

## **Notes on John Alexander McKane Wallace and Esther née Maise (Maze, May(e)s)**

(Great-great-grandparents of John, Peter, Margaret, Randle and David Major)

**John Alexander McKane Wallace born:** October? 1819, Antrim, Co. Antrim, Ireland.

**Esther Maise born:** c1818, Antrim.

**Marriage:** Antrim?, September 1843.

**John Wallace's arrival in NZ:** from Sydney on 27 November 1846 in troopship 'Java'.

**Esther Wallace's arrival in NZ:** from Chatham, Kent, England, on 14 January 1847 in troopship 'Sir Robert Peel'.

**Children:** James born 1846 at sea;  
Esther born c1848, Whanganui, NZ;  
Mary Jane born c1850, Wanganui;  
\*Joseph born on 9 May 1853, Whanganui;  
Agnes born c1855, Wanganui;  
William John born 28 September 1856, Whanganui;  
Catherine born c1859, Wanganui; and  
Thomas Morton (adopted) born c1866.

\*Great-grandfather of John, Peter, Margaret, Randle and David Major

**Esther Wallace died:** 9 November 1893, Whanganui.

**John Wallace died:** 29 December 1895, Wanganui.

### **John Alexander McKane Wallace's parentage, birth and early life**

According to his death certificate, John Alexander McKane Wallace was born in Belfast, Ireland, the son of James Wallace; however, this notoriously unreliable source of information can in this instance also be safely ignored. An old parish register (OPR) of the Antrim 1<sup>st</sup> Presbyterian Church, Mill Row, in the town of Antrim, Co. Antrim, Northern Ireland (as it now is) records the births and baptisms of three sons and a daughter to a William Wallace and Catherine née McKane or Kane, residing at 'Trench' – probably Trench Farm outside of Antrim town and not far from William's home village of Donegore. The children were: William born 27 January 1822 (and accidentally killed on 5 September 1834 'in Thomas Kelly's gravel pit'), James born 31 August 1825, Mary Ann born 23 November 1828 and Thomas born 27 December 1831.

This William and Catherine are almost certainly the parents, also, of John Alexander McKane Wallace. There would seem to be no extant record of his birth, though Jewel and Ian Fyfe in their on-line family history claim that he was born in the village of Connor, Co. Antrim, and baptised in Antrim town on 17 October 1819. No source is given for this information, or for that of the birth of a second child to William and Catherine – Arthur, born, they say, in 1821 in Donegore. Doreen Corrick in her

printed (and on-line) volume *The Wallace Family History* (1988), makes Arthur the first born – 1817, and has Antrim as John's place of birth. But both Corrick and the Fyfes agree, at least, that John was born in 1819. Military records concur with Corrick that Antrim (presumably Antrim town) was John's birthplace.

William Wallace and Catherine McKane were Presbyterians, no doubt descendants of families that moved to Ireland as part of the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century 'Plantation' of Scottish Protestants intended to subdue (or eliminate) the rebellious native Irish 'papists'.

As John Wallace could not even sign his own name, it can safely be assumed that he had no schooling but began work as soon as he was able to pick up potatoes or feed horses. The property known as Firgrove, not far from Trench Farm where his father worked and the family lived, seems to have had some special significance for John, as he called his own farm in Whanganui by the same name; possibly it was at Firgrove that he was employed as a labourer before he joined the British Imperial Army, and maybe it was there that he met his wife.

According to Corrick, William, John's father, died in 1838 leaving Catherine a widow with two or three dependent children. Whether any of them survived the potato famine of 1845-49 is doubtful.

### **Marriage**

No contemporary record exists of the marriage of John Alexander McKane Wallace to Esther Maise (her surname spelt variously in the records); John's death certificate says that it took place in Belfast and suggests 1839 as the year, while Esther's claims it was in Antrim and suggests 1843 – which year seems to be confirmed by the fact that John and Esther celebrated their golden wedding anniversary on 20 September 1893.

### **Esther Maise's birth and parentage**

Esther Wallace's death certificate further notes that her mother's maiden name was said to be Agnes Miller. An OPR from Antrim town records the birth in 1826 of a daughter Maria to a George Maze and Agnes Millar, and it is very likely that this couple were the parents also of Esther, born c1818.

### **John Wallace's military career**

The three brothers Arthur, John and James Wallace (in that order) all enlisted in the British army and eventually settled in New Zealand. John, an illiterate farm labourer, enlisted on the last day of 1840. According to Corrick, who has investigated Imperial Army records, John enlisted initially in the 48<sup>th</sup> Regiment, but was convicted of desertion on 30 March 1841. However, he must have re-joined his unit as on 1 February 1842 he officially transferred to the 65<sup>th</sup> Regiment ('The Royal Tigers') in Dublin; his brother Arthur was already a private in the 65<sup>th</sup>. The enlistment documents provide the interesting (if inconsequential) detail that the three brothers were all tall for their times: John was 5 feet 8½ inches while the average height of adult males was 5 feet 4 inches.

The 65<sup>th</sup> Regiment remained on Home Service until 1845, so John would have seen little hostile action during his first four or five years in the army, and might well have rather enjoyed life with his wife (but apparently no children yet) in the regimental depot in Chatham, Kent, or on postings around the United Kingdom.

Details meticulously extracted from military records by Hugh and Lyn Hughes and published in their booklet *Discharged in New Zealand* (1988) help give some idea of John's military career and travels from 1846. It was from Chatham that John on 24 February 1846, along with two officers, two NCOs and 47 other soldiers, moved to Woolwich on the outskirts of London to provide a guard for the ship 'Palmyra', travelling to Tasmania with 300 convicts. The ship sailed first to Portsmouth, leaving from there on 1 May and arriving at Hobart Town on 22 August. Having discharged its miserable human cargo, the 'Palmyra' and guard sailed on to Sydney.

### **To New Zealand**

Meanwhile the main body of the regiment had travelled out to Sydney on the ship 'Java'. When news reached New South Wales of a Maori insurrection in northern New Zealand, the headquarters and 900 troops of the 65<sup>th</sup> were urgently re-embarked on the 'Java', which sailed from Sydney on 8 November 1846. About 200 troops disembarked at Kororareka in the Bay of Islands, while the rest sailed south to Auckland, arriving on 27 November.

Because of an outbreak of measles amongst the children in the Chatham depot, no married men or families had been allowed to travel with the main body on the 'Java'; they travelled later on the 'Sir Robert Peel' arriving in Auckland on 14 January 1847. Probably Esther, John's wife, was aboard this ship, eager to meet her husband again after almost a year's separation, and with their first child, James, to introduce to him.

In 1846, when John Wallace arrived in New Zealand, the total European population was only about 12,000 souls clustered in six small, isolated settlements, the rest of the country being occupied by as many as 400,000 Maori. That Pakeha were residing in New Zealand only because of the goodwill of the native population is, in hindsight, obvious, though it was not so to many of the settlers. What John's attitude was towards the Maori is not known, though as a soldier he must have appreciated their military prowess and courage.

The Hugheses, after indicating that John landed in Auckland, give no further details of his movements in this country, and the Fyfes and Corrick differ as to his whereabouts in New Zealand up to the time of his discharge from the army in 1849. Corrick implies that John and Arthur were with the detachment that landed at Kororareka, and that they remained there until transferred to Whanganui in 1847 or 1848. The Fyfes have the brothers serving in the north, then in Wellington before being despatched to Whanganui.

### **To Whanganui**

John Wallace was in Whanganui with a company of the 65<sup>th</sup> sent to protect the 200 or so settlers after the killing of members of the Gilfillan family on 16 April 1847. Detachments of the regiment arrived in the town in May and June of that year and were quartered in the Rutland Stockade on the site now occupied by the Sarjeant Gallery.

However, the relevant muster and pay books indicate that John had been assigned some other duty and did not reach Whanganui until November of 1847. He would, therefore, have missed any fighting, in particular the climactic but inconclusive skirmish known as the Battle of St John's Wood when, on 20 July 1847, 400 or so Maori attacked the settlement from the north. Sporadic fighting, some of it heavy, took place between detachments of troops and the attackers, some on each side being killed. A few days later, the potato-planting season having arrived, the Maori

force withdrew. Over the next months Governor George Grey and his trusty lieutenant Donald McLean managed to patch up the relationship with the hostile up-river tribes and peace returned to the fledgling township.

### **Discharge from the army**

Less than two years later, on 5 May 1849, John Wallace took his discharge from the army on payment of £20, and, at the age of 29, again took up civilian life and employment, but in very different circumstances from when he had last been a free man. It would seem from the Army records that John had forfeited his pension, firstly with respect to his service up to the date of his 1841 desertion, and then, because of some further misdemeanour while in New Zealand, for all of his military service.

John's brother James Wallace also bought his way out of the army in 1849, but the other brother, Arthur, served until August 1864, at which time he was honourably retired and provided with a pension.

### **Early Whanganui**

James Belich in *I Shall Not Die: Titokowaru's war* describes Whanganui in the first quarter century after its founding in 1841 as follows:

For years the population had languished at around 200, the people given to 'drinking and Sabbath-breaking' and 'the lowest debauchery'. But by 1868 it had 2,120 inhabitants, with another 2,000 Europeans in the surrounding districts. There were fifteen general stores, eleven carters, six bakers, five auctioneers, and three each of photographers, undertakers and newspapers – the *Chronicle*, *Times* and *Evening Herald*....

Whanganui faced its river. 'The Beach' or river bank, also known as Taupo Quay, was in effect the main street, noted for bustling activity, mud and blown sand....

In one respect at least, Whanganui had remained true to its early traditions. A speaker at an 1867 temperance meeting maintained that 'of all the places he had ever seen, Whanganui was the most drunken'. Alcohol was still a major industry and provided much of the Customs revenue. There were some sixteen hotels....

Until October 1867, an integral element of Whanganui Town, almost as important as drink, was the British army. From 1847 the town had a garrison of Imperial troops, and in 1865 the arrival of Cameron's army in its thousands created a tremendous boom in business, trebling the population at a stroke. Supply contractors ... made small fortunes. Now [in 1868] the thousands had gone....

### **John Wallace's employment and land purchases**

John and Esther Wallace settled in the town of Petre (later renamed Wanganui) in a house on a section (No.240) purchased from the New Zealand Co. A few years later two adjacent sections (Nos.241 and 244) were also taken up. As with most property bought from the New Zealand Co., these purchases were investigated by a government commission to determine whether the land had been fairly obtained by the company from the local Maori, and it was not until 1852 and 1859 respectively that the Wallaces could be sure that the sections were validly theirs. The house built on Section No.240, on the corner of Ridgway and Churton streets (though Churton does not now extend to intersect with Ridgway), remained the Wallace family home until after John's death, but the other two sections were disposed of at some earlier date.

Other details of John Wallace's life in Whanganui are given in his obituary, published in the *Wanganui Herald*, 30 December 1895. While not totally accurate, the obituary can be relied upon when it says that after leaving the army John worked for some years as a sawyer before taking up farming – this is corroborated by the 1853 birth certificate for John's son Joseph which gives 'Sawyer' as the father's occupation. The obituary continues:

...about 40 years ago [ie, c1855] he bought 50 acres of land on the No.3 Line [actually No.2 Line], afterwards purchased 100 acres adjoining from Messrs Taylor and Watt, and later on he acquired another 100 acres, the latter the scene of the dreadful tragedy [the Gilfillan murders] that was always remembered with horror by the early settlers.

In assessing the accuracy of this account, note needs to be taken of the evidence of the electoral rolls given below, and of the description of John as 'Labourer' (rather than 'Settler' or 'Farmer') on his son William John's birth certificate in September 1856, and as 'Sawyer' as late as 1862 in his consent to the marriage of his daughter Esther.

Until 1879 the right to vote was restricted to men who owned freehold property worth £50 or more; or paid at least £10 a year to lease property; or lived in a house with an annual rental value of at least £10 (in a town) or £5 (outside a town). John Wallace appears not to have satisfied any of these criteria until 1858 when his name first appears in the Wanganui electoral roll, where he is described as 'Farmer' and his voting qualification given as 'Freehold. Left Bank Wanganui River'; this statement is refined in the 1865 roll to 'Left Bank, half of Section 59' – his Matarawa property. The Deeds Register (Vol.16, folio 188) held by Land Information New Zealand (LINZ) states that the Crown grant of this section was authorised in December 1858 to John Wallace and Charles Sumerville jointly, and that the section was later divided equally (52 acres each) between the two.

That this was how John began as a farmer is borne out by an undated but near-contemporary map held in the Whanganui Museum which shows the total area of the Whanganui land purchase as completed in May 1848 by Donald McLean, Governor Grey's special agent for land negotiations. At some later date, the names of purchasers have been added first in pencil then ink on their respective sections. This map has the names Somerville, Wallace and Gilfillan on adjacent sections.

LINZ records show also that John Wallace later purchased the former Gilfillan farm, Section 123, situated along the southern boundary of his half of Section 59 – according to Flora Spurdle in her *New Stories of Old Whanganui*, this was in about 1861. Lastly (it seems, though the obituary suggests otherwise), he acquired from Messrs Taylor and Watt Section 59A of 105 acres across the Matarawa Valley at the bottom of Section 59. In any case, the official *Return of Freeholders* of October 1882 gives the total area of his farm as 241 acres, valued at £1,928 and his town sections at £275. The farm acreage is less than would be expected but apparently some land was taken for the Matarawa Valley road.

In the book *History of Farmlands of the Okoia District* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed., 1968), Michael Rogers, whose family had farmed the Wallace estate from 1947, adds the following detail relating to the farm:

J.A. Wallace built a cabin of clay and thatch on a site near the present house [i.e. the house on Matarawa Valley Road] and when this deteriorated, built a wooden house on a plateau halfway up the hill. The marketing of butter and

eggs meant an arduous climb up the hill through scrub and bush to the No.2 Line, then a five mile walk into Wanganui. Mr. and Mrs. Wallace did this for some years, till the house was burnt down, and a new one built on the No.2 Line next to the Matarawa Cemetery. A fruitful pear tree still [but no longer] marks this dwelling place.

The acquisition of a bullock wagon at this stage made life much easier for the family, and the seven children were able to attend the Matarawa School.

The Matarawa School records show that Mary Jane, Joseph, Agnes, William and Catherine Wallace were all admitted to that school at some time between 1855 (when it was established) and 1868 – the years when the school was situated down along the Matarawa Valley Road. Mary Jane would have turned 12 in about 1862 and is unlikely to have attended school after that, which suggests that the Wallaces were living on their Matarawa farm by about that year – 1862. However, the 1866 electoral roll for the district gives John Wallace's 'Place of Abode' as Wanganui (though his voting qualification is still stated as 'Freehold. Left Bank, ½ of section 59'), and 'Intention to Marry' forms completed for the older Wallace children give 'Wanganui' as John Wallace's place of residence up to May 1868 and 'No.2 Line' only from April 1870.

The evidence of the school records is probably to be preferred in this case, and the assumption made that the Wallace family moved to live on their Matarawa property probably between 1860 and 1862.

The Matarawa School was relocated to near its present site on No.2 Line in 1868. Agnes, William, Catherine, and the adopted son Thomas were all still of school age at this time – possibly one of the reasons why the replacement homestead was built close to that road.

Michael Rogers adds the following information:

When the Maoris became troublesome some years later [i.e. after the building of the house on the No.2 Line in about 1870], Mrs. Wallace and the children were taken into Wanganui for safety, and did not move out to the country again.

John seems to have been a successful farmer. The *Wanganui Chronicle* of 21 December 1892 informs its readers that:

In mentioning today's sale we would direct attention to the opportunity afforded those who are seeking really good dairy cows. Mr John Wallace's herd is to be sold. Wallace's butter is a household word, and for quality it ranks amongst the first in the district.

It is interesting to note that LINZ records show that in 1873 'John Wallace of Wanganui, Settler, and James Daniel Baird of Wellington, Engineer' jointly purchased two sections, totalling more than 21 acres, in the new Fitzherbert township over the Manawatu River from Palmerston (as it was then called) in or near the area now occupied by Massey University. In his earlier years, John would seem to have been something of a wheeler dealer, buying, mortgaging and selling land as the market dictated.

## Children

John and Esther had seven children of their own:

- **James**, born 1846 at sea en route to New Zealand; farmer, married Caroline Chitham (birth registered 1850, Auckland) on 28 May 1868 in the Whanganui residence of John A. McK. Wallace; lived in Eltham. James

and Caroline had 14 children. Ten of them can be traced in the on-line index to the NZ birth registration records (the names of parents are not shown for births before 1875). Two of the children were not registered at the time of their birth: James, born 9 April 1872, was not registered until 1934, and Esther, born before 1910, was registered in 1916. The other children who are probably James and Caroline's are: John (registered 1876), Arthur (1880), Sarah (1882), Jane (1884), Caroline (1886), Bruce (1888), Annie (1889) and Naomi (1892). Caroline died, aged 86, on 28 June 1935 and James on 14 September 1936, aged 90; they are buried together in the Hamilton East Cemetery, Plot BB-Q-052.

- **Esther**, born c1848; married at the age of 13 years 4 months to Charles Revel(l) (aged 25) on 25 April 1862 at Matataua Valley, Whanganui. The on-line index to birth registration records shows 11 children born to a Charles and Esther Revell, other children would have been born in their 12 or so years of marriage before parents' names were included in the index! The children noted are: Emily (registered in 1871), Esther (1873), Mabel (1876), Minnie (1877), Charles (1879), William James (1881), Agnes Wallace (1883), Ernest Samuel (1885), Elizabeth Crocker (1886), Oswald (1889) and Florence May (1893). Charles died in 1920, aged 82; the on-line cemetery record gives his occupation as 'Custodian, Pukekura Park'. Esther (May), widow, died on 16 August 1939, aged 90. Her last address is given as Carrington Road, New Plymouth. They are both buried in Te Henui Cemetery, New Plymouth, Esther in the Primitive Methodist section, Row 17, Lot 2, Plot 2. The location of Charles's grave is not known.
- **Mary Jane**, born c1850; married William Wallace of Hawera in 1870; died 4 August 1912 at her residence 'Ohangai', Hawera. They seem to have had at least eight children: Richard (registered 1875), Janet (1876), William (1878), Esther (1880), Cecil Allan (1882), Garfield (1886), Norman (1887) and Mildred Ursula Lightfoot (1889).
- **Joseph**, born on 9 May 1853 in Whanganui; married Sarah Spurdle on 10 December 1873 in Trinity Wesleyan Church, Whanganui; died 25 September 1948, Whanganui. [*See separate essay.*]
- **Agnes**, born c1855; married Nils Peter Manson of Bushy Park, 13 June 1883, in St John's church, Matarawa. They had five children: Ellen Agnes (registered 1884), Esther Wallace (1887), Annie Christina (1890), Alexander (1891) and Florence Nettie (1893). Nils Peter died in 1927 and Agnes in 1930; they are buried in the Heads Road Cemetery, Whanganui, Block 4 Terrace, on the hill above the gate off Guyton Street.
- **William John**, born 28 September 1856; married (1) Edith Ida Burns, 27 January 1892, in St John's church, Matarawa – at this time William had lived at Mangawhero (presumably somewhere along the river of that name) for six years; Edith bore him two children: Emily Evelyn (registered 1893) and Ethel (1894); Edith died, aged 23, on 18 September 1895 at Upokongaro. (2) Martha Rosina Peachey, 20 December 1898, in Turakina Presbyterian church; her children were: Richard (born between 1899 and 1910 but not registered until 1929), Jack (registered 1900), Martha (1901), Sydney (1905), Edith (1906), William John (1908) and Hector (1910); William died 31 March 1930 at his home 44 Halswell Street, Whanganui; Martha died in 1945; they are buried together in the Whanganui Catholic Cemetery.

- **Catherine**, born c1859; married John William Hoskin of Okoia in 1880. They seem to have had ten children: John Alexander (registered 1881), Esther Jane (1883), Louise Evelyne Catherine (1885), Arthur James (1888), Jessie Crawford (1890), Thomas Albert (1891), Florence Ethel (1892), Edith May (1894), Harold Gordon Victor (1895) and Julia Rose Wallace (1901). John William died, aged 79 or 80, in 1926, and Catherine (Kirkby) in 1946, aged 83 or 84; they are buried together in the Aramoho Cemetery, Whanganui, Block B, Row 6, Plot 345.
- plus an eighth child, an adopted son, **Thomas Morton**, born c1866; married Elizabeth Whitcombe of Whanganui on 24 June 1891. They had four children: John Alexander McKane (registered 1892), Cyril Vernon (1894), France [sic] Cederic (1898) and Thomas Whitcombe (1900).

### **John and Esther Wallace's last years**

Esther Wallace née Maise died, aged 75, on 9 November 1893 in the family home she and John had owned since 1849 in Ridgway Street, Whanganui. John died on 29 December 1895 in the same house; he was 76. His *Wanganui Herald* obituary gives the following information about their final years:

About three years ago [ie 1892] Mr and Mrs Wallace came to town to live, but shortly afterwards he had the misfortune to lose his wife [!]. Three months ago Mr Wallace met with an accident by falling downstairs, which confined him to his bed, and he has been declining since then, till yesterday morning...he passed peacefully away, being conscious right up to the last.

They are buried together in the Head's Road cemetery (Row 6, fourth plot in from the central path).

### **John Wallace's reputation and achievement**

The obituary says of him that 'there was probably no more familiar figure in Wanganui than Mr John M. Wallace', and concludes:

Though not taking an active part in public life [no doubt his illiteracy inhibited him], Mr Wallace was intimately associated with the late Hon. John Ballance, both gentlemen having come from the same town [Ballance was, in fact, born at Glenavy, 10 miles or so from Antrim town], and was a firm supporter of Mr Ballance right up to the time of his death. He was always known as a hard working industrious settler, and very highly respected by all who knew him, and what little property he acquired was got by honest toil.

The 'little property' was not only the six-roomed house on his town section but, as the 'For Sale or To Let' notice describes it in the *Wanganui Herald* of 8 February 1892:

That very compact and desirable Farm on No. 2 Line, known as "Fir Grove",...containing 257 acres, well-grassed and sub-divided, five miles from town, good eight-roomed house, garden, orchard, concrete dip, and every possible convenience. Title—Crown Grant.

In that year 'Fir Grove' was leased to Peter Manson, John's son-in-law. In his will John stipulated that at the expiry of the lease the farm should be sold and the proceeds divided between his eight children.

John Alexander McKane Wallace had managed to parlay his small social and financial capital into wealth and status such as he could never have dreamt of in



Ireland. The £20 he outlaid in New Zealand to buy himself a discharge from the army was certainly money well spent, and an opportunity well taken.

Michael Rogers gives the rest of the story of the Wallace estate as follows:

In 1892 John Wallace sold to his son-in-law, Peter Manson from Sweden, who had married Agnes Wallace. They lived there for only one year before taking up land at Kai Iwi. For some years the property was leased to Tucker Brothers, Butchers, who grazed sheep and cattle .... [Then] Malcolm Manson managed the farm for his brothers till it was sold to Harrison in 1920. After three years it passed back to Peter Manson, who put as sharemilker his son-in-law, Jack Wright, who had married Florence Manson. The present house was built for this couple, who lived there with their five children until 1938 when the farm finally passed from the Wallace family. It was sold to Walter Harding, who ran it in conjunction with 'Blink Bonnie'. It was bought by Guy Rogers in 1947....

### **End note 1: Esther Revel(l) née Wallace**

John and Esther Wallace's second child, their first in New Zealand, was a daughter born in December 1848 (or possibly January 1849) in Whanganui. She was named after her mother – Esther. Esther is not a direct ancestor of the Majors but her story is interesting – and well documented in the newspapers!

What schooling the young Esther received in Whanganui is not known – the Matarawa School opened in 1855, but the family did not move into their Matarawa Valley house until about 1861, when Esther would have been 12 or 13 and past primary school age.

What is certain, however, is that, at the age of 13 years and four months, Esther was married to Charles Revel(l), a bachelor shoemaker, aged 25. The wedding, conducted by Rev. David Hogg, Presbyterian, took place on 25 April 1862 'at the residence of John Wallace, Wanganui' as the Intention to Marry form tells us; the entry in the civil marriage register refines this to 'in the house of Mr Wallace, Firgrove, Matarawa Valley' – i.e. in the homestead on John Alexander McKane Wallace's farm.

Charles and Esther Revell (the second 'l' was added after about 1870) produced a family of 13. According to Chris Korte's New Zealand Genealogy Project on RootsWeb (from which some of the following bullet-pointed information is taken), the first two children born were:

- **John Alexander**, born in 1867 in Whanganui; married Amy Louisa Divehall in 1899; died on 8 October 1931 in New Plymouth, and is buried in Te Henui Cemetery; and
- **Jane Kingcome**, born 13 August 1869 in New Plymouth. Then came:
  - **Emily**, born 11 July 1871 in New Plymouth; married Thomas Fraser in 1896.
  - **Esther**, born 19 July 1873 in Omata, Taranaki; married John Thomas Laing in 1910, who died in 1925; Esther died 19 June 1963, and is buried in Waikumete Cemetery, Auckland.
  - **Mabel**, born 29 December 1875 in New Plymouth; married George Henry Lynch in 1897; died in 1911 aged 35.
  - **Minnie**, born 22 April 1877 in New Plymouth; married William Robson Coulthard in 1900; died in 1972.

- **Charles (Edward)**, born 16 July 1879 in Inglewood, Taranaki; married Sarah Hudson in 1913; died 7 December 1922, and is buried in Te Henui Cemetery, New Plymouth.
- **William James**, born 29 April 1881 in New Plymouth; married Constance Theresa Smith in 1904, who died in 1921; William died 21 September 1958, and is buried in Te Henui Cemetery, New Plymouth.
- **Agnes Wallace**, born 1883 in New Plymouth; married Cornelius William O'Sullivan in 1904; died in 1965, aged 82, and is buried in the Awanui Cemetery, New Plymouth.
- **Ernest Samuel**, born 1885 in New Plymouth; married (1) Helen Constance Johnston in 1905 and had one child, Eric Ernest, born that year; it would seem that Helen and Ernest were divorced by 1920; Helen died on 26 September 1938 in Wellington; (2) Jane McIntosh Stuart on 10 April 1920 in Wellington; Jane died in 1960 aged 75 and is buried in Karori Cemetery, Wellington. Ernest, printer, died at Paekakariki on 16 September 1963 and is buried in Paraparaumu Cemetery.
- **Elizabeth Crocker**, born 1886 in New Plymouth; married Duncan Ritchie Ingram in 1920.
- **Oswell**, born 12 December 1888 in Omata, Taranaki; died 1968, aged 79, and is buried in the Awanui Cemetery, New Plymouth, with Mary Jane Revell who died in 1959 aged 70 – presumably his wife.
- **Florence May**, born 21 December 1892; married Stanley William Lovegrove in 1912; Stanley died in 1954 aged 67, Florence in 1976 aged 83, and they are buried together in Te Henui Cemetery, New Plymouth.

The Taranaki Herald reports in its issue of 23 August 1871 an inquest at which 'Charles Revell, a shoemaker' was called to make a deposition. It is clear from his evidence that he, Esther and their family are living together in New Plymouth at this time. But shoemaking did not seem able to produce the income needed to keep his growing family, and Charles, though reputedly of a titled and wealthy Devonshire family, filed for bankruptcy in 1883, describing himself then as 'of Omata, Farmer'. By this time the household included eight children with another on the way.

The marriage was not a happy one. The first clear sign of a marital rift is a report in the 26 September 1893 issue of the Taranaki Herald, a New Plymouth newspaper:

In the R.M. Court this (Tuesday) morning, Esther Revell sued her husband, Charles Revell, of Okato, for maintenance of herself and family. Defendant did not appear, but sent a letter stating he was willing to contribute 10s a week. The R.M., after hearing the views of the informant, ordered defendant to pay 15s per week, first payment to date from Tuesday next.

But Charles either could not or would not pay, as the next newspaper report, in the issue of 17 February 1894, makes clear:

Charles Revell, who was arrested on a warrant, by Constable Hickman, appeared before the Court charged with being in arrears with his payments....

In answer to Sergt. Duffin, Mrs Revell stated that she had heard from several persons that defendant had signified his intention to clear out in order to avoid payment. She had eight children, only one of whom was earning wages....

Defendant replied that he had got one of the boys a situation at 12s a week and found, but his wife would not let the boy go, saying that he (defendant)

wanted the boy to earn the money in order that he could avoid the payment of the 10s a week. This was the way he had been treated right through life. He had been driven from home. For five months his wife had never spoken to him in their house, and the eldest girls were the same. He had also to sell his cows, as he could not attend to them through the way he was treated.

His Worship said that he would have to make an order to imprison defendant for one month, but in order to give the defendant a chance he would give him time to pay the arrears before executing the order.

The defendant said that he could not see his way to pay.

After some discussion, the defendant was allowed 14 days to pay off the arrears and current payments.

Charles must have paid up as it seems he did not go to prison, but the Herald reports that he was before the court again on 30 October that same year, having paid the maintenance only up to 31 July and being £3 10s in arrears. Charles did not appear, sending a letter asking to have the amount reduced. This request was rejected out of hand, and Charles was given one week to pay or serve one month's imprisonment.

At his next court appearance, on 17 April 1895, it transpired that Charles had served the prison sentence, but that he was still not paying the 10s weekly towards the maintenance of his wife and children as ordered by the court. However, a physician gave evidence in Charles's defence, telling the court that he had known the defendant for the previous 20 years.

I know him to be a hard working man. He was sent to prison recently, and he volunteered to work at hard labor in the quarries. I gave the requisite permission. Two days after he was reported sick, and on my examining him I found a curvature of the spine. The spine is diseased, and he cannot work continuously. He might work for an hour, and then have to lie down. Judging from my past experience of the man I think his brain is softening. He is not likely to get better.

On hearing the doctor's evidence, the magistrate declined to make an order requiring Charles to pay.

It was more than six years before Charles, said now to be of Rahotu, was before the court again, but this time his arrears amounted to £13. The case is reported verbatim in the 9 November 1901 issue of the Taranaki Herald.

Defendant: I am a cripple and unable to pay this amount as I can barely keep myself.

Mr Stanford [the magistrate] (to Mrs Revell): Is he able to pay?

Mrs Revell: He is quite able to pay. John Revell, his nephew, informed me that my husband told him that he was never doing better at his trade than he is now. Witness added that there were two children out of the eight still unable to earn their living.

Mr Stanford: Do you earn anything?

Witness: I used to do washing, but rheumatism has so crippled my hands that I am unable now to wring clothes.

Defendant got in the box and said he was 64 years of age, and Drs. O'Carroll and Walker had some years since certified as to his physical condition. He had a little workshop at Okato, and just earned enough to enable him to exist.

Mr Stanford said he would not alter the order, and directed the defendant to pay the arrears, in default 3 months; order to be suspended for a month to enable the defendant to pay.

Defendant: I simply can't pay, so I suppose I will have to take out the three months.

Mr Stanford: But you will have to pay. It is your duty to keep your wife.

Defendant: Well, I can't pay.

Five years later things are no better. The Herald of 31 January 1906 reports that Chas. Revell of Okato had 'applied to have a maintenance order for payment of 10s per week towards the support of his wife, Esther Revell, reduced'. However, the court was told that he was again in arrears of £13. The magistrate ordered that Charles satisfy his obligation by paying his wife £5 within seven days, after which the payment would be reduced to 5s per week.

Charles died in 1920, aged 82; the on-line cemetery record gives his occupation as 'Custodian, Pukekura Park'. Esther (May), widow, died on 16 August 1939, aged 90. Her last address is given as Carrington Road, New Plymouth. They are both buried in Te Henui Cemetery, New Plymouth, Esther in the Primitive Methodist section, Row 17, Lot 2, Plot 2. The location of Charles's grave is not known.