

AUCKRAM – the children of George and Catherine Auckram

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These brief biographies follow the biography 'AUCKRAM George and daughter Mary Ann'

Mary Ann, died 28th July 1856; she was the 4th child of George and Catherine

George Henry Auckram (1843-1929)

George, along with his brother John, worked at Matthew Roe's sawmill at Kakamatua (Cornwallis) during the 1860s. In 1867 they both moved to the Coromandel area to try their luck goldmining.

George married Margaret Nixon at St Patrick's Cathedral, Auckland in May 1872; they were to have seven children. Margaret was the daughter of Adam and Elizabeth Nixon, another Fencible family, who had arrived on the '*Ramillies*' and settled at Onehunga in 1847. Initially George and family roamed the Waitākere hills working for various sawmills until they inherited the former Nixon Fencible allotment in Albert Street (today's Galway Street), Onehunga in 1879. George was to work at the Kauri Mill on the Onehunga foreshore for the rest of his working life, losing his right hand in an accident in 1900. From then on George had the habit of walking around holding the stump behind his back. George was a member of the *Forrester Lodge*, and the family were well known in Onehunga, with the old Nixon Fencible allotment staying in the Auckram family until 2003. The whole Auckram family was involved in horse-racing and had a reputation as the 'fighting Auckrams' with so many of them living on the allotment. George's grandson, Jack Auckram, was a councillor for Onehunga from 1969 until its amalgamation with Auckland in 1989. George died in October 1929 and was buried with his daughter-in-law, Annie Jane Auckram, at Waikaraka Cemetery (though there is no mention of George on that plot's headstone). His wife, Margaret, had died in July 1907 and was buried at Our Lady of the Assumption Church (Catholic) Onehunga. Her grave is unmarked. The church, according to family folklore, would not allow George to be with his wife as he was not Catholic.

John Auckram (1845-1917)

John married Annie Clarke, daughter of dam-builder William Henry Clarke (killed in July 1867 by a log when a dam was released): they married at the Presbyterian Church, Onehunga in September 1868. Annie's mother (also named Annie) was the daughter of Thomas and Catherine Garvey, another Fencible family which had arrived on the '*Clifton*' in 1848, settling at Panmure.

In the 1870s, John went to work for brother-in-law, Thomas Kelly, in the Coromandel sawmills - initially Waikawau and then Tairua. John and Annie had three children before separating. Annie shifted back to Auckland, where in a relationship with Henry Huckstep, she had another four children. John worked at the Tairua sawmill for many years as a saw-doctor until shifting to Australia in September 1886, where he remarried in 1890 and had another eight children. He farmed in the Lismore and Casino areas of northern New South Wales up to his death in December 1917. He was buried at Casino Cemetery.

Elizabeth Auckram (1847-1923)

The New Zealand Wars brought many British troops to Auckland in the early 1860s. The ships coming from Australia crossed the Manukau bar to unload their troops at Onehunga. As in any a war of the times, young men deserted due to their treatment and living conditions. The hills west of Auckland

attracted these deserters from the army and navy; there the locals were more than accommodating of them, and mill owners and operators were only too willing to employ them, even those that had the letter 'D' tattooed on them. Catherine's daughter, Elizabeth (known as Bertha), later in life, told the story of how a boy, employed by Gibbons as a lookout, was placed in a tree by the road to the bush and mill, to watch for the police from Onehunga. If the boy saw the police, he blew on a horn and the men escaped into the bush. One deserter from the 65th Regiment, George Frederick Smith, was befriended by the Auckram family; no doubt their grievance with authorities would have caused them no hesitancy. George Smith used the alias 'Baker', though it was an open secret to all in the Titirangi Hills and beyond. He and Bertha become a couple and they were to have 12 children, most born in either Little or Big Muddy Creek. The exploits of the Smith/'Baker' family came to the fore during the 1880s. During this time John Kilgour and George Smith/'Baker' had teamed-up and were clearing the last of the Kauri from the Tampoos Range, Waitākere, running teams of bullocks. Kilgour's land claim ran from Cornwallis and backed on to Marshall Laing's property at Big Muddy Creek. Both men employed their daughters, Ellen and Lovie Kilgour, plus Annie and Charlotte Smith (Baker). Initially the girls were occupied splitting shingles. As the girls got older, they started working in the bush with their fathers, driving the bullock teams. In Bill Barr's memoirs, recorded by John (Jack) Diamond many years later, he said 'the first women I ever saw wearing men's trousers were Charlotte and Annie (Baker).' He was quite taken aback by the sight and the language they used when working the bullock teams - what he described as 'blue water swearing ... the Kilgour and Smith (Baker) sisters were expert bullock drivers and accordingly were expert shingle splitters and often helped the men on the tail rope of the saws when felling or crosscutting the kauri trees.' John T. Diamond was to immortalise the girls when he wrote the ballad 'Charlotte Ann' in his publication 'Waitākere Ballads.' George died in June 1920 and was buried at Waikaraka Cemetery, grave unmarked. Bertha went to live with her son, Charles, at Rotorua where she died and was buried in July 1923.

Thomas Alfred Auckram (1852-1926)

Young Tommy, like many men at the time, had to leave the Waitākere region as their work dried up. He took a boat, in 1875, to the Pelorus Sounds in Marlborough where he worked as a bushman and bullock driver, marrying in 1876 to Eliza Rickard Foote. They settled at Canvastown, raising a family of eight. When the timber was cut out in the Pelorus District, the family shifted north (1898), finally settling at Akatarawa, Upper Hutt. Tommy was a jovial character happy and content. His wife, Eliza, well known as a midwife had a reputation for being hard and stern.

Eliza died in February 1922 and Tommy in November 1926; they are buried beside each other at Wallaceville Cemetery near Upper Hutt. Today two-thirds of all the New Zealand Auckram descendants stem from Tommy and Eliza with their numbers reaching into the thousands.