground and here and there sod huts gave their industrious owner a greater degree of shelter. Liquor provisions and general merchandise were sold from frame and calico building but these were soon replaced by more permanent structures of wood and iron. ... A little township sprung up in the vicinity ... and contained at least five hotels and a number of stores ministering to the needs of the busy community.

On the flat, about five kilometres from the Gully, a small township had been created on the main road called Havelock, but as there were already two settlements in New Zealand by that name, it was changed to Waitahuna and remains that to this day. To try to distinguish between the two geographic areas, Havelock has been used throughout this document to refer to the township. It is not known when Havelock officially became Waitahuna but we now realise that most of the early references to Waitahuna actually refer to the Gully and not the Havelock township.



Nothing remains of the Waitahuna Gully settlement today the bush has regenerated and there is no historical signage. The township of Havelock is in its major death throes: there still remain a number of dwellings and a community hall but all three churches have been decommissioned and two are currently private homes.



*The map of Waitahuna Gully (surveyed as Upper Havelock) was located at the Lawrence Museum. The section where the Walker's Hotel was situated was identified on a side paper but was inadvertently cut off when taking the photograph.*

## DEATH AND BURIAL

John died on 27 June 1870. Although the death certificate states he died at Waitahuna (Havelock) it seems it was at the Gully. He was described on his death certificate as a farmer aged 83. The informant was Henry Adamson the licensee of the Diggers Arms Hotel situated in the Gully.

27 <sup>th</sup> June Waitahuna	John Black	Male	83 years	Farmer	Old Age	Henry Adamson Waitahuna	27 <sup>th</sup> June 1870	Dennis Black
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Death certificate – John Black.

### Evening Star

7 July 1870

Mr **John Black**, one of the oldest settlers in the Tokomairiro plains, died on the 27<sup>th</sup> ult. at his residence Waitahuna, at the advanced age of 84. The deceased was well known in that district and was generally respected.

An obituary in the *Evening Star*, a Dunedin newspaper confirmed John had been a long-standing resident of Tokomairiro.

A year after John died his daughter Grace Shanks arrived from Scotland on 5 July 1872. It should be noted that in a list of old identities in *Waitahuna Memories* ‘John Black, Mrs Shanks and Mrs

McCownie’ are mentioned together but no reference was made to the fact that they were siblings. It is assumed they were living in the same house, as the writer was naming those who he could remember residing in the Gully in geographical order.

Three months after Grace's arrival Elizabeth died on 7 October 1872 aged 85 years. The informant was ‘Mary McCouney granddaughter of deceased’. Mary was only eight years old!

When Died and Where	Name and Surname	Sex	Age	Rank or Profession	Cause of Death	Signature, District, and Residence of Informant	When Reported	Signature of Registrar
7 Oct 1872 Waitahuna	Elizabeth Black	Female	85 years	Wife of Farmer	Old age and debility	Mary McCouney Grand daughter of deceased	8 October 1872	D. Black

Death certificate – Elizabeth Black.

The headstone at Waitahuna Cemetery reads:

John Black died July 1870 aged 84 years also Elizabeth Black his wife died Oct 1872 aged 85 years. Also their children John, Grace and Elizabeth.

As we don't know John's birth date we cannot state his exact age but we do note his death certificate states he was 83 and his headstone and obituary states he was 84 (he died in June not July). Elizabeth was 84 and not 85 as recorded. Three of their children share their grave and more detailed information about them follows.

It is important to note that John and Elizabeth's grandchildren remained in close contact with each other for many years, as did at least one branch in Scotland. Postcards addressed to Jessie Aitken, daughter of Jessie Black remain in the family and although some are just signed ‘your

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loving cousin', we can identify amongst the senders, Jean Black, Olive Walker from Gore and Minnie who was Mary Walker's granddaughter.<sup>2</sup>



*Sacred to the Memory of John Black who died July 1870 aged 84 years; also Elizabeth Black his beloved wife who died October 1872 aged 85 years; also their children John, Grace and Elizabeth.*

*And*

*John beloved husband of Agnes Black aged 80 years also Agnes beloved wife of above died 16 Aug 1827 aged 87 years.*

*(John, the grandson of John and Elizabeth and his wife Agnes are discussed in another document.)*

*Robyn Spurdle collection.*

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<sup>2</sup> Minnie was Mary Maria Harriet Walker daughter of Lewis Walker. She married John Henry McMath in 1909 and lived in Balfour.

## CHILDREN OF JOHN BLACK AND ELIZABETH BLACK

### JOHN BLACK

John, the eldest child was born at Crooklands, Carnwath on 27 June 1814; the date was entered in the Whitburn parish records when he was an adult. In 1841 he was living in Cambusnethan with a paternal aunt, Mary Black and her husband Daniel Gardner, employed as a servant. He was back living with his parents in 1851; his occupation was by then an ironstone miner. He was 44 when he came to New Zealand and his arrival in 1859 was confirmed on his death certificate. The informant was his nephew who was a passenger also. We believe he was listed on the *Alpine* passenger list as 'John Black and his wife' and as explained his 'wife' was his sister Elizabeth. John never married and his sister Grace confirmed this in the letters of administration on his death.

#### **Evening Star**

**5 July 1910**

ON THE ROAD TO GABRIEL'S IN 1861  
AND SOME OF THE OLD LANDMARKS.

There were six in our party: the late George Walker (of Clark's Flat). Thomas Brown, James M'Laren, my brother Alexander Blair (still alive at East Taieri), my brother Robert, and myself. I was a lad of seventeen.

We started from the Taieri and one of the first stopping places was Springbank, at an old house that was pulled down years ago to make way for a newer building which is a monument to the enterprise of the late Alexander Callender. .... Then we arrived at Dawson's, in the Tokomairiro Gorge, and some of the children—Freddie and Bennie—came around us and wanted to know if we were for the diggings, and would bring back some gold and let them see it. .... Let me mention some of the earliest parties on the ground... From Tokomairiro there was the party of John Black, owner of the Milburn farm, and also the parties to which J. L. Gillies and Hardy (Gabriel Read's master) belonged....

John went firstly to Tokomairiro with the rest of the family and in no time had applied for land. The *Otago Witness* dated 31 March 1860 listed all the applicants and we find John had applied to run 100 cattle in the Waihola District. Results of the applications were promised in April but were not published. In 1866 we have confirmation of John's success as the *Bruce Herald* dated 25 January 1866, shows both John and William had land in the 'Hundred of Waihola' and the same publication dated 12 April 1866 shows John Black had the right to run 100 cattle and his brother William 394. However in the interim John had left for Gabriel's Gully when gold was discovered in 1861 and this was confirmed by a newspaper article dated

1910 headed 'On the Road to Gabriel's in 1861'. It also confirms John was a farmer. We believe while John was on the goldfields he farm was being run by his brother William and his father.

John's time at the Gabriel's claim was short-lived as he was found on the list of preferred voters for the Bruce District; the 'right was dated 14th November 1861' and he gave his address as Wetherstones Gully and his occupation as a miner. By this date there were 1,500 miners at Wetherstones Gully but all but two had left by the following year. From there he moved like most of the miners to Waitahuna Gully. He retained his land rights in Tokomairiro until at least 1866 according to the newspapers. We have already explained that in 1870 his parents came to live with him and his sister Elizabeth who we believe was housekeeping for him. In 1881 he was found on the electoral roll as a labourer and freeholder, owning Sections 1-7 and 14-20 of Block XXI in the Havelock township.

DEATH AND BURIAL

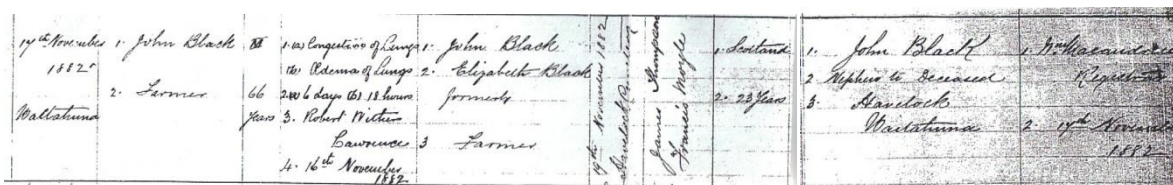
John died at Waitahuna on 17 November 1882 and was described as a farmer aged 66. The informant was his nephew John who was identified as a resident of Havelock so we wonder if John had remained living in the Gully, despite his land purchase in the township.

**Otago Witness**  
**2 December 1882**

...and yet another death, that of **John Black**, who though 66 years of age was hale and strong to a remarkable degree and whose death was painfully sudden. He had taken a slight cold, which turned to inflammation of the lungs and after an illness of only four days he expired. Deceased was buried on Sunday and the remains were followed to the grave by a large number of friends.

John's death was reported in the *Otago Witness* somewhat belatedly. He died intestate and letters of administration were located at the Dunedin Archives office. Sworn statements from various people stated there was no more than £75 in his estate. The term 'farmer' may have been used loosely as only small sections were mentioned in the documents and as all family had left the Tokomairiro Plains we assume any land concessions he laid claim to in that area had

long since lapsed.



Death certificate - John Black.

**Tuapeka Times**  
**23 May 1894**

SATURDAY, 26th MAY, 1894,  
At two o'clock, ,

JOHN THOMPSON has received instructions from the Executrix in the Estate of the late **John Black** to sell by auction at his Rooms, Lawrence— The following Freehold Sections in the Town of Havelock: —

Lot 1—Comprising Sections 1, 3 to 7, and 14 to 19, inclusive, Block XXI.

Lot 2 — Sections 8 and 9, Block XVII.

WITHOUT RESERVE.

The sections in Havelock were finally put up for sale nearly twelve years after his death. It seems hard to believe that John's estate took so long to settle but the facing article dated 1894 shows this was the case.

As noted earlier John was buried with his parents.



In the Supreme Court of New Zealand }  
Otago and Southland District }

In the goods of John Black late of  
Waikahuna in the Colony of New Zealand.  
Settler Deceased intestate

- I Grace Shanks of Waikahuna aforesaid Widow make oath and say
1. That I knew the said John Black when alive and that the said John Black was my brother. \_\_\_\_\_
  2. That the said John Black died at Waikahuna aforesaid on or about the 17<sup>th</sup> day of November - 1882. \_\_\_\_\_
  3. That the said John Black was <sup>F.O.</sup> my brother never married. \_\_\_\_\_
  4. That I have searched among the effects of the said John Black but have found no will or testamentary disposition of his property made by him and that I verily believe the said John Black has died intestate
  5. That to the best of my knowledge information and belief the estate effects and credits of the said deceased to be administered by me are under the value of seventy five pounds. \_\_\_\_\_
  6. That I will exhibit unto this Court a true full and perfect inventory of all the estate effects and credits of the deceased on or before the first day of September one thousand eight hundred and eighty four and that I will file a true account of my administration on or before the first day of September one thousand eight hundred and eighty <sup>F.O.</sup> four. \_\_\_\_\_

Sworn at Waikahuna aforesaid there being no qualified Solicitor or Registrar of the Supreme Court Grace Shanks resident within five miles this 31<sup>st</sup> day of

May 1884. Before me.

James Ondaile  
J.P.

A Justice of the Peace in and for the Colony of New Zealand

Letters of administration - John Black's estate.

## CATHERINE (KATE) BLACK

Willie claimed the eldest daughter of John and Elizabeth was Catherine, known as Kate and she too came to New Zealand. John's mother was Catherine so this was a probable name for his daughter but a birth cannot be found that fits around 1816. No marriage is located either and she wasn't on the 1841 census. It is possible she had married by then and was even a passenger on the *Alpine* but as we do not know whom she married it is difficult to tell.<sup>3</sup> We can find therefore no evidence of her in New Zealand, nor for that matter in Scotland either.

## GRACE (GIRZY) BLACK AND WILLIAM SHANKS

### GRACE (GIRZY) BLACK

Most documents suggest Grace was born around 1818 in the Parish of Carnwath. She was known by the family as Girzy and was working as a female servant in the home of the Hamilton family at Haywoodhead, Carnwath on the night of the 1841 census.

### WILLIAM SHANKS

William was born (or baptised) on 10 February 1793 in New Monkland, Lanarkshire.

### MARRIAGE

Girzy married William Shanks in Bothwell, Lanarkshire on 4 June 1848 when she was about 30. William was a farmer in his fifties about 25 years older than Girzy. The couple were found on the 1851 census living at Newarthill, a mining village in the parish of Bothwell. No children have been found for them.

CENSUS RECORD SHEET					
DISTRICT Lanarkshire			YEAR 1851 (30 MARCH)		
LOCATION: Bothwell					
ADDRESS: Newarthill					
NAME	DESIG	STATUS	AGE	OCCUPATION	BORN AT:
William Shanks	Head		55	Farmer	New Monkland Lanark
Grace Shanks	wife		37	Farmers wife	Carnwath, Lanarkshire
John Shanks	brother		57	Farm servant	New Monkland Lanark
Plus ten others					

On the 1861 census we find their name written as 'Shank' and their ages lowered. During the ten-year period William had aged only aged four years and Grace six. Living with them was Grace's niece, Grace Black and a servant James Prentice who young Grace married a few weeks later. The location of Yett Farm is a more precise description of their residence in Newarthill.

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<sup>3</sup> On the *Strathfieldsaye* was a William Fraser and his wife from Whitburn but there is no evidence that this is Kate.

JOHN BLACK AND ELIZABETH BLACK

CENSUS RECORD SHEET				
DISTRICT Lanarkshire			YEAR 1861 (7 APRIL)	
LOCATION: Bothwell				
ADDRESS: Yett Farm, Hamilton and Edinburgh Road				
NAME	DESIG	AGE	OCCUPATION	BORN AT:
William Shank	Head	59	Farmer	New Monkland Lanark
Grace Shank	Wife	43	Farmers wife	Carnwath, Lanarkshire
Janet Shanks	Visitor	18		Morton, Dumfries
Grace Black	Niece	17	Farmers niece	Carluke, Lanarkshire
James Prentice	Servant	24	Ploughman	Carluke, Lanarkshire

In 1871 the couple were still at Yett Farm (which was transcribed incorrectly on *Ancestry* as Gett, along with William's occupation which is impossible to entangle). There were four servants assisting with milking and general farm duties.

CENSUS RECORD SHEET				
DISTRICT Lanarkshire			YEAR 1871	
LOCATION: Bothwell				
ADDRESS: Newharthill, Yett Farm				
NAME	DESIG	AGE	OCCUPATION	BORN AT:
William Shank	Head	75	Farmer - indecipherable	Ardrie, Lanark
Grace Shank	Wife	53	Farmers wife	Carnwath, Lanarkshire

William died a month after the census on 22 May 1871; his death certificate says he was 78. In Girzy's obituary we read that:

Mrs Shanks, sometime after her husband's death, left Home for New Zealand in 1872, arriving at Port Chalmers in due course, then coming direct to Waitahuna Gully, where her aged parents were then residing.

Girzy boarded the *William Davie* on 5 April 1872 and arrived at Port Chalmers on 8 July 1872; she was 54. The voyage was subject to adverse weather. Her name has been transcribed as Mr Shanks but she was one of only thirteen cabin passengers which included two Presbyterian ministers. Her father had died in 1870 before she arrived, but it must have been a joyful reunion with her mother. Girzy's obituary states that she too lived initially at the Gully and in December 1873 her nephew John was married at her home there.

The Reverend Skinner, the first permanent Presbyterian minister in the settlement arrived in June 1874 and boarded at the home of 'Grace Shanks'. Her obituary infers this residence was at the Gully although the church itself was in Havelock. Two years later a manse was built in Havelock and Girzy lived there in the capacity of housekeeper for many years. In January 1882, she entered her produce into the Waitahuna Farmers Show and won prizes for her oaten cake. Her brother John died the same year and she would have benefited from his estate along with their sister Elizabeth.

## JOHN BLACK AND ELIZABETH BLACK

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In 1886 when she was around 68, Girzy purchased section 8, block XXIII for which she paid ten shillings and this was reported in the *Otago Witness* on 8 October 1886. She built a home on this property and also purchased sections 6 and 7; proof of this follows. Her sister Elizabeth McConie went to live with her.



*Sisters Grace Shanks and Elizabeth McOnie, both nee Black.  
Vincent Leonard collection.*

The *Tuapeka Times* of 15 January 1887 reported an accident that involved Girzy and Elizabeth, whereby their cart overturned and Girzy broke her collarbone.

**Tuapeka Times**

**15 January 1887**

**PAINFUL ACCIDENT AT WAITAHUNA**

A very painful accident, and one which narrowly escaped being attended with fatal consequences, occurred at Corry's bridge, near Waitahuna, on Thursday afternoon; **Mrs Shanks and Mrs M'Cowney**, two elderly ladies, well known in the district, were driving in a spring-cart to Johnson station to catch the afternoon train. On approaching Corry's bridge, which is approached by a steep cutting, the horse, shying at something, commenced backing, and did not stop until he had backed completely over the embankment, an almost perpendicular drop of nearly thirty feet. The Misses Corry, who live nearby, saw the accident and lost no time in going to the assistance of the injured ladies, whom, after considerable difficulty, they released from their perilous position and had conveyed home. They also disentangled the horse, he having got mixed up with the harness and nearly strangled. Dr Blair, who was immediately wired for, was soon in attendance, and on examining the patients, found that **Mrs Shanks** had the collarbone of the right shoulder broken, and **Mrs M'Cowney** was suffering from a bad fracture of the shoulder-blade. The doctor speaks highly of the way in which the injuries had been treated by the Misses Corry before his arrival, and of the courageous manner in which they went to the rescue. The horse, which escaped without much injury, had been in **Mrs Shanks'** possession for nearly twenty years, and was considered thoroughly trustworthy. Our Waitahuna correspondent writes: — The shock to the system, added to the injuries received, has so completely prostrated **Mrs Shanks and her sister**, neither of whom have been in the best of health of late, that it has been deemed inadvisable to remove them from Mr Corry's residence, where they are now being looked after.

**DEATH AND BURIAL**

Girzy died on 15 September 1903 at the age of 85 and was buried with her parents. She was a much-loved member of the community.

**Tuapeka Times**

**19 September 1903**

**DEATH OF MRS SHANKS, WAITAHUNA.**

[Own Correspondent.]

It is with regret I report the death of one of the oldest and most respected residents in the Waitahuna district, in the person of **Mrs Shanks**, relict of the late **William Shanks**, Newart Hill, Lanarkshire, Scotland, which took place at her residence, Waitahuna, on Tuesday evening, 15th September, at the ripe age of 85 years. **Mrs Shanks**, sometime after her husband's death, left Home for New Zealand in 1872 arriving at Port Chalmers in due course, then coming direct to Waitahuna Gully, where her aged parents were then residing. She stayed there some time, the late Rev. J. Skinner boarding with her during the first few years of his ministry in Waitahuna. After the manse was built **Mrs Shanks** acted in the capacity of his housekeeper for a considerable time, thereafter settling down in her own home where she remained up to the time of her death. The deceased lady was highly esteemed and loved by both old and young, her kind, gentle manner endearing her to all with whom she came in contact. The funeral took place on Friday afternoon when her remains were laid to rest in the Waitahuna Cemetery alongside her parents' grave, the tombstone showing her father's age to have been 85 years and that of her mother 84 years. The Rev. J. S. Reid conducted the funeral services both at the house and graveside in a very impressive manner. The deceased leaves a sister, with whom she was living, and other relatives to mourn their loss.

**Tuapeka Times**

**14 September 1904**

**LAND TRANSFER ACT NOTICE**

APPLICATIONS having been made to me for the issue of a Provisional Certificate of Title in the name of **GRACE SHANKS**, of Waitahuna, widow, for Sections 6 and 7, Block XXIII, Town of Havelock, being the land included in down Grant, Vol. 52, Fol. 179, and satisfactory evidence having been lodged of the loss of the said Crown Grant I hereby give notice that I will issue the Provisional Certificate of Title as requested, unless caveat be lodged forbidding the same within fourteen days from the publication hereof in the Gazette.

Dated this 14th day of September, 1904, at the Lands Registry Office, Dunedin. W. WYINKS,  
District Land Registrar.

After her death her sections were identified in order to settle the estate. They were also listed in her will with the instruction that the money was to be divided between her niece and nephew John and Jessie. Jessie (Mrs George Aitken) also received household furniture along with Grace's grandnieces Mary Grace Black (Mrs Ledgerwood) and Margaret Crawford Black (Mrs Russell). Girzy left her bible and her watch to their brother, John Thomas Black.

Girzy ensured her sister Elizabeth McCounie (McOnie) had full use of her house and furniture until her death. Jessie Aitken may not have lived to receive her full inheritance

as she died the year before her Aunt Elizabeth.

A

This is the Last Will and Testament of me Grace Shanks of Waitahuna Otago New Zealand, Widow. I give, devise and bequeath to my nephew John Black of Waitahuna aforesaid Mines my dwelling house, and the two sections of land namely sections six (6) and seven (7) Block twenty three (XXIII) township of Havelock, on condition that the said John Black pay to my niece Mr George Aitken of Waitaka, Otago, half the cash value of the two sections aforesaid. I hereby, further direct that my household furniture, bed and table linen, and household utensils, be divided equally between my niece the said Mr George Aitken, and my two grandnieces Mary Grace Black (now Mrs Ledgerwood) and Margaret Crawford Black (now Mrs Russell), that is that the aforesaid furniture linen and utensils be divided in three equal shares. I bequeath my watch and family bible to my grandnephew John Thomas Black of Lawrence Otago. After payment of all my just debts funeral and testamentary expenses I direct that any balance of ready money be paid to my sister <sup>MS</sup> Mrs McCounie <sup>MS</sup> who resides with me. and I bequeath all the above mentioned real and personal estate on condition that my said sister, Mrs McCounie <sup>MS</sup> be allowed to occupy the house and use the furniture during her lifetime. I appoint the Rev James Swanson Reid of Waitahuna aforesaid Clergyman executor of this my last will and testament in witness whereof I have hereunto subscribed my name this twenty seventh day of April one thousand nine hundred and three

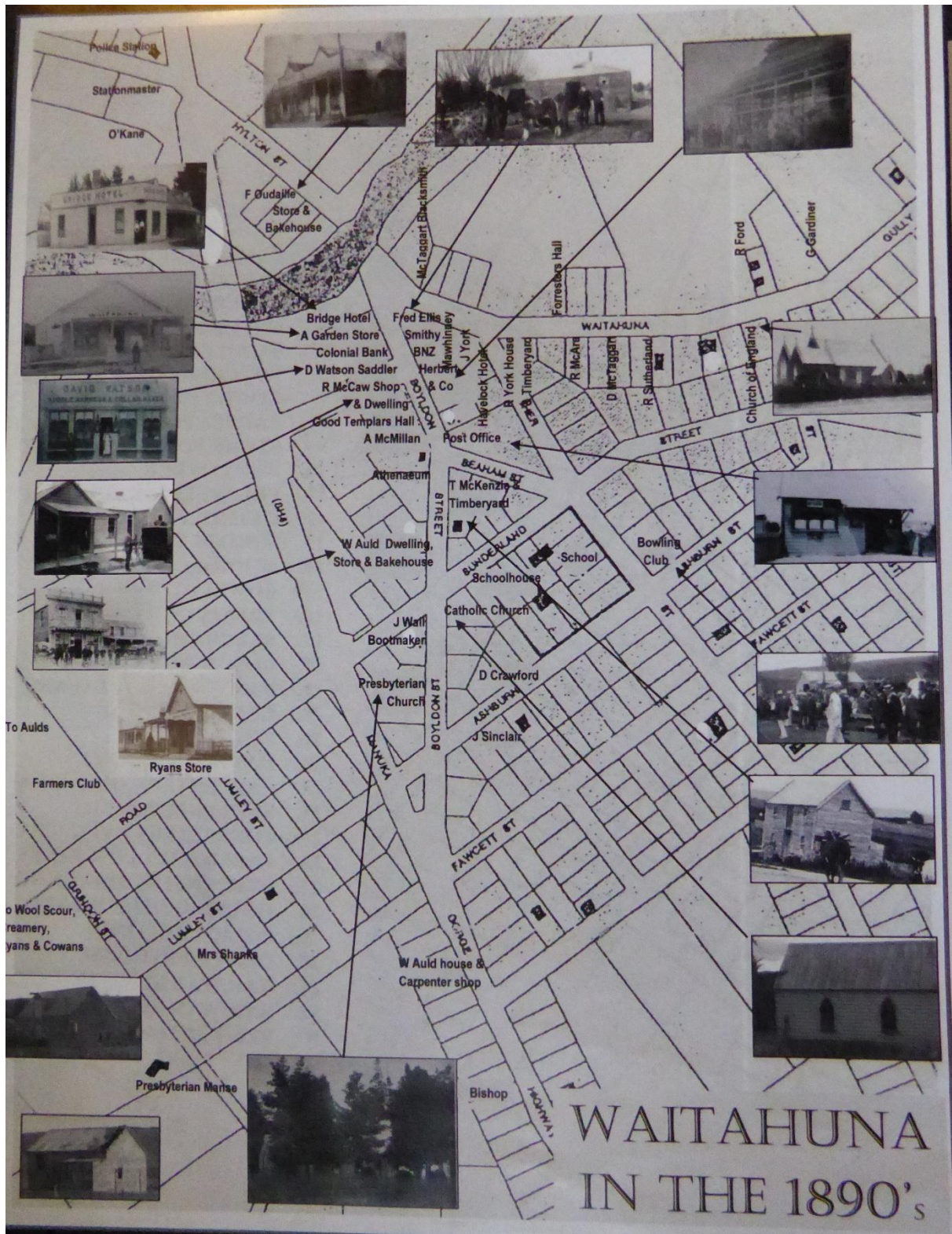
J Swanson Reid. Witness  
Annie J Reid. Witness  
Grace Shanks

Will - Grace Shanks.

Researched by Robyn Spurdle

10/01/2021

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*Havelock (renamed Waitahuna) showing Grace Shanks's properties (lower left) in the 1890s.*



## ALEXANDER BLACK

We know Alexander existed as he was living with his parents on the 1841 census and from that we estimated he was born around 1817. Willie believed that Alexander came to New Zealand but despite extensive research no matches can be found for him in this country, nor in Scotland.<sup>4</sup>

## THOMAS BLACK

Thomas was born on 31 May 1819 and remained in Scotland where he married twice. His story is documented elsewhere.

## MARY BLACK AND WILLIAM WALKER

### MARY BLACK

Mary was born on 14 June 1824. In 1841 she was a sixteen-year-old servant in the home of Isobel Steel in Carnwath.

### WILLIAM WALKER

William claimed on the census that he was born in Currie around 1822. A descendant has identified the birth in Edinburgh on 6 May 1822 to parents John Walker and Helen Black.<sup>5</sup> If that was the case *Scotland's People* shows he was baptised with the middle name Maxwell.

## MARRIAGE AND CHILDREN

A month before Mary's twentieth birthday she and William married in Kirknewton and East Calder, Midlothian on 19 May 1844. In total we find eight, possibly nine children.<sup>6</sup>

	BIRTH/BAPTISM	DIED	MARRIED
William Walker	24 Nov 1844	25 Jan 1908	Eliza Emily Fahey
John Walker	19 Oct 1846	Bef 1859	-
James Walker	24 Mar 1850	15 Nov 1920	Ann Milne
Lewis (Louis) Walker	23 Mar 1852	31 Dec 1931	Harriet Maria Walker
Alexander Walker	24 Feb 1856	24 Feb 1834	Elizabeth Jane Briggs
Elizabeth Walker	11 Apr 1858	1859	-
Elizabeth Walker	Apr 1859	Aug 1859	-

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<sup>4</sup>Alexander Black from Chatton who arrived on the *Storm Cloud* was from Aberdeenshire and the Alexander Black who died on 6 October 1881 was the son of Duncan Black according to the cemetery records.

<sup>5</sup>It is not within the bounds of impossibility that Helen Black was daughter of William Black and Jean Cleland and therefore Mary was marrying a second cousin.

<sup>6</sup>The Elizabeths are confusing. The ship's log says the family had a child die on the Alpine aged four months, could this be fourteen months? A death for a two year old Elizabeth Walker is found in Whitburn in 1859 but their child born in 1858 should only be two. The space between the three Elizabeth's is too tight to be correct.

## JOHN BLACK AND ELIZABETH BLACK

Elisabeth (Eliza)Walker	30 Jan 1860	8 Oct 1930	Arthur Edwin Wilde
Jane Walker	11 Mar 1862	6 Oct 1935	Iver Johnsen
John Walker	1864		

By 1851 they had three sons, all born at Whitburn, not Kirknewton according to Select Births on *Ancestry*. The John mentioned in the census had died before 1859.

A further two sons, Louis and Alexander, and at least one daughter named Elizabeth were born in the next eight years. Again the births were all recorded at Whitburn.

CENSUS RECORD SHEET					
DISTRICT Kirknewton and East Calder Midlothian			YEAR 1851 (30 MARCH)		
STREET: Morton Farm					
NAME	DESIG	STATUS	AGE	OCCUPATION	BORN AT:
William Walker	Head		29	Ag labourer	Currie, Midlothian
Mary Walker	wife		26		Carnwath Lanark
William Walker	son		7	scholar	Kirknewton, Midlothian
John Walker	son		4		Kirknewton, Midlothian
James Walker	son		1		Kirknewton, Midlothian
Robert White	lodger		21	shepherd	Mid Calder, Midlothian

At the age of 35 Mary boarded the *Alpine* with her husband, parents, two siblings, her four surviving sons and a month-old baby daughter named Elizabeth.<sup>7</sup> In her care (and listed as Walkers) were her niece and nephew Jessie and John Black. According to the passenger list, baby Elizabeth died on the voyage aged four months. The following contribution to *Brave Days* was written by Mary's granddaughter Mrs J H McGrath.<sup>8</sup>

My paternal grandmother arrived at Port Chalmers in the *Alpine* on September 12th 1859 from Lanarkshire, Scotland with her husband, four little boys and a small niece. Her first move was to Milburn where her brother had a small farm. The only mode of transit was by bullock wagon. After a time the family had moved on to Milton, then called Tokomairiro. They remained there till the gold rush at Gabriel's Gully, Mrs Walker being one of the first women to enter that famous spot. After a time they went to Waitahuna Gully and started an accommodation house for miners, 3,000 of whom made colourful history while the rush lasted. A farm at Te Houka was the next change and here I was born, a daughter of Louis, third son of the Walkers. The niece now grown up, became Mrs George Aitken of Wendon Valley and reared a family of ten.

<sup>7</sup>One source says Elizabeth was born on board but the dates as reported don't tie in for this to be correct.

<sup>8</sup>*Brave Days* published 1939 AH and AW Reed p 302. Mrs McGrath does not mention Jessie's brother John but as the publication was arranged by the Women's Division of Federated Farmers he may not have been considered important to the story.

**Tuapeka Times**

**27 July 1889**

The late **Mrs Walker**, of Te Houka, was the second woman to arrive at Gabriel's Gully after the rush set in, and must therefore have been a witness of all the stirring scenes that marked that most remarkable part of our early history.

**Otago Daily Times**

**8 November 1862**

**LAND FOR SALE AT TOKOMAIRO**

FOR SALE, 100 Acres of LAND, on which is a seven-roomed House, stockyard, and shed; 50 acres are fenced-in, and 25 acres under crop, to be taken if wished. A stream-of water sufficient to turn a mill runs through the land. The above property is situated four miles from the lake and about the same distance from Midtown, and on the main road to the diggings; a good back run for cattle. Apply to Mr JOHN BLACK, on the premises; or to Mr WM. WALKER, Waitahuna

As we have read, on arrival in New Zealand the family went to stay with Mary's brother William Black and a second (or third) daughter named Elisabeth was born here on 30 January 1860. The family farmed on the Tokomairiro Plains for several years on a freehold property according to the 'for sale'

notice in November 1862. When gold was discovered in 1861 they moved to Gabriel's Gully and the family story that Mary was the second woman to enter the area was repeated by the press.<sup>9</sup> They then moved the thirty odd kilometres to Waitahuna Gully but in both areas there was great hardship as shelter initially would have been under canvas.

Two more children were born to Mary and William, Jane in 1862 and John in 1864 and both were probably born in Waitahuna. They returned to Tokomairiro for Jane to be

baptised.

Eighteen months after gold was discovered we find the Walker's land being offered for sale at Tokomairiro. The 'John Black on the premises' was Mary's father. William Walker's son's obituary states 'The whole family went to reside at Milton, where they took up land and stayed for five or six years, finally selling out to the then well-known firm of Blues and Duthie.'<sup>10</sup> The obituary isn't totally accurate as the length of ownership appears to be only three years. The obituary also suggested William had a general store at Waitahuna Gully, but our knowledge extends only to The Royal Hotel, which he purchased from a Mr McCutcheon around 1866.<sup>11</sup> Life must have been hard for all, cleaning and cooking for miners whose intemperate habits are well documented. The two younger boys William and James drove bullock wagons to and from the goldfields for several years. With the proceeds from their hard work William purchased a farm at Te Houka near Balclutha around 1869 and Mary's niece Jessie moved with them.

The Walkers retained ownership of The Royal and leased it out in their absence to William Hart. From the following extract, article and advertisement we learn William, in 1875, also purchased the only other hotel still operating in Waitahuna, the Golden Age. His intention was to remove the town's only competitor and make his hotel more saleable. Ernie Skinner in *Waitahuna Memories* (1947) wrote:

<sup>9</sup> A version later on says she was the second woman to take up 'abode' in the Gully.

<sup>10</sup> *Bruce Herald*, 30 January 1908.

<sup>11</sup> The advertisement offering to sell The Royal stated William had owned it for nine years.

**Tuapeka Times**

**15 May 1875**

SATURDAY, 22nd MAY.

VALUABLE HOTEL PROPERTY

HOUSEHOLD FURNITURE, HORSES,  
FARMING IMPLEMENTS, &c.

WILLIAM HAYES has received instructions from Mr. **William Walker** to sell by public auction, on the premises on the above date, all that valuable property known as the Royal Hotel Waitahuna, owned and occupied by him for the past nine years. The Hotel consists of bar, bar parlor, sitting and dining rooms, five bedrooms and a kitchen; also, a capacious billiard room, fitted with one of Alcock's tables. The out-houses consist of stable, fowl house, &c. This property has attained a considerably increased value, as the proprietor lately purchased Mr. Tanton's interest in the Golden Age Hotel, and it now remains the only hotel in Waitahuna.

In addition to the above, there will be offered 2 heavy draught Horses

1 Reaping Machine

1 Plough

1 Bullock Dray

Also,

A quantity of Household Furniture and Corrugated iron.

The only reason, for the disposal of the above property is that the **proprietor** is retiring from the hotel business.

In 1875 Taunton sold the Golden Age to Walker, mine host of the Royal and after the clearing sale the hotel was dismantled. Business must have been poor for Walker retained the Royal for sale... The Community must have become very temperate as within a few years the Royal closed its doors though bottle licenses were still held by Wm Duff and Mrs Dewes.

William immediately advertised the Royal Hotel for sale but his plan failed and two years later the hotel was razed to the ground in July 1877. At the time the last leasee had left the property and it was vacant. William returned to Waitahuna for the inquest into the fire and Mary's nephew John Black and his first wife Annie were mentioned at the trial and possibly implicated. John was also called as a witness. We are not sure if the insurance company paid out, but other witnesses said the property was unsalable and a mining license had been granted the previous day to tunnel underneath the building. Although the verdict was arson, the jury did not name any suspects.

*The New Zealand Herald* of 9 July 1875 confirmed the hotel was unoccupied at the time of the fire and gave the added information that it was one of the first houses built on the Waitahuna diggings.

**Tuapeka Times**

**18 July 1877**

**INQUIRY INTO THE BURNING OF THE ROYAL HOTEL, WAITAHUNA.**

An inquiry was held on Saturday last into the cause of the late fire, by which the Royal Hotel, Waitahuna Gully, was burned to the ground. The investigation was conducted by the District Coroner, E. H. Carew, Esq.; and Mr Inspector Thompson watched the proceedings on behalf of the police. The following is a summary of the evidence taken on oath. The inquiry was held before a jury of thirteen, Mr Oudaille being chosen foreman James Cutler sworn, deposed that he was a stonemason in the employ of Mr Higgins, at Waitahuna. He knew the Royal Hotel, situated in Waitahuna Gully. It was next to Mr Higgins' store, where he lived. It had been unoccupied for six or eight weeks. It belonged to **William Walker**, and it was last tenanted by William Hart. When Hart left it, witness wrote to **Walker**, who resides at Te Houka, telling him he had left it. Two or three days afterwards **Mrs Walker** came to Waitahuna. She left the same day, or the day after. Before going she brought witness the key. **Mrs Walker** and he then went and had a look through the building. There was a billiard-bagatelle table in the house. He saw four or five kitchen tables, a colonial sofa, a lot of forms, and some chairs. There were two stoves in the place, one had been in use fifteen or sixteen years. He would value all the articles, excepting the billiard table, at £6 or £8. There were four rooms, and three or four small sleeping places in the house. He valued the house at £70. That would be a good price for it. He was in the building three times after the key came into his possession. He believed all the doors were locked on the night of the 5th July. He slept in the store alongside the building, and was awoke about half-past one on the morning of the 6th July by a noise which he took to be a fire. He got up and ran outside, and then saw it was the Royal Hotel on fire. The flames were coming through the centre of the building. He heard the voice of some person cooeing before he got up. The first persons he saw were James Porter and Ross Moore looking on. No attempt was made to put it out, as it would have been useless. He was last in the building about six days before the fire. He took a lamp down from outside, and put it in, but did not go above three paces inside. After the building fell down, he noticed the pot produced. It burnt a fierce remarkable white and blue light, and burned for a long time after the building fell, and then capsized and was extinguished. This pot may have been 20ft distant from the very centre of the building. It seemed to be in the same place as when he saw it inside the building, but he could not say whether there was anything in it then. He took it to be sulphur, when he saw it burning. He did not, however, smell sulphur. About eight or ten days before the fire Craven offered to nail up the windows to keep out some boys who had been going in and out of the house. Witness gave him the key to do so. He returned it before the day when he (witness) took down the lamp. He could not account for the fire in any way, but he was confident the fire must have commenced from the inside. Since he had the possession of the key, he had not allowed any one to sleep in the place. Cross-examined by Inspector Thompson When **Mrs Walker** gave him the key, he helped her to measure the building. She said she was going to insure the building. William Craven, a miner living at the rear of the hotel, was next examined. He had lived there fifteen years. If the building could have been used as a public house, it might have fetched £100, but if to be pulled down he would value it at £50. The bagatelle table he valued at £25 to £30. He corroborated Cutler's evidence about the nailing up of the windows. He went through all the rooms but the billiard room. He did not notice the pot produced. On the night of the fire he had been attending the Oddfellows Lodge, and returned home about 10.30 p.m. He passed close to the house at that time, and noticed no indications of fire. About 11 p.m. he noticed a strong smell of the burning or scorching of Baltic timber. He was a Dane, and accustomed to the smell of Baltic timber. He searched about his own fireplace, but found nothing there. He then looked out and saw nothing. He went to bed about one o'clock, and awoke by the cry of fire. He went out and saw the flames coming out of the roof of the building. He cooeied as soon as he got outside. He saw Cutler; then Moore came up. He noticed something in the pot produced.

It was burning with a green flame, which rose six or eight inches above the top of the pot. There was something unusually inflammable in the pot. It fell into a waterhole shortly after attention was drawn to it. He noticed a similar flame coming from what he took to be a kerosene tin under the billiard table. He heard no footsteps after he got home. His opinion was that the fire had been intentionally caused. Ross Moore, a miner, who also lived at the back of the hotel, was next examined. He was awoke about 1.30 a.m. on July 6th by the cry of fire. He saw the place on fire. People quickly collected. Nothing was done to put out the fire, but fences were pulled down to prevent the fire spreading. This witness corroborated the previous one about the pot and kerosene tin emitting a peculiar flame. **Mrs Black** was a visitor at his house on the 5th. **Mr Black** came about 7 p.m. He then went to the lodge, and was again in his place about 10 p.m. He left it somewhere about 10 o'clock; **Mrs Black** remaining for the night. Black resides at Havelock. Witness believed he was connected or related to **Mr Walker**. In going home **Black** would pass within a very few feet of the hotel. Witness was not out of his house after **Black** left. **John Black** deposed. He was a miner living at Havelock. Knew the Royal Hotel. It belonged to **his uncle, Mr Walker**. After leaving Moore's house, he passed quite close to the hotel, and noticed nothing wrong, nor did he smell fire, or see anybody about. William George Carr deposed: I am a miner residing at Waitahuna Gully. He applied for an extended claim last month for ground upon part of which the Royal Hotel stood, and proposed to work it by tunnelling. He did not know if they would require to work under where the hotel stood. The fire took place the night after they got a grant for the claim. On the night of the fire he was at home and in bed by 10 o'clock. Some of the ground under the hotel was worked before the hotel was erected. Peter Thompson, sworn, deposed that he was a miner holding a claim where the hotel stood. He was called at two o'clock on the morning of the fire by Thomas M'Kine. He was at his claim about 3 o'clock p.m. of the 6th July. He was at Higgins' that evening, and went straight home as soon as the store was shut. He lived about 150 yards from the hotel. He saw a person on horseback when he was going to the store. He went up a right-of-way between the hotel and Watson's. He could not see who it was. He thought he was going to the hotel stables, but did not know if he did so. He had seen people occasionally in the stable to put horses in it for an hour or two. 'William Craven, recalled, said: About half-past ten of the night of the 5th July he saw Joseph Sutherland take a horse out of the Royal Hotel stable. He left the door open, and witness saw him ride away. When the fire was raging he saw the stable door open, and shut it to prevent sparks getting inside. . Witness spoke to Sutherland. He had been at the lodge, leaving there before witness. - George Comyn, Sergeant of Police, deposed that he found the pot produced on the site of the fire. **William Walker** was next examined. He was the owner of the hotel. He could always make a living at the hotel when he was in it himself. He got 15s a week for it from Hart, but he gave it up on the 9th of May last. He was not at Waitahuna for three months before the fire. The house was insured in the New Zealand Insurance Co., at Balclutha branch for £150, and the billiard table for £40, or £190 in all; Hart was a tenant of the hotel when he insured the property. The reason he insured when he did so was because he thought it would be safer to do so. He never took any measurement for the purpose of insurance. Measurements, he understood, were taken by a man employed by his **wife** to do so. This was before the insurance was effected, and before Hart left the house. His **wife** was at Waitahuna before Hart left the house. He could not say whether the Balclutha agent of the insurance Co. examined the property before the offer was accepted. He valued the hotel when he last saw it before the fire at £350. Witness then gave a minute description of the house. Sydney Wilson deposed: Under all the circumstances of the place, he doubted whether the hotel would have been saleable. Joseph Sutherland was then called, and said that on the night of the 5th July he put his horse in the hotel stable. It had been his practice to do so. He then went to the lodge, and as soon as it was over, went straight to the stable and got his horse. This would be about 10.30 p.m. He then rode to Havelock. He used no matches at either time when he was at the stable. He noticed nothing strange about the hotel, and smelt no fire. He saw and spoke to Craven as he was going away. Craven was coming up the right-of-way just as he was about to mount his horse. The verdict arrived at was: That the building was on the night of the 5th day of July feloniously, unlawfully, and maliciously set fire to by some person or persons unknown to the jury.

By now the Walker children were of a marriageable age and we find William and Jane both married on the same day, 4 May 1881 at their parent's house in Te Houka

## DEATH AND BURIAL

### Clutha Herald

**12 July 1889**

.....Mrs Walker, the other lady referred to, arrived in the Colony along with her husband and family in 1859, and for a few years resided in Tokomairiro. When the diggings broke out, Mr Walker, like many others, went to Gabriel's Gully in search of the precious metal, and Mrs Walker was the second woman to take up her abode on that celebrated field. Leaving Gabriel's, they lived for a few years at Waitahuna, and then came to Te Houka, where they have resided for the past 20 years. Mr Walker is still alive, as also are five sons and two daughters.

Mary Walker died in Te Houka on 2 July 1889 aged 65. William died at Te Houka on 11 June 1894 aged 72.

The farm was eventually taken over by their son William and the family remained in the area for a number of years. A baptism in Balclutha for a Grace Shanks Walker in 1890 is clearly a member of this extended Black family.<sup>12</sup>

## ELIZABETH BLACK AND JAMES M'CONIE

### ELIZABETH BLACK

According to the 1841 census, Elizabeth was born around 1827 as she was recorded as fourteen on census night. As suggested earlier she was listed as the 'wife' of her brother John on the passenger list of the *Alpine*. She was 32 when she boarded the ship for New Zealand.

### JAMES M'CONIE

James was a fellow passenger on the *Alpine*. There are two possible births in Scotland around 1835 and this would make him 24 when he boarded the *Alpine*.

## MARRIAGE AND CHILDREN

On 22 July 1861 Elizabeth married James M'Conie at the home of her brother William Black, Newhouse, Tokomairiro. She was described as a spinster aged 25 but was around 34! James was described as a farm servant aged 22 but may have been a bit older.<sup>13</sup> The witnesses were William Black and Sarah Bryce, a farm servant also from Tokomairiro.

Nothing can be found of James after the marriage and only one child has been identified. Mary's birth year of 1864 is calculated from her death information as no birth or baptism can be found for either. She claimed to have been born in Dunedin. As James's death is not recorded we are not

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<sup>12</sup> <http://www.archives.presbyterian.org.nz/baptism/standrewsbalcluthabaptisms2.htm>

<sup>13</sup> <http://www.archives.presbyterian.org.nz/marriageregisters/tokomairiomarriages1.htm> and also archives Hocken Library. The marriage is not shown on BDM website.

sure if he abandoned Elizabeth or she was widowed. Mary recorded her father as a farmer on her marriage and indicated he was alive but she may not have known what happened to James either.

The earliest we can place Elizabeth at Waitahuna Gully is in 1872 when her eight-year-old daughter was the informant on the death of her grandmother. James McOnie may have been mining in the Gully but it is more likely Elizabeth moved there to receive assistance from family members and was probably keeping house for her brother John, perhaps as early as 1864.

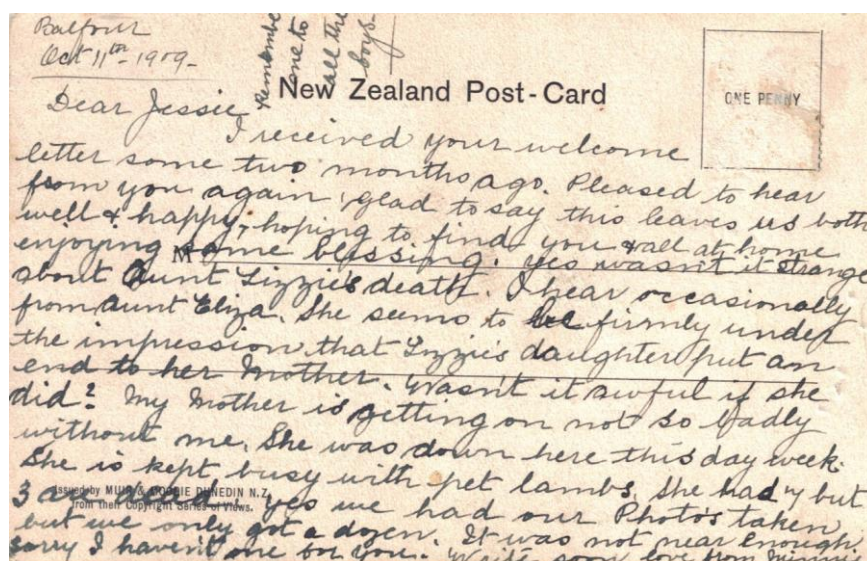
We get a third spelling of the surname as by the time Elizabeth moved to Havelock to live with her sister around 1886, her name becomes M'Cownie. The article referring to the accident she was involved in with her sister Grace was shown earlier and she suffered a broken shoulder blade. We learn from other articles in the *Tuapeka Times* that she entered her wares in the local farmer's shows and was also awarded £2 for cleaning the Presbyterian Church in 1901.

When Girzy died in 1903 she made provision for Elizabeth and stated in her will that 'Mrs McCounie' was to have any excess cash after paying her funeral expenses and be able to remain in her home until she too died. Elizabeth was found on the electoral rolls and this time the spelling is McCourney.

## DEATH AND BURIAL

Elizabeth's death in 1909, at the age of 81 was recorded at Waitahuna and she was buried with her parents, sister Grace and brother John. The spelling in this context becomes McCowney but later in the subsequent inquest becomes McCouney. Her daughter Mary, on her marriage, used the spelling McConey. As there are so many variations of this surname it is hard to know which one to use! Despite her age, the inquest on the surface of it was deemed necessary as Elizabeth had not been seen by a doctor for five years and her death was sudden.

Her death was not without controversy and a postcard was found that makes us wonder if there was more to the inquest than meets the eye! 'Aunty Eliza' (nee Walker) was convinced that Lizzie's daughter Mary had put an end to her mother!



Postcard -  
Janet Dean  
collection.



## Tuapeka Times

7 July 1909

### THE INQUEST.

An inquest was held on Monday, July 5th before Mr F. Ellis, J.P., Acting-Coroner, and a jury of six of whom Mr James Auld was chosen foreman.

Mrs McKenzie (sworn) said she had known deceased for thirty years. Saw her last on Thursday afternoon when she and her daughter were at her place and had tea. She left about 4.30. Noticed that she was failing, and suffering from shortness of breath, but was otherwise in her usual health and spirits. About 10 o'clock her daughter came to her house and said poor mother has gone. She sent for Constable Treehey and some others and then went to Mrs McCouney's house where she found her lying at the back of the bed.

Mary Pyke (sworn) said she was the daughter of deceased and had come from Wellington last Thursday week. Her mother was 81 years of age. She had not known her to suffer from any complaint, except cancer in the breast, but that had not troubled her for over five years. She seemed in good health since her arrival. On the day of her death she was in good health, was bright, and had a good appetite. They returned from Mrs McKenzie's together about 4.30, and retired about 7 o'clock. They occupied the same bed. About half an hour afterwards he mother complained of a terrible pain in her heart, and she gave her brandy and rubbed her body, over the heart, with painkiller, but she died in her arms. There was no other person in the house.

To the Foreman: She was not able to leave her mother to get assistance.

Constable Treehey (sworn) said that at 11 p.m. on 1st May Mrs Pyke informed him that her mother was dead. He found her lying where she now lies. Her face was warm and she appeared to have died an hour previously. Found no symptoms which would show cause of death. Examined bedroom and took statement of particulars as to deceased's death from Mrs Pyke and found no suspicious circumstances. Rang up the doctor on Friday morning and left a message that Mrs Pyke would like to see him with a view of getting a certificate of death. The doctor replied at 4.30 that he had not attended deceased for over five years. He asked him if he came down and examined the body would that assist him in giving a certificate, and he replied that he would not give one. I then informed the Coroner of the circumstance and he ordered an inquest.

To the Coroner: There was nothing to indicate that death resulted from any other than natural causes. The reason the doctor could not give a certificate was, that he had not attended deceased for over five years. The jury could order a post mortem examination.

The jury then retired and on returning gave the following verdict: "That Elizabeth McCouney, died on July 1, 1909, at Waitahuna, from natural causes."

The inquest enabled us to learn more about Mary. She is really beyond the boundaries of this document but her story is too delicious not to retell! She married John Pyke in 1894 at the age of 29. John, the son of William Pyke and Elizabeth Harris was born in Wellington (not London) on 21 May 1851.

Marriages in the District of Wellington									
When and Where Married. (Time, Locality and Description of Building)	Name and Residence of the Parties.	Age.	Rank or Profession.	Qualification of Parties. as to Marriage and Birth. If Foreigners, where born, and whether legitimate or illegitimate.	Religion.	Residence. 1. Church. 2. Court.	Parents. Father's Name and Residence (1) and his Rank or Profession (2).	Mother's Name (1) and Rank or Profession (2).	
1894 August 28 <sup>th</sup> St. Peter's Church, Wellington.	John Pyke	40	Subaccountant	1. Bachelor 2. -	1. London 2. England.	1. Wellingt <sup>n</sup> 2. Wellingt <sup>n</sup>	1. William Pyke. 2. Stone-keeper	1. Elizabeth Pyke. 2. Harris.	
	Mary McConey	29		1. Spinster 2. -	1. Dunedin 2. N.Z.	1. Wellingt <sup>n</sup> 2. Wellingt <sup>n</sup>	1. James McConey 2. Farmer	1. Elizabeth McConey. 2. Black	

Maxims, after the delivery to me of the Certificate required by "The Marriage Act, 1886," by

This Marriage was solemnized between us,  
 John Pyke  
 Mary McConey

In the presence of,  
 Mr. McAlister, Auckland, Contract  
 Mr. S. O. Johnston, Wellingt<sup>n</sup>, Stone-keeper

I certify that the above is a true copy of the entry in the Register-book of Marriages kept by me,  
 Wellington, N.Z.  
 October 8, 1894.

W. G. Watson, Officiating Minister (per signature)  
 W. G. Watson, Wellington, N.Z., Officiating Minister

BIRTHS, DEATHS & MARRIAGES  
 Printout Copy Only  
 This is not a Certificate

Marriage certificate – John Pike and Mary McOnie.

At the time of the marriage John was already married to someone else! John had a colourful life to say the least. He had married Emily Rogers in Gisborne on 20 March 1876 and had six children. Emily also had history so the two were well matched. Both had problems with alcohol, burglary or other liaisons. Emily was often in court and then after being gaoled for theft, ended up in Christchurch. We don't know who raised their two surviving children.

John Pyke started off as a linesman but on his marriage to Mary claimed to be a tobacconist and a bachelor. He was 43 not 40. On Christmas Day 1894, a few months after the marriage his first wife died by drowning in the River Avon in Christchurch. The verdict of the jury was 'found drowned' and one witness claimed she was drunk.

John and Mary had two children of their own but both died at four months of age; Vera Myrtle was born in 1895 and Oliver Francis in 1897. From the inquest into the death of Elizabeth McOnie we learned that John and Mary lived in Wellington and the electoral rolls show John was a hotelkeeper. The Imperial Hotel in Cuba Street and the National Hotel in Petone were both listed. They were prosecuted on several occasions for breaching the licensing laws. In May 1906 according to the *New Zealand Times* 'Mary Pyke was granted a protection order against her husband, John Pyke, on the grounds of habitual drunkenness'.

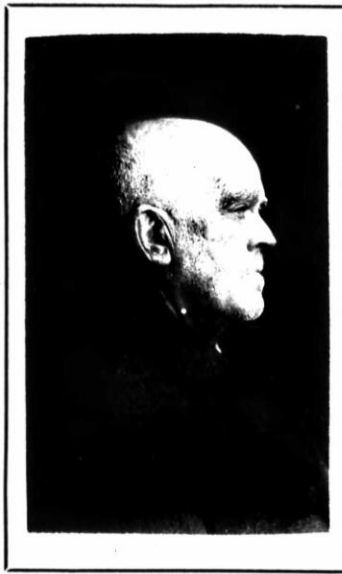
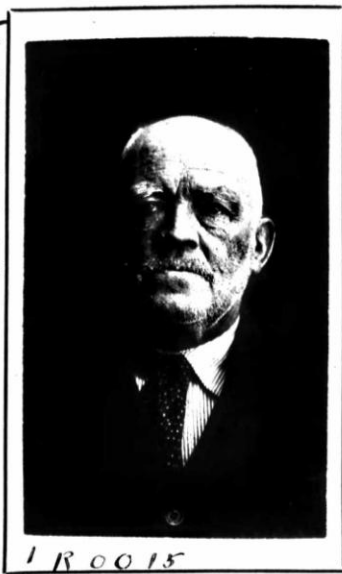
John Pyke was reported in the newspapers as an elderly vagrant and appeared before the courts in Wellington on several occasions in 1908 and 1909. In the *Police Gazette* in 1909 he was described as an 'incorrigible rouse' and an ex-publican. We next find John in Sydney but we are unsure how he got the funds to get there. A leopard does not change his spots so we find John had eleven stints in jail for vagrancy and theft between 1910 and 1915.

No. **12450**

Name John Pike or John Pyke

Date when Portrait was taken 18. 4. 1902. 211

Native place New Zealand  
 Year of birth 24. 5. 52  
 Arrived in { Ship  
 Colony { Year B. O.  
 Trade or occupation previous to conviction Labour  
 Religion B. of E.  
 Education, degree of N. W.  
 Height, without shoes, 5 feet. 5 1/2 inches  
 Weight { On committal 158  
 in lbs. { On discharge  
 Colour of hair White  
 Colour of eyes Blue  
 Marks or special features Bald top of head. Scar on upper lip. Mole left side of mouth.



1 R 0015  
1 R 00  
 (No of previous Portrait...)

G 26.6.07.

CONVICTIONS.

Where and When.			Offence.	Sentence.
Central P <sup>b</sup>	9	2 10	Stealing	£ 2. or 7 days H <sup>b</sup>
"	29	7 10	Vagrancy	21 days H <sup>b</sup>
"	10	9 10	do	1 mon. H <sup>b</sup>
North Sydney P <sup>b</sup>	23	1 11	do	3 mon. H <sup>b</sup>
Central P <sup>b</sup>	7	7 11	Drunk	10/ or 7 days H <sup>b</sup>
"	10	8 11	Vagrancy	3 mon. H <sup>b</sup>
"	11	12 11	Big Arms	3 mon. H <sup>b</sup>
Water P <sup>b</sup>	20	3 12	Vagrancy	4 mon. H <sup>b</sup>
Central P <sup>b</sup>	17	7 12	Vagrancy	6 mon. H <sup>b</sup>
Central P <sup>b</sup>	21	9 14	Vagrancy	6 months H <sup>b</sup>
	24	6 15	Vagrancy	6 weeks H <sup>b</sup>

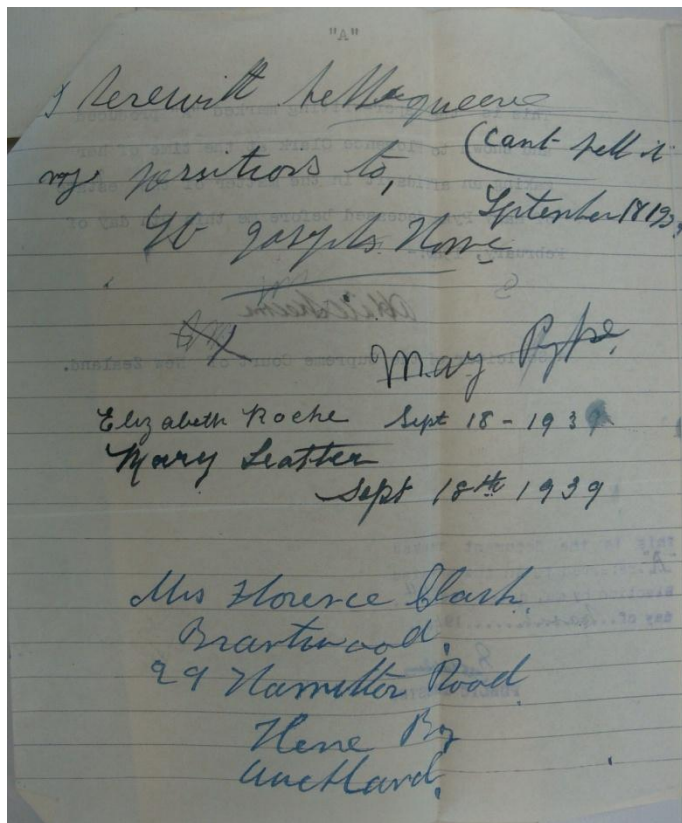
New South Wales, Australia, Gaol Description and Entrance Books, 1818-1930.

Eventually John died on 2 August 1816, in Castlereagh Street, Sydney.

So what about Mary? She was found running the Clarendon Hotel in Picton in 1915 and was probably the widow on the 1928 electoral roll in Wanganui, and in 1938 in Auckland. Mary died

## JOHN BLACK AND ELIZABETH BLACK

on 24 September 1939. Her burial was located in Auckland in the Anglican Division of the Waikumete Cemetery aged 75.



Mary wrote a will a week before she died and with no children or nieces or nephews, it was not surprising to see she left her estate to St Joseph's Home where she was no doubt living at the time of her death. Her will was short and sweet: I herewith bequeath my possessions to St Joseph's Home. 'Can't spell it' is penned alongside her request, and that should have read 'can't spell any of it'!

*Will of Mary Pyke.  
National Archives.*

## WILLIAM BLACK

William's name was entered in the Whitburn Parish registers in 1855, stating he had been born and baptised in the parish of Carnwath on 14 June 1829. This entry took place when he 26. He was found on the 1851 census, aged 22, living with his parents and his occupation was an ironstone miner.

We find William Black from Whitburn, single, on the passenger list of the *Strathfieldsaye* arriving in Port Chalmers on 29 April 1858. He would have been 28. He settled in Tokomairiro, acquiring property through the Waihola Hundreds Scheme and named his farm Newhouse, a small town in Lanarkshire only one and a half miles from where Girzy lived at Newharthill. We have a physical description of the Milton property from a sale advertisement and learn it was 'sections 21 and 22, Block III Tokomairiro, containing by admeasurement 105 acres'.

Eighteen months later he was joined by twelve members of his family who all settled in Tokomairiro for several years. Only his parents and sister Elizabeth remained in May 1861 when gold was discovered in Gabriel's Gully.

Our frustration when researching William lies in the fact that there were at least three William Blacks in the Tokomairiro area, including father and son. A reference to Newhouse tells us that one of them acted as a ploughing judge in July 1864 and it could be junior or senior William on

this occasion.<sup>14</sup> In July 1864 'William Black senior of Newhouse' was one of several judges appointed to a ploughing competition at Tokomairiro. A history of the Milton Presbyterian church shows a William Black was on the committee to select a new site for the church and a William Black served on the committee of the Tokomairiro Agricultural Society in 1860.

## DEATH AND BURIAL

### **Bruce Herald**

**14 February 1867**

DEATH. Suddenly, on the 12th inst., at New House, Tokomairiro, Mr **William Black**, youngest son of Mr. **John Black**.— The friends of the deceased are respectfully requested to attend his funeral, which will take place to-morrow, at two o'clock p.m.

William died in February 1867 aged 37. He never married and his father swore this in an affidavit. William was buried in the Fairfax Cemetery, Milton, Block 1 Lot 19 purchased by John Black. There is no headstone. The day his death notice appeared he was mentioned along with 53 others to act as a committeeman for James McAndrew. He is the only one to have an address next to his

name and we assume it was printed for the same reason we have struggled.

William died without leaving a will and his father was named executor by the courts. John advertised for any claims against his son's estate and a clearing sale was held in April. John also swore the estate was worth less than £250.

Despite clearing livestock and equipment in April 1867, as documented earlier, William's father

### **Bruce Herald**

**21 February 1867**

*IN RE WILLIAM BLACK,  
DECEASED*

ALL PARTIES having CLAIMS against - the late **WILLIAM BLACK**, of Newhouse, Tokomairiro, are requested to SEND IN the same, within fourteen days from this date, to **JOHN BLACK**, the father of the deceased.

Newhouse, Tokomairiro,  
Feb. 20, 1867.

### **Bruce Herald**

**10 April 1867**

SATURDAY, 13th APRIL, 1867.

TO SETTLERS, FARMERS, GRAZIERS,  
AND OTHERS.

WRIGHT, ROBERTSON AND CO. are instructed by the Administrator of the Estate of the late **Wm. Black**, deceased, to sell by auction, at the

Newhouse Farm, Tokomairiro,  
On Saturday, 13th April, 1867, at Twelve o'clock noon.

Cattle

Horses.

Drays and Agricultural Implements

remained at Newhouse for at least two and a half years before leaving the area.

<sup>14</sup> *Otago Daily Times* 25 July 1864.

In the Supreme Court of New Zealand Otago and Southland District

In the matter of the Goods of William Black late of Tokomairiro in the Province of Otago and Colony of New Zealand Settler deceased intestate.

I John Black of Tokomairiro in the Province of Otago and Colony of New Zealand Settler make oath and say -

1. That I am the Father of the said William Black deceased -
2. That the said William Black had never been married in his lifetime and was single at the time of his decease -

Sworn at Tokomairiro aforesaid (there being no legally qualified Solicitor or Registrar of the Supreme Court resident within five miles of the residence of the deponent John Black) this nineteenth day of March 1867. Before me -

John Dewar R M  
One of Her Majesty's Justices of the Peace in and for the Colony of New Zealand.

John Black

Letter of Administration - William Black.

## JAMES BLACK

James, the youngest was recorded on the 1841 census aged ten and was not found in 1851. It is possible he died young but Willie claimed James came to New Zealand also. A James Black was buried in Dunedin on 26 July 1879 aged 48. This gives him the right age roughly (1831) but he came from Fife via Australia. He had been in New Zealand 15 years.<sup>15</sup> The death indexes however show he was not 48 but 68 so the certificate has not been ordered. James has not been identified in Scotland either. Two possibilities are the burials for a James Black in Carnwath, on

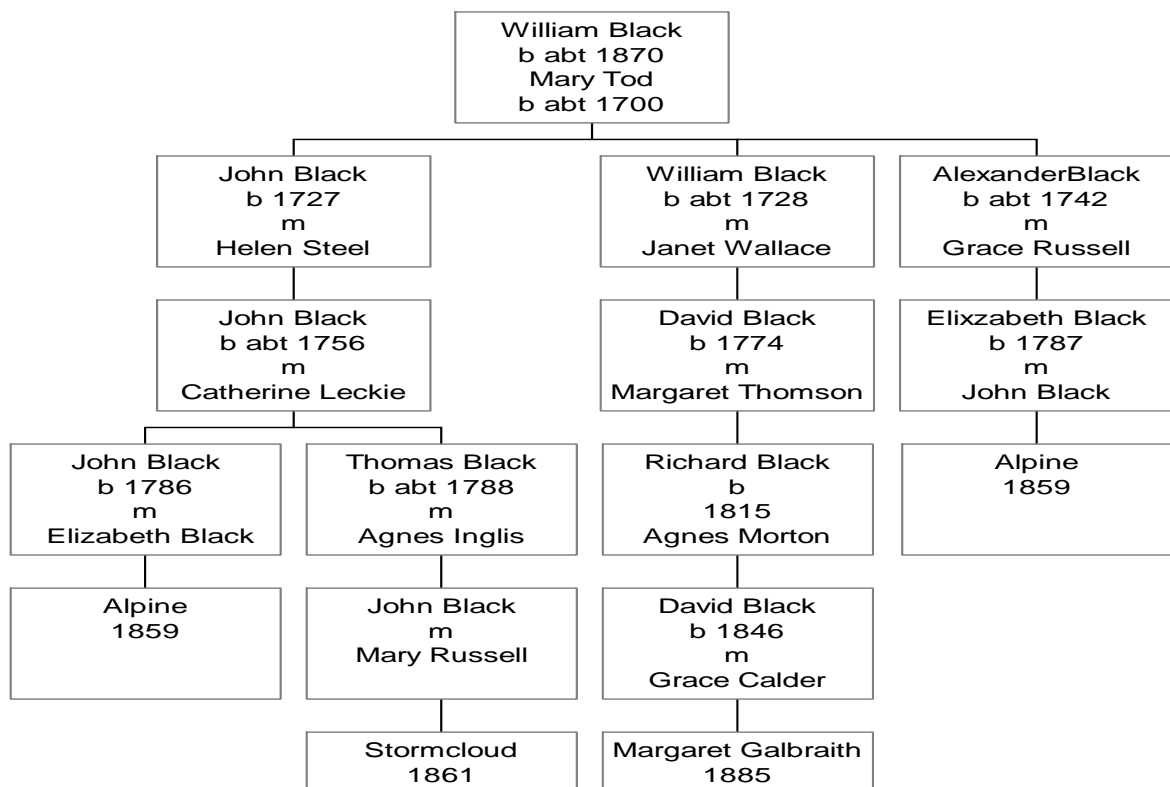
<sup>15</sup> New Zealand cemetery records on Ancestry.

15 June 1852 and the other on 5 March 1847, but no additional information is listed on the records.

## BRANCHES OF THE BLACK FAMILY TO EMIGRATE TO NEW ZEALAND

Only the branches emigrating have been depicted to show the connection between the two families.

1. John and Elizabeth and their family were not the only family to come to New Zealand.
2. John's nephew (also John) went from Knowtown to New Zealand. John married Mary Russell and they arrived with three very young children on the *Stormcloud* at Port Chalmers on 30 July 1861.<sup>16</sup> They eventually had eleven children and settled at Palmerston South. Joan Pearce of Clinton is a descendant of this couple and has documented the arrival of this family.
3. David Black his wife Grace Calder and four children came to New Zealand from Scotland in 1884 on the *Margaret Galbraith*. They settled in the Esk Valley, Hawke's Bay. Gary Black is a descendant of this couple.
4. Margaret Black married to George Gibson came to Manaia in Taranaki. She was the daughter of David Black and Agnes Mann, also a descendant of John Black and Catherine Leckie.



<sup>16</sup> Newspaper article *Otago Daily Times* 5 April 1976.