

People You Meet on the Way to Masterton

Edward Gibbon Wakefield



Edward Gibbon Wakefield was born in London on 20 March 1796, the eldest son of Edward Wakefield, a London land agent and surveyor, and his wife Susanna, née Crash, an Essex farmer's daughter.

The colourful life of his early years led to Newgate where he was imprisoned for three years. He barely escaped transportation or perhaps hanging but lived with a tarnished reputation for the rest of his life. However, his prison experience seems to have brought him to a tipping point in his life, for he emerged from gaol committed to and actively promoting the cause of prison reform. He also became a vigorous promoter of colonizing along the lines of the English system of squire and peasant. He played a significant part in defusing a situation that brought about the union of Upper and Lower Canada after a rebellion in 1837. Behind the scenes he was a driving force for both the South Australia Company and the New Zealand Company. His catch-cry was, "Possess yourself of the Soil and you are Secure."

For all his promoting, Edward Gibbon did not sail with the colonists. Many years were to pass before he saw New Zealand. Probably he recognized that he did not have the patience, the skills or the talents needed as a frontier pioneer. His talents lay in visualizing dramatic plans and grandiose schemes and then persuading other people to get involved. He was not even a good organizer as he tended to ignore the details. He was a salesman, a propagandist and a politician, and who knows how far he would have gone but for his earlier folly.

Wakefield was a man of large views and lofty aims, and in private life displayed the warmth of heart which commonly accompanies these qualities. His main defect was unscrupulousness: he hesitated at nothing necessary to accomplish an object, and the conviction of his untrustworthiness gradually alienated his associates and left him politically powerless. Excluded from Parliament by the fatal error of his youth, he was compelled to resort to indirect means of working out his plans by influencing public men. But for a tendency to paradox, his intellectual powers were of the highest order, and as a master of nervous idiomatic English he is second to Cobbett alone. After every deduction it remains true that no contemporary showed equal genius as a colonial statesman, or in this department rendered equal service to his country.

This British colonial statesman, was born in London on the 20th of March 1796, of an originally Quaker family. His father, Edward Wakefield, was an active philanthropic reformer, best known for his account of 'Ireland, Statistical and Political' (1812), and was a surveyor and land agent in extensive practice. His grandmother, Priscilla Wakefield (1751-1832), was a popular author for the young, and one of the introducers of savings banks. Wakefield was for a short time at Westminster School, and was brought up to his father's profession, which he relinquished on occasion of his elopement at the age of twenty with Miss Pattle, the orphan daughter of an Indian civil servant. The young lady's relatives ultimately became reconciled to the match and procured him an appointment as attaché to the British legation at Turin. He resigned this post in 1820 upon the death of his wife, to whom he was fondly attached, and, though making some efforts to connect himself with journalism, spent the years immediately succeeding in idleness, residing for the most part in Paris. In 1826 he appeared before the public as the hero of a most extraordinary adventure, the abduction of Miss Ellen Turner, daughter of William Turner, of Shrigley Park, Cheshire. Miss Turner was decoyed from school by means of a forged letter and made to believe that she could only save her father from ruin by marrying Wakefield, whom she accordingly accompanied to Gretna Green. This time the family refused to condone his proceedings; he was tried with his confederates at Lancaster assizes, March 1827, convicted, and sentenced to three years' imprisonment in Newgate. The marriage, which had not been consummated, was dissolved by a special act of parliament. A disgrace which would have blasted the career of most men made Wakefield a practical statesman and a benefactor to his country. Meditating on the probability of emigration upon his release, he turned his attention while in prison to colonial subjects, and acutely detected the main causes of the slow progress of the Australian colonies in the enormous size of the landed estates, the reckless manner in which land was given away, the absence of all systematic effort at colonization, and the consequent discouragement of immigration and dearth of labour. He proposed to remedy this state of things by the sale of land in small quantities at a sufficient price, and the employment of the proceeds as a fund for promoting immigration. These views were expressed with extraordinary vigour and incisiveness in his "Letter from Sydney" (1829), published while he was still in prison, but composed with such graphic power that it has been continually quoted as if written on the spot.

After his release Wakefield seemed disposed for a while to turn his attention to social questions at home, and produced a tract on the Punishment of Death, with a terribly graphic picture of the condemned sermon in Newgate, and another on incendiarism in the rural districts, with an equally powerful exhibition of the degraded condition of the

agricultural labourer. He soon, however, became entirely engrossed with colonial affairs, and, having impressed John Stuart Mill, Colonel Torrens and other leading economists with the value of his ideas, became a leading though not a conspicuous manager of the South Australian Company, by which the colony of South Australia was ultimately founded. In 1833 he published anonymously "England and America", a work primarily intended to develop his own colonial theory, which is done in the appendix entitled "The Art of Colonization." The body of the work, however, is fruitful in seminal ideas, though some statements may be rash and some conclusions extravagant. It contains the distinct proposal that the transport of letters should be wholly gratuitous -- the precursor of subsequent reform -- and the prediction that, under given circumstances, "the Americans would raise cheaper corn than has ever been raised." In 1836 Wakefield published the first volume of an edition of Adam Smith, which he did not complete. In 1837 the New Zealand Association was established, and he became its managing director. Scarcely, however, was this great undertaking fairly commenced when he accepted the post of private secretary to Lord Durham on the latter's appointment as special commissioner to Canada. "The Durham Report", the charter of constitutional government in the colonies, though drawn up by Charles Buller, embodied the ideas of Wakefield, and the latter was the means of its being given prematurely to the public through "The Times", to prevent its being tampered with by the government. He acted in the same spirit a few months later, when (about July 1839), understanding that the authorities intended to prevent the despatch of emigrants to New Zealand, he hurried them off on his own responsibility, thus compelling the government to annex the country just in time to anticipate a similar step on the part of France.

EMIGRATION
TO
NEW ZEALAND.

The Directors of the New Zealand Company, do hereby give notice that they are ready to receive Applications for a FREE PASSAGE to the

TOWN OF WELLINGTON,
AT LAMBTON HARBOUR,
PORT NICHOLSON, COOK'S STRAITS,
NEW ZEALAND,

From Agricultural Laborers, Shepherds, Miners, Gardeners, Brickmakers, Mechanics, Handicraftsmen, and Domestic Servants, **BEING MARRIED**, and not exceeding Forty years of age; also from **SINGLE FEMALES**, under the care of near relatives, and **SINGLE MEN**, accompanied by one or more **ADULT SISTERS**, not exceeding, in either case, the age of Thirty years. Strict inquiry will be made as to qualifications and character.

Apply on Mondays, Thursdays, and Saturdays, to Mr. **JOSEPH PHIPSON**, 11, Union Passage, Birmingham,
AGENT TO THE COMPANY.

TOWN and COUNTRY SECTIONS of LAND on sale, full particulars of which may be had on application as above.

The New Zealand Company poster or advertisement that influenced so many to leave their home and sail to the far side of the world.

CONVICTION.

New Zealand, } Be it remembered, that on
Wanganui, } this 18th day of January, 1842,
to wit. } Edward Jerningham Wakefield, Esq., J.P., of Wanganui, was duly convicted before us, Gilbert Francis Dawson, Peter Wilson, Samuel King, and John Nixon, Esqs., four of her Majesty's Justices of the Peace, on an information on that behalf, exhibited before us on this 18th day of January, 1842, for that, on Sunday, the 16th day of January, 1842, the said Edward Jerningham Wakefield, Esq., J.P., did fire, and cause to be fired and discharged, certain guns in the public street or way at Wanganui. And we do, in pursuance of the act in such case made and provided for the prevention of firing guns in the public ways, award, order, and adjudge, that the said Edward Jerningham Wakefield, Esq., J.P., do, for such offence, forfeit and pay the sum of ten shillings, to go and be distributed as in and by the said act is provided, besides the costs and charges of and attending this conviction, which said costs and charges we, the said Justices, do hereby ascertain and assess at the sum of seven shillings.

Given under our hands and seals the day and year first above written,
Gilbert Francis Dawson, P.M., (L.S.) Peter Wilson, J.P., (L.S.) Samuel King, J.P., (L.S.) John Nixon, J.P., (L.S.)

We, the Magistrates in petty sessions assembled, hereby certify that the above is a true copy of all the proceedings in the case, *Regina versus Wakefield*, tried on the 18th day of January, 1842.

Gilbert Francis Dawson, P.M.; Peter Wilson, J.P., Samuel King, J.P., John Nixon, J.P.

A conviction against the New Zealand Company's agent and Edward G. Wakefield's son published in the Wellington Spectator 23 February 1842.

For several years Wakefield continued to direct the New Zealand Company, fighting its battles with the colonial office and the missionary interest, and secretly inspiring and guiding many parliamentary committees on colonial subjects, especially on the abolition of transportation. The company was by no means a financial success, and many of its proceedings were wholly unscrupulous and indefensible; its great object, however, was attained, and New Zealand became the Britain of the south. In 1846 Wakefield, exhausted with labour, was struck down by apoplexy, and spent more than a year in complete retirement, writing during his gradual recovery his Art of Colonization. The management of the company had meanwhile passed into the hands of others, whose sole object was to settle accounts with the government and wind up the undertaking. Wakefield seceded, and joined Lord Lyttelton and John Robert Godley in establishing the Canterbury settlement as a Church of England colony. A portion of his correspondence on this subject was published by his son as The Founders of Canterbury (Christ Church, 1868). As usual with him, however, he failed to retain the confidence of his coadjutors to the end. In 1853, after the grant of a constitution to New Zealand, he took up his residence

in the colony, and immediately began to act a leading part in colonial politics. In 1854 he appeared in the first New Zealand parliament as extra-official adviser of the acting governor, a position which excited great jealousy, and as the mover of a resolution demanding the appointment of a responsible ministry. It was carried unanimously, but difficulties, which will be found detailed in W. Swainson's *New Zealand and its Colonization* (chapter 12), prevented its being made effective until after the mover's retirement from political life. In December 1854, after a fatiguing address to a public meeting, followed by prolonged exposure to a southeast gale, his constitution entirely broke down. He spent the rest of his life in retirement, dying at Wellington on the 16th of May 1862.

His only son, Edward Jerningham Wakefield, was a New Zealand politician. Three of Wakefield's brothers were also interested in New Zealand. After serving in the Spanish army Colonel William Hayward Wakefield emigrated to New Zealand in 1839. As an agent of the New Zealand Land Company he was engaged in purchasing enormous tracts of land from the natives, but the company's title to the greater part of this was later declared invalid. He remained in New Zealand until his death on the 19th of September 1848. Arthur Wakefield, who was associated with his brother in these transactions about land, was killed during a fight with some natives at Wairau on the 17th of June 1843. The third brother was Felix Wakefield, an engineer.

The Wairarapa was always an attractive proposition from the earliest days of European settlement in New Zealand. However, access over the Rimutaka Ranges from the burgeoning town of Wellington presented major difficulties for early settlers and held back immediate development. Even as late as 1858 the road over the ranges was little more than a bullock track forcing the Chamberlain family to dismantle the bullock cart that carried their possessions up the Hutt Valley as far as Mangaroa, and literally manhandle their belongings as well as the wagon wheels up over the steep slopes to Featherston. Each member of the family made at least two backbreaking trips over the Ranges, and the body of the cart, now in pieces, made the journey strapped to the back of the bullock. At Featherston the cart was reassembled, the lost bullock found, and after a further two days of tortuous travel the first wheeled vehicle trundled into the fledgling township of Masterton.

To satisfy the ambitious young entrepreneurs arriving in Wellington, and to provide food for the growing population, the pressure for grazing land produced a succession of forays to find the best way through the mountains guarding the Wairarapa. Several failed attempts were made by early surveyors struggling over the steeply wooded slopes for a glimpse of the valley, and eventually the coastal route by boat was chosen to access the valley from Whangamoana or beyond. Leading Wellington entrepreneurs, including William Fox, Charles Clifford and William Vavasour made the coastal trip to Wairarapa to satisfy themselves about the region's grazing possibilities and to meet Maori chiefs.

Several years and land purchases followed but it wasn't until the Lambton Quay cooper, Joseph Masters and Henry Jackson, a Maori speaking farmer tramped over the Rimutaka Ranges to meet with Ngati Kahungunu Chief Retimana Te Korou at Ngaumutawa, that the possibility of a town being established became more realistic.

Retimana Te Korou:



Retimana Te Korou was born in the late 1700s and was the son of Te Raku and Te Kai. His parents were descendents from the Rangitaane and Ngati Kahungunu peoples of Wairarapa.

During the 1830s, Wairarapa Maori faced mounting pressure from Te Rauparaha and his allies, the Taranaki tribes, who had moved south to Wellington and into Wairarapa. Although the tribes initially lived peacefully, troubles arose and a number of battles took place. Te Korou was among a number of Wairarapa Maori captured.

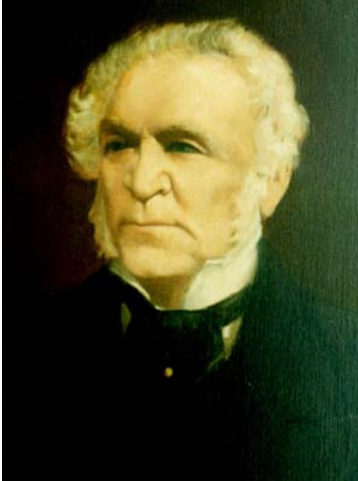
Te Wera, of Ngati Mutunga, was taking him to Wellington when Te Korou escaped by killing Te Wera. Realising that it was no longer safe in the Wairarapa, Te Korou and his wife, Hine-whaka-aea and their children joined other Wairarapa Maori at the east coast stronghold of Nukutaurua on Mahia Peninsula.

Te Korou was a member of a party of Wairarapa chiefs who concluded a peace treaty with the Taranaki tribes in Lower Hutt in 1841 and returned to the Wairarapa where he was involved in encouraging Pakeha settlement.

Te Korou's tribe decided to sell some of their land to the Small Farm Association established by Masters and his colleagues, resulting in the small farm settlement of Masterton beginning May 1854.

Te Korou became disillusioned with the aggressive Pakeha (white) settlement and he and his son, Karaitiana, supported the King movement of the Maori wars, during the turbulent 1860s. When Te Korou died in 1882 however, many of Masterton's leading settlers joined in the 300 strong cortege, which made its way to Te Korou's burial place in Masterton cemetery.

Joseph Masters:



In 1853 a Small Farm Association was formed. It was launched at 7 p.m. on Friday 18 March 1853 when a well-attended meeting was held in the Crown and Anchor on the beach at Lambton Quay in Wellington. The meeting, called by a group of Wellington's working men, discussed the establishment of a Society to promote the cause of "village settlements," and the establishment of small farms for families with little capital. The meeting appointed a committee to set up such an organisation.

The committee of five contained three who were to have a major impact on the future establishment of the Small Farms Association settlements of the Wairarapa plains - Joseph Masters, Charles Carter and William Allen. Henry Jackson's presence on the journey appears in the main to have been completely overlooked. Jackson was indeed fluent in Maori - a necessity for one of the party of two - but he accompanied Masters not just as interpreter, but as the authorised representative of the disgruntled small settlers of the Hutt, just as Masters represented the Wellington supporters of the small farm movement.

Masters had started the ball rolling with a series of letters he had written in 1852, published in the 'Wellington Independent', under the pseudonym of 'A Working Man,' calling for Wellington settlers to be judicious in the voting for public office. He urged that voters should only vote for those who supported the concept of small farms.

Joseph Masters was born in Derby, England in 1802 where his father was a leather breeches manufacturer. He was orphaned at a young age and lived with various relatives before serving an apprenticeship with an uncle who was a cooper (barrel maker). In 1826, Masters married Sarah Bourton and in 1832 they moved to Tasmania, Australia with their two daughters. In the 1840s, Joseph Masters and family moved to New Zealand and he set up as a cooper in Lambton Quay, Wellington. Masters was also looking for land in the Wairarapa. He was promoting the concept of small farm settlements whereby groups of working men could pool together to buy large blocks, which they could then subdivide amongst their membership. It was his proactive initiatives that rallied the many immigrants, frustrated and disillusioned by the empty promises of the New Zealand Company, and also moved Governor Grey and the government to eventually confirm and purchase land in the Wairarapa region that became known as the towns of Masterton and Greytown. Masters was a vigorous promoter of Masterton, representing the area on the Wellington Provincial Council and helping to establish the Trust Lands Trust. He died in December 1873.

Masters envisioned a Wairarapa where sheep farmers would be confined to the hilly districts, and where the more fertile flat lands would be set aside to allow small farms to establish. He thought that under such a scheme, villages would flourish, and the occupiers of the small farms would be able to enjoy schools and the "blessings of civilised society." His message found support among the working-class settlers of Wellington. Many of them had been induced to migrate to the city by the promises of the New Zealand Company, which had assured workers employment and the chance to buy land but had been unable to fulfil that promise. Instead, the working people of Wellington were finding it very difficult to obtain land near the city, and sheep farmers were rapidly taking up the land in Wairarapa. The sheep owners were entering into leases with the Maori owners and the working-class settlers feared that there would be no land left for them.

Masters' call also found support from successful Wellington businessman Charles Carter. Carter, who had been immersed in liberal politics in England, had only arrived in the colony in 1850, but had quickly set up in business as a public contractor, and was already at work on his first major contract, the reclamation of the Lambton Quay frontage. Carter had been a proponent of the small farm concept being applied to Wairarapa before he had even arrived in New Zealand. In a number of articles written in 1848 he set forth a plan of "systematic colonisation" whereby the Wairarapa plains were to be divided into 30,000 plots, each of five acres.

In 1847 Dr. Isaac Featherston's 'Wellington Independent' had also called for the establishment of small farms, this time at the point where the newly-constructed road across the Rimutaka Range entered the plains, at the place later named after Featherston.

SMALL FARMS.

THE SMALL FARM COMMITTEE will hold a Meeting every Tuesday evening, at Mr. Bannister's, Crown & Anchor Inn, Lambton-quay, and at Mr. Whitewood's, Hotel, River Hutt, every Saturday evening at $\frac{1}{2}$ past 7 o'clock, for the purpose of receiving applications, and giving every information relative to the Small Farm Scheme.

JOSEPH MASTERS,
Secretary, pro tem.

Wellington, Nov. 18, 1853.

Governor George Grey was familiar with the calls for the creation of small farm settlements too, and had promoted the creation of a society based on ownership of land by all classes. He believed in the value of a "sturdy yeomanry based on ownership of a small farm." Governor Grey also became involved with negotiations and eventually preferred settlement sites, which became Masterton and Greytown, were confirmed and purchased by the government.

Masters later recalled that the Governor consulted him about his plans, and following the consultation lowered the price of land from £1 per acre to 10 shillings in new land regulations. He also claimed that it was as a result of his advice that Grey's regulations stipulated a 40-acre minimum for the small farms. It was then that Masters called for fellow "Working Men" to come forward and take up shares "to purchase a good large block of land, (and) form your own village in the centre." "Be united," he told them, "and you will be able to have towns and farms of your own."

The small settlers of the Hutt Valley answered Masters' call too. They had also felt cheated by the New Zealand Company, and had been petitioning the Governor to be allowed to purchase small blocks of land under the new regulations. Masters, Carter and Allen journeyed out to the Hutt to attend a meeting of settlers, under the chairmanship of the charismatic miller, Alfred Renall. The meeting appointed Masters and his fellow Derbyshire native Henry H. Jackson to travel to Wairarapa to select a block of land suitable for the small farms scheme.

Masters and C.R. Carter (after whom Carterton is named) paid a visit to Governor George Grey convincing him of the scheme. Masters and committee member, H.H. Jackson, trekked across the Rimutaka Ranges and met with Te Korou at the village of Ngaumutawa, west of Masterton. Their negotiations resulted in Te Korou's tribe deciding to sell some of their land to the Small Farm Association established by Masters and his colleagues. The small farm settlement of Masterton began on the 21st May 1854 with the arrival of the first European settlers in Masterton.

When the settlements were laid out, the Small Farms Association purchased the whole block from the government at 10 shillings an acre. One-acre sections were balloted to their members for one pound each, the difference paying for surveying and other expenses. In Masterton, town acres were on both sides of what was to be known as Bridge and later Queen Street and were surveyed in the shape of a cross.

Te Korou and Masters are buried 50 metres apart in the Pioneer Cemetery in Queen Elizabeth Park.

Masterton including a portion of the Upper Plain, was proclaimed a Borough in 1877. The election of the Mayor and the first Council took place in the first week in August. The elected councillors were R.G. Williams (Mayor), H. Bannister, W. Perry, F. Grey, E. Feist, D. McGregor, E. Wyllie, J. Vile, D. Donald, W.W. McCardle, R. Wilsone (Town Clerk, pro. tem.). The first meeting of the Council was held in the Magistrate's Courthouse on 14 August 1877. Within a month R Brown was elected town clerk from six applicants. A.R. Bunny was appointed solicitor to the Borough, and J King was appointed engineer and surveyor.

Sir George Grey:



Sir **G**eorge **G**rey's achievements include:

Governor of South Australia	- 1841 to 1845.
Governor in Chief of New Zealand	- 1845 to 1853.
Knight Commander of the Order of the Bath	- 1848.
Governor of the Cape Colony & High Commissioner for South Africa	- 1854 to 1860.
Governor General of New Zealand	- 1861 to 1868.
Member of Parliament for Auckland	- 1875 & 1893.
Member of Parliament for Thames	- 1876.
Premier of New Zealand	- 13 October 1877-8 October 1879.

Sir **G**eorge **G**rey was born in Lisbon Portugal in 1812. He was educated at Guilford Surrey, and in 1826 entered Sandhurst, where he gained his reputation and promotion in the 83rd Foot.

After some time working with his regiment in Glasgow and then Ireland, Sir George entered the senior department of the Royal Military College, where he excelled and gained his captaincy. He spent some time in Australia,

while he was there he was leader of two expeditions in Western Australia 1837-39, Resident at King George's Sound Albany Western Australia 1839, and Governor of South Australia 1841. However, intelligence from New Zealand indicated that the current administration there was not successful. The Colonial Office alarmed at the tension between the natives and whites, turned to Grey. He landed at Auckland on 18 November 1845, assumed office as Governor-in-chief of New Zealand and immediately headed for the Bay of Islands. In 1848 he was knighted.

Sir **G**eorge **G**rey rapidly acquired great mana with the Maori, and even had a command of the language. In 1853 he visited many of the Pacific Islands and arrived in South Africa early 1854 to assume the governorship of Cape Colony together with the high commissioner-ship of South Africa.

When Sir George set foot again in New Zealand he found a very unhappy conflict between the two races, he again became Governor of New Zealand from 1861 to 1868. On 24 March 1875 he was elected both as MP for Auckland City West and Superintendent of the Auckland Province, both positions he held for a year. Grey later became MP for Thames, in 1876, and on the defeat of Atkinson, 13 October 1877, he formed a ministry and Premier. His ministry got into difficulties over land tax and a commercial crisis. He carried on for a few weeks after being defeated, then asked for a dissolution. Sir George was now suffering from ill health and he retired from politics in 1890, leaving for Australia. On returning to New Zealand a deputation requested him to contest the Newton seat, to which he was elected unopposed. In December 1893 Grey was again elected for Auckland City, and kept the position until retiring due to failing health on a visit to England. Sir George Grey died in London on 20 September 1898, two weeks after the death of his wife.



Once settled at Upper Plains, Masterton in Wairarapa district, Giles Chamberlain (centre) quickly became caught up in the industrial revolution and operated a steam threshing business for some fourteen years and partnered with his younger brother Edmund in a flourmill, pictured above, for thirty years from 1877. They listed themselves as flour millers, grain merchants, bread and biscuit bakers, confectioners, threshing machine and traction engine proprietors with offices in Albert Street. Giles and Edmund also ran a bakery for some time on Queen Street in connection with the mill. Mary Wilton came to work in the shop attached to the bakery some time prior to marrying Giles eldest son Joseph, on the 24 May 1887.



From a report presented by the Executive Commissioners to both Houses of New Zealand's General Assembly in 1889, we find in the official list of awards that Giles and Edmund won three medals at Melbourne's Great Centennial Exhibition of 1888. Under section 28—*Wheat, Oats, Barley etc.*: they received a "first" for Stout Oats and a "third" for Wheat. Under section 30—*Confectionary, Jams, Jellies, Biscuits, flour*: they received a "first" for their Fine Flour to be awarded the above medal.