

Notes on William Hamilton and Janet née (Mc)Kissock

(Great-grandparents of Daphne, Laurence, Glenys and Lynette Hay)

William Hamilton born: 1837, Girvan, Ayrshire, Scotland.

Janet (Mc)Kissock born: c1839, Parkhead, Glasgow, Scotland.

Married: 31 December 1860, in Christ Church (Scottish Episcopal), Mile End, Glasgow.

Arrived in NZ: 13 March 1867, Port Chalmers, in 'City of Dunedin'.

Children: Elizabeth, born 14 November 1867, Milton, Tokomairiro, Otago.

Janet/(Jessie) Morison [*sic*], born 26 May 1869

Annie Osborne, born 18 May 1873

*William, born 20 June 1875, Tokomairiro.

Peter, born 11 May 1877, Milton.

George Samuel, born 26 April 1879, Milton.

Janet Hamilton née (Mc)Kissock died: 12 April 1880, Milton, Otago.

William Hamilton died: 26 October 1896, Milton.

*Grandfather of Daphne, Laurence, Glenys and Lynette Hay.

William Hamilton's forebears

The 1851 census of Scotland lists a Peter Hamilton, 48, hand-loom weaver, his wife Ann and their three children living at 65 Dale Street, Bridgeton. Their third child and only son, William, is stated as being aged 14, born in Girvan, Ayrshire, and working as a 'dyers boy'; his year of birth was probably 1837. It is this boy who eventually, after his marriage, emigrated to New Zealand and begat our maternal grandfather, also William Hamilton. His sisters, born in Girvan, were Eliza, aged 19, (who also married and moved to New Zealand) and Mary, 17, both cotton mill workers.

Peter Hamilton and his wife Ann (née Osborne) were born in Belfast, Ireland, had moved to Girvan in about 1830 and then to Bridgeton, Barony (now a suburb of Glasgow), in 1841, when their son William was four years old. Ann died on 5 April 1857, aged 56, in the family's rented accommodation in an apartment-type building at 32 Howard Street, Bridgeton, the cause of death being given as 'Heart Disease & Ascites'. Her parents, William and Mary Osborne, were also both dead by this time.

Peter's parents were William Hamilton and Mary Ann Maigh, whose forebears were no doubt part of one of the Scottish Protestant 'plantations' of Ulster which took place in the 17th and 18th centuries as a component of the English attempt to subdue the 'papist' Irish and conquer their homeland. With the mechanization of cotton weaving in the later 18th century, thousands of Scots-Irish hand-loom weavers returned 'home' to Scotland in search of work – Peter and Ann Hamilton amongst them. [*For Peter's situation after Ann's death, see note 1 at the end of this essay.*]

Bridgeton

Aileen Smart in her *Villages of Glasgow*, vol.1, tells us that Bridgeton, situated on the north bank of the Clyde, to the east of Glasgow, had its origins in 1776 when a new bridge (the Rutherglen bridge) was built across the river. After David Dale and others set up the Barrowfield dyeworks on the river bank to the east of the bridge in 1785 and began calico printing, Bridgeton developed rapidly as an industrial village. To house the ever-expanding workforce additional streets were laid out, including Dale and Howard streets and others that enter into our family's story. Aileen Smart continues:

The rapid transformation of the green fields of Barrowfield into a centre of textile manufacture continued in the early years of the nineteenth century with the appearance of a line of cotton spinning and weaving mills along the Camlachie Burn ... By the middle of the century powerloom weaving factories had sprung up on the west side of the village which until then had kept its rural character. Bridgeton was now encircled by factories, forcing the ever-growing population into crowded, insanitary back lands.

It is in this insalubrious environment that William Hamilton grew up and, in the late 1840s, with no education, began his working life, almost certainly in the by then vast Barrowfield dyeworks.

Marriage

The next extant record of the young William Hamilton is his marriage certificate dated 31 December 1860, when he and Janet McKissock (both illiterate) were wed in the Scottish Episcopal (i.e. Anglican) Christ Church, Mile End, Glasgow. William, still living at 32 Howard Street, is described as a journeyman dyer, and Janet, living just along the road at no. 22, as a domestic servant. The census of the next year shows the couple living at 208 London Road, Bridgeton, William still working as a cotton dyer.

Janet McKissock's family and forebears

Janet McKissock, born in Parkhead, Glasgow, c1839, was third of the four children of a hand-loom weaver, William (Mc)Kissock (not George as on his daughter's marriage certificate), and Janet née Morrison. Janet senior had been born on 23 December 1816 in Auchinairn, in the parish of Cadder, Lanarkshire, the daughter of John Morrison, labourer, and Robina Glen. Janet married William Kissock on 3 May 1835 in the Barony parish of the Church of Scotland (Presbyterian).

William Kissock died in about 1848, after which Janet senior had three more children by unrecorded fathers, and by 1861 was an inmate of the Glasgow parish poorhouse. How long she stayed there is not known, but in November 1878 she applied again for parochial relief and was given further help.

To add to the sorry tale, Janet junior's eldest sister, Robina (named after her grandmother), in January 1861 at the age of 26, also applied for parochial relief. She was stated then to be unmarried, with one child living with her and another deceased. She was refused help. Some 26 years later, in February 1887, Robina applied again. She was stated then to be wholly disabled by 'Heart disease, etc' – the 'etc' probably referring to her chronic state of inebriation. From that date until at least March 1894, Robina was in and out of the poorhouse. Her husband refused to take responsibility for her because of her drinking; 'She admits that she is a drunken

woman', wrote the inspector from the Parochial Board. Before pronouncing judgement on these women, it needs to be remembered that the miserable and powerless condition of the working people was largely created and maintained by and for the benefit of the economic and social elites of the day.

However, not all of Janet junior's family were in such a sorry state. The 1881 census reveals that her brother, George McKissock, was a policeman, married with five children.

Parkhead

Parkhead lies north-east of Bridgeton, on the main road from Glasgow to the east. In the years from 1838 when Janet McKissock was growing up there, the 'village' was occupied largely by colliers working the coal pits of nearby Westmuir, by handloom weavers working in their homes, and increasingly by labourers employed in the power-loom factories along the Camlachie Burn, or in the rapidly-expanding Parkhead Forge, established in 1837 to make use of the abundant coal of the area. The forge soon became a vast enterprise, attracting other iron works and chemical factories, and transforming Parkhead and its environs into a centre of heavy industry, with predictable results for the quality of air, water and soil.

Emigration

No doubt the hope of a better life was the main motive for the decision of William and Janet Hamilton to emigrate to New Zealand. Or possibly it was to escape from the shame (and responsibility) of parents and siblings poverty-stricken and degraded. Whatever the reason, in early December 1866, William and Janet, both in their late 20s, boarded the ship 'City of Dunedin' and after an uneventful 96-day journey arrived in Port Chalmers on 13 March 1867. The cost of the passage for their family group – the two Hamiltons, William's brother-in-law William Connor and a Robert McKenzie – was £18, advanced by the Otago Provincial Council (and £16 still to be repaid as at 30 September 1872).

Who Robert McKenzie was is something of a mystery, but a greater mystery is why Elizabeth – William Hamilton's sister, and William Connor's wife from c1859 – did not travel with them. From information given on her death certificate (notoriously unreliable) it would seem that she arrived in New Zealand in about 1862, but it seems highly unlikely that a young, newly-married woman would travel alone to a far country and live there for four or five years before being joined by her husband!

Life in New Zealand

While cotton dyeing was hardly an option for William Hamilton in New Zealand, and his illiteracy ruled out most indoor occupations, he must have appeared strong and willing and been offered work in Milton, south of Dunedin. Or at least that is where we next hear of the Hamiltons, the records showing that a child, Elizabeth, was born to them in Milton, Tokomairiro, on 14 November 1867; in the register her father is described as a labourer.

The *Bruce Herald* (30 August 1871, p3) reported that 'William Hamilton, laborer' was a witness in a case brought before the resident magistrate. In his evidence William stated that he had assisted in putting up the scaffolding in question in the case, adding that 'he had put up the greater number of the scaffolds which had been erected in Milton, and they were all erected in the same manner'.

William is still a labourer when his son William is born on 20 June 1875, but by 1878 *Wise's Directory* for that year lists 'Hamilton, Wm, brickmaker, Milton'. Adding to this, Sumpter and Lewis in *Faith and Toil*, their centennial history of the Tokomairiro district, after speaking of George Jones's large Britannia Brick and Pipe Works, mention that a brick works was 'established also by Mr. Hamilton on a site between the two bridges on the Table Hill road, and for some years "sun-dried" bricks were produced'. A lengthy article describing 'Mr W. Hamilton's Brick and Tile Works', and the processes followed there in the making of bricks and pipes, was published in the *Bruce Herald* of 16 December 1887, p3.

The nationwide 'Return of Freeholders' of October 1882 reveals that William Hamilton, brickmaker of Milton, owned at that time four acres of country land in Bruce County, worth £150.

Milton

According to the *Cyclopedia of New Zealand*, vol.4, published in 1904, the township of Milton dates only from the year 1860, however, the massive influx of population into Otago generated by the discovery of gold about that time had such an impact on Milton that in 1866 it was proclaimed an incorporated town with its own mayor and council. Milton developed steadily into the service centre of what became the fertile and prosperous Tokomairiro district of Bruce County.

By the beginning of the 20th century Milton, with a population of 1,500, had 'many large and handsome public buildings', including four churches, as well as 'woollen mills, flour mills, a brewery, a fellmongery, brick works, pottery works and a bacon factory'. It also prided itself on its two banks, its own newspaper, a post and telegraph office, a district high school, four hotels and a courthouse. It claimed to be 'one of the cleanest and most complete towns in New Zealand!' We are further informed that 'the roads around the town are level and excellent for cycling. The Tokomairiro river is well stocked with trout; and the neighbourhood affords rabbit-shooting for sportsmen.'

Janet Hamilton's death

But, for the Hamilton family, all did not go smoothly in this idyllic town: on 12 April 1880 Janet, aged 41, died leaving a husband grieving at the loss of his wife and having to provide and care for six children ranging in age from one year to 14. The cause of Janet's death was given as 'Pericarditis and Bright's disease'; she is buried in the Fairfax Cemetery, Milton, Block 5, Plots 168, 170. William stayed on in the family home in Ajax Street, Milton.

William and Janet Hamilton's children

It seems probable that Janet had had a child before her marriage to William; there is an entry in an OPR of High Church, Glasgow, recording the birth to a Janet Kissock (no father named) of Sarah Morrison Kissock on 13 August 1859, when Janet would have been 19 or 20 years old. Janet had an older sister named Sarah, and her mother's surname was Morrison. If this was Janet's child, the girl did not come to New Zealand with her mother and step-father in 1867, probably having died in infancy. It is relevant to note that Janet's widowed mother had already had two illegitimate children by 1859 and was soon to have a third.

Be that as it may, it would seem that William and Janet Hamilton produced no children, or none who survived, during their five years or so of married life in Scotland, while in the 13 years in New Zealand up to the death of Janet three girls were born followed by three boys. The Hamilton children were:

- **Elizabeth**, born 14 November 1867, Milton; 1890 married John Bruce McIntosh of Bleaton Farm, Balclutha, Otago, who died 10 August 1927. Children: James Bruce (birth registered 1891), Robert Bruce (1893), Janet McKissock (1893), William Bruce (1895) – Cpl William McIntosh died of wounds in France 17 September 1918, Alison (1897), Thomas (1898), James (1900), Elizabeth Grace (1902), Annie (1904), Hazel Aileen (1905), Robert (1907). Elizabeth died 8 February 1939, aged 72, and is buried with husband in Fairfax Cemetery, Milton, Block 15, Plots 301, 302.
- **Janet(Jessie) Morison [sic]**, born 26 May 1869, Tokomairiro (i.e. Milton), Otago; October 1882 passed 4th standard at Tokomairiro School; 1889 married James Thorburn Park, storeman, finally of Benhar, Southland, who died 28 October 1952. Children: Catherine Hamilton Thorburn (birth registered 1889), James (1891), William Hamilton (1893), Janet Neill (1895), John Shearer (1897), George Hamilton (1899, d 1966), Peter Hamilton (1901), Thomas Callendar (1902), Stanley (1905), Allen Bruce (1906), Wallace (1908, lived four days). Jessie died 10 May 1950, aged 81, and is buried with her husband in Balclutha Old Cemetery, main block.
- **Annie Osborne**, born 18 May 1873, Milton; August 1887 passed 5th standard at Tokomairiro School; 1898 married Robert Brunton Coghill Jnr, who died 26 February 1922 and is buried in Dunedin Northern Cemetery, Block 59, Plot 15. Children: Robert Douglas (birth registered 1898), Flora Osbourne [sic] (1900), Leslie George (born 26 August 1902) and Doris (1904). Annie died, 5 July 1958, Milton, and is buried in Fairfax Cemetery, Milton, Block 5, Plots 168-170.
- **William**, born 20 June 1875, Tokomairiro; August 1887 passed 4th standard at Tokomairiro School; left to work with his father at his brick and tile kiln; married **(1)** 24 August 1897, Mary Seed Murphy, who died 17 May 1937 **(2)** 30 July 1939, Sarah Ann Murphy (sister of Mary). William died 17 August 1939, aged 64, and is buried in Gore Cemetery, Block 35, Plot 32. [See separate essay.]
- **Peter**, born 11 May 1877, Milton; August 1890 passed 6th standard at Tokomairiro School; is said to have gone to Australia and married twice.
- **George Samuel**, born 26 April 1879, Milton; October 1893 passed 5th standard at Tokomairiro School; never married; suffered from epilepsy and mental problems; 4 June 1908 committed to Seacliff Mental Hospital; died 7 July 1930, Waitati, east Otago. [For fuller details, see end-note 3.]

Community and religious life

William Hamilton Snr was a keen poultry breeder, as was his son after him. On his death, the following mention was made of William in the minutes of the AGM of the Bruce Poultry Society (published in the *Bruce Herald* of 21 May 1897):

The Committee wish to place on record the severe loss the Society has sustained through the death of Mr Wm. Hamilton, one of the most active members of the Committee, and an enthusiast in poultry matters.

What William's denominational affiliation is less clear, though his son William was an ardent Salvationist by 1893. All of the children of William and Janet were christened in St John's Anglican Church, Milton, but it may be significant that their second and third children were christened together on 3 March 1875 at the ages of six years and two, suggesting a rather nominal attachment to religion by the parents. Furthermore, while Janet (with others) sponsored the baptisms of all her children, William, the father, did not sponsor that of the first three, though he and Janet together sponsored the baptisms of William Jnr (August 1875) and the following two children.

William Hamilton's death

William did not remarry after Janet's early death, and the stress of providing for his large family may account for the causes of his own passing 16 years later: 'Cirrhosis of liver' and 'Exhaustion'! He died on 26 October 1896 in his Ajax Street home at the age of 60, described in the death register as 'Tile Maker'. He was buried by the Anglican vicar in the Fairfax Cemetery, Milton, Block 5, Plots 168, 170, where the remains of his wife, two young grandsons and his daughter Annie also lie.

Note 1: Peter Hamilton's later life

(Peter was great-great-grandfather of Daphne, Laurence, Glenys and Lynette Hay)

By 7 April 1861, the date of the UK decennial census, and only three months after William's marriage, Peter Hamilton had moved from 32 Howard Street to 165 Canning Street, Bridgeton, where he shared accommodation with a number of other Irish-born cotton weavers. He was stated to be 62 years old (though probably only 57 or 58). Peter did not stay in Canning Street long, however, as on 28 November 1861 he moved to the 'North Side of King St, Calton' (the 'village' to the west of Bridgeton), then to 63 Soho Street, followed by a place in Gallowgate, and, finally, in about May 1864, to 16 Marshall Street.

It was here that, on 13 November 1866 at precisely 11:15am, Alex D. Campbell, an assistant inspector for the Glasgow Parochial Board, entered the dark interior to meet Peter Hamilton, an applicant for parochial relief.

Peter was 67 years of age, Assistant Inspector Campbell noted, a weaver by occupation, but wholly disabled by bronchitis, 'bedfast', and hadn't worked for two years. During that time he and his two children, Elizabeth now aged four and Samuel, two and a half, had been supported by his wife (or partner?) – his second – Jane Dunn, more than 30 years Peter's junior. Jane earned 5/- to 6/- per week as a 'washer and dealer'. As the 1861 census reveals, Peter had remarried(?) within three years of the death of Ann Osborne, his first wife, who had died in April 1857. As well as the two children born to Jane, Peter had had three children by Ann. The eldest was Mary Ann, 36 years old (the same age as her step-mother), married to a weaver. Mary Ann lacked an arm, we are told, but still managed to keep a small shop in Main Street, Calton; Assistant Inspector Campbell had no hesitation however: 'paupers', he wrote.

Then there were Elizabeth (Peter had two living daughters called Elizabeth, one by each wife!) and William: 'In New Zealand', Peter informed the assistant inspector,

which was hardly true – William and his wife, and William Connor, Elizabeth's husband, did not embark for New Zealand for another month; (quite when Elizabeth made the move is not clear.) Maybe it was the prospect of their going, abandoning him, that had driven Peter to the humiliation of seeking parochial relief, and so becoming officially a pauper.

Assistant Inspector Campbell forced himself to look around the tiny room: 'the children run about the house dirty and unkempt', he wrote in his report; 'the house is dirty and close, and the air at the time of my visit difficult to breathe. Gave 1/- interim as he [Peter] said there was nothing in the house.'

That was all Peter got. The Parochial Board decided in its wisdom that his having lived in Glasgow for only four years 11 months and 15 days did not justify them extending any further relief to him and his destitute family.

However, some eight months later, Peter Hamilton, still in Marshall Street, tried again. On 19 July 1867 Assistant Inspector Campbell wrote an addendum to his first report: '...he has earned nothing since before last application. Wife earns 1/- a day but is not constantly employed.... The pauper states that on former application he omitted to mention 63 Soho Street where he resided 1 yr & 4 mos, and whither he removed after living in King St. Calton. This makes the settlement Glasgow.' Peter had hit the jackpot! But how much longer Peter Hamilton, pauper, lived to enjoy it I do not know. He does not appear in the 1871 census, but neither does he in the statutory register of deaths from 1867 onwards (unless he was the Peter Hamilton, aged 69, who died in 1872 in St Martin's, Perth).

Note 2: Osborne

Samuel Osborne Hay, son of Jeremy and Nicola Hay, is the fifth generation of the family to carry the name 'Osborne'. Why this name should have persisted through more than 200 years of our family's history is an intriguing question. It is not a common name, or notable or particularly euphonious, but for some reason it persists.

The list of lineal Osbornes is:

Ann Osborne, 1801-1857, daughter of William and Mary Osborne, and first wife of Peter Hamilton. None of Peter and Ann Hamilton's three children was named Osborne – a generation missed – but their son William, after his marriage to Janet McKissock and emigration to New Zealand, gave one of his children his mother's surname:

Annie Osborne Hamilton, 1873-1958. This naming would seem to have been part of a deliberate attempt to keep the name Osborne in family memory and to preserve the link with Scotland, as William and Janet's previous child had been given the name Morison, Janet's mother's surname. Annie called one of her children Flora Osbourne [*sic*], and, more to the point, her brother William Jnr, after his marriage to Mary Murphy, carried on and reinforced the tradition:

Ronald Osborne Hamilton, 1900-1968, and **Annie Osborne Hamilton**, 1908-2002. This Annie married Francis Hay and continued the Osborne tradition:

Laurence Osborne Hay, 1940- . Laurence married Margaret Major, but none of their children was given the name Osborne – a generation missed. However, their son Jeremy, married to Nicola Smith, took up the tradition again:

Samuel Osborne Hay, 2005- .

We know very little about the first Osborne in our line -- Ann, who died in a squalid Glasgow tenement when her son William Hamilton was 20; no stories have been preserved in family memory. My mother, Annie Osborne Hay née Hamilton, did not know who she was called after. When asked, she said she thought that Osborne was the surname of someone who had saved her father from drowning.

What sort of woman, then, was the original Ann Osborne? Was she especially admirable in some way and worthy to be memorialised, as has happened, down the family line? We will never now know. But whatever the reason for the persistence of the name, it has by now gathered a patina of family associations that make those who bear it proud to do so.

Note 3: George Samuel Hamilton

George Samuel Hamilton was born on 26 April 1879 in Milton. He attended Tokomairiro school from Jan 1885 to July 1894 ('Destination: Home'); he never married. George died of pneumonia on 7 July 1930, aged 51. Annie Osborne Hay née Hamilton wrote the following about George, her uncle, in 1988:

[George] suffered from epilepsy and he lived with Dad & Mum [i.e. his brother William and wife] until Essie was born [1898], then neither sister wanted him as they had young families, so he went to Seacliff [Lunatic Asylum] and was the head gardener there for many years. Dad went by train to see him sometimes, and he and I once met him at the Dunedin winter show, he was wandering around alone, and was so much like Dad I couldn't believe it.

Not all of this information is correct.

The Seacliff asylum records show that George was 'wandering at large' and presumably causing a nuisance in Outram, Otago, on 3 June 1908, and so was arrested and confined to a cell. Constable William Southgate listed the following as George's property at the time of his arrest:

- Rotherham silver watch no.117173 with metal chain attached;
- 2 sleeve links;
- tie clip;
- Bible;
- clothes brush;
- leather purse;
- 14 one penny stamps; and
- Sunday papers.

The next day George was brought before the magistrate in Dunedin and, on the advice of two medical practitioners, was committed to the Seacliff Mental Hospital where he came under the supervision of Dr Frederic Truby King. George was described by the doctors as a single, 29-year-old labourer, religion Salvation Army, previous place of abode Milton, and he was regarded as dangerous.

Dr Williams, one of the certifying doctors, records:

Geo. Samuel Hamilton has excitable manner.... Says that several people and a woman got into his cell at Outram while door was shut. He tried to hit them. Wm. Southgate, Const., states that G.S.H. was very violent in Outram cell & thought people were in the corners of his cell. Bruised knuckles hitting at walls to hit these people. Refuses food.

Dr Evans corroborated these details, adding 'No signs of drugs or alcohol'.

George (Reg.No.44120) was examined at Seacliff by Dr Truby King on 5 June 1908; his diagnosis is 'Epilepsy. Imbecility'. George's height is given as 5ft 7½in [171.5cm] and his weight 10st 10lb [68kg]. He is described as:

A well developed man of small stature, eyes grey..., teeth defective.... Bilateral enlargement of the thyroid.... Expression weak & childish. Manner quick. Hair brown. Has an old injury of the right elbow joint caused by falling out of a loft during childhood, flexion and pronation being limited, but the arm is fairly well developed and useful.

Mental state: Patient has a peculiar frowning and staring expression, and in manner he is very nervous and in conversation uses the right side of his mouth during articulation which gives him a very one-sided look. He gives the following account of himself: 'I get a sort of nervous feeling coming over... mostly coming on at night when asleep. I roar out and think I am talking to people.... When I wake from one of these attacks I feel confused and shivering all over. I used to have fits when I was a boy, taking "funny turns" until I was seven years old when they left me and I was 21 when they came on again.... Sometimes at night I hear voices when I am asleep & think the person is right beside me. These voices talk to me about silly things & sometimes curse & swear at me, this makes me feel very angry and I feel as if I could pull their heads off. These attacks have come on me when I have been in the street. I have fallen down unconscious, bitten my tongue & always foam at the mouth & sometimes wet myself, after an attack I want to lie about as I feel lazy and tired. Often after fits I feel suspicious of people and think they have not been treating me well.'

Salient points: Epileptic insanity associated with attacks of maniacal excitement; aural and visual hallucinations; patient is to a certain extent congenitally defective, his manner being facile and childish; marked thyroid enlargement.

On 1 July 1908 Dr Truby King records: 'Patient has been keeping very well and is not troubled now with hallucinations. He is quiet and well-behaved and I am about to give him a trial as "help" with the Plumbers.' And on 5 September: 'Manner childish and simple, has occasional "nocturnal fits" of which he has no recollection when questioned; is somewhat hypochondriacal.... Is at present working well in the Plumbers Shop.' Also a treatment for his goitre had been tried but found to be ineffective so was discontinued.

On 15 June 1909 George was transferred to the Orokonui Home in Waitati, an adjunct of the Seacliff hospital. A report dated 27 April 1910 reads:

At Waitati patient has had fits occasionally, at times 2 or 3 in one night. Mentally he is generally quiet and well-behaved, though when interfered with in a trifling degree by other patients he has shown himself hot-tempered, either striking the interferer or... [in one case] turning a hose on him. Bodily health fairly good. His thyroid... not noticeably changed since coming to Waitati.

George was transferred back to Seacliff on 12 January 1914, the medical record stating: 'He is full of complaints. Fits rare but severe. Good kitchen worker.' A November 1916 entry includes the comment: 'He is considerably demented & weeps readily without adequate cause.... Most emotional; works fairly well in kitchen'.

In April 1920 George is said to still be 'a good worker in the kitchen', with the following qualification:

When the cook is away he [*i.e. George*] becomes very 'bossy' and resents anyone coming into the kitchen. Impulsive, and will hit out if he thinks he can get the better of it. Excitable and emotional. Generally has a complaint about other patients which he brings to the Doctor. Complaints are always about patients calling him names. Fits are irregular. May go two or three weeks without a fit & then has 3 or 4 on end.

Physical condition good. Goitre large. Tremendous eater. Sleeps well. Weight 11st 6lbs [72.5kg].

In December 1924 he is reported not to be keeping well and so had been shifted from the kitchen to outdoor work, which brought about an improvement in his physical condition. By January 1926 he was back in the kitchen. His fitting and behaviour continue as before. A note dated 17 August of that year reads:

Patient still takes severe and mild fits at intervals. His cerebation is somewhat slow and his memory is poor. He gets very irritable at times. Is very religious. He is working on the farm [*Orokonui?*]. Conduct is fair and he is clean and tidy. Bodily health is satisfactory. He has a greatly enlarged thyroid but it shows no signs of becoming toxic.

Further entries in his record include the following:

6.11.27 Received a severe scalp wound due to a fit during the night. Five sutures inserted.

4.1.29 A demented feeble-minded epileptic who has periods of irritability.

4.1.30 A demented childish epileptic who has frequent fits. Fair health.

3.7.30 Confined to bed suffering from Broncho-pneumonia.

6.7.30 Condition much worse – had a fit at 11pm being noisy & restless afterwards.... 4pm Special att'ant in charge of patient during the night.

7.7.30 Condition much worse, sinking slowly. Died at 1:15pm in the presence of Att'ant A. McInnis. Cause of death: Broncho-pneumonia; Cardiac failure.

George died in the Orokonui Home, and is buried in an unmarked grave, Block 5 Plot 16, in the Waitati Cemetery.

The final hospital report form completed in respect of George Samuel Hamilton shows that the last visitor he had received was his eldest sister Elizabeth (Mrs J.B. McIntosh) who had come to see him on 23 January 1928, almost two and a half years before his death. His five siblings all out-lived him, the youngest of the family.