

# Jackson dynasty lives on

## ... family still making contribution in sport

### THEY DID IT THEIR WAY

IAIN GILLIES on local sporting legends.

**BROTHERS** in arms — Frederick Stanley Jackson's boys from Te Araroa were champions for their country and for rugby.

Everard, Irwin and Sydney (Bully) Jackson, and Tutu WiRepa were born to the game.

Their father Fred Jackson had played for the Anglo-Welsh Lions against the All Blacks in the 1908 tour. He was sent home over allegations that he had played rugby league and was therefore a professional.

But Fred had been smitten by young Ngati Porou woman Horowai Henderson. He jumped ship in Sydney, travelled to Te Araroa and eloped with Horowai.

After settling in New Zealand, Fred also made a name for himself playing rugby league.

He captained Auckland against the touring Great Britain Lions league team and also played for New Zealand against his countrymen in a test match, kicking four goals.

Everard, Bully and Tutu forged their manhood on the battlefields of World War 2 in 28 (Maori) Battalion's C-Company.

They also made an enormous contribution on rugby fields here and abroad.

Bully's son Gary Jackson, who played rugby with his cousin Rongo WiRepa for the Wellington Maori team, said his father was modest about his rugby



**BROTHERS IN ARMS:** Sydney (Bully) Jackson with one of his towering kicks for the 1938 New Zealand Maori team at an Eden Park match. He is watched — obviously approvingly — by his



**FAMILY MATRIARCH:** The Jackson family legacy began in 1908 when Ngati Porou teenager Horowai Henderson won the heart of Anglo-Welsh Lion Frederick Stanley Jackson. His feelings for the young Te Araroa woman were so strong he jumped ship in Sydney to return to New Zealand. As Horowai was already engaged to another, the couple eloped and were married in Hastings. This photo was taken in Hastings shortly after the wedding of 19-year-old Horowai and Fred, who was thought to be about 30 at the time.





achievements, but particularly proud of Everard being selected for the All Blacks in 1937-38 and brother Tutu joining him (Bully) in the NZ Maori team in 1938.

Irwin was an Auckland premier player until he was sidelined by a knee injury.

Speaking from Wellington, Gary said that during the war, Bully captained the Maori Battalion team to victory in the NZ Army championships and was selected for the NZ Army team to play the British and South African teams in Egypt and also in Italy.

Life on the East Coast had been based around family, marae and the farm, Gary said.

There were five in Bully's family — the four brothers and a sister, Mary. It was isolated with few modern amenities, and no sealed roads.

Transport was mainly on horseback.

Te Araroa had only a primary school and the nearest secondary school was in Gisborne.

"Dad told us that sometimes he and Tutu, who was a whangai child, would accompany Doctor Tutere WiRepa on his rounds, riding their horses," Gary said.

Tutere WiRepa was the second Maori to graduate from the Otago Medical School (Peter Buck was the first).

Dr WiRepa also found time for rugby, playing in the Poverty Bay team who lost 26-0 to the 1908 Anglo-Welsh Lions (Fred Jackson did not play).

Bully, who got his nickname from his love of bully beef, left school at 13 after one year at Gisborne High School, Gary said.

It was the early 1930s, the time of the Great Depression, and Bully worked in a butcher's shop in Te Araroa for five shillings a week.

At 18, he followed his eldest brother Everard to Hastings and, about 1938, was employed at the Whakatu freezing works.

"He played rugby for MAC (Maori Agricultural College) along with Uncle Everard and

brother Tutu WiRepa.



Major Tutu WiRepa

another famous All Black, Tori Reid," Gary said.

They won the Hawke's Bay club competition in 1938, and Bully was selected for Hawke's Bay and the NZ Maori team.

After war was declared, Bully and Tutu volunteered and did their basic training at Papakura in 1940. By then, Tutu was married to Mary Baker (Ngati Porou/Rongowhakaata) with two children, Rongo and Frances. Bully was still single, but not for long.

Bully's platoon sergeant, Friday Hawkins, took him home to Ngaruawahia on leave one weekend and Bully fell for his daughter, Noni Hawkins.

Noni and Bully were married in Devonport, Auckland, in 1941, and went to live in Wellington while Bully attended officer training school at Trentham.

"Uncle Tutu shipped out with the first 28th Battalion echelon in 1940 and Dad followed in 1941," Gary said.

"Uncle Everard enlisted in 1941 and joined his brothers in 1942 for the Middle East campaign.

Pictures courtesy of Gary Jackson



Major Sydney (Bully) Jackson

"All were ranked as lieutenants at this stage.

"Uncle Everard suffered a serious leg injury caused by an artillery barrage soon after his arrival.

"Dad and Uncle Tutu tried not to get too close to each other on the battlefield to prevent the risk of both of them suffering the same fate.

"They quickly gained promotion to become majors in the Maori Battalion. Both were mentioned in dispatches for distinguished service in the field of battle. After the Middle East (El Alamein), 28 Battalion was shipped to Italy where they took part in the battle for Monte Cassino."

Gary said he and his cousin Doc WiRepa recently visited Italy and retraced their fathers' journey of nearly 70 years ago.

Gary's sister Derna was born while Bully was overseas. Gary and younger sister Carol were born in 1946 and 1947.

Bully, Noni and their family settled in Wellington.

After an unsuccessful attempt to join the police, Bully tried



**BROTHERS IN CAIRO:** (From left) Major Tutu WiRepa, Lieutenant Everard Jackson and Major Sydney (Bully) Jackson faced many of life's challenges together, including World War 2. Members of 28 (Maori) Battalion's C Company, the sons of Frederick Stanley Jackson were a force to be reckoned with on and off the football field. This 1942 photo was taken at the Maori Battalion camp in Cairo.

his hand at bricklaying and eventually became a painter and paperhanger.

He continued to play rugby following the war. After retiring from playing, he became a successful coach of local premier club Taita.

What effect did the war years have on the family?

Gary said: "Dad suffered the same troubles many soldiers faced on returning home after the war and adjusting to civilian life.

"Dad never discussed it much with me as I was growing up. But in his later years he began to talk more about the war and his experiences. My family and grandchildren are extremely proud of that generation."

The rugby gene has carried through the generations. Gary Jackson played first 15 rugby at school, and was selected for the Wellington under-20 rep team.

He played premier rugby for Taita with his cousin Rongo WiRepa and also played for the Wellington Maori team and the Wellington B rep team.

After Gary had a stint in

Australia, injuries forced an early retirement but he took up refereeing and was selected to go to Japan (twice), Canada and Australia to referee and coach.

Today he is still involved as convener of selectors for the Hurricanes zone referees.

His cousins Doc WiRepa and Morgan WiRepa (East Coast) and their brother Chris (Counties-Manukau) played representative rugby in the 1960s and '70s. Peter and Irwin WiRepa were also well-performed rugby players.

Chris has been coaching rugby in southern California since 2006 and in five seasons he has had teams in the US club championships three times.

Morgan, who farms at Hicks Bay, went to Australia in the New Zealand development team and also had an All Black trial.

His son Morgan WiRepa junior, playing alongside cousin Everard Reid, continued the family tradition by helping Ngati Porou East Coast beat traditional rivals Poverty Bay 24-14 in Gisborne on Saturday.

The legacy lives on!



# Everard made the All Blacks

## ... but war injuries took heavy toll on him

### THEY DID IT THEIR WAY

IAIN GILLIES on local sporting legends.

EVERARD Jackson became a hero in his own lifetime ... more than once.

The boy raised in Te Araroa was picked to play for the New Zealand Maori team in Suva, Fiji, with his brothers in 1936 but received the call all Kiwi players dream of — to wear the All Black jersey.

From 1936 to 1938 Everard played 11 matches for the All Blacks. He made his test debut at the age of 22 against Australia in Wellington in 1936, played the Springboks three times during their 1937 visit and toured Australia in 1938.

The Rugby Almanac for New Zealand named Everard as one of the best five players in New Zealand in 1936.

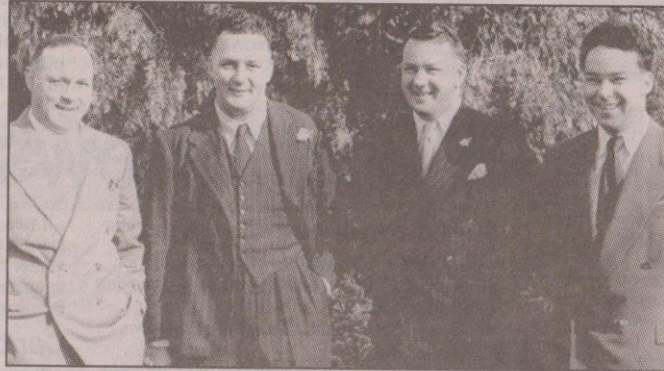
Like so many young men, World War 2 was to change his life forever.

Not long after joining 28 (Maori) Battalion's C Company, Everard was seriously injured at Burg el Arab. He and fellow New Zealanders were caught in what was termed "friendly fire".

Others were killed as bombs exploded around them.

Everard's son Moana told us Everard was wounded before the Maori Battalion team were chosen ... he had, however, captained the New Zealand Divisional Team who included a couple of men who would become great All Blacks after the war — J. B. (Johnny) Smith and Jack Finlay.

The eldest son of Fred Jackson, an Anglo-Welsh Lions rugby player



**HAPPY DAYS:** All Black Everard Jackson (second left) with brothers (from left) Tutu WiRepa, Syd (Bully) Jackson and Irwin Jackson at the second wedding of their sister Mary. Her first husband was killed in the war. Pictures courtesy of the Jackson family

he should leave the East Coast.

It was a move he never regretted because it was there he met his future bride — Janey Cunningham (Ngati Kahungunu), of Hastings.

Everard also played for Tai-Rawhiti several times.

In 1934, while playing for the Maori Agricultural College (MAC) in Hastings, Everard was included in the Hawke's Bay and North Island teams. He made the North Island team again in 1936, '37, '38 and '39.

Everard powered through 1936, being chosen for Hawke's Bay, the All Blacks and the New Zealand Maori team.

He soon made a big impression as an outstanding All Black prop.

Everard and Janey "were married in 1938 just before Dad left with the All Blacks on their Australian tour", Moana said.

They had six children: Phil and Fred who live in Hastings, Moana in Wellington, Jacqui in Christchurch, and Bob and Sydney, who have died.

challenged the Federation of New Zealand Maori Students to oppose All Black tours to South Africa as a stand against apartheid. He was a founding member of the Maori group Nga Tamatoa in the 1970s.

All of Everard's sons played in the first 15 at high school.

"When I was a member of the Hastings Boys' High School first 15 and played Gisborne Boys High, a tackle from my cousin Doc WiRepa led to my being carried off with a fractured collar bone," Moana said.

"My elder brothers Syd and Fred both played rep rugby for Wellington, and Fred played for the East Coast for many years when he was teaching there."

Able to trace their whakapapa back to Horouta, Everard's family has shown strength and conviction in many areas.

Lieutenant Everard Stanley Jackson and his brothers Major Sydney (Bully) Freyberg Jackson and Major Reginald Tututaonga (Tutu) WiRepa featured in Monty Soutar's book *Nga Tama Toa: The*



**WAR AND RUGBY:** There was plenty to talk about when former All Black Lieutenant Everard Jackson, left, and Springbok Boy Louw, a star South African forward of the 1930s, got together. They played against each other in 1937.



and a New Zealand rugby league representative, Everard led the way for his younger brothers to also make a name for themselves on the wider rugby scene.

Their mother, Horowai (née Henderson), of Ngati Porou descent from Te Araroa, had won Fred's heart when he was on tour with the Anglo-Welsh Lions in 1908.

As we outlined in this series, Fred was ordered back to England after it was alleged he had at some stage played rugby league and so was a professional in an amateur game.

He went as far as Australia but then returned to the East Coast and married Horowai.

He played rugby league for both Auckland and New Zealand in 1910.

He died in Auckland on April 15, 1957.

Fred and Horowai had five children: daughter Mary and sons Everard, Sydney (Bully) and Irwin Jackson, and Tutu WiRepa.

The boys followed in their father's rugby footsteps. And many a friendly argument must have been voiced over an East Coast beer as to who was the best of the Jacksons.

The brothers themselves certainly looked up to Everard as their leader.

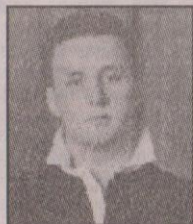
Everard was educated in Te Araroa and gained a place in Takararangi (Te Araroa) senior team when he was 14.

At 18, while playing for Tolaga Bay Country, he was selected for the East Coast and gave a good account of himself, so much so that after two seasons as a Coast rep he moved to the Whakaki Club in the Wairoa sub-union and won selection for Hawke's Bay.

Moana said his father moved to Whakaki after being advised by one of the All Black selectors that if he wanted to advance in rugby

Everard had another son, Bill Nepia, who was an Auckland rugby rep in the 1950s.

After losing his leg at Burg el Arab, Everard spent six months recuperating in Egypt and was thrilled to get a visit from Boy Louw, who had been in the 1937 Springbok team that Everard had lined up against as an All Black.



Everard Jackson wearing the black jersey.

Everard was to spend six months more in Burwood Hospital before finally returning to his family in Hastings.

"Dad was often unwell after the war with complications and stress from his horrific war wounds," Moana said.

"He continued to be involved with the MAC club in Hastings for many years. However, his rugby interests were coloured by the fact that immediately after the North Island versus South Island game in 1939 he and uncle Tori Reid were both told by the Rugby Union that as Maori they would have to make themselves unavailable for any future All Black games to avoid the union embarrassment when it selected its next team for the proposed tour to South Africa in 1940.

"Because of the war, the tour never proceeded, but Dad never forgot the slight and he was the first former All Black to join the original anti-apartheid movement in 1960.

"Somewhat ironically, when the great South African captain and coach Danie Craven subsequently selected his own 'World Fifteen' from players he had played against or had seen, he chose two All Blacks as his props — my dad and Kevin Skinner," Moana said.

Moana is a lawyer specialising in Treaty of Waitangi and constitutional issues.

His brother Syd — uncle to broadcaster Willie Jackson and National MP Tau Henare — was a Maori rights advocate who in 1968

Price of Citizenship, C Company 28 (Maori) Battalion 1939-1945.

In an April 1985 article published in The Battalion Remembers 11 booklet, Everard's son Syd contributed an article that captured in graphic clarity the life and times following the war years.

He stated: "My earliest memories of the 28th (Maori) Battalion mingle in my child's eyes . . . of magic names like 'A. T.' Cassino, Ruatoria, and the Middle East; of camping at Ocean Beach — and almost drowning with three of my brothers before Dad stripped off and hopped out on his one leg to tell us to let go of the net we were vainly trying to bring back to the beach.

"I can remember the old tin trunk — army issue — which seemed to contain a million magic mementoes of the war, parts of Dad's old uniform, photographs, souvenirs, even a German Luger pistol with which I pictured myself winning the war single-handed!

"I remember Dad's 'wooden leg' as we called it when we were kids.

"Then, of course, there was the rugby. I remember these stories. They were great. I can remember the hilarity they caused, the happiness and laughter of my All Black father and names like Tori Reid, Charlie Smith and George Nepia, among many others. Rugby was a stimulus, almost an opiate for our family. It was fun while it lasted."

Syd said that like most other Maori families they had been touched by the war: "Cursed by it, might, in fact, be a better description because of the many lives lost and the suffering to families."

Gary Jackson, son of Bully (Sydney), said his father and Tutu were at El Alamein 70 years ago and served alongside fellow East Coast soldier Te Moananui-a-Kiwa Ngarimu, who was awarded the Victoria Cross for his part in the taking of Point 209 at Tebaga Gap, Tunisia, about six months later.

Second Lieutenant Ngarimu



**CAPTURED CAR:** Bully Jackson is at centre back in this picture, with his mates in a German staff car they captured at El Alamein 70 years ago. Bully wrote to his wife Noni: "Taken at Alamein Nov. 3, 1942. After final attack against Germans by our Bn (night Hati was wounded). If only you could see what was around us when this photo was taken."

was killed on March 27, 1943, in a German counter-attack on the hill the Ngati Porou soldiers called Hikurangi, after their mountain at home. He died defiantly facing the enemy with his tommy-gun at his hip.

Bully carried Second Lieutenant Ngarimu back down the hill and wrote a citation for the Victoria Cross that recognised his bravery, determination and outstanding leadership, Gary said. He is buried in the Sfax War Cemetery in Tunisia.

The Jacksons had a long association with the Ngarimu family and after the war Tutu was involved with the administration of the Ngarimu VC and 28th (Maori) Battalion Memorial Scholarships.

Horowai Henderson was brought up by the Ngarimu family until she was nine years old "when Grandfather Henderson went and took her home", Gary said.

"The Ngarimu family always had a soft spot for Horowai and it is believed they helped her and Fred when they started farming," he said.

Doc WiRepa last week recalled how rugby was a big part of their

family life.

"Dad (Tutu) was a humble man," he said.

"We lived on the family farm at Ruatoria and then at Hicks Bay. We often had important visitors to our home."

A visit by George Nepia was a childhood highlight for another of Tutu's sons, Chris.

"When Mum had all the pots on the stove you knew someone important was coming," Chris said.

"We felt so lucky to shake the hand of George Nepia, who stayed for dinner. We didn't know that our father knew him, but they talked like old friends. We were in awe to be in the presence of a great player, of the 1924/25 Invincibles.

"George Nepia was so well dressed, wearing a Welsh tie — and he spoke so beautifully. He was a real gentleman."

Language was extremely important in the WiRepa home.

"Dad said English and Maori were beautiful languages and should be treated accordingly.

"He said he was spoiled to have two wonderful families — the Jacksons and the WiRepa whanau. He had the best of both worlds!"