Captain Joseph Thomas and the Canterbury settlement.

University of Canterbury

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

by O.L. Eatwell

1968.
CAPTAIN JOSEPH THOMAS
AND THE
CANTERBURY SETTLEMENT.
**TABLE OF CONTENTS.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Preface</td>
<td>iv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>List of Illustrations and Maps</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abbreviations</td>
<td>xi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CHAPTER I</strong> : Canterbury to 1848.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geographical background; Maori occupation; European discovery; whaling and trading; French colonization; &quot;pre-Adamite&quot; farming; explorations by Daniell and Duppa, Mein Smith, Tuckett; origins of the Canterbury Association, plans for the new settlement.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CHAPTER II</strong> : The Search For a Site.</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Association and the New Zealand Company; preliminary estimates; Thomas chosen as chief surveyor; his instructions; arrival in New Zealand; Nelson and Wellington rivalry; views of Grey; attempts to acquire the Wairarapa site; &quot;Kemp's deed&quot;; exploration of the Port Cooper district; seeking the sanction of the Governor and Bishop; views of the Bishop; sanction obtained; Thomas's intentions; explorations by Hamilton and Torlesse; Thomas prepares in Wellington.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CHAPTER III</strong> : Preparation For the Pilgrims.</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problems of land settlement; Colonial Surveying; Thomas re-examines site of the capital; public works - rejects tenders for buildings and roads, imports timber, buildings erected, members of the labour force; Mantell defines native reserves - problems; arrangements with &quot;pre-Adamites&quot; - dissatisfaction; triangulation surveying; progress of the surveys; communications between port and plains; recruitment of Maori labour - problems; progress on Sumner road; laying out Lyttelton, Sumner, Christchurch; naming of streets; plan of Christchurch; conflicts between Thomas and workmen; expenditure heavy - extension of credit by Fox; Godley leaves for New Zealand.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER IV : The Godley Episode.

The Godleys arrive in New Zealand - reactions to Thomas's work; suspension of the public works - account of progress; problems of law and order - Watson dispenses justice; social portrait - public houses, women and children; recollections by Pratt; offers to start a newspaper; filling in time; pastoral prospects - explorations for overland route from Nelson, early runs; the Association's affairs in England; news of emigrant ships sailing reaches New Zealand; public works resume; loan arranged by Grey; arrival of the first four ships; problems faced by the colonists; Thomas leaves Canterbury - conflict with Godley - Thomas's version of his dismissal - Godley's reply.

CHAPTER V : Conclusion.

Comparison of Thomas and Light - geographical discovery of South Australia, choosing a suitable location, the site of Adelaide, plan of the city, surveys, dismissal of Light; contemporary view of Thomas's preparations; criticism of the Summer road - justification of route; blame for shortcomings in preliminary works; views of Stokes, Dobson, Herons, Bruce, Wigram, and Straubel; summing up.

APPENDICES.

B : Terms of Agreement Between Thomas and the New Zealand Company.
C : Did Felix Wakefield Help to Draw Up Thomas's Instructions?
D : Thomas's Expenditure.
E : Joseph Thomas: His Later Years.

BIBLIOGRAPHY
PREFACE.

Of all the figures in Canterbury history, none did more for the foundation of the settlement, and received less reward for his services than Captain Joseph Thomas. He has frequently been referred to as "the forgotten man of Canterbury history", a title largely arising from the fact that he fell under the shadow of John Robert Godley. Godley has been styled "the founder of Canterbury", but this title is too often taken to mean that he was responsible for all the important features of the settlement's foundation including the physical preparations made before his arrival. Further, the placing of the Godley statue in the centre of Christchurch, and the absence of any other public memorial in the city to the architects of early Canterbury, reinforces the popular impression that Godley was the one figure of outstanding importance in Canterbury before December 1850. Without over-stretching the metaphor it is safe to assert that while Godley may have been the heart and soul of the Canterbury scheme he was not the hands and feet also. This honour belongs to Thomas, who laboured so conscientiously to prepare for the coming of the Pilgrims.

Contrary to widespread popular belief, Canterbury history did not begin with the arrival of the first four ships. This myth has been fostered by numerous books and newspaper articles. Even anniversary publications by Christchurch newspapers have perpetuated the idea by giving
only passing mention to the vital 1848-50 foundation years. The obscurity surrounding the "pre-Adamite" era in Canterbury has only relatively recently been cleared away by the labours of J.C. Andersen, C.R. Straubel, and P.B. Maling. Andersen's *Place-names of Banks Peninsula* (1927) contains a wealth of information, while Straubel's contribution to *A History of Canterbury* (Volume I, 1957) casts much new light on the "pre-Adamite" period, and his excellent chapter on Thomas did much to rehabilitate the latter's reputation. But the most comprehensive account of the years 1848-50 is undoubtedly Maling's edition of the letters and journal of C.O. Torlesse (*The Torlesse Papers*, 1958). These papers provide the only detailed contemporary account of the "Thomas period" and as such form a valuable addition to our knowledge of Canterbury history. But Charles Torlesse's objectivity as a witness is open to doubt, and his denigration of Thomas tended to reinforce the traditional views of his chief. As a result Thomas's career remains, in many aspects, as great an enigma as ever.

The aim of this thesis has been to examine the part Thomas played in the foundation of Canterbury. An introductory chapter on the Maori and early European period has been included since this is indispensable for an understanding of the foundation of the settlement. Generally, local historical writing has tended either to overlook or underestimate the role Thomas played in the selection of the
location of Canterbury. As a result this theme has been investigated in some detail. Thomas's work in preparing for the reception of the first colonists has been carefully scrutinized. An important question to ask is: how thorough was his work in the light of what the Association, and the Pilgrims, could reasonably expect? The question of the blame for the shortcomings in Thomas's preparations has also been investigated. An interesting side issue has been to examine why such opprobrium developed around Thomas's name and the extent to which he deserves this reputation. The work of Colonel William Light in South Australia has been examined in order to provide a suitable comparison with Thomas's labours. This has been done mainly from secondary sources and is therefore by no means conclusive. In another less serious respect the comparison has a certain light-hearted interest; it is a commonly held notion in Adelaide that Light laid out Christchurch. It is time this particular myth was laid to rest.

This is not a full-scale biography. So little is at present known of Thomas's life outside his connection with the Canterbury Association that such an undertaking could not be attempted from sources available to me. Even if one takes only the three years he was associated with Canterbury a personal portrait is difficult to sketch. He left no diary and few personal letters and his views on many matters of importance are unknown. In drawing a character sketch of the man one has to rely on comments, often of a biased and even
vitriolic nature, by contemporaries, and on official
despatches. Both of these sources reveal little of the man
himself.

The task is rendered even more difficult by the lack of
knowledge as to Thomas's physical characteristics. His
height, colour of hair, and other physical features are
unknown. The only known existing portrait of him is William
Fox's painting (see photo facing page 111) of an exploring
party on the plains. But it is impossible to build up an
adequate portrait from this minute representation. About all
that can be safely taken from this painting is that Thomas was
bearded and broad-shouldered. Undoubtedly his physique
betokened, at least to a certain extent, the vigorous, robust,
out-door life he lived. He has been described as being "bluff
and burly" but these adjectives reveal little of the man's
personality. It is a distinct loss to Canterbury history that
so little is known of one of the province's greatest pioneers.

Two appendices in this thesis, that is, those dealing with
Thomas's career outside his association with Canterbury have
been documented in as much detail as possible. This has been
done to provide a basis for further research. Wherever
possible initials of Christian names of those persons working
under Thomas have been given.

One of the chief difficulties encountered in the writing
of this thesis was the dearth of contemporary accounts of the
1848-50 period by those involved in the preliminary works.
Apart from The Torlesse Papers the only surviving diary by a
person employed by the Association "on the spot" is that of H. Gouland, the customs collector. Unfortunately this is pitifully inadequate. Gouland was not a good diarist and his day-to-day entries concern only mundane matters such as the arrival or departure of housekeepers. To some extent this lack of information was compensated for by contemporary newspaper accounts. The Wellington newspapers, especially, carried many informative reports about the Canterbury Settlement. However, there was no lack of official source material — indeed the abundance of such was often an embarrassment.

I have become increasingly aware of the need for further research to be done on the role of the surveyor in the land settlement of Canterbury. This may lie more within the realm of the geographer but it is also of importance to historians. Abundant material is available, merely awaiting a keen student to unravel it.

My thanks are due to many people, especially members of the staffs of the Alexander Turnbull and General Assembly Libraries, and the National Archives (all in Wellington), and the Hocken Library (Dunedin). I am obliged to Professor G.E. Carrington (London) and Lieutenant-Colonel G.A. Shepperd (Sandhurst, England) for their scholarly assistance. I am grateful to Mr W.A. Taylor of the Department of Lands, Forests, and Water Resources (Victoria, British Columbia, Canada), who went to a great deal of trouble on my behalf. Although he could not provide any information of direct relevance to this
thesis, he showed that the colonial surveyor of the Crown Colony of Vancouver Island was influenced by procedures of survey referred to in the *Canterbury Papers*. Here is another field for further research. Mr C.A. Lawn of Auckland, who is engaged in research for an official history of surveying in New Zealand, gave some valuable background material. I am deeply indebted to Mr J. Hayward of the Lands and Survey Department (Christchurch) for his help, especially his tracing of Jollie's map of Christchurch. I wish to express my gratitude to Messrs J.C. Wilson of the Canterbury Museum, R.C. Lamb of the Canterbury Public Library, J.C. Cottrell of the Anglican Diocesan Office, and Dr P.B. Maling, all of whom made original material available to me. Messrs D.V. Sims and F. McGregor were most helpful in preparing the maps and photographs respectively. Last, but not least, I am grateful to my typist, Mrs G. Reid, and my supervisor, Mr W.J. Gardner, for their assistance and co-operation.
LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS AND MAPS.

Illustrations.

1. Captain J. Thomas's exploring party on the Fort Cooper plains. (By W. Fox. Original painting held in Hocken Library, Dunedin)  33
2. Thomas Cass  62
3. John Cowell Boys  63
4. Edward Jollie  75
5. Charles Ohins Torlesse  81
6. John Robert Godley  89
7. William Pratt  98
8. Pilgrims landing at Lyttelton. (By W. Fox. Original painting held in Hocken Library)  111

All of these illustrations, except no. 8, were reproduced from negatives, or copies, held in the Canterbury Museum. No. 8 was reproduced from A History of Canterbury (Vol. I, 1957), with permission of the publishers.

Maps.


The Oxford, Ashley, and Mandeville Districts, showing the trigonometrical stations established by C.O. Torlesse and J.C. Boys in 1849-50. Compiled from a tracing, dated Nov 1852, of a "General Map of the Surveyed Districts, Canterbury Settlement"  62

"Plan of Christchurch, the Capital of the Settlement of Canterbury." Drawn by Edward Jollie and signed by J. Thomas. Traced from the original held in the Lands and Survey Dept., Christchurch  78

The maps following pages 33 & 62 were reproduced from The Torlesse Papers (1958) with permission of Dr P.B. Maling.
**ABBREVIATIONS.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CSLB</td>
<td>Chief Surveyors Letterbook.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAG</td>
<td>Despatches from Alston to Godley.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DGGNZ</td>
<td>Despatches from Godley to the Government of New Zealand.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DGS</td>
<td>Despatches from Godley to the Secretary of the Canterbury Association.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DTF</td>
<td>Despatches from Thomas to Fox.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DTH</td>
<td>Despatches from Thomas to Harrington.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GIL</td>
<td>General Inwards Letters.</td>
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<td>GOL</td>
<td>General Outwards Letters.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LT</td>
<td>Lyttelton Times.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NE</td>
<td>The Nelson Examiner and New Zealand Chronicle.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NZG</td>
<td>The New Zealand Gazette and Wellington Spectator.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NZJ</td>
<td>The New Zealand Journal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NZS</td>
<td>The New Zealand Spectator and Cooks Strait Guardian.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WI</td>
<td>Wellington Independent.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CP</td>
<td>Canterbury Papers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TP</td>
<td>The Torlesse Papers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GBPP</td>
<td>Great Britain Parliamentary Papers Relating to New Zealand.</td>
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<td>L &amp; S</td>
<td>Lands and Survey.</td>
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<tr>
<td>NZC</td>
<td>New Zealand Company.</td>
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<td>NM</td>
<td>New Munster.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cmd.</td>
<td>Command, as in GBPP 1850 (Cmd. 1156).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H. of C.</td>
<td>House of Commons; as in GBPP 1841 (H. of C. 311).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER I : CANTERBURY TO 1848.

The Canterbury Plains present a very different appearance to modern viewers than they did to the first Europeans who gazed upon them from a similar vantage point on the Port Hills in the 1840’s. Instead of the checkerboard pattern of paddocks, vast, virtually uninhabited plains stretched as far as the eye could see, being bounded in the far distance by majestic snow-capped mountain ranges reaching into the sky. Described as "...an immense lens-shaped alluvial deposit..." tapering toward their northern and southern extremities, the plains were formed by huge coalescing fans built up by shingle brought down by the Rangitata, Rakaia, and Waimakariri Rivers from the glaciated mountains.

Their vegetation cover consisted mainly of low tussock grassland, the monotony of which was broken by isolated remnants of a once extensive forest at Rangiora, Tuahiwi, Woodend, Kaiapoi, Chaka, Papanui, and Riccarton. Areas of flax and raupo swamp extended north to the Ashley River from Lake Ellesmere in the form of a "collar" between Banks Peninsula and the plains proper, while the coastal sandhills were covered in a rough growth of scrub, flax, fern, grass, and toi toi. On poorer gravel stretches the tussocks were in part replaced by manuka and matagouri. Further inland, in the areas of higher

rainfall, beech forest stood out as patches of darker green on the foothills of the Alps.

Apart from the plains the other area of geographical importance is Banks Peninsula. This was built up by lavas poured out from twin volcanic cones centred on Akaroa and Lyttelton Harbours which took their present form when the craters were invaded by the sea. Long periods of erosion cut deep radiating valleys into the slopes.¹ Podocarp forest covered most of the peninsula until European settlement when the valuable timber trees such as the totara, matai (black pine), and kahikatea (white pine) were removed for building purposes. The only large unforested areas were in the north and north-west where tussock was prominent.

The climate of Canterbury in the days of the first European settlers differed little from that of today. Statistics for Christchurch, taken over a period of ten years or more, show the temperate nature of the climate. Rainfall averages 26.3 inches distributed fairly evenly throughout the year, and falling on 116 days. The mean temperature is 52.5°F.; the monthly average ranging from 61.5°F. for January the hottest month to 41°F. for July the coldest. Ground frosts can be expected on ninety days, while hours of bright sunshine total 1,990 per annum. Prevailing winds come from the north-east and south-west, and highest temperatures are associated with those from the north-west, known locally as

¹ R. Speight, "Geology of the Province", ibid., p. 80.
the "Canterbury norwester" which is a hot, dry, unpleasant wind. Snowfalls are light and infrequent though heavy falls are sometimes experienced. Further inland climatic extremes are more pronounced, though the reverse is the case for Banks Peninsula which is greatly influenced by proximity to the sea.

This environment appears to have been first inhabited by the Moa-hunters, though local Maori tradition does not mention them. J.W. Stack, the greatest authority on the subject, divided South Island Maori history into four main periods: prior to the arrival of the Waitaha; Waitaha occupation 1477–1577; Ngati-mamo occupation 1577–1677; and Ngai-tahu occupation 1677–1827, and the accompanying traditions into three classes – the fabulous, the uncertain, and the reliable.

The fabulous traditions speak of prehistoric times and supernatural beings, and relate to a band of ogres, a mythical race said to have been the first occupants of the South Island. Described as "giants", they could swallow rivers and transform themselves into anything animate or inanimate. In the time of their successors, the Te Raruwai, uncertain tradition records that the country around Invercargill was submerged, the forests of Canterbury and Otago destroyed by fire, and the moa exterminated.

Next came the Waitaha who made their way south from the

Bay of Plenty. Freed from the alarms of war, and nourished by the inexhaustible supplies of food which the North Canterbury and Banks Peninsula region provided, they multiplied so rapidly that ancient tradition described them as "covering the face of the country like myriad ants", though there is little surviving evidence of such concentrations. After a peaceful occupation of the "food-abounding island", they were destroyed or absorbed by the Ngati-mamoe about 1577. ¹ They in turn were overcome by invaders from the north, the Ngai-tahu, and dating from about 1650 when this tribe was located at Hataitai near the entrance to Wellington Harbour, reliable tradition begins. The Ngati-mamoe became a hunted people and many of their number retreated to caves in the river gorges.

During the Ngai-tahu conquest contact was made with the Ngati-wairangi of the West Coast, and profitable greenstone gathering expeditions ventured over passes in the Southern Alps to procure the prized commodity. An efficient trade, created by the system of gathering also developed, and very soon Kaiapohia (Kaiapoi), which the chief Tu Takautahi had fixed as the headquarters of the tribe, became the thriving "metropolis" of the South Island. However, the promise of continued prosperity was broken by the kai-huanga or "eat-relational" feud which, starting in 1810-15, rapidly escalated into civil war.

¹. J. Hight & C.R. Straubel (eds.), A History of Canterbury, i, 17 places the arrival of the Ngati-mamoe and Ngati-tahu about 1500 and 1627 respectively.
The heavy loss of life paved the way for Te Rauparaha's easy conquest. The Ngai-toha chief had begun scheming the subjugation of the rich Ngai-tahu when he became master of the northern tribes of Cook Strait. In 1828, in response to a boast by the Kaikoura chief, Rerewhaka, that he would "rip his stomach open with a barracouta tooth", Te Rauparaha sailed from Kapiti with a strong body of warriors and destroyed every pa in the neighbourhood of Kaikoura. The next year he returned to the attack and destroyed the Omihi pa, to where the Kaikoura remnant had fled. Continuing to Kaiapohia, Te Rauparaha, under the pretence that he had come to trade, persuaded the inhabitants to admit some of his men into the pa. However, his war plans were overheard, and eight of his chiefs including the redoubtable Te Pehi were killed. His revenge came in 1830 when, in the notorious incident associated with Captain Stewart of the brig Elizabeth, the Maori village at Takapuneke Bay in Akaroa Harbour was destroyed, and the Ngai-tahu paramount chief Tamaiharanui captured, taken back north, and tortured to death.

The Ngai-tahu were finally overcome in the famous siege of Kaiapohia (1832), and soon after Te Rauparaha moved on to destroy their last stronghold on Onawe Peninsula. Many captives were taken back to Kapiti and used as slaves. Eventually Te Rauparaha made peace with the defeated tribe and sent their captured chiefs home. The remaining captives were released when the Christian faith was accepted by the tribes over which he ruled. The volte face was completed in 1843.
when Te Rauparaha's son Tamihana, and nephew Matene, visited Banks Peninsula, and spent some time imparting to the Maori inhabitants a knowledge of Christianity. Their zeal was rewarded by the baptism of many of the Ngai-tahu into the Anglican Church.

This, however, was not the first missionary endeavour amongst the Canterbury Maoris. Taawao, a Wesleyan of the Nga-puhi tribe, brought the Christian faith to Banks Peninsula in 1841. The following year, after his baptism by the Rev. J. Watkin, he used Port Levy as a base for his missionary effort, in company with Hohepa Koreki from Cloudy Bay. Early in 1844 Bishop Selwyn visited Port Levy, and by the end of the year both Wesleyans and Anglicans had erected Maori churches.¹

Disease caused by contact with Europeans accentuated the decline in the Maori population, already seriously weakened by inter-tribal warfare and the ravages of Te Rauparaha. An epidemic of measles in 1848–9 caused havoc, with Maoris dying faster than their friends could bury them.² The pre-European population of Canterbury (about the year 1780), which was estimated to have been from 1,600 (Cook) to 6,400 (Buck)³ had fallen to about 450 in 1849. The disorganized and demoralized condition of the Maoris made large-scale intrusion a much less

difficult process for Europeans than might have been the case fifty years earlier.

* * * * * * * * * * * *

Crew members of Captain Cook's *Endeavour* were the first Europeans to sight Canterbury, during the circumnavigation of the South Island. On 16 February 1770 they sighted Banks Peninsula and named it Banks Island. The misnomer was discovered by Captain Chase of the *Pegasus* in 1809. As the New Zealand coasts were becoming increasingly frequented by sealers, whalers, and traders the known history of Canterbury is for many years little more than a chronology of visiting ships. At least three ships, the sealer *Brothers* (1810), the flax trader *Perseverance* (1813), and the sealer *Governor Bligh* (1815 or 1816), visited Banks Peninsula before the 1820's, and crew members of the *Governor Bligh* who went ashore are believed to have been the first Europeans to have landed in any part of Canterbury.¹ Forts Cooper (Lyttelton) and Levy were named by Captain W. Wiseman of the brig *Elizabeth* which flax traded between Sydney and New Zealand during the years 1827–9. Joseph Price gives an account of a visit he made in June or July 1831 to Kaiapohia to negotiate with the Maori for a cargo of flax

¹. *Historical Records of New Zealand*, (ed. R. McNab), 1, 559.
while a crew member of the Vittoria. 1

The first shore whaling station in Canterbury was
established by Captain George Hempleman in 1837 at Peraki. 2
Before this time several whaling ships had operated from the
harbours of Banks Peninsula. The peak year was 1842 when
thirty-one whaleships from France, the United States and
Britain operated from Akaroa Harbour alone. 3 However, the
total soon declined when the northern Pacific whaling grounds
became more profitable. At various times during the 1840's
shore stations were established at Ikoraki, Goashore, Island
Bay, Timaru, Matumutu, Port Cooper, and Motunau with varying
degrees of success but few outlived the decade. It was these
stations which (with Peraki) provided Canterbury with its
first European population, which totalled about ninety in 1840,
even before the French arrived. 4

French colonization at Akaroa originated from the purchase
by J. Langlois, Captain of the Cachelot, a ship with the French
whaling fleet, of 30,000 acres of Banks Peninsula from Maoris
at Port Cooper on 2 August 1838. Langlois mistakenly believed
he had purchased the whole of the peninsula (some 300,000 acres),
a point which was to cause confusion later when land claims
were negotiated. Upon his return to France he persuaded a group
of merchants to form the Nanto-Bordelaise Company to carry out

3. Ibid., p. 47.
4. Stanley to Hobson, 17 Sep 1840. Encl. 1 in no. 33.
    GEFP 1841 (H. of C. 311), pp. 81-2.
the colonization of the area purchased. In return for a one-fifth share in the Company Langlois ceded his title of the purchase as his subscription. 1

The Company obtained the backing of the French Government which undertook to provide transport, and treat the colonists as French subjects. A warship, the Aube, was to be sent out in advance to protect the interests of the colonists, and its commander C.F. Lavaud was to exercise the powers of Commissaire du Roi. With sixty-three emigrants on board the Comte de Paris left France in March 1840. While the French ships were still at sea Lieutenant-Governor W. Hobson proclaimed British sovereignty over the whole of the South Island by virtue of Cook's discovery. Then soon after, at Cloudy Bay, Major T. Bunbury made a similar declaration based on the southern chiefs' cession in the Treaty of Waitangi.

On 11 July 1840 the Aube arrived at the Bay of Islands. Lavaud, on being informed of the British proclamation of sovereignty, decided not to contest it but to continue to Akaroa to help land the colonists and protect them. Nevertheless, Hobson decided to strengthen the British possession by an act of effective jurisdiction at Akaroa, and so accordingly, despatched the Britomart to hoist the flag and hold courts. Lavaud evidently was in no hurry as the Aube did not leave the Bay of Islands until four days after the Britomart. With this

in mind, historians have rightly dismissed the legend of a race to obtain possession.

The colonists on the *Comte de Paris* finally got ashore on 19 August 1840. At first the colony was administered jointly by the British and the French, but this arrangement was ended by W. Shortland, the Acting-Governor in February 1843. When A. Berard, who had taken over command from Lavaud, departed in 1846, official French supervision was virtually at an end. Although the Akaroa district was suitable for a colony the settlement never expanded, and the French colonists did little more than cultivate vegetable gardens.

Governor Grey was instructed in 1845 to grant the French Company 30,000 acres on Banks Peninsula and arrange for boundaries to be drawn up. However, the French Agent at Akaroa, P.J. de Belligny, left France before arrangements could be made to carry this into effect, and nothing was done until June 1849 when the property and rights of the Company in New Zealand were transferred to the New Zealand Company for £4,500.¹

* * * * * * * * * * *

European farm settlement began in November 1839, when

¹ Harrington to Earl Grey, 12 Oct 1849. Encl. in no.14. CEPP 1850 (Cmd.1136), p.239.
Captain W.B. Rhodes landed his manager W. Green, an assistant T. Creed, and Australian cattle at Takapueneke Bay (Red House Bay). This was the first cattle station in the South Island. The first attempt at farming on the plains began at Putaringamotu (beside Riccarton Bush) in April 1840, when J. Herriot and McGillivray, accompanied by three farm workers, arrived there. After eighteen months the venture was abandoned, possibly because of the discovery of the doubtful validity of the title to the land. However, in this brief time moderate success attended their efforts, and showed the potentialities of the district.

Because of dissatisfaction with the Wellington settlement, William Deans decided to look for other possible sites. While on a cruise of the cutter Brothers down the South Island east coast he was so impressed with the Port Cooper district he decided to settle there. On his return to Wellington he chartered the schooner Richmond, and accompanied by two farm workers, J. Gebbie and S. Manson, sailed for Port Levy, arriving there in February 1843. The group settled on a site which Deans named Riccarton after his native parish in Ayrshire. Captain F. Sinclair and E. Hay, part owners of the Richmond,

1. A.E. Woodhouse, George Rhodes of the Levels and his Brothers, pp.17-18.
2. There is no evidence to substantiate the claim that an earlier enterprise had to be abandoned before it got under way, because of the loss of the ship carrying the title deed to the land.
who had accompanied the group on their voyage, were also
captivated by the district. As a result the Sinclair and Hay
families settled at Pigeon Bay in April 1843. Within a few
weeks the three Greenwood brothers had settled at Purau.¹

At first all the settlers stocked their runs with cattle
only, but sheep soon began to appear. John Deans arrived at
Port Cooper in June 1843 with stock from Australia, including
forty-three sheep — the first in Canterbury. In 1845 Rhodes
imported 400 sheep for his Akaroa run, and by the end of the
same year the Greenwoods had 1,500 sheep at Purau.² Cheese
making was also an important activity, and the Deans’ products
earned a high reputation in Wellington and Sydney.

The only new farming settlements in the years 1843-9 were
established by members of the original groups. In 1845 Gebbie
and Manson left the Deans and established themselves at the
head of Lyttelton Harbour. A new station was started at Motunau
by the Greenwood brothers in 1847. They sold to Rhodes their
leasing rights and most of the stock at Purau.³ The success
of these early farming ventures can be gauged from the exports
the district sent to Wellington in 1848 — thirty tons of butter,
sixty-two head of fat cattle, and sixty-two tons of pork.⁴

*   *   *   *   *   *   *   *   *   *   *

¹. Hight & Straubel, pp. 92-3.
². Ibid., pp. 93-4.
³. Ibid., p. 99.
⁴. Statistics of New Munster 1841-8, no. 22. In GBPP 1850
   (Cmd. 1280), p. 182.
At least three times there was the possibility of a British settlement being established in the Port Cooper district. The first was in connection with the founding of Nelson. While Hobson recommended sites near Auckland, Arthur Wakefield, the Nelson leader, cast longing eyes towards Port Cooper. An exploring expedition under Captain E. Daniell and G. Duppa was despatched in late June 1841, on the schooner Balley to the southern area to examine its suitability as a possible site for the settlement. They visited Ports Cooper and Levy, and pronounced them "excellent" harbours. Daniell stated that through one of the breaks in the precipitous hills of Port Cooper, a road could be carried "...without difficulty to a splendid district of flat land..." Duppa, who went about eight miles up either the Avon or Heathcote River, found the soil to be of excellent quality. Several groves of trees were scattered on the plains, and there were only a few natives. The report concluded, "...I do not however believe a more splendid district for colonization ... is likely to be met with."¹ In spite of this favourable report Hobson rejected the location because of several undecided land claims, including those of the French,² and the unnecessary dispersal of population, which would hinder efficient government.³

Captain W. Mein Smith, the surveyor-general of the New

¹. Daniell to W. Wakefield, NZG 31 Jul 1841.
². Hobson to A. Wakefield, 27 Sep 1841. Encl. D in no. 49.
Zealand Company, made the next official survey. He examined the harbours on the east coast of the South Island in November 1842. His report shows that he did not regard Port Cooper very highly, because of the swell in the harbour, and the lack of wood near the shore. Pigeon Bay, he stated, would be a possible site for settlement, with 3,000 acres of flat land at the head of the bay, and there would be no difficulty in forming a road to Akaroa. Although he viewed the plains from the hills at the back of Rapaki he did not state their capabilities for settlement. Surprisingly, he found Akaroa the best possible site.¹

The third possibility concerned the Otago settlement in 1844. The Port Cooper plains had already been provisionally chosen as the location of New Edinburgh when Frederick Tuckett, who had protested at this restriction of his freedom of choice, examined the area. He considered that the plains were not worth occupying in small sections, as was envisaged by the planners of the settlement, though they might be attractive to persons of property.² D. Monro who accompanied him, held a similar opinion, remarking particularly on the lack of timber. A community of small means, he believed, could not take advantage of the plains' principal advantage, their pasture. Moreover, distress and ruin would result from carting wood at great expense from the valleys of the peninsula.³

of this visit was that Tuckett was prepared to recommend the area only if Otago or Foveaux Strait proved less suitable. However, he did have some constructive, though hardly realistic ideas for a settlement on the plains. He envisaged ten acre plots on one bank of the streams of the district, and on the opposite bank, fifty acre sections to remedy the "...grievous unfitness of the scheme of this settlement for the peculiar country in which it is to be formed."¹

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But the plains were not destined to be unoccupied for long. The idea of a settlement in New Zealand in connection with the Church of England was first mooted by Edward Gibbon Wakefield in May 1843.² Four months later a report of the New Zealand Company stated that in consequence of the Company being permitted to select sites outside its original field of choice (the Cook Strait area), two plans had been submitted to the directors, one in connection with the Free Church of Scotland, and the other with the Church of England.³ By 1844 the plan had "...assumed practical form..."⁴ However, various circumstances contributed to postpone the plan's being further

1. Tuckett to W. Wakefield, 8 Apr 1844, NZC 110/2.
advanced. With the return of the Whigs to power in June 1846 the Colonial Reformers had politicians in high places sympathetic to their cause.

Wakefield, the colonial theorist, was as enthusiastic as ever to have his ideas put into practical form, in spite of the fact that none of the colonies in Australasia formed under his influence had lived up to expectations. John Robert Godley, a religious young Irish squire with high connections in church and state, deeply upset by the Irish problem and the chaos engulfing Europe, saw in colonization a hope that civilization would regenerate itself in the newer societies of the Antipodes and the Americas.¹ The two men met at Malvern on 29 November 1847, and formed the Canterbury plan in its essential features. After this meeting Godley persuaded a sufficient number of influential men in church, state, and society to support the project that "An Association for founding a settlement of members of the Church of England in New Zealand" was formed in March 1848.

The original plan of the Canterbury Settlement was printed in the prospectus of the Association issued in April 1848 and elaborated the following June.² The latter pamphlet cited the example of the ancient Greek colonies which sailed from the parent states perfectly organized, occupied territory

¹. Hight & Straubel, p.137.
sufficient for the agricultural industry of the colonists, and had an abundance of labour. For Canterbury a tract of 1,000,000 acres was to be acquired from the New Zealand Company and sold to emigrants at £3 an acre. One-sixth (or 10/- an acre) of the revenue obtained was to be paid to the Company as the price of the land, one-sixth was to be set aside for preliminary activities, one-third was to be put in an Immigration Fund, and one-third into a Religious and Educational Fund.

All purchasers of land were to have the right (subject to the Association's veto) to nominate assisted emigrants, and were to have a free selection of land within the surveyed territory. They could also lease unsold land for depasturing in proportion to the amount of freehold land they owned. The Association did some "social arithmetic", and envisaged selling 200,000 acres in the first year or two which would enable 15,000 settlers to be sent out. From the outset twenty churches, twenty schools, a college, chapel, and bishop would meet their educational and spiritual needs. The settlement was to be composed of all the best features of an English county, and hence care was to be given to the selection of emigrants of good character who were also members of the Church of England. This in outline was the plan which embodied all the essential Wakefieldian principles: a uniform "sufficient price" for land; the use of land revenue for assisted emigration; and the judicious selection of emigrants.
With the basic plan drawn up, the next step was to obtain the sanction and support of the New Zealand Company and the Government, a task which required considerable negotiation and diplomacy.
CHAPTER II : THE SEARCH FOR A SITE.

Joseph Thomas, the man chosen by the Canterbury Association to be its chief surveyor, was not a newcomer to New Zealand. Born in England in 1803, he was a seasoned traveller, having been in the United States, India, and the West Indies before he came to New Zealand as a Wellington settler on the Adelaide in 1840. Before he returned to England in late 1847 or early 1848, he gained considerable experience surveying for the New Zealand Company in Wanganui, Wellington, and Otago. In April 1848, he gave evidence before Lord Monteagle's Committee on Irish emigration. ¹

Shortly after Thomas's return to England, the Canterbury Association, having met for the first time on 27 March, was faced with the problem of finding a sponsor. An approach was made to the New Zealand Company, which had been granted the Crown's right of disposal of land, and pre-emption over native lands in the southern province ² of New Zealand, as well as a loan of £136,000. ³ The Association proposed that it be given the option on the purchase of 1,000,000 acres at 10/- an acre, conditional on 100,000 acres being sold before 1 October 1848, and an average of one-tenth of the remainder for every year

1. For a detailed account of Thomas's life before 1848 see Appendix A.
2. This included the southern half of the North Island, as well as the South Island and Stewart Island.
thereafter. ¹ The Company saw in the offer a chance of reviving its declining land sales and responded warmly to the approach.

Because it was not yet legally incorporated, and had no assets with which to offer for security in order to raise money, the Association asked the Company for a loan to cover preliminary expenses. Thomas, who had not yet been officially appointed as chief surveyor, was asked by the Association to draw up an estimate of the cost of surveys and roads in the year following the choice of a site. He estimated the total cost at £15,000, including £7,880 for the surveying department (the survey of 300,000 acres at 3d. an acre), and £7,120 for roads. ²

However, the Association, believing the estimates to "err on the side of insufficiency" decided that £7,120 was inadequate, as not only roads, but also immigration barracks, and at least two churches had to be provided as well. This raised the sum required to £20,000. In addition to this, finance was needed to enable the Association to apply for a charter of incorporation. The final result was that the Company agreed to a loan of £25,000, of which £5,000 was to be retained in England for expenses.³ A total of £20,000 was thus left for preliminary works in the colony.

1. Lefroy to N.Z.C. Directors, 30 Mar 1848. Encl. 5 in no. 27. GRPP 1848 (Cmd.1002), pp. 166-7.
3. Harrington to Godley, 26 May 1848. NZC 102/28.
The Colonial Office was also reasonably sympathetic towards the Association, and its head, Earl Grey, requested Governor Grey of New Zealand to give all the necessary help in the choosing of a site. As well, the Company agreed to the Governor exercising their right of pre-emption over native lands. Earl Grey also agreed with the idea of a charter of incorporation being granted the Association, and the possibility of Canterbury being established as a separate province, a point close to the hearts of the founders.¹

While the negotiations between the Colonial Office, Company, and Association continued, Thomas remained largely in the background. In the early stages the relationship between him and the Association is difficult to determine. The latter, anxious to obtain the services of an experienced surveyor, undoubtedly had their attention drawn to Thomas, whose evidence before the Monteagle Committee on 4 April 1848, stamped him as a likely candidate.

His views on colonization resembled those of the Association. In reply to questions by the Committee he agreed on the vital necessity of preliminary surveys and the correct siting of the main town, and that the progress of society in a colony was related to the taking of "... a portion of the whole social system, [Father] than an emigration which consisted of the mere separation of one class and denomination of society."

Moreover, he thought that the proposed Wairarapa site for Canterbury was a good field for colonization provided a satisfactory adjustment could be made with the Maoris, which he frankly doubted, as two years previously while passing through the area he had been informed by them that they would not sell any more land.\(^1\)

It appears that the offer of the position of chief surveyor to the Association was first made to Felix Wakefield who turned it down.\(^2\) Possibly Thomas sought the post or, as is more likely, merely sought employment with the Company, which directed him to the Association.\(^3\) In any case, the Association regarded him as their Agent as early as 6 May, when the Management Committee resolved that a letter be sent to Earl Grey requesting him to send instructions to Governor Grey to assist Thomas in his search for a site for the Canterbury Settlement.\(^4\) A sub-committee comprising Godley, E.S. Halswell, J. Hutt, and Edward Jerningham Wakefield was set up to prepare instructions for Thomas. Also, a deputation from the Association met the Company Directors, and recommended Thomas as its (Association's) Agent. Thomas's professional capacity

1. Great Britain Parliament Committee on Colonization from Ireland, Reports 1 & 2, 1848, pp. 154, 174.
3. Thomas had been interviewed by the Directors of the Company on 14 Jan 1848. Minutes of Court of Directors, N.Z.C., 14 Jan 1848.NZC 31/5.
4. Management Committee, Canterbury Association Minute Books, 1, 6 May 1848.
for the task was attested to by the Company, which had employed him in New Zealand, and by Felix Wakefield to whom he had been referred for an interview. Moreover, the Association was satisfied of his trustworthiness and integrity by personal association and private enquiry.  

However, Thomas's title of Agent of the Association was revoked until such time as a charter of incorporation was obtained. In the meantime he was to be designated Agent of the Company, though responsible for carrying out the plans of the Association. Two appointments were made to his survey staff: Charles Torlesse as an improver, at £200 a year; and Thomas Cass as draughtsman, at £300 a year. In the case of Thomas being unable to perform his duties, Cass was to take charge. Both appointments were contingent on the performance of duties to the satisfaction of Thomas. By the contract dated 25 May, the Company agreed to pay Thomas a salary of £400, provide him with a cabin passage to New Zealand, and grant him a bonus of £500 whether he was successful or not in obtaining an eligible site.

The detailed instructions which were drawn up directed Thomas to proceed to Wellington, get in touch with the

1. Ibid., 17 Jun 1848.
2. Ibid., 26 Jun 1848.
3. Ibid., 1 Jul 1848.
4. See Appendix B. Thomas's agreement was with the Company, as the Association was not yet a chartered corporation. This contract was confirmed by the Association and Company in June.
Principal Agent of the New Zealand Company,¹ and then travel
to Auckland to consult with the Bishop and Governor who were
to propose possible sites. He was especially warned not to
negotiate with the Maoris. The principal points to be used
for guidance in choosing a site were: a good and commodious
harbour; a continuous block of 1,000,000 acres, irrespective
of shape, out of which 300,000 acres must be easily available
for cultivation; and a district so removed from natives and
other settlements that it might be formed into a separate
province with its own institutions. For the capital, to be
called Christchurch, a block of 1,000 acres with ample reserves
for public purposes was to be laid out in quarter-acre
sections. Secondary towns of 500 acres were to be laid out,
and around all towns suburban land was to be marked out.
Buildings were to be erected for the reception of the first
colonists. The instructions continued at some length on such
matters as finance (on no account was £20,000 to be exceeded),
employment of labour, the survey, and the general map.²

Armed with these instructions Thomas left Gravesend on
7 July aboard the Bernicia, accompanied by Cass, Torlesse, and
over 150 emigrants bound for various settlements in New
Zealand. When the ship was two days out in the English Channel
Thomas went ashore at Boulogne to receive a last minute

1. At this date Colonel W. Wakefield who, however, died
before Thomas arrived in New Zealand. William Fox took
over the position.
2. Harrington to Thomas, 30 Jun 1848. NZC 102/28.
briefing from E.G. Wakefield.¹

Thomâ's first task was to choose a site for the Canterbury Settlement. It seemed likely that this would be in the Wairarapa Valley which had been selected as the location of the proposed Church of England scheme as early as 1845 when Governor Fitzroy granted the New Zealand Company the right to purchase 300,000 acres there.² This predilection for the Wairarapa was strengthened by the report, which the surveyors received when they arrived at New Plymouth on 2 November 1848, that this area was to be the site.³ The next port of call was Nelson, and while the Bernicia was there (5–17 November) the strong possibility emerged that the Port Cooper district would become the location of Canterbury.

On 6 November Thomas told a prominent Nelson settler, J.W. Saxton, that a strip of land across the North Island, reaching from the west coast, and including the Wairarapa, was a possible site.⁴ However, by the end of his stay he had changed his mind, for he then told Saxton that "... it was now a question of Port Cooper or nowhere ..."⁵ The reason for the

¹. TP, p.14.
³. TP, p.32.
⁴. J.W. Saxton, Diary, 6 Nov 1848.
⁵. Ibid., 15 Nov 1848.
change is not hard to find. Thomas had dined with Duppa who had been very impressed with the Port Cooper district in 1841. Indeed, the Nelson settlement in general viewed the locality favourably. At Thomas's request, Duppa provided a very detailed, approving report on the district.¹ That Thomas probably used this report as a guide on his exploration of the Port Cooper area is indicated by comments in the margin of the report on various points contained in the script. On the whole the views of the two men coincided. Expert advice was also obtained from Captain T. Wing, of the brigantine Deborah, a mariner with considerable experience in South Island waters, who gave Thomas a favourable report on Port Cooper as a harbour.²

From Nelson, Thomas reported to the New Zealand Company that he understood the local government to have extinguished the native title from the Kaikouras to Otago, therefore no delay should occur if Port Cooper was chosen as the site. The Government, he reported, was also negotiating for the purchase of the Wairarapa.³

The Bernicia continued on its way to Wellington where Thomas was fortunate in meeting Governor Grey, whose arrival in port was a welcome coincidence. Grey informed Thomas that he would give his assent to any location chosen, and furthermore

1. Duppa to Thomas, 18 Nov 1848. NZC 107/1.
2. Wing to Thomas, 17 Nov 1848. NZC 107/1.
that he considered the Bishop's functions as being spiritual only, thereby implying that the Bishop would have no real say in the matter.\(^1\) In a report to England, Thomas stated that Grey had agreed to send the Acheron, then engaged in a survey of the harbour of Ahuriri in Hawkes Bay, to Port Cooper to make a similar inspection. Thomas added that he intended to explore the Port Cooper district, and then the Wairarapa, Manawatu, and Ahuriri areas.\(^2\)

Even before the arrival of Thomas there had been considerable rivalry between the Nelson and Wellington settlements regarding a site for Canterbury. The battle of words between the parochially minded newspapers of the two settlements took on a new fervour late in 1848. In a detailed editorial the Nelson newspaper strongly condemned the proposed Wairarapa site as having no good port, containing only about 150,000 acres of suitable land, and being too isolated for the cheap transport of supplies.\(^3\) The Nelsonians had never forgotten Hobson's rebuff after the favourable reports on Port Cooper by Daniell and Duppa in 1841. Wellington newspapers were not slow to take up the challenge, the Wellington Independent being particularly outspoken. But the Wellington point of view was most succinctly advanced by the other local newspaper which stated that, with the Wairarapa settled, the whole southern

1. \(\text{TP}, p.36.\)
2. Thomas to Harrington, 9 Dec 1848. \(\text{DTH} 2/48.\)
3. \(\text{NB} 7\text{ Oct 1848.}\)
portion of the North Island would "...be concentrated into one compact, powerful, and flourishing settlement, with Canterbury for its metropolis and Wellington for its commercial port..." But if some other locality was selected, all the evils associated with inter-settlement rivalry would perpetuate a spirit of localism, and New Zealand would be divided into "a sort of Heptarchy." ¹

Previous to the exploring party departing for Port Cooper, Governor Grey, aware of the likelihood of that area being chosen as the location of Canterbury, outlined his views in a despatch to Fox. Grey was well aware of the advantages of the Port Cooper area. With the exception of the native reserves the whole district was the property of the Crown, therefore no trouble would be encountered in the matter of titles, and an immense area of fertile land would be open to British industry and enterprise.² The Governor did not think there would be any difficulty in dividing the South Island into two provinces, the northern one containing Nelson and Canterbury, or in erecting the South Island and Stewart Island into a separate bishopric, though on this point he had not consulted Bishop Selwyn. Yet there would be difficulties. Where would the capital be, in Nelson or Canterbury? If it was Port Cooper, then in fairness to Nelson being governed from a place so

1. NZS 6 Dec 1848.
2. Grey was mistaken in stating the "whole district", as the French boundaries had not yet been delineated.
distant, some part of the public works fund of Canterbury should be expended in opening a road between the two places.

In spite of the advantages of Port Cooper, Grey felt that a site in the Rangitikei or Manawatu would be more suitable. By the establishment of steam-boat communication with Porirua these areas would be brought within a few hours distance of Wellington. These locations had the advantages not only of a large river navigable for a considerable distance by small vessels, and contained an extensive fertile tract of land, but also of proximity to a settlement already well-established. The drawbacks were that they were not yet the property of the Crown, and that there were a considerable number of Maoris there, but these disadvantages would be offset by the supply of native labour, and the trade which would develop. From the Manawatu a road could be formed into the Wairarapa plains, and this vast area of grazing land would be opened up. Finally, stated Grey, Wellington and Canterbury could be proclaimed a fourth province.\footnote{Grey to Fox, 11 Dec 1848. GIL 1657.}

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The desire to acquire the Wairarapa was not new. As early as September 1843 a meeting of Wellington settlers demanded its
immediate acquisition so that they could depasture their increasing flocks and herds.\textsuperscript{1} Unsuccessful efforts were made to purchase the area, but these received a new impetus when Governor Grey was ordered to immediately obtain the Wairarapa district as a site for Canterbury. Accordingly, T.H. Kemp and F.D. Bell were sent to negotiate with the Wairarapa Maoris. The latter were reluctant to alienate the land as a considerable sum in rent was being paid to them annually by squatters. Some of these leases had been executed for twenty-one years, and the brisk trade which had developed did not encourage the Maoris to sell. However, on being informed of the many benefits a settlement would bring they became willing to sell, and when they heard of Thomas's arrival in New Zealand they were said to be in "high spirits."\textsuperscript{2} With this encouraging news the negotiators returned to Wellington to await further instructions. It was this premature anticipation of their success which greeted Thomas on his arrival at New Plymouth.

But the comment that a good port was to be a \textit{sine qua non} for Canterbury, and the fact that the Port Cooper area was to be explored first, reduced the chances of the Wairarapa being selected.\textsuperscript{3} The Maoris obviously heard these reports and became obstinate, refusing to sell for less than £16,000, a

\textsuperscript{1} NZG 20 Sep 1843.
\textsuperscript{2} Kemp to Col. Sec. of N.M., 8 Dec 1848. Sub-encl. 10 in encl. 2 in no. 23. GBPP 1850 (Cmd. 1136), pp. 89-91.
\textsuperscript{3} Gov. Grey to Earl Grey, 9 Feb 1849. No. 33. GBPP 1849 (Cmd. 1120), pp. 69-70.
sum far in excess of the £400 they were offered for the 1,000,000 acres. After Thomas had chosen the Port Cooper site, negotiations were suspended in March 1849, at the request of Fox. While there was uncertainty with titles to the Wairarapa there was no such difficulty with the Port Cooper area.

Governor Grey, during a visit to the South Island in February 1848, had found the Ngai-tahu prepared to relinquish all claims to land lying between the Nelson and Otago blocks, provided adequate reserves were set apart. He then instructed E.J. Eyre, the Lieutenant-Governor of New Munster, to arrange for the purchase. Ample reserves were to be made, and the remainder of the land purchased, with payment to be made annually for four or five years. Kemp was sent to negotiate the sale, and on 12 June 1848, "Kemp's deed" was signed by forty leading Maoris at Akaroa. The territory, which was purchased for £2,000, contained about 20,000,000 acres, and reached across the South Island. All the land between the Nelson and Otago blocks was included, except Banks Peninsula, which the Maoris claimed to have sold to the French.

Kemp violated his instructions by not setting aside native reserves, and W.B. Mantell and A. Wills were sent to remedy this and other omissions, in August 1848. After numerous

1. Kemp to Col. Sec. of N.M., 18 Jan 1849. Sub-encl. 3 in encl. 2 in no. 23. GBPP 1848 (Cmd. 1136), pp. 85-6.
2. Grey to Eyre, 8 Apr 1848. Encl. 1 in no. 22. GBPP 1848 (Cmd. 1120), pp. 41-2.
3. Translation of deed. Encl. 6 in no. 22. Ibid., p. 43.
difficulties, including a denial by the Maoris that they had ever sold any land north of the Waimakariri River, and the removal of survey poles, they accepted reserves at Tuahiwi (2,640 acres including 500 acres of bush), the site of the Kasiapohia pa, and five acres of an old pa on the north bank of the Waimakariri. Mantell then proceeded south and set aside land for reserves at Taumutu (eighty acres), Arowhenua (376 acres), Umukaha River (187 acres), Waitemati (seventeen acres), Caroline Bay (twenty acres), and Tauhimu on the north bank of the Waitaki River (thirteen acres).¹


With the Port Cooper plains now in the hands of the Crown, and the native reserves marked out, the stage was set for the arrival of Thomas’s exploration party. The cutter Fly was chartered for £55 a month, and with Thomas, Fox, Cass, Torlesse, and five survey hands on board, left Wellington on 12 December 1848 and arrived at Purau three days later.² For the next eight weeks the Port Cooper district was subjected to a thorough exploration.³

The whole party set off from the Deans’ farm at Riccarton

2. TF, pp.39-40.
3. For day to day details of this exploration see ibid., pp.39-57.
a large hot, read on the left.

COOPER PLAINS, 16 December 1846, Captain Thomas, to

CAPTAIN J. THOMAS, EXPEDITION PARTY ON THE RIVER.
and went north, traversing the area between the Ashley and Waimakariri Rivers, Harewood Forest and Kaiapoi. On returning to Riccarton the group split up. Cass made a survey of Port Cooper Harbour and the shoreline extending around to the mouth of the Avon, while Torlesse led a party up the south bank of the Waimakariri. This party climbed Rubicon Peak, then headed back to the sea, and went north along the coast to Double Corner (Waipara River). Meanwhile Fox and Thomas went overland to Akaroa, via Port Levy and Pigeon Bay. Leaving Fox at Akaroa to continue his journey to Otago, Thomas returned to Port Cooper by way of the peninsula shore of Lake Ellesmere and Gebbies Pass. Thomas next examined the land on the banks of Lake Ellesmere, while Torlesse sketched the Avon and Heathcote Rivers from the estuary inland. Then a party led by Thomas and Torlesse went to the Rakaia Gorge intending to inspect Alford Forest. They were prevented from crossing the Rakaia by deep water, and so climbed Mount Talbot, being rewarded with a view of Lake Coleridge. A party also explored along the coast as far south as the Ashburton River. There was now enough information to prepare a map, and Torlesse set about drawing one, which incorporated part of Cass's survey. He finished this task on 15 February 1849.

To supplement his own observations, Thomas obtained from the Deans brothers a report on the capabilities of the

1. See map following this page for the various routes.
2. TP, pp. 56-7.
district, particularly in regard to farming. This document was an impressive summary of the potentialities of the area, and undoubtedly confirmed in Thomas's mind the suitability of the plains as a site for Canterbury. Advice given ranged from the best kind of stock to bring out (Durham cows and bulls, Galloways for beef), their own success with sheep (a lambing percentage of 105 per cent in the last season), to the local prices of necessary commodities such as sawn timber, flour, sugar, and tea. Thomas forwarded the report to England where the Association was duly impressed by it.

Whereas other parties had never explored more than a few miles inland, Thomas's group ventured as far as the foothills of the Southern Alps, and consequently were in a position to give a much more accurate description of the plains. Indeed, Thomas was so impressed with the locality that he decided not to implement additional instructions calling his attention to that portion of the South Island lying to the south and west of Otago, including Dusky Bay and Stewart Island. This last area was deemed suitable, even though separated from the mainland where the rest of the site would be.

However, Thomas, though aware of good land adjacent to Bluff Harbour, considered Port Cooper superior in climate and position. Furthermore he was unwilling to create delay and additional expense in further prolonged explorations.

2. Harrington to Thomas, 4 Sep 1848. NZC 102/28.
3. Thomas to Harrington, 28 Feb 1849. DTH 1/49.
was also given permission to select a tract of 300,000 acres if an eligible site containing 1,000,000 acres was not available. In this case all the expenses of the Association, and the quantity of land sold within a fixed period would have to be proportionately reduced. ¹

According to Hocken, Thomas, after exploring the Port Cooper district, intended to go south and continue his reconnaissance, but was twice prevented from doing so because the "...little cutter refused to move in the face of a strong sou'wester which suddenly sprang up." Thomas, so the story goes, accepted the omen, and announced, "Here let us stay; the fates are against us: these shall be the Canterbury Plains."² The validity of the story is extremely doubtful, as at that stage Thomas had no intention of continuing southwards.

Now that the initial work of selecting a site was finished (providing sanction was obtained for it), Thomas intended to go immediately to Wellington in order to draw up a detailed report to the New Zealand Company, in time for the intended sailing of the Cornelia for England on 1 March. A report that the Acheron would soon be in Port Cooper caused him to delay his departure, but since it had not arrived by the time he was forced to leave, he deputed Cass to attend to Captain Stokes. He also sent Torlesse to search for coal in the south, where its existence

¹. Harrington to Thomas, 1 Dec 1848. NZC 102/28. This instruction was outmoded by the course of events.
had been reported.

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Accompanied by the five survey hands, Thomas journeyed to Wellington arriving on 26 February. From there he despatched his report recommending the choice of the Port Cooper district. The plains, he stated, averaged forty to fifty miles in width, and contained about 2,000,000 acres of land, most of which was covered with a light loamy soil well adapted for agricultural and pastoral purposes. At the head of Port Cooper Harbour was an excellent site of about 500 acres for the chief town. But there was an obstacle. On Banks Peninsula, neither the boundaries of the French claim, nor any native reserves had yet been defined, and before a settlement could be established at least one good harbour, preferably Port Cooper, would have to be made available to the Association. Thomas added that he was waiting Governor Grey's decision on this matter, in response to an application by Fox on his behalf. If this was satisfactory he would then seek the Bishop's approval of the site. If not, he proposed exploring the Bluff area.¹

Everything now hinged on the approval of Grey and Bishop Selwyn to the site. Thomas and Fox left Wellington on the

¹. Thomas to Harrington, 28 Feb 1849. DTH 2/49.
Harlequin on 12 March and arrived in Auckland on 6 April, after being delayed by adverse winds off the East Cape which forced the ship to shelter in Hicks Bay for a fortnight. Both Thomas and Fox were aware of the views of Grey, and he was not expected to provide any opposition to the site, though he had refused to give his sanction until conferring with the Bishop.

One of the first obstacles to overcome was the undefined French claim. Fox recommended that Grey should do one of two things. He could give to the New Zealand Company a crown grant of an area specified by Fox, including Ports Levy and Cooper, in which case the French would be compensated by a grant in some other part of Banks Peninsula or New Zealand; or, he could reserve the above harbours on the grounds of their being absolutely necessary for the colonization of the vast district beyond, in which the French had no claim. The French would not suffer unjustly as they would still have access to two first-rate harbours, Pigeon Bay and Akaroa, in which their rights were recognized by the Maoris. There was another difficulty. Native rights on Banks Peninsula had not been extinguished.¹

Grey replied that it was absurd that a single body of persons, and foreigners at that, should be allowed to select so small an extent of land in such a manner as to occupy four excellent harbours, thereby virtually rendering useless the vast plains. Therefore, Ports Cooper and Levy would be

1. Fox to Grey, 9 Apr 1849. GIL 1.
excluded from any territory awarded the French, and if there were any doubts about native claims he was prepared to direct that the harbours be made a reserve, which the Maoris had disposed of to the Government for the purposes of a settlement. ¹

Thomas was so eager to meet the Bishop that he intended to proceed to the Bay of Islands and meet him there, but on being informed that he was travelling direct from Nelson, waited in Auckland for him. Bishop Selwyn was likely to be "a thorn in the flesh", as his views on the Port Cooper district were based largely on those of Tuckett who did not favour the area. However, unknown to Thomas, the Bishop's opposition to Port Cooper had already been reversed after a visit to the Deans brothers' farm while he was in Wellington. ²

But, before his visit he had expressed to Fox, in a letter dated 13 December 1848, regret that the whole of New Zealand was not left open for choice. ³ Fox replied that Thomas was limited in his instructions to the southern province over which the New Zealand Company had pre-emptive rights. Also, if the Association chose a site in the northern province and the settlement failed, then the Company, to whom the undisposed land reverted, would be forced to colonize it against its will, or retain useless land. ⁴

1. Grey to Fox, 27 Apr 1849. GIL 1659.
3. Neither of Selwyn's letters to Fox are in the N.Z.C. archives but the date and details of them are noted by Fox in his replies.
4. Fox to Selwyn, 31 Jan 1849. NZC 107/1.
An interesting insight into Fox's thinking is revealed by Saxton. The latter was told by Elliott¹ that in two confidential letters he had received, Fox had abided by his instructions and declined including the northern province in the area of choice, thereby hoping that the "cunning cardinal" would be affronted and refuse to interfere; then the matter would be more pleasantly settled without him.²

Yet, Selwyn was not convinced that enough sites had been considered. In a second letter to Fox, dated 3 April 1849, he regretted "that so little effort has been made to ascertain the comparative advantages of the various sites which might have been open for selection." Fox considered that Selwyn's censure of Thomas was unfounded. Before Thomas has returned to England he had explored every part of the southern province with the exception of Port Cooper, the country south of the Molyneux, and the area accessible from Nelson. As to these, the South Island west coast had already been explored by T. Brunner and C. Heaphy, and its inadequacy well known; the Bluff country was exposed to Antarctic winds, and was inferior to Port Cooper in climate. Port Cooper possessed several advantages over other possible sites: an excellent harbour; the almost entire absence of natives; the ability to obtain all the land in one block; and the previous extinction of the native title. Even in the northern province there was no

1. Probably Charles Elliott, original proprietor of the Nelson Examiner.
2. Saxton, Diary, 10 Mar 1849.
suitable site. The Waikato, which Governor Grey had suggested, was out of the question. It had no harbour, the soil away from the rivers was poor, 1,800 Maoris occupied the best locations on the bank of the main river, and unlike most other tribes would not sell to the Crown. Commenting on the Bishop's letter to Thomas, dated 3 May, Fox stated that the possibility of the New Zealand Company being dissolved was extremely remote, since it was unlikely to withdraw from colonizing activities having borne "...the heat and burden of the day..." Fox added that his experience at Otago had convinced him that gatherings of colonists in confined spaces were not, as the Bishop thought, "tumultuary."  

The Bishop finally arrived in Auckland on 21 April and gave his sanction to the site, subject to several qualifications, these dealing not with the suitability of Port Cooper, but with the plans of the Association and its connection with the New Zealand Company. Firstly, he doubted that a sum of £500,000 for payment to the Company could be abstracted from the settlers, without endangering the success of the whole scheme, which required a large outlay on preliminary works. Secondly, he thought that the unity of the scheme was in danger since the ecclesiastical system of so large a settlement could not be organized as rapidly as the Association envisaged. Moral and religious pledges confined to nine years would be endangered

1. See below.
2. Fox to Selwyn, 15 Jun 1849. NZC 112/7. 
by unforeseen delays, causing unsold land to revert to the
Company. Thirdly, in the possible event of the Company’s being
dissolved in April 1850, would the money paid up by the
Association be refunded? Selwyn added that the idea of forming
large settlements in New Zealand was a wasteful delusion. Also,
"tumultuary" gatherings of colonists in immigration barracks
produced much immorality and discontent.

In the same letter, Selwyn made several practical
suggestions. He urged the postponement of the sale of land in
the port town until the fever of speculation had subsided, so
as to prevent absentee, or even resident, proprietors gaining
a monopoly on good sites, thereby inconveniencing the majority
of the settlers. Preliminary works should be limited to a
road over the hill at Gebbies Pass, the survey of a sufficient
quantity of land contiguous to the port, and the formation of
two or three townships on the plains. The Association should
send out to each township its own body of landowners, emigrants,
and a clergyman and schoolmaster in a separate body. The
sailings of ships should be arranged so that each body of
immigrants arrived in October or November, at which time he
could meet each annual arrival, until the formation of a new
diocese.¹ Thomas forwarded the suggestions to the
Association.

With the required approval now obtained, Thomas wrote a
comprehensive despatch to England, elaborating his earlier

¹ Selwyn to Thomas, 3 May 1849. NZC 107/1. Received by
Thomas on 10 May.
report from Wellington. Not only was there an area of 2,000,000 acres of land in the plains, from which the Canterbury block was to be chosen, but there were also fine grazing districts of an appreciable extent to the north and south.¹ Port Cooper was an excellent harbour, with easy access and no bar, and he recommended a light-house on Godley Head. The mud-flat at the head of the harbour would be reclaimed by means of an embankment from Gleigs (Quail) Island to the mainland. There was an abundance of building stone with which to build it. A road from Christchurch to port Lyttelton (Rapaki), five mile in length, would be constructed for £400 to £500 a mile, and on either side of it land would be divided into ten acre suburban sections. This road would be continued over the Rapaki saddle to the plains.

Sites for towns on the plains Thomas selected at the following places: Stratford, Mandeville and Lincoln, these strategically situated with regard to water communication, and also being centres of agricultural districts; Buccleugh for its vicinity to Alford Forest, and as a centre of a pastoral district; and Oxford for its proximity to Harewood Forest, and as a suitable site for a college.² The remoteness of Oxford would keep the young students away from the harmful influences of sea-port society. Of these towns only Stratford and Mandeville would be laid out immediately; and at these two, and

¹ By this time Thomas had received the reports of Hamilton and Torlesse. See below.
² See map following p.33.
the Lincoln site, timber and fuel depots would be set up for the convenience of the colonists. Timber would be supplied principally from Banks Peninsula, and would be transported to the plains via Lakes Forsyth and Ellesmere.

It would not be difficult, Thomas added, to establish profitable agricultural farming, if an estimate given by the Deans brothers was a reliable guide. The outlay on forty acres of wheat and ten acres of potatoes in the first year would result in a clear profit, and when the price of land (fifty acres at £3 an acre) was deducted, only a small deficit would remain, and this could easily be paid off in the following year. Nevertheless, the use of the plains would be, for many years to come, principally pastoral.¹ Fuel, in the form of coal, could be obtained close at hand, at Timaru, Arowhenua, and Moerangi, and it could also be imported cheaply from New South Wales.

Finally, Thomas estimated his preliminary expenditure would amount to £18,743. An additional £30,000 would be needed to complete the survey of the whole 1,000,000 acres, and to form roads opening up the agricultural districts.² Few sites for any settlement ever received such intensive and careful investigation.

While at Auckland, Thomas despatched Alfred Wills by the Louisa to London to give the Association all possible

¹. The Association envisaged a settlement based on agricultural farming. Although it made provision for the leasing of pastoral lands to its own settlers, the Association failed to appreciate the importance of pastoral farming on the Canterbury Plains.
². Thomas to Harrington, 15 May 1849. DTH 8/49.
information on the site. ¹ Wills had been appointed by Thomas as an assistant surveyor, and had joined the exploring party at Port Cooper. He also had experience as a surveyor assisting Mantell, while the latter was extinguishing native claims in the South Island. Most important, he was thoroughly acquainted with Thomas's views.

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There was little activity at Port Cooper while Thomas was absent. Captain Stokes of the Acherson surveyed Port Cooper Harbour, and announced it the best and most approachable anchorage (with the exception of Akaroa), on the South Island east coast.² A party from the Acherson climbed Mt. Grey, and later, while the ship cruised south, an officer from it, W.J.W. Hamilton, remained and explored the country from Double Corner to Kaikoura Peninsula, discovering the wide plains traversed by the Hurunui and Waiau Rivers.³ Torlesse, in the south, discovered not only the coal he had been sent to find, but another vast area suitable for grazing sheep.⁴

Thomas left Auckland on the Ennerdale and arrived at Wellington on 5 June. He immediately began preparations for the

1. Thomas to Wills, 19 May 1849. GOL 9/49.
3. Hamilton to Stokes, 3 May 1849. Encl. 2 in no.41. GBPP 1850 (Cmd.1136), pp.153-5.
4. Torlesse to Thomas, 27 Apr 1849. Quoted in J.C. Andersen, Jubilee History of South Canterbury, pp.53-5.
commencement of the preliminary works. An accountant J. Ballard, overseer D. Gollan, superintendent of public works H. J. Cridland, and assistant surveyors S. M. Scroggs and E. Jollie were engaged. Advertisements were placed in the local newspapers announcing that contracts for surveys and roads would be open for tender at Port Cooper in two months time. Tenders were also called for the erection of immigration barracks, stores, out-buildings, an office, school-house and church; riding and draught horses, drays and harnesses; a timber dray and chain; a pile-driver with windlass, chain, monkey, and working gear; and timber and shingles.¹

Anxious to commence the surveys and buildings Thomas, accompanied by Cridland, Mantell, Scroggs, and thirty labourers sailed from Wellington on the Fair Tasmanian on 1 July, arriving at Port Cooper the following day.² One more phase in the struggle to establish the settlement had ended. The next task was to take Canterbury off the drawing board and place it on the map.

1. NZS 9 & 13 Jun 1849.
2. Thomas to Harrington, 6 Jul 1849. DTH 13/49.
CHAPTER III: PREPARATION FOR THE PILGRIMS.

Many of the problems faced by land purchasers in new territories opened for settlement concerned the selection of suitable land. This task was made very difficult by the absence of maps showing the natural features of the country, and the inability of the surveyors to keep ahead, or even abreast, of the demand for land. General surveys tended to be drawn without regard to the topography of the land, and purchasers often found, to their bitter disappointment, that their choice turned out to be an impenetrable forest, impassable swamp, or was lacking in some vital element necessary for successful settlement.

These difficulties the Canterbury Association aimed to overcome by the application of methods concerning the survey and selection of land, which they claimed had never been used before in new colonies. The traditional view is that they were based on Felix Wakefield's treatise,¹ the first draft of which is generally held to have been included in the instructions to Thomas.² The tract was not a detailed analysis of surveying methods but a general statement on the best way to go about forming a settlement with special reference to the sale of land, and modes of survey and selection. Felix Wakefield had

¹ F. Wakefield, Colonial Surveying with a View to the Disposal of Waste Land. The text following is a summary of this treatise.
² This view has been challenged by D.H. Pike. See Appendix C.
considerable surveying experience in Tasmania under the surveyor-general, George Frankland, and he used this as a guide in his preparation of the treatise.\(^1\) His arguments were based on three main ideas: the importance of giving all intending purchasers, as far as possible, an equal freedom of choice as regards quantity and situation of the land; the need to prevent this freedom of choice from allowing a few purchasers to choose the "cream" of the land; and the importance of pastoralism in New Zealand.

The freedom of choice could only be successfully applied if intending settlers had a complete description of the land open for settlement. The great mass of purchasers, stated Wakefield, had neither the strength nor the knowledge required to explore a waste region that had not been mapped. Hence an accurate master map, the result of a meticulous survey, should be compiled, showing every natural feature as well as the intended site of the proposed main town, and line of main roads. Only a trigonometrical survey would provide the accuracy required for the pin-pointing of harbours, rivers, lakes, hills, plains, forest land, and other features.

An accurate map would not only facilitate intelligent selection by the first purchaser, but would also give satisfaction to both buyer and seller in later transactions. When sections were chosen their position would be accurately known, and boundaries drawn up, thereby preventing endless

\(^1\) See Pike, pp. 4–8 for details.
litigation. Sections in general should be rectangular as far as possible, and be of such a width in proportion to length as to preclude the purchase of land for the purpose of extortion. When a purchaser made his choice he would go back to the land office, point out the spot, and gain the sanction of an officer of the department. The latter, having marked the boundaries on the map, would send a surveyor to mark them on the ground.

Wakefield also argued that pastoralists were the best pioneers of settlement because they opened up the country to the agriculturalist, and created an economy in which agriculture could later flourish. They should therefore be given land at a low rental with pre-emptive rights. If this was not done, then squatters would carry on the pastoral industry without a title, thereby impeding the progress of the settlement.

Felix's elder brother, Edward Gibbon, held similar views, stressing an accurate, cheap, and complete survey. He believed that "waste land not surveyed, is not land open to purchasers, any more than unpicked cotton or unthrashed corn is fit for market." In order for the sufficient price to operate efficiently, there would have to be a complete freedom of choice, and this could only result from an accurate map of the area. Edward Gibbon placed the survey above all other features of preparation, as can be seen from a comment he made to Godley:

1. E.G. Wakefield, A View to the Art of Colonization, p.402.
"...I will only repeat the expression of my confident trust that you have sacrificed everything else to the one essential thing — the survey, the survey, the survey." Every other defect could be remedied, he thought, except a deficient survey.¹

The Canterbury Association justified the high price of land by the benefits it believed the colonists would receive from land revenue. These included the preliminary works which were to be paid for from a fund formed by the contribution of 10/- an acre, or one-sixth of the price of land. Preliminary surveys would give to the settlers the advantage of security and accuracy of boundary, facility of registration, and easy transfer of all landed property. The Association further pointed out the obvious advantages of good roads in the colony: "The settler's family, his household goods and agricultural implements, and food to sustain his establishment until the fruits of their labour shall be sufficient, must all be conveyed to his new abode." Lack of transport facilities in the United States and Australia were particularly noted. Moreover, the survey and existence of roads would also have the effect of reducing the cost of living in the colony.²

². CP, pp. 16-17.
When he arrived at Port Cooper to commence the preliminary works, one of Thomas's first tasks was to re-examine the site for the chief town, which he had anticipated placing at the head of the harbour. The expense of reclaiming the mud-flat, and the advantage of placing the chief town on the plains so as to assist and induce the population to enter into agricultural and pastoral pursuits, determined him to place the capital on the site originally proposed for Stratford.\(^1\) Within a fortnight he had also found a new site, Cavendish Bay, for the port town, because the Maoris insisted on having the original site, Rapaki, made a reserve.\(^2\)

The response to advertisements for tenders in the Wellington newspapers was not heartening, as Thomas was planning from a limited budget. Tenders for the buildings he turned down. Charles Mills of Wellington offered to erect buildings on the following terms: immigration barracks for married couples, £480 each, and for single persons, £410 each; stores, £550 each; cook houses, £220 each; and privies and urinals, £60 each.\(^3\) Two road contractors, J. Compton and B. Polhill, travelled to Port Cooper to tender for roads, but their estimates of £1,300 and £800 per mile respectively, Thomas considered too high as compared with his own of £500. So not surprisingly, Thomas took what he believed to be the most efficient and economical course, and went ahead with the

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1. Thomas to Fox, 14 Jul 1849. NZC 107/1.
2. Thomas to Harrington, 28 Jul 1849. DTH 14/49.
buildings and roads without the use of contractors.  

As superintendent of public works and roads, Gridland, a Wellington surveyor and land-agent, was paid a salary of £250 a year. The buildings Thomas intended to erect included the following: a combined church and school, immigration barracks, store, and jetty at Lyttelton; barracks, survey office, agent's office, and school at Christchurch; and a store and jetty at Sumner. A Wellington merchant firm, Waitt and Smith, was engaged to hire sixteen carpenters from Hobart Town, and to load there 300,000 feet of shingles at 14/6 per 1,000 feet, 300,000 feet of timber at 14/6 per 100 feet, nails, zinc, ironmongery, and a pile-driver. The hardwoods of Tasmania were of superior durability, and better facilities existed there, than in New Zealand, for the execution of such a large order. Both timber and carpenters arrived in January 1850, aboard the barque Rebecca, and the brigantine Camilla. The carpenters were paid at the rate of 7/- a day, except for one or two of their number at a slightly lower rate.

From Nelson, 70,000 feet of timber was ordered, much of it arriving by the Torrington and Return, for 12/- per 100 feet, including freight. Timber was also obtained locally from Okains Bay, Little Akaloa, and Pigeon Bay. Gangs of sawyers were kept

1. Thomas to Fox, 14 Jul 1849. NZC 107/1.
3. Thomas's men excelled in unloading the ships in fast time, and James Smith who had chartered the ships in Hobart Town paid Thomas the compliment that the job could not have been performed faster in Wellington, a port established for nearly ten years. Smith to Thomas, 29 Jan 1850. GIL 105.
busy for some years supplying timber to the Association. Amongst those whose names have been left to posterity are J. Bennet and J. Rix, Little Akaloca; J. Fleurty and W.H. Webb, Pigeon Bay; and Riall and R. Carr, Riccarton Bush. Six men were also employed conveying timber from Lyttelton to Summer, and thence up the Avon by punt.¹

A block of land lying east of Oxford Street, between Norwich Quay and London Street, was reserved for the Association. Upon it Thomas employed his Tasmanian carpenters in constructing four houses, "commodious and neat", intended as immigration barracks, and calculated to hold from 200 to 300 people. Next to this group of buildings was a small house, temporarily occupied by Thomas and destined to be the office of the Association's Agent. Behind this, and divided from it by a plot intended for a garden, was a house built for Godley. This was an impressive two-storey weather-board building of six fair-sized rooms and a verandah. Next to the shore was a boat-shed and a house for the crew. Also within this block of land were a number of temporary buildings and a timber yard. Most of the buildings were enclosed by fences.² A jetty 150 feet long and sixteen feet wide was built by the brothers Robert and Magnus Allen, and John Grubb. At high tide there was twelve foot of water at the end of it, and boats of 100 tons could moor alongside. A sea-wall was built along from the jetty.

² For a contemporary portrayal of these buildings see photo facing page 111.
At Sumner the Association store was built under contract by C. Crawford for £66. It was completed in December 1849, when J. Thompson and his wife were sent over from Lyttelton as caretakers. Some other public works were also constructed by contract. The following tenders were accepted at various times: J. Nankivell and G. Petherick, to complete the agent's office, 277/15/-; G. Greange, to deliver 30,000 bricks made in Lyttelton, at £2 per 1,000; J. and J. Lingard, for a culvert at the corner of Oxford and London Streets, £50; W. Stewart, for a sea-wall at Sumner, at 9/9 a yard; and R. Allen and J. Greg, for a sea-wall at Lyttelton, at 7/- a yard.

Thomas was insistent on the contracts being carried out according to specification, and no latitude was given for shoddy workmanship. He complained about the unsightly appearance of a culvert's crooked walls, and the incorrect laying-off of the fronts of the immigration barracks. Gridland was instructed to attend more to his outdoor duties, as the labourers had informed Thomas that they thought the slow progress in building the jetty was due to no-one knowing how to build it! While the store was being held up for want of timber, the sawyers, according to Thomas, were "...carousing and passing their time in collecting materials to build private places in the bush."

So, in order to take some of the burden off Gridland, and allow him to discharge his duties more efficiently, Thomas took over

1. Thomas to Scroggs, 17 Dec 1849. GOL 113/49.
2. Tenders, passim. L & S 51/7.
the task of superintending the road parties. ¹

Apart from labourers, the men employed on the public works included the following: J. Fraser and M. Kierby, blacksmiths; J. Moorhouse, hammerman; J. Bannister, W. Reese, J. Wilson, and H. Sole, carters; J. Grubb and J. McNeil, shipwrights; and W. Harper, cook. ² Also employed in positions of responsibility were J. Ballard, accountant (from December 1849 A.J. Alport took over), and T. Brunner, the famous West Coast explorer, clerk of works. Brunner was storekeeper from November 1849 until January 1850, when M. Cryer was appointed. A medical officer, Dr. W. Donald began duties in November 1849, at a salary of £200. His appointment was hastened by the death of a survey labourer, James Mason, early in September. With over 100 men employed on the works under his supervision, Thomas suggested that Fox send a medical officer. ³ A customs officer, H.G. Gouland, was appointed when Lyttelton was gazetted a port of entry. ⁴ Gouland also acted as postmaster.

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While Thomas’s men industriously laboured on, W.B. Mantell and his surveyor C. Carrington, marked out native reserves,

1. Ibid., 9 Oct 1849. GOL 46/49.
2. Thomas to Godley, 12 Apr 1850. GIL 200.
3. Thomas to Fox, 11 Sep 1849. DTF 23/49.
4. Domett to Thomas, 30 Aug 1849. GIL 65.
negotiated with the Maoris for the cession of remaining rights on Banks Peninsula, and attempted to define the French boundaries. After long and tedious meetings Mantell reported that on 10 August 1849 the Maoris had ceded the Port Cooper Harbour district for £200. Reserved for the natives were ten acres at Pureu, including the right to firewood at an isolated bush two miles inland, and 856 acres at Rapaki, containing about sixty acres of arable land.\(^1\) By the end of September he was able to announce the cession of the Port Levy district for £300 which, with the Port Cooper purchase, took in the whole of the peninsula east and north of an arc running from Flea Bay, along the top of the hills around Akaroa Harbour, and down to Lake Ellesmere near Birdlings Flat. A reserve was made at the head of Port Levy, and Mantell guaranteed to the natives that a small grave of an infant Maori boy at the head of Pigeon Bay would remain undisturbed until a cemetery was consecrated there.\(^2\)

Mantell failed to obtain the cession of the rest of the peninsula; the Maoris demanded reserves totalling 15,000 acres, while he offered four reserves totalling 1,880 acres and £150. Their resistance was partly due to a hope that the French Agent would return and make an enormous payment. Fearing violence if he continued, Mantell continued his work and returned to Wellington.\(^3\) However, the failure was not

\(^1\) Mantell to Col Sec. of N.M., 11 Aug 1849. Mackay, i, 253.
\(^2\) Ibid., 27 Sep 1849. P.255.
\(^3\) Ibid., 28 Nov 1849. P.255.
was not important in the establishment of the Canterbury Settlement, and in any case the New Zealand Company purchased the rights of the French on 30 June 1848, for £4,500.  

The Canterbury Settlement Land Act\(^2\) of 14 August 1850 defined the territory available to the Association as including the whole of Banks Peninsula, except such portions as might have been sold to other parties by the French Company. Some Association settlers selected land within the disputed area, and it was not until December 1856 that W.J.W. Hamilton was able to obtain the surrender of the remaining Maori rights for a payment of £200 and reserves at Onuku, Wainui, and Little River.\(^3\)

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Settlers already in the Port Cooper area had, of necessity, to come to some arrangement with the Association since their farms were situated on land within the settlement. The Deans brothers, whose title to land rested on their native lease of 1846, came to an understanding with Fox and Thomas while the latter were on the original exploring expedition. By virtue of their holding New Zealand Company land orders in Nelson

1. See page 10.
2. 13 & 14 Vic., c.70.
3. Hamilton to Chief Commissioner of Land Purchase Department, 11 Dec 1856. Mackay, ii, 15.
and Wellington, and their inability to obtain land there, the Deans received in exchange 400 acres occupied by them at Riccarton Bush, including the improved portions and half of the bush near their house. The agreement was to be superseded if the Company Directors agreed to an earlier request for the purchase of 1,000 acres at Riccarton. ¹ While Thomas was in Auckland seeking sanction for the district as the site for Canterbury, Torlesse made a plan of the 400 acres, which Thomas signed on 22 August, after he had returned.

Further difficulties then arose. Thomas wanted five per cent of the 400 acres for a right of road through the property, particularly on the bank of the river for tow paths. But since the lines of road had not been determined, a new map could not in the meantime be made. ² However, the objections of the brothers to this measure were upheld. But the future of grazing sheep and cattle outside the limits of the 400 acres was left undecided. Although a form of squatter’s licence allowed them to graze their stock unhindered until the settlers arrived, they decided to establish a cattle station in the Malvern hills in April 1850. They eventually sold most of their land at Riccarton.

The Rhodes brothers, William and George, also sought recognition of a title to their land at Purau, which they had purchased from the Greenwood brothers in 1847. They based

¹ Memorandum signed by Fox and Thomas, 25 Dec 1848. Quoted in Deans, p. 53.
² Thomas to W. & J. Deans, 30 Aug 1849. GOL 20/49.
their claim on the reputed purchase, by Captain Wiseman, of the whole of Banks Peninsula and a large part of the plains, on behalf of the Sydney trading firm of Cooper and Levy. William Rhodes was later a partner in the firm's successor, Cooper, Holt, and Rhodes, and the claim was based on this connection. The brothers were in possession of land adjacent to Port Cooper, Kaituna, and a whaling station at Goashore, but realizing the importance of their Port Cooper lands to the Association, they proposed the surrender of their alleged rights on three conditions: firstly, that they be permitted to retain 500 acres at Purau including the house, outbuildings, cultivations, part of the bush, and a small frontage on the harbour; secondly, they desired the grant of the buildings at Goashore of about one acre in extent; thirdly, they wished to be placed on the same footing as the Association settlers as regards squatting and other matters, and be allowed to continue depasturing their stock on their present runs until such time as they might interfere with the interests of the settlers.¹

Fox was not prepared to put them into possession of the land merely on the ground of equitable claims, but he agreed to grant them 450 acres at Purau as compensation for a similar amount held in scrip at Wellington.² Carrington surveyed the boundaries in January 1850. Both Fox and Thomas were

¹ W.B. & G. Rhodes to Fox, 11 Jun 1849. GIL 4.
² Fox to W.B. Rhodes, 14 Jun 1849. Encl. in GIL 3. The claims of Hay and Sinclair at Pigeon Bay were unimportant at this stage, as this area was believed to be within the French block.
anxious to come to an arrangement with the Deans and Rhodes brothers, as they realized that the latter's farming experience and knowledge of the district would be valuable to the Canterbury settlers.¹

In a circular regarding squatting, Thomas reiterated the views he had expressed on the exploring expedition. Until instructions were received from England, or the local government drew up regulations for the depasturing of stock, the land occupied by the various parties for runs would remain in their possession for that purpose. He added that no claim for compensation for improvements made after January 1849 would be granted.²

The Purau and Riccarton runs were an invaluable source of fresh meat for supplying Thomas's party. However, other commodities such as flour, tea, and sugar had to be imported from Wellington, and numerous small vessels such as the Torrington, Twing, Bee, Ann and Sarah, and Sisters carried on a thriving coastal trade. In August 1849 George Rhodes signed an agreement with Thomas by which he agreed to deliver, in good condition, about 1,000 lbs. of meat weekly at a price of 4½d. a lb. for carcasses, and 5d. a lb. for the meat already cut into rations.³ Complaints in October about the quality of the meat resulted in Thomas's requesting Ballard and three

1. Fox to Harrington, 14 Sep 1849. NZC 112/7.
others to examine the latest delivery. They stated that it would be unmarketable in England because of its extreme leanness and coarseness, and "...from the improper manner in which it had been killed."¹ Thomas warned Rhodes that the contract would cease in six months, but it was renewed in April 1850. No more trouble appears to have been experienced. The Deans brothers also contracted to sell meat to the surveying parties on the plains for 5d. per lb. by carcass.² By December 1850 these parties were consuming about 300 lbs. a week.³

Yet some of the "pre-Adamites" (the name given to the pre-Association settlers), were not happy with their treatment from Thomas, if a letter to the editor of a Wellington newspaper is a reliable guide. The anonymous correspondent bitterly complained that several applications to erect temporary stores for the sale of garden and dairy produce were rejected, yet a public house and a general store could be established, with a baker's shop in preparation, "...all for the benefit of an old chum and ex-Major [A. Hornbrook]..." The letter continued that Thomas's justification for this state of affairs - to secure the Maori workmen from imposition in the purchase of food and clothing - was a pretext to cover monopoly.⁴ From this it can be inferred that the farmers sold direct to the

1. Encl. in Thomas to Rhodes, 6 Oct 1849. Quoted in Woodhouse, p. 46.
4. WT 15 Dec 1849.
storeowners, Hornbrook and later W.T. Pratt, and were not allowed to sell produce, at least not to Maori labourers, within the environs of Lyttelton.

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The "novel" plan of surveys to be followed in Canterbury was made much of in the publicity of the Association. But there was little novelty in the actual procedures of survey; even the trigonometrical method, which the Association claimed had never been attempted in any new settlement, had been applied to the Otago surveys in 1846, and in South Australia even earlier than this. The innovation in Canterbury was that rural sections were not marked out until the purchasers made their choice, whereas in Otago, for example, rural sections were marked out prior to the arrival of settlers.

In the method of triangulation, a base line is measured very accurately, and from the two end points of the line the direction of some distant points are read. As a side and two angles is sufficient to mathematically solve the remaining angle and two sides of a triangle, the location of these points can be drawn, and a whole series of triangles drawn up. As the extent of the triangulation network progresses its accuracy diminishes. When a certain specified degree of inaccuracy is detected a fresh control base has to be measured. Also, the
2. THOMAS GASS.
latitude and longitude of each station has to be computed. This, in outline, was the method followed in the triangulation of Canterbury. The main advantage of the trigonometrical method was its accuracy. As the trigonometrical work proceeded, contracts were let for the topographical surveying.

The initial station of the surveys was on Mount Pleasant, and its bearing of $S.45^\circ 51'W.$ was made by the Acheron, probably in 1847. From mid-July to mid-September Cass laid out a base line a mile or two west of Riccarton Bush. This was 20,469 links, or about two and one-half miles in length, and on it a network of triangulation of two to three mile sides was built. Charles Torlesse, who was soon joined by J.C. Boys, triangulated the Mandeville district from September to December 1849 with C. Dimond, W. Fitch, I. Wagstaff, T. Dodd, Beattie, R. Bryant, and A. Weston as survey hands. J. Hay and White worked as sawyers for the party, preparing the timber for the four-roomed weather-boarded house, and the many stakes used in the erection of the trig stations.

2. Both Cass and Torlesse practised taking latitude and longitude readings on the Berenice, and also read numerous works on geology and surveying while on the voyage out to N.Z. C.O. Torlesse, Journal, 6 Jul–2 Nov 1848. This portion of the journal is not included in the JF.
3. A plaque, erected by the National Historic Places Trust, marks the spot where the line crosses Russley Road close to Ryans Road near Christchurch International Airport. Attempts to locate its end markers have failed.
5. See map following this page for the various localities and the sites of trig stations.
3. JOHN COWELL BOYS.
The work was not uneventful. Maoris from the North Island arrived in the area and pestered Torlesse not to survey the area north of the Ashley River. They maintained that this district had not been included in any of the land purchases. Two natives, Takiori from Cloudy Bay and Turaka from a pa near Lake Forsyth, cut down one of the trig stations. ¹ The offenders were brought to trial.

By the end of December the surveyors were able to report that they had completed the survey of the Mandeville district, which they estimated as containing about 100,000 acres. ² They then moved to the Ashley district of 70,000 acres which they finished surveying in February 1850. After this the Oxford district of 200,000 acres was surveyed, the work being completed on 12 May. ³ Thomas allowed them to continue till they completed the task, even though officially all Association survey work had been suspended through lack of funds on 1 May. ⁴ While based in Oxford the men lived in two houses built specially for the surveying party. Thomas was well satisfied with their work. According to Boys' obituary notice, when Cass showed Thomas a map prepared by them "...that fiery individual rapped out, with a great round oath, that it must be ½ too...correct to be right." ⁵

¹ Torlesse to Thomas, 27 Oct 1849. GIL 1075.
² Ibid., 29 Dec 1849. GIL 1072.
³ Torlesse & Boys to Thomas, 20 Feb & 27 Apr 1850. L & S 51/7.
⁴ Thomas to Torlesse & Boys, 26 Mar 1850. GOL 20/50 & 21/50.
⁵ LT 14 Jun 1889.
While the surveys north of the Waimakariri went ahead, Cass, after finishing the base line, "trigged" the Lincoln and Ellesmere districts. He was assisted by R. Craig, J. Craig, E. Fox, B. Cumerfield, and C. Stewart.¹ In October 1849 Thomas, because of the pressure of work at Lyttelton, put Cass in charge of survey operations.²

Sidney Scroggs worked in the area Thomas had chosen to be the site of Christchurch. Although the exact site had not as yet been fixed upon it was Scroggs' job to traverse the area, marking the location of swamps, and other natural features in order that a suitable site for the town could be found. Although assisted by five men,³ Scroggs did not make fast enough progress to satisfy Thomas. He estimated that in the three months from July, Scroggs had traversed only seven miles at a cost of £25 a mile.⁴ It was hardly fair, replied Scroggs, to include the cost of building the houses (one weather-board and one grass) as part of the actual surveying. According to Scroggs, his field-book recorded a total of fourteen miles traversed, therefore the cost per mile was £5, exclusive of buildings and carriage of stores. In any case, since the area was the possible site of the future capital, he had been working with regard to quality rather than quantity.⁵

¹ Cass to Thomas, quarterly report Jul-Sep 1849. L & S 51/7.
² Thomas to Cass, 10 Oct 1849. GOL 50/49.
³ Thompson, Martin, Mason, Bruce, Scott. Scroggs to Thomas, monthly return Oct 1849. L & S 51/7.
⁴ Thomas to Scroggs, 11 Oct 1849. GOL 55/49.
⁵ Scroggs to Thomas, 23 Oct 1849. L & S 51/7.
Several contractors were engaged to fill in the topographical details. The tender of J. and T. Hughes\(^1\) was accepted by Thomas who sent them to work under the direction of Boys, north of the Waimakariri. Cass found their work to be satisfactory.\(^2\) Another contract surveyor was R. Nankivell, who appears to have worked in the Lincoln area. Boys, who was sent to inspect his work, found it to be very inaccurate.\(^3\) As a result Thomas withdrew payment until the work was satisfactorily revised.

Viewed as a complete project the surveys were very cheap. The trigonometrical survey of 659,000 acres Thomas estimated at costing nearly \(\frac{3}{5}\)d. per acre, and the topographical survey of 213,450 acres nearly \(\frac{4}{6}\)d. per acre. Therefore, on the average each acre completely surveyed cost a fraction less than 3d.\(^4\) Godley, shortly after his arrival in New Zealand, reported that Thomas had informed him that the cost was 1\(\frac{1}{4}\)d. per acre.\(^5\) This was obviously a rough guess, as at this stage, that is, in April, the surveyors had not finished working, therefore no detailed analysis of costs was available. Probably Thomas merely doubled the cost of the trigonometrical survey; this would account for the amount reported by Godley. Also, Godley stated

1. Dated 14 Nov 1849 their tender per linear mile, including plotted plan, was coast £1, fern £1, flax £1/17/6, scrub £3/10/-, forest and woodland £7. L & S 51/7.
3. Boys to Thomas, 1 Jun 1850. L & S 51/7.
4. Thomas to Godley, no date. GIL 205.
that Thomas was "...very proud and happy at the successful result of the new plan of surveying."¹ Thomas had every reason to be pleased as the cost was well below the 10d. an acre estimate of Felix Wakefield.²

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Apart from the public works and surveys, Thomas's other major task was to provide for communications between port and plains. With the shift of the site of Christchurch from the head of the bay to the plains this question became of paramount importance. In his instructions Thomas had been told to be "most particular" in making the chief town readily accessible; if it was a sea-port he was to provide every facility for the landing of the colonists and their goods, if an inland town a good road communication.³ David Monro, who had noted the communications problem a few years earlier while exploring with Tuckett, stated that a road along the western shores of Port Cooper as suggested by Duppa and Daniell "...might be executed by a Napoleon or a King of Egypt but hardly by the New Zealand Company."⁴

1. Ibid.
3. Harrington to Thomas, 30 Jun 1848. NZC 102/28.
There were three possible routes for a road.¹ One was over the Rapaki saddle and this had been the line intended originally when Christchurch was placed at the head of the harbour. However, this route, which was never properly surveyed but merely reconnoitered by Cridland, had the serious disadvantage of passing through land which the Maoris insisted upon retaining as a reserve. The second route was over the saddle at the back of Lyttelton on a line similar to the present bridle-path, though not so steeply graded. Torlesse surveyed three different lines on this route from Lyttelton to the summit for the purpose of achieving a better grade. But the best he could find was a one-in-twelve grade and hence very unsatisfactory for horses and drays. However, this route would have been, according to Cridland, the least expensive and least difficult to construct.² Both of the main routes mentioned would have crossed the hills at over 1,100 feet above sea level.

The third possible route, which was the one finally decided on, was suggested to Thomas by F.J. Evans, First Lieutenant of the Acheron. On 20 July 1849 Cridland, Torlesse, and Thomas examined this line which wound eastwards round above the bays

¹. For the whole problem of communications see the Report of the Select Committee appointed by the Council of the Society of Land-Purchasers in the Canterbury Settlement to take into consideration the Best Means of improving the Communications between the Port and the Plains.
². Ibid., p.16.
for two miles to a low saddle 650 feet above sea level (the present Evans Pass) and thence gradually descended to Sumner.\(^1\) Its gradual gradient of one-in-nineteen and the low height of the pass determined its selection as the favoured route. Cridland laid out the line with the required gradient, and Torlesse surveyed it, reproducing his results on a map which showed the form of the hills and the rocks.\(^2\) No detailed sections of the line were made. Edward Jollie also helped lay off the gradient.\(^3\)

A road was not the only means of communication to be considered. The possibility of a tunnel was debated, and though no regular survey was made, Cridland gave Thomas an estimate of upwards of £100,000 for one 1,100 yards in length through the hills at the back of Lyttelton.\(^4\) Apart from the prohibitive expense, the engineering skill required would have been beyond the resources available to Thomas. According to Torlesse it was thought likely a tunnel would be built later when the resources of the settlement warranted it.\(^5\)

There was also a proposal for a jetty at Sumner Nook\(^6\) and a road along the beach to the inside of the bar thereby

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1. **TE**, p. 89. According to the **Select Committee**, p. 19 Gollan also examined this line.
2. **Select Committee**, p. 19.
4. **Select Committee**, p. 17.
5. Ibid., p. 20.
6. The south-eastern part of Sumner Bay, where the sandy beach joins the rocks at the foot of the spur ending in Sumner Head.
avoiding the need to cross this obstacle. Officers of the Acheron who proposed the idea suggested that a jetty would facilitate the loading of wool especially. Long-boats and punts could carry the wool to vessels lying off-shore. The idea made no headway probably because of the cost and difficulty of constructing a jetty strong enough to withstand the ravages of the sea. At this early stage there do not appear to have been any proposals to improve the navigation of the Sumner Bar although an officer from the Acheron surveyed the bar and channel to a little beyond Shag Rock. George Day, master of the Flirt plying between Lyttelton and Sumner from November 1849, crossed the bar many times and did not suffer any mishap. He considered it safe for navigation at high tide at all times of the year for decked boats up to thirty tons not drawing more than six feet of water.

For the construction of the Lyttelton to Sumner road Thomas decided to use the services of the two road contractors, Compton and Polhill, whose tenders he had earlier turned down. Thomas realized that their experience would be invaluable for the success of the job. Compton had successfully superintended Maori workers on North Island roads, while Polhill played a major part in constructing the road from Porirua to Hororiri Valley.

2. J.C. Andersen, Place-names of Banks Peninsula, p. 205.
4. Ibid., p. 35.
The lack of labour was a considerable impediment to a quick start on the Sumner road. As the local Maoris showed no desire to work on it, Thomas sent Compton to Wellington on a recruiting campaign. Compton hoped to recruit Maoris who had worked under him previously, and whose confidence he had won by kindness and good management. Yet, in spite of this, he could only persuade about thirty to go south to Port Cooper.

This situation Compton blamed on reports of inclement weather at Port Cooper, the jealousy of European labourers because of preference being given to Maoris, rumours that work on the north road out of Wellington would soon be resumed at a rate of wages equal to those he had been empowered to offer, and the interests of shopkeepers to whom a large number of the natives were indebted. Compton found there was no lack of Europeans desiring to work at Port Cooper, but for higher wages. He turned down over 300 such offers.

The Maoris arrived at Port Cooper with Compton aboard the Bee on 2 September 1849. In the same month Gollan and J. Grindell were sent to obtain more Maoris; thirty to supplement Polhill's gang, and sixty for Gollan's. There was more success this time though some difficulty was encountered. The scarcity of labour was such that Grindell agreed to pay a court order so that two Maoris desiring to work at Port Cooper

1. NZS 22 Aug 1849.
2. Compton to Thomas, 8 Sep 1849. GIL 83.
3. TP, p.102.
could be allowed to go there. 1 Eighty to ninety natives arrived at Port Cooper on the Sisters on 8 November. 2 The turnover rate in Maori labour was, not surprisingly, fairly high. Although about 120 Maoris came from the North Island, they were not all employed at the same time: the maximum was about eighty or ninety at any one stage.

At first there were two gangs employed on the Sumner road. The No. 1 party consisted of: Compton, superintendent; Polhill, foreman; R. Day and J. Hill, overseers; and thirty Maoris and two boys. In the No. 2 gang were the following: Gollan, superintendent; Grindell, foreman; T. Clepham, overseer; and fifty-eight Maoris. Later, when sufficient labour was available, a third party under T. Hughes, foreman, and consisting of thirty European labourers was employed in helping with the road out of Lyttelton, paving the Lyttelton streets, painting houses, and digging a well. 3 This gang was also involved in work at Sumner. 4

The construction of the road, which commenced in mid-September with the clearing of bush and fern, was beset with many difficulties. Outcrops and ridges of volcanic rock, which required considerable blasting to remove, caused the greatest delay. In addition, poor gunpowder and a scarcity of water (men had to be employed carting supplies and sinking wells)

1. Durie to Thomas, 18 Feb 1850. GIL 124.
2. Thomas to Harrington, 14 Nov 1849. DTH 26/49.
3. Thomas to Godley, 12 Apr 1850. GIL 200.
4. See Appendix D, roads.
contributed to the slow progress. The major obstacle was a
large outcrop of rock through which a cutting thirty-eight
feet wide, with sides of thirty-seven and twenty-eight feet,
was blasted. This obstacle was appropriately named "Sticking
Point No. 1." It appears there may have been a gathering to
celebrate when a narrow pathway had been blasted through the
rock. It was proudly recorded that on 1 January 1850 Captain
Thomas was the first person to walk through it.¹

Soon after, Polhill stated that the following work had
been performed on the road: a footpath to the summit at Evans
Pass; eight and one half chains of road, fifteen feet wide,
including a deep cutting; and three chains of side wall of
rough masonry averaging twelve feet in height.² From this
time until the work stopped the main progress made involved the
construction of drains, side walls and culverts. A track
descended to Sumner from the pass.³ Thirty-three weeks had
been worked on the road when the Maoris were dismissed on
15 April to be sent home. The cost of the road had proved to be
far in excess of Thomas's estimates, "Sticking Point" alone
costing £68 a chain.⁴

The experiment in using native labour proved to be very
successful. Paid 2/6 a day the Maoris were delighted to be

1. Workbook, Native Road Party, Lyttelton - Port Victoria:
   1849-50. Week ending 5 Jan 1850.
2. Polhill to Thomas, 10 Jan 1850. GIL 1065.
3. This track, on the hillside opposite the present road, is
   still visible.
4. Select Committee, p.35.
earning plenty of money, although Thomas considered the European labourers cheaper at 4/6. When they were sick, or if it was too wet to work, the Maoris were paid 1/- a day, a system which probably aggravated the absentee problem. However, they served a useful purpose in acting as a counterbalance to the Europeans. Had the latter been the only available labour they would undoubtedly have dictated terms to Thomas. When the Maoris worked they shovelled together keeping time to a song, like sailors to a sea-shanty. According to Godley they lacked the power of steady, continuous work, did everything by fits and starts, and had to be coaxed like children.¹ Captain Stokes, however, made different observations in February 1850. He found there was a rivalry between the Maoris and Europeans in building side walls, and little difference could be noticed in their work, "...a remarkable proof of that aptitude for imitation and improvement by which the natives are distinguished."² An early settler noted that the Maoris worked like "Trojans", often clambering up precipitous rocks where the white man could not work.³

Though they gave little trouble, the Maoris went on strike twice for short periods. The first time was when they objected to Compton's swearing: they called themselves "Missionaries"

and refused to work under anyone who swore at them. On the second occasion they refused to work after Thomas warned Compton's gang that those who were idle and lazy would be docked in their wages. As a result, they were all fined 6d., except the two boys whose wages were raised to 2/- a day (they had not gone on strike), and three men were immediately discharged. Another incident occurred when the Maoris refused to make up lost time one evening. They were fined as a result. Three men who refused to work the next day unless their fines were remitted were discharged. Occasionally pay was refused when Maoris feigned sickness, and one robust individual was dismissed for striking his overseer.1

Intoxication was a considerable problem. Thomas went to the trouble of posting a notice cautioning natives that any drunkenness would result in dismissal, and anyone caught supplying them with liquor would be prosecuted.2

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Edward Jollie, who arrived at Lyttelton on 12 August 1849, was given the task of laying out the townships of Lyttelton, Sumner, and Christchurch. Four days after he arrived he began

4. EDWARD JOLLIE.
laying off Lyttelton (Torlesse had commenced this), and by
28 September he had finished the work Thomas required to be
done.\footnote{Jollie, Reminiscences, p.26. There is a discrepancy in
Jollie's accounts. In his "Recollections of Early Life in
N.Z. 1841-60", \textit{Weekly Press} 15 Dec 1900 (Jubilee Number),
he states that the survey took twelve days which would mean
he finished on 28 Aug. But 28 Sep is the more logical date.}
Next, from 2 October to the end of November he
surveyed the town of Sumner, which was intended as a minor port
at the entrance to the Avon and Heathcote Rivers, and a stage
on the Lyttelton to Christchurch road.\footnote{The present street plan and street names of Sumner do not
follow the 1849 survey. The site became rural land, and
in the 1860's was subdivided into a town following a new
survey.} After working on
some engineering problems in connection with the Lyttelton
streets, he was sent to confer with Scroggs on the survey of
Christchurch. However, at the end of December Scroggs left.\footnote{Thomas, because of financial difficulties, had in Nov given
Scroggs his notice of dismissal. Thomas to Scroggs, 5 Nov
1849. \textit{GOL} 72/49.}
Jollie took his place and commenced the survey of Christchurch
at the beginning of January 1850.

Thomas was instructed by the Association to select for the
capital a block of 1,000 acres. In laying out the town ample
reserves were to be made for all public purposes, such as a
market place, probable public buildings, and parks for the
convenience of the future inhabitants. The remainder was to be
divided into quarter-acre sections.\footnote{Harrington to Thomas, 30 Jun 1848. \textit{NZC} 102/28.} The prime requisites for
the site, as laid down by the Association, were a dry healthy
spot, easily drained good water, and timber and if possible building stone in the vicinity. When Thomas chose the site of Christchurch it seems he regarded a location at the head of the navigation of the Avon as being of overwhelming importance. Nevertheless, the site he chose also met other requirements. Timber could be obtained reasonably close at hand in the Papanui and Riccarton Bushes. Moreover, the Avon solved the immediate problem of a pure water supply. Though the site was swampy in places, Thomas obviously did not regard the possibility of draining the swamps as insoluble.

The map of Christchurch was ready by 18 March, and the finishing touches to the survey completed eight days later. Jollie, who lived in Scroggs' grass house at the "Bricks", with his six survey hands forty yards away in a one room weather-board house, found the work very pleasant. Though working hard during the day he spent many enjoyable evenings eeling, pig-hunting, and shooting quail and duck.

Thomas approved of the plan of the town except in a few parts where Jollie had indulged in a little ornamentation, such as crescents, which he sarcastically called "gingerbread." Jollie was not sorry for this change, but he always regretted another which Thomas made. He had proposed that some of the streets should be wider than a chain for two reasons: firstly,

1. Memorandum attached to ibid.
2. Apparently rebuilt after being destroyed by fire the previous September.
so that any fire which broke out would be limited to one block; and secondly, so that avenues of trees could be planted. Thomas did not agree to this proposal, but when the survey was nearly finished gave permission to widen one or two of the principal streets, if it could be done without delaying the completion of the survey. As this was impossible, the streets remained at a width of one chain. However, Jollie managed to have two good wide streets on either side of the Avon, which would act as "lungs" for the city, and also prevent private drainage from being run into the river.¹

Christchurch was laid out in the conventional grid pattern, all streets except those round the river and from Papanui Bush and Sumner, running either north and south or east and west. The only bridges marked were at Market Place and Worcester Street. On the north, south and east sides were town reserves intended for future subdivision when the town expanded. To the west lay Hagley Park,² and the loop of the river formed an area reserved as a government domain. Provision was made for botanic gardens, cemeteries, cattle market, abattoir, hospital, jail, government offices, survey office, Association store and barracks, Mechanics Institute, and four schools, to three of which a church site was attached. Each full block contained two rows of eleven sections, and an allowance of one link was

2. This was placed between Christchurch and Riccarton in deference to a request by the Deans that the town should not be too close to their farm. A.S. Bruce, The Early Days of Canterbury, p. 29.
made in the length and width of each section for a "party
wall."  

The often repeated story of the naming of the streets
has always seemed a little naive and simple to be the truth.
According to Jollie, as soon as he had completed the map of
each town he took it to Thomas "...who putting on his gold
spectacles and opening his 'Peerage' would read out a bishop's
name to hear if it sounded well and if I agreed with him that
it did, I put the name to one of the streets requiring
baptism."  

Because Lyttelton was the first born town it got
the best names – Canterbury, Oxford, London, Norwich, Dublin,
and Winchester.  Sumner being next got the next best – York,
Ely, Carlisle, Rochester, Bristol, Wells, and Newcastle.  When
it came to Christchurch there were not enough English names to
go round, so the names of Irish and colonial bishoprics were
used as well.  

Although the story is a pleasant one it is doubtful if it
is the exact truth.  There are two good reasons for believing
the procedure was not as haphazard as it sounds.  Firstly,
Torlesse mentions that while Thomas and he were on the cutter
Fly, bound for Port Cooper to explore the area, some street
names were settled.  Secondly, the streets of Christchurch
were named in a well-defined pattern.  

1. See map following this page.
3. Ibid.
4. TP, p. 40.
5. The interesting interpretation which follows, has been
taken from an article in the Press 6 Dec 1952.
Cathedral Square there are streets, running west and east to the north and south of the Square, named in this order: two English dioceses, Gloucester and Hereford; then two Irish dioceses, Armagh and Cashel; then again two English, Chester and Lichfield; and two Irish, Kilmore and Tuam; then reaching the town belts with two English, Peterborough and Salisbury, and one Welsh, St. Asaph. Running north and south from the Square are, in succession, two English dioceses, Manchester and Durham; two from the colonies, Madras and Montreal; and then two from the West Indies, Barbadoes and Antigua.

Such a pattern shows design rather than chance. Of course, Thomas could have read out the names and Jollie sorted them into the pattern. It appears the geographical divisions of the Church of England were well known to the surveyors. Also, there were four Irish archbishoprics (Armagh, Dublin, Cashel, and Tuam), and it is interesting to note that because Dublin had already been used in Lyttelton, Kilmore was substituted in its place, instead of the better known Irish dioceses such as Limerick, Derry, and Waterford. This can be explained by the fact that Kilmore was the diocese where Godley's home of "Killegar" was situated.¹

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¹. Ibid.
Thomas's unenviable reputation as an overbearing, haughty individual who could not tolerate criticism stems largely from this early period, especially from August to December 1849. This interval was a particularly frustrating one for Thomas who, anxious to get the preliminary works into full swing, was prevented from doing so for some time. The failure of the contractors to deliver the timber by the specified dates especially irked him. Very quickly ill-feeling between Thomas and his subordinates became evident.

As superintendent of public works, Cridland was reprimanded on several occasions for failing in his office, but there is no evidence that Thomas was anything but diplomatic in his relations with him. It seems more likely that Cridland did not pay the attention to his work Thomas would have liked, or was not competent to do it properly. As it was, Thomas took over the superintending of the road parties so Cridland would have more time to supervise the public works. In October, after Thomas had remonstrated with him over the slow progress of the public works, Cridland was dismissed after replying unsatisfactorily to the charges. Unfortunately the replies are missing; had they survived, considerable light would have been thrown on this interesting situation.

The two men subsequently patched up their differences and Cridland resumed his duties. However, Cridland was again dismissed on 31 December, and replaced by Gollan; undoubtedly the latter's efficiency with one of the road gangs contributed
5. CHARLES OBINS TORLESSE.
greatly to his promotion. When the temporary suspension of works occurred Thomas stated that although the £20,000 had been used there was a great surplus of stores. This was due, he argued, to the inefficiency and lack of organization shown by Gridland. Proof of Gridland's extravagance was the expensive pile-driver to make the jetty he (Gridland) had ordered but which was landed on the completed jetty itself.¹

The charges against Thomas were summed up in a letter by Torlesse to his mother. He writes that Thomas lacked method in getting things done, gave contrary orders, insulted his subordinates, and made enemies by allowing his private feelings to interfere with public business. These charges were overstated, and made in the heat of the moment at a time when Thomas was having differences of opinion with Gridland, Cass and Scroggs. Torlesse himself was not without faults, and a study of his journal reveals an opinionated, cantankerous young man. His uncle, E.G. Wakefield, considered him to be conceited, intractable, and bad-tempered. He warned Thomas never to give way to him.² With this in mind it is not surprising that Torlesse was often critical of Thomas. Yet the latter, in his despatches, never complained about Torlesse's behaviour or work. Torlesse seems to have been rather unfair in his estimation of Thomas. F.B. Maling wisely observes that "one is left with the feeling that Torlesse failed either to understand

1. Thomas to Fox, 15 May 1850. CSLB 18/50.
or appreciate the fine qualities Thomas undoubtedly possessed."  

In the same letter, Torlesse cited specific complaints. He noted Thomas's inattention to the surveys, and the concentration of the whole of the road gangs on the Sumner road. As to the first of these, Thomas was busy in Lyttelton and he showed he understood the situation by putting Cass, a very competent surveyor, in charge on the plains. The blame for what Torlesse regarded as the slow progress of the surveying cannot justly be imputed to Thomas. In fact no-one was to blame; all the surveyors were already busy. Cass was laying off the base line, Scroggs was traversing the site of Christchurch, and Jollie was laying off the streets of Lyttelton. As it was, the surveys soon made rapid headway after Cass started his trigonometrical surveying, Boys joined Torlesse, and the contract surveyors started work. There was some justice in Torlesse's reservations about the Sumner road, but the alternative he suggested of making roads to river mouths where boats could discharge, did not take into account the fact that Thomas had been instructed to be "most particular" about connecting the port and chief town by a good road.

Cass resigned in September 1849 after a difference of opinion with Thomas probably concerning something to do with the base line. However, he soon withdrew his resignation.

Ballard, the accountant and Association storekeeper, was instructed to take more care in keeping accounts, as some mistakes had been made. But this was routine procedure and not the result of personal animosity.

The collector of customs was another who did not see eye-to-eye with Thomas. The antagonism was mutual. Thomas told Godley that from Gouland he had "...received every petty annoyance, and obstruction that his situation has afforded him." William Pratt, the local storekeeper, considered Gouland as an official to be "...fussy, methodical and a red-tapeist [sig]..." Hence it is not surprising that Thomas, who was always in a hurry to get things done, resented what he considered unnecessary interference. A very amusing incident illustrates the contrasting outlook of the two men. Gouland reported to the Colonial Secretary, A. Domett, that Thomas had hoisted a Union Jack at his residence, and when told his action was illegal replied that "...he should like to see the man who would go and haul it down..." in a tone which indicated he would use violence towards anyone who might attempt to do so. In spite of the fact that J. Watson, the magistrate at Akaroa, thought that no interference was necessary on the part of the authorities, Gouland reported it. Domett replied, humorously,

1. Thomas to Ballard, 24 Sep 1849. GOL 31/49.
2. Thomas to Godley, 15 May 1850. CSLE 19/50.
that Thomas "...might hoist all the flags in the world if he pleased."¹

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The public works soon proved to be more expensive than anticipated. In November 1849 Thomas estimated that expenses would total almost £20,000 by the following March.² In other words, work at Port Cooper would stop when this point was reached. It began to appear extremely doubtful that the essential works could be completed within the sum allotted to Thomas. Already by February he had overdrawn by £556.³ Fox journeyed south to Port Cooper to inspect the works, arriving on 21 February aboard the Acheron. Thomas requested an extension of his credit to the sum of £3,500 in the interim, until more funds arrived from England where the Association presumably would have sold sufficient land to justify further expenditure on preliminary works.

Fox agreed to the extension, having satisfied himself that the funds already spent had been expended as economically as the circumstances permitted. In his report to the Company

¹. Domett's reply, dated 5 Mar 1850, is written on the back of ibid.
². Thomas to Harrington, 14 Nov 1849. DTH 24/49.
³. Fox to Thomas, 15 Feb 1850. GIL 106.
he justified his action, the responsibility of which rested entirely on his own shoulders, on four grounds. In the first place he stated that Thomas had undertaken nothing but what was intended to be carried out by him. The original amount of credit had been estimated in ignorance of many circumstances, and £3,000 had been spent even before the consent of the Governor and Bishop to the chosen site had been gained. Secondly, the works were of so extensive a character that a suspension of them would cause irreparable damage. Moreover, if the Canterbury Settlement was to go on, it was important that no delay in New Zealand should hamper the progress of the Association's preparations for the departure of the first settlers. Finally, Fox believed that even if the Association did not carry out its plans the expenditure already made at Port Cooper would be a beneficial investment, which could be transferred to another colonizing body. He was well aware of the impropriety of drawing beyond the amount of credit specifically allowed, but he strongly believed that the progress of Canterbury should meet with no check.¹

Nevertheless, operations at Port Cooper had to be curtailed. Accordingly, Thomas informed the foremen of the road gangs, Polhill and Gollan, that they would be paid off because of the lack of funds, and the absence of instructions from England. Also, rather conveniently, the natives had

¹ Fox to Harrington, 1 Apr 1850. NZC 112/7.
expressed a desire to return home with the approach of winter. All road works would cease about the middle of April when a ship would arrive to return them to Wellington.¹ Twelve days later Thomas sent notice to Torlesse, Boys, Cass, and Jollie that surveying operations would be suspended from 1 May. He hoped the suspension would only be temporary, thereby enabling him to re-engage them without inconvenience.²

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While Thomas was sinking deeper and deeper into a financial quagmire, John Robert Godley was on his way to New Zealand accompanied by his wife, Charlotte, and son, Arthur, aboard the Lady Nugent. Since January he had been troubled with his throat, and he was recommended to spend a winter in a milder climate at Madiera or Naples. This would have been death to the Canterbury Association, depriving it of its most able and versatile member, but E.G. Wakefield saw his chance and persuaded Godley to go to New Zealand as the Association's chief Agent, and to recuperate in the southern latitudes equivalent to Spain.³ The Lady Nugent left England on

1. Thomas to Polhill & Gollan, 14 Mar 1850. GOL 18/50 & 19/50.
13 December 1849, and after a journey of fourteen weeks anchored at Port Chalmers.

Meanwhile, at Port Cooper Thomas waited anxiously for the arrival of Godley, whom he hoped would bring fresh remittances to enable the preliminary works to go on. No longer was Canterbury a settlement in theory only. Thomas had not only chosen the site but had also successfully superintended the public works in a very creditable manner. A crucial period in the history of the settlement had ended.
CHAPTER IV: THE GODLEY EPISODE.

Having been anchored nearly a fortnight at Port Chalmers the Lady Nugent set sail for Port Cooper and arrived at the entrance to that harbour on the evening of 11 April after three days of coasting in light winds. As there was no pilot to guide them up the harbour the ship anchored outside it. Early next day she sailed through the heads, already named Godley and Adderley, and anchored outside Lyttelton. Though the country was not as pretty or as wooded as Port Chalmers the work already done by Thomas amazed the Godleys. Charlotte thought the well-built immigration barracks would be too comfortable, inducing the colonists to stay in them longer than was necessary.¹

Her husband was "perfectly astounded" when he first set eyes on Lyttelton, as he had not envisaged such extensive preparations. A visit to the Deans brothers' farm at Riccarton convinced him that Thomas's reports on the productive potentialities of the plains were not misplaced. He was not slow to appreciate the value of the work done by Thomas, whom he praised for his zeal in promoting the interests of the Association. In spite of this he had misgivings about the overdrawing of the original funds which "...with ordinary foresight, he [Thomas] might easily have adhered to them." The works, though well executed, were "unconscionably costly"

6. JOHN ROBERT GODLEY.
and had "...been managed upon far too extravagant and showy a scale..." He was especially critical of the employment of an architect (Gridland) since a good carpenter could have done the work of designing the buildings just as efficiently. Godley was also indignant at the high wages being paid to the Tasmanian carpenters. ¹ However, since the extension of credit granted by Fox was in the interests of the Association and settlers, he could only regret it on grounds of expediency. But as no new funds were available he was forced to suspend the works. ²

Nevertheless, Godley was convinced that should the road be ready before the settlers arrived, they would have no real difficulty to contend with, except the expensiveness of wood, and their success would depend entirely upon themselves. ³ After a stay of only two days, the Lady Nugent sailed for Wellington where Godley hoped to immerse himself in the intricacies of colonial politics. It is doubtful whether it would have been of any benefit for him to have remained in Lyttelton since the enforced idleness of himself and Thomas would almost inevitably have led to a clash between the two.

The first meeting between Godley and Thomas, though it produced none of the bitterness so evident in their later relations, did provide a foretaste of what was to come. Godley,

1. 8d a week to the foreman and £2/15/- for eleven journeymen.
3. Ibid., p.164.
though appreciating that Thomas was the rough, vigorous, and
determined man made for the job, decided he lacked "...a good
manner with gentlemen."¹ There was undoubtedly some truth in
this charge since Thomas did not care much for the social
virtues, but Godley failed to recognize or appreciate the
differences between English and colonial society. The
distinctions of English society meant little in the colonial
setting where hereditary titles and the rights of the upper
classes did not normally give a man any more privileges than
his neighbour.

From Wellington Godley officially informed Thomas that he
was to take the necessary steps to wind up operations, and
suspend them altogether when Fox's extension of credit ran out.²
Thomas had, previous to Godley's arrival, arranged for the
temporary suspension of the Association's surveyors, to be
effective from 1 May, and the Maori road workers from the
arrival of the Harlequin to take them back to Wellington on
15 April. Yet, he had not suspended the many other workmen,
whom he had kept employed in the hope that Godley would arrive
with fresh funds. In compliance with Godley's instructions, he
stopped the contract surveys and discharged the road party
consisting of European labourers. Also discharged were the
carpenters who, according to agreement, were paid one month's
wages and provided with a free passage to Wellington.³

1. Ibid., p.162.
2. Godley to Thomas, 23 Apr 1850. GOL 25/50.
3. Thomas to Godley, 29 Apr 1850. GIL 198.
In his report on the state of the public works at the time of suspension, Thomas stated that 600,000 to 700,000 acres had been trigonometrically surveyed, and about 300,000 acres topographically surveyed. The public works at Lyttelton comprised the following: a boat-house, boat-shed, jetty, four immigration barracks (nearly completed), together with a kitchen, wash-house, privies, and a well forty-four feet deep, offices, and stable. All of these were enclosed with fences and gates. At Sumner there was a store, built to house equipment used on the public works, while at Christchurch there were two temporary buildings for surveyors. Cutters and schooners had transferred from Lyttelton to Sumner, 80,000 feet of planks and scantling, and 120,000 feet of shingle, the greater part of which had been conveyed up the Avon by punts and boats for public buildings in Christchurch. The Sumner side of the road over Evans Pass would cost much less than the steep Lyttelton grade; apart from a bridge over the Heathcote, estimated to cost £1,000, the road would be level and would require little more than draining and ditching costing about £600 a mile. Thomas believed that if the works were resumed in July the road could be open by the end of the year or the beginning of 1851. The cost of completing the road Thomas estimated at £7,260, which included the employment of fifty Maori and fifty European labourers for one year.

1. Ibid., 15 May 1850. GIL 195.
2. Ibid., 13 Apr 1850. GIL 189.
Although Thomas blamed Cridland for the existence of the surplus stores, worth £4,000, he took some consolation from the fact that they could be used to complete the public works he envisaged. These stores would also command a ready sale, he hoped optimistically, on the arrival of the Association settlers.¹ Godley regarded the existence of so large an amount of surplus stores as evidence of blundering miscalculation.²

When Godley ordered the suspension of works Thomas had just commenced cutting through a high bank so as to form a road connecting Canterbury and Oxford Streets in Lyttelton. Being keen to complete this work, Thomas called the men together, explained his position and desire to continue working, and offered them "...nails, paint, tar, linseed oil, tools, and lumber of various kinds..." in lieu of cash payment for wages. Most of the men agreed and the work was successfully carried through to completion. How the men managed to survive on nails, tar, and oil amazed Pratt.³

The suspension of the works was a set-back not only for those employed by Thomas but also for many others who had been given licences to "squat" on sections surveyed in Lyttelton, on the conditions that they gave up the land when the Association

1. Thomas to Fox, 15 May 1850. GSLB 18/50.
2. Godley to Alston, 28 May 1850. DGS 3/50.
settler owning it required possession, and that no claims for compensation would be granted. Those given squatting licences included Goulard, Pratt, Cray, Hughes, Greg, Hesphy, Day, Nankivell, Greange, Woods, Fowler, W. Taylor, E. Omer, T. Ellis, T. Skillet, J. Johnston, Alport, A. Duncan, and Hornbrook.¹ Most of these stayed on in Lyttelton, as did many of the Association's workers.

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With such a large work force there were, not surprisingly, problems of law and order. These problems were exacerbated by the stoppage of works and the consequent unemployment of most of the population. Thomas wrote "...of the very rough characters who for the most part form our labouring population..."² Whaling ships brought to Banks Peninsula gangs of men of doubtful character from Australia, and they were nicknamed "T'othersiders" and "Van Diemonians." Possibly many of them were escaped convicts. Some worked for Hay in Pigeon Bay bush-felling and timber-sawing. Though many of them were good workmen their chief aim appeared to be to over-draw their wages or get into debt and clear out.³ Torlesse

2. Thomas to Harrington, 26 Jan 1850. DTH 1/50.
described Lyttelton as a "...receptacle of all loose beachcombers and escaped lags or convicts... neither person nor property are safe there..."¹ As early as September 1849 Thomas expressed misgivings over Hornbrook's intention to establish a public house in a place of 200 workmen, with neither magistrate nor police to enforce order. Though he was not averse to a glass of ale himself, Thomas felt so strongly about the proposed tavern that he informed Fox that if he was interfered with "...by these grogsellers, I must recommend you to suspend the works of the Association..."² As the enforcer of discipline Thomas was the natural opponent of the more dissolute characters among his workmen.

Justice was dispensed by John Watson, the genial Irish Resident Magistrate from Akaroa, usually in conjunction with the local Justices of the Peace, William Deans and Henry Goulard. At first Watson visited Lyttelton fortnightly but in April 1850 he started making the visit monthly. The journey of over thirty miles from Akaroa to Lyttelton was not an easy one, and involved a severe walk across almost impassable bush tracks by Pigeon Bay, Port Levy, Purau, and around the head of Port Cooper, or if the sea was calm across the harbour by boat from Pigeon Bay or Purau. Often he did not reach Lyttelton until after dark, and on one occasion the

2. Thomas to Fox, 11 Sep 1849. DTF 24/49.
special constable accompanying him was unable to continue the journey after falling over a low cliff in the dark.¹ Watson was relieved of his Lyttelton duties when Godley was appointed Resident Magistrate on the arrival of the Pilgrims.

There was a great deal of drunkenness and disorderly conduct at Lyttelton and Watson urged the need for a lock-up. Thomas put him in possession of two rooms in the immigration barracks, one for the court and the other for the two constables who usually accompanied him on his visits. Watson noted that the Mitre was an unfit place for constables to stay in.² A site was reserved in Lyttelton by Thomas for a police office and gaol, but these buildings were not erected until after the Pilgrims arrived.³ The prisoners who were sent to Akaroa were lodged in the blockhouse there. Their sentences were mostly of a trifling character — usually for drunkenness or petty theft.

Yet, notwithstanding the carousings at Lyttelton, Watson reported in June 1850 that in three consecutive months he had no case to dispose of. He therefore intended to stop his visits because of the pressure of work at Akaroa, and send a special constable instead.⁴ After a particularly vicious case of assault, as a result of which Goulard committed a

2. Ibid., 20 Feb 1850. Encl. in no. 285.
3. Thomas to Watson, 16 Feb 1850. COL 12/50.
prisoner to trial, Peter Cameron was ordered to Lyttelton, presumably as a police officer, but it is not known whether he stayed. 1 William Pratt speaks of a resident constable but does not mention his name. 2

An illustration of the dispensing of justice is shown in the case of two Maoris, Turaka and Takiori, summoned to appear at Lyttelton for cutting down a trig station near Kaispoi in October 1849. Two days after Torlesse wrote informing him of the incident, Thomas requested Watson to deal with the matter. At a sitting of the court on 5 November Watson found Takiori alone was guilty and fined him £2 and costs or one month's imprisonment with hard labour. The fine was immediately paid by the Maoris of Port Levy who "passed the hat" around, but at the request of Thomas it was mitigated to £1 and costs. 3

Lyttelton in these days boasted little in the way of social amenities. The activities of the population largely centred round the two public houses, the Mitre and the Lyttelton Arms. The more famous of these was the Mitre at the corner of Canterbury Street and Norwich Quay, owned by the irrepressible Major Alfred Hornbrook who had served in the Spanish Legion. Hornbrook was prepared to offer £100 a year to the settler who selected his valuable section. 4 The Mitre combined the functions of tavern, board or lodgings, restaurant,

1. Ibid., 20 Feb 1850. Encl. in no. 283. NM 8/21.
and general store. Apart from Lyttelton, "Paddy" Woods and Captain J. Bruce owned hotels at Akaroa, while at Port Levy William Humphy held a Bush licence enabling him to sell spirituous liquors. While Thomas was on the original exploring expedition Woods contemplated setting up a store and tavern at Rapaki, which was at first the site of the port, but nothing came of the idea.¹ The public houses in Lyttelton were very popular places after the men were paid on Saturday. By the following Tuesday many of the workmen had washed almost their entire wages down their throats.² No doubt the revellings were considerable and it is difficult to imagine the taverns keeping to strict hours.

The almost entire lack of small change was an inconvenience in such a thirsty place. However, old fashioned round wooden boxes of matches, and sticks of tobacco, both valued at 3d., could buy a glass of ale. It was easy to judge the extent of an unslaked thirst by the distension of trouser pockets by bulky packets of matches and tobacco. Sometimes Pratt would receive a visit from one of these "itinerant match depots", wishing to be relieved of this stock at half price.³ Members of the Acheron found that clay pipes and cigars were readily accepted as change.⁴

A few of the workers and squatters took their wives and

1. TE, p.56.
4. J.L. Stokes, Diary, no date.
7. WILLIAM PRATT.
families with them to Lyttelton, but the settlement was hardly conducive to family living. From the Wellington shipping lists the following women and children travelled to Lyttelton in 1849-50 and most appear to have stayed: Mesdames Bannister and three children, Johnson and eight children, Piper and six children, Cameron and six children, Brogden and two children, Hughes and two children, Macfarlane and three children, and Gridland and children. All arrived before the Pilgrims. ¹

William Pratt has recorded some of the amusing incidents of early Lyttelton.² He came to Lyttelton from Nelson in November 1849 and opened the first general store, the owner of the Mitre being quite happy to be relieved of the trouble of keeping general goods for sale, since his licensed business took all his time. For a bakery Pratt dug an oven out of the side of a cliff at the rear of the store. He employed a youth who had worked in a bakery in Wellington. The dough for the first batch of loaves made for sale in Lyttelton was mixed in a large tub and turned out quite a success.

A shortage of fresh water was an inconvenience; there was only one well at this time and it had been sunk in the vicinity of the immigration barracks. But on the beach opposite the Mitre there was a trickle of fresh water that accumulated in a hollow. An old man who earned a living by making and selling ginger beer had built his whare nearby and

¹ NZS 1849-50, passim.
² The incidents following are taken from Pratt, pp.197-212.
monopolized the water, so Pratt used to creep down just before daybreak and collect what water there was.

For a burglar alarm Pratt used to pile a lot of pannikins and other tin-ware at weak places in his "citadel" (as he called his store) where breaks were likely to be made, so a tremendous clatter would result if an entry was attempted. He also provided himself with a bayonet securely fixed on a staff about four feet long. His place went unmolested until he went to Wellington on business. It was then burgled, but the considerable booty taken was recovered.

The chief representative of the local government at this time was the customs collector and postmaster, Henry Goulard, who combined "...in his own person all the dignity and authority of the British Constitution." Very few captains and would-be smugglers succeeded in evading the customs duties collected by the vigilant Goulard. This is illustrated in a delightful incident noted by Pratt. The captain of a schooner which regularly traded between the settlements, deeming he was beyond the pale of customs restrictions, made no secret of his having some genuine "mountain dew" on board. Goulard quietly inspected the schooner while the skipper entertained friends in the Mitre, but not finding anything thought he had been hoaxed. The captain was soon heard boasting that the "old fool" had sat on the casks without knowing it. A second visit

by Gouland resulted in the illicit cargo being landed ashore and impounded. The talkative captain lost no time in sailing off, thankful he had at least saved his vessel.

It was not because of a lack of offers that early Lyttelton lacked a newspaper. While Thomas was in Wellington preparing for the commencement of the preliminary works, W.E. Vincent, who published the Wellington Independent in partnership with a colleague, offered to start a newspaper at Lyttelton on the conditions that he was responsible for the printing of the paper only, the Association being responsible for finding a suitable editor, and a guaranteed number of subscribers — about fifty.¹ Unfortunately Thomas's reply to Vincent is missing but he appears to have turned down the offer. The publisher of the Otago News, H.B. Graham, requested Thomas's patronage with a view to moving to Lyttelton. Godley praised Thomas's judicious decision to reject the offer as the paper was "...a wretchedly written and mischievous publication, which appears ... to be on its last legs..."² The first newspaper printed in Lyttelton was the Lyttelton Times which began to appear on 11 January 1851, just over three weeks after the arrival of the Pilgrims. Its editor, J.E. Fitzgerald, printer J.I. Shrimpton, and publishing plant all arrived with the first body of colonists.

¹ Fox to Thomas, 21 Jun 1849, & encl. GIL 5.
After the suspension of works the surveyors remained in the vicinity of Fort Cooper, hoping for an early re-start of activities. Boys and Torlesse offered to work in the survey office during the winter, on the chance of being re-engaged when operations were resumed. Thomas lent them the boat-house for accommodation. However, the work rapidly phased out and Torlesse was soon bitterly complaining about Thomas's "pie-crust" promises to collect the last two months' salary owing. ¹ Torlesse spent his time reading, walking, boating and socializing with some of the "Lyttelton swells." Jollie was kept busy for a few weeks making a connected plan of the several surveys, and he occasionally took riding trips with Thomas to different parts of the plains. He and Dr. Donald, whose employment was also terminated, kept house together in Lyttelton. ²

Even the industrious Thomas had to fill in time as best he could. On 10 June he and Jollie started out to go overland to Otago but had to give up the trip when they lost their horses. ³ Early in July Thomas journeyed to Dunedin by sea aboard the Return. He arrived back, accompanied by Cass, three weeks later. ⁴ Robert Waitt, an old friend of Thomas, also went on the Otago trip and thence to J.S. Caverhill's station at Motunau with Jollie and Thomas. The

3. TP, p.148.
4. Ibid., pp.152-3.
adventures of the group were recounted by Waitt in a letter addressed to Thomas. While a guest of Caverhill the men excavated some coal discovered previously by their host. ¹ A Wellington newspaper commented on the coal which it claimed was the best sample brought to Wellington from anywhere in New Zealand. The discovery, it stated, would be of great value to the Canterbury Settlement, and it had been informed that a road could be built from the location to the beach for £50, from whence the coal could be transported by small coastal vessels to Lyttelton.²

Although there was much pessimism in Lyttelton and a belief the settlement would fall through the steady drift of people to Canterbury continued. Indeed William Pratt had enough faith in the future to double the original size of his store to the amazement of some of his neighbours.³ This drift was particularly noticeable with regard to pastoral farming.

During 1850 several attempts were made to find an overland stock route from Nelson to Canterbury.⁴ The pastoralists of the Wairau and Awatere Valleys naturally sought an outlet for their surplus stock and the vast plains of Canterbury, well known to the Nelson settlers, beckoned speculators in sheep. The account of William Heaphy's bold but unsuccessful attempt (he was nearly drowned in the Waiau

². NZS 26 Oct 1850.
³. Pratt, p.214.
⁴. For the various explorations in North Canterbury see W.J. Gardner, The Amuri, pp.15-38.
River) to walk from Otago to Nelson in 1844 was well known and probably discouraged other efforts for some time. It was not until 1850 that an inland route was discovered. In May Lieutenant Impey was forced back to Nelson by bad weather and snow, but a British army officer on furlough from India, Captain E.M. Mitchell and a Nelson settler, E.H. Dashwood, during April and May made the first successful journey via the Acheron, Clarence, Hamner, and Waiau Rivers. After staying at Caverhill's station at Motunau they pushed on to Port Cooper but nearly perished in the process, being found in a distressed condition by Maoris. Their arrival at Riccarton has been portrayed by Jollie who at the time was with Thomas in Cass's house when one evening "...two rough, dirty looking men came to the door ... both of them had fallen into a spring hole somewhere between the Waimakariri and Riccarton."  

It soon became evident that pastoralism would play a much larger role in the new settlement than its planners had envisaged. Even before the Pilgrims arrived various runs were established in North Canterbury. Though the route explored by Mitchell and Dashwood was unsuitable for stock droving the former was sufficiently impressed to place cattle and sheep on what was to become known as the Mount Grey run, probably in August 1850. This appears to have been the second run in

1. NZS 17 Jul 1850.
Canterbury; the first was the Greenwoods' station at Motunau, which was established in 1847 or earlier, and leased to Caverhill in January 1850.  

1. Early in 1850 C.H. Brown took up a run at Double Corner, while Robert Waitt occupied Teviotdale in the same year.  

2. However, it was not until February-March 1852 when Jollie and E.J. Lee drove 1,800 sheep from the Wairau to the Amuri that an inland stock route was used.  

3. * * * * * * * * *

Meanwhile, in England the Association had obtained a charter of incorporation on 13 November 1849. This provided for a Committee of Management, general meetings of the Association at least once a year, the making of by-laws, the publishing of accounts together with a Government audit, and the division of funds as originally envisaged.  

4. At last solid progress was being made. On 1 December, one day before Godley sailed, an agreement was made with the New Zealand Company in which the latter agreed to reserve 2,500,000 acres for the Association for ten years, provided that £100,000 worth of land should be sold by 30 April 1850. Should the

1. Ibid., p. 267.
2. Ibid., pp. 75, 271.
4. OF, pp. 57-60.
required sales not be made the land would revert to the
Company.  

The terms of purchase were fixed in January 1850 and
the land thrown open for sale. Felix Wakefield
enthusiastically began to sell land on a commission basis,
but difficulties developed and for a time it seemed the
Association was headed for extinction. Dissatisfaction with
the "contingency of failure" clause resulted in a new
agreement with the Company, dated 16 April 1850. Land sales
now had to reach £50,000 by 31 December 1850 and continue
thereafter at the same rate annually.  

At the same time
Lord Lyttelton, Lord Cavendish, J. Simeon, and E.G. Wakefield
saved the day by guaranteeing to the Company a sum of £15,000
against losses if land sales did not reach expectations.

The inefficient chairman of the Committee of Management, John
Hutt, was replaced by the dynamic Lord Lyttelton who steered
the fortunes of the Association with considerable zeal and
understanding. Canterbury was to go ahead after all.  

In Mid-April the Association announced that applications
for land would close on 30 June, and that the first body of
colonists would leave England not later than the first week
in September.  

Also, revised terms of purchase were issued

1. Encl. 2 in no.203. GBPP 1852 (H. of C.570), pp.442-3.
2. GP, p.206.
4. For an excellent account of the fluctuating fortunes of
the Association see the thesis by R.M. Glen, "The
Canterbury Association; its work in England, 1848-56."
5. GP, p.61.
on 22 April 1850. Because the New Zealand Company surrendered its charter to the Crown on 5 July a new agreement had to be made as to the powers and liabilities of the Association regarding land. The Canterbury Settlement Land Act of 14 August 1850 defined the Association's powers to dispose of land (the main provisions of the terms of purchase were included) within an area bounded on the west by the "snowy range of hills", on the south by the Ashburton River, on the north by the Double Corner (Waipara River), and on the east by the sea. If the prescribed amount of land was not sold the forfeiture of the powers of the Association was to depend on the discretion of the Crown.

Meanwhile, preparations proceeded in England for the departure of the first colonists. The huge task of selecting emigrants, chartering ships, purchasing supplies, appointing officers, and a host of other details was completed, and on 1 September Archbishop Sumner preached a farewell sermon at St. Paul's Cathedral. On 7 September the Creasy, Charlotte Jane, and Randolph left Plymouth, and were followed the next day by the Sir George Seymour.  

News of the Association's affairs was expectantly awaited by Godley and Thomas, and until information was received nothing could be done at Port Cooper. Nevertheless in spite of the lack of intelligence there were heartening

1. Ibid., pp. 62-4.
indications that Canterbury would go on. Two Canterbury land purchasers, R. Pollard and A. Percival, arrived in New Zealand on the Poictiers in August 1850, having left England in February without waiting for final announcements of the Association's plans.\(^1\) The Mariner which arrived direct from England in September carried goods consigned to Thomas by the Association, and this indicated there was no intention of abandoning the scheme.\(^2\) Thomas, tired of waiting for news travelled to Wellington on the Hooghly at the end of October in the hope of obtaining permission from Godley to resume at least some of the works;\(^3\) but he was sent back to Lyttelton a fortnight later without the sanction he sought.

However, from Sydney newspapers which carried English news up to 23 June, Godley learned that the Association had chartered four vessels which were due to sail at the end of August and which would therefore be due at Lyttelton in December. Also, the recently arrived Camilla brought news of the dissolution of the New Zealand Company, and as a result Godley was not without hope that the restrictions placed by that body on the Association would be removed, thereby enabling the more rapid progress of the Canterbury scheme. Although the news from Sydney was unofficial, Godley

3. NZS 23 Oct 1850.
could take no chances, and so with the arrival of the colonists seemingly imminent he guaranteed his personal credit with the Union Bank of Australia to a total of nearly £5,000 in order that the works could be resumed.

This sum Godley hoped, would be sufficient to complete the public works (except the Sumner road), including a store at Lyttelton, a survey office at Christchurch, the trigonometrical survey of over 1,000,000 acres and the topographical survey of between 600,000 and 700,000 acres, all of which would be ready, Thomas had informed him, by the following Easter. According to Godley, Thomas was instructed to recommence the surveys, and to enter into contracts for the two public buildings. But no work appears to have commenced until after a loan was arranged for by Governor Grey.

This loan, which Godley sought from the Colonial Treasury, was intended to be used in completing the Sumner road. Godley pressed on the Governor the importance attached to the successful completion of the road for until this was done the only means of transport was by water carriage, which was dependent on the weather. The sum required, £7,000 to £8,000 could be lent over a period of six months. But Grey only granted £2,400, enough for work to proceed for two months. He laid down conditions that it be repaid out of the

2. Godley to Grey, 9 Nov 1850. DGGNZ 1/50.
bridge-road (later called the bridle-path) was explored by Jollie and Gollan.\textsuperscript{1} One of the road gangs immediately commenced the forming of this track, a task which was not finished until the middle of February 1851. It was only just passable for horses, and after heavy rain it turned into a muddy quagmire.

The surveys were re-commenced in December. Cass continued working in the Lincoln and Ellesmere districts where he had been engaged when work was stopped the previous May.\textsuperscript{2} Authority to expend £164 from the loan he had granted, was given by Grey, who had arrived in Lyttelton on 13 December after visiting the Auckland Islands.\textsuperscript{3} This was to be used in laying out the lines of the principal roads suggested by Thomas: from Christchurch to Double Corner; from Christchurch to Oxford; a line connecting these; and from Christchurch to Lake Ellesmere through the Lincoln district.\textsuperscript{4} Boys, Cass, and Torlesse commenced laying out these lines immediately following the arrival of the Pilgrims.

Definite news that four ships had sailed from England loaded with colonists reached Lyttelton by the *Phoebe Dunbar* on 7 November and Wellington by the same ship a few days later. This news brought a number of small craft loaded with stores and passengers to Lyttelton, attracted by the prospects

\textsuperscript{1} *TP*, p.177.  
\textsuperscript{2} Cass to Thomas, monthly return Dec 1850. L & S 51/7.  
\textsuperscript{3} Grey to Godley, 16 Dec 1850. GIL 140.  
\textsuperscript{4} Thomas to Godley, 14 Dec 1850. CSLB 53/50.
8. PILGRIMS LANDING AT LYTELETION.

A contemporary engraving based on a painting dated 11 January 1851.
of ministering to the wants of the new colonists.  Robert Waitt started a branch of his merchant's business, while Longden and LeCren who had brought the frame of a large iron store with them erected this on Norwich Quay and started the first wholesale business in Canterbury. Meanwhile, Godley hastened to Lyttelton on the Acheron, arriving on 29 November, to superintend the arrival of the first immigrants.

* * * * * * * * *

On the gloriously fine Monday morning of 16 December 1850, on the one hundredth day after its departure, the Charlotte Jane anchored off Lyttelton. Activity at the port came to a halt. Charlotte Godley did not know how to write large enough letters in her journal for the event. Her husband, who had worked so assiduously for this moment, was overcome by emotion when he met J.E. Fitzgerald, the first settler afloat, and not knowing whether to laugh or cry, ended by doing both. Charles Torlesse, in a letter to his mother called it the "Great Anniversary of the Canterbury Settlement." In the afternoon of the same day the Randolph arrived, and was followed the next morning by the Sir George

2. G.R. Macdonald, Biographies, W.34.
5. Torlesse to Mrs C. Torlesse, 22 Dec 1850. Quoted in TP, pp.183-5.
Seymour. And, to complete the remarkably close arrivals, but lagging somewhat because of a sprung fore-topmast, came the Creasy which anchored on 27 December. The population of Lyttelton, raised by nearly 800 new arrivals, soon approached 1,100.

At first it appeared the long arm of red-tape officialdom had preceded the Pilgrims but the Governor courteously waived the customs regulations on personal belongings. A civilian administration was immediately set up with Godley becoming Resident Magistrate and Commissioner of Crown Lands, with Fitzgerald Sub-Inspector of Police. Fitzgerald also became Emigration Agent and W.G. Brittan was put in charge of the land office.

Of the many problems facing the Pilgrims none were more pressing than those regarding accommodation and communications. The immigration barracks, built to accommodate 200 to 300 people, soon housed over 500.1 Many slept on the ship they had come out in, until it had discharged its cargo. Shelter rapidly began to spring up, ranging from "V" huts to turf cabins and even blanket tents. Fortunately the weather continued fine for several weeks though the occasional downpour and strong gusts of wind often caused difficulties, especially for the tent-dwellers.

The colonists had expected the Sumner road to be ready

1. LT 11 Jan 1851.
for them when they arrived and were bitterly disappointed when they found they had to trudge over a partially completed track. Lighter belongings such as bedding and household requirements the newcomers carried on their backs over the bridle-path. One witness of the time stated that "...the march out of Lyttelton resembled a flight of population from a besieged city to avoid capture..."¹ Before the site of Christchurch could be reached numerous swamps had to be avoided or negotiated. At first the only indication that human beings had been near the site were the tracks cut through the fern and toi toi, and the two huts used by the surveyors.

Heavy goods had to be transported to Christchurch by boat to Sumner, and thence up the Avon to the "Bricks." Two boatmen, C. Crawford and R. Taylor charged the exorbitant prices of £1 and £1/10/- to freight goods to Sumner and Christchurch respectively.² The colonists soon began to complain that the Association itself should have provided boats.³ When Governor Grey was in Lyttelton he offered to let the Association have a schooner, built originally for use on the Wanganui River. Godley soon asked Grey for the vessel.⁴ However it proved to be in a very unsatisfactory condition and was unsuitable for the task required.

2. Crawford & Taylor to Marsham, 18 Dec 1850. GIL 1826.
3. CF, p.298.
Eventually it was auctioned and the question of expenses between the Association and the colonial government was settled by arbitration.\(^1\) The question of communications between port and plains was a vexed one, and the Sumner road was not opened until August 1857.

There were many other problems faced by the emigrants but on the whole these were little more than temporary nuisances. Fortunately nearby farmers were able to supply many of the provisions needed; and as a result prices were relatively reasonable for a new settlement. Meat retailed at 5d. a lb., bread 7d. for a two pound loaf, flour £1/5/- a cwt., butter 1/6 a lb. while sawn timber brought 16/- to 18/- a hundred feet. However labour was scarce and wages correspondingly high. Carpenters received as much as 1/- an hour.\(^2\)

In spite of the fact that one-third of the revenue from land sales was set aside for an educational and religious fund the colonists found neither schools nor churches awaiting them. The shortage of space was such that the first church service in Lyttelton was held in the windowless upper-storey of the Association's warehouse. Seating was provided by rough planks resting on cases. However the unchurchlike surroundings did not dampen the enthusiasm of the congregation; there was excellent singing and chanting.\(^3\)

\(^1\) Ibid., 18 Jun 1851. DTF 17/51.
\(^2\) LT 31 Jan 1851.
\(^3\) G.L. Innes, Canterbury Sketches, pp.6-7.
Apart from the seven clergymen who arrived with the first body of colonists there was little evidence to show that Canterbury had been planned with religious principles in mind.

Bishop Selwyn, who visited Lyttelton in early January 1851, was not at all impressed with this situation. He objected to the expense and extent of the public works when there had not been "...one sixpence of expenditure in any form for the glory of God, or for the comfort of the clergy."¹ To make matters worse the first bishop, Thomas Jackson, who arrived in February, stayed only six weeks though in this time the outlines of ecclesiastical organization took place. An embarrassed Association withdrew their support of Jackson after the full nature of his financial illegalities became known. Although sites had been reserved for schools, none had been built. The only evidence of the college planned to be an educational centre for India and Australasia was a few pupils and a room at Lyttelton.²

However, at least one aspect of the preliminary preparations proved to be a resounding success. The surveys enabled the land purchasers to choose and occupy their sections with amazing rapidity. On 17 and 18 February the allotment of 106 land orders was made at the partially completed land office in Christchurch. Fifty sections had

¹ H.W. Tucker, Memoir of the Life and Episcopate of George Augustus Selwyn, 1, 356.
² J. Hight, Origin and Inception of the Canterbury Settlement, p.11.
been chosen by 5 p.m. when the office closed for the day. The remainder were chosen the following day. The Lyttelton Times commented thus:

It is a matter of surprise that tracts of land in a wild unoccupied country should be described so simply and readily as proved to be the case. The whole of this is attributable to the survey. The frontage of a road or river, the distance from the neighbouring town lands, or from the nearest trigonometrical station served in almost all the cases to fix the locality of a section.¹

Yet, in all the intense activity and excitement of the period immediately following the arrival of the first colonists the man who was largely responsible for making the successful planting of the new settlement possible, was almost entirely lost sight of. After the return of Godley from Wellington in November, Thomas disappeared into the background. The two men clashed from the outset and less than a week after Godley's return Thomas gave his twelve months' notice of intention to resign.² Apart from the recognition of his services by the Society of Canterbury Colonists Thomas disappears from the official annals of Canterbury history.

At a general meeting of the Society on 31 December J.E. Fitzgerald eulogized in high terms the service done by Thomas. Fitzgerald then moved a resolution which was seconded

1. LT 22 Feb 1851.
2. Thomas to Godley, 3 Dec 1850. GIL 187.
by the Hon. J. Stuart Wortley and passed unanimously:

That the Council be requested to communicate the cordial thanks of the colonists to Capt. Thomas the chief surveyor of the Association for his conduct of the undertaking until the arrival of Mr Godley in the colony and the warm admiration with which they have seen the various works which he has accomplished under circumstances of great and peculiar difficulty. 1

It was a fitting tribute to Thomas's two years of toil in preparing for the colonists' arrival. Unfortunately the relationship between Godley and Thomas was strained to breaking point, and Canterbury's first chief surveyor left the settlement "under a cloud."

Even before Godley returned to Lyttelton in November 1850 it was evident relations between he and Thomas were strained. When Thomas went to Wellington to consult Godley on the possible resumption of works he was in his own words "...received... in the same repulsive manner as before...", Godley showing no disposition to consult him as to what work might be resumed. Godley, on his return to Lyttelton employed persons Thomas had earlier dismissed thereby incurring the latter's wrath. 2 Thomas seems to have been disappointed he

2. Thomas to Hutt (Chairman of the Association's Committee of Management), 22 Feb 1851. This letter, which contains several other explanatory letters and comments, is Thomas's version of the events concerning his dismissal. Thomas had it published as a pamphlet entitled Correspondence showing the reason why Mr Thomas quitted the service of the Canterbury Association, after his return to England.
was not made Agent of the Association when a charter of
incorporation was obtained, as he had been promised in a
letter from Alston.¹

Finding it impossible to co-operate fully with Godley,
Thomas on 3 December gave notice of his intention to resign
in twelve months, as provided by his original agreement with
the Company.² In acknowledging this letter Godley expressed
his sincere regret that Thomas was about to leave the service
of the Association.³

Thomas hoped that the twelve months would quietly slip
away without friction but this was not to be so. On the
arrival of the Pilgrims he was ordered by Godley to leave the
house, built originally for the boat crew, he had been
occupying. He moved to a room in the store where the great
inconvenience he experienced was made worse by Godley
depositing the dirty hospital bedding and utensils in the
building. Moreover, Godley constantly interfered with the
workmen who were responsible to Thomas. Carpenters were
ordered "hither and thither", carts were removed without
Thomas's permission, labourers were assigned to different
jobs, and the blacksmiths were sometimes taken away from
repairing the tools of the road-party thereby leaving the
workers unoccupied. On one occasion an overseer was

2. Thomas to Godley, 3 Dec 1850. Ibid., p.3.
3. Godley to Thomas, 3 Dec 1850. Ibid.
threatened with dismissal because he had not brought his men
to work in time according to Godley's watch instead of his
own. The superintendent, in reporting the incident, stated
that he himself would resign if the threat was carried out.
In short, Thomas's complaint was that he was being deprived
of control over men for whose work he was personally
responsible.¹

At the beginning of 1851 Thomas was sent to the plains
to superintend the marking out of the main lines of road.
No sooner had he begun laying off the line of road from
Christchurch to Heathcote Ferry than he received a letter
from Godley stating that tenders had been called for the
constructing of this road, and that interested persons had
been referred to him for specifications.² As a result
people began arriving to look at the specifications before
they were prepared.

At this time, while Thomas was living with Jollie, the
latter, an assistant surveyor, received a note instructing
him to mark out sections chosen by A. Bowen, W.G. Brittan,
and H. Phillips at Papanui Bush as soon as he could without
interrupting his other work.³ These two incidents, which
involved issuing tenders and putting purchasers in possession
of their land, were both rightly regarded by Thomas as an

¹. Thomas, Correspondence, p.4.
². Godley to Thomas, no date. Quoted in ibid., p.4.
³. Godley to Jollie, 13 Jan 1851. Ibid., p.5.
invasion of his proper functions.

Then to make matters worse Brittan was placed in charge of the land office without Thomas being informed of the impending appointment. The first Thomas knew of the appointment was when Brittan wrote to him asking for an interview to clear up several matters. On the same day Godley wrote a note to Thomas informing him that he had had difficulty directing people interested in the road contract since he could not be found. The next day Jollie received a note from Bowen instructing him to lay off fifty acres at Papanui belonging to the latter's sister. Jollie was then instructed to mark off Brittan's section of 100 acres, also at Papanui Bush.

Thomas's feeling of frustration reached breaking point. Godley was told, in no uncertain terms, that the roads and surveys were not his responsibility. Furthermore, Thomas refused to send a copy of the specifications for the road as he had been ordered to by Godley. Thomas wished to be relieved of his position if Godley thought he had anything to do with the roads and surveys. The tone of the letter convinced Godley that they could not work together advantageously and so an arrangement would have to be worked out for Thomas's departure from the employment of the

1. Brittan to Thomas, 14 Jan 1851. Ibid., pp. 5-6.
2. Godley to Thomas, 14 Jan 1851. Ibid., p. 6.
4. Thomas to Godley, 16 Jan 1851. Ibid., pp. 7-8.
Association. Accordingly Godley made W.J. Wakefield a go-between.¹

Thomas "warmly" expressed to Wakefield what he considered Godley's indignities towards himself. Wakefield carefully repeated the "warm expressions" to Godley. The next day Thomas received his notice of dismissal.² Thomas expressed to Wakefield a desire to withdraw his letter of the sixteenth. Godley was quite agreeable to this but although he was willing to withdraw his official dismissal he thought it best they should part. In order to effect this, Thomas would have to resign. But if he did so he would forfeit all legal claim to the £500 which he could claim if dismissed. An abrupt dismissal would carry with it a disreputable stigma so Godley, stressing the goodwill of the Association, was prepared to pay the £500 in the form of an "honorary testimonial" to Thomas's services in forming the settlement. Godley confessed that he might have transgressed the strict rules of official courtesy by communicating directly with Thomas's subordinates. He was sorry, he added, for having offended Thomas and he stated he had never acted towards, or spoken of, him in other than a spirit of respect and regard.³

Godley then offered Thomas a loan of £500 repayable at the expiration of twelve months, by which time an answer would have been received from the Association on the subject.⁴

2. Correspondence, p. 8.
3. Godley to W.J. Wakefield, 19 Jan 1851. GIL 1705.
4. Ibid., 20 Jan 1851. GIL 386.
The offer was rejected by Thomas who requested that his resignation be accepted immediately. In acknowledging this Godley again declared his "high sense" of Thomas's merits and services. He added that he would recommend that the Association marked their approval of Thomas's conduct by a special acknowledgement. Godley then sought the legal opinion of C.E. Dampier who advised that having carefully perused Thomas's contract the Association (on behalf of the defunct Company) were compelled to pay the £500, except in case of certain events which had not occurred.

At this date (30 January) Thomas withdrew his letter of the sixteenth and awaited his dismissal with the cheque of £500. It is probable he saw or heard of Dampier's letter and objected to some aspect of it. After all these vacillations it appears that finally Thomas was dismissed after all. He stayed in Canterbury a few days and left for Wellington in February. Such was the ignominious departure of Canterbury's first chief surveyor.

Soon after Thomas's second resignation Godley explained the situation to the Association. He had, for some time past,

2. Godley to Thomas, 20 Jan 1851. GOL 9/51.
3. Shortly after his arrival in N.Z. Dampier had, on 18 Nov 1850, been admitted to the bar of the Supreme Court of N.Z. NZS 20 Nov 1850.
4. Dampier to Godley, 30 Jan 1851, GIL 144.
5. Thomas to B.J. Wakefield, 30 Jan 1851. Quoted in Mutual Relations between the Canterbury Association and the Purchasers of Land in the Canterbury Settlement briefly considered, p. 104.
noted something strange and unaccountable in Thomas's
behaviour towards him. Through indirect channels he had
learned of Thomas's entertaining the idea that he (Godley)
was endeavouring to get rid of him and had no confidence in
him. Thomas seemed to be suffering, stated Godley, from
some kind of "monomania." He was prepared to make allowances
for Thomas's behaviour but forbearance had its limits. When
he refused to obey an order he was dismissed. However, out
of consideration for Thomas's feelings and services, he had
consented that he send in his resignation and that the sum
owing be paid in the shape of a testimonial and not as a mere
money compensation. 1 The Association, in acknowledging this
letter, approved the steps Godley had taken in the matter. 2

Thomas had refused, stated Godley in a following despatch,
to ratify the above arrangement and so he had been forced to
fall back upon dismissal as originally contemplated, and to
reconsider the question of compensation as a matter of right.
The £500 was paid because it would have been unwise to risk
a costly court action which might result in a verdict against
the Association. Moreover, had the money not been paid
Thomas might have refused to deliver up the maps and papers
belonging to the Association, pending an answer from England,
and inestimable difficulty would have been caused. 3

1. Godley to Alston, 24 Jan 1851. DGS 7/51.
2. Alston to Godley, 18 Jun 1851. GIL 419.
3. Godley to Alston, 4 Feb 1851. DGS 7/51B.
Upon receiving Thomas's explanation of the situation the Association requested Godley to comment on it, once again expressing their confidence in his judgement. In a lengthy reply Godley elaborated his earlier explanations and replied to Thomas's specific charges. He had never been, he believed, cold, repulsive, or supercilious towards Thomas. He had never berated Thomas and indeed, had urged the Colonists' Council to acknowledge his services. But Thomas had been determined to see discourtesy in everything he did or said to him.

As to Thomas's discomfort in the store Godley asserted that he had offered him a room at his own house, and knowing his dislike of society, assured him that he might treat it exactly like an inn. Thomas bluntly refused and preferred to sleep in the store where his presence was very inconvenient. He had been removed from the house he occupied because it was not right that two houses should be monopolized by the Association's officers at a time when there was considerable pressure for room. Immediately after the arrival of the colonists Thomas left Lyttelton against Godley's remonstrances and went to live at Sumner which, in the absence of any road, was the most inaccessible and inconvenient place he could have chosen. He was requested to move to Christchurch to be in the way of the colonists (and not out of it as Thomas

1. Alston to Godley, 16 Jul 1851. GIL 1709.
himself had wished) but Godley did not know whether he had moved or not. This explained the note about Thomas being difficult to find.

It was absurd, Godley added, that if he wanted a cart or labourers he should have to send to Thomas for permission. Thomas's subordinate assistant surveyors had been directly communicated with to avoid delay and trouble. Wakefield had reported to Godley that Thomas launched into a torrent of abuse and invective such as could not be repeated. After this reconciliation was impossible. Godley stated he had never employed anyone dismissed by Thomas, except Cridland, and in this case Thomas had agreed to try him again. The placing of Brittan as head of the land office did not interfere with Thomas's post as chief surveyor.

In conclusion Godley stated that it was obvious Thomas could not carry on in a subordinate capacity for a further year. He did a particular kind of job admirably well but the demand for that work had ceased. His replacement, Cass, was a much more efficient surveyor, and from manner, habits, and qualifications infinitely better adapted for the post.¹

After his arrival in Wellington Thomas submitted a copy of his letter (to Hutt) to Governor Grey who replied that he regretted his engagement with the Canterbury Association had ceased, but he was glad to know that the cessation resulted from causes which in no way impaired his usefulness as a

¹ Godley to Alston, 24 Nov 1851. GIL 1708.
The matter was not put to rest until after Thomas returned to England in August 1852. He received a letter from the Association the contents of which Godley had not passed on to him. In this the Committee of Management expressed regret of Thomas's intention to resign as chief surveyor and asked Godley to convey to him "...their deep appreciation of the value of his services and their best thanks for the zeal and ability with which he has fulfilled the duties entrusted to him." Godley received this letter six months before Thomas left for England. Because he did not receive the contents of it in New Zealand Thomas regarded this as deliberate suppression by Godley. The Association apologized for this state of affairs.

Thomas washed his hands of the whole affair, taking solace from his friends who told him he had been shamefully used by the Association. He confided to a friend in New Zealand that when the Association was dissolved by the New Zealand Constitution Act of June 1852 he was "much pleased" since it was considered in England a "...thorough humbug and a complete failure..."

1. Grey to Thomas, 17 Mar 1851. Quoted in Thomas, Correspondence, p. 12.
3. Alston to Thomas, 7 Aug 1851. Ibid., p. 12.
5. 15 & 16 Vic., c. 72.
According to Carrington, Thomas called on Godley at
the War Office in London and apologized for his hasty
behaviour. ¹

¹ Op. cit., p.113. Godley was at the War Office from 1855-
61. Although Thomas's action seems unlikely in view of
the bitterness of his conflict with Godley, Professor
Carrington has assured the writer that Thomas definitely
did make such an apology. Unfortunately a perusal of
the notes he made when he wrote his book failed to reveal
the documentary evidence upon which the assertion was
based. For details of Thomas's life after 1851 see
Appendix E.
CHAPTER V: CONCLUSION.

That the Canterbury Settlement was extremely fortunate in being so well prepared for the reception of the first colonists is a fact which is only fully appreciated when other colonizing ventures of the period are examined. For this purpose, South Australia, the first settlement formed under the guidance of Edward Gibbon Wakefield, offers fruitful comparison with Canterbury, the last and most successful Wakefieldian settlement.

Just as the responsibility of preparing Canterbury for the first settlers rested on the shoulders of Thomas, a similar burden was placed on Colonel William Light (1786-1839) in South Australia. Like Thomas, Light was a well-travelled military man, having served with great distinction as an aide on the Duke of Wellington's staff during the Peninsular War. Later, he was a lieutenant-colonel in the Spanish Constitutional forces in their struggle against King Ferdinand. He was also friendly with Pasha Mohammed Ali of Egypt, and recruited British officers for the Pasha's navy.¹

Gazetted surveyor-general of South Australia on 4 February 1836,² five months later Light and his assistants left for Australia on the Rapid. The rest of his party had left five weeks earlier on the Cygnet. Under Light's command

2. G. Dutton, Founder of a City; the Life of Colonel William Light, p. 157.
were a total of eleven surveyors and thirty labourers. On 17 August the Rapid anchored off Kangaroo Island, and found the Cygnet had not arrived.

The little that was known of the harbours and plains of the Port Cooper district before Thomas made his exploration was a wealth of information compared with the geographical knowledge available in England of the harbours of the Gulf of St. Vincent and Spencer and their vast hinterlands. Although explorers had sighted the western and eastern portions of the central South Australian coastline Matthew Flinders, who in 1802 examined the Rift Valley Gulfs and the Central Highlands, is regarded as the true discoverer of the future colony. However, it was the discoveries of Charles Sturt in 1829–30 which gave the geographical incentive to the movement to found a colony in the region. Sturt and Collet Barker traced the Murray River to its outlet at Lake Alexandrina, a discovery which showed that the huge area in the vicinity of the Murray was a promising area for settlement. The two explorers also traversed the area between the Murray and the Gulf of St. Vincent, and Sturt prophesied that it would soon become a centre of settlement. His book Two Expeditions into the Interior of South Australia (1834) publicized the area in England.

In his instructions drawn up by the South Australian Commissioners Light was directed to examine the parts of the coast where the reports of Flinders and others showed there
might be suitable harbours. Particular attention was to be paid to Port Lincoln, Nepean Bay, Encounter Bay, the outlet of the Murray, and the east coast of the Gulf of St. Vincent, especially Jones Harbour (Port Adelaide). The land in the vicinity of any good harbour, if suitable as a site of even a secondary town, was to be surveyed sufficiently to be included in the lands available to the preliminary purchasers. A site for the first town was to be selected in conjunction with a good harbour, and an extensive area of land nearby surveyed so as to enable the first 437 landholders to make the first choice of land. Light was advised to exercise caution to prevent collision with the Aborigines. Apparently without weighing their words the Commissioners concluded that the Governor, and with him the first settlers, was expected to arrive at Port Lincoln only two months after Light reached Nepean Bay. Thus, in two months he was given the impossible task of examining 1,500 miles of coastline, founding the first town and secondary towns, surveying the town sections, and 100,000 acres of rural sections. Even Light's opponents admitted that he could just have easily walked from Australia to England in three weeks as examined 1,500 miles of coast in two months.

With the limited time at his disposal Light soon reduced

1. Price, p. 121.
2. Dutton, pp. 161, 163.
3. Price, p. 121.
the area to be explored to the east coast of the Gulf of St. Vincent. Unlike Thomas, who had the benefit of the Acheron surveys, Light had no such expert advice to rely upon. The Admiralty had rejected a request by the Commissioners for a coastal survey. 

A very suitable harbour had been discovered by Barker and re-discovered by a Captain Jones in 1833, but unfortunately it was located on the map to the north of its true position. After noting the unsuitability of Encounter Bay and Nepean Bay, Light crossed to Rapid Bay which he called "a little Paradise." Proceeding north the explorers on three occasions examined Jones Harbour without recognizing it. The wide fertile plains on this coast made it doubly desirable that a good harbour be found. On 21 November the problem was solved when Light explored the southern arm of the Port Adelaide inlet and found a splendid harbour. The location of the first settlement was immediately decided on. Like Canterbury, South Australia was fortunate in possessing a first-rate harbour close to the vast plains. Luckily, there was no range of hills between port and plains as in Canterbury, though the sandy wastes were complained of by the colonists as being a barrier to easy communications.

A decision then had to be made as to the site of the main town and it was Light's positioning of Adelaide which, though controversial at the time, has won him much praise.

1. Ibid.
In selecting the site of the main town he was instructed to confer with Governor J. Hindmarsh though the complete responsibility was to be his own. There were, according to the Commissioners, ten advantages the site chosen ought to possess, the principal ones being: a commodious harbour, safe and accessible at all seasons (the Port River met this requirement); a considerable tract of fertile land immediately adjoining (the Adelaide Plains); and an abundant supply of fresh water (the Torrens River).¹ The presence of dense mangrove swamps ruled out the possibility of placing the capital on the harbour.

At first there was general satisfaction with the site of Adelaide. A meeting of landholders supported the site by 218 votes to 137.² However, some settlers were disgruntled with the six mile separation of port and capital, in spite of the fact that the intervening country was almost perfectly level and not even a road was needed to draw carriages over it. At the meeting of landholders a resolution requesting that a portion of the town acres be surveyed at the port was passed unanimously.³ Although the matter was settled for the moment, C. Stevenson, editor of the South Australian Register and Colonial Gazette, took every opportunity of reviving the controversy in the columns of his paper. Governor Hindmarsh,

¹ Dutton, p.162.
² W. Light, Brief Journal, p.68.
³ Ibid., p.67.
who resented the fact that Light had been given the task of choosing the site for the capital put every obstacle he knew in the way of the surveyor-general. He had the audacity to summon Light, busy with his survey of Adelaide, to a council six miles away at Holdfast Bay to be questioned as if he had neglected his duties. Reports that Victor Harbour near the Murray mouth would make a fine port induced Hindmarsh to recommend to the Secretary of State the removal of the site of the capital and of his own intention to do so.\textsuperscript{1} This was incredible folly as Adelaide was well beyond the tent and hut stage. Fortunately this final protest by Hindmarsh was futile, and Adelaide was secure. Hindmarsh's foolishness was of a different order from Godley's restrained handling of difficult situations in Canterbury. History has vindicated Light's siting of Adelaide, just as Light hoped it would when he stated that he was willing to leave the matter to posterity to judge him.

The greatest monument to Light's work was his planning of Adelaide. He was instructed to "make the streets of ample width and arrange them with reference to the convenience of the inhabitants and the beauty and salubrity of the town..." Reserves were to be made for squares, public walks, and quays.\textsuperscript{2} It is not known whether Light's plan of the town

\textsuperscript{1} Price, p.103.\textsuperscript{2} Dutton, p.162.
was original or not. Van Zyl believes that it is safe to
assume that the Commissioners and Light were influenced by
T.J. Maslen's book *A Friend of Australia* (1836) in which a
diagram for a typical Australian town was based on the
rectangular grid. Other ideas put forward by Maslen, such
as a park belt, were used by Light.¹ With its parkland belt,
wide streets, and six squares Light bequeathed to Adelaide a
spacious plan far advanced for the times. It is noticeable
that the city plans of Adelaide and Christchurch have many
features in common, especially the parklands and squares.
Whether the plan of Adelaide influenced Thomas and Jollie is
not known but it is highly probable the Canterbury Association
knew of it. However, in their despatches to Thomas the
Association never referred to Adelaide.

Although many comparisons can be made between the work
of Light and Thomas contrasts can also be found and none is
more evident than that relating to the surveys. Thomas, with
his small but highly efficient staff, had few problems compared
with Light. The latter's deputy, G.S. Kingston, was obviously
incapable and was not equal to the most simple tasks expected
of a surveyor. The survey labourers were generally a sulky
lot whose temperament was probably largely due to their
resentment at having signed on at 2/- a day while other

¹ F.D.W. Van Zyl, "Adelaide and the Gridiron Plan in
History", *Architecture in Australia*, lli, p. 101. The
author is a member of the Faculty of Architecture and
Town Planning at the University of Adelaide.
labourers worked for twice that amount. Kingston compares most unfavourably with Thomas's deputy, Thomas Cass, who was very efficient in his work.

Light was given a huge task: the country sections each of 134 acres were to be marked out with an adjoining road; he was to provide for the subsequent division into eighty acre sections of such land as was not chosen by the first 437 landholders; and two square miles was to be made available for leasing for every eighty acre section. This huge total of 960,000 acres was expected to be laid out on only £3,000 a year.\(^1\) Moreover, no transport had been provided, there was insufficient staff, and supplies of fresh meat were so few and far between that the labourers began to show signs of scurvy. The contrast between this and Thomas's well-fed, well-equipped staff needs no elaboration. To make matters worse, settlers arrived in South Australia even before the surveys commenced. Another contrast was that in Canterbury suitable areas of land were chosen and then the boundaries marked, whereas in South Australia boundaries were marked before selection.

In April 1837 the country survey commenced, Light and his party working on the east side of the Torrens while B.T. Finnis worked with the other party on the other side of the river. The task was beyond Light's means and very soon

1. Dutton, p. 223.
landholders requested that the survey department be increased so that the job could be done in six months. Light indicated that to do this he required 200 more men as well as carts, oxen, instruments, and tents. Attempts at recruiting staff in Sydney was unsuccessful and Kingston was sent back to England to obtain help and to rid the colony of his unwanted services. In the meantime Hindmarsh and other preliminary purchasers commenced legal proceedings in the Supreme Court and forced Light to reserve Encounter Bay and other districts, thereby holding up the selection of country land.

Kingston returned in June 1838, with the Commissioners’ answers. Lieutenant Dawson of the Royal Engineers to whom the matter had been referred, recommended a running survey in place of Light’s trigonometrical method. The Commissioners adopted the recommendation and ordered Light to institute a running survey. This he refused to do and resigned, with his staff following his example. His resignation was the result of circumstances not unlike that of Thomas’s departure. Both men failed to get a sympathetic hearing from officialdom, though Light’s case was the more tragic since he was harassed at every turn, a factor which sent him to an early grave. Kingston took over the department and in view of the circumstances made a complete volte face by continuing the trigonometrical survey. Light was bitterly denounced by the

2. Price, p. 133.
Commissioners for the shortcomings of the surveys. Yet, in fifteen months he had trigonometrically surveyed 150,000 acres, staked 150 sections, and mapped large areas. By these sordid intrigues South Australia lost its one supremely able officer. The shortcomings in the preliminary work in South Australia reflect not on Light but on the petty-minded bureaucratic officials who neither understood the difficulties involved in Light's work nor seemed to care for the good of the colony as a whole. The planning of the whole scheme left much to be desired.

Undoubtedly the Canterbury Association kept the South Australian experiment in view when it planned its own settlement. That South Australia was poorly planned, at least in the matter of preliminary preparations for the reception of the first colonists, is clearly evident when the work of Thomas and Light is compared and contrasted. Both men were efficient surveyors and administrators and both did nearly all that could have been expected under the circumstances, yet South Australia in its vital formative years was an unorganized chaos compared with Canterbury.

* * * * * * * * * * *

1. Ibid., p.135.
Many contemporaries of Thomas were not unaware of the value of his work in the new settlement. But more often than not the problems faced by the first settlers, if these had anything to do with the preliminary works, were blamed on the first chief surveyor. Felix Wakefield, the Association's land agent, in a report he made in 1852, stated that the preliminary works were not carried on as efficiently as they might have been.

He blamed Thomas for two serious errors: the choice of the sites of Lyttelton and Christchurch; and the erection of expensive buildings at Lyttelton. Wakefield believed Lyttelton was poorly chosen. There was little or no running water; the streets had been formed at right angles, irrespective of the natural features of the ground; it was badly exposed to south-west gales; and finally, communications between port and plains were poor. He believed there was neither the land, wood nor water for a town on the north side of Lyttelton Harbour. Instead of expensive buildings at Lyttelton, Wakefield believed a wharf should have been built at Gollans Bay, and a road constructed from thence to Evans Pass and the plains where the colonists would be immediately located. But this was not very feasible. A road from Gollans Bay would probably have been even more difficult to

1. Felix Wakefield owned 100 acres of rural land at Summer and he wanted a road from Lyttelton to be constructed thence so the value of his land would rise.
construct than Thomas's line, and as buildings sprang up at this harbour, as they inevitably would have done, all available land would soon have been rapidly taken up leaving little room for future expansion.

As for Christchurch, Wakefield objected to its site on the grounds that when the Papanui Bush was exhausted (the Deans had substantially fenced off their bush to trespassers) the town would be without fuel or building timber, and supplies would have to be brought up the Avon and Heathcote Rivers at a high cost. The correct site for a town, he believed was in a wide valley on the south side of the Heathcote Ferry, which was the proper shipping point for the plains.¹ There was little justice in these charges. No site in the Heathcote area contained sufficient suitable land for an expanding town.

However, the main blame for the negligence, added Wakefield, rested on Godley, who should have spent the months after his arrival in New Zealand at Lyttelton in order to become conversant with the problems of the embryonic settlement. Instead he went to Wellington.

The loss of Thomas, Wakefield considered, was a real blow. The chief surveyor had shown zeal, energy, and assiduity in the performance of his duties, and he carried out the surveying with a high degree of skilfulness. Thomas's

¹ Presumably he was thinking of the Heathcote Valley.
knowledge of the country and the perfect survey he had made constituted a guarantee of the completion of the remainder in the same manner. Finally, Wakefield stated that Godley had conducted himself "jesuitically" towards Thomas. 1

In general, the only aspect of Thomas's work which was roundly criticized at the time was the failure to complete the Lyttelton to Sumner road. Even here engineers and road constructors of the time believed Thomas had chosen the best line available. 2 However, Thomas's line was modified by E. Dobson, the Provincial Engineer, who departed from the steady one-in-twenty gradient and instituted a zig-zag to avoid troublesome rocks near Evans Pass. The road continued on the east side of the Sumner Valley, instead of the west side as in Thomas's plan. 3 The road was a contentious issue long after the arrival of the first four ships. It was not opened until 1857 when on 24 August Fitzgerald, the first Superintendent drove a tandem over it. Writing in 1900 C.C. Bowen stated that "it was unfortunate that the Roman severity of Thomas's uniform gradient was not maintained through all obstacles, even at the cost of some delay." The result would have been a useful highway instead of a road unsuitable for heavy traffic. 4

2. Select Committee, passim. See also Andersen, Place-names, pp. 207-213.
3. Andersen, Place-names, pp. 210-11.
Thomas's expenditure on the Sumner road has usually been thought of as being the reason why he was forced to overdraw his credit. But a total of only £4,915 was spent on the road\(^1\) and although this sum, if spent on alternative means and/or routes of communication would possibly have meant the difference between solvency and bankruptcy, these alternatives offered little promise. Thomas could have, for example, formed a road on the route taken by the bridle-path. But this would have been far too steep for carts and would not have solved the problem of transporting heavy goods to the plains. These goods were, on the Pilgrims' arrival, transported by boat to Sumner and thence up the Avon but the method was unreliable since bad weather and the bar at Sumner hampered operations. It would have been an almost impossible undertaking to have made the Sumner Bar completely safe for shipping. Taken as a whole Thomas was justified in choosing the route he did. It was the only line and means of communication which would have solved the problem in the medium term until some superior means such as a tunnel was available for long term use.

Yet, the incompleteness of the road cannot justly be blamed on Thomas. He was working within a limited budget which proved to be completely inadequate as time went on. The funds for preliminary works were not as great as Thomas

1. See Appendix D.
had hoped simply because not enough land was sold in England. By the time the first colonists were due to leave (30 August 1850) only 13,750 acres of rural land and 132 acres of town land, giving leasing rights to 65,750 acres of pasturage, had been sold for £39,300. This was only about one-sixth of the total it had been hoped to sell by this date. As a result there was no extra finance above the £20,000 for the continuation of the preliminary works.  

The neglect of the religious and educational needs of the immigrants was also a matter of economics. Thomas was instructed by the Association to make reserves for all "public purposes." No advice was given as to how many church and school sites were to be reserved. He intended to erect a combined church and school at Lyttelton, and a school at Christchurch but unfortunately funds ran out before these buildings could be erected. Finance to erect schools and churches, which was deposited in the Religious and Educational Fund, was used for purposes other than those intended. The money applicable to this fund, from land sales to 30 August 1850, was one-third or £12,500 (£650 having been deducted for the land agent's commission). This was reduced by £9,000 as part of the £10,000 paid into the Colonial Bishopric Fund as a deposit to guarantee the creation of a Canterbury diocese.

1. CP, p. 209.
2. The loans arranged by Fox and Grey were made so the works could go on, in anticipation of remittances being received from England.
diocese. The remaining £3,500 was further reduced by the investment of £675 in 255 acres of land.¹

Thomas's decision to place Christchurch among the swamps was also criticized. Yet, the site appears to have been chosen with great discretion. The locality was excellent, the supply of water plentiful, and the position combined advantages no other spot would have afforded. The site, in spite of the presence of swamps, was a reasonably dry area, placed as close as possible to the head of the navigation of the Avon and Heathcote Rivers. A site on drier land, seven to eight miles further inland, would have placed an almost unbearable strain on transport facilities. The credit for Christchurch's well-planned layout with its squares and its spacious park of nearly 500 acres near the centre of the city belongs to Thomas and Jollie. The inner city is a living monument to its planners. Later encroachments were made by men who had forgotten Thomas's first plan for the city.

Thomas's greatest success was in the matter of surveys. In no other Wakefield settlement were surveys carried out so efficiently and cheaply. The rapidity with which land-purchasers were put into possession of their land more than justified the scheme of surveys and selection of land.

Thomas was typical of that versatile individual in early

New Zealand — the surveyor who was an explorer, architect, town planner, road-maker, engineer, and administrator as well. Such men did more than any others to shape the future of New Zealand. To generations of Canterbury historians Thomas has been an enigma. This is not surprising since even his contemporaries found him difficult to understand. Edward Jollie, who worked with Thomas probably more than any other man, considered him "...not altogether in his right mind, he had had so many losses from putting trust in other people's honesty that he had become suspicious of everyone." However, added Jollie, he was a very hard-working and honest administrator. Thomas knew more than any other man he had met how to get work out of those under him.¹ Many early settlers were high in their praise of Thomas. One anonymous settler, writing back to England, stated that the Association should be proud to have such a thorough and practical man to carry out their plans. Thomas was the most determined and persevering man he had met.²

Captain Stokes of the Acheron told Godley that he had seen "nothing south of the line" to equal the maps Thomas had shown him.³ This was high praise indeed as Stokes had had considerable experience in survey work.

While contemporaries generally judged Thomas and his

work in a favourable light later historians were more discriminating in their opinions. E. Dobson was critical of the grid pattern of streets in Lyttelton. The streets had been formed without regard to the irregularities of the ground or the direction of the watercourses. Had the steep hillsides been contoured in terraces and connected by inclines laid out at cart-road gradients the site would have been, Dobson believed, one of the "prettiest" for private residences.¹

Dobson was also critical of the fact that no arrangement was made for the reservation of any drainage outlets, or the protection of natural watercourses in the site of Christchurch. The considerable litigation which had attended the attempts to obtain drainage outlets might have been avoided had contour levels been taken, and drainage outlets provided, previous to the sale of the town lots.² From an engineering point of view Thomas stands condemned in this light.

Agnes Hercus has deplored "...Thomas's lamentable lack of insight into the problems which he was creating by attempting to build a city upon a flat site, a large part of which was nothing but a swamp..."³ She came to the conclusion that the original site at the head of Lyttelton Harbour would have been in many ways more preferable. However, she believed that the drainage difficulty of the present

¹ E. Dobson, Pioneer Engineering, pp.131-2.
² Ibid., p.132.
³ A.I. Hercus, A City Built Upon a Swamp, p.6.
site was increased by the multitudinous local bodies which grew up and hindered comprehensive planning.\(^1\) Although Christchurch undoubtedly had and still has drainage problems, modern technological advances and thoughtful planning have rendered the difficulty less serious than once was the case.

Canterbury historians who have examined Thomas's work as a whole, instead of scrutinizing some special aspect of it, have been high in their praise. A.S. Bruce hoped that "...the succeeding generations will recognize the honour due to Captain Thomas, and place on tangible record their obligation to this great man to whose ingenuity and rare judgement we owe our occupancy of this garden of New Zealand - Canterbury."\(^2\) H.F. Wigram stated that "...Captain Thomas must surely be held to have shown good value for the money he spent."\(^3\) C.R. Straubel believed that the Association's settlers "...came to a site that had been better prepared in the matter of surveys, accommodation for immigrants, and landing facilities than any of the northern Wakefield settlements. All this they owed to Captain Thomas and his assistants."\(^4\)

Unfortunately, it was Thomas's determination, carried to a point of bluntness verging on brutal contempt, which raised the hackles of so many of his lieutenants, especially

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1. Ibid., pp. 63-4.
2. Bruce, p. 18.
3. Wigram, p. 33. For Thomas's expenditure see Appendix D.
Torlesse. In many ways he was an overbearing misanthrope, who was only happy when he was far away from the trammels of civilization. Yet, Thomas possessed those qualities essential to his position, as Godley and others were always ready to admit. Only a conscientious, persevering, assiduous, and cantankerous person like Thomas could have carried out the plans of the Association so successfully. Canterbury as an organized settlement owes a tremendous debt of gratitude to its first chief surveyor.
APPENDIX A.


Although many of Thomas's first forty-five years are shrouded in mystery several periods of his life up to his association with the Canterbury scheme can be documented in reasonable detail. He was born in England in 1803 but there is no known record of his birth-place or schooling and little is known of his family though he did have a brother who was later a magistrate of Worcester and who died in the 1850's.¹

Thomas first joined the army as an ensign in the 101st Regiment of Foot on 15 February 1816, and was placed on half-pay on 25 July. He entered the Royal Military College Sandhurst as a Gentleman Cadet on 4 May 1819, at the age of sixteen. His father is given as the late Lieutenant-Colonel Thomas, Barrack Master, Portsea, and his mother as living at Fareham. He was commissioned into the 87th Regiment of Foot (Prince of Wales Own Irish Fusiliers) on 7 November 1822 and became a Lieutenant on 11 November 1825. On 1 November 1827 he was transferred to the 19th Regiment of Foot where he continued to serve as Lieutenant. He is last mentioned in the Army List for 1833 and since he does not reappear in the issue for 1834 he seems to have left the Army between 1832-4, still with the rank of Lieutenant.² This would account for his being called "Captain."

According to Hocken, Thomas was an aide-de-camp for a time to Sir John Malcolm, the Governor of Bombay 1826-30.³ After his retirement from the Army in the early 1830's he travelled widely in South and North America and the West Indies⁴ and on return to England he published in 1839 a collection of drawings made on his journeys.⁵ Apart from travelling over a greater part of the United States he also visited Texas (which was not annexed by the United States until 1845 and therefore still Mexican territory when Thomas was there) where he found the state of society to be "...about the lowest you can possibly find for white people..."⁶

¹. Lord Lyttelton, New Zealand and the Canterbury Colony, p.33.
². For this information, taken from the Army Lists and the R.M.C. Sandhurst Cadet Registers, I am indebted to Lt.-Col. G.A. Shepperd, Librarian, Royal Military Academy, Sandhurst, England.
³. Contributions, p.77.
⁴. Committee on Colonization, pp.155, 164.
⁶. Committee on Colonization, p.164.
Thomas purchased land in England from the New Zealand Company for the Wellington settlement and arrived in New Zealand on the *Adelaide* in 1840. He confided to an early Nelson settler that he had come out with the Wellington settlers "like a fool" and had suffered with them being reduced deplorably. For some time he lived on the coast near Wellington at a whaling station along with several other young men of "family" and education, one of whom was the son of a baronet and the other had been very successful at University. They were so poor, there were only one or two pairs of shoes among all of them.

With Captain E. Daniell, Thomas leased Tom's whaling station at Parema for a season in 1840. Lieutenant Best, whose journal gives an interesting insight into early colonial life, visited Thomas at Parema on 6 October 1840 and the two men "spun yarns" after tea. According to Best who was in the 80th Regiment, Thomas had a brother in this Regiment.

In May 1841 Thomas was appointed an assistant surveyor on the staff of Captain Mein Smith, surveyor-general of the New Zealand Company. He was despatched to Wanganui to assist W. Carrington in the survey there. In May 1842 he returned to Port Nicholson and settled the accounts of the Wanganui labourers and other matters concerning the Wanganui district. Later in the same month he led an expedition of seven men to explore to the north of Porirua Bay and he continued on to Wanganui intending to be present at the selection of the first sections there. He reached Wanganui in time for this event in which he took place on 6 June. Samuel Brees reported that Thomas superintended the recovery of stores from the stranded *Enterprise* at the mouth of the Whangaehu River.

The next mention of Thomas in the New Zealand Company archives is of his being engaged on surveys in the Porirua district. In March 1843 Thomas, along with several other

3. Ibid.
6. Brees to W. Wakefield, 6 May, 1 Jun 1842. NZC 110/1.
7. Ibid., 1 Jun 1842.
8. Ibid., 18 Jul 1842.
9. Ibid., 22 Aug 1842.
surveyors were retrenched at a time when the Company was facing financial difficulties. The following year Thomas and H.S. Harrison walked overland to Hawkes Bay via the Wairarapa. They set out from Wellington on 9 October 1844 and after a journey of 310 miles and 27 days reached their destination, a whaling station at Table Cape, Mahia Peninsula.

Next, Thomas and R.J. Harrison contracted to survey in the new Otago settlement between the Molyneux (Clutha) and Tokomairiro Rivers. Edward Jollie, who was also surveying in the Molyneux district but under a different contract, relates the bad luck Thomas and Harrison had after chartering a schooner to carry themselves, their men, and provisions to the Molyneux River mouth. Having reached the bay and landed the men, except one, and part of the instruments, a strong wind blew up overnight and the schooner was forced out to sea and never returned. The party was unable to commence surveying and kept themselves in food by pig-hunting. Fortunately, Jollie was able to supply them with provisions. By mid 1847 the surveyors had completed their contracts and Thomas farmed in the Molyneux district before returning to England in late 1847 or early 1848.

Back in England Thomas gave evidence before Lord Monteagle's Committee on Irish emigration on 4 April 1848. This revealed the extent of his travels in New Zealand. Apart from the places already mentioned he had been to Auckland, Queen Charlotte Sound, Cloudbay, Pigeon Bay, and Ruapuke Island. He also gave his opinion on several matters which included the progress of Wellington, native affairs, harbours, and rates of wages in the colony. He then became involved with the Canterbury Association which chose him to act as their chief surveyor in the founding of the new settlement in New Zealand. They could have chosen few surveyors with more experience in the colony.

1. Ibid., 1 Apr 1843.
3. Hocken, Contributions, p. 77.
6. He undoubtedly viewed the vast Port Cooper plains while sailing down the South Island east coast, and this experience he probably recalled when on his way to N.Z. to find a location for the new settlement.
7. Committee on Colonization, p. 156.
APPENDIX B.

TERMS OF AGREEMENT BETWEEN THOMAS AND THE NEW ZEALAND COMPANY.

1. A poop-cabin passage to New Zealand.

2. Bona fide travelling expenses while engaged in selecting a site for the proposed settlement of Canterbury - such expenses to be subject to the approval of the Company's Principal Agent.

3. If unsuccessful in obtaining an eligible site within twelve months after arriving in New Zealand then -
   (a) £500, payable in four equal quarterly instalments, in advance, and
   (b) A chief-cabin passage back to England, if required at the end of the period above mentioned.

4. If successful in obtaining an eligible site, then -
   (a) The balance of the £500 to be paid immediately on completion of the selection;
   (b) A salary at the rate of £400 a year, and ration money at the rate of 5/- a day, commencing on the date of his beginning to be employed on the survey, and
   (c) A sum of £1,000 to be paid on his putting settlers into actual possession of 100,000 acres, i.e. with the section lines marked out in detail, etc.

Such 100,000 acres to be all sold; and the sum of £1,000 to be in lieu of any guarantee of employment for any stated time.

5. The whole to be contingent on the reply of the Government being such as to encourage the Company and the Association to go on with the undertaking.

6. To be also contingent on a continued satisfactory performance of all duties.

7. And to be further contingent on Captain Thomas seeing the instructions which Mr Felix Wakefield is understood to have been for some time preparing for his guidance.

Dated 25 May 1849.

Source: NZC 102/28.
APPENDIX G.

DID FELIX WAKEFIELD HELP TO DRAW UP THOMAS’S INSTRUCTIONS?

Professor D.H. Pike has convincingly shown that it was impossible for the first draft of Colonial Surveying with a View to the Disposal of Waste Land to have been included in the Association’s instructions issued to Thomas. The traditional view largely originated from the fact that the treatise by Felix Wakefield carries the notice: "The peculiar modes of surveying, selecting, and giving possession of land, recommended in this work, are those adopted by the Canterbury Association in its Settlement on the Southern Plains of New Zealand."

When the New Zealand Company, in a letter dated 8 May 1849, invited F. Wakefield to submit a report on colonial surveying Thomas was already in Auckland seeking the sanction of the Governor and the Bishop to the Port Cooper plains as the site of Canterbury. Thomas had not had many months of surveying behind him as Pike states; in fact the actual surveys had not even begun. Wakefield submitted his report on 10 September 1849 and he was still handing out complimentary copies when Godley arrived in New Zealand the following March.

But all of this does not mean that Felix Wakefield did not play a major part in drawing up the instructions issued to Thomas. Before the Association’s Committee of Management on 6 May, Godley reported that Felix Wakefield had offered to prepare the professional instructions for the chief surveyor of the Association. The offer was accepted. Not only this but Felix interviewed Thomas in order to test his professional qualifications and capabilities for the position of chief surveyor. It is impossible to believe that some, if not most, of Felix’s ideas did not rub off onto Thomas who was probably not a qualified surveyor. The seventh and last point in Thomas’s agreement with the Company is additional evidence that Felix was preparing instructions.

Another convincing argument is that months before he

2. Ibid.
3. Management Committee, Canterbury Association Minute Books, 1, 6 May 1848.
4. Ibid., 17 Jun 1848.
5. See Appendix B.
received the first draft copy of Colonial Surveying in April 1850 by the Monarch. Thomas was already using methods, such as the preparation of a master map and a trigonometrical survey, identical to those propounded by Felix Wakefield. It is hard to resist the conclusion that Felix had some part in the drawing up of the instructions issued to Thomas. A comparison between Colonial Surveying and these instructions reveals a marked similarity in both form and content, the only noticeable omission being Felix's views on pastoral leases.

The matter is best concluded by quoting Felix himself. He stated that Colonial Surveying was "...a very careful amplification of those instructions I framed for Mr Thomas..." There is no reason to suspect that this statement is anything but the truth. The evidence for the view that Felix Wakefield played a major part in drawing up Thomas's instructions is overwhelming.

1. F. Wakefield to H. Savage, Hon. Sec. of the Committee of Land Purchasers (Eng), 22 Apr 1853. Quoted in Mutual Relations, pp. 86-7.
2. Ibid.
APPENDIX D.

THOMAS'S EXPENDITURE.

Amount expended in public works at the colony.
From April 1849 to 25 November 1850, per Captain Thomas.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Work</th>
<th>Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>PORT</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emigration well</td>
<td>49- 0-11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timber yard and landing-place at Lyttelton</td>
<td>273- 6-10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sea-wall and esplanade at Lyttelton</td>
<td>624- 0- 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lyttelton pier</td>
<td>537-13- 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Landing-place</td>
<td>11-14- 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Streets</td>
<td>1,667- 5- 9</td>
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<tr>
<td>Boat ways</td>
<td>38-14-11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Piles for buildings</td>
<td>8-15- 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Store at Lyttelton unfinished</td>
<td>11- 3- 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crane, Lyttelton pier</td>
<td>5-12- 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooking utensils, Lyttelton</td>
<td>7-11- 8</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total PORT</strong></td>
<td>3,240- 4- 4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **ROADS**                                        |        |
| No. 1 party, Lyttelton                           | 1,308-10- 4 |
| No. 2 party, Gollans Bay                         | 2,511-12- 9 |
| No. 3 party, Sumner                              | 351-18- 6 |
| Sea-wall, Sumner                                 | 643- 0-10 |
| Miscellaneous                                    | 100-15- 1 |
| **Total ROADS**                                  | 4,915-17- 6 |

| **OTHER EXPENSES**                               |        |
| Buildings                                        | 3,755-2- 9 |
| Temporary buildings                              | 266-4-11 |
| Permanent fencing                               | 147-17- 2 |
| Temporary fencing                               | 54-11- 7 |
| **Total OTHER EXPENSES**                         | 4,223-16- 5 |

| **Surveys**                                      |        |
| Trigonometrical survey                           | 1,407- 0- 3 |
| Topographical survey                             | 1,797- 3-11 |
| Survey of towns                                  | 371- 9- 5 |
| Maps                                             | 96- 0- 3 |
| Station houses                                   | 250- 4- 4 |
| Miscellaneous                                    | 153- 8- 1 |
| **Total Surveys**                                | 4,075-16- 3 |

Carried Forward 16,455-14- 6
<table>
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<th>Item</th>
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<td>698-10-3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Office expenses</td>
<td>47-4-7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Profit and loss</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stores and charges on stores</td>
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<tr>
<td>Incidental expenses</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Brought Forward</strong></td>
<td><strong>16,455-14-6</strong></td>
</tr>
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</table>

Source: "Balance Sheet as rendered by the Accountant of the Canterbury Association from May 1848 to 5 April 1853", dated 23 Mar 1853, Mutual Relations, pp. 136-42, (extract).
APPENDIX E.

JOSEPH THOMAS: HIS LATER YEARS.

Thomas's life after he left the employment of the Canterbury Association has been shrouded in even greater mystery than his earlier years. His whereabouts have been almost entirely unknown. However, recently unearthed letters from Thomas to Donald (later Sir Donald) McLean have provided new light on his hitherto obscure career.

After his dismissal by Godley, Thomas did not stay long in Canterbury. He arrived at Wellington on 10 February aboard the Schooner Alice. His name then frequently appears in the annals of early Hawkes Bay history. McLean made an interesting entry in his journal in April 1851:

Thomas offers me all his sheep at 14/- per head - he seems quite delighted with the country, its future prospects and Sir George Grey's offer to send him home with letters to Earl Grey to get colonists out to Ahuriri, he is very bitter with Godley and seems rather disappointed with the treatment he received at Port Cooper... McLean bought from Thomas 370 ewes and their lambs.

On 28 June 1851 Thomas applied for a depasturing licence for a run near Tourerere. He later cancelled this application, probably because H. Russell had earlier applied for the same area. He then applied for a run between Castle Point and Cape Turnagain, bounded in the south by the Owahanga River, in the north by the Waimata River, and in the west by bush, or a line running parallel with the coast for three or four miles inland. Thomas estimated this area to contain 20,000 acres, on which he initially intended to place 1,000 ewes.

3. Ibid., 8 Apr 1851.
4. Wilson, Founding, p.36.
5. Application for depasturing licence, signed 25 Aug 1851. This form, along with all of Thomas's letters to McLean are found in the McLean Papers, Series 32/394.
Thomas next appears as a witness to the signatures to the deed attesting the sale of the Hapuku block to the Crown on 4 November 1851. The letters designating Justice of the Peace follow his name. Not long after this he informed McLean that he was going to Hobart Town, Launceston, and Sydney in the Mumford, to buy sheep and cattle, presumably for his run. Ten days later he wrote that he had turned down an offer to be Resident Magistrate at Ahuriri.

As he intended to travel to England, probably in order to recruit colonists for the settlement he and McLean seem to have planned, he empowered the latter with the power of attorney to act on his behalf in arranging a licence for his run and the general supervision of the run. He mentioned that he wished the Maoris to build a house and pen, and to go to the run and poison the wild dogs which Gollan had informed him were numerous. Also, he stated that his sheep were depasturing in the Wairarapa, and that until he returned Thomas Guthrie had been appointed in charge of his run.

Thomas, left Wellington on 6 April 1852 aboard the Midlothian, and after a long, quiet, and pleasant voyage arrived at Margate on 7 August. Though Thomas was in the same cabin as Felix Wakefield the two rarely spoke to each other. Thomas wrote of Wakefield in venomous terms, calling him "...as great a scoundrel, and liar as the Canterbury people gave him credit for." Elsewhere, Thomas referred to him as "...the greatest blackguard of the lot." After landing in England Thomas lived for a time with his married brother at Eastbourne. He then went to the Isle of Man where he stayed with an old military comrade. Following this he went to London to see the funeral of the Great Duke, as the duke of Wellington was called. He

2. Thomas to McLean, 5 Dec 1851.
3. Ibid., 15 Dec 1851.
4. Donald Gollan had worked under Thomas in Canterbury.
5. Thomas to McLean, 2 Apr 1852.
7. Thomas to McLean, 1 Sep 1852. As land agent for the Association in England Wakefield painted a very rosy picture of the new settlement, and many of the settlers he persuaded to emigrate found the state of affairs very different from what they had expected.
8. Ibid., 10 Dec 1852. Presumably Thomas was referring to the Wakefields.
9. The Duke, who had died on 14 Sep 1852, was buried on 18 Nov.
stated that he was on a balcony in St. James Street and had an excellent view of the resplendent procession. In the same letter he noted that he believed he could get at least 200 families to go out to the proposed settlement, but unfortunately the New Zealand Constitution Act of 30 June, which vested the control of the waste lands of the Crown in the colonial legislature, made it unlikely a settlement would be proceeded with.\(^1\)

In his next letter to McLean, Thomas wrote that he had taken his advice and got married, and had never been happier in his life. The great wanderer had at last succumbed to domesticity, at the age of 50. He had been asked to attend several public meetings promoting New Zealand but had declined since he had "...had enough bullying to make me shy of entering again the lists \[sic\]." He added that he had arranged for £400 to be invested in more sheep for his run.\(^2\)

In July 1853 Thomas and his wife travelled to France where they saw the French military camp at St Omer and the Fête Napoleon in Paris. They returned to England in August and then went to Braemar in Scotland to stay with friends for a holiday hunting deer and shooting grouse. While there he saw Queen Victoria.\(^3\) He had accepted a position with a mining company to go out as managing director with a good salary and a share of the mines, which were 200 miles from Sydney towards Yass, and Goulburn. Finally, he expressed his gratitude to Kelham\(^4\) and McLean for stocking his run with their sheep until he obtained the land.\(^5\)

The last letter Thomas wrote from Sydney. He intended to start soon for Maitland where he was to obtain a horse and ride to view the mines. It was three years since he had applied for his run and since he still had not obtained a lease he stated that he had written to Kelham asking him to try and get £1,200 for the sale of the run and stock. He hoped to be back in England at the end of the year, travelling aboard the Lady Jocelyn.\(^6\)

Once more Thomas disappears into the mists of history. His movements after arriving in Australia are unknown. According to Hocken he died in one of the suburbs of Melbourne.\(^7\)

1. Thomas to McLean, 10 Dec 1852.
2. Ibid., 14 Jun 1853.
3. Balmoral Castle was only ten miles from Braemar.
4. Probably James Kelham a Wellington accountant.
5. Thomas to McLean, 14 Sep 1853.
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