

The Mabey Family

Two brothers, Charles and Job Mabey, and their families sailed from London on the New Zealand Company ship *Olympus* on 9 December 1840 and arrived at Port Nicholson on 20 April 1841. Also on board were the quakers Thomas and Jane Mason. The Mabey families probably settled near the township of Aglionby that was initiated by Daniel Riddiford in July 1841. In consequence the first three Mabey children were born there – Elizabeth Sarah (1841) and David James (1843), children of Job Mabey and Francis Edward Ward (1844), son of Charles Mabey.

In January 1844 Job Mabey was driven off a section which he rented between Hutt and Waiwetū by Maori who inhabited Motutawa Pa near Mr Mason's farm on the Hutt River. Job's obituary in the Evening Post of 19 December 1896 said he settled at Taita three years after arriving in New Zealand.

On 11 April 1844 Charles Mabey attempted to recover £50 for damage done to his crops by Peter Hume's bullocks the previous November. The case was argued in the Supreme Court and some witnesses declared that the soil was bad and badly farmed, and that the crop would have been thin under any circumstances. The jury delivered in favour of Mabey and awarded damages at £7 10s.

The next day the Supreme Court heard a case against Charles Mabey and John Giles for wounding Hume's bullock. It was discovered, with its tail cut off, about 300 to 400 yards from Welch's and about 150 yards above Clifton on the opposite side of the River Hutt on which Mabey and Giles live. The foot marks and blood were traced across Mabey's land to a small piece of land occupied by Giles, where the tail was found about 200 yards from the river and about 300 yards from Mabey's house. Charles White, a witness, lived on the opposite side of the river from Mabey and Giles. The Judge directed the Jury to acquit Mabey as there was no evidence to connect him with the crime. John Giles was a fellow steerage passenger on the *Olympus*. He was also acquitted.

In December 1844 a party of natives came to the land of Charles Mabey, a most industrious and persevering settler, and, after stealing his axe, pulled up all his peas, potatoes, and other vegetables. He was left without anything growing to feed himself with.

On 16 April 1845 Charles Mabey purchased Hutt Section 188 at Taita from Donald McDonald.

Tensions in the Hutt Valley were sufficient to induce the family of Thomas Mason to leave for Hobart Town in July 1845 and William Garrett, a surgeon purchased the premises. When he in turn, with his wife and two children departed for London in January 1846 he left a Mr Mabey in charge. In early February 1846 the natives forcibly ejected Mr Mabey from the house and land, throwing the goods out in all directions. Charles Mabey, of the River Hutt, attested to this in March before Henry St Hill, the Police Magistrate.

In April Charles put in a tender to supply potatoes to the followers of the Native Chief Te Ringa Kuri of Kaiwarrawarra at the rate of £2 5s per ton. This was accepted and Charles agreed to deliver one ton of potatoes every Saturday morning in Wellington.

The natives destroyed two dwelling houses in May 1846 belonging to Mabey and Sutherland and slaughtered Mabey's fine cow. By this time all the "up-settlers" had moved down below the Bridge.

A skirmish took place in a clearing immediately close to Mabey's house on 16 June 1846. Known as Mabey's clearing it was about two miles north of the Camp at Boulcott's and about half-a-mile south of the stockade at Taita. One officer and three rank and file of the 58th Regiment were wounded, and it was believed that several natives also fell. Private James French of the 99th Regiment died from his wounds. Afterwards E Puni's natives scoured the bush near the spot where the conflict took place and found several blankets alongside pools of blood. Two or three guns and tomahawks were also discovered.

On 16 July 1846 a party of *friendly* natives stole a quantity of potatoes belonging to Mr Mabey at his clearing. The potatoes had been collected by Mr Mabey in a heap and were covered with earth to protect them from the weather. On news being received at the Stockade a party of Militia immediately proceeded to the spot, but the natives had gone away.

A list of settlers who were plundered or driven from their homes by the insurgent natives in March 1846 was published in the Wellington Independent on 18 November 1846. Charles Mabey suffered a loss of £16 11s and received in aid £6 13s 4d privately and £4 from the Government – making a total of £10 13s 4d.

On 28 November 1846 both Charles and Job Mabey signed a petition against the disbanding of the Taita detachment of Militia at the end of the month. They believed that Taita was the “key of the Hutt” and that this action would result in Taita settlers leaving and that cattle, sheep and pigs would also be withdrawn. If the post was deserted it would also give the Rebel and disaffected natives the opportunity of destroying any houses or property that may be left.

Settlers did leave and William Swainson wrote that “The Hutt looks wretchedly. Houses empty, fences broken down, roads over fields and through crops.”¹

On 8 January 1846 Charles Mabey mortgaged Hutt Section No.188 and this was repaid on 29 November 1847. It is assumed that he sold this section as he did not receive a Crown Grant for any part of it.

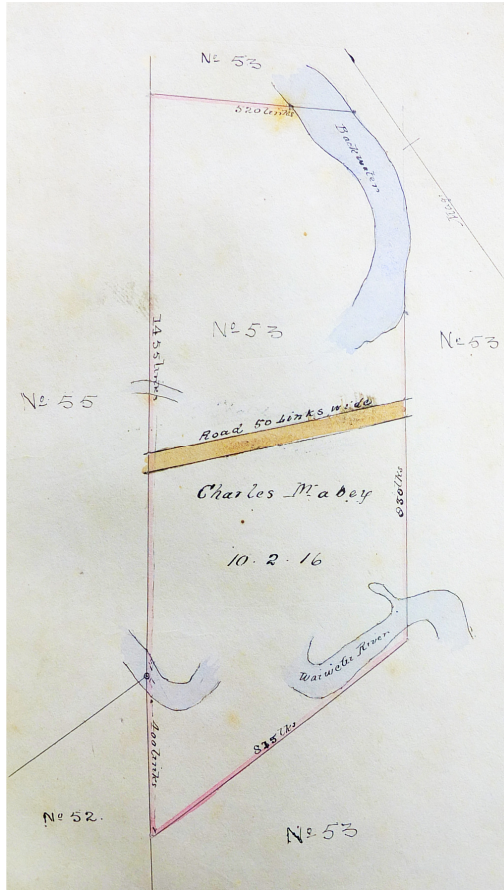
In mid-October 1850 the Mabey brothers began erecting a flour mill, to be driven by a waterwheel that could deliver 15 horsepower and was the first watermill erected in the Hutt Valley. Job Mabey probably acquired two mill stones from Alfred William Renall, the proprietor of Newry Mill. The aim was to reduce the expense of carting wheat, required for their own consumption, to the Hutt Bridge or Wellington, and then returning with the flour. At some point Renall found Charles Mabey wrestling desperately and hopelessly with the watermill.

On 5 August 1851 the mill, known as Mr Mabey’s, was offered to a meeting of settlers at the Aglionby Arms where discussion was about forming a company for the purpose of erecting a Flour Mill. The meeting declined the offer as it was not adapted to the wants of the settlers. In November 1851 Alfred William Renall advised his brother settlers that he would arrange to complete the Tai Tai Flour Mill, after which it would be sold to them if they wish to purchase it.

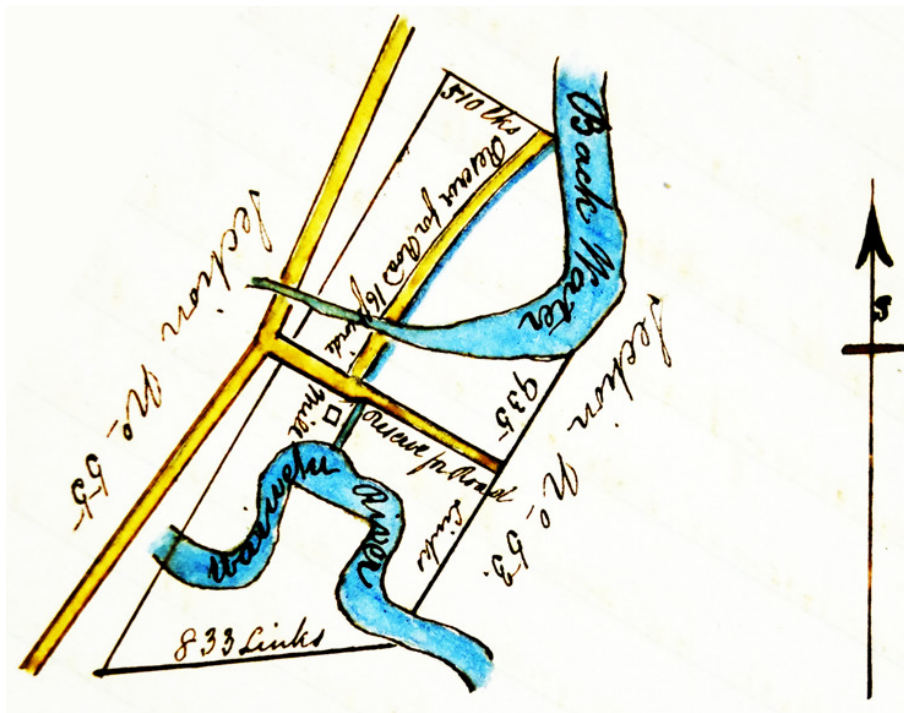
Mabey’s Mill was situated about 2¾ miles from the Hutt Bridge and in February 1852 was contiguous with a piece of land consisting of 4½ acres with a dwelling house, and a substantial Barn that was being erected. One acre was sown with grass and the remainder in crop. The property was leased, with 16 years still to run at a rental of £4 10s per annum.

On 10 August 1853 Charles Mabey received a Crown Grant for 10 acres 2 roods and 16 perches being part of Hutt Section No.53. The land was probably purchased on 28 February 1852 when it was mortgaged to William Bushell. When the mortgage was transferred to George Hart on 12 April 1853 the security included a tenement mill house and appurtenances.

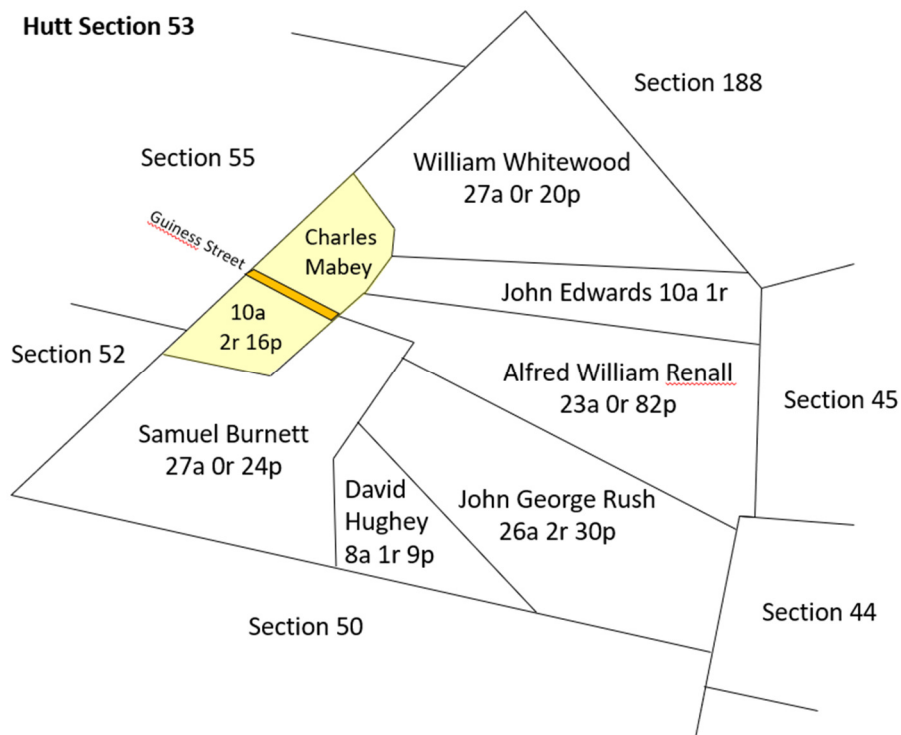
¹ Guardian of the Valley: Christ Church – The Story of Wellington’s Oldest Church by Miles Erwin page 45



Archives NZ R21598822 Wellington Crown Grant Register Nos 601-800 - No.628



Marks the site of the Flour Mill near the southeast corner of today's High Street and Guinness Street
From a plan drawn in the Mortgage - Deeds Register No.3 page 509 Archives NZ Reference R20162992



Based on a plan enclosed with 1880s correspondence about surveying discrepancies
 Archives NZ Reference LS-W1 142/5969 Hutt Block – Part Sections 53 and 55 - R23989725

From about 1853 Charles Mabey is recorded as a farmer of Upper Hutt and on 10 June 1853 Job Mabey departed for Geelong on the barque *Oceania* along with at least one fellow resident, William Tandy. He was described as a 40-year-old married "digger" when he departed on 20 December 1853 for Nelson from Melbourne on the barque *Belle Creole*. After arriving at Nelson on 1 January the ship sailed again for on the 4th arriving at Wellington on the 7th.

Although the foundations of the Taita flour mill were upset and misplaced during the earthquake of 23 January 1855 it was promptly repaired by Alfred William Renall.

On 30 September 1856 Charles Mabey received Grant No.845 for Hutt Section No.189 consisting of 121 acres situated in Upper Hutt on the west side of the Hutt River near Totara Park. This was sold to J. Cleland in 1865.



Archives NZ R21598823 Wellington Crown Grant Register Nos 801-1000
No.845 Crown Grant for Country Section 191 Upper Hutt

In August 1857 both Job and Charles Mabey were awarded land Scrip of 150 acres each as compensation for losses sustained during the Maori War. Charles immediately lodged Application No.1034 for 150 acres. Later he received Grant No.1908 for Hutt Section No.207 on 21 November 1860 consisting of 63 acres near Wallaceville, Upper Hutt. Job exercised his Scrip on 15 July 1859.