

Hill

William

publican of Totterdown, Bristol
residence, 33 Castle Green, Castle Precinct
died pre 1841 census

m

Sarah

b abt 1780, Isle of Wight
d after 1851 Bristol

|



The steepest street in Britain – Vale St in Bristol's Totterdown distict.

Henry

abt 1812
St Phillips, Bristol
all baptised St Augustine the Less on 5/10/1817

d 1885

m Sept 1857

Maria Reynolds

b St Laurence,
Isle of Wight
d March 1883
Bristol
|

Alfred

abt 1814

d 1857 Bristol

m 14/11/1844, Nelson, NZ

Sarah Ann

Edwards

b Rotherhithe, London
21/11/1823
d Nelson
13/2/1867
|

Emma

1817



William Norton Hill

Henry Reynolds

1859
Bristol
Dec 1871
Bristol

William Norton

abt 1862
Bristol
21/1/1929
m Sept 1898

Emma Mary

1863
Bristol
1871
Bristol

Mary Florence Marsh

abt 1879
Devises
27/2/1949, Paignton
|

Henry Reynolds

20/8/1900- (to Australia)

Dorothy Grace

1903-99

Thomas Norton

15/4/1906-19/4/1969

Emily

Joyce
1907-

Henry George

b 29/3/1846
Bristol
2/4/1903 N. Ply
m 9/12/1871

Ann Gosper

Windsor, NSW
b 1839 U. Colo
d 4/9/1920
New Plymouth
|

Alfred Edwards

1873-91

Sarah Mary Marsden

1874-1937

Henry Reynolds

1875-1942

William

Marsden
1878-1959

William Barton

b 21/12/48
Bristol
d 15/10/1898, Napier
m 17/12/1878

Mary Ann

Draisey

22/8/1853
Ruspidge
Forest of Dean
d 24/6/1933, Hastings
|

Alfred

6/10/1881-7/6/1961

George

Charlie

23/2/84-18/9/1956, Hastings

Ruby

Violet

27/7/86-24/4/1970, Waikato hospital

Kate Winifred

Sarah

20/5/1890-31/5/1978

*Note: Second husband
for Mary Ann Draisey was
Con Horan.*

A. EGGLE, Printer, 141, Fenchurch Street, London.



Ruspidge in the early 1900s. Photo: E.J. Reece.

South for a new life

Mary Ann Draisey didn't just decide to make the journey to other side of the world on a whim. Like many other young women, she took the chance to get out of the drudgery of a tiny coal-mining village, for the adventure of a new life in a 'brand-new' land as the bride of a young settler already there.

Family lore does not extend as to the how, when and where of this, but we do know the marriage didn't take place as he died prior to her arrival.

She landed in Napier on 29 October, 1876, on the 725-ton barque *Inverness*, having left London on 21 July. The cost of the voyage was £13.11s and she had an immigrant's Unpaid Promissory Note for £1. A unexpectedly single young woman with no special skills listed as a servant, she would have been employed in general domestic service.



The immigrant ship *Inverness* which made two trips direct from London to Napier.

While Mary Ann was growing up in the depths of the Forest of Dean, her future husband's family was working on becoming globe-trotters and regular members of King Neptune's court.

Our Hill saga starts back in Bristol when the city was part of Somerset, not Gloucestershire. So far the earliest record is William, a publican in the now inner city suburb of Totterdown – built on cliffs rising out of the river and has the steepest street in Britain.

He (William) married Sarah and they had three children, all baptised on 5/10/1817 at St Augustine the Less – Henry, Alfred and Emma. Henry was six years old at this stage, Alfred three years and 10 months and Emma one month old. It appears William had died by the time of the 1841 census and Sarah is listed as being of independent means and in 1871 as proprietor of houses, by which I assume she is running/owning several pubs.

Both Henry and Alfred were printers, but despite this solid trade, Alfred decided to try life in the colonies, shipping out on the *Indus* and arriving in Nelson, New Zealand, on 5/2/1843. He set up shop printing from premises in Haven Rd (along a narrow arm of the harbour). Alfred would have had to freight out with him, various wooden or steel hand printing frames and several sets of typeface.

Meanwhile George Edwards, boatbuilder of Broadway, Rotherhithe, London, had married Mary Thomas. He was baptised 3/7/1791 at St Luke, Old St, Finsbury in London – Mary was born the same year. They married at Wapping in 1821 and produced three daughters – Sarah Ann (b 21/11/1823 Rotherhithe and baptised St Mary's 13/12/1823), Mary Georgina (5/3/1828-1884) and Lucy Emma (12/3/1831–April 1895).

The whole family boarded the *Indus* in Gravesend

where Sarah encountered Alfred Hill – they had three months to get to know one another during the largely uneventful trip. They were married on 14/11/1844 in Nelson by J. Swinton Spooner JP. The public notice of this in the local newspaper drew forth a stinging response, decrying the practice of marriage by Justice of the Peace, questioning the legality of such marriage and asserting that any children of the couple would be denied normal rights of inheritance, etc.



Inner Bristol harbour with the spires of St Stephens, St Augustine the Less and Bristol Cathedral, about 1850.

Spooner had also travelled out on the *Indus*, employed by the New Zealand Company as a surveyor. He was also an amateur artist and went exploring with Major Charles Heaphy when they found the Buller River in north Westland.

Sarah landed as an 18-year-old school assistant and may have found employment as that in Nelson.

At that stage a very basic school made of woven toi toi (bullrush) existed. After the hustle and bustle of international trading port Bristol, Nelson must have been like a very cold shower. Many lived in tents until houses could be built.

The *Indus* was carrying mainly free passengers, but both

the Edwards and Alfred Hill had paid their passage – about £15. Nelson was a mushroom, blossoming from bare land in late 1841/1842 with the arrival of around 1000 New Zealand Company settlers. A town structure had been laid out but was quickly absorbed by the arrival of more ships and people – this led to one of the more unfortunate and savage incidents in the colony's history, politely known as the Wairau Affray.

With its signature disregard for anyone not English, the New Zealand Company pushed out into the

Very early Nelson (1841)– tents, rather than houses, are the norm. Alexander Turnbull Library. Painting by Charles Heaphy.



Wairau Valley across agreed Maori lands not sold for settlement, without any real thought they were taking on two of Maoridom's best and volatile fighting chiefs, Te Rauparaha and Te Rangihaeata. A highly-doubtful written agreement (later proved in court to be illegal) was waved around as authority, but an armed clash took place around Tuamarina on 17 June, 1843, with the Europeans being forced to flee or surrender.

Surrender they did, laying down their arms and all was proceeding to protocol until one of the Europeans was perceived to pull a pistol. The warriors tore into the European group, sparing no-one and in the process settled the debt for the death of Te Rangihaeata's wife from a stray shot earlier in the confrontation.

Maybe the fledgling pioneer town of a few hundred people was not exciting enough for the newly-weds after the hustle and bustle of Bristol (population about 150,000) or perhaps there were too many letter-writing bigots, or the Wairau Affray. Whatever, Alfred and Sarah returned to Bristol 1845/6.

Two sons made up the family unit – Henry George born 29/3/1846 and William Barton 29/12/1848. Alfred was still at his old trade of printing with his brother Henry when the children were baptised, but by the time of the 1851 census the family was at 9 Trinity St, Castle Green, and Alfred was working as a Tide Waiter (a HM Customs ship inspector who joined the ships outside the harbour and supervised unloading).

Alfred died about 1857 so Sarah packed the sea chests

again and she and the boys headed back across the Equator taking 114 days to reach Nelson 23/9/1859 aboard the *Cresswell* on its seventh voyage, after calling at Port Cooper (known as Lyttelton after 1856). The boys settled into school life which had progressed from the first woven toi toi building, and (for those days) a middle-aged woman at 38, Sarah married John Thomas Hodgson in 1861, at his home in Collingwood St.

John (known as Thomas) was an artist from Doncaster's Belmont House estate and was appointed lithographer to the Governor. Sarah died on 13/2/1867 and Thomas remarried Catherine Smith from Ludstone Hall estate, Salop, on 13/10/1868.

While Sarah was globetrotting, her father George was busy re-establishing himself in boatbuilding, including a boat for his daughter and son-in-law. One of these was the 9-ton cutter *Enterprise* in 1843 for surveyor J.S. Cottrell who was killed in the Wairau Massacre. She was wrecked in Queen Charlotte Sound while sheltering from a Cook Strait storm and her anchor dragged.

The local boatbuilders developed a special craft for the area that could navigate small bays and rivers and creeks and performed a bit like today's courier vans. They were known as Blind Bay Hookers (after the Dutch hoeker). George worked out of the Haven area but later

Hookers of 1 to 20 tons were built by George Edwards and colleagues for the local coastal trade. Photo: Nelson Provincial Museum

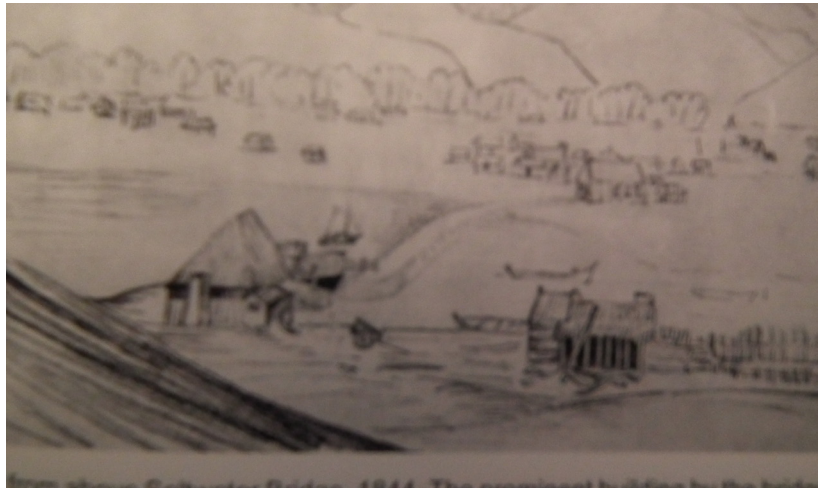


moved around the coast to Riwaka where he became the driving force among an 1845 partnership of four men to build a vessel of between 30 and 40 tons that could sail to Tahiti – which George had already visited.

They would carry a load of potatoes they had grown themselves and sell the cargo along with the vessel in Tahiti. One supposes they would work as crew for someone else for a return voyage.

Fire was the early settlers' greatest fear – living in tents, makeshift shelters or even finished wooden houses, while fire brigades didn't exist and bucket brigades were only effective on little fires. It was possible to lose everything and not be able to replace some stuff for a year. George Edwards died in Riwaka on 13/1/1847, after tripping and breaking his neck while trying to put out a fire around their Tahiti project.

Mary lived on nearly 40 more years until 14/2/1884 aged 93.



Sketch of George Edward's boatyard in the Haven.

With no blood family to tie him to Nelson, William Barton Hill can be found in Napier working for joiner Mr Villers in Petane/Bayview, now part of Napier. This is quite a journey from Nelson in those days so he was obviously not settled in that pioneer outpost. Joinery perhaps proved too tame and William volunteered for the Armed Constabulary, signing up in 1869 and after basic training was shipped off to the wilds of the central North Island, stationed at Te Haroto (on the Napier-Taupo Rd).

He wrote to the Commissioner of Mounted Police on 19 January, 1870, complaining that he had been sent to Te Haroto as a temporary posting – this had turned into nine months at the post, and he was not happy, asking for a transfer to a west coast posting (this may be because his brother was in Taranaki). After a year in the force, he resigned.

Sometime before April 1874 he had obtained the

Boatbuilders taking a break in the sun at the first iteration of Ricketts. In 2022 it is working across the Strait, in Wellington.

George Edwards is second from left. The building was still in situ in the 1930s.

Photo: Nelson Provincial Museum





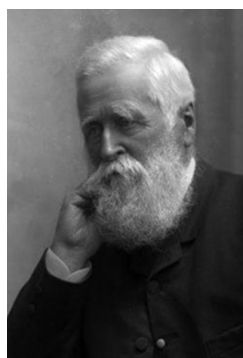
Armed Constabulary at their Orepe base in 1870. The base was the first on the Taupo end of the road.
Photo:

original lease of the (Te Pohue) Pohui Accommodation House (possibly from coach company Cobb and Co). This was wild and isolated country and the hotel served as an 'overnighter' or lunch venue for travellers passing through, and as a 'local' for the constabulary. The original Te Pohue hotel, which stood on the flat just across the stream on the Titiokura side of the Omakrere, had eight rooms.

William may well have been one of the Armed Constabulary who, with local Maori, converted by hand the Maori walking trail from Taupo to Napier into a track. It was a wild ride, originally taking two days, up to 47 fords crossings of the Esk River alone depending on recent rainfall, and some steep grades. It took 30 horses in teams of five to make the crossing – changing teams stationed at Petane/Bayview, Te Pohue, Mohaka, Tarawera and Rangitaiki.

The coach service began on New Year's Day 1872 with Mr Peter's service and involved some walking; then Cobb and Co, and then the Hawkes Bay Motor Co.

William had an extended public joust with temperance advocate the Hon. William Fox (later NZ's Premier), over the standard of accommodation at Pohui as Fox actively opposed the continuation of William's licence. Letters flew back and forth in the local newspapers after they had clashed in the licensing hearing.



On April 22 1874, William's application to the annual licensing meeting was refused on the grounds of insufficient accommodation (complaint of the Hon. W. Fox. Who knows what Fox expected on what was essentially

Hon.W. Fox

'the frontier', we don't know, but he didn't like it). Mr Fox described Te Pohue and two other up-country hotels as being deficient in accommodation.

The Licensing chair summarised Mr Fox's complaint against Te Pohue as: without ordinary comfort, filthy in the extreme, frequented by degraded drunks of both races – the sights, the smells and the language, utterly disgusting. The three hotels were further described as being worse than beastly, but demoniac 'hells upon earth'.

In his defence, William told the Court that they had done their best for Mr Fox when he stayed there, but the place was full of a very rough set, mostly bushmen in for a drink. At the time of Mr Fox's visit they were not drunk, but there was no constable in the district and he was powerless to prevent fights. He had good reason to believe that the bushmen was 'putting on a performance' knowing who Mr Fox was.

The chairman pointed out that houses in districts like Pohui (Te Pohue) were licensed solely for the convenience of travellers. He pointed out that that could scarcely be the case when it was considered in what strong terms he (Fox) had complained of the house.

There followed a very public fight in the media, drawing in others. One correspondent said: "The fanatical crusade now being carried on by Mr Fox and the Good Templars against the public house is likely to cause, amongst other evils, a great deal of inconvenience to travellers ... refused a renewal of the license of one of these hotels, Pohui, situated on the road from Napier to Taupo, which will now have to be shut leaving travellers to camp out as best they can. This kind of thing is intolerable. The whole community is not to be inconvenienced to please a band of fanatics who, under the garb of philanthropy, are endeavouring to

thrust their crotchets down the throats of other people...”

Among other choice pieces of vitriol deployed –comments from William were that he used to think that one of the qualifications of a Member of the House of Representatives was that he should be a gentleman at least, but he is evidently in error. “I wonder if you will ever come up this way again and require accommodation at Pohui, and should you come and find no licence, have to pay ten shillings a meal, same for beds, other charges proportionately dear, how will that suit you? Or even worse– told to sleep in the fern, for the owner of an unlicensed house can refuse whoever he likes.”

William also reminded Fox that as the hotel was full, he had turned the servants out of their beds to sleep outside and William and others had slept on the floor to make room for Fox’s party. Fox would not back down claiming that the hotel was no place for a lady and he would as soon sleep in a tent. The two of them occupied several columns of newsprint, the editor obviously hugely enjoying the ripostes.

Fox pointed out that on his return journey five weeks later, he and his party arrived at half-past nine in the morning. His horses had had nothing to eat since the afternoon of the previous day at Tarawera. “You had not a single feed of corn, bran or hay to give them. We had ourselves ridden 15 miles without breakfast. That which we got in your house was so bad that we could scarcely eat it.” Fox also drew attention to the drunks present at the early time of the morning, blaspheming and howling in front of the house “entirely unnoticed by you”.

William replied, among other quotes, that he had been low on feed as Major Scanell had requisitioned nearly all his oats for Sir James Fergusson and his suite the day before. “I may mention that Sir James Fergusson himself condescended to praise my house for its cleanliness ...”

In reply to Fox’s comments on fleas, William replied that Mr Fox had obviously never tried to separate a dog from his shepherd, even when it came to sleeping. William went on to say he would not waste his time re-applying for a licence in the face of such opposition from a man of power, wealth and influence, regardless of the facts.

On 6 June, 1877, the hotel gained its licence without comment under the stewardship of Joseph King who had taken over the hotel from William in 1875.



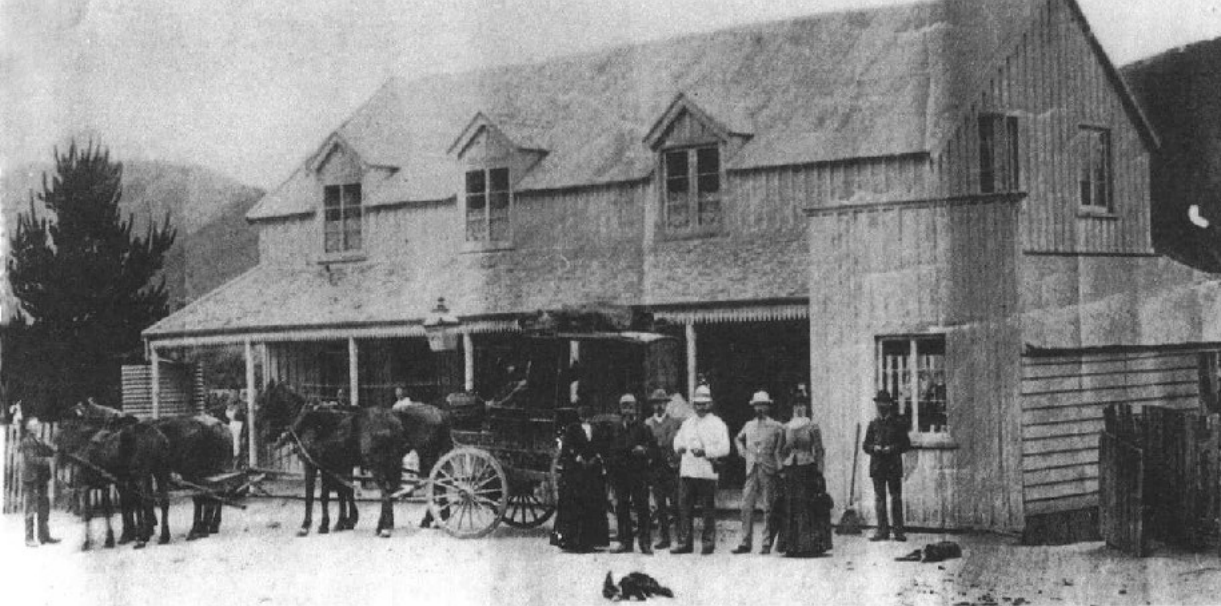
The team of four (plus a reserve) hauls a stagecoach up to the Tarawera Saddle in the early days of the Napier-Taupo Rd. Note the clear felling of the virgin rain forest for some distance back from the road. Great swathes of bush disappeared for conversion to farmland and building.

William took up a new existence as a horse driver, met Mary Ann around town in Napier and they married at The Manse in Napier on 7 December, 1878. The couple returned to Pohui, with William employed as keeper at the Pohui pound, but this position was annulled along with four others in July 1880. They were back on the coast with William working as a carpenter in Petane (Bayview) where the first of the children, Alfred, was born in 1881.

A couple of years later William was the Hon Secetary of the Meeanne Lodge of Oddfellows. George Charlie Hill was born at Taradale on 29/2/1884 where the family settled for several years. Then he got involved with the local racing club, being the secretary of the Town and Suburban Racing Club when it launched itself as a limited company in 1886 seeking capital of £2000 in £1 shares and endeavouring to establish itself as near as possible to Taradale. In September the same year he was appointed caretaker of the Taradale Public Library which came with the use of the upstairs rooms and kitchen.

He was a busy man, advertising himself on 2/11/1886 as an accountant and general commission agent based at the Mechanics Institute, his services including rents and debts collected. He was appointed collector of rates for the Meeanne Rd district the following year, as well as being a sub-agent for Imperial Fire Insurance.

William had moved on to being Clerk of The Taradale Town District by 1888 and with some irony, found



The Te Pohue accommodation house that burned down in 1897. Photo: H.B Museum.

himself Clerk of the Licensing Committee for the District of Taradale – a position he held until his resignation in April 1889. He had become very much a focal point in the community with many public occurrences passing across his desk.

Another feather in his cap in September 1890 was being appointed secretary of the provisional committee of the fledgling Hawkes Bay Farmers' Co-operative Association. In 1891 the racing club had to dispense with William's services as it was only holding two meetings a year. The newspaper report said "the committee say it does not pay to keep a secretary. They will change their minds when the work has to be done."

Two years later William continued his diverse employment by accepting the position of canvasser of country districts for subscriptions to Napier Hospital. He branched out into storekeeping at Puketitiri and being appointed postmaster of Waikononi (the overall district).

On 3 December, 1896, our intrepid William was back in the accommodation business, advertising in the *Hawkes Bay Herald*: "The Puketitiri Accommodation House is now open to the public visiting the district; good fishing and shooting in the neighbourhood. In connection with the above is the Puketitiri Store and the proprietor will also run a conveyance once weekly to Napier via Hawkston leaving Puketitiri Thursday mornings and returning on Saturdays." William is also farming the land attached to the house.

A few weeks later he was applying to the county council for a licence to slaughter on Block 31, Pohui survey district, Puketitiri – we assume this has to do with supplying the accommodation house and perhaps assisting hunters dress their kills. He applied to renew his accommodation licence in 1898, and how times have changed – this time he had the publicly advertised backing of stipendary magistrate Andrew Turnbull. He also presented a petition of 160 people in favour. The licence cost £10.

William used his old skills as a carpenter to help build the Puketitiri School – Ruby and Kate were first-day pupils and the local teacher lived in the boarding house with the Hills. William Barton Hill died at Napier Hospital on 15/10/1898, aged 49, from heart disease.

Mary Ann had been busy raising four children – Alfred 6/10/1881, George Charlie 23/2/1884, Ruby Violet 27/7/1886 and Kate Winifred Sarah 20/5/1890. No doubt she also helped with the accommodation business and general store after their marriage in 1878.

She determined to carry on the family business and applied for the Puketitiri licence to be transferred to her name, and by May 1899 was advertising: "Mrs M.A. Hill of Puketitiri, well-known in connection with the excellently-kept accommodation house which she conducted for several years, is now proprietress of the Puketitiri Hotel, where travellers to the rapidly-rising district will find every comfort and convenience and a first-class table."

Mary Ann was to prove herself a hard-nosed businesswoman. After inviting creditors to present their bills against William's estate on 17/10/1898, she then had to be sued on 7/3/1900 by the trustees of a creditor for £25 as an instalment on an agreement. Her late husband William Hill, had entered into an agreement to pay the plaintiffs £250 in 10 instalments for allowing their accommodation licence to lapse and not compete with Hill's house at Puketitiri. Hill would also purchase all the plaintiffs' wines, spirits and groceries, ales and stouts.

Having publicly declared she was employing the assets of the deceased, of which she is sole legatee, in her own business, Mary Ann lost the case with £6 5s costs, but had had the use of the £25 for at least two years.

Mary Ann remarried and became Mrs Cornelius (Con) Horan. Con was suddenly elevated from labourer to proprietor of the Puketitiri Hotel after a transfer of licence to his name. She was back before the court in

November 1900 with the Appeal Court reserving its judgment on an appeal against the judgment of the Chief Justice that Mary Ann, as widow, was not bound to pay the £250 (owed by her late husband) in annual installments, but could pay anytime in the 10 year period. The end result was for Mary Ann to pay the £25 plus costs and William's estate to be handled through the Deputy Official Assignee in Bankruptcy.



A photographer records first day at the Puketitiri School. Ruby Hill is fourth from the right.

Con and Mary Ann continued on with the hotel until selling it to J. Vigor Brown for £200 and the licence was transferred to Boer War veteran Fred Bradley, who also took over the mail business. The hotel was totally destroyed by fire on 5/1/1909 – at this stage it was owned by Neal and Close and tenanted by Mr Henderson. (The Neals owned several hotels in the province, and their daughter May married Frank Lopdell).

The Horans got involved in a complicated legal case in 1910 over the sale the previous year of 11 and 3/4 acres (a dairy farm on St Georges Rd, Hastings) they acquired along the way, and been fined for not controlling rabbits on the property.

The land was not overly productive and Con was keen to get rid of it. He employed an agent to sell it for £1250 and was prepared to have a down payment followed by instalments over five years. Eventually Miss Angelina McPhinn (McPhumm) offered £125 down and the rest by instalment. However, once the agreement had been drawn up, it emerged that Miss McPhinn would have 40 years to pay it off.

The deposit was refunded to Miss McPhinn. The agent Wilson had paid Con £80 and retained £43 15s as commission. Wilson was now being sued for exceeding his authority. Negotiations got complicated due to Con wanting McPhee to take on the remaining mortgage, but she refused. A cocktail of who said what was submitted to the court and it appears the result was that Miss McPhee rented the land.

Con reverted to being a labourer before picking up a job as a bushman then a mill hand and life settled down. By 1910 he was manager of the mill;

Ruby married Harry Lopdell; George was a mill hand and Kate was working at domestic duties. Kate later married Edward Simmons in 1914 and Alfred married Eunice Bloor five years later – he was a coach driver, then storekeeper; Charlie was a mill hand, later farmer; George was single until 40 when he married Hilda Christopherson; William Barton junior followed his grandfather into carpentry.

The money from the hotel sale appears to have been wisely invested as Mary Ann and Con are both listed at two separate addresses in the 1919 Electoral Roll; grand-daughter Ita Lopdell (Martin) remembers going to house auctions in Napier with Mary Ann and that she/they owned more than one property. She also collected fine china.



The Hills: Mary Ann, Alfred, Charlie, Ruby Violet and William Barton – about 1888.

Con and Mary Ann were listed on the 1919 Electoral Roll at Puketitiri and at 13 Vigor Brown St, Napier (a townhouse?). They purchased 1200 Caroline Rd, Hastings in February 1920 and were domiciled in Ellison Rd on the 1928 Roll – they purchased 203 Ellison Rd on 5/12/1932 (now a commercial building). The following year they sold it to Clemens Eberhard.

Mary Ann died 24/6/1933 at their 1200 Caroline Rd, Hastings, house from heart disease. She was intestate so the proceeds of her estate went to husband Con. He sold the Ellison Rd property in December 1934 and moved south to be closer to his siblings and was farming near Dunedin when he died in Mater Hospital, Dunedin.

His will bequeathed his estate to brother Joseph and



Kate and Ruby visiting the Puketitiri sawmill.

Rural accommodation a risky business

Running an accommodation business on the Taupo-Napier road in its early days was not for the faint-hearted. Even today, the road can be closed by snow. The road was rough, the hotels probably too small to make a reasonable profit (8-10 rooms) unless all rooms had multiple occupancy, and they were the 'local' for some rowdy Armed Constabulary and (later) mill workers.

The original Te Pohue (Pohui) accommodation house was made of pit-sawn timber and a shingle roof about 1869. John Collins Cox was before the court in August 1871 in regards to it. The previous month it was reported that a Mr Warrington who had been missing for some time, was found in a tree in the Pohui bush and had been there long enough to be mutilated by local wildlife. "The deceased had lost all his savings recently in the Pohui hotel of which his brother was proprietor, and which proved a failure. Owing to this he took to drinking severely, and become insane. He had been living in the bush like a wild man for months past."

The accommodation house was later kept by G.H. Gibbs and Samuel Jew – at their bankruptcy hearing they said the first three months had been good trade, but then it "fell almost entirely away, and was only carried on in the hope that it would take a turn for the better. This did not happen which accounted for the small amount of assets appearing on the balance sheet." Gibbs and Jew had liabilities of £506 and assets of £247. They were adjudged bankrupt and discharged in February 1871.



1200 Caroline Rd, Hastings. It had a designated smoking room to which Con was confined whenever he wished to partake.

sisters Margaret Dennehy and May Maloney – his post office saving account was £350 plus accrued age benefit.

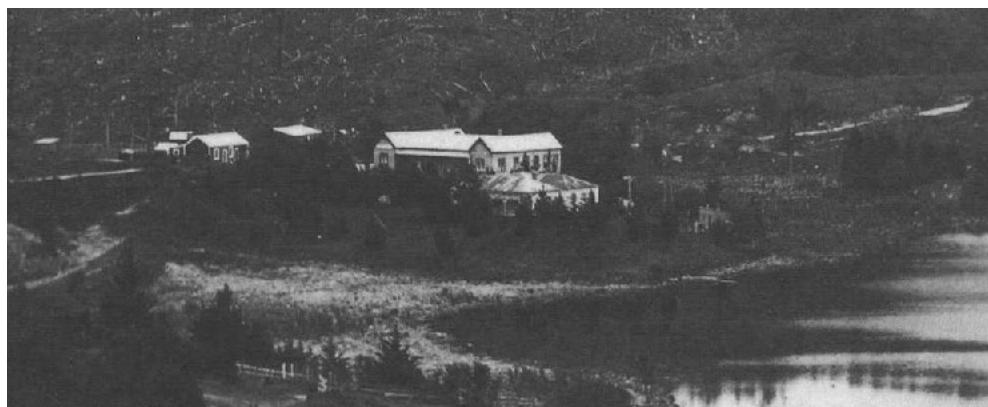
The establishment at this stage had a 'bush' licence which meant basic facilities only.

It is not known exactly when William Hill (known to locals as 'Billy') took over but it was a new or enlarged building that he leased, probably from Cobb and Co. He got out of the business after losing his licence through a public stoush with the Hon William Fox over perceived standards, or the lack of. He sold off to Joseph King in 1875. It burned down in 1897 after sparks from a nearby burn-off set fire to the hotel's shingle roof.



A stagecoach crosses the Esk River yet again, after the outrider has checked it for holes and snags. Photo: Knowledge Bank.

King rebuilt the hotel on a new site alongside the main road and overlooking Lake Pohue, renamed it Lake Hotel and leased it to Mrs Joshua. Before 1906 King had purchased the Mohaka Hotel, demolished it and used the material to add to Te Pohue, making it 24 rooms. Alf Polton purchased it in 1926 only to see it destroyed in the 1931 earthquake. He rebuilt on a new site and named it Lake View Hotel.



Another natural disaster to afflict the hotel was the great flood of 1938. A dance had been held at Te Pohue that night and a string of slips between there and Eskdale meant many of the dancers were squeezed into the hotel for several days. The town was supplied with essentials such as bread and butter through daily air drops.

Right: ***Lake Hotel and Te Pohue Lake, 1907.***

Below: ***Tarawera Hotel, the overnight stop.***

Photos: Knowledge Bank



The soldiers of the Armed Constabulary formed a road for bullock carts out of the old Maori track that climbed from the 320m elevation at Taupo to cross the pumice flats of the Kaiangaroa Plains at around 675m. From there the new road plunged 375m down the course of the Waipunga Stream before climbing 300m back over an active fault zone on the Turangakumu Range.

It descended again to cross the Mohaka River and several more faults at around 375m, before making its last climb up over the Titiokura Saddle (675m), and a final descent through the Esk Valley to join the Gisborne-Napier highway 15 kms north of Napier. Missionary William Colenso is thought to have been the first European to traverse the old Maori route, in 1847, and it was well known to Europeans by the time the Armed Constabulary started upgrading it to a road two decades later.

It took five years to form the road using picks, shovels, barrows and some horse-drawn equipment, and by 1874 the Government troops around Taupo were being supplied in part by bullock carts from Napier.

In 1893 the road out of Napier was shifted west to avoid the 43 river crossings necessitated by the Esk River route.

The Te Pohue accommodation house/hotel was originally an overnight stop, but as the road and service improved, became the first day lunch stop for the Napier-Taupo route. As the coach left Napier, a message pigeon was released telling Te Pohue of the numbers for lunch.



Dodging a large boulder on the Napier-Taupo Rd that fell of a cliff during the 1931 Napier eathquake.

Snow blankets the Napier-Taupo Road after a heavy fall in 2016. Photo: NZTA



An example of the far-from-comfortable coach used on the road.



The 1958 version of Te Pohue.



Siblings and children

Alfred's brother **Henry** went out on his own as a printer working from home (or nearby) in Castle Green in 1836. Back then a printer could have quite small premises as it was all hand-set in page frames and hand-printed.

The brothers went into business together and apart from the standard 'jobbing' work, acted as agents for organisations they were printing for and printed the newspaper, the *Bristol Standard*, for the length of its existence – January 1839 to 27/1/1842. This newspaper saw the Hills in court in 1842 chasing £3 5s 10d, being the subscription for the entire life of the publication.



Castle St, the busy commercial sector of Castle Green. The other side to Castle Green is a large public park surrounding the little that is left of Bristol castle.

Among other publications, the Hills printed the local 1841 Electoral Roll. By 1851 Henry was listed as a letterpress and copper plate printer and Alfred had been to New Zealand, set up as a printer in Nelson for

a short time, then returned to Bristol with his bride. An 1849 list of Bristol Quakers lists H & A Hill, an interesting fact given their parents were hoteliers.

Alfred had left printing behind for a job in HM Customs by 1851, William had died and Sarah was a 70-year-old proprietor of houses. Ten years later Henry had taken the big step forward in technology becoming one of the new 'steam' printers in town – steam-powered mechanical printing that meant speed of production soared.

The company continued to move around the central city as space demanded, being at 2 Baldwin St in

1861, 1863-68 in 18 Small St where Henry was now without Alfred and described as a printer and stationer, and then to John St.

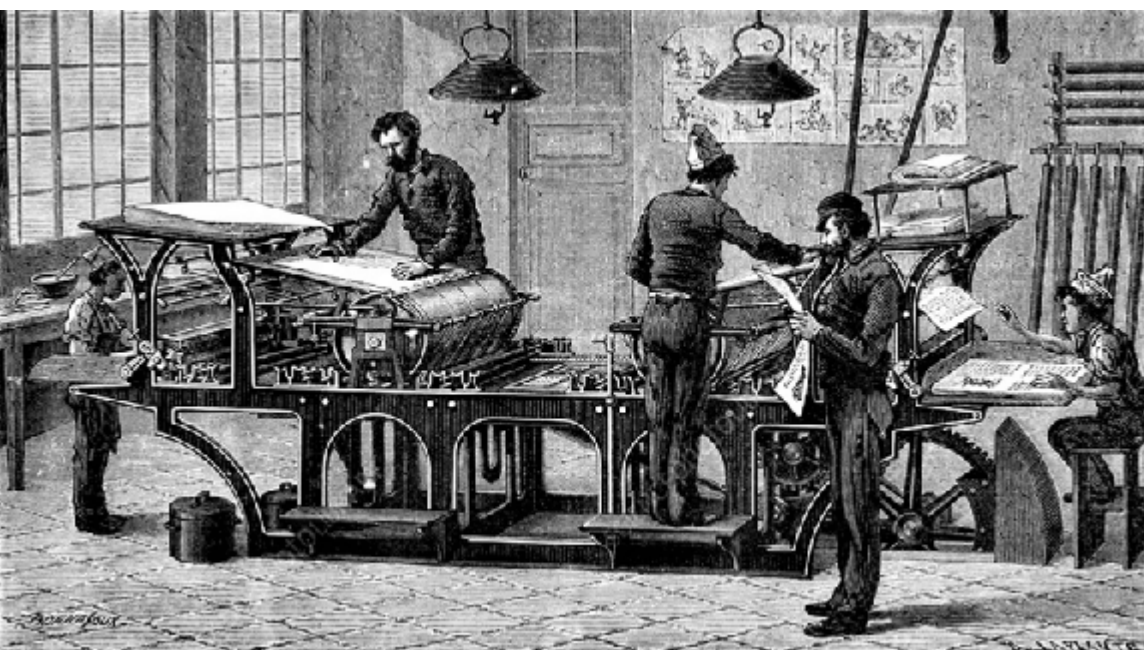
Henry left it later than usual to start his family empire, marrying Maria Reynolds from St Laurence in the Isle of Wight in September 1857. He and Maria had three children: Henry Reynolds, William Norton and Emma.

At the 1871 census Henry was employing five men, two boys and one girl. One apprentice, Joseph Lindsey (born Coleraine in Ireland), was living with them, as well as 14-year-old general servant Alice Byles from Bath. The family was living in the rear house at Park Row.

Come 1881 and a change of residential address, Bedford House at 1 Lower Bedford Place. Maria died in March 1883, aged 64, and Henry two years later aged 74.

Henry junior died as a teenager but William Norton served his apprenticeship and moved into the company.

William married Florence Mary Marsh in September 1898 and had at least four children: Henry Reynolds



A major advance in early letterpress – the steam-driven press. On the far side of the machine is a large fanbelt connected to a boiler on the floor below.

1900, Dorothy Grace 1903, Thomas Norton 1906 and Emily Joyce in 1907.

The family business continued on uninterrupted until the heating apparatus in the John St premises blew up. "Bricks and debris flew in all directions, but fortunately no one was hurt." The damage didn't interfere with production.

In 1901 the family was in Beaufort House, Bedford Place., which later became the Nurses Home. By 1911 the family was in 23 Carnarvon Rd and had a live-in cook (Minnie Aslop from Hambrook) and a nurse/domestic (Mabel Miriam Cutler from East Compton).

William Norton died on 21/1/29 aged 67 – his reported gross estate was £14,472 0s 9d, with net personal of £5564 9s. The various family members had made a success of the business to the point where Henry Reynolds was able to afford a motor-car. In May that year he, along with others, was fined 5 shillings for obstructing the highway at Burnham. William Norton was also able to send his first son (Henry Reynolds) to a 2-19 years boarding school in Margate, Kent. That Henry Reynolds migrated to Australia.

William Norton's youngest son Thomas Norton, while not a printer, probably had control of the business as he was the sales manager in a 1939 listing.

The company was finally bought out after the heavy German bombing of Bristol in 1941 – another printer (Mardons) needed to replace equipment damaged in the attacks, and so ended over 100 years of a successful family company. Mardons was in turn purchased by the Imperial Tobacco Company (W.D & H.O Wills) to produce all its advertising and packaging world-wide.

William Barton's brother **Henry George Hill** took off for Australia, probably seeking his fortune in a larger land. What he did find was a wife – Ann Gosper from the NSW town, Windsor. Ann was born in Upper Colo in NSW to Joseph and Ann (Marsden) Gosper in 1839 – they married 9/12/1871.

Windsor is now an outer northern suburb of Sydney on the Hawkesbury River and probably the best preserved of all the local colonial settlements. Upper Colo is a small village in the bush a few miles beyond Windsor on the Colo River tributary.

Like the Edwards family, the Gaspers are from Rotherhithe or Bermondsey, now part of Greater London, south side of the Thames, downstream from Tower Bridge. Thomas Roker Gosper got seven years free accommodation in Australia for feloniously damaging a headfast (an arrangement of three ropes) affixed to a lighter belonging to Edward Thomas and James Ogle.

Thomas and Ann Gosper

He arrived in Australia in the Second Fleet aboard the *Surprise*, a brutal voyage during which half the convicts died.



Mary Ann Hipwell (to be Mrs Gosper) is also on the 'Australian Royalty' list, although through dubious circumstances. She was left in charge of her mistress's house while she went away, with strict instructions not to go away or let any man in. Apparently she went to Sadlers Wells with 'a man' and when they got home, the place had been burgled with £200 of silver etc, missing. A pair of gloves alleged to belong to her mistress were found in Mary Ann's trunk and she received seven years' transportation. Her supposed co-conspirator was not guilty, but found himself on another boat later for some other offence.



Windsor, NSW today



Shipping at anchor on the Thames around Rotherhithe.

One of the Gosper's parcels of land - Hawkesbury River flats seen from Hawkins Lookout.

Although it appears they did not take an active part, the Gaspers were surrounded by land wars with the local Aboriginal that lasted 12 years and were very bloody on occasion.

Thomas came out of the right side of the ledger with a 30 acre farm on the Hawkesbury River and a further 100 acres at Freemans Reach. His son Joseph got a land grant of in 1821 of the 'Myrtledale farm' which was leased out, and his family worked another farm given to him by his father. Joseph was born 27/4/1804 in Wilberforce and died 11/2/1889 in Kurrajong Heights. They married after the birth of the fourth and youngest son.

Ancestry, in its *Who Do You Think You Are?* tv series revealed that former Australian prime minister Malcolm Turnbull was a descendant of Thomas Gosper and Mary Ann Hipwell. Their son John and his wife Hannah Reeves we supposdly Malcolm's 3xgreat grandparents but the Ancestry research revealed the his 3xgreat grandmother was actually Hannah's 15-year-old sister. Hannah had 15 children.

While this might shock us today, apparently it was not unusual for the 'frontier', especially if the wife is not 'available'. Many convict women, especially, became pregnant to their boss.

Back to **Henry George** ... Henry bought Ann to New Zealand and they produced four children: Alfred Edward (1873-1891), Sarah Mary Marsden (1874-13/10/1937), Henry Reynolds (12/9/1876 Waimea -20/5/1942) and Wiliam Marsden (1878-1959). Given that Sarah was born in Tikokino, it seems they had a look at settling in Hawke's Bay first, before returning to the Nelson area.

Alfred drowned while crossing the Para Para river flats en route to visiting friends in Riwaka. About 18, Alfred couldn't swim and it was said his horse was not good

in water. It is also thought the young man may have mistaken his instruction where and when to cross the flats and unintentionally got into deep water.

We don't know how Henry qualified as a teacher but coming from Nelson he had a better chance at a decent education where private schools had been operating almost as the settlers arrived. Some parts of the country had to wait until the Education Act of 1877 to be guaranteed an education.

The new 88 Valley School appears to have been Henry's first (appointed 22/6/1876) – a report in 1876 said the master had only been there a few months. The 1887 inspection found the unusual situation of the juniors appearing to have been better taught than the seniors. The area is one of many valleys leading into the hills south of Nelson.

Three contingents of German settlers arrived in the Nelson with the first new English inhabitants. One group settled the hill valleys to the south of Nelson (the Upper Moutere area) and named it Neudorf. Today the area is famous for apples and some of the best wine in the country. The school was built in 1870 and opened with 35 pupils.

Henry had transfered to Neudorf by 1879 and the report that year found his teaching to be most careful and intelligent, while excellent discipline was maintained.

The 88 Valley.



Come 1882 Henry was complaining about the lack of maintenance of the school house his family occupied– some of the brickwork was separating. The following year Henry had a glowing report with examiners saying: “Few of our schools now surpasses this (Neudorf) in the quality of teaching.” It went on to say the scholars the inspector had previously thought to be hopeless, were now acquitting themselves.

But there was trouble brewing in the German immigrant community. The inspector’s report said he was surprised that given the competence of the teaching at Neudorf, half the school was missing during his inspection, as a ‘detachment’ of older scholars was going to a private school for part of the week. They could not, apparently, be spared for the single day on which the results of the year’s work of a school that has cost the public some hundreds of pounds in buildings, besides a considerable annual outlay for maintenance, can be tested.” He was happy to report the following year that everyone had been present.

In 1887-88 Henry was sidelining as the postal service for Upper Moutere and Neudorf for the princely sum of £4 annually.

There was a split in the community: the Upper Moutere School Committee complained that Henry had been ridiculing members of the committee in front of the pupils. The newspaper report said the letter of complaint was accompanied by some very interesting and rather sparkling correspondence between the committee and Mr Hill. However, the Education Board could find no reason to dismiss him.

Henry’s position was reinforced by the 1888 inspector reporting: “None but a capable and experienced teacher could have accomplished what Mr Hill has done with a roll of 56.”

The situation was compounded with effrontery taken to Henry washing some pupils who had come to school ‘unclean’. It was becoming clear Henry and a part of the community were at odds, however, only part of the community as a petition was raised to ask him to remain, and a petition from 32 children. Interestingly, it later arose that “the present quarrel had originated with the division among the Germans in respect to their pastor and there had been religious dissension.”

In the end, despite the many plaudits he had on his ability, Henry resigned



The attractions of Collingwood and Golden Bay.

effective at the end of the year. It was proposed that Henry receive three months’ salary but dismissal was objected to on the grounds it would affect his future career.

Henry was well into his career in 1890 when he received a £20 increase in salary at the Collingwood school. The following year, however, Henry found himself at the centre of a public spat over his suitability. From here on Henry seemed to be a polarising influence in the community. The school under his leadership had received two bad annual reports in a row from Education Board inspectors. Deja vu: the School Committee said Henry had to go, whereas a petition of the parents begged for him to remain.

There followed a public discussion on the ballet of moving teachers around positions to fill the gap left should Henry leave Collingwood. He was offered a position at Spring Grove but that school declined to have him, and then it was proposed he go to Haven Rd school as second teacher to replace a teacher taking up Henry’s senior Collingwood position. It was then agreed everyone take a month’s break.

Three months later it was agreed Henry remain at Collingwood for another year. Despite little

German-style buildings at Neudorf.



improvement in the school's performance, Henry was offered a transfer to Lyell. It was not to be a happy experience for Henry as the school had fallen behind not having a senior teacher for a third of the year preceeding him and during 1895, measles and whooping cough were rife and attendance down. He was also without an assistant, struggling to teach over 60 children across nine classes.

One can hardly blame Henry for throwing in the towel, and going farming. He and the family packed up and left for Rahotu (pictured below), in the middle of iconic dairy country on the western side of Mt Egmont (Taranaki). Some of the family gravitated to the farm in the coming years: Henry Reynolds and Olive were there in 1905 along with William Marsden who was still single, Annie had joined them by 1914 and was still there with Ann and William five years later.



Henry died of kidney disease and is buried in Te Henui cemetery with his wife. Ann died on 4/9/1920.

Sarah Mary Marsden Hill

Sarah was born in Hampden (now Tikokino) 19/6/1874 and married Edward Duggan of Taranaki and went dairy farming with him in Rahotu and Otakeho. Edward was the only child of William Duggan and Annie Lennard Leonard who arrived separatly in Australia from Kilkenny and married in Ballarat in 1861. They had Clara Helen in 1899, Zilla Mary the following year, Ada Elizabeth in 1904 and Reynolds Matthais in 1904.

Henry Reynolds Hill married Olive Mary Harrison (Inglewood 27/9/1884 Opunake -27/9/1969) and they had five children: Henry Reynolds (1907-1907), Bessie (Davis) 1907-abt 1958), Alfred Bennett (1912-60), Myrtle (3/1/1918-1979) m Charles Vernon Muir), Henry Ronald (13/11/1926 New Plymouth-6/11/97 Opunake). Henry was a Lieutenant in the Opunake Mounted Rifle Volunteers, resigning his commission on 11/4/1907. He was not called up for service in WW1 until 5/6/1918 and joined C Company of the 42nd Reinforcements.

Fortunately for him he was of an age (43 years)

where he wasn't rushed overseas with the end of war looming. He was demobbed as a corporal of the 49th Reinforcements. His records state he was 5'8", brown hair, brown eyes and dark complexion. At his call-up he was a labourer for E.R. Harrison of Matapu and home address was Caledonia St, Hawera.

Olive remarried Thomas Williams in 1944.

Alfred Bennett Hill

Alfred, a builder's labourer/driver, was killed instantly on 1/12/1960 at the Matahina dam project when a hut on skids toppled on top of him. He had married Lillian Maud Smith in 1939 and the family was living in Kawerau at the time of his death : Linda Marlene (Mrs Harright) 21, Mervyn Bennett 18, Glenda Janet 17, Henry Raymond 15, Peter Laurence 9 and Beverley Suzanne 6.

Myrtle Hill

Myrtle married twice – Herbert Allen in 1932 and Charles Vernon Muir (24/11/1911-1993 Taranaki).

Mary Georgina Edwards

firstly married Henry Fowler 12/12/1849 who arrived from Wiltshire with his parents aboard *Indus* (see below)

She later married William Wastney and they had eight children: George Edmond 1856-1927, Edmund 1857-66, Alice 1859-1918, Ada 1860-1934, Amy 1862-1931, Annie 1864-1915, Harry 1865-1931, Lucy Emma 1867-1940.

Mary died at Wakapuaka (suburb of Nelson) 19/4/1884. William remarried the following year.

Henry Fowler

The energetic young Henry became a partner in the Tahiti venture of George Edwards, but it is not known if it ever eventuated. However, he commissioned a boat of 10 tons for him to operate between Nelson and Wellington which he did for several years. He, like other youngsters among the immigrants, learned to sail in some of the world's more dangerous waters, Cook Strait, where the tidal flow can be too strong to sail against, and waves can peak at 10 metres – well above the little boats' masts.

The 11-ton *Triumph* was built for him in 1848. Tahiti business partner William Pratt reports that toward the end of 1847 Fowler brought the schooner across



the bay to pick up the widowed Mrs Edwards and her daughters, Pratt, and probably others to attend a supper and dance in Nelson. Underlying this were developing romances between the young folk. It was daylight before the men returned to the ship.

The *Triumph* was totally wrecked at the Wairau River in June 1849 and four or five days later Fowler turned up in Nelson in the boat's dinghy. He had rowed and sailed it some 80 miles to report *Triumph* was a partial wreck in Port Gore.

Henry and his crewman had managed to salvage the cargo before the barley aboard swelled to the point where the boat would have burst apart. Henry assembled a rescue crew and they managed to make the cutter temporarily seaworthy. Henry had intended to marry Mary Edwards after this trip to Canterbury, but with the set-back of proper repairs to the boat, they married and later sailed the *Catherine Ann* to Lyttelton where they intended to settle.

Mary had a tough introduction to her husband's working life. A good trip turned into hell just off Lyttelton when a three-day southerly gale forced them to ride it out and not attempt the narrow entrance to the old volcanic crater that is the port. Once the wind died out the newlyweds found they had been nearly carried onto the beach at New Brighton. Using long sweeps, the two of them rowed for two hours until the rip current took them out to sea.

Settled in Lyttelton, the *Catherine Ann* was used to bring timber from the bays around the harbour, and the

occasional visit outside the crater harbour to Sumner. Henry was laid up with the 'flu when a storm hit the harbour and the alternate skipper had moored her too close to the jetty. Despite Mary's protests, Henry went to assist, but someone wanting to help had slackened the lines too much and the *Catherine Ann* was smashed among the piles of an unfinished jetty.

Henry's condition accelerated to a fever and then pneumonia. He died on 13 May, 1850. Mary stayed with friends at the port until she could get a passage back to Nelson. The *Catherine Ann* was salvaged and worked for several years after around Banks Peninsula as the bulk of the first European settlers for Canterbury began arriving.

Lucy Edwards

Lucy married Joseph Wagstaff in Wakefield in 1856 at the relatively older age of 25. They had: Mary Maud 1857-1916 (Mrs Fowler), Thomas 1859 died aged 2, William 1860-91, Kate 1862 - 16.5.1937 (Mrs Cassidy), James Thomas 1864-9/8/98 (died when thrown from a pony and trap). She died in Opunake in April 1895.

The Wagstaff family, including five children, arrived on the *Bolton* in March 1842 from Warwickshire where their father was a weaver and agricultural labourer. Their New Zealand home was at Spring Grove. Joseph was born 1827 in Warwickshire and at 13 was working

The modern Port Cooper (Lyttelton) nestled on the steep slopes of part of the ancient volcano's crater. Early settlers had to walk over the rim to the Canterbury plains beyond.





Axbridge High St

Thomas Norton Hill

The last of the printing family, Thomas worked the sales side and was listed as sales manager in 1939. Two years later he sold out to a bigger printer (Mardons) who wanted Hill's machinery to replace stuff lost when German bombing destroyed 10 of its 13 printing sites around Bristol.

His wife Elizabeth was born 12/12/1910 at Files, Yorkshire, the daughter of a schoolmaster, who had an gypsy childhood with each child being born in a new town around the county. Her father Harold was born in Leeds and her mother Dorothy in Scarborough. At the 1911 census Elizabeth had an older brother and the schoolmaster's salary stretched to three servants: a nurse, a cook and a general housemaid.

The couple married 2/9/1933 at Long Ashton in Somerset and the following year were resident at 8 Newcomb Rd, Westbury on Trym. He was confident enough in his staff to be commuting from the other side of the Mendip Hills in the Axbridge area where he lived with his wife Elizabeth (Ayrton Brown) and daughter Gillian, born 1936. The actual address was Vardells, a property in Fox St between the villages of Sidcot and Winscomb. It was valued at £523,500 in 2017.

Thomas and Elizabeth separated but apparently did not divorce as she was still described as Elizabeth Hill at her death. She arrived in New York on 1/2/1948 and was naturalised on 8/3/1961 in Galveston, Texas. She was in Houston in 1992 and died in Harris, Texas on 13/9/2000.

Thomas died April 1969 in Poole, Dorset.

Dorothy Grace married **Cecil A. Field** in Bristol in September 1929, while her younger sister **Emily** married **Arthur F.B. Ham** in Bristol in December 1935.

as a weaver. He ran hotels around Wakefield and gold mined around Moteuka before going bankrupt. He then moved to Opunake with the extended family. Died 21/3/1903 in south Taranaki.

Wastney family

The Wastneys arrived in Nelson in two instalments – like many other husbands, Edmund had arrived on the *Whitby* in 1842 as one of the colony establishment crew with Captain Wakefield. His wife Lucy and the children followed on the *Lloyds*, arriving 9/2/1842 with the wives and children of husbands of the first ship.

Edmund became a member of the Provincial Council (the early Parliament) representing his area for several years. In 1849 the settlers of Nelson were dissatisfied at the way the country was being run by one man in distant Auckland (the Governor). The 393 signatories, including Edmund and eldest son John, wanted an immediate introduction of representative government into the southern settlements.

William, the second son, married Mary Georgina Edwards. He was also a Member of the Provincial Council and active in local body politics.

Early on, the family established a dairy farm in the Wakapuaka area and this lasted several generations until 2021 when having had enough of milking on winter's early mornings finally convinced the current owner (William Ian) to convert the land by extending the orchard to growing feijoas and producing a number of products under the Little Beauties brand, including dried feijoa slices covered in white chocolate, with similar treatment to other fruit. It quickly became a family business.



Ian Wastney with the company's dried kiwifruit slices and cream cheese – THE snack!

Another well-known modern Wastney is singer-songwriter Bryce Wastney.

and in Australia ...

Henry Reynolds, the eldest son of William Norton Hill and Florence Mary Marsh left for Australia's sunny shores.

Perhaps he didn't want to be a printer! Or perhaps boarding school sent him looking for a different culture. The Hills' printing venture was obviously doing well to afford to send Henry to Wincobank School in Margate, Kent, a pioneer of 2-19 years schooling, attached to the University of Sheffield.

Henry married Muriel Margaret West (born 1903) of Summer Hill, Sydney, on Dec 27, 1931, with Henry described as a motor salesman in that year's census. By 1949 the Hills were living at 278 Old South Head Rd, Bellevue Hill, Wentworth in NSW. Ten years later they are at 28 Queens Ave, Avalon, Barranjoy in McKellar, NSW, where he has been promoted to manager and stays in the job through to the 1972 census. No children appear on records.

Henry was called into the Australian Imperial Force towards the end of the Second World War, but was demobbed before serving overseas.

Four months in a leaky boat

Four months in a leaky boat can be a long time, especially when you are not involved in sailing the boat, or responsible for anything or anybody but one's self.

Indus immigrant William Pratt arrived in Nelson along with the Edwards and Alfred Hill and some others who pop up in our saga. It was an uneventful voyage, he recollects (in his book of 1877), and they raised Nelson in clear morning air.

"And by my side was one whose shared my sentiments and feelings, and whose mind I had long learnt to lovingly regard as the counterpart and reflex as my own – for by pre-arrangement we had romantically agreed to witness together the rising sun shine for the first time for us upon our adopted country, our future home.

"And hand in hand we gazed upon this new world opening out before us, feeling in leaving the old one a new and exquisite sense of freedom in the present, and a trustful faith in the future, that forcibly contrasted with the trials and difficulties that had sorely oppressed us, and that appeared at one time almost insurmountable and from which we appeared to have miraculously escaped.

"Alas! that hopes so bright and promising should soon prove so fleeting and delusive; ere many months had passed the hand then fondly clasped in mine was given to another, and as his bride she sailed gaily away to old England, bidding, it was supposed, a final adieu to New Zealand.

"And yet a few brief years saw her returned with a widow's heart, and for many years the grass has grown green above her upon one of those sunlit points that were all unconsciously gazing upon that sunny morning, thirty four years ago."

William is very much the gentleman and refers to people only by their surname initial, but if you haven't worked it out yet, with the benefit of history we know that the woman who broke his heart was our Sarah Ann Edwards.

Turns out that Pratt had been apprenticed to George Edwards back in Rotherhithe to learn the art of boat-building. It was his love for Sarah Ann that made him decide to travel with them and continue his work with her father.

William was living with the Edwards, but when boatbuilding work dried up, he did the 'right thing' by moving out of the house and finding a job making new roads in the province.

Life settled down with the absence of Sarah Ann, but then she returned a widow, and to rub salt into the wound, she married a certain Mr Hodgson who had become the Edwards' boarder after William Pratt moved out.

Fellow *Indus* immigrants and would-be Tahiti-conspirators, William Pratt and Henry Fowler decided to try the new Canterbury settlement (before the arrival of the famous 'First Four', the specialist immigrant ships) and opened the first store for general goods and bakery in the province, operated by Pratt while Fowler transported lumber around the huge Lyttelton Harbour on the Catherine Ann.

Henry died of pneumonia and Sarah returned to Nelson, but business boomed for William and eventually marriage came his way in the form of Henry Fowler's eldest sister. By the way, that small business he had in Canterbury eventually became the nationwide Ballantynes.

Pratt fall ...

In modern comedic parlance, a pratt fall is one of those amazing feats of gymnastics where the clown falls flat on his face, the office geek walks into the edge of a door and falls flat onto his back, etc. True to his name, William Pratt's arrival in New Zealand was marked by a prime example of such athleticism.

The arrival in a new land he thought to mark by dressing up, including black cloth cut-away coat and a bell 'Topper'. The female passengers were gallantly carried ashore by the sailors and the men made best they could from the dinghys to the shore. William's first step onto New Zealand was onto a large, greasy stone which saw him deposited face-first into shallow water.

That was not the end of the ignominy: there was a rough road yet to be solidified by traffic, the temperature was about 95° in the shade, and the glare off the fresh white rock was intolerable. It was two miles to the immigration depot and no horses or carriages, so push old carts they did. William was under no illusion as to the figure he cut and bore the two miles of broad grins as he pushed the cart George Edwards pulled.

Written by Ross Miller with Draisey/Hill descendant and researcher Anne Taylor, Keith Evans for the early Draiseys, help with Bristol from Terry Simmons, and early Nelson – Ann Lewis, the folks at Nelson Family History Group, Fred Westrupp for his knowledge of little boats, and William Pratt for some real, personal comment.

July 2022

This was never intended to be a scholarly work, hence the lack of references throughout, but we are satisfied as to our sources. There may be slight variations in birth dates as these are often confused with baptism dates.

The first immigrants off the (First Four Ships) Cressy make their way inland through a very sparse Port Cooper (Lyttelton) on 28/12/1850. The track is a very romantic idea of the rugged bridal path settlers used to cross over to the Canterbury Plains.

Photo: Christchurch Libraries

