

Nicola Sciascia



1840 – 1898

La Famiglia Sciascia da Nuova Zelanda

Taketake tukairangi whakatakune huaui ai
Hirere toto hirere tatea
Nau ra kei taku kokoro taotapu
Tau atu koe ki taionorua o mate
Haere horetiti mai
Mate horetata atu
Tihei mauriora

The invitation by our respected Sicilian relative, Ambassador Francesco Paolo Fulci Sciascia, has now been realized with the production of this story of Nicola. A man of vision, Paolo invited us to gather together the fragments of knowledge concerning our beloved tipuna/nonno to be included in a further publication on the Sciascia whanau/famiglia. Here a year later is that contribution. We can only marvel at Paolo's patience.

This story belongs to more than the several thousand of us who are the family. This is a story of New Zealand, of Italy, a Maori story, a pioneer's story, a story of genealogical interlacing far more embedded into the psyche of New Zealanders than initially meets the eye. Who for example could have foretold the Jewish origins, or the Bisceglie connection? The Maori, Scottish and Italian mix here speaks of a time of fluidity, of global movement, of footprints now scarcely discernible but for the few records rediscovered on this exciting journey of family love. These writings will be part of a greater account of la famiglia Sciascia. They have a particular focus around the 1838 marriage of Carlo Sciascia and Maria Giacinta de Toma and their children, continuing on through generations to ourselves, their descendants who became a reunited family after close to two hundred years. Hanga whakamiharo. Miracoloso. Praise the Lord.

So, welcome, gather, let's celebrate this taonga. As we have done with Felicity's "Making Waves", for Captain Jock the grandfather of Riria, Nicola's faithful wife. And again with Marina and Hilary's "Hakui" and "Tuahine" where many of the mothers and sisters are Nicola's descendants. Our abiding gratitude yet again to Felicity.

It has been written that **"The capacity of a family to strengthen, educate and enrich goes far beyond any measurable authority or influence. By its very nature, the family has an inherent power to foster human life"**. We have been blessed so: blessed by tenaciously inspired efforts made over many decades to record, to enquire, to research and now here to collate our precious history, a tatau korero, with the confidence born of meticulous research and accompanying creativity and imagination. Here is a blueprint for a greater journey.

A final word to our Uncle Sonny Sciascia of Levin – e te Matua, tena koe. When the ancient city of Trani, the birthplace of Nicola invested you with citizenship we all became citizens with you. Wonderful thing tikanga Maori, our whakapapa. A chief can't be alone. In that one investiture was four thousand others. We travel with you always. And we know our Italian cousins will understand as we continue to arrive by the busload. A reading of the eye witness account of Nicola's death reminds us of the 'sacred wound' of our family. The text as a whole however is yet another step towards building our faith in ourselves and in life. From New Zealand we may offer this gift to our beautiful relatives, as a worthy contribution that is given as fully and freely as newborn confidence allows.

"Tenei ka tukua atu hei kawenata ki te ao" na Mahupuku.

Professor Piri Sciascia, Pro Vice-Chancellor Maori, Victoria University of Wellington



Nicola Sciascia

Photo Above: JR Dickson, as
published in Otago

Witness, 23 January 1901

CONTENTS

GRAPHICS	6
FAMILY LINES	7
TIMELINE	8
INTRODUCTION	15
THE ITALIAN YEARS	16
ALL AT SEA	18
LIFE IN NEW ZEALAND – CAREER LOCATIONS	21
1 WELLINGTON PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT PILOT SERVICE 1872-1876	22
2 MANAWATU HEADS 1876-1882	23
MATAKARAPA MARAE	23
THE PILOT STATION MANAWATU AND REMARKS	25
FAMILY INTERESTS	28
TEONE MCGREGOR	33
CAPTAIN JOCK MCGREGOR	33
SOME LOCAL POLITICS	34
3 RANGITIKEI HEADS 1882-1886	34
4 MANAWATU HEADS 1886-1887	35
BACKGROUND TO THE LIGHTHOUSE SERVICE	36
5 KAIPARA HEADS 1887-1890	37
DUTIES OF A LIGHTHOUSE KEEPER	37
6 PENCARROW HEADS 1890-1895	39
7 PORTLAND ISLAND 1895-1898	40
PORTLAND ISLAND 1897 – BY A VISITOR	42
LETTERS FROM LITTLE FOLKS	44
PUNCH AND JUDY	45
SUMMER 1897	47
LATE 1897	48
FEBRUARY 1898	48
ACCIDENTS AND FATALITIES	52
MONUMENT IN COURSE OF ERECTION AT PORTLAND ISLAND	54
CHARLES RANGIWAWAHIA SCIASCIA	56
THE FIRST GENERATION	58
8 THE PILGRIMAGE, 2007	59
9 REFERENCES	67

GRAPHICS

FAMILY LINES	7
TIMELINE	8
INTRODUCTION	15
TRANI - BISCEGLIE AND FIUME, ITALY	16
PERTH: THE OLD PARISH REGISTER, 1812	20
MAP OF NEW ZEALAND CAREER LOCATIONS 1872-1898	21
MATAKARAPA ROAD 2008	24
MURAL OF MATAKARAPA MARAE ON HOUSE AT FOXTON BEACH	24
TE UPIRI CHURCH & MARAE	25
THE RULE OF THE ROAD FOR STREETS	26
REMARKS AT THE PILOT STATION MANAWATU	28
MANAWATU RIVER ESTUARY	30
RIRIA MCGREGOR'S BAPTISMAL RECORD – NO 1002	31
CAPTAIN JOCK MCGREGOR AGED 62 TEONE MAKARIKA AGED ABOUT 70	32
RIRIA MCGREGOR NICOLA SCIASCIA	32
PLAQUE REMEMBERING JOCK MCGREGOR	33
JOHN DE TOMBA AND MARGARET SCIASCIA	35
AUTHORITY TO DEDUCT LIFE INSURANCE PREMIUMS – 25 FEBRUARY 1889	38
INSTRUCTIONS RE SALARY – STAMPED 13 JULY 1889	39
VIEW OF LIGHTHOUSE AND HOUSE, PORTLAND ISLAND, HAWKE'S BAY	40
PORTLAND ISLAND OFF MAHIA PENINSULA	43
PORTLAND ISLAND PICNIC CA 1896	45
FRANK TARIUHA SCIASCIA, 78, AT THE MONUMENT TO NICOLA SCIASCIA	55
WHANAU HONOUR FALLEN WARRIOR	56
CHARLES SCIASCIA 1913 CHARLES (FAR RIGHT) EGYPT WW1	57
NICOLA AND RIRIA AND THEIR CHILDREN	58
PILGRIMAGE SUMMARY SHEET 2007	60
THE GIACINTO RELATIONS	61
THE GENOVA RELATIONS	62
TRANI – FAMILY AT NICOLA'S HOME	63
COLAMARTINO GRANDCHILDREN OF RAFFAELLA	64
BARI GATHERING	65
RAFFAELLA SCIASCIA'S DESCENDANTS	66

FAMILY LINES ~ WHAKAPAPA ~ GENEALOGIA

Riria's Paternal Genealogy	Riria's Maternal Whakapapa	Nicola's Paternal Genealogy	Date
	Hoturoa		
	Hotuoape		
	Hotumatapu		
	Motai		
	Ue		
	Rakamaomao		
	Kakati		
	Tawhao		
	Turongo = Mahinaarangi		
	Raukawa		
	Takihiku	Giovanni de Sciascia born	ca 1650
	Ngakohua	Nicola de Sciascia born	1684
	Rakaupaewai	Giovanni de Sciascia born	1708
	Tokomauri	Nicola de Sciascia born	1734
Daniel McGregor born	Te Aramakau		1740
Daniel McGregor = Janet McGregor (niece of Rob Roy McGregor) date estimated		Carlo Sciascia born	1764
John McGregor born	Te Au		1774
		Carlo Sciascia = Ursula Lenaz	1791
		Nicola Sciascia born	1792
John McGregor = Christian MacDonald			1812
John (Jock) McGregor born	Tauia	Nicola Sciascia = Margherita Scaringi	1813
		Carlo Sciascia born	1815
		Carlo Sciascia = Maria Giacinta De Toma	1838
Teone McGregor/Makarika born to Jock and Hinekawa, daughter of Chief Tutepourangi and Hinearorangi	Poutu Hairuha = Rangiwaewa	Nicola Sciascia born	1840
	Pirihira = Teone Makarika		1862?
Riria McGregor/Makarika baptised			1863
	Riria Puaia Makarika = Nicola Sciascia		1882

TIMELINE ⁱ

D	M	Y	EVENT	TITLE	SOURCE and/or OWNER	Reference and/or Description
		1063	Cathedral built at Bisceglie	The Sciascia Family of Bisceglie and Trani	F P Fulci	Antonio Cortese Editore
		1167	Martyrs buried in cathedral crypt	ibid	ibid	ibid
	ca	1499	Aragon walls completed	ibid	ibid	ibid
		1513	Bisceglie becomes a state owned city - gives it more autonomy	ibid	ibid	ibid
		1575	Property register created, with the Sciascia name included	ibid	ibid	ibid
		1681	Pantaleo Sciascia becomes the Notary Public	ibid	ibid	ibid
		1727	Francesco Sciascia becomes the Notary Public	ibid	ibid	ibid
		1743	Marcantonio Sciascia buys the Cotimbo mansion	ibid	ibid	ibid
	ca	1750	Family branch moves to Trani, Giovanni and Antonio	ibid	ibid	ibid
		1764	Carlo Sciascia is born(1)	ibid	ibid	ibid
		1771	Pantaleo Sciascia (son of Pantaleo) buys Ammazzalorsa	ibid	ibid	ibid
		1791	Carlo Sciascia = Ursula Lenaz	ibid	ibid	ibid
		1792	Nicola Sciascia born (1)	ibid	ibid	ibid

ⁱ Compilation From Family Source Documents – Errors and Omissions Excepted

		1813	Nicola Sciascia = Margherita Scaringi	ibid	ibid	ibid
		1815	Carlo Sciascia born (2)	ibid	ibid	ibid
		1838	Carlo Sciascia = Maria Giacinta De Toma	ibid	ibid	ibid
		1840	Nicola Sciascia born (2)	ibid	ibid	ibid
ca	9	1848	Carlo Sciascia, a master tailor, (maestro sartore) and wife Giacinta go from Trani to Fiume	Famiglia Sciascia A Fiume	ibid	email
ca	10	1848	Carlo and Giacinta's daughter Maria Giovanni born and dies	ibid	ibid	ibid
ca	9	1848	Carlo and Giacinta Sciascia leave Margherita (10) Nicola (8) Giacinto (7) in Trani	ibid	ibid	ibid
	9	1848	Carlo and Giacinta bring Bartolomeo(5) Orsola (3) Raffaella (2) and Filomena (1) to Fiume	ibid	ibid	ibid
		1849	Carlo and Giacinta have twins, Ursula Maria and Giovanni	ibid	ibid	ibid
		1849	Twin Giovanni born and dies after a few days	ibid	ibid	ibid
		1852	Maria Giovanni born and dies after a few days	ibid	ibid	ibid
		1853	Twin Ursula Maria dies	ibid	ibid	ibid
		1853	Ursula Maria (2) born	ibid	ibid	ibid
24	8	1855	Carlo Sciascia dies (cholera)	NS 1840 - 1898	Piri Sciascia	looseleaf
		1856	Nicola Sciascia goes to Fiume	Family history and tree	Sciascia 1840-1990	bound
		1856	Nicola Sciascia is issued with "laisser-passer" - enabling travel Trani and Fiume	NS 1840 - 1898	Piri Sciascia	looseleaf

		1856-1859	Nicola Sciascia is probably a junior mate at Trani port	NS 1840 - 1898	Piri Sciascia	looseleaf
		1859	Nicola joins Merchant Navy, Kingdom of the Two Sicilies	Family history and tree	Sciascia 1840-1990	bound
		1859	Nicola leaves Apulia for ever possibly after a liaison with Maria Cristina Brunetti	The Sciascia Family of Bisceglie and Trani	F P Fulci	Antonio Cortese Editore
		1859	Nicola's mother and siblings stay in Trani with Rev. Bartolomeo Di Toma, her brother	NS 1840 - 1898	Piri Sciascia	looseleaf
		1860	Rev. Bartolomeo di Toma's father dies	Letter to Nicola	Rev Bartolomeo di Toma	Transcript on Sciascia family
25	11	1862	Nicola in Glasgow, buys English bible	NS 1840 - 1898	Piri Sciascia	looseleaf
19	11	1862	Nicola buys Italian bible, inscribes: "NS, 25 Nov. 1862. Glasgow"		Rev Bartolomeo di Toma	Transcript on Sciascia family
22	12	1863	Nicola has certs of discharge from Charles Crosby, ship "Maria Burris" embarked	NS 1840 - 1898	Piri Sciascia	looseleaf
19	4	1864	Disembarked. Aka "Sheasher"	ibid	ibid	ibid
	12	1864	Nicola has certs of discharge from "Continental" embarked	ibid	ibid	ibid
		1864	Rev. Bartolomeo Di Toma's mother dies		Rev Bartolomeo di Toma	Transcript Sciascia family
		1864	Nicola's brother Giacinto = Vincenza de Corato		Rev Bartolomeo di Toma	Transcript Sciascia family
	5	1865	Disembarked. Aka "Sheasher"	NS 1840 - 1898	Piri Sciascia	looseleaf
		1865	Bartolomeo (brother) notes that Nicola is on American ship, met Nicola in England	ibid	ibid	ibid
		1865	Nicola's sister Margherita = Guiseppe Pettrossi	Letter to NS	Rev Bartolomeo di Toma	Transcript Sciascia family
		1865	Nicola's English bible is published in Ireland		Piri Sciascia	Email to Paolo Fulci

		1868	Possible date of arrival in NZ	CV of Nicola	Piri Sciascia	looseleaf
	ca	1872	More likely date of arrival in NZ and informing family of same	ibid	ibid	ibid
		1872	Nicola joins the Wellington Provincial Government pilot service	Evening Post, Wellington	Evening Post 1 April 1898	newspaper
		1872	Nicola's sister Raffaella = Donato Colamartino	Letter to Nicola	Rev Bartolomeo di Toma	Transcript on Sciascia family
	8	1873	NS writes to uncle Rev. Bartolomeo di Toma	ibid	ibid	ibid
25	11	1873	Rev. Bartolomeo Di Toma gives family news spanning 13 years (1860-1873)	ibid	ibid	ibid
		1873	Nicola's brother Bartolomeo = Giustina Scanni	ibid	ibid	ibid
		1873	Rev. Bartolomeo, Giacinta, sister Orsolino and grandmother Margherita and brother Giacinto living together	ibid	ibid	ibid
31	11	1875	"Remarks at the Pilot Station Manawatu"	Sciascia 1840-1890	Sciascia 1840-1990	bound
20	7	1876	Nicola resumes at Manawatu Station		Wanganui Herald	article
3	4	1876	Bartolomeo (brother) writes to Nicoletta re twenty lire	Letter to Nicoletta	Bartolomeo Sciascia	Transcript on Sciascia family
		1877	The lighthouse at Portland Island is erected for about £6,500	Lighthouses of NZ	Otago Witness	article 23/1/1901
	4	1882	Nicola applies for the Pilot's position with the Waitara Harbour Board	Waitara Harbour Board	Taranaki Herald	article
		1882	Nicola = Riria McGregor	Sciascia 1840-1890	Sciascia 1840-1990	bound
9	4	1883	Margaret Sciascia born at Matarapa	Family Bible	S Sciascia	
28	4	1883	The case between Thomas Scott and Phillip Jenkins is heard	Supreme Court, Wanganui	Wanganui Herald, 28 April 1883	Paperspast

5	12	1884	Jack de Tomba born at Rangitikei Heads	Family Bible		
27	12	1885	Mary Christina born at Rangitikei Heads	Family Bible		
28	1	1886	Nicola resumes at Manawatu Station	Wanganui Herald	15/1/1886	Paperspast
12	8	1887	Nicholas James born at Kaipara	Family Bible		
21	8	1888	Lydia Louisa born at Kaipara			
		1889	Sciascia, Signalman at Kaipara Heads - removed from there - re salary	Lewis H B Wilson, Assistant Secretary, Marine Department, Wellington	Agency BBAO series 5544, box 47a, record 1889/620	
25	2	1889	Authority to Deduct Life Insurance	Lewis H B Wilson,	Agency BBAO	
11	7	1889	Nicolas Sciascia - pay his June salary into Bank	Lewis H B Wilson,	ibid	
25	2	1889	NS Asst lightkeeper and signalman, Kaipara Heads - authority to deduct Govt Life Insurance from his salary	Lewis H B Wilson,	Agency BBAO series 5544, box 46a, record 1889/222	
5	7	1890	Elsie Maud born at Pencarrow	Sciascia 1840-1990 by Audrey Sciascia	Sciascia 1840-1990	bound
28	9	1891	Charles Rangiawahia born at Pencarrow	ibid	ibid	ibid
2	11	1892	Ellen Ruth born at Pencarrow	ibid	ibid	ibid
11	3	1895	Emma Hannah born at Pencarrow	ibid	ibid	ibid
12	8	1895	Marine Dept reports Nicola falls asleep on duty at Pencarrow	ibid	ibid	ibid
		1895	NS sent to Portland Island	ibid	ibid	ibid

1	10	1896	Frank Tariuha born at Portland Island	ibid	ibid	ibid
20	5	1897	Margaret writes about the wreck of the <i>Pirate</i>	Letters From the Little Folks	Otago Witness	letters
20		1897	Sinking of coal ship at Portland Island, Marine Dept enquiry		"Pirate Enquiry"	Archives NZ
5	3	1898	Nicola dies at Portland Island after being gored by a bull - 29 th March 1898	Obituary	Evening Post	Paperspast
29	4	1898	Letter about the fatality	Casualties	Otago Witness	Paperspast
14	4	1898	Telegram about the fatality	Telegrams	Hawera and Normanby Star	article
21	4	1898	Nicola's replacement is named		Otago Witness	Paperspast
21	4	1898	Fatality details	Gored by a Bull	Wanganui Herald	Paperspast
14	4	1898	Fatality details	Casualties	Otago Witness	Paperspast
1	4	1898	Fatality details	Gored by a Bull	Wanganui Herald	Paperspast
31	8	1898	Pirihira Waikawa, born at Koputaroa	Sciascia 1840-1890	Sciascia 1840-1990	bound
		1898	High Court Wellington, probate details	Agency AAOM series 6029 box 111 record 6030		
23	1	1901	Article	The Late Keeper Sciascia	Otago Witness	Paperspast
23	1	1901	Article and photo by JE Dickson	Picnic on Portland Island	Otago Witness	Paperspast
23	1	1901	incident details	The Lighthouses of NZ	Otago Witness	Paperspast
23	1	1901	Letter about the fatality	To The Editor	Otago Witness	letters
23	1	1901	Includes photo	Monument	Otago Witness	Paperspast

		1938	Riria dies at Porangahau and is buried at Koputaroa			
		1917	Charles Sciascia's War records, National Archives		National Archives	AABK 18805 W5550
		1961	Waikawa lighthouse is moved to Wairoa	Sciascia 1840-1890	Sciascia 1840-1990	bound
	10	1997	I discendenti di NS, visitano la terra del loro atenato	La Diretta, TRANI	newspaper	
6	11	2007	Booklet published	The Sciascia Family	F P Fulci	Antonio Cortese Editore
18	1	2008	Micaela Mecocci (RAI) talk on Nicola		Paolo Fulci	broadcast
30	11	2008	Return of bayonet found at site of Charles Sciascia's memorial stella, to Whanau at Porangahau			

INTRODUCTION

Like iron sands to a magnet – the pieces we know take a shape, but there are pieces of Nicola Sciascia's life which are out of range. They may emerge in time following further research. Nicola and Riria were well known in the Manawatu district because they were lively and interesting characters. The Sciascia family was empowered right from the start – Famiglia meets Whanau meets Clan McGregor! This was a very rich mix with Nicola, a well-travelled European in his forties and Riria, a capable and intelligent Maori woman bearing the surname McGregor, marrying and producing a family of eleven healthy children.

It is no wonder that their children achieved so much to be proud of. Two of Riria and Nicola's sons, John and Charles were in the 1913 Maori All Blacks. Charles Sciascia enlisted and fought at Flanders – tragically he was killed in action at La Basseville (now Warneton-Comines) Belgium during the night of 31 July 1917. Their grandchildren and great grandchildren include many distinguished New Zealanders.

Riria's great grandfather was Chief Tutepourangi and her Scottish grandfather was Captain Jock McGregor – some of the Sciascias' leadership qualities derive from them; their intelligence and charm are partly Nicola's gift; the constancy of their links to whanau, their fidelity to land and the sea is stated in their Maori whakapapa.

Newspapers and Marine Department reports will never provide a description of Nicola and Riria's personalities and the nature of Nicola's death inevitably seizes attention – both then and today. It is an imbalance to have ten minutes override almost sixty years, however the nature of his passing provided some of the most telling and personal contemporary commentary available because it prompted people to write and share their experiences of life on Portland Island. And even at a time when arguably life was more risky, the plight of a young woman with a large family widowed so dramatically caught widespread attention – attention that resonated around the highest level of New Zealand government because of the presence of a very remarkable man on board the first ship to land officers on Portland Island after the accident.

A person's life is not measured by their employment, but by who they were – the story of Riria and Nicola is a captivating one. There is some theory in this essay - yet I feel in my bones that the few domestic scenes I have painted in this booklet are fitting. They are intended to interest the children as well as the senior generations because they are the ones who will eventually carry the heritage forward. I give my sincere thanks to family members for their guidance in construing details of Nicola's life from their precious source material.

In 2007 nearly forty of New Zealand Sciascia descendents, led by their elder, Sonny Sciascia (Horace), returned to Nicola's birthplace of Trani. Their tour included a visit to Sergeant Charles Sciascia's memorial in Belgium and a highly memorable and widely publicised civic celebration in Trani where Sonny Sciascia, following initiatives by a relative, Paolo Fulci, was honoured by receiving the freedom of the city. Ambassador Paolo Fulci used his contacts and applied his talents to ensuring that this pilgrimage to Italy, Sonny Sciascia's third, would be both authentic and inspirational for all concerned. He arranged for the very fine memorial monument to Charles Sciascia to be built in Belgium.

Sadly, Charles' body was never found, but when an appropriate location was chosen for this monument, a German bayonet was discovered there. It is this bayonet, now charged with the symbolism of war, death, sacrifice, honour and remembrance, which has been brought to Porangahau Marae 30 November 2008 by the Italian Ambassador, Gioachinno Trizzino.

It is with great pleasure that I dedicate this booklet to Nicola and Riria's descendants.



Felicity Campbell, 2008

THE ITALIAN YEARS

Nicola Sciascia was born in Trani 13 April 1840 to Carlo Sciascia and his wife Maria Giacinta di Toma. Carlo was a tailor and he and Maria had married two years earlier in 1838; she was one of thirteen di Toma siblings, two of whom were Catholic priests, including Bartolomeo, who would correspond with Nicola in later life. Nicola had an older sister, Margherita who was born in late 1838 and Carlo and Maria soon had four more children, so that by 1848 when he was eight years old he was living with his parents, older sister Margherita, seven year old brother Giacinto, five year old Bartolomeo, two year old Raffaella and one year Filomena.



Trani - Bisceglie and Fiume, Italy

The year of 1848 was marked by widespread nationalistic revolutionary movements in Europe and Carlo and Giacinta “disappeared”ⁱⁱ from Trani in September and travelled to Fiume where Carlo’s aunt Caterina was living. The experience was traumatic because Giacinta was heavily pregnant. There must have been some other intense pressure on the family too – possibly political or perhaps a financial one, because according to Paolo Fulci’s account,ⁱⁱⁱ Carlo and Giacinto left Margherita, Nicola and Giacinto behind in Trani. They were good and caring middle class parents – that they made this decision tells us that they were under enormous stress. Matters soon worsened because the baby daughter who was born 13 October, Maria Giovanna, lived less than a fortnight and died 29 October 1848.

ⁱⁱ Carlo’s name in the church register is annotated with “disappeared”.

ⁱⁱⁱ Email to Professor Piri Sciascia, 1 November 2006 “They split the family, leaving in Trani their children Margherita (10), Nicola (8), and Giacinto (7).”

What would be the effect on these three oldest children? Nicola did not rejoin his family until he was sixteen - he grew up in Trani. We can imagine young children suddenly isolated from warm family life to live and probably work at their grandmother's house and their relative's farm.^{iv} The severance would affect the children – it would make them more independent and, even if the practice was common, it might still make them question why they were left behind. It might have contributed to the independence of character which later enabled Nicola to be disconnected with his family for fourteen years.

Despite living in different towns there is evidence that the two parts of the family were in contact. Nicola's father, Carlo, caught cholera in the epidemic that started in June 1855 and he died 24 August, but before this, Carlo and Giacinta had sent their daughter Raffaella back to Trani – presumably for her safety. There she received First Holy Communion and was also confirmed 12 June, 1855.

In 1856 Nicola was issued with a "laisser-passer" by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies in Naples and this was a 10 day pass which permitted him to travel to Fiume from Trani. It gives a description of a sixteen year old youth, a farm worker (bracciale) returning to support his mother and family. He was a fresh-faced lad with brown hair and brown eyes, still growing into manhood and still to catch up with his nose and chin which had reached full size before the rest of him.

In Fiume Nicola became the main breadwinner for the family and it is thought he became a junior mate crewing on ships at Fiume for the next three years. Since leaving Trani in 1848, Carlo and Giacinta had had several more children – twins Ursula Maria and Giovanni Giuseppe in 1849, Maria Giovanna in 1852 and Ursula Maria, 1853 but they had all died in infancy except for Ursula.

^{iv} Paternal grandmother, Margherita Scaringi, farmer relation, Giovanni di Toma

ALL AT SEA

In 1849, however, Nicola left the area and gave up the role of breadwinner which he had held since Carlo's death.² Not much is known about the next fourteen years.

In November 1862 Nicola was in Glasgow because, on the 25th, he bought an English bible there and inscribed it with his name and the date. Just over a year later he embarked on the *Maria Burris*, a 213 ton British ship registered at Liverpool. The Master was Charles Crosby and the embarkation date was 19 December 1863. Nicola was now a slim brown-haired young man of 23; Christmas that year was spent abroad on ship because the *Maria Burris* did not dock back in England until 20 April 1864. The master awarded Nicola his certificates of discharge and good character. Nicola anglicised his surname for a period, called himself Nicholas Sheasher from Naples and added a year to his age.

Exactly one year after voyaging on the *Maria Burris*, Nicola signed on to the much bigger 1464 ton *Continental* which voyaged to Calcutta, returning 16 May 1865 where once again, "Nicholas Sheasher" from Naples received certificates of discharge and good character; however the birth year of 1840, given on these documents, is correct.

In 1865 Nicola embarked on an American ship. This news came from a friend of the family who met Nicola in England. The likeliest path from there to emigration to New Zealand would be as a crew member on one of the hundreds of immigrant ships to Wellington. Once there he very likely absented himself from the return voyage to start a new life in New Zealand.

In an obituary, Nicola was described as a 'sterling old colonist of the *sixties*'. It is hard to know how reliable this immigration date is, but if it is true then there are almost ten years in New Zealand that are unaccounted for. Was he really here in the late 1860s, during his twenties, or was he sailing on the crews of several ships during this time? It is stated that he entered the Wellington Provincial Service in 1872. He was about thirty-two then and 1872 is so far the earliest recorded date we have.³ The assertion that his time in New Zealand dates from the 1860s poses questions. His certificate of discharge from the *Maria Burris* is dated 1863 and discharge from the *Continental* is dated 1864 which narrows the immigration date to about 1865 at the earliest.

The main questions are: where was he working in the late 1860s and what was he doing? He does not surface in government data until about 1875, some ten years later – but just because nobody has located the documents is no reason to assume they do not exist – somewhere. Or that they *did* exist. Nicola may have been a casual employee doing seasonal work, gaining language skills and knowledge about his options in New Zealand. Pay books with his name in them may be gathering dust in some museum and it will be a matter of chance to find them if they even exist. The possibility that he was working in various locations and positions here in the late 1860s cannot be discounted but is not so likely for the following reasons.

He left Apulia in 1859 – he did not contact his family until 1873. Why did he wait fourteen years before contacting his family? In replying to Nicola's letter in 1873, Reverend Bartolomeo di Toma gives family news right back to 1860 which indicates that Nicola had been out of touch with Trani news for all that time. There must have been powerful reasons for the long silence.

Was he wrestling with a spiritual crisis during those years – one which led him away from the Catholic culture of his childhood and adolescence? If it is true, as has been stated, that he had spent time in a Catholic seminary, then it would take radical shifts in his belief system to prevent him from having his children baptised and raised as Catholics and having ensured that a Requiem mass was conducted at or after his funeral.⁴

The prevalent Catholic view at the time was against mixed marriages – and everything was slanted towards marrying within the Catholic faith. When a mixed marriage occurred, the Catholic party, assisted by the local clergy, would usually promote the conversion of the non-Catholic spouse. A committed Catholic would do this him or herself and, that this did not happen, suggests that Nicola was disillusioned with Catholicism and had developed a different philosophy. Such a change does not happen quickly and the inference can be taken that Nicola spent the years 1859-1873 working through some of these philosophical and religious challenges. When he married twenty years later, he was still Christian, but he apparently practised a more Anglicanised form of religion. He did not encourage Riria to convert from Anglicanism to Catholicism – instead their children were raised as Anglicans.

Or did he hastily leave Trani because he was disillusioned by a love match that was not possible in the social climate? Nicola would later name a daughter "Mary Christina." In an email to Piri Sciascia dated 28 September 2007, Paolo Fulci explains that there was but one Maria Cristina then in Trani, the name being a noble one, and she was one of four well-connected Brunetti sisters. At the time Nicola abruptly left Trani in 1859, Maria Cristina disappeared from the local records as well and the two options suggested are that she joined a convent or that she left Trani and did not return even to marry. It was the custom for weddings to take place in the bride's town. Were these two in love?

Something occurred that was drastic enough to cause Nicola to stop supporting and communicating with his family in 1859. He was out of contact for the next fourteen years.

This is a compelling set of circumstances to support the view that Nicola and Maria Cristina had developed a romantic relationship that was not accepted by the Brunetti family. It is very credible that her memory is strongly underlined in the naming of his and Riria's third child, Maria Christina.^v However Christina (but *not* Maria) was a very popular name among the McGregors and Riria would like the name for its Scottish connotation. Her Scottish great grandmother's name was Christina MacDonald and she might well have known this, given that her grandfather Jock McGregor kept in touch.

^v Maria Christina became Maria Christina MacDonald upon marriage – Adviser: Piri Sciascia

Sanctus and Canticus peris ————— Contradict.
John Mac Gregor Farmer at Perth in the Parish of
St. John and Christian Mac Donald in the Middle Church Parish
of Perth Daughter to Duncan Mac Donald Lawler here — Elder
Alexander Duff — The Persons before named were regularly proclaimed
and married before proclamation on the Eighteenth day of May said
year by the Reverend Mr Duncan Macfarlane Minister of the Free
Chapel in Perth
(Perth the Twenty third day of May One thousand eight
hundred and twelve years ————— Contradict.)

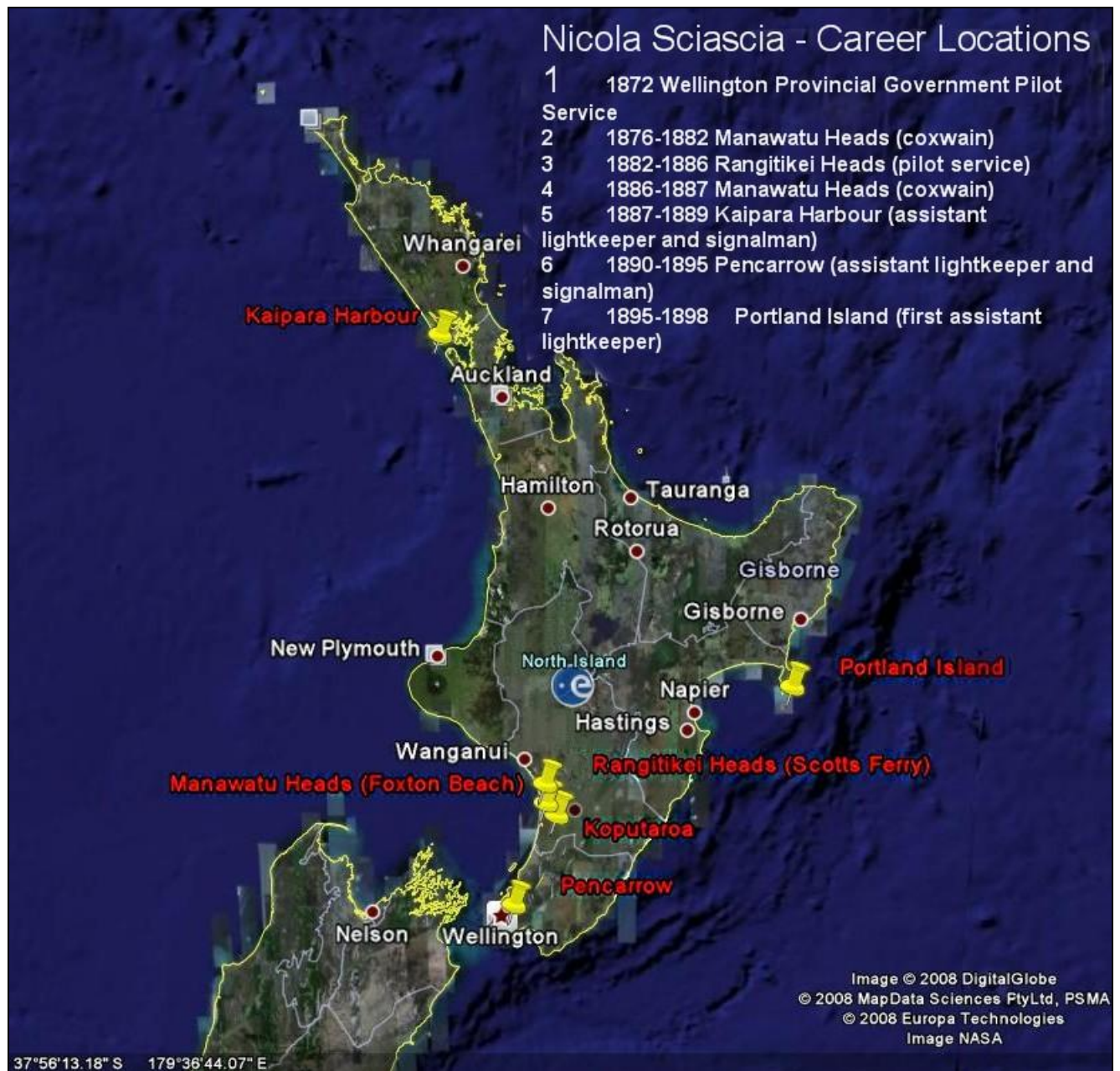
Perth: The Old Parish Register, 1812

The marriage record of Riria McGregor's great grandparents John McGregor and Christian (Christina) MacDonald⁵

Or did Nicola absent himself because he was struggling with both a religious crisis and a thwarted love affair? Did his experiences lead him to question the precepts of his social culture and of his Catholic religion? The fact is whether he was in New Zealand in the 1860s or whether he was a sailor, he was remarkably silent towards his relatives for a long time.

No real clue about the reasons for Nicola's disappearance from Trani and his subsequent silence emerges from Reverend Bartolomeo di Toma's letter of 12 November 1873 – Bartolomeo does apply a bit of a squeeze about Nicola's duties to his mother and grandmother, but he does not reprimand nor criticize Nicola either. Bartolomeo's letter is kind and affectionate and overall gives the impression of acceptance and love – the fondness of an uncle for a nephew – an uncle, it must be noted, who demonstrated a generous spirit towards several in the family, giving Nicola's mother, sister, grandmother and brother a home with him. Bartolomeo wanted Nicola to return to Trani.

LIFE IN NEW ZEALAND – CAREER LOCATIONS



Map of New Zealand Career Locations 1872-1898

Nicola's immigration to New Zealand bypassed formal Italian immigration schemes. He apparently had little contact with other Italians and for any Italian bachelor, the chances of marrying an Italian woman were statistically slim, given that the ratio was 10 men to every woman - and many of these were already married. The updated *Encyclopaedia of New Zealand* explains that between 1860

and 1880 some Italian immigrants worked the Garibaldi Diggings in Central Otago and Italian Gully in Westland. Afterwards many returned to Italy. Others tried their luck in Australia and a few became dairy farmers in the Westland area, however the number of Italians in New Zealand in the 1874 census was very low - just 258 men and 22 women.⁶

The long silence between his family and himself was broken by Nicola when, on 25 August 1873 he sat down and penned a letter to his uncle Reverend Bartolomeo di Toma, asking for family news. It would be very helpful to have that letter today but from Bartolomeo's reply we can infer that Nicola told him he was well and was anxious to hear news of the family. Why did Nicola write in 1873? The reason might have simply been a pragmatic one – he felt settled on dry land and was able to give a return address. If he had written earlier – how could his family reply to him, moving as he did from ship to ship?

Whatever the answer is, in New Zealand's pilot service he had a new career – still marine but certainly not as mobile.

1 WELLINGTON PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT PILOT SERVICE 1872-1876

Little is known about the details of Nicola's life at this time but he led a bachelor life for a few years in Wellington and worked for the Pilot Service there.

The Pilot Service was run by the Provincial Government (not by a Harbour Board) in the 1870s. The crews lived at Beacon Hill station at Worser Bay, so it is safe to place Nicola at Worser Bay from 1872 to mid-1876. The Pilot Service buildings were four miles inside the Heads. It was very isolated; nobody else except the crews, their families and some fishermen lived out there. The pilot was rowed out in all weather, day or night, in an 8 metre whale boat by three boatmen and the coxwain.

In 1915 the Evening Post described this, "An open whaleboat battling against wind and wave was a frequent sight off Pencarrow Head forty years ago. In it would be seen four small specks, representing four sturdy specimens of manhood pitting their strength against the elements... The open whaleboat was the pilot boat, the task of whose occupants it was to bring the sailing vessel to the safe anchorage of the inner waters of the harbour. Those were the days of the early pilot service... Manual labour alone had to be relied on, and nearly every day the men of the service carried their lives in their hands."⁷

One of these four was often Nicola.

Back at the station he had other duties – these included repairs and maintenance of the cottages and the boat. The staff kept poultry, livestock and a garden, but other supplies including coal had to be obtained by rowing to town and back again. Nicola would have earned about 5/6 a day but pay delays of up to five months were common.⁸ The career steps in the Pilot Service were: boatman, coxwain, pilot; Nicola's next position involved the promotion to coxwain and a move

to a much more populated area. This was at Foxton and this appointment appears in the Provincial Government Gazette and was noted in the Evening Post.⁹

The Provincial Government Gazette contains notifications of the appointment of Martin Luman to be signalman at Beacon Hill, and Nicholas Sciascia to be coxswain in the Manawatu pilot service.

2 MANAWATU HEADS 1876-1882

The Wanganui Herald 31 July 1876 also reported the news stating that “Nicholas Sciascia has been appointed coxswain in the Manawatu Pilot Service.”^{vi}

There is evidence that Nicola was also, or became, the Assistant Pilot during this period at Foxton.

MATAKARAPA MARAE

The Manawatu Station was at Foxton Beach. The original name for the Foxton area is Te Awahou – new river - and it was widely settled by Maori because the Manawatu River provided good access by canoe. Matararapa marae was on the opposite side of the river from the Foxton township and from 1880 it featured a picturesque church built by Ihakara Tukumarū, one of the local paramount chiefs, to celebrate forty years of Christianity in the district. The Manawatu ferry operated at Foxton Beach bearing passengers and cargo across the Manawatu River and the ferryman was paid by the tolls he collected.

The road south went through Matararapa Maori land which was not subject to the Public Works Act, so could not be compulsorily acquired for roading, but the chiefs Natana, Kereopa and Ihakara allowed the mail coaches and all traffic through the road past the church without compensation. This access was the only way to Napier as well as to Wellington so the Manawatu County Council when formed in 1876 unwittingly assumed responsibility for a potentially complicated situation concerning a vital asset.

^{vi} Tony Hunt from the Foxton Museum notes: “From what I have gathered the Manawatu Station would have been at what is now Foxton Beach, then known as Te Wharangi or Manawatu Heads. The pilot station was near the present-day school at that time. Sciascia’s position was coxswain but was sometimes referred to as Assistant Pilot.” Email to author, August 2008

The modern highway is some kilometres inland but Matararapa Road still exists, abutting Whirikino Road just south of the trestle bridge across the Manawatu River south of Foxton.

Some reminders of Matararapa remain – one is an unexpected mural on a house at Foxton Beach.



Matararapa Road 2008



Mural of Matararapa Marae on House at Foxton Beach



Te Upiri^{vii} Church & Marae¹⁰

Another is a mural painted by Michael Barclay and Des Comyns showing Matararapa Marae and Te Upiri Church. The mural is on the Foxton Little Theatre fence. The Church "Te Upiri" fell down in the 1960s but some of the carvings are in Canterbury and Manawatu Museums.

THE PILOT STATION MANAWATU AND REMARKS

Foxton Port was a bustling place right up till the 1930s. "In 1858 a regular coach service commenced between Wellington and Wanganui, and Foxton became a stop-over point and ferry station. Until the completion of the railways the port remained the chief outlet for the products of the Manawatu district."¹¹

The Science Centre & Manawatu Museum holds the original of a "diary" kept by Nicola called *Remarks at the Pilot Station Manawatu*; it is described as perhaps being "a copy of the pilot's diary made by Sciascia for handwriting practice". That is in fact exactly what it is. Nicola was using an out of date log book to practise his English by copying the Pilot's log entries.

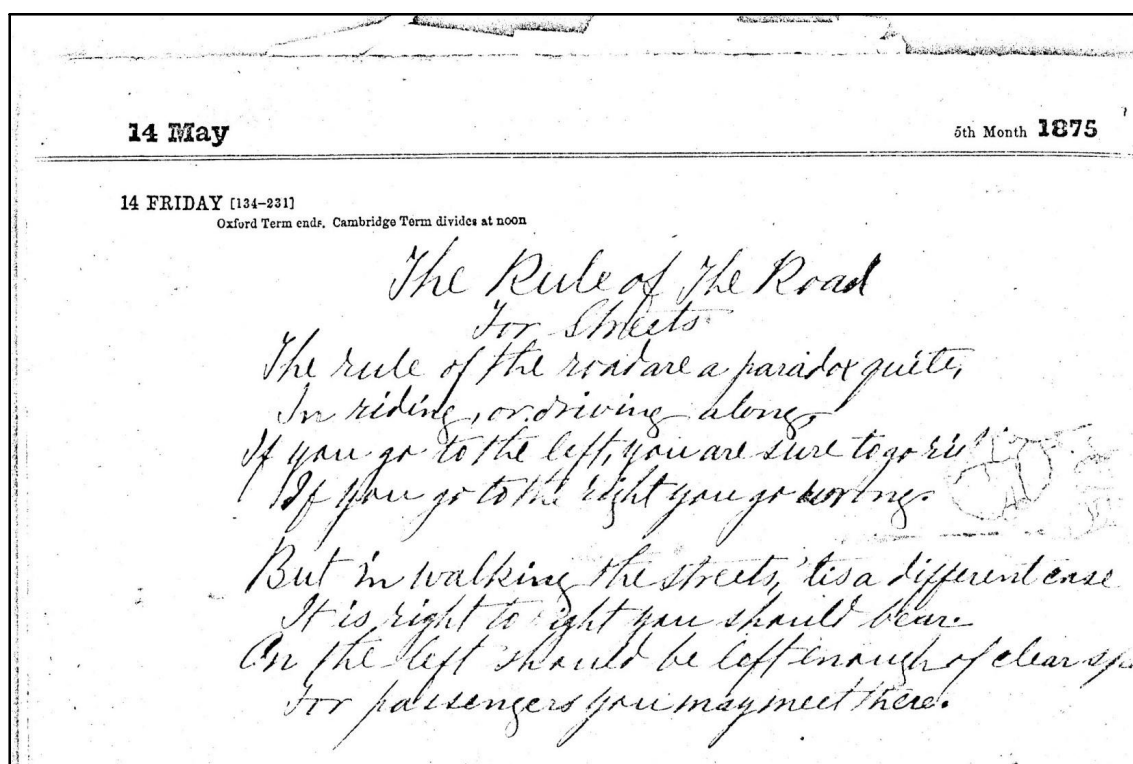
The Pilot at Manawatu was Andrew Seabury who was appointed in 1872 and was paid £150 per annum plus the free use of the Pilot's House. This was where Foxton Beach School is now – the river has changed course since then – and was in the lee of the sand dunes within sound of the waves pounding on the beach. His two assistants lived in a nearby house known as the Pioneer Cottage and, after 1876,

^{vii} Te Upiri is a transliteration of "Jubilee" Adviser: Piri Sciascia

Nicola Sciascia was one of these men and the other was the Boatman, James Wilson.

Andrew Seabury married Mary Elizabeth Hollow, a Cornishwoman, in 1876. The Seaburys' daughter Christina later described her childhood in the Pilot's house as being very happy but apparently somewhat gritty. Her mother had to cover the beds with newspaper after making them in the morning to stop them getting full of sand. Mrs Seabury often fed and sheltered shipwrecked sailors.

The *Remarks* that Nicola copied are dated from June 1875 – about a year before he was appointed to Foxton. The page below, which is tucked into the *Remarks*, has nothing to do with the *Remarks* but shows that he was amused at the ambiguity of English. It appealed to him so much he copied it out – it is a good indication of his mastery of English that he appreciated wordplay in it and we can imagine him chuckling as he mulled it over.



The Rule of the Road for Streets

The rules of the road are a paradox quite
In riding or driving along
If you go to the left you are sure to go right
If you go to the right you go wrong.
But in walking the streets 'tis a different case
It is right to right you should bear.
On the left should be left enough of clear space
For passengers you may meet there.

Generally the *Remarks at the Pilot Station Manawatu* describe the shipping comings, goings and near-misses, and maritime weather reports. There were frequent storms and frantic efforts to prevent vessels from running aground – the work was sometimes dangerous and the men risked their lives.

Andrew Seabury, despite himself being a native of Sweden,^{viii} was a good speller who used repetitive and strong English phrases to describe the weather and the shipping traffic so Nicola increased his mastery of his adopted language well by this practice.

One morning Nicola and James were startled by a strange sound from over the sandhills and alerted Andrew Seabury.

“Can’t think what it is, Boss,” they said, “Sounds something like thunder.”¹²

Captain Seabury dispatched one of them up the yardarm of the signal mast from where either Nicola or James spotted a huge contingent of Maori coming from Rangitikei - soon the Pilot House and the Pioneer Cottage were surrounded by some very angry people.

The Seabury’s daughter remembered, “They took all the food, their clothing and anything else removable and informed the captain they intended to burn down his house and cut down the signal mast because it was on their property which had not been paid for.”^{ix} Things were at an impasse for a few days until an interpreter from Wellington settled the matter; it was proved that the property had indeed been properly purchased. The chiefs immediately made full restitution and the relationship was amicable after that incident. Mrs Seabury related that the chiefs’ behaviour during and after this event, and at all times, was honourable.¹³

To get an idea about how busy the Pilot Station was, one can read almost any page at random and be astonished at the volume of shipping and the dramas that came with it. It was often so busy at the wharf that ships had to lie off in the river. The pilot service involved checking the river as well to keep it clear as far as Paiaka (near Koputaroa) and this meant cutting wire cables which were strung across it illegally for hauling bundles of flax across.

For example, on 2 January 1875, a fine day, in the afternoon the schooner the *Flying Cloud* crossed the bar from Wellington followed by the *Nautilus* from Dunedin, the brigantine *Moynihan*, the ketch *Lillee Hawkins* – due to the ketch being unfamiliar with the bar, it took the wind out of the sails of the brigantine loaded with a cargo of iron, and both vessels ran aground. By the time the men had got the anchors off so they could haul the vessels off, it was midnight – and low tide, so they were still stuck until morning.^x

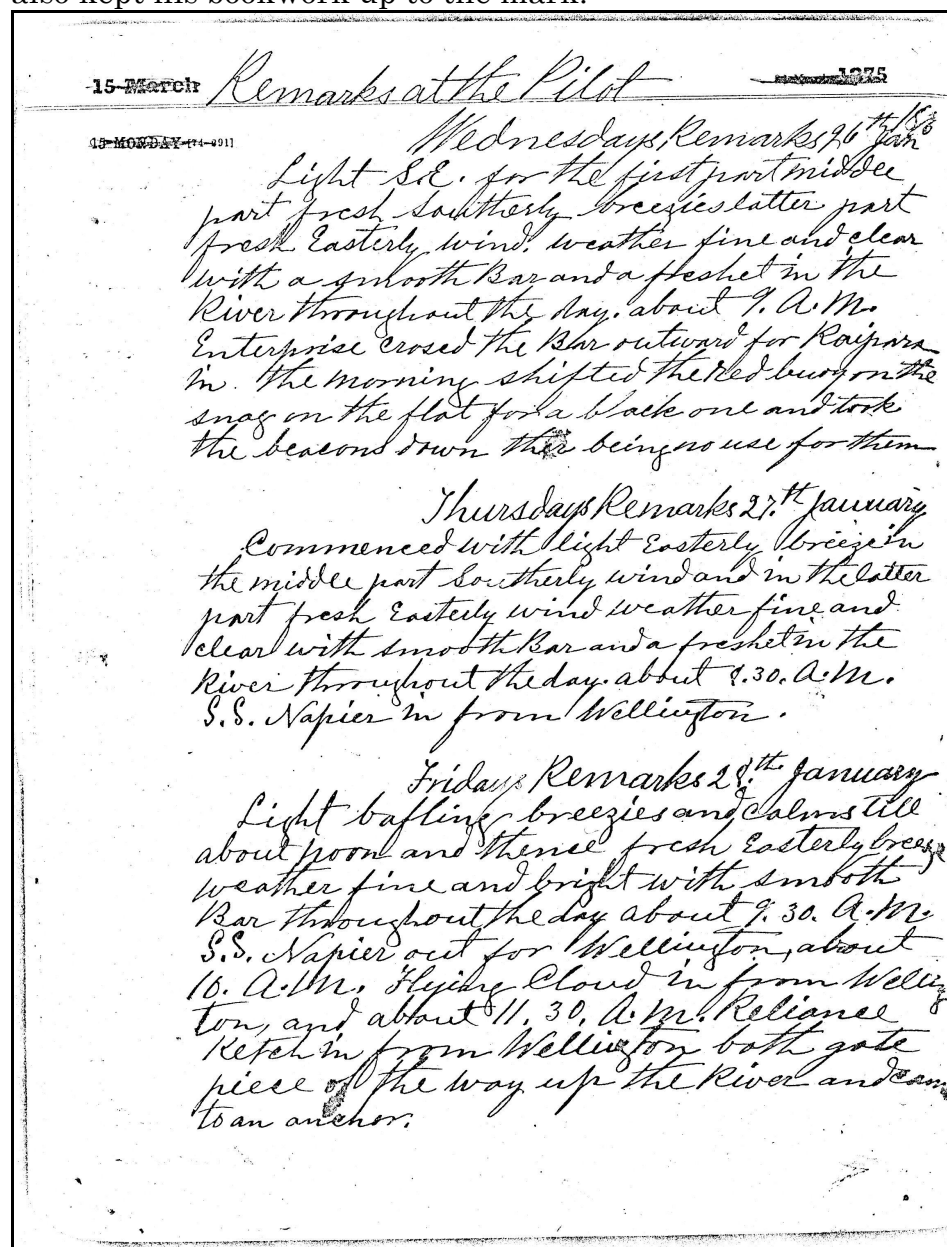
Nicola must have been highly motivated to persist with his homework daily for years. We can imagine James and Nicola coming home after battling the elements all day, probably soaking wet sometimes, tired and hungry. Most men would want to sit down after dinner with their beer or rum, smoke their pipe and

^{viii} Born Anders Gustaf Sjöberg and naturalized at Foxton 1874

^{ix} This was a classic component of tikanga Maori, known as muru, or plunder, where all supplies were removed to punish and weaken an opponent; the motivation was not theft. Adviser: Piri Sciascia

^x The Master of the *Lillee Hawkins*, James Smith, was so grateful he wrote a letter to the Evening Post 5 January 1875 thanking Andrew Seabury for the strenuous efforts which saved his vessel.

play cards and chat about the day's highlights. Doubtless Nicola did this, but he also kept his bookwork up to the mark.



Remarks at the Pilot Station Manawatu

FAMILY INTERESTS

Nicola watched a tall dark man who stood out amongst the men who had been unloading a vessel most of the morning. He was working in a Maori gang but his set was quite different. He had deep-set eyes, a longish tapering chin and a neat black beard in contrast with his Maori companions whose jaws and chins were wider and mainly clean-shaven. He was in

shirt sleeves and his trousers were rolled up for wading – his skin was white where the sun had not reached it. The man was powerfully built and about six foot tall and despite the strenuous work he was chatting in Maori to the others. The muscles in his neck were tensed as he walked across the sand and raised the barrel onto the dray waiting on shore. Like many of the Europeans at the port he was tanned dark – Nicola himself was a walnut brown during the summer – although some of the English and Scottish turned pink and peeled.

Nicola marvelled to the boatman, James, “Who is that European? I am in wonderment at that man – the barrel of beer he is carrying weighs 540lb – I can hardly roll it along, but that man he has long arms he wraps around and carries it so easily!”

“That’s an interesting story.” replied James, “He’s John McGregor – Teone Makarika – see, it’s the Maori way of saying it?”

Nicola nodded and practised the name carefully.

“That is a name from Scotland – he is a Scotch man?”^{xi}

“Yes and no, I gather. What people say here is that his mother was a high-born Maori.^{xii} The story goes his mother died when he was born in Wellington and his Scotch father married a Scotch woman as quick as he could to get someone to take care of John. His father still lives in Wanganui. But some of the Maoris didn’t want the baby to go because he was noble on his mother’s side. His grandfather was a great southern chief.^{xiii} So, when his father was bringing him up from Wellington about 35 years ago, he left him with the ferryman for a few minutes to get a horse to carry on north with, but when he got back, John had been kidnapped.”

Nicola was very interested. “And he stayed lost? His father could not get him back?”

“Not for a long time. I mean – how could you find a baby if the Maoris wanted to hide one back then? – those were very early days and no rules.”

James gestured towards the sand dunes and swamps. Nicola realised how easily it would be to have hidden a baby among the families anywhere on the coast.

^{xi} The word *Scotch* was frequently used for *Scottish* at this period

^{xii} Hinekawa

^{xiii} Chief Tutepourangi



Manawatu River Estuary

James continued, “His father didn’t give up though and eventually he tracked him down. As time passed people noticed a white boy – well half – living with the Maoris but by that time Teone decided that he was better off with the people who raised him, so that’s how it stayed. I suppose he felt he wouldn’t fit in at Wanganui since his father was a stranger to him.”

“Teone is one of a kind here then, a bit like me,” Nicola mused.

James said, “Yes – he is the oldest person hereabouts with mixed blood by far. You’re bound to see his father – he’s Captain Jock McGregor and he visits Teone and the grandchildren at Matarapa. He brings a lot of goods over to the family, always has a lot of flour and sugar, tea, biscuits and presents for his grandchildren. He comes along and has a chat with Seabury – he’s forgotten more about navigating this coast than any of us will ever learn. And you’ll know when he arrives – because he surely isn’t quiet!”

James paused, studying Teone who was heading back to the ship for another load. “Teone looks a lot like him in the face but his father is very Scotch – red faced, white skinned, sandy haired. He’s shorter than Teone and twice as wide! He looks as if he’s as tough as boots but he loves to have those children of Teone with him. He’s not that old – probably early 60s.”

“So Teone got married with a Maori woman then?”

“Yes. He married twice I believe – his first wife died and he remarried. He has some beautiful daughters – but even the oldest, Riria, is a bit on the young side for you or me!”

According to the baptismal record held in the Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, Riria McGregor was baptised 8 March 1863 by Rev Octavius Hadfield at Kapiti. ¹⁴ Assuming that Riria was a baby when she was baptised then Riria would have been about thirteen in 1876 when thirty six year old Nicola Sciascia first came to the district and within the ambit of the Teone McGregor whanau but at some stage Nicola met Riria and forged ties with the McGregors.

Page 126

Baptisms				
BURIALS in the Parish of <u>Kapiti</u>				
in the County of <u>New Zealand</u> in the Year <u>1863</u>				
Name.	Abode.	When buried.	Age.	By whom the Ceremony was performed.
<u>Feb. 22 -</u> <u>Hori</u> <u>son of</u> <u>Anna Wakarusa</u> No. 1001 <u>Kaiti</u>	<u>Ohau</u>	<u>Karimi To Wairangi</u> <u>Kapana To Waka</u> <u>Murukia To Hi</u>		<u>Octavius Hadfield</u>
<u>March 8.</u> <u>Riria</u> <u>daughter of</u> <u>John</u> No. 1002 <u>Paihia</u>	<u>Manawatu</u>	<u>Kakopa To Iche</u> <u>Kirihira Wharo</u> <u>Karala Kaiti</u>		<u>Octavius Hadfield</u>
<u>March 20.</u> <u>Marara</u> <u>daughter of</u> <u>Hoeta</u> No. 1003 <u>Paihia</u>	<u>To Awahuri</u>	<u>Karimi M. To Hauke</u> <u>Tapa To Whata</u> <u>Kirihira Pae</u> <u>Kelapere</u> <u>Kauka</u>		<u>Octavius Hadfield</u>
<u>March 20</u> <u>Otene</u> <u>son of</u> <u>Erena</u> No. 1004 <u>Kirihira Pae</u>	<u>To Awahuri</u>	<u>Karimi M. To Hauke</u> <u>Tapa To Whata</u> <u>Kaiti</u>		<u>Octavius Hadfield</u>

Riria McGregor's Baptismal Record – No 1002

Alexander Turnbull Library MSY-1281

Perhaps Nicola did not meet Riria as early as 1876 because she was adopted (whangai) by the same couple who had raised Teone.¹⁵ It is a coincidence though that *both* Nicola and Riria were raised by others and not their parents.

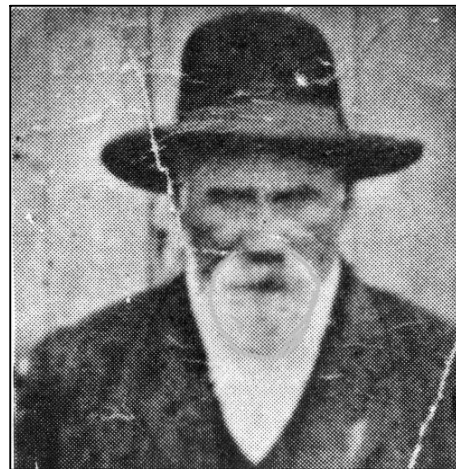
Nicola wrote a dossier containing recipes, remedies, poems and songs – unfortunately this has since disappeared. Despite devoting a whole page to the therapeutic value of conjugal rights for male health there was still no sign of his own nuptials. Possibly this was because marriage would commit him to remain in

New Zealand irrevocably. Anybody who knew Nicola at Foxton in the 1870s, as the days rolled into months and into years at the Pioneer Cottage, would have bet good money against this intelligent, earnest man having any children at all.

Nicola it seemed was a confirmed bachelor and the name Sciascia would die out in New Zealand.



Captain Jock McGregor aged 62



Teone Makarika aged about 70



Riria McGregor¹⁶



Nicola Sciascia¹⁷

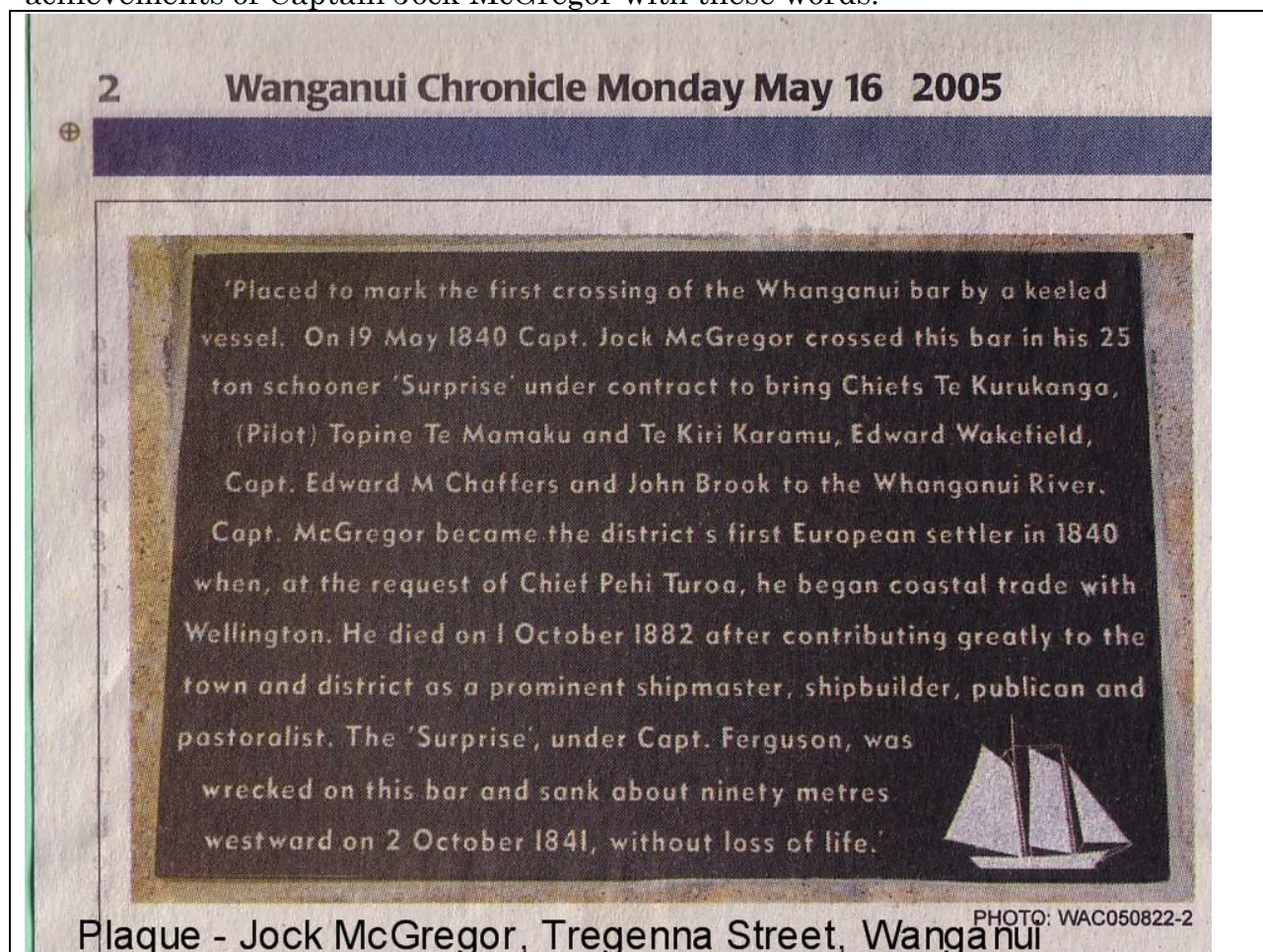
TEONE MCGREGOR

"The only child of Captain Jock McGregor whose grandmother was niece to Rob Roy, and Hinekawa, daughter of Tutepourangi, Paramount chief of the Rangitane and Ngati Kuia tribes, Teone was born in Wellington and spent all his life in the Foxton district. A fisherman and planter of food, he lived close to nature and his predictions of the weather were uncanny. A fluent speaker of the Maori language he nevertheless was not a public speaker on maraes but he was still respected by both Maori and Pakeha at all times. A powerfully built man, 6 feet tall, 24 inch neck, he was renowned for his feats of strength and could easily lift a hogshead of beer, 540 lbs, from ship to shore. He married twice, his first wife being Pirihiira, daughter of Poutu and Rangiwaea of the Takihiku tribe, their children being Riria, Hokowhitu Tahoe and Karaitiana.

His second wife was Aperira daughter of Renata and Pipi of the Ngati Raukawa tribe and their children being Akenihi, Mitarina, Kereopa Hinekawa, Wairata, Waiwari, Pakaru and Hamuera.¹⁸

CAPTAIN JOCK MCGREGOR

A plaque at the bar of the Whanganui River in Wanganui marks the achievements of Captain Jock McGregor with these words.



Plaque Remembering Jock McGregor

SOME LOCAL POLITICS

It is certain Nicola and Teone were affected by the next situation, described in these extracts from the Wanganui Herald, because of Nicola's work as the ferry coxwain and because Teone lived on the land in question. The issues arising from it would have embroiled them both in the early months of 1880.¹⁹

There was a Pakeha squatter who had impounded some Maori horses, and about the same time the ferryman had unsuccessfully prosecuted Maori to make them pay him for crossing the river in their own canoes. Since Maori had allowed the free use of their land, they finally reacted by fencing off the road through Ihakara's kainga by the Matararapa church, 19 March.

None of the Foxton locals was very surprised because the warnings had been issued for some time, but the coach driver Pugsley was disconcerted when told it would cost him 5 shillings to take the mail coach past the blockade. He replied that 'it would be at their peril if they stopped Her Majesty's mail,' but when Constable McAnulty was sent for, he made sure the toll was paid; it cost horsemen a shilling and pedestrians sixpence to pass by the Matararapa Church.

Teone and Nicola became better acquainted as time went by – they knew the same families at the marae and at the port and both had been separated from their fathers early in life. They both had to work to establish their identity in a place where everybody else simply took theirs for granted; Nicola could be found more and more frequently across the river at Matararapa talking to Teone and Aperira and playing with the children. He was very taken by Riria, now grown-up – with her slim build, dark brown hair and olive skin, she reminded him of Italian women.

So he asked Teone if he could marry Riria, and Teone agreed to the marriage. This took place in 1882.

3 RANGITIKEI HEADS 1882-1886

Once married, Nicola felt it was time for a change after six years in Foxton and he applied for a promotion - the post of Pilot at Waitara - but competition was fierce – there were fifteen applicants for the position advertised by the Waitara Licensing Board²⁰ and so Nicola and Riria would remain in Foxton that year.^{xiv}

However they had shifted to the Rangitikei Heads (Scotts Ferry) by February 1882.

^{xiv} Applications for the post of pilot were received from the following: — A.T. Backstrom, Wellington; Alex. Campbell. Auckland; G. N. Calvert, Ngairu; H. W. Dale. Onehunga; N. Dugdale, Waitara; John Gibson, New Plymouth; Thomas Holmes. Wellington; John James, Auckland; Philip Jenkins, Wellington; Eugene McCarthy, Waitara; H. T. Markham, Auckland; S. Phimley, Wanganui. N. Sciascia, Rangitikei; J. Reardon, Waitara; C. Watkin, Greymouth — It was resolved, "That the certificates and the Testimonials of all the applicants for the situation of pilot be returned, with thanks, except the following, i.e., Captains Campbell, Dugdale, and Holmes; and that the Board meet this day week to further consider the same.

Poor Nicola and Riria doubtless wished they had been able to move to Waitara and so be far away from trouble on the night of 13 February 1883 when there was an almighty set-to between Thomas Scott the Ferryman and Philip Jenkins, the Pilot. Philip Jenkins had also applied for the Waitara position and Jenkins must have been a friend of Nicola's because was at Nicola's house that evening when Thomas Scott, very tipsy, called Jenkins outside to fight. The Herald account refers to Nicola as "Nicholas".

"Nicholas dissuaded him, but Scott called out to bring out Jenkins, who, Scott said, ought to be dragged in the river. On the Tuesday Scott had not drunk more than usual. If he drank a bucket of Wellington beer he would not be upset, and it was only Wellington beer he had drunk."²¹

Nicola's role was a bystander who tried to stop the encounter which escalated until old Thomas Scott (68) was beaten senseless by Philip Jenkins.

History has been kind to Thomas Scott despite his curmudgeonly ways and his ferry has been restored for all to admire on the road between Bulls and the hamlet at the Rangitikei Heads that bears his name, Scotts Ferry.



In late March or early April Riria may have returned to the womenfolk at Matararapa to give birth because the family Bible gives Matararapa as the birthplace of their first child, Margaret Sciascia, born 9 April 1883. Nicola honoured his grandmother Margherita Scaringi and his late father Carlo by giving Margaret the second name, Carlotta.

The Sciascia's oldest son John de Tomba^{xv} was born at Rangitikei Heads 5 December 1884, and a daughter, Mary Christina^{xvi} just after Christmas Day (27 December) 1885.

John de Tomba and Margaret Sciascia²²

4 MANAWATU HEADS 1886-1887

"The Manawatu Herald is informed that the pilot service at the Rangitikei River is to be abandoned at the end of the present month, when Mr N Sciascia will resume his old place at the Manawatu station. The destination of Mr Jenkins, who has been attached to the Manawatu service for some time, is not known, but probably it will be Kawhia."²³

^{xv} The name is spelt "De Toma" twice in the family Bible and it is believed that "De Tomba" (of the tomb) is of European derivation.

^{xvi} Thought to be the namesake of Maria Cristina Brunetti

With their two toddlers and a newborn, Nicola and Riria were soon on the move because the completion of the road to Otaki and the Bulls Bridge meant that the Pilot Service at Scotts Ferry was disestablished 31 January 1886. Nicola returned to Foxton Port in early February that year.

BACKGROUND TO THE LIGHTHOUSE SERVICE

By the 1880s bridges spanned most major rivers and it was easy to predict that the Pilot Service itself might become redundant as bridges and roads improved and, following the closure of the service at the Rangitikei Heads it was clear to Nicola that he should pursue a new career.^{xvii}

The Marine Department had grown from the former Marine Board and had been established in 1866 and a specialist Lighthouse Service was set up as well then. There were more than twenty lighthouses operating by the late 1890s and there seems to have been a fraternal atmosphere among these lighthouse families. The early lights burned colza oil behind a glass lantern which moved on rollers or floated in mercury and was swung by a clockwork mechanism in the floor below.^{xviii} This had to be wound every hour during the night.²⁴

Nicola's shift to lighthouse keeping should not have been possible, strictly speaking, because of his age – he was in his mid-forties. New Zealand's Regulations were based on the Scottish model and these restricted the eligible age of applicants to the Lighthouse Service to between 21 and 31. One explanation for Nicola's success might be the comment in the Regulations that "seamen and artisans would be preferred above other candidates" so his career in the Pilot Service would have given Nicola an advantage, but even so, he did very well to obtain a position he was about fifteen years too old for. By the time he went to Portland Island he had been in the Service only eight years and he was then fifty-five.

A consequence of that was that he was junior to younger men – he had to start near the bottom of the Lighthouse Service. Depending on the location and the number of staff, the positions included: Signalman and Probationary Keeper, second assistant, first assistant and Head Lightkeeper.

By 1909 the annual salary ranged from £90 to £180 depending on length of service and, by then at least, the Government view of the service was that it had supplied the Lightkeepers with the means to live with "respectability" – and they were not to get into debt! The 1909 Regulations for the Admission of Candidates to the Lighthouse Service – if we can judge earlier decades by this – also required a candidate to prove he had good eyesight, was not colour blind, was of good character and was capable of passing Standard Four examinations.^{xix}

Whether strings were pulled or not to waive the regulations about age requirements, Nicola's application to join the Service succeeded and his first

^{xvii} Piri Sciascia notes that the family back in Italy also changed careers. Brother Bartolomeo, brother-in-law Giuseppe Petirossi both moved from the Merchant Navy to the Railways.

^{xviii} Colza oil is produced from colza rape seeds.

^{xix} Year Six

position in this specialist career was as Assistant Lightkeeper at Kaipara employed by the Marine Department. The family moved there in 1887.

Kaipara Harbour is near Dargaville; the lighthouse was built in 1884, its first keeper was Martin Nelson with John Ansin as Signalman and Probationary Keeper. Nicola's overall commander would have been the Harbour Master Captain Christy Smith. Nicola was the second person to be the Assistant Lightkeeper and Signalman at Kaipara because he replaced John Ansin.

The lighthouse (below) still stands – it is now on the Heritage Places list.



25

5 KAIPARA HEADS 1887-1890

When Nicola went to Kaipara, John Ansin went to Manukau, and the appointments were recorded by Lewis H B Wilson, Secretary, Marine Department, and Wellington.

“Ansin Keeper at Kaipara – has been moved to Manukau Heads to replace Mr Leith who has retired from service; N Sciascia – appointed Assistant Light Keeper and Signalman at Kaipara Heads – instructions re his salary and arrangements for his wife and family to travel to the lighthouse.”²⁶

DUTIES OF A LIGHTHOUSE KEEPER

The following description of a keeper's duties comes from *Pouto Peninsula, Residents and Land Boundaries, 1984*²⁷

- One week's leave every six months
- Must remain at their post and stand watch every night

Daylight duties:

- Trim the wick
- Polish the lens (this took 2-3 hours)
- Polish the brass

- Scrub the floors
- Tidy the tower surrounds
- Paint the tower when required
- Maintain the cottages to a high standard
- Keep fruit and vegetable gardens and a cow or goat for milk

The Sciascia family increased from three children to five at Kaipara following the births of Nicholas James, 12 August 1887 and Lydia Louisa, 21 August 1888 and their dependence on him prompted Nicola into taking out life insurance. Early in 1889 he authorised the Marine Department to deduct a Government Life Insurance premium of fourteen shillings and ten pence per month from his salary.

M. 89/438.
N^o 271.
59.

MEMORANDUM

Marine Department,
 Wellington, *25th Feb^y 1889*

From
 The Secretary,
 Marine Department,
 Wellington.

To *The Collector,*
H. M. Customs,
Auckland.

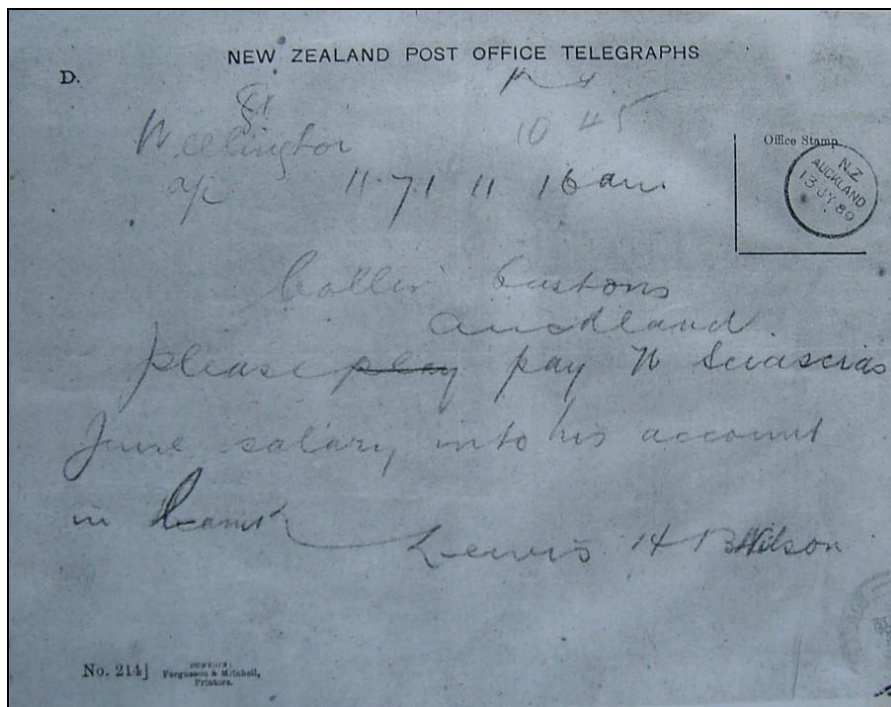
*Mr. Nicolas Sciascia, Assistant Lightkeeper and
 signalman at Kaipara Heads, having given an authority
 for the deduction, in favour of the Government Life Insurance
 Department, of the sum of 14/10 from his Monthly salary on
 account of Life Insurance premiums, I shall feel obliged if you
 will cause this deduction to be shown in his salary abstracts
 in future. As the authority was received here too late to deduct
 the amount from his February salary, it will be necessary to
 show a double deduction in the March abstract.*

29/8 -

Seamus Wilson
 Assistant Secretary.

Authority to Deduct Life Insurance Premiums – 25 February 1889²⁸

Although their lives were challenging, Nicola's position was relatively well-paid and well-regulated because he had a good job in a Government Service. Alterations to his salary arrangements were duly noted and officially implemented as shown in the following telegram dated 13 July 1889 and generally it seems the Marine Department treated him favourably.



Instructions re Salary – stamped 13 July 1889²⁹

6 PENCARROW HEADS 1890-1895

HIGH WATER

TO-DAY—8.24 am ; 3.51 pm

TO-MORROW—4.20 am ; 4.45 pm

SUN

Sets to-day—7.58 pm

Rises to-morrow—5.7 am ; sets, 6.57 pm

ARRIVALS

February 10—Neptune, ss, 41 tons, Eckford, from Blenheim. Passengers—Miss M'Alister and 2 boys, Mrs M'Farlane and 2 boys, Messrs Bilman Preston, M'Intosh, M'Gregor, Golding, Madden and Master Palmer

February 11—Ohau ss, 411 tons, M'Donald, from Greymouth

February 11—Hua, ss, 90 tons, Crawford, from Wanganui

February 11—Waitapu, ss, 40 tons, Westrup, Paten

February 11—Grafton, ss, 297 tons, Nordstrum from West Coast via Nelson. Passengers: Cabin—Misses Crossman, M'Leary, Hemingway (2), Dich, Wastney, M'Enroe and Brooker, Mesdames Permain, Boyes, Bertha, Driscoll and child, Nills, Bonnington, Walker, M'Cleary, Rush, Cameron and child, Jackson, Crossman, Nimmo, Krahagen, Turnbull and 3 children, Messrs Sellars, Wright, Kelly, M'Govern, Marshall, M'Enroe, Crossman, Dunk, Neaves, Kew, Ryder, Levick, Boyes, Levy, Smith, Jackson, Nimmo, Krahagen, Trail, Kelly, Cooper, Asher, Laughton, Gracewood, Levistain, Sykes, Muav, Aitken, Nixon, Steele, Sciascia and Jones ; 11 steerage

In 1890 Nicola took up the position of Assistant Lightkeeper and Signalman at Pencarrow lighthouse near Wellington where, on 5 July 1890, Elsie Maud was born followed by Charles Rangiwawahia, 28 September 1891. In naming the baby Charles, Nicola honoured his eponymous father again with this anglicised version of Carlo.

On February 11 1892 – Nicola appears on the passenger list when he arrived in Wellington on the *Nordstrum*.³⁰ The ship returned from the West Coast via Nelson. Later that year, on 2 November Ellen Ruth, was born.³¹ There was a two and a half year gap before their ninth child, Emma Hannah, was born, 11 March 1895.

In August 1895 Nicola had influenza and it contributed to him falling asleep on duty the night of the

12. He was discovered and as a result his salary was docked £10 and he was sent to Portland Island lighthouse. Nicola's illness at the time was considered to be a mitigating factor and he was not dismissed for the offense but it is clear from the following description of that island in 1897, when the Sciascias were living there, that being sent to Portland Island was not a promotion. His indiscretion was potentially extremely serious and it is a measure of an excellent employment record that he was not summarily dismissed but was given the "lesser sentence" of Portland Island.

7 PORTLAND ISLAND 1895-1898

The photo is dated sometime between 1889 and 1910 and gives a clear view of the lighthouse keepers' houses and garden in relation to the lighthouse. None of these buildings remains; however, the lighthouse top was shifted to Wairoa by the river in the centre of town.

There was a school on the island in the 1890s - a Miss Edith Hodgkinson taught at there from 1896 to 1897; she was a graduate (Latin 1893) from Otago University and she would have taught Margaret, John, Mary Christina, Nicholas, Lydia, Elsie, and Charles Sciascia. (Edith is thought to be the woman seated on Nicola's right in the photo of the picnic at Portland Island). When Riria left in 1898 she took a big percentage of the school roll with her. In 1901 there were 15 pupils there and the Otago connection evidenced in several Otago Witness articles came about because of Edith Hodgkinson's letters. No school is shown in this photo so that may mean this is earlier than the time of the Sciascias' residency.^{xx}

The front house in the photograph is slightly bigger and it would be that of the head lightkeeper and his wife, Mr and Mrs Robson and three children. Both houses have attic areas but the Robson house has a lean-to room at the rear, more windows and what looks like a rear verandah. As the first assistant lighthouse keeper, Nicola, Riria and family would have lived in the middle house, and the single-storey cottage on the right would have housed support staff, probably the Anderson family. The garden is the only stock-proof enclosure on the island so the cattle, sheep and station horses, Punch and Judy, had about seventeen acres of freedom to range over.

View of lighthouse and house, Portland Island, Hawke's Bay

Photo (next page): Henry Charles Clarke Wright, 1844-1936 Permission:
Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, NZ³²

^{xx} When Nicola went to Portland Island Mr C Robson was the head lightkeeper and Mr Anderson was the second assistant but the Marine Department appointed Hansen head lightkeeper in August 1897 and a Mr Wood as the second assistant. He, like Nicola, had been at Pencarrow. The Robsons went to Otago Heads.



The island known as Waikawa had been the site of Nga Heru Mai Tawhiti, a wananga for generations. In the 1840s a whaler called Mansfield employed about 20 men and had three whaling boats working from Portland Island. When chosen as a

lighthouse site it was surveyed by Mr Johnson, and John Blackett, the Marine Department architect, designed the lighthouse which was commissioned in 1878. A zig zag road attained the top land at the northern end and the houses, made of kauri, were built near the lighthouse some two miles distance at the southern end of the island.

Most of the island was leasehold but the Marine Department owned 17 acres which the lighthouse staff farmed to support themselves. Nicola owned the cattle – a couple of house cows and a bull to service them, as well as sheep for the table. Life on the island was challenging and lonely but it was not primitive. The houses were comfortable and had coal ranges so hot water was available. Crayfish and seafood were also very plentiful all year.

The lightkeepers established a large vegetable garden which struggled at times due to the salt spray and the flattening winds. Bishop Williams visited the island and the school was inspected by Henry Hill, the District School Inspector and noted naturalist, on a formal and regular basis.

On 1 October 1896, Nicola's tenth child Frank Tariuha was born. It is even possible that Riria was rowed ashore to Mahia when her delivery time approached – the mailman used to brave the $\frac{3}{4}$ miles once a fortnight in a rowboat and Nicola and Riria had probably only Mrs Robson and Mrs Anderson to be a midwife on the Island, the teacher, Miss Hodgkinson being unmarried and presumably inexperienced.

It was a healthy environment for the island children and the adult residents because there was small risk of contagion, lashings of fresh air and good food as well as ample freedom to work and play. There were frequent picnics and the views and the sunrises and sunsets are stunning.

However, a less positive view was printed in the Otago Witness, 7 January 1897.

PORTLAND ISLAND 1897 – BY A VISITOR

There are numerous small islands scattered irregularly along the coasts of New Zealand of which the ordinary inhabitant knows little or nothing, and Portland Island is one of these. It has neither size, scenery, nor anything else to render it noticeable, and it is inhabited only in virtue of its being one of some 30 lighthouse stations fringing New Zealand shores...

... The lighthouse, after the usual fashion of such edifices, is perched on the highest and windiest spot available at the southern point, and the lighthouse keepers' cottages, of course, keep it pretty close company. The sight is a pleasant enough one on a fine, calm day, though even then a casual visitor is disposed to remark that a few trees would be a great improvement. But it would be of little use to attempt planting, for the wind sweeps across the summit with such force as to leave little chance for anything loftier or less hardy than cotton bush to root itself.

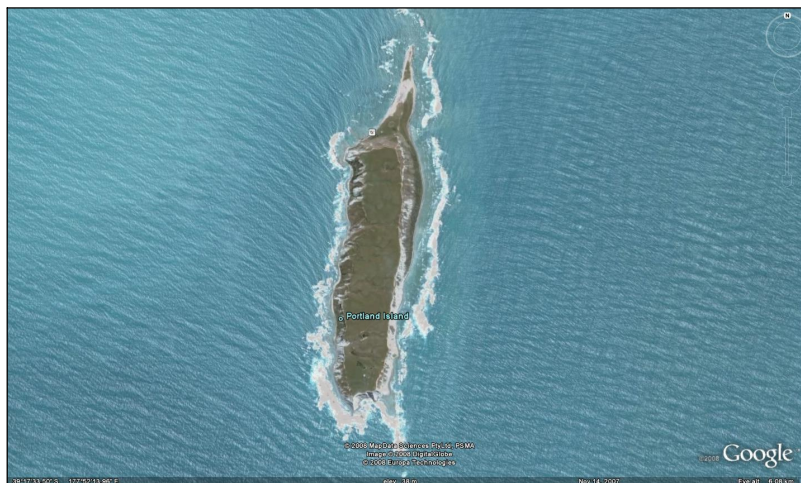
... In spring the fierce winds, sweeping laden with salt vapour over the island, blight all growing thing as if a frost had touched them. It is no unusual thing for a crop of young potatoes to be thus cut down, and after such a storm even the grass

has a withered look. It is said that a housewife here once left her washing on the line one fine evening, and, the wind rising during the night, found next morning that it had bid farewell to Portland Island, leaving not a fibre as a memento...

... The animal life of the island, domestic creatures included, is neither abundant nor varied. Rabbits, cats, and mice are pleasantly conspicuous by their absence. Some years ago there was a wreck on its shores, and soon after this one of the keepers saw two large rats, presumably refugees from the vessel. However, they were either destroyed by some natural enemy or, like the Maoris, took a disgust to the island and deserted it for the mainland, for nothing has been since seen of them...

... The island, like other New Zealand lighthouse stations, is visited and provisioned three or four times in the year by the Hinemoa; and these are almost the only occasions on which it has any European visitors. The usual landing place is in the strait at the opposite end of the lighthouse, so that all stores have to be carted more than two miles along the island, firstly being packed or drawn on a sledge up the steep ascent above the landing place. Letters and papers are brought by a Maori mailman, who rides for them to Mahia and then rows across the Strait... The mailman is a most important personage, and his comings and goings furnish as perennial a topic of conversation as does the weather elsewhere...

... At all events the inhabitants of this island are very far from considering their seclusion as a blessing for which to be thankful, and any communication- with the outer world is eagerly welcomed.³³



Portland Island off Mahia Peninsula

There was a shipwreck while Nicola was there but the lightkeepers were not blamed for it. It happened on Good Friday 1897. The scow *Pirate* filled with coal was wrecked on Portland Island with the loss of one man who died from a heart attack. There

are various official accounts of this but the most interesting is the following which was written by a young correspondent living on Portland Island, whose letter to the Otago Witness was published 20 May 1897.

LETTERS FROM LITTLE FOLKS

Dear Dot, — I am going to tell you something about the wreck of the Pirate. She was bound for Gisborne from Newcastle with a load of coal, and was wrecked on this island on Good Friday, April 16.

It was a rainy day, but to make matters worse there was a wreck. I saw it a little after 8 o'clock in the morning under the hill near the lighthouse, and Pop, Mr Robson, and Mr Anderson went down to help the poor men; but on reaching the beach they found that the men had already got ashore, but one of them was dead, and two others were hurt. The mate of the Pirate had had his leg hurt the Friday before, and the cook had his shoulder hurt badly by a great wave knocking him against the galley. The others were little hurt, so they got some clothes out of the ship for a change. The next day all the men of the ship and the lighthouse keepers here went down to get some more things out of her.

After the shipwrecked crew had been here for five days they were taken to Gisborne by the Anglian, and I suppose they are in Auckland by this time. On the ship were a canary and a dog which belonged to the captain. He brought the canary up to the house and gave it to Mrs Robson. It is a very nice bird, and sings very sweetly. The dog was missed by everyone, and it was thought to have been drowned, but it was found three days later by its master. I think this will be enough this time. Good-bye.

Yours truly, **Margaret Sciascia** (aged 14). Portland Island, Mahia Peninsula, Hawke's Bay, April 30.

The Sciascia children were handsome and healthy. Their bloodlines were about 60:40 European to Polynesian and each child had a unique inheritance, some favouring their Polynesian line and some their European, and Charles looked particularly Italian, brown-eyed and brown-haired of course, but with his longish nose and straight hair over a pale narrow face, he could have been playing unremarked upon on the streets of Trani.

It is not clear who wrote the next account, however it may have been Edith Hodgkinson, and this story too was written for the children's page *Little Folks* in the Otago Witness; it describes much about life on the island. There was a great deal more to being a lightkeeper than sitting looking out at sea. The supply of fuel and the logistics of getting supplies for the families and lighthouse maintenance from the steamer to the other end of the island are described here.

PUNCH AND JUDY

... Punch must be a very old horse, for he was already old when brought to the island at the time the lighthouse was built— 20 years ago, and he shows all the signs of extreme old age. His mane is thickly streaked with grey; he is nearly blind, very deaf, has lost nearly all his teeth, and is growing stiff and rheumatic. Yet he is still hardy and full of spirit, occasionally decidedly frisky, and until a few months ago did all the sledging and carting for the station.

This is not a little for all the household supplies and coal for the station, the large quantity of oil required for the lighthouse, and occasional extra items, such as timber for fresh buildings or repairs, new tanks, and so on, have to be dragged by sledge up the face of an almost perpendicular hill, and then carted two miles along the top of the island to the lighthouse. Carting furnishes work for four or five days in the week during several months of the year; and in winter the unmade road becomes boggy and is cut up into deep ruts.

About a year ago, however, the lighthouse hands petitioned for a new horse on the justifiable plea that Punch was getting past work, and after some delay the young chestnut was sent by the steamer that takes supplies to the lighthouse stations. On her arrival she was promptly christened Judy.

She had apparently not been properly broken-in to harness, and much resented having to draw a cart. If got to advance at all she would leave the beaten track and dash down gullies and in every direction but the right one, sometimes taking the cart dangerously near the edge of the cliff on one side of the road. Instead of the men returning with a load for 12 o'clock dinner they would appear about 2— hot, tired, and out of temper, ready to wish Miss Judy at the bottom of the sea.

Once or twice during the summer, when she had grown a little quieter, she was put into the cart on a picnic day to carry the provisions and the juveniles of the party. The children were at first delighted at going so much faster, than old Punch's rather snaillike speed; but when she fairly bolted their mirth changed to screams of fright, and both they and their elders were glad when the end of the road was reached without mishap.

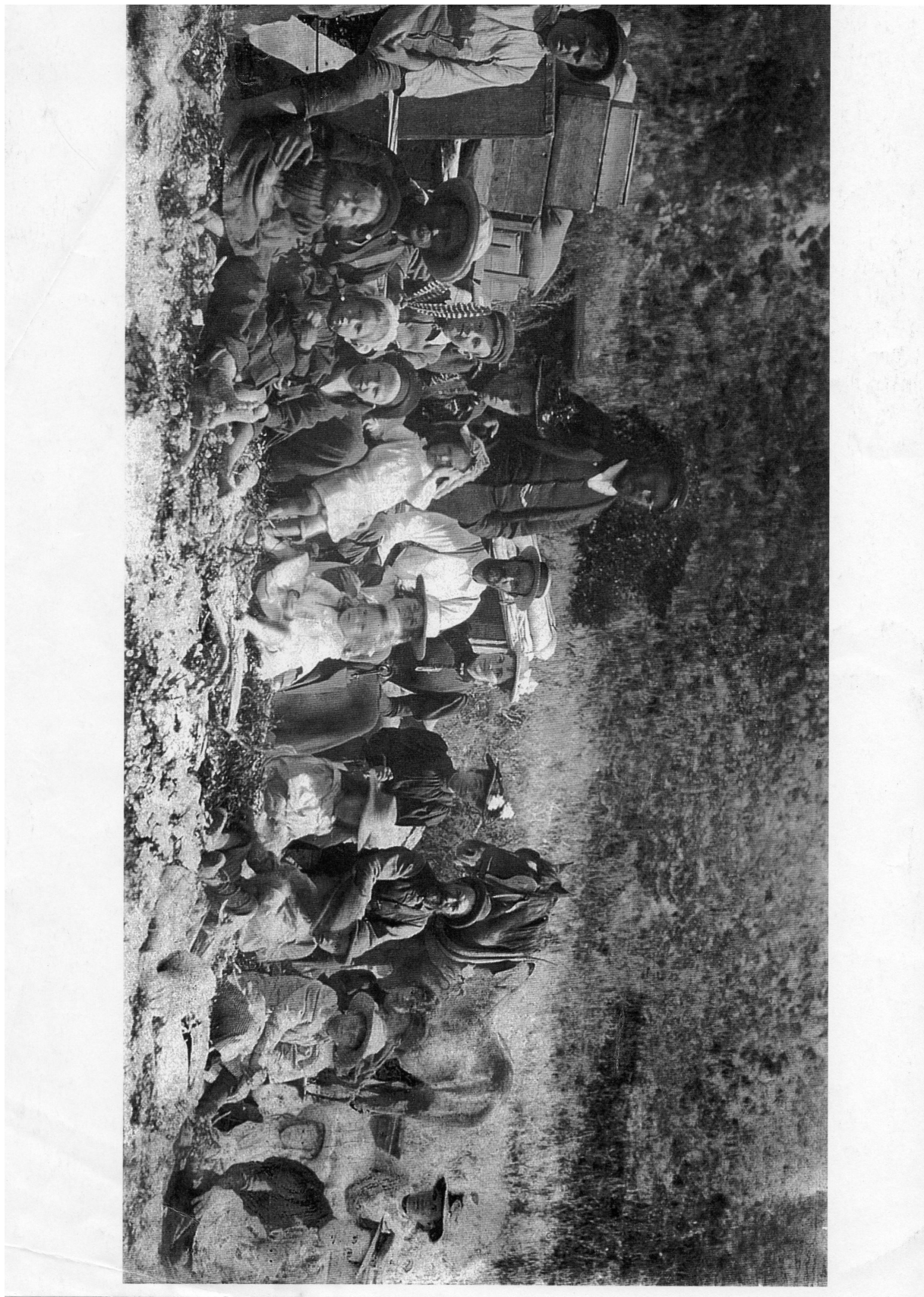
Written for the Witness Little Folks, By Theta^{xxi}

Portland Island Picnic ca 1896

Photo (next page) Anderson, Robson^{xxii} and Sciascia Families and Punch³⁴
Jack is thought to be standing on the far left.

^{xxi} Otago Witness, Issue 2273, 23 September 1897, Page 50

^{xxii} Possibly Wood and Hansen families, Left and Centre



Edith Hodgkinson was just coming to the end of her term in 1897 when she wrote this brief observation about quail and predators on the island.³⁵

“It might interest your correspondent to know that there are quail on this island which the residents have always considered to be the old New Zealand species; though as I understand that the Australian or Tasmanian variety has been introduced in various districts, and closely resembles the former, it is possible that these may be descended from them. However, these correspond to the description and engraving given in Dr Hector's book on New Zealand birds, and it does not seem unlikely that some should have survived here. Last year only a solitary pair was to be seen, but there have been two or three broods, and 15 were seen at once some time ago. As there are no cats, rats, nor ferrets here they are likely to increase.”

SUMMER 1897

One evening early in 1897, two men stood talking in the shadow of the lighthouse.

“Nicholas my friend, that bull of yours is scaring the children. We never know where the beast will be – he appears anywhere at any time on the island. I think we should fence him in or tie him up or something.”

The head keeper Mr Robson did not want to admit that the bull had alarmed him as well by bellowing, stamping and lowering his head as if to charge him. It was disconcerting to be walking towards the lighthouse then become aware of a reddish bovine shape a couple of hundred yards away tossing its head and watching.

Robson studied his companion closely. Nicholas's face was weather-beaten and lined from his seafaring years and he appeared older at first glance than 58. Laughter lines spread deeply across his kind face starting at the edge of his downward sloping eyelids. Nicholas Sciascia was rather a cultured man to have fetched up on this isolated place, Robson thought, but it was lucky for him to have somebody to discuss politics, the constellations and theories about life. The long periods of studying the night sea and the stars fostered philosophy in some keepers and now, as he looked into his friend's smiling face, Robson felt cheered by his good, hard-working companion.

“Oh no! He just is the normal bull – he just wants to marry with Ruby, but because since these months she has a calf, she does not remember him, he is bad-tempered,” Nicola explained. “The bull, he is not any problem. His behaviour – it is all to impress Ruby – but if a stick he sees in your hand – like this,” Nicola grasped a stick and shook it, “then once more he is a calf, see? ... running away and hiding. If the bull he thinks you are frightened, then he grows important and he shows off – like this.” Nicola took a few prancing steps to make his point.

“The bull, he is no trouble if you are the boss – and what tells him you are the boss? A stick like this!”

“I expect you are right, Nicholas, but all the same I think we should restrain the bull somehow for the women’s sake. Mrs Robson has complained to me and Miss Hodgkinson has been alarmed. She says one is apt to come across the bull unexpectedly anywhere on the island and it is preventing her from exploring widely.”

“Oh then, that matter, it is different,” Nicola replied. “The bull should not make frightened the women, but what is it we can do? A fence he will jump or with his head push it over and become loose again. And he will need a field so large,” Nicola’s brown earnest eyes widened as he stretched his arms to encompass an imaginary field almost from coast to coast – “because the grass it is poor – if the bull gets hungry, he will behave much worse!”

Neither man had a solution so the bull continued to roam the island.

LATE 1897

It did not take the new head lightkeeper Mr Hansen, appointed in August 1897, long to take up the theme with Nicola and to attempt a solution.

“Nicholas, let’s get all the men and boys together and we’ll chase that bull into a trap later today. If we can’t fence him in properly we can at least slow him down! See that log over there?” Hansen pointed to a fallen post behind an old shed.

“We’ll bolt the log to that chain between his horns – but if that doesn’t slow him, we’ll have to think of some other way.”

FEBRUARY 1898

It was already hot in the kitchen. Riria stoked the range then emptied two pounds of oatmeal into her big cast iron saucepan and poured a kettle full of hot water from the hob over it before sprinkling a good measure of salt into the porridge.

Strong as a vine, Riria was a reassuring sight thought Nicola. His wife’s brown eyes and her bone structure pleased him every time he saw her. She still reminded him of Italian women. Her lips were full and chiseled; she had a small straight nose and a broad high forehead, high cheekbones and the same grooves from her nose to her lips as her grandfather Jock and her father Teone. One of the benefits of leaving the Pilot Service and becoming a lighthouse keeper was that Nicola could spend all day with his wife and close to his children. He was never rushing away to go to work – his children were in school of course but for the rest of the time the family was all together.

No matter she was carrying his eleventh child and was in her mid-thirties, Riria was quick and competent. Yesterday she had milked Ruby the house cow, then churned butter from the cream and now some of this, freshly salted and golden, was spitting in the frying pan. Just as the butter browned, stirring the porridge with one hand, with the other she tossed in sea-fresh fish which skidded across the pan. Her dark brown hair was neatly plaited and held with a clip at the back of her neck.

Sometimes he would watch her in the evening, when their work was finally done and she would grin at him, her teeth white in the darkening night, and subside into a comfortable tumble on the verandah, sigh contentedly, put a match to her pipe and tug her McGregor tartan shawl round her shoulders. At other times, when on a picnic or entertaining visitors, Riria wore a snowy white high-collared blouse and a long black skirt. She loved to dance – she stepped lightly, never tiring, sometimes she taught her girls to dance, laughing when the smallest ones tottered over.

Then again there were other evenings when he was on duty in the lighthouse and she would climb the stairs balancing a pot of tea and some cake for his supper. When they sat there, the broad beam from the lens casting a wide lit swathe three hundred feet across the sea below, it seemed as if they were all alone with the night, the stars, the dark land and the sea.

They exchanged stories then; when they were alone together they spoke a three-plied language, English in the main but seasoned with Maori and Italian – Riria loved to hear about Glasgow and its stone buildings and streets, stories about the ships and the marketplaces, the fields of cattle, the castles and the lairds and lords who controlled them. Or he would describe Italy and the cathedrals that were so many hundreds of years old – the pageantry of feast days and celebrations and the ancient Latin rituals. Sometimes he talked about the opera, the orchestras he had heard and he would hum an air which she quickly learned and, relaxed, their soft voices floated together in the night.

Then Nicola would fall silent and Riria would tell him strange tales of mountains that loved and fought and fled creating rivers, of monsters that lived in the deep – of the strangers that shadowed those who now had being on the land. When she talked it was as if she was made from the elements around her and he marveled at how his wife had been shaped by the green dark islands of Aotearoa.

“For you, first, Nicholas my husband, some ika?” today Riria turned from the coal range and wiped her forehead and smiled affectionately – with a reproachful glance at John and Nicholas who were sniffing around the range trying to pluck the crust from the bread loaves Riria had just taken from the oven.

“You big boys – get out from under my feet and sit down at the table – and wait!” she growled.

“But Mama! We caught the fish! We’ve been up since five o’clock fishing and we’re huuuuuungry,” they complained.

“Never mind the fish. That is for your father – you eat your porridge first – and then we’ll see about any *fish*! And make sure Frank has enough to eat.”

Frank Tariuha was Riria’s toddler and the little boy stood frowning with concentration, blanket end in his mouth, not sure whether to bellow for food or wait quietly. Nicholas sidled out the door a fistful of fresh bread hidden behind his back where five of his sisters were sitting like Russian nesting dolls in a row on the front verandah each plaiting their younger sister’s hair.

Polly^{xxiii} was nearly twelve and, having plaited her own hair, was brushing ten year old Lucy’s hair. Eight year old Elsie sat on Lucy’s knee while Lucy^{xxiv} grimly plaited her hair; six year old Ellen sat in front of Elsie grimacing, trying to hold her head still, while Elsie tugged at her knots; she in turn battled with her baby sister three year old Emma.

“Hurry up Polly and Lucy! Come and set the table – Maggie’s gone so far away – you are my big girls now!”

Charles and Nicholas had been teasing their sisters just outside their mother’s hearing. When they heard Riria they jumped to their feet and cleared off to do as they were told and ran to the woodshed – they had ridden their luck by dallying this long getting firewood and the tone in Riria’s voice spurred them to make up lost time.

It was a cold and blustery late March day a month or so later. Nicola was a little worried about the supplies, and after his duty he walked to the island’s edge. The sea was grey and very choppy, he could hear the waves crashing at the bottom of the steep cliffs and Mahia Peninsular seemed slung low and sullen in the ocean. The steamship *Manapouri* was due soon but he could see no sign of anything at sea.

Oh! This island was often so cold and bleak for an Italian! Sometimes he remembered the mellow warmth of Trani and sadly shook his head at the salty winds that blasted his garden here. Nicola’s worn body was bent both by constant work and the westerly gale which cut through his woollen trousers, brown vest and workday jacket. There was no fat on his frame and, although his eyesight was still keen, being a lightkeeper at nearly sixty and having numerous young children to love, feed, clothe and discipline was wearying.

He had considered adding a page to his dossier. He used this to teach his children information that Miss Hodgkinson and the new schoolteacher Mr Wilson had little understanding of – astronomy, marine knowledge, mathematics and medical matters. Nicola

^{xxiii} Mary Christina

^{xxiv} Lydia Louisa

knew now that conjugal rights were good therapy for male health but thought he might add that looking after the results of the exercise could be tiring. A balanced view should be taken.

It was not only the night duties shared among the three keepers but the need to maintain the provisions that soaked up so much energy during the day as well. Winter was approaching so stocks had to be high to make up for the times mail and provisions would be delayed.

Hunching his shoulders to keep warm, head down deep in thought, Nicola began to walk back to the house.

A couple of hundred yards away the bull raised his head and sniffed the air, his top lip curling as he picked up the scent of the house cow Ruby just beginning to come in season. Charges of adrenaline and testosterone hit his blood stream. Ruby the cow and Judy the horse were skitterish too and as the wind howled, the bull's mood turned bad. His massive neck muscles tensed and he threw up his head tossing the log about like balsa. Tipping his head one side to clear his hooves from the log, one sharp horn raked upwards, the point as high as a man's chest, he snorted and began to paw the ground. Nicola, still deep in thought, never looked up and heard nothing in the whipping wind.

Then the bull saw a man walking between him and Ruby; the hormone rush exploded in his brain. He began to run, head aside. Front hooves delicately sidestepping the log intended to anchor him, his jiggling charge gathered speed as he thundered forward.

Only Ruby and Judy saw what happened next.

Tucked away in the Evening Post, 31 March 1898 is the paragraph below which explains that the officers steaming past Portland Island on the *Manapouri* heading to Gisborne had seen distress signals sent from the lighthouse but because the seas were too rough for a boat to be sent, they had to go on to Gisborne where the Customs Officer telegraphed the codes to Wellington. It was a long time before anybody worked out what the signals meant and it was not until the next day that a vessel could send a boat ashore.

This ship was the steamship *Hinemoa*. On board was a very important man who was heading to Auckland. An incidental but extraordinary aspect in Nicola's story is that among the very first people to not only hear of the tragedy that befell Nicola Sciascia on this isolated outpost, but to actually *be* there, was the Premier of New Zealand, the Honorable Richard John Seddon.

On the voyage from Napier, the officers of the *Manapouri* observed signals from the Portland Island Lighthouse and hove to. The signals were somewhat difficult of interpretation, and were brought on to the Customs officer at Gisborne, who forwarded them to the Marine Department at Wellington. It is thought they possibly refer to some accident having occurred on the island, but the sea was too heavy for the steamer to send a boat ashore to enquire. [The *Hinemoa*, which left Napier this afternoon for Auckland with the Premier, is to call at Portland Bay *en route*.]

36

The next day the *Evening Post* (1 April 1898) reported what the *Hinemoa* had discovered when it called into Portland Island:

ACCIDENTS AND FATALITIES

"The puzzling signals from Portland Island turn out to have indicated a sad accident. This morning the Marine Department received a telegram from Gisborne stating that the *Hinemoa* had called in there to report that on Tuesday last Mr Nicholas Sciascia, first assistant light-keeper at Portland Island, was gored to death by a bull. The *Hinemoa* visited the island in consequence of the *s s* *Manipouri* having reported signals from the lighthouse, and on learning of the fatality, Captain Post sent one of his men ashore to assist the lighthouse staff until a permanent successor to the deceased has been appointed.

The late Mr. Sciascia was a native of Italy, and was about 60 years of age. He was married to a Maori, and leaves a family of nine children.^{xxv} He entered the Wellington Provincial Government service in 1872, and was afterwards transferred to the Marine Department. For some time he was in the pilot crew in Wellington and afterwards he was coxswain at Foxton. He then became

^{xxv} There were eleven children; Margaret (15) was already in Dunedin and Riria gave birth to Pirihira 31 August 1898

attached to the Pencarrow lighthouse staff, but for some years he has been stationed at Portland Island. He was the only person on the island who kept, cattle, so that means he must have been killed by his own bull."

However it was the Otago Witness which in 1898 tells much more about the circumstances. A letter to the editor April 4 1898 explains:

"... An interesting circumstance connected with the death of Sciascia, who was gored by a bull at Portland Island. While the bull was tossing the body about, a large red cow (Ruby) repeatedly charged him, and at the same time a station horse (Judy) was galloping round and round the bull. In the opinion of those who saw them, both animals were designedly trying to drive the animal away from his victim."³⁷

Three years later there was an extensive coverage of New Zealand Lighthouses in the Otago Witness 23 January 1901; an extract from the article contains this poignant account.



"... The most tragic incident in connection with the lighthouse and its keepers was the death of poor old Nicholas Sciascia, one of the keepers, and a sterling old colonist of the early sixties, who was gored to death by a bull early in the morning of the 29th of March, 1898. Sciascia was seen about 7 o'clock, standing on the edge of the cliff at some distance from the house, and a few minutes later one of the keeper's boys saw the bull tossing something about. He immediately gave the alarm, and with some difficulty the keepers drove the animal off. The body of the poor old fellow was quite warm and life could only just have been extinct when it was recovered. The body was badly bruised, and the chest on the right side crushed in.

One touching incident in connection with the accident was the repeated and savage efforts of one of the cows to drive the bull away. The station horse also tried to distract the bull by galloping round and round him. It need not be said that the animal was at once destroyed. Strange to say, the bull was in terror of the children on the station. The smallest one could drive it anywhere — in fact, it would run away from them.

On the first of April we buried the remains of our old mate. It was a sad procession that wended its way from the house to the grave, and the scene at the grave was pitiful in the extreme. To see poor Mrs Sciascia with her nine children (the eldest 14 and the youngest one year of age) standing weeping around the grave was enough to soften the heart of the most hardened, and it made an impression on us which will never be effaced.

A subscription was started among we keepers and a substantial sum was collected. Part of this has been expended in procuring a grave stone, and the Marine department has generously presented the railing, etc. This is now in the course of erection. The remainder of the funds have been given to the Public Trustee to be administered for the benefit of the family..."

A fortnight later a correspondent was so annoyed by the description of the bull's character in the article that he wrote this Letter to the Editor:

“Sir — In the article on New Zealand Lighthouses which appeared in the Otago Witness of January 23, the writer, when referring to the death of Assistant-keeper Sciascia, on Portland Island, says that the bull which killed him ‘was in terror of the children on the station. The smallest one could drive it anywhere; in fact, it would run away from them.’ This must be a mistake unless the animal had lately altered very much in its disposition. It had a particular dislike to men and boys, and would rush them on the first opportunity.

My authority is Miss Hodgkinson, who for nearly two years was in charge of the school on Portland Island, and who left only three months before Mr Sciascia's tragic death. Curiously enough, he was the only person on the station who was not afraid of the bull, and he was frequently warned to be more prudent by Mr Robson, then head keeper. He used to say that it was all nonsense to be frightened, and that anyone could drive the animal away with a bit of a stick.

The whole island being unfenced (with the exception of a small enclosure at the station), one was apt to come across the bull at any moment. It usually wore a heavy chain attached to its horns. When the present head keeper arrived on the island he considered this insufficient and had a log added to the chain. Possibly having to drag this weight about did not improve the temper of the animal.

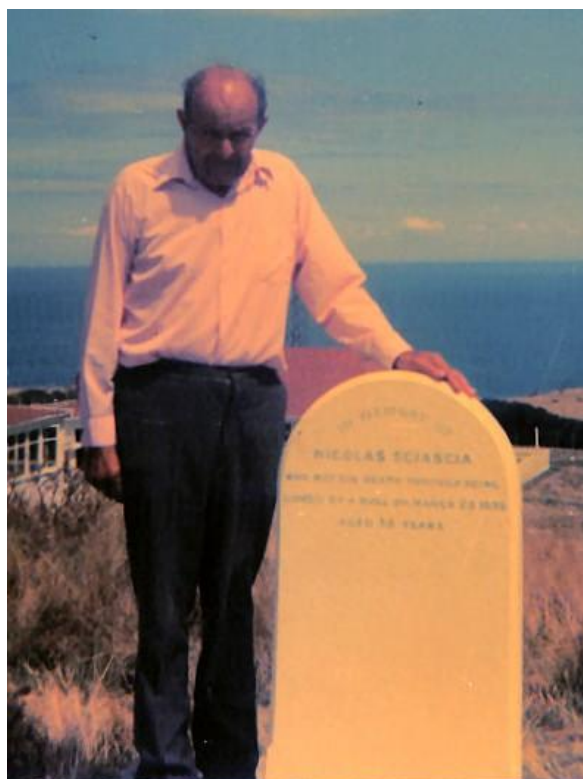
The little mare Judy always showed a great aversion to the bull, and when it tried to worry her old companion Punch, she used to come to the rescue and by biting and kicking to drive it away. Punch and Judy were introduced to readers of the Otago Witness by Miss Hodgkinson some years ago.” I am, etc., PHILL.³⁸

On 21 April, the Otago Witness named John Ansin of Moeraki lighthouse as Nicola's replacement as first assistant lightkeeper.

MONUMENT IN COURSE OF ERECTION AT PORTLAND ISLAND³⁹

This heading appears above an article in the Otago Daily Witness, 23 January 1901 which includes a photograph of the monument being built. It was partly paid for by the other keepers' subscription and is a lonely and lasting memorial to the life of Nicola. His son Frank Tariuha Sciascia returned to the island he had left as a very small boy and visited the grave when he himself was an old man. Whanau members continue to make pilgrimage there to honour Nicola.

The one year old returns to his father's grave 77 years later... (see page 53).



IN MEMORY OF
NICOLAS SCIASCIA
WHO MET HIS DEATH
THROUGH BEING GORED
BY A BULL
29 MARCH 1898
AGED 58 YEARS

Frank Tariuha Sciascia, 78, at the Monument to Nicola Sciascia
February 1975⁴⁰

The Life Insurance policy Nicola had taken out provided Riria with £200 which, although not a fortune, was a considerable sum and further help was given by the Marine Department which on 2 May 1898 granted Riria an allowance on compassionate grounds.⁴¹

Following Nicola's burial Riria left Portland Island and returned to Koputaroa. On 31 August 1898 Pirihiira Waikawa (Maori name for Portland Island) was born at Koputaroa, the eleventh and last child of Nicola Sciascia. Riria lived there and also at Porangahau until her death forty years later.

These days nobody lives on Portland Island but it is grazed by the Spark family in conjunction with a farming station on Mahia Peninsula.

Nicola is not the only person known to be buried there. It is a strange coincidence that the two men known to be buried there died within a year of one another. The first was the young seaman from the wreck of the *Pirate*, 16th of April, 1897, who was buried on the beach close to where the wreck occurred. At the time a fence was erected round the grave and the life-buoy from the wreck was placed there, but all traces have long disappeared.

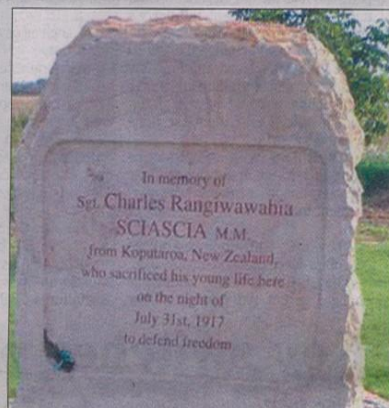
Nicola's headstone, raised by the Marine Department and by his fellow Lightkeepers to honour him, remains high above the beach – overlooking the sea.

CHARLES RANGIWAWAHIA SCIASCIA

Whanau honour fallen warrior



The warrior: Charles Sciascia, left, whose death led to the family pilgrimage 90 years later. Above: The Sciascia descendants at the stone erected to honour Charles and other Kiwis who fought at Flanders. Right: The inscription. Bottom: Charles, front row, right, next to brother John in the 1913 Maori All Blacks team.



MATT CALMAN

NINETY years after a young Maori soldier died on a Belgian battlefield, his whanau have made a bittersweet visit to the unveiling of his memorial. Charles Rangiwahia Sciascia left New Zealand in 1914 as a Maori All Black, the son of an Italian father and Maori mother. He would rise to the rank of sergeant, serving at Gallipoli and in France, before being sent to the western front in Belgium. He went into battle for the last time

at La Basseville on July 31, 1917, aged 25. The next day he was reported missing in action. His body was never found.

On the 90th anniversary of his death, nearly 40 of his descendants, mostly from the lower North Island, gathered in the town of Comines-Warneton to remember him.

But, on the day the whanau were preparing to honour Sergeant Sciascia, tragedy struck when a member of the party, 71-year-old Kit Pera-witi, of Koputaroa, died.

Piri Sciascia, Victoria University's

Pro Vice-Chancellor (Maori), said the death had turned the visit to his great-uncle's memorial into a bittersweet experience. "It was a very, very emotional time for the family. She was a dear member of the family."

Mr Sciascia said from Switzerland last night that the family was surprised to see their relative honoured in stone. "We had expected to go on to the battlefield and commemorate him in Maori style but we found a stone and monument with the flags of New Zealand, Belgium and Italy flying."

Local people paid for the memorial

as a tribute to Kiwi soldiers, he said.

The visitors read out wartime letters Sergeant Sciascia and brother Jack wrote to their sister Margaret.

Charles Sciascia was born at Pencarrow Heads in 1891. His Italian father, Nicola, died after being gored by a bull and the family moved to Koputaroa, near Levin.

In 1908 Charles moved to Porangahau to help an uncle build and carve Te Poho o Kahungunu meeting house. He was a gifted rugby player and, with brother John, was picked for the Maori All Blacks in 1913.

Some 2227 Maori and 458 Pacific Islanders served in the Armed Forces during World War 1 in the Maori Pioneer Battalion. Three hundred and thirty six soldiers from this battalion lost their lives and another 734 were wounded. Maori enlisted and died in other battalions.”⁴³

Charles was a member of the Wellington Infantry Regiment, serial number 10/518 and he was awarded the Military Medal. The London Gazette cites those circumstances as:

“In the Noutillerie Sector on the 3rd day of February 1917, this N.C.O. was in charge of the Scouts of a Raiding Party of 22 ranks. He led his party with coolness and accuracy and contributed materially to the success of the Raid. He had previously shown himself brave and capable in Gallipoli and France.”⁴⁴

His death was confirmed on 1 August 1917 and his memorial is in Warneton-Comines, formerly known as La Basseville, Belgium.



Charles Sciascia 1913
Sonny Sciascia Collection



Charles (far right) Egypt WW1
Sonny Sciascia Collection

THE FIRST GENERATION



Nicola and Riria and their Children⁴⁵
Collage prepared by Sal Criscillo 2007 Pilgrimage

THE PILGRIMAGE, 2007

Mr Paolo Fulci, the great grandson of Nicola's brother, Giacinto Sciascia, has had a prominent international diplomatic career and in recent years has extensively researched the Sciascia and related family history. About two years ago, in November 2006, he wrote to Professor Piri Sciascia, saying, "The reason of my visit was to confer upon Sonny ... the Honorary Citizenship of Trani. He for sure deserves it, for his relentless efforts to find roots of the family in Trani and to re-establish links with relatives scattered not only in Italy but all over the world!

Paolo Fulci commented on the need to move well in advance for the bestowal of the citizenship because a lot of bureaucracy and red tape lay ahead but that the Commissioner had agreed to begin the preliminary procedures..."⁴⁶

In a letter to Sonny, Paolo Fulci expanded on the tenacity that Sonny has shown over almost thirty years and involving three forays to Italy, commenting, "Indeed you are a living symbol of perseverance; just imagine that when Ambassador Nicosia was writing to you that, according to the Mayor of Trani, the branch of Giacinto Sciascia was almost surely extinguished, exactly at that time I was in Trani, totally unaware that I belonged to such a large extended family reaching New Zealand and Brazil."⁴⁷

Most people would give up when told by the Mayor of their grandfather's home town that all the family had died out – particularly when the effort to trace the connections involves travelling from New Zealand to Italy and researching links in Italian. Sonny's efforts were boosted when the efforts of Diane Taylor, family genealogist, were rewarded with a connection to Angiola Angellini, a descendant of Raffaella. At last there was a channel to the descendants of Margherita and Bartolomeo to add to those of Giacintos.⁴⁸

When the New Zealand relations returned to Italy in 2007, one highlight of their reception was a buffet in the entrance hall of the Palazzo Sciascia-Ammazzalorsa, Bisceglie, inherited by descendants of Pantaleo Sciascia's daughter Clorinda, where to the sounds of the national anthems, dignitaries from Bisceglie presented them with a reproduction of the seal of the university.

Paolo Fulci located numerous descendants of Nicola's brother Giacinto and sisters Raffaella and Margherita. The following photos and notes convey not only the joy of those meetings but in many cases reveal a family resemblance that has existed, thousands of miles apart, for generations.

The enthusiasm generated by this pilgrimage has involved all ages of the extended whanau/famiglia and that will ensure that the New Zealand branch of the Sciascia family will always know where to walk in their ancestor's footsteps and they will always have family to walk with them there.





The Giacinto Relations

Our first meeting with the descendants of Giacinto Sciascia, the Weigert and the Fulci families. Taken in Ortone, at right next to Uncle Sonny in green is Flavia, matriarch of the Weigert branch. Photo: Alan Sciascia Collection; Notes: Piri Sciascia



The Genova Relations

Our group with the Genova relatives - the family of Raffaella. Photo: Alan Sciascia
Collection; Notes: Piri Sciascia



Trani – Family at Nicola’s Home

Family on the steps of Nicola’s home in Trani. From the top: Sonny Sciascia, Paolo Fulci, Carlo-Roberto Sciascia, Piri Sciascia, Francesco de Toma, and Richard Taylor. Paul Sciascia is in the front. Photo: Alan Sciascia Collection; Notes: Piri Sciascia



Colamartino Grandchildren of Raffaella

Uncle Sonny, Nicola's grandson with the remaining Colamartino grandchildren of Raffaella – Donato, Margherita, Ottavia and Enrico. Photo: Alan Sciascia Collection; Notes: Piri Sciascia



Bari Gathering

We were hosted in Bari by Lea (in orange) she is a descendant of Margherita, Nicola's elder sister. At her side is Paolo Fulci whom we had met the day before, a descendant of Giacinto, Nicola's brother. And in the back row next to me is Carlo-Roberto (in blue) a descendant of Bartolomeo, the youngest brother of Nicola. Photo: Alan Sciascia Collection; Notes: Piri Sciascia



Raffaella Sciascia's Descendants

We met the first group of relatives at Genova. They are the descendants of Raffaella the sister of Nicola. In particular they are the only surviving grandchildren of any of Nicola's brothers and sisters. Uncle Sonny is in front and is one of thirteen surviving mokopuna of Nicola. Photo: Alan Sciascia Collection; Notes: Piri Sciascia

REFERENCES

- 1 Main sources – Making Waves, F Campbell, email Piri Sciascia, The Sciascia Family of Bisceglie and Trani, FP Fulci
- 2 Main sources – The Sciascia Family of Bisceglie and Trani by P Fulci and Curriculum Vitae of Nicola Sciascia by P Sciascia
- 3 Evening Post 1 April 1898
- 4 The Dominion 15 February 1975
- 5 F Campbell Collection
- 6 Tessa Copland. 'Italians', Te Ara - the Encyclopedia of New Zealand, updated 21-Sep-2007
- 7 The Evening Post 11 March 1915
- 8 <http://www.nzshipmarine.com/history/companies.aspx?id=11>
- 9 Evening Post 27 July 1876
- 10 <http://foxtonmurals.library.org.nz/22.html> designed by Chris Lloyd
- 11 'FOXTON', from An Encyclopaedia of New Zealand, edited by A. H. McClintock, originally published in 1966.
- Te Ara - The Encyclopedia of New Zealand, updated 18-Sep-2007
- URL: <http://www.TeAra.govt.nz/New Zealand/1966/F/Foxton> Encyclopaedia of New Zealand 1966
- 12 Captain Seabury, Manawatu Worthies, Manawatu Herald 1956 – courtesy S Sciascia
- 13 ibid
- 14 ATL MSY-1281, p 126. Record Title : Maori mission - Native Church, Otaki (Te Rangiwaewa) - Register of baptisms
- 15 Letter by Margaret Pene, nee Sciascia 1947, John Acheson
- 16 www.sciascianz.co.nz
- 17 www.sciascianz.co.nz
- 18 Teone McGregor, from the John Jock McGregor Papers, Whanganui Regional Museum
- 19 Volume XII, Issue 3670, 23 March 1880, Page 2
- 20 Taranaki Herald, Volume XXX, Issue 3981, 4 March 1882, Page 2
- 21 Wanganui Herald April 30 1883
- 22 www.sciascianz.co.nz
- 23 Wanganui Herald, Volume XX, Issue 5819, 15 January 1886, Page 2
- 24 www.newzealandlighthouses.com/
- 25 ibid
- 26 Archives New Zealand agency series accession box / item record part alternative no.BBAO 5544 40a 1887/371a
- 27 Source: Sonny Sciascia
- 28 Archives New Zealand (Auckland) Agency BBAO series 5544 box 40a record 1887/371a
- 29 Archives New Zealand (Auckland) Agency BBAO series 5544, box 46a, record 1889/222
- 30 Evening Post 11 February 1892
- 31 Evening Post 11 February 1892
- 32 G-20441-1/1 Alexander Turnbull Library Wellington NZ
- 33 Extracts from a description Otago Witness, Issue 2236, 7 January 1897, Page 42
- 34 Photo: JR Dickson Sonny Sciascia Collection
- 35 Otago Witness, Issue 2283, 2 December 1897, Page 46
- 36 Evening Post 31 March 1898
- 37 Otago Witness 4 April 1898
- 38 Otago Witness 6 February 1901
- 39 Otago Witness, Issue 2445, 23 January 1901, Page 28
- 40 www.sciascianz.co.nz
- 41 AJHR]1899 Page H.15, 25
- 42 www.sciascianz.co.nz The Dominion Post 31 August 2007
- 43 <http://www.nzhistory.net.nz/war/maori-in-first-world-war/introduction>
- 44 London Gazette, 12 March 1917, p 2486, rec No 545. Source National Archives Wellington, agency AABK series 18805 accession W 5550
- 45 The Sciascia pilgrimage to Belgium and Italy
- 46 Email from Paolo Fulci to Piri Sciascia 14 November 2006 – Source P Sciascia
- 47 Letter to Sonny Sciascia from Ambassador Francesco Paolo Fulci, 5 February, 2007 – Source S Sciascia
- 48 The Sciascia Family of Bisceglie and Trani – FP Fulci

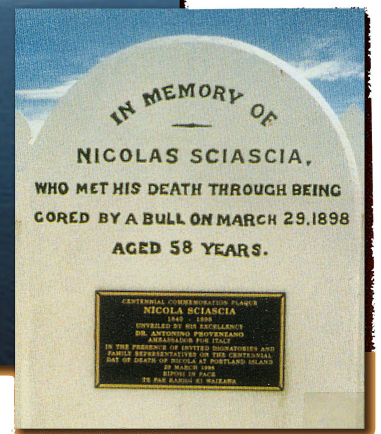
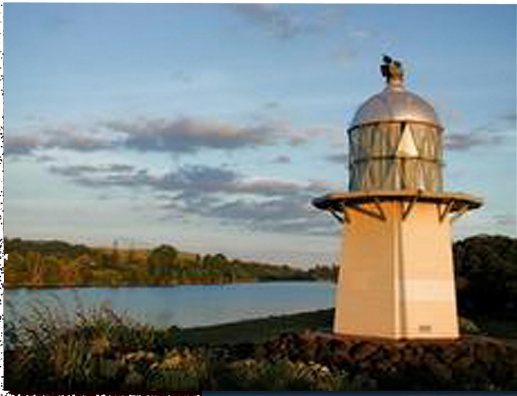
Appendix

Letters to Nicola Sciascia

Letter from sisters **Orsolina & Raffaella Sciascia - Bari**

Letter to **Riria Sciascia** from nephew
Carlo Colamartino, son of **Raffaella Sciascia - Bisceglie**

Te Pae Karioi ki Waikawa



Riposi In Pace