

KILGOUR Agnes (nee Murdoch)

the information in this biography is primarily taken from:

'The Kilgour Family of Te Huia, West Auckland': Kathryn Mooney (Revised Second Edition, 2007)

William and Mary (nee Duess) Kilgour left Greenock, Scotland on the 18 June 1842, on board the *Jane Gifford*, sailing for Auckland where they arrived as some of Auckland's first assisted immigrants.

They had six children with them. Their seventh child was born a few months later at Huia, a coastal settlement on the Manukau harbour. William and Mary were among the first European settlers in Huia.

William and Mary's children were **Ann**, b. c.1824; **John**, b.c.1826; **Martha**, b.1829; **Mary**, b. 1832; **William (jnr)**, b. 1835; **Thomas**, b. 1838; and **Lavinia**, born at Huia, 1843.

William (snr) was a bushman and a farmer in Huia.

Mary (snr) died 24 July 1876, aged 74; **William (snr)** died 29 Dec 1881, aged 80; both died at Huia and are buried 'on the knoll in Te Huia.'

William Kilgour (jnr), the second son of **William (snr)** and **Mary Kilgour (nee Duess)** (see insert above), was 8 years old when he arrived in New Zealand with his parents and siblings. As an adult he lived simply, working as a boatman, a bushman and a gum digger.

Agnes Murdoch was the third child of **John** and **Agnes (nee Thompson) Murdoch**. Agnes was born in the Tower of London, 23 August 1839. The Murdoch family arrived in Auckland, 16 June 1849, on the *Berhampore*, and settled in Onehunga. John was a member of the *Royal New Zealand Fencible Corp.*

William (jnr) (aged 24) and **Agnes** (aged 20) married at Saint Paul's Anglican Church, Auckland, 9 June 1859.

They gave birth to eight children: **Mary Lavinia**, b.1860; **Edward John**, b.1862; **Agnes**, b.1864; **William**, b 1866; **Maria Jane**, b.1867; **Thomas**, b.1871, who died the same day as his birth; **Amy Selina**, b 1872 and **Mabel**, b.1877. All, except William and Thomas, are recorded as having been baptised at **Saint Peter's Church**, Onehunga. In the church records, their father's occupation was recorded variously as sawyer, mariner and boatman.

Around 1870, William, Agnes and their then 5 children moved to the Thames region, where they settled in Tapu (then known as 'Hastings'). William probably moved his family there to avail himself of the bush-work. There they were surrounded by family (his married brother Thomas and married sister Mary Davison and their respective families lived in the region) plus many sawyers and bushmen previously from the Manukau region.

It is possible that **Agnes** struggled with the shift to Tapu, or suffered health-wise, as she seems to have returned to Onehunga a number of times to live with her mother, **Agnes Murdoch**.

Agnes gave birth to **Thomas**, 27 April 1871, in Onehunga. Thomas lived but a few hours, dying of asphyxia. The Kilgour family was still living in Tapu in September 1872, when **Amy** was born in Onehunga. The youngest child in the family, **Mabel**, was also born in Onehunga in 1877.

Agnes never really regained her health following Amy's birth and is reported to have stayed bedridden, until she died on 8 March 1885 of dropsy and liver disease, aged only 46. She was buried the following day in **Saint Peter's Cemetery**, Onehunga.

In her Will, **Agnes** left instructions that 'my acre of land bequeathed to me by my late father' be divided amongst her 7 children, with the use of the house for her husband William for life. As a consequence, later in life, several of the children lived in Onehunga houses next-door to each other. *'They were a very close family, who kept together and mixed with all the cousins, having few outside friends.'*



William Kilgour (jr)

Thus **William**, aged 50, was widowed with seven children to support. He was to spend many years gum-digging and also working for his brother **Thomas Kilgour**, as a bushman in the Kauaeranga Valley, Thames. About 1910 he was joined by his son-in-law **Thomas Caldow**. Later he moved to Whitianga, where he lived with his daughter **Maria** and her husband Thomas Caldow.

William died on his 78th birthday, 21 February 1913, and was buried at the **Mercury Bay/Whitianga Cemetery**, where other members of that Caldow family have also been buried.

William Kilgour (jnr): a man deeply loved by his children.