BEHIND THE SNOWY MOUNTAINS.

Thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of M.A. (and Hons.) in History.

by

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BEHIND THE

SNOWY MOUNTAINS.

An account of the wanderers who discovered and recorded a New Zealand landscape, and of the change in attitudes toward it.

"Wander ... every immigrant has the before mentioned impulse more or less, but it is the vagabond who put in the energy ... the settlers kept near where the ships ate drank fed themselves. A special hero now and again penetrated a few miles into the country making his will first".

C.E. Douglas. 1892.
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In the preface to his well-known *History of Europe* H.A.L. Fisher disclaimed the discovery of any pattern in that continent's history, the study of which he thought proved only the constant influence of "the contingent and the unforeseen". The scope of this thesis is confined by its title to behind the "snowy mountains" - a land which lay beyond the original Canterbury Association's "block" and escaped the calculations of any scheme for planned colonization in the nineteenth century.

There were two boundaries of the Canterbury Association settlement - the theoretical and the real. The true limit was close to Christchurch, and that is the more natural starting point for an account of the movement of exploration and settlement across the South Island. Beyond this limit, unforeseeable factors entered largely into the colonization of the interior - but these factors were not derived from the interplay of social and racial forces, nor from the drag of tradition. The colonists of the South Island possessed an unusually uniform cultural background; only a small native population existed; and tradition of necessity played a small part in the settlement of a new land by what seemed the quickest and most available means. "Contingent and unforeseen" forces were here provided by a close and ever impelling nature; by the varying response to the land of its settlers; and by the secrets of resources, wealth and beauty that were to be won from it.

The subject of the thesis covers both the sequence of the exploration of this land, and the evolution of general attitudes toward it. The land itself is the central figure - merely a "cross-section" of the South Island between the Hurunui and Rakaia watersheds, but the cross-section is typical of the structure of the Island. Though its settlement and use has given it probably a greater degree of historical unity than any other comparable segment of the natural channel for communications between centres of settlement in both Maori and European times on east and west coasts, the pattern of expansion into it did not differ greatly from that of the rest of the South Island.

What kind of individuals were the explorers and pioneers of this land, who pushed into the interior to learn what the country held for them? In the eighteenth century Rousseau proclaimed a need for civilized man to free himself from "social chains" and revert to a "natural" life. In many ways the colonial frontiers of the nineteenth century provided just such an environment. The prospect the first colonials viewed was overwhelmingly primaeval; the single-minded concentration upon shaping nature to human ends reduced life to uncomplicated fundamentals; and the directness of aim gave an Arcadian simplicity to early colonial society.

Biographical details of many an early footloose wanderer of this land are not available - but the individual pioneer and self-seeking colonist formed the initial shape of settlement more than did colonial planner or statesman. For by searching for them, he was more likely to realize and inclined to accept the practical limitations and advantages inherent in the
nature and shape of the land itself. These, not social forces or preconceived ideas, formed the predominating control upon early colonial society.

The quality of vagabondage - a quality which was almost a tradition in the nineteenth century colonies - was shared by most of the explorers of this land. The Maori can only be described from European account, but the Ngai Tahu were a nomadic race. The shepherds belonged to the wandering class of investors in the southern colonies. Early surveys were by contract and the men concerned selected their sphere of activity. Haste chose the part of an exploring scientist. Roberts and several of his contemporary Westland surveyors responded beyond official duty in their desire for a complete knowledge of the country. The mountaineers of the 1830's perpetuated the same tradition of the wanderer, and seeker after the final view of a country.

The hinterland of the South Island was particularly challenging, for it included a wide variety of landscape within a narrow compass. A century of European settlement in the South Island had passed before the exploration of this small area was completed. During this time man was close to a land where there was little evidence of human society. The high mountains stood as a perpetual monument to the strangeness of the country. However in its continuity of the pioneering tradition, this region differed only relatively from the rest of New Zealand, where the breaking in of land by constant edging back into forest and mountain has been a long-lasting process. Large tracts of little inhabited country still exist, where the individual has to accept the challenge of nature, and can share in a sense of primitive simplicity.

Acknowledgement is due for assistance in research particularly to J.D. Pascoe (Wellington) and D. McMillan (Christchurch). Many other have given freely of their time and knowledge in discussions of the history, topography and place names of this part of the South Island: L. W. Beat and G. Kelly (Hokitika), F. J. Kitching (Greytown), J. J. Broadway and D. J. Cipotik (Christchurch), P. Croft (Arthur's Pass) and the Dillon family (Maipo Valley) in mountain history; R. W. Nisley (Hokitika) in the translation of Maori names; B. Haigh (Hokitika), J. Hayward and C. Holdsworth (Christchurch) in surveying history; D. McLeod (Graziers), R. M. D. Johnson (St. Fort) and Mrs. D. Menzies (Little Akaloa), in the history of the high country runs; P. R. May (Christchurch) in West Coast history; R. C. Lamb (Christchurch Public Library) and J. C. Wilson (Canterbury Museum Library).

It is a pleasure to record my obligation to those with whom I have travelled among these valleys: J. A. Douglass (Wellington), R. S. Swaney (Hokitika), A. Chin (Christchurch), A. D. Hooper (Christchurch), A. R. Clark (Coromandel), the Barnhill family (Kokatai), the Sanson family (Hokitika) and above all my wife, who has been my companion over many of the byways of this region.

My thanks must finally be recorded to my mother for her transcription of the manuscript.
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ABBREVIATIONS.

L. and S. (Chch)  Lands and Survey Department, Christchurch
L. and S. (Hok.)  Lands and Survey Department, Hokitika.

N.A.G.S.       A.Nackay: Compendium of Official Documents Relative to
L.T.           Transactions of the New Zealand Institute published from
Press          Lyttelton Times, published from 1854.
N.Z.A.J.       West Coast Times, published from 1865.
C.M.           New Zealand Alpine Journal - annual publication of the
               N.Z. Alpine Club.
               The Canterbury Mountaineer - annual publication of the
               Canterbury Mountaineering Club.
               Proceedings of the Provincial Council, Canterbury.
               Appendices to the Journal of the House of Representatives.
               Journal of the Polynesian Society.
               Survey Department Field Book, Hokitika.
               Survey Department Field Book, Christchurch.
               Chief Surveyor's Letter Book (Outward), Hokitika.
               Chief Surveyor's Letter Book (Outward), Christchurch.
               Provincial Papers, Canterbury Museum.
               J. Von Haast: Geological and Topographical Exploration
               of North West Nelson, 1861.
THE LAND.

The hinterland with which this history is primarily concerned, in contrast to the plain on its east, gave little encouragement to the initial probes of nineteenth century colonists. The view across the monotonously level plain was bounded to the west at a distance of forty to fifty miles by a range of mountains which rose steeply several thousand feet above the high plain. To the eyes of Samuel Butler the range formed "a long, blue, even line, something like the Jura from Geneva or the Berwyn from Shrewsbury"; to M.P. Stoddart it seemed "a glorious Alpine range, the snowy summits glistening in the pure sparkling atmosphere". Though the broad crests of these mountains showed bare tops in summer, they were a barrier of "the snowy mountains" to colonists of the eighteen fifties, for their height exceeded that of any range in the homeland of the settlers.

The major rivers broke through this range in gorges bordered by distinctive steps of shingle terraces. Beyond each gorge was a broad irregularly shaped basin, with patches of the indigenous hardwood forest scattered on its slopes, which however, were characterized more by faces and gullies of shingle scree. The surrounding mountains sheltered the basin,

1. S. Butler. First Year in the Canterbury Settlement. 1914, p.33.
3. Species of nothofagus - Beech forest - miscalled birch by the early Canterbury settlers.
which seemed a country far away from the coast plain. Winter snowfall
was frequent, and the shape of the land in each basin gave clear evidence
of the past extension of an ice sheet over it - isolated sugar loaf hills,
concealed lakes and scoured valley sides. Tall tussock, thick stemmed
matagouri (the "wild Irishman" of the colonist) and taramea, or
"Spaniard", 4 flourished on the better flats and terraces, such as those
of the Rakaia gorge, which in 1851 "bristled with Spaniard" 5 amidst a
decomposing mat of surface vegetation.

Beyond the basins the beds of the Waiau, Hurumui and Rakaia
Rivers, together with those of their main tributaries, led back many more
miles into the mountains by means of what seemed gigantic furrows.
These were level floored but steep sided valleys, across which shifting
streams wandered, cutting with exact curve the alluvial fan of a sidestream,
shaping bluffs where the parent rock was met, or enclosing grassy islands
in the shingle floor. Beech forest on the valley sides indicated the
approach of the headwaters and suddenly the valleys narrowed as the
abrupt wall of the main divide was reached. This was the true alpine
range with its peaks infinitely shaped, small glaciers perched high above
the valley floor or occasionally in the south extending into the main
valley, and a variety of passes which led to a world that nature seemed to
offer as contrast to that of the east.

taramea - aciphylla.
In the west, the Austrian geologist Von Hochstetter reported in 1861 "the Alpine mountains abruptly assume a very precipitous character, and form, on this the stormy side of the island, a dreadfully rugged, weatherbeaten and rocky coast". This was the common early opinion of the western seaboard. If the general impression of the east was of an arid, open tussock and shingle landscape, the malevolence of a subtropical rain forest, obstacles to travel of bluff and river, and a wet climate were the typical features of the west coast of the island. Though some swampy clearings existed, the prevalent vegetation of the river flats, terraces and low hills of the coastal strip was either a matrix of tough scrub, or tracts of gloomy forest, distinguished from the more open beach stands to the east of the divide by a canopy overhead, tangled undergrowth, ferns and palms. The narrow harbourless shore and rivers were the natural routeways. A journey in constant rain over broken forest lowlands brought vividly to the mind of a traveller in 1863 Van Humboldt's


7. The reasons were not at once apparent in the 1850's and 1860's. Weather systems had not been studied to any degree. There were various speculations made; A.D. Dobson thought excessive rain fell "from the attraction of the high mountains and dense forest", Von Haast argued that icefields acted as natural condensers for the westerly winds. The Southern Alps lie directly across the course of the prevailing moist north to west winds, and thus divide the island into windward and leeward slopes. Up to 250 inches of rain per year falls on the western mountain valleys, whereas in the central basins the annual rainfall might be under 20 inches. The differences in geology also contribute to the contrast.

8. Species of podocarpus: particularly kahikatea, rimu, matai, totara, and miro; together with weinmannia racemosa (kawakawa) and metrosideros lucida (southern rata) formed the main tree types. The forest soon became "the bush" throughout the colony.
descriptions of South American jungle — "... the rottenness of the soil; the wonderful amounts of rain and water, the thousands of decomposed and decomposing trees; hemmed in on every side by kei kei, supplejack and tatarama,9 and the network of roots to crawl leisurely over".10

Southward of the Taramakau valley the dividing range of the Southern Alps was visible from the foreshore, and presented at first sight the appearance of an unbroken wall, particularly in winter months with the sheen of snow above the bush. Underneath light conditions (rarely the same for two consecutive days on the west) an observant viewer, such as R.A.Sherrin, could note that the range rose in "tiers". About fifteen miles inland the lowlands terminated. Three great geologically distinct steps then took the eye from the inner river flats, little above sea level, to the summits of the main range of the Alps, the highest verging on nine thousand feet. First rose "a succession of wooded granite hills ... forming a kind of advance ground to the dividing range".11 The line of these lay in front of a massive structural rift running parallel to the coast. Beyond this rift, the scarp faces of the second tier marked the beginning of the mountains proper. This tier, consisting of predominantly mica schist rock, reached to heights of between five and six thousand feet. The western faces of the main divide, geologically a part

of the eastern grey-weather ranges, formed the third tier.

Only the mountain valleys of the Tararameka river system contained any extent of flats. More characteristically in the southern valleys rivers "plunged into deep rock-bound gorges, confining them to narrow channels, encumbered with huge boulders over which the water dashes madly in wildly magnificent rage".\textsuperscript{12} Occasionally a canyon cut deeply into schist bedrock. Bush hugged the slopes to three thousand feet, above which came a belt of sub-alpine scrub,\textsuperscript{13} followed by meadowland of herbfield and snowgrass at four thousand feet.

Above the open parkland and subtropical jungle stood the alpine range, which in altitude was only a prelude to the major work of the Alps to the south. But the prelude included many difficult passages of its own, and contained the features peculiar to the whole range: crumbling rock ridges; clinging shrub and bush; gaunt moraine wastes and long running shingle screes; together with a deceptively easy eastern approach compared to the steep fall on the west, and a unique alpine flora above the bushline.

\textsuperscript{12} P.G. Morgan: \textit{Geology of the Makonui Sheet}, 1908, p.16.

\textsuperscript{13} Species of \textit{clearia, dracophyllum, senecio} and \textit{hebe}. Wiry and matted, this became the "monkey scrub" to west coast settlers, because of the antics necessary to make progress through it.
Aerial Photo

Winter pallona of snow, tussock, shingle and river bed. Wilberforce River fore-ground, Lake Coleridge middle and the plains beyond.
The main range in summer. Across the Crow glacier to the Southern Boundary of the National Parks at Mt. Murchison (3012') is the left: Rakaia peaks in the distance.

Aerial Photo

The plain of the Rakaia River: Coromandel Plains in the centre.
Native forest or tussock-roaming mammal life was almost completely absent from this landscape. Wild pigs, rats and dogs were a part of its scene at the time of first European contact, but only the rat was a native. Pigs seemingly had confined themselves to the front hills on the east. Rats were present in every valley system, and the effect of wild dogs was noted in the mountain valley of the Hokitika in 1863.

The richness of wild life was in the birds of the forest, but this natural resource was not to last long. "All the birds of New Zealand have a shocking tameness about them, with the single exception of the Grey Duck," noted M.P. Stoddart in 1851. Their tameness was to be their downfall, together with a set of circumstances peculiar to the European development of the colony. The weka, wood-pigeon (kereru), kakapo and native ducks, including the blue mountain duck (whiowhio), provided diet for travellers in forest and valley. The native species of quail (korókó), abundant in 1851, was within a few years virtually extinct. The parrots (kaka and kea), the kiwi and pukeko were not so palatable. A multitude of smaller species added music and ornament to the forest - the tui, bellbird (makomako), bush wren (matuhi), morepork (ruru), parrotkeet (kakariki) fantail (piwakawaka) and rifleman (titi pouamau).

A Maori tale of the takeke being last seen in the upper Rakaia seems doubtful.


15. G.J. Roberts thought that there were signs of a large bird near the Ramsay Glacier in 1880. H.Von Haast: Life and Times, p.473. Roberts later included a Maori report of the takeke in the Rakaia in a description of Maori knowledge of mountain passes. H.D. Skinner: Maori life on the Poutini Coast J.P.S. 1912, p.146. C.E. Douglas found no trace of the bird during the 1890s in the Whitcombe, Rakaia or Wanganui valleys.
and the moa had apparently not been seen by the Polynesian for some centuries before the white man came.

For the traveller there was a limited natural food supply. The seashore and the forest provided the natives with most of their food. Lakes, lagoons and streams abounded in eels. Most of the edible birds were bush inhabitants, and the rain forest provided a greater selection of edible roots, berries and plants than the hardwood forests.

The greatest problem that the new land gave to the colonial was the limitation imposed by its rivers. These, as an early squatter and hopeful acclimitizer wryly wrote, were "magnificent salmon streams to the eye, but incapable of being bound over to keep the peace".¹⁶ That the rivers, short by the standards of other countries, commonly did not "keep the peace" was due to the frequency of storms in the mountains. The characteristic rain, most common in spring, developed with winds from the north. Heralded by wispy cirrus cloud (and often "hogs backs" ¹⁷ on the east), the "norwester" held mastery for its duration over this region. With the onset of a storm, mist and rain would blot out the western ranges; the rivers became swollen with sudden and destructive "fresches" which flowed into old channels and sought out new in the shingle runnels of the eastern valleys, and cascaded down the boulder gorges of the west to spread out over unstable river flats and deposit a fresh pile of drift-wood on the beach.

¹⁷. Torpedo shaped clouds which form east of the divide and foretell a westerly front.
Though with a nor-west wind the belt of rain generally ceased within a short distance of the divide, the east also came under its influence. A grey arched cloud appeared high over the plains, and a gusty dry wind came dust collecting down the valleys - "a wind strangely hot and oppressive ... producing the same sensation on skin as heated air would", as its effect was first described in 1844.\textsuperscript{18}

A Southerly change brought fine cooler weather, but sometimes the cycle was completed when south-east winds brought rain to the eastern plains. Then the west basked in sunshine as a nor-wester in reverse came over the sheltering wall of the mountains. In such weather from the west, "every pinnacle's rugged outline and snowfield will be distinctly seen".\textsuperscript{19} Easterly cloud curling around the divide peaks alone remained to tell of a storm across the mountains.

After a long spell of fine weather, floods could be forgotten, but the nor-wester, to H.P. Stoddart at least, was a lasting memory. He imagined a "flatulent old buffer" at work far above the gorges, and thought credit was due to this "potent demon's" manufactures.

\textit{"I've witnessed all the winds that blow from Land's End to Barbadoes}

\textit{Typhoons, pamperos, hurricanes like terrible tornados}

\textit{All these but gentle sephrys are which pleasantly go by}

\textit{To the howling billowing horrid gusts, sweeping down Hakaia".}\textsuperscript{20}


\textsuperscript{19} Sherrin: \textit{Press} 12 Dec. 1863.

CHAPTER ONE.

THE NGAI TAHU.

"Mehemea ka tuoho ahau me maunga teitei"
(Should I bow my head, let it be to a lofty mountain)

About six hundred natives of the Ngai Tahu tribe lived in the central parts of the South Island in the mid-nineteenth century, their settlements being almost entirely confined to the shoreline. Of that number less than one hundred occupied the coastal strip on the west. These figures were recorded in 1861 after a decade of colonization, and a much longer period of European contact. There had, according to Maori report, probably been a greater population on both sides of the island at the turn of the century, but the depredations of Te Rauparaha's forces, local conflicts and epidemics, had decreased the numbers of the tribe considerably. By the 1861 census, twenty five per cent of the tribe were children under fourteen. Compared with others of their race, they were "somewhat below the acknowledged standard ... lack fine stature and ... possess a smaller measure of comeliness".

The extent of pre-European Maori knowledge of the interior of the South Island has been the subject of a good deal of conflicting comment. The Maori "map" of the interior imagined by various twentieth century writers has ranged from one with the high percentage of blank spaces to one of almost modern accuracy of topographic detail and completeness of nomenclature. It is noteworthy however that the most extensive "map" was compiled by one of the most recent recorder of Maori information. Such a complete "map" could be

1. The Polynesian predecessors of the Ngai Tahu date back in Maori mythology to the Waitaha of the 15th century. The only heritage of importance was that of the working of greenstone, probably originated by the Ngati Wairangi, the west coast tribe whom the Ngai Tahu replaced in the 18th century. The Moahunters may have ranged more widely before the main Maori migration.


imagined from a reading of H. Beattie's *Maori Lore of Lake, Alp and Fiord*, the general thesis of which appears to be that nearly all the higher and more isolated features of the interior were sufficiently well known to the Maori to have been named by them (a most imposing list of place names is included) and that "snow did not stop the Maoris from travelling where duty or inclination called".

The salient facts of Maori history are notoriously difficult to establish. The writer does not feel qualified to disentangle fact from tribal legend, and little weight is given to the recollections of Eruopanised descendants of the Ngai Tahu. The most reliable information on Maori penetration into the interior comes from the earliest European records - in journal, sketch and map form. Some inferences can also be drawn from the distribution of place names - in so far as they are witnessed of passing traffic; and the location of artefacts - evidence of a mainly negative kind.

Knowledge of the interior.

Maori knowledge of the west and east coasts seems evident enough on the modern map. Maori place names can also be followed across the Hurunui-Taramakau route in this region. Maori knowledge of the remainder of the interior is less in evidence. By examining Maori use of divide passes, their knowledge


4. e.g. Rurumata: kau [Whitcombe Pass]; Te umu-kakapo [Mt. Murchison]; Taumata-o-tohu [Mt. Greenlaw]. The two peaks were little distinguished by Europeans until the 1930's. It is difficult to apply any test to Beattie's place names except topographic suggestiveness, which applies to none of the above examples. He himself had little idea where these features were. "The character of the mountains is unknown to the writer." [Beattie, op.cit. p.59]

5. Ibid. p.30.

6. The difficulty of accepting such recollections was outlined by Dr. R. Duff when endeavouring to clarify Maori traditions of the Moa. He wrote"...where the whole may be considered accordingly suspect ... accounts have been increasingly of this nature, the closer the Maori informant was born to the present century". [Duff op.cit. p.286]
of the source of greenstone (located in very rugged country), and which of the high peaks have recorded Maori names, some light might be shed on the problem of Ngai Tahu familiarity with the more inaccessible interior - a problem created by assertions that the main passes of each of these river systems were used for travel to and from the greenstone country. 7

Edward Shortland, the first white man to make the land journey along the east coast, was also the first to record information about the interior. As he crossed each river near its mouth in 1844, his guides informed him that "the sources of the Orakaia were nine lakes, the most northerly being opposite Awahura ... the Rakitata 8 had its source in three lakes". 9 The lakes referred to must have been those in the central basins, with the exception of the specifically mentioned lake on the Arachura pass.

It soon became evident that the customary Ngai Tahu crossing of the island was by way of the Taramakau valley. Heaphy and Brunner on the west in 1846, Mantell in 1848 and Hamilton in 1850 while investigating native land claims at Kaiapoi were all informed of the route, and J.C. Drake’s survey of the route during January 1863 resulted in a map which includes a rare collection of Maori mountain names and leaves no doubt that the topographic features along that alpine path were well established in the Maori language .

7. Beattie recorded Maori names for most passes. The surveyor who completed most of their mapping thought that "All the passes from Harper’s Pass to Whitcombe were well known routes of the Maori", G.J. Roberts to G.M. Manering, 27 July 1896. Letter held by J.D. Pascoe.

8. The "k" often replaces "ng" in southern Maori. cf. Kai Tahu.

The natives did not seem so certain of their ground in the southern valleys however. Canterbury's chief surveyor reported in 1863 that the Kaiapoi Ngai Tahu "had invariably answered that there was no pass in that direction" when questioned about Waimakariri routes. But Brunner in 1848 heard of a pass into the "Waimakariti" country (possibly the reason for the location of a Maori pass from that valley on Stanford's map of 1850 [see p.392] and Harper, when crossing by the Hurunui in 1857, had been told by his guides of an alternative Taramakau pass via the Otira. The most explicit account of the Maori use of the Otira valley was that recorded in late 1864 by a prospector, William Smart. He noted in his journal that "Tinui (Werita Taimui) and Tarapuhi (the fighting chief of the Poutini Ngai-Tahu, at that time aged about seventy) had told him of a small Pah being constructed at the junction of the Taramakau and Otira rivers during the eighteen twenties and eighteen thirties for use as a retreat from the marauding North Island tribes. Native parties had also been accustomed to travel up the Otira river "on their road to Kaiapoi, but the track has not been used for many years".

As early as January 1863 Tarapuhi outlined to the same prospector "the different routes overland to the east coast, one by the Taramakau, one by the Otira and one by the Hokitika to the Rakaia". No official knowledge of this Rakaia pass was gained until March 1865, when enquiries by Canon Stack at Kaiapoi revealed one old man who could remember crossing the Rakaia pass and showed by a sketch map that the route followed the north branch. Apart from this sketch [see page392], which demonstrated that the eastern Ngai Tahu were aware that the Rakaia had four main branches, there is no record, or tradition, of Maori knowledge of any of the other Rakaia passes.

The pass at the head of the south Rakaia, comparatively low for its

glaciated surroundings, has often been regarded as a greenstone route. The "evidence" for this seems consistently to be derived from a confusion between it and the well established route at the head of the north Rakaia, together with failure to realize that this north Rakaia pass was a Hokitika pass for the Ngai Tahu. That the pass crossed by Whitcombe and Lauper was a Maori route was first suggested by W.J. Hamilton in 1865 when he claimed that "all the passes to the West Coast have been known for many years past ... fourteen years ago I was informed by the old Maoris of practicable passes by the Rakaia and Waimakariri as well as by the more frequented one by the Hurumui and Teremakau.... At the time Mr. Whitcombe was crossing Whitcombe pass an old Maori was describing it to Rev. J. Stack of Kaiapoi".  

This was an obvious confusion with the north Rakaia route, but some others have not been so obvious. One of the explanations for the name Hokitika has been that that place was the point of departure for the return alpine crossing up the Hokitika valley, giving rise to the belief that the head of the Hokitika was used. Legends of parties being snowed in, of greenstone being left on a Rakaia pass, and of messengers being sent to the head of Rakaia to bring back a war party, mention only vaguely a Rakaia or a Hokitika pass.

The old Maori's instructions for the Arahura pass crossing described a further saddle from the head of the Arahura into the head of the east branch

15. W.J. Hamilton to Lt. J. 7 March, 1865.
16. The translation of Hokitika (or "Okitika") is the "direct return".
Maori place names recorded by F.C. Drake from his Maori guide, Solomon, in 1883.
- Otoio (Oturini) River and Tahiwai (Tihia) Bush were incorrectly spelt,
  and Sauanga chosen probably ought to have been attached to the mauaite to the east of Lake Brunner (Te Kinga).
of the Hokitika, and so to the Hokitika plains. The Poutini Ngai Tahu were apparently not accustomed to follow Raureka's route straight up the Arahura valley, and the Arahura saddle therefore formed for the Ngai Tahu part of a route to the Hokitika. The source of recent inclusions of Whitcombe pass as a Maori route is an article in the Journal of the Polynesian Society, 1912. All that this article stated, however was: "... one native said that the pass had never been used, the others affirmed that Canterbury natives had come over by it". This suggests nothing more than some awareness of the use of a Hokitika pass. C.E. Douglas recorded his belief that the southern pass was probably a Maori route, but that belief seems to have been derived from Robert's information. R. Firth, following the Polynesian Society Journal article, included the pass as one used by the Ngai Tahu in his "Primitive Economics of the New Zealand Maori" (First Edition); from that source the Canterbury Museum's display map marks it as a greenstone route. From the same initial source M. McCaskill, in the most thorough modern description of Maori occupation of the western coast-lands, includes the pass as a Ngai Tahu alpine crossing.

17. The Arahura pass, according to Maori legend, was the first of the alpine passes to be discovered. A Ngati Waerangi woman called Raureka, in her aimless wanderings, followed the Arahura to its source and crossed to South Canterbury, there to introduce the Ngai Tahu to greenstone and begin the contact between the tribes. (Stack: loc. cit. pp. 86, 87)

18. H.D. Skirmer: loc. cit. p. 142. The article is based on information collected by G.T. Roberts from old South Westland natives.


Yet the early European learned nothing of the mountain country south of the Arahura pass from the Maori. In 1863 when R.A. Sherrin's expedition ascended the main branch of the Hokitika river as far as a singular treble mounded hill called by the natives "Kohiterangi", he observed that:

"This is the highest point on the river to which any name has been given, a proof I consider to be several evidences that beyond this distance they have little or no knowledge of the country. The natives have a custom of giving names to everything they see.... They had no knowledge of any saddle or pass existing at the head of the river until the late Mr. Whitcombe demonstrated the fact".

Sherrin concluded that "with the coastline they have a perfect knowledge, but of the interior of the country they are almost entirely ignorant". 23

This conclusion was reinforced by R.J.S. Harman who examined many of these passes in the 1860's. In 1865 he summed up his experience:

"It is well known that since the foundations of Canterbury the Maoris have been very rarely seen in the upper streams. There seems to be no tradition that they ever used any Rakaia pass except that to the Arahura". 24

22. An observation supported in Stack (op.cit. p. 58) "Not only were the large plains, rivers and mountains named, but every hillock, streamlet and valley. These names frequently contained allusions to people or events, and thus served to perpetuate the memory of them and to preserve the history of the past".


24. R.J.S. Harman to L.T. 16 May 1865. See explanation of "Kaimatau" (p. 2%) for a further discussion of Maori knowledge of the interior.
The modern map is a record of a European, not a Maori, culture. However, early Canterbury surveyors were generally ready to record Maori names in this region. Many of them became familiar with the Maori language and used natives as chainmen or guides. Once Maori names were heard, their interest and euphony usually gave them an appeal to the European. It is from the maps and other records of early surveyors that exact information on early names is likely to be gained, for it was the surveyor’s business to fix the position of features.

There is an interesting correspondence between the boundary of the high mountains and the inland limit of the prevalence of Maori place names on the west of the divide. As far as the line of granite foothills - such as Te Kinga, Hohomu, Turiwhate, Tuhua and Rangitoto - Maori names generally prevail. Beyond these foothills, where each valley enters its true mountain environment, hardly a Maori name has survived. [see map p.25] As only three features of these high mountains have ever been mapped at all consistently with Maori names in this region, it is interesting to investigate whether these features possess special qualities which may have singled them out to the Maori.

The name of the first feature is Tera Tama, an outstanding peak between the Araroha and Taipo rivers. A.D. Dobson has given its original name as "Te Tara o Tama" and explained its significance as a signpost to the

25. Beattie argues that the lack of Maori place names was due to preconceived opinions of Europeans. "The opinion ... that a large part of the South Island had no Maori names was not an isolated one, and was even held in official circles, and this helps to explain why so few names were gathered while there was time and opportunity". [Beattie: op.cit. p.52]
sacred greenstone river - sailing directions for the mouth of the Arahura being to chart a course until the peak and the rising sun were in line. 26

This mountain was fixed by surveyors as a notable pre-European landmark in much more than legend, however. In 1860 "Tarao-o-Tama" was used as one of the landward boundaries for the Westland purchase. Drake accurately fixed the position of "Otomo" peak in 1863 from positions as wide apart as the Taramakau saddle, the Pakihi and the mouth of the Arahura. [see map p. 16 and sketches in appendix on place names] Dobson and J.S.Browning, in 1864 and 1865 respectively, recorded the name as Tera Tama, and to these two surveyors the final map form of the name is probably due. 27 Tera Tama was clearly well known to Ngai Tahu travelling parties and functioned as a guide not only to the greenstone river, but also to the source of greenstone, as will be seen from the explanation of the second feature.

It is generally considered that the Maori had no knowledge of the exact source of greenstone. The second feature of this high interior still retaining a Maori name is the Hura stream which leads to the Hura saddle. This saddle is on the same range as the only proven location of greenstone formations, from which it is separated by the towering Tera Tama. A clear cut saddle, marked on early maps, it was in all probability used by Maori

27. See Dobson's map of Arthur's Pass 1864 [Folder] and Browning's sketch drawn in 1865 [see p.134]
28. The earliest Survey Office (Hokitika) map of the whole of Westland shows the saddle. The map was probably drawn about 1866 but it is difficult to date early maps (and Field Books) from internal evidence.
parties taking an easy alternative to the Arakura pass by crossing via the true head of the north branch of the Rakaia [Pope pass] and the Hopekowa [Taipo] or travelling up that river from the Taramakau to cross from it into the Arakura. 29

Ngai Tahu prospecting parties must have come close to realizing the source of their prize. Drake's field book of January 1863 contains a bearing from the Pakihia to a stream [either the Big or the Little Wainihinihi], descending from the greenstone formations on the Griffen range with the note added - "From here the Maoris got greenstone". 30 A prospecting party was informed of "the names of the different mountains" they could see from the Feraumui flat on the Taramakau. W. Smart, one of the prospectors, recorded that he was shown one mountain "on the Arakura, which they said contained a great quantity of greenstone but very difficult of access". 31 A sketch by Smart confirms that this was Tera Tama, and later G.J. Roberts was also told that "Tara-o-Tama" was one of the sources of greenstone.32

If the Hura saddle was used, the Ngai Tahu surmounted a pass close

29. Mrs. M. Dillon, who has lived for many years in the Taiho valley, remembers that her grandmother, a Kiaiwi Maori, described to her a distinctively shaped rock above the Hura saddle which marked the turning off place for Kiaiwi parties wishing to reach the Arakura valley.

30. E. Drake: E.R. 58 (Hok.)


to the Griffen Range and could have made a circuit round and within a
close radius of it, by crossing the Hura saddle from the Hopea Kowa into
the Arahura, following down that river for some miles, and then crossing
back to the Taramakau via the low pass of the Wainihinihi. Maori parties
must soon have realized that greenstone was not to be found up-river from
the range that these paths encircled. The Hura saddle, as a bypath into
the Arahura, is an interesting survival, for no Maori name exists in
these mountains southward of it. [See map p. 25].

The third name, at different times spelt Kaimatau, Kaimatau, and
Kaimata, was first recorded by Brunner in 1847 for "a lofty snow capped
mountain bearing S.E. from Taramakau". Kaimatau has created a problem,
for it has gained only a periodic and itinerant place on maps.

Close investigation of early records showed that the name in fact
belonged neither to a part of the divide nor to a general mountain zone
(as had previously been thought) but to an isolated peak among the front
ranges near Lake Brunner. The European name for this feature is Mt.
Alexander.

Alexander and Tera Tama are the two mountains which dominate the
central area of Maori settlement on the West Coast. Their height above the
surrounding ridges makes them northern and western outposts of the central
chain and their winter snowcaps stand alone. Not unexpectedly, these were
familiar features to the Maori, and are the only peaks over six thousand feet

33. The translation of Arahura is the "open path", "Hura" presumably
is "the opening".

34. See Appendix on Place Names, p. 218.
between the Grey valley and the Wanganui River for which Maori names have been recorded. 

35 There is no evidence to suggest that the Ngai Tahu were concerned to distinguish the peaks of the main divide. It seems that European attachment of the name Kaimatau to divide peaks had been based partly on the false assumption that Maori names in the mountains ought to belong to the higher and more notable peaks of European days, but those divide peaks visible from the coast form one long indistinguishable line to those without a close knowledge of them.

The fixing of Kaimatau also supported the view that the Poutini Ngai Tahu were ignorant of the more inaccessible southern valleys, for though the Maori lived up to their reputation as good geographers in their accurate description to Brunner of the source of the Taramakau and a tributary of the Grey, their placing of the sources of the Arahura and the "Okitika" were so wide of the mark as to suggest that in each case they were merely guessing. 

36 Similarly, they must have been guessing when they stated that "Kaimatau could be seen from the east coast at Port Cooper".

35. There are no further Maori names definitely recorded for high peaks until Mt. Adams, north of the Watarea gorge, Tururehehau is reached, and then nothing more until Mt. Cook Haorangi. Both of these are distinctive from the coast. Drake recorded from Holitika the name for "a snowy peak 50 miles distant called kokatahai". He gave its bearing as 155°. That peak would be Mt. Bryce, but it is more likely that the plains of the Kokatahi were being referred to.
The above outline of the extent of Maori occupation and knowledge - restricted to the coastal fringes and to mountain routes via the upper valleys of the Taramakau and of the Ararura - is necessarily derived almost entirely from early European testimony. An alternative source of knowledge for a people with no written language - the distribution of artefacts - offers nothing which might extend the degree of Maori knowledge of the interior that is outlined above. No Maori camp has been found further inland than Kowhiterangi on the Hokitika. Maori middens were often found at Inchbonnie - the old Pakihi. Maori ovens have been found at the mouth of the Bealey, and an adze at the bottom of the Otira gorge, but nothing else has been discovered in the National Park. 37 There have been artefacts found also in Castle Hill basin and at Double Hill in the Rakaia. 38

Overland Travel.

Maori journeys were mostly confined to the beaches and nearby rivers and plains. The Ngai Tahu had no Pah in the mountains and only occasionally used the mountain paths for the purposes of visiting relatives or seeking and transporting greenstone. From the brief comments of Harper and others about the methods of their Maori guides, careful records of reminiscences which support the scattered contemporary accounts available, and information recorded about overland travel by natives on the east and west coasts, a picture emerges of a well adapted and prepared traveller, who kept to


38. Information from the managers of Castle Hill and Double Hill runs, 1960.
THE RELATIONSHIP OF MAORI OVERLAND ROUTES AND SURVIVING PLACE NAMES WITH PHYSICAL STRUCTURE

T.T. Tera Tama
- Pounamu Formation (Gritten Range)

Front hills of the West Coast
1. Paparoa
2. Te Kinga
3. Hohonu
4. Turiwhate
5. Tutuia
6. Koiterangi (Camel back)
7. Rangitoto

Viewpoints for Mt Alexander

- Presumed Alpine Passes of Ngai Tahu in

Divide Passes
(a) Harper's
(b) Arthur's
(c) Pope
(d) Browning
(e) Mathias
(f) Whitcombe
(others)
(g) Hurra
(h) Styx
(i) Kiwi
the summer season and known ways for his journeys, generally travelled slowly and often in family groups.

Travelling parties did not cut tracks but kept almost entirely to the beaches and river beds and just "popped over the saddles". 39 In steep places flax ladders were constructed, but the relics of Maori travellers were not benched tracks but food depots, small shelters, the occasional well worn path along a short-cut, or pieces of greenstone worked to varying degrees. They had no maps. Von Haast has recorded that for explaining a route a sand sketch was used "showing the rivers by deep furrows and the mountains by little hillocks". 40

It appears that, at least from 1840, there was no central Pah on the West Coast, the Poutini Ngai Tahu migrating from settlement to settlement. Heaphy and Brunner in 1846 and in 1848 found a major settlement at the Taramakau mouth which was a greenstone workshop. Harper's impression in 1857 was the same, since he found at Mawhera "only a small Pah with some ten to twelve natives all old people". 41 By 1860, according to Haast and Mackay, there was a larger settlement at Mawhera, 42 and by 1863 there

39. W.H.S.Hindmarsh (Waratah): Tales of the Golden West, 1906, p.86. A comment by Merita Tainui included in a chapter on the Maori Chief. also Dobson op.cit., p.55. where he points out that the natives used the river beds as their tracks.


42. Von Haast found the only consolation for hearing "nothing but Maori songs and Maori noise from morning to night" was that the din "could not drown the majestic roaring of the surf". Haast, op.cit. p. 27.
was little left at Taramakau except a potato garden. On the other hand, the Pah at Manhera was found to be well established "in a clearing on the south bank of the Grey ... four acres in extent". On this site there were "five or six huts built of timber and grass and toi and a number of stands for drying eels and other fish, some futtahs [whatas] for storing provisions, about one acre of ground in wheat stubble and some patches of potato, taro and maize, several canoes, tools, nets etc."

Small settlements were located at intervals on the estuaries between there and Jacksons Bay, and any of these could be a starting point for a journey across the mountains. The destination on the east coast was usually the old Kairapoi Pah and occasionally perhaps Waihoia [Ellesmere].

There was "no regular trade [in greenstone] ... a poutini native who had a friend across the ranges might send him a piece of pounamu ... when visiting the east coast they would present pieces to their hosts in return for food". The greenstone expedition from the east coast tended to be a more formal affair when crossing the rugged ranges, according to Canon Stack's account derived from Kairapoi sources:

"Most of the greenstone worked up in the South Island was carried on men's backs in a rough state. The labour of procuring a stone was very great. The tracks across the mountains were most dangerous, and somebody skilled in prayers and chants always attended the party of carriers, who led the way uttering petitions for safety whenever the party reached any particular difficulty. On reaching the coast the tohunga performed certain religious rites and

43. Smart: op.cit. 29 Jan. 1863. Smart heard from Tarapuhi that the old pah had been on the north bank, but had been washed away.

44. Skinner: loc.cit. p. 144. The questions were put by Roberts in 1897 to five natives living at Makawhio River, South Westland. They were, with the age of each in brackets: Hemi (95), his wife (97), Kere (75), Jacob (65), Bill (50)."
retired to rest alone, and in his dreams a spirit would come and indicate the spot where the stone would be found. On waking, he would summon his companions and spreading themselves along the river bed, they would proceed upstream until they reached the spot indicated in the vision, when the stone was sure to be found and received the name of the spirit who revealed its position. This method of discovery is still adopted, and I have a piece of greenstone in my possession that is known by my name, the finder an old chief at Arahure, having found it in a place indicated to him by my spirit during the vision of the night".

How often this overland cavalcade ventured across Stack does not say, but Kere, one of the South Westland natives, stated that parties of the Poutini Ngai Tahu which set off to cross the island "were small, generally five or six, rarely more than twelve, consisting of men, women and children. A chief would carry nothing more than his weapons. His mats and food would be carried by slaves. Each free man carried his weapons, a load of food, and generally two or three mats". Kere himself had travelled across with a party of ten and "stopped about a year at Kaiapoi ... about 1825". Smart was surprised at the local knowledge of the four Kaiapoi natives who travelled down the Taramakau with his party, until they informed him that they had been "over here from Kaiapoi several times and lived at the Grey when they were children. Their fathers or friends took them over when the Kaiapoi Pah was being besieged by Rauparaha".


47. Smart: op.cit. 12 Jan. 1863.
a close connection between the western and eastern Ngai Tahu in the early nineteenth century.

The main pre-occupation of travellers was with food supplies, particularly on alpine journeys. However, the Ngai Tahu were well adjusted to travel, being nomads, not cultivators, and in the west living "entirely upon fish, birds, fern root and Maori cabbage with a few kumerae." Preserved birds were carried packed in bull kelp bags, together with dried eels, whitebait and fern root. Apart from these stores, which might amount to "one hundred weight for seven men", the traveller lived off the land. For this they kept to rewarding hunting grounds - one of the reasons why the Taramakau valley was such a favoured route, for along this there were totara and kahikatea berries in the season, eels to be caught and the weka and kakapo to be snared.

Clothing, footwear and shelter presented few problems in summer months. Flax was the natives' all-purpose plant, making mats for their shoulders, sandals for their feet - sometimes made "of ti or of mountain grass" strands for rope, and plaited straps for carrying loads on their backs. Bundles of flax sticks were also used for making a raft, the natives utility craft on the West Coast for crossing a lake or drifting downstream.

There were evidently variations of size and method of construction of these flax stalk, or sometimes raupo, skiffs. Most were small, but

50 ibid. ti (kouka) - cordyline australis, cabbage tree.
or toii - cordyline indivisa. Both were used.
the “mogie” constructed at the Peraunui for about eight men was a large edition. The prospector Smart gave a full account of its construction.

It consisted of "two long rolls of flax sticks ... in the shape of two huge cigars, small at each end and about three feet in diameter in the middle and twenty five feet long. The ends of each of the rolls is then tied together and the centre spread out by pieces of dry wood to about six feet wide. The centre is then filled up with more dry flax sticks and strongly laced with flax. Small bundles are tied on top to form a gunwale..." and finally came "the manuka poles and flax paddles". 51

Sherrin’s verdict on a mokihi was that it was "bouyant, perfectly safe, almost impossible to capsize ... but it may come apart". 52

The "Kawe" described by Dobson in 1863 53 consisted of two tapering pleated flax straps joined at their centres by a flat strip of flax ten inches long. He found that with these a heavy load once adjusted could be comfortably carried.

The canoe replaced the mokihi for upstream travel and longer journeys. One kept on Lake Brunner was thirty five feet long. 54 A canoe or a mokihi, if well managed as by the natives, could ride a flood down the Grey, Taramakau or Hokitika rivers to the coast, and this was much to be preferred to taking to the bushed bluffs and boulders of the banks.

Travelling was limited for the Ngai Tahu by the availability of food, by weather and by season. Looking “to the clouds and the stars” 55 and doubtless the winds, storms were often forecast, with some accuracy if

the experience of one prospecting party in 1863 was any indication.\textsuperscript{56}

Parties kept to the summer months for their migrations, and invariably for those across the high mountain ranges. The aversion of natives to snow conditions seems clear from the records of early European travellers. Even the Taramakau saddle was too high for winter crossing. This was pointed out to Von Haast by Tarapahi and Werita Tainui when they were describing to him all the passes out of the Grey valley. Whereas the passes to the Waiau were very easy and "could be travelled in the middle of winter ... without any fear of being stopped by snow conditions, the Taramakau saddle is considered not so good because in winter time there is a good deal of snow lying on the saddle".\textsuperscript{57} No white man could persuade the Maori to make a winter crossing, from the first efforts of Heaphy and Brunner (who found that "nothing we had to offer could induce the natives to accompany us until the summer, excusing themselves on the plea of the rivers being too much flooded to allow passage of a canoe")\textsuperscript{58} to the latter surveying parties of Rochfort in 1859 and Browning in 1865.\textsuperscript{59}

\textsuperscript{56} Smart: \textit{op.cit.} 27 Jan. 1863. Smart's party accepted the Maori forecast of "heavy rain and a big flood", and saved themselves from the fate of a neighbouring party whose tent was "under water to the ridge pole" in the morning.

\textsuperscript{57} Von Haast: \textit{op.cit.} p.129. Of the other Grey passes to the Waiau - the Amuri, Hope and Lewis - only the Lewis is of lower altitude than Harper Pass, so perhaps it was being referred to.


\textsuperscript{59} J. Rochfort: \textit{Journal of Two Expeditions to the West Coast of the Middle Island of New Zealand}, J.R.G.S. 1859. Rochfort crossed from Kaipoi without natives partly because "they did not like to face the danger to be encountered in passing through the snow on the dividing range". [p.24] Before Browning's party crossed the Ararua pass in June 1865, R.J.S. Hannam recorded a native's description of it as "only a summer road, and [he] laughs at a winter crossing". [L.T. 16 May, 1865]
Both routes which the Ngai Tahu used across these mountains had
easy access from each side - the difference being in the block that the
pass itself presented in the southern crossing. The Taramakau route
possessed in summer difficulties no greater than those the Poutini Ngai
Tahu would need to surmount coastal travel. Three ways led into the upper
Taramakau; - straight up the river, by canoe if possible, to avoid fording
the Hopeakawa - "the terror of the natives in coming over"; 60 by a
detour to a large lake via the Hohonu tributary and then back to the
Taramakau at the Pakiki flat; or from Mawhero by canoe up the Kotuku-wakaha
to reach the same lake, which generally occupied a day's travelling from one
end to the other. All routes met at the Pakiki (or opening) between the
lake and the Taramakau River.

The route then followed a valley of beech forests, glades and
terraces and led across a low pass into the Hurumui to a cluster of lakes
about fourteen miles down the valley. A second saddle led down the Waitoki,
so avoiding the gorge of the Hurumui. Native opinion on this route, given
to Mackay in 1857, was that "they have a little difficult travelling" on the
western face of the saddle and the gully to the Waitoki where at one place
"they let themselves down on a rope". Otherwise there was "open country
all the way except for bush on the banks of the west coast Taramakau". 62

The complete journey would take between a week and a fortnight.

The other main route via the north Rakaia seems rarely to have been
used as an alternative, and then only by the east coast natives, specially
those from Taumotu, although legend made this the first entrance into the

60. Smart op.cit. 12 Jan. 1863. For that reason, Smart recorded the
Ngai Tahu had "rechristened it the Taipo".

61. The Arnold river. Lake Brunner was given the same name
(spelt Tukuhakama by Heaphy in 1846).

pounamu country for the east coast natives. Raureka's crossing is estimated to have taken place about 1700 A.D., and the implication is that before then the west coast Polynesian had no contact with the east. The tale of a party of natives becoming snowbound and perishing on the pass was on several occasions recounted to early Europeans to explain why the pass had become tapu and fallen out of use. The old Maori description of this route was that it led up "the Waitawhiri" [north branch] to the head of the river where the ascent to a small lake on the top of the pass took three hours, the final two hundred feet below the saddle being "very steep". From the base of the pass the traveller could reach the coast in a day and a half, via the head of the Arahura, and a second easy saddle into the east branch of the Hokitika.

The Primitive Legacy.

The Ngai Tahu attitude to land, and the effect of the European upon the tribe, is suggested in the following chapter. It is necessary also to outline the influence of the Maori upon the white man in this region.

The European was to find that Ngai Tahu knowledge of the nature and extent of the land was not comparable to the local familiarity of North Island tribes. South of the Arahura, the mountain zone was a closed book in Ngai Tahu geography. Despite incomplete knowledge, and the fact that only few natives lived in or visited this region, the influence of these upon the initial wave of Europeans into valley and forest country was to be

From the air in summer the lake shows clearly. This is an unsatisfactory pass, for its eastern faces are sheer. The Ashburn River flows from the lake to the right, but the normal route followed into the Hokitika by following its east branch behind the skyline ridge to the plains in the distance. Mr. Caroline (Kereru) can be seen at the left of the skyline ridge. This is the highest major divide pass in these valleys. (4752)

Aerial Photo: A.D. Harper.
proportionately great. At various times and to different people the native was to appear all too recently a cannibal and a heathen, who in the Pah had become a hard dealer in barter, of no great industry and inclined to bicker over the forms of Christianity. But as an overland wanderer through forest and by water, the savage was to appear noble indeed.

The European found many among the Ngai Tahu who were to be their mentors. Thos who travelled with native guides could probably all at some time have echoed Brunner's testimony to the merit of his Ngati Toa guide - "To Ekehu I owe my life. He is a faithful and attached servant". 64

The native travelled unhurriedly, and in this way were often irritating to the white man. 65 Maori parties were reluctant to press on in bad weather, cross flooded rivers, attempt a rough surf, or wander far from food supplies. They also took Sunday as a regular day of rest. Sherrin related how "Solomon kept us in food during the week, but on Sundays considered it better to fast than to break the sabbath. Unfortunately not being equally scrupulous, I had to spend my Sundays hunting for Kai". 66

Sherrin regarded the disaster of Whitcombe's crossing as "an added proof that natives are necessary to travellers on this coast". 67 Native guides were to him indispensable. In this land of great obstacles, their methods were sound as is evident in the following passage from his journal.

64. Brunner: op.cit. p.102.
65. The reaction however was generally that of Brunner. "I became tired of urging onward progress, for I only breed discontent and do not carry my point". [Brunner: op.cit. p.33]
67. Ibid. 15 Dec. 1863.
"The great secret in travelling on the coast is never be in a hurry. Husband your provisions and, if detained by a fresh, instead of rushing into the river when the ford is impracticable, take your gun and go shooting, or lie in the tent and go to sleep. Natives are the best men to take when travelling. I know not the reason but they stand like a log when the water is foaming about them. They manage their canoes with a boldness and skill which is astonishing. They will find a ford when you will discover not a trace. They will light a fire when all your matches are wet by the friction of kaikomaiko wood; 68 they will watch over you like a mother to prevent you from 'coming to grief'; they will be content with a small quantity of food when food is scarce; and they have a presence of mind in danger, and one free from cowardice when death stares them in the face. Such is my experience of natives on the coast!" 69.

The first white travellers learnt how to use flax for many purposes, how to ford a river with a cut branch (tawhara), 70 how to construct a mokihi or a dugout canoe, and a knowledge of bush lore from the Maori. Native place names and a group of Maori words of local reference (e.g. pakihi, korari 71 and whare) became incorporated into European language. The early years of white contact in this region were a period during which Maori and pakeha met on more or less equal terms. In whaling

68. pennantia eorymboea (kaikomaiko - bellbird's food). By constantly rubbing a sharp pointed stick of this into a hardwood, a pile of smoking dust would eventually accumulate which could be fanned into a flame.


70. There is little record of Maori travellers being drowned. The method of moving in a compact line parallel to the current and holding firmly to a pole was found to be a sound one by Europeans. Torlesse described the spectacle of a Maori party crossing a Canterbury river in flood. A native missionary, Mathias "with great risk got his people across the river, running down it holding onto a long pole". C.0.Torlesse: The Torlesse Papers ed. P.B.Maling. 1958 pp.71-72.

71. This became "koradi" and today, on the west coast, "claddy" sticks.
occupations, on overland journeys and among the initial scattered settlements the methods of traveller and pioneer tended to put everyone on an equal footing. Men who met the Maori on their own ground generally retained respect for them, and many such as Brunner, Mackay, Rochfort, Dobson, Howitt and Mueller became Maori scholars.

Above all it is as guides, and for their hospitality, that the natives contributed to settlement. Many of the Ngai Tahu become familiar and respected figures to the reader of early west coast journals - Werita and Thaia Tainui, Kerei, Tipehi, Peter, Solomon and Simeon. Especially is this so of the dual chief of the Poutini Ngai Tahu, termed by Mackay Tarapuhi te Kaukahi, of whose hospitality a half starved Hammett was to record "I firmly believe he would risk his life or share his last potato without any thought of recompense". 72 Tarapuhi, when younger, "had been all over the country from Nelson to Wanaka" 73 From 1857, when Mackay found him of assistance and Harper travelled to south Westland as his companion, until his death seven years later, Tarapuhi was a constant source of advice and succour to government agent, prospector and surveyor alike.

The death of their paramount chief virtually brought to an end the Maori era on the coast. Tarapuhi died on 8 April 1864, and whereas at the beginning of that year there were hardly any Europeans west of the divide, at the end of the year, relatively speaking, there were hardly any natives. Tarapuhi's tangi brought together the eight white men in the area; prospectors from the Buller (bringing with them "Kegs of sherry and wine"); 72 Journal of J. Hammett, L.T. 5 Sept. 1863. 73 Smart: op.cit. 29 Jan. 1863.
and some of the Kaiapoi Ngai Tahu who travelled across the mountains.

The following description by the prospector Smart of the burial of the old chief in an ancestral vault shows a mingling of Maori custom and Christian service, and fittingly ends this account of the Maori period.

"... A track was cut from the Pah to the burial cave in the limestone rocks, a ladder was made and two Maoris went down to prepare a place for the body and very frightened they looked as they came up again. The funeral service was read in Maori by George Peters and the body lowered into the cave with all the deceased clothes, sticks and everything that he used even to a paamikih, and very glad the Maoris seemed to be when they were once more in daylight. After the funeral the Maoris had a feast to which all the people there were invited, and it was carried out with great ceremony." 74

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74 Smart: op.cit. April 1864.
The vault was the burial place of Tuhuru, Tarapuhī’s father. On 31 November 1860 Merita Tainui was also placed there “with great ceremony” in a zinc coffin. After his death the few remaining Poutini Ngai Tahu shifted their residence to Arakura. The cave was later destroyed when a firm quarried the limestone.

Dobson records that, after she had passed on Tarapuhī’s messages to him, the wife of the chief “retired to the little whare built for her to die in, refused all food, rolled herself up in her mats and blankets, and in a few days died”.

Dobson: op.cit. p.96
CHAPTER TWO.

EUROPEAN CONTACT AND
THE TRANSFER OF THE LAND.

"The savage for his tribe alone,
The Roman for a world - his own".


This region, despite its isolated nature, shared equally in the contact of the first Europeans with New Zealand and its inhabitants. By the time the centre of the east coast of the South Island was considered suitable as a field for colonization, the Ngai Tahu were already changed both by European society and by Christianity. This fact, together with the effect of inter-tribal wars, Te Rauparaha's invasions, and the introduction of diseases upon a small initial population, had left the tribe a negligible force in the consideration of the factors involved in the settling of the eastern plains. The settlement of the west of this region, despite the fact that its shore was to be more accessible by sea from Nelson and Otago than from the east, was to be, by the accident of an administrative boundary, the concern of the eastern colony. European pattern of contact with the west to some extent repeated that related in Maori legend - a first sighting by navigators of the western coast, migration to it from the north followed by a wave of settlement through passes discovered over the Alps.

Early whaling and sealing associations (beginning in Dusky Bay in 1792) and the spread of the Christian gospel in the 1840's through native missionaries from the north had, by 1850, converted most of the remnants of the Ngai Tahu into dependents on European centres in the South Island.
The southern Maori were a migratory race and it is only by outlining the general influences of European contact upon the whole Ngai Tahu tribe that a clear picture can be gained of those directly concerned with this region.

The most cursory reading of Heaphy's and Brunner's journals of their coastal trips reveals the familiarity of even the Pouinti Ngai Tahu with western ways by 1848. The Taramakau village in 1846 reminded Heaphy of a whaling station, and both noted the effect of Christian teaching in creating controversies in every pocket of settlement. This teaching in doctrine must have filtered down from Nelson, probably by means of that itinerant class of natives noted by Buller in 1859 as exerting an important influence. "These bring with them the news of their own tribes, they tell of their advance in civilization, of their industrial pursuits, of the movements, social, moral and political ... frequently coloured ... from a love of exaggeration". The message had become garbled. Heaphy observed that all the Arakura natives "profess Christianity, either Church of England or Wesleyan", but "It is doubtful whether the majority of these natives have any correct idea of the meaning of the service which they repeat or can comprehend the books which by their industry and application they have learned to read ... and the manner in which they connect their new creed with their old superstitions is most deplorable". Heaphy also noted that sealing parties had been located at Jacksons Bay and the

2. W.L.Buller to Native Secretary, 27 Dec.1859 N.A.S.I.Vol.II. p.128.
Taramakau before 1846. In 1844 a whaler Joseph Thoms had been the first to enter the Buller river. 4

The history of fifty years of freelance European contact upon the eastern Ngai Tahu was succinctly summarized by the Protector of the Aborigines, Edward Shortland, in 1844. After recording the intermingling of the "Kai Tahu" tribe with their predecessors, the Ngatimamo, Shortland outlined the customary development of trading relationships between white and brown.

"... When European sealers first began to frequent this coast ... frequent disputes arose relative to women or thefts, and blood was at times shed; the European adopting the Maori mode of satisfaction by killing the next party they met with. By degrees however a more friendly relationship was established, for it was perceived that much benefit resulted from the intercourse with the foreigners". He pointed out that by 1839 twelve whaling stations between Preservation Inlet and Akaroa had been at work, and that settlements had been established. Then "the desire for European property increased; they gave in exchange their labour pigs and potatoes, and latterly land... they have acquired a considerable knowledge of English; whaling and sealing boats have superseded canoes ... they have become expert whalers". He suggested also that conversion by native missionaries was not altogether to be commended. They "busied themselves making proselytes with more of the native than the Christian spirit and caused a schism in almost every settlement between Wesleyan and "Church of Parihia" ultimately destructive of the cause they seek to promote". 5

A decade of settlement virtually completed the process of disintegration and Europeanization. A Native Commissioner pointed out with satisfaction in 1860 that the eastern Ngai Tahu "have already made progress in civilization .... Their domestic habits are gradually assimilating to

4. A.N. Field; Nelson Province 16,2-4,2, 1942. p.60
the European, their clothing as a rule is not inferior to that worn by our labouring classes ... tea is very generally used." 6 The western regions however were to remain only indirectly altered for some years yet, and until 1865 survived as perhaps the last of the Maori migratory grounds as unoccupied by the white man.

The respective attitudes of Maori and European to the land emerge from the procedure of the transfer. This legal transfer had been proceeded by many private arrangements. Some of these had been recorded in 1844 by Shortland, who reported that "many Maoris visited Sydney in whaling vessels and returned loaded with presents as the price of land which were eagerly purchased by merchants of that place...." 7 One of the eager merchants was W.C. Wentworth who claimed title to the whole island. These early "purchases" had little final effect. 8 The major purchases which achieved the transfer were the outcome more of the bargaining of one association with another - the tribe, or what was represented as the tribe, with the New Zealand Company or the Government of the Colony - the matters for negotiation between the two parties consisting largely of the amount of cash to be paid, special reserves for the tribe and the title of various tribes - or sub-tribes [hapus] - to territories. An interesting problem has always been the

6. Buller to Native Secretary 1860 N.A.S.I. Vol. II pp. 129-130
7. Shortland to Chief Protector of Aborigines, 18 March, 1844. loc. cit.
8. Claims for compensation for purchases before 1840 were in some cases granted by the Colonial Government.
equity of the purchases and this hinterland of the Canterbury colony was concerned in several negotiations.

In 1843 when the Deans brothers came to the great plain to "squat", they learned that the "demesne of the Crown in the island is not yet determined". The dual sovereignty inherent in the Treaty of Waitangi inferred that the Maori race was "an independent and organised state, capable of forming a treaty". This status, both impracticable for colonization and unlikely in fact, was not maintained either by the actions of the colonists or the proclamations of the Crown. Subsequent to the Treaty of Waitangi, came the more traditional claim of sovereignty (21 May 1840) over the apparently largely empty territories of the southern islands by right of discovery. The land question was to remain confused during the 1840s, and a temporary reversal in 1845 of the policy of Crown prerogative in the purchase of land allowed the Deans to obtain a title to some territory direct from the natives.

The first episode in white settlement followed with the choice of the plains as a site for a colony under the aegis of the New Zealand Company. The Crown delegated to the Company the right to "purchase, hold and alienate" the land, the Canterbury Association becoming the de facto administrator of about two and a half million acres for an initial period of ten years. The New Zealand Company, to the minds of its London administrators, had fully cleared up its legal obligation to obtain a deed of transfer from the Maori.

long before the first body of Colonists landed.

H. Tacy Kemp's deed, signed by forty natives at Akaroa on 1 June 1848, assumed their control over the whole of the South Island between the Nelson and Otago purchases. There was no attempt to put either Pakeha or Maori ideas of the interior on the map; the coast line was vague and the existence of West Coast natives ignored. For two thousand pounds, Kemp had purchased what was little more than a blank of a map, and the complications which ensued had not been settled by Mantell and others by the time the colonists arrived in 1850.

The inland boundaries of tribal claims were never certain in the South Island. Kemp's purchase was eventually only to apply to the east from Kaiapoi to the Otago block and presumably back to the snow mountains. The Poutini Ngai Tahu had come in January 1850 to Kaiapoi to claim a small sum set aside for them by Mantell. Torlesse, who described them as a "... wild but ... an intelligent and well tempered set of men", reported that "to their great disgust" most of the money had been spent by others.

After this fiasco the land west of the divide became forgotten by Government officials, and the native for his part thought that, because no

11. The question at issue was not only territorial, Legal title to even this restricted area was disputed in the Native Lands Court sitting in Christchurch, 1868. The decision by Judge Fenton was in effect that the Ngai Tahu deed of 1848 had not according to English Statutes in force at the time provided a title to the purchaser, but that in practice it had. To the nine points of the law of possession, he added the tenth of Ngai Tahu acceptance of that possession. N.A.S.I. Vol. II pp.260-266.

12. Torlesse to his mother, 3 Jan.1850 op.cit. pp.122-123.
money had been paid for it and it held their precious greenstone, the
land should remain terra incognito to the white man. 13

Possibly with the same argument in mind mentioned by Hamilton in
connection with the Kaikoura purchase-that "the recent gold discoveries are
likely to raise the value of the land in the eyes of the Maoris to the most
extravagant pitch" 14 - the Central Government negotiated at intervals
between 1857-1860. The major work of mediation was carried out by the
Assistant Native Secretary at Nelson, James Mackay, who between 1857-1860
made three long expeditions to the West Coast. 15

In March 1857 an offer of the Poutini Ngai Tahu to sell their lands
for two thousand five hundred pounds was received. Mackay carried on the
negotiations in 1859 and finally on 21 May 1860, after the main stumbling
block of Ngai Tahu desire to retain the country between the Grey, Hokitika
and Lake Brunner had been removed, the deed was signed at Mawhera. Thus all
the west of this region "with its trees, waters, minerals, rivers, lakes and
interests" excepting "certain lands reserved from sale" (the most notable
being one thousand acres at the mouth of the Mawhera and "a very large reserve
... at the river Araraua ... in a strip up each side of the river") 16 passed

13. As evidence for this see annotations on Leonard Harpers Journey
in A.F.Harper: Memories of Mountains and Men 1946. p.201. also
John Rochfort at Kaisipo 1859 "... not able to induce a single
native to join me [across the island] owing to their objection
to exploring country not yet purchased from their race by the
Government and also they did not like to face the danger ... through


15. The Central Government had made payments to other tribes, claiming
Poutini Ngai Tahu territory by right of conquest. Mackay in 1857
pointed out that the title was not considered extinguished by the
natives.

16. This reserve of the Ngai Tahu greenstone grounds was for 2000 acres
in the deed, but when G.M.Mueller surveyed native reserves in 1866
he found that the inland limit - Mt.Tuhua - was about 14 miles inland
instead of the 6 that had been thought. G.M.Mueller: "My Dear Bonyie"
The Westland Purchase

PLAN in MARGIN of THE
ARAHURA
DEED of PURCHASE
21ST May 1860

The land coloured pink is that sold to the Government
James Mackay
May 21st 1860 asst. Native Sec.

Copy of map included with the deeds of the West Coast purchase, 1860.
to the Crown. 17 Mackay returned north with a hundred of the four hundred sovereigns which he had brought still in his possession and a more encouraging report than those of his predecessors of the territory. 18

The Association and Government, after the experiences of the New Zealand Company in the North Island, and of Kemp's deed, were motivated in the final land purchases in the middle South Island by a desire to be open and thorough even if "as economical as possible". 19 The work of Mantell, Hamilton and Mackay was that of Maori scholars ready to consider the importance of tribal history. What the Maori customary attitude to land and transactions in land had been is more difficult to interpret. Territorial jurisdiction, according to the pioneer student of South Island Maori history was complicated by the fact that the Maori was far from a sedentary race. "Every Maori" states Stack "was required to know by what title the land claimed by his tribe was held, whether by right of original occupation, conquest, purchase or gift". 20 Stack's classification suggests that the

17. If the boundary fell through Tera Tama, the upper Taipo Valley, rich in quartz reefs, has not been negotiated for.

18. E. I. Lord has stated that whether Mackay was brought by the gold potential was a "question much discussed by my father and old timers" in the 1860's. E. I. Lord. Old Westland. 1940. p. 80.

19. Governor Grey to J. W. Fox 27 April, 1849 in his instructions to complete the purchase at Bank's Peninsula.

boundaries of tribal domains always tended to be in a state of flux, and this was certainly the case in the early nineteenth century. European purchase might be considered as the last of the appropriations of tribal lands, different from those preceding it in the eyes of the Maori only in that it was wider than usual and procured by a superior stranger to their society - the pakeha. For this appropriation the Maori had to receive some satisfaction for losing his few thoroughly utilized territories (the most useful of which were demanded, with some success, for reserves). Of this concept of satisfaction few races could have had firmer ideas than the New Zealand aborigine. The Maori word "utu" covered most of its meanings and could be freely translated and was used in the light of this context of land purchase 21 as compensation for loss, which perhaps puts the Maori and European understanding of the issues on common ground.

However subsequent treatment was not to be so equitable. From the beginning of settlement, Torlesse had suggested that "because they are few in number the natives here are to be neglected, a circumstance not much to the credit of the Local Government". He added that "these natives say that it dare not treat the northern natives with similar coolness", 22 - an interpretation later placed on native treatment by Mantell and Mackay also. 23 The decline of the Ngai Tahu which began early in the century was not stayed,

21. Torlesse in 1849 met a native travelling south to Otago to claim his "utu" of £200 for the Otago purchase. Torlesse: op.cit. p.71//
but furthered by colonization. Their disintegration can be followed in
a series of reports of Native Commissioners in the 1860s and 1870s which
pointed out that the administration of the Ngai Tahu had fallen between the
two stools of the Provincial and Colonial Government. In 1864 a native
commissioner wrote "the Kai Tahu [are] the most inert and listless tribe
that I ever met ... it is a melancholy fact that the aborigine race is fast
disappearing from this province". Mackay in 1865 commented on the injustice
of the restriction of natives to reserves and the prevention of Maori purchases
of land in their own tribal territories; pointed out the "increase of lazy
and vagabond habits"; and noted "that the idea has become deeply rooted into
their minds that the race is doomed to extinction". This prevalent
deterioration continued throughout the period of laissez faire settlement
until the general Maori renaissance in the 20th century.

27. Reserves provided income for the Ngai Tahu - particularly the
  Greymouth reserve. The Ngai Tahu made good whalers, prospectors
  and chainmen, but did not settle into European life well at first
  otherwise. In 1920 a Commission on Native Claims awarded a total of
  £354,000 compensation to the Ngai Tahu for their alienated land. In
  1944 the Ngai Tahu Trust was established to administer a grant of
  £10,000 per year.
Knowledge of the interior before European settlement of the central Middle Island

A portion of Arrowsmith and Sons map of New Zealand (published July 1850). Included were Brunner's version of the west, the Canterbury Association's mapping of the eastern plain, and Māori information on the interior. Passes are shown by both the Waitohaki and Hurumui to the west coast, and Mātata is placed as the source of many of the major rivers and close to Lake Coleridge.

New Munster, the Middle Island and Taiari Pouinamoo are the trio of names given to the island.
"The resources of Port Cooper will best be developed by persons of considerable capital... I can imagine no situation more helpless or discouraging than that of a community of small means placed upon little patches of ten acre or even fifty acre sections, thus prevented from availing themselves of the principal natural advantage of the country - its pastures."

D. Muir: Nelson Examiner, 20 July, 1844

The natural assets of the eastern plain were considerable-level open grassland and a climate similar to the east of England. The resources of the plain were first tested by the Deans Brothers, who proved the extent of grassy plain back to the "snowy mountains", and established a run for cattle and sheep as well as a homestead area near the sea for cultivation. Therefore they provided examples of both alternatives which faced the Canterbury Association - intensive husbandry or large scale grazing. The first colonists, who arrived in December 1850, had purchased only fifteen thousand of the expected seventy five thousand acres. This immediately placed under a handicap the Association's plan to transplant the forms of English society and economy, by encouraging the Anglican squirearchy and country labourer, together with the high society and the poor of the cities, of the South of England, to play their allotted parts in the development of the colony.

The nature of the local environment and the hard facts of colonial competition quickly overturned the original scheme. John Deans pointed out in 1853: "few (emigrants) will pass Australia unless we offer some bait for them." The cloistered settlement was exploded by men who rose to the "bait" of the natural resources according to their individual experience of colonial conditions. The settlement did not disintegrate however - Christchurch was, after all, the natural centre for an arc of plains - and the manner of its progress was in

accord with the philosophy of colonization of its broad-minded founder, J. R. Godley, who had argued from the beginning of his great enterprise that the seed had to flower according to its natural environment. Godley in his speeches before and after his visit to New Zealand consistently maintained that the function of a colonizing nation ought to be "to found, not to govern" colonies. He could with justice claim in his farewell speech to the colonists at Hagley Park, 18 December 1852 that, if not by the Association, "the plains if colonized at all would have fallen into the hands of a very different set of people from those I see around me." The idealism of the Association founded the colony, but its ideals were not retained in the colonization of the plains, and consequently had no influence upon the later settlement of the land beyond the mountains.

The final achievement in common with many other colonies in temperate lands, which expanded during the nineteenth century as a result of the individual energies of a diverse immigrant people, was to be far from a reincarnation of High Church and class distinctions, or the rigidly mercantilist colony of the previous century. It was to draw much nourishment from the nature of the land and the manner of its settlement.

The Association's territory was explored and mapped within two months of the arrival of the preliminary expedition under Captain Thomas in December 1848. The explorations of C. O. Torlesse, undoubtedly the most active and adventurous of the preliminary surveyors, and of others who journeyed inland before the end of 1850, were not entirely attributable to the planning of a colony. Torlesse had, partly with an eye to furthering his career, extended an expedition along the southern coastline to examine the plains south of the Rakaia back to the

foothills. The northern extent of the plain was examined by W.J. Hamilton and
the botanist D. Lyall who formed part of the complement of the survey ship
H.M.S. Acheron. These expeditions reached into the ridge and basin country as
far as the Hurumui River. Later an Acheron party gained the summit of Mt.
Grey, a low hill which formed a north-west corner post of the plains. Torlesse,
as a result of a much tougher climb than Mt. Grey, found what magnificent
parapets the front ranges made, for from there could be viewed the whole extent
of the new colony's proposed territories - "a fertile country about three
million acres in extent, one hundred miles on either hand." On January 1849
Torlesse and a Maori ascended Otarama - the range south of the Waimakariri
gorge. Exhausted and thirsty they reached the summit and gazed at "a romantic
and chaotic mass of mountains to the westward - the main ridge of the island,
capped with everlasting snows." Torlesse wrote later of his satisfaction in
that he had "been up a snowy mountain." F. Strange, naturalist for the Acheron,
followed him into the same area looking for botanical specimens. The summit
he reached was not as high, and from it he saw a sight that he thought "very
singular and wild; whole sides of mountains appear to have slipped into immense
gullies below." Strange considered that an earthquake must have been respons-
ible. In January 1850 Torlesse was in the Association party which ascended a
hill of moderate height north of the Rakaia gorge to see "the course of the
river westward and a branch leading from a lake, beautiful snowy ranges..."

The tide of official or semi-official exploration receded, and was stayed
by the task of battling against the formidable difficulties of creating a link
between the port and the plains and constructing barracks with limited funds for

6. Torlesse: op. cit. p. 51. The lake was named "Coleridge" by the Association
surveyors. There were several members of the Canterbury Association with
the name of Coleridge.
for the arrival of the settlers. The next wave of exploration was to have a different composition and purpose.

The Association's right to administer land sales on the plains had been made subject to previous occupation. This gave some of the pre-Adamite colonists a lever with which to demand land, and in addition Australian squatters were virtually waiting at the door as the Association settlers moved in. Godley, who was not antagonistic to pastoral farming as a colonial activity, supported them all by a "compact" in May 1851, which introduced a sliding scale for the cheap leasing of large areas of land. In February 1852 the arrangement was made formal, and large runs between five thousand and twenty thousand acres, termed Class III, became the desideratum of all colonists with capital. All that was necessary was to apply at the Land Office with a description of the territory, and, if there were no predecessors or competitors, land was obtained for lease. An Australian system of free selection was thus established, which, with modifications, lasted to the 1860s. The plains were rapidly covered by a pattern of rectangular sheepruns which joined the Association settlement at Christchurch to the nests of pre-Adamite settlers in the Malvern hills and on the down country between Double Corner and Motanau. The rush for the open spaces was however to be free of the disorders of the American prairies and the Australian interior, just as the later movement of gold seekers was to be a more moderate example of social chaos than most gold-rushes of the nineteenth century.

By 1861 roughly six million acres of tussock grassland had been appropriated by sheepmen or their agents as a result of the search for "country".

7. D. Wakefield Colonial Attorney General to W. & J. Deans 11 March 1851 quoted from the relevant act: "Nothing therein shall prejudice the rights...annexed by virtue of any deed or contract made or entered into previously ot the passing of the Act." (Deans: op. cit. p. 1850)

8. "All agree that there is no field of investment now open in the world at once so safe and so profitable, as pastoral husbandry in New Zealand..." J.R. Godley: Letters, 29 May 1850.
Perhaps the only thing most of them had in common was money. These capitalists were drawn from other settlements in New Zealand; from the Australian colonies; from parts of the Empire further afield; or directly from England, though many of them were "pilgrims". Without the influx of capital and adaptable sheepmen the Association settlers may have created a colony — but Torlesse wrote of the core of settlement near Christchurch in April 1851 that "the Canterbury settlers are very unenterprising at present."9

Exploration was the prerequisite for the prospective run-holder of the 1850s. When the rush to get land developed, Charles Sidey began a lucrative, though hazardous, trade in sheep across the Tasman. Early in 1851, he and G.E. Mason, a young man of twenty-six, recently arrived from England, followed Hamilton's route inland to the country marked on his map as "tall grass plains". Torlesse recorded on 27 March 1851: "Mason, T. Hamer and Caverhill back from expedition to north."10 Sidey had applied for land "thirty miles inland" which he named "Whytoni", and Mason settled on that run.

At much the same time the country to the south-west was examined. An Australian pastoralist of twelve years standing vividly recorded his migration to the new land of promise, and described his impressions of its appearance. After a bad drought in Australia, M.P. Stoddart was considering salmon fishing at Vancouver when he was turned aside at Sydney by meeting a friend — "an early overlander and forlorn hopoaleader." The attraction of "Magnificent grassy plains without a head of stock" was too much, and Stoddart, fired with the same spirit as his friend, "who had been pushing and fighting his way on the

9. Torlesse to his mother, 6 April 1851: op. cit., p. 211.
outskirts of civilization for years"¹¹, boarded his ship with two thousand head of sheep.

From Lyttelton Stoddart set out with another Australian J.W. Aitken, (whose flock had been reduced from two thousand to one hundred and sixty on the trans-Tasman voyage) over to the plains where they "had only to travel onward until we arrived at what we might deem to be a suitable place for forming a station."¹² Stoddard described how they passed through the town of Christchurch, where the Land Office was the only large building and the allotments were laid out among the fern, tutu and coarse grass. The quirk of Stoddart's facile pen suggests that the sight of the cart with its pack horses, tools, tent and provisions was incomprehensible to the Canterbury Pilgrims.

"Our expedition at that time was looked upon with a good deal of curiosity as singularly enough the most valuable feature of our province seemed never to have entered the heads of the original band of Pilgrims (viz., the dividend which nature immediately gives from the use of the natural grasses, especially in a climate enjoying only a negative winter). The dreamy expectations however of a peaceful happy existence upon 50 acres sections, fed with High Church Wanna apart from colonial strife or race for filthy lucre, were soon swept away by the teachings of necessity and its practical instincts, and the ideal vine and fig tree life under the banner of Excelsior soon melted into the common sense struggle for success in the new sphere of action."¹³

They travelled across long stretches of waterless plains to the first sight of the Rakata gorge where they found the valley "alive with porkers in all stages of growth, from saturnine old boars chewing their tusks to mothers of families frisking about."¹⁴ Stoddart thought the country promising, even after seeing what a "howling wilderness"¹⁵ it became during a nor-wester. He nego-

¹¹. M.F. Stoddart: op.cit., p. 1. The friend was E.W. Templar, both Stoddart and Templar later became members of the Canterbury Provincial Council.
¹². Ibid: p. 3.
¹⁴. Ibid: p. 5.
tiated for Aitken's sheep and decided to settle on the banks of the Rakaia. The run he took up was later numbered 17 in the Association's regulations (see map p. 57).

Stoddart and two others, one of whom had been intrigued "by the glimpse of a lake gleaming among the distant mountains", were the first white men to explore as far as Lake Coleridge. They set off in May 1859, attracted by "the charm of being the first "explorer" and "the possibility of meeting a living moa". A change to southerly weather conditions stimulated a philosophy of empire building in Stoddart. It was in such conditions "that man's highest and best qualities are brought into play... in a way that would perhaps make it the best practicable examination for honours leading to good appointments on the outskirts of our Great Empire." The party crossed the Acheron stream and came to the lake which Stoddart lyrically described as "a beautiful sheet of water ten to twelve miles in length embosomed among hills. Gravel beaches encircled its margin and where rocky points jutted out the Rata hung over the clear water and by its dark myrtle-like foliage softened the general sternness of the scenery".

Stoddart found the expedition a delightful picnic; the party saw their first wekas which "walked off with anything that took their fancy"; hooked a large eel; spent a day hauling one of their horses out of a bog at the end of the lake; and found time to climb high enough to see the "wild chaos of mountains which barrier an easy intrusion into the West Coast." On their return a match was put to the vegetation and for three weeks after there could be seen "a lurid glow in the night sky." Stoddart recorded that the following year the country was "a blackened waste, but it made a most complete clearance." 16

16. Ibid. p.p. 6-10.
Doubtless others were just as mobile and restless as Stoddart but he has recorded his coming to the country. He narrated how "the pigs furnished many a cask of pork," but soon disappeared in favour of sheep.

The first occupation took the pastoralists to the ranges. The upper valleys of the Horunui, Waimakariri, and Ashburton were guarded by narrow gorges. The Rakaia was broader and allowed entrance to country that was already chartered vaguely on the Association map. Here The Point (No. 33) was taken up by the Stadhunks brothers in May 1852, Snowdon (Nos. 86 and 86A) in May and June 1853 and the beginning of Lake Coleridge station (No. 121) in October 1853.

A line of runs occupied the slopes of the ranges from the pre-Adamsite stations of Dalethorpe (Nos. 23, 1510) and Homeshub (No. 41) to the inland Horunui downland. All this pastoral country was relatively accessible, except that the fording of the Rakaia delayed expansion south for a short time. The difficulty of "crossing the Rakaia or Cholesdley in time to stop the runs within the limit" was pointed out by the Commissioner of Crown Lands in August 1853. By mid-1853 land was very hard to get. John Deans, a good eye-witness to developments, noted that "almost every acre is taken up."19

A period of relative stability in settlement ensued. Though occasional parties may have gone beyond the front ranges, they have left no account. After the Australian gold discoveries of 1851, there were desultory attempts to search for gold, if reports in the Lyttleton Times during 1853 are any indication.20

TYPICAL APPLICATION FORM

APPLICATION FOR DEMPSTERING LICENSE.


I hereby apply for a License to Dempster Stock upon the land hereinafter described, subject to the "Rules and Regulations for the Occupation of Waste Lands of the Crown," in the District of Canterbury.

Kings of the River

Location of the Land

Description of the Land

Estimated Extent of the Land

Number and Description of the Stock

Name

Residence

Description

Date

20th September 1888

Subject to previous applications.

See map p12 for location of Run 272.

Hand. (Initials)
In 1853 the whole of this region became a part of the Province of Canterbury. The Province had no immediate need of its hinterland, which had aroused little official interest so far. There was one evidence of interest on the part of the Association's preliminary survey. Torlesse recorded in 1849: "Captain Thomas says that he shall go to the West Coast in the summer — probably I shall go if he does not." Torlesse later, as he became interested in the geology, botany and birdlife of the colony, professed himself interested in getting behind the ranges. In 1854 he agreed to a suggestion by Fitzgerald that he should make an "exploratory trip to the West Coast," but nothing came of this. W.J. Brittan in noting the completion of the settlement of the plains in 1854, added: "with respect to that part of the Province which lies between the Snowy Range and the Western mountains very little is yet known. It is said that among the hills are several wide valleys but nothing positive can be stated."

A solitary appeal for recognition of the western lands was made on the part of the Lake Coleridge runs in 1855. Some argument followed a Provincial Council motion that "a grant of one hundred pounds for traversing the country between Lake Coleridge and the West Coast" be made. C.E. Fooks, an engineer and not very successful runholder, argued optimistically that inland there existed "a rich tract of country available for pastoral and agricultural purposes... with easy access to the coast... over a fertile country twenty miles in extent." In the ensuing discussion W.J. Brittan, the Commissioner of Waste Lands, pointed out pertinently that "there were not enough funds..."

22. Torlesse to Provincial Secretary, 23 Nov. 1854, Provincial Papers, Canterbury Museum.
country were needed this was only for the purpose of extending the pastoral
district. For such purpose the stock owners were probably the best explorers.\textsuperscript{24}

This was an accurate forecast of the outcome. The first extension of
the Canterbury Colony west of the mountains was to be the culmination of the
movement which began with the adoption of its "waste lands" for pasture, the
last suitable areas for which existed above the gorges.

\textbf{Behind the Mountains}

As in 1851, and again in the early 1860s, a stage in exploration for
pastoral country was dramatically advertised in October 1857 by the signs of
a great conflagration visible from Christchurch. The \textit{Lyttleton Times} noted:

"These fires appear to be burning in the direction in which
explorers would take going up the Waimakariri or between it
and the Hurunui: This tends to keep up the excitement
occasioned throughout the province by the recent discoveries
of new country. We may add that several parties have left
Christchurch for the purpose of the exploration".

The newspaper confidently prophesied that "no doubt the greatest portion of
our unknown lands will be inspected during the ensuing summer."\textsuperscript{25}

What was behind this fresh surge of interest? The demand for sheep
country had not lessened in a colony which, through its wool exports, was
advancing as rapidly as any of its rivals. One of the first squatters, re-
porting to Captain Thomas in 1856 the progress of seventy sheepfarmers holding
between ten thousand and sixty thousand acres each, judged that "unless fresh
districts are found to the westward...the province will be overstocked in five
years."\textsuperscript{26}

\textsuperscript{24} Report of Proceedings of the Provincial Council \textit{L3T2}, 4 July 1855.
\textsuperscript{25} Editorial: \textit{L3T2}, 21 Oct. 1857.
\textsuperscript{26} R. Waitt: \textit{Progress of Canterbury}, 1856.
By this stage tussock land was at a premium, and a prospective runholder kept his journeys from the newspapers and the public. Thus it is from diaries and letters that most information is to be gained. The single exception concerned the upper Hurunui country. The Provincial Engineer, Edward Dobson, investigated at the request of G. W. Mason, the possibility of constructing a road through a gorge into the Hurunui headwaters and thus his report was published. Dobson reported that beyond this gully, which had "hitherto been regarded as an impassable barrier" there lay "sixty thousand acres of good sheep country... The whole of the district is so valuable that I would recommend it being at once opened for sale by the construction of a bridle road through the great gorge..."  

This was the first knowledge of major exploration to the west, and the Lyttelton Times seized on the news to fill out the report of "this discovery which adds wonderfully to our knowledge of the geography of the province." The party had attacked the precipitous gully in question with spades and pick-axes, and in four days a track was cut." The gorge had led them into "a smiling and beautiful valley...on all the streams there are lakes, six in number...all beautiful. The soil is well covered in grass and not at all swampy." Pushing on beyond the lakes they had reached a low saddle into a western stream; The saddle had been crossed, but the party had been stopped by four days bad weather and forced to return.  

The country gave prospects of "an abundance of timber for the destitute plains of Hurunui" and the paper added: "it is almost too exciting to be told that rock...abounding in quartz indicates more than a probable presence of

28. The pass was estimated at one thousand feet above sea level, and the river thought to be the "Brumer" (Arabura).
gold." Above all there was sheep country in the mountains. With some perception the Lyttleton Times pointed out it was likely that other major rivers "divide in a similar manner what has been called the Snowy ranges." Thus "exploration will be found advantageous, for if the west coast be worth nothing when we arrive there, every acre of land found on the way will give room for population and add wealth to the settlement."

The newspaper account concluded with the report that "the whole available land discovered was taken up as a sheep run." Those who made immediate application were the others of Dobson's party: G.E. Mason, H. Taylor and C.E. Dampier. Mason was granted thirty thousand acres (Run 212) and Taylor twenty thousand acres between the lakes (see map p. 65). C.E. Dampier was granted the country to the south, to complete the sixty thousand acres.

That suitable country for sheep existed in the mountains was already known. Australian sheepmen and the late arrivals in the rush for runs had not needed the urging of the Lyttleton Times. The upper valleys of the southern rivers had been explored in the previous year. E. Waitt, when he called on C. Hunter Brown at Double Corner (no. 8) in March 1856, learned that his neighbour "had only returned the evening before, having failed in ascending to the source of the Courtenay." There is no saying how far up the river Hunter Brown had travelled, but the time of the fires was more than a year after this. In October 1857 four ex-Australians applied for pastoral licences.


30. C. Dampier came out as a solicitor to the Canterbury Association, and did not immediately occupy the run. H. Taylor became well established, and his run was setting off point for the westward journeys of 1862 and 1863. Mason apparently sold his runs in the early 1860s. Mason was possibly the first white man on to the Harumui Saddle. See D. Cresswell: Squatter and Settler in the Waipara County, 1952, p. 59.

Sketch map provided by Mason and Taylor to define their runs. Sumner was the President of the Canterbury Association.

Sketch of the head of Lake Sumner by Edward Robson (Son).

35. Named by the party after a heron which they saw upon it.
in the upper Waimakariri. In one swoop almost the whole Waimakariri basin had been occupied by means of the submission of a sketch map with boundaries marked that all four - J. Hawdon, J. Pearson, T.W. White and J.C. Aitken - agreed to regard as final.\(^{32}\) (see map p. 67). C.C. Haslewood at the same period applied for three thousand acres in the main gorge, south of the Broken river.\(^{33}\)

Simultaneously squatters had moved into the Rakaia and Ashburton valleys. On 23 April, T.H. Potts, F.G.F. Leach and H. Phillips, searching for unclaimed sheep country, went beyond Lake Coleridge and followed the north branch of the Rakaia until the river divided into five streams. Here the mountains began to close in, but despite the appearance under cloud of a pass to the north, they returned. A year later they took horses on the long straight trek up the south branch of the Rakaia. Before reaching the high ranges towards the head of the river, they crossed to a wide opening in the hill country on the south bank which led to a basin behind the Ashburton gorge. After investigating the small lakes of the basin and another wide opening which led south into the Rangeitata, they followed down the Ashburton gorge to the plains where "many were the enquiries as to what we had seen and where we had come from."\(^{34}\) As a consequence of this expedition Potts and Leach (the latter with a partner Dudley) applied for a total of forty five thousand acres in the basin. Pott's run became No. 181 and Leach's No. 175 (see map p. 90). During 1857-8, the remainder of this "Lake Heron"\(^{35}\) basin and the south bank of the Rakaia to

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32. A dispute concerning Hawdon's boundary arose in 1864, and the Chief Surveyor referred to an agreement to abide by the boundaries on "a sketch map submitted by the several parties interested at the time." (Cass to G.C.I., 23 April 1864, C.S.I., E. (3)).

33. This, together with the fact that Castle Hill was taken up later, suggests that the Waimakariri was explored through the gorge. Pearson and J.H. Sidibottom are thought to have started the fires. Pearson was the agent of Hawdon, and searched the country for him.

34. T.H. Potts' Diary in possession of D. McLellan, Christchurch.

35. Named by the party after a heron which they saw upon it.
Panorama of the Waimakariri basin from The Dome. The lakes from the left are ‘Grassmere’, ‘Charlotte’, ‘Blackwater’ and ‘Pearson’.
"Lake Stream" was split into runs. The first push across both branches of the north Rakaia - the Harper and the Wilberforce - saw small runs taken up by J. Phillips (195) in 1857 and J.J. Oakden (278) in 1858. Neither however was stocked for two or three years, and a larger run (289) was selected by H.A. Scott in 1859. The major part of the pastoral occupation was now complete, though a third phase in the mountains can perhaps be noted after 1860, when existing runs were consolidated and a few extensions made.

More venturesome journeys were needed to define the absolute limits of pastoral country. Its westward extent in the Hurumui was confirmed for the pastoralists of the 1850s by the journey of Leonard Harper towards the end of 1857. This, as the Lyttelton Times put it, demonstrated that there was "no country of value" further in that direction. Because Harper was not simply interested in grazing country, he continued beyond it and achieved one of the notable journeys of New Zealand pioneer travellers, though it was to him "a boyish prank" (he was then aged twenty).

At Kaiapoi he had been excited by report of the alpine route, and had persuaded the Chief Taihiti to allow him across the mountains. On November 4 he, his companion Locke, and the natives were at Mason's run at Waitoki, soon they were beyond European settlement at the lakes. They pushed on until the Hurumui "assumed the character of a mountain torrent", then crossed the saddle through melting snow and gazed down on the Taramakau, flowing for twenty

36. The general movement of runs is traced from information contained in L.D.G. Acland: The Early Canterbury Runs, 1951.


38. He had some thought for sheep country. In 1864 he stated that the journey "was undertaken merely from a desire to explore this hitherto unknown part of the island, and for his own purposes as a sheep farmer." Proc. Royal Geog. Society, 1864, p. 49.

miles "between high snowy and thickly wooded ranges." On 14 November, they reached the furthest west of any previous European party, and at that point, also ran out of food supplies. Their month's provisions, "which they had to carry on their backs...got spoiled from the difficulty there was in crossing and recrossing the river," and Harper existed as the natives - in improvised mini shelter, wearing flax sandals, and obtaining food mainly from birds shot by him or snared "with wonderful ingenuity" by his guides - until the party reached the sea on November 26 "utterly destitute". Lower down the Taramakau Harper glimpsed the large lake which Brunner had reported, and the party came down the Taramakau from the mountains in traditional Maori manner by fashioning a "agoghi", on which they rode a flood, in company "with trees and bushes torn away by the torrent." The party had spent twenty-three days on the crossing from Mason's run, but they were delayed by much bad weather. Harper thought the route "not only rough and precipitous, but entirely bare of grass." Harper's account of the rest of his journey, with Tarapuhi as companion, following the coast and Brunner's footsteps to the south, was singularly brief, but it was clear they went inland nowhere. Three months after setting out he was back in Christchurch, having been held up by snow on the pass. Harper arrived with Tarapuhi and Locke at the Lakes without much food "and practically no clothes."\footnote{40} The Lyttelton Times acknowledged the contribution to the geography of the province of this first crossing of the island, which had "joined Mr. Dobson's route to those of Mackay and Brunner." The knowledge was stored for the


\footnote{41} *L.T.*, 20 Jan. 1858.
future however. Harper sent a gross of clay pipes to Tarapuhi in return for his assistance, and Canterbury to all intents and purposes forgot about its western lands for several years.

The dividing range seemed clearly the end of the journey for Canterbury sheeplemen and they concentrated on pushing their leases into all the isolated pockets of "country" which had been missed in the first applications. Two youngsters, J.H. Baker and F. Mathias, caught the fever for grazing country shortly after Baker's arrival in Canterbury in 1860. In April they explored a dip in the ridge across the Rakaia from Lake Coleridge to find a pocket of "undulating downs" at the head of the north Ashburton. As in many cases this was merely a speculation, and they made the most of their luck by selling the lease within two months. 42

Between 1859/1863 Dampier's run was extended into the south Hurumui. W. Thompson took up the head of the Esk river in 1858-1859 (Runs 294, 309, 310). E.C. Minchin occupied the Poulter valley, and in 1860 the Goldney brothers formed their run on the south bank of the head of the Waimakariri bounded on the west by "Glacier creek". 43 In 1861 the Porter brothers extended their leases back to the higher slopes of the Craigieburn range (294, 399) and the major occupation of the Waimakariri was complete.

The wider ramifications of the Rakaia system took a little longer to be penetrated. Samuel Butler applied for the river flats above Lake Stream in 1860 (see map p. 72). A block of ridges between the Mathias and the main river on the opposite side of the valley was applied for by J. Palmer in 1863 (447). 44

42. The value of 15,000 acres was £300 - "A good bit of pocket money for a couple of youngsters under 19 for a few days work." J.H. Baker: Surveyor in New Zealand 1932 Ed. R. Baker, pp. 27-28.

43. It is not clear in the application (J. & S. Christchurch) which creek this name referred to.
following the exploration of it by his manager at Double Hill (272). R. McKay. This made a trio of runs each taking in a vast extent of range country between adjacent northern tributaries of the Rakaia, and stretching more or less back to the main divide. The others lay between the Mathias and the Wilberforce (at first "Rakaia Forks" station), and between the Wilberforce and the Harper. The homestead of the latter (Glenthorne Station) was well established by 1861. "In a lovely situation" wrote Archdeacon H.W. Harper "...set in an amphitheatre of snowy peaks... Major Scott has planted his house and lives there with his family and employees."

In a brief intensive exploration Samuel Butler gained within a few months of his arrival in 1860 what must have been an unequalled topographic knowledge of central Canterbury. He was a born wanderer who could feel as soon as he saw the mountains that he "longed to get on the other side of them." This, together with his desire to double his capital sent him searching to the head of all these valleys for "some little run that had been overlooked." Butler was to write in aphoristic vein, "exploring is delightful to look forward to and back upon, but is not comfortable at the time, unless it be of such an easy nature as not to deserve the name." He might also have added, delightful to relate, for his journeys are described with all the zest with which he set out both to discover a new land, and become "an old chum, as the colonial dialect calls a settler."

His first journey with a runholder took him into the remote forested Awoca valley beyond Lake Coleridge. He strikes a characteristic note of excite-

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47. Butler: Brawbun, p. 27.
Map drawn by J.H. Baker for Baker's application. Baker being a survey cadet, was able to produce a more polished map than was included with most applications. (cf. Form on p. 60)
ment from the start, when he wrote he could not sleep on his first night out because he "kept on looking up and seeing the stars." The scenery next day among the bush and peaks of the Avoca was "glorious." The possibility of a pass "to the other side" at the head of the valley drew them above the bushline, where Butler became acquainted with the cheekiness of the alpine parrot. Butler commented dryly that they were not to be led astray from pastoral practice: "... our object was commercial, not scientific; our motive was pounds, shillings and pence, and where this failed we lost all excitement and curiosity." The exploring urge was there however, although they turned back "...we were yet weak enough to have a little hankering after the view from the top of the pass." A pass to the "other side" was to be lasting attraction in Butler's travels.49

Next he travelled alone on horse up the Waimakariri finding no "country" but viewing a "magnificent mountain chain of truly alpine character"50 and being tempted by the prospect of a pass up a north branch. He then tried the Hurunui and found it least likely of all the valleys to provide fresh pasture.

Butler eventually decided on a small side valley of untouched pasture in the Rangitata, and from that built up his sheep kingdom by purchase; The next summer he set off on his longest and most interesting period of exploration, and that which gave the setting for Breanhop. His companion was J.H. Baker, and Butler set out on this occasion more as an explorer51, to find an outlet from the valley to the West Coast. The two main branches of the Rangitata led to glaciers, so they tried the most northern branch. A dawn start from its head took them early to below a saddle, and an hour's climb of a gully of frozen snow brought them to the summit.

49. Butler: F.Y., p.p. 54-57
51. "More as a traveller and an explorer than as a person intending to make money by the expedition, (Forest Creek Manuscript; Appendix to P.B. Haling: Samuel Butler at Mesopotamia 1960, p. 54).
Baker merely noted that the view was "splendid" but looked down to the Rakaia, across which they noticed "quite a low pass evidently leading to the west coast." But this first recorded close view of an alpine landscape stirred a more imaginative response in Butler which enabled him later to recreate the feeling of anticipation at the thought of seeing "over the other side", and dramatize the sense of discovery that he obtained from that ridge.

"By five, I was within ten minutes of the top, in a state of excitement greater, I think, than I had ever known before. Ten minutes more and the cold air from the other side came rushing upon me.

A glance, I was not on the main range. Another glance. There was an awful river, muddy and horribly angry, roaring over an immense river bed, thousands of feet below me...

Another glance, and then I remained motionless. There was an easy pass in the mountains directly opposite to me, through which I caught a glimpse of an immeasurable extent of blue and distant plains."53

The pair returned to Butler's run and on the last day of January 1861 set out through the Lake Heron depression into the neighbouring Rakaia valley to explore the pass, but found a barrier of gorge and rain forest in the westbound valley. On their return Butler applied for his ten thousand acres "of inferior country."54

New Zealand is perhaps fortunate that Samuel Butler arrived when he did. The freshness and scale of the land and the vigour of the life around him equally formed their impression upon a great writer, and his account of Canterbury was the first to possess sufficient combination of experience, observation and penetration to rank as a valid description of the newly won land both for his own age and the present.

52. Baker: op. cit., p. 37; Baker had, with C. Harper, been up to the head of the Rakaia the year before but "did not find any new country worth applying for." (Ibid., p. 29).
Butler's activities, which provided almost the last chapter in the pastoral invasion, produced from him pen pictures of its setting which are unsurpassed. The first five chapters of *Brewhon* form an evocative epitome of pastoral pioneering - its enclosed yet vast scale of landscape, a primitive waste yet profitable land which "contained millions and millions of acres of the most beautifully grassed country in the world." 55

His descriptions convey accurately the appearance of the high country valleys. The view from the ridge tops while mustering seemed "as upon a colossal model or map spread out beneath." 56 The valley below was "utter loneliness...only the little faraway homestead giving sign of human handiwork." 57 Over all stood out "the vastness of mountain and plain, of river and sky...and the solemn peacefulness of the untrodden region." 58 His vivid imagination pictured the high country as a place where

"...the land has no rest, but is continually steep up and steep down, as if nature was determined to try how much mountain she could place on a given space; she had however still some regard for utility, for the mountains are rarely precipitous - very steep, often rocky and shingly where they have attained a great elevation, but seldom if ever, until the immediate proximity of the West Coast range, abrupt..." 59

Butler did not remain in New Zealand, but his stay was long enough for him to contribute to its first century's tradition of the "man alone" exploring and contending with nature.

57. Ibid:
There was an easy pass in the mountains directly opposite to me, through which I caught a glimpse of blue and immeasurable plains.

Butler, Erewhon p. 27.

The river ran in many winding channels looking when seen from above like a tangled skein of ribbon, and glistening in the sun.

Butler, Erewhon p. 17.
Thus on horse or on foot the squatter had explored the east, and with hack, pack-horse and dray had taken the few essentials to establish a run. Then followed a mob of sheep driven across the plain, man-handled into rivers, and run on natural boundaries of ridge or river.

Exploration had provided few problems. A tethering place for the horse, a mackintosh sheet round the swag to keep dry either blankets or Australian opposum rug, and a cheerful fire were the necessities, "with companions of robins and the occasional weka... the hollow of a saddle for a pillow... and blankets strapped round the body"60; cold and discomfort were minimised. For the run, the bullock team and dray formed the essential transport, and the traveller or potential runholder might set off with such things as "tent, tea, flour, sugar... a tin pot and two tin pannikins... a gun, powder and shot"61... or, if casting in a dray, include "tools, household utensils, few and rough, a plough and harrows, doors and windows, oats and potatoes for seed."62

The problems of establishing a run and maintaining the sheep increase were considerable. On the run, the first and most important step was to "apply the match,"63 Then it was thought the ground became more even, less clumpy, Sweeter and, with the manuring of sheep, a period of "three to five years (would) transform a wild mountainside... into a fair sheep run to carry one sheep to four to five acres."64 A water supply was vital for the site of a homestead and a patch of bush close at hand was useful. Yards were first erected. Then followed a hut, generally made of sod until the shingle splitter

60. Butler: Forest Creek Manuscript, op.cit., p. 51.
64. Ibid.
could supply timber for a house. Then would some commonly something over a thousand ewes to begin the flock.65

If lucky in his choice, the runholder had easy country — in the mountains a good share of sunny terraces and slopes. He then had to concern himself with the problems of management: first, to gain some knowledge of sheep — for many of these Colonials had capital but no farming background. Expert labour — worth from fifty to sixty pounds a year if living in66 — was of great assistance but this was not always easy to obtain in the colony. Then there were the problems of the tutu plant, the limitations of river crossings to which the colonists sometimes became too callous, the variability of winter weather, which might bring early snow to the high grazing basins or a blanket snowfall to the low country, and above all the arrival of scab which rapidly infected flocks. On the whole, however, the pioneering run was a profitable investment. This lucrative society of runholders was sufficiently attractive to persuade young "cadets" to pay between fifty and one hundred pounds a year to live on a station and learn the "trade".67

Extension of the Survey

Surveying in the new colony had from the start been closely tied both to the need for exploration and the policy of Crown land tenure. In Canterbury the occupation of the plains had conformed to the original conception of colonial land law in that legal title could be marked on an existing map. In pastoral country beyond the front ranges surveying was to be a matter of recognizing the

67. Tripp, op. cit., p. 4. After the 1860s according to L.D.G. Acland a run often became a liability, but during the 1850s many fortunes were made from sheep farming. Tripp quotes the example of a man who arrived in the colony possessing £150 and the owner of 50 acres of land and, by the income from his own sheep and that gained by running sheep "on terms" for others "in 15 years" had become worth over one ccc (c. £10,000).
de facto occupation of sheepmen, who perhaps had gained an extra sense of empire-building by virtue of the fact that the land was theirs "by right of discovery". Precise map-making was never quite to catch up with the Waste Land Board's eagerness to facilitate the occupation of country. The contract surveys that on the whole were adhered to by the Canterbury Survey Office between 1849 and 1865 gave rise to varying standards; and by 1860 Cass wrote that attempts to define runs and pre-emptive rights would create "many problems as a result of the past system."63

Edward Jollie was the first to extend the map into the high country when he carried out a survey of the runs about Lake Coleridge in 1855. By this time Jollie was a runholder, and made the contract compass survey for one hundred pounds. Cass pointed to future practice when he stated that one hundred thousand of the one hundred and twenty thousand acres surveyed was pastoral country and "that runholders should be called upon to bear a portion of the expense as it is to their advantage to have clearly defined boundaries."69

Again C.C. Torlesse was to carry out the most energetic mapping of the east. The central part of Torlesse's instructions directed him to map the upper Courtenay and Ashley, "the rivers and tributaries as far as the country may appear available for pastoral progress"; but he was also to record topography: "to fix the position of the principal hills...numbering, lettering or naming these...and sketch in the woods, swamps and base of the mountains and the snowline; for his map he was to receive ten shillings for every thousand acres that were taken up.

63. 11 Oct. 1860, C.S.L.E. (1) ChCh.
69. 7 July 1855, C.S.L.E. (1) ChCh.
He began with the survey beyond the Ashley gorge and climbed Mt. Penyber in the Puketeraki range, on which he found "a great variety of new and curious plants." The view into the upper Waimakariri was more extensive than from his first summit in 1849, and the prospect further into the valley did not appeal. The basin was "backed by grand blue and white ranges which were again topped by more distant lofty peaks such as Mt. Cook. The scene however looked chaotic and did not strike us as promising a smiling and cheerful homes - it chilled me to look at it." 70 Back in Christchurch Torlesse plotted the results, selected twenty-five thousand acres for himself, and then set off via his Ronside station to reach the head of the river. His companion was Fred Revell and the two left the plains on 2 February 1853.

They crossed to Lake Lyndon, one of their first meals giving the key to how they lived, as they cooked a Paradise duck in a "humu" with damper added. They followed across the basin to "Iona pass," 71 then to Lake Pearson and returned east down the Broken River to the bed of the Waimakariri. They turned back up the river again and camped well beyond where the basin ends and the main stream follows its steep-walled valley. There the horses were left to feed and the two walked to where the "Courtenay issues from the main range of mountains and where its tributaries issue with such a rush as to block up its channels leaving the water to ooze underneath." 72 Torlesse found the head of the valley to be "pretty wooded cheerful country particularly with what we had passed through, but very limited." 73 His map (see folder) shows that he must have noted carefully the lie of the north branches, for they and the direction

71. Craigieburn cutting.
72. Torlesse: min. 19 Feb. 1853.
73. Ibid.
of the divide are accurately drawn. The largest north branch they followed, and
found it unusually gorged and rough travelling. By the time they reached its
head they had "altogether had enough of water." Torlesse felt "so very
poorly" that dosing of nips of rum and quantities of arrowroot became necessary.
They attempted to ascend the pass from a westerly fork beyond "snowcap" but
the weather closed in and they retreated down the gorges in front of a nor'wester.
Torlesse had become disgruntled with exploration by the time the pair reached
the Broken River country. This gave him "a positive pain to look at from its
barren and misshapen appearance." When they reached the plain a month
after their departure to feed on mutton, he felt he "had just had enough of
it." For his map, however, he was paid two hundred and fifty pounds, and
Revell received twenty pounds. The Lyttelton Times briefly reported the result
of this first recorded exploration of the Waimakariri headwaters. The pair
"had travelled up the river to its source, about thirty miles from the west
coast, and also to the source of the northerly branch, the Waitawhihi."73

In 1861 Cass pointed out: "The necessity of a survey of pastoral country
between the headwaters of the Rangiata and Hurumui every day becomes more ap-
parent, as litigation and misunderstanding must ensue in the present imperfect
knowledge of the country in question."79 The annual report of the Survey Office

74. Ibid, 20 Feb. 1858.
75. They reached close to Worsley's Pass.
77. Ibid: 4 March, 1858.
78. L.T., 13 March 1858. The Waitawhihi was the northern branch of the Wakaia
(see p. 34). There may have been some questioning of natives beforehand.
The country was already applied for, and this north branch named the Poulter.
This was the last exploration by Torlesse in Canterbury. That he had mapped
the head of the Waimakariri and the Poulter was unknown until recently. His
map was found in 1858.
79. 5 Oct. 1861, C.S.L.B.(I) ChCh.
in October 1861 promised that by the following summer and autumn there would be "a complete survey of all the country held under pasturage licence in the province...six million acres." In November 1861 the survey of the runs behind the mountains was let in two contracts. The job of Robert Park, once a New Zealand Company surveyor in Wellington, at that time a Canterbury runholder, and F.C. Wilson, was to mark the boundaries of the runs and draw up documents by which each runholder could accept his allotment. Park produced the first map of the Rakaia headwaters in 1862, leaving out only the Avoca, and the divide zone beyond pastoral limits. The work was not without its dangers, and he did thoroughly that which was required of him. Wilson's rough traverses between the Waimakariri and the Hurunui added nothing to Toulousse's map. He was still engaged on the work in 1864 when he requested an extension until the following summer. However Cass in 1863 summarized the results of the completed survey of the settled part of the province, at: "The cost of triangulation half a penny an acre, detailed topography two and a half pence an acre... But wooded hills were more expensive." 

In 1863 a road was completed across Porter's Pass to Craigieburn "over a most difficult country at very small expense." Five thousand bales of wool were reported as waiting transport in the upper valley and the Provincial Council voted two thousand pounds for work on the road in return for an agreement by the runholders that they would purchase a total of one thousand acres. The Pro-

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30. 9 Oct. 1861, C.S.L.B. (1) ChCh.

31. C.H. Stuart, one of Park's party, fell and broke a leg, while bringing a message down the Rakaia. He was found dead many days later. InT, 10 May 1862.

32. 7 May 1863, C.S.L.B. (2) ChCh.
"At dawn ... the mountains were as pale as ghosts, and almost sickening from their death-like whiteness."  
Butler: FY, p. 57

The sun rising on Mt. Whitcombe as seen from Mtn's Knob.

"The scene however looked chaotic and did not strike us as promising a smiling and cheerful home!"  
Lapotere.

Lake Lynder and the Rakaia valley under a nor-west sky, from the slopes of Mt. Telford.
vicial Engineer forecast an inland route beyond the mountains via the Tak
river to the township reserve at Lake Sumner, which perhaps would become a
junction for bridle roads "to the valleys of the Waiau, Mauia, Grey and Terama-
kau." There is no mention of need for a direct route to the opposite coast,
but this was the beginning of a road to the west.

The hunt for pasture had ended and the colonial settled into his inhe-
ritance. At first it had been thought that, in the high country, runs would be
snowbound, their grasses too tough, shepherding impossible, and the distance to
a port too great. However the last half of the invasion had almost doubled
the pasture lands and created runs which had the advantage of being, in the
words of Lady Barker, in "the backest of back country" where "...no fear had
these distant squatters of cockatoos." The land appeared made for man and
flocks, free from forest and racial conflict. A pastoral world seemed the
destiny of the province. Cattle raising was possible but the market was limited.
Sheep gave the assured investment estimated in 1850 as at least thirty per
cent.85

A class of property had quickly risen in the province, seemingly the
antithesis of Wakefield's idea of responsible land lordism, for though the
desired end of a landed hierarchy had been achieved it was with the wrong means.
The runholders were of various origins, and there was little of a central core

Museum).
84. Lady Barker: Station Amusements in New Zealand, N.Z.Ed. 1953, p. 78.
The 1860s.

Grasmere Station Album

Photograph.

Grasmere Morning Gang.

From a painting by R. Park

held by T. Dean.

Castle Hill Homestead.
about their estates. Their life in a small hut set in a vast area void of other humanity began, as Butler aptly described, "as a kind of a mixture of that of a dog and that of an emperor." 36 But for the runholder this was a temporary and a pleasant pioneering phase. That style of living lasted more among the shepherds and became the way of life of the musterer. The customary shepherd's life of 1860 was well described by R.D. Booth as living in a "little one roomed hut, sometimes two rooms built of mud and thatched with grass, an earthen floor, with a large chimney and fireplace...supplied monthly with a sack of flour and a bag of tea, sugar and salt, etc. ...possessing always at least one dog and a horse and possibly a cat." 37

However in the colony the race for wealth tended to blur the outline of social classes and prevent the growth of an aristocracy. Aspects of the leisured life developed among runholders, but in not quite the same social atmosphere at "home". C. Tripp, at the same time as he pointed out to the labouring classes of his home county that in Canterbury "sovereigns are as plentiful with you as shillings are here" added that in the colony "we all work, an idle man is counted as a disgrace." 38 In the colony where everyone had expectations, society tended towards one big middle class in a world of commercial attitudes to land. "The incessant financial discussions are wearisome" sighed Lady Barker, "where the treasure is there will the heart be." 39

On the whole the results seemed eminently satisfactory. Fitzgerald, at

38. Tripp: op. cit., p. 4.
the end of the first Superintendency of the Province, with a small acknowledgement to early Association ideals included amidst full encouragement to the squatter, summed up his satisfaction to the Council in the society that had been evolved:

"You have had to make Laws for the management of the waste lands which should at once open up the country to the small farmer and working settler, and at the same time afford such security to the squatter as would induce him to pursue his lucrative though speculative trade...interests often supposed to be hostile or incompatible...we may anticipate the maintenance of the present Laws in all their main features for many years to come." 90

From "Browne's map of the Province, 1862." The extensions to the 1856 map (p. 59) include Tordoff's survey of the upper Waingari and Park's survey of the upper Kaikai
CHAPTER FOUR.

THE PROSPECT OF GOLD.

"I doubt if such a wilderness will ever be colonized except through the discovery of gold. In future years, as elsewhere, the 'aura acora fames' may tempt men to venture, and so fulfill its appointed task of opening up an inhospitable waste to settlement and cultivation". [Archdeacon H.W. Harper of the West Coast in 1861, Letters from New Zealand, p.57.]

The Provincial Council and the Survey Office were engaged during the 1850's to a large extent in furthering sale of the waste lands, arranging for their administration and opening up communications on the east. In the early 1860's more emphasis was placed on the mercantile interest during the controversy over the railway tunnel and the scheme to create a port for Christchurch. The third alteration in balance was still to come, and neither the Provincial Government nor the squatters were quite sure whether another change was wanted or needed. Developments across the divide were to make it a watershed for the province in more ways than one.

Prospectors of the early 1860's who first described the west of the province to the east, claimed that the Provincial Government had ignored their efforts, and that the Provincial Geologist had doubted their usefulness, despite the fact that after the Otago gold rush of 1861 there was a demand in the province for its own goldfield - at least as long as it was accessible. Nevertheless the Provincial Government had not shown an entire lack of interest in its western territories, and that this was the case mostly stands to the credit of its geologist, Julius Von Haast.
In November 1860 the coal measures on the south bank of the Grey River were placed in a reserve of five thousand acres. However coal was not a sufficient inducement to populate "a wilderness". Haast informed the Superintendent in October 1861 that the most likely places to find gold on the east were in the Waitaki Basin and the Hurumui headwaters. By October 1862 Haast had investigated the southern area, and placed his estimate nearer the mark. In that month the area on the western coast from "The river Grey to Kotaura Haaka ... to the paddle of the Taramakau ... on the south by the Taramakau to the sea ... N.W. by the sea coast" was proclaimed as a "Mineral reserve". In August and September 1863 township reserves were set aside on the "Hokitiki", the Taramakau and the Grey River mouths.

The proving of the western goldfields was achieved by a handful of prospecting parties who ventured to the west across the mountains or by sea, and, often in the company of the Poutini Ngai Tahu, explored the "mass of impenetrable forests on the western side of the ranges". These prospectors of 1862-1864 were the western equivalent to the pre-Adamites of the 1840s on the eastern plains.

In 1857 the Oakes brothers are said to have sailed along the west coast and found gold at several places. L. Harper had noted its presence in the same year, but these discoveries, like Brunner's and Harper's journeys, had little influence in creating interest in the west. Between 1856-1859 gold was being worked on the Aorere. The first interest in the southwest developed from Nelson, and Mackay's, Haast's and Rochfort's  

expeditions were sent within a short time of each other during 1859 - 1860. To reach the lower Grey valley, John Rochfort’s party, consisting of himself and three "hands", set out from Kaipoi in February 1859 with instructions to map the southern boundary of Nelson Province. They crossed the Taramakau saddle in "breast high snow" and reached Lake Brunner through the Pakih, Rochfort being the first European to record the complete route from it to the Grey River. They had no natives with them and found that travelling over such country required considerable adaptability. In five days the party hollowed out a canoe from a white pine tree, and then crossed Lake Brunner. They sailed at ten knots down the 'Arnold' outlet to the Grey River, completed their surveying and arrived at Wairere Pah, Rochfort writing that they "for six long months had submitted to worse than an English pauper's fare". He reported that there were "Favourable indications of gold" near Lake Brunner.

In 1861 gold workings were opened on the Buller River. In July 1861 a suggestion was made in the Provincial Council that a reward of one thousand pounds be offered for the discovery of a "payable and workable goldfield". The reward was proclaimed in August. The pattern then became one of individual prospecting parties raising hopes in the west, followed by

2. Haast's and Mackay's 1860 expeditions are outlined in chapter five and chapter two respectively.

3. As one of Rochfort's party had shot himself in the Taramakau valley, the men had to be taken back to Taylor's Run. Then Rochfort, accompanied by James and Alexander Mackay travelling to Wairere Pah to open the land purchase negotiations, crossed the pass in the snow storm.

4. J. Rochfort: loc.cit., Rochfort's use of the terms Westmorland and Westland in his reports of these expeditions led to the adoption of Westland in later years.
cautious government support, this sequence prevailed until early
1865, by which time gold was pouring out of the province, and the
Provincial Government set out with great energy to prove that it could
cater for a goldfield.

In 1861 prospecting parties had been in the head of the Hurumui
valley, but it was not until the end of 1862 that parties started prospect-
ing in the western valleys. Captain Dixon of the schooner "Emerald Isle"
in December 1862 was the first to claim reward as a result of obtaining
gold in the estuary of the Taramakau River, but the expeditions of
several overland parties fully paved the way. The journeys of W. Smart,
C.L. Money and R.A. Sherrin have been recorded in some detail. Sherrin's
first expedition was with a survey party, and this had been preceded by a
Government track cutting and prospecting party led by R.C. Howitt. All
expeditions were in late 1862 and early 1863, and during these months the
west was first closely examined. The tracks of the parties crossed
several times.

Charles Money and Rowland Davies, well educated Englishmen
"knocking about" in the colony as Money termed it, met Howitt's party in
the upper Hurumui in October 1862, and then crossed the saddle, using
blankets as a "carpet bag", and flax for binding. Money, a colourful writer
wished to see the colonial world. His reward for a journey was "the
dash of hazardous adventure to give it a zest". The view from the saddle
appealed to him. "I can never forget the exciting moment when we first
reached a point where we could see the windings of the river Taramakau,
which stole like the silver tresses of some ancient dame over its time
woven bed". In late 1862 the pair were in the Taramakau valley, shuttling
back and forth across the saddle, each probably having the distinction
of being the only white man west of the divide. They rescued two men (a Frenchman and a German) who had preceded them and were in a helpless state from starvation. Having assisted these back up the valley, Money and Davies eventually reached Lake Brunner, thinking they were the first to do so since Harper. After experiencing what became common occurrences in the Taramakau valley - flooded camp sites, living on damper and snared birds, competing with hordes of rats for food and suffering from the attacks of mosquitoes or sandflies - the pair followed Smart's party to the diggings newly established at the Hohomu Creek, which they reached by rafting down the Taramakau River in January 1863. Not having much luck there, they decided to move on to the Buller diggings where stores were available. They arrived at Mawhera in time to join a welcoming ceremony for a Maori from Kalapoi. The feast included "honey, potatoes and salt kaka" together with some of the contents of a "gigantic basket of eels (over two hundred)".

Early in 1862, W. Smart had prospected behind the Puketeraki range without success. First making sure that the official gold prospecting expedition would not prejudice any claim for a reward, he, R. Day and a companion Frazer set off on 24 December from the lower Hurunui and followed

5. Lauper and Johnson presumably see p. 94 and p. 96. Laufer was a Swiss, but spoke German.

6. C.L. Money: Knocking About New Zealand. 1871. pp. 21-30. Money and Davies spent a year at the Buller diggings. There they were met again by Smart who described their "peculiarities ... in being lightly clad and carrying very light swags. Davies' eccentricity lay chiefly in boots which were seldom fellows at the same time. I believe he could tell you the doings of nearly every English politician for a century back". They were probably enabled to travel light by the lessons in bush lore given to them by Howitt see p. 90. Smart: op. cit. 22 Mar. 1863.
Maori directions for the route across the mountains. They took horses to the saddle, but from there carried their "swags", finding it necessary to ford the Taramakau River fourteen times in the day. The pair who had been found in such a dire plight by Money and Davies were taken off their hands. Smart's party who were better provisioned, "fed them all right on stewed pigeons and damper, and returned them to Taylor's". The party then moved down the Taramakau valley after being joined by another group of four which included a negro. On 12 January the parties separated, Smart's party forded first the Taramakau, then the Taipo River and reached the final mountain ridges, where at a flax swamp a mokihī was constructed with the assistance of natives who had helped them across the fords. With this mokihī they reached the Hohomu creek. A little upstream from this, on a small island, Day had found a piece of gold "as large as a shilling".

At the junction of the Hohomu creek and Taramakau River, see map p. 14, the party settled in, making a sluice race and a saw pit. On 13 January Smart recorded that Money, Davis, French and Everest arrived. They, with the addition of several natives who were also prospecting, made a little colony of miners in the bush. Smart's party were confident of the paying quality of the ground which gave them "very fine and scalely" gold. Smart by means of a Maori travelling back to Kāiapoi sent a letter with gold

7. The equipment and food carried was "a tent, two flys, clothing and blankets, pick, shovel, tin dish, frying pan 14lbs. shot, 2 lbs. powder caps, bacon tea, sugar, 200lbs. flour, salt, matches, candles, a few nails - nearly 1cwt. each". Smart: op. cit. 3 Jan. 1865

8. The spot was just above the present Kuraera bridge, and Smart in an annotation made after 1865 wrote: "This was the first piece of gold got in this part of the country".
enclosed, requesting provisions. Their position was not without its
drawbacks. The sandflies became "a most dreadful torment ... to pen
a dish of dirt your hands are covered in blood and we have to tie our
trousers at the ankle, and to sit still for one minute is impossible".
Their stores did not last long. On 29 January Smart's party moved down the
river and north to the Hawera Pah, Smart noting that there was gold on
the beach "as fine as the finest snuff". No provisions were available at
the Pah except those belonging to a man named Freeth, but Tarapahi went
back with them to see how gold was obtained. By 5 February the prospectors
were back at the Pah, and eventually the party moved up the beachline to the
Puller River, making a good stock of "pararas" before
departing. Rations were limited to a sack a day, bidi-bidi tea, mussels,
the top of nikau palms and birds until they reached European settlement.

Money, Smart and the rest travelled as private adventurers, but
R.A. Sherrin first crossed with a survey party, and became during his two
expeditions a reporter who publicized the features and prospects of the
west for The Press, Christchurch. His journals awakened public interest,
just as the official report by J.C. Drake of the first expedition which
included Sherrin, impressed the Survey office with the need for further
investigation. The survey party consisted of Drake, R.A. and W. Sherrin,

9. Freeth had taken a run in the upper Grey valley, and
intended to return to get his stores.

Smart returned from the Buller in 1864, and worked again near
the Taramakau River. He recorded that his letter claiming the
reward had been sent in May 1864, and thought that Albert Hunt
and W. H. Revell had not acted with justice when the reward was
claimed by Hunt in July 1864. Late in 1864 Smart's party
prospected in the Taipo and Otira valleys.
Solomon Tuapaki and W.B. Osbourne. On their arrival at the Lakes shortly after the other two parties in January, the services of Jacob Lauper were obtained, and Albert Hunt joined the survey gang later. This expedition was notable not only for its official result but also in its composition. The Journals of Sherrin and Lauper, in their vividness, and their valuable description of conditions, rank next to Brunner’s as accounts of West Coast exploration. Hunt played a prominent part in early prospecting and began several gold rushes between the Grey valley and Bruce Bay in 1864-65.

Sherrin had been a miner in Victoria and New South Wales. His journal contained accurate topographic description, vivid narrative, explanation of weather conditions, observant comments upon the environment of the west and a prophetic summing up of the potentiality of that coast. Legends of the Poutini Ngai Tahu embellished his traveller’s tales.

Sherrin began his narrative by filling in details of what he called the "salutary lesson" of the West Coast experiences of the pair who had been rescued by the preceding prospecting parties. Lauper and Johnson were men "accustomed to hardship and exposure for many years in the different colonies, were good bushmen, and well equipped". In three weeks they had experienced one day of fine weather and reached within eighteen miles of the sea. From there they had been forced to return and, travelling to the sound of "rain, rain, rain," their clothes never dry, their matches useless and without food for the final seven days, they had struggled up the valley until rescued.

Osbourne broke down in the Taramakau valley, and returned to the Lakes.
Sherrin at once outlined the contrast in travel west of the divide. "We have to crawl through the bush with a swag ... a person on the west coast must remember he has to become amphibious during his wanderings".

With fine weather, a good Maori guide, and a strong party, the survey made quick progress down the valley. Drake estimated the distance from Lake Sumner to the sea at sixty-five miles. While obtaining extra flour and sugar from Kawhena Pah, they were told of a large river to the south and travelled down the beach to see it, passing on the way a negro and a half-caste prospecting three miles south of the Taramakau River. Sherrin was delighted with the Hokitika River, and felt deprived that "some more fortunate individuals will have the gratification that arises from being the first to gaze upon and explore this valley and river of the west". On his return he advised prospecting parties to go by sea as the west coast from the saddle north to the Buller River was a no man's land without supplies. A long editorial in the Press remarked on "the revelation" of Sherrin's Journal as "entirely new country opens before us." 13

It was difficult for such a natural explorer to keep away from the enticement of fresh country. In June 1863 Sherrin arrived by sea, and remained on the west coast for five months. In a whaleboat with a party of seven, including two natives and a runaway sailor, he set off to complete the exploration of the Hokitika River. "Whenever a mist clears away"

12. Probably the same negro as mentioned by Smart, and very likely these two were the first to prospect south of the Taramakau River.

Sherrin remarked, "any person, however insensible to the beauties of natural scenery, cannot help gazing on those magnificent tier of peaks". Toward these the party journeyed in the whaleboat, which they hauled past several portages. The estuary of the Hokitika had seemed on second sight less likely to provide a port, but the valley was still impressive to the eyes of Sherrin.

"The finest timber I have seen anywhere on the coast will be found on the Hokitika. White pine, rimu and miro grow in magnificent proportions .... Land, I believe for agricultural purposes when once cleared will be found that cannot be surpassed".

The party occupied themselves in desultory prospecting, but Sherrin seemed more concerned with recording observations on the type of bush, geology and birds. They reached the mountains, where the deep still water of the granite gorge formed for Sherrin "a picture that will long be remembered". From here Sherrin took the two natives and travelled into the mountains for a further four days. The noise of the river "resembled the surf on the beach". The weather broke, and they reached only a further four miles, from where Sherrin could see what he termed "the Hokitika saddle". [see sketch p. 100.]

The rain set in and the Hokitika river became "a broad smooth sluggish stream resembling somewhat the Murray River". Down this the party came at a "racing pace", just managing to beach the half swamped boat within five yards of the surf on the south bank. Sherrin described the critical moment:
"The half caste pulled off his coat, the Maori began to pray, the man on the steer car became frightened and like a true sailor began to swear and he who had relieved him from the lookout had exhorted us to pull for our lives. It was truly a narrow chance... When the affair was over the native exclaimed "No use to talk... the Man above he knew all about us. Let us make a fire and get the kai-kai!"

It was an escape from what became a common fate in that year. On 2 August Sherrin was met by Hamnett at the mouth of the Taramakau River and was the first to hear of the disaster on Lake Brunner. For many days Sherrin and C. Townsend, the Government Agent, searched the lake for the missing men.

On 19 September Sherrin set off from Hokitika again to complete his knowledge of the coast by travelling south to the Wanganui and Whareoa Rivers. In December 1863 his Journal was printed in long instalments in the Press.

Sherrin's general comments were full of observation.

"The dread of rain is your chief source of anxiety.... You rush from the tent in the middle of the night to see how the scuds are drifting.... It makes you watch the sunrise and the sunset, the tone and direction of the surf, vent an impression on the cry of the hawks by day, and a benison on the mopeke at night, tremble when the wind dies away and the sandflies commence their repast...."

He decided that the warmth of the rain was beneficial.

"Every person living on that coast for any period can testify to the benefit derived from hydrotherapy. Wet all day, often your blankets wet through for a fortnight altogether, yet never was it the misfortune of any of us to suffer from a cold".

He concluded optimistically: "A small quantity of fine gold is
APPLICATION FOR DEPASTURING LICENSE.

To the Governors of the White Lands Board for the Province of Canterbury,

I am now applying for a licence to depasture stock upon the land hereafter described, subject to the Rules and Regulations for the issue of Licences for the Occupation of Waste Lands of the Province of Canterbury.

Situation of the Run: West Coast.

Boundaries: On the North by the Headland
On the South by a change
On the East by a change
On the West by a change

Estimated Extent of the Run: 5,000 acres.

Number and Description of the Stock to be pastured on the Run:

Name: P. A. B.
Residence: Chechu
Date: July 6, 1882

Sketch by R.L. Sherin 1863. The pass he said was from the saddle Whitcombe's in further south.
scattered through a large body of drift ... over some fifty or sixty miles of country ... fine and scaly on the beach, coarser and more plentiful inland". All that was needed was "a pack horse route, then the energies of the miner will do the rest..." He urged Canterbury not to allow "Melbourne Merchants" and Melbourne capitalists to reap all the advantages". But he also warned that this land was not an Eldorado. The returns would be well earned. The western coast was "no place for the new chum ... but for men who fully understood their business". 15

Official Expeditions.

The Buller goldfields were still without rival, and it seemed most likely that Nelson would become "the grand emporium of the gold-fields", 16 if any were proved in the west. In 1863 the Provincial Government however provided several expeditions to claim its western lands. These were organised for two main purposes - to survey the western coastline and to

15. Sherrin's Journal describing his second period on the west coast was printed in the Press, on 12, 14, 15, 17, 19, 21, 25, 26. December, 1863. During 1865 Sherrin was correspondent on the West Coast for the Lyttelton Times. He later became a Wellington journalist, and author of a History of New Zealand.

An expedition led by H.Price also prospected in the west during 1863. Sherrin thought that, although Price was the only experienced prospector among the party, it had achieved as much as any. A short account of this expedition was published in Pfaff: The Digger's Story. The "will of the wisp" activities of Albert Hunt, and doubtless the work of other expeditions, contributed to the opening up of the west, but no personal records of these are available.

16. R.Waite: The Discovery of the West Coast Goldfields 1869 p.11.
complete a pack-horse track to the Grey and Hokitika Rivers across the Taramakau saddle. The last was to become a difficult task, and altogether, though expectations of a goldfield were high in 1863, the year was to be one of disaster for official expeditions into west Canterbury.

The first expedition to explore westward was the northern of the two prospecting parties organised in September 1862. The Provincial Engineer was responsible for this expedition, which was placed under the leadership of H. C. Howitt - a young Australian aged 24, whose family had an interest in the exploration of that country. His father described Howitt as being "remarkable from his infancy for his intense love of nature ... he never if he could avoid it slept in a bed".\(^{17}\) It was not surprising that Howitt revelled in the opportunity to pioneer a way among the inland valleys. The country made its appeal to him, and he had adapted himself to it sufficiently to have become a bushman of some standing in his short career. The Lyttelton Times described him as "an active young man, somewhat below average stature, but possessed of immense energy and endurance ... able to carry on his back for twenty miles at a stretch ... loads ... which would generally have been considered sufficient for a pack horse".\(^ {18}\) To C. L. Money he was "not one of those boorish sort of bushmen who expect their men to do everything while they look on". Money added that Howitt had given him "the first lessons in bushcraft, such as knowledge of edible herbs and roots, modes of crossing rivers, snaring birds and many other invaluable wrinkles".\(^ {19}\)

19. C. L. Money: *op.cit.* p. 27.
Howitt seemed to be a man made for the task. He could write that he enjoyed the work despite the frequency of rain, and he responded to the challenge and setting of it, instructing his family to "read all the descriptions of the New Zealand scenery you can find, then you can understand how happy I am to be in a country so beautiful."  

By 15 December Howitt's prospecting party was at Lake Sumner, and they decided that its environs were unlikely country for gold. From the south branch of the Hurunui they climbed on to a saddle with a small lagoon on its summit and looked down into a north branch of the Waimakariri. After six week's prospecting, the party crossed the Hurunui saddle on 3 November. Here Howitt noted that "the vegetation seems to change entirely, ... the birds also". The rain that plagued the other parties continued, and a journal entry reads "It looks as though it might continue to rain for a year to come". In the Taramakau they adopted the same shuttling back and forth to Taylor's station as had Money and Davies. On 27 December the party reached altogether more promising country at Lake Brunner, and Howitt's men took heart, agreeing to remain the allotted three months. The rain did not ease up however and after the failure of an attempt to cross the Taramakau, the men refused to go any further.  

In January 1863 Howitt was back with a track cutting party. The purpose, in the words of the Lyttelton Times, was "to cut a horse track from from Lake Brunner along the Taramakau ... and across the coalfield to the mouth of the Grey, preparatory to the commencement of the survey of the whole district".  

21. Diary of Mr. Howitt during his late search for gold. M.S. Alexander Turnbull Library.  
By this time the saddle route was becoming well established, and in the next few months there was much more life in the west coast, with at length in June 1863 a Government Depot of stores, established at the mouth of the Grey River. Charlton Howitt and his party established whatas for their provisions around the shores of Lake Brunner, and spent the early months of 1863 cutting lines through the bush. A letter to Australia described "the pleasure with which they had launched a canoe from a cliff and watched it plunge deep under the water, and then rise and swim buoyantly on the surface." The journal of the cook of the party recorded how on 27 June Howitt, R. Little and R. Mullis had started in this canoe across the lake to reach the Arnold. On the next day rain fell, then the wind blew hard from the south east, and the canoe party did not return.

Hawsett searched around the lake shore for days but found only Howitt's swag rolled up in a tent on a beach. Until 21 July he continued the search, in and out of the water, but he began to experience "fancies and hallucinations" and eventually made for the Taramakau River where Sherrin met him. This was the end of the first attempt to form a track, which the Provincial Engineer had forecast would take from "four to five weeks".

24. A south east gale creates the worst conditions for a boat on Lake Brunner. Sherrin thought its initial submergence may have caused the white pine canoe to become waterlogged.
The genesis of the survey expeditions of early 1863 was a suggestion in October 1862 by "Taikoi and other natives" that a surveyor accompany them to sketch their route across the mountains. Cass offered the work to C. O. Torlesse ("in every way the best qualified person").

27 There was a big gap in the survey records and Cass instructed Torlesse to "collect any information that you can on the subject". Torlesse however refused the contract, and the survey was given to J. C. Drake. The time allowed for the overland route was eight weeks, and if possible an examination of the rivers to the south was to be made. The cost was estimated at between one hundred and fifty and two hundred pounds.

29 As a result of this survey Canterbury possessed, for the first time, a map of a route right across the mountains, and of a part of the west coast of the province. The result of Mr. Drake's expedition warrants a more extended survey" wrote Cass to the Provincial Secretary. He stated that such a survey would entail from eight to nine month's work and that it should be let by contract for

"Nelson and Wellington surveyors accustomed to that type of work are likely to tender". The tenders were to close on 30 May 1863, and the Chief Surveyor budgeted for a total amount of four thousand pounds in his estimates for 1863-64, to cover the expenses of the surveys of West Canterbury.

29. The terms offered were £2.2.0 a day for Drake, £1.1.0 a day for his assistants, and it was thought necessary to offer a gratuity of £20 to the natives. Cass to Prov. Sec. 19 Dec. 1862. P.F. Canterbury.
30. Little further is known of Drake's surveying work. A. D. Dobson recorded that "years afterward Drake was drowned in one of the streams between Collingwood and Takaka". Dobson: op. cit. p. 57.
The mapping of the Maori route and the reconnaissance survey of the western coast were not the only aspects of the west to claim attention. Alternative passes to it were also visualized in the false dawn of early 1863.

The Lyttelton Times in April forecast the need.

"Other public works undertakings sink into insignificance compared with the undertakings that we see looming in the future connected with the west coast.... There are probably several points on the main range at which bridle tracks might be made (as for instance along the old Maori paths leading from the Waimakariri and the Rakaia to the West Coast) 32 .... Two good roads via the recently discovered Haast pass and the Hurunui saddle... would secure the trade between Melbourne and the best parts of the Provinces of Otago and Nelson and give impetus to the settlement of the West Coast". 33

In June Cass explained the increased interest. "I have much reason to believe that a 'rush' will be made to the West Coast in the spring". 34

Obviously the most direct routes to West Canterbury would be by either the Rakaia or Waimakariri Rivers. Von Haast had shown that there was no good pass between the Rangitata head waters and Haast Pass. In April Cass instructed one of his road surveyors J.H. Whitcombe, trained as an engineer in England but more recently a surveyor in India and New South Wales, to "examine the country about the western sources of the Waimakariri and the Ashley, start from the north and work south to the Rakaia ... stay out until

32. The Lyttelton Times was better informed on the existence of these passes than were either the Survey office or the Provincial Government at that time.

33. L.T.8 April, 1863. This forecast of a flow of Australian trade eastward over the Alps suggests that the difficulties of travel through the mountainous interior were still little realized.

34. T.Cass to Prov. Sec. 4 June 1863, C.S.L.B.(2) Chch.
May ... and take a party of three white men and two Maoris." 35

Cass however had chosen the wrong men for such a journey. In 1859-60 Whitcombe had added a survey of the Hurunui valley as far as Lake Sumner to the Provincial map. A.D. Dobson worked under him, and recorded that he was used to "plenty of camping arrangements and plenty of cheap labour", but had proved adaptable. 36 Cass agreed to Whitcombe's suggestion that the surveyor should start at the Rakaia, but was forced to limit his commissariat. The Chief Surveyor rationed Whitcombe's party to ten pounds of flour, two pounds of sugar and half a pound of tea per man per week, and reported that fifty pounds of pemmican was being prepared "otherwise through improvidence on the part of the men the affair might be a failure at the commencement". 37 The pass itself was a fateful choice. At first deceptively simple, it lead into one of the most impenetrable and least direct of West Coast valleys. The exploration was to have no value except the negative one of emphasising the importance of the two passes at the northern and southern limits of the Southern Alps.

Whitcombe's expedition left Christchurch on 13 April 1863, and consisted of the surveyor, Jacob Leuper and two other men. The cart was left in the lower Rakaia valley, and the party camped under "a deep fissure" in the range which seemed to be the pass they were expecting to find. "High snow covered mountains and blue glaciers rose to a towering height on all sides" and Leuper was reminded of his native Switzerland.

35. 27 March, 1863, C.S.L.B. (2) Choh.
27 March, 1863.
Here Whitcombe suggested that he and Lauper go on alone, taking rations for fourteen days. Whitcombe estimated that "the road must be very rough indeed if they could not make four or five miles a day". The party explored the end of a glacier further up the valley, then climbed on to the pass which was measured at four thousand feet. On 22 April, Whitcombe and Lauper left the others and entered the western valley, taking with them an oppossum rug and a blanket, no tent, rations of two biscuits a day, and eight pounds of sugar (at Lauper's insistence). Bush and rain were encountered, and then the gorges. The rats ate the birds that were carried; the sugar dissolved; the biscuits became mouldy; the oppossum rug was soon fly blown; and Whitcombe shared Lauper's blanket. The Swiss was soon carrying all the load. Lauper's account relates vividly how the two pitted themselves against the obstacles, and episode by episode the tale mounts to the climax of Whitcombe's death. The rain scarcely ceased, and the travelling became if anything worse – over boulders, into gorges, and around deep pools. They were forced to clamber high on to bluffs, clinging to shrubs to avoid crossing the river, and in one day progressed only about two hundred yards. "The sweat and rain ran down my face", Lauper wrote, and "rain incessant" is a frequent phrase in his journal. At length, after a final gorge where "the river was closed in by two perpendicular walls not more than five or six yards apart, the water running through with indescribable velocity", there ended "the roughest

36. There seems no reason for this decision. Perhaps Whitcombe thought the honour of discovering a direct route to the west worth the risk.

39. This was an accurate measurement.

40. The granite gorge by which the Hokitika river leaves the mountains. cf. Sherrin's description of this gorge on p. 78.
of the road". On the eighth day from the pass Lauper washed for and found gold - two grains - and in their excitement their hunger was forgotten.

Five days later \(^{41}\) the sea was reached and Lauper recognised the river they had come down as the Hokitika. They had scarcely been dry and had caught no birds, but once on the beach the strain was lessened, and travelling was easy. Of Whitcombe, Lauper wrote: "In reality he could not be recognised - his eyes were sunk deep in his head, his lips were white, and his face as yellow as a wax figure".

They found no natives and no ship at the Taramakau river. Whitcombe persuaded Lauper, who could not swim, to cross in a waterlogged canoe. It was washed into the surf at the river bar, and Lauper, by hanging on to the overturned canoe, eventually drifted onto the south bank where he found Whitcombe's body half buried in sand. Lauper managed to light a driftwood fire by creating a spark on quarts with a knife and so igniting rags.

With Defoe-like detail Lauper had recorded his graphic narrative. He wrote: "In my youth I had read Robinson Crusoe with very great pleasure and ever wished myself in his place; now I was in reality so situated, the story looked in quite a different light". He buried Whitcombe on the lonely shore, and following up the river, met five Maoris with whom he crossed to the Hohomu diggings. From there he passed on to

\(^{41}\) The gold from a terrace near the present town of Kaniera, where later a gold dredge worked. Progress in these five days must have been painfully slow, for the distance from there to the sea is no more than five miles.
Howitt's camp on the Lake. Howitt ferried him across in their canoes. Lauper went on over the saddle on one of Howitt's horses to Taylor's where the remaining men of the original party were waiting. They did not recognize Lauper after his month's absence.

Whitcombe was the first officer employed by the Provincial Government to die in its service. The fairest summing up of Whitcombe was that by Von Haast.

"Although Mr. Whitcombe was an accurate surveyor, a good mathematician and astronomer ..., he had no experience in New Zealand bush travelling, which requires not only strong men, able to carry a heavy load ..., but also a general knowledge of the nature of rivers and of the best way of crossing them.... Owing to his deficient arrangements he had been exhausted when he reached the coast..." 44

His wife was granted one thousand pounds.

Lauper received one hundred pounds for his part in the exploration. He had experienced a strenuous few months. In December 1862 he and Johnson had nearly starved to death after seven weeks in the Taramakau valley. Money described them as being unable to move or think sensibly when they had been found. But Lauper returned with Drake's survey party and worked with them through January and February. One month after the return to Christchurch he was with Whitcombe's party at the head of the Rakaia. The Whitcombe valley journey was a repetition of the conditions met with in the Taramakau valley four months earlier - constant flood, sodden food and

42. Almost certainly the canoe in which Howitt and the others lost their lives later.


matches. Yet in March 1865 he was still in the employment of the Survey Department, returning in March of that year to the West Coast with John Rochfort's party. In the same year Lauper claimed the reward for the discovery of a goldfield.

The better pass had not materialized. In September three thousand pounds was voted by the Provincial Council for the construction of a pack horse track from the plains to the Taramakau saddle.

The successful tenderers for the west coast reconnaissance survey were A.D. Dobson and Robert Bain. Dobson received the territory from the Grey River to Allert Head, and Bain the southern half of the west of the Province. Bain attempted to do his surveying by using a ship as his base, but had completed only fifty five miles of his estimated one hundred and thirty five miles when the vessel was wrecked.

The fifteen ton vessel Gypsy which carried Dobson's equipment via Nelson to the west coast was also wrecked, but Dobson from the first had set out to prove that the choice of such a young man was not a mistake. He had worked under Whitcombe in the upper Hurunui during 1859, and surveyed the glacial valleys near Mt. Cook with Von Haast in 1862. The principles of surveying and engineering had been thoroughly learned from his father (the Provincial Engineer, Edward Dobson), and forethought combined with adaptability were always to be features of his surveying. The little vessel was wrecked when crossing the Grey bar on 14 September 1863, but Dobson's gear and provisions, having all been securely boxed and

45. Dobson was then just 22 years of age, and the allocation of the contract to him caused some surprise. "Some of the older surveyors were very indignant at one being let to a boy as they called me". (Dobson: op. cit., p. 76)
A gorge in the Whitcombe River.
stowed, were easily put over the side to the beach.

Depressed by drowning accidents, Dobson's survey gang left. He then formed a gang entirely from natives. These he found ideal chainmen who could provide him with a canoe at each river mouth. For the work, Dobson learned the Maori language, with the assistance of a half-caste Maori at Mawhara and a translation of the New Testament. At one time or another, he had most of the Maori men on the coast working for him. With his gang he lived as half Maori - half Pakeha, carrying his loads with plaited flax straps and wearing flax sandals. While in the bush he wore "two flannel shirts, one without sleeves round the waist like a kilt, the other one as a shirt with a light rug over the shoulders";\(^{46}\) and the more customary almost waterproof moleskin trousers. He carried his own gear (which always included a dry change of clothes) and the theodolite. His full supplies of bacon and flour (both luxuries to the natives) kept the party well provided for, and Dobson's efficiency, together with the natives' experience, reduced difficulties to a minimum. Dobson later wrote: "I spent two years exploring the forests and mountains and in that time never went short of food, nor had wet blankets to sleep in"\(^{47}\). A rare achievement among west coast explorers.

Dobson's survey was to extend fifteen miles inland. He took his party first to the Taipo River, and then south along the beaches, erecting a small store at the mouth of each river from the Wanganui to the Grey.


\(^{47}\) Ibid: p.90
In a letter dated 30 October he informed the Lyttelton Times that his men had "got the colour everywhere but nothing more". By this time Dobson was assisting the occasional famished prospector, and added his warning. "This was a country where it was impossible to go a dozen yards without a track ... and the prospector may be starved before he will obtain sufficient gold to make a ring". By 18 January 1864 he was satisfied with his progress, and set off from Kawerau over the Taramakau saddle because his natives wished to spend their evenings at Kaiapoi.

Dobson arrived at Christchurch early in March. The Chief Surveyor was pleased with his report, and had two further suggestions to make - that Dobson carry out the first survey of the south branch of the Hurumui, and try to find a pass out of the head of the Waimakariri River. This letter contract resulted in the discovery of "Arthur's" Pass, for which Dobson became famous, although the survey of the west coast was by far the most considerable of his achievements.

It had at first been thought that there was more likelihood of a route via one the eastern tributaries of the Waimakariri River. Dobson's elder brother George had been searching for a line of road via the Esk and the Pouler branches since January with the assistance of another brother Edward. Arthur took Edward with him and the pair set out on 11 March from Cera Lynn to explore what the sheepmen called "the second north branch". Carrying light swags they cut their way with bill hooks through the beech forest to the top of the saddle, which the elder Dobson measured at three thousand feet. From there they looked down into a bush-clad gorge.

which dropped into a deep valley. The ruta was in full bloom and gave "the snowcapped mountains an extremely beautiful formation". 49

The route was impassable for horses, so the pair returned. But the Goldneys' of Coralym were interested in possible grazing land. A. D. Dobson, F. D. Goldney and a shepherd, Marshall, returned across the saddle, and with great difficulty descended the western gorge to the flats. At one place the sheep dog had to be lowered with a flax rope. No sheep country was found and they retraced their route. Dobson built a small whare on the summit, for he was not sure which western river the pass led to, and intended later to investigate the western approaches. On his map [see foldout] he marked the river as the "Arahaura", (at the same time naming the Bealey River, Mt. Rolleston, and the Punch Bowl Falls), and his account in the Christchurch newspapers mentioned his uncertainty. Compared to the Hurunui saddle, Dobson told the Chief Surveyor this pass was "lower, and having a northern aspect would be clear of snow sooner". 50 Cass reported that the route would save about thirty miles, and that the Waitakariri offered fewer difficulties than the Hurunui valley.

The Press commented that the report demonstrated "a great deal has got to be done in prospecting the mountain range: and that valleys and passes lie concealed between their gigantic summits, which a cursory survey leaves unseen". 51 However the discovery of the pass had no immediate result because the Provincial Government was beginning to lose interest in its western territories.

49. Dobson to T. Cass, printed in Press 6 April, 1864.
50. Ibid.
51. Editorial in Press 6 April, 1864.
Dobson left on 6 April, this time taking a survey party made up of sailors, and mapped the south Hurunui valley. From the Taramakanau valley Dobson found that the newly discovered pass led after all into the Otira. His party arrived at the Grey River on 22 April, Dobson recording that their horses were the first to make the complete crossing of the island. From April to September, the Pecura, Wanganui, Waitaha, Mokomai, Hokianga and Arakura Rivers were surveyed up to their mountain gorges by means of canoes. By then however, the steamer Nelson was bringing diggers to the coast, and a gold rush had started.

No detailed maps have survived of this surveying though probably much of it was incorporated into the maps of the west in the following year. Though Arthur Dobson himself was to take little part in the search of 1865 for a practicable trans-alpine route via the Waimakariri valley, he had contributed much to knowledge of the west, where he had lived for

52. There was later some argument as to whether Dobson had been told of his pass by natives. There is no mention of such information in his published Reminiscences, and his sister Edith in 1934 stated that Arthur's diaries furnished no evidence of previous knowledge. However an account of the discovery of the pass written by his brother Edward in 1927 mentioned that Arthur had chosen the route "as he thought from what he heard from the Maoris that there might be a pass there".

53. In 1934, Edith Dobson wrote a letter to the Press stating: "I have my father's diaries from 1859. These are plain matter of fact records of all information of value gathered and observed, embellished with little sketches... These diaries are an invaluable record and... in time to come will I hope be made available to the student and historian." Edith Dobson died in 1937, and no information about these diaries can be found. In view of the energetic part that the Dobson family took in the expansion of Canterbury between 1856-1866, it is a pity that these diaries cannot be traced.
a year amidst:

"... the forest with its wonderful and mysterious sounds which can only be heard and understood by those with a vivid imagination and who can dream dreams and enter into a life quite unknown and unnoticed to the busy workers of the world."  54

In December 1863 John Rochfort had accepted employment as a Canterbury surveyor. He was appointed District Surveyor for the West Coast, and his instructions were to lay out the site of towns "at the Grey, the Taramakau, and Jacksons Bay" as well as complete the interrupted survey of the south. Cass thought that he may in his southern voyage be able to fix the position of Mt. Cook. Dobson noted that Rochfort had established a little survey hut at the Grey River by 22 April, 1864, and that he had engaged only natives. Rochfort spoke Maori well, and worked easily with them. He has been described as a "very quiet, unassuming gentlemanly figure". 55

Rochfort carried out the survey of the almost unknown southern coastline, but his official position seemed likely to be short-lived. Cass informed him that after July "it may be settled to abandon for the present the work on the west coast, at any rate I do not think it at all necessary to carry on the surveys after the end of the present year". 56

The western half of the province had given little return for the effort involved. There was still no complete map; the track via the Hurumui and the Taramakau valleys was not more than half formed; no gold rush had occurred and seven government men had been drowned within a year,

54. Dobson: op.cit. pp.149,150.
56. 10 May, 1864. C.S.L.B.(2) Chck.
Dobson first mapped the high, double-peaked hill in the distance as Tera Taru, but it is Mt. Alexander.

[Keiwa]
including the first Government Agent and Storekeeper at the mouth of the Grey, Charles Townsend.\textsuperscript{57}

But in July Smart and Hunt applied for the reward on the evidence of gold washed from the Hokowhitu creek, or the Greenstone as it was becoming called. R. Waite, encouraged by a letter from Smart, sailed from Nelson for the Grey River with a ship load of prospectors; W. H. Revell, the new Government Agent, who had been requested to close the Depot, took gold to Christchurch, and soon the fact of a goldfield was recognised. The beach came alive with the movement of prospectors. Waite purchased a whale boat from Dobson. With that and a dugout canoe, he established ferries across the Taramakau and the Hokitika Rivers.\textsuperscript{58} On 6 September C.B. Dampier made an application to rent the Waitoki store as an Accommodation House. Soon Price and Hudson were to construct a store amidst the driftwood of the Hokitika beach, and begin there a settlement which grew with amazing rapidity.

\textsuperscript{57} Townsend, Solomon the Maori, and P. Michelmore had been drowned while attempting to cross the Grey bar in a whaleboat on 9 October 1863. The other Maori on board, (Simeon) and R.A. Sherrin had reached the beach safely.

\textsuperscript{58} The price of a crossing was 2/6 per man and 6/- per horse at Hokitika River; 2/6 and 5/- respectively at the Taramakau River.

\textit{\textsuperscript{17} See R. Waite. op. cit. p. 17.}
The need for a pass.

At first most diggers came by sea from Otago and Nelson, but in late February and March, Canterbury became aware of the goldfield. On 27 February the report of two thousand ounces of gold being sent to Nelson reached Christchurch, and in early March a young immigrant travelling down the south road to look for a run to purchase found "the road crowded with diggers". He noted in his diary that the recent census had found a population of 32,253 in Canterbury.\(^59\) By the end of the year this had grown to half as much again and a second focus of settlement established across the mountains, as an alien horde of diggers entered the land from dying goldfields elsewhere.

The *Lyttelton Times* changed its tone of aloofness. "We confess at being quite astonished at the magnitude of the rush... It is no use pretending that we have foreseen the attractiveness of the goldfields". The letters of diggers, though perhaps deficient "as to style and expression", were sufficient to persuade the paper that experienced diggers, being "used to undertaking journeys that the ordinary traveller would not contemplate" would regard the overland route as the quickest and cheapest, as well as a method that would allow them to prospect on the way. The editorial concluded that "the eastern settlements of Canterbury are quite within reach of the diggings on the West Coast for many profitable purposes".\(^60\)

This struck a vein of optimism that extended throughout the east.

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59. F.D.S. Neame: *Diary*. 4 March 1865／In possession of Mrs. D. Menzies, Little Akaroa.

in 1865. Public meetings and newspaper editorials, private expeditions and individual advice, were the order of the day. Now that Canterbury had a goldfield, after lacking one for so many years, all that was required, since it was in the "remote corner of the province", was to find a pass to it. The Press reported hopefully that Albert Hunt had described the Otira and Taramakau valleys as "open grassland" and that access would be available "in a few days" 61. This was not the only strange geographic information proffered. C.O.Torlesse maintained that the simplest route would be found by ignoring passes.

"I am distinctly under the impression that the country between the head of the Waimakariri and the West Coast has no great elevation and that there is probability of an available road being formed on a ridge from about the source of the Waimakariri in the direction of the river Okitiki". 62

Vague ideas of easy access found in the nature of the country, a stumbling block. No easy pass was found. The final result of a feverish period of exploration was an alienated West Coast and a remarkable engineering feat.

On 2 March the land extending from the Grey River to the Wanganui River and inland to "the nearest summit of the dividing range" became the West Canterbury goldfield. A second proclamation on 4 March extended the goldfield boundary to the south of the province. The only central route to it from the east was still by way of the Hurunui saddle. Here Taylor’s station, having been the retreat for parties before 1865, now

62. C.O.Torlesse to L.T. 8 March 1865. Torlesse must have had no memory for heights or knowledge of engineering.
became the reluctant stepping off place for the overland migration. 63
The track was not easy, and between Lake Brunner and the Taramakau River it had become almost impassable from its mire of branches and rocks. Von Haast wrote in April: "I do not think the best walker could make more than a mile an hour here". 64 This was a roundabout route to the centre of the goldfield, and in addition lay along the boundary of a neighbouring province. The only other known passes were "Arthur's" and "Whitcombe's". The Lyttelton Times on 16 March reminded the Government of what had not been done. "There is the whole of the Waimakariri to explore. There is the Rakaia to be examined. There are two sides of the range to start from. There is Maori information to be had as well as European". 65

The rapidity with which the attraction of gold covered this "waste" of mountains with exploring parties was remarkable. The Provincial Engineer, Edward Dobson (Sr.) was to be the co-ordinating official of the efforts. He left in haste on 16 March for the head of the Waimakariri River. With him went fifty labourers who were to await developments.

However one of the Provincial Engineer's sons, George Dobson, had been in the upper Waimakariri valley since late February. The name of Arthur is most associated with a pass out of the Waimakariri valley, but it was his brother who performed the major exploration of passes out of that river. On 20 February George Dobson left Goldneys' with two men,

63. Taylor was one of several runholders who began driving stock across the saddle to the diggings. Later in the year he was drowned on the West Coast while attempting to cross the Wainihinihi stream.
64. P.E.C. Session XXIII p.15
Russell and Anderson, to examine the pass discovered in 1864. They crossed it to the Taramakau valley where Anderson suffered from "yellow fever" and left for the diggings. Matthew Russell however stayed with Dobson for all his Waimakariri journeys. The two returned up the east branch of the Otira River with a week's provisions, but their journey back to Goldneys' took only two days. Dobson's first report on his return was not optimistic. "The slightest fresh would block the Otira", and the eastern pass, on which they had found it necessary to crawl "on hands and knees", was immensely high "for the bush does not grow to within several hundred feet of the summit", and led to a bad gorge in the east branch of the Bealey River.

Dobson left Christchurch with the main party on 16 March. The Secretary of Public Works, J. Hall, gave him instructions "to continue your explorations in any other direction in which you may perceive indication of a pass". Dobson and his father explored to the head of the Hawdon branch and this led them into the Otehake valley, over an easy pass, on to which they had been preceded by the shepherds, Pearson and Walker, who had taken a pack horse to the summit. But the Otehake stream followed a twisting course and led into vertical sided gorges. After battling with these for days, that route was abandoned. Next George Dobson tried the

66. Report to Sec. of Public Works, 13 March 1865. P.P.C. Dobson was paid £3. a day for his exploration. The western route was first named "Arthur's Pass" by George Dobson in his report. He named the eastern saddle Coat's pass and the branch of the Otira leading to it the Deception River. The east branch of the Bealey River he mapped as Hoaxing Creek, and the west branch of the Otira River as Erin Stream, but these two names have not been retained, though they were recorded on a map attached to his report.

67. J. Hall to G. Dobson 16 March 1865. P.P.C.
Poulter River, followed its north branch and this time crossed over a high pass to arrive in the Taramakau valley, but the point he reached was not far from the Harumui saddle. The Otehake was explored from its junction with the Taramakau River, but for the second time they were blocked by its bluffs, and had to build a stage in the bush in order to have a level place to sleep. By 31 March Dobson was back at the junction of the Bealey River and the Waimakariri. He found that the main party had mistaken their way and reached the head of the river so Dobson followed them. He judged accurately that the south source of the Waimakariri led only to the Rakaia River. By 5 April he and Russell returned down-river and journeyed up the Poulter branch once more. Its west tributary led to Worsley's saddle and the Otehake River again. Another branch leading north was tried, which gave them only a view straight down into the head of the Taramakau River. In less than a month Dobson had explored almost every possibility of a pass out of the Waimakariri valley, and had been into regions seldom visited again during the next eighty years.63

E.Cahill and J.S.Browning had been the first among the main party to reach the head of the river. Others joined in the hunt by taking a coach up as far as the Bealey River, and going from there to the source of the Waimakariri. Here the amateur explorers searched for "the much hoped for pass into the Okitiki". R.J.S.Harman and Browning tried a ravine

63. George Dobson was appointed a road surveyor on the West Coast. In May 1866 he was murdered by a gang of bushrangers near the Arnold River. One of the men who identified his body when it was found a month later was Matthew Russell, Dobson's companion of the Waimakariri explorations.
which crossed the main range but were "pounded among precipices and frightful torrents" and blocked by a gorge "precisely similar to that described in Jacob Leaper's journal." R. Armstrong was injured on the glacier at the head of the north source of the Waimakariri, and had to be carried down the valley. This source was also examined by one of Edward Dobson's party, who had crawled along a lateral moraine to the summit and looked into "a deep, desolate ravine", which was thought to lead into the Arahuara or Hopeakawa Pass, was inspected for a track but led only to bluffs and waterfalls.

The Provincial Engineer's report was full and included maps, cross sections and sketches. The western sources were glaciated, and the northern branches south of the Bealey River led either into the many tentacled and deep carved valley of the Otehake or into the very head of the Tararamakau River. Dobson wrote that the impatience of the public was understandable, but "the country is so rough ... that it has been with great exertion on the part of all concerned that enabled them so soon to arrive at a definite result". There was no easy route, but Arthur's pass was the most direct, and a road could be constructed above flood level in the gorge. He concluded that there was "no real difficulty about the matter provided that the necessary funds could be obtained", and reported that the track was being opened out down the Otira gorge "as fast as thirty good axemen could cut their way through the dense scrub".

69. *L.T.* 15 April 1865. This pass (Harman) and Browning's Pass (Campbell) lead to the Taipo River.

70. *P.P.C.* XXIII. p.57. This ravine was actually the west branch of the Otira River, which C. Dobson had been prevented from exploring by diggers stealing his provisions in the Otira valley. He called it the Erin stream, but it is now the Rolleston River.

71. E. Dobson to Sec. Public Works, 5 April 1865, *P.P.C.*
Head of the Bealey and Arthurs Pass

Gorges in the Otehake River
On 13 April Hall replied that "the result of the explorations appear satisfactory ... and will give much satisfaction to the public". However a reward for "not less than two hundred pounds" had been subscribed by Christchurch businessmen on 4 April for the discovery of "a practicable road to the West Coast". Just as the matter seemed settled, the Rakaia was brought into the picture, and the months of April, May and June were occupied with a renewed search for links to join the bisected province.

There had been rumours of a Maori pass in the Rakaia headwaters, throughout March, and on 8 April the Lyttelton Times reported that "an express messenger was dispatched on Friday up the Waimakariri to try and find one of the exploring parties and place in their hands a rough sketch". This showed a route "dropping into the headwaters of the Arahura and Okitiki not far from each other".

Browning, Harman and Johnstone immediately took pack horses through the short cut by Lake Lyndon to the Rakaia valley. However the adventurous history of this pass during 1865 had already begun. When they reached the head of the north Rakaia, a tent was seen under the face of the pass. Two men, Griffiths and Catway had been to the top of the pass. The following

72. 13 April, 1865, E.P.C.
73. L.T. 4 April, 1865.
74. L.T. 8 April, 1865.
75. R.J.S. Harman was a Provincial Councillor, runholder, partner in a Land Agency, and had played a prominent part in establishing the Press in 1861.
76. Griffiths by this time had "been up every stream of the Rakaia" / Harman to L.T. 16 May 1865. /
day saw them all climbing to the summit, "the last part being very steep and dangerous". The group examined the west coast gorges and thought that they belonged to a Tarumakau tributary. Browning initially reported that the pass did not offer a good line. There was as yet not much snow on the slopes. Harman was realistic. "The public must not expect a pass that can ever be regarded as even a very indifferent foot track for the best and hardestiest bushmen ... winter is the best time for judging the merits of a road".

On the map the route was direct to the heart of the goldfields. The *Lyttelton Times*, complaining about "the melancholy shipping disasters" on the west coast harbours, championed this new rival for the established Hurunui and Waimakariri routes. When Browning's report was published on 27 May, the paper stated that the discovery deserved "to be ranked as the most important work for practical purposes yet performed by any explorer in Canterbury". The distance was reported as only one hundred and twenty miles, the highest point three thousand three hundred feet, and the saddle comparable to Porter's Pass.

Browning and Griffiths had completed the exploration of the route by slow stages to the second saddle, and then to the open country to Kokatahi. Their arrival in Hokitika caused a considerable stir.

Browning set off for Christchurch by sea, but Griffiths immediately

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78. Harman: *loc.cit.*
80. The height of the pass is 4,752 feet.
returned with C.P. Cahill, a road engineer on the goldfields by that time. The snow was more in evidence, and the pair looked down with some trepidation from the summit of the pass. Cahill reported how Griffiths descended from the lip of the pass "unceremoniously, by a slide over the frozen snow from top to bottom; but however admirable under certain circumstances, this method of travelling can scarcely be relied upon for regular traffic in both directions". Cahill recorded that Griffiths intended to withdraw his application for the reward, and decided that "no explorer could report the face available for road making "though it could be used as a route for horses, stock, foot passengers and sheep to cross to Sherrin's run". To G.S. Sale, the Commissioner of the Goldfields, Cahill was more blunt. The pass, a distance of twenty-five miles from Hokitika, "stands in the way ... on looking down the steep and frozen rocks which form the ascent from the Rakai, I became at once convinced of the utter hopelessness of getting a dray track over ... and only recommend it for a bridle road if there is no better". The Lyttelton Times did not give up. "The report of Mr. Cahill ... fully bears out the view which we have expressed as to the practicability of the route for all such purposes (mail, bridle track etc.)"

On 5 July, in the depth of winter, a survey party, formed into two

81. J.D. Pascoe has recorded that from this slip Griffiths "sustained a life long hip injury". J.D. Pascoe: Unchained New Zealand 1939, p.57. Griffiths was active during the rest of the year nevertheless.

82. L.T. 22 June, 1865.
83. L.T. 17 July, 1865.
84. Editorial in L.T. 17 July 1865.
groups, set out for the pass. One gang was under the leadership of Robert Park, to cut a line onto the saddle; the other under J.S. Browning (in his official capacity this time as surveyor)\textsuperscript{85} to find a line through to the second saddle. "The result of the expedition is looked forward to with deep anxiety..., Our stock market depends so much on the opening of a practicable line, for wethers at least, in this direction", was the view of the \textit{Lyttelton Times}.\textsuperscript{86}

The contest between Arthur's Pass and "Browning's" Pass raged at its height, with an occasional entrance into the lists of the other two main candidates, the Hurumui saddle and "Whitcombe's Pass". The \textit{Lyttelton Times} was not sure which one to support; the \textit{Press} fervently advocated Browning's Pass; whereas the \textit{Standard} maintained that the decision should be left to the judges. The newly published \textit{Punch in Canterbury} added burlesque to the performance.

To "Mr. Punch" under the heading of "another impracticable route to the West Coast" was sent the report of "a private exploring party". The daily journal of "Vagrants" bemoaned that essential equipment had been neglected, such as "the mousetraps\textsuperscript{87} upon which I depended for an occasional supply of food." After some adventures around the Avon river this explorer headed for the hills. By various signs he estimated that his pass was "fifteen thousand, two hundred and twenty one feet above high water mark at Lyttelton", and this convinced him that the pass was an impracticable one. His journal expressed his "pleasure in bearing testimony to the

\textsuperscript{85} Browning had been employed as a draughtsman in the Survey Office since at least 1858. His previous expeditions were privately arranged.

\textsuperscript{86} \textit{L.T.} 4 July, 1865.

\textsuperscript{87} Whitcombe had taken rat-traps in 1863.
kindness with which I was treated at the various public houses on the way", and insisted that "notebooks are available to refute the allegation that I got no further than Ebenezer's quarry in the Port Hills". "As soon as sufficiently restored" he solemnly concluded, "I shall lay down the route". 89

By 10 July, the Lyttelton Times also felt that the tone of the controversy needed lightening. "If there are two well defined parties in this little state, with their distinct leaders, principles and passwords, we can hardly believe that the distinction has become purely geographical; that politics and passes are synonymous; that Maoris and Otitius are ranged against each other like the ancient Whigs and Tories; that the name of Wilberforce has become deadly opposition; or that Hall and Dobson, Browning and Griffith are paired against one another for the future." 90

But exploration was a serious business in mid winter. Fifty miles of mountains formed a line of bleak ridges; the sheep were down from the tops huddling on the flats, the shadowed sides of the valleys were frozen scree and bush, while snow smoothed the outline of the valley floors, intense with cold in the morning.


89. Punch in Canterbury, 13 May 1865, p.18.

90. L.T. 10 July 1865. One of four consecutive editorials on the subject of passes to the West Coast.
On 5 July the Provincial Engineer and Provincial Secretary left to examine the pass. On his return Hall assured the Superintendent that everything possible was being done; a party would push into the mountains from Hokitika; he had arranged for the erection of an Accommodation House and sheep yards in the Lower Wilberforce valley; and a punt would be placed at the best ford above Lake Coleridge.

Cass asked Browning to keep a journal of the expedition. C.L. Money, after a period in the Buller diggings and in the North Island, was one of the survey gang; and the accounts of these two, added to the reports sent back to the eager newspapers, fill out the picture of winter surveying in 1865. The expedition began badly, when one of the survey gang was accidentally shot, and had to be carried down the valley.

Browning, who was to become District Surveyor for the West Coast on his arrival, took the expedition very seriously, but to the ubiquitous Money it just added fresh spice and frolic to his colonial adventures. The camp was established a mile from the pass. Browning and Park, after having difficulty finding a long enough base line, calculated the ascent at fifteen hundred feet. On 25 July there was a heavy fall of snow, and F. D. Neave, who packed meat to the party, recorded that the conditions were "fearfully cold and snowy"; the snow lay two feet deep, and six of them crowded into the tent to keep warm.

91. This was an important consideration, as the Wilberforce River is one of the most dangerous in Canterbury.

92. The man, Joseph Trounce, was carried in a hammock by eight men to Glenorchy, but died in the Christchurch hospital.

Money was soon occupied with some of the gang felling and splitting the timber for a hut. "Certainly never before or since have I experienced the same torture from cold", he wrote. Every branch or leaf was covered with a coating of ice. Steps were cut up the frozen snow to the "gap". Browning thought this "very difficult, tedious and dangerous work" which led to many a slip and a slide. One, by the surveyor, was described by Money. The party "were dotted like flies along the sloping sides of a sugar loaf ... all armed with pick axe and spade ... I looked up just in time to avoid being swept away by Mr. Browning who shot past me with terrible velocity and reached the bottom of the pass in a few seconds ... ."

Browning had spun "round and round like a top" but the result was no more than "a few severe scratches and the total destruction of his apparel". Park later slipped on that face, again on frozen snow, and came down four hundred feet of the "thirty five degree slope" on his back, being "luckily unhurt at the bottom".94

Park left the track cutting to Walter Greenlaw; but Browning and his party moved on from the summit at 4.30 p.m. on 21 July, after an empty grog bottle had been "flung far and wide over the cliff with three cheers". They entered the valley of the river which they still considered to be the Taipo. There Browning settled in "for the necessary survey work in fixing the peaks and points". The party was snowed in for two days during which time he recorded that they were "surrounded by falling avalanches"

94. L.T. 7 Sept. 1865.
Thus each of the three expedition leaders had slid for a considerable distance on that face. The first time that the writer crossed Browning Pass was in October, 1957. He too slid down the face "from top to bottom", with a result much the same as Browning's. Either the pass is a very dangerous place in winter, or we were all beginners on frozen snow.
which have come down the various gullies like thunder". Six days after leaving the pass they reached Cahill's track party in the "Styx" valley, "the whole party being very fatigued, with the heavy travelling, wet swags and short commons". One of Cahill's party was missing, and all spent a day searching for him, but he was presumed drowned.

Money described their short rations as "oatmeal, flour, sugar and chocolate", though the dog brought by the cook, an old sailor, "... in half an hour had got three woodhens and a pair of whistling ducks". When Cahill's food depot was reached, "panful after panful of fried bacon and damper with copious libations of tea" had been devoured. Then the woodstock storekeeper had been "taken literally by storm, and cleared out of everything except a few boxes of sardines and a chest of tea".

No one conveys more vividly the effervescence and vigour of the explorations than does the buoyant Money. He relished the scene at Hokitika, where he worked on the track cutting across the plains to the Styx valley, for five weeks at twelve shillings a ten-hour day. "It would require the pen of a Dickens" he wrote, "to describe the peculiarities of character to be met with among so strange an assortment as the labourers on the bush roads".

Browning remained in Hokitika. On 28 August Park reported on the pass. A track was possible, and if the Government thought it worth it a dray road could be forced through and kept clear in winter either "by manual

95. This east branch of the Hokitika had been so named by Cahill.
96. Blue mountain ducks.
J.S. Browning: "Kokaia Pass Diary" F.B. k. (Hokitika) 9 July to 2 August 1865.
From a painting by J. Von Haast,
April 1866. Alexander Turnbull Library.

Browning Pass from the Wilberforce Valley.

The surveyed route on to Browning Pass. The falls on the left—Hall in Haast's painting, Grey Mares tail on the map—are now called Homer Falls.

From a map by R. Park 1865.
[I. and S. clichy]
Sketch by J.B. Browning
F.B. (Nok)

Down the Anahoro River
to the second saddle on the
left, and Tara Tama on the right.

From a painting by R. Park, 1866.
Held by J. Dean.

Winter Surveying on Lake Browning 1866.
labour or a snow plough. A railway could be put through by means of a tunnel one to one and a half miles long.

The Lyttelton Times crowed: "Of course the Government will not hesitate any longer about constructing this road ... with this pass it is now clear that the line of railway must be connected". Only half a million pounds would be required for this, and the money should be obtained by opening land for sale on the West Coast.

The stockmen of Canterbury knew as little about the pass as the newspapers. In October A.H. Cunningham, his son, and John O'Halloran left Fernside run with five hundred newly shorn sheep. They rode to the pass to test the route, climbed the summit and walked over the lake without realizing it. C.H. Cunningham completed the crossing to Hokitika. He found the bush track incomplete, with the result that the mob of sheep were left in the Lower Wilberforce valley until the Fernside shearing was completed. Then the stranded flock was mustered and taken over the pass, by that time almost clear of snow. Half the sheep were sold to George Dobson's party working in the lower Styx valley, including a number that had fallen over a cliff face nearby. The rest were sold at Hokitika. O'Halloran and young Cunningham returned over the pass where they met one of the Harper brothers with the second flock of sheep to make the crossing.100

Browning's pass was finally examined by the Provincial Geologist, as others "views were considered to be biased for one reason or another".

98. L.T. 7 Sept. 1865.
100. See Christchurch Star, 4 July 1925. The ruling rate for sheep on the diggings in 1865 was about £5 a head.
Taking three aneroid barometers and accompanied by R.J. Holmes, Haast crossed the ranges via Arthur's Pass and returned via Browning's Pass. His impressions were of avalanches that "even in the highest Alps of Switzerland would be enormous", and a pass that was of greater altitude than its rivals. Haast's party came down from the summit of the pass by "stair-like steps", and took shelter in "the block house of Walter Greenlaw's at Camp Creek". 101

The ranges offered one other potential opening to the west. Lauper's account of the route by the southern Rakaia pass was widely known, but the Government could afford to leave no stone unturned. On 4 July E. Harman of the Survey office had been attached to a party led by the freelance explorer, Edward Griffiths. Harman's instructions included, in addition to the observation of a line of road, the noting of "the character of the vegetation and timber, as well as the nature of soil and the formation of rock". 102 The snow was five feet deep on Whitcombe pass, and the party must have had a trying journey through the gorges to the plains, for Griffiths described the north bank as a "mass of angular broken rocks heaped loosely together, with deep holes between them ... the south bank being quite or nearly perpendicular". They soon abandoned the track cutting and concentrated on getting out. Griffiths considered "this track to be perfectly useless for any purpose, not excepting foot passengers, who cannot

use it without risking broken limbs".\textsuperscript{103}

By the end of 1865 the early history of Whitcombe pass, Browning pass and "Harper" pass was virtually ended. A dry road was rapidly being shaped over Arthur's Pass. "To those who know the country the idea \[ of a road\] seems a dream to be realised in twenty years or so" reported the Westland correspondent of the\textit{ Lyttelton Times} in August 1865.\textsuperscript{104} The high hopes and great energy of the east met only lack of interest and realism on the part of the diggers, if the editorials of the\textit{ West Coast Times} and the policies of candidates for election to the Provincial Council in November were any indication. The western newspaper was as much against the construction of the road as the eastern newspapers were for it. The west was not "a kind of quarry to be worked for the benefit of its eastern neighbours" declared the\textit{ West Coast Times}.\textsuperscript{105} It added "the road and the escort will swallow up the first year's revenue. Both are comparatively speaking useless, one entirely so".\textsuperscript{106} From 21 September the newspaper advocated the secession of the "cisalpine portion of the province".

But the road crept on, and the result was unexpected for both sides of the province. The east gained little value from either the road or the gold escort, but the road was completed - at a cost of about one

\textsuperscript{103} L.T. 26 August, 1865.

\textsuperscript{104} L.T. 1 August, 1865.

\textsuperscript{105} Editorial in\textit{ W.C.T.} 12 Aug. 1865.

\textsuperscript{106} W.C.T. 2 Sept. 1865. The expensive gold escort carried across the mountains one penny weight of gold, ironically handed in by a miner. Smart thought that by establishing an escort the Government had gone "to the other extreme" compared to its policy in the preceding few years - but he noted that the buildings and horses had been used by swaggers and the coach line. (Smart: \textit{op.cit.} p.132)
hundred and fifty thousand pounds.

By October 1865 a township was flourishing at Bealey corner, and telegraph lines were moving up the pass. The bridle track down the gorge was more or less complete in August; then the main difficulty was the bush cutting from the Taramakau valley to the Ararura valley. The contractor for this was E. Blake who advertised in Hokitika for "two hundred able bodied men at twelve shillings a day".\footnote{107} By the end of the year the road was forming in West Coast territory. Goldfield communications, which were still by means of the beach, or tracks inland on which "a horse sinks nearly to its girths in mud, or stumbles over the trunks of trees hidden far below the slimy surface",\footnote{108} gained no assistance from the alpine road for it bypassed the diggings.

Cattle were using the pass by the end of the year, and stock yards had been constructed at Core Lynn. By March the tough, adaptable Cobb coaches with their expert drivers and team of four trained horses were coming over the pass. "It took a few hours" wrote Archdeacon Harper in a vivid account of a crossing in 1866, "to lose all sense of danger". The coach "pitched and rolled like a ship at sea" when crossing the fords. The top of the pass was "sterile, steep and savage enough to be the haunt of Kohleborn\footnote{109} himself, with his attendant gnomes and sprites ... yet the place is relieved by the growth of Alpine Flora". As road dropped down into the gorge, the team curved "round and about like circus horses at a

107\footnote{W.C.T. 19 August, 1865.}
108\footnote{Editorial in W.C.T. 16 Sept.1865.}
good pace to keep the coach from swerving... the driver knows his work, the brakes grind and squeak". Then on went this road that had breached the mountain valleys, a pass, and a gorge "through the primaeval forest" to the sea.

Thus the hope of quick reward had led the search on until the land was traversed from sea to sea. There was some further exploration contemplated or carried out. Griffiths had hoped to explore the north branch of the Whitcombe River, but the journey down the main branch had taken too long. Browning took a party up the Makatini River to its head in mid September, but here as in the Taipo River, Smart and his prospecting party had preceded the surveyors. Browning nevertheless produced the first map of the upper valley.

The lowlands became populated with "crowds of men, rough and rowdy, their talk of gold..." gold, that magic substance which in a few short weeks breathed life into the unbroken forest, by drawing to the land a vigorous and young race of diggers, which followed from one rush to the next, leaving a permanent settlement scarcely anywhere in the first two years. Hokitika was solidly established by 1866 however, as the centre of the Canterbury goldfield and one of the large ports of the colony.

111. Reference number 1/50, L & S. (Hok.)
The town had "one long narrow irregular street of wood houses, built right on the sandy beach, just clear of huge trees, some fallen, its suburbs a wilderness of gigantic stumps".\footnote{113}

In August 1865 the editor of the \textit{West Coast Times} reminded the miners that they were "as yet sojourners in the land". Already he looked for the more permanent natural assets which "should induce many to separate themselves from the crowd of adventurers and become colonists in the true sense of the word".\footnote{114}

The land gave its bonanza to the Europeans whose nineteenth century destiny it was to conquer a new land and extend an empire. Sluicings carved into gravel faces; shafts led down deeply into the terraces; and hand cradles washed the beach sands. By the end of 1865 over a million pounds worth of gold had been claimed from the field. But the bonanza was hard won, for this land of gold was rugged, and gave little food except birds which "were shot by the dozen and boiled by the bucketful".\footnote{115} The meat diet for the first few months consisted almost entirely of salt beef, for the entry of stock by sea was restricted by a Government which wished to assist eastern squatters to satisfy the market. Floods cut into sluicings and washed away camp sites. One ford of the Taramakau River alone caused an average of one drowning a week in late 1864,\footnote{116} and the surf left a line of derelict vessels along the foreshore of each large estuary.

\footnote{113}{Ibid.}
\footnote{114}{Editorial in \textit{W.C.T.} 26 Aug.1865.}
\footnote{115}{G.O.Preshaw: \textit{Banking Under Difficulties}. 1868 p.111.}
\footnote{116}{Ibid. p.112.}
The Town of Bealey was to be located in the shadowed area, at the junction of the Bealey Creek and the Haunahauin (centre) Rivers.

Township plan of Bealey 1865.
The parts tinted green are proposed to be sold first.
CHAPTER FIVE

A NINETEENTH CENTURY EXPATRIATE
SCIENTIST IN THE LAND

"The man of science, no matter what his nationality, is at home wherever he works and makes his researches, and ... the land and soil of his activity, even if it be the most distant part of the globe, is his other home."

(F. Von Hochstettler in a Public Lecture, Nelson, 29 Sept. 1860)

"Oh! that I were a poet to sing the beauty of the Southern Alps."

(Julius Von Haast: L.T. 14 June, 1865)

On 21 December 1858 a German scholar Julius Von Haast, aged thirty-five, much travelled throughout Europe and familiar with the scientists and scientific theories of his day, arrived in New Zealand as immigration agent for an organisation which intended to encourage in the colony a settlement of German nationals. The uprising of the North Island Maori tribes, and the results of his journeys with an Austrian geologist F. Von Hochstettler into the centre of that island, and then to Nelson, persuaded him both that his function as an immigration agent had become purposeless, and that the colony provided attractive possibilities for the scientific explorer.

The tradition created by Alexander Von Humboldt had become one of the basic assumptions of nineteenth century science - the desire on the part of all the rapidly evolving natural sciences for universal knowledge in order that the world’s phenomena could be classified and interpreted. Humboldt laid down the principle for the would-be man of knowledge of the nineteenth century. He should see "...not merely coasts, and districts little removed from the margin of the ocean, as in voyages of circumnavigation..., but extensive continental districts, presenting the most striking contrasts."

All explorers of the nineteenth century were possessed of something of the scientific spirit—a spirit which led them to attempt to discover what actually existed beyond the fringes of knowledge. But as the century moved on, natural science was to become more and more combined with exploration, and exploration more and more of an exact science. Topographic survey, botanical research, geological investigation—all the related phenomena of the surface of the earth and life on it—were fused in one common search, and a map became the most convenient vehicle for expressing the synthesis.

The antipodean scientist was not so much a colonist, viewing the land against the light of his own ends, as one who looked at a land as history, whose evolution and complicated inter-relationships it was his ambition to expound. What more could the scientist ask than the opportunity for experiencing the two senses of discovery many times expressed by Haast—"the feeling of awe that never before had a human foot stood upon this spot" and the collection of data or species "new to science."

Science as a Government Department was a novel idea in the 1860s, and Haast was faced with opposition from both Nelson and Canterbury colonists. He overcame this to build up a considerable reputation and be acknowledged as the authority, for his own age, on the mountains of the South Island. Haast and Butler were the two notable nineteenth century men to describe this land, which Butler introduced to European literature, and Haast to European science.

In November 1859 Midlothian seceded from the province of Nelson, and expeditions were sent by the Nelson Provincial Council into the only other possible area of expansion—the Nelson portion of the West Coast. Rochfort and Mackay were instructed to examine this. Haast took the opportunity provided when the Nelson Chamber of Commerce suggested a further examination, to justify his position as Geological Adviser and to prove his worth as a scientific
explorer; by carrying out what he termed a "geological and topographical"
exploration of the south west. Haast was unusual among South Island explorers,
in that he began his researches in the more difficult western side of the moun-
tains, and then turned to exploration of the eastern valleys.

Haast was appointed to lead the third provincial expedition which set out
on 3 January 1860, and the geologist was accompanied by James Burnett, a colliery
engineer. Haast's expedition differed from the other two mainly in the amount
of scientific equipment carried (mining tools, a grindstone, two geological
hammers, a pocket sextant, two aneroids, four thermometers and a boiling water
apparatus); in the number of summits ascended to obtain overall bearings of
the Butler, Grey and Taramakau valleys and ranges; and in the scientific flavour
of the document that he produced.

The party found overland travel to the Grey valley a severe test, though
Haast's expedition was methodically organised and followed close in the footsteps
of Mackay. From halfway to the head of the Grey valley, all provisions had to
be carried on their backs. Burnett wrote that the conditions were such that
"five or six miles a day is often very hard work for men loaded as we are." 2

The pass into the Grey valley was almost level, which was just as well as the
travellers by that time were in difficulties with floods and bluffs. They
arrived at Waimahana on 22 March in little better condition than Mackay, who had
poisoned his leg on a speargrass point with the result that he had to open the
swelling before he could make any progress at all. Haast and Burnett had stood
the journey better than the others of the party, Burnett writing that he felt
"new strength infused into my blood" from the challenge of each day's difficulties.
But "it was very pleasant to be near the sea again. How I longed for it in the

2. J. Burnett: op. cit., p. 3.
mountains of the upper Grey". He pointed out that "everyone who has been up this river has had a run for life". 3

From a Nelson peak Haast had already obtained to the south "a magnificent view of the wild mountain chains; whose rugged peaks assumed shapes that it would defy the wildest imagination to conceive". 4 The best view Haast obtained of the high mountains was by returning up the Grey River by canoe to "Black Hill". (see sketch p.158). This was to be ascended "because it was situated in the midst of the eastern chain ... and also because its round top and smooth sides seemed easy of access". 5 The climb from the base of the mountain took them three days of reconnaissance and climbing, and a further two days for a re-ascent. From the top they viewed the valley.

"lying like a map before us ... the eye dwelt with pleasure on this extensive tract, in which however no sign of human presence was visible except the smoke rising from Mr. Rochfort's camp in one of the grass plains, the colour of which contrasted agreeably with the dark green tints of the forest". To the south rose up "the highest summit ranges of the island ... amongst them, its two snow covered peaks glittering in the sun, Mt. Cook rose majestically". It was "not without regret, wrote Haast, that he left the summit." 6

Several days of heavy rain followed. Burnett "could hear distinctly the rolling of large boulders as they were carried along by the impetuous current". The party canoed down river in the wake of the flood to Mawhera Pah, where "the flood had made fearful ravages, having washed away several houses and covered most of the cultivation with sand".

Though "every dishful of dirt" that had been tried had yielded "some specks" of gold, 8 Haast's greatest enthusiasm was aroused by the coal measures.

3. Ibid. p.2.
5. Ibid. p.33.
6. Ibid. p.37.
inland on the banks of the Grey River. Here there was a seam, twelve feet six inches thick, of "real coal, its compactness, specific gravity and combustibility leaving nothing to be desired." He imagined the time when there would be "a busy population of miners enlivening the country; the shrill of the loco will resound through its valleys... the harbour will be the resort of numerous colliers," and Haast exclaimed that "that most matter-of-fact man would become imaginative when standing upon a spot containing such a vast store of mineral wealth." 9

Haast, as well as analysing geological formations, had conducted a topographic survey which included barometric observations, and had spent many days collecting botanical specimens, sketching and painting flora. As Mackay and Rochfort had done, he reported encouragingly on the south-west of the Province. Two months after his return to Nelson, his report was published 10 and the cost of the expedition worked out. A controversy on its value arose in the Nelson Provincial Council. It was stated Haast had added nothing that was not already known, and his report merely related his own adventures and tribulations, including such trivia as "the New Zealand robin had sat on and pecked his hand which was holding sketching paper." 11 But Haast sent copies of his report to the Governor of the Colony, and to European scientists as a means of making his name known.

10. The publication did not include Haast's maps, which he considered essential.
Late in 1860 Haast offered to conduct a geological survey of the Province of Canterbury, including "as much of the West Coast as is accessible." His intentions were to "prepare a proper geological map... to make a complete collection of rocks and ores, arranging the same in a geological museum" and he engaged to be in the field "not less than six out of the twelve months." He was appointed by a Provincial Council hopeful of obtaining shares in the mineral wealth of the South Island. No results were obtained in this direction for several years, and Haast again had to survive criticism.

Haast was ready to start directly from Nelson and begin the survey of the western part of the province, estimating that this would take him six weeks to complete as far as Jackson's Bay. But the Superintendent, W. S. Moorhouse, was interested in other more important schemes, one of which necessitated a geological study of the Peninsula Hills, in order that estimates for the cost of tunnelling through them might be made. Haast carried out this survey, and his official appointment followed on 15 February 1861. In that month he became a naturalised subject of the Colony, and the Lyttelton Times welcomed him.

"Haast is surprisingly adapted to the task... a competent surveyor, and experienced geologist and an educated observer of nature in all her aspects."13

Beginning in 1861, Haast carried out a systematic geological exploration of each of the eastern river valleys to its source. That same year he learned what a contrast of shape, material, and access for an explorer, the valleys east of the divide provided. Haast discovered that the Survey Office had not mapped further than the limit of run boundaries in each valley. The regions beyond

this limit were to become his special preserve for many years, and if the gold rush had not come half way through his methodical survey, with the consequent establishing of a Survey Office at Hokitika, the western parts of the province would eventually have claimed him as their pioneer mapmaker.

His first expedition in 1861 was concluded by the examination of the range which he called the Arrowsmith. This gave him "an instructive insight into the geological structure of that stupendous mountain chain." Impressions of the majesty of the Alps, of the cause of their uplifting, and of the influence of ice and erosion in creating the vast shingle "drift formations" and terraces, were to provide the material for much of Haast's writing in the following few years.

With this, he was not only to participate in the scientific advance in Europe, but also to give to the colonists themselves - who often had little idea of what was to be found in the interior of the South Island - some rare glimpses of their country. His reports, public lectures and museum collection stimulated an awareness of the existence of a mountainous interior, and of its zoology and botany, but the practical minded among colonials and Councillors often held that this work was so much wasted effort. For these his flowery writing and geological terminology, his tendency toward pomposity and the verbose expressions of simple facts of nature must have been altogether too much. But Haast was a scientific enthusiast; he believed that science should be made as important and popular as possible, and related to the impressiveness of his adopted country.

The reports that Provincial Councillors were intended to consider must have provided many difficulties. In one Haast described the cycle of erosion as the work of two mighty agencies which determine the form of the surface of our globe and which endeavour to counteract each other, for whilst the geological force upheaves or depresses, the atmospheric destroys and levels, both continuing their slow but incessant work for myriads upon myriads of years." 15

He thought that science ought to display the immensity of the works of God. Haast explained the high passes by the work of the "ice planes" of two glaciers which met at the summit. "Thus we observe how Nature, to accomplish gigantic ends, uses very simple but effectual means." 16 His reports endeavoured to instruct their readers in the newly emerged science of geology. "Before reporting on the character and extent of these gold fields..., I deem it necessary to allude to the physical geology and geography...from the beginning of the Cainozoic or tertiary period..." 17

In 1862 and 1863 Haast reached into the heart of the Alps, and crossed Haast Pass. Thus he had acquired a knowledge of the South Island from Cook Strait to the Otago boundary. His investigation of the glacier systems under Mt. Cook led to a report on the Southern Alps which excited the attention of geologists who were attempting to explain the glaciers and their associated lakes in the European Alps. The President of the Royal Geographical Society in January 1864 noted the arrival of "a most valuable memoir, describing a map of the province and illustrated by numerous exquisite pictorial sketches of mountains and glaciers, from the Provincial Geologist of Canterbury." 18

By 1865 Haast had worked out his theories of the formation of the Canterbury

17. R.R.G.S., Session XXIV, p. 177.
plains; the flights of terraces on the high country valleys, and the effect of ice sheets. Late in that year he travelled to the West Coast where he investigated the lines of moraines and the terraces of the western lowlands from which most of the alluvial gold was being gained.

In his examinations of the upper Rakai and upper Waimeakeriri in 1866 and 1867 respectively he was rewarded by the evidence of past glaciation which these river valleys furnished. The traversing of the Rakia River system took his party seven weeks from 2 March 1866. They were forced to ascend a precipitous road where the two source glaciers almost met. This viewpoint was surrounded on three sides by glaciated ranges. Haast did not distinguish exactly between the peaks 19, but the general picture he saw "was magnificent in the extreme, and can fairly rival that in any part of our Southern Alps.... For several hours I was occupied in taking the necessary bearings and making a sketch of the glorious scenery." It was "impossible to convey in words an adequate idea of the rugged character of [Mt. Reassy] and its eastern neighbour Mt. Whitcombe; turrets, pinnacles and minarets rise all along the serrated edges, and its rocky face is in most instances so steep that no snow can lie on it." 20 The descent through the scrub and bush was "a herculean task, particularly for one who is of portly dimensions, as we had often literally to lie flat on the ground and crawl through, or to walk on the top of the branches." 21

The party explored the head of the Mathias branch and then the two main branches of the Wilberforce River. The summit of Browning's Pass was clear of snow, and Haast noted the difference in the scene. "A picturesque lake lay at

19. He named two different peaks Mt. Whitcombe, and thought that a pyramidal peak at the head of the Lyell Glacier was the Mt. Tyndal which he had named while in the upper Rangitata.
21. Ibid, p. 20. This is the only occasion on which Haast gives evidence of taking himself less than seriously during an exploring expedition. His son, H.F. Von Haast, among over one thousand pages of biography of his father, allows him to have made only one serious error of judgement — the suggestion by Haast senior that chamois be introduced to the mountains of New Zealand.
at our feet, surrounded with hills mostly covered with a deep green alpine turf, thickly studded with flowers. The water of the lake was perfectly clear... a few grebes (Podiceps rupiferus) were swimming upon it and gave life to the otherwise solitary and tranquil scenery." 22

The Avoca tributary was explored to its head, Haast finding that valley unusual in the extent of its covering of beech forest. Then the return was made through the lone hills and isolated lakes about Lake Coleridge.

The report on the river Rakaia was the most full and probably the most interesting of Haast's published reports, and the map as good an example as any he was to produce.

The following year his exploration of the eastern valleys was completed by an examination of the upper Waiaukariri. His party returned on 6 April with "large geological, botanical and zoological collections, which were deposited in the Canterbury Museum." 23

Haast had gained the insights of the geologist into the past, and noted the unusual features of his country - the "drift formations" which allowed the traveller to "go from Blind Bay to the east coast and to the west coast, in the midst of mighty mountain ranges six thousand and seven thousand feet, walking on gravel and gravel plateaus all the way, without once setting foot on solid rock." 24 Data drawn from Haast's observations in the Southern Alps demonstrated to pioneer European students of ice erosion that "the southern hemisphere too... bears traces of this ice age of the most magnificent and excellent

22. Ibid, p. 23.
23. Geology, p. 152.
Mr Whitecombe from Meins Knob.

Alexander Turnbull Library

From a painting by J. Von Haast, 1868.

Photo, 1958.
quality entirely analogous with the phenomena ... in southern Europe and America". 25 In 1868 Haast completed the first map of the Southern Alps. He described the methods of his topographic work from the limits of the pastoral occupation.

"All the principal rivers on the east coast and some on the west coast were chained, by myself or my assistants, to their sources generally issuing from glaciers. In conducting this survey I repeatedly measured base lines, sometimes upon the glaciers themselves .... The west coast had presented more problems. As a result of a combination of "the difficulty of obtaining provisions ... the wild and impassable mountain torrents ... the serious errors on the West Coast found by the Colonial Marine Survey ... as well as from want of time, I was unable to obtain as exhaustive a set of bearings as I hoped". 26

Haast, unlike later mountain explorers, had no tendency to play down his achievements. He hoped that the narrative of his *Geology of Canterbury and Westland* would enable the reader

"to participate in the difficulties, dangers and joys of an explorer's life, and at the same time to show him that the work of a geologist, in an unknown country, in which moreover he has to seek his own way, make his own map and carry often a heavy load on his back, is not an easy one". He thought that "it will be found none of the important features had been overlooked by me when future explorers in years to come may have more leisure at their command". 27

So much is heard about Haast from Haast himself that it is interesting to obtain other impressions of him. G.M. Mueller was, with his two contemporaries in the hard school of Westland surveyors, G.J. Roberts and C.E. Douglas, 28 little impressed by Haast's estimate of his own achievements. In 1884 Mueller wrote to the Canterbury Survey Office, and to Haast, requesting information on the position of main divide peaks. Mueller informed Haast that he was finding

25. *Ibid*, p. 277
"great difficulty in identifying many named by yourself." To the Chief Surveyor of Canterbury Mueller explained that he "was not much concerned as to the position of the peaks on the Doctor's map, knowing that few of these would stand the test of recent surveys. It was the names principally I was anxious to get." Haast in his reply enclosed a copy of a report by himself on the Tasman Glacier, as well as the map that had been requested. Mueller wrote to Haast that he had read the report "with great interest - amidst a mass of dry information it contains a few racy bits." 29

Burnett thought that Haast had shown himself in his Nelson expedition to be "one of the truest stamp." 30 To Archdeacon R.W. Harper he was excellent company in a hut, for he was "full of anecdote, and, having a rich baritone voice, kept us alive with his songs." 31 However C.L. Money who in 1865 attached himself to the Geologist's party in the West Coast Goldfield, in order "to see what equivalent was obtained by the Government for the fifteen hundred pounds a year" decided that his means of travelling was by no means laborious, well clothed and bootless he toddled, or rather rolled along, with a pompous air...." 32

Haast's journeys of exploration were in fact more impressive in the telling than in achievement. Hardly ever did one of his parties cover any extent of ground unexplored by Europeans. His expeditions were always methodically organised and carried through. His surveying attained a standard equal to that of his Canterbury Provincial Survey contemporaries. When he had difficulty in relating the mountains of one valley to those of another in the high Alps, he was merely discovering a fact which had to be realised by the Westland Survey and by

30. Burnett, op. cit., p. 6
The retreat of "Nature's great ice plains."


The western ranges of the province of Nelson.
View from the junction of the Grey and Hawdon Rivers, east.

The Southern Alps.
View from the mouth of the River Spur, from sketches by Mr. A. Blaxland.
Canterbury mountaineers before the mapping of this region could be completed - that in a maze of mountain valleys and ridges, peaks can be exactly differentiated and mapped only from other peaks. Above all, even if Haast did not greatly extend the territorial knowledge held of the Province, his expeditions rank high as geological explorations of this land. He also well merited the attachment of his name to several distinctive sub-alpine plants, for he was the first scientist to study, and collect specimens of, the flora above the bushline in the Southern Alps.

33. H. Von Haast lists seventeen species which were named after the geologist. Most of these are sub-alpine plants. They include the beautiful yellow buttercup (ranunculus Haastii) and the remarkable vegetable sheep (Haastia pulvinaris), both of which are found on shingle faces far above the limits of most other vegetation.
Haast's 1868 map of the Southern Alps (N.G.S. Printing).
Some of his names have not survived, e.g. Haast's Range, Stewart River, and Mt. Feuenteufel.
CHAPTER SIX.

THE SECOND GENERATION.

"The service knows, the public don't matter": attributed to G.J. Roberts by A.P. Harper in his foreward to Mr. Explorer Douglas.

"The colonies especially New Zealand are in feverish haste to work out all their future resources"

C.E. Douglas, 1892.

As the migration receded from both sides of the Alps, the mountain land beyond sheep pasture and above the mineral belt became a landscape that was to be almost entirely left alone by the generation after the gold rushes.

In fact the entire region suffered a similar fate. Naturally isolated and still difficult for communications, this land at the back of the mountains was a world apart from the centres of the colony. Though pioneering was still to be found within its settlements, the potentialities of this frontier seemed exhausted and, in its relative changelessness, it became a nineteenth century antiquity preserved as the other centres of New Zealand advanced into the twentieth century.

Both east and west formed a landscape of isolated settlements against a limiting background which gave the impression of being little altered by human intrusion. The high country valleys retained their station life, with its timeless dray transport and weather bound occupations, long after this had disappeared from the plains. Among the valleys the dialect and social patterns of the pastoral age survived, and crystallised into an indigenous way of life. The forested lowlands of the west coast could no longer survive on individual sluicings. The coal industry pictured by Von Haast became centred on the lower Grey valley while dredging replaced
some of the alluvial diggings to the south. Timber milling began to
eat into the flats and terraces, the forest being replaced on the flats
by primitive cattle farming, founded on little capital and contending
against a small market, C.E. Douglas thought that the resultant landscape
of the 1890s in the "flats of the Hokitika" fitted a raw settlement.

"... the clearing is of the roughest description... the spectacle presented around each house is not
of an aesthetic nature and must have a demoralising effect on the rising generation a chaos of stumps may
be picturesque and the picturesque is simply the beautiful run wild, so perhaps such scenery is more
suitable for a new country than well kept lawns and clean trimmed fields". 1

Here and there mineral riches kept on tempting, particularly on the
fringe of the mountains. There was the everlasting thought that the wealth
must come from somewhere. Quartz mining in the Taipo River and on Mt.
Greenland was attempted; a silver mine of Mt. Rangitoto established; and
later even the serpentine formations high on the Griften range were worked.
But the golden horde was gone from the land.

The West Coast, closer by coastal steamer to the north than to the
east, developed its own traditions. The solitary link with the east,
was the slender winding man-made thread across the mountains. To travel
that road was a great adventure through a Shangri-La country. For four
pounds ten shillings from Springfield to Hokitika the rigours of mountain
travel could be experienced "through the most picturesque, gorgeous and
romantic scenery of any part of the world". 2

Extracts from the Douglas reports are from J.D Pascoe's Typescript copies.
2. R.C. Reid: Rambles on the Golden Coast, 1886
   p. 90.
The impression that the background scene formed upon a visitor to Hokitika in 1887 was that nature could not have produced "anywhere in this world, a more sublime, grand and awful mountain range ... the solitude ... the awful silence". 3

Formal awe, stylized paintings and restricted poetry were the typical response of the Victorian colonial to immense scale in landscape, which he was generally content to admire from a distance as something remote, impersonal and of no special relevance. Nature was for man's ends, and what man could not use, there was little desire to become familiar with. There had indeed scarcely been time to evaluate the uniqueness of the land, or for personal impression to seep into a deep consciousness of it. For this the wanderer was again to have an advantage.

Of the "scenery" of the colony, Thomas Braiken could write in the 1880's.

"Here we have a land, yet fresh from the hand of its maker, formed in all the wild prodigality of natural beauty. A land of stupendous mountains, roaring cataracts silvery cascades, fantastic volcanic formations, magnificent landscapes, noble forests and picturesque lakes". 4

The writing, or reading of such description, with its commonly connected adjectives, formulates no personal meaning and demonstrates no sense of possession.

There were few visits made to the mountainous interior between the decline of the gold rushes and 1914; but those that did venture into this

landscape still "fresh from the hand of its maker" were to complete the major record of it and to show attitudes, in their feeling for the land and response to its natural beauty, of some general relevance.

If the majority of colonials had not gained a complete insight into the land by the turn of the century, they seemed determined to complete the cultural impact in another way. From England, North America and Australia animals and fish were acclimatised to redress the balance of wild life in the forest as well as to stock empty streams. In 1896 three stags and five hinds were released at Manuka point to begin the Rakaia herd. In 1903 a small group of fawns were released at Mt. Tuhua and about the same time four Canadian moose were released at the Hokitika gorge. These apparently did not survive, but in 1907 a herd of chamois were established at Mt. Cook, and from there spread to the northern limits of these valleys. The final major import into the forests was the Australian oppossum.

The surveying foundation.

The key date for the extension of uniform surveys throughout the colony was 1876, when the Provincial Survey Offices became incorporated into a central Lends and Survey Department. The methods of the Provincial surveyors had varied. J.T. Thomson, the first Surveyor-General, chose a system for the completion of the national survey that he thought most suited to the circumstances of the colony. Most effort was to be directed, as was natural in a still growing colony, "so that settlers might be placed in secure possession of their land, and the Crown might be safe to issue titles on reliable plans and descriptions". He went on to explain the special nature of colonial surveying."My instructions were two-fold - one,
in regard to the settlement of an immigrant people, the other in permanently securing their titles ... this throws a responsibility on the surveyor very different from older countries".

The primary need, apart from settlement, was a rapid method to cover the country, mountainous or level, with exact reference stations. The quickest and most suitable division Thomson thought to be that of "Meridional Circuits", each of which was centred on an astronomically measured meridian point and a chained baseline. From these a "minor" triangulation, formed with two or three mile sides, could be extended. Simultaneously with the triangulation, topographic mapping of a scale of two miles to the inch was to be carried on. This was the ultimate end in the departmental surveyor's work, for which parts of this region became drawn into the Amuri, Mt. Pleasant and Gawler circuits in the Canterbury Land District, and the Grey, Hokitika and Okarito circuits in the Westland Land District. Thomson's report stated that triangulation should extend first over the country most required for the check and connection of settlement surveys, and suggested that progress would be by following "from the initial points by the most ready roads through the valleys connecting settled points". Such a programme assumed that further pioneering surveying would be left in abeyance; and the east of the divide did remain, as far as the Lands and Survey Department was concerned, until 1930 little better mapped than by Von Haast.

The practices of each Provincial Survey Office were criticized by Thomson in 1877. The Province of Canterbury had become "a mass of unsurvey and survey-free selection presents one of the most difficult problems a surveyor has to meet ... on the plains of Canterbury it is encountered under the best advantages and under the fewest objections ... But where we leave
the plains, the problem is otherwise". In the mountains the survey lines should have been made "in harmony with valleys, spurs and ridges, not counter to all". Thomson summed up that both the Canterbury survey, and survey records, had arrived at a condition where drastic reorganisation was required. J.H. Baker, at that time chief Surveyor in Southland, was appointed to carry out the difficult task. As one of the busiest land districts for settlement subdivision, this and pastoral resurveys were to be the Office's primary concern for the next thirty years.

Baker's surveyors during the 1890's were engaged behind the mountains mostly in what he termed "minor triangulation and topographic surveys to enable him to get more reliable plans made of the pastoral country". J.H. McClure during 1887-88 was in the Clyde, Ashburton and Cameron valleys under the Arrowsmith Range. J.Hay at the same time resurveyed the pastoral country south of the Rakaia gorge, and J.S. Welch surveyed the Okuku and Mt. Noble areas towards the lakes in the upper Hurumui. The triangulation involved mainly correcting the old surveys, and the surveyors covered little new ground. Some attractive maps of the high country were produced.


6. Baker in his diary records the fact that he did not visit the West Coast until 1886, although he had explored two passes (Whitcombe Pass and Hanast Pass) which led to it. [see J.H. Baker: op.cit. p.189]


In official accounts mention was made of the difficulties of this "most arduous" work. These included two feet of snow in the Cameron valley after a severe winter; escapes from drowning; attacks of frostbite; and McClure had "nearly lost his life by falling down a crevasse, the brink of which he incautiously stepped too near". 10

Prospecting was largely absent in the high altitude country, but by 1884, by whose efforts is not recorded, claims were established on the divide ridge faces of Pope Pass and Grave stream, and lower down the Wilberforce at the head of the Moa stream high on the Ragged Range. The leases to mine quartz gold were unusual enough for special comment in the survey report. J. E. Pickett had in the course of furnishing "much valuable information about this almost unexplored region", surveyed and mapped sections averaging four thousand feet in height, which lay "among mountains so precipitous that the higher pegs could not be driven". 11 The "Browning's Pass reef road" was extended towards this camp of enterprising miners from the west along the line laid down in 1865. 12

This was not the only new line of communication contemplated. Between 1874-1884, the mountains between the Hurunui and the Rakaia had been searched again for a suitable route to join east and west, though this time without the same public participation as in 1865-66. A Midland

11. Report to Surveyor General, A.P.H.R. Vol. I, 1884. Many of the stream names of the upper Wilberforce were given by Pickett. (Burnett, Bristed, Cronin, Gibson, Gifford, and Grave – the last two after men who had been his schoolteachers at Timaru)
12. Many parts of this track, formed ten feet wide, still remain today. During the depression years of the 1930's another camp was organized under Browning's Pass, after the Chairman of the Ashburton Unemployment Board had stated that in 1896 three men had obtained three thousand pounds worth of gold there. [Press 1 March, 1935]
railway line, mooted as early as 1866 (via Harper's Pass) was to be put across the island. All the major passes were surveyed but there is little personal record of the expeditions. A Royal Commission in 1883 decided upon the same route as that taken by the road.

Thus on the east little was added to the map by this generation. In the Western Land District, the Surveyor-General found, in contrast to Canterbury, "that the present system of survey is sound and practical for the conditions" and in his report added by way of commentary upon the landscape that there had been "no base lines in the usual sense of the term, possible therefore long road and shore traverses have had recourse to instead". Surveying on the lowlands had been "little better than underground 'driving'." 14

The Westland Survey was under the control of a chief who by 1874 was criticizing the inefficiency of contract surveying, and chafing at the fact that on the "last litho plan from Nelson to Hokitika the gaps averaging twenty square miles are conspicuous of which we know nothing". The mapping of these gaps was to require getting to know the whole province, upper and lower story - a difficult task. The Chief Surveyor was G. Mueller, of German origin, who had come as a surveyor to the West Coast in 1865 after a period in Invercargill. Before this he had spent three years in diverse occupations throughout the United States (including one of

13. A new divide pass was found from the east. But by three men mustering from Manuka Point. In 1875 A.Comyns, W.Gerard & J.G.Richards crossed from the head of the Mathias, found themselves in the Hokitika, and took five days to get through a series of canyons with prospector's names of Frisco, Omatane etc. to the Hokitika flats.
coachman on the Wells Fargo line) followed by a year on the Australian goldfields. To get into the mountain valleys seemed a natural extension of his early surveying in the virgin bush and roadless lowlands. By 1876 he had become a west coaster by adoption and the chief of a hard core of energetic surveyors who were not to be so tied to settlement surveys.

Mueller himself carried out only one expedition of any note within these valleys. In 1881 he tested the pass at the head of the Mathias River for a line of road. Mueller's party found the pass could be gained on the east by a narrow ravine. An easy route was found from the Mathias Pass over a grass saddle to the Whitcombe River by thus passing the cascades and canyons of the upper Hokitika valley. The only difficulties of the expedition were in fording high running rivers, and the "special treat of having to live off a small piece of scree for about three days" as a consequence of a stock of provisions being left on the wrong bank of the Whitcombe River.¹⁶

The part of the Westland survey more concerns a man who was one of Mueller's staff. By 1881 the triangulation of Westland was well under way. The Surveyor General's report of 1877 explained: "Westland has been divided into three circuits ... Mr. Roberts is to extend the standard bearings through the Hokitika circuit. He has for three months been engaged in selecting and preparing stations. Several of these are so high and difficult of access that it would not be expected that settlement surveyors would willingly resort to them for connection ... the high stations referred to will become the points of a major triangulation, whose lines

will be above all obstructions." 17

This was the first official mention both of G.J. Roberts and of the nature of his work. Of his early career little is known, except at one time he had been on the Indian survey staff. The nature of his work made necessary high altitude mapping above the bushline. He was not to regard this as a surveyor's burden in a hostile land, but came to revel in its opening a further world to him, as his expeditions carried him beyond high level surveying to the fringes of mountaineering.

In 1878 the Surveyor General's report recorded that Mr. G. Roberts "extended bearings from Koiterangi to Ahaara", and the following year from Koiterangi to Abut Head. For the first three years Roberts and his survey gang were occupied in this preparatory work on the front hills and lowlands, extending baselines, calculating bearings, establishing trig stations and carrying to camp sites the gear that bush ridge lines and stations required. He established stations from one end of the coast to the other, noting his reference points and the topography, embellishing the neat pages of calculations in his field book with painstakingly drawn sketches. As surveyor's panoramic sketches they have a photographic accuracy. Their appeal is more than this however — each sketch demonstrates the reality of a personal impression and all show an aesthetic response to the shape of land and the symmetries of mountain valleys and ridges.

In 1880 Roberts was instructed to join the triangulation systems of Canterbury and Westland somewhere near the head of the Rakaia River. He chose to try the upper Wanganui Valley in order to extend a chain

TRIANGULATION OF WESTLAND 1877-1885

Baseline trig at Inchbanrie

Collapsed iron trig above the clouds on Muelle Peak (6643)

Sketch by G.J. Roberts, F.B. (foot)

The Okaka Valley from Warnocks Knobs trig.
of triangles across the mountains. As his was the first party to venture into glaciated regions in Westland, Roberts "read up on the subject of mountaineering" beforehand. "It was a badly devised expedition too late in the year, too saving of the public purse", he wrote later. This - the most interesting expedition Roberts made - is also the most fully recorded. 18

The Wanganui river led his party to directly under the divide, where the main stream forked the valley closed in on all sides and there were only high altitude possibilities of getting out of it. In three days from the forks a track was cut up a steep bush ridge to a rock promontory which terminated a range coming off the divide. This promontory was named the Blue Lookout, for it gave an unexcelled view point both back down the valley and across the invisible depths of a narrow gorge to a line of eight thousand foot peaks and snowfields south towards the Wataroa and east toward the Rangitata. The next day the party explored along the snow grass platforms. Above them rose a line of vertical rock faces [the Lord range] and toward those the party moved, finding the "snow slopes very useful for by cutting steps [we] got to the top of peaks otherwise unscaleable" ... until they were "finally jammed by the western precipices of Dan's Peak",ith Eventually the party found high access to the head of two branches of Wanganui by following along either side of this range to the point where it met the divide. Here, three ridges of high peaks met at a low depression through to the Ramsay glacier in Canterbury. Among the low peaks there were

18. There are two sources for this account of the transalpine triangulation. A letter from Roberts to A.P. Harper dated 23 August 1933 (typescript copy held by J.D. Pascoe) and a pencil diary occupying the back pages of P.E.288 (Mok.) The two sources are here combined. All references to letters from Roberts to Harper and G.E. Hamering are from Pascoe's typescript copies.
potential trig points, and through the gap others of much the same altitude could be seen both close at hand, on the Butler range, and far away on the north shoulders of the Arrowsmith range.

Roberts, with his foreman Dan Strachan, then returned and made the journey by coach across Arthur's Pass to Lake Lyndon. They were forced to do the complete link, because no suitable surveyor could be released from the Canterbury office. Twelve days after exploring the Lord Range, Roberts and Strachan, with a cook Jack Stewart, were camped under the Arrowsmith Range.

After placing a beacon on one outlying nob of the Arrowsmiths, they used a horse obtained from "Neaves" station [Mt.Algidus] to ford the Rakaia. They camped under Whitcombe Pass. After constant wet weather food supplies became short, so without having achieved their purpose Roberts and Strachan journeyed back to "Neaves" for more food, Roberts hanging on to the tail of Strachan's horse at the fords. Not until near the end of their supplies again did they obtain a sufficiently clear day to climb Mt. Butler above Whitcombe Pass. Even then a storm hit them near the top "... a perfect blizzard, wasn't it cold. Ugh!" Robert described how their little cook "staunch and true, albeit soft," who had climbed with them, on the next day was "puffed and blistered". The others rubbed weka oil where his skin peeled off.

The final task was the hardest. Rain kept them there until the three had "snared every weka we could hear and stoned every blue duck about". When the weather cleared Strachan and Roberts for three hours attempted to cross back over the Rakaia River. Finally they made the decision to cross the two glaciers at the head of the river, and by the end of that day were
The route onto the Lord Range followed the ridge on the left. The Lambot gorge has not yet been explored.

"The precipices of Dan's Peak."

Eastern slopes of the Lord Range. Mt. Lord is the last in the line of peaks. On its right is Strachan pass through which Mt. Butler can be seen.
camped under the Arrowsmiths again. A second choice of route next day took them to their beacon point, and the pair returned round the head of the river. Darkness fell during the last stages of ice and moraine and Roberts reached the camp well behind Strachan, "very tired and worn out". The points established, the surveyor and his gang of two arrived back at Neve's after three weeks in the upper Rakaia. During that time they had experienced almost all the tribulations the Rakaia offers - long periods of northwest rain with floods, cold southerlies, and travel over bluffs, moraines and glaciers - but "after the jungle of the west coast, we found the country very quiet".

Twelve days later, after a few days in the Hokitika office, Roberts and Strachan were back in the head of the Wanganui River again. There, beacons were put up on Mt. Roberts and Mt. Lord; an iron trig. placed on Mt. Mueller; and a log bridge formed across the upper Wanganui. An entry in Roberts' diary:- "Went up Mueller's Peak at sunrise ... set done ... fog ... waited to 3 p.m." suggests that the sea mist played its part in the surveying. Later Roberts explained that by camping under a peak and having the theodolite set up in advance he usually "got an hour a day at dawn". There was no camp site possible near his divide trigs [Mt. Lord and Mt. Roberts]. "Every morning we had to crawl half way down a high glacier, then along sundry rock and ice slopes to the stations, and day after day we got there a few minutes late". 19

19. Roberts to Harper, 8 April 1894. Part of this route is shown in the sketch on p. 185.
However there must have been many days of clear weather for Roberts to glory in the panoramas, for he wrote later that it was country where "not a peak has been topped yet, cols untrdden and scenery unsurpassable". Snowfalls also influenced the surveying. At one stage "Strachan and Bill ["Clarke"] had from the divide pass "scrambled up the face to trig K.D. ["Mt. Lord"] and dug twenty feet of snow of it". Roberts' description of the Wanganui valley itself suggested the unlikelihood of "another such string of immense precipices, snow, or gulch, anywhere. Hot springs, gold, geological formations of great variety alternating against all theory".

Roberts and Strachan returned over the Whitcombe pass and "tore along from sun-up to dark" after "seven months out, climbing incessantly". Roberts added: "It was our trade to swag heavy loads, to climb to ford etc. and we simply did it, after a fashion, but we never climbed a high peak or did anything else to brag about". Mueller reported that Roberts had "carried the Westland triangulation across the main dividing range into Canterbury via the headwaters of the Big Wanganui. Amongst great and exceptional difficulties, this was satisfactorily accomplished."

In the following years Roberts extended the triangulation from Bell Hill at one end of Westland to the Cascade plateau at the other, sketching in his picture of Westland. In the late 1880's his work became more and

20. Roberts to Harper, 6 May 1892.
21. Roberts to Manring, 1 April 1894.
22. Roberts to Harper, 14 October 1893.
The Westland - Garwood triangulation of 1880. The main divide follows from Mt. Lord to Mt. Martin. Lines of dashes record the routes of the survey party on its traverse trips, Mr. Butler and the Arrowsmith Boys.
more restricted to the northern valleys. C.E. Douglas was to spend those years exploring the head waters of the Southern valleys, and Roberts gradually pieced the work of this "first bushman in Westland", to his own. By 1890 he was confined to office work, but the memory of his surveying among the mountains remained as a lasting influence.

Roberts' ideas about his work, the newly settled land, and its colonial people were developed in letters which he wrote during the 1890's to two young Canterbury men who were endeavouring to establish mountaineering as a sport in the Southern Alps.

His was essentially a pioneering ethos. All men ranked according to their merits in the "fighting against odds" that made "life worth living". As he put it, through his theodolite he looked "level at his men and cared not whence he came". He thought that perhaps the reason for the non-publication of a report of the Wanganui triangulation was that "each of my overworked, half-started loyal fellows got honest mention". Strachan had been the only one of the party to complete a crossing of the divide pass; a crossing which could rank as the first above snow level in the Southern Alps. Roberts, a bushman hardened to the rain and labour that belonged to his "trade", ironically referred to the ashib mentality of some nineteenth century explorers and mountaineers when he wrote to C.E. Hamnering in 1896; 25. Roberts to Harper, 23 August 1893.
"D. Strachan was my paid foreman and may be treated as a combination of guide and porter and consequently should be ignored. The pity of it is that I wasn't at his coat tail because then you could give me the glory!" Of the man who, after using Survey Department information, claimed the first crossing of the Southern Alps above snow level, Roberts typically asked: "Why didn't Fitz[gerald] ... explore new country ... settle whether there is a viable pass up there, and thus give me information for my map?" His response to the valleys and ridges among which he had carried out much of his work was that of a mountaineer. Early in his triangulation - possibly before the first attempt on Mt. Cook which began New Zealand mountaineering history in 1882 - he had "studied every crease and cranny of old Cook through a powerful telescope ... and we made up our minds to tap him from the Hooker". By 1892 he was already looking back, writing "no-one can dream how I love the hills, nor how bitter the reflection at times, that I shall never scale a peak again".

He had no pretensions about his work as an exploring surveyor. "I could finger a theodolite ... for like other experts, by dint of long and incessant practise, got brain, eye and hand to work as one - concerning all else, except trudging I was and am, below the average, and I know it". However the mapping of Westland was his life's work. He possessed a

26. Roberts to Mannering, 6 July 1896.
27. Roberts to Mannering, 28 February 1895.
28. Roberts to Mannering, 9 December 1894. Roberts described this as a "dream that didn't come off".
29. Roberts to Mannering, 6 May 1892.
30. Roberts to Harper, 23 August 1893.
professional pride in his surveying which in later years he dwelt on occasionally partly because, like Douglas, he feared that credit would go to others. He wrote to A.P. Harper that "long before Von Lendenfeld went up "the Tasman, I had the whole of the main divide from Sefton to Elie de Beaumont held for better than it was possible for him to do by his method". 31 As with the first European explorer of Westland, his health was eventually affected by the strain of "lumping great loads for often twelve hours when I was half starved". 32 But he attempted to retain or create the incentive for others – the explorer Douglas, the mountaineers Mannering, Harper and Teichelmann – to keep on going into the upper valleys until the map was complete; and took a delight in their sketches, maps, photographs and reports. Further Survey Department mapping was also done from lower peaks in the Taipo and Taramakau Valleys by G. Murray and W. Wilson in the 1890s. In 1898 and 1902 respectively A.J. Harrop mapped the Deception and Otehake valleys for the first time since 1865. By 1898 Roberts was writing that his work would "produce a scientific result ... [that] will equal anything outside the ordnance maps of England". 33

Surveying had given him not only technical satisfaction, creative pleasure and physical release but also a possessive feeling for the land. Though a meticulous surveyor who had made his mark through the Westland

31. Roberts to Mannering, 6 May 1892. He added "... but I was always kept in the field, and there was no-one else to plot the work". Von Lendenfeld mapped the peaks at the head of the Tasman Glacier in 1883. Roberts however had already made 24 observations to fix the height of Mt. Cook. His stations ranged from 20-70 miles distant from the summit, and Mueller in the Hokitika office calculated the results obtained at 18 stations at a mean of 12,349’ 3 see Surveyor General’s Report, A.P.L.I.R. Vol. I. 1882

32. Roberts to Mannering, 6 May 1892.
33. Roberts to Harper. 12 April 1897.
Survey, he never reached the high posts of the profession because he refused to leave Westland. He wrote: "All for what? All for a sight of the old giants in the east and south and a sniff of mountain air". The love of a land is the beginning of nationality, and Roberts' work had made one part of the colony irrevocably his own. The colonial had become a native; the wanderer had discovered a home.

In 1902 Roberts became Commissioner of Crown Lands, and while holding that office established scenic reserves near Greymouth and Hokitika. He retired in 1910.

Roberts and C.E. Douglas made a good pair. Roberts described their relationship as one between "two human beings who fully understand each other and, ignoring our many weaknesses, fully appreciate the remainder". Each during the late 1890s was working on his own collected data - Roberts stated that his referred to north Westland, Douglas's mainly to south Westland. In 1897 Roberts was considering sending their results to scientific bodies in London as addenda to colonial knowledge. In the same letter he mentioned he was struggling against illness to finish his map "for no other man can work out my observations and notes as I can".

34. Survey Department annual reports give evidence of this. Roberts linked the Wanganui triangulation to points in Canterbury fixed by C.W. Adams. The then Surveyor-General, J. McKeown, commented: "... the near agreement of the heights observed by Mr. Adams and Mr. Roberts is a matter of gratification to all who delight in good work". [A.P.H.R. Vol. I. 1831/]
The following year's report mentioned Roberts' triangulation again. "The accuracy of this officer's work and the progress he has made despite the difficulties ... entitle him to the warmest commendation. [A.P.H.R. Vol. I. 1832/]


36. Roberts to Harper, 12 April 1897.
Little has been learned about the outcome of Roberts' work. Whether he ever thought "his map" complete is not known. In the Survey office in Hokitika were parcels marked "G.J. Roberts private", but these have been scattered. The geological surveyors, when remapping these Westland valleys between 1905-1908, duplicated many place names, but they acknowledged the assistance of "unpublished surveys" by G.J. Roberts.

The map of Westland and the main divide has only been improved since his day by the work of mountaineers. Some of their mapping has consisted of rescuing and revising Roberts' work. In 1891 the Report of the then Surveyor-General, S. Percy Smith, included: 'It is probable that New Zealand stands first in the Australian colonies with respect to the amount and completeness of topographic information buried in its various Survey offices'. Some is still buried in the Hokitika and Christchurch offices.

The work of Douglas went from the possession of Roberts to William Wilson, another Westland surveyor. In 1957 J.D. Pascoe rescued the Douglas documents from obscurity with the publication of "Mr. Explorer Douglas". Much mention is made of Roberts in this. A.P. Harper in his foreword to the book wrote of "the immense debt owed to Roberts for his own work in the Southern Alps". Perhaps the present-day map of Westland, based on Roberts'

37. e.g. L.W. Boot's map of the upper Rakaia for the C.M.G. 1934.
38. The Survey Department will not have adequate maps of the mountains until the present aerial survey is completed. In this the radar telurometer replaces the chain and the theodolite of the 1880s, and a complete map will at last be available. Even this kind of surveying needs control points, and in 1960-61 a party of mountaineers organized by D.J. Elphick (N.Z.A.C.) and including A. Chinn (L. & S. Choh) took plane table bearings from the summit of Mt. Whitcombe and other Rakaia peaks to the trig. summits fixed in 1880.
hard won trig. stations, still including many of the place names of his choosing, and containing the altitudes of many peaks whose height he fixed, stands as a fitting testimonial to his work in this land which he pictured as:

"a bewildering succession of white created ridges, sparkling snowfields, craggy outrunning spurs outlining gleaming glaciers, rolling foothills with a strip of undulating littoral country clothed in sombre and unbroken coverage, dotted with lakes, streaked by foaming alpine rivers, and backed by the eternal snows of the great divide". 39

Under Seddon's reign Westland was to experience a mild burst of renewed activity. One of the results was the construction of a bridle track over the Whitcombe Pass. This had long been suggested by Roberts, J.N. Smyth and the West Coast Tourist Association visualised a future for the route, as a third transalpine crossing to Canterbury, an idea "supported by the runholders and Ashburton businessmen". Tourists were also an attraction for did they not support "whole towns in Switzerland and Europe?" It was a "duty to entice them". Smyth, who had surveyed the track in 1896,

39. Quoted by M. Wallace: Westland's Golden Century 1960, p.58. Presumably this was written for a tourist publication. But Roberts like Douglas, was reluctant to write for guidebooks. For them, he wrote, "I'm hanged if I can unburden my inner self on this subject". [Roberts to Harper, 14 Oct. 1897]
Field book sketches by G.I. Roberts.

The Lord Range from Mt. Lord.

The Lord Range from Mt. Butler, a distant view across, in the words of Roberts, "the beautiful ice curve of Strachan's Pass."
The sketch above is one half of a panorama drawn by Roberts in 1880. The painting below is based on the sketch and was drawn by either Roberts or C.E. Douglas. The viewpoint is Mt. Lord from which Roberts saw "the prominent features of this region—the pinnacles and precipices of Mt. Whitcomb and the soaring height of Louper Peak."
published the attractions in a long article, in which was first mentioned
the merits of a great cave at the Wilkinson junction, four miles below
the pass. This was "a natural suburban residence of a very high order of
composite architecture" and had been provided by the survey party with
all facilities, including "a bed of mountain lilacs, a rare and fragrant
couch". From the Wilkinson glacier, visible from this bed, "the great
ice falls and avalanches were continually falling and making the adjacent
mountains rumble by echo and reverberation". 40 The surveying instinct
had not become dormant under the influence of the scenery, for the party
measured an erratic boulder nearby at two hundred and forty feet by two
hundred and forty feet by fifty feet.

C.E. Douglas ended his career of exploration among these western
valleys, by completing during the 1890's geological and botanical reconnais-
sance surveys of the Wanganui, Waitaha, Whanganui and Whitoome, together with
topographic maps of the Kokatehi and Rolleston Rivers. By this time
Douglas was a connoisseur of west coast landscape and a little more of a
cynic in describing it, but he met with some experiences which formed
stimulus for the pungent observations of a born naturalist, a penetrating
writer and a securely attached West Coaster.

He held to his view of the necessity for exploration in a pioneer
land "if only to prevent some enterprising globetrotter from immortalising
himself by discovering FEATURES and thereby hinting that the colonial

40. W.C.T. 16 April, 1996.
A reconnaissance party under D. Barron (then Westland Chief
Surveyor) had preceded Smyth in 1895. The track was completed
in two years, but there is no record of a tourist using it,
and the track soon became overgrown. The purpose of Smyth's
article was much the same as that of Carrington's later, publicity
of the high mountain valleys [see Chapter 7], but there was
no equivalent response.
knows nothing about the country he is living in". One of the rewards of explorations in the mountains was the view to be gained on a clear day after the hard labour of getting above the bush line, where "all trouble is forgotten for the time being in the exhilarating feeling which comes over a fellow when he knows he can look down on the world and his fellow men". Douglas made the first exploration of the upper Waitaha River by means of a steep traverse until the terrain became too difficult, when the country was "laid off from a point, by compass bearings, estimated distances and sketches". Above the gorges in the Waitaha River he obtained a view which he considered "probably the finest waterfall and cataract scenery in Westland. In about twenty or thirty chains the Windhover River comes down over one thousand feet through a high perpendicular walled gorge". This however was not likely to be visited by tourists for "with ropes and ladders a fellow might get into the foot of the first fall, but no further".

Douglas also noted the view at Cave camp, from where "almost the only Alpine scene of the Whitcombe can be viewed to perfection. Mt. Evans with its shattered cliffs ... and the beautiful Wilkinson glacier". Douglas, though failing with photographs, succeeded in capturing that massive scene in his sketch [see p. 195], one of the many that he drew of topographic features in these valleys. The sketches of Roberts and Douglas

42. Ibid.
44. Ibid: The Windhover is now the upper Waitaha River.
of the mountains and glaciers through the length and breadth of the Westland ranges form an unexcelled topographic and historic record of them.

In his Wanganui report Douglas pointed out that the "stoat family are nearly as numerous on the river up to its head as rats were at one time ... they won't touch rabbits as long as a bird is to be got". There he also found "the canary and paroquet and various varieties of wrens nearly extinct.... The tui is now very scarce, it and the saddle back and the crow have taken to the high ranges, at least for a part of the year". But the ideas of Douglas on the preservation of the colony's resources, together with the protection of its natural features and wild life, were ahead of his time.

Scientific Research.

After 1880 the remote regions in the east attracted a few lone scientists. L. Cockayne pioneered studies of the relationship of plant cover, climate and geology in the Waimakariri River system, culminating in


47. Ibid.

48. "All the best land has been sold to land sharks and Syndicates, runs are overstocked, land is overcropped, till it won't grow weeds. The forests are wasted, 10 trees worth £1 a piece are destroyed to get out one worth £3 ... gold and other mines are rented for a mere song to Syndicates at home ..." [Douglas: Report on the Rinkomi, 1892] This was a typical Douglas outburst on settlers of the West Coast but his comment was at that time relevant criticism of the economic methods commonly practiced both east and west of the divide.
periodic visits to the summit of Arthur's Pass about the turn of the
century.\footnote{In 1887, accompanied by his son, Cookayne travelled to the
head of the Poulter, and reached Lake Minchin - the "most perfect beauty
spot" he had ever seen.}

"For background was a huge two peaked hill,
snowcapped and storm swept. A fine waterfall
fell in three leaps some two or three hundred
feet from the mountains on our left and in the
foreground on the lake itself were two little
islands, exquisite with their covering of green
veronica and white leaved olearias".

They moved to the low summit of Worsley's Pass, and Cookayne recorded
a naturalists' enthusiasm for a scene as yet untouched by sheep, deer or
chamois.

"In wealth of vegetation the slopes of this
saddle surpass anything I have seen in New
Zealand. The large herbaceous Senecio was
in full bloom, a white sheet covering the
hillside and dazzling the eyes like a snow-
field. Here too was the huge buttercup-Ranunculus
Travassii, a plant seldom recorded - soft yellow
in colour, with kidney shaped leaves and having
twenty to thirty blooms on a short stem".\footnote{In 1910 Professor R. Speight, R.M. Laing and Cookayne published the
results of their separate studies on the "Physiography" and Botany of
"The Arrowsmith District". Speight and two geology students were the first to
examine the terminal face of the Lyell Glacier.\footnote{see Plant Geography
of the Waimakariri T.N.Z.I. 1899/}

49. At Arthur's Pass he was accustomed to record for climatic data
the depth of water in his tent in centimetres. \footnote{see Plant Geography
of the Waimakariri T.N.Z.I. 1899/}

50. L. Cookayne: A Glimpse of the Alps in Canterbury in Canterbury Old
and New 1900.

1910 pp.315-376. Speight made no further geological examinations among
unknown glacial regions in the upper valleys, though he published studies
of the Waimakariri and Hurunui basins, and in 1925 became an
influential figure in the founding of the Canterbury Mountaineering
and Tramping Club.
district was full, included photographs and was the nearest eastern
approach to the geological survey of the corresponding western valleys.

Professor Arnold Wall in the years before 1918 took part in many
climbing excursions among the eastern ranges for the purpose of studying
subalpine flora. Wall's poetry showed a distinction in his approach
towards the back peaks and the front ranges. The Southern Alps he described
as:

"A stately file of high majestic peaks . . .
The wilderness, the pure and holy place,
The grisly crags and precipices deep,
The sense of vast illimitable space,
The peaceful mountains bound in frozen sleep". 52

As well as their remoteness, he could point out that:

"Ice axe and alpenstock leave them unscoured,
No vulgar hobbs can ravish or repair
Those virgin heights for ever undeflowered,
By the gross feet of any mountaineer". 53

Nevertheless he felt at home among the mountains, as "The Old
Botanist's Farewell to the Southern Alps" testified:

"But I camp no more in the beech wooded valleys
No more shall I sleep in the roar of the river
Or wander alone in the cool shady alleys
For my feet have come down to the lowlands forever". 54

Scientific attention to the region before 1904 culminated in the inten-
sive geological exploration of the western half between 1905-1908. In 1904
J.W. Bell was appointed Director of the Geological Survey, which was
instructed to begin the geological mapping of New Zealand to the scale of
one mile to the inch. In 1905 Bell himself chose to carry out the first

52. "The Southern Alps" in "A Century of New Zealand's Praise",
(a sequence of sonnets on the evolution of New Zealand) 1912. p.52.
investigation which covered one half of the west of this region and extended from the Taramakau to the Styx Rivers. Thus the "Hokitika Sheet" became No.1. in the series of Geological Bulletins. The "Mikomui Sheet" covered the southern valleys from the Toaroha to the Wanganui, and P.C. Morgan began his survey of these valleys at the same time as Bell. Each area included about five hundred square miles.

The lowlands had been geologically examined on several occasions, but the mountain valleys had not been explored by a trained geologist. The hope of locating the source of alluvial gold ("the mother veins of the detrital wealth" as Bell put it) seems to have been the reason for initiating the survey on the West Coast. This search, and the fact that the survey was extended into high altitudes, added a tang of exploration to the study of a region which "exhibited almost every phase of geological interest".

Bell's report of his thirteen months work (in which he had been assisted by C.Frazer, geologist, and R.P.Greville, topographer) disclosed a purpose similar to, and was written in a manner reminiscent of, Von Haast. It not only outlined the geology but publicized the beauty of the region.

Bell's range was that of a scientific "savant" of nineteenth century tradition.

55. The goldfields were examined by Von Haast in 1865 and 1868, and also by Hector. A general examination of Westland by S.H.Cox and A.Mackay in 1875 did not touch the mountains of this region. Cox wrote: "This was inevitable as the country inland is so rough to be utterly impassable travelling as we were". S.H.Cox in Reports of the Geological Survey 1874-75. pub.1877. p.75.


57. Ibid.
equally happy to dissertate on flora, birdlife, weather and general economy, or to insert didactic remarks to explain to the reader such items of knowledge as "the word 'Kiwi' as well as 'waka' is onomatopoeic". Such scientific writing possessed a high popular appeal.

Interpersed with analysis of the peculiarities of geomorphology, glaciation, folding, faulting, terraces and the noteworthy thermal springs, was enlivening description. The mountains "owe their majestic appearance not so much to the great altitude of uplift but to the magnificence of their dissection.... The sculpturing of the chain is exquisite, the upper slopes often precipitous, being broken, rocky and practically bereft of vegetation, while the summits are everywhere patched with snow". The scenery was "superb". "Often all ... features are to be observed in the same scene. From the shade of magnificent trees one may look down upon a glacier, and up on to the whitened crests of the Southern Alps". Tama Tama gave Bell's party the best view of their district. From this "stately dome which raises its snow covered top six thousand and eighty four feet ... and over one thousand feet above most of the surrounding mountains" they had viewed "practically the whole of the Hokitika Sheet splendidly disclosed panoramically". He thought that the climate of the western valleys ought not to be so maligned.

In addition to the advantage of the "infrequency of high winds", there were long periods when "day after day for a week or more the sun will set in a cloudless sky, with wonderful colour

58. Ibid. p.44.
59. Ibid. p.25.
60. Ibid. p.18.
61. Ibid.
effects unsurpassed elsewhere in New Zealand ... the colour changes from yellow to orange, from orange to crimson than deepens to exquisite shades of purple, saffron and even on some rare occasions to a curious greenish blue". 62

P.C. Morgan worked at intervals for three years in the more glaciated valleys of the south before writing his report in 1908. He too dwelt on the total nature of the land and its resources, but in a more matter-of-fact way than did Bell. His observations were interesting nevertheless. "The Kea is pre-eminently the bird of the mountains, and in Westland is monarch of all he surveys". 63 He noted that of the birds only the Kea and the rock wren were to be found above the bushline. The failure of attempts to stock the snow grass brought forth the comment that "The botanist and lover of nature, at any rate, will rejoice in the certainty of the alpine flora of Westland remaining unaffected by the pasturage of animals for many years to come". 64 Occasionally he allowed himself fanciful description such as "frowning precipices" and "soaring cloud-kissed peaks" 65 but he regretted that a photograph quite failed to do justice 66 to either the "exquisite beauty of the Wilkinson glacier" or the "remarkable rock structure" of the Lord Range, which, though not quite so lofty as other ranges, "is the most magnificent of all". 67 Morgan concluded that the whole of his mountain area made "a dazzling ensemble which cannot be described and baffles the artist to depict". 68

62. Ibid. p.16.
64. Ibid. p.12. Only a few chamois have so far reached the head of the Wanganui (1960), and native bush, grasses and alpine flora remain undisturbed.
65. Ibid. p.16.
66. Ibid. p.59.
67. Ibid. p.40.
68. Ibid. p.16.
The two reports included little of practical economic value. Bell's party had found among the 'pounamu' schist formations traces of "almost every known metal except tin", and a platform high on the GrifTen range provided a natural rock museum where a solitary specimen of bedded greenstone had been located. No answer to the puzzle of quartz lodes was found. Both reports mentioned the commercial possibilities of the hot springs. Morgan noted the presence of asbestos, but did not recommend the ranges to any future prospector. He showed most enthusiasm for the water power potential of the ToaroHa canyon, the Waitaha gorges and the Wanganui River system.

However the Geological Survey parties had formed tracks into the head of the Taipo, Hokitika and Wanganui Rivers. Creville had mapped the Taipo ridges and the Mungo headwaters. The geologists camped in altitudes and traversed passes where no-one had been before. The maps produced were on a large scale, and thus attained a standard in mountain map making not bettered since. These maps were official and they were printed. Eventually the Geological Reports and their hard won photographs stimulated others to explore the country into which the geologists' maps could lead them.


70. The photographs in the geological Bulletins were the first to publicize this part of the Alps. Some were taken by James Park, some by the Geological Party and some were credited to the Lands and Survey Department (possibly these were taken by C.E. Douglas). Photography between 1865 and 1914 in mountainous country required much hard labour but A.P. Harper, W.A. Kennedy, E. Teichslmann and G.E. Farmering all achieved excellent results.
Park's photograph of Mt. Evans and the Wilkinson glacier was printed in Geology of the Misoumi Sheet which was read widely by mountaineers during the 1870s. The sketch by H. A.追柤
The head of the Wanganui River, from left the peaks are Red Lion, Mt. Evans, Mauhlo-Peak (obscuring Mt. Whakante) and the bluffs of Pi...
The first climbs.

After A.P. Harper and C. E. Douglas found difficulty in obtaining companions for mountain exploration during the 1890's, they discussed "the theory that nature called for a rest, therefore a generation of pioneers in a new country is often followed by a generation of stay at homes". Harper and others had little success in their crusade to establish mountaineering as a sport during the same period. "We were still looked upon as more or less harmless lunatics", recorded Harper.72

The Rev. W. Green's climb on Mt. Cook in 1882 had sown a seed which grew into the beginnings of New Zealand mountaineering with the climbs of G. E. Hamnering and W. Dixon, the sons of two rushholders of the 1860s. The 1890s developed into the golden age of mountaineering in the Mount Cook area, but even there climbs were few and far between.

This was also the case among the peaks of these valleys. The upper Waimakariri had had advocates for mountain "scenery". In 1881 the Waimakariri Road Board provided the backing for a horse track to the glaciers at the head of the valley.73 During the 1890s climbing began in the vicinity of Arthur's Pass. In December 1891 Hamnering, A. H. Ollivier and W. D. Wood made a laborious attempt to climb Mt. Rolleston, but encumbered with photographic gear and led astray by fog, they only reached the low peak. A. P. Harper and others climbed and named the peaks of Philistine, Phipps and Temple close to the pass. Before the first world war W. A. Kennedy established a mountain hut for the use of himself and his friends at Arthur's Pass.

73. G. O'Malley, proprietor of the Bealey Hotel, contracted to form the track which was occasionally used during the 1880's.
None of the peaks among what Roberts had claimed to be "a climber's field" at the head of the Rakalau were attempted from the east. However at Easter 1893 G.J. Macerthern led a party, which included C.H. Inglis and W.H. Lean, in an attempt on Mt. Arrowsmith from the Cameron Stream. These men were energetic, but climbing in the 90s, without crampons, involved much step cutting, and they turned back at eight thousand feet with blistered hands.

In 1912 A.P. Harper, with E. Harper and G. Denniston, camped at the head of the Waimakariri River. From here they climbed Mt. Davis but bad weather prevented success on the high peak of the region - "Mt. Greenlaw". They were considerably puzzled by the inaccuracy of their map. As a consequence of this expedition A.P. Harper wrote a report on the recreational possibilities of that part of the main divide. In December 1912 a youthful Greymouth party, infected by Harper's enthusiasm, took horses to the upper Waimakariri valley. From there F.A. Kitchingham, C.K. Ward and C.S. Chalk crossed the divide and climbed Mt. Rosamond. From the summit of this corner pyramid of the Wilberforce, Arahura, and Taipo watersheds, they could see through a hazeless sky the street lines of Hokitika, like "tall white chimneys or columns of smoke". Kitchingham's trips were precursors of the annual holiday alpine crossing. Interest arose, at Easter, they packed

75. Lean was a son of Alexander Lean who had first taken up the country by the Strem which looks up onto the Arrowsmith Range. see map p. 72.
76. The high peak of the upper Waimakariri was not definitely named before the geological survey of 1905, when it was called Mt. Murchison. Mt. Greenlaw had been placed on the map by Von Haast, but he confused a peak at the head of the Avoca River with the present day Mt. Greenlaw; a peak at the head of the Cronin Stream; and this peak at the head of the White River. In 1912, both Harper's Kitchingham's parties thought that Mt. Murchison was Mt. Greenlaw. 
77. F.A. Kitchingham: Trip Diary. in his possession at Greymouth.
back to the White River by way of the old miner’s track along the Styx River, crossing three divide passes before reaching their destination. The party traversed the divide massif of "Mt. Isabel", and two of them, A.C. Talbot and C.K. Ward, gained the summit of "Mt. Greenlaw" by climbing above its icefalls at the head of the White. The following Christmas (daily rations having been reduced a good deal) Kitchingham with Ward, W. Hughes, and L. Gooch struggled for five days with fifty pound packs along the overgrown track to the head of the Whitcombe River. Using Cave camp as a base, the party first traversed the Bracken snowfield and then climbed Mt. Louper by a steep and direct stone-splattered ridge clearly visible from Greymouth. By that time their annual holiday was almost at an end so they returned via Manuka Point Station and Arthur's Pass.

G. Dennistoun from Mt. Peel and Dr. E. Teichelmann from Hokitika responded directly to Roberts' credo that there should be no gaps left in topographic knowledge. Dennistoun, a fervent explorer of the head waters of "his river" (the Rangitata), with L. M. Earle and J. M. Clarke in 1910 climbed Mt. Nicholson at the head of the Clyde branch. From there they looked down on to the Lyell glacier. In this and other expeditions Dennistoun proved that the Rangitata's passes led to the Watara, not the Wanganui River.

Teichelmann, born in Adelaide of German descent, came to the West Coast in the mid 1890s. In 1899 he and a young Waiho man, Peter Graham, were attracted to the snow and ice at Frans Joseph. Teichelmann was forty when he started his career of mountaineering - a lone example in Hokitika.

78. This was Mt. Davis, Isabel, Rosamond and Murchison, were names given by the Geological Survey.

79. By using pack horses, on their first trip they had been enabled to take among other things; 24 lbs. of bread; 6 lbs of roast beef and 1 dozen hard boiled eggs.
In 1910 a party, including Teichelmann, investigated the head of the Rakaia valley from the east and returned over Whitcombe Pass. The following year Teichelmann organised a major expedition to attempt to reach the icefields between the Wanganui and the Rangitata Rivers. His climbing partners were J.M. Clarke and A. Graham, and these three followed the route up to Blue Lookout (by then well marked by Roberts' parties, by Douglas and by the geological surveyors) to the Lord River. From there they worked their way up to a tremendous snow platform on which it was possible to walk along the divide and look down a cliff edge to the valley of the Clyde River. They climbed two ice pyramids raised above the platform - Mt. Tyndall and Newton Peak - and a divide summit of vertical rock strata - Malcolm Peak. [See sketch p. 261]

The route taken had proved that the icefield above the Lambert and Adams Rivers was connected on the east with the Rangitata, not the Rakaia River. Teichelmann added further scenes to his collection of alpine photographs. Though he did not take part in a further major expedition into this part of the Alps, he became a member of Scenic Reserve and National Park Boards - but above all his enthusiasm was for the mountains, which to him were "nature's cathedrals".

In 1912 the high peak of the Arrowsmith range was climbed by H. F. Wright and J. P. Murphy. At that time experienced mountaineers, they "pigeon holed" their way across high ice slopes after aiming for the wrong


81. Reminiscence of Mrs. L. Sweeney, Hokitika. Teichelmann's photographs combined camera technique and mountain art. He was well known for his interest in art and literature in Hokitika, where he spent forty years as a doctor.
This panorama drawn in 1885 from the Mt. Murray trig on the Arrow southerly ridge shows the major peaks at the head of the Lyell glacier.
summit in that jagged range and "gained ... the honour of the first ascent of this somewhat inaccessible peak". 82

Thus mountaineering had been pioneered by a few, when its development was cut off by the war. The post-war generation was to seemingly bear out Harper's observation, and the effects of a more unsettled age increased its restlessness. Both comfortable colonialism and laissez faire settlement lost their virtues. By 1914 the term colonial was dying out, and the next generation was to seek knowledge of a land that was its own.

CHAPTER SEVEN.

THE THIRD GENERATION.

"Scene of the wildest and most varied character... unrivalled as a school for Junior members of an Alpine Club."

The head of the Whitcombe valley as described by J.M. Smyth 1.C.T. 16 April 1896.

"We are the pilgrim master; we shall go.
Always a little further, it may be.
Beyond that last blue mountain, barred with snow."

Lines from J.E. Flecker's Hassen, quoted in early volumes of The Canterbury Mountaineer.

The final unmapped and unexplored zone required a growth of mountaineering, and formed the stimulus for a more searching approach to the nature of the country. The awareness of and enthusiasm for the little known mountain regions on the part of a few young men, during the 1920's, created the Canterbury Mountaineering and Tramping Club. This soon grew to real strength and built up a reservoir of knowledge of the mountain valleys, which, together with the simultaneous growth of skiing clubs, the first wide and objective research into mountain lands, and the creation of a National Park, led to an almost complete reversal of attitudes to the mountainous interior. By taking the lead in this change, mountaineers and research students added a further contribution of the "vagabond" to growth of a New Zealand community.

Two young university students in 1924 and 1925 spent some of their annual holidays in the head of the Waimakariri River, camping in much the same place as had been used in 1912. One of them, C.N. Carrington, in a letter printed in the Press of 7 January 1925, pointed out that there existed mountain scenery within a day's journey from Christchurch, "well
worth a visit from even the most far travelled globetrotter"; that the Franz Joseph and Mount Cook glacier areas were not the only available centres for mountain sports, or tourist attractions; and that there existed a need for a convenient method of transport to the head of the valley. Massive mountains, curious waterfalls and ice formations "comparable to the hanging glaciers of Norway", were some of the attractions. Carrington was eighteen years of age; his companion had been B. Wyn Irwin, and they were intrigued by their two survey maps "which gave different details, and both were wrong". ¹

Wyn Irwin and Carrington in their first university vacation had made a crossing of the historic Browning Pass. With the assistance of F.W. Hildengorff,² Carrington, using pedometer and compass, drafted a map of the upper Waimakariri. Both Carrington and Wyn Irwin were more interested in becoming acquainted with the country than in mountaineering; Carrington was the practical organiser and map maker, while Wyn Irwin enjoyed research into history and natural life. Both of them provided early inspiration for the Canterbury Mountaineering Club.

Carrington's youth did not prevent him from following up the publication of the letter with approaches to local organisations and the

1. Press, 7 January 1925.
2. F.W. Hildengorff had been in the upper valley on several occasions in order to gather research material on high country pasture. In 1926 his son, Charlie, then aged 14, climbing alone had reached the summit of one of the divide peaks, later called after Carrington.
Governments. The Press had written a favourable editorial, which noted that the completion of the transalpine railway should make the valleys away from Arthur's Pass more accessible.

At Easter 1925 Carrington took a party of members of the Canterbury Progress League to the head of the Waimakariri valley. The Government Tourist Bureau was persuaded to grant £50 for the erection of a hut there. Some of the Progress League party met again, and became the nucleus of the Canterbury Mountaineering and Tramping Club, with Carrington as Secretary-Treasurer. Its aims were the organization of trips; the exploration and mapping of the upper valleys; the building of a hut and the appreciation of the natural features of the country. Then the newly formed Club had to survive the death of Carrington who was drowned while rafting down the river with which he was so familiar. His enthusiasm for the back country proved infectious however, and the forty five who attended a General Meeting in 1926 decided to carry on with the programme.

A party led by S.A. Wiren had followed the other expeditions into the head of the Waimakariri valley in early 1926. In a long article in the New Zealand Alpine Journal of 1926, Wiren added his publicity of the area to that of Carrington. With the article was printed Carrington's map which Wiren had found to be accurate, and he suggested that an impressively buttressed

3. The first officers of the Club were President: C.S. McCully;
Vice-Presidents: A.D. Dobson, Dr. E. Teichelmann, G.B. Manwaring,
Professor R. Speight, W.A. Kennedy,
Secretary-Treasurer: G.N. Carrington (succeeded by G.L. Key).

4. The Club was not incorporated until 1946, when its aims were listed as (a) Organization of trips,
(b) Exploration of unknown regions,
(c) Protection of native flora and fauna, and the natural features of the country,
(d) Building of Huts.
peak dominating the view from the camp site be named after Carrington. The article concluded with a poem written by a member of Wiren's party. One of its verses is reminiscent of Arnold Wall's vision of the remote peaks, but the first two lines of the verse suggest the growing familiarity with the mountains which was to be characteristic of this generation.

"I see afar in darkness whitely stand,  
The unscaled peaks, the passes we have trod,  
These are the ancient dwellers of this land,  
Snowed, silent, and remote, each like a god."\(^5\)

From the small beginnings of Carrington's and Wiren's articles interest in the high valleys spread rapidly.

The major aim of the Canterbury Mountaineering and Tramping Club became that of fitting together the missing pieces in the topographic jigsaw puzzle of the watersheds of the rivers between Harper Pass and the Rakaia valley. From the initial expedition, members' greatest interests were in exploration and becoming acquainted with the country. When mountaineering became a part of their programme it was far from that of the leisured amateur or professional guide. Parties looked forward to and planned from one short holiday to the next. They reached the high valleys by pack horse, bicycle, old car or on foot by any method that would involve no great cost. The Club developed a tradition of independent travel, a liking for trans-

Camp at the White River site in 1913, and the first Carrington Hut shortly after its completion in 1930.
alpine crossings; and a preference for pack carrying, with the use of improvised bivouacs, though by much hard labour huts were constructed at a few key points in Alpine crossings. 6

The Club was a native growth and as a result of its activities there accumulated an exact store of knowledge and a considerable body of experience of the mountain sections of these river valleys. The first few volumes of the *Canterbury Mountaineer* (published from 1931) illustrate the wide range of the Club's activities, and provide a full record of its explorations. Articles in this club Journal were written in a style which reflected the qualities of the travellers - direct, unpretentious but enthusiastic, and scrupulous in attempting to relate their own journeys to those of others, as well as to the history of the valleys. Only rarely does introspection or individual philosophy creep into an article. The work of the Club was further chronicled by J.D. Pascoe in *Unclimbed New Zealand* (1939). This book also was written in a manner that suggested the native vigour and enjoyment in trans-alpine pack carrying expeditions which became characteristics of the Club.

6. Carrington Hut at the junction of the White and Waimakariri Rivers was not completed until 1930. Then followed the Park-Morpeth Hut (at the junction of the Cronin Stream and the Wilberforce River) constructed in 1931 as a memorial to two Hokitika boys who had been drowned in the river; the Makia Hut (near the Lyell Glacier) built in 1933; Prew's Hut (at the junction of that creek with the Whitemore River) built in the same year; and Benten Hut (at the head of the Styx valley) provided by members of the Hokitika branch of the Club in memory of a Hokitika pilot killed when his plane crashed on Mt. Turiwhate.
In its first few years the Club's expeditions solved the remaining uncertainties of the Waimakariri River system. The two main sources of the river were found to lead into places which, according to old maps, were unexpected. A party crossed the north branch into the valley of the Rolleston. Wyn Irwin, on his third attempt, crossed in a blizzard the White Col at the head of the south branch, and found that the stream on the other side led into the Wilberforce, not the Avoca River, as had been thought. Irwin's parties had also travelled into the head of the Avoca River, and the combined results of these expeditions and ascents of peaks above the White glaciers, cleared up the confusion between the positions of Mt. Murchison, Mt. Greenlaw and Mt. Davie. On the Lands and Survey map, much of the country among the branches of the Poulter River still remained marked as unexplored. In February 1927, F. Kay, C. J. Penwick and Wyn Irwin reached as far as the Hinchin gorge. This expedition was the first of many attempts to solve the valley's intricate stream and pass system.

In December 1929 Penwick, Irvin, C. W. Evans and J. D. Pascoe carried weighty packs into the Mingha branch of the Bealey River, which they thought unexplored. Though this was not virgin country, a divide pass, which had escaped Dobson's exploration, was noticed from a peak close to the railway line. An expedition was quickly organised. The party worked their way through a gorge in the Edwards branch of the Mingha, and reached a high level valley. The pass (named for its earthquake rubble, Tarawhuna) was found to lead into the Otehake River. The pass had actually first been seen by deer stalkers from the Otehake valley early in the same year. The peak on the east of the pass was named Paling Mountain, as its western face had subsided onto the pass.7

7. The discovery of a new pass so close to Arthur's Pass led to a report in the Christchurch newspapers that a good alpine route had been missed, but the Otehake valley had been tried in 1885, and found too difficult.
Activity in the Waimakariri, until 1930, was related to the need for an accurate map of the upper valley. In that year the Lands and Survey Department had been embarrassed by a request to produce a map of the National Park and had been forced to decide that it was better to have no map at all, rather than an inaccurate one, until Club parties had completed the missing portions. By the end of the year the first map of the Park was circulated among Club members.

At Easter 1930, a fresh direction was taken which marked the end of the novitiate period of the Club. A large club group camped in the newly completed Carrington Hut, and climbed most of the accessible peaks at the head of the Waimakariri valley. Parties returned in almost every direction via neighbouring valleys and across the divide to Hokitika. The most notable climb was a traverse of Mt Rolleston from the source of the Waimakariri to Arthur's Pass. This was achieved by R.R.Chester, S.Milne, and W.Wilson, who demonstrated both the characteristic energy and equally typical absence of gear or preparation of early climbs. Winter ascents of peaks were made, and by the end of the year few peaks of the Arthur's Pass National Park remained unclimbed.

One of the Club members has described a further cause of growth in 1930. "This was a great year. The beginning of deer culling and the declaration of deer as vermin destroyed the old stalking code and brought

8. The three had reached the summit earlier than expected. They were wearing little more than their underpants, and when they reached the Arthur's Pass road, it seemed to their "harrassed faculties that the road was lined with women all parading that 'well I never' look". [R.R.Chester: G.M. 1932, p.5]

9. By 1934 only one summit in the Park remained virgin - the low peak of Mt Greenlaw.
men who were not inexperienced into our ranks. By now there was a large group of mountain men to whom musterers' and Club huts, pass crossing, pack carrying and short rations had become part of a way of life. From 1930 Club members' interests were to follow two differing but not mutually exclusive directions. Some moved south into the virgin tracts of the mountains and snowfield; to others the ever onward attraction of pass crossing and the need for further mapping still held the greatest appeal. Representatives of the latter class were those who continued the exploration of the Poulter River system - H. Townsend, T.H. Beckett and J.R. Cawthran. For both groups photography, botany or geology became increasingly by-products of the main aim of getting to know country.

The expeditions of the Club during the following five years omitted no range or valley. The work of the Club received recognition from the Christchurch newspapers, which published accounts of the exploration and mountaineering expeditions throughout the 1930's. Equipment and food planning became more refined. In 1927 a Club group which included such later notable figures as Irwin, Fenwick, I.W. Tucker and Chester, had seemed as if they were "equipped for an expedition to the South Pole". Pack weights for this expedition, the only one into the upper Rakaia before 1930, ranged from seventy pounds to one hundred and twelve pounds, and the thirty-five pounds of butter in one pack had begun to melt in the sweltering heat by the time the slow moving party reached a musterers' hut under the

11. After taking part in several first crossings out of the Poulter River system, Townsend was drowned when attempting to find the Rakaia River in 1934.
12. A.E. Milsom: C.M. 1937 p.64.
Arrowsmith Range. Chester recorded that for his "first venture into the snow"... My ice axe was made out of a shovel and a bit of an old bike.... For rope we had a clothes line". 13

As well as this optimistic expedition into the Rakaia valley, the movement south had begun in another direction before 1930. In the Christmas holidays of 1929 a party consisting of Wyn Irwin, Pascoe, Chester and W. Mirams reached the Mathias branch of the Rakaia River. Pascoe, like Irwin, by this time was engrossed in mountain research. A young law clerk, he had become a student of mountain topography, given in his description of it to both vivid colloquialism and literary allusion. He had made meticulous preparations for the expedition. As he learned what little there was recorded of the valley, his "joy and interest were as Ossa piled upon Pelion". 14

Irwin preferred the investigation of the saddle out of the head of the valley, but the others ascended a steep ridge to the divide and climbed eleven peaks in the day - evidence as much of their determination as of the unbroken nature of the climbing. The party next climbed on to the Agassiz range, and then returned by Mueller's fifty year old road line across Mathias Pass and Frew's saddle to Hokitika.

The four uncrossed passes between Browning and Mathias were explored between 1931 and 1935. In March 1932 L.W. Boot, H. Andrewes, Tucker and Beckett made the first complete crossing of the Clarke Pass from the Wilberforce to the Kokatahi River. H.M. Sweeney and D. Cambridge, gold

prospecting during the depression, followed up the Hokitika gorges and crossed Mungo Pass in March 1933. Early in 1935 the Farquharson Saddle from the upper Wilberforce into the Kokatahi River was traversed by a large club party, and in April of that year Kea Pass was crossed from the West Mathias into the Whitcombe River by A.R. Cant and W.B. Cullens. But the main energies of the Club expeditions between those years were expended among the peaks and high snowfields of the Rakaia headwaters and the Arrowsmith Range.

At Christmas 1931 the several parties which travelled to the Upper Rakaia achieved the combined results of an ascent of Mt. Whitcombe, the first in a series of assaults on Mt. Evans, and the retesting of the main Rakaia outlets to the West Coast – Whitcombe Pass to the Hokitika valley and Strachan Pass to the Wanganui valley. Whitcombe Pass was crossed by Boot, Andrewes and Tucker, who found the Whitcombe valley in much the same condition as in the 1860s, for the track was of no assistance and deer had not yet penetrated into the upper Whitcombe from the Rakaia valley. The party scarcely noticed a morning at Cave Camp pass as they gazed at the view of Mt. Evans, framed by the slopes of the Wilkinson valley, Tucker wrote: "Never in my life have I seen anything more beautiful". 15 That was the last entrancing thing about the journey down the valley, for the most difficult two miles occupied a day’s travelling and the party kept going for twenty two hours on the final day before reaching settlement.

Pascoe, Mirams and Chester attempted to climb Mt. Evans from the terminal of the Ramsey glacier. A long journey up the glacier across the

15. I.W. Tucker: C.M. 1931. p. 28
divide and over the Bracken snowfield enabled them to reach a height of eight thousand feet on its East Ridge, before steep loose rock stopped them.

The ascent of Mt. Whitcombe and the subsequent crossing of Strachan Pass rank as the most notable results of those 1931 Rakaia expeditions, and were typical examples of spontaneous decision and dogged perseverance in striving against obstacles.

The climbing ambitions of all the parties had been centred on Mt. Whitcombe, supreme among the gallery of virgin peaks at the head of the Rakaia. Chester, Mirams and A.H. Willis set off late one morning with the intention of examining routes from the head of the Ramsey Glacier. They moved under the great eastern face on to a col. From there the divide was followed across a small peak, and the party began climbing the final ridge of very steep but unusually firm rock. At 6.30 p.m. they reached the summit, where a cairn was built. The ridge being too steep to descend, the climbers traversed the mountain on to its shelving western snowfields, where at seven thousand feet, they were forced to spend the night. Early next morning the descent to the Ramsey Glacier was completed.

Chester, Willis and J. Barnett, confident of reaching Haribari in quick time, decided to return via the Wangamui River. Strachan Pass was crossed easily, but the topography of the Lord Range was confusing and the party mistook the location of the Blue Lookout. After battling through thick scrub they decided that "anything was preferable to this ape-like method of progress, and dropped down into the Lambert gorge, thought impassable by Roberts, Douglas and Teichelmann. From that moment their difficulties were almost insuperable. "For thousands of feet on each side
rose dense walls of bush", and the bed of the stream led to bluffs and continuous rapids. First they tried to climb out of the gorge, and reached a point where the flats of the lower Wanganui valley could be seen, but again had to descend. The next day they attempted once more to get on to the correct route above the bushline, but became jammed by a rock face. The three men discussed whether it would be better to attempt to swim through the gorge, but "as it was a bit inaccessible to expect the Canterbury Mountaineering Club to build a memorial hut, we decided to postpone the attempt". Chester, without a pack, at last succeeded in reaching above the bluffs, and the party gracefully made their way down to the Wanganui Forks, having covered three miles in two days.

The first ascents of Mt. Blair and Mt. Ramsey in the Rakaia valley, and Dan Peak on the Lord Range, were accomplished by 1934, but Mountaineering Clubs from the North Island participated in these, and also took part in the rivalry which developed for the ascent of Mt. Evans. J.D. Pascoe, after the first attempt on this peak in 1931, had set his heart on climbing it. In 1932 a party which included Pascoe had made an attempt from the Westland side, but bad weather had hindered their climbing. Floods in the Whitcombe River and blizzards at high levels were common adversaries. Many other parties were drawn to the peak, and by the end of the following year Pascoe, A.P. Thompson and J.C. Malcolmson were ready to make what was the fourteenth attempt on the mountain. For guidance in climbing Pascoe had arranged for a pioneer West Coast pilot, J.D. Mercer, to obtain aerial photos of the peak.

Mt. Evans had become something of a symbol, not only to Pascoe but to the Club - the peak stood "for all that is remote, tough and steep". The route chosen was that attempted in the previous year. Malcolmson, Thompson and Pascoe climbed through the mist. After negotiating steep rock faces and a sharp arete they gained the summit, which was above the mist, late in the day. It was decided to traverse the mountain to its Waitaha slopes where not far from the summit the night was spent. The next day the three climbers circled around the mountain to return to the Whitcombe Valley and crossed the divide by a novel high level route. They were delayed on the crest of the divide by a blizzard which ripped to shreds the tent in which they were confined, but on the following day the party reached the Rakaia Hut, with the feeling that they had earned their victory.

During the same years, a different group of club climbers were attacking the more strictly mountaineering problems of the Arrowsmith Range. In January 1931 A. Anderson, E. and J. P. Wilson had made the second ascent of the high peak, and climbed Tent Peak. Subsequently North Peak, Jagged Peak and Couloir peak were climbed, in addition to a host of newly named summits, as a result of the concentrated efforts in holiday after holiday, of Anderson, the Wilson brothers, D. Brough, A. Willis and others.

Andrew Anderson had been born at Otira near the main divide. In 1923 he climbed Mt. Armstrong, and obtained crampons.
from Switzerland. Sometimes he and a companion used one crampon each. By 1929 Anderson had climbed Mt. Rolleston three times, and he joined the C.M.G. in 1930, the same year that the campaign on the Arrowsmith Range was begun. Several attempts made by Anderson on Couloir Peak ended in success in 1934. Thames, having learned so much among his local ranges, like many others about that time, felt the urge to climb the higher peaks to the South.

By 1934 J.D. Pascoe had acquired a taste for the bush, gorge and rain of Westland Valleys. He found that there was a sector of the Alps of which there was no record, and organised an expedition with the aim of completing the work of Teichelmann's parties among the confused mass of peaks, glaciers and snowfield between the Wangamati and the Perth Rivers. This country was all in Westland, but the easiest access to it was from the head of the Clyde branch of the Rangitata River. During two expeditions in 1934 and 1935, each a fortnight in length, most of the ridges and glaciers were explored and mapped.

The first expedition crossed the Perth Col and reached a vast snowfield on the Westland side of the divide. This the party named "The Garden of Eden." For most of the two weeks rain came down, and the party retreated along a flooded Wataroa River, with the exploration incomplete. When returning along the South Westland road, Pascoe, who had previously seen only the sources of the two rivers, felt as he crossed the Wangamati and Waitaha bridges "like a pilgrim seeing the Ganges."

18. After the war Anderson became the first man to ascend all seventeen of New Zealand's 10,000 foot peaks.

19. In 1926 Teichelmann had organised an expedition to explore the same icefields, but six weeks continuous bad weather had prevented any progress above the Perth valley.

20. J.D. Pascoe: C.M.1934, p.39
The following year an expedition was organised which meant estimating supplies for eighteen days and involved carrying initial loads of sixty-five pounds each. The party consisted of Pascoe, H. McDowell, M. Sweney and A. E. Pearson. By 27 December 1934, they were on the "Garden of Eden" and looking down into the unexplored Adams tributary of the Wanganui River. From their high camp the party climbed Mt. Kensington and Mt. Farrar, but then on 30 December, with their spirit fuel running out, they descended the Adams icefall, still carrying heavy loads. Once their difficult was passed, they entered a delightful grassy valley thick with mountain flowers. There was a rare quality about the scene which reminded Pascoe of the "gardens bright with simous rills" of Khaba Khan. A gorge blocked the way to the Wanganui forks, and three days' travelling over a high ridge was required in order to by-pass it. The party reached the Wanganui flats in mud soaked clothes after thirty-six hours without water. The return was made via Hokitika where the information gained was added to the lands and Survey map.

The exploration of these valleys was now completed. After 1935 club members began climbing regularly among the higher peaks of the Mt. Cook area. Since the war these valleys have been regarded more as a training.

21. "Farrar's" Peak dates back to the 1860's. Kensington Peak, prominent from Hokitika, was at first named "Henis's" Peak in Roberts' sketches. He then called it Harper's Peak, after Leonard Harper. This became changed again to Kensington Peak, possibly by the geological surveyors. The two tributary glaciers of the Adams (named Arethusa and Beesleobub by this party) had also been previously named on Westland Survey maps (Duncan glacier and McFad glacier respectively). There is no record of the valley having been visited before 1935 however.
From the "Garden of Eden" to the unexplored Adams Valley.

Photo: A.F. Pearson 1935.

Bracken Snowfield and Red Lion Peak.

Photo: E.J. Hitchingham 1913.

Three generations of mountain explorers. A.D. Dobson centre, Professor H. Sprigg on the right, with members of the Canterbury Mountaineering Club 1930.

Canterbury Mountaineer
ground for climbing and trans-alpine expeditions.\textsuperscript{22}

By 1940 the Canterbury Mountaineering Club had compiled and printed maps of the main divide from Arthur's Pass National Park to the Rangitata; of the Arrowsmith Range; of the Garden of Eden snowfields and glaciers, and of the Poulter and Wilberforce valleys. These were the result of compass and camera surveys, and have not yet been superseded. In 1961 a Canterbury Chief Surveyor could point out that the valleys north of Lake Minchin were still "marked as unexplored country on survey maps" and that "the alpine divide from Mt. Cook to Arthur's Pass was unexplored from the survey point of view".\textsuperscript{23}

The knowledge which had been gained was to be widely used: by those who furnished observations on the balance between the mountain's natural environment and the animals which had been introduced to it; by those who became members of National Park Boards; and by those who contributed

\textsuperscript{22} The unguided tradition had brought forth some ability. When in 1934 A. Anderson, E. Wilson and D. Brough, on their first climb of a peak over 10,000 feet, had entered the length of time taken for their climb of Malte Brun as ten and a half hours, guides had claimed that it must have been twelve and a half. The Chief Guide had refused to accept the time. However, in the words of Evan Wilson: "Two years later we became gentlemen again - Bert Mabin and Ian Powell climbed the peak in nearly two hours less, and also made the record time for Mt. Cook". The "Junior Alpine Club" had grown up.

articles describing the features of the mountain valleys or their wild life.

The extension of knowledge of the mountains was reflected in growing interest. The concept of a National Park, which had originated in the United States, presumed that there was a social virtue in the preservation of impressive natural landscape and that there were aesthetic as well as commercial values involved in the use of one's native land. Naturalists such as T.H. Fotts had advocated forest conservation and the preservation of National Domains during the 1860's and 1870's. J.H. Baker had in 1887 suggested the protection of the Mt. Cook region "for all time as a place whose beauties would not be easy to exaggerate, and which will undoubtedly be one of the attractions of the globe". The creation of scenic reserves after 1892 was a step towards preservation. In 1901, at the suggestion of Dr. L. Cockayne, one hundred and seventy thousand acres of the Otira and Waimakariri valleys was created a reserve for National Park purposes, under the same 1892 Act. In 1929 this area was formed into a National Park. As a result of this, the widening circle of interest in the mountain valleys was extended; with the activities of the mountaineers, deer shooters and skiers leading to participation, and the National Park, with its aim of giving "the public freedom of entry and access", furthering this.

Soon after this it became generally realized by those who had acquired some knowledge of the mountainous interior, that for this part of the South Island the economic and aesthetic motives might lead to the same end. The programme of research into the results of a century of free settlement which


was initiated in the 1930s, was followed by a policy of government intervention. Settlement had formed scars in forest and river valley on the western lowlands, but it was the mountain lands which had been most drastically influenced. As early as 1875 a report to the House of Representatives had commented that timber milling methods in the colony were scarcely based on a long term policy. From the 1860's an occasional forecast was made of the damage that would accumulate in tussock grass lands if the existing methods of pasture control were retained. But it was not until 1939 that a Committee of Enquiry recommended that "forest growth in non productive areas should be regarded as a social service" and commented that "in general the tussock country had been exploited rather than managed".

By this time mountaineers and those carrying out research into the ecology of mountain species could find scarcely any areas in which the natural vegetation remained unaltered. All protection was removed from deer, chamois and thar in 1931, and a campaign to thin deer herds began. This brought into the mountains every summer, a class of "cullers" who became the backwoodsmen of New Zealand. Their job was not only to shoot deer but also to solve the problem of lack of accessibility and shelter. Such men became semi-permanent residents of most of the isolated Westland and Canterbury valleys.

Little wide research was done until the end of the second World War. Since that time extensive investigations of the condition of the mountainous half of the South Island have been carried out. For this purpose, both eastern and western valleys of this region have been chosen as laboratories.

Carrington Peak

Tearoa Canyon
for research into the special problems of each side of the mountains. In particular R.D. Dick, of the North Canterbury Catchment Board, W.P. Packard, of the Geography Department, University of Canterbury, and J.T. Holloway, a Forester, pioneered research in the eastern mountain valleys of the Avoca and Waimakariri Rivers. In 1950 a High Country Survey was established by the Forestry Department for the special purpose of protecting mountain forests, and in 1960 the Mountain and Tussock Lands Institute was created for the co-ordination of mountain research.

Of all those pioneer researchers into the condition of the mountains, in this period probably J.T. Holloway achieved both the fullest coverage and the most revealing results. An able research Forester with a background of mountaineering in Otago, he had from his youth been interested by his father, by Dr. A.H. Cockayne, and by other contemporary botanists, in the ranges and forests of the South Island.

In 1950 the Avoca watershed forests were chosen as a research centre for the High Country Survey, for the valley included both forest and sheep country. Holloway reported that the forest in the Avoca had been almost completely burnt twice, and that deer had been browsing in the valley for fifty years and there had been "no significant forest regeneration since". Deer had damaged vegetation above the level reached by sheep; and chamois had gone even higher. He concluded that the state of the vegetation could only become worse "under the continuation of the present laissez faire policy". 27

Between 1957-1960 the High Country Survey, under Holloway, together with the Noxious Animals Division, chose the mountain catchments of the Hokitika River system as a testing ground for vegetation studies and policies of animal extermination.

Holloway's opinion, after thirty years travelling about the mountains and forests of the South Island, was that "there is no general acceptance of the harsh facts of life as it must be lived in an excessively mountainous land." His study had led him to believe that as a result of the degree of alteration in the natural landscape and vegetation of the interior "we face a peculiar and possibly unique combination of circumstances that spell trouble". A vegetation particularly susceptible to damage by the animals which had browsed on it for fifty years; extremes of climate; unstable mountain soils and crumbling rock combined to create problems which could only be solved by intensive local research, and would require the training of a generation of mountain men.

If the wanderer in the South Island discovers anything, it is that he lives in a mountainous land. This may not be a happy conclusion, as was amusingly pointed out sixty years ago by C.E. Douglas when he related how the Government Geologist had constructed a scale model of the South Island

28. J.T. Holloway: Chairman's address to the Forestry Section, 9th N.Z. Science Congress, N.Z. Journal of Forestry pp. 275-291. The seriousness of damage to the watersheds of the South Island is a controversial issue. There is no doubt however that the vegetation in mountain areas of New Zealand has been remarkably altered from its native state in a very short time compared to any other large country. The matters of controversy are the extent of damage able to be assigned to any one cause and the likelihood of the landscape adapting itself naturally to the altered condition of its protective vegetation.
to send to an overseas exhibition. The model had been "suppressed" because it "showed the country as it really is - almost all rugged mountain". If Holloway's conclusions are correct, the nature of the land will continue to demand that the vagabond plays a part, to ensure that the white man does not disprove the Maori proverb - "the land is a mother which never dies". The mountains of the South Island are beautiful in shape and patterns, and hold much that is distinctive of New Zealand landscape, but their is a fragile beauty.

29. "New Zealanders in their eagerness to crack up their mountain scenery as the most wonderful in this Planet or any other, nearly put their foot in it" was the comment of Douglas on this.

[Mr. Explorer Douglas p.295]
The wanderings of Kaimatau

In 1847 Thomas Brunner delayed his great journey for several months at a small Pah on the north bank of the Taramakau estuary. While there he noted: "From Taramakau on a clear day, bearing S.E., is a lofty snow-capped mountain which is considerably higher than the mean range of which it is a part. This part is called by the natives Kāi Matau, and is seen from the east coast at Fort Cooper. The river Taramakau and a branch of the Waitaha, the Potikahanau, take their rise from this mountain." Later he added: "The Arearea and the Okitika take their rise from a remarkable snow-capped mountain visible in the far distance, bearing S.E. from Taramakau, called Kaimatau." On his return journey he ascended the Victoria Range, from the summit of which he could see to the south "the white capped peak of Kaimatau towering conspicuously." ¹

As one of the two Maori names for high peaks recorded by Brunner (the other being a version of Arangiti), Kaimatau was duly placed on maps of the South Island published before 1860. But the directions were vague and knowledge of the interior small, with the result that it generally appeared as a dominant cone in the centre of this region, or as a kind of fruiterer John country at the head waters of all its major rivers. As the mapping of the interior became more and more complete, the position of Kaimatau became progressively less certain, as different conclusions were drawn as to which peak was sufficiently outstanding to deserve the distinction of this name. Eventually confusion prevailed. Kaimatau had become a name without a peak.

This web of mystery was woven around the name almost entirely as a result of the cartography of Julius Von Haast, who, as a geologist to the Nelson and Canterbury Provincial Governments during the 1850s, became a prolific manufacturer of mountain names, albeit somewhat uncertain in their distribution. "Kaimatau" was first made known to him, presumably by natives, during his surveys of the interior of Nelson in 1860. He noted that the peak of Kaimatau stood out clearly from three different positions: the summit of Black Hill in the upper Grey Valley; the summit of Mt. Hochfort north of the Buller North (from which the view to the south "was bounded by the Southern Alps, in front of which Kaimate lay conspicuous"); and closer at hand from near present day Romanga on the north bank of the Grey River. From this last position Kaimatau was visible "on the south bank of the Taramakau." ²

Haast persisted in using this rare Maori name for a high mountain ³, but the peak itself moved south with him from Nelson into Canterbury. His further positions of it in order of time are as follows:

1. Brunner: op. cit., 10 July 1847; 26 Jan. 1848; 11 March 1848 respectively.
3. "With the exception of Kaimatau at the head of the Waimakariri and which is probably Mt. Davis, Arangiti (Mt. Cook) and Umuroa (Arrowsmith Range), the Maoris seem to have no names for the peaks of the Central chain."

¹Haast: Geology, i, 1847.
²Haast: Geology, iii, 1847.
"The Southern Alps begin properly at Harper's Pass — here on the north 4 side of the Taramakau, Kaimatau raises his snow pyramid, and from here, as far as observation has been made, no break occurs to its termination in Beaufort Strait." 5 (1864) "There are enormous peaks, reaching heights of 11,000' - 13,000' are especially prominent in the main range of the Southern Alps. 6 In the north is the colossal snow pyramid of Kaimatau (Lat. 42°53' Long. 171°23') 7 its icefields nourishing the sources of the Waimakariri." (1864) 8 In his completed topographic map of the Province of Canterbury (1869), the range north of Harper Pass (having been "Mt. Warner" in his topographic map of S.W. Nelson, 1866) becomes "Eukelerstorf", and "Kaimatau Pts." are placed as the watershed of the Waimakariri, Arakura and Taipo Rivers. Haast's last word (1879) was to credit his uncertainty to the geographic haziness of the natives. "The Maoris were never able to point out to us which mountain in particular they designated by the name Kaimatau. They always pointed to the central chains to the head of the Waimakariri when I asked them... I formed the opinion that it was probably Mt. Davie." 9 In his account of a journey to the head of the Waimakariri in 1868 however, Haast had mentioned nothing of Kaimatau.

The name stuck to Mt. Davie, or the upper Waimakariri generally, for a long time, being last placed there on the map printed with Archdeacon F. Harper's "Letters from New Zealand" (1914). For two generations the area remained virtually unknown to the Lands and Survey Department. Then, S.A. Wiren, in his article in the Alpine Journal of 1926, suggested (after Haast) that the general name "Kaimatau" be given to the region. 10 R.S. Odell, however, during the course of pioneering research into the origin of the place names of the newly constituted National Park, found a new claimant. The central and best known peak of the Park is Mt. Rolleston. Odell went further back in time — to Brunner — to conclude that "Rolleston is S.E. of the Taramakau mouth almost to a degree, Haast could not know it was Mt. Davie..." There is little doubt that Kaimatau is Mt. Rolleston. 11 The Lands and Survey Department adopted Odell's compass criterion, and Kaimatau shifted once more on a map of Canterbury to be bracketed with Mt. Rolleston. 12

4. The underlining is the writer's.
6. Mt. Cook and Mt. Tyndall were the other two.
7. This position coincides with that of Mt. Davie.
8. Hochstatter: Geology of New Zealand, ed. C.A. Fleming, p. 241. A panoramic sketch drawn by Haast from the summit of Black Hill is included in this book. On this sketch Kaimatau is shown as a pointed peak to the west of the broad summit of Mt. Warner.
12. Selwyn County Map.
Which was this mighty peak of the Ngai Tahu? In the course of the writer's research among the earliest records of this region, several clues came to light which were to illuminate the puzzle of why the Ngai Tahu should have named remote and indistinct divide peaks.

The first fresh reference to Kaimatau occurred in Drake's map of January 1583, on which "Kaimata" range, terminating at present day Inchbonnie, is shown on the north bank of the Tarameka 13. "On the Kaimata," wrote one of Drake's men, "somewhere opposite the Otelo /Otira/ a peak rises 500' or 600' above the average height of the range, completely covered in snow." 4 This peak is today Mt. Alexander (rarely mapped with its height). The writer had already noticed the outstanding appearance of its winter snow cap among the mountains in the vicinity of the western coastal strip, the Grey valley and Lake Brunner. With the summit of Mt. Alexander rising so impressively from its neighbouring ranges and almost five thousand feet above them, this evidence of Drake's map was sufficient for the writer that Kaimatau had wandered far from its original position. But others interested still had a lurking fondness for Mt. Rolleston - the divide peaks could claim an extra thousand feet of height, and Alexander was not C.E., but E.S.E., of the Tarameka river south.

Two subsequent discoveries seemed to clinch Kaimatau's position. First, the writer learned that, in the offer of the Paotini Ngai Tahu to sell their territories, made in 1857, the eastern boundary was outlined slightly different-ly from that of the 1860 purchase. The boundary ran from the south to "...Tio-rapatea, Tera o Tama, Kaimata, Narua..." 15 and so north to West Whanganui - thus further fixing the name Kaimatau to a landmark north of Tera Tama and the Tarameka River. Then, in order to test these relative positions, the writer visited the site of the old Taramaka Pah, half a mile from the road bridge, on a clear winter's day. Just before the old Pah site (on a hill flat close to the beach) was reached, Kaimatau made its bow over the north shoulder of the Ichonu range-bearing 116°. From this position Mt. Alexander, with a sheer northern face falling away to the Crooked River, is indeed "a colossal snow pyramid" in relation to the other front ranges. The isolated snow cap of Mt. Alexander and Tera Tama (the latter obscuring the divide peaks due south east) stand out from the crest of the beach as the Alpha and Beta of the Main range of the Southern Alps, the winter snowline of which becomes visible only southward of Tera Tama and continues unbroken to beyond the distant peaks of Cook and Tasman, rising above the curve of the southern coastline.

Such was the virtue of returning to original sources, even if, as in this case, one of the "documents" was an exact location. Of the other "Kaimataus" Mt. Rolleston is not visible from the Pah site. Though Mt. Davie can be seen from there, it is merely as a "sump" in the snow ridge of the divide. Little can be said to justify Haast's confusion. Despite his reference to the vagueness of the Maori, natives must have pointed out Kaimatau to him, for the peak that he saw from Runanga, and from Mt. Rochfort, was Mt. Alexander, and at some

13. See p. 16.
stage he must have been of the opinion that Kaiapoi was a snowy pyramid to the north of the Taramakau River, not on its south bank.

Tara Tama

This notable Maori landmark, as with Kaiapoi, has at times been misplaced by Europeans. The name has also been recorded in different versions, but the correct one seems that used by Dobson and in the Westland Purchase - Tara o Tara (the peak of Tara). The peak could be clearly seen from the summits of both Ngai Tahu passes - the Ahurira and the Taramakau - as well as from most parts of the much travelled section of beach between Wairarapa and Hokitika. It has already been pointed out that Tara's mountain marked the entrance to the Ahurira River when the peak was in line with the setting sun. E.W. Boot of Hokitika gives an amended version of the sailing directions - that the peak should be lined up with Mt. Turimiate, one of the lower hills in front of Tara Tara. The result of both methods is much the same.

A Maori legend credits the discovery of greenstone to an early navigator, Ngahue, who first reached the Ahurira river chased by a sea monster, Poutini. "At this moment the sun hid its face, and lo! all was dark, save that from the icefields of Tara o Tara, at the source of the Ahurira river, there glowed a bright radiance, and by this even Ngahue knew that he was to land and proceed thereto." 16 This legend related how Poutini had followed up the river and been turned into a bed of greenstone. If snowfields be substituted for icefields, the above description is an accurate one of the winter view of Tara Tara from the mouth of the Ahurira River,

A.D. Dobson's treatment of the name led to it being transposed. In his Reminiscences (1930) he related that in 1864 the prominent peak on the west side of Arthur's Pass had been named by him. "Not knowing the Maori name of this mountain when I made the survey in 1864, I named it Mt. Rolleston... but its proper name is Te Tara-o-Tara." 17 Dobson in 1863 had seen the true Tara Tara from Lake Mahinapua, but in his Reminiscences regarded this as Mt. Rolleston. There was a lapse of memory involved however in Dobson's association of Tara Tara with Mt. Rolleston, for in his original map of Arthur's Pass [see folder] a peak north of the point where the river leading away from the pass turned toward the west, is marked as Tara Tara. If that river had been the Ahurira, as he assumed for the purposes of his map, then Tara Tara would have been correctly positioned, but the river was the Otira, and the mountain Alexander [Kaiapoi].

Other Maori Place Names

The meanings offered here for the remaining existing Maori place names are in some cases more interpretations than translations, for Maori scholars emphasize the importance of historical associations in the origin of place names.

Panoroma taken on the site of the Taramakau Pah, from where Thomas Brunner first described Kaimatau.

"Kaimatau"

from a painting by Alison Sanson
and the considerable alteration in meaning which can occur in a word when it is combined with another word or syllable.

Translations of Tara Tama, Arahura and Kokitika have already been quoted. The mystery of Kaimatau was not lessened by an explanation of the meaning of the word, which can be translated in several different ways. One translation is "uncooked food". S.A. Wiren in his 1926 article suggested another translation of "big white food". This, he pointed out, "did not convey much, unless to an ice cream lover". Translations of the names for the major eastern rivers have often been attempted. Hurumud and Rakaia are words for which it is most difficult to assign an exact meaning. Rakaia possibly is the southern form of Rangaia, which means "to arrange in ranks", and could refer to the Maori method of crossing the river.

Translations of the names for the western rivers are as follows:

Tara-makau ("a favourite peak" - the peak would be Tara Maha);
Kokatahi or Kaka-tahi (two parrots); Miko-nui (place of many palms);
Wai-taha (back-water); Wanga-nui or Whanga-nui (large harbour);
O-te-hake (the dwelling of the hunchback);
O-tira (place of rays or possibly "food for the chief", but the fact that rays of light commonly shine into the Otira gorge in the late afternoon gives the first translation the greater appeal).

The surviving names for peaks and ranges are:

Rangi-toto (volcanic rock, which is found in that mountain);
Ko-whi-te-rangi (no simple translation);
Tuhua (the Maori word for obsidian, which was used to fashion greenstone, Mt. Tuhua guards the mountain gorge of the Arahura River);
Turimutu or Turi-whata (a key storehouse site);
Ho-homu (deep - the Homun stream, under the range of the same name, was one of the Maori sources of greenstone);
Te Kinga, either Te Kinonga or Sekinonga on early maps (no translation);
Onokko or O-rongo-koko (the place to hear the native parrot);
Puke-te-raki (the hill to the sky).

18. Wiren: loc. cit. p. 306
Haast's Nomenclature.

Haast is recorded as having predicted that a map of the South Island would "afford a remarkable example of colonists' geography, and that many a learned student of geography would rack his brains to find out what deep significance lay in the singular names".1 This forecast was true for the names given by early runholders, prospectors and surveyors, but Haast did his best to disprove his own assertion in the mountains and glaciers of Nelson and Canterbury. The pattern behind his place names was systematic, even if the exact location of many were not always clear from his mapping or description. Haast's aim was "to create a kind of Pantheon or Valhalla for my illustrious contemporaries amongst those never trodden peaks and glaciers".2 Nearly all the names he gave to features were those of notable nineteenth century scientists; though a few were named after prominent Canterbury personalities; and even fewer after persons with whom Haast had some personal connection. Hardly ever did he name a lake, mountain, range or river from a peculiarity inherent in the feature.

Haast's names for peaks and ranges, despite the foreign origin of many of them, have in the course of time been accepted as New Zealand names for New Zealand features. Usage has deprived the French and German names of their strange sound, though of course the pronunciation of many has become anglicized, in much the same way as have Maori words. In his nomenclature he showed evidence more of patriotism toward Science and his adopted country, than toward his homeland. Haast also was ready to adopt Maori names, "so notable for their melody".3 but these were not easy to discover in the interior.

Haast named over a hundred features in the Southern Alps. In the upper valleys of this region he named the Ramsay and Lyell Glaciers after English geologists; Mt. Tyndall after an English mountaineer and glaciologist; Mt. Kinkel and Mt. Coste after German poets; Mt. Martius and the Agassiz Range after a German and a French naturalist respectively. Sale Glacier, Mt. Davie, Mt. Tancred and Mt. Greenlaw after early Canterbury public men and surveyors.

Haast's treatment of Harper Pass is interesting. Through the late 1850's and during the 1860's this pass was regularly termed either the Hurumai or the Taramakan Saddle. The pass was first crossed by the party led by Edward Dobson, senior, and none of the Dobson family were known to refer to it as "Harper's Pass". Haast married one of the Provincial Engineer's daughters, and possibly for this family reason was unwilling to name it after Harper. In his Geology of Canterbury and Westland he referred to it as "the so-called Harper's Pass" 4.

3. Life and Times p.41.
When A.P. Harper in 1893 related to G.J.Roberts the story of Leonard Harper's alpine crossing, Roberts, as well as naming Harper's Peak in the Wilber Range after the first European to cross the Alps, decided "to expunge Hurumui saddle for good and all" from the map of Westland, at the same time commenting to A.P. Harper that it "was too bad of Von Haast to ignore your father's work". 5

Some names of the Westland Survey.

Appreciation of a survey gang's performance and a diffidence about claiming achievements on their own part was characteristic of both Mueller and Roberts in their Westland surveying. Many of the peaks and ranges triangulated or climbed on Roberts' 1880 expedition were named either after members of Roberts' gang, the staff of the Hokitika Survey Office or well known West Coasters. Mueller's daughter has recorded that he always objected to having his name put on the map. Roberts later wrote that there was a peak named after him only on an "obsolete map". Both Mueller Peak and Mt. Roberts have retained their names. (The origin of the names is placed in brackets.) Of the other trig points chosen and named in 1880 by: Mt. Murray (W.G. Murray, surveyor, Hokitika); Mt. Edhurst (unknown); Mt. Butler (named by Von Haast in 1866); Mt. Lord (E.J. Lord, surveyor, Hokitika) Mt. Smyth (J.N. Smyth, surveyor, Hokitika). At the same time the following were named: Leper Peak, Strachan Pass and Clarke Glacier (D. Strachan and W. Clarke of the survey gang who first traversed them); Dan Peak (Dan Strachan); Adam's River and Range (C.W. Adams, surveyor, Christchurch); Wilberg Glacier (E.N. Wilberg, draughtsman, Hokitika); Hende Creek (C. Hende, ferryman at the Wanganui gorge); Red Lion Peak and Mt. Evans (a Hokitika hotel and its proprietor, J. Evans); Puker Creek (the survey party's dog). The origins of Malcolm Peak, Mt. Blair, Mt. Farrar, Mt. Lambert and Mt. Stoddart are unknown but each was named after some individual for Roberts used the possessive case of the names in his maps and sketches. The origin of Lornty, Essex, Wilkinson and McKenzie glaciers is also unknown.

The line of peaks along the Whitcombe divide from Haast's Mt. Martinus to Mathias Pass: Mt. Neave, Law Peak, Bond Peak, Mr. Warner, Mt. Owhter, Mt. Young, Button Peak, Mt. Marion and Mt. Frieda were all named during the 1880's. Roberts named Mt. Neave and Bond Peak after the owner and manager of Mt. Algidas Station respectively as these two men had been of great assistance in his Rakiia surveying of 1880, but the origin of the other names is not recorded.

The creeks falling away from this part of the divide to the Whitcombe River on the west and to the West Mathias River on the east have suffered several changes of name. The most unusual did not survive. On a map of the forests of Canterbury (probably printed during the 1890's) the names Caspades, Hidalgo, Monge, and Vamos were given to the creeks which flow westward, and Acrucis, Becrucis, Decrucis and Gecrucis to those which flow eastward.

5. Roberts to Harper, 23 August, 1893.
G.J. Roberts kept a record book of the origin of all the place names he gave, but this has not been located.

The Arrowsmith Range.

Thinking that this range had derived its name from the cook of Whitcombe's party, Arnold Wall composed a whimsical poem which touches the chord of curiosity aroused when many a name of unknown origin is sounded. A large number of the names for features of this region were given according to some such chance event or association.

In the Great Alp's heart
The first to intrude
And camp by the noisy waters and crash through
The virgin wood.

And because the leader
Has an odd whim
Up flies his name, and the rocks and ice for ever
Remember him.

Aloft for ever streams
His glorious name
A banner shining in the bitter sleetly winds,
Bearing his fame.

Did Whitcombe catch him
Taking a stroll
Hungering and admiring the mountain, and so discover
The cook's soul?

Did he run out of names
On the final day,
And hurriedly snatch at the finest name in the gang
Who can say? 6

Whitcombe's survey records, though kept by Lauper, were so damaged as to be useless. The range in fact was named in 1861 by Von Haast in honour of the London firm of cartographers. The Cameron Stream was the next feature to be named, but the origin of this is unknown. Sometimes in early maps the Cameron has been recorded as a part of Lake Stream; sometimes the latter has been marked as Cameron Stream. Von Haast in 1866 added, on

6. The middle verses of a poem by Arnold Wall:
the west ridge which joins the main Arrowsmith Range to the head of
the Lyell Glacier, Mt. Gould, Goethe and Rossau. However the last has
not survived. In 1879 Haast named the Reischek glacier after Andreas
Reischek, taxidermist for the Canterbury Museum.

Coulouir and North peaks were well established names by 1930 and may
have been named by G.J. Roberts, though the Arrowsmith Range is in a
Canterbury survey district. On his panorama from Mt. Butler in 1880
the names of Coulouir and North peaks are pencilled in.

Between 1930-1939 the rest of the many features of the Range were
named as a result of the sustained climbing carried out during those years.
The mountaineers kept mainly to qualities inherent in the features for
inspiration, and a fine collection of names resulted from the suggestions
of A. Anderson, E. Wilson, D. Brough, R. Booth, S. Conway, J. Pascoe and others.
The major ridges of the Range acquired the Spires, Bastion Peaks, Tent Peak,
Prop Peak, Marquee Peak and Tower Peak. The outlying Armour Range,
which leads off Haast's Mt. Goethe, gained Pistol, Bardolph, Spearpoint,
Renegade, Bandit, Bathsheba col and Crossbow saddle.

Mt. Park and the Mungo River.

Robert Park's survey of 1862 extended up the Wilberforce River
to where it split into five branches. The only peak he named on the whole
Rakaia divide was Mt. Park, placed between two of these branches which later
became the Griffiths and the Gibson streams. There is no outstanding peak
between the valleys of these tributaries. Thus Mt. Park was named from the
Canterbury side. Von Haast recorded Mt. Park on his map in 1868, but encircled
it with a cluster of names of his own choosing.

Next the Westland surveyors took up the mapping of the opposite slopes.
On their maps of the 1870's the Toaroha River reached back to the divide,
and the Hokitika River was a much abbreviated stream. Mt. Park was at first
thought to be a prominent level topped summit, rising immediately beyond
Kowhiterangi and seen distinctly from Hokitika. However, as on many other
occasions during the 1860's and 1870's, it had not been realized how far
back and how obscure some of the divide peaks were. By the early 1880's
it had been found that the Hokitika swung behind this mountain - now termed
Mt. O'Connor 7 - and between the source of the Toaroha River and the divide.
Here it became known as the Mungo River. This name predates the Geological
Survey of 1905-1908 for the Mungo River was marked on the geological map
of north Westland compiled by C. J. Douglas about 1898. The association with
Mungo Park was carried on with the naming of Sokota Creek, one of the small
stream sources of the Mungo River.

7 Named after C. Y. O'Connor, road engineer on the West Coast
during the 1870's.
"Ofono" peak from the mouth of the Brumner [Arnhem] River, and from the summit of the Turrumchu saddle.

Sketches by J.C. Date
1863, F.R.A.N.Z.

Panorama of the Arrawarra Range
from Mt. Butler, Roberts-Muir trip. Stations on the Range are clearly marked.

G.J. Roberts, 1863
F.R.A.N.Z.
The Mungo River was the last major branch of the Hokitika River to be named. The latter divides into two branches above its canyons, and again the name of the main river itself was attached to the smaller branch. The source of present "Hokitika River" is under Mathias Pass. That stream then falls over one thousand feet of cascades to join the larger Mungo River, which has its source many miles eastward in the shingle faces of the Hokitika saddle. That the name Hokitika was attached to the shorter source was probably a result of the musterer's exploration of Mathias Pass in the 1870's.

There are many other interesting place names in this area, though the origins of a large number are still unknown. Each name provides tangible evidence of some history, but it is surprising how many names for features have not survived even when put on survey maps. The writer knows the origin of a little more than half the place names of the region.
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Diaries, reminiscences, letters, and reports which include personal impressions, have been used as much as possible. The most valuable of these have been 'Journal' of R.A. Sherrin; 'Reminiscences' of M.P. Stoddart; 'Journal' of C.O. Toriisse; 'Journal' of William Smart; Reminiscences of A.D. Dobson; 'Letters' of C.J. Roberts, 'Reports' of C.E. Douglas.

The many sketches, paintings, photographs and maps included for visual illustration or record are regarded as an integral part of the thesis, for they provide a historical or geographical supplement to verbal impressions of the land. The source of each picture, sketch or map is acknowledged where the illustration is used. All unacknowledged photographs were taken by the writer.

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