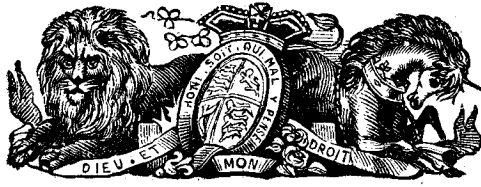


NEW ZEALAND



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[WITH SUPPLEMENT.]

PROCLAMATION.

Prorogation of the Provincial Council to the fifteenth day of November instant.

By His Honor THOMAS DICK, Esquire, Superintendent of the Province of Otago.

WHEREAS by an Act of the Imperial Parliament of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, passed in the session thereof, holden in the fifteenth and sixteenth years of the Reign of Her Present Majesty Queen Victoria, intituled, "An Act to grant a Representative Constitution to the Colony of New Zealand," it was, *inter alia*, enacted that for each of the Provinces established in the said Colony by the said Act there should be a Superintendent and a Provincial Council, to be elected and constituted under, and subject to, the provisions in that behalf therein contained, and that it should be lawful for the Superintendent to prorogue the Provincial Council thereof from time to time, whenever he shall deem it expedient to do so: And whereas, on the ninth day of October last, I, Thomas Dick, Superintendent of the Province of Otago, declared the Provincial Council of Otago to stand prorogued until the ninth day of November instant:

Now therefore I, the Superintendent of the Province of Otago, do proclaim and declare that I do hereby, in exercise of the power vested in me in this behalf by the said Act, further prorogue the Provincial Council of the said Province of Otago; and that the said Provincial Council is further prorogued until the fifteenth day of November instant.

Given under my hand, and issued under the Public Seal of the Province of Otago,

(L.S.) at Dunedin, the first day of November, one thousand eight hundred and sixty-five.

THOMAS DICK,
Superintendent.

By His Honor's Command.

FREDERICK WALKER,
Provincial Secretary.

PROCLAMATION.

Meeting of the Provincial Council.

By His Honor THOMAS DICK, Esquire, Superintendent of the Province of Otago.

IN pursuance of the power and authority vested in me in this behalf, I do hereby fix and proclaim that the twenty-first Session of the Provincial Council of the Province of Otago shall be holden in the Provincial Council Hall, in Dunedin, in the said Province, and shall commence upon Wednesday, the fifteenth day of November instant, at twelve o'clock, at noon; and the Members of the said Council are hereby warned to give their attendance at such time and place accordingly.

Given under my hand, and issued under the Public Seal of the Province of Otago,
(L.S.) at Dunedin, this first day of November, one thousand eight hundred and sixty-five.

THOMAS DICK,
Superintendent.

By His Honor's command.

FREDERICK WALKER,
Provincial Secretary.

ROAD TO THE WEST COAST VIA LAKE WANAKA.

THE following Report is published for general information.

FREDERICK WALKER,
Provincial Secretary.

Gold Fields Department,
Secretary's Office,
Dunedin, 25th Oct., 1865.

To Frederick Walker, Esq., M.P.C.,
Provincial Secretary.

SIR—I have the honor to forward the following Report of the Exploration, undertaken in accordance with the instructions of the Government, in search of a practicable line of road to the West Coast, *via* Lake Wanaka.

I started from Clyde (Dunstan) on August 28th, accompanied by Mr Coates, Mining Surveyor, and three men, with two mules and two horses, arriving at Newcastle on 30th. Here I met Hai-Mon-re-Weti—better known as Maori Jack—and engaged him for the expedition. Owing to the straying of the animals, we were detained at Newcastle till the evening, when I at once dispatched them, with three of the party, by the land route, round the west side of the lake, with instructions to meet me on the following day at Mr Thompson's, Messrs Stuart and Kinross's station; and I proceeded with Mr Coates and one of the men to the foot of the lake, where I had engaged a four-oared boat to convey the stores, &c., which were kindly carted to the point of embarkation by Mr Carter, of Messrs Wilkin and Thomson's station. The following morning we ran up to Mr Thompson's, with a light but fair wind, meeting the land party who arrived late in the afternoon. The up-track from the station was covered with snow and impassable; but Mr Thompson suggested that we might find a new track by taking the animals over a lower shoulder of the mountains, and cutting through a patch of bush beyond. I therefore sent on the land party by the route indicated, and started with the others in the boat, for a point about five miles distant, intending to cut through the bush back to the foot of the precipitous spur by which the horses, &c., would have to descend to the margin of the Lake. Mr Thompson with two of his men came off in his own boat. But before we had proceeded far rotary wreaths of spray, rising high in the air, came whirling down upon us, and were followed by a thin white smoke like mist which rapidly drifted past, concealing the adjacent mountains from our view. A strong northerly wind blew in sudden and capricious gusts, during the intensity of which the surface of the Lake was covered with foam as in a white squall, and between the gusts the waves rose in huge rollers, threatening to swamp the boat. Against this tempest all the exertions of boatmen availed nothing, and after many ineffectual struggles we were compelled to turn back and run for shelter behind the bush, where we got ashore about half-a-mile above its commencement, Mr Thompson landing lower down. Shortly after that gentleman came up and informed us that a track could be made to the point where we then were. Setting all hands to work we quickly cut and cleared a way through for the animals—a task in which Mr Thompson personally aided and guided the party, and we thus brought all safely through to the point of a long steep spur, backed by deep gullies and dense bush.

The boatmen being unwilling to go forward in the face of the wind, I detached Jack to assist them, and instructing them to proceed to the mouth of the Minaret Burn, I led the land party, clearing a track through fern and burnt scrub, up the face of a mountain ridge. So precipitous was this route that the horses, although without loading, fell several times, and the most incessant attention was requisite to get them to the summit of the ridge. This, however, we at length accomplished, and descending the other side very sharply, we rejoined our party at the Minaret about sun-down.

During the night it rained heavily. Next morning the wind lulled, and I again started up the Lake, instructing the land party, that if benighted on the ranges they were to light one fire as a signal that all was right, and two fires if they required assistance. About 11 a.m. the wind began to blow again from the north, but by dint of hard pulling, and after shipping much water, we reached a small sheltered bay below Cameron's Hut, and a little to the south of the Estuary Burn. Here we were again rejoined by the land party, whose signal fire blazed out on the mountain soon after dusk, and who arrived at the camp about two hours after night-fall—having been compelled to travel within the snow line, owing to the rugged and broken character of the ranges at a lower elevation.

The following day it was impossible for the boat to proceed, the wind still blowing fiercely from the north and north-west; I, therefore, sent the land party forward and waited for a change. None occurred that day, but about midnight it began to rain, and the wind gradually decreased in violence. It was not, however, until 3 p.m. on the next day that we were able to effect a start from the place, which I named Windbound Bay. Before we had proceeded two miles, another squall, preceded and accompanied by heavy "rollers," came down from the north-west, compelling us to run in for shelter behind the Peninsula. Soon it began to rain, and dense fogs veiled the mountains from sight. The wind and the waves fell, and the storm was succeeded by a calm, in which we moved off and rowed steadily up the Lake, till about 5 p.m., when the wind began to blow from the south and increased in strength, and hoisting our square-sail to the breeze, we quickly concluded this portion of our journey, re-joining the land party about 8 o'clock at their camp, on Manuka Flat, near the mouth of the Makaroro. We had thus been five days traversing the waters of this small but treacherous lake, and an equal time had been spent by the land party in bringing round the unloaded horses and mules. It appeared to me, however, that the difficulties of the land route might be lessened at a small expense, if some of the worst places near the shore were rendered passable, so as to obviate the delay caused by the necessity which now exists of ascending the mountains, in order to head the ravines and broken ground.

A heavy fall of snow occurred during the night (5th September), so that in the morning we found the ground deeply covered. About 2 p.m., we crossed the Lake to the east bank of the Makaroro (more properly Maungaroa), sending the horses and mules round by the ford—half-a-mile up the river. One of the tents provided for the use of the party was so large and cumbersome that I left it in charge of the boatman (well-known in the neighborhood of the Lake by the *soubriquet* of "Yorkey"), taking with me only the smaller 8 by 10 tent, which I found amply sufficient for all purposes.

Immediately above the Lake, the fine valley of the Makaroro opens out, and occasional small patches of bush appear in the sheltered hollows of the ranges and fringing the sides of the gullies. About three miles up the valley, commences the great forest, which extends continuously through the Southern Alps to the very sands of the beach on the West Coast. This immense forest consists principally of "black birch," or beech (*fagus*), interspersed, in the lower grounds, with totara, rimu, and pine trees, with a dense undergrowth of young trees and scrub, and clothes the mountain sides to the height (estimated) of 4500 feet. At its southern boundary, it is brought to a remarkably abrupt termination on both sides of the valley by deep fissures, or ravines, running in a continuous diagonal line across the mountains. These fissures are, seemingly, the result of volcanic action; and, beyond their well-defined line, which is almost mathematically correct—not a tree or shrub is seen, except in distant and occasional patches, as before stated.

Proceeding up the valley, we camped for the night at the Sawyers' Huts, where a few men are employed in felling timber for the settlers and for sale; and also, when we were there, in building a 10-ton schooner, which has since been launched, it being intended for the Lake traffic. Next day we continued our journey, crossing the river on a shallow bar, about four miles above the Huts; and travelling along the west bank, till the forest closed in on both sides a little below the junction of the Blue River. To avoid this stream, we re-crossed the Makaroro—proceeding along the margin of the river, until compelled to enter the bush. Here we found a recently-cut track, terminating above the river at a tree, marked "M.K." I naturally supposed this to be one of Mr M'Kerrow's marks; but on my return, I was informed that the track was cut by Mr O'Neill's party, the initials representing the names of two of his men. Endeavoring to continue in the direction of the track, we cut into the bush for about a mile; but were seriously impeded by the heavy snow, the weight of which had bent down the branches and young timber to the earth. The scrub becoming more dense, with no appearance of any outlet, (although Jack ascended a lofty tree in the hope of discovering open country), and night-fall also approaching, we returned to the river, and cleared a road along the bank till we reached a small open spot above the confluence of the Blue River—(Camp 2.)

Next day I sent the horses back to Clyde, and proceeded with the mules only, cutting our way through several small belts of the densest scrub I ever saw. Through the last of these we emerged into a fine grass flat about two

miles long, and nearly a mile wide, through the centre of which runs a small but rapid stream—unnamed. At the termination of the flat the valley is entirely filled to the edges of the forest with the shingle bed of the river, which winds through it in several small channels. Between these shingle beds and the ranges, however, lies a belt of level ground, which offers unusual facilities for making a road by simply clearing off the scrub and timber. About a mile farther up, small grass flats occasionally take the place of the shingle, until a point about 23 miles from the Lake is attained, when the forest closely hems in the river, and the rocky spurs of the mountains run into the bed, confining the water to a narrow channel. By making a double journey, we got all our stores, &c., up to the head of the last flat, which is on the west bank (camp 3), crossing the channel of the Makaroro five times on gravelly bars, in about two feet of water. As the contingency then arose of our being detained by freshets on our return, I deemed it prudent to make a *caché* here of seven days' provisions.

Above this flat the Makaroro hurries through a narrow, boulder-strewn gorge for about a mile, when the channel turns abruptly to the east, and the river issues from an immense chasm, the vertical cliffs of which ascend to the height of 300 feet. Between these, the river—now a foaming torrent—rushes through, and over, and under enormous blocks of rock, the *debris* of landslips, whilst the rocks *in situ*, tilted at an angle of 85 or 90 degrees, sufficiently indicate the violent convulsions that rent the mountains asunder, and formed the present channel. At the bend of the river it is joined by the Fish Stream, up the bed of which we proceeded in search of a route, till stopped by vertical rocky cliffs, rising to a great height on either side, and confining the stream in a deep narrow channel, so as to render further progress in that direction impossible. We then sought for a road along the west bank of this stream, and struck the track originally cleared by Dr Haast; but owing to the rugged nature of the ground over which this track passed, and to the circumstance that portions of it had been blocked up and obliterated by fallen timber and recent landslips, it was quite impassable.

On the following day I detached a party to find and clear a road. Unfortunately they ascended too high on the ranges, and after cutting a broad path for two miles we had to abandon it, and I caused the inscription "No Road" to be cut on the trees at the entrance, so as to prevent future travellers being misled. As the direction of the great rent forming the pass was clearly discernible through the timber, I set off next morning with Jack to seek a better route, at the same time directing Mr Coates and one of the men to cross the Makaroro at the junction of the Fish Stream, and explore the country on the east bank of the latter. After penetrating the bush about three miles, and finding a comparatively easy route low down the ranges, we again struck the Fish stream coming from the west, and running between precipitous rocky banks through a deep ravine, which is apparently a lateral fissure of the great rent forming the Pass. Crossing this channel, the bed of which is strewn, and in places almost blocked up with massive fragments of rock, we continued in the direction of the Pass, and in about half a mile came to the Pass Creek, a shallow stream, the banks of which consist of loose shingle. We travelled up the course of this creek some distance, till it began to take an easterly direction, when we again entered the forest on the western bank, and shortly came upon a blazed track leading back to the Fish Stream. Leaving this behind we went forward towards the north, where the light gleaming low through the forest indicated the existence of the Pass. Here the snow lay very deep amongst the scrub and fallen timber, rendering travelling extremely unpleasant. About a mile further on we again struck Dr Haast's track, where it re-enters from the creek, and followed it down till a small rill of water oozing from the swamp moss, and flowing towards the north, assured us that we had found the Pass of which we were in search. We then returned to the camp, blazing the route for a mule-track. On our way we met Mr Coates, who reported that a feasible route could not be found on the east bank of the Fish Stream, where the mountain sides rise abruptly in steps or terraces to the summit.

It rained so incessantly during the whole of the following day that nothing could be done; but next morning we cut and cleared a track to the Fish Stream, and brought up the mules and loading. (Camp 4.) One day was entirely occupied in devising and constructing a passage across the Stream. After felling several trees in the attempt to bridge over the chasm, and seeing them dashed to splinters on the rocks, we found a small watercourse, by clearing which of the greater obstacles we were enabled to bring the unloaded mules to the water's edge, and drive them across. On the other side a small recess in the rocky

cliffs offered facilities for the formation of a roadway to the top of the bank. This we effected by fixing strong saplings (or rather young trees) longitudinally, and morticing in cross pieces, then filling the interstices with fascines of scrub, and covering the whole with stone and gravel. The stores and provisions were slung across on a rope with a running guy attached, and the crossing was then completed. (Camp 5.)

Beyond the Fish Stream the ground is less broken, so that the Pass itself is easily traversed. Indeed, the depression which forms this remarkable Pass may be said to commence at the Fish Stream and terminate at the head of the Haast Valley, forming a distinct bed of shingle drift about four miles square, heavily timbered throughout, and having, as it appeared to me, a slight general inclination to the west. It is quite impossible to detect the existence, or the exact position of any saddle; and it is not until the flowing of a small rivulet confirms the fact, that the traveller can realise that he has really crossed to the northern watershed of the Southern Alps, the mountain peaks of which, crowned with eternal snows and seamed with stupendous glaciers arise on either hand in majestic sublimity, to an elevation of from 7000 to 9000 feet, whilst the greatest altitude attained in the Pass is little more than 1600 feet, or about 600 feet above the level of lake Wanaka.

At the termination of the Pass we were brought to a stand by a vertical cliff, (camp 7) 100 feet in depth, composed of shingle and loose debris, and overlooking two small streams, one coming from the east and the other from the west, and both uniting in one broad stream flowing northwards. This was the Haast River. Descending the cliff I found a break, or depression in the bank of the western stream, leading by an easy incline to the summit, presenting the means of forming a mule-track, which we cleared and levelled before breakfast. At the head of the valley thus obtained, the left bank of the Haast is bounded by a vertical rocky bank varying in height, but as truly defined as if it had been cut by human agency. This continues for several miles, receding however from the river. About a mile below the junction of the two streams, the right bank consists of low flat country, covered with timber and scrub, and presenting indications of the existence of the ancient river bed to the eastward of its present course. The stream being now confined in a narrow channel, we cut a track through this bush for about a mile, when we emerged upon a narrow shingle bank, which soon widened, and the valley opened out. Occasional flats of small extent covered with grass and scrub now appeared; between these the stream, rapidly increasing in volume, wound its way from side to side of the valley. We forded the water, in one day, fourteen times, for the convenience of travelling in open ground; but the land on either side is quite level for the greater distance, so that a track might easily be formed by clearing the bush. Five miles from the head a small gorge compelled us to re-enter the bush on the right bank, cutting through which for a quarter of a mile we again entered upon a succession of small flats. Bordering one of these, on the left bank, I observed a tree peculiarly blazed, thus: (an oblong and two squares.) Judging from the appearance of the surrounding bark, these blazes must be at least seven or eight years old. Several other trees in the vicinity were similarly marked with single longitudinal blazes.

About eight miles down the valley (camp 8), our progress was effectually stopped by an almost unbroken series of rocky gorges, through which the river foams in a succession of cascades and rapids, over and amidst huge piles of rock which encumber its channel for a distance of eleven miles. On either side the banks rise vertically, frequently overhanging the river in loosely-jointed crags, slips from which are of frequent occurrence; or if a break occurs in these, it is so covered with rugged debris as to be impassable beyond a few rods. After carefully exploring the country on either side, we found it everywhere so rugged and broken that to form a mule-track with such implements as we carried (two small tomahawks and a pick and shovel), would have necessitated at least a fortnight's delay. Huge boulders or blocks of rock—fallen long since from the surrounding ranges—covered with thick moss, with wide fissures between, where the soil supported on roots of trees bent beneath the tread, or gave way altogether, to the great discomfort and frequent injury of the incautious traveller; together with the dense bush and constant moisture resulting from the snow which drifts in any weather from the adjacent mountain tops, and melts into rain as it descends—all tend to render this region one of the most gloomy and forbidding that it was ever my lot to traverse. Fortunately, by following the cut track, the whole distance may now be accomplished in

one day, and it is well worth an effort to effect this. But by following a line which we care fully noted, a road may easily be formed by the use of the very impediments which now obstruct the track.

Being fearful that our stock of provisions would not hold out whilst we made the road passable for the mules, I turned them loose, making a *cache* of the packsaddles, and all surplus, stores, personal clothing, &c.; everything, indeed, that could be spared to relieve the men. As we had carefully barred the track at the head of the valley, and also at the Fish Stream, I calculated on finding the animals on our return.

Crossing a branch of the river at the entrance to the gorges, we travelled down the bed on the left side about half-a-mile. Then turning up a dry stony gully, we turned into the forest, following Dr Haast's track (which is well defined), for about three miles. (Camp 9). Here, that track crosses the river to the right bank, immediately below the junction of a small creek; but on examining the country along the left bank, I found a very fair line of route along that side, and continued to a point opposite the junction of the Wills, where Haast's track again crosses the river. I observed that the Wills was then very low, and quite fordable on the sand-bar at its mouth; and on our return, it was even lower. (Camp 10).

As the rain was incessant, and we were unable to find a piece of level ground of sufficient extent to pitch our tent, we rested (if the word is not misused) under the projecting ledges of a huge mass of rock which had travelled from its original bed to within three feet of the river's edge. Here unfortunately I caught a chill in my foot from lying in a pool of water which collected during the night. The consequence was, that I suffered for three days from an acute attack of gout, under which I could only travel with difficulty and in great pain, carrying a heavy swag over the roughest possible ground. We, therefore, progressed very slowly.

Making another small *cache* of biscuit, we again followed Haast's track to the confluence of the Burke river, avoiding, however, several unnecessary detours. At one point this track leads out at and over a dangerous precipice, which may be avoided by keeping a little to the right. I remarked some fern trees growing just below the top of this precipice at an altitude of not less than 1200 feet above the sea-level.

Beyond and immediately opposite the Mount Bealey range (which terminates abruptly in a vertical cliff, rising perpendicularly about 3000 feet above the river, its face scarred by constant landslips and thinly clothed with patches of scrub), the ground descends to the river in a steep incline about half a mile in width. This is covered with belts of fuschia and currant bushes, between which are streams (so to speak) of rock and shingle—the *debris* of the blue slate rock, above, which is bare of vegetation, except on the summit, where it is fringed with timber, and rises perpendicularly with loose pendant masses, awaiting their time to crumble down and sweep all before them. Cutting through the scrub we crossed this immense landslip, and ascended the mountain again, descending rapidly to the river. This ascent may be avoided, and a much easier track found by keeping nearer the side of the channel.

The gorges terminate about two miles above the junction of the Burke. The mountains recede, and the river flows more gently over a wider bed. We emerged from the forest, near a very remarkable water-fall, which shoots straight out from the rock, at a height of 250 feet, and falls over a vertical precipice.

The Burke is a deep and sluggish river, from which I conjecture that it passes through more level ground. Indeed, the general appearance of the country beyond this point is such as to induce the belief that a considerable extent of available land lies behind the ranges flanking the valley of the Haast, and at the rear of Mount Aspiring, the northern face of which, as of all the mountains, presents comparatively little snow. And it is on that side of the chain only that a practicable pass to Jackson's River probably exists.

Fording the Haast to the right bank above the junction of the Burke I noticed the remains of an old camp, and, carved on a tree, "Nugget Prospecting Party, Sep. 3, 1863," with the initials of the members of the party. (Camp 12.) Below the junction the Haast is about fifty yards wide, and the valley opens out, affording a magnificent view of the Gray and Moorhouse ranges. Here the river runs for nearly eight miles between wide flats, some of which are partially grassed, but for the greater part covered with dense scrub and timber. To avoid the sinuosities of the stream, we recrossed to the left bank, immediately below the Burke, where the river is divided by shingle spits into several channels, of which we took advantage. These spits, as we found on our return, shift their position with

every flood, and are intersected at the upper end by dangerous quicksands. From this point we travelled without difficulty to the junction of the Clarke river, above which we again forded the Haast at a broad reach, and subsequently crossed the Clarke to Camp 13. Notwithstanding so much rain had recently fallen, I found the Clarke much lower than I had anticipated; running near the mouth in two broad channels, with a rapid current, between shingle beds extending fully a mile and a half from bank to bank. Some of our party crossed here safely, the second channel which is the most formidable, having about three feet of water; and the others crossed higher up over four channels in shallower water. Before joining the Haast, the Clarke runs for about a mile between two open grass flats, containing probably 1500 acres. These, however, would seem to be liable to occasional inundations. I travelled up the valley to a stream which enters from the North, and found floodmarks on its banks nine feet above the ordinary level.

Heavy rains detained us here for a day and a half. In the afternoon of the second day it cleared up, and we again set forward, first making a *cache* of eight days' provisions, with a portion of which I intended, on my return, to explore the Gray Ranges for a pass, which, I am of opinion, exists in that direction—leading out probably somewhere near Bruce Bay, from which the Clarke is distant about 25 miles in a direct line.

From the Clarke to the coast, the Haast has a bed seldom less than a mile, and sometimes one-and-a-half and two miles in width. Through this the river ordinarily flows in two or more channels—occasionally uniting and again diverging from each other. The intervening spaces are covered with loose shingle drift, interspersed with insulated patches of soil, which are of greater or less extent, and for the most part overgrown with low scrub. These are apparently the remains of the original valley, which has been torn up and destroyed by heavy floods—the vestiges of which are everywhere visible. These floods render the course of the river liable to constant changes. On our return, we found shingle where, on our down track, the water was flowing, and deep water where shingle spit had been. It is impossible, therefore, to lay down positive directions for following this part of our route. The only course is, to keep to the shingle (which affords capital travelling), wherever possible—taking to the bush when the river sets in against the banks. I may here, also, caution travellers against the "back-waters." The shingle-beds are generally very wide, and often several miles in length; but it is not always possible to follow them to their termination. The streams, which issue from the mountains, form small water-courses inside the shingle, and close beneath the bush. These become very wide and deep at their confluence with the river, where the water backs up the entrance, so that the shingle spits often end in quicksands and impassable channels. It is necessary, therefore, to travel along the inner margins, and to cross the backwaters so soon as they begin to deepen. When proceeding up the river this precaution is unnecessary, and the rule is, to ford the backwater and cross to the spit immediately it is practicable to do so.

At the junction of the Clarke, the united rivers form a single broad channel, which when we passed down was 450 feet wide, being somewhat swollen by the rains. We therefore followed along the right bank, taking advantage of the shingle beaches when we could, but being frequently obliged to make tedious detours through the bush, and often climbing steep rocky spurs, to avoid the backwaters and the river itself. About twelve miles below the Clarke, we crossed a roaring mountain torrent, (camp 15) not without difficulty, and even danger, as it was then in a state of fresh of which we were not at the time aware. Five miles further on, the current sets close under a spur, consisting of huge rocks rising precipitously to a height of 300 feet. To avoid this we forded the river to a shingle spit in the centre, again returning to the bank below the rocks. Here, (near camp 16) about sixteen miles from the coast, the cabbage-palm first made its appearance. Two miles above the Thomas River, perpendicular cliffs again obstructed our progress; and being by this time convinced that a road along the right bank was quite impracticable, I resolved to ford the Haast to the other side. We effected the crossing at a point where the river was about a quarter of a mile in width, and about three feet six inches deep, with a slight bar in the centre, which afforded a resting point, the current running very rapidly and with great force, so that one of the men who had not taken hand with the rest of the party (a plan which we adopted for mutual support) lost his footing and was nearly swept away.

We continued on the left bank with far less difficulty than we had encountered on the right. Not only were the beaches longer and more continuous, but the rocky

pinches were fewer and more easily surmounted. There was also much flat land on that side, which, although covered with dense scrub, freely intermixed with wild vines and supple-jacks, and, lower down, interlaced with the wild convolvulus and "bush-lawyers," afforded far better travelling ground. Soon after passing the mouth of the Thomas, which appears to traverse a fine open valley, the horizon alone bounded our view. The mountain ranges began to recede, stretching away to the north-east and south-west so as to form a semi-circle enclosing a large area of flat land, the central point of which is about nine miles from the shore, whilst the extremities of the arc run out into the ocean in bold rocky cliffs at Arnot's Point and Jackson's Bay. This flat, which constitutes the delta of the Haast, is entirely covered with the densest scrub, with occasional belts of rimu and white pine,—is pierced with deep lagoons, and chequered with extensive swamps. Scattered over the plain are several isolated round hills, rising like islands from a sea of vegetation. Three of these are especially conspicuous—one, Mosquito Hill, being on the north bank of the river, and the others some distance to the south.

When about five miles from the sea the river set in against the bank, running with a swift current behind and around the base of one of these hills, where it was joined by the waters of a lagoon, to head which we were compelled to make a sharp detour. Thinking to pass the hill we struck into the bush, and were intercepted by a swamp rank with vegetation, and noxious from foetid exhalations. Endeavoring to avoid this swamp, we insensibly diverged from our course, till on reference to the compass we found that we were heading for the south-west. The ground, covered with a thick carpet of moss, through which the water oozed at every step, offered no available camping place, and we were, moreover, desirous of escaping from such an unwholesome locality. Whilst in this dilemma the daylight left us; but fortunately the moon shone out clear and unclouded. By the dubious light we endeavored to cross the swamp on the ferns, and tussocks, and fallen timber which pervaded the deep water holes; but after persevering till nearly ten o'clock we were fain to give in, and to wait for daylight. We camped in the midst of the swamp on a small hillock, dry only by comparison. It was useless to think of erecting the tent; so lighting a fire we wrapped ourselves in our rugs and lay around it. In the night it began to rain, and intermittent misty showers continued till noon the following day. For a few minutes only the sun shone out, and notwithstanding our discomfort, I could not but then admire the beauty of the scene which presented itself. Lofty fern trees formed a verdant canopy, the delicate tracery of their silvery leaves standing out in bold relief against the sky, relieved, here and there, by the pendant branches of the elegant rimu, and the slender leaves of the sword plant, whilst high above towered gigantic pines, their limbs hung with fantastically disposed festoons of beautiful lichens, and interlaced with supple jack, which spread from tree to tree like the cordage of a vessel. In the swamp-holes flourished enormous ferns, and other aquatic plants, amongst which was particularly noticeable a coarse grass, with drooping leaves three feet in length, growing in bunches somewhat resembling the head of the cabbage-palm. This plant rises with a single stem, about three or four inches in diameter, and grows in self-supporting clusters. But it is also parasitic, twining in close folds around lofty trees, and throwing out its branches profusely as it climbs upwards, often to the height of eighty and ninety feet, until the whole assumes the appearance of a huge grass-tree.

By steering as near as possible a north-east course we succeeded in getting through the swamp, and ascended a hill, whence we obtained a view of the river and the open ocean. Descending the other side we again struck the river, and followed along the bank to within a few hundred yards of the sea-beach, when our progress was again barred by a deep lagoon, intersected by branches, which we in vain strove to head. An old "dug-out," or canoe, lay high and dry on the opposite bank; but as it was late, and the men were exhausted, we camped by the side of the lagoon, intending to fetch over the canoe in the morning. But in the night a terrific thunder-storm came on, the rain fell in torrents, the wind blew a hurricane, the tide rose to an unusual height, and a heavy flood came down the river. Under these combined influences the water backed up the lagoon to four feet above its usual level. Early in the morning we had to retreat precipitately from our tent, within which the water rose a foot deep, and to cut an opening in the scrub, where, from a narrow ridge, we watched the flood gradually rising around us until we began to speculate on the strength of the cabbage-palms, in the branches of which it seemed probable we should eventually be compelled to seek refuge.

To increase our difficulties, the canoe got adrift and floated up the lagoon out of sight.

About 11 a.m. the sun shone out, the tide ebbed and the water began to recede, and in a few hours Jack was able to get through the scrub and fetch the canoe, which stranded on the bank above us. In this we crossed the lagoon. Whilst the men were unloading the stores, Mr Coates and myself forced our way through a belt of scrub, and in a few minutes we stood upon the sea-beach and the waves of the ocean laved our feet.

I remained on the coast three days, with the double object of allowing the men to recruit their strength and repair the damages sustained to their clothes, and of waiting for the subsidence of the flood in the river. Our stock of provisions at this time was reduced to twenty pannikins of flour and meal, and a little tea and sugar. But the lagoon was well stocked with fine eels, on which, with a few red-bills, we subsisted during our stay. We kept an anxious look-out for passing vessels, but none appeared in sight. I was not aware until my return that miners were located at Jackson's Bay and Bruce Bay (Porangirangi), but if I could have procured a supply of provisions, I should have pushed on to the latter place with the view of seeking for a pass through the Gray Ranges.

The sea-beach is flat and sandy, extending, in an unbroken line, northwards to Arnot Point, and southwards to Jackson's Bay. About a mile above the coast the Haast divides into two main channels, which rapidly diverge from each other till within a hundred yards from the shore, when the south arm, which is much the largest, sweeps suddenly round, running in a northerly direction parallel with the beach for three-quarters of a mile, and entering the ocean a mile and a-half to the south of the other arm, which also takes a turn to the north. The two channels are united by a shallow backwater behind the beach, which thus forms an island. The space between the north and south arms is filled up with shingle and treacherous quicksands, which can only be traversed at low tide; and abutting on the southern channel, a single island of soil, about half-an-acre in extent, and overgrown with flax, veronica, and a few palms, agreeably diversifies the scene. Both mouths of the river are fordable at low water. There was about four feet of water on the bar at the south arm, but the river was then flooded. The north arm is much shallower.

We commenced our return journey on the 5th October, with tolerably fair weather, varied by occasional showers by day and thunder-storms at night—the 7th being the first entirely fine day experienced since the 27th September. The river was much higher than on our downward route. Keeping on the south bank all the way to the Burke, we found an excellent road, encountering few obstacles of any moment. On that side of the Haast there is no river, nor any considerable stream, from which I infer that the watershed is limited. About five miles above the junction of the Thomas, we noticed a remarkable rift or fissure in the mountains, running with a gentle incline to a low saddle, through which no other ranges are visible, even when viewed from the opposite hills, and apparently leading in the direction of Jackson's river valley.

On arriving opposite our *depot*, below the junction of the Clarke, I sent two of the party across the river to fetch the stores from the *cache*. Unfortunately, one of them, when returning, attempted to ford the Haast where the water was deep and the current very strong. The consequence was that he lost his footing, and was obliged to drop his load, swimming ashore with difficulty. We thus lost all our oatmeal, tea, sugar, and flour, but recovered about six pounds of the latter on a sandbar; and this, with a little brose-meal, was all that was left us. I therefore reluctantly abandoned my intention of exploring the Gray Ranges. Incited by the scantiness of our rations, and the extensiveness of our appetites, we hurried onwards till we reached the Burke, where we crossed and re-crossed the Haast at our old fording places; and pushed on through the gorges to our former camp, No. 8, taking up the biscuits left opposite the Wills, as we passed by. To our utter disappointment the mules had broken through all our fences, and crossed the Fish Stream. Indeed we subsequently recovered them near the head of Lake Wanaka. We were therefore compelled to leave the contents of the *cache*, and to press forward to camp 3, in the Makaroro valley, which we reached on the following evening, and with great satisfaction, found the *cache* there uninjured. Considerable difficulty, however, was experienced in getting past the Fish Stream: which, flooded by incessant rains, was foaming and roaring through its rocky channel in a torrent which it was impossible to ford. Tree after tree was felled in the vain effort to throw one over the chasm, and nothing but the fact that our last biscuit

was consumed, could have induced us to persevere in the midst of a steady downfall, which so chilled us as to induce a drowsy lethargy of the most painful description. We crossed at length, by constructing a rude ladder of saplings reaching from a rock in the river to the top of the opposite cliff.

The Makaroro was somewhat swollen, but the upper crossings were passed without any trouble. But after gaining the first open flat on the east bank we kept that side down to the Lake, thereby avoiding two deep fords below the Blue River. The return journey occupied nine days in travelling, and one day spent in searching for the mules. On the 14th October we arrived at the head of the Lake, where we found "Yorkey" awaiting us. The wind being fair we made a five-hours' run to the foot, re-entering Clyde on the morning of the 19th, and starting for Dunedin the same day per the Gold Escort.

The main object of the expedition—namely, to find a practicable and easy route to the West Coast, I consider to have been fully accomplished. The ascent to, and the descent from the Pass, are remarkably gentle. The rough country necessary to be traversed is limited to three miles at the Fish Stream, and twelve miles in the rocky gorges. Only one ford need be crossed on the Makaroro; and two, or perhaps four, on the Upper Haast, and these are all perfectly safe, with shallow water and sound bottoms. The Fish Stream requires bridging over, and a punt is necessary at the Burke, below which a few rocky points have to be surmounted, but there are no swamps, nor any rivers to be crossed from thence to the coast. The total length of this route from Lake Wanaka I estimate at ninety (90) miles, and I am of opinion that it could be made at a trifling expense.

We observed auriferous indications at various parts of our route, for fuller information respecting which, and other interesting topics, I beg leave to refer you to the Report of Mr Coates, to whom I entrusted this branch of the subject. I regret that, owing to the severe illness under which Mr Coates has suffered since his return to the Dunstan, this Report has not yet reached me; but I hope shortly to be in a position to lay it before you, together with a map showing our tracks and the proposed line of road.

I have great pleasure in being able to report that no casualties of a serious character occurred, nor did any of the party suffer ill-health on the journey.

I have the honor to be,
Sir,

Your obedient servant,
VINCENT PYKE,
Leader of the Expedition.

Provincial Secretary's Office,
Dunedin, 4th November, 1865.

IT is hereby notified that a Writ issued for the election of a person to serve as Member of the Provincial Council for the Lawrence District has been duly returned, with a certificate to the effect that

JAMES CLARK BROWN, Esquire,

has been duly elected.

FREDERICK WALKER,
Provincial Secretary.

Provincial Secretary's Office,
Dunedin, 6th November, 1865.

IT is hereby notified that a writ issued for the election of a person to serve as Member of the Provincial Council for the Queenstown District, has been duly returned, with a certificate dated 31st October last, to the effect that

CHARLES EDWARD HAUGHTON, Esquire,
has been duly returned.

FREDERICK WALKER,
Provincial Secretary.

Provincial Secretary's Office,
Dunedin, 8th November, 1865.

HIS Honor the Superintendent directs it to be notified that he has been pleased to appoint

BRYAN CECIL HAGGITT, Esquire, M.P.C.,

to be Member of the Executive Council of the Province of Otago.

FREDERICK WALKER,
Provincial Secretary.

RETURN OF THE SALE OF TOWN LANDS IN THE PROVINCE OF OTAGO, FOR THE MONTH OF OCTOBER, 1865.

Towns.	No. of Sections.	No. of Purchasers.	Acreage.	Amount Realised.			Average Price per Acre.			Remarks.
				£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	
Pembroke	4	2	A. R. P. 0 0 32	29	0	0	100	0	0	
Newcastle	4	1	0 0 32	20	0	0	100	0	0	
Totals	8	3	0 1 24	49	0	0				

Waste Land Board Office, Dunedin.

W. H. CUTTEN, Chief Commissioner.

RETURN OF THE SALE OF RURAL LANDS IN THE PROVINCE OF OTAGO, FOR THE MONTH OF OCTOBER, 1865.

Hundreds.	No. of Sections.	No. of Purchasers.	Acreage.	Amount realised.	Average price per acre.			Average Acreage per Purchaser.			Remarks.		
					£	s.	D.	£	s.	D.			
Marawhenua	1	1	A. R. P. 90 0 0	90	0	0	1	0	0	90	0	0	
Awamoko	3	2	129 3 38	129	15	0	1	0	0	64	3	39	
Kakanui	3	3	544 2 17	544	10	0	1	0	0	161	2	5	
Moeraki	1	1	72 2 8	72	10	0	1	0	0	72	2	8	
Dunedin	1	1	11 1 0	11	5	0	1	0	0	11	1	0	
East Taieri	1	1	14 0 23	14	2	6	1	0	0	14	0	23	
North Tokomairiro	2	2	115 0 0	115	0	0	1	0	0	57	2	0	
Waitahuna West	5	4	340 0 0	340	0	0	1	0	0	85	0	0	
Pastoral Districts	16	7	510 0 0	510	0	0	1	0	0	72	3	17	
Totals	33	22	1827 2 6	1827	2	6							

Waste Land Board Office, Dunedin.

W. H. CUTTEN, Chief Commissioner.

Sheep Inspector's Department,
Dunedin, November 7, 1865.

NOTICE is hereby given that I have appointed

ARTHUR KENNEDY, Esq.,

to be a Sub-Inspector of Sheep for the Province of Otago from the 1st of October, 1865.

GEORGE THOMSON,
Chief Inspector of Sheep.

THE GENERAL ROAD BOARD meets, for the dispatch of business, in the Government Offices, Dunedin, at noon on the first Thursday of every month. Notice, in writing, of all business intended to be brought before the Board must be in the hands of the Clerk three days at least before the day of Meeting.

By order,
JOHN HARDY,
Clerk to the General Road Board.

NOTICE is hereby given that the Partnership hitherto subsisting between us the undersigned, BLAIR FULLARTON and THOMAS BONAR NEILSON, has been this day dissolved by mutual consent. All debts owing to the said late partnership will be received, and all its liabilities discharged, by the said T. B. Neilson.

Dated this third day of November, 1865.

T. B. NEILSON.
BLAIR FULLARTON.

Witness—A. OLIVER. 5s.

In the Supreme Court of New Zealand, }
Otago and Southland District. }

In the matter of the Petition of JAMES BRUCE, of Oamaru, in the Province of Otago, Contractor, a Debtor; and in the matter of the Petition of JAMES RATTRAY, of Dunedin, in the Province of Otago aforesaid, Merchant, a Creditor of the said James Bruce to the extent of not less than Fifty Pounds; and in the matter of the "Debtors and Creditors Act, 1862."

NOTICE is hereby given that His Honor Mr. Justice Richmond has appointed Friday, the twenty-second day of December next, at ten o'clock in the forenoon, at the Supreme Court House, Dunedin, for the hearing of the Petition of the above-named Debtor.

Dated this third day of November, 1865.

MACASSEY & TURTON,
11s. Solicitors for the Petitioner.

NOTICE.

THE Partnership heretofore subsisting between the undersigned Edward Esquilant and Robert Algie, as Stationers and Printers, trading under the style or firm of "Esquilant and Algie," Manse-street, Dunedin, has this day been dissolved by mutual consent. The said Edward Esquilant will receive all moneys due, and will discharge all the liabilities of the late firm. As witness our hands this eighth day of November, one thousand eight hundred and sixty-five.

EDWD. ESQUILANT.
ROBERT ALGIE.

Witness: HENRY P. MORSE. 14s.

[From *New Zealand Gazette*, No. 37, Sept. 22, 1865.]

CENSUS OF NEW ZEALAND, 1864.

Colonial Secretary's Office,
Wellington, 13th September, 1865.

THE following Table, showing approximately the Increase and Decrease of the Population of European Descent in New Zealand, from the 1st January to the 30th June, 1865, is published for general information.

J. C. RICHMOND.

Gross Increase in the Half-year ending June 30, 1865.

By Immigration (over Seas)—

	M.	F.
In 1st Quarter	3,516	2,533 = 6,049
In 2nd Quarter	2,124	1,332 = 3,456

By Births—

In 1st Quarter	834	799 = 1,633
In 2nd Quarter	863	834 = 1,697

TOTAL GROSS INCREASE - } 7,337 5,498 = 12,835

Deduct Decrease—

By Emigration (over Seas)—

	M.	F.
In 1st Quarter	1,455	420 = 1,875
In 2nd Quarter	1,222	344 = 1,566

By Deaths—

In 1st Quarter	495	347 = 842
In 2nd Quarter	457	306 = 763

TOTAL GROSS DECREASE - } 3,629 1,417 = 5,046

Net Increase in the Half-year ending } 3,708 4,081 = 7,789
30th June, 1865

[A few of the Returns requisite to make the foregoing estimate accurate were not received at the time of its compilation. But they related to places most of which are (as respects statistical numbers) comparatively unimportant; and the Returns from those places for the corresponding Quarters of 1864 have been taken into the calculation as applying to 1865 also. The estimate may therefore be regarded as substantially correct.]

The above numbers added to the population of the Colony, as shown by the late Census, amount to—Males, 110,288; Females, 69,659; Total, 179,947. But these Totals are defective with regard to the month of December, 1864—the Census having been taken on the night of the first of that month, and the Returns employed in the preparation of this estimate being quarterly (not monthly).

An apportionment amongst the several Provinces of the figures in the above Table would show the following results with respect to increase or decrease during the half-year ending June 30th:—

Auckland—Increase, M. 2,884; F. 2,661; Total, 5,545.

Taranaki—M. (Decrease) 14; F. (Increase) 15; Total (Increase), 1.

Wellington—Increase, M. 223; F. 127; Total, 350.

Hawke's Bay—Increase, M. 24; F. 32; Total, 56.

Nelson—Increase, M. 349; F. 109; Total, 458.

Marlborough—Increase, M. 30; F. 20; Total, 50.

Canterbury—Increase, M. 759; F. 666; Total, 1,425.

Otago—M. (Decrease), 464; F. (Increase), 407; Total (Decrease), 57.

Southland—M. (Decrease), 83; F. (Increase), 43; Total (Decrease), 40.

The attempt to estimate the Population of the respective Provinces by the introduction into the calculation of the Arrivals and Departures at the several Ports—although it has been repeatedly made in the annual volumes of Statistics—is confessedly

attended with uncertainty, for this reason (amongst others), that there are no means of ascertaining the amount of *Overland Migration*. As some aid, however, to such an estimate, the following figures are given, showing the excess of Arrivals over Departures, or of Departures over Arrivals, at the Ports of the several Provinces during the Half-year ending June 30th :—

Auckland, Excess of Arrivals, 742; Taranaki, Excess of Departures, 88; Wellington, Excess of Arrivals, 2,083; Hawke's Bay, Excess of Arrivals, 270; Nelson, Excess of Arrivals, 100; Marlborough, Excess of Departures, 143; Canterbury, Excess of Arrivals, 277; Otago, Excess of Departures, 2,064; Southland, Excess of Departures, 691.

Subject to the qualifications above stated, as to the uncertainty attending this mode of estimating the Population of each Province, and as to the absence of all the information specially relating to the month of December which would be necessary to make the calculation (such as it is) complete, the following figures are given as indicating, more or less approximately, the Population of the several Provinces on the 30th of June :—

	M.	F.	Total.
Auckland ...	29,206	19,213	48,419
Taranaki ...	2,690	1,597	4,287
Wellington ...	10,172	7,248	17,420
Hawke's Bay ...	2,704	1,392	4,096
Nelson ...	7,052	5,416	12,468

Marlborough ...	3,947	1,479	5,426
Canterbury ...	19,946	14,032	33,978
Otago ...	30,129	16,769	46,898
Southland ...	4,132	3,222	7,354

JOHN B. BENNETT,
Registrar-General.

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